

CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—New Zealand papers which have recently reached the United Kingdom contain reports of a debate in Parliament in which it appears to have been stated that proportional representation was a failure in the election of New South Wales Legislative Assembly last April. This is very far from being the case.

It is true that the smooth working of the system was greatly prejudiced, as far as the voters were concerned, by a regulation making compulsory the marking of preferences for every candidate. This regulation—which violates the freedom of the elector in the exercise of his franchise—was maintained in spite of strong efforts of supporters of proportional representation. It was, without doubt, the cause of disfranchising tens of thousands of voters. Apart, however, from this ill-inspired regulation, the system gave excellent results. True, it produced a nearly even balance of parties in the Assembly, but for the reason that the main currents of opinion were nearly evenly balanced in the country. Proportional representation did not place a minority party in power with a large majority of seats, as did the "first-past-the-post" system in New Zealand at the last election.

The general fairness with which proportional representation worked in New South Wales may be judged from the following table showing the result for the three greatest parties:—

New South Wales—Election 1920.

Party	Votes Polled	Seats Won	Votes per Seat
Official Labor	241,348	42	5,748
Nationalist	164,176	28	5,863
Progressive	92,185	15	5,479

Electors in New Zealand may like to compare these results with those of their own last General Election, which were approximately as follows:—

New Zealand—Election 1919.

Party	Votes Polled	Seats Won	Votes per Seat
Reform	194,833	44	4,428
Liberal	164,096	19	8,636
Official Labor	125,970	8	15,746

These are very striking figures. In New Zealand each supporter of the Reform Party has as much weight in Parliament as two Liberals or four members of the Labor Party. The "first-past-the-post" system is in operation also in the United Kingdom and gives results analogous to those in New Zealand elections. A vote cast for a Coalition candidate in 1918 has about four times as much weight in Parliament as a vote given to a non-Coalition candidate.

The latest application of proportional representation in parliamentary elections took place in the city of Winnipeg. The election was in every way a great success. The results were fair. Ten members were elected for the city. Some 48,000 votes were polled, and although there were 41 candidates, only 1.7 per cent. of the votes were invalid, a very good result in view of the cosmopolitan character of the electorate. The British principle of freedom in preference marking was adopted. The press was enthusiastic and proportional representation is rapidly extending in Canada.

I venture to bring these facts before the notice of your readers so that the bearings of the false step taken by New South Wales may be fully understood. Proportional representation there gave fair results—but the regulation compelling electors to mark preferences for all candidates was both unnecessary and disastrous.—Yours, Etc.,

JOHN H. HUMPHREYS,
Secretary,

The Proportional Representation Society,
82 Victoria Street, London.

October 19, 1920.

Fear not therefore . . . any trouble that may come upon you, if trouble be God's will; trouble will but prove the simplicity of your devotion to Him. When Our Lord walked on the sea, Peter went out to meet him, and "seeing the wind strong he was afraid." Doubt not that He who caught the disciple by the hand, will appear to rescue you; doubt not that He who could tread the billows so securely can, self-sustained, bear any weight your weakness throws upon Him, and can be your immovable refuge and home amid the tossing and the tumult of the storm.—Cardinal Newman.

PEOPLE WE HEAR ABOUT

The recent death of Rev. Theodore A. Metcalfe, of the archdiocese of Boston, U.S.A., leaves Cardinal Gibbons the only surviving American who attended the Vatican Council. His Eminence was then Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina, while Father Metcalfe was one of the stenographic secretaries of the Council, being later appointed Vice-Rector of the American College in Rome, and still later Chancellor of the archdiocese of Boston.

Monsignor Lemaître, Vicar Apostolic of the Sahara, has just been appointed by the Pope, co-adjutor to the Archbishop of Carthage. In mentioning this appointment, one of the Paris papers remarked M. Clemenceau, during his tenure of office as Premier of France, one day had a long conversation with Monsignor Lemaître, at the close of which he declared: "One hour's talk with this priest has taught me much more than day-long discussion with many deputies."

The Pastoral issued by the American Bishops this year, as a result of their conference in Washington last September, was so long (says the *Register*, Denver), that we are afraid few read through it, but we remember at the time that it was sure to lead to conversions among thinking non-Catholics who would peruse it. The truths set forth in it were so logically presented that this was to be naturally expected. The *Catholic Columbian* recently reported one of these happy conversions, that of Miss Ellen Gates Starr, co-founder with the famous Jane Addams of Hull House, Chicago. Miss Starr is a descendant of Mayflower stock and from the family of Ethan Allen of Ticonderoga fame. She has long been a leader in social reform, and is an authority on Italian art.

The Right Rev. Dr. Matthew Gibney, D.D., retired Bishop of Perth, West Australia, has reached the age of 85 years. He came to Australia from Ireland in 1863. As Bishop of Perth from 1887 till 1910, he was particularly vigorous, his diocese, until the foundation of the See of Geraldton in 1898, extending over the whole of West Australia. His work included the introduction of several Orders of priests and nuns and the Christian Brothers, and the foundation of schools, orphanages, reformatories, and hospitals. Since 1910 Bishop Gibney has been living in retirement and Archbishop Clune has continued and solidified his work.

The Most Rev. John Aloysius Maguire, Archbishop of Glasgow, who died at Crosshill House (towards the end of October) after a long and tedious illness was born in Glasgow on September 8, 1851. His parents were Irish, and he was the only son of a large family. Four of his sisters entered the religious life as Franciscan Nuns in the Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Glasgow. One of them held the office of Abbess for over ten years. The late Archbishop studied at St. Mungo's Academy, Glasgow, and at St. Aloysius' College, and later went to Stonyhurst. Later still he entered Glasgow University and attended the law classes with a view to entering the legal profession. When he reached his 20th year he heard the call of the Church. Relinquishing legal studies he proceeded to Rome and commenced his preparation for the priesthood. After a brilliant career at Propaganda College he was ordained to the priesthood in 1875. On his return to Scotland he was for a time assistant priest in the Cathedral parish, where he celebrated his first Mass. In 1890 he was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop at the early age of 42. In 1902, on the death of Archbishop Eyre, he was appointed to the vacant Archbishopric. A remarkable testimony to the love and esteem in which Archbishop Maguire was held was given when his remains were laid to rest in Old Dalkeith Cemetery.

"IN MEMORIAM."

"You sought the Grail, when spring was burgeoning,
Down flow'r lanes laden with the May's delight,
Where God's love lingered through the day and night,
And soul songs gave your heart a voice to sing;

Where'er was music raptly fingering
Life's melody, on heart strings dull or bright,
You sought the Grail; and oh, its gleaming white
Made beautiful your spirit's pilgriming.

Knight of the Grail, your seeking now is past,
And you have found the glory and the gleam
Of Love Eternal in the after vast,
Where singers find their songs and dreamers dream
In endless peace. The Grail is yours at last
To gaze upon in ecstasy supreme."

—DR. WILLIAM FISCHER.

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