

As an illustration of the extraordinary ignorance prevalent in the Mother Country of the Geography of her southern possessions the following tale may not be without interest to your readers. A young gentleman of considerable private means was ordered by his medical adviser a trip to New Zealand. The directions he received on leaving the paternal roof were clear and simple.—“On arriving at Melbourne proceed at once to Dunedin the capital of New Zealand. Your journey as far as Brisbane will be upon camels, which have been found the only animals it is possible to employ on account of the sterile country lying between Victoria and New Zealand. Arrived at Brisbane you will proceed by train direct to Dunedin.” On reaching Melbourne the young gentleman was, as may be imagined considerably mystified by his parent's considerate directions.

A great deal of fun has lately been poked at the people's Ministry acent a certain sixpence. An allowance of £14,000 per annum is made to the Cabinet, which they are permitted to divide amongst themselves in such proportions as they may please. This amount is provided for nine ministers. On Mr. Cuthbert's retiring from the Postmaster-Generalship, the remaining eight ministers did not allow his salary to lapse into the Treasury, as had been the custom of all former governments, but shared it amongst themselves,—that is, shared all but sixpence which they could not divide by eight, and that sixpence was allowed to lapse into the Treasury. The exposure of this greed on the part of the working men's Government at a time when there was no money in the Treasury, has produced anything but a favourable effect on the “Liberals.” Even their own paper, the *Age*, had a leader bitterly reviling them for their rapacity. Mr. Berry's arrogant conduct of late has also caused immense disgust. One night in the very heat of the Reform debate he was to be seen in the dress circle of the Theatre Royal enjoying the Williamsons' acting in “Struck Oil.” Again when the House sat from 4.30 p.m. till 11 o'clock a.m. the following morning wrangling over the tariff, the Premier was in sweet sleep at home and he came to the House next day as fresh as paint, and Cromwell-like dismissed the sleepy legislators.

The Reform and Tariff question are both, as I have said, now under discussion, and before the debate is over we are likely to have a ministerial crisis. Up to this the principal speeches on Reform from the opposition side were made by Sir John O'Shannessy and Mr. Gavan Duffy. Mr. Berry made a long speech, and contended that the Bill was that “reasonable measure” which the Secretary of State says ought to be submitted to the Council, and the rejection of which will induce the Imperial Government to interfere. To show how reasonable this bill really is, I may mention that the 6th Clause provides that votes shall be payable as soon as they have been adopted by the Assembly, so that the Council would be completely ignored, and jobs might be consummated before the country had heard of their existence.

The spring weather has fairly set in, and the Cricket Reserves are looking in splendid order. Soon the football matches will be heard of no more this year, and already the hearts of cricketers are beginning to rejoice at the immediate prospect of their time coming. It would appear that inviting English gentlemen cricketers to spend a season in Australia is rather a costly pleasure. The balance-sheet of the Melbourne Club which was presented to the members on last Saturday shows that over £6000 was received as gate money for matches played by the English team. The club was nevertheless a loser by their visit to the extent of over £100. To be sure the captain was a “lord,” but this was paying rather dear for the whistle.

A supply Bill for £622,000 was passed in the Assembly on Tuesday evening, after much protest against voting away the public money without fuller information.

Mr. Berry declares that legislators shall not have their proposed outing to the Sydney Exhibition unless the Tariff and Reform Bills are advanced a step. He urged that a division on the Reform should be taken that evening, and the speech making be reserved for the third reading. The opposition were inflexible, and it was finally agreed that the House should sit all through this week.

A good deal of sympathy has been elicited here on behalf of Captain Irvine, master of the *Claud Hamilton*. The *Argus* devoted a vigorous leader to his defence, and called upon the Government to sweep away the Steam Navigation Board, the members of which it designates as fossils. It points out that they are judge, jury, and prosecutor, and that there is no appeal from their decision, which in this instance it states has been singularly unjust and cruel.

General News.

The intelligence from the Vatican is good with respect to His Holiness, who has resumed his reception of foreign and national visitors, drives about the Vatican gardens with his prelates, and has descended into the Crypt of St. Peter's to inspect the recently completed mosaic pictures of SS. Peter and Paul, ordered by Pius IX. and executed by the artists Malusardi and Ubizi. Leo XIII. has installed in the Vatican observatory the distinguished Jesuit astronomer, Father Ferrari, the friend and pupil of the late celebrated Father Secchi and his successor in the observatory of the Roman College, from which the Italian Government authorities recently ejected him.

Bishop Vaughan, of Salford, in an elaborate pastoral on the subject of Peter's Pence, full of valuable details, supplies us with two very important statements. First he tells us (*Catholic Review*) that the income of the Holy See is but £60,000, or less than 300,000 dols., and secondly that its lowest possible expenditure must reach £350,000, or something less than 1,750,000 dols. That this small sum cannot be wasted in luxurious living we can learn from this paragraph: “Coming now to the income actually required, it has been estimated that, all told, about 5,000 persons, including old *impiegati*, are dependent upon the Holy See. The sum we have mentioned, if divided equally would not afford to each of these the wages of a common English mechanic, while leaving nothing for the Pope's privy purse, for household expenses, for diplomatic expenses, for fabrics, for

libraries, for offices, for printing and stationery, and for other inevitable incidental charges. The modesty of the estimate may be realized by observing that the annual expenditure of the English Government for the single item of “Printing and Stationery,” exceeds by over £100,000 a year the sum total required for the maintenance of the Holy See and the Government of the Catholic Church. Truly the requirements of the Holy See are modest!”

