

our readers of the nature of his institution. It is a "bird's nest" of the most flagrant description where Catholic children are detained against the will of their parents, and where every effort is made to pervert their faith. No Catholic deserving of the name, so long as Dr. Barnardo's institution rightly owns this reputation, can possibly subscribe one sixpence towards its support, or do anything whatever in aid of it.

THE Irish party have had a victory over the Tories. Not a very important one, it is true, but still one to be taken as an additional straw among several of late moved by the changing wind. The occasion was that of the moving, by Mr. Fox, M.P., for Tullamore, of the second reading of the Labourers' Bill for Ireland, and which was carried, notwithstanding Government opposition, by a majority of 26 in a thin House. We do not set very much store by this victory, but still it is decidedly something gained, and, what is more, we have heard it stated at its least value through a hostile medium—the cable agency.

It is consoling to find that Sir Charles Dilke, who, we understand, is an authority on the subject, considers that these colonies are prepared to encounter the brunt of war. Speaking the other night at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute, Sir Charles, we are told, referred to Australia as the safest part of the empire, and relatively the best prepared for war. A weak point, however, was mentioned by the speaker which, perhaps, some of us had not considered,—that is, the attractions of the Westport coal mines, whose fame as providing fuel for steamships is evidently very widely spread abroad. Sir Charles thought the mines ought to be defended. The hint, no doubt, will be taken into consideration by the authorities concerned.

COUNT CAPRIVI recommends bullets and Bibles for the civilisation of Africa, and another notable interested in the condition of the continent seems partially to agree with him. Speaking the other night at the London Guildhall Mr. Stanley, the famous explorer, condemned what he called the "Quakerism and namby-pamby journalism, which were thwarting enterprise in Africa." The utterance appears to confirm certain reports of Mr. Stanley's methods of proceeding in the country alluded to, which it was to be hoped might prove unfounded. He is evidently an advocate of the bullets, whatever may be his opinion as to the probable influence of the Bible. A momentous crisis in the history of the native tribes has certainly set in, and there are too many analogous cases on record, to leave us in doubt as to what must be its issue. With or without Bibles, bullets will speedily be on the wing.

It is announced that the strike of the Queensland shearers has come to an end, the squatters having temporarily agreed on terms. The magnates in question have been wise in their action, and will prove themselves still wiser if they enter into a lasting agreement. The force opposed to them is far above their strength.

Is the Emperor William's effort to keep his promise of amending the condition of the working classes to be judged by the announcement made by Count Caprivi, that military service will be made compulsory on all the men of the Empire without exception? If such be the case, his Majesty evidently takes an original view of what he has pledged himself to. The crushing armament of the country is already one of the chief causes of the workingmen's sufferings, and its increase must aggravate the evil. After all it would seem that the coercion by which Prince Bismarck is accused of having encouraged the growth of Socialism, is to be continued under another form. Like causes, nevertheless, will probably produce like results.

The solemn exposition for public veneration of the relics of St. Francis Xavier, preserved in the Cathedral at Goa, East Indies, has been deferred until next December. The ceremonies on the occasion will be characterised by much pomp. Thousands of pilgrims are expected to flock to Goa.

Judge Murat Matterson was at the Leland the other day, direct from the city of Mexico, says the *Chicago Tribune*. With him is Don Luis Huller, who is the Vanderbilt of Mexico, though a Vanderbilt would have little standing in his family, for he prints a golden crest at the head of his note paper which has distinguished such a long line of Huller Dons that the memory of man does not begin to run back to the first of them. Don Luis is of the bluest-blooded Castilians. He lives in a castle at Tacuba, the little town but a few miles from the City of Mexico where two other of Mexico's wealthiest men live—Antonio Escandon and Sebaston Weir. Don Huller owns and occupies the famous Villa De Barron. The place is really a palace. The house has fifty rooms, and its construction is on a scale of magnificence equal to anything in Mexico. The grounds alone cost 600,000 dollars, and the whole place several times that sum. Most of the interior finishings were imported from Europe, and even the stone carvings for the doorway and the great gateway into the grounds were imported. Even with all this magnificence for a home, the owner spends much of his time in Europe. He is on his way there now to join his family.

