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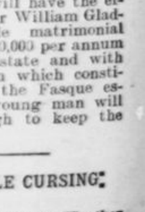

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THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL.

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL THE WORLD OVER.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading.

CANADA.

City Engineer Haskins of Hamilton, died there on Sunday afternoon.

The Canadian Pacific Railway will become a member of the Joint Traffic Association.

The will of the late Godfrey P. Payzant of Windsor, N.S., bequeaths $100,000 to Acadia College.

A daring plan to rob the Bank of Commerce in Winnipeg was frustrated by its premature discovery.

Robert Stewart, an employe of the Welland canal was drowned in Lock No. 1, new canal, early Sunday morning.

A despatch from Vancouver states that the water in the Fraser River is rising and that much damage has been done upon the low lands.

Mr. Wm. McCammon, youngest son of ex-Mayor McCammon, of Kingston, Ont., was drowned at Clayton, N.Y., on Saturday night. The deceased was 22 years of age.

Peter Wheeler was convicted at Kentville, N. S., on Wednesday of the murder of sixteen-year-old Annie Kempton at Bear River, and sentenced to be hanged on Sept. 8th.

Sir Charles Rivers-Wilson before leaving Montreal for England expressed his belief that Grand Trunk affairs were progressing under the management of President Hays.

Josiah Hanson, the original of Uncle Tom in Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, died in Dresden, Ont., in 1872, and was buried in the negro cemetery near that town.

Mrs. Catharine Lawless, a patient in the Insane Asylum in Hamilton, committed suicide by hanging herself from the bars of the window in her room. She had made several attempts previously to commit suicide.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The death of Baron Fitzhardinge is announced. He was seventy years of age.

The Irish land bill was passed by the British House of Commons by a vote of 292 to 140.

The sale of the estate of the late Col. North the Nitrate King, realized five hundred thousand pounds.

The Duke of Atholl is the only nobleman who clothes his men-servants in Highland dress in London.

The sale of the estate of the late Col. North, the "Nitrate King," is reported in London to have realized $2,500,000.

The wedding of the Princess Maud of Wales and Prince Charles of Denmark has finally been fixed for the 22nd inst. The Queen will attend the ceremony.

The British revenue returns for the first quarter of the present fiscal year show an increase of £1,698,000, one million pounds of which is derived from the excise duties.

As a result of the meeting of the imperial Cabinet on Saturday, the second battalion of the King's Royal Rifles, now at Malta, has been ordered to the Cape of Good Hope.

It has been decided that a review of troops will be held at Aldershot camp in honour of the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Boston, who are on their way to visit England.

The Imperial Government has acquiesced in the demand of the Opposition for the appointment of a Select Committee of Parliament to investigate the affairs of the Chartered South Africa Company.

There is a prospect of a general coal strike in England. The employers are trying to effect a 10 per cent. reduction in wages and the miners of Derbyshire and Lancashire have already refused to accept the proposition.

Important conferences have been held lately between the officials of the British Admiralty and War Department and members of the Cabinet, showing that the Government views the present state of the Venezuelan question with the gravest apprehension.

The lash was recently applied to the back of a man in England who had committed highway robbery. He knocked down a young woman and stole her purse. Justice Day, of the Kent Assizes, expressed his disapproval of long sentences for first offenders. He thereupon sentenced Ellis to a month's imprisonment and thirty lashes from the "cat."

UNITED STATES.

Cattle are dying by thousands on the Arizona ranges owing to the drouth.

A boiler explosion at Houston, Tex., killed three people and seriously injured a fourth.

An enterprising cracker bakery of Washington has now placed upon the market a "bicycle biscuit."

Benjamin Huff, an old soldier living near Niles, Mich., shot his daughter-in-law, and then killed himself.

An official denial has been issued of the report that an attempt was recently made to assassinate the new Shah.

A daughter of James Mullin, of Miami, Saline county, Mo., died from eating mulberries that had been stung by locusts.

The Cheyenne Indians have donned their war paint, and are holding powwows, preparatory to a general uprising.

Robert Lansing, of Watertown, N.Y., has been appointed counsel on the part of the United States to the Behring Sea Claims Commission.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was stricken down with congestion of the brain and died on Wednesday.

