

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

Some Considerations of Irish Social Conditions.

Work for an Irish Legislature.

In a recent speech Mr. Michael Davitt dwelt upon the scandalous neglect of the agricultural industry in Ireland and stated the condition of affairs in words that will repay attention.

"Our chief industry is agriculture, and it is a horrible comment upon and the strongest possible condemnation of the land system under which we live that we have to pay nearly a million a year for the support of pauperism, while more than two-thirds of the whole area of Ireland is devoted to the feeding of sheep and cattle, and to the consequent starving of labor. We have over 10,000,000 acres of land under grass and upwards of 1,000,000 of bog, mountain and waste; and I maintain that if this land could only be used for the benefit of industry instead of for rent, there would be neither unemployed nor poverty nor workhouses left in Ireland."

So emphatic a statement as that "there would be neither unemployed nor poverty nor workhouses in Ireland" calls for some consideration as to the possibility of its accomplishment. It will be as well also to consider the present condition of that portion of the population with whom poverty is an ever present evil.

It was in 1830 that O'Connell told the House of Commons that many thousands of persons were subsisting, if it could be called subsistence, on three half pence a day, and he significantly added that at the same time a four pound loaf of bread cost ten pence. He was looked upon as a successful laborer who could earn a half crown a week. This class of laborers it is who feel the keen pangs oftenest. They are not to be confounded with the tenant farmers, who, badly off though they be, are comparatively well housed and well fed, at least until their cabins are pulled down about their heads.

Perhaps fifteen years after this statement by O'Connell, there was written that other statement by Thomas Davis:

"In a climate soft as a mother's smile, on a soil fruitful as God's love, the Irish peasant mourns. Consider his griefs: they begin in the cradle—they end in the grave. Suckled by a breast that is supplied from unwholesome or insufficient food, and that is fevered by anxiety—reeking with the smoke of an almost chimneyless cabin—assailed by wind and rain when the weather rages—breathing when in his cabin, the exhalations of a rotten roof, of clay walls and of manure, which gives his only chance of food—he is apt to perish in his infancy. Or if he survives all this (happy if he have escaped from gnawing scrofula or familiar fever), and in the same cabin, with rags instead of his mother's breast, and lumps instead of his mother's milk, he spends his childhood. Advancing youth brings him labour, and manhood increases it; but youth and manhood leave his roof rotten, his chimney one hole, his window another, his clothes rags, his furniture a pot, a table, a few hay chairs and rickety stoves, his food lumps and water, his bedding straw and a coverlet—his enemies the landlord, the tax gatherer and the law—his consolation the priest and his wife—his hope on earth, agitation—his hope hereafter, the Lord God. Bitter it is to him to feel that this green land which he loves and his landlord scorns, is ravished by him of her fruits to pamper that landlord, twice bitter for him to see his wife, with weariness at her breast of love, to see half his little brood torn by the claws of want to undeserved graves, and to know that to those who survive him he can only

leave the inheritance to which he was heir; and thrice bitter to him that even his house has not the security of the wild beast's den—that Squalidness, Hunger and Disease are insufficient guardians of his home—and that the puff of the landlord's or the agent's breath may blow him off the land where he has lived, and send him and his to a dyke, or to prolong wretchedness in some desperate kennel in the next town, till the strong wings of Death—unopposed lord of such suburb—bear them away."

Let it not be thought that this picture, powerful as it is, is overdrawn. Sad, indeed, is it that the same may almost be said of to-day. It is not long since Mr. Justin McCarthy made the statement that there are in Ireland about 98,000 houses with only one room in each. "Of these most have floors of rough damp earth and roofs of rotten thatch; their walls are without plaster and a hole in the roof serves for a chimney. On an average the height of such a hovel will not exceed eight feet. Into some of these cabins will be crowded a pig, a donkey, and several fowls, along with the occupant and his family."

Speaking of one county where with he is familiar, and which is never used for sensational reports, Mr. McCarthy says there are 1,500 families depending on daily earnings for their existence, and that among these seven shillings a week is more above, than below the average wage.

