

assistant Under-secretary's of the Colonial Office, who was despatched to Berlin by the Foreign Office to make arrangements for the meeting of a Convention to adjudicate upon the rival claims to the Pacific islands, proposed at Berlin that Great Britain should possess exclusive protection over New Guinea, and that Germany should be recognised as having a protectorate over New Britain, New Ireland, and the York islands. He also proposed to neutralise the remaining unoccupied islands of the Pacific, and specially referred to Samoa and Tonga. He further suggested that England should offer a small concession in Africa to France, providing the latter gave up all claim to the New Hebrides. Prince Bismarck refused to agree to this. Earl Granville answered that the proposed annexation of the northern portion of New Guinea by Germany would lead to strained relations with the Colonies, and Prince Bismarck replied that the internal policy would be unaffected so far as Germany was concerned, and he insisted on the fulfilment of the promises made in October. In January Earl Granville again protested against the German annexation of the northern portion of New Guinea prior to the appointment of the proposed commission, and at the same time intimated that England had now extended her protectorate as far as Huon Gulf. He also charged Germany with intriguing for Samoa. On receipt of this Prince Bismarck instantly wired that the proposed extension to Huon Gulf would probably involve a collision of interest. Earl Granville explained that he was unaware that Germany desired any of the territory to the southward of the gulf named, and he also admitted that there was a treaty which provided that neither England nor New Zealand must annex Samoa. At present there is a deadlock.

The Cabinet Council on January 7 decided to extend the Bechuana frontier to the Linpopo River, the westward frontier to include both banks of the Fish River. This cuts the Transvaal off from any chance of German connection. The Transvaal Government is preparing to protest against English annexation in Zululand.

Referring to the death of the Bishop of London, which occurred on the 6th, a London journal says it is generally believed the catastrophe was hastened by an unpleasant episode which occurred on the Sunday previous, when the Bishop preached in St. Paul's Cathedral. During a momentary pause in the discourse a wild-looking individual jumped from a chair, and pointing his finger towards the pulpit, yelled "You worship idols, while you scorn to save souls. Woe unto you." The Bishop was quite moved by the occurrence.

Earl Granville has ordered the British Minister at Tangiers to remonstrate with the Sultan of Morocco about the treatment of the Jews at Demnat, where they have been driven from their homes, imprisoned in fetid dungeons, and their warehouses robbed. The Grand Vizier charges the Jews with fomenting rebellion.

Captain Phelan, a dynamiter, and one of O'Donovan Rossa's gang, was stabbed in the latter's office in New York on January 9 by Richard Stuard. Phelan was severely but not fatally hurt. He believes he was deliberately entrapped into the office to be murdered because it was thought he blabbed too much to newspaper reporters in this country. Phelan was in Hull in 1883, and the police there were notified by those of Newcastle of his arrival. He was carefully watched. He there met Carey and other Irishmen of the same dynamite type as himself. The espionage, however, was so close that he had to leave without accomplishing anything. He had the audacity to visit the chief constable of Hull, and complain of the surveillance, and threatened to complain to Sir Vernon Harcourt unless it was removed. Papers in his possession would show Phelan to have been an officer in the United States Volunteer force, and also a New York police officer. A New York dispatch of the 17th says: "Although Phelan is improved, he is not out of danger. His wife and daughter are at either side of his cot minister to his wants. He is very weak and not permitted to talk any length of time. Mrs. Phelan says he will make a statement to the public as soon as he is well which will strike terror to the hearts of Rossa and his constituents."

Startling revelations are made by a St. Paul correspondent at Fargo, Dakota, in his letter of December 29 to the effect that the Dakotas have been grievously disappointed and angered at the neglect with which they are treated by Congress. They have proposed to join the Manitoba people, some of whom are growling over their treatment by the Dominion Government in forming a separate republic. The *New York Tribune* considers the proposition ridiculous and impossible to be carried out, but the people are very much in earnest about the matter.

An improbable story was set afloat by a dispatch of January 7 to the effect that the English detectives have obtained evidence that a powerful society of dynamitards exists within the boundaries of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and that this society is directly responsible for the recent explosions and assassinations in Great Britain. While the Irish-Americans scoff at the idea, a Greensburg correspondent says it is certain there has been something in the wind in this country for some time past of an unusually exciting nature.

A scheme has been matured by certain Irish-Americans whereby 5,000 responsible persons in the United States will agree to pay \$500 per annum each towards a fund for the payment of Irish members of Parliament so long as constitutional methods as conducted by Parnell are maintained. The organisation was to be completed at a meeting in Cincinnati on the 24th January.

Mr. Redmond, M.P., spoke in Edinburgh on January 12. He declared that the Parnellites had no sympathy with the perpetrators of the recent outrages, and had no influence over them, but he said it was not the duty of Irishmen to act as detectives.

Dublin tradesmen have sent out writs against the Corporation to prevent the renaming of the streets of that city.

Mr. Biggar, M.P., addressed a meeting of nationalists at Londonderry. He described Earl Spencer as a murderer, and declared that he was answerable for the death of Myles Joyce. Mr. Biggar was enthusiastically received. The horses of his carriage were unyoked, and the vehicle drawn through the streets by a crowd.

The British Admiralty has invited tenders from the ship-builders at Belfast for the immediate construction of six cruisers.

