

# Weekly Messenger

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## The Weekly Messenger

### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

This great society of scientific men, which for more than fifty years has been meeting annually in some British town, to discuss all sorts of science and to compare notes of progress made during the past year, has just concluded at Montreal the first of the meetings that has ever been held outside of the British Isles. Some of the members were afraid that if they came out here they would not have a good scientific time at all, but would give themselves up to sight-seeing. That has not been the case. There has been as much real scientific work done as ever, and plenty of sight-seeing as well.

The meetings,—for the reading and discussing of members' papers,—were held in McGill College and various buildings close at hand. The work was carried on in eight divisions, or sections. Those interested in mathematics and physical science, including astronomy, met in one section, called A. Chemists had section B to themselves, and Geologists had section C. There was section D for Biology, at which questions relating to all living creatures were discussed. In section E, that of Geography, the latest explorations of the earth were dealt with. Members who attended section F listened to the latest statistics about everything in the world, and discussed such "economic" questions as that of Free-trade and Protection, and the conditions of wages. At section G, for Mechanical Science, great engineering works, such as bridges, tunnels and light-houses, were dealt with. And in section H, the Anthropologists compared notes as to various nations and languages on the earth. It would be impossible for us to give anything like an idea of the mass of knowledge that was given forth by these learned men. At one time the future of the electric light was painted in glowing terms; at another the fast dying customs of Indian tribes were related. The mysterious connection between sun-spots and the earth was discussed, but without much enlightenment resulting; and English and American Geologists compared notes as to the antiquity of the rocks on their different sides of the Atlantic.

Saturday was given up to excursions. Some of the 500 members who have come across went down to Quebec, and were most hospitably received by the Governor-General; others went to Ottawa, and still others to Newport and the beautiful Lake Memphremagog, many of them being then on American soil for the first time in their lives. This week the long excursions begin. Several hundreds go by the Canadian Pacific railway up into the Rocky mountains, as far as the track is laid. Others go all over the continent,—some even to California,—according as they have friends various in parts, all, of course, go to Niagara, and many to the Yosemite and the Yellowstone National Park. When they get back to England, the information that these influential men of science will have to give will prove of the greatest value to the new countries they have seen.

### THE FRANCO-CHINESE WAR.

The French ironclads continued their attack on the forts of the Chinese near Foo Choo on August 26, 27 and 28. The Chinese offered a determined resistance, but the French demoralized the Chinese batteries, and the men in them fled. The French remained masters of the situation. Their loss was seven killed and twenty-seven wounded. The Chinese loss was estimated by the French admiral at 1,000 killed and 3,000 wounded. The Chinese man-of-war "Yan-goon" was exploded, and a French torpedo boat was sunk. The French fleet afterwards retired, when Chinamen looted and set fire to the foreign quarter of Foo Choo. The French newspapers exult over this victory.

Eighty thousand Chinese troops are said to have suddenly invaded Tonquin, the province recently conquered by the French, and, after hard fighting, to have completely annihilated the French troops there. General Millot telegraphs, however, that "The Chinese are preparing to invade Tonquin," and he is ready for them. The French commanders were unaware of the nearness of their foes until they were almost upon them. Twenty-five hundred troops were immediately got together by France to proceed at once to Tonquin.

Fears concerning the safety of Catholic missionaries in China are expressed. At Canton, the French consul and merchants were driven out by the mob.

In spite of all this bombarding and fighting, according to diplomatists, the two countries are not yet at war with each other. Now, however, it is reported that the Chinese Government, in reply to the bombardment of its forts, has issued a proclamation declaring war against France, but calling on the people to protect all French and other foreigners who are engaged in peaceable occupations. The excitable French at home have gone wild, and are crying out for the President to call the Chambers together, in order to give the ministry power to declare war against China.

In England there is a good deal of sympathy naturally felt for China; England herself has before now unjustly invaded that country, but no such deed would be approved of in the present state of public opinion, whether committed by France or by England herself. But the feelings expressed by English people and newspapers have stirred many of the French to the most furious rage, in which they would even ally themselves with their old enemy, Germany, against their old friend, Britain.

### UP THE NILE.

General Lord Wolseley having been appointed to the command of the expedition to relieve Gordon in Upper Egypt, telegraphed his plans to Cairo. He proposes to reach Dongola by boats not later than Nov. 7th. He considers this Nile expedition much easier than the Red River one which he commanded during the rebellion in Manitoba. The English Government has contracted with a Chicago firm for 750,000 lbs. of compressed beef for use on the expedition. The staff at Woolwich arsenal has been in-

creased and troops will be sent from the West Indies, Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus. Four hundred Canadian boatmen are to be employed to take this expedition up the river.

