The Weekly Messenger

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY

ALBERT BIENVENU.

The Hungarian Government has obtained control of ten thousand taverns throughout the country. This has been done by virtual purchase, and the sum necessary so defray the cost of the redemption of them will be raised by a special loan. A large number of these buildings are to be converted into public school-houses.

An effort is being made in Great Britain to repeal the ancient law according to which jurymen are denied refreshment when they are considering their verdicts. The London *Lancet* which is the principal organ of the English medical profession, calls for some relaxation of what it designates as "the antique rigidity of the law" on the subject. It urges that most persons when hungry become angry, and the irritated mind is seldom just.

The fire which destroyed the office of the Minneapolis *Tribune* and a number of its employes, coming so soon on the heels of similar disasters on a larger scale as to property loss in Lynn and Boston, has seriously impressed the public mind with the necessity for greater safeguards against the flames. The *Tribune* building, it seems, was provided with only one fire-escape and one stairway, which was a narrow one, winding around that deadly fire trap, the elevator. Urgent needs of the times are a fire-proof building which is proof against fire, and a vigorous enforcement of laws which require the furnishing of adequate fixed appliances to enable people to escape from burning buildings.

One museum attraction has permanently retired from business. His specialty was catching a bullet, fired from a rifle, in his teeth. This apparently wonderful feat is not, according to the Chicago *Herald*, so difficult when one knows how to do it. The main thing is to have an imitation bullet composed of pasteboard. It looks exactly like lead and easily "catches" the gaping jays who see the trick. This time, however, the gun was accidentally loaded with a leaden bullet, which, instead of being stopped between the teeth of the showman, went on through his head. But the tragedy will hardly break up this branch of the show business. It will probably be worked by the museum fakir as a good "ad."

Evidences are not wanting of the tenacity with which the French of Canada still adhere to old France as the parent country, and fresh proofs are forthcoming every day. The Dominion Government have just now been informed that if the French Canadian grievances in the Canadian Northwest are not adjusted, and if the French language and separate schools are abolished, the former as an official language, they will appeal to France, who they are assured will see that the treaty which ceded Canada to Great Britain is not broken. The French in Canada have become too powerful for the Dominion British Government to treat with indifference. They number 2,000,000 people, 40 per cent. of the entire population, and the threat of appealing to France is not now made for the first time, says the New York *Sun*. It has been used, and used successfully, before as a weapon under the power of which the Canadian Government relented. It forcibly serves to show what must inevitably come, sooner or later—an open conflict between the two national elements for supremacy.

A NEW albuminous poison, of one hundred times the power of strychnine, has been described by Prof. Kobert to the Society of Naturalists of Dorpat. It is extracted from the seeds of *Abrus precatorius*, which have long been used as irritants and anti-hemorrhage remedies, in Brazil for ophthalmia and in India as a poison. Entire English colonies are said to have been murdered in India by pricks from sharp points rolled up in the seeds, the mark left being no more than that from the sting of an insect. The poisonous principle causes death by coagulation of the blood corpuscles.

Of the 10,200 steamers in the world of over 100 tons register, 5914 are British and only 425 belong to the United States.

THE ETERNAL WILL

There is no thing we cannot overcome.
Say not thy evil instinct is inherited.
Or that some trait in-born makes thy whole life forlorn.
And calls down punishment that is not merited.
Back of thy parents and grandparents lies
The great Eternal Will! That, too, is thine
Inheritance—strong, beautiful, divine;
Sure lever of success for one who tries.

Pry up thy fault with this great lever—Will.
However deeply bedded in propensity,
However firmly set, I tell thee, firmer yet
Is that vast power that comes from Truth's immensity.
Thou art a part of that strange world, I say;
Its forces lie within thee, stronger far
Than all thy mortal sins and frailties are.
Believe thyself divine, and watch and pray.

There is no noble height thou can'st not climb.
All triumphs may be thine in Time's futurity,
If, whatsoever thy fault thou dost not faint or halt,
But lean upon the staff of God's security.
Earth has no claim the soul cannot contest.
Know thyself part of the Supernal source,
And naught can stand before thy spirit's force.
The soul's divine inheritance is best.

THE SAVAGES OF INDIA.