DUNEDIN CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

THE seventh annual meeting of this Society was held in the Christian Brothers' school on Wednesday evening last. The Rev. Father Lynch presided, and there was a large attendance of members and visitors. The report and balance-sheet were read and adopted. The former referred in feeling terms to the loss sustained by the Society consequent on the removal of the Rev. Father Burke to Queenstown. The rev. gentleman had been intimately connected with the Society, for the past seven years, and the many valuable services rendered by him to the Society will be fondly remembered by those with whom he came in contact. The election of officers for the ensuing session resulted as follows:—President, Rev. P. Lynch; vice-presidents, Messrs. J. P. Hayes and P. Carolin; secretary and treasurer, Mr. John A. Hally; assistant secretary, Mr. C. Colum; members of committee, Messrs. J. Egar, F. Cantwell and S. Simmonds. A motion for the establishment of a reading room, to be open on Tuesday evenings, was brought forward, and it was decided to discuss it more fully at next meeting. Several gentlemen were proposed for membership. Votes of thanks to the retiring officers and the chairman concluded the evening's business.

MR. RHODES: THE DIAMOND OCTOPUS.

EXCESSIVE competition reduced the price of diamonds to its lowest ebb. The fortune of Kimberley hung in the balance. Only one thing could save them—amalgamation. But that, with so many and such conflicting interests, seemed at first impossible. The man who solved the difficulty was a young fellow who had recently taken a pumping-contract in De Beers. Guided by Mr. Cecil Rhodes and his fellow worker, Mr. Bent—both of them now millionaires—the De Beers Company began secretly and steadily, through agents, to acquire the main interest in all the others, until one fine day it was found that they were masters of the situation. Remoulding itself into the "De Beers Consolidated," with a trust deed empowering them to engage in any and every undertaking conducive to their end, the company in this way amalgamated first De Beers and then all the other mines into one colossal syndicate. A few last outstanding companies were being bought in the very week I spent in Kimberley; and as the company has acquired also a preponderant interest in the only other diamond diggings which need be considered, it controls to-day the diamond industry of the world. Shafts have been sunk to depths of seven and eight hundred feet through the fallen reef and through the hard mass outside the mine; the price per carat of diamonds has been doubled; the joint yearly output amounts to three and a-half million pounds worth a year; and while paying water at a fabulous rate, and coal at £9 a ton; while buying wags to the tune of £20,000 a week, with total working expenses of £180,000 a month, the company anticipates an annual profit of £2,400,000, and after paying 5½ per cent. on its 2½ millions of debentures, divided 10 per cent. in August last for the six months to June 30 on its share capital of £3,950,000.

Now the world spends £4,000,000 in diamonds every year; and, as year by year it grows more wealthy and populous, it will certainly, unless the taste dies out, not spend a penny less. The world, then, will go on buying its £4,000,000 worth of diamonds every year, and of those at least £3,500,000 worth will have to come out of Kimberley and De Beers. That, at £2 the carat, means £1,750,000 carats from the two, or roughly 1,300,000 loads. That, at 15s a load, means a total of yearly working expenses of about £1,000,000. That leaves a net yearly profit of 2½ millions of money; or, taking the capital as £4,000,000, about 60 per cent.—the best mining investment, I suppose, in the world.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE LAND PURCHASE BILL.

(Truth, March 27.)

A FRIEND sitting by me on Monday when we were listening to Mr. Balfour's Land Purchase Bill, asked me whether I thought it would pass. I replied, "If you fell amongst a band of bandits, do you think you would part company with them with your purse in your pocket?" This is the condition of the British taxpayer, and will be so, so long as the classes to whom he foolishly gave power at the last general election retain that power. The Bill, however, ought to be opposed line by line and word by word, in order that the British electors should be brought to understand clearly the monstrous robbery which is being perpetrated. This will be the course taken by British Radicals, and by the representatives of Ireland.

An Irish landlord is to have the option of selling his estate to us, provided that he can cajole or bully his tenants into agreeing to the sale, and we are then to sell it to the tenants. Land is almost unsaleable at present in England or Ireland. Why, then, are the Irish landlords to be provided with a solvent purchaser? The terms on which we are to buy are outrageous terms. They are to include arrears, and they are to be estimated on what Mr. Balfour calls net value, this net value including cost of management and bad debts. We are to give anything up to twenty years' purchase, and Mr. Balfour explained why by an example. He supposed an estate worth seventeen years' purchase. He adds one year's purchase for cost of management to the present owner, and two years' arrears of rent to the actual owner. We should, therefore, pay for that estate twenty years' purchase, and our security would be the estate worth seventeen years' purchase.

If we do not get our annuities from the tenant, we are to lay hold of certain moneys now paid to Ireland by the Imperial Exchequer, and if that does not cover the deficit we are to provide money neither for education, nor lunatics, nor paupers in Ireland, and behind this is to be an Imperial guarantee. This, Mr. Balfour laboriously explained, is no sort of guarantee. The answer is obvious: if it is not a guarantee, then why give it? The value of a security is not based upon the borrower's estimate, but upon that of the lender. Without this guarantee no one would advance money on