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THE ENGLISH SUMMER.

After little more than a week's fine weather in England the summer has again been interrupted by violent storms and torrential rain. The King and Queen while motoring from Chippenham ran into a terrific thunderstorm. While the bad weather seems to be general nowhere has it been worse than in Wales. Great devastation has been wrought in the Dowlais Valley, where mountain torrents sweeping down on the Neath and Brecon Railway completely carried away a portion of the track and roadway.

The reported instances of havoc by the hail and thunderstorm in the Merthyr Tydvil district multiply. The roadways were torn up in places, and nearly all the window glass on one side of Zoar Chapel was shattered. The plants in the public park were destroyed, and extensive damage was done to the windows of private houses.

The German steamer "Marie Marchmann" bound for Alicante with a cargo of wood has been forced to put into Leith for repairs. She encountered a perfect hurricane in the North sea and was almost overwhelmed by a water spout. Almost immediately afterwards the vessel met with a whirlpool and was within an ace of being sucked into the depths.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Bill conferring the municipal franchise on women and allowing them to become members of Urban and County Councils was read a third time. The Territorial Army Bill was also read a third time.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. Samuel Roberts, Conservative, Member for the Ecclesfield division of Sheffield, asked if the British Delegates to the Hague Conference had made any proposal with reference to the limitation of armaments, and what the terms of any such proposal were. Sir E. Grey replied that he was aware that the terms of an alleged proposal had appeared in the columns of the Press, but he understood that no proposal had been formally submitted to the Conference. He was unable to say in what terms any proposal on the subject would eventually be couched, but it was desirable that they should be, in as far as it might be possible, accepted by the Conference.

DISASTROUS FIRE IN VICTORIA, B. C.

A disastrous fire was raging on Tuesday in the Northern portion of Victoria, British Columbia. The situation was the more menacing inasmuch as a violent wind prevailed; there was also a lack of water. Two churches and about 150 houses for the most part belonging to the poorer classes have already been destroyed.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

MR. BRYAN'S POSITION.

The *Globe* learns from its New York correspondent that Mr. William Jennings Bryan has evidently become alarmed at the growing boldness of the powerful section of the Democratic party which is opposed to his Presidential ambitions, and is resolved, if possible, to prevent him from obtaining the coveted nomination at the National Convention next summer.

Mr. Bryan has again publicly withdrawn his Socialistic plan of Government ownership of all the railways of the country, and announces that he is in favour instead of Government regulation only, in order to check abuses. He pronounces also for a thorough tariff revision, but it seems pretty clear that the question upon which he will, if possible, appeal to the country first and foremost is "autocracy in the White House", and the consequent encroachments of the Federal power upon the rights of individual States. In the best-informed and most trustworthy democratic political quarters, the belief is strongly held that Mr. Bryan

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will not obtain the party nomination, and that the honour will go to some able man not at present in the public eye.

Several "booms" have been started in favour of one or the other of the leading congressional members of the party, but each has fizzled out quickly, and it is not at all clear in what direction the party bosses have turned their thoughts. Astute observers are quietly watching for the first trustworthy indications of the "boom", which will mean business so far as the Democratic plans are concerned.

The Roosevelt "boom" on the Republican side has not been really started, despite occasional appearances which seemed to herald its coming, and the prospects of Mr. Taft were, in the opinion of his friends, never brighter than they are today. Real work is scarcely likely to commence on either side until the end of the year, after the reassembling of Congress.

EVADING THE LIQUOR LAWS.

An attempt is about to be made by a large liquor company to evade the prohibition law in the State of Kansas. The law is so stringent there that restaurant cars on railway trains passing through the State are obliged to close their bars and are not allowed to serve intoxicating drinks even to passengers having their meals.

The company has secured a large number of steamers, many of them of small draught, and are placing them upon the Missouri, the Kansas, and the Arkansas rivers, and from them liquor will be sold. Legal advice has been taken, which states that the project is within the law, as navigable streams are under Federal jurisdiction and the selling of liquor from a boat in mid-stream will be no violation of the anti-liquor law.

