

Here and There

An Ocean Sirine.—Halfway between Madagascar and Australia, in the Indian Ocean, there is a small, rocky and sterile island named Kerguelen. Recently the French Minister of Public Instruction sent a scientific mission to Kerguelen to prospect for oil and coal. The mission is headed by M. Etienne Peau, who is accompanied by his 26-year-old son. In order to obtain the blessing of God in their mission, before leaving Havre the scientists obtained a large figure of Christ, made of cast iron, which was solemnly blessed by the pastor of the church of Notre Dame, Abbe Zlheume. Upon reaching port Jeanne d'Arc, on the southern coast of the island, M. Peau had a large cross made of driftwood which had been washed ashore. The figure of Christ had been mounted on this cross which has been erected on a rocky height. At the foot of the calvary an inscription, written in French and English, and enclosed in a bottle, has been left to recommend the calvary to the pious care of those who may come to the island after the mission has returned to France.

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Rev. Charles Wolfe: The Author of a World-renowned Poem.—The author of the famous poem, "The Burial of Sir John Moore," (writes P. A. Philbin in the *Irish Weekly*), was born at Blackhall, Co. Kildare, in 1791, and after studying at Trinity College he was ordained to the Ministry of the Episcopalian Church and was appointed to a curacy in Ballyclog. Afterwards he became rector of the parish of Donoughmore. The world-famous poem, which he composed in 1817, has conferred a sort of dual immortality on the author and the subject; although in truth Moore was worthy for he was an able and chivalrous soldier. He and his friend Sir Ralph Abercrombie served in Ireland during the rebellion of 1798, and both won a reputation for humanity that was not shared generally by the British officers of the period.

Connection with Wolfe Tone.

The poet also could trace two vague connections with that turbulent time. It was from his father, Theobald Wolfe, that Theobald Wolfe Tone, the founder of the United Irishmen, derived his Christian names, and the father was also a first cousin of Arthur Wolfe, Viscount Kilwarden, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who lost his life in the Emmet uprising in 1803. The poet was one of a typical Irish family consisting of eleven children, and was the youngest of eight sons. After the father's death in 1799 the family removed to England, but Charles returned as a student to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1809, and was ordained in 1817. During his college career he was an active member of the Historical Society, founded by Edmund Burke, an association rich in brilliant traditions and numbering amongst its membership such great names as those of the Emmets, Wolfe Tone, Charles Kendal Bushe, and William Conyngham Plunket. These eight college years included practically all the years of his poetical industry. From the time of his ordination in 1817 until his death in 1823 his literary activities consisted almost exclusively in the composition of his sermons which were good but were not of extraordinary merit.

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Death of Lord Acton.—By the death of Lord Acton the Catholic body loses one of its representatives in the House of Lords, and the British diplomatic service loses one of its most trusted servants. The late peer was born in Bavaria, his mother being a member of the Bavarian nobility. The public mind became somewhat hazy as to the nationality of the Acton family, and apart from a special Act of Parliament defining the family's nationality, there is no doubt as to its English origin. Lord Acton was head of an ancient Shropshire family which received a baronetcy from King Charles I. Some of its members sought service on the Continent, and one of them was raised to the rank of Cardinal. The late Lord Acton was the second Baron. His father, the famous Cambridge Professor of History and a man of colossal learning, was raised to the peerage by Mr. Gladstone.

Secularising the Grande Chartreuse.—The Bishop of Grenoble has made a vigorous protest against turning the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse into a home for aged teachers, thus making the return of the Carthusians impossible. The Council General of Isère, which is largely under the domination of the radicals, has secured an option on the monastery for eighteen years, at a rental of 5500 francs, and it proposes to instal within the cloisters sick and aged teachers. The monastery, which was built to suit the particular needs of the Carthusians, is totally unsuited for the purpose designed by the Council, and in addition the climate would be far from beneficial. The aim of all this is quite clear—says the Bishop of Grenoble in his protest. The Chartreuse must be occupied, in order to prevent the Carthusians taking possession of it at some future date. The Bishop denounces the action of the Council as purely sectarian, and declares that not only the local inhabitants, but tourists coming from afar, wish to see the Carthusian monks back in their own proper home.

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The Pope's Coachman.—An interesting little festivity was (says the *Irish Catholic*) recently celebrated in what we might describe as the family life of the Holy Father's household—the eightieth birthday of the coachman who has driven the Popes from Pius IX. to Pius XI. Rinaldo Giacchini has driven Pius IX. through the streets of Rome in the gorgeous pageantry of former times, and accompanied him during his exile at Gaeta. Within the walls of the Vatican, he has continued to drive Leo XIII., Pius X., and Benedict XV. His more humble contemporaries in the profession might find consolation in hearing described the bitter feelings experienced by the veteran at seeing the automobile take its place within the precincts of even the Vatican. Notwithstanding his venerable age, he still, after 62 years' service, continues at his post, and when Pius XI. drives out around his little realm, the faithful Rinaldo mounts the box and takes the reins in his firm and practised hands.

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Cardinal Confirms Over 1000 Converts.—His Eminence the Cardinal (says a Boston (U.S.A.) message under date June 28) administered the Sacrament of Confirmation on Tuesday morning at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross to 1000 converts who have been received into the Church in the archdiocese of Boston during the past year. The solemn and impressive ceremony was conducted in the presence of a great congregation of approximately 4000 people who had gathered to witness this striking demonstration of faith in this archdiocese. Since the inauguration by his Eminence of Confirmation of Converts as an annual event taking place at the Cathedral, the increasing number of those who, year by year, have entered the Church, gives vigorous testimony of the strong and lively spirit of faith which exists in the archdiocese, whose sparks have struck out and penetrated countless souls heretofore ignorant of the truth. Confirmation Mass was celebrated at 10 o'clock, just previous to the administration of the Sacrament by his Eminence.

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A Catholic Congress in Poland.—A Catholic congress will shortly be held in the old city of Tezew, which has played such an important part in the history of Poland. The town possesses magnificent churches. The most ancient is that of the Holy Cross (13th century) in which there is a relic of the true Cross. Another fine edifice is that of the Dominicans. Tezew is situated on the borders of the Vistula, and owes its industrial development to the handsome bridge which was erected in order to unite Pomerania and Eastern Prussia. This is one of the finest bridges in the world. The coming Catholic congress will be the first to be organised in Pomerania under the auspices of the Catholic League. It will be opened with Holy Mass, which will be celebrated by his Eminence the Cardinal Primate of Poland. There will be several meetings during the congress, and addresses delivered by prominent Polish speakers.

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