

Notes of Irish News.

FROM OUR EXCHANGES.

A MANIFESTO.—A manifesto has recently been issued "To all Irish Nationalists," signed by the members of the Provisional Directory of the United Irish League; that is, to say by Michael Davitt, James J. O'Kelly, William O'Brien, P. A. McHugh, B. E. Shaviland Burke, and John McInerney. It will be remembered that two weeks ago we published an article in which we asked if the new movement suggested by Sir Thomas Esmond meant the formation of a new party or not. It would seem that this action on the part of Sir Thomas, in connection with the County Councils, gave birth to the manifesto now before us. While offering no opinion as to the qualifications of Sir Thomas for a leadership, the United Irish League protests against the donation of the Councils and the settling of Irish questions by a body, as proposed that would not be responsible to the people; and against the proposers of such a movement attempting to take into their own hands the whole direction of the Parliamentary Party.

As an evidence of the great hostility existing between sections of the Irish Party, we quote the concluding passages of the manifesto, which run thus:

"It is not necessary to point out that the practical effect of the proposed scheme would be to disorganize the popular Councils of Munster and Connaught almost entirely, and to leave the fate of Parliamentary agitation at the mercy of the small number of members who could conveniently attend meetings in Dublin, while under the organization of the United Irish League, each of the constituencies upon which it is proposed to impose members from Dublin is supreme within its own boundaries; and that, instead of imposing on the Bishops and clergy the delicate and invidious duty of selecting a small representation from their own body, the organization of the League secures to every clergyman in his own county the fullest measure of influence in the popular Councils. It would be easy to analyse in detail the numerous absurdities and dangers to popular liberty involved in Sir Thomas Esmond's proposal; but we are satisfied that a timely word of warning to the Nationalist Councils will be sufficient to put them on their guard against a scheme which, whatever may be the intentions of its promoters, could only result in precipitating the country into another and more desperate era of dissensions and jealousies, and, finally, discrediting Parliamentary agitation as a means for the redress of Irish grievances.

"The United Irish League will welcome every proposal to broaden, if possible, the democratic basis of its organization, without the smallest reference to personal or sectional pretensions of any kind, and with the sole object of making Irish Nationality again an effective political force; and we appeal to our fellow-countrymen to make it clear that the only method of securing substantial National, and hereafter, Parliamentary Unity, is by strengthening and extending the organization which will place it in the power of the people at the General Election to say with the fullest freedom whether they desire the abolition of English rule and of landlordism, and to elect a body of Nationalists, whoever they may be, to whom the destinies of Irish Nationality can safely be confided."

IRISH LANGUAGE.—Before the members of the Gaelic League, in Belfast, Mr. Douglas Hyde, LL.D., T. C. D., delivered a most highly instructive lecture upon the "Educational Influences of the Irish Language." As such a large number of our readers are interested in the revival of the Celtic literature and of the old language of Ireland, we feel that considerable space may be profitably accorded Dr. Hyde's splendid address. Passing over the introduction, which was materially of a local interest more than a general one, we find the talented advocate of the Irish tongue thus expressing himself:

"A national movement in the non-contentious sense of the word the Gaelic League undoubtedly was, but it was also a great educational body and what the educational aspects of it were he would like to devote their attention that right. He would refer to three aspects of the case—first, to their primary education and what the Gaelic League was doing to improve that education; secondly, to the education received in their class schools and colleges; and thirdly, he found it necessary to refute a recent attack made on them and their work by one of the largest of their seats of learning—Trinity College, Dublin. When the Gaelic League, four or five years ago, found the people of Ireland, the English-speaking people of Ireland—that was two-thirds of its population—plunged in the deepest, blackest and grossest ignorance of their own past, of their own history and of their own language, the Gaelic League instantly set to work to produce a revival. Not only were the people ignorant of the language that their fathers and grandfathers spoke before them for countless ages; they were ignorant of their own class history, in the history of their race, of their country, and their people. The Irish were not negroes or Indians; they were people with a past, and had a great past behind them. They could boast of the proudest race heritage in Europe; they came from a stock to which almost every country in Europe owed, and admitted that they owed, a debt of gratitude. They were the descendants of a people who during the barbarity and horror of the dark ages held alive single-handed and alone, knowledge and learning. He would ask, then, was it good for the Irish to forget their ancient honor, their own great achievements in the past? Was

it good to know nothing or remember nothing of the racial or historical past they had behind them? He would tell them it was not good for them. There was not a man within the four seas of Ireland who would say that they should confine their education to events of the past 250 years. The Gaelic League had endeavored to bring to the English-speaking people of Ireland a self-respect by teaching them the history of their own past. They had endeavored to teach the Irish people that they were not a race of slaves, of nobodies or savages. They were endeavoring to teach them that they had behind them a great and noble past. Wherever the Gaelic League had a footing it had endeavored to teach these things. It not only developed a sense of history but also a sense of the moral character of the people whom it taught. That was the first educational influence of the Gaelic League—**to teach Irishmen their own great traditions and to live up to these traditions.**"

CATHOLIC EDUCATION.—The interesting ceremony performed by His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese on Friday, when the memorial stone of the new schools of St. Malachy was laid, marks another distinct advance along the path of Catholic education in Belfast, says the "Irish News," of that city. Second only to the desire of providing worthy temples for the celebration of the mysteries of our holy religion has been the anxiety of the reverend Bishops of the Diocese to secure commodious, healthy, and properly equipped schools for the education of the Catholic children of the city. How successful those efforts have been the many splendid Catholic schools in our midst fully testify. His Lordship in addressing the large congregation said in part:

"I am glad to see here present so many parents of the children for whose use and benefit these schools are being erected. Your presence shows the deep interest you take in the great work of Catholic education. Your Christian instincts tell you that after the church, the Catholic school is the most important place in a parish or district. It is, as it were, the conservatory of faith and morals, the training ground for the future champions of religion. Without good schools—good Catholic schools and good Catholic teachers—very little can be done for the spiritual welfare of the rising generation; and hence the education of the people has been, from the earliest times the chief object of the Church's care. You all know that the work of education cannot be satisfactorily carried on unless both teachers and taught are provided with suitable school accommodation and equipment."