In a fight between Sheriffs men and strikers near Berea, O., one man was killed and another fatally injured. Many shots were exchanged.

Notwithstanding that the American Government is confronted by a big deficit, it is proposed to spend many millions on a new army rifle.

At the launching of the new German cruiser last week the Kaiser expressed the hope that Germany will yet have a navy worthy of her armies.

The Czar and Czarina made their formal entry into St. Petersburg on Friday, and an immense concourse of people acclaimed their Majesties with great enthusiasm.

"Hungry Joe," the famous bunko man, recently released from a Baltimore prison, must report to the New York police every morning as long as he remains in that city.

For the first time the flag of the United States was flown on July 4th with forty-five stars on its blue field, indicating the admission of Utah to the sisterhood of States.

Miss Charlotte Smith, of Washington, head of the Rescue League, has written a circular denouncing the use of the bicycle for women, as being destructive of health and leading to immorality.

Gen. Lawton, who served in the Confederate army with Stonewall Jackson and who for two years was United States Minister to Austria, died at Clifton Springs on Thursday.

A systematic system of robbery, by which passenger train conductors, station agents and Pullman car porters have already stolen $15,000 from the Chicago & Alton railroad, has been discovered.

The United States treasury statement for the fiscal year 1896 discloses a deficit of $25,500,000. The deficits for the past three years aggregate $137,500,000. The deficit for July is estimated at $10,000,000.

"summer dulness" have together produced in the United States much more than the ordinary cessation of movement which usually marks this period of the year in commercial circles. Prices all round are unprecedentedly low, and the markets largely overstocked, so that mills and factories, both north and south, are closed for terms varying from a couple of weeks until the end of August. Some threatened "labor troubles" have fortunately, in various quarters, been amicably arranged. The output of iron has been large, and works are closing for repairs.

GENERAL.

Forest fires are raging in northern Newfoundland.

The Khedive of Egypt is preparing to visit England.

Smallpox and yellow fever are causing great loss of life in Cuba.

Queen Margherita of Italy is about to publish her Alpine experiences in book form.

It is reported that a brother of Dr. Jameson has been killed by the Matabeles.

A despatch from Cairo states that during June there were 3,598 deaths from cholera.

The total number of cases of cholera in Egypt to date is 7,550, which proved fatal in 6,216 instances.

Emperor William has gone for a six weeks' cruise in northern Norway seas aboard the Imperial yacht, Hohenzollern.

The packet boat Rahmanieh, bound from Suakim for Suez, went on a reef and foundered. Sixty persons were drowned.

The Cretan insurgents defeated the Turks on Wednesday, killing two hundred of them, and capturing three of their cannon.

The number of horses killed for consumption as food in Paris last year was 23,186, this being exclusive of 43 mules and 383 donkeys.

Brazil has not yet assented to England's offer to submit the question of the occupation of the Island of Trinidad to arbitration.

The massacre of white people in Matabeleland continues, and it is expected than an assault will shortly be made upon Buluwayo by the rebels.

By the explosion of ammunition in an arsenal near Fort Moselle in the Province of Lorraine 42 men were killed and 100 badly injured.

In an engagement between Dutch and Chinese in the Dutch Indies the Chinese lost 112 killed. Of the Dutch forces 9 were killed and 39 wounded.

It is stated in Copenhagen that the Government would be prepared to sell some of its West Indian colonies to the United States at a suitable price, for a naval station.

EXHIBITION STABLES BURNED.

Four New Buildings at Toronto Burned —Firebugs at Work.

A despatch from Toronto says:—At a few minutes to 2 o'clock on Monday morning flames were seen shooting from the north stables in the Exhibition Park. The bright reflection caused an alarm to be turned in from Queen and Claremont streets, nearly a mile away, and this was followed by one from King and Gwynne avenue, and in a few minutes later a general alarm rang in from the Exhibition grounds. This caused some delay, and when the reels arrived the northern stable was blazing furiously, and the one south of it was igniting. The steamer from Dundas street was got into commission, and did good service, but the third and then the fourth building caught, until it looked as if the entire row of a dozen ne wand solidly-built structures was doomed. The men worked with a will, however, and stayed the flames at this point, but the four buildings were gutted with their contents, which latter, however, did not amount to much.

