

The Catholic World

ENGLAND—An Octogenarian

Dr. Wilkinson, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, has just celebrated the sixtieth year of his priesthood. The venerable Bishop, who is in his 83rd year, has his residence at Ushaw College, of which he is President. On December 23, 1848, the jubilarian was ordained priest by Bishop Hagarth. His Lordship is a native of Harperley, near Wolsingham, and after some years at Harrow and Durham University, where he took his degree, intending to become an Anglican minister, he joined a community of young men, followers of Pusey in Leeds, and in 1846 he was received into the Church in that town by Father Henry Walmsley.

The Sisters of Nazareth

Mother Mary of the Nativity (Miss Margaret Mary Owen), Mother-General of the Sisters of Nazareth, whose death—in the 69th year of her age, and the 47th of her religious profession, at the new house of the Order at Hammersmith—was briefly recorded in our last issue (says the *Catholic Weekly*), was a woman of extraordinary ability, as the wonderful extension of the work of her Order during the period—thirty-one years—of her government clearly proves. The Sisters of Nazareth have now thirty-one branch houses in the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, the greater part of that number being founded during that period. In South Africa there are five houses, and during the war the Sisters gave up part of the buildings as hospitals for invalid and wounded troops. In Kimberley the Sisters heroically continued their work, despite shell-wrecked walls, and on the day of the relief Lord Edmund Talbot, the Duke of Norfolk's brother, rode in ahead of the column with messages of congratulation from another convent of Nazareth Sisters. The labor and responsibility entailed in controlling all the houses of the Order were infinite. Mother Mary undertook the whole of their general management, and every matter of importance was referred to her. She never shrank from duty or danger, and never hesitated in giving a decision.

JAPAN—Negotiations with the Holy See

American contemporaries state that early this year Archbishop O'Connell, of Boston, will leave for Japan to complete the negotiations between the Holy See and the Mikado's Government, begun on his former trip.

FRANCE—A Travesty of Justice

It is almost inconceivable that under any civilised Government such a flagrant travesty of justice should have occurred as was enacted recently in a French law court over the 'liquidation' of the property belonging to the French Assumptionist Fathers (remarks the *Catholic Weekly*). As is well known, the Catholic newspaper, *La Croix*, was formerly owned and managed by these Fathers, and it has a wider circulation than any French Catholic journal. Before the law proscribing the religious Orders had come into force, and nearly two years before M. Menago was appointed liquidator, a Catholic banker of the name of Vrau left Lille and took up his abode in Paris, in order to take over the concern. This was done in due legal form by deeds of contract, and it is not disputed that M. Vrau's purchase of *La Croix* was a real one. It was proved and admitted by the judge that he invested his money in the concern. Yet the court decided that the contracts by which the Catholic banker obtained proprietorship of the paper were 'null and non-existent,' and that the business of *La Croix* and of the *Pèlerin*—connected with it—belonged to the liquidator, M. Menago! How did the judge, in his reasoned decision, make out the case? He was at no pains to reveal the true reason of this shameless robbery. M. Vrau was a pupil and intimate friend of the Fathers, and wedded to their religious ideas. He was told that in spite of having purchased *La Croix* and managed it for some years, he must have known that the Fathers were the real proprietors.

Religious Freedom

The Minister for War, General Picquart, has just dismissed three officers stationed at Laon on a strange plea. It appears that on Sunday, November 8, when Monsignor Pechenard, Bishop of Soissons, was to preach to the members of the Association of Jeunesse Catholique, three officers attended Mass at the Cathedral in civilian clothes. It was afterwards reported to the military authorities that the sermon cast serious reflections on the Government. This report appears to have been made by the Commissary of Police, for whose action the Mayor of Laon has publicly declined to bear any responsibility, as he had never given any orders for him to go about spying in plain clothes in order to be able to supply reports of the religious views

or doings of public servants in the town. The Bishop of Soissons has also declared that his sermon was in no way concerned with the Government or its acts, that he never even mentioned the words 'Government,' 'republic,' or 'laws,' and that his sole purpose was to develop the meaning of his text, 'The truth shall make you free.' Furthermore, there is an official report to the Mayor that the Mass passed off without any incident. But the officers have been cashiered by General Picquart on the mere report of a spy, without being allowed a word in self-defence.

ROME—The Holy Father's Sacerdotal Jubilee

On Sunday, December 27, a solemn *Te Deum* was sung in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the Pope's Cathedral Church, and as we are informed by the inscription on the front, the 'Mother and head of all the Churches of the City and the World.' The function, which was held as a thanksgiving ceremonial for the fifty years of sacerdotal life granted to Pope Pius X., was preceded by solemn Vespers, to which were invited all the Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops resident in Rome. In addition, deputations from the Chapters of St. Peter's and St. Mary Major's attended, as well as the Generals and Procurators of all the religious Orders and Congregations. Special tribunes were reserved for the Sacred College, the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, the Papal Court, the Military Orders, and the sisters and nieces of Pius X. This was the last function held in connection with the Pope's Sacerdotal Jubilee, and, with the single exception of the Holy Father's Mass in St. Peter's on November 16, was the most brilliant gathering of a memorable year.

The Revision of the Vulgate

His Holiness Pius X. on December 29, received in private audience Abbot Gasquet, President-General of the English Benedictine Congregation, and Father Charles Corney, of Downside Abbey, Bath. The Pontiff displayed great interest in the revision of the Vulgate, and paid a warm tribute to the valuable research work which Abbot Gasquet is performing.

The Sacred College

The death of Cardinal Lecot (writes a Rome correspondent) makes the seventh death in the Sacred College during the past twelve months. Cardinals Richard, Casali del Drago, Portanova, Nocella, Cassanese y Pages, and Mathieu were the other six Cardinals who died in 1908. The number of vacancies in the College at present is fifteen, and, notwithstanding various rumors, nobody knows as yet when any of these vacancies will be filled up. Much less is it known who will be chosen to fill any of them.

Christmas Day at the Vatican

Christmas Day passed off very uneventfully at the Vatican. The Holy Father, after pontificating at early Mass before a very limited number of specially invited guests, spent the morning quietly in his private apartments. In the afternoon he saw a few visitors; but all of the audiences were of a perfectly private character.

The Holy Father's Health

The rumors circulated in the press concerning the health of the Holy Father are not well founded (writes a Rome correspondent under date December 28). The fact that he did not hold the reception of Cardinals usual on Christmas Eve has been made the basis of these rumors—an insufficient basis, because the reason for not holding this reception is that quite recently, in connection with the Jubilee, the Cardinals presented the good wishes which they usually present at Christmas, and thus rendered so early a repetition a needless formality. His Holiness enjoys his normal health, and is as well as any man can reasonably expect to be when he has turned his seventy-third year.

The Irish Christian Brothers

Before a large assembly of clergy and laymen on Sunday, December 27, the annual distribution of part of the awards made to their students by the Irish Christian Brothers took place under the patronage of the Most Rev. Dr. Delany, Archbishop of Hobart. On the following evening his Eminence Cardinal Martinelli presided at the carrying out of the second part of the programme. In their addresses to the assemblies, both Cardinal Martinelli and the Archbishop of Hobart spoke in most eulogistic terms of the good work done by the Brothers among the youth of Rome, and referred at some length to the efficiency of their schools, to which, by the way, even Freemasons now send their sons to be educated as good Catholic citizens.

UNITED STATES—The Divorce Evil

In the course of a recent discourse Cardinal Gibbons made the following comments regarding the growth of