

Irish News

OUR IRISH LETTER

(From our own correspondent.)

Dublin, December, 1905.

The Catholic Truth Society.

A month ago, the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland held its third Congress under the presidency of his Eminence Cardinal Logue, supported by his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, and a large number of bishops and priests. "The principal paper read was a long and interesting one by his Lordship the Bishop of Ross, who dwelt eloquently upon the dignity of labor and the true nobility of rising above those false and pagan ideas that lead so many to despise honest work. His Lordship also went deeply into many of the historic reasons for Irish poverty, showing what so many people are apt to ignore, that in Ireland industries did not fail from lack of character, of industry, of honesty, of enterprise, but from deliberate systematic suppression by laws passed to destroy every trade by which Irish Catholics could obtain wealth and might, by winning wealth, retain any power. It was not alone of our lands we were dispossessed, but of every source of commerce for which Ireland was famed: her woollen trade, her fishing trade, her tanning trade, her glass manufactory—even Royalty now eagerly seeks after specimens of old Waterford glass—and many other sources of wealth which Ireland formerly exported all over Europe.

These Conferences are of very great value, even though it seemed to me some of the speakers forgot that the encouragement of Catholic literature is the object of the Society, and were apt to wander off the main line and seize upon this opportunity to air their own fads somewhat. Even so, it is good to see such throngs of earnest Catholics, lay and cleric, gathered to show their interest in what should be one of our most important Catholic works, and what would be of immense benefit were it not for one drawback. We all know the saying: How much do you sympathise? Strange to say, although the annual subscription is only the modest sum of five shillings, there are but 600 subscribers, so that the committee, as they frequently regret, are not in a position to pay writers or to publish many important works without which the issues of the Catholic Truth Society are incomplete.

A Literary Treat.

Talking of literature, we are promised at no very distant day a rare treat in the publication of what are known to a comparatively few students as 'The Survey Letters' or 'O'Donovan's Letters.' Hitherto these manuscript letters, of which there is a large collection, have been under lock and key in the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson street, Dublin, and are only lent to readers on the premises. These letters were all written at the time when a Government Survey of all Ireland was being prepared. I have not the date at hand, but I think it was about seventy years ago. At the head of a staff was the celebrated Dr. Petrie, assisted by John O'Donovan, the great Irish scholar and translator of the Annals of the Four Masters. Under O'Donovan's directions, a number of clerks went from county to county, from parish to parish, from barony to barony, from house to house in such of the counties as were surveyed. But, unfortunately, sufficient money was not supplied by Government, for such a work was necessarily costly, and even though much was done for payment that barely covered the daily expenses, a stop was put to the Survey and the work was never completed. But what was done is of the highest interest and serves to show the value of what has been lost to us for ever through State niggardliness. John O'Donovan himself travelled over much of the ground and wrote his report daily to Dr. Petrie in Dublin in precisely the same way that he instructed his assistants to write to him, namely, at once and while the information was fresh in their memory, and as nearly as possible in the words of those giving the information; also, no tradition, no local legend, no touch of character or coloring, no idiom of speech was to be lost: everything was jotted down and transmitted at once. We have, therefore, in those Survey Letters, a fund of Irish lore that keeps the reader who knows anything of Ireland poring, charmed, over their pages for hours together. It is long since I heard of any work about to be published that will give such pleasure to Irish readers as this will.

Even the peasantry would, should it be published at a price within their reach, be the most eager readers of all, so much is there of the lore told them by their fathers long ago.

COUNTY NEWS

DUBLIN—Death of a Talented Lady

In Gaelic League circles deep regret is felt at the death of Miss May Curran, B.A., who passed away at the residence of her parents in Drumcondra. As a linguist, a musician, and an educationist she occupied a high place in her native city.

How a Unionist Looks at it

How Sir Francis Cruise remains a Unionist, notwithstanding the decided views he holds as to the cause of Irish disaffection, is incomprehensible to ordinary mortals. Here is what the eminent doctor and well-known litterateur writes to the 'Daily Chronicle': 'The bane of English rule in Ireland seems to lie in unreasonable delay in conceding reasonable demands. Thus the psychological moment is lost wherein good might be done, gratitude earned, and solid peace secured. Under the existing regime all these are forfeited, and a prize set upon agitation and its dangerous consequences—the only means by which any concession is ever obtained. This is a very sad old story, as I have witnessed. Others of far superior judgment than mine tell the same. The late Sir Robert Hamilton, some time Under-Secretary for Ireland, stated once—at my dinner table—that if his country (Scotland) were governed on the lines adopted in Ireland it would not take two years to produce a rebellion. Doubtless he said the same elsewhere, and very soon afterwards—as I expected—he was promoted (as far as possible from Ireland) to the Governorship of Tasmania.'

Blackrock College

The bond of affection which exists between the Fathers of the Holy Ghost and their past pupils is proof, if proof were required (writes a Dublin correspondent), of the paternal care, combined with excellent education, which students receive at Blackrock and Rockwell. The 'old boys' seldom lose an opportunity of showing their high regard for those to whom they owe much of their success in life. On the evening of November 29 they entertained Very Rev. Father Healy, Provincial, the Presidents of Blackrock, Rockwell, St. Mary's, Rathmines, and Clareville to dinner in the Dolphin Hotel. Replying to the toast of 'Our Guests,' the Provincial made an important announcement regarding the new University College. Inspired by the traditions handed down to them by Father Reffe, and relying on the just appreciation of their work by the country at large, on the loyalty and support of their past students, of which they were sure, and on the loyalty of their present students, on which they had a right to count, they were determined to spare no efforts or expense in affording to their pupils the fullest advantages of a higher education. By next summer their new University and Civil Service College, a large and commodious building, worthy in every respect to be a noble seat of learning, would be ready. It would afford accommodation to 60 resident students, who would there have the advantages and safeguards of a resident college. They had at present 740 pupils in their three colleges, and they would not think him over sanguine when he expected that, even if they had to rely on these alone, they would send up sufficient students to fill the new University College.

KERRY—A Successful Probationer

Miss Kathleen O'Connell, of Derrynane Abbey, great-granddaughter of the Liberator, who is a probationary nurse in Richmond Hospital, Dublin, has won a gold medal for the highest aggregate of marks in three competitive examinations in anatomy, physiology, and hygiene, against a number of competitors from three hospitals.

KILKENNY—Presentations

Miss Donegan, I.S.M., who is resigning the position of organist of St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, Kilkenny, to act as conductor of the Irish Ladies' Choral Society in Dublin, has just received two handsome presentations, one a purse of sovereigns from her Kilkenny friends, and another from the members of her choir in that city.

LIMERICK—A Reminder of '48

A son of William Smith O'Brien, the Irish patriot, whose participation in the Young Ireland Movement endeared him to his countrymen, has been appointed Protestant Dean of Limerick.

J. O'ROURKE,

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