

NEWS SUMMARY.

Interesting Items from all Parts of the World.

UNITED STATES.

As a result of the Pittsburg glass-works strike, co-operative factories are being started by the workmen.

Georgia farmers are busy securing laborers for the coming season, and it is said that the supply is equal to the demand.

Strawberries from a New Jersey hot-house sell for \$1 a dozen. Peaches may be ordered for \$3 each in very small quantities.

Newport, R. I., has received \$20,000 from the State, as partial compensation for ceding Coasters' Harbor Island to the national government.

Though 52,000,000 bushels of grain were despatched from New York to Europe last year, not one American vessel cleared with grain as its cargo.

Semi-annual dividends to the amount of \$1,051,750 will be paid by corporations in Hartford, Conn., this month, being about the same as last year.

The bookkeeper of the Washington Bank, Boston, has been in the employ of that institution fifty years, and has never asked for nor taken a day's vacation.

Killing alligators for their skins and teeth employs a large force of men in Florida, who are engaged to furnish 500,000 skins to a tannery in a given time.

Mr. J. C. Flood's Christmas gifts to the orphan asylums, etc., of San Francisco aggregated \$6,000. Protestants, Catholics, and Hebrews being treated alike.

Louisiana, has 2,557 factories, working 50,072 hands, with a capital invested of \$18,313,974, paying annually in wages \$1,593,470, and yielding annually in products \$24,161,905.

There were 1,775 violent deaths in Philadelphia last year, and 110 of the victims have never been identified. Seventy of the latter were infants; the others were men and all white but one.

Despatches from the West report the coldest weather known for years. In the North-west Territories it is 50 below zero in some localities, the cold wave moving eastward.

It is expected that General Grant will visit Havana during the month. He will be the guest of his friend General Bad eau, the United States Consul-General for Cuba.

Senator Fair sent \$1,000 as a Christmas gift to the Nevada Orphan Asylum in Virginia, with a pleasant letter in which he alluded to the many happy days he had spent in that city.

The ship-building industry in Maine has proved more satisfactory this year on the whole than was expected last spring, on account of the prevailing low freights. Last year there was an unusual number of tons built, and in 1883 the total comes within 70,775 tons of the total for 1882.

A New York cigar dealer has invented a "tobacco refrigerator" for keeping the weed fresh and moist while exposed for sale. It is a cigar stand and tobacco-box combined, made of polished white metal, and divided in the centre by two perforated partitions, between which is placed a wet sponge.

South Carolina has a local option law which applies to incorporated cities, towns and villages. When a place votes in favor of prohibition it is said to have gone "dry," and when another votes for license it is said to have gone "wet." More than twice as many towns have gone "dry" as have gone "wet."

An Exchange says:—A bill permitting divorce for adultery was defeated in the State Senate of South Carolina, recently, on the ground, among others, that divorce laws are a "Northern institution," and therefore not proper to be adopted in South Carolina. It was shown that the Bible authorizes divorce for adultery, and also that the lack of a law of that kind leads to adultery, and is often a cruel wrong to innocent parties; but the objection could not be overcome, and South Carolina remains solid on the adultery issue.

CANADIAN.

A new bridge has been built across the Schellu river at Lacolle, P. Q., costing \$17,000.

A Chicago paper states that no less than 1,000 ducks left that city at holiday time to visit "the old folks at home."

The eldest surviving daughter of Sir Hector Langevin was married recently to Thomas Chapuis, son of Senator Chapuis, and Private Secretary to Lieut. Governor Robitaille.

The produce of the coal mines of Nova Scotia during the first three quarters of 1883 amounted to 1,078,396 tons—an increase over the same period of the previous year of 57,463 tons. The sales during the same period aggregated 966,000 tons—an increase of 93,157.

The Buffalo papers describe McBride, who is arranging to blow up the public buildings on the other side of the line, and thus avenge O'Donnell's death, as a first-water crank. In Chicago they make congressmen of such men as McBride. This crazy Buffalonian should come West.

The returns of fish exported to Chicago from Halifax over the Intercolonial Railway show that 160 car-loads were shipped during the year, divided as follows: 2,761 one hundred pound boxes, 61 four quintal casks and 319,945 pounds in bulk of codfish; 1,616 boxes boneless codfish; 2,583 barrels mackerel; 7,198 barrels herring.

