

thing has been done in Ireland, although the Department of Agriculture has been especially charged by Parliament with this duty. Has the Department made any effort whatever to face this question of such grave and far-reaching importance to the country? Members of the Agricultural Board have again and again brought the matter up at the Board's meetings, but without effect. Three or four years ago the Department intervened in one case, but it has not exerted itself in this field since.

GENERAL.

Aid from America

In the early part of November the Irish National Defence Fund was augmented by a draft from America for £1000, same being the third instalment of like amount forwarded since the convention recently held in New York. Our American friends (says the 'Belfast Weekly') pledged themselves to send forward £10,000 in response to the appeal of the Nationalist leaders. The third instalment of £1000 is announced. No doubt the pledged word of the Irish in America will be honored in the fullest degree. Their unshaken constancy in the National movement is one of the most encouraging signs of the times.

Strong Language

The Irish Attorney-General, one of the 'parasites' denounced by Mr. T. P. O'Connor as living on the corruption engendered by minority ascendancy in Ireland, lately asserted that the Dunraven devolution proposals were the outcome of a 'deal' between Nationalists and Unionists at the Lamb Conference. Mr. Redmond, in his speech at Limerick, said that the man who made such a statement must know it to be untrue. Captain Talbot Crosbie, in a letter to the 'Times,' declares that the assertion is a 'malicious fabrication.' If the Irish Attorney-General has any spirit or sense of honor he cannot sit down under such imputations.

Crops in the West

Reports from various parts of the West of Ireland indicate a winter of acute distress. Cereal crops and hay seem to have been a favorable harvest, but the staple crop, the potato, is described on all sides as 'almost a total failure.' Public Boards are exerting themselves in the matter, and there is a general demand for relief works. Landlords are also being called upon to give substantial reductions. The outlook is decidedly black in that part of the country.

A Protectionist Press

The 'Daily News' remarks that on top of the startling news of the capture of 'The Standard' comes the rumor (from a correspondent) that others of Mr. Chamberlain's flock are about to embark upon journalistic enterprise in Ireland. The avowed followers of Mr. Chamberlain in that country are certainly not many, but they are gentlemen of undoubted enterprise and enthusiasm. Lord Dunraven is an out-and-out supporter of Mr. Chamberlain's schemes. Protectionism has also a devoted friend in Mr. Moreton-Frewes, brother-in-law to the late Lord Randolph Churchill. Lord Mayo, who is at once a Land Conference and a 'Devolution' man, is also in the Chamberlain camp. Sir William Goulding, chairman of the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland, and a gentleman of undoubted influence in commercial circles in Ireland, is a member of Mr. Chamberlain's 'Commission.' Sir John Nutting is also in the Protectionist swim. There is money enough behind the movement, in fact, to buy up many papers and foud many more. Also, there is money enough to run Tariff Reform candidates all over the country.

Distress in the West

The 'Pall Mall Gazette' publishes the following from its correspondent in Dublin:—I have just returned from a tour in the West of Ireland, and can vouch for the fact that the outlook there for the coming winter is extremely black. Almost all over the province the potato crop has been a failure, and the peasants are face to face with a famine. In some districts the crop has been so deplorably bad that the farmers are inclined to let the tubers remain in the ground; and in the localities that have come off best the yield of edible potatoes is only about one-third of the average. Spraying improved matters in some places, but the use of the spray was largely neglected in the country, and this fact, coupled with the moist summer and the deterioration of the Champion seed, which is almost universally sown, accounts for the present position. Unless something is done for the peasants they will in many localities be almost as badly off as were their ancestors in the historical famine year in the last 'forties.

People We Hear About

Mr. Francis M'Cullagh, who was a member of the Glasgow 'Catholic Herald' staff a few years ago, is at present on active service in Manchuria as the special war correspondent of the 'New York Herald.' Since leaving Bradford Mr. M'Cullagh, who is an Omagh man, has been editor of the 'Catholic Messenger' in Ceylon, and more recently of the 'Siam Free Press' in Bangkok.

Mr. John Dillon, M.P., is in public life the most distinguished of the surviving students of the Catholic University of Ireland. Mr. Dillon studied medicine in the Medical School of the University, which stood, and stands to-day, on the site of the historic old theatre of Crow Street. Curiously enough, on the site of the even more famous Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin a Catholic church now stands.

Sir George Errington, Bart., is another of the survivors of the old Catholic University—of which Newman was the first Rector—who sat in the House of Commons but whose politics were not those of the distinguished member for East Mayo.

In the Crown Prince of Japan the Emperor Mutsuhito has an heir-apparent after his own heart. Although he has never travelled beyond his father's dominions, Prince Yoshihito is a remarkably enlightened young man, and one who has never been pampered. As a small boy he was sent away to school, where he was treated in much the same way as his companions. He is fond of athletics, is a fine long-distance walker, and is, or rather was until recently, something of a wrestler.

Some of the peers in the House of Lords have peculiar mannerisms. Lord Lansdowne will probably never get out of the habit of twirling his fingers round his fingers when addressing the House. Lord Spencer, who sits on the opposite side of the table, most often lays his left hand on his breast. The Duke of Devonshire always puts one of his hands into his trouser pockets when making a speech. Among the younger members of the House, Lord Dunsborough, the Under-Secretary of State for War, always ends his periods by slapping a file of notes in front of him. He has also the trick of turning upon their lordships with an expression of bland surprise and extending both hands palms upwards.

The Earl of Gainsborough has let Campden House, his beautiful seat on a spur of the Cotswold Hills, and will reside during the winter at Exton Hall, his place in Rutland. Exton is a larger place than Campden, but neither so picturesque nor so interesting as the old Gloucestershire manor-house, which is a many-gabled mansion dating from the time of Charles I., and occupying the site of a grange once belonging to the great Cistercian Abbey of Bordesley. The present Lord Gainsborough's father was a great friend and patron of Welby Pugin, who built his private chapel at Campden, and designed for him wall-papers and sideboards of the ultra-Gothic kind affected by the famous reviver of medieval art. Lord Gainsborough owns one of the finest sandstone quarries in the West of England, and has built in the pretty old town of Campden a very ornate and handsome Catholic church, which rivals in beauty, if not in antiquarian interest, the ancient parish church at the other end of the town.

The death has just taken place at Clevedon, Somerset, in her 77th year, of a notable Irish lady, the Hon. Letitia Vesey-Fitzgerald, twin daughter of the Very Rev. Henry, third and last Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey, LL.D., Dean of Kilmore, 1826-60, by his marriage to Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Standish Grady, of Elton, County Limerick. This branch of the ancient house of Fitzgerald descends from the family of the celebrated Edmund Fitzgerald, well known in the reign of Queen Elizabeth as 'The White Knight.' Miss Vesey-Fitzgerald's grandfather was the Right Hon. James Fitzgerald, a leading and impressive member of the Irish Bar, noted as a brilliant orator in the Irish Parliament, strenuously opposed to the Union. He latterly refused a peerage for himself, but his wife was created Baroness Fitzgerald and Vesey in 1826. Their younger son was Henry, the late peer aforesaid, at whose death in 1860 the title became extinct. The elder son, William, was at one time Minister to the Court of Sweden, where he spent several years in unsuccessful attempts to persuade Bernadotte (who was then King) to repay the large sums of money that had been advanced to him during the wars with Napoleon. He was afterwards defeated by Daniel O'Connell at a memorable bye-election in County Clare, but was eventually a Cabinet Minister under Peel.