

Catholic pen to this anti-clerical—from the pen, viz., of Colonel Pilkington, C.B. Colonel Pilkington says:—'It would be impossible for anyone ignorant of Ireland to read his (Kenny's) article without being driven to the conclusion that the religion of the Irish peasantry is one of gloom and bitterness and fear; whereas Mr. Kenny must be well aware that probably there are not on earth any people more supremely happy in their religion, or any whose religious outlook is brighter. Then as to the priests themselves. Mr. Kenny, dwelling only on their faults, and illustrating these only by the worst examples, causes them to appear as monsters of insincerity and greed, propagating superstitious terror; though he would probably admit that, on the whole, it would be hard to find a more earnest clerical body, or one more efficient in maintaining a spirit of beautiful and unaffected devotion and a high standard of practical morality among their flocks.'

Catholic Tolerance

We (*Catholic Herald*) have frequently noted the nomination of Protestant members of Parliament by Irish priests in Irish constituencies overwhelmingly Catholic. The latest instance is North-east Cork, where the retiring Nationalist member, Mr. Abraham, Protestant Home Ruler, was opposed by Mr. William O'Brien. Mr. Abraham was nominated by Father Kennedy, and at a meeting held in his support in Fermoy the chair was taken by the Very Rev. Canon Rice, who was supported by a number of other Catholic clergy in the district. In South Fermanagh, again, where the Nationalist nominee was Mr. Jeremiah Jordan (a Methodist in religion) Father Duffy presided at a great meeting held in Mr. Jordan's support in Enniskillen, Father McGinity, Newtownbutler, and Canon Keown, V.G., Enniskillen, also speaking in Mr. Jordan's behalf.

Election of Mayor

Meetings were held all over Ireland on January 18 for the selection of chairmen of the local municipal councils, including three Lord Mayors and eight Mayors. The result was—Dublin, Councillor M. Doyle elected Lord Mayor; Belfast, Councillor R. J. McMordie (installed); Cork, Councillor Donovan. The new Mayors are as follow—Derry, Mr. McFarland; Limerick, Councillor T. Ryan; Waterford, Councillor T. Hackett; Drogheda, Councillor J. J. Callan; Wexford, Alderman Sinnott; Sligo, Alderman Higgins; Kilkenny, Alderman Potter; Clonmel, Mr. J. Meehan.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor's Majority

One of the most astonishing returns of the whole campaign (says the *Freeman's Journal*) is that of the Scotland Division, where Mr. T. P. O'Connor's opponent, Mr. Moy, only succeeded in polling 776 votes. This is only little more than half the figures polled by the Unionists in previous contests, and is all the more remarkable considering the fact that owing to Mr. O'Connor's absence in America on behalf of the Irish Party he was only able to take a personal part in the campaign during the last fortnight. The Liverpool Irishmen seem to have been determined that their member's interests should not suffer by his absence, and the result of their efforts and of the energy displayed by Mr. O'Connor since his return, is shown not only in the smallness of the Unionist vote, but also in the fact that Mr. O'Connor's own poll showed an increase even over that of 1906. This is Mr. O'Connor's seventh time of election for the Scotland Division, for which he has now sat close on twenty-five years.

Help from New Zealand

We (*Irish Weekly* of January 22) received the following interesting and important cablegram at an early hour on Tuesday morning from Napier, New Zealand:—*Irish News*, Belfast. Cabled Joseph Devlin £75 to-day, Party Fund.—J. Gleeson.' Mr. Gleeson is a splendid young Irish-Australian, the son of a Munster exile who has prospered in New Zealand. He spent several months in Ireland during the year 1908, and addressed a number of Nationalist meetings in various parts of this country and Great Britain. Ireland's sons abroad watch the fortunes of her struggle for liberty with a generous and abiding interest.

The Comet

The comet was visible to the naked eye in various parts of Ireland on January 21. A Queenstown message stated that the comet appeared in the western sky, and was a brilliant spectacle while it lasted. The extreme clearness of the atmosphere gave people in all districts about Cork Harbor the fullest opportunity for seeing the heavenly luminant. To the naked eye it looked like a huge falling rocket. It remained visible for about thirty minutes.

THE LATEST TABLET PUBLICATION.