The dwelling of these people is described as "a small lop sided wigwam, built of stones and mud, with a thatched roof, and with three holes left in the front wall to act the part of doors and windows. Into that castle of the Irish peasant truly the wind and the rain may enter. On wet nights the drenching showers soak through the ill thatched roof and come dripping down on the beds of the sleepers. . . . The food of the Irish laborer consists principally of potatoes, or else of Indian meal mixed with flour and soda. Tea of the thinnest and poorest kind, oftener without milk than with it, is the enjoyment of the laborer and his family."

There is not here room for more than a mere allusion to the marvels of virtue, patience, purity, resignation, lightheartedness and the love of knowledge which exist in spite of these conditions. The dominant fact is that the average wage is but seven shillings a week and that therefore the Irish peasant must still, as in the time of Davis, leave to his offspring only what he himself received. Side by side with this must be placed Mr. Davitt's statement that there are 10,000,000 acres of the most productive soil in the world lying in grass solely for the benefit of the landlord.

Let anyone consider the gravity of this statement. Here are fully three acres to every inhabitant, man, woman and child of the whole island. Consider the possibilities if such soil were utilized even for the primary purposes of raising food. There would be still left an enormous amount of land whereon to produce the requisite staples for the production of woollen and linen fabrics, starch, sugar and many other articles of trade.

Let it not be thought that there is no means of conducting successful manufactures. Coal there is in plenty, notably in Antrim, Tyrone and Connaught. The bogs too are a boundless source of wealth. Let the peat be properly dried and there is scarcely anything of superior excellence as fuel. Then too there is a wealth of water power. It is calculated that the annual rainfall exceeds 100 billion cubic yards. Granting that two-thirds of this pass off in evaporation there is still an immensity of water power passing over innumerable streams and rivers down to the sea. Of a surety here is a store of energy which in these days of electrical transmission

could be wondrously applied. Iron ore there is in abundance. Let but the people of Ireland once feel that their destiny is really in their own hands and we may expect a commercial and intellectual development which will be the astonishment of the world. There was a time when William III. received a petition from his loyal English subjects stating that "the growth and increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland had long been and would be ever looked upon with great jealousy by his English subjects, and praying him, by very strict laws, totally to prohibit and suppress the same." William's answer was, "I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and to encourage the linen manufacture there, and to promote the trade of England." As it was, so it may again be—without the English restrictions.

Ottawa Catholic Truth Society.

The annual meeting of the society which was held on Nov. 11th. was well attended, and the proceedings gave evidence of the good work being done by the society.

During the year the society purchased from the Catholic Truth Society of England, 621 bound volumes, 5,444 pamphlets and 558 leaflets and from the O.T.S. of America 1,083 pamphlets. There was put in circulation 472 bound volumes, 5,555 pamphlets, 3,517 leaflets. These included a number of the Ottawa series.

The grand total was 16,422 publications compared with 9,007 last year, an increase of 1,415. Since organized 3 years ago the society had put 25,396 publications into circulation.

The report concludes: The grand object of the society is the diffusion of Catholic truth and its vindication whenever assailed within our territory. We attack no creed and allow no assaults on our own. Whenever we claim the courtesy of the press, it is not to apologize for our religion, for we engage in controversy solely for purposes of explanation and defence. This is a highly important and at the same time delicate part of our work and our efforts have been attended with satisfactory results.

The financial statement presented by Dr. MacCabe showed receipts totalling \$412 17 and an expenditure of \$340 34, leaving a balance of \$101 83.

Archbishop Duhamel thanked the officers of the society for the work during the year and expressed his happiness and consolation at seeing the Catholic laity understand their duty to help the clergy. He asked all present to join the society and to encourage others to join that they might work towards the perfect union of mankind on the basis of the truth as taught by the Catholic church, that all men might be of one heart and one soul, recognizing one Father, God, in heaven and one mother, the church, on earth.

