



CURRENT COMMENT

A curious thing happened lately in London. The Anglican Bishop having accepted the resignation of the Rev. H. M. M. Evans, who, after being eleven years the incumbent of St. Michael's, Shoreditch, found that he could not agree with the Protestant views of his Bishop, a large number of his parishioners agreed to attend Mass and Vespers at the new Catholic Church of St. Mary, Moorfields, about 400 yards from St. Michael's. On Saturday last a notice was left in every house in the parish, inviting all to attend Low Mass with English hymns at 8 and 11.15 a.m., and musical service and Benediction at 7 p.m., in the Catholic Church of St. Mary's, Moorfields, Eldon St., E.C., Sunday, Feb. 8.

That same day most of the Sunday school teachers told the children that, as there could be no proper service at St. Michael's, they (the teachers) would take them to a proper church. The children accordingly went with their teachers by appointment on Sunday morning and were marched off to the Catholic Church. At the end of the morning service they were each given a medal of the Sacred Heart "in commemoration of the first Romanistic services."

A correspondent of the Tablet (Feb. 14) thus describes what took place afterwards. "Last Sunday the new Church of St. Mary, Moorfields, was opened and quickly filled by a congregation consisting almost wholly of the people of St. Michael's. The early Mass at eight o'clock was said by Father Chase, formerly Anglican vicar of All Saints, Plymouth, "and eleven o'clock Mass by Father E. A. P. Theed, who in his Anglican days was Father Chase's curate at Plymouth. During Mass Catholic hymns were sung with great fervor and devotion by the Protestant congregation, who seemed perfectly familiar with every detail of the service. . . . In the evening the Rosary was said, and here again the Protestant worshippers were perfectly at home, and showed themselves thoroughly accustomed to the devotion. The "O Salutaris" and "Tantum Ergo" were beautifully sung by the children during benediction and with the perfect ease that comes with long familiarity, while the organ was played by the organist from St. Michael's. It may be added that the children know the Catholic catechism by heart." In fact the Anglican congregation of St. Michael's have used for some years past the halfpenny catechism published by Messrs. Burns and Oates.

The same correspondent, who knows the locality well, continues: "As the accommodation in St. Mary's is limited, it may be necessary next Sunday to take steps to exclude persons attracted only by curiosity or the novel sight of an Anglican congregation worshipping in a Catholic church. For the moment, at their own request, St. Mary's is opened primarily for those in the neighborhood who have just discovered that the teaching of the doctrines of the Catholic Church is forbidden in the churches of the Establishment, and the course of instruction from the pulpit will be for some time specially adapted to their needs. Meanwhile great efforts are being made by the Anglican authorities to persuade the people that there is no need to look to Rome, and that they can find all they want at St. Michael's. On Sunday there were altar lights and vestments as usual

and even the Angelus bell was rung, but the people will not be easily satisfied. They ask, when told that all will go on as before: 'Then why was our Vicar driven out?'

Of the clergy attached to St. Michael's the Tablet says "there is good reason to hope that two are already following up the resignation of their charge by preparing to be received into the Catholic Church." Our metropolitan contemporary does not say if the Rev. H. M. M. Evans is one of these two clergymen; but the London correspondent of the Dublin "Freeman's Journal" does write: "The Rev. Mr. Evans, of St. Michael's, Shoreditch, is said to have gone to a Southern wateringplace, with the object of preparing for his reception into the Catholic Church." All good Catholics will hope and pray that this may be true: for his farewell sermon, as summarized in the "Church Times," shows him to be an earnest, sincere and kindly man who felt he had no alternative but to follow the dictates of his conscience.

The Tablet wisely warns its readers against reports of wholesale secession and conversion in connection with this extraordinary incident. "Attendance at Mass is not quite the same thing as reception into the Catholic Church. . . . Father Chase has commenced a complete course of instruction for those who may wish to go further, and no one—man, woman or child—will be received into the Church who has not been individually and thoroughly prepared."

The London "Daily Chronicle" of Feb. 11 prints a letter from a correspondent signed 'Common Sense,' who says that the collapse of the "Revolt from Rome" leads him, as an old-fashioned Protestant, to question whether the sympathy of Protestants with ex-Roman priests is not misplaced. "These gentlemen," he says, "can generally be classed under one of two headings: (1) Persons who afterwards become a credit to no one; and (2) persons who return sooner or later to the Roman obedience." The correspondent adds: "I may mention that the recent return of the well-known Count Campello within the pale of the Roman Church has been the direct cause of a relative of my own seeking instruction in the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion."

