

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

The damage inflicted by the floods in France is estimated at two hundred million francs. The London subscriptions for the sufferers by the inundations in France now amount to some £20,000. The Times Paris correspondent, writing on Sunday, says:— "The Emperor leaves Paris on Tuesday for Plombières, where he purposes remaining about three weeks. As the opinion generally prevails that a sovereign cannot stir from his capital, or, indeed, take a step in any direction without a political object in view, various rumors have circulated, but which, as I am assured, contain hardly a particle of truth. For instance, there is none whatever in what has been said relative to the interview with the Emperor of Austria on the shores of the Lake of Constance; and the projected visit to the Castle of Arenenberg, on the Rhine, I am also disposed to regard as apocryphal."

RUSSIA.

A letter from Warsaw, in the Augsburg Gazette, says:—"The papers have spoken several times of the reconstruction of Sebastopol; but as yet all the Russians have done is to clear away the rubbish; and the plan of the rebuilding of the town, which was to be laid before the Emperor and the Minister of War, is not yet finished. The troops are returning but slowly from the Crimea. The disarming of Poland is insignificant as yet, but the corps in the Baltic Provinces is being disbanded."

It is said that Nicholaïeff is to be made the headquarters of an extensive mercantile steam navigation, like the "Austrian Lloyd's."

THE RUSSIAN NAVY.—The Emperor of Russia has given the whole of his fleet a new arrangement, which had become necessary in consequence of the events of the late war. The Russian papers, in speaking of the arrangements, say that the saving will now be effected by the suppression of the expensive Black Sea Fleet, in conformity with the terms of the treaty of peace, which amounts to 15,000,000 or 20,000,000, will, in all probability, be applied to the development and strengthening of the naval force in the Baltic, White Sea, and Pacific Ocean. Now that the Byzantine projects of the Emperors of Russia are necessarily given up, at any rate for some time to come, the nation seems to turn its eyes to the extreme north. According to all accounts from the shores of the White Sea, the population there contains a hardy, courageous race of men, for the development of whose seafaring instincts hitherto little or nothing has been done and the land in those parts is moreover covered with the finest shipbuilding timber.

A letter from St. Petersburg states that the crops in all the provinces of Russia present an admirable appearance.

ITALY.

The Courrier de Marseille of the 30th June says:—"We have received from Rome an important piece of intelligence. We learn that the Holy Father is preparing a general amnesty in favor of political offenders. That amnesty is to be proclaimed on the occasion of the Festivity of St. Peter.—The reforms so ardently desired by the population of the States of the Church will be published about the same time."

GREECE.

It is stated in Paris that the affairs of Greece are about to be discussed at a conference in London, at which Lord Clarendon and the representatives of France and Russia will settle various questions arising about the state of Greece. A Berlin journal states that the succession to the throne of Greece is one of the points to be settled.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

ANOTHER WAR AT THE CAPE.—We have reason to believe that information has been recently received from the Cape of Good Hope which savors strongly of another war in that colony. The Kafirs are again becoming discontented, and the home government should lose no time in despatching an additional strong military force to keep these rogues in check. The fine army now returning from the East will give every opportunity for concentrating at the Cape an efficient and well-disciplined body of troops, ready to take the field with energy and determination to become victors.—United Service Gazette.

THE MAYNOOTH QUESTION.

(From the Times.)

Somebody suggested, a little time since, that if there was to be an examination for the Civil Service, there ought, a fortiori, to be one for the far more important office of legislator. Certainly it is of much more consequence that an M. P. should know the history of the Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, the Revolution of 1688, and the history of Louis XIV. than a tide waiter or a clerk at Somerset House. At all events, it would be a vast gain if aspirants for political office and distinction could come to some tacit understanding—we will not say on the practical application of general principles, but on the general principles of political science themselves. Here we find Mr. Spooner, a most respectable gentleman, and able to manage his own affairs with prudence and propriety, after we know not how many years, gravely assuring the House of Commons that the education of Clergy for the great majority of a population, and in conformity with their opinions, is a national sin. No matter how old the institution is, under what compromise, or for what political objects it was founded—no matter what we should have in its place—no matter how it works politically—no matter any consideration whatever that may be urged for it—the institution is a "sin." Yes, that is the word. When a gentleman of quick temper and a not very reverential tone of mind wishes to dismiss a person or a mat-

