

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

The sittings of the Neuchâtel conference have already been numerous, but the fruits of their counsels have been as good as none. Both Prussia and Switzerland declare concession to have already reached its limits, and the conference has accordingly dispensed with the attendance of the Count von Hatzfeldt and of Dr. Kern. It remains now to be seen what terms the mediating powers will themselves impose, and by what means they will enforce them. That the King of Prussia should retain the style of Prince of Neuchâtel seems granted, but there is a further unromantic difficulty, and the "almighty dollar" is at the bottom of it. How much shall the Majesty of Prussia receive in hard cash from the Republicans of Switzerland is now the question.—*Tablet*.

A SOCIETY OF REGICIDES.—The Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post*, speaking from official data, says that the police authorities of France are unhappily compelled to keep up a perpetual look out for the intrigues of some dozen of men—not all Frenchmen—who are nothing more nor less than a society of assassins, whose object is to kill the Emperor of the French and one or two other Sovereigns of Europe. It occurs, then, that as their respective plots ripen it is necessary to nip the conspiracy in the bud by arresting the most prominent members of this secret association. The members of the society are to be found in London, in Switzerland, and in more than one city in France, and the French police, from long practice, are pretty familiar with their movements. They appear to make rows to assassinate, and wait their own time and opportunity, without communicating their plans even to their own associates. If one fails he knows others will attempt the same crime. This was asserted by Pianori, the unhappy man who lost his life for shooting at the Emperor in the Champs Elysees. "Within the last few days," continues this writer, "the police of Paris discovered a ripened plot to kill the Emperor, and 31 persons were arrested accordingly. From the interrogatories which have taken place it appears some of these persons held communications with the foreign secret society in London. They are mostly men in humble positions, and the chief actor of the plot in question is a dyer from Lyons. I am not able to give you the precise plans by which they hoped to accomplish their crime, but it is not true that they had nearly succeeded in their object. No doubt other attempts will follow, until this faction have one by one fallen into the hands of the police. Every day reduces their numbers. Nevertheless, no one can help calculating on possibilities. The Emperor is notoriously fearless, and frequently drives and walks out almost unattended. His nearest and best friends have long remonstrated with his Majesty on this subject, and in vain." A correspondent of the *Sun* corroborates this recklessness. He says:—"A friend of mine, who resides in Paris, went to meet an old schoolfellow of his at the Marseilles station about 9 p.m. Being disappointed, and seeing that the weather was very fine, he walked quietly towards the Boulevards des Italiens. Before he went very far, and in one of the very worst parts of Paris about that quarter, he met somebody whose face he thought he knew, and turning and looking attentively at him, he was surprised to find that it was the Emperor. He was so astonished that he stood motionless, and when he (the Emperor) was almost out of sight, two aide-de-camp passed him, when no doubt remained of the fact. It is thus that this man risks his life; and although I admire it myself, I cannot help thinking that sometimes he overdoes it."

The aim of the initiated in France is notoriously the establishment of Democratic Socialism, but it is perfectly certain, because it has been openly proved, that such a political creed is distasteful to the population of the country. Without entering into the origin or causes of this repugnance, we need only remark that the insurrection of 1848 placed the Democratic Socialists actually in possession of power, and that they were unable to maintain it from sheer want of popular support. France would not have a Republic of any kind, still less a republic of Socialists. The decision of the country in this case was even more strongly pronounced than in that of the Orleansist dynasty, for that was simply allowed, when assailed, to fall without aid, whereas the Republicans were directly superseded by appeal made to the nation. We cannot, therefore, conceive that France would now be disposed to acquire through peril and convulsion institutions which, when quietly offered, she declined to accept.—*Times*.

GERMANY.

AUSTRIA.—The *Times*' Paris correspondent writes that it is again said that there are hopes of the differences between the Austrian and Sardinian Governments being arranged through the friendly intervention of the other Powers.

