

Dublin Notes.

(From the National Papers.)

THE French Government are at present buying in Ireland all the horses they can obtain that are suitable for cavalry mounts. Ten very fine animals have been already shipped for France. This is a hint to enterprising readers of the Irish farming class. Horse-breeding can be made a very lucrative branch of their business.

There is a good deal of regret and annoyance in Irish Catholic circles that the Custody of Children Bill, which came from the Upper House, should have passed through the committee stage in the House of Commons, under a belief, by the Attorney General, that all sections, Catholic and Protestant, were in favour of it. A telegram putting a different aspect upon the matter was received recently by Mr Justin M'Carthy from Mr Sexton, who has been in communication with the Irish Archbishops and Bishops concerning several amendments they desire to have proposed.

From a statement laid before Parliament, it appears that the assets of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund consist of £43,524 in consols, £2591 in cash, and £19,118 in outstanding loans, making a total of £69,233. The assets of the Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund consist of £19,189 in consols, £16,006 in outstanding loans, and £3586 in cash. These two funds, limited as they are, have conferred considerable benefit to the country. Those who administer them are doing in a small and feeble way what a native government would do in a comprehensive and vigorous fashion, to the permanent advantage of the whole country.

The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language has issued its report for the year 1890, and the progress made by it may be judged from the fact that over 1000 books more than the previous year had been sold. During the year 1889 the Irish language was taught in 51 of the National schools, and nearly 1000 entered for public examination in it. The Society's efforts have been rewarded with an encouraging degree of success notwithstanding the great difficulties they have to contend with.

Father Humphreys, of Tipperary, writes:—"Colonel Caddell is reported to have said in the Cork Court House that he was glad to have an opportunity of contradicting on oath the statement that he had put out his tongue at me in New Tipperary on May 26 last. The court house was burnt down the day after, and no wonder. The wonder is that every court house in Ireland has not been burnt down. I beg to state that the allegation which Colonel Caddell has made on oath is false. He did put out his tongue at me in derision on the occasion mentioned. I charged him on the spot with having done so, and he did not dare deny it."

The O'Gorman Mahon has just completed his 88th year. It was his custom to celebrate his birthday on the 12th March by inviting some of his colleagues to dine with him. One of them once asked him how old he was—"Ab, my boy," said he, "that is one of the things I have had time to forget." He is six years older than Mr Gladstone, and entered the House of Commons two years before the Liberal leader. The warmest friendship exists between the two gentlemen, and the divine attribute of perpetual youth seems to be theirs. Old age, however, is leaving its mark on the O'Gorman Mahon, and of late his health has not been good. He was unable to attend the St Patrick's Banquet in London, and had to content himself, like Cardinal Manning, with an apology.

The Government has established a new scheme of colleges for the training of National school teachers, removing the inequalities in the treatment of denominational and undenominational colleges, and placing all alike on the same footing. Under the new scheme fixed grants are given in all the colleges (Marlborough street included) of £50 a year for males and £25 a year for females, besides a diploma bonus of £10 for males and £7 for females for each year of training, on reward of the diploma for training after a probationary service of two years in the actual work of teaching. If the new scheme should yield a surplus the surplus will be applicable to scholarships, prizes, and other educational matters connected with the colleges. Under the new scheme also the Government will substantially make a gift to the heads of the denominational colleges of the value of the college buildings.

A correspondent, writing from Doogort, Achill Island, says:—"Lady Zetland shook hands with some of the old women who came to the front to welcome her. The dwellings occupied by the people are constructed in such a way that the interior is absolutely dark, and as her Excellency and Miss Balfour stepped into the first cabin they met, it was some time before they discovered that beside them, in a corner next the door, lay a cow. At the fire sat an old man almost blind with age, and it was intimated that his wife had recently died, and that he was alone in the world. There were no articles of furniture in the apartment save a little dresser, a block of wood on which he sat, and a few boards fixed into the wall. A pile of old rags denoted that this bench served as a bed. Lady Zetland asked him some questions, and his answers in Irish were interpreted. He could

not tell what age he was, except that he remembered certain natives of the islands whom he named and who died many years ago.

