



FLEETS OF JAPAN ARE LINING UP

Warships of the Mikado at Nagasaki Ready for Action.

Germany, England and Russia Are Preparing to Grab Celestial Territory, and China Has Become Alarmed.

JAPAN IS PREPARED FOR WAR

LONDON, Dec. 29.—A special dispatch from Shanghai, dated Tuesday, says: It is reported that a Japanese fleet of war ships is waiting near Goto Island, outside Nagasaki, fully equipped for war and only awaiting instructions. This includes the Yashima and the Fuji, two of the finest vessels in the Japanese navy, and the Chen Yuen, that was captured from China. The Japanese fleet, it is understood, is acting in close touch with the British squadron under Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Buller, commander-in-chief of the China station.

Japan will certainly oppose a permanent Russian occupation of Port Arthur. The sudden dissolution of the Japanese Diet was owing to the war spirit. It is expected that the Japanese fleet will attempt to prevent the landing of reinforcements from Odessa for the protection of the Russian trans-Asiatic Railway in Manchuria.

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Globe this afternoon says a private telegram reached London last evening announcing that over twenty British warships have arrived at Port Hamilton.

Another dispatch says that a report is current at Chee Foo to the effect that the Japanese fleet has also arrived at Port Hamilton.

Port Hamilton is a small island south of Korea, and not far from Quelpart Island.

JAPAN IS NOW CONSIDERED IN MOST WARLIKE MOOD.

Military Party Eager for Action, While Statesmen Are Trying to Form a New Cabinet.

YOKOHAMA, Dec. 23.—Owing to the failure of the Premier, Marquis Saigo, to reconstruct the Cabinet, all the members of that body have resigned.

The newspapers demand the formation of a very strong Ministry, capable of coping with the situation in the East.

A dispatch to the Times from Kobe, Japan, says the dissolution of the Diet has greatly angered the political parties. It is probable that the Marquis Ito, former Premier, and Count Okuma, a former Foreign Minister, will form a coalition ministry, with a vigorous foreign policy. The military party is eager for action, extraordinary activity prevails at the military and naval depots and warships are assembling at Nagasaki.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—The Japanese Minister has not yet been advised of the resignation of the entire Cabinet, and he feels that while the resignations may have been tendered the Emperor will not accept them unless it becomes apparent that an entirely new Cabinet under Marquis Ito can be formed. It has been in private life much of the time since his notable achievements during the China-Japanese war, and it is not believed he is ready to return to the Cabinet. He is strong with all parties, however, and has the people behind him, so that he may again assume the Premiership if the emergency demands it. The Yokohama dispatch refers to Marquis Saigo as the present Premier, which is said at the Legation to be an inaccuracy, as Minister Matsugata has been Premier up to this time, with Marquis Saigo as Minister of Marine.

The reference in the dispatch to the public sentiment in Japan for a strong Ministry capable of coping with the situation in the East is one of the first intimations direct from Japan that she may take a hand in the controversy centering in China. While he has received no official advice as to the purpose of his Government, Mr. Hoshi expresses the personal conviction that Japan will not be quick to enter the controversy, but will maintain an independent attitude for the present.

LONDON, Dec. 29.—According to a

letter which the Times publishes this morning from a correspondent at Tokio a Cabinet crisis occurred in November, due to the refusal of the Progressists to vote an increase in the land tax, which is necessary, owing to the deficits caused by the late war. Parliament would have expired next June, and the Progressists, with a general election in sight, did not desire to risk unpopularity by voting to increase taxation.

However, Count Okuma, the leader of the Progressists, left the foreign office, says the correspondent, with an enhanced reputation, and next to Marquis Ito occupies the largest space in the field of the nation's vision.

The Times, commenting editorially upon this letter and its dispatches, says: The advent of a Cabinet led by two such statesmen as Marquis Ito and Count Okuma may be regarded as an event of great significance by the other powers.

CHINA BECOMING ALARMED AT THE PRESENT SITUATION.

