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HAPPENINGS IN THE OLD LAND.

The Change of Sentiment in the North.

Lord Mayor of Belfast in a New Role—Failure of the Crops Now Apparent—A Coal Fund Projected—Interesting Whistle-Blower—Features of News.

DUBLIN, January 1st.—There is considerable interest felt not only here but all over Ireland over the present position of affairs in Belfast. The recent civic elections in that city have shown that the Catholics are numerically very strong and their rights so long abused by the Orange majority were bound to be respected. In a recent speech the Lord Mayor of Belfast declared that he was happy to state that a better spirit was becoming manifest in the capital of the North and that religious toleration was progressing. He himself believed that the time was at hand when the Protestant and Catholic elements of Belfast would be on a more friendly footing one with the other and all his efforts had been and would be directed to that end. He believed the Catholics of Belfast recognized this fact and in fact had done so when on several occasions they had invited him to be present at several of their important gatherings.

Clerical Changes.

The following clerical changes, made by the Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath, and M. Redmond, Bishop of Killaloe, may be interesting to some of our readers:—Rev. T. M. Conrath, P. P. Mounungent, to be P. P. Slane; Rev. P. J. Smith, C. C. Clara, to be P. P. Mounungent; Rev. P. Briody, P. P. Slane, to be P. P. Kilkenny West; Rev. P. Ledwith, C. C. Delvin, to be Adm. Oristown; Rev. J. Clavin, C. C. Moynalty, to be C. C. Delvin; Rev. P. Kelly, to be C. C. Moynalty; Rev. T. Scally, to be C. C. Collinstown; Rev. P. Geraghty, to be C. C. Kingscourt; Rev. L. Ryan, to be C. C. Beauparc; Rev. G. Buehanan, to be C. C. Athboy; Rev. M. Kelaghan, to be C. C. Skyrne; Rev. C. Cronin, C. C. Oristown, to be C. C. Clara. His Lordship Most Rev. Dr. O'Reilly, Bishop of Killaloe, has made the following changes in his diocese:—Rev. P. O'Dea, C. C. Borrisokane, to be C. C. Doora; Rev. J. Maher, C. C. Newmarket-Fergus, to be C. C. Borrisokane; Rev. M. Houlihan, C. C. O'Callaghan's Mills, to be C. C. Newmarket-on-Fergus; appointment to O'Callaghan's Mills deferred.

Assuming Serious Proportions.

Every day the position of affairs brought about by the bad crops in Ireland is becoming more manifest and brings up more harrowing situations. Early last summer everything looked as if a bountiful harvest would cheer the hearts of our farmers all over Ireland. Most of the cereals promised abundantly and there was a double crop of hay on foot in several sections. But it pleased God to send us excessive rains, so that it was impossible to save even half the hay; the oats and other grain lay upon the fields "stooked" or "stacked" until they swelled and reprinted; the turf was in a great measure a failure, while as for the chief staff of the poor, the potato, the blight (which always comes with a certain heavy misty fog) spread its fell breath over vast districts as early as July, the tubers turned black in the ground, and there have already been two deaths from eating diseased potatoes reported.

Reminders of '98.

But all this instead of acting as a lever of pity with which to move the stoney hearts of the landlords is only giving them a fresh impetus to continue in the plans begun in black '98. The usual crop of evictions still increase and the Salisbury Government is assisting in the work with all the strength in its power. Like in '47, the Government shuts its eyes to the existing distress and the eminent danger of famine, but sends its soldiers along to enforce with their bayonets the civil writ of the bailiff. There were sorrowful hearts in many Irish homes this Christmas, and this year will see another large number of broken-hearted Irishmen driven to seek fresh homes in strange lands.

In Memory of a Great Irishman.

The Christian Brothers of Cork have held in their schoolrooms, last week, a grand conversation for the purpose of raising funds for the erection of a technical school as a memorial of the illustrious Gerald Griffin, who died a member of the order and whose remains lie under a simple cross in the Brothers' cemetery in Cork. The affair was a success, but outside aid will be necessary to raise the funds for the enterprise to the proper amount to make the school a fact.

