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VOL. XLVI. NO. 37

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 1897.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

EUROPEAN CATHOLIC NEWS

Disturbances During the Lenten Services at Paris.

The New Pontifical Seminary in Rome.

The Success Achieved by Switzerland Catholics.

The Italian Minister of Education on the Merits of the Work of Religious and Secular Schools.

The opening of the Lenten season, when the vast churches were filled to the doors by enormous crowds of the faithful assembled to hear the great preachers of the day...

The Church of St. Ambrose was the first to be chosen as the scene of these manifestations. Peré Etourneau is preaching here, before immense audiences, a course of sermons upon the mutual duties of the rich and poor.

THE PONTIFICAL SEMINARY.

A Roman correspondent, in a recent despatch, refers to the action of His Holiness in connection with the education of the students for the priesthood...

It has long been recognized that one great need experienced by the Church at this time is a soundly educated, an entirely cultured, clergy, fitted by the nature of their studies in the seminaries to uphold among men of the world and among the chiefs of learning and intellect, the principles of Christianity.

members of the Chapter of the Vatican Basilica. In this way the foundation will be in the closest touch with the Pope's and the Sacred College. In the course of time, that means—to put the matter very familiarly—good-bye to the old-fashioned country curate, who, knowing well enough how to say his Mass, and help his people on their way through life, is quite unfitted to encounter the fierce spirits who are now to be found inveighing against the Church in almost every hamlet in Italy.

SWITZERLAND CATHOLICS AND FINANCE.

The London Tablet, in a recent issue, publishes the following statement in connection with the recent efforts of Catholics to make their influence felt in Switzerland:—

One would scarcely expect to find the question of a National Bank assuming the importance of a test of strength between Catholics and their opponents. Yet this is just what has happened in the land of the "Ranz des Vaches." The electors of the Catholic Cantons were the firmest in their rejection of the proposal to centralize all the financial arrangements of the country by means of a State Bank; and it is almost entirely due to the Catholic party that the measure has been quashed.

EDUCATION IN ITALY.

The following expression of opinion in regard to religious instruction in schools, coming as it does from no less a person than the Italian Minister of Education, cannot be regarded otherwise than as being very significant.

"Do you know," he writes, "to what conclusions I have arrived? I have turned back, in one most important respect, from all my former beliefs. It is hard for me to avow it to myself; but I find at least the pleasure of speaking out the truth. In Parliament I have called the free schools (that is to say, the Christian as contrasted with the Secularist Government schools) sources of ignorance. I have bitterly inveighed against private instruction. I have made myself the echo of opinions which are current in our part. Now I recognize that the free schools give a better education, sounder instruction, than the schools of the State."

ring among official leaders of Italy—a spirit which, calling attention to the evil done in the past and its natural results on the moral, intelligence and public spirit of the people, has moved an initial reform. The developments of this new phase of official opinion will be watched with interest by all who care for the well being of Italy and for the preservation of Christianity within her shores.

Our Irish Letter.

The Organization of Belfast Catholics to Secure Representation in Public Offices.

UNION OF PRIESTS AND PEOPLE ONE OF THE CHIEF FEATURES OF THE MOVEMENT.

Indignation Meeting in Cork. Spirited Resolution Adopted. Death of a Prominent Irish Priest. Three Sad Occurrences. Distress in the Western Districts

DUBLIN, March 20.

The Belfast Irish News, in a recent issue, in referring to the letter of Bishop McHenry, which was read on Sunday last at the services in the churches of the New Belfast district, inviting all the parishioners to assist at the preliminary meetings of the new Catholic Association, says:—

This duty devolved on His Lordship pursuant to the constitution of the Association adopted at the great public meeting in October last. Accordingly on some day of the week beginning on Sunday next the householders attached to each church will meet to elect Congregational Committees together with three lay delegates to the Central Executive. The meetings will be attended by every Catholic interested in the welfare of the Catholic body. They have a direct local interest in the subjects that will be submitted to their consideration, and it will be incumbent on them to see that men most fitted by character, education, business capacity and experience are chosen to take part in the management of the Catholic public affairs of Belfast.

UNION OF PRIESTS AND PEOPLE.

