



Shanrock III. has been repaired, and has restarted her trials.

The Crown Princess of Saxony has given birth to a daughter.

The Admiralty has planned four cruisers of the Duke of Edinburgh type, with a speed of 22 knots and armour of the citadel design.

The Montreal employers and the longshoremen both refuse the offer of the Labour Department to intervene in the dispute which has arisen.

The Columbia, last year's defender of the America Cup, beat the Reliance, the newly-built yacht, by a quarter of a mile in a seven-knot breeze.

The Dominion liner Hamilton rammed the Clyde liner Saganaw off the coast of Delaware. Twenty of the Saganaw's passengers were drowned.

The Emerald, a steamer constructed on the turbine principle, has successfully crossed the Atlantic despite the severe gales prevailing at the time of her voyage.

The "Daily Express" states that the Haversham Grange brought from Buenos Ayres to Capetown 2,000 sheep and 250 cattle suffering from foot and mouth disease.

Not only with England is Germany experiencing difficulty in securing financial support for the Bagdad railway, for Swiss, French and Americans all threaten to withdraw.

Conflicting Japanese political parties have arranged to expend a hundred and fifteen million yen (about two millions sterling) a year on their naval programme during the decade ensuing.

The second reading debate on the Irish Land Bill foreshadows a protracted discussion in committee. The Nationalists ask for wider concessions. The Government has promised fair consideration to all amendments in committee.

At a meeting of the Marylebone Cricket Club, 315 members voted in favour of widening the wickets, and 299 against. The motion was therefore lost, a two-thirds majority being necessary under the constitution of the club.

Mr A. J. Balfour's motor driver has been thrice fined for "scorching" when the Prime Minister has been riding. The Liberal press condemns Mr Balfour's repeated breaches of a law of his own making.

The Rev. Mr Morrison, an American missionary, has reported to Lord Lansdowne that many flagrant cases of official atrocities are reported in the Congo, and declares that there is no Government in the world so wicked, not even including that of Turkey, as this Republic, with its population of a European race.

M. Rouvier, the French Minister for Finance, is introducing an Income Tax Bill with a new method of collection, which does not require declaration or inquiry as to its taxpayers' financial position. Instead the amount of the tax will vary according to the taxpayer's apparent circumstances.

The New York police, in consequence of a letter they received stating that the Mafia Secret Society contemplated the destruction of an English liner, discovered on board the steamer Umbria a box containing no less than a 100lb of dynamite, fitted with mechanism which was actually working and arranged to explode within 36 hours.

Mr Chamberlain, replying to Mr Catchat Wason in the House of Commons, said that on learning hereafter the Governor of Fiji's views he would consider if an alteration of taxation was advisable. It would, he said, be unprecedented and inconvenient to ask the Prime Minister of New Zealand for a report on the native regulations promulgated in Fiji. The proper method for the natives petitioning would be through the Governor. Ordinance 20 of 1887 was still operative. As at present advised he was of opinion that it was necessary to retain the powers of deportation.

GENERAL CABLES.

THE KING'S TOUR.

President Loubet, in a telegram to King Edward, says he is delighted at the good impression His Majesty has carried away as the result of his visit. He most warmly thanks him for his sentiments so kindly manifested towards the French people and Government.

The King was accorded a splendid ovation at Portsmouth and London.

DEADLY SUBMARINES.

Two submarines in some manoeuvres at La Rochelle attacked the "enemy's" ironclads forward. They then plunged and attacked them aft.

Eye witnesses declare that in actual warfare the whole division would have been annihilated.

AMIDSHIPS.

M. Santos-Dumont ascended in a navigable balloon to a considerable height above Paris, and carried out successful evolutions.

M. Lebandy has also ascended in a steerable balloon at Nauves. The weather was rainy and windy, and he travelled 37 kilometres in 90 minutes, and made various evolutions at an altitude of 300 metres.

PURSUIT OF THE MULLAH.

General Manning is collecting the scattered posts along the Obbia line. The Mullah is quiescent.

Italy's backwardness in occupying Mudug and other points on the Italian hinterland now in British possession is hindering operations.

A rumour is current at Aden that the Mullah attacked a British column at Galadi, but was repulsed with heavy loss. It is stated the British losses were considerable.

Five thousand Indian camels have been purchased for Somaliland.

THE RAGGING SCANDAL.

Replying in the House of Lords to the Duke of Bedford's criticism on the action of placing Colonel Kinloch on the retired list in connection with the "ragging" in the Guards, Earl Roberts declared that the decision was in accordance with the regulations, and also in the best interests of the Army.

He would not allow the honourable traditions of the Army to be sullied by a disgusting and degrading form of bullying.

JEWIS IN RUSSIA.

Hundreds of Jewish families fearing massacre have left Kiel. Troops are patrolling the streets. Assemblages have been forbidden, and the populace has been warned that troops in case of need will use their weapons.

[Despite the exodus of such vast numbers of Jews from Russia through persecution, the total Jewish population in that country is estimated at 5,142,136 out of 8,351,581 in the whole of Europe. The primary grounds for the contempt for—so easily turned to the hatred of—the Russian Jew is the heartless and ingenious extortion that he is apt to practise upon the ignorant mizki, or peasant, who only too readily places himself in a line of needful oppression at the mercy of these Snylocks. Giving the best of security in real estate, the unfortunate mizki has often to pay many hundred per cent. in interest before he is quit of his debt. The not unusual consequence of all this is that the patience of the victim is likely to give way, and that he is prone to show his contempt, not only against the bloodsucker, but against the Hebrew race in general.]

SOUTH AFRICA.

