

DR. FRANCIS O'HEARN.

WHEN O'Connell was at school at Louvain, which was for a very brief period only, sent thither with a view to the priesthood by one uncle, old "Hunting Cap," at the request of another, General Count O'Connell, he had as master a rather remarkable fellow-countryman named Francis O'Hearn. A paper by M. Edward van Kyan giving an account of this Irish exile was read some little time since at a meeting of the Royal Flemish Academy, and was afterwards published as a pamphlet. O'Hearn was born at Lismore in the year 1753. Being destined for the Church, he was sent to the Irish College at Louvain, where his talents were speedily recognised. When his seminary course was finished he did not return to Ireland, but remained in Louvain, and having acquired a solid reputation for learning, rose rapidly to positions of importance in the town of his adoption. Already, previous to his ordination, he had held a professorship; at the age of 23 he was made a member of the Council of the Faculty of Arts of the University; he was subsequently appointed to a chair in that famous seat of learning, was nominated Canon of the Cathedral of Bruges, and became Rector of the Irish College of Louvain. To his theological attainments—for which his appointment to the positions just named sufficiently speaks—he added excellence in many other subjects, but more especially in the study of languages. He knew thoroughly—in addition, of course, to the classical languages and his own native Irish and English—French, Italian, Spanish, German, and Flemish. It is owing to his proficiency in the last named that he has merited the posthumous honour of being lately held up for praise before a learned body of Flemings. The university of Louvain was, in accordance with the old prevailing custom, divided into nations, and when O'Hearn entered he attached himself to the Flemish nation, of which he was subsequently appointed Dean by his admiring colleagues. He not only learned Flemish thoroughly, carefully studying the best models, but also made strenuous efforts to bring the language, then much neglected, into greater favour with the Flemings themselves. Nor was he satisfied with confining himself to prose—he became a Flemish poet as well, and many specimens of his verse are given, with evident appreciation, by M. van Eran.

Of one of his pieces, "Koddig gedicht," he appears to have had the faculty of composing both grave and gay—the learned Bollandist, Father de Buck, remarked that few Flemings of that day could produce so good a poem. As a man Dr. O'Hearn was most amiable, and among his pupils he enjoyed great popularity. He had a strong passion for travelling, which mated well with, or perhaps grew out of, his love of his study of languages, and when vacation time would come round, he would set off on distant journey, always made on foot, knapsack on back. At one time, says his panegyrist, he was to be found in Rome or Madrid, at another on the banks of the Rhine, or again by the shores of the Bosphorus, studying the Koran. "Slight luck or grace attends your boaters down the Bosphorus," says a modern Irish poet, Clarence Mangan. Dr. O'Hearn must have made himself in some way very obnoxious in Turkey, for we hear that he was suspected of stirring up a rebellion against the Sultan. To evade arrest he took flight to Russia, and, after some wandering, found himself in Siberia—as a *bona fide* traveller, let me add, bearing in mind the horrors which the mention of that country's name is wont to conjure up. He finally made his way home to Belgium *via* Norway.

When the Revolution broke out in Joseph II.'s Belgian provinces, Dr. O'Hearn took sides with the popular leader, Van Vonck, but, finding him too advanced in his views, he allied himself with the moderate but equally popular patriot, Vander Noot. It was part of the latter's policy to enlist the sympathies of the English, German, and Dutch Courts on the side of the Belgians, and when the Brabant manifesto was published by the popular leaders, special commissioners were despatched with it to these three Powers. It was the Irishman, Dr. O'Hearn, that was sent as envoy to the Hague. He was also entrusted with other business of importance by Vander Noot, whose intimate friendship he enjoyed, and whose counsels he had a share in guiding. When the French became masters of Belgium, O'Hearn saw, with sorrow, his college turned into a powder magazine, and he, its Rector, was forced to become an exile in Germany. Shortly after this change in his fortunes he returned to Ireland, and was parish priest of St. Thomas's, in Waterford, in which city he ended his life in 1801—the year after that in which the joy bells rang for the passing of the Union.—*Exchange*.

Monsignor Luigi Nicora, appointed by the Pope two years ago Bishop of Como, has just died, after a long course of harassing anxiety, owing to the persistent refusal of the Government to grant him the *exequatur*. The bishop had never been able to exercise his full functions. He was obnoxious to the Government as a strong *intransigente*.

Prosaic statistics sufficiently explain the Red Indian rising in Dakota. Thirty years ago the white population of Dakota would have filled little more than half the sitting space of Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle. Now it amounts to three-fifths of a million, with between 6,000 and 7,000 miles of railway to carry their traffic! In other words, the Red Indian races are being driven out of their homes. Between the Red man and the white American there does not exist a trace of that mutual good feeling which, for instance, characterises the present day relations between the Zulu and English races in South Africa.

The Emperor William took part lately at Berlin in a conference on higher education. He said if the schools had done their duty they would themselves have opened the war upon social democracy. Since 1871 emphasis had been laid on the acquirement of knowledge and not on the formation of character adapted to the requirements of modern life. At present the chief matter of concern was to place education on a national basis. The Emperor declared that he was in favour of classical gymnasia and schools with a modern side, but not of gymnasia exclusively for modern subjects.