The stables destroyed were among the newest of the Exhibition buildings, having only been completed in time for last fall's show. They were well built of lumber and cost about $700 a piece. The total loss will therefore be about $3,000, covered by insurance.

The cause of the fire cannot be definitely stated, but there can be little doubt it was of incendiary origin, as there had been no fire around the place for months.

At 3 o'clock all danger of the fire spreading was over, but the sections of the brigade played on the smouldering embers till long after daylight.

Notwithstanding the untimely hour, hundreds hurried to the scene, the many alarms and bright reflection creating the impression that the conflagration was worse than it fortunately turned out to be.

HOW TO STOP AN EXPRESS.

Suburban Resident—See here, sir! You told me that country place I bought of you was only thirty-five minutes from the city.

City Agent—Yes, sir, thirty-five minutes by express. You remember, when we went out to look at it, the time was thirty-five minutes exactly.

But, confound it, sir, the express trains don't stop there, not one of them, and the accommodation takes about an hour and a half!

You and I went by express, and it stopped for us, you know.

Yes, I know; but it hasn't stopped since.

It will stop if you hire a man at your station to buy a through ticket for somewhere. That's the way I did the day we went.

FALSE REPORT.

Rose—Do you see that man who has just come, Lulu? They says he's cashier of the Bank!

Lulu—What, he? I've met him already, and he's only its president!

LONDON BURIAL GROUNDS

THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO IN THE COUNTY LIMITS.

Many Turned Into Public Parks, Others Built Over and Lost—Famous People Whose Graves Cannot Be Found.

London is so crowded with the living that we are sometimes in danger of forgetting that the dead beneath our feet are even more numberous. It is only during the past few years that any care whatever has been bestowed upon the ragged and unkempt churchyards and other places of interment.

They were the repositories of all manner of rubbish, from worn-out tin kettles to dead cats. "Such strange church yards hide in the city of London," says Dickens; "the illegible tombstones are all lopsided, the grave mounds lost their shape in the rains of a hundred years ago." In only too many cases, after every square yard had been used over and over again for interments, the ground was cleared and built upon. It is in the nature of things that in all great towns intramural interment should tend to create a difficulty; but the huge population of London and the narrow dimensions of most of its churchyards have helped to make the matter one of peculiar seriousness to the metropolis. There are in the city and country of London 362 burial grounds, of which some forty are still in use, while close upon a hundred have been transformed from neglected and offensive eye-sores into bright and cheerful gardens. But public opinion did not awake until carelessness and irreverence had accomplished a vast amount of mischief, and close upon half a hundred old London burial places have

ENTIRELY VANISHED.

One was destroyed to make room for each of the railway stations in Cannon street, the Mansion House station stands on the site of another, while the Mansion House itself has its foundations, in the earth where once the parishioners of St. Mary Woolchurch Haw found sepulture. Part of the General Post Office stands upon the churchyard of St. Leonard's, Foster lane, and Mercer's Hall upon that of St. Thomas Acons, where the pilgrims were buried. Strange has been the fate of some of the old citizens who were buried in churches which were eventually demolished. It has been the custom to remove the memorials of the dead from these churches to those to which the now churchless parishes have been annexed, but sometimes the coffins were too numerous to be accommodated by any one church. Thus, those from St. Michael, Crooked lane, were divided between St. Edmund King and Martyr and St. Mary Woolnoth, and those that went to the latter church underwent a second removal, when, a few years ago, it became necessary to clear the vaults.

How packed with people the city of London was, even in the early middle ages, we may form some idea when we remember the large number of churches which still exist within the walls. Yet many of those destroyed in the fire were never rebuilt, no doubt because the tendency of population 200 years ago was already toward what were then the suburbs. Indeed, the city of the thirteenth or fourteenth century must have presented a singularly ecclesiastical appearance. Not only was it crowded with churches, each with its own burial ground, but it contained a great number of monasteries and priories, some of them occupying considerable areas, and each with its "cloister-garth" wherein departed brethren were laid at rest. In those days the salt of the earth died more easily could they be assured that they would die within the church to some monastic foundation. The magnificent church of

