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A BLACK WEEK.

The closing weeks of 1909 are gaining an unhappy notoriety. Fire and tempest have levied a heavy toll of calamity throughout all Europe, and in the course of last week we had to announce no less than three political assassinations. The Premier of Corea has been mortally wounded by a young citizen, whose motives and antecedents are as yet unrevealed. The Chief of the Petersburg Secret Police has been blown almost out of recognition by a bomb explosion. And Mr. A. M. T. Jackson, the Collector at Nasik, in the Bombay Presidency, was shot dead on Tuesday night as he was coming out of the theatre. It is a ghastly list for Christmas week, though that season of peace and goodwill is not recognised in Corea, and the Calendar of the Greek Church does not celebrate the great festival of the Christian year until ten days later than the rest of the Western world. The circumstances, moreover, of the St. Petersburg crime are so mysterious, and are so bound up with the tortuous methods of Russian officialdom, that it looks as if the real facts may never be made public. The victim, Colonel Karpoff, had only occupied his post for a very short time. The outrage took place in a small flat in a remote street in the Viborg district, which had been occupied a few days earlier by a young man from the country named Vosskressensky. Hither came Colonel Karpoff at midnight, in close disguise, and with a single attendant. He had only just gone upstairs, leaving Vosskressensky at the doorway, when an infernal machine was exploded, apparently by pressing a button from below, and the body of Karpoff was blown literally to bits. Vosskressensky was arrested, and enough incriminatory evidence has been found upon him to reveal the existence of an extensive Anarchist conspiracy. But the dark suggestion is made that Karpoff was lured into the trap under a promise that he would meet one of those "agents provocateurs" who are the curse of Russia, and whose existence was denounced by M. Lopukhin with consequences so disastrous to himself.

The assassination of Mr. Jackson is one of those detestable pieces of wickedness which are staining the Indian reform movement with so indelible a dye. The murderer was a youth of 18, and he declares that his object was to avenge the sentence passed at the Nasik Sessions in June upon Ganesh Damedar Sawarkar, of transportation for life for seditious writing. The sentence was not pronounced by Mr. Jackson, it appears, but by the District Judge, and had been subsequently confirmed by the Supreme Court at Calcutta. These mad dogs, however, are indifferent as to whom they bite, and it is curious that Mr. Jackson, as well as the late Sir Curzon Wyllie, enjoyed the greatest popularity among the native population. The crime is only one of a series concerned to paralyse the administration of justice by terrorising its instruments. Sentences passed on natives for political offences are to be avenged on the servants of the law. Repeated attmpts have been made on the life of Mr. Hume, the Public Prosecutor, at Calcutta. In February last Mr. Ashutosh Biswas, another Public Prosecutor, was shot dead at Alipur. And the atrocious murder of which Mrs. and Miss Kennedy were the victims in May, 1908, was perpetrated under the impression that their carriage contained Mr. Kingsford, the Sessions Judge. A century and a half of British rule should have taught the natives that European magistrates are not to be intimidated by bombs and pistols. And while the deepest sympathy will be felt with the widow and relations of the very distinguished civil servant who has met with so untimely and cruel a fate, there will be no mercy for the traitors and sedition mongers. I the reverse of cordial. Whether the Company will

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Commenting on this latest Indian tragedy, a London contemporary says: It is useless, we are afraid, to reiterate that no small share of responsibility for these atrocities rests on the British politicians who never cease from impugning the administration of justice in India. No one, it is true, was found to say a word on behalf of the murderer of Sir Curzon Wyllie. But the man Ganesh Damedar Sawarkar, whose sentence has just been "avenged" at Nasik, has a considerable following in this country. And there is not a single trial for sedition in India which does not produce a crop of indignant letters from the "white Baboos." A recent letter in the Times from an Anglo-Indian correspondent is instructive as to the qualifications for forming a judgment on Indian affairs which is possessed by the Radical globe-trotter. Mr. Keir Hardie's performances, and the mischief that follows them, are well known. But Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., is a man of higher intelligence, and it makes one despair of an Empire ruled by a democracy when he assures his friends at home that the Indian working classes are in the mood to join the "International Labour Party." As the writer the Times points out, "wherever the unfortunate Indian worker has hitherto come into contact with a Labour party, whether in Australia, or South Africa, or in Canada, he has met with nothing but ostracism and illtreatment from Mr. Macdonald's friends."

