

Some extraordinary stories are current illustrative of the confusion at Balaklava, and of the culpable carelessness of the subordinate officials, whose duty it is to keep the Commissariat department in working order. The following are some of them:—

"A vessel arrived at Balaklava loaded with boots and shoes. Having no bill of lading, and the cargo being merely stated as shoes for the army, the vessel was ordered out of the harbour to wait her turn. A few days afterwards an order came from Lord Raglan to obtain a vessel to proceed to Constantinople instantly on a most pressing service. This vessel was consequently ordered to proceed. Constantinople, with Lord Raglan's agents, without unloading. When she had nearly reached the place, one of the agents imparted in confidence to the captain that he was going to Constantinople to purchase boots and shoes, the army being in a great state of destitution for want of a supply. The captain replied, 'Why, my vessel is filled with boots and shoes.' Upon which the ship was put immediately about, and returned to Balaklava."

The Berlin correspondent of the *Daily News* does not appear to consider that in giving the *Thetis* for two Prussian gun-boats, such a bad exchange has been made. He says:—"The *Nix* and *Salamander* are both British built, having been constructed in a celebrated private yard on the banks of the Thames. To call them gun-boats is merely a *facon de parler*, for they are vessels of upwards of 600 tons each, but from their peculiar construction they draw only about six feet of water, notwithstanding their powerful armament. This, as well as their great speed, for they run with ease thirteen knots, combine to make them a very valuable acquisition for the British navy, particularly as they cannot fail to be of great use in the approaching naval campaign in the Baltic in the spring."

A new castle at Balmoral, for the Queen's highland home, is being erected under the direction of Mr. W. Smith, of Aberdeen. The Scotch Baronial is the style adopted, but in a modified form. The west and north sides present carved corbellings, rope, ribbon, and other mouldings. The design consists of two separate blocks of buildings, joined together by connecting wings, at the east angle of which stands a tower 35 feet square, with circular staircase turret, rising about 100 feet. This tower and the connecting wing are now about 12 or 14 feet above ground. The block forming the principal house is, with the exception of the carriage porch, completed externally. It is 120 feet one way, 118 feet 4 inches the other, with a central court 33 feet by 52 feet. At the west angle are the carriage porch and the entrance hall, leading to the corridor, running behind the principal rooms, which are on the west and north sides; the dining-room is to the north, where the river is. These rooms are 15 feet high, and above these, extending the whole length of the west side, are the private apartments of the Queen and the Prince. The principal staircase is in the centre of this corridor, all of stone. On the south and east sides there are three floors, containing rooms for some of the suite, for visitors, for the royal children, bedrooms, and servants' room. The whole of the principal house, connected wing, and square tower, are made fire-proof on Fox and Barrett's principle, with wrought-iron rolled joists. The kitchen offices, forming three sides of a square and something more, are to be built on a lower level to suit the ground, and the ball-room, 68 feet by 25 feet, is placed also on a lower level. The building is entirely of granite, of very good and uniform colour, found in great abundance on the estate.

Since the death of the late Venerable President of Magdalen College, Dr. Martin Routh, on the 22nd of December last, in his hundredth year, the oldest of the Heads of Houses is now Dr. J. D. Macbride, the highly respected Principal of Magdalen Hall, which appointment he has held ever since the year 1813, being the unusually long period of upwards of forty years. He is the author of some well-known theological works, among which may be mentioned *Lectures on the Articles of the Church of England*, and *A Discourse on the Life of Christ*, in two volumes, which last has passed through several editions. Dr. Macbride, who has, we believe, attained the advanced age of eighty-six years, is also one of the Professors of the University, being Lord Almoner's Professor in Arabic.

Examinations for thirty assistant-surgeons in the service of the East India Company are now proceeding. These fine appointments begin with £600 a-year, and after a time rise to £1000. There is also a retiring pension. Yet, strange to say, for these thirty vacancies there are only thirty-four candidates.

The French Protestant pastor, F. Monod, writes to the *Standard* denying that the French Government had organised a "service d'aumoniers" for the Protestant troops in the Crimea. On the contrary it has repressed every application to send out Protestant chaplains on the Government account. Two, however, have been provided by private subscription, to which the Government has offered no opposition, but given a free passage and "provided some other facilities."

The news from China comes down to the 27th of November:—

"Sir J. Bowring had an interview with the Imperial Commissioner on the 3rd November, when Sir John was attended by a guard of 100 maces and sailors, and was received by the imperial officers in suits near the forte, in the presence of about 1,000 officers, troops, and spectators. At this conference a very full discussion and development was had of all the questions at issue between China and the Treaty Powers; and the English and American Ministers continued their intercourse with the Imperial Commissioner, during the remainder of their stay, through the medium of correspondence, and their secretaries, who remained within the river, individually pressing the claims of their Governments, they have thus advanced an important step, and it only remains for the commencement they have made to be followed up with vigour by the three Treaty Powers, to meet fully the interests of their countrymen in China and their respective countries."

"The *North China Herald* says that 'the spirit of the northern provinces, from what we can glean, is not broken by the long civil war. Commanders were met with who had fought with the rebels; and the feeling there appears to be that the insurgents will be eventually quelled, although it may take much time to effect it.'"

"The *Pekin Gazette* to the 20th October states that the insurgents have met with heavy reverses during the last two months, and give in detail various victories, and the capture of several cities. After the capture of King-san, the rebels were repulsed by water, and 300 vessels burnt, by which means 2,000 insurgents were destroyed. On other occasions 400 rebels were captured or slain. On the 9th several vessels were destroyed; on the 12th, 50 more vessels were burnt, and those on board of them put to death to the number of four or five hundred. On the 13th, more vessels were destroyed, and a hundred men."

