

The Weekly British Colonist AND CHRONICLE.

Saturday, June 20, 1868.

European Echoes.

In England we see as usual, in the pursuit of all her great schemes for the improvement of her people, a happy freedom from that constant dread of war which paralyzes the progress of the principal continental powers.

What it is to be about, or where it will commence, however, it does not seem to be obvious. Although upon the whole our own country may be congratulated, there are some smaller things coming to the surface that are not altogether agreeable to contemplate.

First and foremost of all is, that Her Majesty does not possess the same hold upon the people that she formerly had. It cannot be denied that independent of the dissatisfaction felt at her long and continued seclusion, a strong feeling has sprung up in reference to the support she is supposed to have given Disraeli during the discussion upon the Irish Church.

Another black spot is the total change coming over English women concerning their political rights. The "Woman's Suffrage" question is driving all asses into its horrid vortex. Even Florence Nightingale, whom we have all hitherto looked upon as the embodiment of human virtue, and feminine grace, has joined the misguided people who form the "English National Society for Women's Suffrage."

It would do for the men to post-pool this thing any longer, as a mere sapient, that will die of its own accord after a time, because it daily assumes an aspect more alarming to those who cherish the recollection of the social charm of England's society.

Already one lady has been escorted with a sort of public triumph to the polling booths in Manchester and recorded her vote under the new Registry Act in favor of a liberal candidate; and no fewer than six others have been elected on parochial boards, of all things in the world in different parts of the country.

In the neighbourhood of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, there is a religious movement going on which is entirely in the hands of women. They go about preaching among the lower classes, and manifest the greatest enthusiasm. Amongst these is a Miss Wilson, who is described as being very pretty, with a winning charming way, and gaining much repute as a pulpit oratoress.

Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. McClaren, whose husbands are both members of Parliament, and Miss Taylor, a relation of Mr. Mills, all declare in public that before the next Parliamentary movement occurs, public opinion will universally endorse the enfranchisement of woman. They have, however, all one great fear; and that is that George Francis Train will presently appear in England and become the champion of their cause.

If Train would ruin it we must all pray devoutly that he may appear without delay. Our readers must not imagine we are overdrawing the picture of this movement, for we are not by any means.

country is not altogether free from disquietude. The Government; after mature deliberation have determined not to resign without a dissolution. Whatever there is of a crisis it offers great constitutional anomalies. Unquestionably the constituencies by which the present Parliament were elected are altered; new ones have to be called into existence, and the electoral condition of Scotland and Ireland has to be determined.

As neither party can claim really to represent the present electoral status of the Kingdom, the Government maintains the right of dissolution. The House of Commons must soon solve the question; for it alone can do so; but if a general election be resolved upon it will produce one of the most severe contests known for years.

The House of Lords has taken another step in that silent revolution which is so rapidly transforming the British monarchy into a strictly popular government. The Peers, after a long and able debate, have abolished the system of voting by proxy. This ancient privilege, we all know, has been practiced from time immemorial; and more than once, when a great measure has been supported by a large majority of the Peers present, it was unexpectedly defeated in the end by the proxies of absentees drawn from the pockets of the minorities.

The system no doubt was a gross outrage on legislation, and by abolishing it the Lords have gained no little credit and honor. It was a privilege which made hereditary legislators more obnoxious to the country than any other they enjoyed; the people rightly demanded its abolition, and the Peers in letting it go have gained power by showing they can be just.

SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION OF MOUNT BAKER. Mr. Coleman, of this city, formerly a member of the Alpine Club, and whose book is an authority on Alpine scenery, intends to attempt once more the ascent of Mount Baker, in August. When upon the mountain in 1866, he perceived a path to the summit which this year he intends to take.

By a private letter from Abyssinia we learn that during the latter part of the advance on Magdala, the comforts of the officers were restricted to Spartan proportions. The rations per day consisted of 1 lb of meat, 1 oz of tea, 2 oz of compressed vegetables, and water. No grog or tobacco. The climate is represented as bitterly cold; but notwithstanding that the warm clothing had been left behind in consequence of the necessity of discarding everything in the nature of a superfluity, all were in good spirits as well as health.

