

A SENSIBLE LETTER ON TEMPERANCE.

"Ireland Sober is Ireland Free."

From the Naugh (Ireland) Guardian of November 11, we copy the following racy letter, written by Rev. John Gleeson, a nephew of Very Rev. Dr. Flannery, P. P. of Windsor, Ont.

Dear Sir—In a magnificent lecture delivered recently at Cork by Dr. Ireland, Archbishop of St. Paul, U. S., he used the following words:—"Establish sobriety as habitual among Irishmen, and you can trust them for anything. But until sobriety has become a habitual fact, we are losing our time in working in other directions for their welfare, temporal or spiritual. The race is passing away, weakened, enfeebled, and incapable of grasping opportunities. You are losing your time in mere talk, and giving to your enemies an excuse to show their continued scorn and continued persecution."

"The race is passing away." Are these words true? Are we enfeebled and incapable of grasping opportunities? I will not answer the question, but I have a deep conviction that Irishmen at home do not grasp opportunities like other nations. Dr. Ireland attributes our want of enterprise and energy to an enfeebled mind and poverty, caused by intemperance. He states that there are at present 19,000 public houses in Ireland—one licensed house to every 256 persons. Subtract children, women, and others who do not drink, or only rarely, and you find how small is the number of persons who support each of these houses. He also states that during the last year in Ireland, not including foreign spirits and wines, there were consumed in Ireland spirits to the value of £11,826,888—close on £12,000,000, and that this amount is an increase of £167,000 on the previous year. Can it be that the savings of the Land Court are going to buy liquor? Where, then, is our enterprise? We pour out millions each year on a luxury—in gratifying our bodies—and we complain that our enterprises need Government help, that our land needs Government money, to drain and manure. Like children, we cry out always, "Give us money." Give us money—playing the whining beggar—while the money which we acquire by our honest labor we squander in a manner which brings us no return except crime, poverty, and insanity. And yet, we are proud of our country while we remain behind other nations; and we imagine we do our duty as Irishmen when we talk party politics and pass stock resolutions. "Come weal, come weal," drink our spared coin and revile the Government, from whom we are always begging money. We should demand the money which is due to us, but not spend foolishly the money which is at our disposal. Our idea of enterprise is to start a public house, and then "pull the devil by the tail."

Dr. Ireland tells us that at the World's Fair at Chicago, Irishmen asked in anxiety, "Where is Ireland represented? What is Ireland doing? What was there? A tower some twenty or thirty feet high, built up from base to summit with whiskey bottles." The poor Irish American turned away in disgust. This state of things opens up many questions in an admirable letter on the subject, written lately by Mr. James Haugh, Neungh, the question was raised as to the number of public houses. This phase of the temperance question is disputed. Some hold that a reduction in the number of licensed houses would not lessen the quantity of drink used by the people. I have not heard the arguments in favor of that opinion. I venture to hold that the excessive number of public houses in Ireland is not only a cause of excessive drinking, but that its tendency is to sap the life of the nation. One argument in favor of a reduction is the necessity of supervision. It is impossible for the authorities to enforce the law efficiently under present circumstances. Consider public houses in country places—many of them are situated from two to four miles from a police barrack. Can we expect the constabulary to spend the greater part of Sunday watching those houses? Consider the number of public houses in towns. How can the authorities enforce the law as to prohibited hours and Sunday-closing, or prevent the sale of bad drink? It is most difficult or impossible. In my humble opinion, founded on experience, no licensed house in a country parish should be allowed, unless in close proximity to a police barrack. Again, each licensed trader has relatives and well-wishers, who are interested in supporting him, and who will invite themselves and others to his house to drink more than they might otherwise do. From an economical point of view we are told that there are two kinds of labor—productive and unproductive. Those words explain themselves. The prosperity of a country will depend on the large number of its productive workers, and the employment of its unproductive employees. The sale of drink is an unproductive occupation—at least for food. In Ireland our industries are few, our agriculture behind time, and our labor market unsatisfactory. All those are productive occupations, but our drink trade is flourishing. We have vast distilleries and breweries and nineteen thousand public houses. In all those places there are thousands of the bone and sinew of the country engaged in unproductive work. Put half of them to something else and they will help to enrich society. Where there are too many public houses drink will be sold to the intoxicated, and bad drink, to boot. A few well ordered, wealthy, and

