

THE DUBLIN DIOCESAN SYNOD

THE address of His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin at his first Diocesan Synod has been published. In the course of it His Grace stated that the Diocesan Clerical Fund Society is to be put on a wider and surer basis—that some important reforms in the matter of Church music are to be made, and that clerical school visitors are to be appointed. Speaking about existing defects in the primary schools under the National Board of Education, His Grace says:—

Allow us to say a word on another matter, of vital importance, the question of education. The powers of darkness throughout the world are making their most ferocious assaults on the school which must be the citadel either of Truth or Error. We, thank God, have to a large extent vindicated our claims to freedom of education; but even in our primary schools we have yet much to receive before we can admit that our just demands are fully satisfied. Our national schools are bound to receive rules based on the supposition that they are mixed schools, whereas in the great majority of them there is not, never was, and, in all probability never will be, the smallest mixture of religions within their walls. The books forced on these practically denominational schools are compiled under the inspiration of this absurd mixed principle. And the 'Time Table' is constructed on the same unfounded assumption. Theories are taken for established facts, and accordingly the principles deduced from such theories are fictitious, but fictions fraught with power of working great mischief. A new injury has been recently inflicted on the National Schools, and complaints on this subject have reached us from all parts of the diocese.

"The averages formerly required for the recognition of claims for assistant teachers have considerably increased; in many country schools these increased averages cannot be kept up, and in future the mere monitor will be expected to do the work which was formerly performed by the assistant. It is easy to see how this change will work injuriously to our schools. This new standard may be interpreted into a desire on the part of the Board to secure a greater control over the teachers. The assistant is appointed by the school manager. The inspectors practically have authority to appoint monitors, who will naturally regard the Board in after life as their patrons. Again, the religious sisterhood who devote their lives to the education of the poor in our National schools labour under the greatest disadvantages, and are unfairly deprived of many benefits which the National education system gives to the mere secular female teachers. These disadvantages arise from the circumstance that religious sisters cannot undergo examinations before officials, and therefore cannot be classified like ordinary teachers. Their schools may be the best managed and most efficient in connection with the board, no matter; the hard iron rule is there. The Sisters will not submit to stand before a secular—perhaps a Protestant—official, and therefore their superiority counts for nothing. You know, Very Rev. Fathers, that these Sisters are prohibited by a solemn law from submitting to such an examination. 'Nemo,' says the 293rd Decree of the Synod of Maynooth, '*sive ex monialibus sive ex novitiis ad examen coram officialibus commissariorum esse presentaret.*' No member of a religious community, whether she be a professed Sister or a novice, may present herself for examination before the officials of the Commissioners. This decree is absolute. When in the foregoing Decree 292, the Synod forbids in future the connection of convent schools with the National Board, it adds, '*Nisi cum expressa approbatione Ordinarii.*' But when there is a question of a nun submitting to examination by officials of the Commissioners, there is no such qualifying clause. No bishop can dispense in this law which forbids religious women to stand for examinations before such officials. You, Very Rev. Fathers, can see the wisdom of this law. Her consecrated virgins are the tenderest and most precious portion of the Church's flock. She watches over them with the most jealous care, because their angelic purity and heroic charity are her choicest treasures. But this purity and charity (the noblest guarantees for devotion to their self-assumed painful duties) are made obstacles to the recognition of their just claims. There is another great blot on our primary system. We are deprived of all Government help for training our teachers. If we pass over to England we find ample provision made for the efficient education of Catholic teachers, male and female. Why this simple act of justice should be denied to us it is hard to see. Is an invidious contrast between everything English and Irish necessary for the maintenance of the Empire?

"As you know, our Sisters of Charity and Mercy and Sisters of the Presentation Order are doing great good in rearing up promising young women to become qualified teachers; but the expense of carrying on that work is thrown on themselves. You are also aware that the Bishops of Ireland have established a training school for male teachers. This school is a great success; but it is a great burden on our people, as no help is received from the public funds to aid in the accomplishment of this public duty. Let us hope that these acts of injustice will not be perpetuated. In the meantime, let us watch over the schools placed under our control with the greatest vigilance. The secular education of our people is becoming of greater importance every day, for now the race of life is for the swift. But in proportion as secular knowledge is more sought for, the necessity for full religious education is becoming more and more urgent. There is a danger that, in pursuit of knowledge which leads to worldly gain, the knowledge which is essential to eternal life may be disregarded. Therefore it has become a paramount duty for the clergy to watch unceasingly over the catechetical instruction in every school at least once a week. We also require that in every parish of the Diocese there will be a special book in which the priest will make a short report of those weekly visits, and we will expect to see these books on the occasion of our diocesan visitations.

"To provide more effectually for this most important matter we will publish a Decree appointing diocesan visitors of schools, and that the duty of individuals may be light, we have named several Visitors for each District."

BRAVE FIREMAN LYNCH.