ter from his particular regards, he commonly does so in a form of expression which is considered, by strict divines a violation of the Third Commandment. Of course, Mr. Spooner would endanger his relations with Exeter Hall if he were to indulge in this mode of venting his feelings. But he does what is a great deal worse, for he does the same thing deliberately, seriously, solemnly, with much grimace and cant. His way is to call this thing a "sin," and that thing a "sin," ad libitum, as if he had a particular revelation to inform nations what was "sin" and what was not. He is always thundering from his private Mount Sinai against this Act of Parliament; this statesman or that, forgetting that mankind want a little more attestation of a divine authority than is contained in an average respectability, blunt manner and acrimonious aspect. Pretensions of this exaggerated character would not make such way if they were confronted with a little more political science. If the principles of political morality were better understood, we really believe that even Mr. Spooner would not lay down the law with so sublime a confidence in the sanctity of his convictions. Here are all sorts of grave questions, not so much encountered, or answered, as stamped under foot, by this summary way of calling a thing a "sin." Is the nation which contains several religions in precisely the same case as regards matters of conscience as an individual who can only have one religion? Then, who is the sinner? Where is he? If the consenting Taxpayer is the sinner, and it is a sin in Taxpayer A to support the religion of Taxpayer B, why is it not also a sin in Taxpayer B to support the religion of Taxpayer A? If it is a sin in one, why not in both? If Taxpayer A on going to Exeter Hall and hearing Mr. Spooner feels his conscience pricked, and realises the extreme sinfulness of supporting the idolatries of Taxpayer B, will not B, as a matter of course, light his conscience at Taxpayer A's, and realise the extreme sinfulness of supporting A's blasphemies? Where is this to stop? The State, in one way or another, through the Legislature or the Executive, has given immense sums and still contributes largely to the maintenance of the Established Church, which is the religion of about five eighths of the English, one-fifth of the Irish, and of an utterly insignificant fraction in Scotland. As Mr. Spooner lays down the law, it is a heinous and damnable sin on the part of the three-eighths in England, the four-fifths in Ireland, and nearly all Scotland. So, of course, we are sinning by wholesale all round, and ought to repent and cut one another's throats, rather than contribute any more, by our mutual toleration to these soul-destroying errors.

It is almost needless to say that Mr. Spooner simplifies the question immensely by denouncing altogether the sin of maintaining a Roman Catholic College under any circumstances, whatever its origin, whatever the mode in which it is conducted, the spirit of its teaching, or its actual results. True, his argument is cumulative, for otherwise he would miss the pleasure of abusing the Papists, and showing up pleasant little details from their books of devotion and doctrine. But his argument proceeds on the commonly received character of the Papist, and it is that the State commits a grievous sin in educating an animal of that sort, or helping him to educate others, or having anything at all to do with his religion. But, to revert to the project of a preliminary examination in politics to be required of all the candidates for the office of M. P.—when the debate is resumed on the motion for the second reading of this bill, will some one of Mr. Spooner's friends have the goodness to lay down the whole law of religious endowments, as it applies not only to the hierarchy and aristocracy of the Church of England, but also to Papists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, and the rest of them? All these people have consciences, or profess to have them, which is all that the State has to do with. Our excellent Presbyterian friends have a great admiration for Mr. Spooner, but they go a little further than he does. They hold Prelacy to be quite as damnable and much more contemptible than Popery, and they have renounced both in a very round piece of polemical obscuration. Of course, they think it quite as great a sin to continue the endowment of the See of Oxford with great tithes granted for the purpose since the Reformation, and a number of colonial sees founded the other day by Act of Parliament, as to go on giving £30,000 a year to Maynooth. Will Mr. Spooner just tell these gentlemen what they ought to do in this matter?—what is a sin in their case, and what is not? But, as he is proposing to strip Maynooth of its endowment—about one-twentieth of that of our Protestant Universities, not to speak of our public schools—he will not beso cruel as to leave the wretched occupants without a conscience by taking away their £30,000: he must seriously inform them what they ought to do as regards the endowments of the Established Church, whether in the direct form of tithes, rates, and Parliamentary grants, or the ancient endowments still continued by the State, and protected by the law. It is an English as well as an Irish question, for the Irish have quite as much concern in England as we have in Ireland. Unless he tells the Roman Catholics what they ought to do, we greatly fear that they will take the simple course of following his example. At all times this is easier than analysing arguments, or even merely reading a speech. The sudden stoppage of £30,000 a year, and the fact of several hundred Roman Catholic students being suddenly put on short commons, or scattered about Ireland begging their bread, will be a visible and intelligible fact, addressing itself to the obtusest understanding. When the Roman Catholics of the Empire learn that Parliament has done this for conscience sake, and to wipe away a great "sin," no doubt they will be seized with a noble emulation. Of course they ought. It is in the nature of virtuous acts to inspire a generous rivalry. Mr. Spooner himself would only be too proud to find his religious views so widely disseminated. With this beginning there would then be some hope of the Papists. But why does not Mr. Spooner prepare us for the inevitable result, and already lay the foundation of the triumphant success which he will certainly be able to claim? How much more glorious to purify the political faith of all creeds, than only of one, and that the most pure!

