

GENERAL NEWS.

(Continued from page 2.)

East. The most important precautionary measure is the boiling of all drinking water, for cholera is almost entirely a water-borne disease.

Stockholm, September 17.

It is reported from Helsingfors that the English steamer "Saxon" has arrived there from Brighton, and that several of the crew are ill with what is supposed to be cholera. In the course of the night the quartermaster succumbed, the symptoms distinctly pointing to cholera. The vessel will tomorrow enter quarantine at Trängsund, where she will be thoroughly disinfected and the sick members of the crew removed to the cholera hospital. A seaman who was recently taken to the cholera hospital at Björkö, apparently suffering from the disease, died there early today.

St. Petersburg, September 17.

Within the last 24 hours, up to noon today, 305 cases of cholera have been reported, 115 having had a fatal termination.

THE DELAGRANGE AEROPLANE.

Paris, September 17.

M. Delagrange took a flight yesterday over the manoeuvre ground at Issy-les-Moulines, which lasted 24 minutes and 55 seconds. The Malecot airship manoeuvred before General Dalstein at a height of about 650 feet. After some time a defect in the steering gear became apparent and the airship descended, accomplishing the landing without difficulty.

ARTILLERY DISASTER IN SPAIN.

Madrid, September 18.

During firing practice by a battery of artillery between Vicalvaro and San Fernando yesterday, one of the guns exploded, more or less severely wounding 15 artillerists.

RUSSIAN TOWN HALF DESTROYED.

St. Petersburg, September 17.

An extensive conflagration which broke out at Sterlitamak, Government of Ufa, has reduced half the town to ashes. A section of the commercial district, several schools, and the council buildings are destroyed by the flames.

THE CULT OF ENGLISH IN AUSTRIA.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR KELLNER.

The study of the English language and literature throughout the Austro-Hungarian monarchy has made such considerable advance during the last few years that it now amounts to a cult. Some very interesting facts concerning this movement were related to Mr. Israel Cohen in an interview by the distinguished scholar, Professor Leon Kellner, who occupies the chair of English language and literature in the University of Czernowitz, and who is best known to students by his excellent "Historical Outlines of English Syntax." On the Continent he is best known by the fact that his articles introduced the work of Mr. Bernard Shaw to the German-speaking nations long before Mr. Shaw became a "boom" in Great Britain. Professor Kellner, who has many intimate friends in England, including Mr. Shaw and Mr. William Archer, had been spending some three months in the British Museum over the finishing of a work on "Victorian Literature," to be published by Tauchnitz. Mr. Cohen managed to secure an interview with the Professor just on the eve of his return to his native country, and gives the following account of it in a contemporary:—

"You want to know something about the study of English in Austria?" he said. "Well, the curious thing is that there are professorships of English only at the German Universities—Vienna, Prague, Innsbruck, Czernowitz, and Graz, which is the stronghold of Germanism. But at the Slavonic Universities, such as Lemberg and Cracow, English doesn't enjoy that distinction; and at Pest only modern English is taught, but not philology. Where there are professors there are also students, and in big numbers. In Vienna, the lectures of the English professors are attended by 200 people; and at Czernowitz, which is comparatively small, I never have less than thirty-five students—men and women. The enthusiasm for English is quite recent, and how it has grown you can see from this fact. When I came to Czernowitz in 1904 there was not a single English teacher there: French was predominant. Now, in addition to myself, there are two lady teachers—Scotchwomen—at the University, who are going to be joined by another, and there are also two private teachers and a Berlitz school."

"Do you provide any special facilities for native teachers who want to perfect their English?"

"Certainly, we have special arrangements for training teachers. Formerly, after they had graduated they used to come to England for two or three months in the summer vacation with a £30 grant. Now we give them £50 to start with, so that they

can stop here six months, and if they make good progress and want to stay longer they can get an additional £25 or £50. We are regularly informed about their progress by Dr. James Morrison, the Sanskrit scholar at Oxford, who was formerly English lecturer at the Vienna University for many years, and who is the official representative of the Austrian Minister of Education in England. Our students, on reaching England, at once go to Dr. Morrison for advice and guidance, and keep in touch with him the whole time. This system has now been in force five or six years, and has been found to work well. I may add that I was responsible for this idea."

