

IRISH PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

In the recently published plea against the reduction of Irish representation, from the pen of J. G. Swift MacNeill, we find ample food for study. Mr. MacNeill's contribution consists mainly of extracts from speeches delivered by various leaders of political thought in Great Britain, consequently, our hurried reference to it must equally comprise a number of quotations. The article is short; but what a fund of information it contains! The writer parades them all before our mental vision—Grattan, Butt, Gladstone, Bright, Parnell, Chamberlain—all actors in the drama of the Union. He makes Butt foretell the future, Gladstone repeat the prophecy, the late Lord Russell emphasize it, Chamberlain repudiate it and eventually attempt to accomplish it. Never were two characters so splendidly contrasted as the Chamberlain of 1884 and the Chamberlain of 1901.

At the Home Ruler Conference, held in Dublin, on November 18th, 1873, the conference from which the present Irish Parliamentary Party derives its origin, Mr. Butt said:—

"A few more years of Union and England will have a pretext for insisting that our number of members shall be reduced to the number to which our diminished proportion of population will entitle us. I could not produce a more damning evidence against the Union, a more decisive proof that we have reached the point at which the process of national downfall should be stayed."

This prophetic statement the great Home Ruler explains by means of statistics that go to show how the Act of the Union redressed inequalities, not by increasing Irish representation, when Ireland's numbers demanded it, but by reducing Ireland's population to a sufficient extent to efface her claims for a larger measure of representation. On the same subject, speaking in 1884, Mr. Gladstone said:—

"I would say this, that those who have been miserably and unjust in former times must be very cautious when they come to plead in their own behalf for the strictest application of laws of which they might, indeed, have claimed the strictest application had they never deviated from them themselves. . . . Look back to the year 1832, and see how we dealt with Ireland on that occasion. I think I am right in saying Ireland had, at that time, three-tenths of the population of the United Kingdom, and to them we gave considerably less than one-sixth of the representation. I do not think that looking back to that proceeding we should say now that it was a very handsome treatment, and I cannot entirely dismiss that fact from my resolution in coming to consider the Irish question when we deal with the redistribution of seats. I say it is not a desirable position for a great country to occupy, to claim the most rigid application of numerical laws when they tell in her favor and, on the other hand, to apply a very lax view of them indeed, when they tell against her."

Commenting upon this, Mr. MacNeill adds:—

It should also be remembered that any proposal for the reduction of the Irish members to a number less than 100 is a distinct violation of the Act of Union whose provisions are always held to be sacred by the Unionist Party when they tell against Ireland, but to be of little if any account when they are in Ireland's favor.

It has been argued that the article of the Act of Union, making 100 representatives the minimum for Ireland, need not be considered as absolute, since other provisions of the Act have been disregarded—for example the Irish Church disestablishment. But the cases are not at all similar. "The disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church was carried, not against the wishes, but in accordance with the demand of the overwhelming mass of the Irish people as formulated by their Parliamentary representatives."

While any measure for the reduction of the Irish representatives will be firmly opposed and resented by the Irish people. We will have to skip John Bright's and Sir Charles (Lord) Russell's pronouncements on this issue. They merely accentuate and more minutely explain what has been set forth so briefly above. But what most amused us was Mr. MacNeill contrasting of the two Chamberlains—he of 1884, and he of today. Speaking as a Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons, on the 27th March, 1884, Mr. Chamberlain said:—

"Unless the House is prepared to abandon all idea of a constitutional treatment of the Irish question and

all idea of a representative system in Ireland, let us take care that the representative system there shall be a reality and not a sham—not a mere fraud and imposition upon the public. We may like or dislike the opinions held by the majority of the Irish people, but we cannot suppress these opinions, and under these circumstances it is to our interest, it is wise statesmanship and sound policy, that these opinions, however unpopular, should at least be represented in this House, and we should tempt the people of Ireland to bring their grievances to a constitutional test, and not force them by driving them into secret conspiracy into a desperate course."

