

# Irish News

## OUR IRISH LETTER

(From our own correspondent.)

DUBLIN, March, 1908.

### A STATUE OF THE LATE QUEEN.

A statue of the late Queen Victoria was unveiled some days ago in Dublin by the Lord-Lieutenant in presence of a fashionable gathering. His Excellency made a short speech, and read the following telegram from the King:—"My thoughts are with you on the occasion of your unveiling to-day, as my representative, the statue of my beloved mother, Queen Victoria." The statue stands on the Leinster Lawn, in front of the old city mansion of the great Earls of Kildare. The house was leased in the last century by the then Earl to the Royal Dublin Society, and is the headquarters of that flourishing institution. On either side of this eighteenth century mansion are the fine modern buildings containing science and art museums, public library, etc., and were it not for the fact that the statue is of such colossal dimensions that it seems to crowd the place and dwarf the surrounding buildings, the site would be an admirable one; but the committee evidently worked on the idea that they could not have too much of a good thing. Artists pronounce the work a clever one, the portrait excellent, the execution fine and bold, though some think it would have been better to portray her Majesty at an early period of her life. The work is from the chisel of a young Dublin man, Mr. John Hughes, a former pupil of the Christian Brothers.

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

Our national festival appears to have been celebrated with becoming honours all over the globe. In Dublin and other Irish Dioceses there were preparatory novenas in the good cause of temperance, and it is a hopeful sign for the future to know that sobriety is now the feature of St. Patrick's Day. The shamrock is as universally worn as ever, but it is worn high and dry, it being no longer considered necessary to drown it. Another feature of the day is the prevalence of Rosary and sermon in Irish in the churches. More than one Protestant church advertised full morning service conducted in Irish for the occasion. There were two somewhat remarkable demonstrations on the 17th. In Omagh, in the black North, the town was decorated gaily, and a procession said to be 50,000 strong marched, unmolested, through the streets, the Northerners mustering from far and near to join in a national celebration such as has rarely been seen in the North of Ireland.

### A NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION IN TRINITY COLLEGE.

No less remarkable, and certainly as amusing as it was unusual, was a demonstration and its sequel in Trinity College. It appears that amongst the students is an English youth who has become so enthusiastically enamoured of Ireland that he determined to head a number of Irish lads in making an entirely new departure in the annals of Trinity and have a genuinely national manifestation on the 17th. To the horror of the college dignitaries, a great bonfire was built and set ablaze in a locality known as Botany Bay, and, led by the English boy, a lot of youthful fun went on around the bonfire. But Trinity College must be kept anti-national at all cost. The gradually growing national party amongst its students must be put down; so, to the amazement of all the students, a punishment hitherto reserved for the gravest breaches of discipline showing unmistakably immoral conduct was given to the ringleader of an innocent bit of fun: he was to be expelled the college.

Evidently all the students, no matter what their politics, were disgusted by this act, for, a day or two later, some 500 of them, led by a mounted Boer lad (whose father fought for his country in the late Boer war), and preceded by one of the principal trades' bands of the city, playing the 'Dead March' from 'Saul,' held a most amusing mock funeral through the city. Hundreds of cabs and outside cars, swarming with college lads wearing crepe and strange white

linen garments, slowly paraded the streets, mourning for the expelled youth amidst the good-humoured 'chaff' and hearty cheers of the thousands who collected to enjoy the joke. However, neither the Dons of T.O.D. nor the Castle authorities could see the absurdity of the affair. The police were ordered out in force, and the procession broken up, but not before a good many thoroughfares were paraded and full publicity given to the fact that, notwithstanding all the protestations of liberality on the part of the Board of Trinity College, it does not want, and will not have, Irish feeling exhibited within its walls.

### THE LATE SIR NICHOLAS O'CONOR.

Constantinople has just been the scene of a remarkable manifestation of public sorrow on the death of the late British Ambassador, Sir Nicholas O'Connor, an Irish Catholic. At the funeral service in the Catholic Cathedral the church was thronged by the general public, and the mourners included the entire diplomatic body, and a number of delegates from the Sultan. The funeral procession from Constantinople to Topaneh, thence across the Bosphorous to the cemetery of Haidar Pasha, was a most imposing one, delegates from the Sultan and the various Embassies being pall-bearers.

### A SAD STORY.

A story was told in the Cork newspapers a short time ago that was, to my mind, a very sad story of a great wrong done to a free man. A poor old tramp, 70 years of age, was met by the police wandering around the country, trundling all his worldly goods before him in a wheelbarrow, carrying all his worldly wealth in his pocket. The contents of the barrow were a medley of queer odds and ends, of little or no use: the contents of the pocket were over £100, the scrapings of a lifetime spent, no doubt, peddling about the country, living that half gipsy life so dear to many an Irish heart. The delightful freedom of it!—the soft climate; the kindly intercourse with hosts of friends everywhere, for your true pedlar was a most social creature; the lovely sights, the joyous sounds of Nature; an ideal life to those who choose it willingly. It was the dream of my own youth, but social etiquette has its limitations and drawbacks: still, to this hour the joy of that life thrills, and I could have cried when reading that—for his own good, forsooth!—the police took charge of the old wanderer, his money and his barrow, and lodged him safely within the lovely, picturesque, warm, kindly shelter of the poorhouse ward. The old man may be doating; all the more does he want what his youth craved: freedom—freedom to go about and fancy himself still the sturdy pedlar of old, welcome in every cottage and farmhouse; freedom to totter on as long as his feet can carry him, and then to sink down where, never fear, kind hands will help him and care for him, for our country folk still love the old stock. Better even, far better, the freedom to die as the wild creatures of the woods and hills love to die. Do we not all know how even the pet animal, the dog or cat, when its time comes, is tormented with the longing to go away and die free of all restraint? Ah! it was a cruel thing to shut up that poor old wanderer who fancied he was free in a free country. Poor old man!

## COUNTY NEWS

### ANTRIM—The Diocese of Down and Connor

The Parish priests of Down and Connor met on March 31 in St. Malachy's College, Belfast, for the purpose of selecting three names to be forwarded to the Holy See in connection with the vacant See. His Eminence Cardinal Logue presided. The three names before the Conference were—Very Rev. Dr. Lavery, P.P., St. Matthew's, Vicar Capitular; Very Rev. Patrick Murray, Irish Provincial, Redemptorist Order, Limerick; and the Very Rev. John Tohill, P.P., V.F., Cushendall. The voting resulted in Dr. Lavery and Father Murray each receiving 25 votes, while Father Tohill received four.

### CARLOW—Champion Life-saver

According to a local contemporary, Michael Webster, the Lock, Carlow, has just saved the thirty-first life from the deep waters of the Barrow. His address indicates his oppor-

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