A NATIONAL HALL.—Last week a new National hall and club was opened in Berry Street, Belfast, under the most happy circumstances. That public spirit is not only appreciated but unselfishly practised is quite evident from the tone of the following speeches. Mr. Joseph Devlin presided and in opening the proceedings, he said:

"He took that, the first opportunity which presented itself, to congratulate all concerned—the active, fighting Nationalists of Belfast and the loyal men, who were not afraid to come forward and give their financial aid to raise that great institution in the city, which would be the centre of National thought and a place for the promulgation of intellectual culture. For two years in Belfast they had keenly felt the necessity for such a hall and building as the one they were in that night. It was a stain upon their national character that in a city with a great and growing Nationalist population such as Belfast had they were devoid of a building and an institution such as that, which was an absolute corollary and necessity for real and genuine political effort, and he was glad to say that when the United Irish League came into existence, with greater effort for political endeavor here, as elsewhere, the men who not only saw danger in any crisis in the history of politics in Ireland were

not going to be left without a place of meeting and social centre, and by the efforts of the working men and their more wealthy supporters they were proud to meet in that hall that night. This was perhaps a fitting and proper occasion for him to refer to the purpose for which the hall and club had been established. In the first place he had the authority of the committee to announce that as soon as the hall was completed they would once more launch the Literary Society in Belfast under the old name of the Belfast Young Ireland Society. He thought that in view of that he could make no better announcement, or one that they would more sincerely welcome, than that Mr. M. McCartan, M.P., would once more be president of that society, as in the past. A Gaelic class would also be held one night each week, and one of the most distinguished of Gaelic scholars and a man who had done great service to the United Ireland Society—Mr. P. J. McGinley—had offered to conduct the class."

Mr. J. Dillon, M.P., who was received with prolonged applause, said: "I have come here to-night with the greatest possible pleasure, with more pleasure than I could easily express to you, to meet once more the old and faithful, tried, and true Nationalists of Belfast, and take part in the invitation which the committee of this club were kind enough to send me, in this, which I consider to be a most auspicious and happy occasion—the opening of this club to-night. When I received the invitation from the secretary and the committee of this club to come here and formally declare these premises open I felt that it was a duty, as well as a pleasure, that I should come here and share in the satisfaction and the triumph which must necessarily exist in the minds of every Nationalist in Belfast at the opening of these beautiful premises, when we reflect on all the trials and difficulties through which Nationality has passed in this city during the last two or three years. And what I have seen here to-day, when I was conducted over these premises, and what I see around me here to-night around this platform is one more proof, if proof were needed, that no power on earth can crush the National spirit of the Nationalists of Belfast. You have got here a club which, as your chairman truly said, will, I hope, for many a long year to come serve as a centre and rallying point for National action in this city, and as a meeting place where the young generations of Nationalists may assemble together to exchange views, and cultivate their intellect, and listen to true National doctrine from this platform. And you have got here a club and hall from which nobody can ever turn you out. And I venture to prophesy that in the future, in all true National movements in this city, that this club will be the centre and rallying point. Now the chairman has alluded to the fact that this club, the opening of this club and the magnificent success which attended the efforts of the committee who undertook what I must say would appear to me a most formidable task to open such large and commodious and handsome premises as these within so short a time as they have succeeded in doing.

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The Engineering Magazine reports a growing interest in the construction of a railway to cross the desert of Sahara and unite the region of Algeria and Tunis with the Lake Tchad country. There is already a railway about one hundred and fifty miles long, from the port of Sfax on the Mediterranean to Gafsa, in the interior of Tunis, where a valuable deposit of phosphate rock exists, from which over three hundred thousand tons are annually obtained. It is believed that the proposed railroad across the desert could be made at about the same satisfactory cost per mile as that portion already built, water being found at regular intervals, and the topography not greatly differing from the road now under

way. It is estimated that the entire 1,240 miles could be completed at a total cost, including rolling stock, of \$24,000,000. The construction of such a line it is thought by competent judges, would have the effect of developing materially the natural resources of the country through which it would pass.

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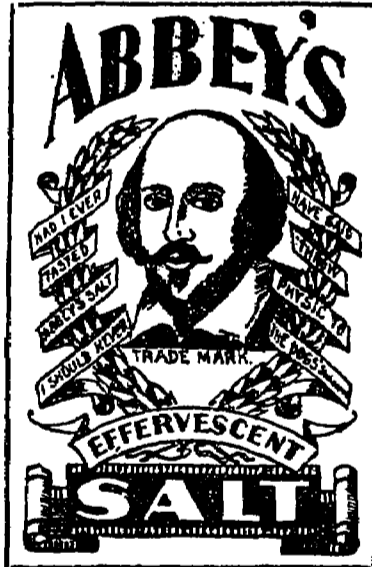
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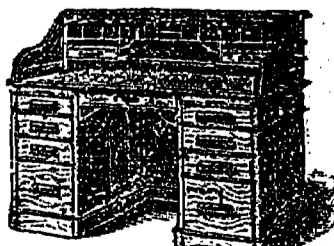
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