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GENERAL NEWS.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

At question time, on Wednesday Mr. Hobhouse, replying to a question on behalf of the Secretary of State for India, said the Ameer of Afghanistan had taken measures to prevent his subjects from giving support to the Mohmands, and those measures had had the desired effect.

The Prime Minister afterwards gave notice that the Budget would be introduced on May 7.

WOMAN'S TERRIBLE ORDEAL.

A Tonbridge woman had a narrow escape from being buried alive this week. Believed to be dead, she was placed in a coffin, but at the last moment, previous to the lid being screwed down, her husband discovered that her cheek was warm. He immediately summoned a doctor, who had the woman removed to hospital, and she has now practically recovered. She declares that she was aware of everything that went on around her during the time she was believed to be dead, but was unable to move or speak.

THE DESTROYER CATASTROPHE.

Respecting the destroyer accident briefly reported on Wednesday, the Press Association's correspondent at Harwich now telegraphs:—

The destroyer "Gala" was lost during Monday night by an accident in the vicinity of the Kentish Knock. While a night attack was proceeding she was rammed by the scout "Attentive." All the crew were saved excepting one officer.

In a later telegram the correspondent says: H.M.S. "Blenheim" arrived in harbour at Harwich with the crew of the "Gala" on board. The officer drowned is the Engineer-Lieutenant. All the others were saved. The "Gala" had a total of 80 on board. It appears that at half-past two on Monday afternoon the "Attentive" left Harwich Harbour, with 15 destroyers, for the purpose of firing exercises, and also for midnight manoeuvres. They arrived about 14 miles north-west of the Outer Gabbard, and the order was given for the masking of all lights. This was about midnight, when the "Attentive" struck the "Gala" just abaft of the engine-room with a loud crash, which was heard for some distance. The "Gala" was completely cut in two, and it was thought that the engineer-lieutenant was killed instantaneously, for no cry was heard. The forepart of the "Gala" sank almost immediately, but the afterpart, with all the crew clinging thereto, was towed into shallow water, where they were rescued amid scenes of excitement by the destroyer "Garry," which has brought them into Harwich Harbour and berthed them on board the cruiser "Blenheim."

Two of the men injured by the boiler explosion on board the battleship "Britannia" have died of their injuries.

The Chief of the German Marine Cabinet, Vice-Admiral v. Müller, has telegraphed to the British Admiralty in the name of the Emperor and the naval attachés of all the great Powers, condolences on the "Gladiator" disaster.

HEAVY RAIN AND FLOODS.

A heavy rainfall, particularly in the country bordering on the upper Thames, has caused serious floods. At Henley and Maidenhead the water level is two inches higher than it was in the flood of June 1903. The University cricket ground at Oxford is under water. People living near the upper

reaches of the river are leaving their houses in boats.

AMERICAN NEWS.

MISSING U. S. MAIL BAGS.

A New York telegram states that Mr. Mayer, Postal Inspector, confirms the rumour that two bags of mails are missing, adding that one has disappeared from the "Majestic," which arrived on March 26, and the other from the "Philadelphia," which arrived on March 29. The authorities, however, do not know the value of the contents of the bags.

PLOT AGAINST AN EMPEROR.

A telegram from Denver, Colorado, reports the arrest in that city of an Hungarian named Stephen Toth, on a charge of being concerned in a plot to assassinate the Emperor of Austria. It is understood that the American police have been advised of the prisoner's presence in Denver by cablegram from Vienna.

FIFTEEN PERSONS DROWNED.

It is reported from Helena, Arkansas, that the river steamer "Marion" was caught in a storm on Sunday and capsized, fifteen persons being drowned.

PANAMA AND COLOMBIA.

According to arrangements, Mr. Taft, Secretary for War, was to leave yesterday on board the U.S. cruiser "Prairie" for Panama, accompanied by a detachment of Marines. During Mr. Taft's stay in Panama it is hoped that he will be in a position to satisfactorily settle a number of questions, outstanding between Panama and Colombia and between the United States and Panama. It is said to be necessary that the concessions which the United States has obtained from Panama, at present provided for only in a protocol, should be embodied in a permanent treaty.

