

routes. The paper dollar is worth about 1s 10d of our money. It was originally worth 4s, the same as the gold dollar, but has become debased. Such is the result of the idea that for the manufacture of money nothing more is requisite than a bale of paper and a printing press. It is necessary, at least, that the credit of the Government should be sound, and for a long period the credit of Argentina was anything but that. But her debt has been reduced.

The cost of living in Buenos Aires is extremely high; almost double that of New Zealand. The wealthy citizens do not mind, but the burden presses heavily and unjustly on the poor. The chief factor is the high rents. These are caused in their turn by the heavy taxation which is necessary to keep up the splendor of the city. Another cause is the expense of paving the streets. This is done with square blocks of stone, which have to be brought long distances by rail. On the plains, or pampas, as they are called, there is no stone whatever, only deep red-colored soil stretching for hundreds of miles without a pebble. Out in the suburbs of the city the pavements are laid abruptly, and afterwards there is only the soft soil of their natural camp roads. In dry weather, this is changed into blinding clouds of dust, and in wet weather the roads are almost impassable. Consequently people are willing to pay any price in order to be on the paved streets, and rents in the city are very high. Any sort of a house which could be called a home cannot be rented at less than £2 or £3 a week. The prices of food and clothing are also far above those ruling in New Zealand. The incomes of the higher grades of employes in industries and commerce are on a high scale, but artisans and unskilled workers are very badly paid.

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of Argentine life in the cities is the cafés. These are luxuriously appointed places, with abundance of plate glass and gilding. The system of meals in Spanish-speaking countries is very different from our custom. The average British subject likes to start the day with a good breakfast, but the Argentine is satisfied with a cup of coffee and a morsel of bread in the morning. Then, between 11.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. he takes the meal which he calls breakfast, and at 7.30 p.m. dinner. Both these meals are very important functions indeed, and the Argentine will linger over them for an hour and a half.

(To be continued.)

Over-Taxation of Ireland

Mr. M. Nolan, in the course of a letter to the *Hawke's Bay Herald*, deals in a very able manner with England's indebtedness to Ireland. Mr. Nolan's letter was written in answer to an article that appeared in the *Herald*, in which it was stated that the Irish people had had many grievances in the past, but that at the present time they were better off than the people of England. Mr. Nolan writes: "There be a people on earth to-day who, from every social, civil, and political aspect, have reason to be contented and happy that people is the English. If they are not, it is their own fault, and no one else's; they are the framers of their own destiny. They make their own laws, and live under a constitution admittedly the finest in the world. On the other hand, the Irish people to-day are the most heavily taxed in the British Empire, with a perpetual Coercion Act always hanging over them, by which they can at any moment be deprived of their liberties by a stroke of the Lord Lieutenant's pen, and incarcerated without a trial." Mr. Nolan then reminds the readers of the *Herald* of the different Acts of repression passed during the reign of the late Queen, of the fearful mortality of the famine years, the terrible evictions, and the forced emigration of the people. At the time of the Union (continues Mr. Nolan) Ireland owed £28,000,000, and England £446,000,000. The terms of the Union were that England was to bear, for ever, the burden of her £446,000,000, and consequently the burden of its interest, also, from all of which Ireland was to be freed. It was expressly stated by the seventh clause in the Act that Ireland was never to be taxed beyond her relative taxable capacity to that of England, and that the ratio of her contributions must ever correspond to her wealth and prosperity, that is to say, to her wealth as compared with that of England. At the present time the wealth of England has grown to be about thirty times that of Ireland, while the latter country is mulcted to the tune of one-eleventh of the whole taxation. In other words she is paying over £9 in every £100 of the taxes, where she should be paying less than £5. The manipulation of this business is delightfully simple and English-like. In 1817 it was decided in London to amalgamate the Irish debt with that of England, and the two Exchequers were united in order to simplify the system of book-keeping at the Treasury, but chiefly, of course, for the benefit of Ireland, the effect of which was soon apparent. In 1793, a few years before the Union, when Ireland had her own Parliament, her taxation was 9s 2d per head of her population, while in 1895 it had risen

