

Dublin Notes.

(From Contemporaries.)

WIDOW OF THE COMPOSER OF MARITANA PENSIONED.

The Queen has been pleased, on the recommendation of the First Lord of the Treasury, to grant £200 a year out of the Royal Bounty Fund to the widow of the eminent Irish maestro, Vincent Wallace. Badly the aged lady needed it, and long it was coming.

ANCIENT IRISH CROSSES.

The Rev D. Murphy, E.J., delivered an interesting lecture on the above subject to the members of the debating Society of the Catholic Commercial Club, Dublin. The lecturer began with a description of what was known as the Celtic, but which should be the Irish style of ornamentation. In Britany and in Cornwall there was no trail of this style of ornamentation. Some of it was found in Wales, but that was due to the communication between Ireland and Wales in ancient times, and, as to Scotland, he quoted the opinion of an eminent Scotch authority, Dr Anderson, who, after an examination of the Celtic style of interlaced and intertwined ornament, wrote that "Ireland was the cradle of the art. He quoted from Ruskin and other authorities as to the artistic beauty of this distinctive Irish art.

THE BISHOP OF LIMERICK AND MR LECKY.

The rejoinder of the Bishop of Limerick to Mr Lecky, which was published in the *Times* is of a most convincing and crushing character. The Catholics of Ireland are undoubtedly handicapped in the matter of university education. Mr Lecky thinks that Trinity College, Dublin, is now sufficiently non-sectarian even for Catholics. The Bishop points out that, although professedly non-sectarian, and open to all creeds and classes, still that Trinity College is even now the principle training ground for the ministers of the Irish Protestant Church, and that the prayers and services gone through in the university are a Protestant in their framing and origin. What, the Bishop asks, would the Protestants of Ireland say if they were asked to send their sons to Maynooth, even though every possible guarantee was given that their rights would be respected? Why, there would be a howl at once all over the country against this act of intolerance, this infringement of religious liberty on the part of the Catholic authorities. The Bishop exhorts the present Government to settle, once and for all, the question of university education in Ireland, and points out that this is the best and surest way of fostering a spirit of conservatism amongst the Irish people.

WHAT CARDINAL RAMPOLLA SAID TO JOHN DILLON.

After the audience with the Pope, the prelates and the Dillon family were received most graciously by Cardinal Rampolla, Secretary of State, with whom they had the honour of a long audience. His Eminence, speaking of Irish affairs, expressed his concern for unity and friendship among Ireland's representatives. "I exhort you specially to promote unity, my dear Mr Dillon," said the Cardinal, "carrying in front the banner of Catholic truth, and giving the Church of God the great advantage of the united force of Irish Catholic support." His Eminence concluded by graciously saying he would be glad to welcome Mr Dillon often again to the Eternal City.

LEO XIII AND JOHN DILLON.

Dr O'Donnell and Monsignor Kelly had the pleasure of presenting to His Holiness Mr John Dillon, M.P., Mrs Dillon, and Father Dillon, of St Isidore's. The warmth of the reception and the many blessings accorded by His Holiness to this distinguished Irish family must have been gratifying to them beyond expression. Kneeling at the feet of His Holiness, Mr Dillon expressed, in a manner worthy of a devoted son, how he and his colleagues were ever ready to do their utmost to promote the interests of religion and vindicate the rights of the Holy See. The Pope blessed him tenderly for this declaration, and with pathetic appeal exhorted him to be a champion of Holy Church in the fulfilment of her divine mission. Special mention was made of the education question.

LEO XIII THE UNCHANGEABLE FRIEND OF IRELAND.

The tender message which the Holy Father conveyed to Ireland in his interview with the Most Rev Dr O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, and subsequently with Mr John Dillon and his wife, will be received (says the *Dublin Freeman*) with respectful and earnest sympathy by the Catholics in Ireland. It is no wonder that the steadfast faith and the magnificent self-devotion of the Irish race has so strongly appealed to the heart of his Holiness. "He declared himself," our correspondent wires, "their unchangeable friend, and said the love of his paternal heart was poured out in blessings on the faithful race which, despite itself, could sympathise with a despoiled Pontiff." His Holiness realises that Ireland's demand for liberty has gone hand in hand with Ireland's fidelity to the faith. Her priests and

her people have ever been steadily united in patriotism as in religion, and the most savage violence and the most ingenious intrigues have failed and will ever fail to divide them.