It makes the lay element the predominant partner of the Executive. The union of priests and people we consider to be absolutely indispensable to the working of the scheme, and to be a happy augury of its success. To this union all the past progress of Irish Catholics is due. By it alone we can secure and promote the progress of the Catholic body in this city. The new organization is democratic in its essence, and is framed on democratic lines. It claims the support of the people, because it will exist for the good of the people, who have had put into their hands a powerful instrument for making their collective force felt in municipal and other matters. It gives them a means of attaining one of the ideals of Leo XIII., quoted by the Lord Bishop—that of taking a prudent part in the business of municipal administration. Here, in Belfast, the Catholics number 75,000. In this city they have hitherto, for municipal purposes, been treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The iron heel of Orange tyranny has ground them down. They were thought unworthy of civic rights. Effective and independent civic representation was denied them. In the struggle over the Corporation Act of 1896 the fabric of Protestant exclusiveness was partially demolished. We won, not all we sought, but a measure of our rights.

A NEW MUNICIPAL ERA IS ABOUT TO DAWN

for the Catholic people. Unhoped-for opportunities are within their reach. It is for themselves to use these opportunities wisely and most advantageously. We believe the new association, inaugurated by His Lordship Most Rev. Dr. Henry, furnishes them with an effective means of strengthening and consolidating their power in municipal elections, and that it is deserving of the support of every Catholic citizen. At the public meeting in October last, which was probably the most representative that ever met within the historic precincts of St. Mary's Hall, Most Rev. Dr. Henry expounded a scheme for the protection and promotion of local Catholic interests, congregational and general. The scheme, when worked by the new Association, which will be firmly and prudently guided and thoroughly organized will be a splendid weapon in the hands of Catholics for keeping their ground and

BETTERING THEIR SOCIAL POSITION.

The men of Belfast and a few other places in the North have borne the brunt of the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish persecution of recent years. We have fought

a long and a good fight. We have upheld our principles at a great price. For many years past the profession of Catholicity put a man under a public ban. The paths of emolument and honour were not to be trodden by him. Now at last the Catholics are about to emerge from the rule of domineering bigotry into the light of a better time. The Association will fight hard to the end that the profession of Catholicity shall no more be a barrier to the enjoyment of the rights and privileges which have been monopolized by citizens of all denominations. Recent significant incidents in the work of hospital building show more eloquently than speeches or writings how scant and slight is the consideration the friends of ascendancy will give to Catholics or Catholic works. On these occasions our Protestant friends betray wonderful harmony—on one side. It would be a senseless and disastrous farce if the Catholic strength in Belfast were allowed to go much longer to waste.

THE REAL WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION

will be to organize the Catholic vote in all the wards. This is the stepping stone to municipal representation. The Catholic vote has long been scattered. Hence it is weak and shapeless. In the future it will be thoroughly worked, and the details of municipal registration will be attended to. When the Catholics have won their way into the City Council they will not rest content. We have a right to representation on the other public boards. This right we will assert in good time. The Catholic wards will be made doubly safe for Catholics, while in the wards where our people are not in a majority they can throw into the scale a mass of votes that will cause the electoral balance to lean to the side they favor. The Executive will find sufficient scope for its energies in securing adequate representation of Catholics on the public boards in selecting fit and acceptable candidates, in bringing about concerted action among Catholic voters in municipal, poor-law, and other elections, and in exercising a vigilant supervision over matters within its purview. Two points in the

STRUGGLE FOR OUR MUNICIPAL RIGHTS

are of great importance. These points were emphasized at the public meeting last October. Every Catholic ratepayer should bear them in mind—(1) In order to hold their ground and to improve their position, the work of organizing and directing the Catholic vote must be undertaken by an organization able to weld all the Catholics of the city into one mass. This the Catholic Association can do. Every Catholic householder will have a vote and a voice in its proceedings. Its platform is broad enough for every man of Catholic faith. (2) The Catholics will have to fight against the drilled and trained battalions of the powerful Conservative Association. Hence the need of a strong and well-equipped Catholic Association to meet and beat them at every point. If experience of Orange ascendancy has taught one lesson more strikingly than another to the Catholics of Belfast, it is that they should act together as a united body, and stand by and sustain one another in every crisis of their local municipal fortunes.

PROTEST AGAINST EVICTIONS.

A report comes from Cork, that a large and enthusiastic meeting was recently held in the Ballymacoda district, to express condemnation of the eviction of Philip O'Neill. The Very Rev. Canon Rice presided. The following resolutions were proposed and adopted:—

- 1. "That we condemn the taking of this farm as purely legalized robbery, and pledge ourselves to use every lawful means for the restoration of this farm to its lawful owners."
2. "That we offer our sympathy to the brave men who have been unjustly fined and sent to gaol."
3. "That we are convinced that there is no hope for cordial unity amongst Nationalists until a chairman of the party is elected, in whose wisdom and unselfishness Nationalists of every section and party shall have confidence."
4. "That the Queen, on the approaching occasion of her Jubilee celebration, ought not allow herself to be surpassed in clemency by President Kruger in the liberation of political prisoners."
5. "That we establish a People's Defence Association, and all the members of the National League and National Federation be hereby constituted a committee."