The Ottawa Times is authorized to state that E. R. Burpee will make an offer to the Government, in a day or two, to locate, construct, and equip the whole line of the Intercolonial Railway, by the North Shore route, for the lump sum of \$14,600,000. If his offer is accepted, he will be prepared on the opening of the season to place two thousand men at work on the road.

Mexico.—This poor distracted country, according to late accounts, appears to be getting from bad to worse. Most of the recent papers on speaking of her internal condition are full of such expressions as "from bad to worse—brigandage, defenceless, oppression of the people, terrible atrocities, extortion, outrages, conspiracies and so forth ad nauseam." Indeed unless a man is in very robust health, it is more than his nerves can stand to read even the headings of current articles upon this beautiful but unhappy and unfortunate country.

AGRICULTURE'S SALE.—This morning Mr. McCrea will sell, at eleven o'clock, the household furniture of Messrs McCutcheon & Callingham at their residence, Fort Street. The articles to be sold are all of superior character.

FENIAN RAID.—Canada is now thoroughly aroused to the threatened attack. The Toronto Globe says it has information that it may take place any day after the 20th inst. With General Grant at the head of the American army, however, it will be very strange if he allows his country to be disgraced by being used for the convenience of these silly beings. If he does it will go a long way towards settling the Alabama claims, and the English Government ought to say so at once.

THE DOMINION SAVINGS BANK.—It is very gratifying to learn from so many sources, says the Quebec Gazette, that the Savings Bank recently established in connection with the Post Office department is meeting with encouraging success. In every city and large town in the Dominion, as we hear, deposits were made on the very first day; and before the first four days were over, quite a large sum had been received.

POLICE COURT.—John Liverman, for selling liquor to an Indian, fined \$50 or three months imprisonment. George Hall, remanded as a suspicious character; ordered to find bail to be of good behavior for six months, himself in \$100, and two sureties in \$50 each, in default of bail to receive one month's imprisonment. Henry Neale, for assaulting his wife; remanded for two days. Richard Morgan, for assault, on bail for \$25.

NAVAL.—The command of the gunboat Forward, in lieu of Commandeur Denny, who returns to England, having received his promotion, has been given to Lieut. T. H. Laroom, who arrived by the California on Sunday. Mr. Denny, during his comparatively short stay amongst us, has succeeded in gaining the esteem and friendship of all with whom he came in contact.

SAD ACCIDENT.—A little child of Mr. Haynes, James Bay, about 16 months old, was taken out on Sunday evening by an elder brother to play in the yard. In a few minutes Mrs. Haynes inquired after the child to put it to bed, but it could not be found. After a long and anxious search, the well was thought of, and in it the poor child was found dead. It is said he must have been in the water fully an hour.

THE LATE HON. MR. MCGEE.—It is a very singular circumstance, says the London Free Press, that on the very day that Mr. McGee was martyred for his adherence to law, order and country, Mike Murphy, of Toronto, the father of Fenianism in Canada, should have been on his death-bed, an exile, at Buffalo.

THE STEAMER CALIFORNIA.—This vessel will leave this morning for Port Townsend and return in the evening. It is intended at present to dispatch her so early on Thursday morning for San Francisco that passengers going down by her would do well to be on board by Wednesday night.

THE PRINCE OF WALES.—The ship Chelsea, from San Francisco, arrived on Sunday evening on her way to Moody's mill, Burrard Inlet. The Chelsea is a fine 1000 ton vessel, and will take a cargo of lumber to Melbourne, Australia.

ENGLISH VESSELS LOADING FOR THE PORT.—The Prince Victor, Glendinning, was loading in London by advices of 2nd May, and the Bolivia, Kelly, at Liverpool, both for this port.

MARSHAL'S SALE.—The ship Ellen will be offered for sale at Sayward's lumber yard this day afternoon, by the Marshal of the Vice Admiralty Court of Vancouver Island.

The British Mission in Abyssinia—Napier's Great Victory.