Take the following remark, made by the same Right Honorable gentleman:—

"What I care about is that one equal value shall be given to every voter in every case. It has a great bearing upon the question raised by the Prime Minister. There is a large Irish vote in many of our large towns—in London, Liverpool, and other places, as hon. members on both sides know sometimes to their advantage and sometimes to their cost. I say on both sides of the House because, however hon. members opposite may denounce the conduct of the Liberal Party in this respect, I have never found a Conservative candidate at all slow to ask, invite, and even truckle to the Irish vote."

Mr. MacNeill's comment is good, rich, and rare, and runs thus:—

Mr. Chamberlain must have forgotten that he told the House of Commons that he "had never found a Conservative candidate at all slow to ask, invite, and even truckle to the Irish vote," when, at the Tory gathering at Blenheim, he spoke thus of the party in whose Cabinet he once sat: "We still believe they are willing as before to sell the interests of the country for 80 Irish votes," and urged this subservience on the part of the Radical Party to the Irish vote as an argument for the reduction of the numbers of the Irish representation.

Finally, the article closes with the words pronounced by Mr. John Morley, in the House, on April 3rd, 1884, which words are:—

"The question of Irish representation he would not discuss either upon the basis of numbers or that of the Act of Union; either by reference to what had been called a musty parchment, or by working a sum in rule of three. It ought to be settled on the same principle as that which settled all political questions, namely, the broad ground of policy and expediency. We should lose more by irritating the population of Ireland than we should gain by taking seats from her for our own use. Ireland was entitled to exceptional representation, not so much on the score of geographical distance as on that of moral distance, and the disadvantage under which her members labored from the ignorance and prejudice of Englishmen about them arising out of difference in race and religion. Another reason for special treatment of Ireland was that a great obstacle to improvement in Irish legislation was to be found in the other House, and as Ireland was under a disadvantage in the hereditary branch of the Legislature, there was less reason to object to her having an excess of representation in the elective branch."

These extracts have unduly lengthened our article; but since on them Mr. MacNeill bases his opposition to any such reduction, we cannot do better than to follow suit, and allow these extracts to speak for themselves.

A GOOD STORY.

The "Freeman's Journal" is responsible for the following very amusing story, illustrative of the old-time methods that some silly fellow has attempted to revive. It runs thus:—

"Considerable merriment has been excited in Irish circles in London by an amusing story of the futile efforts of an 'agent provocateur' to inveigle a number of prominent London Irishmen into a conspiracy for the establishment of a new insurrectionary movement in Ireland in sympathy with the Boer cause. The tale is that the individual in question wrote to certain Nationalists of extreme views representing himself as an emissary of the Boer Government, who, he said, had entrusted him with a million pounds for the purpose of starting an Irish revolution. The gentlemen referred to had no difficulty in satisfying themselves as to the bogus character of an emissary who went about his work in such a clumsy fashion. But, believing it to be of advantage that they should learn as much as possible of his identity and designs, they determined to accede to his request to dine with him one evening last week at a well-known Italian restaurant not a thousand miles from Piccadilly. On arriving at the restaurant they found, as they expected, several Scotland Yard detectives seated at convenient spots around the table reserved by their pretended Boer host. The latter, no doubt, believing that he had his prey safely within his coils, was lavishing his hospitality, and throughout the meal his guests spared no effort to complete his delusion. Then, at the conclusion of the repast, when the spy believed that everything was going swimmingly, and he was beginning to broach the subject of a joint trip to Ireland to put his scheme into operation, his guests quickly informed him that the game was up, and that so far from being a Boer gentleman they knew him to be a green-grocer in a London suburb. His fury at such an unexpected denouement may easily be imagined. His guests, highly enjoying his discomfiture, thereupon bade him a polite adieu, and left him to the consolations of his Scotland Yard friends. Apparently the days of the 'Red' line are not yet over in Irish politics, but fortunately victims are not so easily procurable nowadays."

OBLETES AND BROTHERS.