An attack was made on Khartoum on Aug. 12th by the rebels, when Gen. Gordon cleverly repulsed them, after severe fighting. A large number of the rebels were killed. The rebels have since captured three vessels near Suakim and killed four sailors. H. M. S. "Condor" has proceeded there. The British troops are quietly but steadily pushing their way on up the Nile, and General Wood with some Egyptian troops have arrived at Wady Halfa; a telegram from that place says that according to the latest letter from General Gordon, he can hold out in Khartoum till the middle of October.

The fact of the British Government sending Lord Northbrook to examine the finances of Egypt, has, of course, roused very bitter feelings among the French; it was their own fault that England was left to deal with the Egyptian difficulties single handed—but the thought that they missed an opportunity to take their share in the business only makes them hate England the more when she takes the position forced upon her by them.

### THE CHOLERA.

At Marseilles the persons who fled from the cholera are returning, and a great deal of destitution exists. It is suggested that a subscription fund in aid of these poor persons be opened in this country. At La Spezia, in Italy, the epidemic has increased, owing to some of the dead having been privately buried in gardens, only a few inches beneath the ground; the rain setting free the poisonous miasma from the dead bodies. King Humbert, and the Prime Minister of Italy recently visited a cholera hospital at Busco, and gave \$2,000 for the relief of the patients. The Italian peasants are said to fear and drive away doctors, trusting in charms and other superstitious observances. Forcible opposition has been made at some places.

Dr. Koch, of Philadelphia, says that cold weather has no effect on the disease. Damp weather keeps the germs of it alive whilst dry weather kills them. The public of Marseilles up to August 27 had subscribed 521,300 francs, (about \$104,000) to the cholera relief fund.

At Cardiff, Eng., the SS. "Esperanza" arrived on August 29 from Marseilles with two cases of cholera on board.

A riot has taken place at Gioja, the people coming with arms and preventing a British steamer from taking cargo. There was no disease whatever on the ship, but the authorities were powerless, and troops were ordered to the spot to protect the shipping and passengers.

A telegram states a French transport ship, returning from Tonquin, has arrived at Algiers with cholera on board.

THE TEAM OF British volunteers has arrived at Quebec, to compete with the Canadians in the artillery contests.

A FRIGHTFUL CATASTROPHE has happened on a railway near Greeley, Colorado. A circus car, containing sixty men, caught fire during the night, and many were burned to death before they could escape. The glare of the flames on the prairie, the roaring of the frightened wild beasts in the other cars, the stifled cries of the dying and the smell of roasting flesh all made up a most horrible scene. The engine went on and brought medical help. The charred masses of human remains were buried in a huge coffin, but it could not be found exactly how many were missing. The coroner called a jury, but the managers and the rest of the company had gone on to keep some appointment with their circus.

IT IS STATED that the British Government is preparing a bill to protect "crofters" tenants in Scotland from summary eviction. The crofters badly need such protection. They have suffered long but have not made noisy complaints, and so have been let alone by Government, which for the most part only give justice when driven to do so by well-expressed public opinion. But Mr. Gladstone is a man who, though tied down by innumerable and world-wide cares and anxieties, will do justice for its own sake when he can.

EIGHT CASES of pleuro-pneumonia have been found by the Chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry near Chicago, besides several other cases at different points. Orders have been issued to isolate the infected herds and to slaughter the diseased animals. The disease is thought to have originated in Ohio, in Mr. Dye's herd. The latter is an extensive dealer in Jersey cattle, and if his herd is infected the disease must have spread to every state in the Union.

THE TWO NATIONALIST members of Parliament for Queen's County, Ireland, have just been presented with \$1,250 each. One of them, Mr. O'Connor, in replying, urged that the Nationalist members should be paid if they were to continue the fight.

TROUBLES in Hocking County, Ohio, between miners on strike and the guards looking after the mines, has resulted in serious riots. One guard was shot dead. Troops were ordered to the spot to restore order.

THE PIGEON INDIANS in Montana, according to the governor himself, are dying of starvation, being weakened by insufficient food for two years past. The government is called upon to issue full rations.

A BRITISH STEAMER, the "Loch Tay," ran ashore on a reef at Belize, in Central America, on August 20th. The passengers and crew were saved, after spending a night and a day in open boats.

THE POPE is about to issue a letter to the faithful of his church denouncing the new divorce law of France. The bishops are instructed to maintain the principles of the church.

A NUMBER OF LIVES were lost by the capsizing of a steamer near Henderson, Indiana, in a hurricane.

SEVEN MEN were killed by an accident in a coal mine near Paisley, Scotland.