It has been ascertained that the deaths at Johannesburg, which were feared to be due to an outbreak of bubonic plague, were due to pneumoconiosis, an inflammatory condition of the lungs, due to the inhalation of irritating particles.

Mr Chamberlain, in a speech which elicited warm commendations from both sides of the House of Commons, explained the resolution guaranteeing a development loan for the Transvaal of 35 millions, which was asked conditional upon a war contribution of 30 millions from

the latter to be derived from a future loan secured on the Transvaal's resources. The realisation of the enormous potential resources of South Africa would, he said, require similar treatment to Australia and Canada in the way of State intervention for providing the capital required to enable South Africa to find its own necessities before it could ever become an important exporter. The Motherland would treat the new colonies, apart from direct Imperial interests, as self-governing, which was the only wise and only possible policy. The bulk of the development loan would be devoted to the discharge of existing liabilities. To readjust the present charges and refund to the Exchequer six millions would be advanced, so that the Motherland would receive 36 instead of 30 millions.

The Transvaal would also pay two millions compensation to loyalists as regards the first Boer invasion. Furthermore, the conversion of debts and purchase of railways would leave nine and a-half millions, whereof five would be devoted to the development of railways two and a-half millions to land settlement, two millions to roads and irrigation services. The loan would absorb £1,430,000 per annum, calculated at 4 per cent. for interest and redemption. This would be a first charge on the intercolonial council of the two colonies, and the subsidiary Transvaal revenues. It is estimated that after three years, with assistance from the Transvaal surplus, the loan will leave a surplus of £300,000 for further development. That marvellous result was due to Lord Milner's energy, ability and unexampled devotion.

The resolution was agreed to without a division.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Lord Lamington raised a question in the House of Lords of Russia's growing ascendancy in Persia. He added that the only object of any Russian outlet in the Gulf was the establishment of a naval base threatening India and the trade of the southern seas.

Lord Lansdowne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said that it was owing to British expenditure of lives and money that the Gulf was open to navigation to the world. Our policy he continued, was firstly to protect and promote British trade without excluding the legitimate trade of others and next—and he would say it without hesitation—Great Britain would regard the establishment of a naval base or fortified port on the Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests and would certainly resist it by all the means at her disposal. (Cheers.) He would say this in no minatory spirit, because he was not aware of any such project being afoot.

[Lord Lansdowne's statement will occasion the profoundest relief in everyone who has followed the growing power of Russia in the Persian Gulf. As Sir H. H. Johnston has asserted, the independence of Persia is probably one of the few points worth fighting for, and the paramountcy of Great Britain in the Gulf is, as Lord Lansdowne has implied, in the rational report above, an essential to the safety of our Empire in India. Russia's influence, as has been often before indicated in these columns, has grown by almost imperceptible stages, to a really dangerous height at last. This influence she has acquired by judiciously working for a favoured trade, by the building of railways, by liberal loans, and by a special tariff included

in a commercial agreement announced early in February. This treaty, in view of the seriousness of its issues, may now be briefly glanced at. It is provided, then, that the 5 per cent. ad valorem duties introduced by the Turkoman Chah Treaty of 1828 shall be superseded by specific duties, and that the majority of the Persian export duties shall be abolished. At the same time, Persia has pledged herself to abandon for ever the system of farming taxes, and at suitable points to establish Government Customs stations; further, to arrange details regarding the payment of Customs and storage by agreement with Russia, to erect storerooms at the Customs stations, and to grant storage duty free for a year. Persia also agrees to abolish traffic and toll dues, apart from certain special taxes which may be introduced by arrangement with the Russian Ministry at Teheran for the use of high roads. Couched as it is in language that involves something of the "exaggeration of understatement," it will be seen that this agreement is of the profoundest significance to Great Britain.]

RUSSIA IN MANCHURIA.

Russian troops from Niuchwang recently went to Port Arthur and stations along the railway line. A portion of them have now returned, bringing several large guns. Others have been ordered to reoccupy Tien-chwangtai.

The Russians are constructing forts on the hills between Tienyung and Yalu, and have accumulated stores of coal, provisions and war material, and have bought many horses.

There are indications of an increase in the forces in Manchuria, and there are now 14,000 between the mouth of the Liao River and Port Arthur.

Dr Morrison, the "Times" correspondent, states that China has instructed the Treaty Commissioners not to discuss with America the opening of new treaty ports because Russia forbids it, but China will tell the American and other Ministers that they never intended to open new ports.

The "Daily Telegraph," commenting on Mr Hay's policy of joint pacific pressure on Russia, declares that the latter considers the mobilisation of the Japanese fleet as sufficient warrant for her defensive attitude at Niuchwang. Mr Hay does not share in that view.

The New York "Times" says Russia gives America a fair opportunity of underwriting the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

Ruter's Yokohama correspondent states that there are persistent reports that Russian detachments have entered Corea ostensibly to protect the lumber concessions. A large Russian force is approaching Wihau. The Korean Government is protesting against the invasion.

China latterly has been apparently willing, in connection with the American and Japanese projected commercial treaties, to open Mukden and Tatungau to foreign trade, but Russia's coup at Niuchwang will imperil the above treaties.

Mr Hay, considering that America is directly interested, and learning officially of the increased garrison at Niuchwang, has asked President Roosevelt to authorise America to take joint action with Britain and Japan to compel the evacuation of Manchuria without committing America to a formal alliance.

The reoccupation of Niuchwang is interpreted at Washington as an attempt to secure the monopoly of the sea entries to Manchuria, and is interpreted at Peking as a reply to China's rejection of the Russian conditions of evacuation;

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