

IRISH NEWS.

FROM OUR IRISH EXCHANGES.

MR. OWEN LEWIS AND HIS CONSTITUENTS.

On the 1st inst. Mr. Owen Lewis delivered an account of his stewardship to his constituents at Carlow, from which I must trust to your kindness, Mr. Editor, to find room in your columns for the subjoined report:—"I have come," he said, "to pay you my annual visit, and to tell you what I think of the questions of the day. I have been five years your representative, and have hitherto always considered that my political action met your approval. During the last twelve months, however, sundry expressions of discontent have reached me, and I am now here to defend my policy and answer objections. If there is anyone in Carlow who honestly disapproves of anything I have done, now is the time for him to come forward and say what he has to say. There is not a speech which I have made, or a vote which I have given, or a letter which I have written, during the last five years of which I am ashamed, or which I would hesitate to repeat under similar circumstances. I have nothing to apologize for and nothing to retract. Let this be well understood. If my conduct no longer meets with your approval, the dissolution of Parliament is not far off, and within a year, at latest, you will have the opportunity of choosing another representative. I value the honor of representing your town in the Imperial Parliament highly, but still more highly do I prize honesty and freedom of action, and I would never desire to sit in the House of Commons unless I could fearlessly vote as I thought right on the questions of the day. Now, if there has been any change in the front it has not been on my side. When I sought your suffrages in 1874 it was to co-operate with the Home Rule party, on English and Imperial ones I was to vote as I thought right. If anyone questions this fact, he has only to refer to my election addresses and election speeches of January 1874. As I said before, if my views are no longer in harmony with yours, a candidate who will represent you more faithfully. Having said this much, I shall now proceed to review the course of events during the past year at home and abroad. First, as regards Ireland and our own Irish questions. You have all heard a great deal about Home Rule discussions, and especially within the last two months. Now, I have all along declined to enter into these questions, which are to my mind exclusively personal, very petty, and wholly irrelevant to the purpose for which the Home Rule party was established. There will always be differences of opinion amongst a body of sixty Irish members as to questions which do not directly touch Irish interests, and even as to how unimportant Irish interests can best be promoted. Certainly the Union was repealed to-morrow, it is difficult to suppose that all the members of an Irish Parliament would take the same view of every imaginable question. I will not be drawn into a discussion of these questions further than to say that I entirely agree with the opinions expressed and the policy pursued by Mr. Butt. It was Mr. Butt, the greatest of living Irishmen, who at a time of unexampled despondency and national depression, when the highest ambition of an Irish representative was to distinguish himself as the obsequious and expectant follower of an English Whig Minister, when the country had ceased to believe in Parliamentary honesty or political virtue, it was Mr. Butt, I say, who succeeded in arousing it from its fatal lethargy, and forming for the first time a party independent of Whigs as well as of Tories, united on all Irish questions, and knowing no interests save those of Ireland. Under his guidance this party has now been five years in existence, and has certainly done everything that could have been expected of it. The realization of its whole programme is only a matter of time. Last Session the urgent question of Intermediate Education, which had been constantly debated since 1874, was successfully and happily solved. No one, I think, can refuse his thanks to the Government which introduced the Bill, or fail to realize how much Ireland is indebted for its successful passing to Mr. Butt, who watched its every stage and every detail with such ceaseless vigilance, and to whose personal exertions and influence the conception of the measure is generally believed to be due. If the Home Rule party had never achieved anything else during the present Session, this coming Session there is every prospect of the University question also being solved, and that in a way satisfactory to the Catholic instincts of Ireland. The present time is peculiarly favorable for such an attempt being made. The Government is almost pledged to introduce a University Bill; it is at all times ready to accept, it would naturally receive the support of the entire Home Rule party, which would more than compensate for the threatened defection of twenty or thirty Ulster members. Although heartily disliking the idea of anything in the shape of a Catholic University, I believe that many of the English Liberals would hesitate to oppose; in fact, the opposition would be more noisy than formidable. On the other hand, if the present opportunity be lost, it may be many years before another presents itself. If the Liberal party were in power it would be very difficult for them, pledged as they are to secular education in its primary, intermediate and university stages, to introduce a measure which would be satisfactory to Irish Catholics, and still more difficult to carry it, as such would be strongly opposed by a formidable section of their own body, and doubtless by the entire phalanx of a Conservative opposition. The present juncture is, therefore, in my opinion, as favorable a one as is ever likely to arise for dealing successfully with a great and important question, one of urgent and pressing moment to the Catholic youth of this country, and which three previous Ministries have vainly tried to settle. The Sunday Closing Bill, after most active and resolute course of opposition, was carried and now, I am happy to say, in full working order amongst you. In former days, as you are aware, I was not in favor of the measure; but time and study of the question convinced me of its necessity, and I gave it my hearty support during the whole of its stages."