The Bank of France has an invisible photographic studio behind the cashier's desk, whence likenesses cau, at a signal from the latter, be taken. The camera is much used, too, in the examination of documents. An erasure is often obvious in the photograph of a document which is not seen in the document itself.

According to the *Official Messenger* there were 1,730 conflagrations in Russia during the month of May, occasioning damage to the extent of more than 2,000,000 roubles. The loss of property of all kinds inflicted on Russia by fire during the last six months is valued by the same authority at more than 30,000,000 roubles.

Mr. Vanderbilt, who swore that he was too poor to pay taxes, has just bought another railroad, and given a check for 125,000 dollars on account. He is building a 1,000,000 dollars palace in New York, and he proposes to build an elevated railway there that will cost four or five millions. Poor Mr. Vanderbilt!—*Plot*.

A magnificent bronze statue of St. Vincent de Paul was unveiled at the Westchester (New York) Prefecture, recently, in the presence of his Eminence Cardinal McCloskey, and many of the archbishops, bishops and priests who were present at the dedication of the New York Cathedral, on the 25th ult.

Edmund Dwyer Gray, the Home Rule Member of Parliament for Tipperary, was last week elected Lord Mayor of Dublin. Mr. Gray is son of the late Sir John Gray. He is editor and proprietor of the *Dublin Freeman's Journal*.

Like everything else, musical instruments have their periods of fashion and decline. Some whose tones one used to hear every hour in the day, at some place or other, are now out of date, and the musical folk would be ashamed to touch them, although their time of resurrection may, and no doubt will come again. Instruments with whose names alone were we formerly acquainted are, on the other hand, now in demand, and in the front rank of these stands, by common consent, the zither, which is becoming the universal rage.

A correspondent of the *La Crosse (Wis.) Republican*, writing from Fairmont, Minn., in reference to a meteor that recently passed over north-western Iowa, says:—“Many of our citizens saw the ball, with a long trail of smoke behind it, and also heard the explosion, which resembled the sound of a large cannon. Reliable reports from Estherville, Iowa, say the meteor struck *terra firma* about three miles north of Estherville, and about four miles from the Minnesota line. It descended about three o'clock in the afternoon on the 10th inst., and was witnessed by a large number of Estherville citizens. It travelled with fearful rapidity. It made a hole in the ground fourteen feet across, and the dirt was scattered in all directions for twenty rods around. Shovellers were at once set to work, and the meteor was found fifteen feet under ground. It was about the size of a bushel basket, and weighed 530 pounds. I have just examined a half-pound specimen of the strange visitor which is in possession of the *Sentinel*, of this place. It is of a metallic substance, and as hard as steel.”

An instrument has been invented in France for aiding in the resuscitation of persons apparently drowned, or who from any other cause have been temporarily deprived of animation. It consists of a cylinder of sheet iron large enough to contain the body of an adult person. It is closed at one end, and the inanimate individual is inserted, feet foremost, in the receptacle, as far as the neck, round which there is placed a padded diaphragm, fastened to the cylinder so as to be air-tight. An air-pump, attached to an opening in the tube, creates a partial vacuum, and then the outer atmosphere, by its own pressure, forces its way into the lungs by the mouth and the nostrils, which are left exposed. By a reversed action of the pump, the air is allowed to re-enter the cylinder, and respiration is thereby re-established. A glass plate inserted in the iron casing enables the operator to watch the movements of the chest, which rises and falls as in life, with the working of the pump. The action may be repeated eighteen times in a minute, an exact imitation of natural breathing being thus produced.

In the Italian journals, even in some of those most hostile to Catholic practices, we find stated some facts concerning the good effects of Sacramental Confession, which they accompany with exclamations of admiration and astonishment. By the official report of the Directors of the Bank of Agricultural Credit, it appears that in the city of Bose, in Sardinia, during the course of Lent, the sum of 102,210 Italian lire, stolen by different parties from this bank, was returned to it through three confessors, a thing which could never have happened but for the sincere repentance of the undiscovered thieves. The liberals wonder greatly at this, but those who are acquainted with the working of this holy Sacrament, as it is daily practised, are aware that restitution of the goods of others and several other salutary effects are but the ordinary fruits of Sacramental Confession.

Dr. Schlieman writes to the *London Times* that in his excavations in ancient Troy he has discovered the positive proof that the Trojans understood the art of burning brick, and practised it for ages before the burning of the city. He says:—“Having in company with these friends (Professor Virchow and Mr. Bournouf) most carefully examined many heaps of bricks, we have all three become convinced that the latter have been slightly burnt in ovens before having been employed for building, because they are too uniformly burnt to admit that their burning should have been produced solely by the great conflagration; besides, even in compact masses of bricks, we never found a raw, merely sun-dried brick.”

As an illustration of the prevalent extravagance of dress in our day it is said that bonnets are selling at Paris just now at incredible prices. A lady can easily procure one for 2,500 dollars. They are made of imitation lace, but carved in mother-of-pearl, and decorated with jewels. Such a figure as 1,250 dollars is estimated as comparatively cheap, and this, be it remembered, is under a republican regime.