

Irish News

CLARE—A Lady Clerk of Union

Miss E. M. Bennett, daughter of the late Clerk of Union in Ennis, has been elected his successor. There were five candidates, and Miss Bennett's election was the cause of much popular rejoicing. She had acted as Clerk since her father's death.

CORK—An Incident of the Famine

With reference to the death of Mr. Alex. James, which occurred recently in Queenstown, it is interesting to record that he was the last survivor of a body of young Queenstown men who in 1849 stopped the brig Westmoreland, which was laden with potatoes and about to proceed to the British Channel with her cargo, which she had taken on board at Midleton. Hunger was rampant at the time in Cove—as Queenstown was then named—and a body of young Cove boys volunteered to board the Westmoreland, which was lying in the Whitegate roads, as it was a cruel thing to see food being taken out of the port when it was so much needed at home. The young men got on board the brig and brought her to Fitzpatrick's quay, now the C.B. and P. Railway depot, at Queenstown, where they uncovered the hatches and called on all people who were in want to supply themselves free with the brig's cargo. A huge crowd assembled round the vessel and carried away with them as much as they could take of the potatoes. The small force of police then at Cove were unable to cope with the matter, and the military at Spike Island were sent for, and having arrived, the officer in charge, on seeing the pitiful condition of the people, declined to use the force at his disposal in combating the people, and unbuckling his sword, tendered it to the magistrate present—viz., W. B. Verling. The justice also declined to interfere, and the people thus having free access, the cargo of potatoes was unloaded quickly.

DERRY—Clerical Influence

A talented Irish Protestant gentleman, Mr. William J. Johnston, B.L., who was the Liberal candidate at the recent election for the representation of South Derry, and who was born in Ulster and has resided and worked all his life in his native province (writing in the *London Nation*), explains the causes which led to the local Liberal defeat:—This rather disastrous result is to be accounted for, to some extent, by plural voting; but in the main it is to be attributed to the reign of terror that was induced in these constituencies by a number of fanatical Presbyterian clergymen and other firebrands who were determined that the Presbyterian Liberals in Ulster should be intimidated from voting for the Liberal candidates. This system began with a fiery call to arms, delivered by the Rev. Dr. McDermott in his church in Belfast, on Sunday, November 27. In many instances Dr. McDermott's clerical followers made a personal canvass of those members of their congregations who were suspected of being Home Rulers. In every instance they "reasoned" with their people, whilst in many cases they did not scruple to base their appeal on personal and social grounds. The clerical influence that was thus exercised during the contest will have in the future an effect upon the interests of Presbyterianism in Ireland not contemplated by those who were responsible for it.

DOWN—A Prominent Citizen Passes away

Profound sorrow is expressed throughout the district centred by Banbridge at the death of William Smith, M.D., M.Ch., L.M., J.P., who passed away at his residence, Newry House, Banbridge, on December 31. He had been a member of the Board of Guardians and the Banbridge Town Commissioners. Deceased was an exemplary and practical Catholic and an uncompromising and ardent Nationalist, and was a close personal friend of Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P.

Election Experiences

The experience of my friend, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, the popular and witty member for South Down, in being able to fight a contest without personal expense, is as pleasant as it is rare (says a writer in the *London Daily News*). But I fancy it happened before, and in the same county, too. The circumstances, however, were very different. Just a century ago there was an election in Downpatrick, the county town of Down, and on the day of the nominations one of the candidates was delayed on the road and ran the risk of being late. John Wilson Croker, afterwards the 'Quarterly' reviewer, a friend of the belated candidate, happened to be in town, and he was put on the hustings to address the electors and thus 'kill time.' To qualify him to speak, it was necessary that he should be nominated—he was duly proposed and seconded, and he received one other vote—three in all. In due time the missing candidate arrived and was duly nominated. Then the fun began. It was a lively election, as was customary in those days, and after all was over there was an election petition. The result was that the elected member was unseated, but as the conduct of the petitioner was equally bad the seat was not awarded to him. Then it was sud-

denly discovered that there was a third candidate, John Wilson Croker, who had received three votes, and whose electoral conduct was exemplary. His unseated or defeated friend expected that Croker would make no claim; but that gentleman, declaring that he would never desert his faithful constituents—three in number!—claimed the seat, and was duly elected, without cost, of course. Croker cut some figure in Parliament, from which, as a strong Tory, he retired on the passing of the Reform Act. As a writer he was best known for his edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson*.