OFFICERS.—The election of officers resulted as follows: Pres, Jos. Pope; 1st, vice pres, Father Whelan; 2nd, vice pres, Wm Kearns; secy, W. C. DesBrisay; treas, Dr MacCabe; committee, Father Constantineau, Father McCarty, Father Cole, J. A. J. McKenna, W. Gorman, J. P. Dunn and D. Burke; auditors, Wm. Finlay, Michael Kavanagh.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad Company will in a few days announce the fact that on and after December 1st there will be a reduction of 10 per cent. in all salaries over \$1,000 per annum.

THEY NEVER FAIL.—Mr. S. M. Boughner, Langton, writes: "For about two years I was troubled with Inward Piles, but by using Parmelee's Pills, I was completely cured, and although four years have elapsed since then they have not returned. Parmelee's Pills are anti bilious and a specific for the cure of Liver and Kidney Complaints, Dyspepsia, Constipation, Headache, Piles, etc., and will regulate the secretions and remove all bilious matter."

Lord Howe's Lost Breakfast.

Mr. John F. Blandy, of Prescott, Arizona, writes to the American Historical Register:—

History tells us of the personal reconnaissance of Washington and Lafayette around Elk Landing, Md., when the British debarked at that point, from whence they marched to Brandywine, Pa. It also states that from that point the upper Chesapeake is distinctly visible. They made an early start from their bivouac and went northwestward to strike the road leading from Elk Landing to Newark, and entered a farm house, which stands about one hundred yards from the road, to try for a breakfast. They were graciously received by the lady of the house, and found a table nicely set and the breakfast ready to be served. Lafayette manifested great delight at their good luck, and they were soon seated. The lady of the house leaving the room for a moment, Washington touched Lafayette under the table with his foot and said: "Eat in a hurry; this breakfast was not meant for us." He took the hint and it was not long before they were again in the saddle, after expressing many thanks for the hospitality. Upon turning a bend in the road they looked back and saw Lord Howe and his staff, the expected guests, turn into the farmhouse.

When Lafayette visited the United States in 1824 the city of Baltimore sent a committee to Philadelphia to meet him and escort him to their city. In this committee was Mr. Lausdale. Upon the approach of the delegation to Elk Landing, Lafayette related the story to him. Mrs. Lausdale told my mother this story, as related to her husband by Lafayette, who pointed out the house to me where this event took place. It was on the east side of the road of the leading from Newark to Elkton, near where it crosses Little Elk Creek. Alexander was the name of the lady who prepared the breakfast.

"The Lightwood" is one of the most useful southern products, especially in Florida, where it is used by all sorts of country folk, and particularly by the hunters. A cordwood stick carried in to the wilderness will cut up into fragments with which a dozen meals may be cooked. The rich, resinous pine makes a quick, hot fire, especially suited to open air cooking. It is a Florida tradition that the chief who led the little band of Seminoles whom the United States army long failed to run to earth was on the point of agreeing to go with his people to Indian Territory when he suddenly asked whether there was any lightwood in that new land, and, when the answer was no, positively refused to go further with the treaty. He would not live in a land without lightwood.—Philadelphia Press.

As for that intimate acquaintance with human nature which some, especially old-time school masters, used to magnify and boast of having, I never had it myself, never knew how it was to be got, always wondered how others got it, yet never had either hope or desire for it. My conviction now, late in life, is that acquaintance with human nature, if not the most unprofitable, is the meanest knowledge that a man can get, and that he is the most secure from harm who believes others to be better than himself. I moved among many pupils, confessedly knowing little outside of books, yet I believe that no school master acting upon a different principle has been less frequently disappointed of his generous hopes.—Richard Malcolm Johnston, in November Lippincott's.

The only inheritance many receive from their ancestors is impure blood. Fortunately, it is in everyone's power to transmit a cleaner heritage to their posterity by the simple use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the only blood-purifier admitted at the Chicago World's Fair.