

The Canada School Journal,

AND WEEKLY REVIEW.

VOL. X.

TORONTO, APRIL 23, 1885.

No. 16.

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The Canada School Journal and Weekly Review.

Edited by J. E. WELLS, M.A.

and a staff of competent Provincial editors.

An Educational Journal devoted to the advancement of Literature, Science, and the teaching profession in Canada.

—o—T E R M S.—o—

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Publishers.

The World.

An American paper wittily said after the Chinese victory at Lang-Son that the French were threatening to declare war against China if the thing were repeated. But the new French Government proceeded to negotiate for peace instead. The treaty waives the French demand for indemnity for the Chinese attack at Lang-Son, which was the pretext for the invasion, but, on the other hand, recognizes a French Protectorate over Tonquin and Anam. There is still some difficulty about the order of the respective armies' withdrawal, whether the French shall raise the siege of Formosa or the Chinese withdraw from Tonquin, first. Meanwhile, to add to the humour of the situation the Chinese Emperor is said to have issued a proclamation telling his subjects that the French having humbly sued for peace, he has granted their prayer and begs his soldiers to refrain from destroying them.

The Week gives its cordial support to the objects of the National Liberal Temperance Union, recently formed in Toronto, one of which objects is the prohibition of ardent spirits. There is much to be said in favor of the distinction the Union emphasizes between beers and light wines, whose use it approves, and the strong liquors it would fain suppress. But *The Week* shows a singular inconsistency for so able a journal in its course on this question. Its columns have teemed with articles condemning the Scott Act as "sumptuary" legislation and an interference with the liberty of the subject. Surely to say that it is tyranny to forbid A his wine, or B his beer, but sound political economy to deprive C of his brandy, and D of his whiskey, is to make a distinction without a difference in the principle involved. If the former is sumptuary legislation pray what is the latter? As a matter of fact neither prohibition would be a sumptuary law, the object of the prohibitionists being to promote sobriety and prevent crime, not to regulate household expenses. By its action in this case the *Week* relegates the whole question of prohibition to the domain of public expediency where it belongs.

A marked change has come over the spirit of the English despatches in reference to the Afghan affair since our last issue. The prospects of a temporary peace have much improved. The change is somewhat hard to understand, though no doubt its secret causes will come to light by-and-by. It is evidently not that the lion has become afraid of the bear, or that the bear has convinced the lion of its innocence and friendly intentions. Nor has Komaroff made good his assertions that the Afghans were the aggressors in the Kushk River affair. But somehow it has suddenly been discovered that Pendjeh is not worth fighting for, and that the Russians might as well have it if they want it. There is little doubt that the change is due to new discoveries in regard to the feelings and intentions of the Afghans themselves. The British army could hardly invade their territory, and defend them from attack, without their own consent. The worst feature of the case is that nearly all seem agreed that a great Anglo-Russian war is only postponed, not averted.

The bill for the employment of prison convicts has, strange to say, been defeated in the New York Legislature. The *Christian Union* points out very clearly and forcibly the criminal folly of keeping the prisoners, amounting to about one in every thousand of the population—in idleness. Apart from the fact that hard labor is the most fitting punishment, the best preventive against confirming and intensifying vicious habits, and, rightly used, the most potent reforming agent, the notion that prison labour is an injury to the free labourer involves a most absurd fallacy. The employment of all prisoners would add about one-two-hundredth part to the labour of the country. It is surely better that honest labour should suffer by this small