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ing the peace of Europe. France and Germany must respectively keep aloof, it is implied, so that these powers may play the part of holding one another in check.

In an article on recent banking returns, the *West Coast Times* concludes with a sentence which will scarcely find favour in some banking quarters:—"Of the New Zealand banks the National seems to be the most progressive and is evidently meeting with the most general favour."

THE Rev Joseph Cook, an American divine, who lately visited this Colony from Sydney, on returning the other day to that city, gave rather an indifferent account of our political situation. The effect of State Socialism, an unwise use of his political power by the working man, and a disposition to rely unduly on the Government, he said, made capital shy, or drove it away. The Colony's great want too, namely population, was hindered by the determination of the working man to prevent immigration. The poll tax, however, of which Mr Cook also made mention, is proposed only for Asiatics, and this is a matter with which, in his own country, the rev gentleman cannot have been unfamiliar. What, it would be interesting to know, was his attitude towards the anti-Chinese agitation in the United States, and what were his motives for it?

Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by our Correspondents.]

THE SITUATION IN IRELAND.

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

Sir,—The result of the Imperial Parliamentary general elections does not contain much upon which Irishmen might be congratulated.

Every true lover of Ireland, every honest Home Ruler, must hold in supreme contempt and brand with his indignation all and everything that has been instrumental in bringing about that result.

With regard to the question of Home Rule two points for practical consideration cannot be lost sight of, these are, first the vast Conservative majority, and secondly, more vast still in their consequences, the lamentable dissensions among the Irish Party. As to the first no one will attempt to minimise the seriousness of its effect upon the Irish National struggle, one cannot close his eyes to the meaning of the sudden and decisive change of political feeling

amongst the English democracy. However great this difficulty is there is consolation in the fact that greater obstacles and difficulties more serious in their nature have been overcome by the Irish people in their fight for national independence. What Ireland has done before she is fully prepared to do again until her sacred rights are duly acknowledged and respected, until her national aspirations are completely satisfied.

But there is one great hereditary enemy of Ireland, one great difficulty that has not been yet overcome—the evil of dissension.

Dissension always has been, and is to-day Ireland's bitterest and most malignant enemy, an enemy that almost invariably appears shrouded in the cloak of patriotism, in which circumstance consists its chief malice.

The proverbial "Kilkenny cats" never fought with more vigorous determination to destroy each other than the Irish Parliamentary representatives of to-day.

Just at the time when we were within measurable distance of the promised land, at the very dawn of political freedom the historic enemy reappears in its vicious capacity of blasting the hopes of our suffering country.

It is deplorable in the extreme that a people so faithful, so loyal and generous, should be at the mercy of a gang of factious politicians, the greater number of whom, trading upon public confidence, care very little about the real interests of those whom in honour and justice they are bound to represent.

What a political farce they are making of a cause which ought to be as dear to them as life itself, and that to the infinite delectation and comfort of their deadly foes.

For the past three or four years at least, they have been simply representing their own personal grievances, and have monopolised the public Press to parade before a suffering people their own petty jealousies.

They may be good politicians, they are not patriots.

There will not be much harshness found in the statement that among the Irish Members of Parliament the number of patriots is very limited. Politics in our day are too practical for patriots.

We find men styled patriotic who are eaten up with selfishness, and intoxicated with blind personal ambition. They are the enemies of the Irish movement, as they are the pest of every society.

Their own glory is the idol of their lives—an idol worthy of all sacrifice. The almighty and all-absorbing *self* is the great landmark that directs their course through life. They see it reflected in every undertaking they are called upon to engage in.

It is singular, too, that those so-called lovers of their country are loud in disclaiming unworthy motives in their political actions. What hypocrisy!

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