

A New Irish Historian

Mr. C. H. Oldham, B.A., lecturing in Dublin on December 21, before the National Literary Society, thus spoke of Irish history: 'At this juncture it seems to me that we Irish have no history; we only have a big pile of new material out of which some day history may be produced. This position is embarrassing and demoralising. Few of us have the free time, or the intellectual training, necessary to handle the raw materials ourselves. It is certain that the day has gone by for making new books by merely copying out the unverified or untested statements which we find printed in older books. A good many of us are merely waiting and hoping for the true historian to turn up and tell us all about the whole thing. Pending his expected arrival, now much overdue, we are living along really without any history at all! In such case a shrewd man, who has any reputation to lose, will sit tight and say nothing. But those of us who are clothed with any repute as historians, but who are too deeply interested to sit tight and stop thinking, must try to grope our timid way through the debris of crumbling statement, like a blind man feeling for his home through a city which an earthquake has tumbled all about his footsteps. It is questionable now whether this historian that we are looking for has not arrived in Mrs. Green. Her work, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing*, has flooded our knowledge with such an amount of new light that we are really at present blinded by excessive light.

Banking Returns

The report on the banking, railway, and shipping statistics of Ireland for the half-year ending June 30, 1908, issued by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, contains some exceedingly interesting and important information regarding Ireland's present financial position. As regards banks, the report contains the following:—The deposits and cash balances in joint stock banks amounted on June 30 last to £50,596,000, being the highest amount for June of which there is record, and £2,529,000 in excess of that for June, 1907. Comparing the deposits and cash balances since June, 1888—with the exception of a decrease in June, 1897—there has been a gradual increase from £30,310,000 in June, 1888, to £50,596,000 in June, 1908. These figures are of considerable interest as indicating the growth of the operations and influence of banking in Ireland. They do not, however, in themselves gauge the growth of 'net savings.' Such a growth and its extent could only be determined by a complete account of savings on the one hand and of indebtedness on the other. But for this account the necessary data are not available. A comparative table of half-yearly totals of deposits and cash balances is appended, extending back to 1898, which shows that there was an increase in June last of £217,000 over the amount recorded for the period of December. A second table shows that at the end of last June the estimated amount in the Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland stood at £10,627,000, as compared with £10,637,000 for the corresponding period of 1907—a decrease of £10,000.

OBITUARY

MR. OWEN McGUIGAN, HOKITIKA.

It is with sincere regret that we record the death of Mr. Owen McGuigan, which took place at his residence, Kanieri, on the afternoon of January 15, at the age of 64 years. Mr. McGuigan was an old and respected resident of the West Coast, having resided there for nearly forty years. He was born in County Cavan, arrived in Victoria in 1864, and came to New Zealand in 1871. He was proprietor of the Hokitika-Kanieri tramway for a number of years. A widow and family of three sons and two daughters are left to mourn their loss. The sons are Messrs T. J. McGuigan, J.P., and member of the Westland County Council; John McGuigan, of the Grey Valley, and Owen McGuigan, of the Defence Department, Dunedin. The late Mr. McGuigan was a devoted and practical Catholic, and was attended in his illness by the Rev. Father Ainsworth. The funeral took place on Sunday, January 17, at Hokitika, and was attended by a very large number of friends. Rev. Father O'Reilly, of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, officiated at the Church of St. Mary and at the graveside.—R.I.P.

The New York correspondent of the London *Daily Express* reports that Mark Twain has incorporated himself at Albany, the capital of the State of New York, under the name of the Mark Twain Company, with a capital of £1000. The company will take over all the rights to the name Mark Twain, in order to ensure future benefits for Mark Twain's family.

People We Hear About

Sir Edward Elgar, the famous Catholic composer, was the son of W. H. Elgar, organist. He is best known by his famous 'Dream of Gerontius,' which he and Cardinal Newman are responsible for. This famous piece was first heard in London in 1903 under the baton of the composer. Before being played in London, it had been performed in Dusseldorf and America. Sir Edward's other works include 'Caractacus,' 'Sea Pictures,' 'The Apostles,' and his new Symphony, which was performed for the first time in Manchester the other day.