Go where you will in India, you will find danger lurking about your hammock or dogging your footsteps. You are not much safer in a large city than in the country. I was stabbed by a would-be robber almost in the heart of Bombay, and a poisonous spider bit me in one of the parks of Calcutta and caused me a month's visit to the hospital. Before the British advent India must have been what might be termed a paradise-hell. It swarmed with Thugs, dangerous fanatics, and real lunatics, and no spot was safe from savage beasts and dangerous reptiles. Forty years of progress and civilization, with the expenditure of millions upon millions of dollars in the shape of rewards have only made certain neighborhoods comparatively safe. The Thug travels no more in bands, and the dangerous fanatic is confined in asylums, but the tiger, the hyena, the serpent, the bear, the crocodile, tarantula, and a score of other dangers menace human life every hour in the day, and will continue to do so for centuries to come.

A friend of mine had a summer residence about nine miles from Lucknow, and I accepted his invitation to spend a few weeks with him. He had about 300 acres of land, a large part of which was forest and thicket, with a creek running across a portion of the estate. The idea in India is to keep cool. Therefore, every house is built with this idea, being provided with as many windows as possible, and always surrounded with veradas. I had never seen a cobra, except in zoological gardens, when I went out there, but I was fated to have an adventure almost as soon as I arrived. My bedroom was at a corner of the second story of the bungalow, and contained three windows. These were screened with wire and the sashes taken out. A hammock was slung to hooks in the ceiling, and the room was fairly comfortable even on a very hot night.

On the third morning, just at daybreak, I was aroused from sleep by a noise on the veranda which ran along under my bedroom windows. My hammock was within two feet of one of the windows, and of course the wire cloth admitted every sound from the outside. As the grounds were guarded by two chowkadars, or watchmen, I had no fear of thieves, and therefore had no arms within reach. I lay facing the window, with my face not over thirty inches from the screen, and was wondering what had caused the noise, when a big cobra suddenly lifted his head against the outside of the wire, and his eyes looked into mine. For half a minute it seemed as if my heart did not beat at all. Had the window been unguarded I could not have raised a finger to ward off the attack. The serpent hissed at me and moved its hideous head all over the screen, looking for some break in its surface. It bulged in as it pressed on it, and, knowing how slovenly work is done by Indian servants, I expected it to give way at any instant. After a couple of minutes the snake went to the second window, and then to the third, searching every square inch in hopes to find a way into the room.

After he left the window directly in front of me I might have dropped out of the hammock and got my revolver from the bureau, but it occurred to me that if I provoked the cobra he would be pretty sure to make a more vigorous attack. I therefore lay perfectly quiet, closed my eyes so that I could just peep at him, and after going over all the windows a second and third time I heard him crawling around the veranda. I then dropped out, opened the door and called to my friend, and he seized a double-barrelled shotgun and passed through the halls until he found the serpent on the other side of the house. He had given up seeking an entrance by the windows and was mounting to the roof when a charge of buckshot fired at close range through the screen cut him almost in two. No one was at all excited; the incident seemed to have no more weight than the visit of a bat.

A week later two of the servants accompanied me on a hunt around the neighborhood after birds. Neither was armed, and both were barefooted, barelegged and barearmed. In the marshy ground along the creek I shot several birds of the snipe species, and we were about to cross it when one of the natives, who was in the lead and following a path, halted, turned back, and quietly said:

"We had better go another way, sahib."

"But why?"

"Because the crocodile might do us harm."

"I advanced to the spot where he had halted, and at once made out a huge saurian lying in the creek, right across the path, and evidently waiting for some one to cross. This was not over a quarter of a mile from the bungalow, and the saurian had evidently come down the creek from a small lake about two miles away. I made ready to fire at him, but one of the natives touched my arm and respectfully said:

"Please don't, sahib. If you anger him he will bring others to make us trouble."

"But he ought to be driven away or killed."

"Yes, but when there are a thousand more in the lake, what would you gain?"

He seemed so earnest about it that I turned away. That night a number of the servants crossed the creek to attend some sort of a party, and in the morning a young man was missing. After considerable inquiry it was decided that the crocodile had seized him as he attempted to cross the path. I said to the native who had restrained my fire:

"Now you see what you did. Had I killed the reptile the young man would have been with us this morning."

