

EX-SPEAKER PEEL.

Incidents of the Commons During His Term of Office.

FARNELL AND CHURCHILL.

On Monday Mr. Speaker Peel announced his resignation of his high office. On Tuesday the House voted him its thanks, and adopted an address, praying Her Majesty to bestow upon him "some signal mark of her favor;" in other words, the accustomed promotion to the peerage; and on Wednesday the "faithful Commons" proceeded to the election of his successor. Mr. Peel's retirement is one more reminder of how fast the Parliamentary scene is changing. Since his election eleven years ago, how many of the veterans whose names had become household words have withdrawn in one way or another from the field of Parliamentary politics? It was only last year Mr. Gladstone retired, making way for one who was all but unknown when Mr. Peel first presided over the debates of the Lower House. The rise of Randolph Churchill to the leadership of the House of Commons, and his tragic passing away, all belong to the period of Mr. Peel's Speakership. So, too, does the all but complete triumph, and the still more tragic downfall of Charles Stewart Parnell. How many of the younger men were all unknown when Mr. Peel assumed office! An entirely new grouping of English parties has arisen in these eleven years. In 1854 there were the two solid masses of the Liberals and Conservatives, and striving to hold the balance between them the solid little phalanx that stood by Parnell. Now on both sides of the House there are minor parties and groups and subdivisions of the main bodies, till the fate of Governments depends less on the voting power of any one party than on temporary alliances of the partisans of rival schools of political thought. A state of things such as that which prevails in many of the legislatures of the Continent is arising in England, and the tenure of power enjoyed by Ministers may soon be as uncertain as it is abroad. Then, too, the rules of procedure of the House have been changed. The privileges of the individual member have been curtailed, fixed rules enable the Speaker at the suggestion of even a few members to summarily bring a debate to a close and precipitate a division. The Speaker's office has thus become more important than it ever was before, the necessity of his acting in a judicial spirit is more imperative, the danger of his acting as a mere partisan is all the more serious. Hence the interest that attaches now more than ever to a change in the Speakership.

THE RETIRING SPEAKER.

Of Mr. Peel's own career it may be said that he has acted up to the high traditions of his office. At the outset he was by no means popular with those who had to bow to his decisions. On one occasion, if not more, the fierce zeal of party strife led men to charge him with partisanship. But there is no doubt that in every case he acted for what he believed to be the interest and dignity of the House as a whole. In his own personal views a Liberal Unionist, he has nevertheless held the balance even with impartial justice through angry debates that might well have tried the temper of a man of less judicial spirit. He has used with studious moderation the larger powers conferred upon him by the new rules of procedure, and he has at more than one critical moment acted with ready resource in such a way as to prevent discussion degenerating into open strife. There is no doubt that it is with sincere regret that the House of Commons parts from him this week.

On Monday the Speaker made his formal farewell address to the House in a brief and dignified speech. He assured the House that in all his acts he had thought only of its permanent interest. He had not been consciously awayed by personal or party feeling. If he had failed in any way, or if he had given offence to anyone, he trusted that it would now be forgiven and forgotten. He had to thank men of all parties for their kindly forbearance, their unwavering help. He trusted that, whatever might be the changes in the formal rules of the House, its unwritten traditions, its great law of mutual courtesy, would never fall into desuetude. "I wish to speak," he said, "not with the brief remnant of authority left to me, with the sands of my official life rapidly running out. I would rather speak as a member of thirty years' experience in this House speaking to his brother members and comrades, if I may term them so. I would fain hope that by the co-operation of all its members this House may continue to be the pattern and the model of foreign nations and of those great peoples who have left our shores, and have carried our blood, our race, our language, our institutions, and our habits of thought to the uttermost parts of the earth. I would fain indulge in the belief and in the hope, and, as I speak, with the traditions of the House and its glorious memories crowding upon me, that hope and the belief become more emphasized—though with that hope and belief I would couple the earnest but humble prayer—that this House may have centuries of honour, of dignity, of usefulness before it, and that it may continue to hold not a prominent only, but the first and foremost position among the legislative assemblies of the world." These eloquent words were addressed to a fitting audience. Not since the day when Mr. Gladstone introduced his Home Rule Bill were the House and its galleries so well filled, and as soon as the cheers that greeted the oration had subsided, Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Balfour rose to announce that they would next day move that the thanks of the House should be given to the Speaker, and both took advantage of the occasion to express at once the general regret that failing health should be the reason for Mr. Peel's retirement.

One of the largest parishes of Catholics in the country must be the Holy Family of Chicago, which is served by the Jesuits. The New World of that city asserts that within its limits resides a Catholic population that must count up fully 25,000 souls. "This means," adds our contemporary, "6000 families, and the responsibilities of the good priests can well be imagined. The church has 23 priests attending these 25,000 people, and 10 of them are exclusively engaged in active work among the people." Some idea of the work that devolves upon the priests of this church may be estimated from the fact that during the past year nearly 1200 baptisms took place in the parish, while the marriages numbered 325, and confessions that were heard counted up nearly 290,000.

The diocese of Wheeling suffered a grievous loss by the death last week of the venerable Father Parke, who held the post of vicar-general in that episcopate, and in past years has acted as the administrator of the diocese. Monsignor Parke was well advanced in years, which fact makes the nature of his death—he was killed by the collapse of a building in Wheeling which he had entered—all the more to be regretted. Deeply mourned as he is by all the priests of the Wheeling diocese, his loss will be the most acutely felt at the Academy of the Visitation, Mount de Obantal, just outside the episcopal city, with which institution he had long been connected as its chaplain.

LEO XIII. TO HUNGARY.

A Letter of Sympathy with the Catholic Party.

