

THE EX-EMPRESS AT THE VATICAN.

A ROME correspondent, under date of December 18th, writes:—"Immediately on arriving the Empress Eugenie wrote an autograph letter to the Pope, thanking him for his fatherly reception of her son, and craving an audience on Saturday at 11 o'clock. The Pope, although unwell, and fresh from a visit of physicians, acknowledged Her Majesty's missive at once, and expressed the pleasure he would have in receiving her at any time convenient to herself. Punctually at 11 o'clock on Saturday, a closed carriage, destitute of all armorial insignia, drew up at the entrance to the Vatican, and the Empress and the Prince Louis Napoleon alighted, followed by a lady and gentleman in waiting. The Empress and her lady in waiting wore dark silk dresses, were thickly veiled, and without jewelry. They were received at the entrance by Cardinal Simeoni and two other prelates with regal honors. The Empress and the Prince Imperial were ushered through the Papal antechamber between lines of the Noble Guard and the Palatine Guard, and shown into the Pope's library, while the Pope himself was in an adjoining room. There the Holy Father received the Empress alone, and the two remained in close colloquy for one hour and a half. Afterwards, at the invitation of Cardinal Simeoni, Prince Louis Napoleon and the two attendants were admitted, and together with the Empress, conversed with his Holiness another half hour. The party then withdrew into the Vatican library, and inspected the cabinets of coins, the archaeological rarities, the albums presented to the Pope, and paused with peculiar interest before the Sevres vase which served as the baptismal font for the Prince Imperial in Paris. Baron Visconti then conducted them through the galleries and museums, and they returned to the Villa Bonaparte. The 'Liberta' asserts that the Empress no sooner saw the Pope than she fell on her knees and wept bitterly, till, after some minutes, yielding to the Pope's entreaties, she permitted herself to be raised by Cardinal Bonaparte and the Prince Imperial, and dried her tears.

A CHAPTER OF IRISH HISTORY.

In the recent death of Sir John Esmonde, Bart., at the comparatively early age of fifty, the representative of one of the oldest Anglo-Irish families in County Wexford has passed away. Seated in that county with the early English settlers, the family became conspicuous in the age of Elizabeth. Sir Lawrence, the representative at that time, adopted the Protestant religion, and commanded a troop of horse in 1601-2. He was knighted by Sir Henry Sydney, and in an expedition to West Connaught with Sir Thomas Burke and Morough na doc O'Flaherty, fell in love with and married the beautiful sister of the latter. For his services he was created Lord Esmonde, Baron of Limerick, County Wexford. He died in 1612, General of all the English forces in Ireland, and Governor of Duncannon Fort. During his life his wife, who was a pious Catholic, fearing that her son would be reared in the Protestant religion, fled with their only son to her relatives in Connaught. Accepting her flight as an abrogation of the marriage, Lord Esmonde, without the formality of a divorce, married again, but had no other issue. At his death his son applied for his father's titles, but he was a Catholic, and his claim was coldly received. He died before obtaining his paternal peerage. From Sir Thomas' second son, James of Ballytrasnagh, the present family are descended. This James died from a fall in the hunting field, aged eighty-four. His third daughter married Howard Kyan, of Mount Howard, County Wexford, and one of the sons of this marriage, Esmonde Kyan, was the most heroic of the rebel chiefs during the insurrection of 1798. Sir James, son of the aforesaid James, survived his three cousins of the elder branch only a few days. He had been an officer in the service of France. He left two sons, Thomas, his heir; and John who was executed on Carlisle bridge, Dublin, as a rebel in 1798. John's sons were Thomas the eighth Baronet; Bartholomew, a distinguished member of the Society of Jesus; James, a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy; Lawrence, a captain of grenadiers in the French service; and a fifth son, a naval captain in the service of Chili, killed in action with a Spanish frigate. The Right Hon. Sir Thomas, ninth Baronet, was born in 1786; dying without issue, he was succeeded by his nephew, the late Sir John, whose father James, married Maria Murphy, daughter of James Murphy, of Ringmahon Castle, County Cork. The eldest born of this marriage was the late Sir John, born in 1826, and succeeded to the baronetcy in 1868. In 1861 he married a daughter of the late Henry Grattan, of Tinnehinch, County Wicklow, and granddaughter of the famous orator Henry Grattan. Sir John leaves a son named Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, aged 14, as heir to his titles. This family history is a good illustration of the manner in which foreign blood in Ireland, in the course of generations, becomes mingled with the deep fount of the ancient nationality.—'Pilot.'

A TRIBUTE OF PRAISE.