properly supervised houses would meet the public need, and would not stoop to unworthy methods. Drunken men leaving town will call in to every public house on their way home through the country. I therefore hold the opinion that a reduction in the number of licensed houses would tend to increase sobriety amongst the people. This should be accomplished by compensation, and in the meantime our magistrates should not increase the number of licenses. It has been suggested that on a certain day all licenses should cease. Let half or less of them be renewed on payment of a fine. This sum to be increased by a Government grant, and divided amongst those whose licenses are taken away. This would mean a tax, but we are taxed for things of less importance. I wish to remind the authorities that the law of Sunday-closing is habitually and flagrantly violated, in some places within a whistle of the police barrack. The custom of Sunday drinking is a standing danger to some of our young men, who spend their spare coin each week, and a couple of hours or two of their own houses. The three mile limit is a mockery, and must have been passed by the houses of Parliament after a good dinner. Our magistrates go on, and will go on, increasing licenses, until the power is taken from them. I pray God, most sincerely, that that day is not far off! I excuse their sin as being a sin of ignorance, and not of malice, but I cannot put them past the fire of Purgatory. It is sometimes argued that you cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament. Why, then, does an Act of Parliament help people to be honest, by compelling them to pay their debts. An Act of Parliament will remove temptation, and produce natural virtue, which is the foundation of supernatural virtue, so that I can not agree with those who argue against temperance legislation.

One more point, Mr. Editor. It is argued that in England and Scotland the amount per head of the population spent on drink is greater than the amount per head of the population spent on drink in Ireland. On this point there are some things to be remembered. From an economic point of view, a man who has an income of £1,000 a year may spend £50 a year on things which he does not want, while another person, whose income is only £100 a year, cannot spend £50 a year on luxuries without becoming bankrupt. Now, England is a vastly richer country than Ireland, and, therefore, could afford to spend £20 to our 10 shillings—but does she? Certainly not. She does not spend on drink £1 to our 10 shillings. It must be also remembered that a very considerable quantity of drink is used each year in England by foreigners. The shipping of the world comes into her ports, and great numbers of travellers, tourists, and others pass through England each year, most of whom, probably, consume drink after the fashion of travellers and sailors.

However it may be with other countries, we are not to be excused if we drink in excess of our means or our morality; and we certainly exceed in this matter, if we drink to the enormous tune of twelve millions. My apology for so long a letter, Mr. Editor, is the duty of discussing a subject which is vital to the life of our nation, a subject on which different views are held even by the moral guides of the people—some of those intelligent men holding that the moral influence alone is of use without Acts of Parliament, that the reduction of public houses would be no remedy. I have heard a priest say that the giving of the pledge only demoralises people, because they break it, while the same priest in confession accepts a promise from his penitents that they will sin no more, although he knows that they may afterwards break that promise, as some persons break their pledge. If a resolution is useful in one case it might be useful in the other. Some promises build on conscience, and therefore the pledge is a moral force when it is taken sincerely and honorably, even though it is afterwards broken through human frailty. It would be desirable if those who hold those opposite views would argue their views in the press, so as to check temperance fanatics, and keep us within the limits of intellectual sobriety. I remain, yours truly, John Gleeson, P. P. Ballaghmore, Roscrea, Nov. 1899.

SEEDTIME AND HARVEST.

By the authoress of "Home Truths for Mary's Children" (Barns and Oates)

"Somebody said it, not I," that a foreigner once facetiously remarked that if an Englishman chance to find a specimen of the rare plant of humility on his native soil, he would put it in the British Museum as a curiosity. We may suppose that the speaker had never met with any of our members of the League of the Sacred Heart, for they at least profess to esteem humility as the virtue most dear to our Divine Lord. Few people seem to realize in what true humility consists, and doubtless this is the reason why that virtue is so calamitated. To many, the very word brings an idea of mean spiritiveness and cowardice. St. Theresa, in her simple, forcible language, tells us that "Humility is the truth," for it puts the creature in his right place and leaves God His glory intact. Yet even among those who profess to follow Christ and accept His teaching concerning humility, what opposition there is between theory and practice! Let us take Mrs. X. and her family as an example. She is a practical Catholic, at least, as we generally