The prospects for Ireland continue to brighten. Walter Wellman, writing in the American Monthly Review of Reviews on "Ireland's Emancipation," tells how Sir Anthony MacDonnell came to be appointed under-secretary as follows:

When Prime Minister Balfour and Irish Secretary Wyndham decided that the greatest work to be done for the unification and strengthening of the empire was to make Ireland loyal, that Ireland could not be made loyal without contentment, that contentment could not be had without prosperity, and that prosperity could not be secured without the abolition of landlordism and the introduction of the sound principle of individual ownership, they cast about for men and means with which to carry out the new policy. Chief Secretary Wyndham has the work directly in hand, but as he must remain most of the time in London he needed a man—the right man—to represent him in Ireland. While in India as viceroy, Lord Lansdowne had known of the work of Sir Anthony MacDonnell, in the Northwest provinces of India. MacDonnell had solved—scientifically and satisfactorily—a land problem similar to

that in Ireland. On Lansdowne's recommendation—and this is a state secret—he was sent for. Lord Lansdowne took him to King Edward, who feels the keenest interest in the project to make a new and loyal Ireland. "I am willing to undertake the work," said Sir Anthony to the King, "but you must bear in mind that I am not only an Irishman and a Roman Catholic, but a Nationalist and Home Ruler." "That makes no difference," replied the King; "you are the man we want." So Balfour and Wyndham sent MacDonnell to Dublin as under secretary. He has been there only two months; but in this short time he has thrown old traditions and prejudices to the winds; he has consulted not only the landlords, but the true representatives of the Irish people,—the Nationalist members of parliament and T. W. Russell, the Scotch Presbyterian, who has brought Ulster in line for land reform and for the first time enabled the Irish people to present a united front, Catholic and Protestant, Nationalist and Unionist, Leinster, Munster and Connaught along with Ulster,—for settlement of the land problem upon the sound principle of individual ownership in place of dual ownership and landlordism. As a practical administrator, dealing frankly with the landlords on the one side and the Nationalists on the other, he had up to the time I left Ireland, in December, secured a general agreement upon the details of the project which the Government will present to parliament in a few weeks. More than 80 per cent. of the landowners whose rentals exceed five hundred pounds a year had given their consent, and most of the remainder were expected to join. If a remnant stand out, the project will go ahead just the same and something akin to compulsion, or the law of eminent domain, will be applied to them, for the government is determined this time to make a complete and final job of it, and to leave no sore spots for centers of discontent. The Nationalist leaders—Wm. O'Brien, John Redmond, T. P. O'Connor, John Dillon, Michael Davitt and others—will support the government measure in parliament. Mr. Brice and other leaders of the Liberal party tell me that if the bill is a good one,—and, of course, English political and journalistic methods are such that they do not yet know what the measure may be,—there will be no opposition.

The Free Press has lately taken the Provincial Government to task for applying public school funds to an agricultural college. The Telegram, the Government organ, has not replied, and yet we think there is an excellent answer to this charge. Here it is: If public school money is freely used for collegiate institutes that give university training, why should it not—a fortiori—be used for an agricultural college in an agricultural country like Manitoba? Surely agriculture is more in keeping with the needs of the general public than the study of Latin, poetical literature and elementary general science. This retort is, we believe, unanswerable; but the Telegram apparently dare not use it because it goes counter to the general practice, in Ontario and Manitoba, of applying the hard earned taxes of the poor to higher education which must of necessity be limited to a chosen few. But general practices outside of Catholicism fail to produce reverence or awe in us. If we find them bad we say so. As Catholics, who pay a large fraction of the public school taxes, as Catholics whose own school buildings are heavily taxed to support a system which we abhor, we protest against using public taxes for such orna-

mental purposes as collegiate institutes, and we hold that it would be much better to apply a part of these taxes to the teaching of scientific agriculture. Hence we thoroughly approve of the local government's action in this matter.

Mr. Harriss, the promoter of the great cycle of musical festivals, says His Majesty the King has been pleased to allow him to name any new Mass written for this occasion "The Coronation Mass of Edward VII." How does this chime with Edward VII's accession oath in which the Mass is declared to be idolatry?

By the way, the Tablet urges, for the re-opening of Parliament, renewed agitation for the suppression of what the Prince of Wales once called 'that horrid oath.' And in point of fact there is no time to lose. The King was seriously, if not dangerously, ill last year; age does not diminish his liability to disease; if he should die before the removal of that offensive declaration, his successor would make it as a matter of course, unless he should suddenly develop an amount of honest independence as yet unknown in royal circles.

