

THE VENERABLE BISHOP O'HEA OF ROSS.

THE Dublin correspondent of the 'London Tablet' pays the following deserved tribute to the well-known Bishop O'Hea of Ross, lately deceased:—"The venerated and beloved Bishop of Ross, one of the most esteemed members of the Irish Episcopacy, has just been struck down, at a ripe age, amid the deep regret of his devoted clergy and flock, and to the sorrow of the whole Irish race where-soever dispersed. The ancient See of Ross (Carbery), where stood one of the most famous of the ancient great schools of Ireland, was united with that of Cloyne many centuries ago, although the diocese of Cork was in closer proximity. The effect of which union was that Cloyne and Ross formed a circle encompassing Cork on three sides, sweeping a curve from Youghal to Bantry, or the whole expanse of the largest county in Ireland. As the population increased, the difficulties of episcopal visitation and other circumstances led to the dissolution, and the re-establishment of the See of Ross as a distinct diocese in 1851, when Dr. Keane was consecrated its first Bishop after the separation. On the translation of Dr. Keane to the See of Cloyne in 1857, Dr. O'Hea was appointed his successor in the diocese of Ross, and consecrated Bishop 7th February, 1858, so that the late Prelate governed the See for close on nineteen years. The diocese is a small one containing only eleven parishes, of which two are Mensal, but includes two good towns, Skibbereen and Clanakilly, and also Cape Clear Island. Dr. O'Hea was a native of the diocese, and descended from a noble old Sept. During his missionary labors he served in several parishes in both Cloyne and Ross, and was always remarkable for high efficiency as a faithful and devoted priest and an effective preacher. Another prominent feature in his life was the promotion of Catholic education. But eminent as were his learning, his piety, and his episcopal zeal, the ardent patriotism of the late warm-hearted Bishop contributed considerably to intensify popular affection for him at home and abroad. With but slender income to sustain the rank or meet the calls inseparable from the episcopal office, his open-handed generosity would never permit him to let a single call of church, charity, or country pass without contributing to meet it. Mourned in Ross, regretted in Munster, and respected throughout Ireland, the venerated Bishop sunk at his post amid the sorrow of the people, and leaves his memory in benediction amongst his faithful flock in ancient Ross, to which he was devotedly attached. Death has been active lately amongst the Bishops in the province of Cashel, vacancies having occurred, within a few years, in the archiepiscopal See, and in the dioceses of Waterford and Lismore, Cloyne and Ross.

"THE DREADFUL IRISHMAN."

[*'Nation,' 9th December.*]

THE little village of Marpingen, in the now German province of Lorraine has been the scene of an occurrence which has occasioned considerable excitement in the neighborhood, and which bids fair to disturb the slumbers of even the Man of Iron. The circumstances of the event are briefly these:—

In the month of July last three of the village children professed to have witnessed an apparition of our Lady. She appeared to them, they said, in a little wood close by. They, moreover, declared that the spot where the vision occurred was marked by the appearance of a miraculous well. Of the latter part of their story there was little room for doubt. At any rate, it was true to this extent—that in the place indicated a spring of bright pure water was found bubbling forth, where certainly no spring had been known before. Naturally, the affair became the talk of the village, and gradually got noised abroad. Naturally, too, there were found some who discredited the narrative altogether, while others firmly believed in the sincerity of the children and the reality of the vision. At any rate, there was no gainsaying the sudden appearance of the well, for there it was. By-and-bye, too, it gave evidence of its miraculous origin by the cures which were worked through the agency of its waters. Its fame spread rapidly, and it soon became a place of pilgrimage, whence people flocked from the surrounding neighborhood, and from more distant places, either through devotion or curiosity, or from a sense of need.

Such an unlegalised event could not, of course, escape the lynx-eyed myrmidons of Bismarck. And now comes the Irishman on the scene, in the person of a Mr. Marlow, by birth a Corkman and by profession a journalist, and just now foreign correspondent of the 'New York Herald.' Such, at least, was the account given of himself by a plausible and officiously-systematic gentleman, who one fine day took up his quarters in Marpingen. Without much difficulty he worked himself into the good graces of the simple villagers, and became intimate even with the priest and the schoolmaster. Information as to the incidents of the alleged miracle were freely communicated to him. He became acquainted with the little children who had been favored with the vision, heard its history in detail from their own childish lips, took copious notes of everything, as became an accurate correspondent, and then disappeared—the simple people meanwhile rejoicing in the thought that the story of the graces vouchsafed to their poor little village was edifying their brethren on the great continent of America.

A sad disappointment, however, awaited them. Mr. Marlow soon after re-appeared, but this time as his own proper self, Von Meerscheidt-Hullessem, of the secret police, Berlin. Under his directions, visits to the miraculous well were prohibited, and the little wood occupied in a military sense by the gendarmes. Attempts were made to bring the well itself under the power of the law. It, however, declined to submit; and when it was stopped up in one place, its liberating waters found an opening into the bright sunshine elsewhere. And so it goes on, bubbling up and flowing away. Since Bismarck to the contrary notwithstanding. Its ut or want of respect for police regulation seems to have displeased the authorities not a little. If they could not dry up the spring, they determined to prevent the people

using its waters, the possession of which they have construed into a legal offence. Hence, under the guidance of "the dreadful Irishman" (as the villagers call Von Meerscheidt), domiciliary visits have been instituted for the capture of the miraculous water.