A letter from Vienna confirms the account already briefly given that the Austrian government, wishing to be prepared for any eventuality, had transmitted orders to Count Gyulai, the commander in chief of the army of Italy, to reinforce the garrisons of the three principal fortresses in the Lombardo-Venetian provinces.—The letter adds:—

"The French government is endeavoring, both in Turin and Vienna, to prevent by its intervention the complications which might arise from the rupture of diplomatic relations between Austria and Sardinia. It is stated that Baron de Bourqueney has handed to Count de Buol a note in which it is declared, in the name of the Emperor Napoleon, that his government, with a view to prevent events which might happen in Italy, and thence extend to other points, has resolved on being the intermediary between Austria and Sardinia."

PRUSSIA.—A letter from Berne, in the *German Journal* of Frankfurt, says:—

"The news that in the Conference Dr. Kern has decidedly opposed the demands of Prussia is confirmed. In conformity with his first instructions he declared that Switzerland declined the payment of any pecuniary indemnity to the

Crown of Prussia, and that she would do nothing more than pay the expenses caused by the occupation of Neuchâtel, and the calling out of the troops. Switzerland also refuses to recognize in any manner whatever, the rights of sovereignty to which Prussia pretends. The instructions of Dr. Kern not permitting him to recognize the right of the King of Prussia, nor of any member of his family, to bear the title of a Prince of Neuchâtel, he has protested in advance, in the name of Switzerland, against all pretensions which may hereafter be based on that disputed title. We are assured that the Ambassador of England supports Dr. Kern."

ITALY.

ROME.—A letter from Rome, in the *Nord* of Brussels, says:—"I am assured that the Sardinian Government is about to resume negotiations with the Court of Rome. King Victor Emmanuel has, it is said, written to the Pope to propose to him an arrangement on the following basis. That Mgr. Franzoni shall resign the archbishopric of Turin, and be made a cardinal; that Mgr. Chiarvaz, Archbishop of Genoa, shall be translated to Turin; and that afterwards a concordat shall be agreed on, which shall pass the sponge over all the acts of the Sardinian Government in ecclesiastical matters during the last few years. This is what is stated to me on good authority. But though I believe that Sardinia, in the position in which she stands towards Austria, is anxious to put an end to her dissensions with Rome, and that Rome would be inclined to yield on secondary points, I doubt that an understanding about a concordat can easily be arrived at; for, on the one hand, Rome would propose a slightly modified edition of the Austrian concordat, whilst Count de Cavour would propose a simple reproduction of the French one with the famous organic articles."

NAPLES.—A few weeks ago, at the commencement of the general election, the Palmerstonian organs treated the public to a dish of horrors from Naples and a description of some new modes and instruments of torture which the infernal genius of despotism had invented. If we mistake not it was the *Illustrated London News* or some pictorial paper which actually gave a wood-cut of a cap of torture, a complication of metal bands, and straps, and screws, by which the jaws, brows, cheeks, and ears of the victim could be compressed at discretion, and the agonies of the thumbscrew or the iron boot be inflicted on the head. The gullible public was invited to contemplate with the mind's eye rows of political prisoners, patriots, statesmen, and warriors, fond fathers, kind husbands, and affectionate friends, sitting in the dungeons of Montecitorio wearing these caps of torture, while wily Jesuits turned the screws for the amusement of King Bomba. We do not know that these particulars were actually stated, but such were the impressions which were conveyed. The contradiction arrives late, and will never reach the eyes of thousands, who will make the young blood of their small children run cold by minutely detailed stories of the atrocious cruelties practised in Popish countries. However, the contradiction has arrived at last, and the cap of torture proves to be a hoax, even as the assassination in Sicily of Colonel Mazza, the officer who presided over the court-martial which sentenced Bentivenga. Colonel Mazza was a Mrs. Harris, and the story of his assassination is as true as any of the adventures of that worthy female narrated by her Sairey Gamp. It turns out that no such person as this Colonel Mazza ever existed, and that the manes of Bentivenga are still unappeased. But the lie has served its turn.—*Tablet*.

CHINA.