DUBLIN—The National University

Mr. J. G. Swift MacNeill, K.C., M.P., who is already Professor of Constitutional Law in the National University of Ireland, has been appointed by the Commissioners to the Clerkship of Convocation. Mr. A. E. Clery, LL.D., B.L., has been appointed Professor of Law of Property and Law of Contracts, University College, Dublin.

LIMERICK—A Humorous Suggestion

At the meeting of the Limerick Harbor Board, Councillor T. Ryan (Mayor) presiding, a letter was read from the military authorities relative to some old cannon that lie on the ground owned by the board, and which forms part of the premises of the now disused Militia Staff Barracks. During the discussion Mr. Roche asked if there had been an application from the North of Ireland for the guns. If Captain Craig knew they were here he might apply for them. The Mayor: Guns are booming just now.

Memorial to a Priest

At Abbeyfeale, County Limerick, on Thursday, December 29, a splendid monument, erected to the memory of the late Father William Casey, for a quarter of a century pastor of the parish, was unveiled in the presence of a vast assemblage of people, gathered together from Limerick, Kerry, Cork, and other parts of Munster. It was arranged that the panegyric should be delivered by Very Rev. Patrick Beecher, D.D., M.A., Maynooth College, but an accident which he met with prevented his attendance, and his place was taken by Very Rev. John T. Murphy, C.S.Sp., Provincial, Blackrock College. The chair was occupied on the occasion by Very Rev. Patrick Lee, P.P., successor to the late Father Casey. Eloquent tributes were paid to the memory of the great priest, who during his life did herculean work for Faith and Fatherland; by Father Murphy, and other clergymen and laymen who knew his worth. But the inscriptions on the beautiful bronze statue of Father Casey, which are both in Irish and English, epitomise the history of his labors as well as the most eloquent of orations. They read as follow: 'His grateful fellow-countrymen at home and beyond the seas have erected this monument to the memory of the Rev. Father Casey, for a quarter of a century prior to his death the parish priest of this parish. He found his people struggling in the toils of landlordism: he left them owners of the soil and freemen. By his death religion lost a shining light, the cause of temperance a strenuous advocate, the poor, without distinction of creed, an ever-helpful friend, and Ireland a devoted son. But his memory, which will live for ever in the hearts of the people, is a rich, ennobling, and inspiring inheritance.'

LOUTH—The Parliamentary Seat

Several candidates have already been mentioned in connection with the vacancy which may be created in North Galway, owing to the election of Mr. Hazleton for both his old constituency and North Louth. Amongst the names which have been brought prominently before the public are those of Mr. J. M. Briscoe, secretary of the Town Tenants' League; Mr. Frank McDermott, son of the late Mr. McDermott, K.C., formerly Attorney-General for Ireland; Mr. Farrell McDonnell, a local shopkeeper and landlord; Mr. Frank Guy (who has been recommended by Right Rev. Dr. Clancy, Bishop of Elphin), and Mr. Peter Newell, retired Inspector of National Schools. A rumor is, however, prevalent that Mr. Hazleton will resign his seat for North Louth if his action in so doing will have the effect of disposing of Mr. Healy's election petition. As Mr. Healy has not claimed the seat, this would necessitate another election.

MAYO—A Hearty Welcome Home

Very Rev. M. J. M'Hugh, Crossboyne, County Mayo, has returned to his parish after a very successful mission, extending to almost three years, in the United States, in aid of the Castlebar New Church Fund. Father M'Hugh has been heartily welcomed home by his parishioners.

Old Age Pensions

The Poor Law relief disqualification, which expired on December 31 (says the *Freeman's Journal*), will bring within the benefits of the Old Age Pensions Act in the County Mayo over one thousand, at the very lowest estimate, of the deserving poor who, through receipt of a miserable pittance from the rates, had forfeited their title to the larger Treasury grant. Almost all the claims of these old people have now been dealt with by the various sub-committees in the county, and 95 per cent. at least of the total number have been passed at the full amount, the remaining 5 per cent. being adjourned for further evidence of age. There was not as great a difficulty as was