

## NOTES FROM PARIS.

(From the *Nation*.)

WHETHER Chinese treachery or French ambition has been the cause of the present war it matters little now. The French flag is raised, and the time for blame or discussion is past. Frenchmen of all parties must unite and support it, for this is no single-handed struggle between two nations—it is one into which several European States will be drawn, and in which some of them may have to settle long-standing accounts between themselves. Last night nearly all the members of the Chinese Embassy left Paris for Berlin. Interviewers were left in the dark, and the only thing that has transpired is, that they (the Chinese) are determined to fight out to the bitter end. They say, "We shall follow the example of Russia in 1812, and leave, instead of snow-covered plains, deserts of sand and burnt villages between us and our enemies, in which disease will thin their ranks better than cannon and shot." They affirm that they have at headquarters English, German, and American officers who have been teaching them the art of war, and that they are apt scholars of late.

They attribute the rupture to M. Fournier's report, which was not duly signed and approved of in high quarters. They are aware of the great loss to the commerce of Europe such a war must become, and they are convinced that, openly or secretly, some of the nations injured by it will be on their side.

A discovery just made by two French officers, which simply consists in steering balloons through the air with far more precision than ships at sea, is either likely to put an end to war or make it far more terrible in the air than it ever was on sea or land.

M. Reynard and M. de Haye, for whom Gambetta obtained, with great difficulty, a grant of 200,000 frs. to carry on their works, have just gone in their balloon to a considerable distance, and steered it back without difficulty to the starting-place, realising what was for the last century considered as impossible. It requires no stretch of imagination to realise the change in the whole system of warfare that this new invention will make. In fact, all the ironclad ships, the torpedoes, monster cannon, mining in sieges, etc., will sink into insignificance beside what can annul their effects from the clouds.

It is said to think that what would be a blessing to humanity and the greatest conquest of man over the elements should be first employed in his destruction by nations calling themselves civilised and humane.

J. P. L.

## THE AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

(From the *Nation*.)

THE latest issue of the agricultural statistics compiled by the police for the Registrar-General does not differ in the essential lessons which it teaches from former compilations of the kind. It does not tell quite so dismal a tale of decay as the average return of the days of Lord Carlisle; but the decay of which it does speak would be quite enough of itself to delight the heart of that smirking advocate of the substitution on the soil of Ireland of beasts of the field for human beings.

The central fact in this return is the same as that disclosed by all previous returns dealing with the same subject. Every year for the last three decades we have been informed that more and more land has been going out of cultivation, and this year we are presented with the same ominous statement. This year the total extent of land under crops is less by 63,732 acres than it was last year, and decrease is noticeable in every province, and in every species of crop except cabbage, carrots, parsnips, vetches, and rape. The land under potatoes has decreased by 7525 acres—a striking proof in itself that the people are going out of the country, and that, therefore, the true source of the wealth of the country is being dried up. Against such facts and figures we have only to record a decrease in the amount of bog and waste land, and a trifling increase in the number of sheep and cattle, which is itself almost balanced by a decrease of 42,169 in the number of pigs.

We have no doubt that if the Castle orators had the opportunities of orating on the condition of the country which they too long enjoyed, they would find in this return, as they did in many a similar one, cause for congratulating the nation on its "progress." Figures, it is said, can be made to prove anything. But the truth cannot be hidden by any ingenious numerical manipulations or specious reasoning. Of a really progressive nation no figures like those are ever published. In no country which is prospering is land going out of cultivation, and are beasts taking the place of men and women; and by no possibility can Ireland be prosperous while it is the scene of those processes. And this decay is witnessed three years after the passing of the Land Act just as it was witnessed before that enactment! We imagine the Irish people will be more convinced than ever, in face of this circumstance, of the futility of all British legislation for Ireland which does not include the abolition of foreign rule.

If you would have appetite, flesh, color, strength, and vigor, take Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which will confer them upon them in rapid succession.

We (*Bombay Catholic Examiner*) translate the following from the Mauritius paper, *Annales De L'Union Catholique*:—"The English correspondent of the *Planters Gazette*—a Protestant and anti-clerical—reports that the Protestant missionaries are doing their utmost at Antananarivo to gather the fruit of the labours of the Jesuits. In order to attract to themselves the Hova converts to Catholicism, they have hit upon the idea of sporting long gowns (soutanes) and adopting Ritualistic practices in imitation of the ceremonies of Catholic worship. And they thus address the simple Malagasy; "You see that you do not change your religion in coming to us, English people. We dress just like the priests, and do all that they do." If this be correct, it is the newest practical illustration of the parable of the wolves in sheep's clothing."

