

THE BISHOP OF PLYMOUTH.

In its series of "Preachers and Teachers of the West," the *Western Mercury* devotes a column to the career of the venerable Bishop of Plymouth, England:

For the last thirty-eight years Dr. Vaughan has been to the Catholics of his diocese not merely a teacher, but a guide and a father, a true shepherd of his flock, a true pastor of God's Church. Sprung from one of those grand old English families, which through trouble and persecution remained true to the Faith of their fathers, William Joseph Vaughan was born in London on February 14th, 1814. From his earliest years he aspired to the ecclesiastical state, commencing his studies at the great College of Stonyhurst in 1829, from thence he proceeded to St. Acheul, in France, and afterwards to St. Mary's College, at Oscott. In 1835 the young student visited Italy, and whilst in the Eternal City received the Minor Orders and the Sub-deaconship at the hands of his illustrious uncle, Cardinal Weld. Returning to England, he took up his residence at Prior Park College, near Bath, and on the completion of his studies, was there ordained priest by Bishop Baines, on March 19th, 1838. Strangely enough, the first work entrusted to the zeal of the young priest was at Lyme Regis, Dorsetshire, a place which on the re-establishment of the English Hierarchy was included in his future bishopric. Here, with his own means, he built a presbytery and schools for the poor, and for three years laboured with that quiet thoroughness and zeal which have been the characteristics of his life work, and which still keep his memory green in the traditions of the mission of Lyme Regis.

But Father Vaughan, like so many other members of his family, was evidently marked out to take a leading part in the building up again of the Catholic Church in England and to fit him for his future exalted position in that Church, he was now called to a work which would bring him more in contact with the poor and the out-cast—to whom faith and religion are the only consolation left—and thus foster in his priestly heart that all-embracing sympathy which the Church of Christ has ever manifested for suffering humanity, and which should be found in every true pastor. The Catholic mission at Trenchard street, Bristol, to which Father Vaughan was now appointed, was one that demanded in its pastor a sacrifice of self and of his own comfort; to succeed in it he must give himself up entirely to his people. The greater part of the congregation consisted of poor Irish families, whom want and disease had driven to seek in Bristol that right to live which was denied them in their own country. They could not expect to find much sympathy from the people amongst whom they had come to dwell—they were as aliens in the land—but fortunately for them they found in Trenchard street an altar, around which they could pray, as they prayed in the old chapel at home; and in Father Vaughan—a priest whose heart went out to them in their sorrow and trial, and in whom they found all that an Irishman could look for in his "Soggarth Aroon." His theme it was to keep alive in those poor but warm-hearted people that Faith which was their greatest treasure and consolation; to instruct them and their children in the practices of a Christian life—to visit them in the poverty and squalor of the homes of the poor in a crowded English city, to help them in their need—to be to their beck and call at every hour of the day and night—and how well he did that work, how nobly he sacrificed himself and his health for his people, is still feelingly spoken of in Bristol by those who remember him in those days.

And if there is one thing more than another that should endear their Bishop to the Irishmen of this diocese, it should surely be the remembrance of the noble work he did amongst their fellow-countrymen in Bristol during the dark days of "Black Party-soven." At the end of the year 1848 Father Vaughan was called upon to take charge of the new and important mission in Clifton. It was an undertaking of considerable difficulty, requiring in the rector great administrative ability, for much had to be done with very paltry means; but it is precisely in this kind of work that Dr. Vaughan has ever been found to excel, and during the seven years he managed the Clifton Mission, he succeeded by his zeal and energy, in making it one of the most successful and notable missions in Catholic England. When in the April of 1855 Dr. Errington, the first Bishop of Plymouth, was called to London to be a Conductor-Bishop to Cardinal Wiseman, the Cathedral Chapter, attracted by the meritorious and efficient services rendered to religion in the neighbouring diocese by Canon Vaughan, deemed him to be the fittest person to fill the vacant see. Pius IX. approving of their choice, he was consecrated Bishop of Plymouth by Cardinal Wiseman, at Clifton, on September 16th, 1856. The new Bishop took possession of his see on September 25th of the same year, and since that date has, with untiring energy, zeal, and solicitude, promoted and watched over the growth of Catholicity in this Western diocese. His episcopal work has been beset with many difficulties; for his diocese, though vast in extent, has but few great centres of population in which Catholics, for the most part poor generally, congregated; and therefore the means at his disposal have been scanty indeed. But what Bishop Vaughan has done, he has done, and lain the burden of it on his own Episcopate and administration; and when his work shall have been completed (for his people's sake, may it be many years hence) he will leave his successor unembarrassed by outstanding debts; the onward march of his Church in these parts unimpeded by the burdens of other years.

