

MADAME MODJESKA AND IRELAND.

LAST week Madame Modjeska, the eminent actress, appeared in a round of her favourite characters in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin. Her engagement terminated on Saturday night. The play was "Heartsease," which was most successfully interpreted. The house was densely crowded, and Madame Modjeska, in the part of Ceannta, was applauded enthusiastically. At its conclusion she was called before the curtain three times. On coming forward the last time she said:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I don't I can't attempt to express to you my deep and heartfelt thanks for the kindness, warmth, and true Irish hospitality which I have received since I came to Dublin (cheers). I know that that kindness and your enthusiastic cheers cannot be due merely to my poor artistic merits. I know that the largest share of the cordiality with which you greet me is due to the sympathy you have with the country of my origin (loud and prolonged cheers). I know it is due to your sympathy for my dear Poland—(cheers)—a country so akin to your own in her misfortunes, her oppressions, and her hopes and undying prayers for liberty (cheers). I do not want to say anything that would be looked upon as indulging in political matters, which are, indeed, beyond the scope of my womanly capacity; but if you say, as by your cheers I believe, that you love Poland, pray believe that from my heart of hearts I love Ireland (enthusiastic cheers). I thank you once more for your hospitality and kindness. I can never forget it, and I shall ever look forward with joy to the time that I may again return to the shores of your beautiful Erin." (Loud and prolonged cheers)

The *Irish Times* adds:—"After the theatre closed there was a demonstration in the streets, and one of the trades bands played in front of the Shelbourne Hotel, where Madame Modjeska was staying, and where Mr. William Redmond, M.P., presented her with a handsome album containing views of Irish scenery and portraits of the members of the Irish Parliamentary party.—*Nation*, May 30.

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY.

(*Bangalore Spectator*.)

THE death of one of the Sisters attached to the Bowring Hospital in this station, has drawn public attention to the nursing agency employed in that institution. These nurses are Frenchwomen, belonging to the order of St. Joseph, of Tarbes, whose head-quarters are in Cantouze, in the South of France. Five of them came to Bangalore about three years ago, for the express purpose of nursing the sick in the Bowring Hospital, a duty which the small community has assiduously performed, and continues to perform, day and night. Of course these Sisters are Roman Catholics, but their work and their noble self-sacrifice command the respect and admiration of men and women of creeds other than their own, and also of those who have no creed of any sort. It must be something superior to ordinary human nature—whatever it is—that leads delicate women, even many of good position and attainments, to cut themselves off irrevocably from all the pleasures of life, from kindred and friends, to perform disagreeable, and often repulsive, duties, in the wards of hospitals, where the sins, sorrows, and diseases of poor humanity, are constantly exhibited in their worst forms. The Sisters who attend at the Bowring are in a place where it is very seldom that they hear their mother tongue; they have to wear a dress, too, which, besides its coarseness, is so quaint as to border on ugliness—no mean trial, in itself, to women, whose very instincts always lead them to dress becomingly. Occasionally one of these Sisters is met with on the public road, walking rapidly, as though time was an object to her, most frequently to or from the Blackpully Roman Catholic Church, which is near the Bowring, or between the Bowring and her own quarters; and the severe homeliness of her costume immediately strikes a stranger, and makes him wonder if it is possible that a spark of vanity can survive under such a garb. Frenchwomen, who usually dress so charmingly, must find even the habit of a Sister of Charity no mean *crux* to bear at first. But, what is this trial to that of nursing the very poorest classes of the Natives of India—the sick and diseased Pariahs of the Bazar? And to do this constantly day and night, year after year, without a month's "privilege leave," or even a day's holiday! The performance of an heroic act under a sense of peril, or from patriotism, or from love, or even plain prosaic duty, is but a little thing compared to the life-long sacrifice of a Sister of Charity, who casts away all hope of ever being absent from the sights, sounds, and smells of an hospital ward, until death releases her, or feeble old age compels her to retire into darkness and poverty. The heroine in secular life—even a Miss Nightingale,—receives her reward in the praises of the public; but who hears anything of a Sister of Charity? She has no identity,—her very name is almost unknown! her deeds are not hers, but belong to her order; and her order sometimes, so far from earning thanks, is abused and persecuted.

To spend a life in an Indian Hospital, where even the poor sympathy of the suffering patients of one's own nationality or creed, is not to be had, is one of the gloomiest prospects that could be presented to anyone; yet this little band of Sisters chose it, Sister Gervaise, now deceased, being the most active and the most cheerful of them all. We can imagine that the life of Sisters in a Camp, where they have to attend to wounded and dying soldiers would be better in one point of view—that of the appreciation of mankind,—than the life of the Bowring Hospital Sisters.

The Sister who died yesterday in the Bowring, died literally in her hospital harness. Death met her in the ward, as she was walking in attendance on the Doctor. She suddenly stood still, and said she could walk no further, she felt so ill. She was promptly attended to, but she died in the hospital: even if she had any desire to retire to the privacy of the house where the little community have their home, that could not be gratified, and she died amidst those whom she had nursed.