Promise of the Fulfillment of the Forebodings Connected With the Sun's Eclipse on Chinese New Year's Day.

PEKING, Dec. 23.—The German question is unsettled. China's difficulty is increased owing to the uncertainty of the attitude of the powers. Germany's withdrawal from Kiao Chau bay is said to be conditional upon her finding a suitable naval station elsewhere. China is becoming alarmed at the present situation. The Government appears to be utterly powerless. No answer has been received from Russia concerning the proposed loan. There are calamitous forebodings connected with the sun's eclipses on the Chinese new year's day.

LONDON, Dec. 29.—The Paris correspondent of the Morning Post says: Russia has been long negotiating to raise a Chinese loan of £5,000,000 in France, to pay the indemnity and secure the Japanese evacuation of Wei-Hai-Wei. The negotiations were broken off owing to France insisting that the Bank of France should issue the loan and Russia desiring that the Russo-Chinese Bank should take the lead. A certain coolness now exists between France and Russia.

RUSSIA IS CERTAINLY THE DOMINANT POWER "IN GREAT KOREA."

It is Now Admitted by Japanese Papers That the Czsr Has Distanced Japan in the Struggle for Supremacy There.

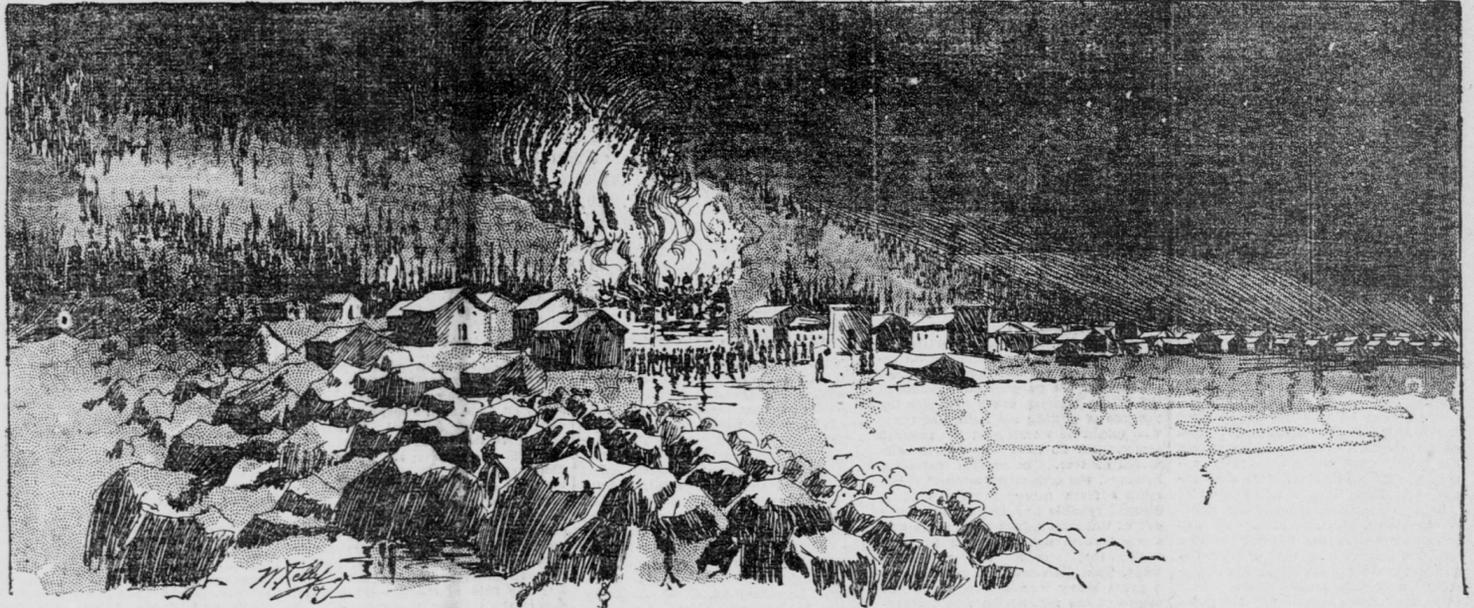
TACOMA, Dec. 23.—Russia has become the dominant power in Korea. Her recent operations in that kingdom, as detailed in the mail advices received here to-day, leave no room to doubt that Russia intends eventually to exercise sovereignty over what the Korean King is pleased to call "Great Korea."

