

THE ECONOMIES OF A COUNTRY PRIEST IN FRANCE.

Les Annales Catholiques lately published a "lost manuscript," containing the accounts of a country priest for one month. As an example of the straits to which some of the poor French priests in country parishes are reduced by the parsimony of the Republic, we give it to the readers of the *New York Freeman* :—

Feb. 1.—I have to-day (writes the good *cure*), received my allowance as a priest of the lowest rank, 63 francs, 50 centimes. My old servant, Gertrude, has not been paid her wages since Easter, and she wants a silver cross, to make herself "look pretty" at Mass. What a pious old coquette! I gave her ten francs. There remains 52 fr. 50c.

Feb. 2.—This is the first day of the Catechism class for Confirmation. My poor little catechists have need of being spurred on. I have sent to Paris for some Holy pictures. No long credit for poor priests in Paris. Six francs paid for different kinds; my scholars are happy. If I were richer, I would have had colored pictures.

Feb. 3.—Wood from the forest, vegetables from the garden, water from the spring—that is my bill of fare. It takes very little to live.

Feb. 4.—Received from the château a fat pullet; my servant took the broth to old Matthien, who is sick. We ate the pullet dry.

Feb. 5.—Continuation of the fowl; fifty centimes for soap to old Gertrude, that she might do the washing. There remains 46 francs.

Feb. 6.—End of the fowl. Everything passes away—even the carcasses of fowls.

Feb. 7.—Gave three francs to pay for the blessed bread. Have 43 francs.

Feb. 8.—1 franc 75, to the shoemaker, leaving 41 francs 25.

Feb. 9.—Sermon on the Disadvantages of Luxury.

Feb. 17.—Complete cleaning of the house for the coming of Monseigneur the Archbishop, who will give Confirmation.

Feb. 11.—Arrival of Monseigneur; his dinner 19 francs 75. We must honor our superiors. On hand 21 francs 50.

Feb. 12.—Monseigneur said to me, before going away:—"Monsieur l'abbé, your soutane is very threadbare." "Black cloth wears out very quickly," I answered. He smiled. "There is a patch in it, near the collar. We shall see if we can't hide it." What did he mean by that?

Feb. 13.—Received from the deputy of the department four bottles of good wine. It was needed for the altar.

Feb. 14.—The young Gendras, being drunk, broke a pane of glass at the *Lion d'Or*; I went over there; they all laughed at me at first. I paid for the glass, and that noisy fellow wept. It sobered him, however, and he promised to come to Church on Sunday. A pane of glass 2 francs, leaving me 19 francs 50.

Feb. 15.—Frost. The garden vegetables have given out. We have still potatoes and nuts.

Feb. 16.—My old Gertrude is sick; a vegetable diet does not agree with her; bought a little meat for the *pot-a-feu*. I had all the trouble in the world to make her accept it. These good women are so obstinate. Saint Ambrose says: "Mortify yourself unceasingly."

Feb. 17.—Letter from the Archbishop, asking if the hole in my soutane has grown. He pokes fun at me. His spirit is as gentle as that of the apostles, of whom he is the worthy successor.

Feb. 18.—Answered Monseigneur that I had put in a larger piece; expressed devotion and filial obedience. 20 centimes for stamps for the letter. I have 17 francs 30 centimes.

Feb. 23.—The picture of Mary on the altar of the Blessed Virgin begins to show wear; a picture-framer in the town wants 3 francs to varnish it—that is an expense which gives me joy to meet. It is a feast for the soul to honor these who intercede for us. There remains 8 francs 30 centimes.

Feb. 24.—Nothing in the garden. Expenses for bread for the month, 8 francs; when the banker is paid there remains 30 centimes.

Feb. 25.—Went out botanizing, to leave what remains of the bread for the old servant.

Feb. 26.—30 centimes for bread; I ate dried nuts and bread crumbs. Gertrude dined with her niece. Little Nicholas is convalescent. The communal doctor has ordered chicken for him, as his stomach is weak. Chicken! There is nothing to pay for bread!

Feb. 27.—Invited to dine at the château; a splendid repast: venison, pastry, truffles. I hid my piece of fowl in a clean handkerchief, for Nicholas.

Feb. 28.—Still another wretched day to pass. A packet from the Bishop!—They will not pay the allowance until to-morrow. My old house-keeper brings me a forty-sous piece she has been saving since Confirmation. I open the packet. There are two things in the envelope. One, the cloak of an honorary canon of the Cathedral; the other—"Dear Abbe: You have a patch on your soutane. Here is an ornament which will hide it from view."—I, honorary canon of the Cathedral, distinguished among the pastors of souls? I, so useless? Oh, my God, how good Thou art to Thy unworthy creature!

But all poor country *cures* are not given this way out of their difficulties on the day that starvation faces them. In the meantime, "philanthropic" statesmen wrangle over their pitiful allowance.

