

for perfect equality with our non-Catholic fellow-countrymen in all that regards endowment and privileges of University institutions, and express our determination to enforce that claim by every constitutional means in our power." The resolution was supported by Professor Steinberger, M.A., F.R.U.I., in a speech so fitting an to the point that we cannot refrain from quoting, said "he had travelled or lived in most of the countries of Europe, and when he first came to Ireland to learn the Irish language he met with many surprises, but nothing surprised him more than to find Ireland—which taught the greater part of the countries of Europe, and but for which he might now be a barbarian on the Alps or on the Danube (laughter)—without a University of its own. He was astonished to find that the Catholic people of Ireland had no University. If they looked to India they could find the people provided for in this respect. If they looked to Austria, which was pretty much like the British Empire, in having under its dominion many different races and people speaking various languages, they would find the higher educational wants of these people well provided for; but Ireland is the only place in Europe where the majority of the people have no University (hear, hear)." The following resolution was also carried:—"That we call on the members of Parliament for the town and county to press the Catholic claim for perfect educational equality on the House of Commons on every suitable occasion, and to expose the urgency of the grievance, and the injustice which a delay in dealing with it inflicts on the Catholic community."

**KILDARE.—Inspection of the Diocesan Schools.**—The fifth annual report of the inspection of schools in the above diocese has just been published and presented to the bishop, the Most Rev. Dr. Foley, by the diocesan examiner, the Rev. Wm. Phelan. The report shows that there are 270 schools in the diocese, and the subjects taught were prayers, catechism, explanation of catechism, and Bible history. Father Phelan classifies the schools in accordance with the results of his examination, and we learn from the report that 52 schools specially distinguished themselves, as the answering of the children in every subject was super-excellent, 117 were excellent, 60 good, 37 moderate, and four unsatisfactory. In the order of merit as to parishes, Bagnalstown ranks first place in the diocese, for out of 1000 children on the rolls, only three were absent through illness on the day of the examination, and the answering was of such a superior nature that every one of the 10 schools in the parish got the mark super-excellent in the column of merit. Clonegal parish ranks next with five out of its schools super-excellent. Tullow next with five out of eight schools super-excellent. Carlow parish has an excellent record, the three Convent Schools scoring super-excellent marks on the advanced programme, while Kildare, Naas, Abbey-leix, and Borris have also taken a very high position.

**LOUTH.—Unveiling of a Statue to St. Brigid in St. Nicholas' Church, Dundalk.**—A very interesting ceremony took place in the beautiful little chapel attached to St. Nicholas', Dundalk, on Monday, February 7, when a statue to St. Brigid, which has lately been added to the internal decorations of the church, was solemnly unveiled. High Mass was celebrated at 11 o'clock, the celebrant being Rev. P. Finegan, C.C.; deacon, Rev. B. Donnellan, Adv.; and sub-deacon, Rev. F. McNeese, C.C. The ceremony of unveiling took place at 3 o'clock before a large congregation, after which Rev. Father Matthew, of the Capuchin Order, preached a very earnest and eloquent sermon. The devotions were brought to a close by Rosary and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

**MAYO.—The Distress in the West.**—Most pitiable accounts still reach us of the dreadful state of things in the West of Ireland. Large districts (writes the *Freeman's Journal*) are on the brink of famine. Day by day, and from every direction the evidence of the acute distress accumulates upon us. The proceedings at a meeting in Swinford show the union in so lamentable a condition that the overworked relieving officers are driven to seek for assistance or to resign, and at the same time indicate the strong protest of the people against the notable project of Mr. Balfour by which the starving ratepayers are commissioned to save each other from starvation. To Belmullet, as the Government has been over and over again warned, famine has arrived. The great bulk of the sixteen or seventeen thousand inhabitants are in immediate and pressing want of food. The potato crop, which was their main dependence, has completely failed. There is the utmost difficulty in obtaining supplies from the outer world. The Government, by refusing the railway demanded, and substituting a hazardous, intermittent, and practically worthless boat service, has done what it can to accentuate and perpetuate the distress. Each story of the distress appears the most pitiable possible till the next is told. In the parish of Carraroe the people are actually clamouring for Indian meal to keep the life in them, and there is no reason to suppose that in many other districts the strain of the famine (it is time to call it by its true name) is any less severe.

