



The Russian Government is building three fast torpedo boats to strengthen the Black Sea fleet.

The mountaineer bandits at Zeenat have captured Mr Harris, the "Times" correspondent at Tangiers.

Mr Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, has conceded the abolition of perpetual rent charge under the Irish Land Bill.

The cold store of the Imperial Food Supplies Company at Nottingham has been opened. The building has a capacity of 60,000 cubic feet.

Fifty hundred persons were drowned in the floods at Heppner, in Oregon (U.S.A.). The damage is estimated at a million dollars.

A cloud burst in the Western State of Oregon, flooding a creek, and a torrent swept over the residential parts of the villages of Heppner, Olgon and Lenington. It is estimated that 450 people have been drowned.

Complaints are made that recent arrivals of New Zealand meat were damaged by the use of inferior ink-branding wrappers. The assessors allowed 1½d to 3d per stone on many carcasses.

The reports from the meteorological stations of the London County Council show that five inches of rain have fallen in London in the present month of June, and that of this the greater part fell during the past week.

It is announced in connection with the approaching visit of the United States squadron to Kiel in connection with the German celebrations, that the fleet will afterwards proceed to Portsmouth, where a week will be spent before returning to America.

The Conference of the Allied Colonial Universities will discuss at their meeting the co-ordination of University education throughout the Empire, and the development of post graduate courses in applied science, and other subjects of common concern.

GENERAL CABLES.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

The Opposition has decided not to propose a vote of censure on Mr Chamberlain's policy owing to the unity of the Unionist Party in favour of an inquiry. They prefer to begin the campaign in the country.

Mr Balfour has announced that the various departments concerned have begun their inquiry into the fiscal system. The Government does not propose to lay down any limitations to the inquiry.

IRISH LAND BILL.

The Irish Land Bill is being considered in committee in the House of Commons. Mr John Redmond's amendment to abolish the maximum limits of rent reduction and extend the minimum to which the bill has hitherto restricted the Commissioners was rejected by 217 to 170.

A lively debate took place in the course of which Mr Redmond threatened that if the interests of the Irish people were not better safeguarded he would not consider that the bill was fulfilling his hopes of settling the land question.

It is rumoured in the lobbies that if the member for Waterford city persists in his attitude the bill is likely to be dropped, inasmuch as it was offered on the understanding that it would be accepted as a generous attempt to settle the land question.

Eighty Liberals voted with the minority. The "Times" says the result was a foregone conclusion.

MOKAU ESTATE.

A fresh attempt which has been made to sell by auction in July next the well-known Mokau estate in New Zealand, which has for many years formed the

subject of litigation, has led Mr Henry Labouchere, M.P., the editor of "Truth," to publish in his paper a strong article on the issues involved.

He warns all intending purchasers to keep free of any transaction in the matter, as Mr Flower holds the estate solely as a trustee for Mr Jones, whose name is so closely associated with the earlier stages of the proceedings.

ENTENTE CORDIALE.

One hundred and fifty members of Parliament, representing commercial interests irrespective of party, have invited the French International Arbitration group of deputies to visit London with a view to the development of a movement in favour of conciliation and of strengthening friendly commercial ties between the two countries.

FATAL MOTOR RACE.]

M. Lorraine and Mr Barrow, two of the competitors, succumbed to the effects of the injuries they received during the recent Paris to Madrid Motor Race.

While driving at a rate of 80 miles an hour they tried to avoid a dog, and ran against a tree with terrific force.

SOMALILAND.

General Manning's despatches, covering a period to the 15th inst., have now been received at Bohotle. At the latter place a flying column is being held in readiness in case the reconnoitring parties should indicate that the effective co-operation of the two forces is possible.

The position of the Mullah remains doubtful. It was last reported that he was at Lasuban, a place three miles west of Damot, and therefore six or seven miles south of Bohotle, with a party of riflemen on a low hill to the south, and a thousand horsemen. The latter were seen to be watching General Manning's movements.

Damot was reported safe up to the 16th inst. It is officially stated that to the 14th inst. 36 officers and 937 men of General Manning's force had reached Bohotle. It thus seems clear that this division is making inland, and through districts where the enemy is in vast numerical superiority, instead of returning to the coast in accordance with the War Office instructions.

GERMAN POLITICS.

The chief issue of the German elections is the future Customs policy of the Government.

