

Condensed News of the Week

The situation in the far east between Russia and Japan seems to be slowly approaching a crisis. It was announced on December 26 that Japan had massed a fleet of twenty-five steamers at Port Arthur for the purpose of conveying soldiers, munitions of war and supplies, and that the situation between that power and Russia is reaching the straining point. Not much information is to be gotten from the seat of operations, however, as a strict censorship is being exercised over the press. On December 29 news came from London that Japan had bought two warships now nearing completion at Genoa, having outbid the Russian government for the same. Credence is given to the war rumors also by the purchase recently by Russia in this country of more than 3,000,000 pounds of beef and the packing companies of the country are more or less interested in filling the shipment, many people believing that this is a sign that Russia is preparing for hostilities.

Helen W. Evarts, widow of the late William M. Evarts of New York, died at her country home near Windsor, Vt., on December 27, in her 84th year.

Because a signal light was extinguished by the strong wind, two trains met on the same track near Grand Rapids, Mich., on December 26, and in the collision 22 persons were killed and more than thirty more or less injured, some fatally.

General John Newman Andrews died in Montpelier, Vt., on December 27. General Andrews was 64 years of age and has been failing in health for some time. He was graduated from West Point in 1860 and served through the civil war, being retired as brigadier general in 1889.

After months of patient work among various window glass companies and manufacturers, the scheme to form a window glass trust with a capital of \$100,000,000 and having absolute control of the product of at least 1,500 firms, has been abandoned.

A trust and savings bank, with a capital and surplus of \$1,250,000, is being organized in Chicago. Among the capitalists interested in the new bank are several from the east, as well as bank officials from several sections and states in the Union.

The investigation into charges against members of the board of education of Kansas City, Kas., still goes on and it was recently made known that charges of soliciting bribes for the appointment of teachers to public schools have been instituted against the members of the board.

At Ironton, O., on December 28, three thousand blast furnace workers were given notice of a proposed reduction of 10 per cent in wages, to take effect on January 1. Reductions in wages have also been made in other manufacturing districts of the country and the cut seems to be almost general.

According to an order from the chief of the fire department of Chicago, all firemen belonging to unions in the city must withdraw from such membership or retire from the city service. January 15 is set as the limit for such action, as after that day any member of the fire department belonging to a union will be charged with violation of orders.

L. F. Loree, late president of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, was elected president of the Rock Island company of New Jersey, on December 29. The latter company controls the various railroads in the Rock Island system. Mr. Loree will be succeeded as president of the Baltimore & Ohio by O. G. Murray, first vice president of the company.

The fifty-third annual convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science began at St. Louis Mo., on December 28, with between 700 and 1,000 members present, comprising some of the most notable men in the country. The convention was divided into nine different branches and separate meetings were held in addition to the regular convention routine.

Former Premier Zanardelli of Italy died at his home near Rome on December 26. Premier Zanardelli has served as president of the chamber of deputies for some time and also filled other important offices before being appointed to the pre-

iership of Italy. On account of his poor health, he resigned in October last. He was 77 years of age.

On December 27 the elections for members of the constitutional convention took place in every part of the republic of Panama, and reports indicate that the candidates proposed by the popular junta were elected. It was said that this was the first time in the history of the isthmus that the elections in the city of Panama were conducted without any attempt to bribe the voters or institute other irregularities.

Notices of a reduction in wages were posted on December 29 at all the local points of the United States steel corporation, according to a dispatch from McKeesport, Pa. The cut includes every employe from the heads of departments down to laborers, no less than ten thousand men being affected by the reduction. At New Haven, Conn., the employes of the National Wire corporation's factory have also suffered a 11 per cent reduction of wages.

Rumors are afloat that the Jews in Russia, particularly in the Kishineff district, are in fear of another massacre in the near future. The approach of January 7, the Russian Christmas day, is awaited with terror by the 40,000 Jews in Kishineff, many of whom believe that all the Jews will be killed by the Russians. An appeal has been decided upon by the Jews to the United States and England asking them to interfere before it is too late.

The situation in San Domingo is again attracting some attention. Hardly had the new government, recently instituted, been set up before dissensions arose and now another full fledged revolution is in progress. The provisional government seems to be very weak and it is regarded as certain that more trouble will be forthcoming.

Sir William Allan, the well-known marine engineer, ship engineer and member of parliament from Gateshead since 1893, died recently in London. He was born in 1837 and served as chief engineer on a blockade runner during the civil war in the United States, being captured and lodged in prison, but was afterwards paroled. He was well known throughout England.