"From Canton, we learn that the Imperialists on the 17th Nov. suffered a severe defeat and heavy loss in men and junk, at the hands of the Fuhshan insurgents, who effected their object by means of a surprise."

The character for the first syllable Ningpo, forming part of the name of the late Emperor of China, Ming Ning, was modified in its component parts on the accession of that monarch to the throne, according to law, so that in its original form, it was to be applied only for the sacred purpose of indicating that personage. Recently the character Ming has been wholly tabooed in official documents, and the first part of Ningpo is now written by a different character, which, however, is identical in sound and similar in sense to the one regarded as sacred. Should the exchange be extended throughout the empire, the names of half a hundred cities and countless number of other places will be affected by it.

SUPPRESSION OF CONVENTS IN SARDINIA.—The following article, says the *Calendar*, is taken from the *New York Crusader*. It abounds in statistical information that no doubt will prove highly interesting at this time. The *Crusader* says:—

"The Roman Catholic apostolic papers of Italy, Ireland, and of the United States, have been caving, of late, like crows over lost prey; they have loaded with insults the only free government in Italy, for having suppressed some convents, in several cities of the Sardinian kingdom, in order to lodge the sick and poor, during the awful ravages of the cholera. What care priests, friars, nuns, and Romish editors, if the creatures of God die in the gutter, or lay their weary limbs on the naked board, provided they enjoy all the good things of the earth and monopolize celestial life in heavens above!"

The Sardinian Government has acted wisely; the whole press of that country, and the majority of the nation insist on the total abolition and suppression of all the monastic orders and establishments. There are buildings in Piedmont which could contain even three thousand persons, but are occupied only by fifteen nuns, or twenty fat, lazy friars, with many thousand

dollars income, which they employ to keep up political and religious strife, constantly conspiring against the constitution of the country.

"There are in Sardinia, a kingdom of nearly five millions of inhabitants, 444 religious houses, commonly called convents and monasteries, of which 303 are occupied by males, and 141 by females!"

"There are as many friars and nuns as there are houses. This whole family of parasites divided into thirty or more different orders of men and twenty-four of women, forming a population of 12,500 persons. If we add to this all the archbishops, abbots, canons, chaplains, and priests living in Piedmont and in the Island of Sardinia, we shall have an army of 17,500 male and female soldiers."

"This holy society possesses the largest means and the best estates in that kingdom, the property belonging to the whole of the convents being valued at sixty millions of dollars."

Let the Sardinian government pursue the noble mission of reforming the country and suppressing convents, and the civilized and Christian world will applaud its noble undertaking. The wants of its people claim this policy.—*National Standard*.

Diocesan Church Society.

MEETINGS AT MELFORD.

MR. EDITOR.—Very interesting Meetings have lately been held at Melford, in aid of the Diocesan Church Society. The largeness of the attendance, and the degree of interest generally evinced, were truly gratifying. The members of the various denominations readily lent their countenance and support, not merely in words, but in deeds.

At each of the Meetings the following Resolutions were passed unanimously:—

1. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of every Christian to do all in his power towards the cause of Christ and His Church.

2. *Resolved*, That the Objects of the D. C. S. commend themselves to the cordial support of every member of Christ's Church.

3. *Resolved*, That this Meeting desires to express its unfeigned gratitude to the D. C. S., for the appointment and partial support of a Resident Missionary at Melford.

Though our people generally are not given to "public speaking," yet in some instances very pleasing and practical remarks were made in moving and seconding the above Resolutions. One man said, that, although not professedly a Churchman, he felt it his duty to support such Objects as those contemplated by our Society. Another declared, that he deemed it a source of inexpressible pleasure to be able to afford any assistance, however small, towards the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. There were few indeed, who did not seem to be interested by the remarks that were made, or by the extracts from missionary reports that were read. Several individuals expressed their regret that such Meetings did not occur much more frequently than was customary, so fully impressed were they with the belief that much good resulted from them. Doubtless, the exercise of charity tests and strengthens faith—on this account alone, the occasions calculated to call it forth, ought not to be lightly esteemed.

The amount collected at Melford in aid of the funds of the D. C. S. is £8 11 8, which, it will be perceived, shows a large increase upon that of the preceding year, and all things considered, is at least commendable.

Melford, Feb. 6, 1855.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHURCH TIMES."

On Thursday evening, 11th January, the Annual Meeting of the Alabone Bay Committee of the D. C. S. was held in the School House.

After the usual formalities the following Resolutions were passed nem. con.

1st. That the Report just read be received. Moved by A. Lane, Esq. M. D.; seconded by Mr. Fred. Crick Ernst.

2nd. That while we gratefully acknowledge the vast amount of good already accomplished through the honored instrumentality of the D. C. S., we cannot but deeply feel and lament that many fields long since white to the harvest are still unoccupied and unimproved, and must for years continue so to be, unless the Society receive the immediate hearty co-operation, the fervent prayers and the liberal contributions of every Member of the Church in this Diocese.

Moved in an interesting and lengthy speech by the Rev. H. L. Owen, Rector of St. John's Church, Lunenburg; seconded by Mr. Lewis Knaut.

3rd. That the great spiritual destitution which still unhappily prevails in many parts of this Province, in common with other portions of the world, should engage our deepest sympathies, and stimulate us to unwearied efforts to extend to our fellow men, less highly favored than ourselves, the ordinances of our most holy religion, and to make known to them, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God.

After some very appropriate remarks, was moved by Benjamin Leage, Esq., and seconded by Mr. Joseph Zwicker.

4th. That the Venerable Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel, and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which now for upwards of 150 years have been so successfully engaged in the promotion of God's glory, and the salvation of souls, in all lands, and to which the Church in this Diocese is so largely indebted for years of the most liberal support, are justly entitled to, and are hereby assured of our warmest gratitude, and our