**ROSCOMMON.—Mr. Hayden, M.P., and the Local Government Bill.**—Mr. J. P. Hayden, M.P. for South Roscommon, takes up a very curious position with regard to the new Irish Local Government Bill. Though a Catholic member, he objects to the Bill because it makes it possible for a Catholic priest to be returned as a member of a County Council. The *London Tablet* gives him the following well-deserved castigation:—"Mr. J. P. Hayden, Parnellite member for South Roscommon, seems to have a curiously intolerant mind. At least, so we judge from the following words, which we find reported in the *Irish Times*: 'If the rumour were true that clergymen would be eligible for election to the County Councils under the coming Local Government Bill, then in the part of the country he came from, he knew whole districts in which every parish would be represented by a priest. This Bill would not be at all acceptable if the Government persisted in keeping such a clause as that in it.' Here is a Catholic member of Parliament

wanting to invent new disabilities for the Catholic priesthood. Why should the electors be forbidden to choose a priest to represent them on a County Council if they think him the best man for the post? We suppose Mr. Hayden does not like priests in public life. Well, other people do not like Parnellites, but it is not proposed on that account to pass a law to prevent Parnellites sitting in Parliament. It is an old situation when an Irish member of Parliament is seriously unhappy because a Tory Government proposes to leave a Catholic people at liberty to show their confidence in their priests by electing them as their representative."

**WATERFORD.—The University Movement in Waterford: Lord Waterford gives it his Support.**—At a large and enthusiastic meeting in the City Hall, Waterford, the Bishop of Waterford, who presided, made a few brief remarks at the close of which he made an interesting announcement. His Lordship said that whilst they demand educational equality, and equality soon, they did not demand that the equality should be retained or gained in this, that, or the other particular form. They had their own views, most of them at least, on that subject. Some of them might be in favour of a separate college, some of them might be in favour of a separate university, but on this platform they welcomed all—let it be said again, and emphatically—they welcomed all who were in favour of equality, no matter whether the equality was to be reached by the establishment of a separate university, or by the establishment of a college or colleges. He had risen only to discharge a formal duty and without any intention of taking part in the proceedings of the meeting. But before he sat down he thought it but right to read a letter which he had received the previous day, and he read it because it was addressed to himself, and still more because of the eminent position of the writer, and because, he was happy to say, it was the first declaration on a matter of public interest that had been made by the writer, Lord Waterford. The letter was as follows:—"I have to apologise for not replying to your letter before, but I have only just returned from the North. I most heartily sympathise with the project of establishing a university for Roman Catholics in Ireland, and hope that the movement will be successful. I regret to say that I shall not be able to be in Waterford to attend the meeting. I hope your Lordship will make whatever use of this letter you may think fit."

**WICKLOW.—The Glencree Industrial School.**—The annual report of this reformatory for the year 1897 has just been issued, and gives ample evidence of the useful work which is being carried on by that valuable institution. The number of boys detained during the past year averaged 167. During the year 74 boys were committed. The majority of commitments were for petty larcenies, or attempted larcenies. Out of the 74 boys sent to Glencree 35 had been previously convicted. Every effort, says the report, is made to teach the boys trades, so as to enable them to live respectably on going out into the world, and the statistics of re-conviction show that those efforts are, as a rule, successful. We note with regret that public subscriptions fell off during 1897. Only £102 was contributed, a sum which fell short by £10 of the amount spent on setting the boys in situations. We hope that during the coming year Father Cox and the Brothers will receive the practical sympathy and support which their work undoubtedly deserves.

### GENERAL.

**The Irish Association for the Prevention of Intemperance.**—The report of the Irish Association for the Prevention of Intemperance which has just been issued, shows that during the year Ireland spent £11,659,804 on alcoholic beverages, an enormous amount, as the report remarks, for a poor country with a decreasing population and decaying industries to tax itself with. This amount shows, however, a decrease as compared with 1896, of £12,203. The amount spent on drink represents an annual outlay of £2 10s 9d per head of the population. There is a decrease in the amount of spirits consumed but a counterbalancing increase in the quantity of beer and porter. The Association does all in its power, by the spread of temperance literature and by frequent open air meetings, to combat the drink evil, and certainly deserves the hearty support of all sections in the community. The report discusses the important question of introducing temperance instruction into the schools. It says:—"The National Board of Education have recently included a much larger number of lessons giving scientific temperance teaching in their Alternative Series of School Books. This country is still, however, far behind others, and especially the United States, in providing adequate physiological and scientific temperance teaching for children, and we shall not fail to press the matter on the attention of those responsible for the education of the rising generation." This is an aspect of the temperance question which deserves the careful attention of educationists not only in the Old Country but in the Colonies also.

The following chaste lines, which elegantly portray Ireland's devotion to the Holy See, were suggested by the sight of Dr. Prendergast's Consecration Ring.

#### THE BISHOP'S RING.

His Consecration's Seal it showed  
On hand where ne'er had jewel been;  
In massive band an emerald glowed  
And wreathing it with sharp-r shewn  
Were diamonds—that, like dewdrops rolled  
Off leaflet green, took circled hold  
Close clinging to that stem of gold.  
Flashing before our lifted eyes  
Upon the shapely Celtic hand,  
Meety, methought, it typified  
That consecrated natal Land  
Its wearer claims—Earth's vernal gem!  
Whose saints (the diamonds emblem them)  
In exile clasp Rome's parent stem.

By MARGARET M. HALVEY in *Irish Catholic*.