THE GREYFRIARS

the site of which is now occupied by Christ Church, Newgate street, stood peculiarly high in the favor of the great. There were buried the wives of Edward I., Edward II., and Henry II., and the hearts of Edward II. and Queen Eleanor. An old chronicler tells us, with pride, that "four duchesses, four countesses, one duke, and twenty-eight barons" formed part of the hallowed dust beneath the Greyfriars Church." All traces of these tombs and the very church itself, once so famous, and so splendid, have vanished, and he would be a sharp schoolboy, indeed, who could tell, without a good deal of research, where the second wife of Edward I. was interred. But, indeed, this oblivion is not confined to half-forgotten queen consorts. How many people are there who know that the ashes of Van Dyke lie somewhere beneath the crypt of St. Paul's, and that Emanuel Swedenborg is buried in the parish of St. George in the East? All trace of the great painter's tomb was lost in the fire which destroyed even the memorials in the parish church of St. Faith's, which forms the crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral. When Wren dug the foundations of the new cathedral, he found, going down into an immense depth, layers of graves—first those from Norman times downward, then Saxon ones, and beneath them British graves. Still deeper were found many Roman urns. The persistency with which, throughout every period of which we have any knowledge, St. Paul's has remained a centre of city life is exceedingly curious. It has always been something more and something less than a church. Long a mart and a meeting place, and not much better in those respects after the Reformation than before it, the cathedral is still, even in these more reverential days, largely used as a lounging place, as anybody may see who enters it during the city dinner hour. Westminster Abbey, with its incomparable interest among English churches, has never suffered in that way.

Save in very exceptional cases, interments no longer take place within the city or county of London, and every year a larger number of the disused burial grounds are being put into decent order and maintained as

PUBLIC GARDENS.

There was a time when these closed churchyards were mere plague spots, and during a cholera period a London incumbent found it necessary to fasten upon the parish pump, which our ancestors, with their breezy disregard for sanitary considerations, had placed in the midst of the tombs, the inscription "Dead man's soup." The County Council has used its powers whenever it could for turning neglected burial grounds, to a useful purpose. There is yet much to be done, since in many cases what should be "God's acre" is still a mere rubbish heap, a timber yard, or the back premises of some factory or warehouse. And there are always likely to be difficulties when the susceptibilities of sects have to be taken into account. The Jews will not allow their graveyards to be turned into gardens; but the Hebrews, setting an example which Christians might copy with advantage, are exceedingly careful of the resting places of their dead. The closed burial grounds belonging to some of the dissenting bodies appear to be the worst cared for of all. This results partly from the fact that many of them have, in turn, served for more than one demonination, and partly from the lack of any central authority with jurisdiction over such matters. Happily the old Bunhill Fields ground, in the City road, where so many famous Nonconformists lie buried, is the property of the city corporation, and is by them kept in order. It would, indeed, have been a national disgrace had the spot in which lie Bunyan and Defoe, Dr. Watts, and the mother of the Wesleys, fallen into the condition of so many other such places.

ROYAL PAGES.

Qualifications Necessary to Candidates for a Highly Valued Preferment.

The announcement is made in the English newspapers that Queen Victoria has appointed Ivan Hay, son of Lord Errol, as page of honor, in the place of Sir Albert Seymour, who, having attained his 16th year, is compelled to vacate his office worth $1,200 a year. This serves to recall attention to the fact that "the pretty page with the dimpled chin," so sweetly sung of by the poet, and who constituted one of the most picturesque figures of mediaeval times, still survives.

Royal and imperial pages range in age from 12 to 16 years. They are appointed by the sovereign, enjoy pay prerogatives and perquisites much as do the grown-up attendants on royalty, and are prescribed certain definite duties. The duties are possibly no more important than in days of yore, when there was no postal service, and the lovelorn Princess was forced to rely upon the secrecy and fidelity of her page for the conveyance of messages of her knight or troubadour. But fact and discretion in performing them are probably more necessary now than ever, owing to the popular craving for information concerning the personal and

HOME LIFE OF KINGS,

and attempts are often made to extract information of this kind from the pages by persons who imagine that because they are young their tongues are likely to be loose.

To toughen them against such attempts and qualify them for this service the royal pages are subjected to very careful training. At the court of St. Petersburg, for instance, there is a regular college of pages, where they are educated and maintained at the expense of the crown.