THE SUNDAY IN ENGLAND.

At the meeting of the Council on Wednesday, a memorial was presented from a number of very influential gentlemen, in which they asked to be allowed to provide a band of music, at their own expense, to play in the Botanic Gardens on the afternoons of Sunday, between the hours of two and five. The

memorial which made this request bore the signatures of the stipendiary magistrates, honorary magistrates, several eminent merchants, and zealous philanthropists, who evinced their sympathy with the general enjoyment of the laboring classes on the first day of the week by offering to provide them with suitable music. When gentlemen of position are willing in this voluntary manner to put their hands into their own pockets, to serve others, they give at least undoubted proof of sincerity, and a glance at the names attached to this document will show that on the score of position, intellect, and we may add, genuine piety of a practical and Christian-like character, they will not suffer by comparison with any given number of frothy councillors and plethoric aldermen. In fact, the strength of this document seems to have staggered some of the members of the body to which it was addressed. One gentleman, whose attempts at the facetious are not always happy, moved that the prayer of the memorial be complied with, but that Thursday be substituted for Sunday—a suggestion which the reporters state was received with derisive laughter. Another declared his intention of voting against the memorial, but wished to express his high opinion of the gentlemen who had signed it—an amount of "soft sawder" which will pass for what it is worth, and several other members, including the erudite Alderman of St. Peter's Ward, protested against being thus repeatedly called upon to discuss theological questions in the Council. The reply was prompt—that this is not a theological question any more than the Council is a theological body, and that the members of the Council who can only discuss it in this spirit mistake alike their position and their duties.

It is one of our island peculiarities that we are disposed to indulge in superfluous glorification, and a striking proof of the fact was afforded yesterday by the publication of a letter in one of the local prints, headed "Sunday in Rome." The writer is a Liverpool gentleman, who has long resided in Italy, and is at present in this town (Liverpool.) The signature to this letter describes the gentleman accurately, and the communication bears so pertinently on the subject of the memorial addressed to the Town Council, that we cannot resist the temptation of quoting it:—

"Having just arrived from Rome, I cannot read Mr. Samuel Holme's aspersions on the Roman Sunday, without remonstrating against the extreme injustice of them. It is my firm belief that there is not a large town in either England or Scotland, where the Sunday is so religiously observed as in Rome, and where so large a proportion of the population attend religious worship. The evening, it is true, is devoted to amusement, as is also the case in Protestant Geneva; but during the day the shops are all closed, and there is more quiet and decorum than in any English town. I remember when leaving London by an omnibus, on Sunday afternoon, and observing a street crowded with 'roughs,' I inquired whether there was a row, and was informed that 'they were waiting for the gin-shops to open.' When I compare this crowd, or the 10,000 who weekly lie drunk on the Glasgow Sunday, with the dignified and self-respecting crowd that listen to the band on the Pincian-hill at Rome, I blush for my countrymen; and for the aspersions the educated part of them venture upon, though I am no Catholic, nor friend of the Roman Government, but

"A PROTESTANT ENGLISHMAN."