Dr. Vaughan has never been a man to seek publicity in his work; but yet he has ever been a public man in the highest sense of that word, for his whole life has been devoted to the welfare of others, a life in which self-aggrandisement was never in view—a life without reproach, to which none can take exception. In Bishop Vaughan members of every Church have found the courtesy of a true English gentleman, his priests a firm, wise, and kind-hearted ruler, his people a true father in Christ. As a preacher, he was distinguished even in the earliest years of his ministry; for the well-known grandeur and dignity of his figure, the impressiveness of his style gave him the command of the minds and hearts of his hearers, as he taught them the truths of the Faith and exhorted them to the practices which modelled his own life. How truly eloquent his preaching was may be seen from the fact that even now one hears old people speak of his sermons preached some forty years ago. And if his sermons were so impressive then, they became far more so when he spoke to his people with all the influence and authority peculiar to the Catholic Episcopate. But now the sunset of his life has thrown round him that halo of veneration and respect which must always accompany such an old age as his, his sermons have become far more impressive still, for he speaks to his flock now not merely with the authority of a pastor, but of a father of the Church, who, looking back through the long vista of eighty well-spent years, knows full well how to instruct his flock as to what they must pursue, what they

must avoid, if they would realise in themselves the ideal of a true Christian. And that he will be long left to them thus to instruct them is the fond hope and prayer of those who are proud to call themselves the spiritual children of William, Bishop of Plymouth.

The Gorge of the Lualaba.

The western head sources of the Congo River were visited for the first time by white men last year, and the story they have told of the great gorge they saw and of the stream that plunges through it, almost as swift as an arrow for many a mile, was entirely out of the common in Congo explorations. The explorers were Liout. Francqui and Dr. Coenot, in the service of the Congo Free State. They traced the Lualaba River from its fountain head, and made a discovery that, as far as is known, is duplicated nowhere in Africa.

Imagine a narrow stream flowing placidly between its rather low banks. It has gradually been gathering volume from little contributions that a dozen or fifteen tributaries have supplied. The channel is quite deep, though not wide. Nearer and nearer the water approaches a mountain pass to the north, which at a distance appears to have no passage through. Suddenly the water rushes into a rift in these hills, and for many a mile it tumbles along, zig-zagging between two gigantic, perpendicular walls of solid rock. Sometimes it falls headlong as a cataract, and then again it is merely a rapid, with a speed five times as great as that with which it enters the hills.

This great gorge has a tortuous course bending first to the east and then to the west. It is nowhere over 120 to 150 feet wide, and it rises 1,000 to 1,200 feet above the level of the stream. The walls rise nearly perpendicular in every part, and are formed of bare crystalline rock. Here and there in some crevice a little soil has formed, just enough for a tuft of grass or a puny tree to take root.

At the level of the stream one can only see a little ribbon of the sky above for a that great height the top of the walls seem almost to touch one another and trees at the top overhang the edge and shut out nearly every glimpse of daylight. At the bottom of the narrow gorge the little river glides swiftly sometimes almost with an unbroken surface, and then again lashed into foam by thousands of rocks, whose tops rise above the surface; and then again the water pours tumultuously over the edge of a declivity, and then plunges on in a series of rapids.

