

MISCELLANEOUS.

The latest dates from the captives in Abyssinia are to October 28th. They were then all well.

Mr Hall received £8000 from the Government for the invention of the rockets that bear his name.

On the 9th ult. Herr Von Dreyse, the inventor of the needle-gun, died at his native place of Sommerda, near Erfurt.

It is said that the recruiting Sergeants in Dundee (Scotland) are just now doing a brisk trade, doubtless in consequence of dull trade.

All the Garibaldian prisoners with the exception of those who belong to the Pontifical States, have now been delivered to the Italian Government.

The Italian Government, the Florence journals state, has contracted for the supply of 300,000 Chassepot muskets, to be delivered at the rate of 50,000 a year.

Jane, Duchess of Gordon, enlisted Soldiers for her son's regiment, the 92nd Highlanders, by offering the bounty-money to likely youths at country fairs between her lips. "One kiss of that beautiful mouth was worth dying for."

A telegram from Massowah announces that more than one hundred villages have tendered their services to the British expeditionary forces. The tribe of the Gallas has joined Gebazye, and the latter is reported to have captured Magdala.

SINGING FENIAN SONGS.—At a Scottish Police Court, two ballad singers named John Wilson and William Brown (the latter being blind) pleaded guilty to singing a party song, entitled "Lamentation of Mrs. Larkin for her husband, Michael Larkin, who was executed at Manchester." Both prisoners were sent to jail for 60 days. They left the bar muttering revenge and predicting a day of retribution.

A Royal Warrant is about to be promulgated, which provides that the medal and gratuity for long service and good conduct which has hitherto been conferred upon soldiers of irreproachable character who have not been convicted by court martial during a period of twenty one years in the cavalry and eighteen in the infantry, shall in future be conferred upon soldiers in all branches of the army after eighteen years service.

From Dunkirk comes the news that a quantity of cannon and projectiles have been sent for the fortifications that have recently been enlarged and strengthened; and from Strasburg we hear that the additional works which were recently ordered are being rapidly executed, and that cannon to arm them and the fortifications have been prepared. Lille journals state that some emotion has been caused in that town by the Government having ordered a demoralising of the fortifications: that is, placing thereon 900 cannon out of the 2000 they are capable of receiving. The fortifications of Lille are the most formidable in France.

The new breech-loader which the Russian Government has adopted is called the "Karl." It is similar to the Prussian needle-gun, and its accuracy was found to be in no way impaired after 30,000 shots had been fired with it. It is stated by the *Invalide* to be superior to the needle gun both in the rapidity of its fire (twelve to fourteen shots a minute) and in the arrangement for keeping the needle in its place, which is much less liable to get out of order than the Prussian gun. It may be taken to pieces and put together again with very little difficulty, and the mechanism is not disturbed by the effusion of gases.

MEMORIAL OF THE LATE GENERAL BRUCE.—*The Examiner*, in one of a series of articles "Visits to Private galleries and Studios," says:—A monument, intended to be placed in Dunfermline Abbey, of the late General Bruce, recently executed by Mr Foley, has engaged on more than one occasion the especial consideration of Her most Gracious Majesty. It is an altar tomb, on the panels of which, in bas reliefs, are commemorated the chief incidents of the journey to the Holy Land, made by the Prince of Wales, under the guidance of the accomplished and gallant officer, who for several years occupied the honorable and responsible post of Governor to His Royal Highness.

THE WAR IN PARAGUAY.—The news from the seat of war in Paraguay is of the usual contradictory character. The *London Times* speaks of several sanguinary engagements, in all of which the Allies had been victorious. General Mena Barreto, with seven battalions of infantry and two of cavalry, had carried the fortified position of Portreo Obello, defended by 4000 Paraguayans. The Brazilians had 400 men killed and wounded. The Allies had also taken the important pass of Tayi, entirely commanded that portion of the River Paraguay, and this completely investing Umaita. Colonel Rodriguez was among the slain. The *Post* has seen a telegram from Lisbon of a totally different complexion, but admits that if the Allies have gained the alleged victories they would have a most important bearing on the results of the war.

A NEW TORPEDO.—Letters from Brest mention the extraordinary effects produced by a new kind of torpedo, tried in the river of Landerneau, which flows into the bay. The vessel selected for destruction was an old ship of 100 guns, the first fire of which had been cut down. The New torpedo is far superior to either the English, American, or Russian one. The former is only efficacious when the vessel is passing over it; the latter are so contrived as to stick to the vessel and cause a shock; but the new French torpedo produced its effect at a distance of twelve metres from the hull, and six metres below water. There were four torpedoes thus placed around the vessel, and connected by wires with an electric battery on shore. On the signals being given, three immense sheaves of water were seen rising to the height of sixth storey, the wire of the fourth torpedo being broken, it did not go off. Nevertheless, the effect was astounding. The ribs and planks of the vessel were shivered, and there was barely time, notwithstanding the precautions taken, to run the vessel ashore.

SEARCH FOR SUSPECTED FENIAN PRIVATEERS.

—The *Gladiator* (six), paddle sloop, 430 horse-power, Captain Aplin, sailed from Portsmouth on Wednesday afternoon for the westward, on sudden orders; and the *Medusa* (two) paddle sloop, Commander Potter, 312 horse-power, followed at a later part of the day. The *Cromer* (four), screw gun vessels, also sailed from Portsmouth for the westward. All three vessels are supposed to have sailed under sealed orders; but it is probable that one of the three will look into Plymouth Sound and at Falmouth for communication with the authorities at head quarters, and the rendezvous of the three will be somewhere in the latitude of the Lizard. A suspicious vessel, believed to be without national flag or papers, is reported to have been seen off the land westward. A guard house has been erected on board the *Talbot* floating magazine in the Thames, below the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, and an armed guard were on Wednesday appointed for immediate duty. The police aloft opposite the dockyard have been appointed to night duty, and it is at present under consideration to augment the force, which is to be armed with revolvers and cutlasses, so as to be prepared for a sudden emergency, as the establishment has been so frequently threatened.—*English Paper.*

GENERAL GRANT ON THE AMERICAN ARMY WEAPONS.—In General Grant's opinion, no breech-loader in the country or in Europe has been produced which is superior to the converted Springfield musket, as altered at the armory, and none equal to it in serviceable qualities can be produced at less cost. In view of the fact that all the 50,000 converted muskets will very soon be issued to the troops, leaving no breech loading muskets on hand in store, it is recommended that the conversion of the Springfield musket, discontinued by order of the former secretary of War, be resumed. The report is equally explicit in regard to the efficacy of our heavy guns. A board of officers have reported that 1915 pieces of the calibre of 13, 15, and 20 inches for smooth bores, and of 10 and 12 inches for rifles, were required for the permanent fortifications. None of these guns have yet been provided, and there are no existing orders or contracts for heavy cannon. This stoppage of the procurement of heavy cannon, says General Grant, has been mainly occasioned through "persistent efforts for some time past by ignorant or designing persons to destroy public confidence in the heavy guns which have been provided by the Ordnance Department for the army and navy," but thorough experiments have established the fact that our heavy cast iron cannons are the cheapest and best effective guns possessed by any nation. Although our rifled guns have been tested with favourable results, it is not deemed advisable now to proceed with the manufacture of this arm until further experiments have been made.—*New York Times.*

ALDERSHOT IN WINTER.—The recent hard weather has covered our table with complaints from Aldershot, where the men appear to suffer severely from cold. Short allowance of fuel and bad fuel is the general complaint, but "Shivering Ben," a married soldier, writes to us to-day to complain of the inadequacy of the bedding and blankets supplied to the married people. "Ben"