The company proposes to allow the boats to sail through the larger cities, supplying the wants of the thirsty.

THE "COLUMBIA" DISASTER.

Further details are to hand respecting the disastrous collision between the "Columbia" and the "San Pedro" off the coast of California. After the collision, which took place in a dense fog, the "Columbia" sank in 10 minutes; there was not even time to launch her boats. Many passengers were drowned in their cabins, being unable to leave them before the water rushed in. Scenes of wild panic occurred on the upper deck. Sailors as well as passengers fought like wild beasts in their efforts to get near the boats. Many of them drew their knives and used them in this desperate *lutte pour la vie*. It is significant and shameful for the men on board that not a single woman was saved. On the contrary the women were braver than the men and some actually refused to put on life-belts because they preferred to perish in the deep with their husbands. The captain remained on the bridge and went down at his post. It is now believed that 69 persons were drowned; 144



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survivors have been landed while it is reported that four lifeboats have been picked up, three of them containing 46 shipwrecked persons.

MORE STRIKES.

It is reported from New York that the Steel Trust's miners at Lake Superior have gone out on strike. With the ore loaders some 10,000 workmen have also struck.

A MISSING MILLIONAIRE.

It is announced from Annapolis that Harold Vanderbilt, brother of the Duchess of Marlborough, who left Annapolis for Jamestown in his steam yacht "Trivia" last Thursday has not yet arrived at his destination. Rescue steamers are proceeding to search the coast for him.

PRO-JAPANESE FILIPINOS.

The Filipino students at Cornell University held a meeting on Tuesday at which a resolution was passed stating that the natives of the Philippines would welcome a Japanese invasion. The Filipinos complain that they are regarded as unimportant by the Americans and American tariff policy has spelt economic ruin to the natives. This has caused them all to regret that they are no longer under Spanish rule.

PRINCE BÜLOW ON WORLD POLICY.

In a letter to the Paris *Figaro* from Norderney, M. Jules Huret gives an account of an interview which he has had with Prince Bülow, the German Imperial Chancellor, who is as usual staying on the island for the summer holidays. After a short talk on the subject of the domestic policy of the German Government, in the course of which the Chancellor expressed confidence that Socialism would never give rise to serious troubles in Germany, the conversation turned to foreign policy. Prince Bülow said he had rejoiced to see so many Frenchmen at the Kiel regatta, and he was happy to learn that the visitors had taken away such pleasant memories of the reception accorded to them by the Emperor.

The Chancellor continued:—"An improvement in the relations between France and Germany has begun, and after some years of progress in this direction an understanding, if it is to come to pass at all, will be reached with France, which is a country endowed with great acuteness of perception. Much tact, moderation, and patience is required in working in the cause of peace, and incidents likely to spoil everything are naturally not desired."

On the subject of Moroccan affairs Prince Bülow said:—"You can be sure that we are not going to raise difficulties for you or place obstacles in your way in Morocco. The Algeiras Convention will be loyally observed by us. You on your part must carry on the economic policy of the 'open door' sincerely and without 'arrière-pensée.' Germany will not ask more of you. There are certain other points on which France and Germany can come to an agreement, and I believe that in economic matters they will not fail to do so."

The Chancellor expressed the conviction that wars would become of more and more rare occurrence because peoples would in the future have more in common with each other, and the slightest trouble in one country would affect all. After pointing out that Germany alone in Europe had not had a war for 35 years, while all her neighbours had been engaged in terrible conflicts in Asia and Africa, Prince Bülow declared that Germany had no desire for colonial expansion, and that her Navy was not meant for aggression, but for the protection of her commerce.

In conclusion, the Chancellor said he did not believe in the Yellow Peril. The Japanese were too wise, too serious, and too sensible to threaten Europe. He was of opinion that there would be no trouble between the United States and Japan, and that everything would be settled amicably.