Japanese papers, which maintain the liveliest interest in everything relating to Korea, admit that Russia has completely distanced Japan in the struggle for supremacy. The Japan Times, Japan's great national paper, says this struggle was brought to a culminating point last February, when Russia caused to be published in the Official Messenger at St. Petersburg the text of the secret Russo-Japanese convention. News of this treaty greatly surprised Korea, but the Japanese Minister at Seoul secured a temporary advantage by representing that the treaty was a successful attempt by Japan to maintain the balance of power in Korea and thus preserve from new dangers the independence of the kingdom for which Japan had so recently poured out her treasure and blood in war against China.

This representation caused a temporary reaction against Russian ascendancy, of which the King's removal to his palace from the Russian legation was the outward sign. The Russo-Japanese convention left the reorganization of Korea's army to her own Government, but in July Japan was completely checkmated, the Times admits, by the arrival from Vladivostok of thirteen Russian army officers, who at once proceeded to drill the Korean army. Three years ago China, Japan and Russia coveted Korea. Japan maintained her right against China by war. The Russian bear now stretches out his paw and, through diplomacy and the strength of the Russian empire, takes the prize from Japan. England had a slight influence in Korea, but Russia intended to nullify this when McLeavy Brown was dismissed as adviser to the Imperial customs and M. Alexieff, a Russian, installed as his successor. Alexieff was preparing three weeks

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TO THE TERRORS OF FAMINE AMONG THE MINERS OF DAWSON IS ADDED THE FIRE HORROR



THE BURNING CHURCH AT DAWSON CITY.

From a description of the fire by Sam W. Wall.

BY SAM W. WALL.

DAWSON CITY (N. W. T.), November 22.—(Via steamer Al-Ki to Seattle, Dec. 28).—The face of the great river that has so much to do with the destiny of 10,000 people camped along its banks is fixed and still. The ice stopped running in the Yukon on Sunday night, the 7th inst. It was a consummation that had been wished by hundreds for many days. To those who wished most devoutly for its coming was a tragedy. It ran like havoc, like devastation, and there is something of both in the grim and rugged face the frozen river has taken on, and which it will wear until the warmth of spring softens it.

The hundreds who have planned to go out over the ice only discovered what the undertaking meant when the tardy sun of Monday morning enabled them to see what had taken place during the night. To go out over the ice meant, on Sunday evening, to the man who knew of the Yukon only what he had seen of it since the beginning of this stampede, a sledding excursion 600 miles long. On Monday morning he saw the wide channel of the river piled from rim to rim with jagged heaps of ice that seemed planned to form an obstruction, and if he had an imagination he saw this desolate wreckage stretch southward 600 miles between himself and the outer world.

On Sunday evening he had talked glibly of the date at which he expected to arrive at Juneau, and ran easily over the calendar at twenty to thirty miles a day. On Monday morning he stood, sickened and helpless, on the bank of the Yukon in the presence of a barrier that seemed impassable. He would have given a year of his life and double the selling price to be able to buy back again the incomplete outfit he had sold the day before.