In the general overturning of religious congregations in France, we have seen the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and amongst those that have taken the road to exile are the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul. We in the Oblate Order, for the achievement of its members in this land constitute some of the brightest and grandest pages in the annals of our Dominion. Possibly we may not, however, be fully acquainted with their work in the old world. An English Catholic contemporary contains some very important remarks on both the orders in question. It speaks thus:—

"What will France do without the Oblates of Mary Immaculate was being said and thought by more than one. The Basilica of Montmartre, as well as other important sanctuaries throughout France, were seen in the perspective of their Oblate members. Fears are set at rest in this respect—the Oblates remain. At least they have asked for their authorization of the French Government. No secular priests could have taken their place in the service of the world."

The chief element of danger is the possible action of some 12,000 men whom the mining company refused to renege after the last strike, who have been unemployed since. Six hundred gendarmes are patrolling Monceaux les Mines. The manager of the company does not leave his office except in a carriage and under the escort of mounted gendarmes armed with revolvers and sabres. The leaders of the "reds" insist that a strike is inevitable, but many who are in a position to form a strike are not so sure. A strike will be averted, or at all events confined to certain localities.

Of course the Protestant Episcopal Convention assumed without doing either of the two things which the "Catholic" element within the fold desired it to do. It refused to adopt a revised canon on marriage and divorce, prohibiting the remarriage of divorced persons within its organization. It also declined to amend or change the name of the Church, to meet the views of those who are anxious to have eliminated the "Protestantism" of its title. The advocates of these reforms will have three more years in which to ventilate and articulate their ideas, before they can be presented again for the action of the legislating body of the sect.

There was no end of debate pro and con on the proposed revision of the marriage and divorce law of the Church. Most of it was intrinsically flabby and inconsequential. Sifted from the bulk of verbal chaff in which it was involved, the main arguments to justify this revision amounts to just this: It would be useless anyway to enact a law which the Church is powerless to enforce. The idea was repeated in a multitude of disguises by the enemies of revision. The House of Bishops accepted "revision" probably knowing that it had not a ghost of a chance in the House of Deputies. At any rate the temper manifested by the convention as a whole, on the subject of "revision" was a confession of the absence of authority in the Church, that motives of expediency govern its legislation in matters of doctrine and those of discipline. "If we refuse to permit the remarriage of divorced persons who are nominally members of the Protestant Episcopal body, they will simply go elsewhere, and that's the end of it." This is the substance of the consideration that defeated "revision" on the floor of the convention. Those who firmly stood for what they conceived to be right and necessary, regardless of consequences, were indifferently tolerated as cranks and visionaries. The Protestant Episcopal Church, therefore, continues to countenance consecutive polygamy because it feels itself impotent to do otherwise. The work of the convention should go a long way to convince the "Catholic" element of the organization of the untenableness of their present position.—San Francisco Monitor.

WHEN DEATH CALLS.

Leo Grindon when lecturer at the Royal School of Medicine, in Manchester, wrote: "When death is actually about to happen, the fear of it is in a great measure lost. At all events, it is not common, as is well known to those whose professions lead them to the pillows of the dying."

My own experience, now extending over many years, is entirely in harmony with the above authority. To tell the truth, I have always been puzzled at the extraordinary calm, peace and freedom from anxiety that I have observed in the dying, even in those who have not been models of virtue, and whose life is a subject which has always possessed a certain fascination for me. I have again and again questioned other priests regarding their experience, which has in no case differed from my own.

Well do I remember proposing this fact as a difficulty to the late Cardinal Manning. Seated one winter evening in his room, almost roasted by the huge fire before which he was wont to toast his meagre and wasted form and chatting upon all kinds of engrossing topics, he began to refer to his declining strength and deteriorating years. This turn in the conversation soon gave the opportunity I sought for.

"How," I asked him, "do you account for the strange circumstance that when death really comes people seem to fear it so little? It seems to me that, however good a man may be, the mere notion of falling into the great unknown and of meeting God face to face and of having one's fate definitely and irrevocably settled for all eternity ought to cause any one on the brink of the grave the most indescribable apprehension and the most acute anguish."