A Coal Fund for Dublin.

The Lord Mayor, last week, presided at a public meeting of citizens to discuss the formation of a coal fund for the distressed poor of Dublin on a basis similar to those already existing in many other cities of Ireland. Ultimately the following resolution was unanimously

adopted: That a Central Executive Committee be now formed, consisting of representative gentlemen from the leading charitable organizations, namely, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Distressed Protestants Society, and Room Keepers' Society, with one minister representing each religious denomination, who shall determine the time and amount of distribution of the coal, that the coal be delivered to the homes of the poor, and that the distribution be carried on in such a manner as the committee may devise." Already subscriptions to the fund to the amount of £225 have been sent in to the committee.

A Worthy Vice-Chancellor.

All the Castle officials are not, had as is evi- enced by a recent will case in which the Vice-Chancellor did his duty in face of the bigoted opposition of the Attorney-General. The facts of the case are these:—Many years ago a gentleman named Clancy left a sum, now amounting to over £7,000, in trust for four trustees, for such charities as they might think fit, and directed that the Catholic Bishop of Ferns, and the Parish Priest of his parish, should always be trustees of the fund. With the lapse of time all the original trustees, of whom only one was a layman, passed away, and last July the present Catholic Bishop of Ferns, Dr. Browne, and the Parish Priest of the parish of the testator, applied to be appointed new trustees under the will. This the Vice-Chancellor agreed to, and two further trustees were then nominated to bring the number up to the requirements of the will. A scheme was then submitted to the Court for the disposition of the fund. The trustees proposed that the money should be put out and expended on such charitable objects as the relief of poor schools in Wexford, in providing food for the poor children attending such schools, in repairing schools and churches, and in making some provision for the declining years of aged and infirm priests of the diocese, no longer able to work.

To this scheme the Attorney-General officially objected, and denied the right of the trustees to get any of the money on the ground that although the will prescribed that the Bishop of Ferns and the parish priest of the testator's parish were perpetual trustees, their successors had no power to propound any scheme, and that the money, in consequence, should pass over to the Board of Charitable Donations and Bequests, so that the Orangemen of Ulster might have just as much right to a pull on it as the Catholics of County Wexford. The Vice-Chancellor, however, refused to swallow this monstrous suggestion, and ordered the money to be paid out to the Catholic trustees for the benefit of the Catholic poor under the scheme which had been submitted to him; thereby showing that, whatever be his prepossessions, he is not a sufficiently ultra-Protestant for Dublin Castle.

Death of a Well-Known Priest.

The death is announced of a very estimable priest in the person of the Rev. Charles Farrelly, Parish Priest of Castletara. He was one of the most esteemed priests in the whole of County Cavan, and was only forty-nine years of age when he called away, twenty-five of which he had spent in the priesthood. The intelligence of his death came like a shock to the diocese of which he had been such an excellent member.

Dedication of a New Church in Cork.

The new church at Wilton, Cork, built by the Community for African Missions, has just been dedicated by His Lordship Bishop O'Callaghan. The sacred edifice is situated in the south western section of the city, and is a strikingly pretty little structure. At the High Mass His Lordship the Bishop presided, the celebrant being Very Rev. Canon Fleming, P. P.; deacon, Rev. J. Minton, C. C.; sub-deacon, Rev. T. M. O'Callaghan, C. C. Mallow; master of ceremonies, Rev. J. Faby, C. C. The assistant at the Throne were Right Rev. Monsignor Maguire and Rev. Father Zimmerman.

Presentation to a Nurse.

The Royal Irish Constabulary stationed at the Phoenix Park have determined upon presenting a very handsome gold watch and chain, accompanied by a magnificently illuminated address, to Nurse Murtagh, of Stevens' Hospital, who has been in charge of the R. I. C. fever ward for many years, and whose zealous labours and unremitting attention to duty have earned for her the most profound respect and esteem of every member of the Constabulary by whom she is known.

It Happens in Derry Too.