His allusions to Pius IX. and Cardinal Cullen. At a later portion of his address the Member for Carlow said:—"Death has been busy and relentless, too, in Irish ranks of the Episcopate. In Cardinal Cullen the Church has lost her brightest ornament and one of the greatest prelates and ablest theologians she ever produced. I can speak with personal feelings of regret for that good and great prince of the Church, for he was one of my best and truest friends, and to him I more or less directly owe the honor of being your representative. He took a peculiar interest in my candidature, and, as you are

aware, introduced and recommended me to your late pastor, Father Maler. I may perhaps add that my course of political action always met with his approval. But we had even a greater loss to mourn in that of our late Holy Father Pius IX., of ever glorious memory. Much as that holy Pontiff was loved and venerated in every clime throughout the world, to none is his memory more dear than to his faithful loving children in the Island of Saints. When the legions of hell rose up against him and strove to hurl him from his throne, Irishmen came forward in his defence and proved their love by more than words. Long indeed will it be before the memory of the Martyr Pontiff is forgotten in Ireland."

His reference to General Grant.

"Turning to a very different character," said Mr. Owen Lewis, "we have this year been honored with a visit from General Grant. In my opinion the people of Carlow behaved with dignity and self-respect in refusing to give any public recognition to a man who, when in power, had done his best to stir up wanton and unprovoked war of extermination against Catholicity in America. I could as easily understand Prince Bismarck being welcomed as a visitor on Irish soil."

As to the last Fenian prisoner.

Mr. Lewis observed:—"All the political prisoners have now been released, save one, and he, I hope, will soon cease to prove the exception. Of those who have always taken so warm an interest in the fate of these unhappy men as the people of Carlow, it must be a cause of no common satisfaction to feel that they are at length free."

The Premier's Eastern Policy.

"For my own part," said the Member for Carlow, "I have voted steadily in favor of the Eastern policy of Lord Beaconsfield without caring the slightest degree what might be the result to myself. Moreover, I believe that a member is responsible for the votes which he thinks right to give in Parliament to his constituents."

DUBLIN.

An order-in-council was issued, providing that every local authority in Ireland shall forthwith institute a register of the cow keepers' dairymen, and the local authority is vested with the powers of inspecting the premises used for the purposes aforesaid, and of making the regulations for the health of the cattle, the cleanliness of the vessels, and the condition of the milk from infection and contamination. A meeting of the Irish Home Rule M. P.'s was held on Feb. 11th, in Dublin. There were fifteen members of the party present, and letters of apology were read from seven others who were obliged to be absent themselves from various causes. Major Nolan and Mr. Richard Power were re-appointed whips. A vote of condolence to the family of Mr. McCarthy Downing was passed. One of the chief features of the meeting was the absence of all the members of the "active party."

Dr. W. Neilson, who in Ireland was issued on Feb. 8th, it states that deposits and cash balances in Joint Stock Banks show a falling off, at the 31st December last, of a million and a half, as compared with the amount at the end of 1877. There had been a falling off of six millions in 1863, when the falling off was nearly as much, and when concurrently the increase in number of persons receiving relief was about seven thousand—an increase closely similar to that of last year. The Trusts of the Bank show a decrease of six thousand on a total of nearly two millions and a quarter. The increase in savings banks deposits was £37,000—a much-reduced increase, however, from former years, the increase in 1877 having been upwards of £200,000. There has also been a decrease of £74,000 in investments in Government and India stock. Dr. Haughey says the increased pressure on the poor is sufficient to account for the falling off in bank deposits. The Irish Banks seem to retain fully the public confidence.

