

KILDARE.—Honouring a Maynooth Professor.—His Holiness the Pope has conferred on the Very Rev. James Donnellan, Maynooth, the degree of Doctor in Theology.

KILKENNY.—Opening of a New Church at Piltown.—A new church was solemnly blessed and opened at Piltown, Kilkenny, on the last Sunday in September by the Bishop of Ossory, in presence of the Bishop of Waterford. The new church is a spacious stone building, the cost of which has been almost entirely defrayed by the pence of the poor. The total cost is £6738, of which £6254 has been paid off, leaving a balance of less than £500 due. This indeed is very creditable when one considers that it is the work of 104 labourers, the shopkeepers of the two villages of Fiddown and Piltown, and about 23 or 30 farmers. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. McDonald, President of Dunboyne.

MAYO.—Death of a Franciscan Brother.—His many friends will read with deep regret (says the *New Era*) the announcement of the death of Brother Bernardine, which took place recently at St. Mary's Monastery, Partry, County Mayo. The amiable Brother, who reached the advanced age of almost 90 years, was a native of Clara, in the King's County. He was educated by the Franciscan Brothers, of the same town, and embraced the Third Order of St. Francis, receiving the habit in the Monastery of St. Mary's.

WICKLOW.—The Philanthropic Reform Association.—The Philanthropic Reform Association, of which the Earl of Meath is president, is justifying its existence (says the *New Era*). For the second time within the past few months the president has brought together from all ranks and classes a number of social reformers for the purpose of discussing and pushing to a practical conclusion such ameliorative measures as are urgently needed to make the lives of the poor somewhat happier. Of the subjects dealt with at Kilruddery at a recent meeting, where the members assembled on the invitation of Lord Meath, the housing of the poor came in for a large share of attention, but as was pointed out by the Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly, Bishop of Canea, the problem was a very difficult one to deal with, especially in cities and towns, since the migration of a considerable part of the rural population caused overcrowding in the tenement houses of the larger towns. This is practically the kernel of the housing question. Much hope is entertained that when the Agriculture and Industries Act of last session comes into practical operation, efforts will be made to stem this migration by establishing such industries as the various districts throughout the country are capable of affording.

GENERAL.

The Department of Agriculture.—Mr. Horace Plunkett, M.P., will be the first vice-president of the newly-created Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland.

Statistics of Primary Education.—The Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, in their annual report, issued about the end of September, say:—On the 30th September, 1898, there were 8651 schools in operation. During the nine months to that date 124 schools were brought into operation, viz, 85 vested in the Commissioners or in trustees, and 39 non-vested; while 104 schools were placed on the suspended list, or removed from the roll of National schools. This gives a net increase of 20 schools in operation for the nine months to 30th September, 1898. The average number of pupils on the rolls as recorded on the last day of the results periods of the schools was 808,467. The average daily attendance of pupils similarly for the results periods was 518,799. The percentage of the average daily attendance of pupils to the average number on the rolls was 64.2. The total number of pupils actually on the rolls of National schools on the last day of their results period was 794,818. The religious denomination of these pupils was as follows:—601,206 or 75.6 per cent. were Roman Catholics, 92,212 or 11.6 per cent. were of the late Established Church, 87,218 or 11.0 per cent. were Presbyterians, 8553 or 1.1 per cent. were Methodists, 5629 or 0.7 per cent. were of other denominations. Of the pupils on the rolls of the 8604 schools, 255,862, or 37.3 per cent. were in schools attended by Roman Catholic and Protestant children, and 498,283 or 62.7 per cent. in schools attended solely by Roman Catholics or solely by Protestants.

Sacrifices in the Cause of Education.—Writing to the clerk of Swineford District Council, the members of which proposed to put the Compulsory Education Act into force in the Union, the Most Rev. Dr. Lyster draws a striking comparison between the comfort and attractiveness of the primary schools of Great Britain and the dismal surroundings of those in Irish country districts. In England and Scotland, his Lordship points out, no means are left undone to induce, and even to entice, children to attend. Recently he visited a public school in Scotland where the very air which the children were to inhale was washed, dried, and warmed before being allowed into the classrooms; the coats, cloaks, and caps were dried in a special chamber if they received a drop of rain; the building was ventilated and heated by elaborate machinery. Now look on the other picture as drawn by Dr. Lyster. On the very day after my return, he writes, I met a child of my own flock trudg[ing] one-and-a-half miles to school, her draggled hair and scanty clothes wet through and through by the thick rain and her two soles of turf under her tiny arm. I asked myself this question: In which country are the greater sacrifices made for the sake of education? There can be no doubt as to the answer to the question Dr. Lyster put to himself. Considering the circumstances, the people of Ireland make great sacrifices in the cause of education. Were it otherwise they would be unworthy descendants of those who gave their very lives for it 'in dark and evil days.'