At the last meeting of the Derry Council there was rather an exciting scene. The affair culminated in two members, who are Unionists, coming to blows. One of these gentlemen, it seems, came up and asked the other to strike him if he dared. His opponent came up, and in a moment they were struggling, with rather unpleasant consequences for one of the combatants, who was knocked down. The fall was a severe one, and in the tussle the Mayor's chair was pulled down. Ultimately a peacemaker intervened, and, after some delay, the business was proceeded with.

Queen Margherita is about to assist materially Italian science, by having an observatory built on the summit of Mont Rosa, 14,820 feet above the level of the sea. This observatory will be the loftiest in the world. The Queen will visit the new observatory next August, and will be present at its inauguration.

OUR ENGLISH BUDGET

The Wealth of Christmas Giving.

The Celestial Problem and the Powers—Many Notes Upon Interesting Subjects.

LONDON, 20th December, 1897.—London is Christmasing in its normal condition of fog, but fog has no terrors for the postman, and those welcome messengers are providing plenty of indoor occupation for the majority of the people, while the boxes and wickets at the head office and at the several city branches of the post office are pouring forth a wealth of mail matter that gladdens the hearts of thousands and is rich with good wishes and good things. It is said that the number of parcels received and despatched at the central office during the week was over a million and a half. Owing to insufficient, illegible and torn addresses, the cold cellars in the lost property department of the post office are taxed to their utmost with turkeys, poultry and game of very kind, from gobblers to pussants, to say nothing of venison. Amongst other unclaimed matter there is said to be already over 3,000 cases of whiskey, wines, liquors, cigars, etc., which, however, not being perishable, do not entail such certain loss as the perishable goods in the cold cellars. The number of letters sent and received has not yet been made public, but it will be found to be well up in the millions. Holly trimmings are seen on all sides, their bright berries glistening in the windows of all dwellings and shops, and giving a thoroughly Christmas look to all parts of the holiday metropolis. Young and old carry their button-hole holly sprigs; all is good humor. "Peace and good will" are the order of the day, and London social life is happy. Not quite so is London political, which sees or thinks it sees

AN OMINOUS CLOUDLET

in the far east, pregnant with far-reaching trouble for European powers. The ears of certain prominent officials are quick and sensitive to the most distant rumblings of war, and as they have a deep interest in encouraging political scares and sensations generally, the Chinese puzzle offers too good an opening to be allowed to pass without serving its purpose. Hence the countless rumors now afloat. The German Emperor made a sally exhibition of his oratorical powers at a "send off" dinner to his Imperial brother, and it is immediately interpreted by these sensation mongers to mean that the lust of empire is developing itself in the ambitious William, and that he has his eye and his heart upon the "Flowery Kingdom" with the hope of making it his eastern garden, or, failing that, that he will acquire a slice from the Celestials for a "tea" garden. While there is much said and much written about all the possible outcome of the mysterious movements of the several European powers, people who take a common sense view of the situation ridicule the idea that any serious trouble will result, or that England will get an opportunity of firing a shot in Chinese waters, unless it be for target practice, and no Russian, German or French warship will offer itself to do service in that capacity.

The Award of the Sealing Commission.

The papers here generally pay little attention to the award of the Sealing Commission. The old charge against the States of acting in bad faith in regard to the damages, as first assessed, is abandoned, or, at any rate, has not been revived, the belief being general that Congress will promptly ratify the new award.

Jubilee Hospital Fund Not a Success.

The Prince of Wales has not met with the success he expected in his Jubilee Hospital Fund, the receipts falling over 80 per cent. below the amount anticipated. The stamps issued to all contributors do not appear to have worked the charm to any appreciable extent. Twenty pounds were one hundred was expected is not looked on generally as a satisfactory or encouraging realization.

Decorating St. Paul's.

The six saucer domes of the choir of Great St. Paul's are being decorated by Sir William Richmond, who will extend his work to the great dome of the Whispering Gallery.

Two Deaths in Leading Circles.