But over this jagged track a thousand men will toll back to the south this winter. What havoc the ice jam may have caused along the length of the river may only now be judged from what it did here, as no individual has arrived from up or down the river since then. Here it crushed and carried away hundreds of boats with which the banks were lined. The shore ice gave away in the crush, and in its place immense plateaus, ten feet in thickness, were lifted from the current and set out upon the banks in that sturdy majesty with which nature does these things. With the floe that went Wednesday afternoon, after the first jam, for the river made tremendous efforts to free itself, I counted thirty-one boats. Many of them contained parts of outfits that the owners had been unable to save. From one of these an American flag waved—its bright bit of color above the white sweep of ice, and over them all hovered a flock of creaking ravens, the black omnipresent bird of this frost-bitten land. They rose and dipped and rested on the gunwales of the boats, feeding from those that contained grain.

Then came the crash and the crush again, and the brave little boats that had weathered the Canyon and the White Horse were rolled over and over and ground to pieces as the ice jammed and fixed itself finally to bind the great river for the long winter.

I said it was a tragedy, but it was really a climax to the deadly play, and whatever devastation it has done it is what that it is done and over with. While the river ran here were those who would dare whatever dangers it presented in their desire to get here.

A boat with five men in it was attempting a landing at the mouth of the Klondike at the very moment of the first jam. They were held in the ice all night, were carried down to the lower edge of Dawson on a floe in the early morning, and their escape or rescue by a party from the shore was like a miracle.

Scarcely a day since the ice began running but has seen some sign of disaster and death pass down in the current with it. Once it was the frozen body of a man. Time and again men

in boats and on rafts have failed to get through the whirling mass of ice to make a landing and have passed on down not so far to be heard of again. Fragments of broken boats became so common in the stream that they were no longer remarked.

What or who may have gone down this wide dark stream during the long nights past the shrouded face of the city to which they had set out and saw only a brief glimmer of her lights as they were hurried by God alone knows. Certainly they do not who were engaged in the drunken revelry of the dance halls, nor do they who were crowded about the tables where "the game never closes" any more than do they who were asleep in the log huts on the hillside. And whatever cry may have come up from the blackness of the river must have been drowned in the sob and shriek of half-starved wolf dogs that skulk back and forth from end to end of the city all through the night. After the brief interval of open river the ice began to flow again on the 20th of October. Prior to the 8th of October the ice had come from the smaller streams that empty into the big river. The tributaries closed and the river cleared. Then there came a night or two when the mercury registered 13 degrees below zero, and the ice that began flowing then was of the Yukon's own making. Next to a free river one that is tightly closed is to the well-equipped old-timer most to be desired, and his praying for it set the others praying also. The other day, since freezing

NEWS OF THE DAY.

- Weather forecast for San Francisco: Fair on Wednesday; fresh northerly winds.
- Maximum temperature for the past twenty-four hours:
 - San Francisco.....60 degrees
 - Portland.....52 degrees
 - Los Angeles.....56 degrees
 - San Diego.....78 degrees
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 - Japan Ready for War.
 - Fire and Famine at Dawson.
- SECOND PAGE.
 - Rich Quartz Strike at Dawson.
- THIRD PAGE.
 - Canada Will Help Klondikers.
 - Secretary Gage Has Not Resigned.
 - Law After Uber's Lynchers.
 - Annexation Plots Hatched.
- FOURTH PAGE.
 - Bold San Jose Thief.
 - Napa Catches a Burglar.
 - Water War at Sausalito.
 - Los Angeles School Scandal.
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 - Big Sloggers Talk Some More.
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 - Society Leaders Fall Out.
 - Secretary Wilson on His Dignity.
 - News Along the Water Front.
 - Christmas at the Churches.
- SIXTH PAGE.
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 - Government for Hawaii.
 - An Alphabetical Question.
 - Prospects for Rain.
 - The Taffel and Boat.
 - The Golden Jubilee.
 - The New Submarine Boat.
 - Personals and Queries.
- SEVENTH PAGE.
 - Meeting of Traveling Men.
 - Results of the Charter Election.
 - Who Shot Baldwin Gardner?
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 - Teachers in Session.
- NINTH PAGE.
 - Durrant's Latest Straw.
- TENTH PAGE.
 - Commercial Intelligence.
- ELEVENTH PAGE.
 - News From Across the Bay.
- TWELFTH PAGE.
 - Racing at Ingleside.
- THIRTEENTH PAGE.
 - Births, Deaths, Marriages.
- FOURTEENTH PAGE.
 - Footpads Worsted by Sailors.
 - Police Judges at War.
 - Death of Dr. Stanton.
 - Preparations for the Jubilee.