His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, who, according to a cable message, is making a slow recovery from an illness contracted in Dublin, left for his *ad limina* visit early last year. His Grace is now in his seventieth year, having been born in Galway in 1839. He studied at Rome, at St. Jarlath's College (Tuam), and at Maynooth. He was ordained in 1865, and after six years spent in parochial work in Westport and Tuam, was appointed Professor at, and subsequently Vice-president of, Maynooth College. He was consecrated Bishop of Galway in 1883, and was appointed Archbishop of Melbourne on September 29, 1886.

The Archbishop of Glasgow, Most Rev. John Aloysius Maguire, D.D., was born in 1851, and received his education at Stonyhurst and Glasgow University, taking his theology course at Propaganda. He was ordained in 1875, and spent the first years of his priestly life as assistant priest at Glasgow Cathedral. From 1879 to 1883 Father Maguire was diocesan secretary; was made Rector of St. Peter's, Partick, in 1883; raised to the Glasgow Chapter in 1884, and became its Provost in 1893. He became Vicar-General in 1885, and was consecrated titular Bishop of Trocmadae and Auxiliary of Glasgow in 1894, succeeding as Archbishop to the See of Glasgow on the death of Archbishop Eyre in 1902. In the beginning of 1903 he received the pallium from the Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh.

Lord Ardilaun has been giving his reasons in the London *Times* why he declined to allow the erection of a mural tablet commemorating Mr. Gladstone's temporary occupancy of his Lordship's present residence in Carlton House Terrace. Here are some of his reasons: 'I freely confess that I should rather not have on my house a memorial of one who, notwithstanding his "charm and genius," by his measures reduced the value of Irish property generally by a half, and reduced vast numbers of my countrymen and women to poverty, and who disestablished and disendowed the Church to which I belong. Even Radical critics should try to place themselves in the position of the criticised, if fair play was their real motive.'

The Hon. A. W. Hogg, M.P., gave an interesting account to a *Dominion* representative the other day of his visit to Hastings. Accompanied by Mr. Dillon, M.P., and Mr. O'Reilly, the Minister went out to Meanee, where he was entertained by the Very Rev. Dr. Kennedy, a young New Zealander of high scientific attainments. Mr. Hogg was greatly interested in Dr. Kennedy's observatory, with its huge telescope, and his fine equipment of scientific instruments, including thermometers for taking the temperature, not only of the atmosphere, but also of the earth at different depths. Dr. Kennedy's wind gauges, his lunar and stellar photographs, taken by himself, his system of daily meteorological observations, and the spectrum analysis, were also inspected. Mr. Hogg said he had rarely enjoyed anything more than listening to Dr. Kennedy's exposition of his views on astronomy. His comprehensively-stocked garden, his glass-sided observation beehive, and his cellar of first-rate local wines were also very remarkable.

The Right Hon. the Premier, in the course of a letter of sympathy to the sister of the late Mrs. Hope, the heroic stewardess of the Penguin, concluded thus: 'One feels so helpless to do anything to lighten your burden in this unusually heavy hour of trial, but if anything can help assuage your grief at the death of your sister, Mrs. Hope, it must be the knowledge that in the hour of danger she acted the part of a heroine, and did her duty nobly to the last. I can only tender my heartfelt sympathy to you and yours in your irreparable loss, and in the grief you have to bear.' Mrs. Hope was the third daughter of the late Mr. John Chisholm, of Inverness-shire, Scotland. Whilst the boats were being launched, we are told, she was untiring in her efforts to comfort and cheer the women and children. One hears of her telling a cluster of terrified little girls, 'Cheer up, darlings; it's only a little way to the shore, and daddy's waiting for you there!' The children were frightened to take the leap into the darkness that seemed to be their only chance of life.