

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

CHINA seems determined to check-mate France. She has appointed a Governor for the provinces, bordering on Tonquin, with the object of supporting Anam against the French protectorate. In all the chief cities of China, meetings are being held to protest against the French interference. The great general Li Hung Chang, has been summoned from his place of mourning even before the end of three months, (the Chinese orthodox period of twenty-seven months retirement on the death of a near relative has been in this case, curtailed by the Emperor,) and Li Hung Chang will at once take measures to perfect the necessary military arrangements.

THE approaching conflict must have many important consequences to England. China has a foreign trade of about \$300,000,000 annually, and seven-eighths of her imports, and two-thirds of her exports, are carried on with Britain and British dependencies. All this trade will be disturbed by a collision between France and China. A blockade will effect over one-million tons of British shipping, and a very distinct and sensible injury will fall upon British commercial interests.

THE success or the failure of French arms will alike prove menacing to European interests. Success may start a Franco-Chinese Empire, which would inevitably be followed by the clashing interests of England and France. Failure, or years of indecisive warfare, would encourage rebellion and resistance throughout the Eastern Empires. This new departure of French in the East will be watched with anxiety by British Statesmen, and may culminate in economic disasters and serious complication to both countries.

FRIENDS of the renowned aesthete Oscar will learn with sorrow that change of vocation has brought change of attire and shortness of hair to the aesthetic lecturer. Oscar adopts histrionic art now, and dresses like ordinary mortals. The *World* welcomes him in this strain :

Our Oscar is with us again ; but Oh,
He is changed who was once so fair !
Has the iron gone into his soul ? Oh, no ;
It has only gone over his hair.

ART is all the rage in London, and Mr. Ruskin is crowding the "theatre" at Oxford with sympathetic listeners to his lectures on contemporary arts. In his last lecture he praised the "hitherto undreamt of and in its kind unrivalled genius" of Miss Kate Greenaway, "the minister to the joy of all the children of Christendom." Strange to say, the walls of the Royal Academy this year shew a remarkable devotion to children worship. There are over thirty pictures of babies and young children. Next in popularity come the Bishops and Doctors of Divinity.

ONE Freak of the Royal Academicians is the subject of much comment. Mr. Belt obtained permission from the city corporation to submit to the Academy the statue of Lord Beaconsfield, which the sculptor had worked for the corporation. It was rejected by the Academy. On the other hand a bust of Sir H. Selwin Ibbetson, declared by Academicians, who appeared as experts in the Belt libel case, to be devoid of artistic merit, was accepted. Such are the caprices of judgment and art ; and this recalls the capital story of Wiertz the painter. The Paris Salon had rejected one of his famous pictures ; and Wiertz, knowing that he had offended the examining body by his caustic criti-

cism, took drastic measures of revenge. He secured an undoubted Rubens, polished it up, put his own initials upon it and sent it to the Salon as his own. It was rejected, and the mortified members found themselves gibbeted in every picture-shop window as having condemned a genuine Rubens.

THE Prince of Wales is never at a loss to secure every means of making himself popular. When presiding at the meeting called together for the purpose of getting up a memorial to Dean Stanley, the Prince stepped down from his chair and gripped the hand of a working man who had made a rough but eloquent speech. A short time ago he invited 400 fishermen to a "treat" at Marlborough House. After these sons of the sea had eaten, the Prince stepped forward and told the men to "pocket all" they could. The men at once produced their cotton handkerchiefs and carefully wrapped up the royal mementos. That is the kind of "democracy" England is thirsting after.

THE brigade of Guards being a whole battalion under its strength, the authorities have wisely ordered that the minimum height of recruits be reduced to 5 ft. 7 in. Why should even that standard be kept up? Common sense might tell the authorities that a stout little fellow, measuring 5 ft. 4 in., is far more likely to make an effective soldier than a tall individual, whose lengthy legs and weak knees seem hardly able to carry his body. Chest measurement and the power to lift and to strike are the true tests. Mere height is a test both ridiculous and suicidal. Military authorities tell us that half the shots in battle fly over the soldiers' heads. Mere *height* has the disadvantage there.