weather set in, the channel narrowed as the shore ice crept outward from the banks. Thus a constantly widening roadway was formed, over which the commerce of the city was carried on. It was level and smooth, and logs and lumber and merchandise were transported over it by horses and men and sleds and dog teams.

Upon this the "techarco" based his conception of what it was to "go out over the ice." The "techarco" is the "new comer" or "tenderfoot," and the word is Indian. It seemed a simple matter to him to travel this wide boulevard back to the land of plenty, and in face of the desperate chances that go with staying here the resolution was easily formed, even by those who had suffered most in the long struggle to get here. That is the bitterest feature of this experience. The toil and suffering and time and money that it costs to get here, and then, immediately upon arrival, when the trials were supposed to be at an end, to find no alternative but to turn back again over the long road just traveled, to tramp it this time through the bleak bewilderment of the Arctic winter, forsaken by the hope that helped to get here and accompanied instead by disappointment, and this, not because there is not all they had a right to expect when they left home to come here, but because, having arrived, they lack a few sacks of flour and a few measures of beans.

The closing of the river, therefore, does not check the exodus from the city. It changes its direction. Fort Yukon, with the river open, was two weeks distant, drifting down stream. Now it is almost as far away as Dyea, and not so desirable. Dyea is "out," and to most of these tired and disappointed people that word leaves nothing more to be said. At Fort Yukon the man with no money is simply accumulating a debt, and the spring will find him in a more helpless position than he is now.

With these considerations, the tents of the "techarcos," which have always formed a deep fringe along the water line of the city, have been a market place for the barter of odds and ends of outfits. The men who determined to go out reserved of what they had only what they might need for a thirty days' journey. With the proceeds of their sales they bought what essentials for this they did not have, such as dogs and sleds. Hundreds had sold out. Very many even sneered at the necessity of dogs, and declared an intention to walk out and haul their own sleds.

A hundred had already started, intending to get as far as possible on this side of the river. A dozen of these found difficulties they had not counted on when only out a few days, and came back.

Not all of these by any means are techarcos. Many are old-timers here, who have excellent claims, by the working of which this winter they might become rich. They have been crowded out of their allotment of provisions by this year's multitude, and are so crowded out of the country. Their stories are interesting, but in the crush of misfortune that has set upon new-comers and old-timers alike individuals and their instances are lost.

I know of many cases of men who had a full equipment and could live very comfortably and enjoy advantages they had not dreamed of when they started for here—the advantages that always come to the fortunate few through the misfortunes of the many—but who have sold out and will undertake this trying journey over the ice. They are afraid to stay here. They know very many who ought to go out because they have not got any provisions will not go out. They anticipate robbery and violence at the hands of these, and they prefer the outer world.

Their fears are well founded, of course. Jim Keery's saloon was broken open and robbed of \$22,000 in dust on the night of November 14, a few days or nights ago. Keery has run out of lamp oil, and so closes his saloon at

THE SWEEP OF FIRE ABOVE THE SNOWS

DAWSON CITY, Nov. 22.—As the carrier leaves the town with this mail at 5 o'clock Sunday morning the Klondike Church—the people's church—in the center of the town, is burning.

There is a lodging-house on the second floor of the building, and a drunken man, going to bed and trying to revive the fire at 4 o'clock this morning, overturned the stove. The place was filled with lodgers and they were compelled to rush out of the burning building, half-clothed, into a temperature that registered 38 degrees below zero. The church building had just been completed and was a large log structure, setting a little back from the line of Front street. There is nothing to do but let it burn, as fires cannot be extinguished with blocks of ice. Fortunately, there is an area of open space about the building, and at this writing there seems to be no immediate danger to the rest of the town.