DEATH OF VERY REV. DR. O'MEARA.

News comes of the death of the Very Rev. Dr. O'Meara, P.P. of Roscrea, after a brief illness. Dr. O'Meara had been in failing health for some time, but the announcement of his death came as a shock to the diocese of Killaloe, for on the last Sunday of January he assisted the Right Rev. Dr. McRedmond at the ceremony of blessing a bell for the Church of St. Mary's of the Rosary, which his own generosity had been instrumental in procuring, and on that occasion he wore the appearance of strong and vigorous health. Dr. O'Meara was only 57 years of age at the time of his death and was universally esteemed.

THE DANGER OF SECRET SOCIETIES.

Secret societies have ever been denounced by the Catholic Church for their baneful influences, and the following incident is a striking proof of the evil effects that germinate in these hidden organizations.

Robert Bliou, of Buncrana, County Donegal, was killed by his son Charles, and the inquest revealed the fact that a number of Ribbonmen had visited the house of deceased twelve months ago, because the daughter had supplanted the

daughter of a Ribbonman in the past of workmistress in the National school. The raiders were very violent, nearly killing Bliou and frightening the boy Charles so much that shortly afterwards he became insane. Laboring under the hallucination that his father was a Ribbonman, the unfortunate boy took his life, and wounded his mother brother, and cousin. Great excitement prevails in the district over the occurrence, and the pastor of the village has strongly denounced Ribbonism, instancing it in this case as the cause of the murder of Bliou.

TWO SAD FATALITIES.

An old man, aged 75, was the victim of a horrible fatality, at Ballydoon, about five miles from Wexford. He was a widower, named John Barlow, and for some time had lived alone. While in a fit he fell on the open fire, and nobody being aware of his awful position, he was being slowly burned to death, until the arrival of a neighbor rescued him, but not in time to save his life. The workhouse van was sent for to remove the sufferer to the infirmary of that institution, but the man strongly protested against quitting his own little home, and expired in the uncomfortable conveyance that was carrying him to the workhouse. The jury at the inquest condemned the Workhouse Board of Guardians for their negligence in not providing a suitable ambulance to be used for the removal of workhouse patients.

Another death by burning occurred in a limekiln near Enniscorthy. It appears that three men, named Bolger, Jordan and Connor, had been in the habit for some time of sleeping at the side of the limekiln in Mill Park road, and on the morning of the accident Bolger awoke at 4 o'clock and was horrified to see Jordan's body in the kiln. He went to release him but found him dead, with face and limbs horribly burned and his clothes slowly burning around him. Bolger was at first detained by the police on suspicion, but the inquest proved the death an accidental one, and in the evidence the fact came out that this was the third death which had occurred in the kiln under similar circumstances, for it has been a refuge for some time for homeless wanderers.

DISTRESS IN THE WEST.

A distressing state of affairs exists in the West of Ireland, where the condition of the poor is such that immediate relief is required to ward off a threatened famine. The Belmullet Union is almost bankrupt, and the urgent claims of the distressed are becoming more frequent. Government aid has been asked, but so far is not forthcoming. The rates are nearly 10s. in the £1 and the Guardians at their last meeting threatened to resign in a body if the Government did not soon offer relief.

THE IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS.

There is a rumor that the Government will again take up the question of amnesty to the Irish prisoners. The Dublin Freeman refers to the matter in a recent issue as follows:—

"Mathew Kinsella, at present confined in Mountjoy Prison under a twenty years sentence in connection with the fatal occurrence in Tighes street in '82, will be liberated in the ordinary course about the 5th or 6th of April, and it is said the Government intend at the same time to take into consideration the cases of Fitzharris, Joe Mullet, and L. Hanlon, whose sentences would come up for consideration under ordinary circumstances twelve months hence. Fitzharris had been in very weak health for some time past, and his release is merely a question of physical condition. Fitzharris has been several times in such a condition that the last religious rites were afforded him, and his friends communicated with, and this has created a feeling that his release is not far distant."

St. Mary's Parish.

At the monthly meeting of the Holy Name Society of St. Mary's parish, held last week, Mr. Thomas Jones presiding, a resolution of condolence was passed on Mrs. T. McAniff on the death of her beloved husband, a member of the organization.