Death has claimed two victims, both of whom were well known, one being Lady Millis, the widow of the great painter, and the other Sir Frank Lockwood, who accompanied Lord Russell on his tour to the States and Canada last year. He was a great favorite with his professional brethren, was a leader in social circles and eminently popular in Parliament, where his wit and humor were proverbial.

The Government's Irish Policy.

It is hardly expected that the Government will act further than the tabling process with their proposed Irish Local Government Bill. The British Parliament, being an exceptionally weighty body, is, naturally, slow in its movements, and, as it is never in a hurry to advance Irish interests, no special effort

OUR PHILADELPHIA LETTER.

The Celebration of the Centenary of '98

In Relation to the Present Generation—Some of the Results of the System of Teaching Geography.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

PHILADELPHIA, January 3, 1898.—There will be an opportunity during the year of 1898 for a great many who are ignorant of many facts in history to become well-informed and correct as to the real meaning of the reference to '98. All Catholics are not of Irish birth, but all Catholics, with the rest of the world, are desirous of "knowing all there is to know" therefore, the history of Ireland has a claim on our attention as history alone. It is much to be regretted that it is very little known by the world at large, and even the important epoch of '98 is but an unmeaning whisper to the inner consciousness of millions of those who have been reared in it during the whole of 1897, at least. The daily press has toiled with it, and during the course of a year has filled many a page of the Catholic weeklies with its descriptions and its quotations, and has brought up to the present day.

ECHOES FROM THE ETERNAL CITY.

All who have visited Rome know the value that is placed on Professor Lucicini's volumes of "Pagan" and "Christian Rome." These, as originally published, were bulky and too unwieldy to do duty as guide books, but being now condensed of all superfluous matter and languages they have been brought to perfect proportions and are greatly in favor with tourists. They contain most interesting and reliable details relative to the "Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome," its monuments, its walls, its bridges and its aqueducts, and are brought up to the present day.

The average tourist finds it easy to follow the Professor's description of "The Rome of the Emperors," and is educated by it to appreciate the wonders that surround him on every side—an extract relative to portions seems interesting enough to copy. "Augustus" he says, "made porticoes popular. Under his reign the whole campus was covered with colonnades. They were designed so that citizens could walk in winter season and at any hour under shelter from wind, rain, cold and heat. Towards the end of the Empire it became possible to walk under shelter from the region of the Fora to St. Peter's, a distance of two miles. This is not intended as a very advertisement for the books referred to, as they are too eagerly sought for by all tourists to need any puffing, gratuitous or otherwise. They are quite as indispensable as Bradshaw's railway guide or the English and Italian conversation books which are a source of such amusement to bystanders who see the frantic efforts of Mr. or Mrs. Bill to converse with the waiter through the medium of "Italian made easy," or one of the many books found in the valise or pocket of the average English tourist.

Rome is very full of visitors, and the spirit of Christmas is making itself felt on every side. As it is not probable many will leave till the Feast of the Epiphany, which is supposed to close the Christmas season proper, the hotels, shop-keepers, commissionaires, cabmen, and last—though in Rome by no means the least, numerically—the beggars, are reaping a rich harvest.

Italians, or at any rate those of them who constitute the population of this city and its immediate surroundings, are by no means alarmed by all the sayings and writings in Germany, England and France about the Chinese trouble, and are quite satisfied the nations immediately interested shall settle it amongst themselves, and believing that there is no possibility of actual hostilities growing out of any of the questions thus far brought up. The German Emperor's volubility is inconsistent with sound thought or deep design; he is a wild talker and his motto should be "Verba non facta." As, however, the mission of his Imperial brother Prince Henry is to exact satisfaction for the treatment extended to the Jesuit Fathers, and as he has expressed his determination to protect the missionary in his religious labors, Catholics generally will sympathize with his intentions and await the results with interest.