King Theodore is dead. The captives have been rescued. The British loss was about ten wounded. The army will return immediately. Never, surely, in the history of war has there been an expedition undertaken with such reluctance, planned with such precision, and perfected with such despatch and completeness as that over the success of which England will this day rejoice.

Sir Robert Napier might write with Caesar, Veni, Vidi, Vici. On Good Friday he had brought his forces within ten miles of Magdala. The enemy was in force, and posted in a very strong position. Their camp was visible on a precipitous height. The natural ravines they commanded had been made more difficult of approach by escarpments, and it was doubtful in what way the attack would begin.

The enemy opened the battle. They attacked the First Brigade, but were repulsed with great slaughter, and the moral effects of the defeat were even more important than its immediate result. The next day King Theodore tardily offered to treat, but was even then unwilling, as it would seem, to acknowledge the hopelessness of his position. An unconditional surrender of all the captives was demanded, though it was indeed feared that the English prisoners had been killed.

On that day, however, and the next, Theodore sent into the British camp every European in his power, both the captives and artificers, but still declined to surrender himself into Sir Robert Napier's hands. Twenty-four hours were given him to decide, and still resisting, Magdala was stormed on Easter Monday, this day fortnight. The assault was conducted under cover of the Armstrong steel-guns, the 3-inch mortars, and the rocket battery, and was completely successful.

It is indeed true that by that time the Emperor seems to have lost all command over the mass of his forces. The most formidable position without the city had been surrendered, and the Abyssinians had laid down their arms by thousands; but Theodore was still resolute, and a band of faithful adherents still defended him. It was in vain. He might and did resist desperately; but he was fighting against impossibilities.

If we may credit one account, it would appear that in the decisive moment of his fate he was not unmindful of his imperial pretensions. This willfulness of the man was manifested even then. He killed himself with his pistol as the British troops approached him, and thus escaped indignities which his own practices presented to his imagination.

Other despatches simply say that he was killed, for his dead body was recognized by those who had lately been his prisoners. With his death the war terminated. The captives had been released. The tyrant had spared us all pains of considering what punishment should be inflicted for his contumacy. Sir Robert Napier was preparing to march homeward with the record of his victory.

The suddenness, the decisiveness of his success—and absolute extinction of Theodore and his power—cannot surprise us. If once our soldiers were confronted by the enemy, the result was certain. The contest between an English army with English arms, and an Abyssinian force of untrained, if gallant men, was seen to be, and in fact was so hopeless, that not even the thoroughness of the triumph should tempt us into mere exultation over the enemy.

Our 12 pounder Armstrong guns silenced his artillery. Our disciplined men could find no foeman worthy of their training among his followers. We need not boast that "our Chassepot did wonders." The special merit of the Abyssinian campaign was not that it was a victory over Abyssinians, but a victory over Abyssinia itself. Nature fought against us, and our science and our organization defeated this worst of antagonists.

The greater part of the long march from Annesley Bay to Magdala has been brought before us so vividly by our correspondents that the English nation has been able from first to last to accompany the army in its difficulties. Is it too much to say that nothing like it has been attempted, much less accomplished, since Suwarrov led his forces over the St. Gothard, or are we too vain in remembering that his wild struggle with the adverse powers of nature was less protracted than the labors of our Abyssinian Expedition?

and sympathize with the nervous anxiety felt by the whole force as it neared Magdala lest Theodore should retire and attempt to wear them out in endless pursuit of him and his captives. Well-accredited rumors had provided such tactics. But Theodore had sworn that "though all his other soldiers should fly, he and his standard-bearer should alone face the British, and to do him justice, he kept his oath. It is, indeed, impossible, viewing him in his last hour, not to feel some pity for the man who has compelled us to crush him. In his wildest freaks of passion, even in his savage brutalities, there was a singular consistency. He was the stuff of which many a Eastern conqueror has been made. Endowed with intense personal will, great courage, and wide designs, he was yet incapable of self-control, and wholly unable to understand the power of a civilization higher than his own.