We pass by the manner of spending the Sunday in Rome to glance at Geneva, and most persons, we apprehend, who are not committed to extreme views on this subject may be induced to think that we might with safety relax a little in favor of the working population, seeing how infinitely more puritanical in the observance of the Sabbath, Protestant England is than Calvinistic Geneva. It is a sore blot on the character of this country that its population, with the solitary exception of Russia, is the most drunken in Europe, and it is to wear the lower classes from this debasing vice, to improve their physical health, by drawing them abroad into the pure air, and to elevate their moral perceptions, that the memorialists are willing to pay for Sunday music; and who shall say that this training is not better calculated to make such persons Christians than the opposite course which is at present pursued? Unfortunately the religious feeling of the nation is almost exclusively confined to the higher and middle classes, while drunkenness revels amongst the lower; and bearing in mind this melancholy fact, it will be seen that the greater part of the discussion in the Council on Wednesday was better suited to the atmosphere of the conventicle than to this sinful every day world—was more in keeping with the spirit of Exeter-hall than with that which ought to influence a municipal body.

It is amusing to see the shifts to which recourses had in the shape of suggestions for a Saturday half-holiday, and other projects, murder to defeat the proposition for the non-religious portion of the public enjoying themselves on the Sunday. The Weekly Review has an admirable scrap of satire on the subject;—"What says the Fourth Commandment? 'Six days shalt thou labour.' What says Lord Shaftesbury? 'Five days and a half shalt thou labor, and a half a day thou shalt amuse thyself.' Does not this carnal lord know that amusement is directly opposed to the spirit both of the Old and New Testaments? We all know that the words 'Keep holy the Sabbath day,' 'On the seventh day thou shalt do no manner of work,' were held by all sound commentators to mean, 'On the Sunday thou must not amuse thyself at all. Oh, let those who heedlessly join this cry for a Saturday half holiday consider the awful state of mind towards which they are tending! Once teach men that it is right to take no manner of amusement, for that would be unholy. Indeed, the Hebrew word which we render 'work,' has been thought by many sound divines to include amusement. This being so, the design of the fourth commandment clearly was to altogether prohibit amusement. It provides for the whole of man's time. Six days shalt thou work, on the seventh day thou shalt go to church or chapel, and read sermons at home; and, consequently, thou shalt never amuse thyself on Saturday, and you will find it very hard to convince them that it is unholy to amuse themselves on Sunday." If this admirable reductio ad absurdum had not been published prior to the last scriptural debate in the Liverpool Town Council on Sabbath observance, we should have regarded it as a reply to the principal speakers on the evangelical side, for it is quite as scriptural and every way, as conclusive as the bulk of the orations delivered on that occasion.—Liverpool Paper.

Losing a cow for the sake of a cat. This is the Chinese interpretation of going to law.

THE "TABLET" ON THE DIVORCE BILL.—A few years ago there prevailed a popular tradition that the English people were on the point of becoming Christians. "All we wanted were imposing functions with Gothic vestments, and the work was done." There was no limit to the virtues of an unwieldy, chasuble and the charms of the Georgian Chant. It is probable that the delusion has had its day, and that we see clearer than we did through the "Anglo-Saxon mist." There are persons who make themselves blind and deaf; all the beauty of the exterior adornments of the Church; and the plaintive simplicity of her chants are thrown away on certain minds, and it is very much to be feared that one of these minds is that of John Bull.

In the House of Commons, nobody expects to hear much praise of virtue; most people are thankful when a debate has concluded there without blasphemy or profaneness. It is so much gain when that is the case. The Upper House, if not very much afraid of God, is yet an assembly of gentlemen, and it is very rarely that "pious ears" are offended there. If any scandal occurs, it is the work of some Superintendent, new to the House, and to the associations connected with it. In the House of Lords, even the Whig infidel, fresh from the private conversation of which the least said the better, speaks with a gravity and decorum not always imitated by the so-called Episcopal bench. There is a tradition there which every one is obliged to respect; and, however great the hypocrisy of many of the actors may be, it is no business of ours to quarrel with it—in an age of expediency and imposture we are on the whole better pleased with the cant than we should be with the naked vice which the Lower House so frequently exhibits.