understand the word: she attends Mass on Sundays and frequents the Sacraments several times a year. Should the conversation turn on humility, she praises this beautiful virtue, and agrees with you that all Christians ought to be humble. This being the case, you expect that she will teach her five girls the necessity of being "meek and lowly of heart." How does she set about it? By progressive lessons and practical exercises without formally laying down set principles. In her house dress is almost the sole and all-important subject of conversation; the latest novelty is purchased even when debts must be incurred to pay for it. The girls must outshine others by their toilet. Mrs. X. teaches her daughters to attach a great importance to good looks, and they are all considered handsome, with the exception of one "ugly duckling," who is made to feel her inferiority. Her beauty attracts attentions which are all the more agreeable if they come from those in a higher station of life. The girls' mental acquisitions exist chiefly in their mother's imagination, for, like most vain girls, their accomplishments are superficial; the "ugly duckling" is the only one who really finds pleasure in study. One Christmas, Gertrude came home with an unsatisfactory report and no prizes. Mrs. X. was exceedingly indignant with the teacher and instantly bought Gertrude a handsome prize as a reward for past laziness and an incentive for future industry. Nor was the child allowed to return to school where the mistress dared to speak frankly of her pupils' faults. Another time she was removed from a convent and sent to the local High School that she might meet the daughters of some fashionable neighbors. Mary, the youngest child, is now six years of age. She attends a dancing class and learns music, but is too young to receive religious instruction! She is more severely reproved for sailing a new dress than for telling a lie, and once committed the little offence of speaking to a "dirty little beggar." Fits of temper are so checked because "they spoil Mary's pretty face."

Sunday is the great exhibition day for recent acquisitions in the way of new fashions. Mrs. X. and her family go to church, conscious that their dress is faultless and serves as a standard by which to judge others. They pay more attention to their neighbors' dress than to the sermon. The whole family have neuralgia occasionally, and these attacks generally coincide with wet Sundays. Should the priest fall to pray due honor, they make God pay the costs. They go to another church, or stay at home and set up an incurable hospital for wounded feelings. The eldest daughter is engaged to a wealthy Atheist, who condescends to go to Benediction sometimes. This, together with wealth and good looks, compensates for his infidelity. Almsgiving is a duty; moreover it is respectable; so God has His penny every Sunday from each member of the family. People must be prudent and not give beyond their means; besides, the girls' hats cost sixteen shillings each, and the bill is still owing.

With such training how will Mrs. X.'s daughters grow up? Seeds of pride fostered by a mother's hand bring forth fruit in due season. Hence her children are vain and frivolous; riches and pleasures are the objects for which they live. If they persevere in the faith, it is because no strong temptation to deny it has assailed them. On the threshold of eternity, the mother may realize that evil seeds she has sown, but her repentance will not blight the harvest of pride, ambition, and worldliness. As men sow, they reap. If our children are to grow up modest and humble, they must see humility esteemed and practised at home. Parents should teach their children by word and example to give God the first place, to use money as a talent for which a strict account will be exacted, to forgive injuries and to be contented with the position in which Providence has placed them. To such parents is the Divine promise fulfilled: "Submit thyself to God, and be at peace, and thereby thou shalt have the best fruits."—English Messenger for December.

THE BEAUTIFUL DEATH OF FATHER PERRY, S. J.

The Great Astronomer Died on a Government Mission.

Percy Fitzgerald in the sixth of "More Death Jewels," which he contributes to our esteemed contemporary, the Ave Maria, describes the death of the great Jesuit astronomer, Father Perry. We append the sketch for its lesson and its comfort: Father Perry, the celebrated astronomer, gave the spectacle of an old man, manly, unaffected death, which was a holy death as well. He was a thoroughly popular figure in the notion of a Jesuit being placed at the head of a public mission by his government. Full of talent and with a great reputation among his scientific friends, he never was led away by praise or the honor of research. The sailors and officers liked him, and deeply mourned his demise. He was just after successfully completing his observations of the eclipse of 1889 when he was despatched in charge of an expedition to the French islands "De Salut," on the African coast—one of which is that Devil's Island to which the unfortunate Dreyfus was consigned. It was an unhealthy spot, full of miasma and fevers. His heart was in the duty that had been entrusted to him; and

though he caught the fever almost at once, and could scarcely totter along, he held on gallantly to the end, looking to every matter minutely until the whole was successfully accomplished. He was then carried on board to die. "All was done as he desired, and as usual he steered the boat which brought him to the ship," says one who was with him to the end. "But when he got on board he could scarcely walk. Though he looked very weak, we all thought a good night's rest would bring him great relief. I went to his cabin about 6 o'clock Monday morning, and he said he had had a dreadful night, no sleep. He then gave me instructions what to do. He gradually grew worse, and at lunch time it was considered best to dismount his instrument, get everything packed and on board, and sail on Tuesday morning. He agreed to this, and after some hours everything was safe on board. But the doctor told me that the patient was much worse, and that if he did not improve during the night he would be in very great danger."