A LUTHERAN minister in Germany thus eulogizes the Catholic clergy:—"Gregory VII. knew well what he was doing when with inexorable severity he enforced the law of celibacy among the clergy. The very life of the Roman Church is a continual struggle, and it is but natural that the priests have to bear the brunt of the battle. To what an extent soldiers who are not bound by the ties of wife and children surpass their married comrades in courage and disregard of death is well-known. We have only to behold modern Roman priests to realize how well Gregory was acquainted with the nature of the Church and how skillfully he ruled it. The host of Catholic priests is a host of heroes. They are carrying on the struggle imposed on them by the exigencies of modern times with a valor and intrepidity that reminds us of the old Roman legions. The world looks aghast upon these men whom no power can move

to do anything contrary to the law of their Church. They suffer themselves to be driven from office and livings, to be harassed by bailiffs, to be cast into prisons, but, unshaken, they persevere; and, driven away to-day, to-morrow they are again at their posts. They are priests, they are warriors, they are true men. It is not the least advantage of the Roman Church that so many warriors can be found within her fold. It may be six months now since we heard of the fearful disaster to a French ship which, being run through by a Spanish steamer, sunk within ten minutes with all on board. While the waves came streaming into the ship, and the unfortunate passengers and crew, roused from their berths, were running about on deck in wild confusion, some praying, others gazing about in dumb despair, others weeping, a Catholic priest was seen hurrying from one group to another promising to all who had a sincere sorrow the forgiveness of their sins in the name of that God before whose tribunal they were all so soon to appear. Glorious type of a true priest! Praise your generals who in the rage of battle expose their breasts to the enemy's bullets, praise your statesmen who calmly look at the pistol levelled at their head by the assassin. Before such a hero they must fade into insignificance. Where all have lost their senses he alone remains calm. When all are terrified by the presence of death, he, with a firm hand, points to heaven, offering life to the dying. Among a hundred clergymen of the Evangelical Church, perhaps one such like may be found. Yet we Evangelical pastors are great in words, and who that would listen to our words spoken in private circles could have but the highest idea of our courage? Any one present at our conferences would stare amazed at our devotedness. But if words are to be converted into actions—if we are called upon to shield with our bodies the standard which we have so proudly unfurled—we are prostrated, and our courage vanishes like smoke. There are wife and child and anxious friends imploring, holding us back. The Catholic clergyman knows that God has placed realities in his hand, but we have only to deal in words. Rhetoric has overgrown everything with us. We are preachers but not priests. Many noble characters among us have been driven by this evident contradiction between the ideal of the Church and the clerical office and the reality, into the bosom of the Catholic Church. Nor can we blame them."

IRISH AFFAIRS IN PARLIAMENT.

MR. MITCHEL HENRY, the well-known Home Ruler, has written an able letter on the cause of Ireland in the coming British parliament. It is a document deserving of careful consideration by every Irishman to whom the cause of his country is dear. In adverting to the Eastern question, on which he expresses his hatred to the Turkish tyranny and apprehension of Russian sympathy, the writer makes a full lounge at England by saying "that the Turkish is not the only government whose conduct in its dealings with insurrection Ireland knows to be ruthless and cruel." The shades of Tone and Emmet will vouch for the truth of this assertion. In the discussion of the Eastern question he sees with delight the "approaching end of secret diplomacy." We hope so, but he will give us leave to doubt his opinion in this respect. The grit of his letter is, however, the progress of Home Rule, education, and the land laws, and this, he declares, will depend very much on the earnestness of the people. As a set off to the defection of Mr. P. J. Smyth, he quotes the latest utterances of the venerable John of Tuam that, "The measure of Home Rule which Mr. Butt is seeking will be a great panacea for the ills of Ireland: we should all, then, priests, people, and bishops, be Home Rulers, if we are in earnest in helping the poor—no other kind of help will do." To carry a land bill, Mr. Henry declares that declamatory speeches won't do; they must have facts, with names, dates, and authentic particulars. There is much truth in this. That the recent Land Bill has effected many amendments is indisputable; that landlords, and law, and ready money, have rendered many of its clauses nugatory there is no reason to doubt. The various "Tenants' Defence Associations" are, as he very quietly says, the proper bodies to estimate critically the action of the recent Land Act. There remains the question of education—a vexed question, which Mr. Henry barely alludes to as a supporter of Mr. Butt's bill. Evidently he is diffident of the clergy. How, indeed, could it be otherwise? However patriotic, however talented, Mr. Butt is not the proper exponent of the Catholic education claims, and an Education Bill, to merit the support of the Irish clergy should emanate from, or have the entire concurrence of that body. Mr. Henry fairly weighs the difficulties of procuring better terms than Mr. Butt's bill provides. We may not endorse all his opinions, but he evidently deserves well of the Irish people, and is entitled to the merits of sincerity and patriotism, and this is much in an Irish Protestant.—'Pilot.'

Almost the whole of the private fortune and official emoluments of Cardinal Patrizi found their way into the pockets of the poor. Sixty thousand lire were assigned by him yearly to various fixed charities in Rome, and twenty thousand were given to the Cardinal's diocese of Velletri, besides which another sum of twenty thousand was spent in various casual largesses to occasional applicants. The Cardinal was accustomed very often to visit the poor in their homes to ascertain personally the condition of those who claimed his pecuniary assistance.

A lady writing from Paris to the 'Chicago Times' says that in France women of the highest rank post themselves at the exit doors of the churches, after service, with an enticing little bag, in which they supplicate you to invest. This is part of the duties of their church membership. The writer adds, "I have seen Patti on her knees on a praying chair at the great door of the Madeleine, in Paris, begging those leaving the church for contributions for the poor. I noticed that the stream of outsiders passed her way, so as to have a good look at the charming *diva*, and her reticule became full so soon that she was obliged to send for another.