INSTRUCTIONS TO LORD ELGIN.—The *Independence Belge* professes to give the instructions for the conduct of Lord Elgin's mission to China. In the first place, he is to demand a renewal of the former treaties, with the following modifications:—"The number of ports open to trade shall be nine, instead of five, and an English minister to reside at Peking, on the same footing as the Russian minister—British military posts to be established in the towns where there have been consuls—the English to occupy certain fortified positions at Shanghai and Canton, to be defended by the garrisons—English ships to have the right of anchoring along all the coasts."

The *Moniteur de la Flotte* publishes some further details relative to the war in China. The Chinese, it is said, are at present making formidable military preparations, which are not to be despised. Since the attack on Canton, the Chinese have executed enormous works on the Pei-ho, a river which falls into the Yellow Sea, and by which a communication is maintained with Peking. That river is now barred in 22 different places by dams built of stone, which completely intercept the navigation. These works are regarded as a curiosity. Moreover, the three branches of the Pei-ho canalised by the Emperor Kia-Kang, in 1817, are cut, and the course of one of them, the Hu-ho, has been turned off into the lake of Koho-tchi. When an army invades the Chinese empire, the principal means of defence is to let the waters of this lake overflow the country. This system of defence, efficacious against an enemy, but most disastrous for the country, was first used against the insurgents in 1852. The city of Peking is consequently perfectly safe from an attack either by land or sea, and the Emperor will in any desperate circumstance be protected by the fanaticism of the people, who will stop at no means to destroy foreigners. A circumstance has lately demonstrated the truth of this fact. The British ships proceeding to Canton have been in the custom of taking fresh water at Whampoa from a small river which falls into the Tchoukiang. It was remarked that the sailors using this water lately have been attacked with colic, and after a careful investigation it was discovered that the water was poisoned by the Chinese. They employed for this purpose the trunk of certain trees, which, after being prepared for the occasion, impart a deadly poison to the water. The Chinese are naturally malignant, and their wickedness is still increased by their fanaticism, which is be-

yond description. There is but one way to subdue them, and that is, to act on their senses, and to terrify them by a display of force and by a maritime demonstration on a grand scale, such as is about to be accomplished by the British government. It appears, moreover, that some of the wealthiest mandarins in the empire propose to revive the great commercial company founded in 1759 by Tsong-Too. These great dignitaries, through personal interest are highly favourable to an arrangement with the English, notwithstanding their warlike manifestations, and, as they are in direct communication with the members of the Nuy-Ko, or Cabinet Council at Peking, they can bring their influence to bear directly on the Emperor's advisers. The revival of the company founded in 1759 will render impossible in future for the Chinese government to violate at will its treaties with foreigners. The *Moniteur de la Flotte* concludes that an arrangement of the difficulties at present existing between the Chinese and English is perfectly possible. For this purpose the British government have merely to adopt the only means efficacious with the Chinese character, which is to make a formidable demonstration on the coast of the Chinese empire.

(From the Weekly Register.)

Year by year, all through the present century, the natural increase of population in France has been steadily diminishing. At length it has reached zero; and (without some great and unlooked-for change) there is no doubt that instead of an increase, however small, the next Census will show an absolute and considerable diminution. What is the most momentous, is that this is a real bona fide decrease of the French people, not a removal of the population by emigration to other parts of the world. The population of Ireland, we all know, is far less than it was eleven years ago. But, notwithstanding the fearful mortality caused by the famine and its attendant diseases, more Irish men and women are, no doubt, living at this day than in 1846. Though no longer on their native soil, they are scattered by the providence of God, as the seed of the Catholic Faith, over great Britain, Australia, and America. The French population of the world is actually lessened. Neither, again, is it lessened by death: the extraordinary loss, whether by the war or by disease, has hardly been enough to tell upon the millions of France. The diminution is of a much more serious nature. It is, that the births have for many years been steadily decreasing, are still decreasing, and already fall short of the deaths. It cannot be wondered that a fact so exceptional and unusual, and at the same time so alarming, has excited general attention. A few weeks ago, the *Siecle* employed it as a weapon to assault the Church. The Religious Orders of men and women, it complains, have absorbed so large a proportion of the population as to cut off the springs of increase from the nation. This strange and absurd statement was refuted by a French Bishop, in the *Univers*, a fortnight ago. The *Times* proposes a theory almost as unfounded. The wars of the First Napoleon, it says, are now telling upon the population of France. The conscription swallowed up all Frenchmen of that generation, except those who were feeble, diseased, or stunted in growth; and the effect is now showing itself in the failure of their children, both in strength and numbers. But wars which ended in 1814 could not possibly cause the births of 1856 to fall short of those of 1846. In fact, the living parents of young families in France must universally have been too young for the conscription. Another fact, however, which the *Times* mentions, and which is notorious, has an important bearing on the subject:—

