

CARDINAL LAVIGERIE has had twenty-five years' opportunity for the study of the traffic as it is carried on amongst the tribes in the interior of Africa. He declares, on the testimony of his own missionaries, that Captain Cameron's estimate that half a million of natives at the least are torn from their homes in Central Africa every year and sold into slavery, is under the mark. These appalling figures, moreover, relate only to those of the poor wretches who actually reach the coast, and take no account of the multitudes who perish in the slave-hunts or in the terrible march. "The aged, the cripples, the weak—all, in fact, who cannot walk to the coast, or who would fetch no price there—are ruthlessly slain in the slave-hunts. Yet their fate is more enviable than that of those whose lives are spared for the slave-market. The Cardinal gives a harrowing description of the march to the coast. To prevent escape, the strongest and most vigorous 'have their hands tied, and sometimes their feet, in such fashion that walking becomes a torture to them; and on their necks are placed yokes which attach several of them together.' In this way they are made to walk all day, bearing heavy loads, and at night a few handfuls of raw rice are thrown to them. That is their only meal for the day. A few days of these hardships begin to tell even on the strongest. The weakest soon succumb, and the weakest are naturally among the women. But terror sometimes nerves even a weak frame to almost superhuman efforts; and the Arab slave-driver adopts a summary method of striking terror into the hearts of the laggards. 'In order to strike terror into this miserable mass of human beings, their conductors, armed with a wooden bar, to economize powder, approach those who appear to be the most exhausted, and deal them a terrible blow on the nape of the neck. The unfortunate victims utter a cry, and fall to the ground in the convulsions of death.' The march sometimes extends over months, and such is the awful carnage "that if a traveller lost the way leading from Equatorial Africa to the towns where slaves are sold, he could easily find it again by the skeletons of the Negroes with which it is strewn." It is no wonder that the population of some of the districts is becoming so thinned that the slave-catchers are obliged to resort to stratagem to capture their prey.

THE verdict of the coroner's jury that the death of Mr. John Mandeville, which did not occur till six months after his release from Tullamore Gaol, was the result of "brutal and unjustifiable treatment," received in that gaol, was, as all unprejudiced persons must admit, based on very slight and inconclusive evidence. The only room for question seems to have been whether his period of confinement may not have left his system in a state less favourable to resistance to the throat disease which carried him off. Incidentally, however, the case suggests an important and difficult question in regard to the treatment of such prisoners. It is obvious that, to a person of Mr. Mandeville's culture and habits, the ordinary accompaniments of prison life, and the menial offices required, constitute a much severer punishment than that inflicted upon ordinary criminals of the coarser types by treatment precisely similar. Is it essentially just that one man should be made to suffer much more keenly than another under the same sentence? To this it may be answered that the guilt of the educated convict is greater in proportion to his better educational and social training. There is undoubted force and truth in this view, and it is the view on which Mr. Balfour evidently acts in declaring that he will make no difference in the treatment of one class of prisoners from that of another. Another, and somewhat distinct question, which is now being hotly discussed, is whether the fact that the law under which Mr. Mandeville and others are imprisoned is special and local constitutes their crime "political" in any such sense as would warrant exceptional leniency in their treatment. To admit the affirmation would go far to defeat the object of the Crimes Act by relieving the punishment of half its terrors, and doubling the number of those willing to become Home Rule martyrs.

THE apprehensions which were excited in Europe by the accession to imperial power of a monarch with tastes and ideals so distinctly military as those of Emperor William, and which were to some extent allayed by the interchange of courtesies which have since taken place with neighbouring monarchs, have been again aroused by the Emperor's speeches at Frankfort and Berlin. The expressions which have attracted most attention are those in which he declares in substance that Germany means to keep what she has gained, and is prepared to meet all comers. Though the language may contain no "immediate menace," it must be admitted that it is at most but a short remove from menace. The expression used is somewhat ambiguous, as it may refer either to Schleswig-Holstein, or to Alsace-Lorraine. Possibly both are included, and the warning intended

for Russia as well as for France, but that it is intended for the latter can scarcely be doubted. The un-diplomatic bluntness of the avowal is no less calculated to create irritation than the defiance itself. Though the speeches have naturally had a depressing effect on the European bourses, it is not likely that there is any immediate danger of rupture. The silence of the leading French newspapers seems to indicate that France does not feel prepared just now to pick up the gauntlet, though it might still be rash to conclude that an understanding and concerted action between her and Russia are out of the question. While no one doubts the sternness of Germany's resolve to hold her conquests against all comers, a point in regard to which Bismarck's language has always been unequivocal, it is hardly possible that her fiery young Emperor can go on making such declarations, especially in speeches to the army, without grave danger to the peace of Europe. The tone of these speeches accords well with the view that France is to be called upon to reduce her armaments, and that she will not be allowed to choose her own time for attempting the recovery of her lost possessions.

THERE seems no longer room to doubt that the rumours concerning the presence of a White Pasha, with a strong force, in the Bahr-el-Ghazel district, are founded on fact. The probabilities seem now to be decidedly in favour of the supposition that the adventurous leader is Stanley. As we have before observed, there is nothing inherently improbable in the theory. It would be quite in keeping with the resolute character of the fearless explorer to attempt the larger enterprise, especially seeing that its success would be the most effectual means of accomplishing the smaller—the relief of Emin Bey. Nor is it by any means inconceivable that he may be even now acting in concert with the latter, and the two forces co-operating in a movement against Khartoum. Nor would it be very surprising if the civilian, with his trained force of natives, should eventually succeed where a British military expedition failed. Irregular troops are often better adapted for such a service than those who are fettered by military rules and traditions. Another supposition is that Stanley is quietly laying the foundations of another State, on a basis similar to that of the Congo Free State, and that this, rather than the suppositional march to Khartoum explains the mysterious movements of the unknown White Pasha. Reliable news will be awaited with great interest, and cannot be much longer delayed.

CRAMMING AND CULTURE.

A RECENT number of *Lippincott's Magazine* contained an interesting sketch of what we may well call an ideal school, in Switzerland, in which the instruction is conveyed, not through dry, abstract, text-book study, but chiefly by means of object lessons and the living voice, in such a way that every faculty is kept alive, every power of observation quickened, and, as a result, all that is learned is thoroughly appropriated by the mind, and becomes a possession for ever. We quote a few lines concerning it from the article itself:—

"Some of the boys leaving this primary school, at the age of twelve, to enter the gymnasium, have never owned two dollars' worth of books in their lives. They have never seen the inside of an arithmetic, or a geography, or a natural history, or an elementary geometry, and yet these are among the best trained boys in those branches who pass examinations for high schools. Many of the best trained pupils entering the Cantonal School of the city of Zurich come direct from the Beust Institute.

"These twelve-year-old boys have had a good time in going to school. They have not been crammed. They have not studied at home or out of school hours. They have had pleasure combined with work. They have had no crooked backs or aching heads or compressed lungs, resulting from overwork in the schoolroom. Their lessons have been plays and their plays lessons."

This sketch of the *process* of learning at the Beust Institute offers a sufficiently sharp contrast to that at present undergone by children of the same age in the average Canadian school. Instead of two dollars' worth of text-books the Canadian child will by that time have accumulated a small library, much of which has already become obsolete through frequent changes; he will have studied, or rather "crammed," many pages, of whose meaning he has received but the faintest idea, and he will have spent most of his evening hours in study, in order to keep up with the prescribed quantity of lessons. And if he, or she, has not had many headaches, if there is no risk of mischief from compressed lungs or stooping shoulders, the fortunate pupil may thank a specially healthy and vigorous organization, and *not* our common school system.