

The Russian Admiralty continues disorganised. The four Dreadnoughts cannot be completed within the time fixed without recourse to foreign aid. The Government works, which undertook to supply the necessary armour in two years, find it impossible to deliver the turrets and plates for a decade.

Owing to America's growing interests in the Orient and Pacific, the fleet has been subdivided into Asiatic and Pacific fleets respectively.

M. Delagrangé, the noted French aeronaut, who has made many hundreds of flights on the Continent and in England, was killed while aeroplaning at Bordeaux.

Professor Percival Lowell declares that two new canals on Mars were discovered during the observations at his observatory in Arizona, when that planet was recently in opposition. Professor Lowell states that the new canals denote the presence of animate will.

Curse that Failed.

OLD MAORI'S STORY OF A TRIBE'S CONVERSION.

LONDON, Nov. 26.

Dramatic glimpses of old New Zealand in the days of the bloodthirsty Ruaparaha are given in "Koro," a little volume just published, in which the Rev. J. W. Stack, late hon. Canon of Christchurch, tells the life-story of an old Maori convert named Koro.

One of old Koro's stories is about the cursing of an English missionary, Mr. Hadfield, by a Maori tohunga. Mr. Hadfield was opposing, on one occasion, the policy advocated by some of Ruaparaha's leading chiefs, who wanted to go to war with a neighbouring tribe.

One of the chiefs, a tohunga of great reputation as a wizard, worked himself up to a terrible pitch of fury against the missionary, and ended by cursing him and handing him over to the Powers of Darkness.

Dramatic Sequel.

All the Maori converts were very frightened at this. They knew that Maoris often died after being cursed by a tohunga, and they did not know how far their missionary was proof against the evil spirits. All Mr. Hadfield said was, "I am in the keeping of the true God. Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

Just as the sun was going down, and the converts were assembled with Mr. Hadfield for evening service, a strange thing happened. The chief who had cursed the missionary died suddenly, the blood spurting from his mouth till he expired.

Of course this dramatic end to the curse episode caused a revolution of feeling in favour of the new religion. The Maoris accepted their tohunga's death as a proof that the God of the Christians was stronger than the god of the heathens. "In a short time," says Mr. Stack, "the majority of Ruaparaha's warriors avowed their determination to embrace Christianity, and place themselves under the missionary's instruction to be prepared for baptism."

Thus the bursting of a blood-vessel in an old Maori's frame did what all the missionary's sermons and prayers had failed to do—it converted the heathen!

Koro's Three Hats.

Old Koro was a slave in Ruaparaha's tribe before his conversion, and could tell some grisly stories of the cannibalism and other atrocities that took place in the old warring days. Once, he said, when a returned slave was telling a group of Maoris about the new teaching of the missionaries, a relative of Koro's master strolled in, and in a fit of drunken frolic deliberately cut the throat of an inoffensive old man who was intently listening to the speaker.

Koro, dressed as a Christian, must have been a queer figure. He was a little man, with an ungainly walk, and Mr. Stack describes his appearance thus:—

"He was attired after a very fantastic fashion, in a variety of garments, which all seemed too big for him.

"His head was surmounted by no less than three hats, stuck one over the other. A thick woollen muffler enveloped his neck, while his feet were wrapped in rags, kept together by native flax sandals."

"Taking off his hat, he disclosed a bald well-greased head. The loss of one eye rather spoilt the expression of his face, which, though plain, was intelligent, and

bore a striking resemblance to the Chinese type of countenance."

But, says Mr. Stack, despite his scarecrow appearance, Koro was one of the best of men, and with his ungainly and misshapen body dwelt a pure and noble spirit.

"A Being Divided Against Himself."

In a paper in the "Contemporary Review," by Miss Mabel Holmes, on the social position of the Maoris, occurs this revelation of the internal troubles of the half-caste. Her informant is the son of a retired naval officer, who married a Maori woman of means. This half-caste son was given the best of education to be obtained in New Zealand, returning with Oxford and a Continental tour. At thirty-five he gave this description of himself and his plight:—"In my opinion, the pure Maori, living away back from civilisation, is still a noble man and a great orator. The nearest approach to an English translation of his language is to be found in the Psalms of David. He employs the same musical rhythm, and at times identical metaphor. But the half-caste—there has never been born a half-caste of any race who could be trusted, or who could trust himself. Funny, isn't it, to say that, when I'm one!

Life a Hell.

"But, consider. The mixture of white and coloured blood is physiologically and psychologically wrong, and produces a being divided against himself, at one moment despising the black in him, at the next resenting and loathing the white. Take me as an example. My life is a hell. I wished to become a doctor, but my father, realising too late the fate to which his marriage had condemned his sons, would not hear of such a profession for me—he could not trust me.

"So, with ample means, I travel for, say, two years, during which my white side is in evidence; I am a cultured gentleman, refined in thought and action. I return to New Zealand, drawn by that home-hunger to which every man of colour is subject. A wedding, a funeral, occurs amongst my mother's people; the Maori in me is in honour bound to attend. A feast, a dance, a tangi, a war dance—down goes culture and the white beneath a savagedom bearing all the vices of civilisation to add to its horrors.

