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The Weekly Messenger

THE WEATHER AND THE CROPS.

The weather for several weeks past has been rather variable, terms of very low and very high temperature following each other in succession, accompanied by more than the usual number of cyclones. In some localities heavy rains have done considerable damage to late cereals, while in others prolonged drought prevails to such an extent that live stock are suffering severely from want of water and short pasturage. The corn crop is now beyond the risk of danger from frost, and will realize to the full all the earlier anticipations as to large quantity and superior quality. In most of the large cities the supply of fall vegetables seems to be unusually abundant and turnips, beets, and cabbages have scarcely ever before been sold at such low prices. The prices of butter have taken an upward start, owing to the discovery that in some of the European countries, especially Ireland, the quantity produced has been much smaller this season than usual. The numbers of cattle and hogs that are being brought to market are less than usual at this season of the year, and this helps to keep up prices; but there is little doubt that greatly increased supplies, and of better quality, will be offered later on in the season, as the farmers are giving an extra amount of food to their fat cattle and hogs this fall. The digging of potatoes is nearly completed, and the product is large, of superior quality, and remarkably free from rot.

A splendid grain harvest is reported from Britain, and the farmers are rejoicing. The weather has been grand for wheat.

INFORMERS REPENTING.

Patrick Cole, an Irish informer, who gave evidence against thirteen men who were recently convicted of the murder of Mrs. Smythe, now declares that his evidence was false, and that he was well paid by the prosecution for swearing to what he did. Whether or not there is any truth in this, remains to be seen.

As to the statement of Thomas Casey, and Anthony Philbin, two other informers, who declare that their evidence was false, being wrong from them by threats of the Crown officers, the Lord Lieutenant has made a searching inquiry into the whole matter, and has given the result in a letter to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, who had called the Government's attention to the matter. Lord Spencer finds that no such threats were made, and that, at any rate, statements cannot be readily accepted from men who confess themselves perjurers. But he also points out that Myles Joyce, who was hanged, and the other prisoners now undergoing punishment, were proved by three unimpeached and independent witnesses to have participated in the murder.

Another thing that Lord Spencer might have said is that these informers naturally

fear that, unless they do something to discredit the Government, their countrymen will treat them as the informer Carey was treated.

THE WAR IN CHINA.

Affairs in China seem to be still in a very uncertain state. The French Government cannot make up its mind what to do. It is almost suspected that the Cabinet is divided. Probably we shall hear more after the 14th of October, as the French Chambers have been called to meet on that day to express their opinion.

Although one report says that the Empress of China has decided to conclude a peace with France, Admiral Courbet is reported as saying that China will never yield till a French army marches upon Peking, the capital.

The French have stopped and searched two British trading steamers in the China sea, and great irritation is felt. It is not likely that the British will lose their temper; they are as much amused as irritated at the insane language used by French newspapers. But the French would themselves like nothing better than an excuse for opening a quarrel with Britain, that is, they would like it till the fight has fairly opened, when they would probably awake to acknowledge their insanity.

One of the leading French newspapers says that 4,500 of the troops in Tonquin are sick. Chinese troops are threatening various points. According to another paper, the attempt to enlist native "Black Flags" to help the French has been a great failure. Only 75 men accepted the gaudy uniforms and rusty guns offered, and they are afraid to leave their fort for fear of being shot.

Meantime, the French government is finding out that war costs money. Two or three million dollars will be needed for the Tonquin expedition, and the Minister of Marine wants \$13,000,000 to arm the iron-clads now building to protect the French "colonies."

THE AUSTRIAN EMPIRE is composed of various nations which hate each other very heartily, and two of these just now seem to be all ready for an open quarrel. The Kingdom of Croatia, situated in the south-west corner of the empire, touching the Adriatic Sea, was in 1849 declared independent of the Magyar Kingdom of Hungary, in reward for the help of the Croats in putting down a Magyar rebellion against Austria. But in 1860 the Austrian Government compelled them to unite with Hungary. The local diet, or parliament, persisted in declaring its independence; but in 1868 the Austrians so tampered with the elections as to get a diet of members favorable to the union. Now, however, the Croats have had another election, and have returned a large majority of members fiercely opposed to the union with Hungary. What the diet will do remains to be seen. At present, 55 percent of the Croatian taxes go to Hungary, the remainder being spent for local concerns.