Immaculate Conception Parish

Rev. Father Murphy, S.J., of the "Sault," held what proved to be a most successful retreat in the Immaculate Conception Church. It was opened on Sunday, March 21, and was brought to a close last Sunday, by a sermon and Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The music was very well rendered by the Ladies' choir. The "Ecc. Panis," by Miss Moncel and Mrs. Vallade, and the solos by Mrs. Morley and Miss Jones, were perfect.

We have received an invaluable little book entitled, "Vocations Explained," from the enterprising publishers, Benziger Brothers, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago. It is an abridgement of "Questions on Vocations," by a Vincentian Father, and for the price, ten cents, is admirably printed and strongly bound. It should have a place in every Catholic home.

Rev. Father Anderson, C.S.S.R., who has been stationed at St. Patrick's Church Quebec, for the past six years, has, through failing health, been obliged to give up his labors for a time, and has gone to a home of the Redemptorist Order in Boston.

ENGLISH LETTER

The Patriotic Speech of Mr. John Dillon, M.P., at the St. Patrick's Day Banquet

FAILURE OF THE CONFERENCE. IRISH MEMBERS ON THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS QUESTION.

Dilemma of the Landlords. The Cremation Fad. Catholic Enterprise in Social Work in Liverpool.

The annual dinner of the Irish National Party took place as usual on St. Patrick's Day, in London, and notwithstanding the fact that it was held in the King's Hall of the Holborn Restaurant, one of the largest in the city, the attendance was so large that there was great difficulty in accommodating the guests.

Mr. John Dillon, M.P., presided, and in proposing the toast of "Ireland a Nation," said: "I venture to say that never in the palmiest days of the history of the National movement in this city have there assembled so representative, so numerous, so magnificent a gathering of Irish women and Irishmen to celebrate St. Patrick's Night (cheers). But what has happened in Ireland itself to bid us to be of good cheer? We are manifestly, we are irresistibly, being borne along the currents of popular opinion in Ireland towards the reunion of the Irish forces (cheers). I don't care to mention names, but I cannot refrain from saying that I think at every gathering of Irishmen and Irishwomen it would be only graceful to express our appreciation of the exertions of Mr. Harrington (loud cheers) to bring about peace and union, on which the future depends, regardless of men, and thinking only of principles (renewed cheers). I myself have noticed—and I am in a good position to observe—that the bitterness is passing away. I notice that amongst the people of Ireland there is growing every day more and more rapidly the conviction that no personal considerations as to the position of this man or that man ought to be allowed or can be allowed to interfere with the good of the nation or the success of the cause (applause); and I am convinced that from this day forth, and indeed for some time past, every man will be judged in Ireland, mainly if not entirely, by the services which he renders and the attitude which he takes towards those proposals for the union and peace on which the future safety of the Irish cause rests, and on the success of which depends, in my judgment, absolutely the success of that cause which is dear to us all and the future of the nation of which we are proud to form a part (applause)."

After the reading of a letter from Cardinal Vaughan, Mr. Justin McCarthy, in response to the toast of the "Irish Party," delivered an able speech. Hon. Edward Blake and Mr. T. P. O'Connor and others also delivered spirited speeches, in which there was an earnest expression of hope that unity would soon prevail in the ranks of the Irish Party. One of the most successful banquets held by the Nationalists was then brought to a close by the gathering singing "God Save Ireland."

CONFERENCES OF IRISH MEMBERS.

The adjourned meeting in connection with the Conferences of Irish members, in order to reach some decisive method of dealing with the question of the Financial Relations Commission, was in no way more successful than the previous gathering.

The following resolution, which was proposed by Mr. Clancy, was the subject of much discussion:—"That the findings of the Royal Commission as to the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland disclose a disproportion between the taxation of Ireland and its taxable capacity as compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, which deserves the immediate attention of Parliament."

Colonel Sanderson, who occupied the chair, declared that from inquiries he had made he felt sure that the resolution, as submitted by Mr. Clancy, was the high water mark of what would commend itself to his Unionist friends. That being so, and there being apparently no possibility of their coming to an amicable and common understanding he proposed to leave the chair and adjourn the meeting.

After some further discussion in which Messrs. Dillon, Healy and Clancy took part, the meeting adjourned without having reached any satisfactory conclusion. Mr. John E. Redmond was unable to be present at the meeting, owing to business in Wexford. There seems to be only one hope now, and that is in the direction of the Irish members making a determined struggle when the debate takes place on the motion of the Hon. Edward Blake. That Col. Sanderson will not be enthusiastic in this more seems a foregone conclusion judging by the tenor of his remarks at this meeting. (Concluded on fifth page)