"Afterwards, satiated, debauched, I crawl back to respectability through agonies of self-contempt and remorse. No, I will be the father of no children to endure such torture as this eternal struggle between my two selves."

Concerning Dukes.

We have been hearing a good deal about dukes of late. A writer in the "Strand Magazine" has gathered some facts and figures concerning these men, their estates, and their incomes. The title of "duke"—i.e., leader—first came into use when the Emperor Constantine separated the civil and military commands in the Roman provinces, and the military governor became either a count or a duke. But in England the title was not known until the Black Prince was created Duke of Cornwall in 1335, and so became the first English duke. For a long time the title was restricted to Royalty. The Dukes now own over four million acres of land, the average for each of twenty-seven mentioned being about 150,000 acres. The Duke of Norfolk derives his chief income from his London and Sheffield estates, and it is not far short of £80,000 per annum. The Duke of Somerset owns 25,327 acres, and his annual income is over £37,000. The Duke of Grafton is the possessor of 25,773 acres, valued at £39,254 a year. The Duke of Bedford, the owner of the Bedford estate in Bloomsbury, enjoys an income of £142,000 per annum. The Duke of Devonshire owns 198,573 acres, with a rent-roll of £180,750. The Duke of Hamilton has 157,386 acres, with an income of £73,630 from land, and £67,000 from mines and quarries. The Duke of Buccleuch owns 446,103 acres, and has an income of £221,000 a year from his land. The income of the Duke of Portland is estimated, cannot be far from half-a-million a year. The Duke of Sutherland is the largest landowner in the Kingdom, and the Duke of Westminster has an income at present of nearly £200,000 a year, which is likely to be increased in the future.

Sports and Pastimes.

WITH SAIL and MOTOR

NEWS FROM THE WATER

(Special to "Graphic.")

FIXTURES.

Jan. 8.—Devonport Yacht Club Race.
Jan. 15.—North Shore Yacht Club Race.
Jan. 19.—Ponsonby Regatta Prize Night.
Jan. 22.—Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron Race.
Jan. 29.—Auckland Regatta.
Jan. 29.—Hamilton Regatta.

THE weather for the week-end cruise last Saturday and Sunday was again on the unfavourable side for yachtsmen, the wind blowing from the north-east with rain squalls.

The yachts *Thetis* and *Mystery* were ashore at Waikaeke during the holidays, but were floated off without suffering any damage.

Ailea, the new North Shore yacht, has had to have her mast shortened considerably, as it was found rather to tall for the yacht, as well as being on the "whippy" side.

The ocean race for yachts of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, also the long-distance power boat race for the cup presented by Mr. W. C. Leys, will take place on January 22, entries closing on the 20th.

A friendly match by the 10ft dinghies *Little Billy* (Oliver) and *Aroroa* (Gittos) was sailed at the North Shore last Saturday over the usual course. The race was started at 3.10 p.m., and the finish was: *Aroroa*, 4h 14m; *Little Billy*, 4h 19m 15s.

The North Shore Yacht Club hold their second race for the lugram Cup this (Saturday) afternoon, the course being round *Waikaeke*. There will also be races for *Clames 6* and *7* to *Takapuna*.

The yacht *Heartsease* returned from a cruise lasting over the holidays last week. Leaving the North Shore on Christmas Eve, the yacht got clear away before the bad weather set in, and made off for the Bay of Plenty, visiting *Mayor* and *White Islands*, calling at *Mereury Bay* on the way down. *Whangarei* and various other places were called at, the weather being, on the whole, very good; in fact, the only bad spell met with was on the return trip when nearing the gulf.

The steam yacht *Rehuti* returned from a fortnight's cruise last week. The yacht went away on the evening of Christmas Day, and went down *Waikaeke* way, visiting the various bays, and getting a good taste of the bad weather which prevailed at the time, losing a lot of time through having to remain sheltering, on one occasion two full days being lost. After visiting *Coromandel*, the yacht went on to *Kawau*, where the crew spent a very enjoyable time, and then left for home, calling in at *Waivera*. The crew had intended to go down to the Bay of Plenty, but the weather conditions were against this. The *Rehuti* acquitted herself very creditably during the rough weather experienced, steaming well, and taking very little water on board.

Devonport Yacht Club.

