

Hence it became difficult for him to remain here as Minister plenipotentiary; but it is not expected that the legation will be suppressed. Nevertheless, these diplomatic quarrels, arising from misconceptions, are an occasion of scandal to the old prelates, who remember the good times of Cardinal Consalvi.

The Italian journals have published the report of the Commission instituted by the Pope for inquiring into the condition of the Roman Bank. This document, which is signed by the Marquis Cavaletti, Senator of Rome, Prince Massimo, and Signor Costa, arrives through a maze of circumlocutions at the conclusion that nothing but a financial arrangement with Italy can avert bankruptcy. In fact, the bank is on the verge of ruin; and, in case of a liquidation, Count Felippo Antonelli, brother of the Cardinal, is alone responsible for 700,000 Roman crowns. It remains to be seen whether the Commission will recommend a liquidation, and then whether the Cardinal Secretary of State will consent to it. Meanwhile, all wait with anxiety for the payment of the 20,000,000 francs due from Italy, as nothing but this success can save the Pontifical Government from financial wreck.

A JAPANESE ENTERTAINMENT.

ONE of the most singular exhibitions ever offered to the curiosity of the British public is now to be witnessed at St. Martin's Hall. In the words of an advertisement, "the Japanese troupe have arrived," and the eleven members composing it perform nightly before an assembly of spectators not so numerous, to judge from a single occasion, as one would have expected. The exhibitors are declared to have been "imported entire and direct from Japan." Whether human curiosities do not usually arrive in this country from such distant places as Japan entire, but in pieces like the china one's friends take the useless trouble to send one, is best known to "spirited" and "enterprising" showmen: but the Japanese troupe is not now, whatever it may have been on its first arrival, exactly entire. The "chief," unfortunately, has lost the use of one hand, so that he cannot exhibit his feats; and, as he is said to be a "perfect miracle," those persons who do not believe in miracles have perhaps missed an opportunity of conversion. He however joins in the salutations with which the performances commence, and which are after this fashion: the eleven performers clatter on to the stage, having upon their feet apparently trestles, and round their legs petticoats, without crinoline or other artifice to enable the wearer to walk freely. They stand in a row before the footlights, and then they suddenly sink down all together upon their hams, and bow their bodies forward, touching the ground with their foreheads; whereat, of course, the gravity of the Briton, impatient of "them rum furriners," is overcome, as it is also when one of the "troupe," still on his hams, bursts out, as if moved by an irresistible impulse, with some remarks in his native tongue, which may be complimentary or the contrary, and which remind one forcibly in sound and tone of a farrago of those ordinary street-cries to which every Londoner is accustomed, but which "no feller can understand." The "chief" too, from time to time, appears upon the stage to direct the proceedings, and in an extremely affable manner and with great volubility addresses the audience in his native language. No doubt he gives explanations which are a great assistance to the polyglot spectator, but to the multitude it matters little whether he endeavour to explain or mystify, whether he bless or curse. There is now and then some native music (so called) written, one would imagine, in the key of Z minor, in comparison with which the marrow-bones and cleavers are melodious, and which, combined with the natural sombreness of St. Martin's Hall, creates a disposition to fall upon your neighbour's neck and weep. That is when the music (so called) is instrumental; when there is the addition of vocal, such as would be a fortune to the street-singer who knows "the value of peace and quietness better than to go away for fourpence," "tears, idle tears" would not do justice to your feelings. A girl having taken an instrument (of torture) something like a banjo, and having carefully untuned it, is joined by a younger relative (gender unguessable by reason of the costume), who adds to her instrumental noise a vocal noise, called a song, which seems to resemble "Do you know the muffin man?" in so far as it appears to have no natural end, but has to be stopped by the children's parent who (probably when he can't bear it any longer) brings it to a conclusion by beating together two wooden things like those weapons with which buttermen attack great masses of butter. This is one part of the entertainment. For the rest there are juggling, acrobaticism, top-spinning, and the "butterfly trick." The juggling and the acrobaticism are certainly not superior, one would say, to what may be seen here any day in the week; but the top-spinning is marvellous, and the "butterfly trick" is very ingenious and elegant. Appearance is greatly studied. One acrobat gets himself up with a gigantic red wig, and looks like an imp in one of our pantomimes; and if the acrobat who swung about on a bamboo-pole really meant (as it is reasonable to suppose he did) to act a chimpanzee to the life, he must be allowed to have been eminently successful, to the extent even of shaking the disbelief of those who deny man's descent or ascent from the ape. Pharaoh had his chief baker and chief butler; and the Tycoon is said to have his "chief top-spinner." This is Ga-en-see, who, if he failed once or twice, failed chiefly through his gear not being in proper order, and at last succeeded triumphantly. Considering the conversation he carried on all the time with his family, and the series of observations he took the unnecessary trouble to make during his labours to the audience, it is wonderful he did not make more failures. He made a top spin all over his body, on the edge of a sharp sword, up and down and along a string which (if we properly understood his movements) he first greased by passing it through his anointed hair; and, still more wonderful,

up and along, and round and down a succession of obstacles more easily comprehended at a glance than from verbal explanation. Suffice it to say that the top went up-hill and through doors, and ascended a tower, and put up a ladder, and turned round corners, and careered along the flat, and "finished" down-hill. Asi-kitchi-san took some common looking paper, twisted pieces into a certain shape, and with the help of two fans and some flowers, created quite an idea of butterflies hovering about their favourite haunts. For, of course, every one had a fan—even the acrobat who did the chimpanzee on the bamboo-pole.

