

Irish News

ANTRIM—Poverty in Belfast

Now and again we hear of the alleged prosperity of Belfast as compared with other parts of Ireland, but the speakers at a meeting of mission workers held on March 2 had another tale to tell. Lady Whitla, who presided, asked how was it that under the flag of England there should be such squalor, distress, misery, and sickening sights, such as they all knew were festering round them in the city. Rescue work, Lady Whitla continued, dealt with the result of sin, and she thought they should all try to cope with it, and bring home to the public the wretched conditions under which their poorer brothers and sisters live. Let them try to picture the homes of the poor mill workers when they return from their day's toil. The ordeal she was afraid would be too much for the bravest of them. A great many people would not believe that such conditions existed in their midst, but she had personal knowledge of the fact. How could a woman look after her home and her daughters if she had to be out all day working to keep the family in food? The poor of Belfast were living under terrible conditions. The owners of prize cattle, dogs, or cats would not allow these animals to live under the conditions that were countenanced by the city fathers in this centre of civilisation. Mr. J. J. Bell, in the course of a review of the work done by the society, said if they were to remove the people from the slums all creeds must unite in the work. There were many causes that drove girls to the slums. One was the dancing saloons, which were a curse in Belfast. Another great cause that drove the girls of Belfast to the streets and the slums was the starvation wages paid for their work. He had come across cases where girls were paid at the rates of 5s and 6s a week. He asked the employer of Belfast would 5s and 6s or 7s a week keep their wives and daughters. Many of these people who paid low wages were professing Christians. It pained him to say so, but nevertheless it was true.

CORK—Christian Brothers' Centenary

At a large and representative gathering of the clergy and laity of Cork, held with the object of inaugurating in a worthy manner the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Christian Brothers Schools in the southern metropolis, much enthusiasm was displayed and a tribute was paid to the great teaching Order. Mr. Maurice Healy, M.P., said what the Christian Brothers had done was done without one penny of State aid, and through the voluntary contributions of the poor. He sometimes read discussions that took place between clergymen of other denominations, and he was always proud to see the handsome way in which they spoke of the teaching imparted by the Christian Brothers. Very Rev. Canon McNamara said the Christian Brothers performed noble work in a devoted and efficient manner. The priests' work would be hard indeed only for the great assistance rendered by them. The Brothers always kept religion in the forefront.

DERRY—Sanitation and Religion

Derry Corporation met specially on March 1 to appoint a sanitary sub-officer at 30s a week, when a letter was received from an applicant, who reminded the Council that twice before he had applied to it for a similar position, having recommendations from the Assistant Executive Sanitary Officer in Dublin, and that the Council had then interviewed him to find out (presumably) if he were "a proper sort of person to nose out the disease and dirt-infested spots of Derry," but that, instead, the Council heatedly debated 'the nature, length, strength, and breadth of his religious convictions, which were finally disapproved of,' it being decided that he had not 'the proper theology for examining Derry dirt.' 'I may apologetically explain,' the writer went on, 'that when passing my examination I was not asked a single question on any theological subject. . . . I must also apologise for my name being O'Brien, as I admit it is a poor recommendation in a city like Derry. . . . Should your Council see fit to appoint me this time, I can assure them I shall not indulge in the popular pastime of some Derry people—viz., religious mud-slinging, nor shall I take any steps (of which intention I was apparently suspected before) to bring over the Pope and saddle him on Derry by virtue of my position of enormous power and influence of a Sanitary Sub-Officer. Neither would I endeavour to dethrone his Majesty King George in favor of the Stuart claimant, whose family, you remember—as is occasionally mentioned in Derry—got knocked out at the Boyne. If elected, I shall entirely confine myself to the useful and humble work of clearing out Derry's drains, dirt, and disease, as a Sanitary Sub-Officer should.' The Mayor said the letter was a very good one. It was decided to appoint Mr P. Rooney, Derry, to the vacancy.