The Devonport Yacht Club held races for Classes I. and II. at the North Shore last Saturday afternoon. H.M. cable steamer *Irish* was flagship, and Mr. W. E. Alexander acted as starter and judge. The racing was very interesting, especially in Class I., it being a good "go" all the time. It was somewhat unfortunate, however, that towards the finish of the race the cargo steamer *Karamea* was being shifted from *Calliope Dock* wharf, and in consequence the *Eulalie* and *Daisy* had to put in a short board to keep clear, whilst *Irish* had the luck to be able to stand right on. At the time, *Eulalie* had the race well in hand, but the extra time taken up in making the board spoil her chance. In Class II., *Ronaki* and *Celox* had a great battle for the prize, hanging very close together all round the course, only a few seconds being between them nearly all of the time. The wind was from the north-east, blowing strongly at times, but decreasing considerably as the afternoon progressed. The following are the details:—

Class I.: Entries and handicaps:—*Eulalie* (scratch), *Irish* (1min.), *Daisy* (3min.). Course: From flagship round first buoy round North Head, thence round mark boat in Hobson's Bay; thence round bulk *Defiance* of *Stanley Bay*, thence inside *Calliope Dock* buoy, finishing off the flagship. The race was started at 2.45 p.m., the yachts crowding the line in the following order: *Daisy*, *Eulalie*, *Irish*. *Eulalie*, however, soon took the lead, and kept it all round the course. The times of the first round were: *Eulalie*, 4h. 17m.; *Irish*, 4h. 20s.; *Daisy*, 4h. 10m. 50s. The same order was maintained over the course on the second round, the finishing times being, *Eulalie*, 5h. 18m. 30s.; *Irish*, 5h. 20m. 5s.; *Daisy*, 5h. 21m. 55s. Owing to the *Eulalie* being interfered with by a large steamer leaving *Calliope Dock* wharf she lost several minutes by having to put in a short board. On corrected times *Daisy* is first, *Eulalie* second, and *Irish* third.

Class II.: Entries and handicaps:—*Ronaki* (scratch), *Celox* (scratch), *Calypto* (scratch), *Aururere* (10m.), *Rancee* (10m.), *Hetty* (15m.). Course, same as last race. The race was started at 3 p.m. *Ronaki* being first, followed by *Hetty*, *Rancee*, *Calypto*, *Aururere*, and *Celox* in that order. Just at the start the wind fell almost to a calm between the mark boat and the flagship, and it was some little time before they got clear away. *Ronaki* kept the lead, but *Celox* soon worked up into second position, with *Calypto* in close attendance. It was a fine race between the three leading boats, and the times on the first round were: *Ronaki*, 4h. 19m.; *Celox*, 4h. 19m. 15s.; *Calypto*, 4h. 21m. 20s.; *Rancee*, 4h. 23m. 55s.; *Aururere*, 4h. 27m. 10s.; *Hetty*, 4h. 20m. At this point *Hetty* retired from the contest. The same order was maintained during the second round, *Ronaki* and *Celox* just keeping about the same distance from each other as during the first round. The finishing times were: *Ronaki*, 5h. 20m. 25s.; *Celox*, 5h. 20m. 40s.; *Calypto*, 5h. 31m. 30s.; *Rancee*, 5h. 35m. 20s. On corrected times, *Rancee* is first, *Ronaki* second, and *Celox* third.

The club hold a cruising race to *Waivera* for yachts A and B this (Saturday) afternoon.

Waitemata Model Yacht Club.

The shore club held two races off St. Mary's Bay, Ponsonby, on Saturday afternoon. The entries were: *Minnie*, *Maro*, *Lottie*, *Resolution*, *Ladye Wilma*, *Constance*, *Aorere*, *Alice*, *Shamrock*, *Miro*, *Emerald*, *Thetis*, *Rio*, and *Edith*, and the course from off St. Mary's Bay to *Northcote*. There was a strong north breeze blowing when the races were started at 3 p.m. The finish was:—Class I.: *Emerald*, 4h 19m 30s.; *Aorere*, 4h 15m 10s.; *Ladye Wilma*, 4h 17m 50s. Class II.: The finishing times were: *Minnie*, 4h 20m 10s.; *Eddy*, 4h 19m 50s. The club held a social on Monday night, which was well attended and a pleasant evening enjoyed.

Ponsonby Cruising Club.

The Ponsonby Cruising Club held their third cruising race for the season on Saturday afternoon, under favourable conditions, the wind being from the north-east, blowing very fresh at times. *Messrs. S. Patterson* and *S. Whaley* acted as starters and Mr. W. Wilson as judge and time-keeper. There were events, one for sailers and one for power boats, and the course was from off St. Mary's Bay to *Arkle's Bay*. The following are the details:—

Sailing Race.—The entries and handicaps were: *Alva* (scratch), *Glaity* 43m, *Rancee* 43m, *Mistletoe* 5m, *Echo* 9m, *Foam* 12m. The wind freshened a great deal shortly after the start, with the result that a number of the boats dropped out of the contest, only three finishing, the times being: *Glaity*, 5h 47m 40s.; *Foam*, 5h 57m 50s.; *Alva*, 5h 54m 35s. The corrected times place the boats in the order which they finished.

Power Boat Race.—Entries and handicaps: *Kotiro* (scratch), *Maroro* 2m 20s, *Harere* 14m 25s, *Tamalinu* 36m 45s, *Loy* 37m 14s. All started, but owing to the heavy sea running, *Kotiro* was the only one to cover the course, her finishing time being 5h 4m 42s. At the completion