RACING NOTES.

THE "legitimate" racing season commences to-morrow at Lincoln, and the principal race of the meeting—the Lincolnshire Handicap—seems to be looked forward to with more than ordinary interest. There can be no doubt that in consequence of the favourable weather for training which has continued in almost unbroken succession since the break up of the hard frost, the majority of the horses will come to the post far more "fit" than it was supposed at one time that it would be possible to get them. It is probable that the field will comprise about eighteen or twenty horses, as against twenty-seven who started last year. Among the probable starters there are but four—Saccharometer (aged, 9 st.), Copenhagen (6 yrs., 7 st. 12 lb.), Treasure Trove (4 yrs., 7 st. 12 lb.) and Dulcimer (5 yrs., 6 st. 11 lb.)—who took part in the same race last February. Treasure Trove, Saccharometer, and Copenhagen ran first, second, and third in the order in which they are named. Saccharometer and Copenhagen (who has never yet won a race) both carried precisely the same weights then as on the present occasion, and the former finished but a neck from Treasure Trove (5 st. 7 lb.) whilst the latter was two lengths behind. Treasure Trove now carries no less than 33 lb. more; it is scarcely likely, therefore, that he will repeat his successful performance; Dulcimer also, though still very lightly weighted, has 9 lb. more for the extra year, so it cannot be thought she will run very forward. Hence it should seem that old Saccharometer has far the best chance of the four. Among the others, there are very few who have hitherto shown to any great advantage. The best at the weights on public running are certainly The Beadle (6 yrs., 7 st. 12 lb.), Vigorous (4 yrs., 7 st. 2 lb.), Bismarck (3 yrs., 6 st. 5 lb.), and Problem (3 yrs., 6 st.). Of these, Vigorous did best at the Shrewsbury Autumn Meeting, where she won the Cup easily, carrying 6 st. 5 lb. (only 11 lb. less than here) beating a field of very fair horses; and The Beadle beat Sandal at Leamington in a canter at a difference of 9 lb. Bismarck ran Friponnier to a head on his first appearance at a difference of 5 lb., but if it were not that he is known to be better than Troublesome at the weights, he would scarcely appear to be good enough. Problem is a moderate filly who won some fair races, and, what is more to the purpose, did well at Lincoln last year. It is always a difficult matter to get three-year-olds into condition so early in the season, and in this respect they are at a disadvantage with the older horses. Mrs. Allan, Leases, and Lady Pam are said to be wonderfully good in private. Mrs. Allan holds the position of first favourite. Private trials, however, are proverbially deceptive both to the owners and the public, and we much prefer horses who have shown well in public. The other races are of no great public importance, although the Handicap Hurdle Race, the Grand Steeplechase, and the City Handicap will bring out a good number of horses. After the amount of rain which has fallen, the ground is certain to be very heavy, and, in the two former events especially, the light weights are pretty sure to have the best of it.

Notwithstanding the doubtful weather both the Birmingham and Windsor steeplechases attracted a great number of spectators. The principal event at the former meeting was won by a comparative outsider, the favourite Despatch not even getting a place. Havelock, who under the name of Claxton, has been more than once before the public, ran third with 10 st. 3 lb. This horse is in the Liverpool Grand National at 10 st., and on this running should have a fair chance. Colonel Knox had a wonderful run of luck during the week, for he won no less than five races at Birmingham and Windsor either as owner or jockey.

The Lincolnshire Handicap has so far engrossed attention that little has been paid to other events. Both The Rake and Plaudit now seem to be in a much better position; the latter especially is looked upon with great favour for the Two Thousand; he is now reported as in daily exercise, and quite free of "plasters" or any other such application.

A FIFTH-MONARCHY MAN.*

"THE following account," says the Rev. Edward Rogers, prefacing, with a judicious estimate of his ancestor's title to notice, the compilation before us, "can claim no attention on the ground of the merits and importance of a Fifth-Monarchy man whose name has been forgotten for nearly 200 years. If it should prove interesting, it must be because it presents the 'vera effigies,' the lifelike and authentic portrait, of one who, with much personal singularity, is no unfair representative of a faction which by its turbulent fanaticism earned for itself a momentary influence on politics, the hearty abhorrence of its opponents, and a certain place in history."

A word or two of the faction before we note more concerning the man. The Fifth-Monarchists were the ultimate vibration of the revolutionary impulse in England in the seventeenth century, as the Sansculottes were of the revolutionary impulse in France in the eighteenth. "Overturn, overturn, overturn!" was the maxim of both; but, while with the French Jacobins belief in the Christian's God was to go its way along with other old-world fancies, the religious fanaticism of the extreme Puritans gave,

* "Some Account of the Life and Opinions of a Fifth-Monarchy Man; chiefly extracted from the Writings of John Rogers, Preacher." By the Rev. Edward Rogers, M.A. (London: Longmans and Co. 1866.)