

ST. WINEFRIDE'S WELL.

A MIRACULOUS WELL IN HILLY WALES.

Recollections of a Visit to St. Winefride's shrine, by a Member of "The True Witness" Staff.

To Catholics from America visiting England, one of the most interesting places to make a pilgrimage to is St. Winefride's Well, at Holywell, in Wales. The village, which is perhaps a thousand years old, takes its name from the miraculous well in its midst.

Holywell, which is within a few miles of Rhyl and Llandudno, the fashionable Welsh watering places, is one of those excessively hilly villages that are to be found nowhere but in Wales and Switzerland.

Holywell is a real old-world Welsh village, where may be seen on market days, disposing of her merchandise, the trim, quaintly dressed farmer's wife, who, as she walks about with her Welsh sugar-loafed hat perched high and shining on her head, chatters volubly to her friends in a dazzling many consonanted language which seems to require a mighty amount of gesticulation to make it intelligible even to Welsh people. What with the bewildering Welsh names that mark the streets, which streets seem to have no beginning and no end and intersect and wind and radiate in a manner that entirely outdoes those mazes occasionally erected in public parks for the diversion of visitors, a visitor to Holywell is never exactly sure what will happen when he leaves his hotel for a stroll; he may walk three or four miles and at the end of that distance find that he is within twenty yards from where he started, or he may walk half a mile and become so irretrievably lost that he has to see some Welsh person named Jones—everybody is named Jones at Holywell except a few of the aristocracy who are called Williams—to take him home again. All this is due to the hilly nature of the place. Houses are perched on the top of precipices, in valleys, in seemingly inaccessible places on hill sides, and in every other situation except where one would expect them to be placed. One may look over the wall of the hotel garden and see down the chimney of his next door neighbour's house, while the window of his bed-room on a high flat will be no higher than the basement of the house opposite; thus despite its seclusion and continued tranquillity, Holywell has perhaps more ups and downs than any other village either in England or Wales.

The tradition of the well is that Winefride, a noble British maid, rejecting the advances of an importunate and wicked suitor, was beheaded by him, and where her head fell there rose immediately a spring of purest crystal water, and at the same time the earth yawning swallowed up her murderer. This was a thousand years ago, but reliable chronicles, history and tradition, all affirm that before that time there was no spring at that place. In course of time the well of St. Winefride became known as miraculous, and in the middle ages St. Winefride was more venerated and her shrine more visited than it is now. The volume of water which springs from the rock every minute of the day numbers ten tons or several millions of gallons, and the stream flows in winter and summer, in dry seasons and in wet, with equal volume. The temperature in winter and summer never varies more than four degrees. Sometimes a deposit of blood-red stains color the marble baths which have been built for the water to flow through; at such times, says Father Beauclerc, who lives near the well, the cures are more frequent: pilgrims, when this happens, feeling more faith in the possibility of a cure.

The Jesuit Fathers of Holywell say that cures are oftenest effected among pilgrims of the working classes, the educated classes always being more sceptical.

In the course of time many thousands of persons have been cured of disease and infirmity by bathing in the well of St. Winefride. Among the cured are many Protestants. This year a larger number of cures than usual have been reported, and St. Winefride's Well was sometimes visited by more pilgrims than could find accommodation. Among the cures effected were cures of tumor, paralysis, lameness, rheumatism, and many minor ailments.

The surprising feature of the well to scientists is that a volume of water reach-

ing several millions of gallons a minute and of such unsurpassed purity should spring up in a place where it is proved there was originally no flow at all; it is also worth notice that in no other part of Wales is there a similar spring. Sceptical geologists, after the most searching and ingenious investigation and the most strenuous endeavors to account for the spring in an ordinary manner, have been at last constrained to confess that they see no natural cause to account for a spring in such a place.

An increasing number of cures take place every year, and an increasing number of pilgrims visit the shrine and in full faith bathe themselves in that pure, clear, ever-flowing fountain and venerating the relics of Winefride the Virgin Martyr, go away cured and with renewed vigor; if not temporally, at least spiritually—with that strength that is so much more valuable than all the temporal physical graces with which it is possible for a body to be endowed.