Every scrap of news received from Zululand from day to day fully confirms the accounts recently given by us of the most distressful condition of that unhappy country. Anarchy and bloodshed reign supreme there. Every man's hand is uplifted against his fellow man, and the whole *raison d'être* of the Zulus at the present moment seems to be to kill one another. That there is a danger of this wretched state of affairs spreading into the Reserve, and even past the Reserve into Natal, we have heard from many persons qualified to judge. Indeed, it has already spread to the Reserve where, if there has not been actual fighting yet, there has been a great deal of excitement, and where preparations for fighting have been going on to a considerable extent."—Natal paper.

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

At a meeting of the North Creek Mining Company held at Christchurch last evening it was reported that a trial crushing of 70lb of stone from the Upper Wilberforce reefs, made at Wellington, had realised at the rate of 5½oz. of pure gold to the ton. The directors were empowered to raise the necessary capital for working the reef.

A telegram from Ohinemutu on Wednesday morning says that Constable Abrahams arrested a Native named Mehana, a lunatic, for having murdered a Native woman named Te Takemata at Te Nga yesterday afternoon. The body was afterwards buried, but the constable had it exhumed, and an inquest will be held. The murderer had been at one time in the asylum. On being questioned, the reason he gives is that a spirit told him to kill the woman.

Stops are being taken at Naseby to form a company to work the Rough Ridge reefs. It is cause of wonder that these reefs have not been worked, as scores are lying exposed.

In the House of Lords on Wednesday night the Bill for the reform of the franchise was, on the motion for the second reading, rejected by 205 to 146.

The latest accounts to hand from Marseilles show that the cholera is increasing in that district, three deaths from the disease having occurred at Axe, a town 16 miles off.

Arrests have been made at Trieste of persons who it is alleged attempted to injure the Emperor of Austria during a recent railway journey.

Intelligence is to hand from Korosko and Wady Halfa that the fortifications at those places are proceeding vigorously, in view of a possible advance of the rebels.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* states that a secret treaty has been entered into between France and Portugal.

SATURDAY.

George McCrae, a settler at Mangawai, Auckland who has had three houses destroyed in recent agrarian outrages in the district, has now, in addition to boycotting, received a threatening letter through the post-office hinting-at his contemplated assassination.

A station hand named Stokes was killed on Tuesday in the Awatere by a fall from a horse. He was a bad horseman, and subject to fits.

A miner named Thos. Quilty was smothered yesterday afternoon by a fall of earth in his tribute in the Moanatairi mine Thames.

Mobs of people leave Ross daily to look at the reefs which are daily disclosing a fresh store of almost fabulous richness on Thursday night a parcel of stone, covered with gold was brought into town, and shares in the Prospectors'—the William Tell—Company were eagerly bought at £750. They are not to be had at that figure to-day. The Swiss Republic, an adjoining lease on the west, are fetching £20 for a 24th share. In the Totara lease, adjoining the Prospectors' claim on the east, \$100 is refused. The Prospectors' reef has been traced a distance of eight chains. Many new leases are being taken up.

The following is Sir Julius Vogel's reply to the Canterbury Railway League: "If the East Coast line is continued north, large concessions must be made by the owners of private property, who will almost exclusively be benefited. Perhaps, also, it will be found preferable to connect Nelson and Marlborough with the Canterbury West Coast line. As to the latter, my views have been frequently expressed. I think it of vast importance, and that efforts should be made to encourage its construction immediately."

The protectorate over New Guinea being issued without jurisdiction over foreigners, is deemed unsatisfactory. The Agents-general are urging England to extend the jurisdiction to the adjoining islands.

It has transpired that at a meeting of the members of the Liberal party, on Thursday, the Premier announced that the present session would end shortly, and that Parliament would reassemble in October for the purpose of again passing the Franchise Bill through the House of Commons and submitting it to the House of Lords. The Liberals are organising an immense agitation in the provinces with a view to intimidating the members of the House of Lords. A large amount is being subscribed.

The Marquis of Normanby was entertained on Wednesday night at a banquet by the leading Anglo-Australians in London. Among the guests were Lord Kimberly, the Marquis of Lorne, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. Responding to the toast of his health, Lord Normanby took occasion to deny that the Victorians were guilty of lavish expenditure of borrowed money. In reference to the residivist question, he urged the colonists to await with patience the action of the Imperial Government.

MONDAY.

A meeting of the unemployed was held on Saturday night at the Christchurch Drillshed, when the Mayor and Messrs. Holmes, Joynt, and Crews delivered addresses. A telegram from the Government was read, offering employment to 30 men at trenching at Rolleston; the men to be taken by an early train and return at night, so as to avoid the necessity for living away from their homes; the wages to be 4s 6d per day. The meeting decided to petition by telegraph for 5s 6d.

A pair of horses bolted with a brake at the Woodville end of the Manawatu Gorge on Friday night, and the brake, with five occupants, was thrown over the cliff into the river bed. Two of the ladies were injured, and the rest escaped unhurt. Of the injured one, the wife of the Rev. J. Worboys, is in a critical state from internal injuries, and Mrs. Lawry had her foot crushed.

A report is current that the German Government intend to start a system of colonisation in the islands of the Pacific.

Ministerial and Opposition caucuses are now actively organising for the purpose of agitating respectively for and against the Reform of the Franchise Bill.