Unhappily for himself he provoked a conflict with the arms of the West; he was unjust, and violent and cruel in his injustice to unoffending subjects of the British Crown, he put our messengers of peace in chains, he misunderstood our forbearance, he challenged us, to vindicate the wrongs we had suffered; yet it must be said of this self-proclaimed descendant of Solomon that, passionate and resolute to the end, he still fought when fighting was hopeless, and, as we may believe, preferred to die by his own hand rather than fall under the vengeance of an unknown enemy.

The army will return immediately. The simple statement with which Sir Robert Napier closes his telegraphic despatch announcing the victory, is the best commentary that can be made upon our motives in entering upon the Abyssinian war. The speedy withdrawal of the force from Abyssinian territory will be a complete answer to the insinuations of foreign cities. The death of Theodore happily relieves us from all embarrassment in performing what must in any case have been an inevitable duty. As it is, our mission in Abyssinia has been completely accomplished.

We have redeemed the emissaries of the Crown, and with them all European captives, from the painful slavery experienced. The single author of all the mischief—the only person with whom in Abyssinia we had any quarrel—has put it out of our power to punish his misdeeds by challenging inevitable, if not inflicting voluntary death. We can thus withdraw without hesitation, for we have done all that was ever designed. We can even withdraw our power without compunction, for we are relieved from all apprehension that we leave behind us a nation doomed through our innocent instrumentality to suffer the wild revenge of a defeated madman.

It is, of course, true that we shall leave Abyssinia disorganized; but the disorganization of Abyssinia is unhappily chronic, and there is now a better prospect than that it may soon terminate than has, long, been known. We have neither caused nor aggravated the disorders of the country. We entered it because its ruler, in defiance of the simplest dictates of natural justice, refused to liberate our subjects sent to him on a message of peace. We have liberated them; and he has himself perished, and, our mission over, we leave again the land we entered with the sole purpose of performing it.

Canada, May 8th. A terrible tornado swept over the township of Stanley and Goderich on 5th May last, damaging and destroying a vast amount of valuable property. A Mrs Campbell, in trying to save her children, was seriously hurt, as the chimney and other portions of her house were blown down. It is thus described: "A violent hail storm commenced, which continued for some time, during which hail stones, or rather icicles, fell, measuring one and a half inches in diameter and two and three inches long, tapering to a point like an icicle. It was during this hail storm that a mighty rushing sound was heard, in southerly direction across the lake, and turning the eyes in this direction a spectacle awfully grand and sublime presented itself. Around what looked like a dense black spiral column of smoke, balloon shaped, being larger at the top than the bottom, the clouds were whirling and clashing with a fury and violence utterly indescribable, the tail of which would ever and anon lash and writhe, like a monstrous serpent, its force being irresistible. Accompanying this, but a considerable distance above it, was a large dense black cloud, but which did not appear to be in such violent commotion, although it too would frequently part asunder and then immediately clash together again in awful grandeur.

Mrs McGee is in a very precarious state of health. The sad bereavement which she has experienced has induced a state of nervous prostration which her physicians regard as very serious. So greatly is she affected that she is never left alone, and for some days it was feared that her reason could hardly bear up against the calamity which had befallen her. We are glad to hear that though still far from well, Mrs McGee is gradually becoming convalescent.

The boring for salt at Kinross Works is progressing favorably, the company having reached a depth of fifty-five feet. The schoolboys in Montreal, on their way home, ate some wild parsnips growing along the railway track last Wednesday. Two of them, brothers, named Day, died that night, and it is feared that others will die.

ABDICATION OF THE EMPEROR OF BRAZIL. The Argentine journals state that private letters received in Buenos Ayres from Rio Janeiro announce the intended abdication of his Majesty Don Pedro II., Emperor of Brazil. They say that the Emperor recently called a conference of the principal personages of the country to arrange definitely the terms of his abdication, to whom he announced the reasons, prompting him to take that step, stating at the same time that his resolution was irrevocable. It appears that he is tired of the fatigues of government, and will probably retire to Europe.

It is said there are two things in the present day dearer than life, and those two things are fashionable marriages and fashionable funerals.