"Recent writers have narrated circumstances which corroborate and tend to explain the returns of the late Census. For instance, it is declared that there has been a physical deterioration of the French race within the last 70 years. We are told that before 1789 the minimum height for enlistment in the Line was 5 feet 1 inch, French measure. After a quarter of a century of war the minimum was reduced to less than 4 feet 10 inches, and in 1830 to less than 4 feet 9 inches. This standard was still further reduced during the reign of Louis Philippe. If the same height were exacted now as under Louis XVI., more than 120,000 soldiers would have to be dismissed the service. Yet, although the requirements of the authorities are so much lessened, the rejections are in an ordinate ratio to the body of conscripts. In six years, from 1831 to 1837, 504,000 youths were admitted and 459,000 rejected. The deterioration, if we may trust the statistics of the French writer whom we quote, has gone on advancing. In the six years from 1837 to 1843 only 486,000 were admitted against 491,000 rejected. That is, actually more than half the conscripts were found unfit for military service, either through exceeding smallness of stature, weakness of body, or some other physical disqualification; and yet certainly the French armies are strikingly deficient in men either of size or muscular power. That more than half the population should fall short of the moderate standard required in the regiments which we see defile past in a French town, is certainly a most surprising and startling fact."

The real cause of both these lamentable results is the same, and is more lamentable than either of them. It dates from the Great Revolution. Secular historians are wont to speak as if the "Day of Sections" (the "whiff of grape-shot" so graphically described by Carlyle) had ended not only the Reign of Terror, but the moral evils of the Revolution. Alas! *Scripture* tells us that "blood defiles a land;" and after that day, how much innocent blood cried out from France to Heaven for vengeance! The first effect was seen in the godless education of the then rising generation: and wonderful as the works of God in France have since been, marvellous as has been the resurrection of her glorious Church, and noble as is its present attitude, the education of the mass of the population ever since, to say the very least until the last two or three years, has been without faith and without God. The effect is, an extent of demoralisation, in many respects without example in the history of Christendom, side by side with a steadfastness of faith and a fervor of self-devoting charity, which may possibly have been found in the Church of the Martyrs, but which we should seek in vain to parallel in any subsequent age. Nowhere is the number of men and women who are living (either in religion or in the world) the life of angels or of saints so great as in France: never before was the majority of the inhabitants of the country—nay, of the same departments, of the very towns and villages to which they are drawing the sympathising eyes of angels and saints, and the blessing and presence of God Himself—are demoralised to a point which (writing as we do for Catholic families) we dare not describe or even hint; and we fear there is no doubt that, with a great deal of external decorum, and especially a pursuit of material prosperity most laudable in English eyes, this evil has been, and still is, becoming more wide spread and more intense. In proof that what we say is no new theory to account for a startling fact, we may venture to refer to a letter which appeared in the Second Edition of the *Weekly Register* for Sept. 20, 1856, and which was suggested by the two facts now noticed by the *Times*—the physical deterioration of the rising generation, and their diminished numbers. Both these evils result from one melancholy and fatal cause—the deep moral degradation of that large majority of the population, of all ranks, which constitutes the irreligious and godless party. These evil effects, and the