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THE ROSARY.

nation which very justly takes a first place in priding itself on its Catholicity. Then, as was right, the vigilant solicitude of the Bishops was aroused, and they forwarded suitable protestation to those whose sacred duty it ought to be to safeguard the dignity of religion and country, and they not only warned their flocks of the gravity of the danger, but also exhorted them to repair by religious solemnities the shocking offence offered to the beloved Author of our salvation. The zeal shown in so many excellent ways by the friends of Christian morality has certainly deserved Our warmest approval, and has softened the bitterness of the pain which that affair has caused Us. On the present occasion We cannot avoid raising Our voice as Chief Pastor of the Church, and We unite Our strongest protestations with those of the Bishops and the faithful. And with the same Apostolic earnestness with which We complain of and condemn this execrable deed do We urge the Christian nations, and especially the Italians, to preserve inviolate the religion of their ancestors, which is a most precious inheritance, to defend it strenuously and to be careful to further it by conduct always honorable and worthy of the creed they profess. We desire, then for this reason also, that during the whole month of October individuals and religious societies should exercise their zeal by paying honor to the great Mother of God, the powerful protectress of Christianity, the glorious Queen of Heaven. On Our part, We renew and confirm with all Our heart the sacred indulgences previously given for this purpose.

Venerable brethren, may God, Who "in his bountiful mercy provided for us such a mediatrix" (St. Bernard de XII., Pœuorgative, B. M. V., n. 2.), and Who "has desired that we should receive everything through Mary" (Id. serm. in Natv. B. M. V., n. 7), hear our common prayers through her intercession and favor, and fully satisfy our hopes. As a token of this receive the Apostolic Benediction which We impart lovingly in the Lord to yourselves and to your respective clergy and people.

Given at St. Peter's Rome, on the 8th of September, 1894, the seventeenth year of Our Pontificate.

LEO XIII., POPE.

CONCERT AT THE SAILORS' CLUB.

THE CLOSING SEASON.

The sailors' weekly concerts, which have all summer been such a source of pleasure and entertainment to the sailors coming to the port and to many citizens as well, are now drawing to a close; the last concert this year will be on Thursday, 25th of October, and will be followed the next Monday by the grand annual concert to be held in the Academic Hall, under the Gesu.

Last Thursday's concert was in no way inferior to its predecessors, and despite the weather there was a very large attendance of both sailors and citizens. There were several particularly interesting items on the programme, notably the charming rendition, by Miss May Milloy, of the dainty recitation, "Long Ago," in which are introduced some of the graceful steps of the old-fashioned minuet; a tin whistle solo was prettily played by Mr. Williams and elicited a well deserved encore. Among the other items on the pro-

gramme were recitations, songs, musical selections, etc. The following persons assisted during the evening:—Messrs. Kemp, Williams, Page, Read, Price, Baird and Carpenter. Among the ladies were:—Misses May and B. Milloy, O'Bryne, E. Mortimer, Mullen, Kelly and E. McCarthy.

ROMAN NEWS.

The cause of the beatification of Christopher Columbus will again be brought before the Congregation of Rites in October.

Miss Meltier, a member of the sect of the Waldenses, has, says the *Sicilia Cattolica*, been converted and received into the Church by His Eminence Cardinal Celsia.

A great pilgrimage to Rome next spring is now being organized in Lisbon. Many of the Portuguese bishops have already expressed their intention of accompanying their flocks.

The Holy See has directed the vicars apostolic of China, Spain and Corea to act with extreme prudence so as not to afford any excuse for persecuting measures against the Catholic missions.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites has just published a decree, approved by the Holy Father, proclaiming the validity of the Apostolic process carried out in the diocese of Rodez, Pamiers and Montreal with regard to the miracles for the canonization of the Blessed John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Brothers of the Christian School.

The "conversion" of Signor Crispi is looked upon with misgivings at the Vatican, where the famous Naples speech of the Italian Premier is regarded as a bait to catch Catholic voters at the next elections. Something more than mere words are wanted from the ex-Garibaldian, Pope-hater, freethinker and Freemason, and unless Signor Crispi can see his way clear to follow up his profession of faith with substantial deeds, he will find, as far as the Holy See is concerned, that he has been merely "beating air." The speech, however, has made a deep impression in the political world, and Freemasonry is simply furious. Grand Master Lemmi has, it is said, determined on erasing the Italian Premier from the list of members, but Crispi will probably survive the shock, if he is really serious in his change of views. Government of Italy with Freemasonic assistance has not proved very successful at all events. Signor Crispi is acute enough to see that, if he cannot do better, at least things could not be worse.

C. M. B. A.

VOTES OF CONDOLENCE.

At the last regular meeting of Branch 26, the following resolutions were adopted:

Moved by Grand Deputy Finn, seconded by Brother A. Brogan, N.P.