In a distance of forty-three miles the river drops 1,500 feet and then it emerges upon the plain, and, forgetting its mad career, it flows placidly along to join the Lualaba River and at the junction of the two rivers the true Congo begins. No other tributary of the Congo or even the great river itself where it tumbles along in rapids for 232 miles between Leopoldville and Matadi presents a spectacle so savage and so violent.

The Cornell Catholic Club is a society organized among the Catholic students of Cornell University for the purpose of promoting the best interests, religiously, intellectually and socially, of the Catholic students in attendance at that school of learning. It has the nucleus of a good library of Catholic authors, largely contributed through the generous and thoughtful kindness of a distinguished ecclesiastic. The club meets every two weeks, when in interesting discussions, papers and addresses form the main features of the evening's entertainment.

A simple way to help Poor Catholic Missions. Save all cancelled postage stamps of every kind and country and send them to Rev. P. M. Barral, Hammonton, New Jersey. Give at once your address, and you will receive with the necessary explanation a nice Souvenir of Hammonton Missions.

Catholicism in Persia.

The journal *Missions Catholiques* publishes a letter from a baldan Catholic priest which gives the following interesting details on the present status of the church in Persia:

"This country, so well known in former times for its steadfastness in the faith, and watered by the blood of so many martyrs, till the sixth century, then dragged into heresy by the followers of Nestorius, later terrorized by Mahomet and his successors, lost the faith almost entirely, so that in the Middle Ages, a Catholic could hardly be found in Persia, particularly in the eastern portion of the country.

"In the first half of the nineteenth century, the vast province of Aderbeidjan contained upwards of forty thousand Christians, Chaldeans and Armenians, but all plunged in the darkness of heresy, with a single exception of the vast parish of Khosrova, whose conversion dates from 1789. Among all the Christians of the town of Ourmiah and surrounding country, there was but a family of Polish origin really Catholic. But in the middle of this century, thanks to the brave Lazarist missionaries, Catholicism again meeting with favor in Persia. At first the Catholic religion appeared so strange to the people they knew it only under the name of 'Religion of the French.'

"The Lazarists would have met with greater success had they not been preceded by the Methodists of New York, who had already led astray a part of the Nestorians, before the famous Eugene Dore founded Catholic missions in Persia. But the zeal of the devoted sons of St. Vincent de Paul was not long in bearing fruit. The city of Ourmiah and suburbs already contain several hundred Catholic families, about forty native priests, of whom several have been converted from Nestorianism. Even now conversions are not rare; only recently three remarkable ones took place.

"The first was that of David Benjamin, a native of Ourmiah, and one of the first converts of the Anglican missionaries of London, who several years ago founded a mission at Ourmiah. The Anglicans had sent him to London to be trained as a missionary. But, before his return to Persia, he had the good fortune to become a Catholic. Since the beginning of the year he is in Rome attending the college of the propaganda, where he will study for some time before being ordained to the priesthood. The Anglicans were expecting much from him.

"The second conversion which is much like the first, is that of Rabi Baba, of Kossi, one of the most learned Protestants of Persia. After teaching several years in the Protestant college, he determined to travel in America. He has since become a Catholic. This conversion has been very gratifying to the Catholics and a rude blow to the Protestants, who were proud to count among themselves such a learned man and distinguished preacher.

"The third conversion was that of Lord Audichon Khinou, who, some months ago, declared himself a Catholic. This conversion is due to the zeal of the pastor of St. George's parish, Rev. Benjamin Khoubyar.

"These three conversions will soon be followed by others. God's finger is seen in this great work. Let us pray this good Father of family to send zealous laborers in the part of his vineyard."

INFLAMMATORY RHEUMATISM.—Mr. S. Ackerman, commercial traveler, Belleville, writes: "Some years ago I used Dr. THOMAS' ELECTRIC OIL for inflammatory rheumatism, and three bottles effected a completed cure. I was the whole of one summer unable to move without crutches, and every movement caused excruciating pains. I am now out on the road and exposed to all kinds of weather, but have never been troubled with rheumatism since. I, however, keep a bottle of Dr. THOMAS' OIL on hand, and I always recommend it to others, as it did so much for me."