The leaders of the iron, electric, cotton and wool industries are hoping there will be delay in the realisation of Mr Chamberlain's policy, and are striving for the return of the non-Protectionist candidates. There will be 180 second ballots as compared with 95 in the elections of 1898. The Social Democrats secured 55 seats at the first ballots, as compared with 32 in 1898. This success is at the expense of the Radicals, and is attributed to the tariff issue and the Kaiser's interference with the parties.

The Freisinnigs, or Radical party, has been almost annihilated. Saxony voted solidly Red—a fact which is attributed to the effects of the Royal scandal. The Socialist vote at Essen was 22,000 as compared with 4400 last election, and at Duisburg 25,000, compared with 7800; Bochum 40,000, compared with 22,000; and Berlin 100,000 above the vote of 1898; and Saxony 100,000 above all the other parties combined.

Many thousands of voters who were not Socialists supported the Socialists as representing the Empire's one effective party of opposition.

SERBIAN REVOLUTION.

As was expected, Prince Peter Karageorgevitch has been unanimously elected King by the Skuptschina, or National Parliament of Serbia. There were great rejoicings and one hundred and one guns were fired when he accepted the crown. He has notified the Tsar, Italy and Montenegro, but, so far as is known, not Austria, of his decision.

Prince Peter, replying to M. Avakumovitch, the Premier, said: "I am deeply touched by the splendid proofs of devotion of my beloved people, my faithful army and patriotic Government. From the bottom of a true Serbian's heart I thank Providence, vouchsafing, by God's mercy through His will, to ascend the throne of my famous ancestors."

Lieut. Ivanovitch, of the Sixth Regiment, committed suicide because he was not deemed worthy to participate in the plot to assassinate the King and Queen.

Reuter's despatch says the Servians show utter callousness in regard to the murders, and unreserved admiration of Colonel Maschin and his fellow conspirators.

Mr Balfour in the House of Commons stated that Ministers accredited to King Alexander had terminated their diplomatic relations and future relations were under consideration.

The conspirators allege that the draft of a scheme in King Alexander's handwriting has been found, showing his intention to proclaim Lieutenant Lunyevitch, brother of Queen Draga, his heir, on the 15th inst., and to execute M. Avakumovitch, now Premier, and other leading Radicals.

The election of Prince Peter to the throne of Serbia has evoked the utmost enthusiasm in the principality of Montenegro.

There are clear indications that the army is seeking to perpetuate a dictatorship, with the influence acquired through recent events, and to make King Peter a virtual nonentity in the affairs of government. So great is it expected that the power of the army will be, that it is generally believed that the King, in fear of serious consequences, will grant an amnesty to those involved in the recent massacre.

There is a general tendency to regard the outrages at the Palace as a feat of heroism, and not in any degree as a criminal act. This fact was instanced by the fact that the whole of the Minis-

ters and members of the Skuptschina, together with many officers of the army, and others, attended a thanksgiving service at the Cathedral.

After the singing of the "Te Deum" the Metropolitan arose from his seat in the chancel and addressed the congregation. He first congratulated the Serbian nation on the restoration of the lawful dynasty; then deplored recent events, which the circumstances, he said, had rendered necessary; and eulogised and thanked the army for its action; and finally invoked the blessing of the Almighty upon King Peter Karageorgevitch and his house.

The Skuptschina has granted immunity to the conspirators, and it was stated in the House that King Peter had acquiesced in the taking of this course. The Metropolitan of Servia has refused to allow a requiem mass for the late King and Queen.

The military party threatened to murder the editor of the "Ojk" if he advocated a republic. On his abjuring he was created Minister for Justice.

At an early stage of the sitting of the House of Commons the Prime Minister, Mr Balfour, made a statement as to the attitude of the British Government with regard to the situation in Servia.

He stated that the question had been considered of whether Great Britain should mark her reprobation of the crime which had recently disgraced Belgrade by withdrawing Sir Gordon Bonham, the British Minister. On mature reflection, however, it had been decided that this representative should remain to watch events.

At the same time he would not be accredited to the new King until fuller information as to the circumstances attending the new Government's advent to power should be forthcoming.

The Emperor Franz Josef has assured King Peter of the sympathy, support and friendship of Austria in his task of raising Servia after the severe fall which she has sustained in the eyes of the civilised world through a heinous

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