Now, however, we are about to lose the last of our public illusions. The House of Lords descends to the level of the Commons—not in language, however, at present, but in deeds, and this once established, the language will soon follow, for thought and speech were born and die together. The Lord Chancellor, together with the other lawyers in the House, have agreed together to establish a new court with a new Jurisprudence on the Sacrament of marriage. Until now we hoped that the peers would have stood between us and harm, and resisted so scandalous an outrage on the law of God. The lawyers, indeed, true to their detestable instincts in all ages, make light of the Divine law, and establish their new jurisprudence on the necessity of helping respectable men to sin cheaply. That seems to be their only reason for introducing the law of divorce. The inference is, that corruption has eaten so deeply into the heart of the nation, that it is no longer possible to disguise the evil, and the civil guardians of the State morals think it no longer worth while to preserve even the appearance of virtue. Some of the peers have objected, and one of them, Doctor Wilberforce, has betrayed the cause while seemingly defending it. He, in his ignorance of the Christian law, admitted the lawfulness of divorce, but denied its expediency, and on that ground only spoke against the immoral and scandalous Bill.

It is a pity that those sapient men—the senators of England—did not pass an act to keep the Irish peasants at home—namely, a Tenant Right Act, as Mr. Lucas so often asked them—instead of passing an act to crimp the exiles in a foreign country—namely, that Foreign Enlistment Bill, which has entangled Britain in a disgraceful squabble with America. This is a great pity. We regret that senators who have so much sympathy for the Romans, and would legislate if they could for the benefit of his Holiness, exhibit so little sympathy for the Irish, and do not legislate for the real benefit of themselves. We are persuaded that without the agricultural population of Ireland the imperial predominance of Britain can never be maintained, and therefore it is a duty incumbent on British legislators to enact measures which will preserve the small farmers of Ireland, and this for a variety of reasons.

The manufacturing habits of England have in some degree been unfavorable to her warlike habits. Her agricultural population is comparatively small, and her artificers, accustomed to high wages, from the unexampled extent of commerce, are unwilling to exchange their good food and warm workshops for the coarse fare and damp lodging of a camp; and when they do exchange them under the temptation of high bounties or slackness of trade, they are not likely to make the best and most hardy soldiers. In all these respects Ireland presented a contrast which for the object in view was in the highest degree favorable. Her agricultural population was before the famine redundant and rapidly increasing, the pecuniary wages of her laborers were lower than the pay of the British army, and offered most irresistible temptations to enlist, and the habitations and food of her peasantry are such as to make a British camp appear an abode of much superior comfort, and the fare of the common soldier a luxurious repast. The facility which the peculiar state of Ireland gave to military levies was so pre-eminent that it broke through all discouragements, and in the actual state of things a very large proportion of Irish is to be found both in the army and navy of Britain. But if even under the present system, in spite of the irritation which they are taught to feel from the power that degrades them, in spite of their exclusion from military distinctions, the discouragement of their friends, and the inconveniences they are subjected to in the performance of their religious duties, they still offer their services in considerable numbers, what would they not do if their hearts were really and cordially with England—that is to say, if they were protected from extermination and exile by a good tenant right bill? Whatever they would do, one thing is certain—their presence in Ireland would render a Foreign Enlistment Bill an unnecessary enactment. In that case the discussion on the American quarrel itself could never have taken place, and thus it would be unnecessary for the Attorney-General to explain either the laws of politeness or of the United States to Mr. Moore. I would have saved that functionary some trouble, and Lord Clarendon some dismay.—Tablet.

ELECTRO CLOCKS.—The city of Marseilles has undertaken to establish a complete system of electric clocks. One hundred of these clocks are to be set up, the arrangements for which require the laying of forty thousand metres of conducting wire. The clocks are to be placed in the street gas lamps, so that the hour may be read at night, as well as by day. The whole cost will be about £5,000.