THE DIVISION AMONGST THE HOME RULERS.

(Liverpool Catholic Times, December 12.)

AFTER the painful debate in the committee room of the House of Commons the struggle between Mr. Parnell and his opponents has been transferred to Ireland. On Wednesday evening last, Mr. Parnell himself addressed a crowded meeting of his supporters in the Dublin Rotunda, and there can be no doubt that if the verdict lay with that large gathering, Mr. Parnell's power over the Irish party would be immediately restored. The proceedings were marked by an abundant flow of enthusiasm in his favour, and the assemblage rapturously pledged itself to support him in the contest which he is now waging. It is not difficult to understand why this pro-Parnellite feeling exists amongst certain sections of the people even at this juncture. A lively sense of gratitude for favours received is one of the most prominent traits in the Irishman's character, and no one can for a moment deny that Mr. Parnell has laid Irishmen under the deepest obligations. As the officer remarks in "Coriolanus," he "hath so planted his honours in their eyes and his actions in their hearts that for their tongues to be silent and not confess so much were a kind of ungrateful injury." In the next place the issue between Mr. Parnell and those who demand his retirement is now declared by Mr. Parnell and his partisans to resolve itself into the question whether Mr. Gladstone is to be allowed to dictate to Irishmen the choice of a leader and to impose whatever terms he desires in dealing with the Home Rule problem. For long years Irishmen have been accustomed to find that the hopes they placed in English statesmen were for the most part mere delusions, and a feeling of distrust even with regard to the most outspoken expressions of sympathy in England was thus generated amongst the Irish populace. This distrust it is, of course, to the advantage of Mr. Parnell and his friends to reawaken. Again, there are throughout Ireland a number of men who put no faith in constitutional action, and are glad to further any movement calculated to prove its ineffectuality. Of these the majority will, it may be taken for granted, be found amongst the supporters of Mr. Parnell. With these considerations and elements working on his behalf, it is evident that he will be able to fight a vigorous battle for the recovery of his position as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

But however long and desperate the struggle may be, it will assuredly result in the practical effacement of Mr. Parnell's power. Had he on the publication of the proceedings in the divorce court consented to retire for a time from public life, a comparatively short period of seclusion would have been regarded by the public on both sides of the Channel as an atonement for his transgressions and he could have resumed the leadership of the Irish party with little or no dissent or murmuring on the part of his fellow-countrymen. But his attitude during the past fortnight has set in motion towards him a tide of hostility which, despite all his ability, it will be impossible for him to stem. His selfishness in jeopardising the Home Rule cause and refusing to sink his own personality for the sake of its progress, his recklessness in flinging bitter epithets at politicians who have exerted a powerful influence for the advancement of the Home Rule movement in Great Britain, and the injustice of which he was guilty in attributing a want of integrity and patriotism to men who had proved the sincerity of their love for Ireland by enduring greater sufferings than he has ever borne at the hands of her enemies have wrought a complete change in the sentiments of multitudes of Irishmen who have hitherto regarded Mr. Parnell with the warmest feelings of admiration. He has now arrayed against him the strongest and the most intelligent forces of the country. The Episcopate and the clergy have, almost without exception, pronounced against him. To assert that Mr. Parnell can readily overcome the opposition they will offer is to betray profound ignorance of their hold upon the people. The priests, embracing many such men as Canon Keller, who have proved their devotion to the interests of the people by undergoing long terms of imprisonment, are and have been the mainstays of the national movement in their several districts, and at this crisis their flock's will, as a whole, be little disposed to dispute the wisdom of their advice. The majority of the Parliamentary party who have rejected Mr. Parnell's leadership will also promote a strong current of opinion against him in the constituencies which they represent. It is true that the two most influential of these members—Mr. Dillon and Mr. William O'Brien—will be unable to take any very active part in the struggle, but amongst the others are gentlemen whose qualities as public speakers, and whose record in the warfare against oppression and coercion will enable them to produce a deep impression on the hearts of their fellow-countrymen.

That the disastrous struggle will go on for a lengthy period is now, unfortunately, a matter of certainty, and it is only too clear that the effect must be to render indefinite the prospect of a settlement of the Home Rule question. Yet we would hope, even against hope, that nearly all Irishmen are sufficiently alive to the lessons of their country's history to recognise that devotion to any single individual should not be allowed to stand in the way of unity. The fact cannot be lost sight of that this crisis in Irish affairs has been brought about by Mr. Parnell's immoral conduct, and that when he has been called upon to make a personal sacrifice his love of power has proved superior to his love of country. Under those circumstances the path of duty must be plain to every self-respecting and patriotic Irishman.

Amongst the gentlemen just admitted to practice as solicitors is Mr. Douglas E. Sullivan, of Mountjoy square East, Dublin, eldest son of the late Mr. A. M. Sullivan. Mr. Douglas Sullivan is a young gentleman of much ability, and the many friends who already recognise his talents and industry rightly anticipate for him a brilliant and prosperous career in the profession he has adopted.