NEWS OF THE WORLD.

A New York cablegram to the Paris Herald, dated Friday, says: Public sympathy goes out today to Mark Twain, who issued a statement yesterday wishing everybody a "Merry Christmas." His daughter, Miss Jane Clemens, was found drowned at 7.30 o'clock this morning in a bathtub at the author's villa, in Redding, Conn. She was about twenty-eight years of age. Mr. Clemens expresses the belief that she was seized with convulsions while taking a bath. She had been a sufferer from epilepsy, though in the last two years the convulsions had not been so severe as formerly. The medical examination pronounced death accidental. Mr. Clemens is heartbroken. He said: "She was all that was left to me in my home life." His other daughter, Clara, recently married the Russian pianist, M. Ossip Gabrilowitsch.

We greatly regret to report the death of Madame Meta Illing, which occurred at Frankfort-on-Main on Sunday from pneumonia. Mdme. Illing, as recently reported by the Record's Berlin correspondent, had been ill for a long time at Frankfort. To her great disappointment she was unable to accompany the English Theatre's tour through Germany. Mdme. Illing, it will be remembered, was the founder and promoter of the English Theatre Company, from which she anticipated great things; but the reception the enterprise has gained from the German critics has been

continue to exist, now that Mdme. Illing is dead, remains to be seen.

NEW YORK, Sunday.-The Explorer's Club of this city has unanimously decided to expel Dr. Cook from the club, since the committee appointed to investigate Dr. Cook's report of his alleged ascent of Mount McKinley has pronounced an unfavourable judgment.

LONDON, Saturday.-A letter from Lord Avebury, published in the local press, says that the Anglo-German Friendship Committee have read with great regret a number of articles recently published in a section of the English press, the result of which must be to increase distrust between Germany and England and strengthen the (according to Lord Avebury) insignificant minority in Germany who regard a war between the two countries as inevitable and even advantageous for Germany. Such a war, continues Lord Avebury, would be fatal to both parties, and those who are endeavouring to sow discord between the two nations are taking upon themselves a terrible responsibility.

LONDON, Saturday.-Reuter's Agency learns from an authoritative London source that the Japanese Government regards as absurd the rumours now circulating in the Russian press relative to Japan's aggressive intentions. The Japanese newspapers view these rumours as fabrications designed to influence the money market. Between Russia and Japan there are no questions which give occasion to any sort of anxiety. Their mutual relations are notably friendly, and both countries are carnestly desirous of maintaining them on that basis.

WASHINGTON, Saturday.-The American Consul at Bluefields, Nicaragua, telegraphs the State I ment that more than 900 men were killed in the battle of Rama, the total casualties amounting to 2000. Great distress is said to prevail among the troops.

(From our correspondent) LONDON .- "When you can't argue, abuse your opponent." "Keep on throwing mud, and some of it's sure to stick." "If you don't at first succeed, lie, lie, lie again." These inspiriting mottoes, as far as I can gather, are the watchwords of the Liberal party in the present crisis. There is nothing in English history, ancient or modern, to parallel the storm of outrageous invective, shameless mendacity, and the personalities which are issuing from the Ministerial camp. Dignity has been thrown to the winds, and the laurels are his who descends deeper into the mire of Billingsgate than his colleagues. Up to now it has been a neck and neck race between Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George, but by his speech at Llanelly on Wednesday last the Chancellor of the Exchequer has gained a long lead. For the credit of British politics his utterances ought to be erased from human memory, but as they are reproduced with acclamation by the Radical press, it is only fair to grant them a hearing all round. From among the Chancellor's flowers of oratory at Llanelly, I extract the following essence for the information of Record readers:

"Who are the Lords? With some exceptions they are the owners of land and royalties. They prey on honest industry.

"We have four noble lords travelling about the country. Lord Milner (booing)-well, you know him evidently; we are still paying his debts (laughter)and until they are all paid I think it would be better for him if he had stayed at home. Then there is Lord Cawdor, who has a special claim to speak the mind of the people. He was rejected twice by constituencies that knew him the best.

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