"Is English read as well as studied?" I asked. "Undoubtedly," replied the Professor with emphasis. "It is tending to supplant French in the whole of Austria, and it is regarded as a higher social accomplishment than French. In former times only Tauchnitz penetrated to the wilds of Bukowina: now you may find there all sorts of English editions. There is a bank-manager in Czernowitz who has all the first editions of great writers from Byron to Kipling's latest—and he has read them all. It is a common thing now to see English books in the family library, and it is no longer true that Tauchnitz supplants original editions. For example, Besant's 'All Sorts and Conditions of Men' is very popular among lady teachers, but they always insist on getting the original edition. That reminds me that I am trying to find berths for three young ladies from Czernowitz who wish to come to England to perfect their English."

"Can you tell me what are the favourite English authors in Austria?"

"Above and beyond all others, Shakspeare. Of course, you know," pursued the Professor in a matter-of-fact tone, "that Shakspeare is considered a German classic. He never presents himself to the German mind as an Englishman. Why, on the façade of the principal Vienna theatre you have a figure of Shakspeare in the middle, and Goethe and Schiller on either side. That illustrates the position he holds there in the general esteem. And, of course, Shakspeare is played at every theatre. Why, if a theatre manager neglects Shakspeare for three months he is reminded of his duty by the public again and again. After Shakspeare there comes a wide gap. Nobody knows anything of Milton or Dryden. Byron is not read, but he is talked about in cultured circles, owing to his personality. Shelley, also, is just talked about, but he is not read or enjoyed. Wordsworth, although simple, and therefore naturally congenial to the Austrian mind, is also neglected. Scott is now forgotten, and Dickens has taken a back seat. But George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë are still great favourites. Meredith is the literary fashion, but I can emphatically say that he is not appreciated. There are two people now engaged in translating him, but that does not prove he is popular. Carlyle is vastly admired and much talked about, but he is not read. His philosophy, however, has been widely disseminated among the working classes in the form of an anthology, entitled 'Arbeiten und nicht verzweifeln' (Work and do not despair). This compilation of maxims has become quite a favourite among the working classes, even though they have to pay about one and eightpence for it. As for Ruskin, he is talked about but not read."

"The two favourite English authors both in Austria and Germany are Oscar Wilde and Rudyard Kipling. Wilde is vastly read, and his plays always attract a large public, both in the capitals and provincial towns. As for Kipling, he is quite a household word. His 'Jungle Book,' 'Stalky,' and 'Just-So Stories' are the most popular literature of our youngsters: you find them in every house, and they are read again and again."

"And Mr. Bernard Shaw?"

"Shaw with the Austrians is an acquired taste, probably because he has been badly translated. They admire his cleverness, but don't take him seriously. As a matter of fact, they took Shaw up—if I may put it that way—even before England or Germany. I may, perhaps, be permitted to say that I was the first to draw attention to him in the German and Austrian papers, years before he was appreciated in England, and I am glad to count him among my personal friends."

"What of our other playwrights, Pinero and Jones?"

"Our theatre managers have tried Pinero and Jones, but have failed to make either popular. They have succeeded, however, with one or two plays of Barrie."

"I suppose that what you have been telling me about the cult of English in literary circles applies also to business circles?"

"Exactly," replied Professor Kellner with emphasis. "Every big commercial house has an English correspondent, and in our commercial schools English is the most important subject. The Austrian aristocracy is on excellent terms with England, and it is becoming the fashion in aristocratic families to send their sons to Oxford or Cambridge just as it has become the fashion for our merchant princes to send their sons to the London School of Economics. In fact, people who want to give their children a thorough commercial education make it

a special point to send them to that excellent institution."

Professor Kellner, who speaks English with remarkable ease and without any foreign accent, informed me that his work on "Victorian Literature" has a concluding chapter on Shaw and Kipling, and that it will probably appear in the autumn.

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of the Royal Saxon Meteorological Institute.

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