Gentle birth is the first qualification for the post of royal page. At the courts of Vienna and Munich an ancestry of no less than sixteen generations free from any plebeian strain on either father's or mother's side is required in the candidates. In England and Russia nobility is not demanded. The pages of honor in the court of Queen Victoria are generally sons of distinguished officers of the army or of high dignitaries of the royal household.

On state occasions they wear gorgeous uniforms of blue and silver, and many a fair lady who has been presented at one of the drawing rooms of Queen Victoria will recall to mind, the appearance which they presented standing slightly behind her Majesty, or behind the Princess of Wales when the latter officiates in the place of her illustrious mother-in-law. In fact, their duties are limited to attendance upon royalty at drawing rooms, state concerts, state balls, and royal weddings.

At the courts of Berlin and Vienna the pages figure at all state ceremonies, clad like those of England, in

BLUE AND SILVER.

At the court banquets they stand behind the chairs of the royal and imperial personages. These personages on rising from the table sometimes address a few kindly words to the boys and present them with sweetmeats. Indeed, the late Emperor Frederick was wont to amuse himself by cramming their mouths full of bonbons until they could not speak and then plying them with questions demanding an immediate answer or else cracking jokes that were sure to make them laugh.

These pages are chosen for the occasion only from among the best-looking boys of the school of cadets at Berlin and from the Imperial Theresianum College at Vienna, all the members of which are of noble birth. These schools resemble a military academy, but the pupils enter at the age of 14, and receive the commissions as officers at a much earlier age than in this country.

At the court of St. Petersburg the corps of pages is a sort of imperial school, where a number of lads, sons of noblemen and State dignitaries, both civil and military, are educated at the Czar's expense and under his supervision. On attaining their eighteenth year they usually attain commissions as officers of the Regiment of Chevalier Guards. The Czarina maintains a similar institution for girls, who on graduating receive the titular appointment of maid of honor to her Majesty.

DEATH FROM FRIGHT.

A remarkable cause of death from fright was the case of the Dutch painter Poutman. He was at work in his studio, where there was a number of death's heads and skeletons, when he happened to fall asleep. During his sleep there was a slight shock of earthquake, and when he woke up suddenly he saw the skeletons and skulls dancing around in the greatest confusion. He at once became panic-stricken, and rushed across the room and threw himself out of the window on to the pavement below. He died a few days after, not from injuries received in the fall, but from the nervous shock given by the dancing skeletons, though the cause of their festivity was explained to him.

RELIABLE.

Young Man—You are older than I am, and I want to ask you a question. Does a woman always mean what she says?

Old Man—Always—that is, if she's married.

A MUSICAL MISFIT.

Host—Who was it persuaded Miss Screechum to sing?

Hostess—It was Herr Amburg.

Host—Do you think he could persuade her to stop?

THE FIELD OF COMMERCE.

Some Items of Interest to the Busy Business Man.

The stocks of wheat at Toronto are steadily increasing. The total is now 181,393 bushels as against 24,557 bushels a year ago.

The last report of The Liverpool Corn Trade News made the Continental wheat stocks June 1st, 21,772,000 bushels against 22,896,000 May 1st. Odessa had the largest stock of any point, 2,400,000 bushels.

The visible supply of wheat in the United States and Canada is now 47,860,000 bushels, a decrease of 959,000 bushels last week. A year ago the total was 44,561,000. The amount on passage to Europe decreased 1,520,000 bushels last week, and the total is now only 26,000,000 bushels as against 41,520,000 a year ago.

The net profits of Canadian Pacific for the month of May show an increase of $142,841 on the corresponding month of last year, and net earnings for the first five months of this year increased $513,000. The net earnings of leading western roads across the border are unfavorable for May. During that month St. Paul's net profits decreased $161,000, and Burlingtons' show the large decrease of $235,000.

The sugar business in the United States for the past week has been very light, with prices shaded a fraction whenever any special effort was made to sell. Quotations are nominal and deliveries sufficiently prompt to make the demand flat. The refined grades are in a rather better condition than muscovado or centrifugal raws, but no especial strength is reported from any department, although a trade circular has appeared, promising great things now that the rainy season in Cuba has begun. Meanwhile imports at New York continue very heavy the week before last being valued at $2,079,099, and for two weeks of June $3,929,997, against $2,003,261 last year, an increase of nearly 100 per cent.