to £2 9s 2d per head, and this with an ever-decreasing population, while during the same period the taxation in England had been steadily decreasing with an ever-increasing population. At the present moment Ireland is the most heavily taxed country in Europe, and the poorest, while England is the most lightly taxed and the richest. Repeated efforts were made by O'Connell to bring an inquiry into the fiscal relations of the two countries, but these were unsuccessful. In 1894 a Royal Commission, consisting principally of financial experts and Englishmen, was appointed to inquire into the matter. After long and careful consideration, eleven out of the thirteen members reported that for the previous 50 years or more Ireland had been paying £2,750,000 a year an excessive and unjustifiable taxation. And this excessive and unjustifiable taxation, instead of being reduced or taken off, is going on to-day. Not only that, but it has been increased considerably. It was in 1864, as Mr. Gladstone said in his speech in 1907, Mr. John Redmond declared that England owed Ireland a debt of between £400,000,000 and £500,000,000 drawn from her in excessive taxation. In his Home Rule speech in April 1886 Mr. Gladstone said that the civil charges per capita at that time in Great Britain were 8s 2d, but in Ireland they were 16s. And, according to Mr. Redmond, these charges have increased in Ireland by 63 per cent, while they have been steadily reduced in England. During the twenty years ended 1872, Mr. Gladstone took out of Ireland over £45,000,000 more taxes than had been contributed during the previous twenty years ended 1852. Sir R. Giffen stated in his evidence before the financial relations Commission that at the time of the Union the relative capital of Ireland to that of Great Britain was as 1 to 30, but at that time it was as 1 to 30; yet her taxation was as 1 to 11.

The Need of the Press

The exhortations of Pope Leo XIII on the subject of Catholic newspapers have been collected in a pamphlet of forty pages, *Le Journal et la Presse*, and published by the *Revue de Paris*. The following are a couple of brief extracts: "With no less insistence we renew our advice that you should labor with as much zeal as prudence for the publication and diffusion of Catholic newspapers. For, in these days people form their opinions and regulate their lives almost entirely by their reading of newspapers. (Letter to the Bishops of Brazil, 1890.)"

Among the means best adapted to the defence of religion there is none in our opinion more efficacious, and more suited to the present time than that which consists in meeting the press by the press, and thus frustrating the schemes of the enemies of religion. (Letter to the Bishops of Vienna, 1883.)

The saying of the same Pontiff that a Catholic newspaper in a parish is a personal mission is well known. And his successor is no less emphatic in his exhortations to support the Catholic press. "It will be remembered how he once took his stylus out of the hand of a Catholic journalist kneeling at his feet, and blessed it with these words: 'Thou shalt be a blessing to the world to-day, and thy predecessors used to consecrate the swords and armor of Christian warriors. I am happy to draw down blessings on the pen of a Christian journalist.'"

Nor need we repeat the Holy Father's words, recently uttered and often quoted in which he pointed out that the building of churches, the preaching of missions, and the foundation of schools would be a vain task unless supplemented by a sound Catholic press.

If we turn from the Pope to the Bishops we find them urging the same thing. Cardinal Pie writes as follows: — "The most religious people in the world, the most submissive to authority, if they only read bad newspapers will at the end of thirty years become a nation of unbelievers and rebels. Humanly speaking, no preaching can hold its own against a corrupt press." Cardinal Laboure is even more emphatic: — "The hour for building churches and decorating altars is past. There is only one matter which is urgent, and that is to cover the country with papers which shall teach the truth once again." Cardinal Lavigerie has the same message to found or support a newspaper destined to enlighten and reclaim men's minds, in a sense, as necessary and as meritorious as the building of a church.

The Bishop of Dijon says that the support of the press is more important even than that of the schools. The Bishop of Blois says that it is a form of apostolate which is imperiously demanded at the present day. The Bishop of Verdun says that the Pope does not merely recommend Catholics to support the Catholic press, but orders them to do so. (The Bishops of Sicily at a synod subscribed 25,000 francs towards the Catholic press.)

If we turn from the ecclesiastics to leading Catholic laymen, we find the same insistence on the need of support-