Mr. Parnell addressed a meeting at Tipperary on January 8, in

which he said that he believed the great power of franchise recently conferred would be judiciously used.

A mass meeting of unemployed numbering fully 10,000 was held in front of the Royal Exchange in London at which Henry George, Helen Taylor, and other well-known Radicals were speakers. Radical pamphlets were sold in large numbers. Some were headed in red type, "Blood, bullets, and bayonets," and made appeals to the "Half-starved, herring-gutted, poverty-stricken parish inhabitants of a disunited kingdom." At Birmingham 5,000 persons out of employment adopted a resolution asking the Corporation to furnish employment. A procession marched through the streets, and halted before a bakery, and shouts of "Break in!" were heard. An artisan stole a loaf of bread, but was promptly arrested. Violence among the working classes is feared.

General Stewart's forces reached Howenjatt wells on January 10, and having obtained a supply of water resumed the march to Gakdul. A detachment of the Essex Regiment will remain at Howenjatt, where a fort and hospital have been erected. There are a few natives in the vicinity of Howenjatt. An account says:—"We are experiencing the difficulty of a desert march. The immense column starts at 2 a.m., and the march continues the whole day. We are going to Gakdul, via Abulkalfa wells, where we hope to find sufficient water for men and camels. A small party left at Howenjatt was fired into one night, but otherwise we have not been molested. Small parties of Arabs wearing the Mahdi's colours are roaming the desert, yet some sell us sheep, and assert that there are only a few rebels at Metemneh. The heat is very trying. The camels go 60 hours without water, and the men are allowed only two pints daily. The water resembles peasoup in thickness. The soldiers freely offer a crown a tumbler for it. If the Arabs had been in active hostility, they would have rendered the desert route impossible, and it would have been necessary for us to carry every ounce of food and water for both men and animals." A dispatch from Gakdul, received in London on January 16, says:—"Thirty camels dropped dead on the march from Howenjatt. The troops suffered severely. A majority of the water skins leaked, and the men yielding to their thirst exhausted their rations of water prematurely. Very few fell out of the line, and the condition of the soldiers under the circumstances was splendid. All bore their hardships bravely, as is evidenced by their singing as cheerily as their parched throats would permit. They are keenly anxious to fight."

Granada, Malaga, Nejah, Algamana, Alhama, and other places in Spain have been visited by tremendous shocks of earthquake. They occurred on New Year's Day, and were repeated with more or less violence for several days afterwards. A number of towns and villages have been completely destroyed. The people have deserted them. Many persons slept in railway carriages. Alhama is among the ruined towns. A royal decree has been issued ordering that a national subscription for the relief of the sufferers be made. The public officials have agreed to contribute one day's pay each, and £5,000 will thus be raised. Spanish officials abroad are requested to open subscription-lists. The official reports state that 900 lives were lost in Granada alone. A church, convent, and 500 houses were destroyed at Motrill on the 5th. Another severe shock was experienced at Granada on the evening of January 16, causing great alarm among the inhabitants. Heavy snow-storms and frosts have continued in Malaga, the most severe since 1861. The sugar-cane crop is destroyed, and the orange and olive groves damaged. The situation is most critical. The earth is constantly trembling and the wind and snow have destroyed the huts of those who fled to the fields from the cities and towns for safety. At Frigitana, 27 miles east of Malaga, the people, rendered desperate by cold and hunger, attacked the houses of the landowners. Another severe shock of earthquake was experienced at Camillas on January 17.

A dynamite explosion occurred on the underground railway between Gower street and King's Cross station, London, at 9.30 on January 2. The windows of a passing train were shattered and the gas lights extinguished. Beyond this there was no damage done. The passengers were greatly terrified, but no one was hurt. The train resumed its journey after a delay of 25 minutes. The shock of the explosion was felt by the residents of Euston road, between St. Pancras Church and Judd street. The railway runs the whole length of Euston road underneath the roadway. The gas lights in Gower street station were put out. The platform at the station was literally strewn with persons prostrated by the shock. On the night of the 18th the Town Hall of Warmiester, in Wiltshire, was partly wrecked by an explosion of dynamite. Several houses in the neighbourhood were badly shattered, and several persons were thrown to the ground by the violence of the shock. The report of the explosion was heard two miles from the Town Hall, and great excitement reigned till it was found no one was hurt seriously. Pieces of tin tubing, which had apparently contained a fuse were found near the scene of the explosion. Two suspicious-looking strangers were noticed loitering near the Town Hall during the afternoon, but no arrests have been made.

A boy named Samuel Cooper aged 13, son of William Cooper, carpenter, was drowned while bathing in the surf off the Ocean Beach at St. Clair, near Dunedin, on Saturday afternoon.

TUESDAY.

Arrangements are being made by the Auckland Volunteers for an Easter encampment at Papatoitoi. The Te Awamutu Cavalry and Gisborne Battalion of Artillery are to be invited.

Another arrest was made by the police on Saturday in connection with the illicit distillation case in the person of G. C. Moss, hotelkeeper, of Woodville, near where the still was found. It is said that malt was found on his premises. All his property, including horses, cattle, etc., was taken charge of by the police.

Mr. Hooker, a gentleman who is connected with one of the forest divisions in India, has arrived in Wellington and brings letters of credit to his Excellency the Governor from the Governor of Madras. Mr. Hooker visits Christchurch to interview Sir William Jervois, and then proceeds to Auckland to inspect the kauri forests.