

COUNTY NEWS.

ANTRIM.—A Priest Composer.—Catholics all the world over not long since read with pride and pleasure the news of the success of the young Italian priest, Father Perosi, who, endowed with great musical ability, was devoting all his talent to the service of the Church. Catholics of Ireland, and those of Down and Connor especially (says the *Sancta Maria*), will learn with surprise and pleasure that there is in their midst a young priest who, much after the manner of the better known Perosi, has, in the leisure time given him from the discharge of his sacred duties, been pouring forth his soul in the composition of sacred music. The Rev. A. L. Greaven, B.A., C.C., Ballymena, is the clergyman referred to, and our readers will be glad to know that upon the first Sunday of October, in St. Patrick's Church, Belfast, there will be performed for the first time, with full orchestral accompaniment, a 'Mass in C' in honour of the Holy Face of our Lord, for solo voices, chorus, and organ, from Father Greaven's pen.

CAVAN.—A Shocking Example of Catholic Bigotry.—'A Protestant,' writing to a Cavan newspaper, says: 'You, Catholics of Cavan, are a queer lot. Who is it you have appointed to the first positions of emolument at your disposal in Cavan, Belturbet, and Cootehill? Three Protestants as borough engineers. Oh, you awful Papist bigots.' The enlightened people of Belfast, or at least those in power there, do not act thus; the highest position to which a 'Papist' might attain in that city is that of street sweeper.

DERRY.—A Despicable Outrage.—A despicable outrage was perpetrated at St. Baithin's Catholic Church, in the village of St. Johnston, near Derry, on the night of September 30. A large cross had just been completed over the apex of the main gable, but the scaffolding was not removed. During the night some miscreant mounted the scaffolding and lopped off the arms of the cross and otherwise disfigured it. Considerable indignation prevails in the district. St. Baithin's is unique in its architectural beauty, being a very perfect specimen of Gothic, from the designs of the Monsignor Stephens, and looked on as an ornament to the district. The present pastor, Father John Doherty, is popular with all classes in the neighbourhood, and has not been aggressive in any way. The district is intensely Orange, but except in political matters, the people live harmoniously enough. The outrage, pending investigation, must be set down to wanton fanaticism or drunken vandalism.

GALWAY.—Departure of a Popular Priest.—The friends—and they are many—of the Very Rev. Father O'Keefe, O.S.A., will, says the *Galway Pilot*, regret to hear of his departure. He has been appointed to Rome, to the post lately held by the Very Rev. Prior Glynn. He will proceed to Rome about the end of the month. Father O'Keefe, who is a native of Kilkenny, is one of the most cultured gentlemen in his Order. His departure from Galway will be much regretted, for he was very popular, particularly with the congregation attending the Augustinian Church.

KERRY.—The Muckcross Estate.—A Dublin newspaper of October 7 says: Sir Robert Hunter, chairman of the Executive committee of the 'National Trust,' and Mr. Hugh Blakiston, the secretary, are on a visit to Dublin and Killarney in connection with the sale of Muckcross. These gentlemen and Mr. F. W. Crossley had an interview with the Lord Mayor in the Mansion House on Saturday morning, and subsequently with Mr. James H. North. It is hoped that the council of the 'National Trust' will secure this property for the people on reasonable terms. Sir Robert Hunter, Mr. F. W. Crossley, and Mr. H. Blakiston afterwards proceeded south by the Killarney express.

MAYO.—Mr. Davitt and the County Council.—Mr. Davitt denies that he was a candidate for the secretaryship of the Mayo County Council. He says: 'I have no intention of offering myself as a candidate for the post in question, and no person has been authorised to use my name in any such connection, or to make any such statement. Under these circumstances I would deem it an honour to serve my native county in any such capacity, to the best of my humble ability, and would feel proud to accept employment from the people with which our English rulers should have no concern. But these "other circumstances" would mean my retirement from active public life, and I need not assure you that I have no present intention of backing out of the National struggle against English rule and Irish landlordism.'

MEATH.—Clerical Changes.—The following changes among the clergy of Meath have been recently made:—The Rev. William Rooney, C.C., Mullingar, to be Adm. Longwood; Rev. William Bracken, C.C. Tullamore, to be C.C. Mullingar; Rev. Edward Crean, C.C. St. Mary's, Drogheda, to be C.C. Tullamore; Rev. James Clavin, C.C., Delvin, to be C.C. St. Mary's, Drogheda; Rev. P. Cantwell, C.C., Drumraney, to be C.C. Delvin; Rev. M. Dillon, C.C., Longwood, to be C.C. Drumraney.

GENERAL.