It is now stated that there is no truth whatever in the statement that the Emperor of Austria will not visit Ireland this season. The ladies and gentlemen who are to accompany her have been selected; and recently, in London, Mr. Jacques Shavell purchased two high-class hunters for £550 especially for her Majesty's use. Mr. Fletcher Baker, a vessel long known to the Dublin public, expired on Feb. 11th, in Douglas, Isle of Man. It appears from the returns just issued of the emigration at Liverpool during January, that the figures of that month were 26 in excess of those for December, and 563 over January last. During January 66 vessels, with 2,462 passengers on board, sailed from the Mersey, of which 1,436 were English, 247 Irish, 46 Scotch, 550 foreigners, and 183 whose nationalities were not known. No fewer than 1,986 of the number went to the United States, 341 to British North America, 23 to Australia, 26 to South America, 91 to the East Indies, 5 to the West Indies, 4 to China, and 34 to the West coast of Africa.

CORK.

At Mallow Criminal Sessions, on February 11th, a man named John Murphy was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude for placing a rail on the track of the Great Southern and Western Railway. The Spring Assizes will be opened for the county of Cork on March 19th and for the city on March 22nd. The Judges are Justices Fitzgerald and Lawson. A very elegant new convent and schools, to be conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, were opened at Banteavon on February 9th, with much ceremony and rejoicing. The venerated Bishop of Cloyne presided at the Mass, and his Grace the Archbishop of Cashel preached an appropriate sermon after the first Gospel. Numerous clergymen from the surrounding parishes were present within the sanctuary, and the beautiful parish church, erected by the late Canon Buckley, was filled to its utmost capacity. The Archbishop's former parishioners, who had once again their beloved pastor, and the occasion had much pleasurable excitement in the locality. The sermon was listened to with the greatest possible attention, and was most satisfactory also in its financial results. His Grace appeared to be in the enjoyment of perfect health.

The British Medical Journal, in an account of the proceedings at the close of the Winter session of the Army Medical School at Netley, says: "Professor Madson read out the list of names of the gentlemen who had passed the final examination in their order of merit, and then announced the names of the winners of the Herbert prize and of the Martin and Parkes medals. Mr. T. H. Sweeney, who had been situated in Dublin, took both the Herbert prize and the Parkes medal; while Dr. D. F. Barry, who had received his professional education at the Queen's College, Cork, carried off the Martin and Parkes medals. Surgeon Major Fayer handed the appropriate remarks." The corporation of Cork have passed unanimously a petition in favor of the bill for closing public-houses at an early hour on Saturday. The collier brig "Shields," belonging to Mr. Robert Sutton, Queenstown, was run down in the channel Feb. 12th by the steamer "C. Anderson," carrying with her four men, including the Captain,

John Twohig and the mate, James Barry. The captain was married, and leaves a wife and family. The mate was also married. Thomas Kidney and Michael Flynn, able seamen, also lost their lives. The names of the two survivors are Thomas Regan and John Sullivan.

At the battle of Chillianwallah, with the Zulus, in which the 24th suffered very severely, two Corkmen, Captains Lee and Travers, who belonged to the Regiment, were killed. A tablet to the latter has been erected in the Protestant Cathedral of Cork.

On Feb. 13th, at Rathmore, Kinsale, the tenants of Mr. Marmaduke C. Cramer, about forty in number, together with thirty of the servants and laborers in his employment, in all over 200 persons, assembled on the cross-road leading to Mr. Cramer's residence, for the purpose of evincing their gratitude to him for his recent unexampled generosity in allowing the tenants a half year's rent. Six tar barrels were placed on the road, and set fire to at about five o'clock in the evening. After hearty cheers for Mr. Cramer, the people proceeded along the avenue. At the house the crowd rent the air with cheers for Mr. Cramer and his lady. Mr. and Mrs. Cramer, on coming out, were heartily cheered. They shook hands with each and every one of the tenants, and thanked the crowd for the extreme kindness shown to them and their family. The crowd then returned to the spot from which it originally started, where dancing commenced, and was kept up for some time, after which the people quietly dispersed to their homes.

