

Parliamentary Notes.

Wednesday, 20th.—Resolutions of regret for the death of the Emperor Frederick and sympathy with the Dowager Empress were passed by both Chambers.—In the Assembly Sir George Grey's Land for Settlements' Bill was considered in committee. The Minister of Lands opposed the subsection providing for taking private land, and moved that it be struck out, the motion being agreed to. Mr. Scobie Mackenzie condemned the proposal alluded to as monstrous, considering that there were thousands of acres of Crown lands available for settlement. Mr. Mackenzie, however, who is an interested party, and naturally an advocate of monopoly, cannot be expected to consider also that there are thousands of acres of land shut out from settlement by monopolists, and that to the great injury of the colony, and the exceeding great detriment of particular localities. This, in the point of fact, is one of the chief causes of the Colony's evil condition.—It is rumoured that there is a desire on the part of the party who support Free-trade to get rid of the protection tariff by inducing Sir Harry Atkinson to go Home as Agent-General.

Thursday, 21st.—The Hospitals and Charitable Aid Act Amendment Bill was read in the Assembly a second time, Mr. MacArthur angling in favour of the separation of the Manawatu district from Wanganni because of the distance, and Mr. Stewart complaining of the unfairness involved in the Waimate district being obliged to pay nearly the whole cost of the Timaru hospital. Provision is made by the Bill for the separation of the districts referred to, as well as that of Ashburton from North Canterbury.—The Divorce Extension Bill was committed, Mr. Fish opposing it on the plea that it aimed an exceptional blow at the fundamental principles of Christianity, and Mr. Blake denouncing it as lowering our social status and illegitimatising our children.

Friday 22nd.—In the Legislative Council the Hon. Mr. Stevens presented a petition from gross bigots at Christchurch praying that aid might not be given to Catholic schools. The Council passed a motion insisting on the amendments made by them in the Chinese Bills and with which the Assembly disagreed. Dr. Pollen, who was the mover, claimed, that the Chinamen showed a good example to Europeans by their diligence and general behaviour, and Sir F. Whitaker seemed substantially to agree with him. But these honourable gentlemen should remember that habitual association, at least, with the lowest filth of the European population is hardly a good example to even that degraded fellow the European settler in general, and the abandoned women themselves are regarded as still further debased when they reach their lowest stage among the Chinese. How such facts as these, not to speak of other things, can be reconciled with the assumed virtue of the Chinamen we are unable to see. But the monopolists and their friends and supporters, as they are eager to exclude a European population from the Colony in the interests of monopoly, promoted by cheap labour, and, above all, cheap labour of the class that seeks no permanent settlement in the country, will not scruple as to how they advance their object. All this gush, however, about Chinese virtue is fustian of the most sickly kind, and, even those who make themselves most prominent in uttering it cannot but know that Chinamen in the colonies, as a rule, are filthily vicious. Even the very reports current concerning them in a neighbourhood where they have formed a colony are of an intensely degrading and demoralising character to the European settlers.—The discussion on the tariff, the Bill being under the charge of the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson, during the absence through illness of the Premier, was resumed in the Assembly and carried on with results favourable to the proposals made.

Tuesday 26th.—In the House of Representatives the tariff was further considered, a proposal made by Captain Russell for the reduction of the duty on tea to 4d being rejected.—An impost supply of £200,000 was granted.

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

OUR ideas in Christchurch are still a little mixed in regard to politics. The Free-traders are in despair and the Protectionists are triumphant. It is more than hinted in some quarters that, in order to retain his position as Premier, Sir Harry Atkinson will have to oust a couple of his Ministerial supporters to make room for two of the united Canterbury party. There is no doubt he is now a mere puppet in the hands of the Opposition, and must dance to whatever they may choose to whistle.

Christchurch, like the rest of the colony, appears to be unable to recover from its profound grief at the German Emperor's death. The Emperor was undoubtedly a good and brave man, and the death of a good man is a loss to the world, but I think there is a great deal of jingoism in the effort which English people make to adopt the Emperor and his German land as though both belonged to England. It is impossible to describe the unction with which English people inform you that the "Empress Victoria is the daughter of our Queen." This Empress in the Guelph family appears to Englishmen to shed such glory upon everything and everyone English that the contemplation of so much splendour appears to fairly reduce the ordinary English mind to a state of idiocy. It is simply laughable to observe all the trouble to which English people go to make the world believe that the English nation is hand and glove with Germany. This is all the more ludicrous when Germany misses no opportunity to let the world know how thoroughly it returns the gushing love of the "ruler of the waves" with profound contempt. At present there is every prospect that as soon as decency will permit, the power now in the ascendant at Berlin will do its best to efface as far as possible all the effects of the rule of an English princess in Germany, and the "daughter of our Queen" stands a fair chance of making an exit across

the German frontier, that is if she wishes to avoid what promises to be a far from pleasant life in her dead husband's land. In view of what may happen in the future English people should restrain their exuberant kinship with Germany, however anxious they may be to toady to a great nation. Though, indeed, I must confess that it is a source of positive delight to me to see English people throwing themselves on all fours before Germany. No nation in Europe loves better than England does to play the bully to a little state, and no other nation is so ready to play toady with a great one. England is frightened out of its seven senses now lest, in the event of a war, Bismarck's army should be opposed to England. If the "daughter of our Queen" were sent home to Westminster in a donkey-cart England, at the present moment, would not resent the affront. Truly there is satisfaction in seeing the tyrant of Ireland obliged to enact the part of suppliant in Berlin.