AN IRISH-AMERICAN ARMY.

Our excellent contemporary, the *Boston Pilot*, thus refers to an announcement which was wired to these colonies:—"The startling news comes from New York that 'an Irish-American army' of formidable proportions has been organised, and will be drilled and armed with the best modern weapons—all in the deepest secrecy, of course. The members must all be 'Catholics and Clan-na-Gael men.' In order to avoid public notice and so preserve absolute secrecy as to their movements, they will wear a striking uniform, and will march in a body to attend Mass on St Patrick's Day! If these precautions should not suffice to conceal their identity, they may hold a secret convention in Central Park some afternoon. It looks very much as if somebody has been playing a practical joke on the newspapers, or possibly another La Caron or McDermott is trying to earn a fee from the British secret service fund by imagining the new army. When Clan-na-Gael men have a scheme to carry out they do not shriek in from the house-tops nor confide it to the reporters; but they would be heard from if 'England's difficulty' offered Ireland's opportunity to-morrow."

THE CATHEDRAL OF MESSINA.

STORY AND TEXT OF A LETTER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

STRANGE LEGEND OF A GHOSTLY VISITANT.

The *Edinburgh Catholic Herald* publishes an interesting article on the famous cathedral. Our readers will of course take the ghost story for what it is worth.

Messina in Sicily, called by some the Queen of the Mediterranean, is a very ancient city. It is said to have been founded by a colony of Greeks, 530 years before the destruction of Troy, and about 1000 before Christ. It is in a charming position, and the long range of the Apennines on the neighbouring coast give a picturesque character to the view. The situation of the city, which lies between Etna on the one hand and Stromboli and Vesuvius on the other renders it peculiarly subject to earthquakes. The Messinesi are proud of their city and its history. They are said to have been converted by the preaching of St Paul, and tradition says that St Peter sent them their first bishop. Messina has about fifty churches, some of them extremely beautiful and of good architecture. The centre of interest, as in most Italian cities, is the cathedral not so much for its architectural beauty as for its interesting history, and more than all for the letter which is said to have been sent to them by our Blessed Lady, whose miraculous picture, supposed to have been painted by St Luke, hangs over the high altar, which is a fine specimen of the inland work of Florentine mosaic. At the back of the altar screen is the famous letter.

A MOST PRECIOUS RELIC,

a letter, written by the Mother of God herself. St Paul visited Messina, and having found the people well disposed, and eager to hear the Word of God from his lips, preached them two sermons, one on our Lord's Passion, the other on the perpetual virginity of our Blessed Lady. This latter had such an effect on the inhabitants that they cried out with one voice, "Our city must be placed under the protection of the Virgin Mother." The story goes on to say that an embassy at the head of which was St Paul himself was sent to Jerusalem, where the Blessed Virgin was then living, and that as soon as she received the embassy she sent a reply to the Messinesi in Hebrew, stating that she was willing to accede to their pious wishes. This letter was afterwards translated into Greek by St Paul, and deposited in the ancient church of Messina, whence in course of time it was removed to its present place in the high altar of the cathedral church. The following is

A COPY OF THIS SINGULAR DOCUMENT:—

"Mary Virgin, daughter of Joachim, most lowly handmaid of God, Mother of the Crucified Jesus Christ, of the tribe of Juda, from the race of David, to all the people of Messina salutation and blessing from God the Father Almighty. It is certified by public documents, that all of you have in great faith, sent emissaries and ambassadors to us. Led to know the way of the truth through the preaching of Paul, the Apostle, you confess that our Son, the Only-Begotten of God, is both God and man, and that He ascended into Heaven after His Resurrection. For this reason we, therefore, bless you and your city, whose perpetual Protectress we desire to become. Year of our S'n 42; Indiction I; iii, nones of June; xxvii of the moon; feria v from Jerusalem. Mary Virgin, who hath approved the baptism above." To establish the genuineness of this letter, the learned Jesuit Father Melchior Inchofer, wrote a very learned Latin work entitled "Epistole B. Virginis Mariæ and Messinenses Ventas vindicata." "The truth of the Epistle of the Blessed Virgin

SMOKE "ROYAL COLORS" TOBACCO.

(IMPROVED AROMATIC.)