

Two of the latest torpedo-boat destroyers, built by Messrs. White, are named Botha and Tipperary.

Lieutenant-Colonel Davidson of the Peruvian Army, has returned to Nelson. He expects to leave for South America in a few weeks' time.

Dr. Gilruth, Administrator of the Northern Territory, and well-known in New Zealand, leaves Melbourne on his return to Darwin at the end of the month.

The South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society has decided to import some English teal, French red-legged partridge, and ptarmigan for liberation in the Mount Cook district. It is believed that these birds will do well there, and add to the attractions of the Mount Cook district from the point of view of sportsmen, as well as the ordinary tourist.

"Fair Play," the English shipping paper, of December 31st announces that Mr. Godfrey Holdsworth has been appointed assistant manager of the New Zealand Shipping Company in London as from January 1st. Mr. Holdsworth is the son of Mr. Charles Holdsworth, managing director of the Union Company.

"We get a little practice at trench digging," says a New Zealand boy in Egypt, "and often come upon old graves, and the mouths of all the skulls were filled with a blue bead. Roman coins have been found; they are very plentiful. One man found a gold and silver signet ring and was offered £20 by a jeweller, but refused the offer."

A party of tourists when crossing over the M'Kinnon Pass recently were fortunate in witnessing an avalanche that came off Jervois Glacier, Mount Elliott, and made a deafening roar in the canon below. The weather was fine and bright, and the beautiful snow-capped mountains were at their best.

"I have journeyed over the theatre of the great Austrian defeat, and have followed the trail of the retiring army," says a "Times" special correspondent. "There are myriad evidences of the completeness of the great debacle. The retreat is a terrible tragedy of war. The whole route is a litter of abandoned impedimenta of every description. The roads along which the Austrians fled are strewn with corpses, demonstrating the havoc worked by the Servian artillery. All unoccupied houses and shops have been looted from floor to ceiling by the Austrians."

It has been determined (says a statement issued by the Canadian Premier) that the number of men under training can be increased in the immediate future to 50,000, in addition to the 8000 men engaged in garrison and outpost duty. Instructions will be given that the additional number thus proposed shall be enlisted forthwith. The Canadian forces thus organised for active service will be as follows:—Forces already despatched (including the regiment garrisoning Bermuda), nearly 33,000; forces engaged on garrison and outpost duty in Canada, about 8000; forces under training in Canada, 50,000; total, 91,000. As soon as the second contingent goes forward a further enlistment of 17,000 men to take its place will be made, bringing the total up to 108,000. Thereafter, further expeditionary forces will be followed by the enlistment of men to take their place as arranged in the proposals made public on October 19.

Siam is making rapid headway, according to Mr. Gerald Morris, a representative of the Eastern Tin Syndicate, an Australian concern. He has just returned to Sydney after securing a concession of territory there. A railway line which would ultimately run from Bangkok to Singapore was being built by the Siamese Government and the Federated Malay States. One peculiar feature was that, though it was being built with British capital, the majority of the sectional engineers were Germans. The Siamese were inclined to side with Germany, mainly on account of their antipathy towards France arising from the boundary dispute, and the Germans were, of course, not slow to take advantage of the current in their favour.

I have spent two days in Bremen, says a traveller, a very different Bremen from the bustling city I knew

ten years ago. I stayed at the Kaiserhoff, a good but not the leading hotel. There were only two other people staying there, and Hillmann's, the Bremen hotel, was deserted. Cafes and theatres, however, are open and in full swing, and the restaurant at Hillmann's is nightly crowded with officers in uniforms, not the resplendent coats of other days, but the sober "field grey" uniform. I went one evening to the Central Cafe, and the crowd there was enormous. The streets are very quiet and the tramway cars nearly empty. There are evidences on every side of unemployment, many places of business shut, shops deserted, the harbour silent. The docks at Bremerhaven are crowded with shipping of all kinds, but there is no life. The smokeless funnels of the ships and the unfrequented wharves here, as at Hamburg, are eloquent testimony of England's grim grip on Germany's world-trade. One is not allowed to see much in the harbour, but I was told that there were some transports there filled with troops to be used for a raid on England.