Mrs. Alexander Sullivan, well known on both sides of the Atlantic as an author and editorial writer, died at Chicago on December 28. Mrs. Sullivan was 56 years of age and had been connected with the editorial department of the prominent papers in Chicago, also during the lifetime of Charles A. Dana, contributing to the New York Sun.

At the annual meeting of the Western Commercial Travelers' association, which meeting was held at St. Louis recently, Charles W. Sargent of that city was elected president. The annual financial statement of the association showed a cash balance of \$122,666 and a reserve fund of \$90,783.

Seventeen additional members of Joseph Chamberlain's tariff commission were recently appointed and this list includes representatives of colonial interests. It is announced that Sir Robert Herbert, formerly under secretary of state for the colonies, has accepted the chairmanship of the commission.

It was announced from Moscow on December 29 that the Russian government is considering making the sale of tea and sugar a state monopoly, according to a plan proposed by M. Witte, while he was finance minister. This action is much opposed by some interests, but because of the pressing need for money, it is believed that Mr. Witte's plan will be adopted. It is said that the present brandy monopoly yields upwards of \$300,000,000 yearly, about one-fourth of the revenues of the empire, and the monopoly on tea and sugar is expected to be even more profitable as the expenses of its operation will be small.

A terrible disaster took place in Chicago on December 30 when fire broke out in the Iroquois theatre, the newest and largest building of that sort in the entire city, and 634 people perished. It is believed that the fire was caused by some defect in the electric lighting and because of the failure of the asbestos curtain to work, the

fire gained such headway that the loss of life was inevitable. As near as can be estimated there were about 1,300 people in the theatre at the time of the fire, among these being many women and children and the mortality among them is the greater.

The United States circuit court for the district of Massachusetts in a decision rendered at Boston on December 30 sustained Mrs. Robert G. Ingersoll in an action against Joseph A. Coram and others to the effect that fees to the amount of \$140,000 were earned by the late Robert G. Ingersoll for services rendered by him in the settlement of an estate belonging to the late Andrew J. Davis of Butte, Mont. The decision given on December 30 settles only the question of lien and leaves the amount due the plaintiff to be settled before the United States circuit court.

Between 150 and 200 of the most influential republicans of Nebraska met in Omaha on December 30 for the purpose of perfecting an organization to push the claims of John L. Webster, a prominent attorney of Omaha, Neb., to the vice presidential nomination of the republican party. The meeting was a very enthusiastic one and an executive committee composed of some eighty odd members was appointed to launch the Webster boom.

It was announced from Peking on December 30 that the Chinese government has promised United States Minister Conger to soon forward the Chinese copy of the treaty to Washington for the exchange of ratifications. It is necessary first to obtain the emperor's seal, and as soon as the treaty is ratified the ports of Mukden and Antung will be opened to the commerce of the world.

A New York dispatch carried by the Associated press and dated December 30, says: Immigration at this port in 1903 has passed all previous records. During the calendar year now ending 619,980 immigrants—steerage passengers—arrived here, as against 547,197 in 1902, an increase of 72,783. It is estimated that some 2,000 more foreigners will land before January 1, so that the total increase probably will be close on to 75,000. The year of 1902 was a record breaking year, the increase over 1901 having been about 139,000.

The recent report that the Harriman interests had taken steps to acquire the Chicago & Alton railroad has given rise to many rumors in impending changes in the railroad system of the country. According to a dispatch in the Chicago News, it is planned to consolidate five railroads into one system.

The many reports from European sources in regard to the uncertain condition of the health of the German emperor seem to be in a fair way to be disproved by the announcement from Berlin on December 29 that Emperor William will immediately resume work and will give up his vacation in the south of Europe as it is said he no longer feels the need of rest from public business.

Professor Maximilian Herzog, who is professor of pathology and bacteriology in the Chicago Polytechnic Institute, was recently called by the United States government to go to the Philippines and study disease germs and investigate Asiatic maladies. He left San Francisco on December 30 on his way to the Philippines.

The National Union of Women's organizations, with Mrs. Frederick Schoff of Philadelphia as chairman, on December 31 issued a circular announcing the formation of a preliminary organization "to protect the country against the treasonable and polygamous teachings and practices of Mormonism, and to maintain Christian ideals of marriage." This circular is regarded as the opening of a campaign against United States Senator Smoot of Utah.

A strike of engineers was declared in Chicago on December 31 against 125 office buildings in the city, and reports are to the effect that twenty more buildings will be also involved in the strike. The business managers' association refused to pay the scale demanded by the engineers, 2½ cents per hour, and it is said that the strikers expect to shut off the local coal supply to these buildings and thereby force their closing, at least for a time.