## ENTERTAINMENT IN AID OF ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL BUILDING FUND.

THE concert and comedy given in the Princess Theatre, Dunedin, on Monday evening, in aid of the Cathedral Building Fund, proved even more successful than we had anticipated. The house was thronged in every part by a most appreciative audience, and the performance was in every respect capital. To begin with the ladies, as it is becoming: the Misses Walker, Walsh and Carroll, who each sang a solo, were heard to great advantage. "My Ariel," given by Miss Walker, is a remarkably pretty song, and brought out very pleasingly the sweet tones of the singer's voice. Miss Walsh had acquired more confidence than on her former appearance, and there was no flaw in the brilliant manner in which she sang Ganz's "Dear Bird of Winter," a song requiring musical cultivation of no mean kind and much flexibility of voice. Miss Carroll sang with extreme sweetness and expression Watson's "The song for me." Messrs. J. P. Harris and H. Reid also sang solos, and each in a manner that received, as it deserved, the highest applause. A glee by St. Joseph's choir went very smoothly, and was also much admired. The instrumental music was a March played in gallant style by St. Patrick's Band, who continue to show the increasing effects of Mr. Wishart's instructions; a clarinet solo on Irish airs admirably played by Mr. W. H. Corrigan—and only to be played well by a master of the instrument; a fantasia, "Erin," by the Garrison Band, who attended in full uniform, and whose performance alone was declared by the audience to be worth coming to hear. The selection of Irish airs given was a very well-chosen one, and the manner in which the band interpreted it was beyond all praise. A double hornpipe by Mr. C. Bills and his pupil was very finely danced, and for grace and agility, and all that attends upon the "light fantastic toe," could not be surpassed: it brought down the house, as a matter of course, and had to be repeated in reply to a rapturous encore. "The big fat gal," the negro song and dance, by Mr. Wiggins, was also very much applauded—nothing, indeed, could be more clever in its way or more amusing, and in response to an encore the performer went through with a very lively dance on a pedestal, which excited the surprise of the on-lookers. At the conclusion of the concert the Bishop came out on the platform and spoke a few words in acknowledgment of the gratitude he felt to the performers who had given so pleasant an entertainment and the audience who supported it. He thanked the ladies and gentlemen who had sung, the members of the Garrison Band, who had done so much to honour the occasion and played so charmingly, the gentleman who so kindly acted as accompanist, the performers who had delighted the house by their hornpipe dancing, and the gentleman who had so amusingly acted the part of the negro girl. His Lordship added that the object of the Catholic community in building their cathedral was, first, the highest object of all, to which he need not now allude; then their own convenience; and lastly, they had also kept in view the consideration they owed the city, which had weighed duly with them in erecting a building that would be ornamental and creditable in every way, and in doing this he thought it could be seen already that they were sure of success. The second portion of the entertainment consisted of the comedy "A Rough Diamond," in which the professional ladies, Miss Heath and Miss Hettie Howarde, took the parts respectively of Margery and Lady Plato, and it is as high a compliment as we need pay to the gentleman amateurs to say that they did not under the circumstances, appear to disadvantage. Mr. D. T. Carroll's Sir William Evergreen was an excellent piece of acting, and the lesser parts of Lord Plato, Captain Blenheim, and Cousin Joe were capably sustained by the gentlemen who filled them, that is, respectively, Messrs. W. Corrigan, S. G. Popplewell, and Carolin. The play was carried through in admirable style, and caused great amusement. Mr. A. J. Towsey acted with his well-known ability as accompanist throughout the evening.—Messrs. C. Begg and Co. having kindly lent a very fine pianoforte for the occasion.

## INVERCARGILL CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

THE usual weekly meeting of the above society was held on Thursday evening, October 9. The attendance was very satisfactory. One candidate was balloted for and duly elected. The programme for the evening was then opened by Mr. D. Bradley, who showed a keen appreciation of the author's ideal in "Fontenoy," or "Charge of the Irish Brigade." He evinced also careful preparation and considerable histrionic ability, being followed by Mr. M. O'Brien, who engaged the sympathies of the audience with his rendition of "The Progress of Madness"; he came very near perfection in his rendering of it. The President then stated that he believed there were several gentlemen present who were anxious to have their heads read, and requested Mr. Lawrence if he would be kind enough to do so, to which he consented, and seemed to be thoroughly at home in executing his abilities as a phrenologist upon eight gentlemen who submitted themselves for examination, with a wish of ascertaining their bad qualities as well as their good ones, which the examiner in either case did not conceal, and at the conclusion his remarks were criticised individually by the persons examined, and with a few exceptions gave general satisfaction. The audience seemed to enjoy it much better than the persons whose characters were read, and were also very liberal in their applause. The programme for the next meeting was then considered. After several subjects were proposed, it was finally agreed to that the subject for debate be "Should capital punishment be abolished." After sides were chosen for the affirmative and negative, the meeting closed in due form.

Private letters from Abyssinia state that since Admiral Hewitt's Mission, King John, feeling assured of the friendship of a Protestant Power, has taken up a hostile attitude towards the French Catholic Mission. The mission houses at Akeour and four other places, have been sacked and the missionaries expelled.