DUBLIN—A Venerable Christian Brother

His numerous friends and admirers will learn with keen regret of the death of Rev. Brother Swan, which took place in the O'Brien Institute, Fairview, Clontarf, Dublin, on March 5, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. Deceased was born in Dublin, received his education in the celebrated O'Connell Schools, North Richmond street, and

at the age of sixteen entered the novitiate of the Christian Brothers' Community, then situated at Mount Sion, Waterford. Liverpool was the scene of his early labors as a teacher, and in that great centre of industry, where so many of his fellow countrymen have made a home, he toiled in season and out of season, day and night, until his health gave way, and he was recalled to Dublin. He was appointed to the staff of his Alma Mater, and there he worked for forty years, with great credit to himself and inestimable advantage to the thousands of Dublin boys who passed through the schools. Brother Swan, after so many years of labor in his native city, was selected by his superiors to fill the position of President of Prior Park College, Bath, and for seven years he worked with great success in his new sphere of labor, until his health gave way and he was in consequence recalled to Ireland. During the last seven years of his fruitful career, Brother Swan was President of the O'Brien Institute, Marino, Clontarf, where he found most congenial occupation in assisting the orphan and training him to become a worthy member of the community in which his lot was cast in after life. For sixty years he devoted his ability and great talent to the education of the young with marvellous success, and his popularity was not confined to his pupils, for his unfailing courtesy won him hosts of friends in all circles.

DUBLIN—National Health Association

His Excellency Lord Aberdeen, who was the principal speaker at the annual Charter Day dinner of the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, recently, in replying to the toast of his health, referred to the work of the Women's National Health Association, and said that during a recent visit to France Lady Aberdeen and he had an opportunity of visiting a magnificent sanatorium which had recently been erected near Dunkirk entirely for the benefit of little sufferers from tuberculosis. It had developed from very humble efforts and from the experience of how efficacious such seaside treatment proved. They felt very envious at such generous arrangements, and in expressing that feeling the founder of the institution offered to take in any Irish children that they might send at the cost of a shilling per day. They were trying to evolve a scheme whereby the Women's National Health Association might take advantage of this offer and send batches of children under the charge of Irish nurses to Dunkirk, provided that the modest cost of their maintenance could be raised. Their idea was that some arrangement should be made whereby the children could be conveyed by sea direct from Irish ports to Dunkirk; and the association hoped that the medical profession, and especially the surgeons of Ireland, would be good enough to co-operate in making this proposal practical and in choosing such patients as would be most likely to benefit by it.

GALWAY—A Rector's Tribute

A public meeting has been held in the Town Hall, Galway, with the object of taking steps to commemorate the approaching golden jubilee of Very Rev. Peter Dooley, V.F. There was a large attendance which included, amongst other non-Catholics, the Rev. J. Fleetwood Berry, Protestant rector of the parish, who, in commending the project, said that for twenty years he had known Father Dooley and had always found him a kind, courageous, Christian gentleman. They all rejoiced in that opportunity of showing their appreciation of his work and worth, and he gladly joined the committee appointed to carry out the object in view.

The Holy Father's Thanks

The Archbishop of Tuam has received a letter from the Pope, written in his own hand, thanking in the warmest terms his Grace and his faithful clergy and people for their generous offering of Peter's Pence and most cordially bestowing on all who subscribed the Apostolic Benediction.

LEITRIM—At the Heels of a Political Party

The Rev. Mr. Orr, a Church of Ireland clergyman, Drumkeeran, Co. Leitrim, in the *Church of Ireland Gazette* says that the Church of Ireland has allowed herself to be dragged at the heels of one particular political party. She has suffered herself to be used as a political agent by those who were thinking only of their own selfish interests. All this has been against her true development on spiritual lines. Things temporal have been mistaken for things eternal, with the natural result. Unless the Church of Ireland has the courage to shake herself free from these accretions and turn her attention to her own proper functions, the light that is in her must become darkness.

LIMERICK—A Protestant's Experience

At the meeting of the Limerick Corporation Mr. William Halliday was re-installed City High Sheriff for the ensuing year. The Mayor (Councillor Ryan), who presided, said the election of Mr. Halliday, who was a Protestant, was a complete vindication of a democratic and Nationalist Corporation, and proved that religious and political intolerance did not exist in Limerick, and when Home Rule came all would unite in the building up of the country for the benefit of every creed and class. The High Sheriff, in reply, said that as reference was made to Home Rule being very near, he desired to say that he had read Mr. Dundon's (the Law Agent) speech the other day, and was proud of his allusion to Protestants. He hoped his words would reach the hearts of the more prejudiced members of the Protestant faith who were opposed to Home Rule. The action of that Corporation in electing him High Sheriff