WHEREAS, this Branch has learned with sorrow of the death of Brother John O'Brien;

Resolved, that the Branch tenders to the widow of its late brother, and to the members of his family, its most sincere sympathy in the great loss sustained by them.

Resolved, that in the death of Brother O'Brien this Branch has lost a most faithful member, and that in token of our sorrow for his loss, it is hereby ordered that the charter of the Branch be draped in mourning for the space of three months.

Further resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the widow and family of our late brother, also entered on the minutes and published in the press.

Moved by Chancellor Finn, seconded by Marshal Milloy, that Branch 26 having learned with deep regret of the sad loss sustained by Bro. Michael Sharkey in the death of his sister, Mrs. John J. Dolan, does hereby tender Bro. Sharkey and the members of his esteemed family its most sincere sympathy in their bereavement; and further moved, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Brother Sharkey.

Moved by Chancellor Finn, seconded by Marshal Milloy,—That the Branch has learned with deep regret of the death of the father of its esteemed medical adviser, Bro. Dr. Charles O'Connor, and herewith tenders to Bro. O'Connor the sincere sympathy of the Branch in the sad loss he has sustained; and it is hereby ordered that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Bro. O'Connor.

THE WORLD AROUND.

Cholera has broken out in Constantinople, and several deaths have occurred.

It is reported in Paris that the Prince of Naples, the Crown Prince of Italy, is engaged to marry an English princess.

Snow fell in thirty counties of northern Minnesota, Sunday, amounting in some places to a depth of three inches.

The Crown Point Calico Printing Works at Leeds, England, were destroyed by fire, entailing a loss of £100,000.

New York saloonkeepers refused to obey the Sunday closing order of Inspector Byrnes and many arrests followed.

Secretary Gresham's outline of the new treaty with Japan shows that it closely resembles the one just concluded with England.

The Wisconsin State Fair Association which it was supposed lost money on the last fair will have between \$500 and \$6000 left after paying all expenses.

The construction of a new mole and dockyard at Gibraltar have been begun. Five hundred skilled workmen will shortly leave England to carry on the work.

The losses from the tornado in Little Rock, Ark., on Tuesday night, are estimated at \$1,000,000. Six persons are known to have been killed and several are missing.

Gen. A. M. West, candidate for vice-president of the United States in 1884 on the Greenback Labor ticket with Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, died at Holly Springs, Miss.

The persecution of Jews throughout Morocco continues. They are plundered and beaten wherever found, and compelled to pay a tax of £5 for passing the principal highways.

The Sagua river, Cuba, overflowed its banks Saturday, and the city of Sagua la Grande is flooded. Many of the residents of the city have been drowned and the damage to property is immense.

A skeleton of a prehistoric giant has been exhumed at the old fort in Kentucky, twelve miles below Portsmouth, Ohio. It is eight feet in stature and four feet across the shoulders.

In the war on gambling in Chicago, the last move is the returning of indictments by the grand jury not only against the gamblers, but against the wealthy owners of the gambling houses.

The British authorities are preparing to send troops from India to the Chinese treaty ports to protect foreigners from the fury of Chinese mobs. The Japanese have landed more troops in Manchuria.

The death of Gustave Humbert, last week, reduces the number of the life Senators of France to twenty-one. The Versailles Assembly selected seventy-five, and the oldest survivor is now 89 years old. The youngest is 61.

A dispatch from Shanghai says that it is probable that the Emperor of China will be dethroned in favor of a prince who will treat with Japan. Five thousand Japanese troops have landed at Passiet Bay, near the Russian frontier, on Corea.

Experiments in the injections of blood serum for diphtheria are meeting with increasing success. In Vienna the patients in the Children's hospital there, who are giving up under ordinary treatment, are receiving the new remedy, and three out of four recover.

C. M. B. A. ANNIVERSARY.

Branch 26 will celebrate its 11th anniversary next month. The members will attend Holy Communion in a body on the morning of Sunday, Nov. 11, and in the evening there will be a grand religious celebration at which all the sister Branches will take part; a social celebration will also be held on the evening of the 13th.

The article which the Rev. Lucian Johnson contributed to the Catholic World of current issue on "Americanism vs. Ultramontanism," is deserved attracting wide attention. Father Johnston has plainly inherited much of his father's literary ability. He is the son of Richard Malcolm Johnston, the distinguished Catholic litterateur, and was ordained two years ago last June at Rome, where he made his divinity studies.