"Ah, sahib, but you might not have killed him, and then he would have taken two of us. I can soon find another young man."

About six miles below Patna, on the Ganges, in the Bengalee district, a couple of English officers with whom I was acquainted had a shooting box, and I went up with a party to enjoy some sport. It was a wild strip of country along the stream, and although so near to a village this fact did not render game any less abundant. A dozen tigers, three or four panthers, and a score of hyenas had been bagged there within two years, but it still remained a favorite lurking ground for big game. As a matter of curiosity I hunted up the returns made to the Government from this place, and found that the average of natives bitten by serpents, devoured by crocodiles, or slain by wild beasts was over three per week the year round. These were the figures reported by the natives, as they persist in believing that the blanks sent in by officials are somehow connected with taxation or official surveillance. Two days before we started a native came in to the civil authorities to report a case. He said:

"We were going to see our father and mother at Mugador (a village seven miles away), my brother and I. We were in a path crossing the forest to save distance. He was ahead. It was about two hours after daylight. We were very happy, and he was telling me a story which his wife had told him, when a tiger suddenly sprang upon him. I stopped. The tiger stood over him with both paws upon his breast, and looked at me and growled and switched his tail. I could do nothing. I walked backward in the path, and the tiger seized my brother by the shoulder, gave him a half whirl, and then trotted away into the thicket. I have been told that it is my duty to report this."

"Yes," carelessly replied the official, as he took down a brief memorandum.

"Can I go now?"

"You can, but be more careful in the future. You should have had a dog along to scare the tiger away."

"So I should, sahib, but he was carried off by a panther last week. Do not blame me—I will do better in future."

The idea of a man entreating forgiveness because his brother had been carried off by a tiger seemed very queer to me, but the official explained that without criticism and censure the natives would become so careless that the list of fatal accidents would double in a year.

We had been at the shooting box three days, and had killed a dozen hyenas, a panther and a couple of big snakes. There were four white men of us in the party, and we had eight or ten native trackers and servants. On the fourth morning, before breakfast, I ran a thorn into my foot, and was advised to lie quiet during the day. The house was divided into two rooms, each about twelve feet square, and each having two hammocks in it. The first room was used to store provisions in. The door between the two was a frame covered with wire cloth. There was only one window in each room, and that was provided with a sliding sash, with wire cloth tacked over the outside. The outside door was also a screen, but this was left standing open during the day.

After breakfast one of the natives fixed a poultice of leaves for my wound, and I lay down in a hammock in the inner room. The three other white men went off up the river, accompanied by all the natives except two, one to attend me and the other to see to the cooking. I lay facing the doors, and had a view of the fire and a strip of country beyond it. At 9 o'clock we heard the reports of rifles far away. Half an hour later, just as I was elevating my head so that I could read a book which was at hand, I saw a tiger spring upon the two men. They were not at the fire, but a few feet away, under a tree, and their faces were toward me. The animal had therefore approached unseen. He knocked both down, and struck them after they were down, and then stood over their prostrate bodies, and looked at the forest. This was hardly ten feet from the open door. It was so sudden that I lost half a minute, and by the end of that time the tiger left the men and came to the door and looked in. He probably scented me, for he switched his tail and growled, and while he stood there I saw blood on his neck.

My hammock had ceased swinging, and I kept very quiet in hopes the brute would go away. He stood and growled and stared for a minute, and then advanced to the inner door and pushed against it. Had it opened toward me he could have entered, but it opened the other way. With his eyes and nose against the wire he growled in a way to send the chill over me, but I feared to move a finger for fear he would make a dash and come through the cloth. He did rake his teeth along the surface, and also strike the wire two or three times with his paw. He must have hit the sharp ends of some of the wires the last time, for he uttered a yell and drew back, and after licking his paw for a moment retreated through the open door. As my rifle was in the further room I felt it prudent to lie quiet for a time, and when I did get up the beast had disappeared. I found one of the natives dead, his skull having been crushed by a blow, while the other had received a bite in the shoulder, but was "playing dead" to deceive the beast.

Just before noon the party came in, and then I learned that they had started a pair of tigers out of cover about a mile above. The female had been killed in a gulley, but the male, after being wounded, had bolted out of sight. He was the chap who had paid the camp a visit and revenged himself for the injury.