We crave our readers' indulgence for the mistake made by the printers last week. They omitted an article on Sir Charles Gavan Duffy which formed the subject of our first comment. They also omitted a report of "Two Shrove Tuesday entertainments." Let us hope they will not fail to insert them this week.

The Silver Jubilee of the Pope's Coronation last Tuesday, March 3, passed off with even more magnificence than the 25th anniversary of his election on Feb. 20. In spite of persistent rain it is estimated that 75,000 people were present in St. Peter's; of these about one thousand were Americans. There was a continuous roar of welcome as Leo XIII. passed in and out in the Portable Chair. To quote from the newspaper cablegrams:

"From his elevation on the new Sedia Gestatoria, carried by 12 men in costumes of red brocade, flanked by the famous spreading fans and surmounted by the white and gold canopy, the Pope appeared to be more than a human being. He seemed to be a white spirit, this impression being added to by the Pontiff's white robes and white mitre, delicate features, face as white as alabaster and his thin hand moving slowly in benediction. It almost seemed as if all human attributes had been expelled from that slender venerable form."

And, strange to say, this is the same man of whom we read in a cablegram of last Saturday, three days before this fatiguing celebration, that the Nuncio in Belgium had received alarming reports of his health. Of course the Pope must die some day, and the older he grows the more likely he is to die; but there have been so many cries of "wolf" that when the wolf does come, few will believe it.

A VERY BIG TEMPEST IN A VERY LITTLE TUMBLER.

Western Watchman.

A very picturesque person is Colonel Arthur Lynch. He fought among the Boers and let all the world know it. He was the only Boer soldier that made anything out of the Boer war. He won a seat in the House of Commons. He knew that in taking sides with the South African insurgents he was committing an act of constructive treason, for which he might some day be tried and hanged. Common

sense should have dictated the policy of staying out of the British Isles. But Colonel Lynch was determined to make a stir in the world and he proclaimed himself a candidate for parliament. He was elected without serious opposition, was promptly jailed and tried and condemned to death, like hundreds of others whose glory he sought to share. His sentence was a farce, as everyone knew that it would never be executed. The King lost no time in commuting the death penalty to imprisonment for life.

This insignificant instrument has been used to excite the Irish people at home and abroad to a degree that appears little short of ludicrous. There is nothing of the hero in Col. Lynch. Like that other Boer hero, who travelled round with the "Irish Joan of Arc," he is a Boer soldier for advertising purposes. In fact, in his plea before the court that sentenced him to death he declared that he was less a soldier than a journalist, and went into the Boer war chiefly in the latter capacity. The avowed purpose of those Irish Boer recruits was the formation of the nucleus of an Irish army, which when England's flag would be hauled down in South Africa, would concentrate in Ireland and drive England out of Erin forever. To our mind this is a criminal agitation. We believe in making it as difficult and as unpleasant as possible for England to govern Ireland; but the end of all political and social obstruction should be to compel England to do justice to the sister isle, not to bring about political separation. None of the wisest leaders of the Irish people want absolute political independence for Ireland. They want the injustice of the past so far righted as to enable the Irish people to start out on the high road of national prosperity with some promise of successful competition with other nations. There was a time when Ireland might have been able to set up for herself; but that time is gone. England of to-day is not the England of a hundred years ago; and King Edward is not his bigoted old ancestor. He is a liberal prince and we expect much from him in the way of remedying the ills of Ireland. But silly agitation, such as this aroused by the opera bouffe martyrdom of Colonel Lynch, will not aid Ireland to help herself or induce others to help her. Still the whirlwind of indignation that swept around the world at the mere mention of the death penalty for Col. Lynch only goes to show that the Irish people will not permit any of their fellow-countrymen to suffer for political offenses against English law. The law is a dead letter in Ireland and always was. We hope this trifling incident will not turn the honest people of England from their expressed purpose of doing justice to Ireland. It certainly should not.

The nomination of the Hon. John T. McDonough of Albany, N.Y. for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines, which was sent to the Senate on February 4 and hung fire there for about ten days, had been withdrawn, but was confirmed on February 19. There was some mystery connected with the delay, the withdrawal, the renomination and final confirmation and it goes without saying that Mr. McDonough's religion was partly the cause of the trouble.

In his message to the legislature Gov. Doekery shows plainly that he is not an advocate of free books in our public schools. The only people benefitted by the measure would be the publishers and the rag men.

He is truly great who hath great love.—Thos. A' Kempis.