The tax collector has called on the Vatican officials to pay the income tax and great indignation has naturally resulted; as those in the employ of Leo XIII. regard themselves Ministers of the reigning Sovereign they very properly refuse to acknowledge any liability. In 1894 the Cardinals living in Rome claimed a tax exemption as heirs to the Pontiff, but they lost their case because the right of succession to St. Peter's chair is not limited to the Sacred College, it being competent even for a layman to be Pope. Another somewhat similar case was lost by Comte Cechchini.

The Princess Adelaide de Bourbon Braganza, widow of Don Miguel, Infante of Portugal and Duke of Braganza, has entered the Benedictine Convent of St. Cecilia at Solesmes a cloistered order of the most rigid kind. She lives in the world seven children allied by marriage to the principal reigning houses of Europe. She received the special blessing of the Holy Father before entering.

At a recent bull-fight in Mexico, where men, women and children delight in the scenes of the bull-pit, a furious Spanish bull trampled the blood-thirsty occupants of the surrounding benches to a change of programme, and jumping the barricade, gored to death three of the admiring crowd and caused a general panic. He scared and scorched his tormentors, and gave them a full sized Roland for their many Oliviers.

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Notes on Catholic News.

Sir Evelyn Wood, Adjutant-General of the British Army, is the first Catholic to hold that post since the Reformation.

A splendid Christmas present has been made to the Holy Father. It is a case of gold set with ninety diamonds, all of which are flawless and it is valued at one million dollars. The case which is the gift of several Catholic Societies in America, has been two months in making and is a beautiful example of the art and taste of the jewellers of the United States. It is valued at over \$1,000,000.

Among the recent converts to the Roman Catholic Church, according to the record of such conversions compiled by the Pastoral Fathers of New York, are the following:—

In England, the Hon. Albert E. Bingham, a son of the Earl of Bingham; the Hon. Mrs. Albert E. Bingham; Mrs. Herbert Rowbottom, wife of Herbert Rowbottom, of the British South Africa Company; Robert E. D. A., an Oxford graduate and editor of "The Surrey Mirror"; the Hon. Mrs. Moore Smith and the Viscountess Canterbury, sisters of the Earl of Oxford; in France, Mrs. Terry, formerly Miss Sanderson, the American opera singer.

The recent converts in this country include Dr. Greener, wife, and seven children, Scranton, Penn.; Miss Marion Gilmore, a graduate from Wellesley College; Dr. Luke R. Simpson, San Francisco; C. E. Allen and Frederick Long of Cleveland; Dr. Richard Ralls, San Francisco; Miss Beattie Livingston Webb, daughter of the Meriden Hospital, Meriden, Conn.; Clarence Whitaker, Colorado; Henry Augustine H. Boyer, formerly a Presbyterian minister in Chicago, now a student at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers; the Rev. E. L. Buckley, former pastor of St. John's Episcopal Church, Newport, R. I. at present engaged in study in Europe for the Roman Catholic priesthood.

One of the most famous survivors of the Civil War in the United States died last week in the person of Very Rev. William Corby, C. S. C., Superior of the Order of the Holy Cross in the United States. Father Corby died at Notre Dame, Ind., of pneumonia. He was born in Detroit in 1833; entered Notre Dame university in his 20th year and five years later became disciplinarian, the first of many important offices with which he was to be charged. He remained at Notre Dame until the outbreak of the war. In 1861 he was commissioned chaplain of the 88th New York regiment, in the Irish brigade commanded by Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher. Father Corby figured in one of the most impressive scenes of the war. It was just before Gettysburg. Father Corby mounted a huge rock to address the army. He held the soldiers remember that their country and the welfare of modern millions were at stake. Turning to the Irish brigade he said that cowardice was as mean as the sight of God as of man, and declared that the Church would refuse the sacraments to any one who should falter in his duty. By a common impulse the soldiers fell upon their knees, Protestant beside Catholic officers and privates, men of all creeds and men of no creed, while Father Corby pronounced a general absolution. Then they rose with hearts full of courage, and how they bore themselves in that awful fight is part of the world's history. It was in remembrance of the part borne by Father Corby in this battle that the flag of the Irish brigade was refused to the legislature of the state of New York and was sent instead to be hung on the walls of Notre Dame university.