

THE ESCAPE OF THE FENIAN PRISONERS.

(From the 'Times.')

THE story which comes to us from West Australia of the escape of the Fenian prisoners from the convict settlement at Freemantle is in many ways remarkable. It is not, however, as some Americans seem to think, a humiliating story for this country. It is quite true that the Government of this country, though it could not assent to such arguments as those by which Mr. Bright the other day endeavored to justify the unconditional release of convicted murderers or military traitors, is not sorry to be rid, by whatever means, of a barren and burdensome responsibility. But to relieve the British Government from a difficulty assuredly did not enter into the motives of the American conspirators, who planned and carried out the rescue at Freemantle. For security against such lawless evasions, we have to trust chiefly to the comity of nations, and to the reciprocity that is enforced upon civilised communities by a sense of common needs. The American Government and the American people are bound to ask themselves whether it is tolerable that such piratical enterprises directed against the public justice of a friendly State should be allowed to go unpunished. In the meantime the temper of suspicion which such outrages naturally induce may aggravate the hardships of a convict's life. At present detention in this remote place of exile has been compatible with considerable liberty of movement. It may be worth while suggesting to the zealous friends of men whom we hold to be felons and they hold to be patriots that if such enterprises as this at Freemantle are indulged in, those charged with the safe keeping of the convicts may very reluctantly, for their own protection, be forced to curtail the privileges the men now enjoy.

INDIAN IDEAS OF DANCING.

IN some parts of India a bitter feud is raging between the Anglo-Indian and native portions of the community on the subject of inviting the latter to balls given by the former. At first sight, it would appear a mere prejudice of race to exclude educated native gentlemen from these festivities. They would not be likely to behave less decorously, it might be imagined, than British officers and civilians. Then, too, there is the patent fact that when any members of the class visit England they are freely invited to such entertainments. One very important difference exists, however, between the two cases. When these gentlemen are on their travels they rarely carry with them female *impedimenta*, and it cannot therefore be justly urged that if they desire to take part in the social amusements of Europeans they must first conform to European usages by introducing their wives and daughters to society. Herein lies the gist of the objections raised by Anglo-Indians to the presence of their Aryan brethren at dancing parties. If the latter would bring with them their female relations, and thus show that they regarded balls as perfectly moral institutions, no European of sense could possibly object to meeting them. It is the suspicion that native gentlemen look upon such entertainments as *nautches* which really causes Anglo-Indian society to hedge its entertainments round with exclusiveness. Nor is this suspicion groundless. Educate the Asiatic mind as you may it will nevertheless continue to regard dancing as a performance, and not as an amusement. To the Oriental who has not travelled in Europe, it is very much the same whether waltzing takes place on the public stage or in a private house. Trained as he has been from infancy to associate the exercise with a certain amount of immorality, he cannot conceive the possibility of really reputable ladies indulging in it for the mere sake of amusement. As this scepticism is well known to Anglo-Indians, their objections to the presence of native gentlemen at dancing parties are, after all, only natural.

At a meeting of the Congregation of the Propaganda held in May last, it was decided, at the urgent request of Mgr. Petitjean, Vicar Apostolic of Japan, to erect a new Vicariate in that Empire. The Japanese mission will therefore for the future consist of two Vicariates; the northern Vicariate will include the northern portion of the island of Nippon and the island of Yesso; the southern Vicariate will comprise that part of the islands of Nippon lying south of Lake Bivna, and the Islands of Kiou-Siou and Chikako.

MESSESS. Clifford and Morris continue to deserve the high estimation in which the photographs taken by them are held. The likenesses obtained by them are admitted to be uniformly perfect, and the difficult matter of dress and attitude having been made a particular study by the talented artists in question, they are in a position to produce the best effects. They are constantly in receipt of all the newest improvements, and nothing is left undone by them to sustain the reputation of their establishment and insure the complete satisfaction of all who patronise it.

The Paris correspondent of the London 'Telegraph' writes as follows:—"The idea of making this city a seaport—in other words, of rendering the Seine navigable for sea-going vessels—is again coming to the surface. The river at Paris is only between sixty and seventy feet above the level of the ocean, and the distance in a straight line one hundred and twenty miles, although, following the course of the stream, it is two hundred and ten miles. The problem is how to lessen the latter number and make a greater depth of water. It appears that to dredge out seven feet would need an expenditure of thirteen million francs, and an additional three feet would require eleven million francs more. It is stated, moreover, that the average of French vessels is under three hundred tons. The Minister of Public Works and the Prefect of the Seine made an exploring expedition the other day to Rouen, and the journey is to be repeated by the Municipal Council. Of course, no decision has been arrived at, but the lower estimate will probably be adopted.

GENERAL NEWS.