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday Mr. Bradshaw moved the second reading of the Eight Hours Bill. The bill, he explained, provided that eight hours should be a day's work and 48 hours a week's work. It also provided that in cases where there was a special contract in writing the hours could be extended. The motion for the second reading was lost on division by 21 to 34.

A meeting of the guarantors of the West Coast railway was held at Christchurch yesterday. There were 54 gentlemen present, representing all the mercantile and industrial interests of Canterbury. The Hon. C. O. Bowen presided. The Chairman said that after full consideration, the committee thought the present offer a reasonable one, and the proposals of the Government in the matter fair and politic. He compared the feeling of the meeting in connection with the railway to the feeling in Canterbury when the tunnel to Lyttelton was proposed for construction; the tunnel was barely completed when it was admitted on all hands to be the making of the province, and he was convinced that this railway was as important to the welfare of the province, and of the whole Colony, as that tunnel then was to the welfare of Canterbury, and this would be acknowledged by everyone as soon as the work was completed. As to the terms, the guarantee required was a burden which the improved value of property ought gladly to bear. It would be to the interest of the company to get the lands set apart for it settled as soon as possible, and this settlement would enhance the value of the now valueless alternate blocks held by the Government.—The largest and most enthusiastic meeting ever held in Nelson took place last night, relative to the proposed railway. Although only notified late in the afternoon, the hall was crowded. Mr. J. H. Cook was in the chair. Mr. Sclanders moved a resolution—"That this meeting, whilst protesting against the principle involved in specially taxing this district for the construction of the main trunk railway passing through it—a railway, moreover, to the construction of which the Colony has been pledged for many years—nevertheless, cordially approves of the guarantee as proposed by the Government to be given for the construction of the East and West Coast and Nelson railway, believing that the value of the work to the Colony and the district will far exceed the price to be paid for it." The resolution was carried unanimously, amidst applause.

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy has written to the Earl of Carnarvon, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, approving of his Irish policy.

Dr. Ferran, of Valencia, who was recently prohibited by the Spanish Government from continuing inoculation with cholera virus as a preventive against cholera until the Board of Health had expressed its opinion on the subject, has now resumed it in the province of Aragon.

A messenger arrived at Assouan on Tuesday from Gal-Ra, bringing news that the Mahdi died of smallpox on the 29th of June.

A Cabinet Council was held on Tuesday at which the fresh proposals made by Russia respecting the Zulfikar Pass were considered. The result of the discussion has not yet transpired. It is reported that the Russian Government has obtained authority to occupy temporarily the Island of Quelpaert, off the Korean coast.

SATURDAY.

In the House of Representatives yesterday the following bills were introduced:—The Gold-mining Districts Act 1873 Amendment Bill (Hon. Mr. Larnach); The Shipping and Seamen's Act 1877 Amendment Bill (Hon. Mr. Larnach); The Middle Island Half-caste Grants Bill (Hon. Mr. Ballance); The Rating Act Amendment Bill, No. 2 (The Hon. Mr. Tole); a bill to provide for the limitation of votes at any election of members for the House of Representatives (Sir George Grey); The Pawnbrokers Act 1868 Amendment Bill (Mr. W. D. Stewart).

A special meeting of the Christchurch Chamber of Commerce was held yesterday to consider the West Coast railway question. There was the largest attendance of members ever seen at a meeting of the chamber, over 50 being present. The following resolutions were passed unanimously, and ordered to be telegraphed to the Government:—"That this chamber desire to express their satisfaction at the announcement that the contractors are now prepared to proceed with the construction of the East and West Coast and Nelson lines of railway." "That this chamber are of opinion that the conditions named by the contractors and the proposal of the Colonial Treasurer as to the method of providing the required guarantee of an annual sum of not exceeding £97,000 are acceptable to the members of this chamber." That this chamber feel assured that the districts interested will without hesitation accept the proposed responsibility in view of the material benefits to be gained by the construction of this railway." The first instalment of the public petition, bearing 1000 names, was sent off last night. The number of signatures to the petition has been largely increased to-day. The Mayor has called a public meeting for Monday night to consider the subject. At a meeting of the City Council of Nelson last night the following resolution was carried unanimously.—"That this Council entirely agrees with the proposals of the Government on the subject of the Nelson and East and West Coast railways, and that the resolution be telegraphed to the Government."

A London cablegram in the *Melbourne Age* states that the situation with Russia is regarded as most critical, and it is believed that the object of General Alikhanoff on the Afghan frontier is to try to provoke war with Great Britain. A deadlock has occurred in the negotiations which were proceeding between the British and Russian Governments with regard to the occupation of Zulfikar Pass. The outlook is regarded as so serious that a panic has occurred on the London Stock Exchange and on the Paris Bourse.

MONDAY.

The Wellington correspondent of the *Lyttelton Times* writes as follows:—A very important piece of intelligence has just reached