"Well, dear fellow," replied the Cardinal, "the vast majority of persons do undoubtedly die calmly enough, and my explanation is briefly this: So long as God intends a man to live he wisely infuses into his soul a certain natural dread and horror of death in order that he may be induced to take ordinary care of himself and to guard against danger and needless risks. But when God

intends a man to die there is no longer any object for such fear. It can serve no further purpose. What is the result? Well, I take it, God then simply withdraws it."

This explanation of the old Cardinal pleased me well and seemed not only to account for the singular phenomenon, but to set God in a peculiarly amiable and tender light.—Father John S. Vaughan, in London Spectator.

MINERS' STRIKE IN FRANCE

The following dispatch from Paris under date of Oct. 21, is published in American daily journals:—

Two meetings of the delegates of the Miners' Federation were held recently at St. Etienne without any decision being reached upon the question of the threatened strike. Another meeting will be held to-day. Meanwhile the papers are devoting columns to the situation and generally taking a gloomy view.

Dispatches from Monceaux les Mines say that while the place is outwardly quiet the feeling is such that a very slight incident would be likely to lead to an outbreak of violence among the 8,000 miners in the locality. These are divided into two factions, the "reds," who favor a strike, and the "yellows," who are opposed to such a step.

The prefect, who has been forbidding the sale of arms throughout the department, yesterday seized two cases of muskets at St. Etienne. They were on their way to Monceaux les Mines. It is asserted that both factions are already supplied with guns and revolvers, which they have concealed at their homes. One of the leaders of the "reds" declares they not only have ordered "Cras" muskets, but also Lebel rifles, ammunition and bayonets.

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COMEDY OF CONVOCATION

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HEROIC PIETY OF CATHOLIC CHILDREN

The following appeared in the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" of recent date:—

"A sad tram fatality occurred in George street North shortly after 9 o'clock on Saturday night, when an eight-year-old child, named Walter Spengberg, who resided with his mother at 18 Argyle Place, was knocked down by an electric tram and fatally injured."

"According to the police, the little fellow was an orphan brother. John, aged 9, had received money from their mother to pay for a ride on the electric tram, but they evidently changed their minds and had, it transpired, been spending the money on themselves. In attempting to cross a road Walter was knocked down by a train."

"A pathetic scene, which moved the hearts of those who witnessed it, occurred at the hospital. The little fellow, though only eight years of age, said that he was dying and asked that a priest be sent him. His

little brother, with only the doctor and nurse as witnesses—the mother not having had time to reach the hospital—then clasped his brother's hand, and kneeling by the bedside, said a prayer, which was repeated by the dying boy. He died shortly afterwards and before the mother arrived on the scene."

The Catholic Press made inquiries, and obtained additional facts. "Now you are dying," said John, "and you want to go to heaven; join your hands and say an Act of Contrition with me." John knelt beside the bed, surrounded by doctors and nurses, and, joining his hands with his dying brother's the two children clearly and distinctly recited the prayer. The Rev. Father Kelly, of St. Mary's Cathedral, then arrived, in time to anoint the child.

Walter was a pupil of St. Brigid's school, Kent street, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, and John a pupil of St. Patrick's Church Hill, conducted by the Marist Brothers.

The mother is a native of Cork, and the father, who died six months ago, was a Swede, and a convert to the Catholic Church. He left eight children under the care of the widowed mother. Their home may be described as a sanctuary of Catholic piety. The blow has been a terrible one for the poor mother, but she is resigned to the will of God.

The death-bed scene has been the topic of the city throughout the week. A more touching illustration of the beautiful influence of the Catholic home and the Catholic school could not be imagined. The dying child in the midst of strange calls for a priest, and then takes his little brother's hand, recites the Act of Contrition, and yields his pure little soul up to God. It would be hard to find a parallel for the heroism of these boys. It often happens in hospitals that big men, in danger of death, are too weak-minded to ask for a priest, afraid of the ridicule of non-Catholics.