'Secular versus Religious Education: A Discussion.' Edited (and, as to its greatest part, written) by Rev. H. W. Cleary, D.D. 212 pages, stiff paper wrapper. Price 1/-, posted 1s 3d. Cardinal Moran writes of it: 'I have received the brilliant pamphlet, *Secular versus Religious Education*. It is a most useful and instructive contribution to the educational controversy, and cannot fail to do a deal of good.'

Apply MANAGER, TABLET, Dunedin.

People We Hear About

March 2 was the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the late Pope Leo XIII.

Mr. Francis McLaren, who was returned for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire, is the youngest member elected to the new Parliament, being only twenty-three years old.

Count Plunkett, the Director of the Irish National Museum, lectured recently on Thomas Frye before the Architectural Association of Ireland. Frye, who was born in Dublin in 1710, became a famous engraver; and he invented Bow china, the first porcelain manufactured in England.

James D. O'Connell, grand-nephew of Daniel O'Connell, died at Los Angeles on December 22. Mr. O'Connell was forty-five years old, and went to America when he was a boy with James J. Hill, the railroad magnate. For several years he was connected with the railroad business, and for the past nine years had resided in California, being in the insurance business in San Francisco until after the earthquake, when he went to Los Angeles.

Mr. Joseph King, who has retained North Somerset for the Liberals, is the only blind man who faced the electorate as a candidate. Despite his loss of sight, he leads a most active life, and is an accomplished musician. As a speaker he is eloquent and impressive. Former blind members of the House of Commons were Mr. William Macdonald, who sat for Queen's County for several years as a Nationalist, and Dr. Tindal Robertson, who at one time represented Brighton as a Conservative.

King Albert of Belgium is one of the most versatile of Royalties. His Majesty is thirty years of age, and a few months ago he astonished the Belgian Senate by making a speech upon the shipping industry which showed he had special knowledge. The Prince, it transpired, had worked up the material in the guise of a reporter, his visiting card for the purpose describing him as a member of the reporting staff of a maritime newspaper. His Majesty is one of the best shots in Europe, and, like his uncle, the late King, is an architect of no mean ability.

The Hon. Archie Gordon, whose death recently was the result of a motor-car accident, was the youngest of Lord Aberdeen's three sons, and, like his father, had a strong taste for things mechanical, so much so that along with his brother Dudley he served for some time in one of the shipbuilding yards in Aberdeen as an ordinary apprentice. The two lads were treated in exactly the same way as all their comrades, going to work at six in the morning and submitting themselves cheerfully to all the other rules and regulations. Mr. Archibald Gordon was also an excellent shot, and did well at Bisley.

The new King of the Belgians is the tallest monarch in Europe, for he is 6ft 3in in height. It is a curious fact that the majority of reigning monarchs are deficient in stature and shorter than their consorts. King Edward is rather shorter than Queen Alexandra. Czar Nicholas II. looks quite small by the side of the Czarina, and so does the King of Denmark beside his Queen. The King of Italy hardly reaches to the shoulder of Queen Helena. King Alfonso of Spain is half a head shorter than Queen Victoria Eugenie, and the Kaiser always insists on the German Empress sitting down when they are photographed together, because she has slightly the advantage of him in height.

In a letter to a friend in Sydney, Father Fitzgerald, O.F.M., writes:—'I heard Rev. Robert Hugh Benson lecture last night on Spiritualism, and to-night I heard him on Lourdes. It is a great treat to hear him. He is medium height, slender build, longish, oval head, covered with a profusion of brown hair flattened down. You would pass him a dozen times and never think him anybody. His lectures are hard-headed, scientific, relentlessly logical, and profoundly religious. All these qualities he especially displayed in his magnificent lecture on Lourdes. He spent four days there, and nine hours each day in the medical examining bureau, and tells in unadorned language what he saw. He has no oratorical gifts or graces, natural or acquired. He has no time for them; he is absorbed in his subject. Several miracles occurred during his visit, and it brings tears to the eyes of all to hear his description of such occurrences, which took place at the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, in which he was a participant. He brings the event before you just as it occurred, for he is a master of language, and an artist in the use of it. He makes no attempt to make an impression, but gives you the idea that he has a message weighing on his heart, and he pours it out in a stream of fast-flowing words, and says in half an hour what ordinarily would take an hour and a half.'

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