The depression of trade at the diamond fields is causing people to shake their heads and predict all kinds of gloomy things. There can be but little doubt that a crisis is impending, and the banks have accordingly put the screw on with what Dougherty used to call "much emphaticness." The news concerning the price of diamonds is enough to upset us even though there were no other causes for us feeling uncomfortable. We are told that all but first-class stones are utterly valueless in the market, and that the best thing we can do is to stop mining operations altogether for a few months, after the plan adopted by coal and iron mine proprietors in England—a proposition simply absurd. What would become of our native labor while mining operations were suspended?—'Eastern Star.'

The nuns are rapidly getting charge of the hospitals in the Irish Union workhouses, thus causing great saving of rates, and improvement in the health and the moral condition of the afflicted. A branch of the Dominican Nuns has just been established in the town of Wicklow.

France exported, last year, false hair, beautifully got up in different shapes, to the amount of 130 tons, worth nearly two million francs. Nearly the whole of this went to England and America. The Paris chiffonniers now carefully collect all small paper parcels with hair combings, which ladies and servants daily throw out of the windows, and obtain five francs per kilogram for the combings.

An apparatus for reviving persons nearly drowned is exhibited in Paris. The body of the patient is put in an air-tight vessel, with his head protruding. A pump then draws the air in and out of the vessel, which tends to make his breast heave and his lungs move, as in breathing.

Rear-Admiral Béné, who recently died leaving no heir, bequeathed his entire fortune, amounting to 500,000 francs, to the French Lifeboat Society. In recollection of this act of munificence, the Association has decided on erecting a statue of its benefactor.

A French soldier named Henri Duhamel has just died at the hospital of Bicetre, who was wounded in the head at Buzenval, in the war of 1870. His wound had soon healed, but he was left quite insane, and had fancied himself dead. When people asked after his health he would answer: "How is Duhamel? Poor fellow, he was killed at Buzenval. What you see is only a machine made to resemble him. But it is badly made, and they ought to make another." He never spoke of himself as "I" or "me," but always as "that thing." He was sometimes insensible for days together, and would show no feeling whatever, though pinched and blistered severely.

Liberal Rome was thrown into consternation by the suicide lately of one of the principal Roman bankers, Giuseppe Baldini, who threw himself into the Tiber. He leaves a deficit, it is said, of five millions. It is thought the Roman Bank and Bank of Genoa will lose largely. A Senator is entirely ruined, and hundreds of families will suffer greatly. He left letters explaining the causes which drove him to the rash act. His body, recovered some days later, was borne through the streets, as if in triumph, covered with flowers, and followed by crowds of friends, thus presenting an apotheosis of suicide, and, as was fitly expressed by a looker-on, furnishing a thermometer of the actual morality of Rome.

At this time, when the public mind is sufficiently distracted and worried by the many strange and uncouth-looking Slavonian names of persons and places, it is the bounden duty of editors not to add unnecessary confusion to the bewildering nomenclature. The 'Times,' otherwise more correct than some of our contemporaries, has of late been one of the worst sinners in this respect. Though the name of the commander on the Timok, Leshjanin, has now been before the public for nearly a month, it was recently given, in an important battle account of the 'Times,' as Leshneiff—which looks almost like an attempt at a pun, by means of a mixture of French and English. To make confusion worse confounded, the 'Times' spoke, in the same report, also of Leshjanin; thus splitting up one person into two, in true mythological fashion. Zaitchar, or Saitchar—a battle-ground so frequently mentioned—was mentioned in the 'Times,' as 'Zeitscar'; which looks like a pun in mixed German and English. Izvor, or Isvor, was rendered 'Asvor.' The Lower Timok became converted almost into a personage, viz., the 'Lower Sindik'; which might have been read as a phonetic spelling of the French word 'Syndic.'

The death of a regular cricketer of consumption seems one of those anomalies which requires explanation. The Cambridge batsman, Thos. Hayward, has succumbed to this disease. The fact is that a man may wear himself out by athleticism and out-of-door activity as readily as any other way. Cricket is severe exercise just in proportion to a man's expertness in batting and bowling, and the constant running tells upon the powers of both the heart and the lungs, especially when, as is frequently the case, it has to be undergone upon a full stomach after those objectionable affairs—the mid-day luncheons. It is no uncommon thing for athletes to die of diseases indicating the failure of organs which have either been overworked or not allowed fair play. Only the other day an old professional dropped down dead from heart disease, and now we have a death from consumption to emphasise the warning.

A melancholy accident has occurred at Fencine-le-Bas (Jura), in Switzerland. Five young girls belonging to good families of the neighborhood had gone in a boat with a waterman for a row on a small lake, but at a short distance from the shore the boat suddenly capsized and left them all struggling in the water. The man at once struck out for the shore, leaving all the girls to perish. Their bodies, some clasped together, were found next day.