

Irish News

OUR IRISH LETTER

(From our own correspondent.)

Dublin, June, 1905.

In the present session of Parliament, one announcement has been made that brings unmixed rejoicing to all Irish men and women who truly love their native land—so sweet now in all the beauty of one of the most glorious months of June I have ever seen. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had to announce a big falling-off in his Budget, owing in a marked degree to a decrease in the drink bill both for this country and for England. The Chancellor considers that the increased number of public holidays, the early closing already adopted by many trades, the enormously increased facilities for public amusements of a legitimate description, especially cheap and easy transit to the seaside or to the country, have all conduced in a large measure to swell the wave of temperance that is setting for our shores. Certainly on public holidays now it is delightful to see the thousands, respectfully and neatly attired, who throng out by rail or tram, a couple of shillings taking a whole family out a good distance into the lovely country and seaside districts that make the suburbs of Dublin so peculiarly attractive. It is delightful, too, to note that a drunken man or woman is scarcely to be seen save in the very lowest quarters.

The Catholic clergy and what we call the National Movement have had much to do with this happy result, especially as the clergy work heart and soul in the Gaelic revival that is making not alone the study of the Irish language, but national games, national amusements, national historical research, and national use of home manufactures (save and except whisky) points of honor with us all—things to make us think, to make us self-reliant and self-respecting, and things to make us joyous too, in the proper spirit of joyousness. Temperance seems just now to be the one platform upon which all the inhabitants of this small island can join hands and hearts, so a monster fancy fair, 'The All Ireland Temperance Bazaar,' has just been held in Dublin, worked by Catholics and non-Catholics. I do not exactly understand what is to be done with the £10,000 realised; I doubt if anybody does, but at all events, the moral effect of the demonstration is supposed to be very sobering.

An Alleged Outrage

The Guinness family has risen to vast wealth and political influence through porter, and are now members of what Sir William Harcourt wittily called 'The Beerage.' The Persse family is anxious to attain the same ends through whisky. It came to pass that Mr. Persse's country house in Galway was alleged to have been attacked of a dark evening at least an account of a terrifying attack appeared quickly in the Unionist press, and at once a posse of policemen was despatched to protect the threatened household, while hundreds of extra police were quartered in the district, at the expense of the local ratepayers. True, when representatives of the people held an inquiry and demanded Mr. Persse's proofs and proofs from the constabulary, it turned out that no one saw any signs of an attacking party. The one only thing that could be brought forward was that a stone—one stone—was fired into the hall through the fanlight above the half-door; but whose hand threw that stone? A young English lady, who was staying with the family, rushed into the hall, picked up the dangerous missile, and raised an alarm. Mr. Persse flew with his men to shoot down or otherwise capture the moonlighters, but not even the fiends of any of the attacking party were seen—nothing but the stone—the Stone of Destiny—as it turned out to be for the young lady who captured it. The country rang with the reports of the awful deeds committed by those invisible moonlighters, and amongst other important steps taken was the despatch of an official to inspect the country, the stone, and—the young lady. He took the young lady first, and went no further. They are married now, that precious stone is to be the foundation stone of their future happiness, an heirloom in their family.

The Late Canon O'Hanlon

We who knew him, and all lovers of true literature, are mourning a saintly Irish priest who has just passed away, Canon John O'Hanlon, parish priest of 'The Star of the Sea,' Sandymount, Dublin. The name of Canon O'Hanlon is known throughout the world, and his literary work for Ireland is an imperishable monument raised by the indefatigable labors of over fifty years, the last

stones only laid a few months before his death at the ripe age of 86. Canon O'Hanlon was a man of singular beauty and simplicity of character, that simplicity that is so often the great charm of true genius. He was most winning and graceful in manner, humble in his opinion of his own work, generous in his esteem of the gifts of others. I can speak these few but strong words in all sincerity, for I was proud to count him as a friend.

The fruits of his pen are many and varied, but the great work of his life is a monumental one, 'The Lives of the Irish Saints,' a series of volumes which form in themselves a library of reference for the student of Irish history, the value of which can only be estimated by those who understand the minute, careful research necessary for these who would write truthfully of Ireland's golden age. To the student and writer, Canon O'Hanlon's great work will prove a mine of reliable information for all time to come. Verily, his works will live after him and will keep his memory green. One of the last books upon which he was engaged was a labor of love and a tribute to the memories of his boyhood: the collection of the poems of his countryman, Keegan whose most touching poem, 'Caoch O'Leary,' will recur to the memories of all lovers of the ballad poetry of Ireland.

M.B.

COUNTY NEWS

CARLOW—The Brigidine Order

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart the foundation stone was laid of a new novitiate in connection with the present house of the Brigidine Order in Tullow, County Carlow.

CLARE—Silent as the Grave

In declaring the County Clare Feis open at Ennis recently, his Lordship Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty, Bishop of Killaloe, having referred at length to the language and industrial movement, said money was not everything. We should try not only to bring money to the Irish home, and neatness and comfort and industry, but the brightness also and the enlightenment that come from the revival of our Irish customs and music and language. He drove the previous night, coming to the feis, through sixteen miles of the most charming country, studded with those numerous white painted cottages which were such a feature of the County Clare. It was evening, and the hour for the day's labor being over the people would naturally turn to relaxation and enjoyment, but that lovely country was as silent as the grave—not a note of music or a voice was heard—and he felt for our people and said, 'God bless every man or woman, young or old, Catholic or Protestant, who is doing his best, however little, to bring back to this lovely country and to its dear people the sound of music and contentment and prosperity.'

CORK—Disappointed over Waterloo

A farmer named John O'Shea, who had attained the remarkable age of 107 years, died at Killoogh, near Dursc. Sound, Castledown, Berehaven, on June 30. Being born in the year 1798, the veteran could boast the unique record of having lived in three centuries. Up to within a few years ago O'Shea frequently walked to Castledown, which is sixteen miles from where he lived, in order to attend fairs and markets. He possessed the use of all his faculties up to the last, and his memory was so good that he could recall incidents which occurred in the early dawn of the 19th century. O'Shea had two pigs for sale at the June fair at Castledown in the year 1815, and in consequence of the great war farm produce and live stock were obtaining very high prices, but O'Shea didn't accept what he was offered, and held on to the pigs, thinking that as affairs were getting more critical he would get more money. On the evening of the fair, however, tidings arrived of Wellington's victory, and prices fell so considerably that the pigs eventually sold for almost half the amount offered at first. In telling this story, the old man generally concluded with the remark that Napoleon was not the only man disappointed over Waterloo.

DERRY—Scholarships

The Most Rev. Dr. O'Doherty, Bishop of Derry, addressing the students of St. Columb's College prior to the summer holidays, said that £500 left by the late Mr. Hugh McLaughlin, supplemented by diocesan funds, would be devoted to establishing scholarships in the college for students preparing to enter Maynooth.

DUBLIN—Death of a Priest

Father Bradley, C.M., of Phibsborough, died recently at Los Angeles, San Francisco, whither he had gone in search of health. The announcement of his death was re-

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