An American exchange says:—Here's an item of commercial news that require no elaboration in order to convey an idea of the growth of certain branches of Canadian trade: The export of cattle from Montreal has increased from 2,888 head in 1876 to 50,366 in 1883, while during the same period the export of sheep has risen from 2,686 head to 102,835.

The Provincial library at Halifax claims to have the only volume of the life of the late prince consort presented by Queen Victoria to an American colony. On the fly-leaf is written, in her majesty's clear style of penmanship: Presented to the legislative library of Nova Scotia in memory of her great and good husband, by his broken-hearted widow, Victoria R., 1864.

An African Sultan.

The death of Berehan, Sultan of Raheita, was lately reported from Aden. The following description of him, contributed to the *Courier de l'Inde* by S. G. Licata, the Italian traveller who penetrated to that far region, may be found interesting:

"I remember," Sig. Licata, "the last visit that Berehan made us, and the last words I heard him pronounce at Buja, where we had prepared for him a throne of new matting and a glass of tamarind. He said that his people believed that we white were like panthers, but that he had seen that we were good, and he smiled around upon us while pushing away our little dogs that tried to lick him, for if they had succeeded in doing so he would have been obliged to take a bath to purify himself. He was mightily content with what little court we paid him, and with the carabineer who stood at the door. That morning he had been on board the Cariddi, and the little flag we had hoisted in his honor, the raising of which the cannon, the salute from a Nordenfeldt, had filled him with a sense of his sultanic dignity. He had the highest quality of a king—ambition—although all his sovereignty consisted in his having, under the immediate care of the crown prince, more goats and camels than other people. He asked, as he always did, for a little coffee to take with him. He suffered from heart disease, and had been having a fire kindled on his breast to cure him, as well as hanging a leather bag containing a piece of the koran round his neck. Then he felt safe, having more faith in the efficacy of such methods than in all the pills and draughts of the doctor. The fire and the koran were sufficient, for his malady was a devil that had entered his body, and must be driven out by the name of Allah. I saw him first at Raheita, in his royal palace of matting. The Egyptians had been molesting him as usual, and he had sent word to his protectors at Asaab. As soon as we arrived he fervently pressed our hands, and seated himself on his throne with the air of a Pharaoh and an idol, dressed in white with bracelets made of goat-skin. The court was full of his warriors, greasy with butter, and of cattle just come from the pasture. There was a glittering of lances and horns, an odor of dairy and stable. The harem contributed its notes—a continuous ringing of silver and glass ornaments and the squeals of babies. In fact, all the riches of a goatherd and a pasha. Then I saw him at Asaab, when he came to receive the \$50 assigned to him every month by our government. He never came without insisting that a palaver should be held to discuss several points concerning the selling of a portion of his territory. I don't know how many years ago. He was as petulant as a beggar, sometimes in a manner to tempt one to give him a bacchish and send him off. He was not yet 50 years of age. He will be succeeded, according to laws of the country, not by his son, but by his nephew, a long fellow, half blind. He died in his bed, amid the lamentations of his subjects. We owe much to Berehan of Raheita. He cooperated in person to the success of Antonelli's expedition. He was less black than he seemed, and now that he is dead he has no color at all. Yes, poor dear Berehan, we are good, and we will write our word of sorrow on the big paper that you wanted so much to be able to read, knowing that it contained the news of all the world. While your wives weep for you, I, two thousand miles away, will buy a little wreath of immortelles and send them to your tomb."

Stirring News from the Dark Continent.

The eyes of all the world are just now turned upon that cradle of ancient civilization—the valley of the Nile. A new prophet has appeared at the head of a very large army, and he has succeeded in defeating troops officered by Englishmen and equipped with the best modern arms. The false prophet, El Mahdi, is an Arab, a fanatic, and undoubtedly in his way is a genius. There has been a tradition in the Mohammedan world that in 1883 a successor of Mahomet would make his appearance and deliver the faithful from the mastery of the infidel Giauour. This looked-for leader was to have one marked physical peculiarity—one arm was to be longer than the other. El Mahdi fulfills this condition, for he can touch his knee with the fingers of his right hand. He has succeeded in totally destroying the army of General, or as he was called, Hicks Pasha. The flower of the Egyptian army—a Nubian corps—was subsequently defeated by the Bedouin followers of El Mahdi. Should there be a rising of fanatical Moslems throughout Northern Africa it might lead to important consequences. The Gladstone government will be forced to hold Egypt as a dependency, and make sacrifices of men and treasure in beating back the hordes of the false prophet. The government of Egypt is in disorder, and some very curious complications will result from the operations of the military fanatic who won so singular a victory over well-armed and well-disciplined troops.