(From the *New York Express*, November 17.)

A REPORTER visited Bellevue Hospital last night for the purpose of ascertaining the condition of Fireman Patrick Lynch, who, saving two children from being burned to death at the Cannon Street fire last Thursday night, nearly lost his own life in his efforts to save others. He is burned in a terrible manner, and it is not yet known whether he will survive or not. From his own lips the writer received the following account:—

"Was it by the orders of your foreman that you entered the burning building?" enquired the writer.

"No, sir. The foreman, noticing that it was extremely dangerous to enter, instructed his men not to do so. I had no idea of going in until I saw a lot of children and a woman on the second floor, trying to escape and screaming as loud as they could. I knew, by the headway the flames were making, that in a few seconds all of them would be lost; so I forgot orders, discretion, and everything else, and rushing through the smoke ascended the staircase. I succeeded in getting a hold of the children, and, making sure of their safety, started after the woman. I knew when I ascended the second time that I could not return that way; and therefore calculated on saving the woman and myself by getting out on the roof. The woman was in her nightdress, and as I grabbed her around the body the flames shot up and burned the hair off my head and also burned my hands. I clung to her, however, but she fell lifeless, and then I found my arm was sprained as well as badly burned. I also became very weak, and was almost suffocated with smoke. I dragged myself to the top floor, and tried to get through the scuttle, but found it nailed down tight. It was then I realised my own danger.

"There were two doors leading to apartments on that floor, but both of them were locked, and I was too weak to force the locks. I don't know how long I was on the floor; it seemed like an age to me, but it could not have been more than a few seconds. It was sufficiently long, however, for me to think of every act of my life. Things which happened when I was a boy came to my mind, and as I felt certain that escape was impossible I prayed to God to forgive all the wrongs I had ever done Him. At that moment I determined to make one last effort. Rushing to the front hallway I noticed a window; and without conjecturing or caring where it led to, for by this time the flames were on top of me, I threw myself against it, and fortunately landed on the fire-escape. There was no ladder to ascend or descend, so my condition appeared very little improved. Noticing that by jumping I could reach the gutter of the roof, I did so, but my maimed left arm was unable to render me any assistance, and I fell back on the fire-escape. A dense volume of smoke reminded me again of my danger, and the second time I grasped the gutter, and by a superhuman effort reached the roof, where I fell prostrate with weakness. Two of my associates on the engine reached me from an adjoining roof, and carried me away in time. This is all I have to say about the matter."

"What do the doctors say about your case?"

"They say I will get well; but of course they would not tell me anything else, if they knew I would not recover. They are doing everything in their power for me, and I know if it rests with them I will get better."

"Don't you think it was very foolish for you to enter the building, when it was deemed hazardous by your foreman?"

"That's what my wife and everybody else says; but I don't see how any fireman or any man could see a lot of women and children burn to death and not take long chances to save them. If the same thing was to happen to-morrow, and I was well, I would certainly do what I did the other night."

At Bishop Guilbert's taking possession of his cathedral—that of Amiens—on the 18th November, his reception by the civil and military authorities was cold, not to say hostile, the "Marseillaise" being played by the band of the 72nd regiment as His Lordship passed; but the attitude of the people, who assembled in large numbers, was most sympathetic and loyal towards their new bishop.

The sale of Church property in Italy since the 26th October, 1867, up to the end of September last, whether by public auction or by private bargain, has been made in 130,514 lots, containing an area of 556,518 hectares (107,991 acres), at the estimated value of £17,054,160, and realizing £20,658,880.

Count Lobanoff, the new Russian ambassador to London, and successor of Count Schouvaloff, who leaves England with the brilliant repute of being the most fascinating foreigner seen in it for a generation, is a man of great wealth, having inherited a good deal of the famous Potemkin property. His carriage horses are grand animals, "Tartars of the Ukraine breed," and he has half-a-dozen pages, sons of chieftains of the Caucasus, intelligent and handsome lads, dressed in their national costume. His servants are all liveried in the costume worn by the menial kind in the time of Catherine the Great, but his coachman and footmen wear the military garb which was the vogue at the court of the first Alexander. This half European half Oriental state marks all details of Lobanoff's home, and he has a wealth of barbaric pearl and gold in his table appointments.

The *Globe* states:—"Intelligence has reached us that whilst crossing a sterile tract of country between Dar-es-Salaam and Nysswasswa, the elephants attached to the Belgian Elephant Expedition marched uninterruptedly without food for forty-two hours, and without water for thirty-five hours, carrying at the time burdens weighing 12 cwt. each animal. This wonderful example of endurance goes to confirm our opinion to the utility of the elephant as a means of transport in tropical Africa."

Saturday, December 13, the King and Queen of Spain, while driving in the Atocha-street at Madrid, met a priest taking the last sacraments to a dying man. Their majesties alighted from their carriage and lent it to the priest, following on foot, amid the acclamations of the populace.