

VICTORIA, B. C., Dec. 14.—The Australian steamer Warrimoo, which has arrived, brings the startling news that a majority of the islands of the New Hebrides group are passing through a baptism of fire, earthquake and volcanic disturbances threatening the very existence of several of the largest and best islands, including Ambrym, celebrated for the excellence of its coffee. In the latter an entire village of natives was recently carried into the sea, the loss of life being estimated at sixty to seventy-five men, women and others, while in others of the group, fatalities are also reported.

A layer of ashes from two to six inches deep covers the once fertile fields. At Epi on Nov. 2 there was a severe earthquake in the early morning, which opened an entirely new volcanic crater on the west side of Ambrym, about fourteen miles distant, and all the next day the whole island trembled. Since then it has opened in five or six different places. Even the island of Epi, which was much less affected, had, to the 7th of November, felt sixty-three distinct shocks, and for weeks had been covered by clouds of ashes and smoke. Traders and planters living on Ambrym island have fled precipitately to Port Sandwich (Mallicolly), the nearest port, in many cases abandoning all their possessions.

On the 15th of November an earthquake shock rocked Ambrym from east to west, causing the land, on which stood a small native village, to slip, with the humble homes of the inhabitants, into the sea. It is impossible to accurately determine the extent of the fatalities, but the lowest estimate of the loss of life is fifty. Owing to the lateness of the disaster details were not available when the Warrimoo left the Southern sea, although natives from all the volcanic islands were flocking to the centers of civilization for safety.

NEW YORK, Dec. 14.—Samuel C. Seely, the ex-bookkeeper and defaulter, arrived tonight. United States Commissioner Shields fixed his bail at \$25,000 and Seely was taken to Ludlow Street jail.

SEATTLE, Wash., Dec. 14.—The volcano on Mount Ranier has broken out again and smoke is pouring from the crater which is also emitting jets of steam. The *Post-Intelligencer* expedition to explore the mountain will start tomorrow afternoon and will endeavor to reach the summit.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 14.—From Yokohama by steamer Gaelic.—The fall of Port Arthur was undoubtedly known to America before the news was circulated in Japan. Several of the men-of-war watched the proceedings, among them the United States steamer Baltimore, which, it is reported, was on one occasion mistaken for a Chinese vessel and came near being torpedoed by the Youshino and Taki Shimo. The German and British ships were also at hand, and again an ugly story is told of the action of Admiral Freemantle, who it is alleged, gave a premature alarm to the Chinese by requiring a salute to the Alacrity while the body of the Japanese troops was debarking.

Edicts are pouring out from the palace in Peking with a recklessness and

lack of coherence which attests the utter confusion that reigns at court. Officials are exalted and cast down, generals are rewarded and disgraced, ordinarily without the slightest understanding of the transactions in which they have been engaged. Occasionally, however, a shaft is let fly which seems to indicate that gleams of truth now and then penetrate the imperial precincts.

General Wei, one of the masters of the Fabian strategy in Corea, has lost his head. General Yeb, who ordered the murder of the French priest, Joseau, is in prison. General Nieh, another of the fugitives from Corea, has been compelled to disgorge the thousands of taels prematurely bestowed on him by the Empress Dowager. Admiral Ting, who was loaded with favors for having been beaten at Taisosan harbor, has been stripped of these unmerited honors and ordered to follow hereafter the instructions of an Englishman, Captain McClure, who accompanies him nominally as vice-admiral, but who really controls the fleet.

On the other hand, General Sung, whose feats of poltroonery have not yet reached his sovereign's ear is ennobled for "dispersing the vermin" and pacifying Corea, and is ordered to "encamp on the banks of the Yula river and await the arrangements for peace by the various powers." Li Hung Chang is appealed to and reviled in the same day. Prince Kung is for the moment the nominal center of authority, being appointed commander of all the forces, military and naval. But before any practical result can follow the enunciation of a decree, it is liable to be cancelled in contradictory rescript.

The latest report from China states that the emperor is at last prepared to appeal directly to his victorious foe, and will ask for an armistice, while Prince Kung and Li Hung Chang proceed to Japan to make terms. This rumor is officially confirmed.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Dec. 15.—Albert Lutz, a dairyman, residing on the Reading road, died last night of hydrophobia, resulting from a nattle with an enormous cat. His agonies prior to the end are indescribable. Two months ago Lutz encountered a famished cat of unusual size in his barn loft and attempted to drive it away. The animal was mad from hunger. It sank its teeth in his left calf, lacerating it badly. Lutz finally killed the creature. The wounds were cauterized and no ill effects manifested themselves until Saturday last, when the left leg began swelling up. In his dying struggles, the dairyman mewed and yowled like a cat and attempted to bite and claw those about him.

CHICAGO, Dec. 15.—The *Herald* says.

A sensational railroad combination is concealed behind the attempt of the branch lines of the Union Pacific to secure separate receivership. Should the attempt be successful and separate receivers be appointed for the Oregon Short Line and Utah Northern, an independent system will be established. The plan is to combine the Oregon Short Line and the Utah Northern with the Oregon Railway and Navigation company, an independent system, and secure a California outlet by extending the branch now

ending at San Francisco. This would require the building of about 400 miles of new track if the branch was extended to San Francisco.

GUADALAJARA, Mex., Dec. 15.—Thomas Glazer, an English tourist, making an overland trip from this city to Tepeca, on the Pacific coast, was attacked by brigands in the Sierra Madre mountains. A Mexican servant was killed and Glazer seriously wounded. He was robbed of \$2,000 and valuable jewelry.

PARIS, Dec. 15.—The funeral of the late Count Ferdinand de Lesseps, who died on December 8th, took place at noon today in the church of St. Pierre de Chaillot, outside of Paris. The church was crowded. The body lay under a catafalque near the altar. The casket was surrounded by many floral offerings.

After the funeral ceremonies the remains were placed in a vault which had been prepared for their reception.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Dec. 17.—From Mount Hope, Ky., a small village, twelve miles from Walton, comes the news of the shooting on Saturday night of a grave robber caught in the act. There had been robberies committed at the cemetery and when Miss Morris was buried Saturday, her betrothed determined to watch her grave. Near midnight two men began digging in the grave. A dozen shots were fired at the robbers and "Smiley" Jordau, a colored farm hand, was shot dead. His white companion escaped.

#### NEWS NOTES.

It is estimated that the Cripple Creek, Colo., war cost the Strong Mining company \$30,000.

Rev. Lydia Sexton, for fifty years famous as the woman preacher, died at Seattle, Wash., on Sunday. She was born in 1799, and was known throughout the length of the land. For a year past she has been blind.

Ten men were injured by an explosion of fire damp or gas in the Vulcan mine at Newcastle. There had been a small fire in the mine, but it was supposed to have been extinguished, and the men were ordered by the superintendent to return to work when the explosion occurred. Some of the men may die.

The Baker City, Idaho, *Democrat* says that one of the largest steers ever raised in that section of the country was brought into the city Saturday, and on the scales weighed just 2584 pounds. Mr. James T. Wisdom raised the steer on his farm in Powder valley. It is a Shorthorn and just five years old.

Another startling chapter in the career of Edward Barron, the millionaire, whose will is being contested by his son George, has developed, says a dispatch from San Jose, Cal. An action was begun in the superior court on Saturday by a fourteen-year-old mulatto boy who claims to be a son of the once gay man of wealth. The story is that about fifteen years ago, when Barron was a widower for the second time, he employed a negress as housekeeper, and to his alleged relations with her is due the existence of the boy who now asks for a part of the rich estate.