THE EARL OF RIPON is returning home to England this fall, and will probably be made a duke,—this honor being given in consequence of his distinguished services for four years as Viceroy of India. It is reported that he will be made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, as Lord Spencer is likely to retire soon. Lord Ripon is not in good health, but his appointment would probably be a wise one. He is a Catholic, and the Irish are, of course, all the more provoked to hate their government because its head is usually a Protestant. Some Protestants will probably object for that very reason. But they protested when Lord Ripon was sent to India, saying that he would turn traitor to the Queen if he could serve the Pope by doing so. Their fears have proved groundless. Lord Ripon has proved himself an impartial administrator in India, and he is likely to continue so if he is sent to Ireland.

THE REV. DR. WOODROW, President of the Southern Presbyterian Theological Seminary, has expressed his opinion that the evolutionists are right in believing that the creation was gradual, man's physical nature being developed from that of lower animals. Eight of the directors agreed that this was not inconsistent with perfect soundness of faith. The other three directors, however, are going to bring the matter before the Synod. It all depends on what they mean by "soundness of faith." Many of the most pious Christians and orthodox theologians openly declare that they are not concerned with this question; that the evolution of man from the lower animals may have taken place or may not, but that it does not in the least alter the fact of God's having created all living creatures, as told in the book of Genesis.

AT THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT'S last session, the largest number of petitions received for any one bill was 6,128 for the Sunday closing Bill, with 584,517 signatures. No petitions were presented against the bill, yet it did not pass, owing to the obstructive tactics of Mr. Warton. This individual amuses himself by placing his "block" on almost every bill that comes before the House of Commons. No bill can be discussed after midnight if a single member records his objection; and few bills except important government measures can be reached before that hour. His constituents have just had a public meeting at which they resolved to ask for a government enquiry into the state of Mr. Warton's mind, in consequence of his extraordinary conduct. He "blocks" in such a wholesale way that once he included among the obnoxious bills one that he had himself proposed.

BELGIUM is still in a very critical condition. The mass of the people are enraged at the new law which re-establishes clerical instruction in the public schools, and riots have taken place at several places. Some have even gone the length of posting bills on the royal palace, with the inscription *maison a louer*, (House to Let). The mayor of Brussels, however, has given some good advice to his friends in the Liberal cause. He points out that they have a constitution-

al form of government, and can turn out the present majority when voting day comes round again. The mayor also wisely remarks that if the people of Belgium began to fight among themselves, their greedy neighbors—France and Germany—would at once step in and swallow up Belgium.

NEWS FROM EGYPT.—The *Times* has received part of the diary of its correspondent in Khartoum, Mr. Power. He says that up to July 29, they had lost 700 men, killed by the besieging rebels General Gordon had had continual battles with them, and large numbers of them had been slain. Mines had been laid in all directions, and exploded under the rebel armies. On July 30th the town had been besieged for five months, and could only hold out two months longer. Gordon was paying his soldiers with paper money. The British Government has now sent him \$2,500,000 in gold. The steamship "Ocean King," with the Canadian *voyageurs* on board, has passed Gibraltar on her way to Egypt.

THE SCOTT ACT Campaign progresses in a most lively fashion. Two counties will vote for or against prohibition on the 9th of October—Simcoe in Ontario, and Stanstead in Quebec. The united counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry will vote on the 16th, Peel on the 23rd, and Bruce and Prince Edward on the 30th. Two attempts will be made to repeal the Act—in Charlottetown, P. E. I., on the 16th, and in York, N. B., on the 30th. The prospect is very bright for victory in at least a majority of these contests, pro' bly in all. The liquor men of Toronto are disgusted; they are talking of breaking up their organization and letting the retail rum-sellers fight their own battles.

MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY, the author of an admirable "History of Our Own Times," and well known also as a Nationalist member of Parliament and a novelist, has made a speech in favor of establishing an Irish literature. It certainly seems a pity that Irish and Scottish Gaelic should die out for they are among the oldest languages on the earth, and much fine literature has been composed in them. But there is no doubt that the brotherhood of mankind will be more promoted the fewer different languages are in common use.

THE WINTER CARNIVAL at Montreal will be repeated, in an improved form, next February, if Montreal's citizens are willing to subscribe plenty of money beforehand for the expenses. There should be little doubt of their willingness, seeing the immense sum of money which the last carnival brought into Montreal and left there.

A HUNTER named William Janeway was nearly killed the other day at Beaver Brook, N. Y., by a heron which he had wounded. The bird laid open his face and destroyed one of his eyes with its beak before he could strangle it.

THE AGITATION against the House of Lords goes on briskly all over Britain. It is said that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh are both going to vote for the Reform Bill in the House of Lords.