fatal cause from which they spring, are really far more intense than would appear from the Census of France as a whole, because they are concentrated in certain districts. A Census of Brittany alone, of great part of Normandy, or in fact, of most parts of the country beyond a circle of some forty leagues round Paris, would show, we doubt not, a population bearing the marks of the Divine blessing, both in their numbers and their strength. Thus alone can we account for the continued distinction of the French army. For many leagues round Paris the deterioration has long reached such a point that, even in times of peace, the number required by the conscription can hardly be obtained at all. The Legislature are continually employed upon bills to consolidate communes in that part of the country, because the districts which were constituted at the great Revolution no longer furnish the number of persons necessary to fill the different local offices. It is impossible to contemplate the facts, which are daily becoming more and more notorious, without a serious dread for the future of France. The *Times* representing, as usual, the notions of a world which denies God, assumes that the evil is to be cured by human means: it is to "time and legislation" that "France must look for the renewal of her energies and the increase of her people." Alas for her, if she had no better stay for her hopes! "Time and legislation" as if the seventy years since the Revolution were not enough to show what they could both do; or, as if the evil, physical as well as moral, had not steadily increased, as the extract we have given from the *Times* itself abundantly proves, year by year ever since. The hope for France is, not only that "God is above" (as our English pensants are wont to say when they complain of injustice and oppression), but that "God is in the midst of her," for where His Saints are, there is He; and yet if we may venture to conclude in the words of the letter to which we have referred:—

"If this district were the whole of France, or a fair specimen of the rest (which we know it is not), the amount of good in it would not of itself satisfy me that some overwhelming judgment from God might not be just ready to fall upon the country. True, there is good in it; more, perhaps, than there ever was; yet a fear that the state of religion and morals among the people at large can hardly be described by any milder term than as a general apostasy. If we may reason from the history of God's chosen people of old, the time when the most overwhelming judgments were the nearest was exactly when there was most evil and most good—when the mass of the nations had hardened their hearts, and the minority had attained a degree of excellence never known before. The destruction of Jerusalem, the captivity of the people, and the final overthrow of the kingdom of David followed immediately upon the resurrection of religion under King Josiah; and the last destruction of the sacred city by the Romans was in the lifetime of St. John and of tens of thousands of disciples of the Holy Apostles. Will the present resurrection of religion in Paris end thus; or will the people be reconquered to the Faith? God only knows; and happily the work and duty of the noble Christians of Paris is the same, whatever it is to be the result. They have achieved a great victory, and a great step towards ultimate success, in the emancipation of Christian education, from the legal impediments placed upon it by the anti-Christian Government of Louis Philippe. But they have much to do. They have to prevent the infection of Parisian life, irreligion, and immorality from spreading yet farther into the parts of the country still Christian. They have to reconquer the part already infected. Happily they are, one way or other, sure of victory; for, as their great St. Louis said, when the storm of heathen Tartar invasion threatened in his day utterly to sweep away the Christian name out of Europe, 'We shall either drive back these fiends where they came, or, dying ourselves in the strife, we shall go to joys prepared for faithful Christians in Paradise.'"

Every one has heard of the American magician Mr. Hume, and how he has been the admiration and terror of the French capital. But how he excites this terror and that admiration may not be equally well known. Mr. Hume not only evokes spirits like Owen Glendower, but they seem to come at his invocation; and all that we read of magicians in the lives of the Saints appears to be perfectly realised by Mr. Hume. That enlightened metropolis, which used to sneer at the miracles of the Saints, trembles at the marvels of the magician, and the credence refused to the Church is freely, and perhaps naturally, yielded to the Devil. A few weeks ago Mr. Hume entered a saloon containing about twenty persons, amongst whom were many ladies. He was presented to the guests by the master of the establishment as the celebrated invoker of *despirits frappeurs*. Mr. Hume's age appeared to be thirty or thirty-five. His features are regular, and he wears a moustache and beard. He is neither short nor tall—neither brown nor fair—neither fat nor thin. He dresses in the ordinary fashion, and is precisely such a gentleman as one meets in every saloon. After uttering a few words in excellent French, he placed his back to the mantle-piece, and stated that he was entirely at the service of the honorable company, ready to perform anything which was at all within the compass of his power. A lady immediately asked him to make the table turn which was standing in the middle of the room. Every one expected that Mr. Hume would make the ordinary passes, and manipulate the table; but this was a mistake. He laid his elbow on the mantle-piece—a place from which he never moved. His form seemed to undergo a slight contraction, as if by a powerful effort he silently collected his nervous energy. When he had spent half a minute in this mental invocation, he suddenly extended his hand in the direction of the table. In obedience to this motion, the table began to wobble—it rocked and oscillated, and finally swung round, and wheeled away in gyrations like a top. This motion was slow at first, but it gradually increased until the vertigo of the table became perfectly alarming, when the ladies besought him to stop it—a request which he complied with immediately.