A GOOD WORD FOR THE CATHOLIC PRESS.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. has addressed a letter, of which the following is a translation, to Count Ferdinand Zichy, who, with Count Esterhazy, is leader of the new Catholic People's Party in Hungary:—

DEAR SON AND MOST NOBLE LORD—You and the Hungarian people know with what interest and solicitude We have observed all that has taken place lately in Hungary in reference to the cause of religion. We regret deeply that Catholicity, which has flourished amongst you since the days of St. Stephen, should be attacked, and with such a cunning as exposes it to grave danger. This is why that, according to the duty of Our Apostolic charge, and urged on by the special affection which We have for you, We have taken care to excite the people of Hungary to take up the defence of the Catholic religion. We experience to-day a lively satisfaction at recognising publicly the large numbers who have courageously responded to our appeals. We have been particularly pleased to learn that a new Catholic Party has been constituted to defend the rights of the Church and the spirit of religion in Hungary in Parliament.

We are extremely glad that the direction of this Association has been confided to you, dear son, to you and to the Most Noble Count Nicholas Maurice Esterhazy. We have full confidence that under your direction the hopes that the active devotion of the Catholics inspires Us with will be realised. The respectful and affectionate letter that you have addressed to Us gives the best testimony of the generous feelings with which you are animated in your noble enterprise.

We fully approve of the foundation announced by you of new journal, entitled *Fejermegyei Naplo*, to support Catholic interests; since you and your fellow-workers engage yourselves to never set aside the advice and authority of the Bishops, and to faithfully observe the recommendations that they have always given to journalists—that is, to observe charity and moderation of language, respect for constituted authority complete agreement with the episcopacy, and especially with the Apostolic See.

Follow then, courageously the suggestions with which love of country and the grandeur of the religion of your fathers inspire you!

In order that your enterprise may prosper under the protection of the Immaculate Virgin, Patroness of Hungary, We give you and the Count Esterhazy most affectionately, as well as all your associates, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, near St. Peter's, 6th March, 1895.

LEO XIII.

The Catholic educational movement has asserted itself anew down in Louisiana, where it is now announced that a Catholic winter school, modelled on the plan of the Plattsburg and Madison schools, will be held next spring, at New Orleans. It is the intention of the projectors of this southern school to have its sessions held immediately following the carnival, which is annually observed with great ceremony in the Crescent City; and the first limit fixed for the duration of the sessions is three weeks. The plans of the school are on the same general model of the one that has for the past few years been so successfully conducted on the shores of Lake Champlain, and a counterpart of which is to be inaugurated this year at Madison, out in Wisconsin.

THANKED BY THE CARDINAL

A Pittsburg Presbyterian Minister Who Defended His Eminence From Attack.

PITTSBURG, April 14.—Last Sunday Rev. J. T. McCrory, pastor of the Third United Presbyterian Church, of this city, preached a sermon in which he severely criticized Cardinal Gibbons' sermon of March 29th last, in which sermon the Cardinal condemned the ex-priests of the Catholic Church who had proved to be unworthy, who had deserted the Church and were traveling about the country attacking it. Rev. Mr. McCrory, in his sermon, said the Cardinal justified the suspicion of corruption in his Church, and confessed that every priest who leaves it speaks against the character of its priesthood. He also alleged that the Cardinal excused and encouraged violence, and he made the strong assertion that "the Cardinal puts Christianity to shame before the world" "He claims," said Mr. McCrory, "to represent the largest body of Christians in the world, and yet he has only soft words for men who would have murdered if they had not been restrained by bayonets."

On Wednesday last Rev. E. R. Donehoe, pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church, of this city, took Rev. Mr. McCrory to task for what he called an unwarranted attack on the Cardinal. Rev. Mr. Donehoe also wrote Cardinal Gibbons, saying he hoped the Cardinal would understand that the sentiments expressed by Mr. McCrory were not those of the Protestant body or any considerable part of it. Speaking from a Protestant standpoint, Mr. Donehoe said: "When we have to put words into your mouth that you do not utter, and attribute to you expressions you did not use, having no other argument, we had better keep quiet." Rev. Mr. Donehoe received the following reply from Cardinal Gibbons yesterday:

CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE,
408 North Charles street.

The Rev. E. R. Donehoe.

DEAR SIR—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and the enclosed newspaper clippings. Your ready response to the slanderous attack of the Rev. Mr. McCrory is, I assure you, greatly appreciated. Your generous action, prompted spontaneously by a sense of justice and truth, compels my sincere, grateful acknowledgment. That the attack of the Rev. Mr. McCrory is unjust must appear evident to any one who reads my sermon, a copy of which, taken from the Catholic Mirror, of Baltimore, I send to you. This unjustifiable misconstruction of another's words and motives indulged in by the Rev. Mr. McCrory is unworthy of any honest man. The offence is only aggravated when committed by one who is a leader of others, who professes to teach the doctrine of truth and charity. I am happy to think that this man is not a fair specimen of the Christian preachers. The knowledge that I have from a personal acquaintance with reverend gentlemen of every denomination convinces me that the Rev. Mr. McCrory is an unfortunate exception in a body of honorable and respectable Christians. I am glad you recall the occasion when I had the pleasure of making your acquaintance, and I trust an opportunity will soon be afforded me of renewing that acquaintance and acknowledging in person your graceful act of justice and charity.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS.
Baltimore, April 12, 1895.

Little self-denials, little honesties, little passing word of sympathy, little nameless acts of kindness, little silent victories over favourite temptations—these are the silent threads of gold which, when woven together gleam out so brightly in the pattern of life that God approves.—F. W. Farrar, D.D.