Two weeks later, at Patna, during a religious festival which brought in many natives from a distance, I was an eyewitness of a terrible occurrence on the Ganges. About forty people had come down from a point twenty miles above on a large raft. They had music on board, and as they came within sight and hearing, I walked to the bank of the river, which was there not more than three feet above the water. I waved my hat to them, and they answered the salute, but just a little below me the raft, which was then 300 feet from shore and being guided to it, struck a "sawyer" and was not only considerably broken up but hung fast. The women and children were at once seized with a panic, and this brought about direful results. In crowding to one side of the raft they broke it up, and at least thirty people were flung into the water. The river swarmed with crocodiles, and at the first splash I saw numbers of them hastening to the scene. Further down the bank men put out with boats as soon as possible, but before they could reach the people, nineteen of them were pulled under by the saurians. On the very next day, while two men were crossing in a canoe, it was upset in sight of a thousand people and the men devoured. Statistics returned from Patna gave the average victims of the crocodiles on twelve miles of river front at 140 per year, "with very many cases presumably suppressed for various reasons."—[New York Sun.

The Greek Women.

The Greek women have all the quickness of their race, the features mobile and the eyes suberb. But they lose the gracefulness of form early. There are many forms of the Greek beauty, from the mixed race of Albania to the semi-Latin women of Terios or Scio, or the Semi-Asiatic Greek of Asia Minor. They have all the heroism of their ancestors, and more courage, as I am sometimes inclined to think, than the men. At the siege of Missolonghi the wife of Tzavel las, whom I saw in boyhood, accompanied her husband at the head of the sortie that cut its way through the Turkish lines. She was of short stature, but on one arm she carried her child, and with her right hand brandished a naked scimiter. Unfortunately for the full development of the Greek woman's character, as some might think, she is still ruled by Oriental matrimonial methods, and hence is partially an Oriental. Marry she must. Supposing a family of three sisters and seven brothers; not one of the brothers marries until the sisters are provided with husbands. Hence in Greece the men generally marry late in life and women wed men far older than themselves. A girl of 16 or 18 marrying a man of 45 to 60, is the most common thing in the world among the Greeks. Marriage is also with them a question of money; there must be some property on both sides. Love is no consideration and plays no part in Greek marriages, notwithstanding that Eros was a Greek god.

The marriage ceremony of the Greeks and Armenians is tolerably long. It always occurs in church; no pews nor seats of any sort are permitted; the densely crowded aisles are filled with incense, and by the time the long-haired priests have chanted and prayed two or three hours everyone is ready to fall with exhaustion. Before closing it may be added that our missionaries have repeatedly married natives of these Eastern countries, and those unions have, to all accounts, resulted happily.—[Brooklyn Citizen.

The Prince and the Blind Man.

I was recently told the following story of a piece of silverware now existing in the plate room at Marlborough House. One day the Prince of Wales, on alighting from his carriage at the door of a house where he was about to pay a visit, saw a blind man and his dog vainly trying to effect a passage across the thoroughfare in the midst of a throng of carriages. With characteristic good nature the Prince came to the rescue and successfully piloted the pair to the other side of the street. A short time afterward he received a massive silver inkstand with the following inscription: "To the Prince of Wales. From one who saw him conduct a blind beggar across the street. In memory of a kind and Christian action." Neither note nor card accompanied the offering, and the name of the donor has never been discovered. But I think that this anonymous gift is not the least prized of the many articles in the Prince's treasure-chamber. I can vouch for the authenticity of this anecdote, as it came to me direct from a young English lady who, by the kindness of a member of the Prince of Wales' household, was shown through Marlborough House during the absence of its owners, and the inkstand in question was pointed out to her by her conductor.—[Philadelphia Telegraph.

MUTINY OF MADMEN.

Extraordinary Conduct of Lunatics in a French Asylum.