"Father Perry had had so bad a night that the order to sail in the morning was cancelled, and the doctor agreed it would be best to summon the Abbé from the island to administer the last sacraments. After the Abbé had gone, Father Perry sent for me and told me what had been arranged. He was not at all disturbed by the serious news, but quietly returned to the cabin and arranged as well as I could for the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. When all was in readiness, he asked me to go on the lookout so as to let him know when the Abbé was coming. Soon the priest, the Abbé and two nuns accompanying the priest, the nuns brought two baskets of articles, and we arranged a nice little altar in the cabin. Father Perry had his crucifix and beads in his hands, and he explained to the Abbé that the former were specially indulgenced for the hour of death. So after giving the absolution the Abbé blessed him with it. Father Perry answered all the prayers with fervor and exactness. He received the Holy Viaticum with intense devotion, and then remained for some time in silent prayer. He made his confession of faith in French, and in the Society of Jesus. He begged pardon of all present for any faults by which he might have offended them, and the doctor in particular for any impatience during his illness. He asked my pardon especially for any unkindness to me during the years I had worked under him, and told me to ask the community at Stonyhurst to forgive his many faults. The doctor was anxious to prevent any further excitement, and cleared the cabin. "All on board were very glad to get away from the Salut Islands. Four men were down with dysentery and others were ailing slightly. So the start and the news that had gone round the ship that Father Perry was out of danger, put everyone in great spirits. I went to Father Perry when we set out, and found him very comfortable. He said he did not feel the motion of the ship at all. He remained much the same all day, and we began to be very hopeful. When Dr. McSwiny came in again, he told me Father Perry was certainly growing worse, and he feared all hope was gone. I suggested we had better tell him, but he said we would watch closely for a time first and see whether there was any change. "At 1 o'clock I thought I noticed a change, and called Dr. McSwiny. He said Father Perry was dying. He was still willing to tell him, but I resolved to do so, thinking it my duty. I took Father Perry's hand and asked him if he knew me. He looked at me and said: "Yes, of course." I went on: "You are much worse to-day; the doctor has little hope. I fear you are dying." He turned round, very calm and self-possessed, and told me to say the prayers for the dying. I had a Catholic Manual in the cabin, and I read the prayers from it. He answered them very fervently, and when they were finished he asked me to say some more. I recited the Litany for a Happy Death and the Litany of Our Lady, the Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart, and the Sonyhurst Act of Consecration. He then asked me to say the Brothers' Act of Consecration to St. Alphonsus' Later, at 2:15 I asked him if he would like to renew his vows. "Yes, yes!" Thanks!" I put the crucifix in his hands, and helped him by saying the words before him, which he repeated after me. He did this with great devotion; and when we reached the words, "ever to lead my life therein," he was much affected, and said how happy he was to die a professed member of the Society. The doctor made an injection into his arm to try to keep him alive a little longer, as the captain said that were he to die there we would have to bury him at sea. He kept repeating the holy name of Jesus and Mary, adding that of St. Ignatius—I may say that he repeated them hundreds of times during his illness. After this he became very quiet, and the doctor prepared to repeat the injection; but he noticed it and said: "No!—no more injections! Let me die making acts of love of God. I put the crucifix in his hands again, and he asked me (it was now about 3 in the morning) to repeat the prayers of the dying. This time, too, he answered in a clear, steady voice. After the prayers he held up his crucifix and made an offering of all his sufferings and of his life at the foot of the cross, resigning himself entirely to the holy will of God."

A MAGNIFICENT CHURCH.

The Roman Catholics are building in London one of the most costly and significant structures in the world. It is just east of the Victoria station, and a few minutes' walk from Westminster Abbey. Although its walls have risen to not more than two-thirds of their ultimate height, \$10,000,000 has been spent on it already, and at least as much more will be spent before it is completed. One can get some idea of its vastness from the fact that the value of the scaffolding alone with which its walls are covered, inside and out, is estimated at \$500,000. What is it to be? The centre from which the Roman Catholic Church will put forth new efforts to bring England back to the fold it left in the reign of Henry VIII. It is planned to surpass in area, in height, and above all in pomp, all other cathedrals in England. Its 60 foot nave will be half as wide again as St. Paul's, and its floor space of 17,000 square feet will be 2,000 more than that of Canterbury. On the right side of the main entrance to the cathedral will rise the great tower, or campanile, to a height of 280 feet, 80 feet higher than the cupola of St. Paul's and 95 feet higher than the fire monument of London. The entire Roman Catholic Church throughout the world, from Leo himself to the poorest charwoman in England, has been moved to take a deep and constant interest in it and to contribute money for it.—Morning Star.

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