

GENERAL

Catholic Dissabilities Bill

The late Mr. Landon, M.P. for East Limerick, had charge of the Bill to remove Catholic disabilities. To Mr. William Redmond the task of piloting it through the House of Commons now falls.

Four Great Events

Under the auspices of the United League of Great Britain Mr. John Redmond and Mr. T. P. O'Connor on March 23 addressed a very large meeting in Liverpool. Mr. Redmond, in the course of his address, said:—The year 1908 would be ever memorable in the history of Ireland for at least four great events. The first was the establishment, for the first time for centuries, of a free National University, where all the youth of Ireland, poor and rich alike, Catholic, Protestant, and Presbyterian, would have placed within their reach the advantage of higher education. He considered the creation of that University one of the greatest achievements of the past century. The next great achievement of the last year was the passing into law of a Bill to provide better housing accommodation for the workers and artisans in the cities and towns of Ireland. The third was the achievement of the Irish Party in saving and protecting the interests of the Catholic schools of Great Britain. They had defeated four Education Bills in this Parliament; and in last session, when the Government thought they had made terms with the Church of England, they took it for granted that the representatives of the Catholics would be obliged to acquiesce; but they defeated that Bill; and, at any rate for this Parliament, the Catholic schools of England, were safe. The fourth and the last remarkable achievement was that the emigration from Ireland in 1908 was lower than in any year for half a century. During last year also their organisation had been growing in strength, and they had received from their countrymen in America, Canada, Australia, and South Africa most overwhelming proofs of their confidence.

Comparative Statistics

In the course of a lecture delivered recently in Letterkenny Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., dealt with some fallacies regarding the wealth of Ulster as compared with the other provinces of Ireland. He said:—We are told that Ulster contains the wealth and intelligence of Ireland. How do the facts and figures square with this contention? Take the ratable valuation for 1908. The ratable valuation of the whole of Ulster was £5,510,202; but, if we deduct from this the valuation of Belfast, which was £1,506,138, we get the figure for Ulster of £4,004,064. The figure for Munster, exclusive of Cork City, is £3,301,231, whilst for Leinster, exclusive of Dublin, it is £4,192,503, or £188,439 in excess of Ulster. Taking the rural districts only, the valuation of Ulster is £3,406,024, whilst that of Leinster is £3,500,372, showing an excess over Ulster of £94,348. Excluding Belfast, Dublin, and Cork, the ratable valuation in 1908 per head of the population in the provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster works out at £4 17s 3d for Leinster, £3 6s 0d for Munster, and only £3 4s 10d for Ulster. In County Antrim, including Belfast, the mean valuation of agricultural holdings is £27. In Dublin County, including Dublin City, the mean valuation is £54. According to a recent return, the average assessment per head for income tax is greater in Leinster than it is in Ulster. The number of holdings rated at £4 and under in Leinster is 107,940. In Ulster the number is 159,379, or more than Munster and Connaught added together. According to a return issued in 1884, the most recent available, the number of inhabited houses rated at £1 and under—that is the very worst class of houses in Ireland—were as follows: Ulster, 152,499; Connaught, 105,008; Munster, 92,632; Leinster, 85,040. So that Ulster contains more houses of the worst class than Munster and Leinster put together, and more than one-third of the total number of such houses in the whole of Ireland. These are not random assertions, made to deceive the public. They are simple statements of fact, which can be verified by reference to official documents, and they certainly do not bear out the contention that Ulster has a monopoly of the wealth of Ireland.

The way it was long, and road it was dark,
And the wayfarer fell in the pond in the park,
And it filled him right up to the Plimsoll mark,
And not only filled but chilled him!
He contrived to get home all a shiver and shake,
He'd a terrible cold and had swallowed a lake.
But Woods' Peppermint Cure they induced him to take,
Or the cold that he caught would have killed him.