ANOTHER and even more terrible disaster than that which recently occurred on Brooklyn Bridge, has transpired in the town of Sunderland in England. It appears that a very large number of children were gathered in a hall to witness an entertainment by a Conjuror, when a panic ensued as they were leaving the building. The body of the hall being entirely cleared of its occupants, some 1,200 little ones came rushing down stairs from the gallery. At the top of the first flight of stairs there was a door which opened only about twenty inches, permitting but one child to pass through at a time. At this point, while a mass of children were pushing forward, one fell and was unable to rise, owing to the others crowding on. The result was that a great number were pushed down, trampled on and suffocated. No effort could stop the mad rush of the affrighted children. They came on pell-mell, and soon more than 200 of them were knocked down and suffocated by the others trampling upon them. The greater number of the bodies which were badly mangled from the trampling lay seven or eight deep. Many of the victims, and others who were not killed, had their clothing torn from their bodies and this, together with the bleeding bodies of the unfortunates, shows the terrible nature of the struggle. The ages of the children known to have been killed ranged from four to fourteen years.

AN extraordinary swindle has just been made public in France. It appears that in July, 1877, the Marquis de Rays advertised land for sale in the Island of Port Areton, in Oceania, and started a scheme for emigration thereto. The Legitimist papers interested themselves in the enterprise, and 5,000,000f. was subscribed to

further it. Of this sum the Marquis de Rays pocketed 2,000,000f. It is stated that 700,000 hectares of land were sold, although the island only contains 7,000 hectares. The Marquis had maps of the island published in which were indicated imaginary houses, churches, and roads. He also instituted militia and gendarmerie forces and the necessary civil officers. Finally he dispatched to the island four old sailing ships with a number of emigrants, a majority of whom perished under the most miserable circumstances. On one vessel 30 immigrants died during the passage, 250 more died from hunger and disease after reaching Port Breton, and five others were captured and eaten by natives of the island. Only 100 of the unfortunate people succeeded in reaching a friendly country. The Marquis de Rays and 17 other persons are on trial, charged with manslaughter, fraud, and infringement of the public companies and emigration laws.

FIVE of the unhappy wretches who were concerned in the Dublin murders have had to pay the penalty with their lives, and now the result of the trial of the Dynamite Conspirators has been to send Dr. Gallagher, Whitehead, Wilson, and Curtin to penal servitude for life. Perhaps, now that it has been shown how ready men are to turn informers, the Irish may, for a time at least, be deterred from engaging in murderous attempts against the lives of those who have been sent to govern them. Better however, if the British Government could devise some way of satisfying those who have been clamoring for some relief from real or supposed wrongs.

THE persistent efforts of the promoters of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill and the hearty support it has received from the Royal Princes have unhappily led to a vote in its favor on its second reading in the House of Lords on Monday week. It has only been due to the strenuous opposition of the Church of England that the measure has been thwarted so long, and it has been felt that influences of an exceedingly powerful kind were being used to induce noble lords to vote in its favor. We regret the result extremely, knowing that it can only be productive of harm to the nation. However it will not affect the Church, but will rather make more plain that her work must be independent as far as possible of State interference. No doubt the success of this measure will draw Churchmen of all names more closely together, and lead to more aggressive warfare against the citadels of Satan's power.

THE famous or infamous "Star Route" trial in Washington has been concluded, and to the surprise of everybody has resulted in a verdict of acquittal. This is, according to the American papers, one of the most barefaced failures of Justice in the annals of the courts. Notwithstanding the judge charged squarely against the prisoners, the jury brought in its verdict as above. The strangest feature of the case is that one of the parties implicated admitted his guilt, and now the verdict declares him innocent.

THE *London Truth* states that the Queen has quite recovered from the injury to her knee. The depression of her spirits is, however, said to cause some anxiety owing to its influence on her general health. Arrangements for the Queen's departure from Scotland on the 20th instant are being made. The report of her intended abdication is positively denied.