

mendador of the Order of Alphonsus XII., one of the highest marks of distinction it is in the power of the Spanish sovereign to bestow. Father O'Doherty is very proud of the Irish College, and quite delighted with Spain and the Spanish people.

'It is the oldest Irish College in the world,' he said. 'It was founded in 1592 by Philip II. of Spain, and was made a royal college in 1610. At that time Spain was the leading country of Europe, whilst Ireland was groaning under the penal laws which set a price upon the head of the priest and the schoolmaster alike. The object of the foundation was primarily to furnish priests for Ireland, and it was made a condition that the students should, when ordained, return to Ireland. That condition, however, is no longer imposed, because the necessity for it has disappeared. The college received most of its endowment from O'Sullivan Beare, and it is owing to the generosity of that great chieftain and of other eminent Irish exiles that the college has been enabled to exist down to the present day.'

'The college,' continued Father O'Doherty, 'possesses the only true portrait in existence of O'Sullivan Beare, and it is rich in historic memories. The town of Salamanca is the capital of the province, and contains a population of about thirty thousand, which is steadily increasing. It is one of the most ancient cities in Europe, and the beauty of its buildings and of its situation is proverbial. The Spanish are wont to speak and write of it as Roma Lachica, or Little Rome.'

'It is the centre of the richest grain-bearing county in Spain. The people are well-to-do and the local manufactures include sulphuric acid, soap, and tanned leather.'

'But it is as an educational centre that Salamanca is chiefly famous. Its university, founded in the eleventh century, is one of the oldest in the world. Suarez, the great theologian, was educated there, and Fray Louis de Leon and countless others, including Cervantes, the immortal author of 'Don Quixote,' who lived in the street just opposite the Irish College.'

'Do the students like the place?'

'Oh, yes, very much, indeed. The Irish temperament suits the place and the people, and the most friendly relations exist between the students and their neighbors. There is no event, social, civil or military, to which they are not invited.'

'Haven't you had a visit from the King of Spain recently?'

'Oh yes, and he was quite delighted with the place, in which he takes a great interest. And not alone the King, but almost every person of distinction who visits Salamanca makes it a point to see the "College of Irish Nobles," as it is called. It was on the occasion of his visit that the King decorated me with the Order of Alphonsus XII., and he also presented me with his photograph.'

'Has the King's marriage been popular?'

'Yes, exceedingly so, and there can be no doubt that it will lead to better relations with this country. The young King is very popular, and everywhere he goes he is received with enthusiasm. He is becoming more popular every day. He is

A Most Accomplished Young Man,—

a splendid athlete and horseman and a marvellous linguist. He speaks English, German, and French perfectly, and when he visited the Canary Islands recently the natives were astonished to hear him addressing them in their own Arabic vernacular. He is every inch a King, and gives promise of being both a wise and a great ruler.'

'Why is not education in a better position amongst the Spaniards?'

'Well, the poverty of the people has a lot to do with it. And then, again, the people do not require much education. The bulk of them make their living off the land, which requires little cultivation, and their wants are few and easily supplied. They are happy and contented, and that is a great deal more than can be said for other nations with more pretentious claims. The teachers have been obliged to combine farming with teaching for a living, and that has been to the disadvantage of the teaching. But recently the position of the teachers has been improved, and the matter of elementary education will be better looked after in future. Of course, with regard to university education, no country affords better opportunities than Spain does to students. The Spanish professors have always been distinguished in literature and science.'

'You have good hopes for the future of Spain, then?'

'Most decidedly. Now that the country is at peace and able to settle down steadily to the work

of improvement and rehabilitation, with a King universally popular and a beautiful young Queen who has caught the affection of the people, and, in fact, with the goodwill of all nations in its favor and the traditions of a glorious past to inspire it, there is undoubtedly a great future opening out before the Spanish nation. The Spaniards are a brave, a generous, and a gallant race, and I believe are destined yet to play a distinguished part in the history of the world's progress.'

Letter-Writing in Various Countries

Some interesting facts (says an exchange) have just been brought to the attention of the department of commerce regarding the letter-writing in various countries as an index of commercial activity and development in those countries. The information quoted among other things says: 'Following is the arrangement in the order of their importance of the number of letters and postal cards passing through the post-office for 1905 of countries having over twenty per head: Great Britain, 78.3 per head of population; United States, 67.6; New Zealand, 66.3; Switzerland, 59.7; Germany, 55.9; Denmark, 41.6; Austria, 38.2; Argentina, 37.2; Luxemburg, 34.6; Holland, 31.1; Belgium, 29.2; Sweden, 26.4; France, 26.2; Norway, 20.5.'

'It is evident that the development of instruction cannot be seen from the greatest correspondence, for countries having compulsory education, such as France, Denmark, and Norway, hold a mediocre place, while other countries noted for the percentage of illiteracy are well in the front. It is singular to note that the citizens of Austria and Denmark write more letters than do those of France. Belgium ranks eleventh among the above. A commercial status or other development does not figure, or both France and Belgium would hold a better position. 'It is seen that English-speaking people correspond more frequently than do those of the Latin races.'

'Temperament might also figure, for it is said on the Continent that an Englishman will write to a friend fifteen minutes away from his home, but that a Frenchman will wait that far and communicate what he has to say verbally. Nor do the facilities for correspondence serve to increase it, for if we compare the number of post-offices with the population we find that Switzerland stands first with a post-office for every 896 of the population; Germany with one for every 1460; Portugal one for every 1649; Roumania one for every 1815; Great Britain for every 1859; Serbia for every 2127; Denmark for every 2586; Luxemburg for every 2571; Austria for every 3140; Italy for every 3791; Holland for every 3951; Belgium for every 3981; and France for every 4751.'

'Great Britain derives the greatest profits from her postal system, netting annually about £4,500,000, the second country being Russia with £4,120,000 profits. Russia is not considered a letter writing country and its printed matter is restrained, and yet upon its peculiar system it derives good profits. The Russian post office department employs 65,187 persons, while Germany employs 263,517. Japan employs 61,430, or almost as many as Russia, but its profits are only £150,000.'

Miss Marie Narelle

After having completed a four years' triumphal tour through the United Kingdom and the United States, Miss Marie Narelle returned a few months ago to her beloved native Australia, where her reception was of the most enthusiastic and flattering description. To show how popular this gifted lady is it is only necessary to mention that her first season in Sydney after her return had to be extended from four to seven nights, such was its success. Writing of the first of these concerts a Sydney paper said:—

Miss Narelle gave the first concert of her Australian tour at the Town Hall, last night, and the enthusiasm displayed was of a remarkable character. The audience numbered fully 3000—there was not a vacant seat in any part of the building—among those present being her Excellency Lady Northcote. When Miss Narelle made her first entrance the audience applauded demonstratively, and at the conclusion of her initial number fully a dozen bouquets were handed up.

Since she last sang here a marked improvement has taken place, and her contributions of last night were sufficient to account for the triumphs she has achieved abroad in the interval. The voice is exceptionally powerful, her production is thoroughly artistic, and entitles her to rank as one of the greatest vocalists who has been heard in Australia. Miss

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