An Appeal on Behalf of the United Irish League.—Messrs. William O'Brien, Michael Davitt, and James O'Kelly, on behalf of the United Irish League, have issued an appeal for assistance to Irishmen all over the world. The first portion of the appeal

is devoted to a summary of the objects of the League, which comprise the reunion of all earnest Nationalists in an organisation similar in purpose to the old National Land League; the National Independence of Ireland in the rule of Ireland by Irishmen; the abolition of Irish landlordism, and the restoration of the land of Ireland to its people; the better housing of our working classes in country and town, and the material and social betterment of their condition; the prevention of famines and of periodical distress in the poorer parts of the country by means of the breaking up of grazing ranches and the providing of more land and better land for small cultivators; to arrest as far as possible the continual emigration of the youth of Ireland; and to encourage the revival of the Gaelic tongue among the Irish race. 'The League has already done good work, its organisation and influence have succeeded in obtaining large and valued concessions for the people residing in the so-called congested areas in the west of Ireland. As the objects which the League has been organised to accomplish are such as the majority of our race approve of as essential to the uplifting of Ireland to her rightful status as a Nation, we, therefore, invite your readers and our kith and kin in America, Canada, the Australias, and elsewhere to extend a helping hand to the working out of the great task which the United Irish League has undertaken. Our people at home are aiding the movement out of slender resources and will continue to do so. But large measures of support are wanted for a more wide and vigorous spreading of the organisation, and we, therefore, venture to ask this help from all who are wishful to see the objects of the League achieved in our time.'

THE SCOPE OF A CATHOLIC CLUB.

THERE is little, if any, maudlin sentimentality about the Archbishop of Adelaide, the Most Rev. Dr. O'Reilly (says the local *Herald*). His address on the opening of the Adelaide Catholic Club was a straightforward and a manly one, and was well worth listening to. He gave it to be distinctly understood that the club was not intended to be a political or scientific institution, as he said 'it was in a more respectable line of business.' For the purpose of giving rest to the mind and change of occupation, he was pleased to see billiard tables, as well as chess, draughts, and cards there. In the course of his remarks his Grace said they were going to have no prayer meetings in the hall, no instructions in catechism, no Bible readings, and no sermons. Within a stone's throw of the club there was a large building, erected by the contributions of the Catholics of the city and country: a building set aside for exercises such as he had mentioned. Its doors were always open, and the young men who wish to take part in the devotions, or who like to hear sermons, would find in the services of the Church, ample opportunity of gratifying their predilections. Neither was it an advanced school for grown boys, who, if they wish to improve themselves in their spare time, would find that the School of Mines and similar institutions gave ample scope for gratifying their desires.

Knowledge was a very desirable thing, and those young men who devote a few spare hours to its acquisition were deserving of praise. He went to school until he was 24 years of age, when he was ordained, and in his last year at school he came to have a large opinion of the extent of the information he had acquired. His professors, who were old and experienced men, took care to cure him of his pride by reminding him that he was not to suppose himself a philosopher after his many years of study, but that he could consider he had done well if, during his long course of education, he had learned how to learn when he had left the college, and was thrown on his own resources. He did not know whether the young colonials considered themselves cultured scholars when they left school at 15 or 16 years of age; they certainly could not be accused of want of self-confidence, and, possibly like himself when he was 24 years of age, they were a little vain of their accomplishments; but they made a mistake if they imagined they had done with book learning when they had taken their certificate under the compulsory standard. Although the education of adults is a desirable thing, it is not the object of the Catholic Club to supply the place of an educational institution for those who have left school. Then, again, the Adelaide Catholic Club was not a political institution. There was a celebrated American writer who, in a letter to Abraham Lincoln, the President of the Republic, wrote: 'I have no politics, navy or politics. I am in a more respectable business.'

The Adelaide Catholic Club will not recognise any form of political opinion. Conservative as well as Liberal, Free-trader as well as Protectionist, and Federationist as well as Anti-Federationist, will be welcome as members.

The club had no politics; it was in a more respectable business. It claimed to be merely a place for the amusement and relaxation of the Catholic young men of the city and suburbs. If he were asked to give a definition of the Australian young man, a definition which would embody his chief characteristics, he would say he is an animal to whom amusement is very useful and oftentimes essential. Australians are sometimes accused of being too fond of sport, but although they throw themselves into their games with enthusiasm and vim, when the time comes for work—and they are a people who work very hard—they do it with a vengeance. He was pleased to see they had two billiard tables. The second room was to be reserved for minor games, such as chess, draughts, dominoes, and for cards in moderation. The trustees decided long ago that card playing should be allowed in moderation, and he did not see any reason for setting himself against their determination. He was told by some person that there would be temptation in cards, but there was temptation in everything, and if every game in which temptation lurks were abolished, there would be little left for our delectation.