THE PRESIDENT'S NAVAL POLICY.

Advices from Washington announce that, although the Senate has again rejected the Naval Appropriation Bill as amended in accordance with the wish of the President so as to provide four battleships, Mr. Roosevelt's friends declare that, as a result of his intervention, the construction of two battleships yearly has been secured, and they maintain the President's Naval policy has been crowned with success. It is pointed out that by the construction of two battleships this year, and two annually afterwards, the United States will keep fully abreast of Naval armaments.

CIGARETTES IN CANADA.

In the Dominion House of Commons, says an Ottawa despatch, Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, announced that a measure would be introduced in the present Session, restricting the sale and manufacture of cigarettes.

MR. JEROME AND THE YELLOW PRESS.

The New York correspondent of a London contemporary, writing of the 122nd annual dinner of the St. George's Society, says that it will long be remembered as the most unconventional ever given by the association. There were the usual messages, including the King's and Queen's from Copenhagen, Mr. Roosevelt's and Lord Grey's, and those of similar societies in all parts of the Empire. After several speeches had been delivered there came a profound sensation. District Attorney Jerome was unexpectedly called upon to respond to the toast of "Our City," which had been assigned to another guest. After a few introductory words Mr. Jerome

launched into a severe attack on the government of New York, in which he declared that it was impossible to make a homogeneous people of the polyglot population entering the United States unless men like those assembled awakened to their duties as citizens. Mr. Jerome contemptuously named the men who control the city politics, and said that while he was glad that England had not conquered Ireland, he did not want to be conquered by such Irishmen as those he named. Turning his attention to the newspapers of the city, he said an end must be put to the "government of the newspapers by the newspapers for the newspapers." He cited himself as an example of a citizen who had been denounced as a thief and had been vainly trying for two years to secure his rights against a newspaper. The correspondent states that he never heard at a public dinner such a vehement denunciation as the speech that followed, in which Mr. Jerome, his voice vibrating with emotion, named incident after incident in his indictment of the methods of the Yellow Press, concluding with the declaration that the editorial policy of the leading New York publications was absolutely dictated by the counting rooms. He even named large advertisers who, he said, could coerce the Press, alleging actual instances. The sensation created by this speech was intense, and at the conclusion Mr. Jerome was greeted with tremendous applause.

FRANCE AND GERMANY.

The Paris *Figaro* publishes an interview which its Berlin correspondent has had with M. Charles René, one of the leading advocates of a rapprochement between France and Germany. Mr. René said: "All misunderstandings in Germany have disappeared. Germany desires nothing more in Morocco than the open door and the protection of legitimate interests. The Emperor, whose goodwill towards France has long been known, and the men who direct the foreign policy of the Empire, received in the most cordial spirit the idea of a rapprochement, a reconciliation between the two peoples." M. René warmly eulogised M. Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, but added: "Nevertheless, misunderstandings might arise, and the task of the Franco-German Committee is to prevent their recurrence. Moreover, the act of Algeiras is not eternal. Sooner or later it will be necessary to take the legitimate interests of France more completely into account. A Franco-German entente will then be necessary, and the task of the Committee is to prepare it. France and Germany have displayed numerous common interests in the Congo region, in Turkey, and in the Far East. For all these reasons a rapprochement is necessary. Such a rapprochement can only come from the people, and not from diplomats. In order to prepare public opinion for it the committee is about to organise conferences, and to invite French scientists, politicians, artists, and engineers to Berlin. It will arrange for joint tours of Deputies, journalists, and scientists, encourage various exhibitions, develop relations between French and German clubs abroad, and endeavour to influence the Press by a Franco-German correspondence, which will be sent to the journalists, diplomatists, and politicians of both countries."

THE NAVAL DISASTER NEAR KIEL.

It is reported from Kiel that Torpedo-Gunner Wentzlaff, who was terribly injured by the cartridge explosion in the pinnace of the battleship "Elsass", has succumbed to his injuries in the naval hospital.

(Continued on page 2.)