

Parisian Notes.

BOULANGISME is a profound mystery. Nobody believes in the General; everyone ridicules him—that is everyone of those who do not, for special interests, oppose him. He has, indeed, a motley following—Clericals, Radicals, Republicans, Loyalists, Bonapartists. There is no party, no shadow of a party, in France which does not yield supporters to him, unless it be that by which the Republic as it exists at present is upheld. But the Republic as it at present exists grows weaker every day. In this, in short, the popularity of General Boulanger may consist that all those who are opposed to the existing Republic see in him a centre whence some movement favourable to their own particular cause may proceed. It is not, therefore, that Boulanger is particularly beloved, but that men are longing for a change, each in his own particular interests. One thing, however, that is greatly in the General's favour is that the army thoroughly trusts him. He is the hero especially of the private soldier who looks upon him as his champion and friend. But, under the circumstances, which seem unprecedented, it is impossible to predict as to what the probabilities or even the possibilities may be, and we must look for certainty to time alone.

A question that bids fair ere long to divide the interest of the day with *Boulangisme* is that of the Jews. There are indications shown that the popular mind in France is beginning to be touched by the feeling that has for some time prevailed towards this people in Russia and Germany. An outbreak against the Jews in France, were it successful would involve very important interests for, as matters now are, they control the fortunes of the country. But if it be true, as affirmed in some quarters that they are largely accountable for the infidel disposition of the people, they might find their Nemesis in being subjected to the ill-treatment of atheistic masses. They would learn how hard it was to incur the enmity of men completely freed from the control of Christianity. This, however, is not to deny that Christian populations have treated them barbarously at times. But there is a difference between those who do ill against their principles, and those who have no principles to outrage.

The Senate has made considerable modifications in the Bill providing for the three years' military service of the Seminarists. It has passed an amendment to the effect that the term shall be limited to twelve months, and the service rendered in the hospitals only.

Although the English Government will not take part in the Exhibition to be held next year in celebration of the centennial of the Revolution, active preparations are being made on the part of English exhibitors. The Lord Mayor of London has himself paid a visit to Paris in connection with the matter. The refusal, meantime, of the English Government to take part in the celebration, seems rather inconsistent, considering that every revolutionary movement of the century, and originating in the event to be commemorated, has had at least its hearty sympathy.

Experiments are now being tried with a new explosive called *bellite*. It is said to combine all the most useful powers of dynamite with many others of superior force, and to be the one thing needed to give France the victory in every war. The doubt is as to whether Germany, for example, may not even now be trying experiments with something still stronger. But *bellite*, besides its tremendous power, is said to be exceptionally safe, as nothing can explode it—neither heat nor friction—except a fulminating cap.

A tragedy written by Louise Michel is being acted at one of the suburban theatres, it is called "*Le Coq Rouge*." The sanguinary fowl, the crest of the *proletaire*, receives a glowing illustration during the course of the play. Blood and fire are its chief characteristics, the production being in every sense worthy of its authoress and her gaug.

From that terror of the dunghill, *le coq rouge*, to its milder occupant who yields not crimson but pink feathers, should be an agreeable if not an easy transition. This marvel among poultry was duly celebrated the other night at the *Polytechnique* ball, where one of the chief belles of the evening was distinguished by her plumes plucked from a rooster's tail, though whether the bird, while still in the flesh, was of the particular colour is known alone to those initiated into the mysteries of the *toilette*. The ball was a very brilliant affair, well sustaining the military reputation in the fashionable world.

A consequence of the tariff difficulties between France and Italy has been the establishment of a system of smuggling on the frontier. The service is said to be very well organised, and it certainly provides an ample sphere of activity for the Customs guards.

The great, ungainly, hideous tower of Eiffel is creating alarm. It is thoroughly unpopular among the workmen because of the frequent accidents that happen there, and of the giddiness and ill effects produced in those of their body employed in its erection. The foundations, besides, are said to be unsafe, and two or three streets are endangered by it. Its fall would make havoc among their houses. A malevolent intention in connection with it was that it should dwarf the great buildings of Paris and make them insignificant, especially the churches. But their fine proportions and noble architecture are brought out more prominently by the contrast. The more of an ugly thing there is, the more objectionable does it become, and this tower is from every where an unavoidable eye-sore.

