

with an escort of boats furnished with ice plows.

The government is planning to test this project, being greatly encouraged by the success of the Danish ice breakers in keeping Vladivostok harbor open this winter.

New York, Jan. 29.—The North German Lloyd steamer *Aller*, which arrived today, brought the captain and twenty-four of the crew of the British tramp steamer *Dagn*, of Sunderland, who were taken off that vessel at sea while she was in a sinking condition. The *Dagn* left Leth Dec. 31st for Baltimore in ballast. On January 5 the steam pipe burst and the machinery became disabled. The steamer fell off in the trough of the sea and rolled in the heavy seas. For twelve days the unfortunate craft laid in this condition. The bunker bulkheads were burst in by the terrific pitching and tossing of the vessel; the coal fell through into the engine room and choked the pumps and safe alley, the vessel became leaky and the water was soon level with the engine room floor. January 21 the *Aller* hove in sight and soon bore down to the sinking vessel. The *Aller* launched one of her large life-boats in which three trips were made to the sinking craft and the whole crew was taken off, the *Dagn* being abandoned to her fate.

Toronto, Ont., Jan. 29.—Nothing could create a much livelier interest than has been aroused all over Canada by the announcement of the contract between the Dominion government and Messrs. McKenzie and Mann for the construction of a railway between the Stickeen river and Teslin lake in the Yukon country. Every one is talking of it and the newspapers, government and opposition alike, concede the deal to be a master stroke on the part of the government.

The Toronto Globe (government) prefaces a strong leader with the following:

"The extent of the revolution which will be effected in the problem of transportation to the Yukon gold country is best understood when it is stated that the journey between Victoria and Vancouver and Dawson, which is now a matter of months and attended with appalling difficulties and hardships will, during the season of navigation and after the projected railway has been completed, be reduced to about seven days while the dangers and privations will be little more than those which any traveler undergoes in a train or steamboat."

The Toronto World (opposition) in an equally strong article says:

"The deal not only calls for the construction of this railway altogether in Canadian territory, but it prohibits the construction of any rival line. This through rail and water route is not only a pure Canadian enterprise, but its duplication by the United States is an impossibility. Herein have we despoiled the Americans of their power to harass us in the Klondike trade. All traffic, whether passenger or freight, is bound to gravitate to the line of least resistance, and will certainly be identical with the Yukon railway. The only possible rival the all-Canadian route may have is that via St. Michaels and the Yukon river, but this involves an ocean and river voyage of 4,700 miles."

"One would as soon travel from New York to Chicago by the canal and lake route as to go to Dawson by the Yukon river. This then is the first great feature of the all-Canadian route. It will command the traffic. It will have no rival and in addition to its unique advantages in this respect, the all-Canadian route will be handicapped by no tariff exactions or customs house restrictions. This deal settles the whole Yukon transportation problem."

An Ottawa dispatch says Sir Charles Tupper, the veteran leader of the con-

servative party in the house of commons, gives the government credit for acting with such vigor and he asserts that the opening of the all-Canadian route is the proper course to pursue. He does not anticipate any trouble with the United States in transferring cargoes from the ocean boats to river boats at Wrangel, while the Teslin lake railway is being constructed. If, however, such should happen, Canada has Fort Simpson to fall back on, which will be equally serviceable.

Messrs. McKenzie and Mann have the capital and resources and energy to carry out what is acknowledged by all competent authorities to be a most costly and hazardous undertaking. They are probably the only men in Canada who could put the road through by Sept. 1 next, the time specified. Extraordinary measures will be taken by the contractors to insure the construction of the Yukon railway by that date.

Mr. Mann left Montreal this morning for the scene of operation. All day yesterday the transcontinental wires were kept hot hurrying men and supplies to the front. A small army of laborers and wagon teams that have been working on the Crow's Nest railway are already working toward the Yukon. Thomas White, civil engineer of St. Thomas, Ont., has been engaged as chief engineer of construction. In six weeks according to the terms of the contract, a sleigh road has to be completed from Wrangel to Teslin lake, nearly 300 miles, and it is expected thousands of men will take advantage of this to go as far as Teslin lake this winter. During the summer as the railway pushes inward travelers can go to the end of the line and then go by roads to the lake.

Constructors McKenzie and Mann are to have a monopoly of all railway connection for five years from the Pacific coast to the Yukon country.

