

Weekly Messenger

AND TEMPERANCE WORKER.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 20, 1884.

No. 51.

The Weekly Messenger

THE FRANCO-CHINESE WAR.

During the week, negotiations between Li Hung Chang and the French Consul at Tien-Tsin have ceased, and the Empress of China decided to summon a council of war to consider the situation. At a meeting of the French Senate, in a discussion on the Tonquin credits, the Duc de Broglie said that the government must be held responsible for the increasing gravity of the situation. M. Ferry, replying to the Duc, said that the government's duty was to pursue a policy of moderation until it proved unavailing, in which event, he pledged himself to energetic measures. He denied that France had isolated herself, saying that she was still friendly to all powers. A community of ideas existed between France and three of the great powers on the Egyptian question. According to the latest despatches he showed that the expedition was perfectly secure. In the end, the senate voted the credits with only one dissentient voice. The peace negotiations, despite contrary rumors, are described as progressing satisfactorily. In Tonquin, affairs are not progressing. General De L'Isle threatens to resign unless reinforced and every mail steamer conveys more Germans to assist the Chinese. In the meantime, the French Government is reported as buying English steamers to convey French reinforcements to China, whilst the Chinese are purchasing torpedo boats, sending them to Australia and afterwards to China. The latest advices were of a more peaceful nature, three viceroys being ordered to the frontier to suspend hostilities against the French.

An incredible story is published by a news agency in Paris, to the effect that in a letter written by a private soldier from the seat of war it is said that General Negrier, upon defeating some Chinese regular troops, handed over 200 prisoners to the best French riflemen for targets in ball practice, and that all of the Chinese were killed. Parisian newspapers are indignant at the statement and demand a prompt denial of it.

THE CONGO CONFERENCE.

To the conference, England has proposed a scheme of neutrality stipulating that in the event of war the Congo and Niger rivers with their affluents, shall remain free to merchant ships. Also, that the merchants of all nations having depots on the Congo and Niger shall be forbidden to supply war vessels with coal except in sufficient quantities to enable them to reach the nearest port. France proposes a somewhat similar scheme. The American delegate proposes to bind the powers signing the agreement to treat as neutral all territory defined in the first declaration of the conference. France only wanted coal not to be treated as contraband of war, he said, in order to establish a coaling station for her men-of-war. The English delegate has been instructed to support Italy in her endeavor to exclude the importation of alcoholic liquors from the Congo country.

THE EGYPTIAN PROBLEM.

According to a despatch from Debbeh, the natives are very friendly, welcoming the British troops, and it is also said that a mounted brigade could traverse the desert with very little risk. From Amderman, near Khartoum, the rebels are reported as continuing the siege. The lieutenant of the Mahdi is reported as advancing through the desert upon Dongola. The Mahdi has himself ordered his lieutenants at other places to send him all available troops, munitions of war and money to Khartoum. Grain is becoming very scarce near the seat of war. From Dongola comes the news that the Sultan of Darfur has deposed and imprisoned the Mahdi's Emir at Khaliid, expelling his dervishes. Lord Walseley was at Ambukol, 150 miles nearer Khartoum than Dongola, on the 13th of December. The Mahdi is trying to crush General Gordon before Lord Walseley arrives. In Europe the situation is being actively discussed, and a strong party is said to be intriguing to replace Ismail Pasha on the throne of the Khedive. Russia is said to desire an international commission appointed in order to settle Egyptian finances.

Latest despatches from the seat of war report that General Gordon is still well, and that he had but recently severely defeated the rebels, killing a large number, and blowing up their forts. The Mahdi, it is said, has written to Osman Digna, appealing for reinforcements, to which appeal Osman replied that it was impossible for him to comply, as he was himself expecting an attack from the enemy.

AN IMPROBABLE STORY.

A strange yarn comes from Egremont in Massachusetts, to the effect that Estelle Newman, a woman of about thirty years, died in 1878, and was buried, and that H.W. Wright, of Connecticut, before dying, recently, confessed to his brother that whilst a student in the Albany Medical College, he, with others, after the burial of the woman helped to disinter her. On the table in the dissecting-room she showed signs of life, was resuscitated, and conveyed to an insane asylum. After some years of partial insanity she recovered and was subsequently married. The friends of the supposed resuscitated one, discredit the story and want her grave opened. The brother of Wright denies that he ever heard the alleged confession concerning the removal of the body.

THE WAR IN MADAGASCAR.

The French Government in order to avoid complications with Australia, has decided to transfer the penal colony of New Caledonia to Madagascar. General Miot, the French commander in that Island, has telegraphed to Paris that his troops now occupy the forts and that the Hovas have fled southward, the chiefs submitting. The French suffered no losses and the health of the troops was satisfactory. On December 6th after a sharp fight he occupied another fort, when the enemy lost two hundred killed while the French loss was trifling.

