

WICKLOW—White Gloves for the Judge

The Spring Assizes were opened in Wicklow on March 1 by the Lord Chief Justice. There was no criminal business, and the High Sheriff presented Lord O'Brien with white gloves.

GENERAL**Social Regeneration**

Speaking on February 27 at the joint dinner of the Eighty Club and University Liberal Club at Cambridge, Mr. Birrell said he was not there to say that his administration as Chief Secretary for Ireland had been crowned with complete success, but if he had adopted the course of suspending the ordinary operation of the law the state of Ireland, he unhesitatingly contended, would be worse than at the present time. Obedience to the law had been strengthened, and he expressed the deepest conviction that the social regeneration of Ireland must be through responsibility of self-government.

A Brilliant Discovery

Sir Robert Anderson (says the *Catholic Times*) has been staggered by the debate on the state of Ireland, but he has recovered his feet, and his centre of gravity is no longer disturbed. Statistics were the cause of the trouble. Mr. John Redmond gave figures from which it appeared that in the matter of crime Ireland is quite a considerable distance behind the predominant partner, and the Prime Minister said that if you take Ireland as a whole, it is a country where respect for law is more widely spread and disobedience to the ordinary law is more rare in occurrence than probably any other part of his Majesty's dominions. Yes, writes Sir Robert Anderson in a letter to the *Times*, it must be acknowledged that the criminal statistics of the two countries will lead anyone who can do a rule of three sum to conclude that as compared with Ireland, England is a criminal country. But as a matter of fact this conclusion is grotesquely false. Sir Robert holds that though the Irishman commits less crime he is more criminal because he lives for the most part in the country instead of in the town. The distinguished knight ought to get out a patent for this brilliant discovery.

An Unfair Law

Few Irish Unions (says the *Irish Weekly*) are penalised to a greater extent than Belfast by the operations of the law which enables English and Scotch guardians to transfer Irish-born paupers from Norfolk, or Caithness, or any place between—from the scenes of their life's labors to the districts of their birth in this country; and the law which permits this injustice prohibits any 'retaliation.' Two hypothetical, but by no means extreme, cases illustrate a grievance which is not yet generally understood. Suppose A. B. was born in Belfast 69 years ago. His parents took him across the Channel when he was a year old. He began to work in Sheffield, or Manchester, or Glasgow, at the age of 10. He lived for 58 years in either of these cities, working his hardest all the time, and adding to the wealth of the place day by day. Then, like three-fourths of British toilers, he falls upon 'evil days,' and becomes 'a burthen on the rates.' The local guardians promptly discover that he was born in Belfast. The poor old man is shipped across and deposited in the Lisburn Road; thenceforward he is supported by the ratepayers of this city. On the other hand, C. D., born 69 years ago in Sheffield or Glasgow, crosses to Belfast, fails to find employment, and goes to the workhouse a week after landing on Donegal Quay. The Belfast ratepayers are bound to keep him for the rest of his life. Mr. Devlin, M.P., drew the Chief Secretary's attention to this grave injustice recently. Mr. Birrell said: 'This is a question which concerns England, Ireland, and Scotland.' But in different ways. England and Scotland want no change in the system. The matter awaits English Poor-Law legislation. Mr. Devlin's timely question will impress the necessity for action on the framers of the long-awaited Bill.

Laborers' Cottages

Replying in the House of Commons to a question by Mr. Devlin, Mr. Birrell said that up to March 31, 1908, 22,921 cottages had been erected under the Laborers Acts. The records of the Local Government Board do not show the number of additional cottages since provided. The number actually authorised to be erected up to date is approximately 44,000, not including 2000 which are at present provisionally authorised. The total cost of providing cottages in each county, apart from expenditure on land, labor, and material, could only be obtained by applying to the several rural district councils.

For Influenza take Woods' Great Peppermint Cure. Never fails. 1/6 and 2/6

People We Hear About

Mr. Thomas Augustine Daly, the American writer of humorous verse in the *Catholic Standard and Times* of Philadelphia, is manager of that journal, and contributes to no other. With much truth (says the *Chicago New World*) one might put nearly a dozen titles upon Poet Daly, each of which would be considered graphic and accurate by an impartial critic. Because there are no sad songs in his work he might be called the poet of cheerfulness. Because most of his characters are urged to marry, or are arranging to get married, he might be called the laureate of Christian marriage. Because he uses toilers as types he might also be called the bard of the underdog. Because he sees romance in the Italian in America a friend once designated him "the laureate of the dago," in our hearing.

Mr. Francis Marion Crawford, the distinguished novelist, whose death was reported last week, was born in Tuscany in 1854. His father, who was a native of the North of Ireland, went to America at an early age, and from there proceeded to Italy to follow his profession of sculptor. The subject of this sketch was educated in America and at Trinity College, Cambridge, completing his studies, after an interval of travel, at the Roman University. He spent four years in the East as journalist, and edited *The Indian Herald* at Allahabad for a time. In 1882 he published his first novel, *Mr. Isaacs*. More than thirty novels have since come from his pen. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1894. He used to spend a part of his time in the United States, and whilst there delivered lectures on various subjects dealing with Italian life. Mr. Crawford was very conversant with Roman life and character. Writing in 1897 to his distinguished fellow man of letters, Professor Maurice F. Egan, he referred to certain criticisms made by those who objected to the introduction of 'bad Catholics' into two of his novels, Mr. Crawford said: 'The stories in both books are literally true. . . . In *Casa Braccio* I meant to show the effect of crime in successive generations. . . . I need not say what hurt me most was the accusation that I had turned against the Catholic Church, than which nothing could be more impossible for a man so profoundly convinced as I am.' The late Mr. Crawford was awarded a prize of one thousand francs by the French Academy as an acknowledgment of the merit of his novels, and especially of two of them, *Zoroaster* and *Marzio's Crucifix*, which were written in French as well as in English. He wrote a play, entitled 'Francesca da Rimini,' which was produced by Sarah Bernhardt in Paris in 1902. Deceased held a professional master's certificate from the Association of American Shipmasters and the United States Marine Board.

Mr. William O'Brien, who recently resigned his seat as M.P. for Cork City, was born in Mallow in 1852. He received his education at the local college. This was a mixed school, attended by both Catholic and Protestant children. There was not the slightest sectarian animosity between the children of the different creeds, but there was plenty of political argument and differences. The Catholic Nationalists in the school formed a sort of small Irish party, and held their own, William O'Brien being successful in carrying off the class prizes, while his brothers and others carried off the honors in cricket, football, and the like. His first journalistic work was on the *Cork Herald*, with which he was connected until 1876, when he became a member of the reporting staff of the *Freeman's Journal*. He did the ordinary work of the reporter for several years, with occasional excursions into more congenial occupations in special descriptions of particular picturesque incidents. Whenever his work had any connection with politics, condition or prospects of his country, he devoted himself to it with a special fervor. It was his descriptions of the County of Mayo in the great distress of 1879 which first concentrated the attention of the Irish people on the calamity impending over the country. In 1881, when the conflict between the Government and the Land League was at its fiercest, the idea occurred of establishing a newspaper as an organ of the League and the Parnellite party. At once the thoughts of several people turned to the able and brilliant writer on the *Freeman's Journal*, and he was invited by Mr. Parnell to found *United Ireland*, and to become its editor. It was then for the first time that the higher powers of O'Brien were discovered. He entered Parliament in 1883 for Mallow, and subsequently represented South Tyrone, North-east Cork, and until the other day Cork City. In 1890 he married Sophie, daughter of Herman Raffalovich, banker, of Paris. Both Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien have written books, principally dealing with Irish life.