People We Hear About

Mr. Max Pemberton, the well-known novelist, who is a Catholic, has just been made a Justice of the Peace in the County of Suffolk.

Lady Robinson, who took a leading and active part in promoting the success of Lady Edmund Talbot's sale of valuable objects at Buckingham Gate, London, the other day, for the benefit of poor children, is a comparatively recent convert to the Catholic Church, and is the wife of Sir Clifton Robinson, the able and indefatigable organiser and director of the great tramway enterprises which have become so widely developed in London and Dublin, and in other parts of the kingdom. Both Sir Clifton and Lady Robinson are liberal donors to many Catholic charities.

Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, whose name has been very much before the public of late in connection with the demand for strengthening the British navy, is a Waterford man. He is now in his 64th year. The following story is told of how he managed to get his own way in a controversy with General Buller: During the last Nile campaign, while on board a river steamer descending some dangerous water in one of the higher cataracts, General Buller entered into a discussion with Lord Charles respecting the proper channel that ought to be navigated. Each most obstinately defended his own course, but eventually that which Sir Redvers so strenuously recommended was used, with the result that the steamer got through without accident. 'You see, I was right,' exclaimed Sir Redvers triumphantly, 'mine was the proper channel.' 'That was mine, too,' coolly replied Lord Charles. 'I only recommended the other because I know you would go against whatever I said.'

Just sixty years ago there died in Rome that linguistic wonder-worker of modern times, Giuseppe Cardinal Mezzofanti. Born of humble origin in 1774, he was ordained priest at the age of twenty-four, having been a few days previously appointed Professor of Arabic in the university of his native city of Bologna, for by this time he was already master of ten languages. From the little income of £25—derived from his professorship supplemented by the proceeds of private instruction, Mezzofanti supported two helpless parents. Among his pupils was Byron, to whom, when he was in Bologna in 1817, he gave some lessons in modern Greek. The poet, writing of his stay in that city, says: 'I don't remember a man among them whom I ever wished to see twice, except Mezzofanti, who is a monster of languages, who ought to have existed at the time of the Tower of Babel and acted as universal interpreter.' Nine years later, the Crown Prince of Prussia, passing through Bologna on his way to Rome, reports of the linguist: 'He is truly a miracle. He spoke German with me like a German, with my Privy Councillor he spoke the purest French, with Bunsen perfect English, and with General Gröben fluent Swedish.' Another time it was the Grand Duke Michael of Russia who was surprised to find himself exchanging voluble Polish with the polyglot priest.

Sir Robert Hart, who retired from the position of Inspector-General of Chinese Customs last year, has been asked to return to China. Sir Robert, who had been connected with public affairs in China for upwards of forty-five years, knows that country better than any other European. It will be remembered that some time ago in the course of an address at a non-Catholic meeting in Belfast, he paid a very high tribute to the zeal, self-denial, and success of the Catholic missionaries in the Chinese Empire. Sir Robert built up the huge fabric of the Customs on a basis of integrity and efficiency. One of the most prominent characteristics of Sir Robert Hart is his extreme punctuality. He has always lived by the clock, for he says that was the only way in which he could get through his work. To his guests he would say: 'Your early tea will be brought to you when you ring. Please ring once only, holding the button pressed while you count three. Then, will it be convenient to you to tiffin at 12 sharp? If not, I will tiffin myself at 12, and order for you at any time you like. I ride from 3 to 5; there is always a mount for you if you wish it. Dinner at 7.30 sharp, and I must ask you to always excuse me at 11.' Needless to say, everything in his office went like clockwork. At 10 a.m. a line was drawn across the books, and late-coming clerks had to sign their names below, while at 4 p.m. the books were again opened and every clerk had to sign again. No chance of slipping away before the proper time. For 30 years, it is interesting to notice, Sir Robert drank his tea sitting in the same big dining-room chair, which was always covered with a rug so that no one else should use it.

For Children's Hacking Cough at night
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure, 1/6 and 2/6