The story so far exhibits a piece of tyranny which would be absolutely loathsome were it not so ludicrous. Worse, however, remains to be told. The three children (the eldest of whom is not yet nine) are accused and, without any trial, condemned for the crime of conspiring to deceive, and are marched off and impounded in a kind of Protestant reformatory at Saarbrücken. The poor schoolmaster is disgraced for aiding and abetting the deception, and the Rev. Father Sonesdu is imprisoned for actively propagating it.

Our readers might well be pardoned if they imagined for a moment that the foregoing must be merely the rough outlines of a Christmas tale. It certainly does sound unreal as an occurrence of this nineteenth century of personal freedom, and in a land which aims at a lofty ideal. We had heard enough, indeed, of this high-handed tyranny of Bismarck, but were hardly prepared for such a specimen of low, mean, pettifogging espionage, and childishly vexatious persecution. The whole circumstances of the story have been investigated on the spot, and laid before the German Parliament by Prince Kazvillé, himself a member of the Parliament, and a priest. The subject will soon come on for discussion before the whole House, and we shall then see how the "magnanimous, noble, and deep seeing" Prince Bismarck will defend himself against the proven charges of playing the spy in order to entrap unwary villagers, kidnap children, and outrage individual rights. Is it possible that the "man of blood and iron" sees in the vision of Marpingen a spectre of that supernatural order which he is credited with denying, and which he has certainly ignored? He has done more than any living man to strangle Catholicism and uproot all devotion to the Mother of God. And can it be that in his highest prosperity the ghost of his victim shall cross his path, and render his remaining days unhappy? The great man's peace to be disturbed by three little children and a spring well! Not if the unscrupulous power of an imperious statesman can prevent it. That simple well may, in the end, turn out to be as the little stone of old which was cut out of the rock without hands; it may match itself against a great empire, and may subdue it. Meanwhile, Bismarck has to answer for this new proof of his magnanimity to the outraged sense of justice of his own country, and, we hope, of the civilised world.

A COLONY OF TRAPPIST MONKS.

WE give the following paragraph from the columns of the New York 'Sun' of Sunday, November 26. We have no information of our own upon the subject. The 'Sun' says:—"About nine months ago Brother Francisco Xavier was sent to this country by the General of the Order of Trappists, with instructions, to select and purchase a suitable plot of ground for the erection of a monastery, as he had resolved to establish a branch of their brotherhood in America. After a long delay Brother Francisco secured a desirable piece of property about three miles from Baltimore where he decided that the new monastery should be erected. His report was favorably received by the General, but the execution of the latter's plans was deferred until September last, when a clergyman in Baltimore, acting as agent for the Trappists, caused the farmhouse, barns, etc., on the property which Brother Francisco had purchased to be prepared for the temporary housing of the monks, pending the erection of the new friary, as about one hundred of them would be sent to this country towards the end of November. Brother Francisco, who will probably become prior or abbot of the new colony of friars, was in this city again last week on his way to Baltimore. He said that among the hundred monks selected for the new station there were blacksmiths, shoemakers, tailors, cabinetmakers, carpenters, masons, weavers, and skilled agriculturists. The order does not live on charity; it is not only self-supporting, but reaps large incomes from the industries pursued by its brethren. The rules of this brotherhood are the most ascetic of all the monastic orders. They sleep on the floor, rise to pray at midnight, go through the form of digging their own graves as a reminder of death, preserve unbroken silence from year to year, use neither fish, meat, eggs, nor anything except vegetables, bread and water.

Pure milk, butter, beer, and well-reared meats are proverbially found for the lowest remunerative prices at the monasteries of the Trappists. A few of the monks are privileged to transact outside business, and for these, of course, the stringent injunctions of perpetual silence and other severe obligations are dispensed with. Of the 100 monks who are now likely on their way to this country, equal numbers have been selected from the monasteries of Murias-tern in Turkey, Mount Mellary in Ireland, Spt Fronds in France, and St. Bernard in Belgium. They will be expected to conserve the rules of their order as far as practicable while travelling. On reaching here, in about ten or twelve days from now, they will be taken in charge by Brother Francisco.

The suppression of the property and means of support belonging to the Religious Orders has been felt most acutely by nuns. They have remained silent, and have suffered without complaining. The Augustinian nuns of Frascati, a small town twelve miles from Rome, are the most squallid misery. The miserable stipend bestowed on them by the Government has, in the present increase in the price of provisions, reduced them to a state of quasi starvation. They have been obliged to appeal to the Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati, his Eminence Cardinal Guidi and he applied to the Holy Father. The Sovereign Pontiff generously contributed 500 lire to assist them in their dire necessities, and other charitable persons have opened a subscription for them.