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION STATISTICS.

The annual report of the Commissioner of Immigration at New York contains much food for reflection. From extracts published, we learn that the number of aliens arrived at the port of New York during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1901, was 453,496. There were also 133,056 citizens of the United States who arrived from abroad. From a comparison of the steerage immigration for the last two years it is shown that nearly 30,000 of the increase of last year over the year before was in the immigration from Southern Italy alone, but while this race shows the largest numerical increase, others present even greater relative gains. The Ruthenian immigration has nearly doubled, the Armenian and Syrian, as well as the Greek, show an increase of about 50 per cent., and the Croatian and Dalmatian about 30 per cent.

FLANAGAN'S NEW RECORD

John Flanagan, the great Irish athlete and the champion hammer thrower, in his effort for championship honors at the track and field games of the Greater New York Athletic Association, made a new world's record in throwing the 56-pound weight a distance of 36 feet 9 inches on Saturday last. The best previous record was 35 feet, 10 inches, by J. S. Mitchell. By winning this event Flanagan now holds all heavy-weight athletic records.

WOMEN RUSH FOR BARGAINS

Charleston, S. C., Oct. 20.—A gathering of 800 women, many of whom were members of well known families, was dispersed by the police last week in Charleston, S. C., while making a wish toward the door of a bargain house.

Alluring offers had been made, and before the establishment was opened

the women had blocked the street to such an extent that cars could not be run. When the doors swung back the women swarmed in and dozens were trampled and hurt. Several women fainted. A colored woman was thrown to the sidewalk, and the mad bargain hunters rushed over her body. She is seriously injured. As the crowd surged through the entrance glasses were smashed and the heavy barricades previously erected were twisted from their moorings.

A riot call was sent to police headquarters and a patrol wagon filled with officers was rushed to the scene. The excited crowd was driven back and the police closed the store. The proprietor was allowed to open later in the day. The police deny the reports that three women were killed in the stampede.

PARISH SCHOOLS

A great many people, even some Catholics, have strange ideas about our parish schools. They think that most of the school-day is devoted to teaching the children prayers and catechism. This certainly is not so. In most all, if not in all, the parish schools in this vicinity, the children are instructed in precisely the same branches that are taught in the public schools; and even the same text-books are used, whenever feasible. The religious training given, however, is practical and comprehensive. Religion is in the atmosphere of the school. The pupil is surrounded on every side with the power, wisdom and love of God. Religious influences form and develop his character. His heart is trained as well as his intellect. This is the work of the Catholic school.—Sacred Heart Review.

A CATHOLIC GENTLEMAN.

An interesting paper was read recently before the Knights of Columbus of Rockford, Ill., by Dr. Cullane. Speaking of what constitutes a gentleman, he said: "Thanks to the beneficent influence of our holy religion and man's association with pure womanhood, the highest type of citizen is produced, a Catholic gentleman. Such a man is a Catholic at all times, and a gentleman at all times, but the man that aims at being a Catholic part of the time, and a gentleman part of the time, is neither a Catholic nor a gentleman at any time; he is what might be called a gentleman on special occasions. In the presence of a lady his airs are most gracious; his manner most courteous; to the coquette he can make a profound bow, but to the Sacred Host he cannot make a genuflection. At the reception of a bull he leads the grand march; at the sacrifice of the Mass he is absent, and yet he calls himself a Catholic gentleman, his only claim to the title being a Catholic ancestry and an infrequent attendance at Mass."

PERSONAL.

His many friends in this city will be pleased to learn that Mr. Nicholas J. Altman, recently employed in the East End offices of the C. P. R., has been promoted to a more lucrative and important position in the Toronto office of the Company. It is at all times gratifying to learn of the material advancement of our young men, and we bespeak for Mr. Altman a further measure of success, as he does, the sterling characteristics of perseverance and integrity combined with ability and a genial disposition.

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