Dr. Grimes returned to Christchurch last week from Akaroa. He has now completed the visitation of his diocese, having visited every dist. iet except one out-of-the-way parish upon the West Coast.

On Sunday, the feast of St. John the Baptist, which is the Bishops' feast day, Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Dr. Grimes, assisted by fathers Marnane, Brehon and Halbwachs. After Mass the Bishop informed the people that next Sunday there would be a collection for the Seminary Fund. He stated that there were not sufficient priests in the diocese to perform the work demanded of them and that it was necessary that their numbers should be reinforced. One reason why he did not bring out priests with him was that he had not the means to do so. The purpose of this Seminary Fund was to provide means for the education of clergymen for this mission. There were many young men, he stated in this diocese who would prepare for the priesthood but they had not the wherewithall.

On Sunday, next Father Comyns will open a mission in the pro-Cathedral, I referred to Father Comyns before as an able speaker. Doubtless the mission will be largely attended.

On Tuesday evening Mr. Robert Lonergan was presented by the Catholic Literary Society with an address. The address is to be illuminated by the Sisters of the mission. In the address deep regret is experienced at Mr. Lonergan's approaching departure from Christchurch. The great impetus which he gave to the affairs of the Society is also dwelt upon at some length, and he is warmly complimented upon his ardent devotion to faith and fatherland. The address concludes with the hope that Mr. Lonergan's absence from Christchurch may only be for a time.—Mr. Lonergan, who appeared to be deeply moved by the expressions of good-will contained in the address, suitably replied, in his own peculiarly happy vein. He expressed regret at severing his connection with the Society, and stated that he would long remember the happy days which he had spent in Christchurch.—A very pleasant programme, comprising vocal and instrumental music and recitations, interspersed with the usual toasts, was then gone through. The hall was very tastefully decorated. The members of the Society are to be congratulated upon perfectly understanding the art of arranging for the passing of a pleasant social evening.—The excellent speeches of Messrs. Cooper and Milner on Tuesday night afforded evidence that there is plenty of talent among the young members of the Society, and also that that talent is being cultivated.

At the Brothers' and the Nuns' schools preparations have been made for the reception of the Bishop, who is to officially visit the schools on Monday. Addresses from the pupils and the teachers are to be presented to Dr. Grimes upon the occasion.

I have just finished reading a book to which I could wish a wide circulation. It is "The Irish in Australia" a volume written by James Francis Hogan of Melbourne for the purpose of showing the part which Irishmen have taken in advancing colonisation and civilisation at the antipodes. A perusal of the book, would teach Irish people that they have reason to be proud of their countrymen, beneath the Southern Cross. Persons who are ever ready to sneer at the Irish ignorance, and maintain that the incapacity of Irishmen to govern is one reason why Home Rule should not be granted to Ireland, will find a complete refutation of their opinions in the pages of Mr. Hogan's book. Since the colonies were founded Irishmen have been in the foremost ranks of colonial statesmen upon the bench, and at the bar, in literature and in medicine, in fact in every capacity in which high intellectual attainments were required, Irish Catholics in Australia have held their own with the Saxon notwithstanding the boasted superiority of the latter. Some of the noblest institutions beneath Australian skies owe their origin to Irish Catholics. The highest positions, social, civic, and political, have been held by Irishmen with credit to themselves and their country. It is only necessary to mention names like those of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, Sir Bryan O'Loughlin, Sir John O'Shannessy, the Hon. Nicholas Fitzgerald, Wilson Gray, Charles Wentworth, and a whole galaxy of other Irish Catholic statesmen in Australia, to give the lie direct to the statement that the Irish are incapable of exercising the functions of Government. What they have done in Australia, they would do in Ireland if they had the chance. Men who have ruled the destinies of a great colony like Victoria, who assisted at the birth of nearly all of its most liberal laws, may fairly lay claim to possess some of the qualities the possession of which make statesmen. Sir William Stawell, Sir Edmund Barry, Judge Molesworth, and Chief Justice Higginbotham, are names which go to prove the height to which Irish talent has enabled its possessors to rise at the Australian bar. The best novel yet written in Australia, was written by a man proud of his Irish descent, and the only musical composition of any note which is associated with Australia, was the work of an Irishman, and yet notwithstanding this, we still hear the old worn-out, flippant, flimsy, vulgar, untruthful sneer, that Irishmen are unfit to govern, and that Irish and ignorance are synonymous terms, while the real fact is, that where Irish intellect and Irish talent get fair play, they have nothing whatever to fear from competition with the rest of the world, and are quite capable of wresting even from the superior Saxon grasp, a fair share of whatever is worth having in this world, in the way of honour and fame, and high position, either social or public.