A mutiny of an extraordinary character took place recently at the Bicetre Lunatic Asylum, near Paris, France, which was only put down by the arrival of the soldiery. Some of the dangerous lunatics had appeared more excited than usual owing to the sultry weather, and one of them, an athlete of great strength, named Joly, succeeded in breaking out of his cell. Having opened the cells of fourteen of his companions, all of them made a rush at the keepers, who were walking up and down on guard. The lunatics then laid siege to the nearest rooms, and broke windows, chairs, tables and everything else on which they could lay their hands. Afterward they went up to the keepers' sleeping-places, and, seizing all the razors, hammers and other dangerous instruments which they could find, redescended into the quadrangle and began shouting out that they intended to kill everybody who should interfere with them. One of the keepers—a M. Petit—received a blow from the leg of a table which broke his arm, but his colleagues succeeded eventually, at the risk of their lives, in cutting off the retreat of the madmen by shutting them up in the quadrangle. The governor, M. Pinon, now intervened, and tried by soft words to calm the rioters; but he was threatened by Joly, who said that he would spare his life if he went down on his knees and begged pardon of all the inmates. As M. Pinon refused to do this Joly hurled a flower-pot full of earth at him, but a keeper threw himself before the governor and received the pot and its contents on his chest. The governor and his men then withdrew and sent for the police and troops. The inspector of police who arrived first found the madmen straddling across a wall, where they were brandishing their razors, and subjecting part of the asylum to a bombardment of rubbish, stones and bricks. Joly, when called upon to surrender, cried out: "We are outside the law; we are madmen, and you can't do anything!" When twenty-four soldiers with fixed bayonets arrived from the Bicetre fort the lunatics became more exasperated, whereupon the keepers turned on the hose and gave the maniacs a few shower-baths. This was followed by a volley of blank cartridges, which effectually frightened them. They descended from their wall and allowed themselves to be handcuffed. After that the most obstreperous were put in strait-waistcoats. Four of the keepers were placed *hors de combat* during the riot, while a sum of $100 in banknotes, belonging to one of the asylum attendants, was destroyed by the lunatics.—[London Globe.

Greyhounds for Canadian Wolves.

It is officially estimated that no fewer than 170,000 wolves are roaming at large in Russia, and that the inhabitants of the Vologda last year killed no fewer than 49,000, and of the Casan district 21,000. In the Canadian Northwest there are also wolves, but these are not, like the European ones, of a very dangerous character. The coyotes are, however, at times very troublesome on the plains, especially to flocks of sheep. Some time ago Sir John Lister-Kaye imported a number of Belgian and French wolfhounds and Scotch deerhounds for the purpose of hunting down these coyotes, while other breeds of dogs have also been tried with fair success. By means of these the number of coyotes has been much reduced, as many as seventeen having been brought down in a single day on the Cochrane ranch. The hounds are, however, scarcely fast enough, and with a view to giving them a greater turn of speed, Mr. Dan Gordon, the veterinary surgeon of Ottawa, Canada, has just imported two of the fastest and best bred greyhounds ever shipped from England—namely, Justinian, by Cui Bono, out of Stylish Lady, and Jetsam, by Royal Stag, out of Castaway.—[London Times.

Paynizing Wood.

Paynizing, a process for preserving and hardening wood, was invented by a Mr. Payne, and consists in placing well-seasoned timber in an air-tight chamber, and when, by means of a powerful air-pump, the wood is deprived of its air, a solution of sulphuret of calcium or of sulphuret of barium is admitted, and readily fills up the spaces in the wood. The surperfluous moisture is withdrawn by means of the air-pump, and a solution of sulphate of iron is injected. This acts chemically upon the sulphuret of barium or of calcium, and forms all through the wood an insoluble sulphate of barium (heavy spar) or of calcium (gypsum). In this way the wood is made very heavy, very durable, and almost incombustible. —[Chicago Herald.

"Barbaric" Russian Silver.

A famous jeweler showed me the other day some rich specimens of Russian enameled silver. One cannot easily restrain the word "barbaric" in looking at the gaudy splendors of this ware. As a matter of fact, the fashion runs back to the days of the Byzantine Empire, and many modern pieces are made on the model of ancient plate preserved in museums. One of the richest pieces ever brought to this city is a large goblet in transparent enamel, the design representing cathedral windows, rich with many-hued glass.—[New York Press.

THE general prospect of the crops in Europe is admitted to be very fine. The prospects in France have seldom been better. In Germany the growing crops have a most promising appearance. In Russia the grain crops have been steadily improving.