KILKENNY.

Alkerman McCarthy, late ex-Mayor of Kilkenny, died at his residence, Barrack street, on Feb. 13th. He had been ailing for some months, and during his illness was not very able to attend to his duties. He was a thoroughly honest, upright man, and in politics he was a staunch Home Ruler.

The death is announced of Rev. James Bray, P. P. Ballacorney, which event took place at Castlecomer Feb. 9th. The rev. gentleman arrived at Dr. O'Hanlon's residence that he had to go to bed in his master's house. He gradually sank, and on the above day he died. The deceased priest was about sixty years of age. On Feb. 8th, Arthur MacMahon, Esq., of Davitt House, was sworn in as High Sheriff of the county of Wexford.

The Irish Times of February 12 says: "Owing to last week's excessively heavy and continuous rains, all farm labor has been stayed. The lowlands in the neighborhood of Ennisceorthy have been submerged. The valley which embanks the River Slaney for nearly twenty miles is now a gigantic lake between Ennisceorthy and Wexford. Much damage has been done to both grain and live stock."

On Feb. 11th a woman named Mary Hawkins was found dead in her bed at Wexford. It is supposed that the woman was murdered, as some of her ribs were broken. The deceased kept a lodging-house, which was frequented by the tramp class, at a place called Rathmore, near Clonroche. She was a widow and lived by herself. Mr. W. M. Kirke, the Park, George, having inquired into the state and circumstances of the tenants of his estate in the Queen's County, after the trying season just past, and having received a not very favorable account respecting the circumstances of some of them, he forwarded a large sum of money, to be given to those who were in need of it.

GALWAY.

Captain O'Hara, D. L. Local Government Auditor, has been sworn in High Sheriff for the county Galway, before Mr. Gilligan, Commissioner of Affidavits, and Mr. John Redington was sworn in as sub-sheriff.

The coming of age of Sir John Charles Burke, of Marble Hill, Galway, son of the late Sir Thomas Burke, M. P., was celebrated on February 7th with great rejoicing. At Ballinakill there was a soiree, at which Sir John C. Burke and his brother, George Morris, M. P., the popular agent of the estates, and many other gentlemen, were present. Mr. W. M. Kirke, of Clifton Castle, recently received from a gentleman the possession of a large townland. On being acknowledged by the tenants as their landlord, Mr. Kirke reduced the rents 20 per cent. The reduction of rent and the landlord's expressed wish to satisfy his tenants encouraged some of them to enlarge their holdings.

BELFAST.

The Belfast Relief Committee are vigorously prosecuting their charitable operations, and are giving employment to increased numbers of operatives. The public have supported them right nobly, but they are still in great want of funds, as the destitution which exists in Belfast is much in excess of what they first imagined.

A successful meeting was held on February 10th, in St. Mary's Hall, Belfast, under the auspices of the Ulster Home Government Association. Mr. Biggar, M. P., occupied the chair, and the attendance was large, enthusiastic and respectable. The body of the hall was well filled, and the platform was crowded with the supporters and well-wishers of the Irish National movement. Resolutions of grave import were proposed for the acceptance of the meeting, and were adopted with unbounded applause.

WICKLOW.

On Feb. 12th, at the Belfast Police Court, Joseph Wilson, who had been for a long time in the employment of the Poor-Law Guardians as a rate collector, was put forward charged with having embezzled several hundred pounds, the property of the Guardians. The prisoner had absconded in the month of October, 1874, carrying with him the ratebooks. The prisoner, who is a negro, was for some years a well-known character in Belfast. Mr. R. McHenry, Clerk of the Court, then read the deposition made by Mr. W. F. Boyce, clerk of the Union, on the 15th Oct., 1874, in which it was stated that he had good reason to believe that Joseph Wilson had embezzled at least £300, the property of the Guardians. Detective Constable Samuel Canning, in reply to Mr. Ward, stated that he was a member of the Irish Constabulary stationed in Liverpool. He arrested the prisoner in that city on the 10th. He had been looking out for him during the past four years. The prisoner was remanded.

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