Cincinnati, O., Jan. 29.—Christian Klein, who was found mortally wounded Thursday night on the street, half a square from his mill, died today. The mystery concerning the manner of his death has not yet been satisfactorily solved, although there is a strong belief that the dying man's repeated statement that he was killed by robbers is a true one. It is combatted by statements of witnesses that they heard the shots, saw Klein fall, but saw no one near him.

New York, Jan. 31.—The Red Cross Line Steamship *Portia* arrived today, four days overdue, from St. Johns, N. F., and Halifax, after a desperate encounter with pack ice off New Foundland coast, and with a harrowing tale of blizzards and destitution in the coast section of that country.

Hundreds of men, women and children are dead or dying from exposure and starvation, with abundance close by, and hundreds more threatened with the same fate, are conditions reported by the *Portia*.

The *Portia* was penned in in huge Arctic floes in plain sight of St. Johns, unable to move. She managed to escape by the merest accident. Many other craft, several of them relief vessels, sent by the Canadian government to succor destitute fishermen, had to abandon their errands of mercy and return to St. Johns, where they were still in the ice when the *Portia* struggled in to clear water.

Close to where the *Portia* lay, the big steamship *Virginia* was locked tight. She had been sent north by the Canadian government with food for the starving fishermen, but a short distance up the coast she found the route securely blocked and was forced to return to port to prevent being ice-bound all winter. Before her departure news had reached St. Johns that unless assistance was promptly dispatched the un-

fortunate inhabitants would be beyond relief.

Among the detained fleet at St. Johns were a dozen or more sailing vessels, loaded with cod fish for England and Brazil.

The City of St. Johns was in a terrible condition on account of the blizzard. The streets were rendered impassable, the railroads suspended work and the poor were suffering through hunger and cold. Prices of food had advanced until they were beyond the reach of the poor.

When the *Portia* was working her way out to sea, she was closely followed by the bark *Flora*, and these two vessels were the only ones that succeeded in leaving St. Johns.

Several miles off shore the *Portia* passed the steamer *Grandland* fast in the ice and in a perilous condition.

The steamer *Virginia* was released from her perilous position after the departure of the *Portia* from St. Johns, and the position of the rest of the distressed fleet has been reported by telegraph to be relieved.

Burlington, Ia., Jan. 31.—Abel Stormer has confessed the murder of Mrs. Fannie Rathburn and her daughter, Mary. The confession was made to Chief of Police Greiner and the county attorney. Stormer says he committed the deed Sunday night, January 25. He killed the mother in the cellar. Then he enticed the little girl into the bedroom above, and after a struggle to outrage her, cut her throat. Stormer was taken to the morgue, although he begged not to see the bodies of his victims. He turned sickly pale and trembled violently when he gazed upon his victims.

The mayor announces that he will issue a proclamation tonight that the county jail, where Stormer is confined, will be guarded by armed men, who will resist with bullets any attempt at lynching.

A rumor is abroad that a mob is collecting in Green Bay bottoms to lynch Stormer.

Havana, Jan. 31.—About midnight a man named Luis Coro Lazo, who recently returned to Cuba from the African prisons, exploded a bomb at the private residence of the mayor of Havana, Senor Miguel Diaz. The noise of the explosion was heard throughout Havana, although the scene of the explosion was at Jesus del Monto. The door was broken and a large hole made in the house. The Diaz family and those inhabiting neighboring houses were panic-stricken. Lazo drove to Jesus del Monte from Havana in a cab. He was captured while attempting to escape. Senor Diaz says he does not know Lazo and believes he has political accomplices.

Vancouver, B.C., Jan. 31.—The steamer *Warimoo*, just arrived from Australia, brings news that the most appalling climatic conditions have been prevailing in many sections of Australia. The prostrations from heat were so numerous that the condition of affairs in large cities was alarming. In a great many instances work is out of the question, and sleep impossible, while in the evening the inhabitants gather on the streets and sit on curb stones drinking in the comparatively cool night air. Telegrams show that the same conditions prevail all over the colonies.

The thermometer during the heat of the day averages about 124 in the shade, and in a long list of towns the lowest figure found was 110. In the sun it is 160, so that it is impossible to work at midday.

The heat has caused numerous fires from spontaneous combustion and the houses are so baked during the day that in the worst sections the residents sleep in gardens and on roofs. The damage from brush fires is very great. News comes from all parts of Australia of destruction by flames.