Another association between the violet and the Bonaparte family has been revealed. It seems the Empress Josephine was wont to

preserve and beautify her complexion by bathing her face daily in a basin of milk poured boiling on a quantity of violet blossoms. All the fine ladies of the fashionable world are said to be engaged in following the Empress's example, and this accounts for the scarcity in public places of those bouquets that used to be so persistently thrust in the face of every passenger. But as to whether the surface of the female countenance divine shows, or need show a finer tint or texture must be left to the judgment of the connoisseur. The purchase of milk, meantime, becomes a suspicious matter.

The newest engineering scheme is one for constructing a bridge across the English channel. An iron or steel bridge so constructed and supported by piles is said to be quite within the range of possibilities. It is believed, besides, that the fears of the English people who prevented the construction of the proposed tunnel would not extend to the present proposal. But it is not easy to see why it should be easier to invade the country through a tunnel than over a bridge. The one could certainly be as readily flooded as the other could be cut down.

The *Gil Blas* is ridiculed for speaking of London as "*La patrie du schooling*" because a certain married lady has eloped with a lover. It may have been simple of the *Gil Blas* to stigmatise the matter as shocking, but the ridicule incurred by it for doing so too plainly shows the state of society.

One of the dailies in giving to Parisians the current Joe-Millerism as to the Queen, Gladstone's head, and a Tory damsel, translates the word "charger" by the words *cheval de bataille*, a war horse. It would be pardonable in a French journalist of the period to misunderstand an archaic English word, but it might be thought an acquaintance with the story of Herodias's daughter would have saved him from this exposure. We have a proof that ignorance of the Christian traditions must affect every walk in life.

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE contest for the Ashley seat promises to be a very unexciting event. Mr. John Ollivier, whom most persons regarded as sure to be returned, has ingloriously retired after delivering one address to the electors of Ashley. Various reasons are assigned for Mr. Ollivier's somewhat strange proceeding, but probably the real one is that he prefers to hold himself back for a city electorate. It is pretty generally considered now that Christchurch North will be open for a scramble in the course of a couple of months. Upon the withdrawal of Mr. Ollivier, Mr. Alfred Saunders has come to the front. This gentleman, who has from time to time been rejected by half the constituencies of Canterbury, is renowned for his bigotry, for his lack of ability, and for his consuming and unavailing desire to add M.H.R. after his name. His political views, shortly summed up, consist mainly in a fine old true blue hatred to Catholics and a firm determination to give effect to these views should he ever get the opportunity. That chance I do not think he will get by being elected for Ashley. His candidature is likely to result in adding one more to his already long list of well deserved defeats. Mr. Marmaduke Dixon, who does not appear to possess any particular claim to the confidence of the Ashley people beyond that of being a local man will probably be the future member. It must be confessed that there is a great deal of apathy displayed by leading men in all parts of the Colony in regard to political matters. In recent years elections only bring out a very inferior lot of men. Political life appears to have entirely lost its attraction for the best class of colonists. Hence it is, I suppose, that we are so poorly represented. It is always an open question whether it would not be really more to the interest of a new country to pay members a sufficient sum to make it worth the while of able men to devote their time to the affairs of the country. As it is, the whole management of the Colony is in the hands of a number of political quacks, who know about as much of politics as a science as an Australian black does of the principles of sociology.

The visit of the Native footballers has been the event of the week in athletic circles. The fine stalwart appearance of the Maoris and half-castes has been much admired. The Christchurch team feel considerably humiliated at their defeat on Saturday. It is said that the Natives owe their victory to the fact that muscle triumphed over science. Judging by the somewhat vigorous play indulged in by the Maoris in Lancaster Park on Saturday, it must be confessed that their play has not that "repose" which stamps the caste of the scientific footballer. They are undeniably strong, and are determinedly bent upon winning. Southern athletes will have to prepare for hard work if they mean to maintain the supremacy of white versus black between the goals.

Father Guary, better than any man "in all Denmark," understands the art of inducing the public to part with their money. The "Mikado" is being actively rehearsed under the management of Mr. Towsey for the benefit of the Magdalen Asylum. The rehearsals are said to be most successful. The principals are perfect in their parts, the chorus is strong and efficient, and the dresses are to be on a scale of great magnificence. The performances of the opera are to be given at the beginning of August when it is to be hoped that the efforts of those who are so generously giving their services for this most deserving of all charities will be rewarded with a golden shower upon Mount Magdala.

It has, I believe, been definitely arranged that the often-postponed bazaar in aid of the convent will really take place at the beginning of November: that is immediately the Tuam street hall becomes available upon the expiration of the Rinking Company's lease.

When the Nun's bazaar is over it will be necessary to initiate some movement for the purpose of giving the Brothers better house and school accommodation than they have at present.