LORD DUNMORE AND THE SCOTCH CROFTERS.

The Earl of Dunmore, who is the owner of the island of Harris and many adjacent islets in the Hebrides, has taken a long step in the direction of relieving that overcrowding which a Royal Commission has marked as one of the most active agents in producing want and misery amongst the crofters and cottars of the Western Isles. His lordship, who cultivates exceedingly friendly relations with his tenantry, met their leading representatives at his rent audit, at Rodil, and announced certain intentions which cannot fail to prove highly beneficial in operation. As a practical farmer he recognizes that the island of Bernera will not adequately support its population, and he has, therefore, handed over to them the smaller island of Harnetray, which will afford good grazing for a considerable number of cattle and sheep. Lord Dunmore also reduces the rent of Taddy Island, and gives to his tenants in the northern and southern townships each a large farm. Accommodation is thus provided for a number of families, but in order to prevent any undue crowding of these new lands there are in the leases most stringent conditions as to "squating" and arrears of rent. We are told that the crofters returned to their island homes "well satisfied" with the statement of their noble landlord. — *Scotch Paper.*

A DETACHMENT of the Salvation Army has visited Montreal. On Sunday morning last they held their first meeting in the open air. A large crowd of roughs assembled, and pelted them with snow. The police arrested the little band—four in number—but they were subsequently allowed out on bail, and are holding in-door services which are largely attended. On Sunday the rough element prevailed, and the chairs and windows of the Weber Hall were smashed. Special constables have, however, been sworn in to see to their protection during the services and the maintenance of order. As we go to press the army detachment—consisting of James Madden, George James Tovey, Richard Davis, Nellie Low, and Hattie Yerex—are before the Recorder's Court, charged with disturbing the peace. They have a large number of sympathizers in the city.

AN ATTEMPT has been made to blow up London Bridge, England, by dynamite, and great indignation has been excited thereat. It is supposed that dynamite was dropped over the bridge, and alighted on a buttress. The damage done consists chiefly of broken windows. A policeman, who was standing near the scene of the occurrence, stated that he saw a blinding glare like a sheet of lightning, and then heard a terrific report. The outrage is attributed to the Fenians. No clue has been obtained to the perpetrators of the outrage. The English papers speak of it in terms of strong indignation. They are unanimous in ascribing the outrage to the operations of American Fenians.

THE STEAMER "Caranya," from Rotterdam for Lisbon has foundered off the Isle of Wight, with a loss of eleven hands.

THERE WERE 314 failures reported in the United States during the past week compared with 294 and 222 for the two preceding weeks.

COMPLAINTS of hard times come from Dakota, where, it is alleged, the farmers have to pay so high a rate to the Railway Companies for the transit of their produce that nothing is left them to live upon.

THERE were 21 deaths from cholera in Paris last week.

A RECTOR in the South of England, whose son married an orphan cousin against his will, has taken the brutal revenge of shooting all the horses and dogs which were the young man's favorites. The English papers describe his conduct in cutting terms.

A HUNDRED hosiery operatives left Nottingham on Friday for America, where places have already been engaged for them.

THE PROCESS of hiring negroes in the oyster industry of Maryland is accomplished by auction. Employees, who wish for laborers, bid so much a week, and the one who bids the highest secures the negro.

PRIZE FIGHTING in England has attained to such a head that Sir William Harcourt, Home Secretary, has expressed his horror at its prevalence, and his determination to put a stop to it by the introduction of more repressive measures.

A TERRIBLE COLLIERY explosion has occurred in the colliery of the Staatsbahn Company, at Orana Steyrdorf, in the south of Hungary, by which no less than seventy-five men were killed, all of them husbands and fathers of families. Heart-rending scenes occurred round the mine after the accident. Miners from other collieries wished to descend to attempt a rescue, but were forcibly prevented by their wives and children, while relatives of the victims knelt imploring them to descend.

THE RIVER St. Charles, at Quebec, is solidly frozen over and the erection of cabins for tommy-cod fishing, has commenced.

FATHER CHINIQUEY, who has been preaching and lecturing in Montreal for the last month and who has been instrumental in making sixty-three converts from Roman Catholicism (whose names he has enclosed to the *Witness* office), has now left for Ontario, to pursue the work with which he has now been so long identified.

IT WOULD seem that in England, just now, there is a revival of the fashion of wholesale perversions from Protestantism. The only son of the Bishop of Rochester has just "gone over," and it is said that a great many other people of note intend to follow his example.

A NUMBER of English Catholic nobles have been endeavoring for some time past to get the consent of the Vatican to the establishing of a great English college. It would appear that their efforts in this direction have been crowned with success.