The gallant Stewart, as well as the brave, big-hearted Colonel Fred Burnaby, was buried beneath Egyptian soil, but Gordon's grave has never been found. Indeed, it is doubtful if he was ever buried. No one was ever discovered who had laid his remains to rest, the generally accepted view being that the ashes of the hero of Khartoum are mixed with the sands of the Soudan.

The British blockade stops imports into Germany of roughly six thousand million marks (£300,000,000) and exports of about eight thousand million marks (£400,000,000), together with an oversea trade of 14 milliards of marks (£700,000,000). A glance at the figures of the imports shows the frightful seriousness of the situation. What is the position, for example, of the German textile industry if it must forego the imports of oversea cotton, jute, and wool? What could she do in the event of a war of longer duration without these raw materials, which in one year amount in value to 830 millions (£41,500,000)?

It is interesting to note that ever since Germany began to make preparations for a great war the Kaiser has been investing immense sums of money on the other side of the Atlantic. He is one of the largest landowners in the Western States—not in his name, of course—and owns a considerable section of property in the West of Canada. So notorious is the fact that it was at one time a standing joke at Vancouver that, although the Kaiser was a large owner of property in a certain district, he declined to join the local ratepayers' association, which would have been materially assisted in its propaganda by the use of his name. According to financial experts, the Kaiser's numerous investments in America can only mean one thing. To quote the words of one of these experts, "They indicate very plainly that the Kaiser, at the time when he was preparing to stake the fortunes of his dynasty upon an attempt at the conquest of Western Europe, was also preparing for the possibility of failure by consolidating huge financial resources in the United States and the neighbouring Dominion, in case he had to escape to that part of the world."

The Turk presents one of the most remarkable anomalies offered by history. In his individual capacity he is delightful. Multiply him by millions or clothe him in a little brief authority and he is impossible. Between the official and the unofficial Turk there is a great gulf fixed which has never yet been bridged, and probably never will be. The higher he rises the lower he falls. The cream of Turkish society never comes to the top. Why this should be so is inscrutable, but the fact remains.

Britain's wonderful financial power has been called the eighth wonder of the world. "The normal gold reserve at the Bank of England amounts to about £30,000,000. When I left England," says a recent visitor, "it was £69,000,000. When war was declared there was a bank holiday from Friday to Tuesday. The Government extended it to the following Friday, and in the meantime the Treasury printed £1 and 10s. notes, which had the British Empire behind them. When the bank re-opened on Friday there were long queues of people waiting for their money. They got it in Treasury notes. There was no panic,

but there are always a number of excitable people who withdraw their deposits. They soon quietened down, however, and things went along as usual. Not only is Great Britain financing her own expenditure, but she is financing Belgium, Servia, the Dominions, and I'm not sure she is not assisting France. It is the wonder of the world."

"In Antwerp," said Mr. Waters, reporter of the American "Christian Herald," "I saw over one thousand poorly clad women, one in bedroom slippers, stand shivering in the snow and slush waiting for food to be doled out to them, and this under the shadow of a big hotel where well-fed, well-clad soldiers drank and made merry. In Malines, under the shadow of the cathedral, its walls caved in, its old stained-glass windows now but ragged remnants of a beauty that can never be replaced, I saw men, women and children gazing disconsolately at the ruins of the houses that once were theirs, poor people who begged something to eat of us as we passed. On the road to Brussels we overtook thousands of refugees tramping dejectedly along, weary and forlorn, returning to the villages and towns where there is not now food enough to sustain those who are already there. In Brussels we saw women holding babies snuggled to their necks, standing at the cold street corners begging a centime for food. We visited the distributing stations, and saw the bread sent over by kind-hearted people being handed out in all too meagre rations."

The pay of privates in the Russian army is about tenpence a month, that of sergeants about half-a-crown a month.

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