The Irish Granite Quarries.—It is to be hoped (writes the *Weekly Register*) that the owners of the Irish granite quarries will place no obstacles in the way of allowing the fullest expansion to an industry that promises to prove a valuable addition to the rather impoverished industries of that country. During the present year there has been a steadily increasing demand for granite setts; the value of the stone has almost doubled itself, and to meet the demand, large quantities are being imported from France and Scandinavia. It is well known that there are a large number of granite quarries in Ireland containing stone of good grade, and which, as yet, has been practically unworked. Negotiations with the holders of Irish quarries are still progressing, which, if brought to a satisfactory conclusion, must necessarily do much towards providing the country with a new industry that will occupy many thousands of unemployed hands.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

CARDINAL VAUGHAN ON THE SCHEME.

ON Saturday, September 30, Cardinal Vaughan received a deputation at the Archbishop's House representing a 'national committee of organised labour,' trade-unionists and friendly societies, which has set itself to advocate the cause of a free State pension for every one of 5s a week on reaching 65 years of age. The deputation consisted of the following: Messrs. F. H. Stead, F. Rogers, (organising secretary), Browning-hall, Walworth; G. Barnes (Amalgamated Society of Engineers), J. Maddison (Ironfounders), Gibbs (Amalgamated House Painters and Decorators), Coffey and Knecht (Book-binders), Gillman (Vellum-binders), Isaac Mitchell, Glasgow (Federated Trades); G. Moores, Editor *Wage-Earners' Weekly*; and Miss Bonfield (Shop Assistants). Mr. F. H. Stead introduced the deputation and explained that the national committee of organised labour was a body composed of district committees appointed at conferences which have been held by Mr. Charles Booth in seven of the chief industrial centres of Great Britain. These conferences had approved the principle that every aged person in the realm should be entitled to receive from the State a free pension on attaining a given age. In support of this cause they appealed especially to the leaders of religious life in this country, and they ventured to approach his Eminence, as the head of the Catholic Church in this country, asking him to hear the case of the superannuated workers.

THE CARDINAL'S REPLY.

His Eminence, in reply, said he felt most strongly that adequate and proper provision must be made for the aged poor. The aged poor among the working classes of this country should not be compelled to resort to the workhouse. He felt that it was impossible with the wages paid at the present day, and with the human needs that were recognised on all sides, to save money out of the weekly wage to form an adequate support for old age. Men should in every kind of way be encouraged to save for old age, by all means; but he maintained that, taking the population as it is, it was impossible to lay down as a universal law that every man himself must make the provision. Nor would he discriminate too closely between the deserving and the undeserving poor. He gathered, however, from the deputation that they endorsed absolutely and entirely Mr. Charles Booth's proposals. Now, he wanted a good deal of converting upon those particular proposals. His difficulty was this. Why should the State provide a pension for those who did not require one? Why should an enormous sum of money be found by the taxpayers for people who were in comfortable circumstances? He feared that would render the object which they had at heart impossible of realisation. The idea of including every man and woman, rich and poor, under the scheme had been adopted, it seemed to him, in order to get rid of certain difficulties which would present themselves. It was a question whether it was not making a much larger difficulty to overcome than those which it was sought to remove by this wholesale apportionment of pensions to rich and poor alike. He knew it was said that a person when he came to 65 need not take the pension. But he might, and a vast number probably would. If they had a legal right to £13 or £14 a year they would probably exercise that right and take the money, whether they needed it or not. Now that was entirely opposed to the principle on which the Poor Law had been founded. To put the case upon the ground that every man because he was 65 had a claim in justice to receive a pension from the State was to bring forward a principle which it would be very hard indeed to prove to be correct. Would it not be possible to begin by saying that every man or woman of 65 who would apply to the workhouse and could show that he or she was in need of assistance should be pensioned at once in his or her own home, and should receive 7s or 10s a week? If that were found to work well, as he was sure it would, would it not be easy then to go a step further? Thus by piecemeal legislation they might bring about a settlement of this immense topic more rapidly than it would come about if they asked for a universal old-age pension scheme. He felt more strongly than he could say the obligation which they were under to unite with their working brethren and to assist them by every means in their power to make their lives happier and brighter, to give them more time for themselves for the cultivation of their minds and the practice of their religion, and especially to remove from them that horrible nightmare of sorrow and of suffering in old age coming from destitution. It should never be forgotten in this country, which lived by its manufactures, that the population was being used up before its time. Men and women were used and thrown aside. He could not understand how any person connected with trade, manufactures, and commerce could be deaf to the claim which the aged working men and women of the country had upon them. He thanked the deputation heartily for the information they had laid before him, and if they could clear up his difficulties and persuade him that Mr. Charles Booth's scheme was really a workable scheme he should be only too glad to support it.

Mr. F. H. Stead, while thanking his Eminence for his sympathetic statement, remarked that it would be a formidable undertaking to convert a Cardinal.

Cardinal Vaughan: Cardinals have a very open mind and are always ready to be converted to the truth.

After a few remarks from others present the members of the deputation cordially thanked his Eminence for his courtesy and the deep interest he had taken in the working classes.

To be grateful for benefits received is the duty of honest men—
one of the sins that most offendeth God is ingratitude.