Economy and enterprise are both necessary to success. Too often the merchant fails to secure a great measure of prosperity because he considers these qualities contradictory, and cultivates one at the expense of the other. Economy may consist in saving every scrap of paper, metal, string, wool, coal, etc., which has use and value, and may lessen expenditure; it may be extended to mean a wiser expenditure of money for fuel, light, wages, rents, advertising and personal expenses, but the limit of this kind of economy is the proportiton of actual waste which can take place in a given amount of gross profits. So wherever economy fails to recognize the necessity of making more business on a scale of expenditure necessary for the larger activity, economy degenerates into a weakness, and not infrequently into vice. It is always both a vice and a weakness when economy becomes meanness, and excites dislike and even hatred in the hearts of employes, relatives and the general public.

There has been a quiet business in wholesale circles at Toronto during the week. It is generally thought that the grain crops will be up to the average, but the present low prices of cereals are discouraging to growers. The cattle and cheese export trades have been very disappointing so far this season, owing to extremely low prices, which leaves little or no profit in these industries. The stocks of autumn and winter dry goods are accumulating in wholesale warehouses, and a fairly satisfactory trade is expected, but as yet for reasons stated, the orders from the retail trade are coming in slowly. Prices of staple merchandise show but little change, and there are a good many complaints about the backwardness of remittances. Discounts are unchanged at 6 to 6 1-2 per cent. and call loans are obtainable on stocks at 5 1-2 per cent., but the supply is by no means large. Sterling exchange is dull and easy in sympathy with New York, where gold shipments are thought to be about over for some time to come. The speculative stocks on the Toronto Exchange are lower in prices, while bank issues are steadier than they were. There is a further advance in consols and choice investments generally are sought after.

AUSTRALIAN CATTLE PLAGUE.

Millions of Dollars Lost—Financial Ruin Brought to Thousands of Breeders—A New Diving Bell.

The steamer Miowera arrived at Vancouver Sydney, on Monday, several days late, owing to fogs. The latest mail advices, dated June 10th, state that the tick plague in still raging in every part of Australia, causing destruction of entire herds of cattle. The tick fastens itself in salt meat, and has been exported to Sydney in this way. Though the tick be removed the egg remains, and the insect cannot be exterminated. Pastoral sections of country are intensely excited over the unexpected plague, which has taken the place of the rabbit plague, and is costing the country millions of dollars and bringing financial ruin to hundreds of homes. The tick sticks to the cattle and eats its way into vital parts.

Dr. Salmon, an eminent American specialist, has been cabled to for advice, and Mr. Terhunt, Australia's famous scientist, is on his way to the United States to consult with Dr. Salmon. Advice of American authorities is considered much more valuable than any that can be obtained in England or elsewhere.

A new deep-sea diving bell has been invented in Australia. In Sydney harbour the owners sail in their metal bell, fifty fathoms from the surface, smoking cigars and sending jocular messages to a distinguished company of scientists above.

DECREASE OF DIPHTHERIA.

Prof. Richet publishes some figures of mortality from diphtheria in the Revue Scientifique, which seem to show that either the disease has this year taken a milder form, or else Dr. Roux's serum treatment is effective. The deaths in 1884 in Paris hospitals were 1,400; from 1887 to 1891 there were from 900 to 960 a year; from 1892 to 1894 they averaged 735; in 1895 they were 239.

REAL ESTATE QUIET.

Eastern Man—Anything stirring in real estate out your way this season?

Western Man (gloomily)—No-o, not even a landslide.

AN IMPENDING STRUGGLE.

Sir Charles Dilke Predicts a European War —England Will be Alone in the Fight.

A letter from Mr. Gladstone was published in London the Other day denouncing the wholesale increase of expenditures on armaments as wild, wanton, and perilous, but it fails to evoke any sympathy. The public is more moved by a serious article from the pen of Sir Charles Dilke, just published, predicting that Great Britain, single-handed, is destined to engage in a great struggle against Germany, Russia, and France combined. The fight, he claims, may come at any time within a decade, ostensibly about Egypt, but, really, on account of jealousy of Great Britian's colonial expansion. Therefore, Sir Charles urges Great Britain to hold herself free from any alliances which might only prove illusive, and devote herself to the development of her defences.

