

The Catholic World

ENGLAND—A Distinguished Astronomer

The death is announced of the distinguished astronomer, Miss Agnes Mary Clerke, one of the few ladies who have been elected members of the Royal Astronomical Society. Miss Clerke's scientific knowledge was acknowledged by experts to be of the very highest value, and her works contain a masterly array of facts. An earnest Catholic, she took a good deal of interest in foreign missionary work.

FRANCE—An Appeal

An appeal has been lodged against the sequestration of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Montmartre, Paris, known as the Church of the National Vow.

Helping Poor Dioceses

The 'Figaro' says the French Bishops have decided to establish an Inter-Diocesan Fund, which will make grants to the more impecunious dioceses.

A Proof of Catholic Unity

The French Bishops have sent an address of thanks to the foreign prelates from whom they have received messages of encouragement and congratulation. These messages are, they state, not only a source of strength to them but a proof of Catholic unity and of perfect union with the eternal rock on which the Church is built.

To Assist aged Priests

Each of the members of the French Episcopal Conference received a medal called the medal of liberty. This medal bears on one side the figure of Christ, and on the other the word 'Liberty' and the emblems of Faith, Hope, and Charity, with an olive branch on the cross. It is to be sold for the benefit of aged priests of the poor communes of France, 'whom the painful circumstances which the Church is traversing will reduce to almost absolute destitution.'

The Protestant Population

Speaking at Wollahra the other day his Eminence Cardinal Moran referred to the persecution of the Church in France. It was a singular fact (said his Eminence) it was only the Catholic Church that was assailed in that country. Three hundred years ago there were 2,500,000 of Protestants in the country, when the whole population was only 20,000,000. They were officially recognised; they had their own fortresses and armies, and were a most important element in the administration of France. At the time of the French Revolution, in 1789, with a national population of 25,000,000; their numbers had dwindled down to a million and a half; and nowadays, whilst the population is 38,000,000, they were only 650,000. They had decayed, notwithstanding the favor extended to them on every side. Now they were regarded as a mere nonentity by the Government that warred against all religion. It ignored their existence.

The Irish College

We ('Catholic Times') trust that Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, in response to the representations made by Mr. John Redmond and a deputation of the Irish Catholic Bishops, will earnestly exert himself to save the Irish College, Paris, from confiscation by the French Government. If the 'entente cordiale' means anything it should avail to preserve the College for the Irish students. It is not enough that the institution is safe till the end of the scholastic year in June. The Foreign Secretary and the British Ambassador in Paris, as representing the British Government, should call the French Premier's attention to the title of the property under international law. Both the Revolutionary Government and Napoleon recognised it as Irish property, and even the Communists during their insurrection after the siege of Paris spared it as being under the protection of the British flag. For the Irish Church it is a memorial of days of persecution, the penal times when Catholics went to seek their education on the Continent. But it has been more than that. Year by year it has sent out priests who have done honor to their sacred calling and some of whom, thanks to their ability and their training, have risen to positions of distinction in the Church.

Clerical Students

The General Assembly of the French Bishops has taken place (says the 'Catholic Times'), and nothing will be known of the decisions arrived at until they have been considered by the Holy See. But we may

take it for granted that the question of securing a supply of candidates for the priesthood has received the most careful attention of the Hierarchy. There can be no doubt that the numbers, already not too large, will diminish here and there with the changed prospect offered by an uncertain future. And possibly many dioceses, feeling the pinch of poverty in other directions, will find it a hard work to maintain their seminaries efficient, even when they can manage to maintain them at all. Moreover, the Government's policy of forcing seminary students, and even ordained priests, into the barracks for military service must, we fear, result in a diminution of the candidates for Holy Orders. It is scarcely possible that from such fiery furnaces of temptation the best of men, with the best of good wills, can escape unsinged. What would our English newspapers say were our Government to force military service in the barracks on young Anglican or Nonconformist ministers or candidates for the ministry? Yet they are sublimely silent over this gross tyranny committed on Catholics by the infidel Government at present ruling France.

Perfect Union and the Result

There is a tone of indignation in the French Bishops' address to the Holy Father at the calumny that they have followed his Holiness more through obedience than from conviction (says the 'Catholic Times'). It was part of the campaign of misrepresentation to induce the public to believe that the Episcopate would have accepted the 'Associations Culturelles' but for the intervention of the Holy Father. Perfect union with the Holy See is in the eyes of the Bishops a title of glory, and there is evidence that, in the face of that union, the Government are tiring of the conflict. The Paris correspondent of the 'Times' announces now with apparent satisfaction that the Government Bill for abolishing the necessity of notifying public meetings to the civil authorities may be passed in time to prevent the application of that provision of the law which stipulates that if the clergy do not fulfil the legal formalities they will on February 3 be deprived of the benefit of temporary subsidies. It is not so long since M. Briand brought in and passed through the Chambers his Bill making notification legally imperative, and the correspondent of the 'Times' defended and praised the measure. Are MM. Clemenceau, Briand, and their friends beginning to see that whilst the French Government is earning reprobation for the persecution, the ecclesiastical authorities are, despite the false reports that are circulated, winning the approbation of the world for their unflinching assertion of the principles of religious liberty?

GERMANY—The Late Archbishop of Posen

The will of Archbishop Stablewski, Archbishop of Posen, has been published. It states that he always sought to preserve the national life of Poland, and he hopes his successor will do likewise.

ROME—The Jamaica Earthquake

His Eminence Cardinal Merry del Val, on behalf of the Holy Father, has sent two telegrams of condolence and encouragement to the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities in Jamaica.

Resolutions of Protest

The Very Rev. Dr. O'Riordan, Rector of the Irish College, Rome, on January 20 presented to the Pope the resolutions passed by the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce of Cork, the Town Commissioners of Bantry, the Corporation of Waterford, the Newry Board of Guardians, and the Macroom, Mallow, and Cashel Urban Councils, protesting against the action of the French Government in its conflict with the Church. The Pope was highly pleased, and Cardinal Merry del Val said the resolutions are so worded that there can be no fear of mistake as to their meaning.

SCOTLAND—Private Chamberlain

The Rev. Dr. Mackintosh, vice-rector of the Scots College, Rome, has been named a Private Chamberlain of the Sovereign Pontiff.

School Requirements

In order to meet the requirements of the Education Department, it has been decided to build at a cost of £14,000 new Catholic schools to take the place of the old premises erected over thirty years ago at St. Margaret's, Kinning Park, Glasgow. The new schools will be of the most modern type. Canon Macintosh lately stated that the head-master who opened the boys' school on November 29, 1875, was at the head of the school yet, and as vigorous as ever.