Subsequently all the bells in the house (agitated apparently by demon hands), began to ring violently. He was asked by a lady if he could cause a book, which she named, and which stood in a glass-case at the end of the apartment, to quit its place and come to her. The glass doors were flung open at once with great noise, and the book flung into her lap, apparently by invisible hands, in a moment.

In the same way, in compliance with his will, a piano in the apartment played several airs without any visible agency. Their handkerchiefs were violently torn from the hands of certain gentlemen present who ventured to defy the wizard. In the next manifestation of his power he was requested to act according to his own fancy: the candles were extinguished at once, the floor seemed to be swept from under the feet of the company, while it appeared to others that their chairs were uplifted by invisible hands. In either case they seemed to be suspended in the air. Meantime doors were violently opened and slammed, and slammed and opened, as if, in the dark, a numerous troop of visitors were arriving or departing, while the furniture was shoved and rumbled about as if to make room for them. Then the candles were suddenly relighted, but Mr. Hume was nowhere visible. A few moments afterwards a servant entered, and said Mr. Hume had just quitted the hotel, and begged the company to pardon the abruptness of his departure.

About a year ago Mr. Hume visited Rome after having astonished and terrified Florence, as at present he astonishes and terrifies Paris. While in Rome he expressed a fervent desire to embrace the Catholic religion. He accordingly studied the dogmas of our holy religion, and the Rev. Mr. Talbot admitted him into the bosom of the Church; but he was obliged to promise—by writing as well as orally—to hold no further communication with his "spirits." On

resolving to embrace Catholicity the demons threatened to forsake him for a year, at the end of which they promised to return and torment him. Owing to the thoughtless curiosity of a highly honourable family at Rome, who entreated him to gratify their curiosity, he was induced to forego his pious purpose, and recommence his invocations, and he still holds communion with the demon world. Many of his old friends, however, who witnessed his piety a year ago, are not without hope that he will, ere long, return to the bosom of the Church. Such is the account which foreign journals give of Mr. Hume.

In the last century scepticism superseded faith; but in our time, owing to the progress of the age, folly has superseded reason. A little time ago this enlightened generation used to laugh at the childishness of the middle ages, which foolishly believed in necromancy and the invocation of demons. But now the century which prided in the science of Cuvier has the mortification to embrace and submit to the demon worship of Pagan times, which it acknowledges to be well-founded. This is "the march of intellect" of which we heard so much.

It has enthroned the "puerilities of witchcraft" in fashionable and philosophic saloons. The French aristocracy, as every one knows, were delighted with the philosophy of Voltaire, and so the scientific aristocracy are delighted with the spirit-rapping of Mr. Hume. But as the philosophism of the last century led to the negation of all rank, so the spirit-rapping of the present century will lead to the negation of all science. Who, in the name of wonder would evolve electricity if he could call up Lucifer? Steam is a powerful agent, but a child's toy compared to the power of the demons. Unbridled curiosity has led mankind through the paths of science to the gates of Hell. The tree of knowledge, whose fruit is death, has fructified to the destruction of its cultivators.

A temple has been built by the enlightened city of Geneva, which denounces the Saints and Angels of Catholicity, to worship the "spirits" of Mr. Hume. But the demon worship of Protestant Geneva will be inferior, we suspect, in picturesqueness and poetry to the demon worship of Pagan Rome; in the point of morality the equality will, perhaps, be more perfect.

Few things can be more analogous than the spirit-rapping of Protestant countries and the magic of Pagan antiquity, so often demonstrated by the primitive Church. The identity is perfect.—*Weekly Register*.