King Thebaw "Reforms."

According to the news published in the Rangoon papers, King Thebaw has become a "reformed character." Till lately this potentate had been a weak young man, given up to indolence, self-indulgence, and cruelty; but it is reported that since the death of "the monster" Yanoung Prince, a marked change has taken place which has done much to restore King Thebaw's power and influence. With the re-establishment of his ascendancy the moderate and enlightened men who have always been attached to his party, and who, not actually vanished from court, have, we learn, lately had little or no say in the conduct of affairs, are now taking the proper positions in the councils of the nation. The king himself has awakened from his lethargy, and has begun to assert himself as sovereign and ruler, while in a corresponding degree the interference and influence of the queen have decreased. He now, according to the same source of information, regularly attends and presides at the meetings of the Hloodaw, and appears to have suddenly developed a surprising amount of intelligence and energy. The latest news from Thebaw's court is that the king, being determined to make an effort to subdue the rebellious Shan chiefs, has despatched five thousand troops to the Shan states under the command of four generals, accompanied by several Italians in the King's service.

Witchcraft in Scotland.

At the Inverness police court recently, an elderly Highland woman named Isabelle Macrae, or Stewart, was charged with assaulting a little girl. She pleaded not guilty, and the evidence showed that the latter had used insulting language to the prisoner, while she on the other hand spoke of the little girl's grandmother as a witch. Toward the close of the case great amusement was caused in court by the accused producing a clay image, or corp creagh, which she believed was made by the so-called witch. The legs had been broken off the image, and since then the prisoner believed that her own legs were losing their strength. A person who wished to purchase the image after the accused had left the court was promptly told that on no account would she part with it, for if anything happened to it she might die, and she was not prepared. Her husband had died some time ago, and also three horses, and she grieved to think that all these calamities were attributable to witchcraft. The image was about four inches in length, green worsted threads containing the diabolic charm were wound round, while pins were pierced through the part where the heart should be. The accused was convicted and sentenced to fine or imprisonment.—*London Daily News.*

In the Tail of a Comet.

An ingenious theorizer has written a book which was published by the Appletons, to prove that many ages since the earth must have passed through the tail of a comet, and that certain disturbances observed on the surface of our planet were caused thereby. The scratches and erosions from the northeast and southwest found upon hills and mountains in the northern hemisphere were attributed to the action of the more solid matter of the comet's tail, leaving its marks, together with the bowlders and detached rocks, which are found in such profusion in the Temperate and Frigid Zones. Although this theory would account for much that is mysterious, it has not been accepted by scientists, as it is not believed that tails of comets are formed of any solid material. Early in December last, some curious atmospheric phenomena were noticed in different portions of the world. At sunset and before sunrise the heavens were permeated with a glow of rosy light, such as might have been caused if a great conflagration had been raging. These strange appearances were noticed in both Europe and America. They have puzzled the scientific world. But some venturesome theorists have again put forward the hypothesis of the world being surrounded by the atmosphere of a comet's tail. It is known that about the time these phenomena occurred our planet was in the track of Bela's comet, and in a part of the heavens that was filled with meteors. It is known that comets are more numerous in the heavens than fishes are in the waters of the earth. Their numbers are so great as to be inconceivable to the human mind and it is not at all improbable that the earth in past times may have been entangled in the tails of these wonders of the sky. We live in a marvelous universe. "There are two things," said the great philosopher Kant, "which always fills me with awe and admiration, and those are the wondrous heavens by which we are surrounded and the moral law within."—*Demorest's Monthly.*

Mr. Elihu Vedder, though principally known as a painter, is a sculptor as well, and some fine specimens of his plastic skill are to be seen in the large iron plates used to back the fire-openings of several Boston hearths. These plates are bas-reliefs of *li-carre*, mythical heads, modelled with characteristic dash and strength. The very remunerative business of decorating the interiors of private houses is now engaging the attention of a large proportion of the best American painters and sculptors. Artists who, a few years ago, would have considered it beneath their dignity to paint a frieze or to design a mantel, are glad to exercise their genius in this direction. History repeats itself.

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