SAM W. WALL.

dark. The money stolen belonged in part to other people, and had been left with him for safe keeping. Several thousand dollars of it belonged to women of the town, and \$5000 to "Nigger" Jim Doughty, who had just sold his interest in certain claims on Bonanza. The Alaska Commercial Company is said to have cached in the barracks of the mounted police a quantity of goods held for reserve as against starvation conditions anticipated later on.

The trail is also made dangerous or given an added danger through like cause. It is well known that gold gathered last spring and summer was not taken out by the transportation companies, as was intended it should be. It has been presumed that the owners of the gold would attempt to have it taken out over the trail, and a great invitation to highwaymen is therefore offered, and they have already gone to work.

Since the arrival here of Captain Constantine, commander of the mounted police, the city has been trained down under regulations that threaten to take from it much of its wrothy character. The gambling and dance-houses have been closed—that is, they have been compelled to retire somewhat from under the public eye. They were ordered to close up on the 15th, and by that date had built partitions around the games and considered they had obeyed orders. Above several of the tables that had worn them before still hang the signs, "This game never closes." There are eleven saloons in the city, all of which run games and two of them public dances every night. One of these latter is the "Opera-house," and the dances go on there only when there is no show on the stage. The dances run on as long as anybody will dance. The price of dancing is the purchase of drinks. The saloons are comparatively deserted during the day, but at night they are crowded.

The two company stores close at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Nearly all others engaged in business quit with the daylight. The three sawmills have closed down for the winter, because they can no longer get logs. Three of the eleven saloons close at night for lack of light, so that in the evening everything and everybody converges toward the saloons that are open and their games and dance halls. The lamps and candles are not lighted in these until darkness compels and business justifies, but although they hang about the big log barracks at such distances apart as to barely relieve the gloom, their flames and smoke weight the air and lend a halo of indistinctness.

One searches for familiar faces in this atmosphere as he would through a heavy fog. All the places of business are along the water front and are compressed in distance of about six blocks, exclusive of the sawmills in the upper end of town. The two company stores and warehouses occupy two blocks and between there on the north, and the police barracks on the south, a distance of four blocks or more, strictly speaking, within two of these four blocks is concentrated what is called "life" in this town.

Aside from the saloons, sawmills, sash factory and company stores, the business of the place embraces three real estate and mining brokerage offices, one law and mining concern, two watchmakers, one shoemaker, two or three dealers in second-hand goods, a cabinetmaker, half-dozen places where fur caps and mittens and moccasins are made, two dentists, two barber-shops with baths, several doctors' offices, two blacksmith shops and a tin-shop, where the demand for sheet-iron stoves is partially satisfied. There is also a small brewery, a man having brought in a few tons of hops, the doing of which cost him a fortune, and out of which he is making the most.

The street along the edge of the river bank is still lined with tents, the entire length of the town, and in those, and in some down-river boats and barges that have been hauled up there and covered over either with boards or canvas, people are living, and some are doing business. Front street is a busy place both night and day. There, during the day, the dog teams are cursed and beaten and kept moving, as men transport their belongings from place to place, and freighters haul merchandise and firewood. Fur-enveloped men and women move about with the rapid step of the dog trot the temperature enforces, and the steam from the bodies of the men and animals arises like a mist and turns each hair of whisker and fur into an icicle.

With the sunset this scene changes here as it does in every city on earth. The dogs are released to forage and fight and howl the night through; men and women crouch for a little while over their tin stoves as they cook their bacon and beans in their cabins, and then most of them blow out their candles, thus saving them, and go back to Front street. The seats at the gaming tables are filled up, the smoke of tobacco mingles with that of the saloon lamps, little pools of water are formed by the pressure of boots about the stove.

Out of that row of houses on the back street, the windows of which are shrouded day and night in red blinds,