PUBLIC MORALITY AND PRIMARY EDUCATION.—If the system of education or moral training pursued commonly in this country is to be judged by its fruits, it must unhesitatingly be condemned as one of the worst that has ever been adopted by any portion of the human race. It is impossible to take up the public papers without being shocked at the details of crime that every week, or rather every day, are eagerly collected together to satiate the craving for scandal that, unfortunately, is one of the principal characteristics of our reading public. This, in itself, is a bad sign; there are certain crimes which Saint Paul says should not be even named amongst Christians; yet the most revolting accounts on these very subjects are those which find most favor, and are most profitable to the publishers. We doubt if there are as many Bibles sold in a month or even in a year, as were sold copies of the proceedings of the Corners' Inquest on the Bardsell murder. Then the social state exhibited by these crimes is really dreadful. The tragedy we have just mentioned unveils a manner of living among people commonly called respectable, far different from that which might be expected in a country whose public morality is so much boasted of. Were any such disclosures made in Rome or Naples they would be published by the English and American press as a proof of the horrible state of society in Catholic countries. But this is not the only case that has lately transpired. We pass over the suicides and murders of almost daily occurrence. We will not mention the numerous divorces granted so freely in that puritanically moral part of the Union, that New England is said to be, for reasons that do not prove that conjugal fidelity is a peculiar virtue of that people; nor will we touch on certain revelations made lately as to the real character of many of the boarding houses in large cities. We will pass over all these things, and many others of the same kind. A law is about to be introduced in this State, if we mistake not, to render more difficult the preparatory steps to the marriage contract by adopting some of the precautions established long ago by the Church. Some such step is necessary to save that remnant of respect which a Godless legislation has left to this the holiest of human contracts. But whence arises all this want of public morality that is now felt and deplored by respectable citizens of all religions? Catholics have always traced it to the public school system, and late events have only proved that their suspicions were too true. It has been shown beyond all denial, that in many, if not all of our cities, the public schools were dens of the most infamous corruption. It is no wonder that in after life, persons should have little respect for the most sacred ties, when in the age in which our impressions, habits, and general character are formed, they learn such lessons of vice and sin.

There rests, therefore, a solemn and important duty on every parent; that of watching attentively the nature of the schools in which they place their children. If not, when afterwards they will have the misfortune to see them entering upon the career of dissipation and vice, now-a-days too common, they will have to repent bitterly of their culpable carelessness. Catholic parents especially are inexcusable, if they send their children to any other but Catholic schools where such are to be had. Let them remember the evident danger to which they expose their children, a danger of which there now can be no doubt; and let them tremble at the account they will have to render, both to religion, and society, for having allowed their offspring to become the disgrace and ruin of themselves and many others, rather than honorable men, good fathers of families, and exemplary Christians.

In *Harper's Weekly Journal of Civilization* we find the following specimen of the kind of civilization the filibusters would introduce into Central America. This extract is taken from a personal narrative of a Ranger's life in Nicaragua.

THE KEN.

In this large and really wealthy establishment I saw no inclinations of luxury, but in all things comfort, perfect cleanliness, and abundance. Our hostess, a nun of St. Teresa, received us with a grave and dignified hospitality which commanded respect, and should have been for her a sure protection against injury or insult. For two days she entertained us, conducting the affairs of her school and household as though we were not present. Colonel C. would not allow us to enter her house, and we were obliged to place our blankets on hides which the *vaqueros* placed for us under the portico. Morning and evening the small voices of the children sounded the praises of the Creator, and of Mary, Mother of God.

THE PICTURE.

Looking one evening through the open wickets of the cottage, I saw a group of children of several ages, two of them beautiful in the extreme, the others swarthy and straight haired. They stood singing, with serious faces about their venerable instructors, whose conventual and aristocratic education had imparted a fine and placid intelligence to her face. They were chanting some portion of a prayer. The picture stood in the frame work of the cottage door, shadowed by the low verandah, against a violet sky after sunset, nor did it fail, apart from the artistic sentiment, to move compassion for the fate of a people whose unprotected simplicity was being then crushed and trampled by harsh and desperate invaders. Two months later, this cottage was rudely