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ENGLISH NEWS.

FOG DELAYS CHANNEL TRAFFIC.

From London it is reported that a thick fog prevails at Grimsby, completely preventing the arrival and departure of shipping. The Continental traffic is being seriously delayed.

FATAL FIRE IN LONDON.

It is reported from London that a disastrous fire occurred at a West End lodging-house in which three children from four to nine years of age perished. The mother was badly injured.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

ADMIRAL EVANS INTERVIEWED BY WIRELESS.

Some of the newspapers are calling upon the Navy Department to make some definite statement as to the duration and direction of the cruise of the Battleship Squadron, and thus put an end to the mischievous and contradictory reports which are being published every day upon alleged Washington authority.

As likely as not, says the *Globe*, nobody but the President actually knows what the squadron is to be called upon to do, and the probability is that no official announcement will be made until after the concentration in the Pacific. The Secretary for the Navy will be pressed for information in Congress when the naval appropriations come up for consideration, and he has to explain the reasons for spending money and incurring obligations in connection with the present cruise before obtaining Congressional authority.

Meantime the battleships are making splendid progress, and all the wireless communications received show that there has not been a single mishap since the ships sailed. Rear-Admiral Evans has thought it worth while to deny the report that he had informed the squadron that the return voyage would be by way of the Suez Canal. This is the first time that an Admiral-in-Command has been interviewed on his own flagship by means of wireless telegraphy, and the present incident is thought to open up interesting possibilities.

Mr. Metcalf, Secretary of the Navy, states that the question of the return of the Fleet, via the Suez Canal, has been discussed, but no decision on the matter has been reached.

CHANGES IN THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

A cable from Washington dated Tuesday stated that the resignation of Rear Admiral Brownson, the head of the Navigation Department, had been accepted, and that Commander Wilson had been appointed to succeed him. It was not stated whether these changes in the department had anything to do with the recent criticism of the fleet.

THE COTTON SPINNING INDUSTRY.

At Boston on Thursday the representatives of 80 per cent of the cotton spinners of New England agreed to diminish production by 25 per cent.

STINGY MILLIONAIRES.

The Rev. C. F. Aked, formerly of Liverpool, and now pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church—the "Millionaire's Church," as it is often called—made some biting remarks about his wealthy congregation in a recent sermon.

Mr. Aked is quoted by the papers as having accused his flock of downright stinginess, though admitting that there were a few bright and shining exceptions. He declared that if, for the future, the offerings were not on a more liberal scale, he should seriously consider the question of tendering his resignation.

Mr. Rockefeller, however, has intimated to Mr. Aked that he will supply him with all the money needed for the purposes of the church, and has given him a cheque for seven thousand dollars to meet current expenses.

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NEWS FROM RUSSIA.

OMINOUS MILITARY MOVE.

On Wednesday a military train of 30 coaches, conveying troops of all arms, left St. Petersburg for Finland, ostensibly for the suppression of smuggling.

GRAND RECEPTION BY THE RUSSIAN PREMIER.

On Christmas Eve M. Stolypin gave a brilliant Soirée at which all the members of the Imperial Council, many members of the Duma, the Ministers, the *corps diplomatique*, and the leading members of society in the capital were present. General Kuropatkin and Count Witte were among the guests.

A BELATED TRIAL.

On Christmas Day, according to a special telegram from St. Petersburg dated Thursday, the trial began of the members of the first Duma who signed the Wyborg manifesto advocating the refusal to pay taxes or to do military service. The defendants present numbered 169, and there were 11 absent. The first sitting of the Court was chiefly taken up with formalities, and the hearing of evidence commenced on Thursday. The defendants Petrunkevitch, Kokoschkin, and Nabokoff pleaded that their mode of action was not criminal but a political means of conflict just as the dissolution of the Duma was; that they had only done their duty by the people, and that for the people they would willingly suffer any punishment. Several members of the Labour party were then heard, who declared that they would gladly suffer death if only the present régime were overthrown.

EARTHQUAKE IN ASIATIC RUSSIA.

An earthquake lasting ten seconds was felt at Kokand at 3.20 o'clock on Thursday morning.

MARTIAL LAW EXTENDED.

In the Government of Viatka the term of the "state of increased protection" has been prolonged for one year. The Sarapul district is placed under "extraordinary protection".

BOMB OUTRAGE IN BAKU.

In Baku two bombs were thrown at the chief of police on Thursday morning. The bombs exploded with great violence and wounded a policeman, but the chief officer escaped injury.



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DUTCH CABINET RESIGNS.

A Hague telegram states that the entire Dutch Cabinet have tendered their resignations.

THE MOROCCAN SITUATION.

SERIOUS ILLNESS OF GENERAL DRUDE.

From Paris comes a report that General Drude is seriously ill. During the last weeks he has suffered from frequent attacks of malarial fever. Colonel Bontegaul has taken over the command of the troops in Casablanca.

PROBABLE REINFORCEMENTS.

The *Matin* of yesterday stated that General Drude has requested permission to return to France, as the state of his health does not admit of his continuing to carry on the command-in-chief of the expeditionary corps. His successor will probably be appointed at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

The Minister of War has sent telegraphic orders to the garrisons in Algiers and Tunis that, in case of General Drude asking for reinforcements, the troops required are to be held in readiness to embark for Casablanca. If the troops at General Drude's disposal were sufficient for an expedition to Mediuna, it was possible that it would be made yesterday. A semi-official note points out that the occupation of Mediuna would imply no departure from the principle "neither occupation nor conquest" that General Picquart laid down in the Senate on the 24th instant; it would simply be a police measure. The fort of Mediuna has long been known as the refuge of the robber tribes; its destruction would remove one of the causes of the disturbances in the province of Casablanca.

DECISIVE ACTION BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

According to a Paris telegram of Thursday, an audience which the French Minister, M. Regnault, had had with Sultan Abdul Aziz, resulted in General Drude being again ordered to take possession of the Kasbah of the Mediunas, which were occupied by the rebels as a means of preventing the submission of the Shauja tribes and the re-establishment of the Shereefian authorities at Casablanca. Reinforcements will be sent to General Drude if he requires them.

PERSIAN AFFAIRS.

A Teheran message states that the Parliament has refused offers made by several towns to provide armed men for its defence. In the capital and the provinces everything is again quiet. The newspapers are being published as usual and the bazaars are open. The Governor of Saudj Bulag has returned to his post.

COSSACKS IN ACTION.

A telegram from Urmia of the 23rd instant reports that, as the Government lacks the means of ensuring order, the regular exchange of merchandise between Persia and Russia is not safeguarded. Two Cossacks of the Consulate who were escorting a Government conveyance to Salmas dispersed on the way, on the 16th instant, 80 marauders who had attacked a caravan of 50 camels. Two of the band were killed and several wounded. In Urmia complete anarchy prevailed. On the 22nd instant the Persian Boundary Commission had arrived there under Muchtecham es Saltaneh, who had assumed administrative control and declared a state of siege.

THE UNREST IN INDIA.

NOISY DEMONSTRATIONS AT SURAT.

The Indian National Congress was opened at Surat on Thursday. The agitator Lajpatrai, who was released on the 13th of November, received a remarkable ovation. The extremists shouted down the proposal to elect a Moderate as President. The sitting eventually broke up amidst noise and confusion.