Sir Thomas F. Brady, Inspector of Irish Fisheries, has issued the fourth annual report relating to the fund subscribed for the relief of distress in Ireland in 1886, which fund was handed to Sir Thomas for distribution. The plan chiefly followed with regard to the fund was the issuing of small loans to poor people, and making free grants where it appeared that the persons were in circumstances too reduced to give much prospect of repayment. Over 400 separate cash loans were issued, some of which were to enable harvest men to go to England and Scotland, and Sir Thomas bears testimony that the repayments have been, on the whole, very punctual. In the case of loans to harvest men, every shilling, with interest at the rate of 5 per cent, has been repaid. The sums repaid are lent to other needy people, and in this way the fund has been a great boon by enabling persons in poor circumstances to keep out of the hands of the "Gombeen men." The number of open cash loans at the end of 1890 was 368, amounting to £613 9s 4d.

A representative of the Press Association has interviewed Mr M'Carthy with reference to the letter published by Mr Parnell, in which the latter throws upon his political opponents the responsibility of not responding to a proposal of his with reference to the relief of the evicted tenants. Mr M'Carthy says it is quite true that in reply to a communication from Mr Parnell he wrote to him:—"You have made a practical proposal with which I am glad to deal." But Mr M'Carthy says Mr Parnell has entirely ignored the remainder of his letter, which read as follows:—"I could not without the sanction of my party make any final arrangement, but I am willing that any sum actually needed for the present wants of tenants should be released and should be entrusted by you and me to Mr J. F. X. O'Brien and Mr Clancy for distribution. No time would thus be lost, and no delay in the relief of the tenants interposed, pending some definite and final settlement of the question." Mr M'Carthy has not yet received any reply to this letter of March 2, and he adds that his letter bearing on the same subject, which was published yesterday in some of the Irish newspapers, was not a reply to that of Mr Parnell, but had been written and posted before the latter was published.

Speaking in the Rotunda, Mr T. Harrington, M.P., in the course of his address, the greater part of which was devoted to an attack on the Irish hierarchy, said with reference to the recent Parliamentary vacancy in Cavan, that "the bishop of the diocese in which Cavan is refused to receive Mr Knox because he was a Protestant. He was very uncomfortable, and said that they wanted a Catholic for that Catholic constituency. These were facts that came to his (Mr Harrington's) knowledge at the time, and he thought that it was about time that they should come before the Irish people. After a while the bishop gave way, and Mr Knox was elected."—Mr E. F. V. Knox, M.P., writes:—"There is one aspect of Mr Harrington's statement which it is well to notice. The London *Times*, which would not before the pledge-breaking began give much space to Mr Harrington's speeches, was careful to report his speech in the Rotunda. The editor was doubtless aware, as Mr Harrington was aware, of the injury which may be done to the cause of Home Rule by such speeches. The Irish people have tried to show their religious tolerance by returning, perhaps, an undue proportion of Protestant Home Rulers. Mr Harrington wishes to remove all effect which those returns had upon English opinion, by representing that Protestant members were forced upon the people in face of the opposition of bishops and priests. His conduct is only of a piece with the conduct of the whole faction from Mr Parnell downwards. Now that it is clear they cannot rule they try to ruin, and if in any case a Home Ruler is defeated in Great Britain as a consequence of Parnellite efforts to create prejudice against the Home Rule cause, they chuckle to think of the ruin they have wrought."

On Sunday, April 5, the census for Great Britain and Ireland for the decade '81-'91 was taken, and will, as far as Ireland is concerned, undoubtedly show a sad diminution of the population. Ten years ago that country had a population of 5,144,983 persons. To-day it is estimated that the number will fall in or about 500,000 short of that figure. Not for the past three decades has there been anything like such an enormous decrease. It was only equalled, and but to a comparatively small extent surpassed, in the period immediately following the famine when in the course of ten short years the country lost upwards of 700,000 inhabitants. Every census taken for the past forty years show a steady falling off in the population, and, contrasting the four latter periods, it would be found that between '51 and '61 the decrease was 726,058; between '61 and '71, 390,236; between '71 and '81, 253,196, and between '81 and '91, 493,692. With the exception of the latter figures the others have been taken from the census reports, and with regard to the last these are based on the quarterly estimates furnished to the Registrar-General and may be presumed to be substantially correct. To the officials in the Registrar-General's office is entrusted the work of arranging, tabulating, and summarising the returns. In this they are assisted by an indoor staff consisting of 100 boy copyists, and 80 men and 10 women clerks, with an outside staff of 25 men and 25 women clerks. On the