The Spectator propounds the question as to what role America will play in such a struggle affecting her colonial interests.

The discussion regarding England's "splendid isolation" is again to the fore. During the past week a well-known military strategist, lecturing before the chief military institution, drew an alarming picture of London's defenceless condition. If, he declared, the Channel fleet were defeated, or lured away to distant fighting, England would be left without her breastplate, and an invader could easily reach the Empire's heart. His idea was that London should be fortified like Strasburg or Metz, and if the War Office should endorse the soundness of his arguments, and ask the Government to provide the necessary money, the request, in all probability, would be granted.

As a matter of fact, large sums are being expended at this moment in building detached forts around London and strengthening the fortifications of the Mersey, Clyde, and Tyne. The money appears in the estimates under a general head, and few Englishmen have an adequate idea how much work is being done in this direction.

Renewed attention is also being given by responsible military experts to the defences of Halifax and Vancouver, and possibly other points in the Western hemisphere; and there is reason to believe that a small committee, installed at the War Office and working in concert with the Admiralty, has been charged to discover what modifications are necessary and desirable in the defences of Canada, the West Indies, etc., in view of the fact that in a few years the United States will become a great naval power. Presumably, the committee's instructions do not end with defensive schemes, but it is impossible to say more than to announce the fact that the committee exists, and is at work.

MAY MEAN TROUBLE.

Ominous For Russia Was the Disaster on the Khodynskoje Plain.

Russia cannot be judged in the analogies of Western Europe. She is still in the middle ages. The first mishap or mistake of the young Emperor would recall the calamity of his coronation week, in which a reign of mismanagement and misfortune might seem to have been foreshadowed; and the blind ignorance of the Russian masses would lend itself a ready dupe to the suggestions of secret conspirators. France at the close of the last century was some hundreds of years in advance of Russia, even as she is now, in knowledge and civilization. Yet in France, when Marie Antoinette became the object of popular suspicion and hate, when, anticipating the phrase used later and on a more trivial occasion in England, the explanation of every folly and crime was found in the statement, "The Queen has done it all," it was remembered that the signs of calamity had accompanied her through life.

She was born, it was whispered, on the day of the great earthquake of Lisbon. As she left the church after the marriage ceremony an angry storm of thunder and rain, which darkened the sky and seemed to shake the earth, burst forth. On the day of the popular fete in Paris in honor of the nuptials of the Dauphin and Dauphiness a catastrophe in the Place Louis Quinz, as closely as possible resembling that of the Khodynskoje Plain, though on a much smaller scale of calamity, turned the national joy into lamentation and into a fearful foreboding of evil. The generous sympathy and grief of the royal pair, and their munificent liberality to the sufferers and survivors, smoothed over the ruffled surface; it filmed the ulcerous place, but the impression was made, and it needed only misfortune and imprudence to revive it.

MODERN GUNS.

Awful Force of an Eight-Inch Gun in the Chilean War.

In dwelling upon the wonderful power of modern guns Albert Matthews gives illustrations from the recent Chilean civil war, showing the effectiveness of the smaller sizes of breech-loading rifled guns.

A shot weighing 250 pounds, from an eight-inch gun of Ft. Valdivia, in Valparaiso Harbor, struck the cruiser Blanco Encalada above the armor belt, passed through the thin steel plate on the side, went through the Captain's cabin, took the pillow from under his head, dropped his head on the mattress with a thump, but without injuring a hair, passed through the open door into the messroom, where it struck the floor, and then glanced to the ceiling.

Then it went through a wooden bulkhead an inch thick into a room 25 by 42 feet, where 40 men were sleeping in hammocks. It killed six of them outright and wounded six others, three of whom died, after which it passed through a steel bulkhead, five inches thick, and ended its course by striking a battery outside, in which it made a dent nearly two inches deep. It was filled with sand. Had it released deadly gases no one knows what damage it might have done.

A four-hundred-and-fifty-pound missile from a ten-inch gun in the same fort struck the same vessel on its eight-inch armor. It hit square on a bolt. The shell did not pierce the armor, but burst outside the vessel. It drove the bolt right through, and in its flight the bolt struck an eight-inch gun, completely disabling it. Such is the power of the small-sized guns.

TORONTO