

A Story of Parnell.

MR HENNIKER HEATON, in 'The Leisure Hour,' tells the following characteristic story of Parnell, showing the latter's power of detachment: He came into the House one afternoon, when the fiercest excitement prevailed regarding the publication by 'The Times' of the forged letters. He, in a short speech, denied the authorship of the letters, and then walked into the lobby and engaged me in earnest conversation. Everybody thought he was telling me of the awful political event then stirring men's minds. This is what he said to me: 'I have just read in the afternoon paper that a mountain of gold has been discovered in Western Australia, and that some tons of the specimens have been sent home to you.' I replied that it was true, and that I had in my locker in the House some of the crushed specimens. We proceeded to get them, and I gave him about a wineglassful of the 'crushing.' He took it away with him, and, to the bewilderment of his party, no one saw him for a week, and very few indeed knew his address. 'On that day week, Mr Heaton proceeds, 'almost at the same hour, he again appeared in the lobby. Walking up to me he said, smilingly, "I have analysed the specimens, and they go 32oz of gold to the ton." I said he was wrong. He then took from his pocket a scrap of paper and read: "27oz of gold and 5oz of silver." I replied that this was indeed remarkable, for it exactly coincided with the analysis of Messrs Johnston, Matthey and Co., the famous metallurgists. Parnell then showed me the small pin's point of gold he had obtained. I expressed surprise at his work. He said: "The fact is, I take an interest in the matter. I have a small workshop to test the minerals in the mountains of Wicklow, some portion of which I own." The astonishing thing is that while his hundreds of thousands of adherents were fulminating against 'The Times,' he was quietly working away testing minerals in his laboratory.'

A Tasmanian in Spain.

MR. JOSEPH MCMAHON, Longford, Tasmania, who spent a considerable time in Europe last year, writes as follows to the *Monitor* regarding his experience during a two months' visit to Spain:—I had the pleasure of spending two months in Spain last year—April and May; and during that time I travelled from north to south and from east to west, but saw only one person drunk, and that case had a rather amusing side to it, which, to my mind, goes far to prove the rarity of such an occurrence. We took a tram ride at Valladolid, and at the terminus a well-dressed young man got in. While waiting for the tram to start he pulled out the inevitable cigarette, and not being able to find a match, applied first to me, and then to the conductor. After drawing a few whiffs, he grew drowsy, and then I noticed that he was showing signs of having imbibed too freely; so we left him and took our seats in the next compartment. On our way through the city I drew the conductor's attention to him, and after looking at him intently, he turned to me and said, 'Mala.' I shook my head and said, 'Vive,' but the conductor thought not. Seeing a policeman he stopped the tram, and brought him in to see the sick man. The policeman shook him; shouted at him, and at length made him open his eyes. He then shook hands vigorously with him and pronounced him 'Mala.' Then he and the conductor lifted him out, and kindly held his head for him; then they laid him by the fountain and the policeman said he needed a 'medico.' So much for drunkenness. I saw more of it in one afternoon in Wellington, Shropshire, a small town of 7000 inhabitants (with its 56 public houses and beer shops), than I saw in Italy, France, and Spain, in eight months.

Then as to the 'parental bond.' Nowhere have I seen such affectionate parents—fathers and mothers—nor such cleanly, comfortably, and warmly-dressed children as I saw in Spain. I speak of the poorer classes. Their 'hospitality' I always liken to that which I expected to find in old Ireland; had I only had the good fortune to visit it. Travellers by rail are as courteous to you as if you were their dearest friends, and always offer to share with you their wine and luncheon. Altogether they are a charming people and unspoiled by tourists. A gentleman I travelled with from England to Australia had a large experience with them as railway navvies between Xeres and Seville; and he told me they were honorable and trustworthy: so different from other working men known to him.

The First Map of China.

THERE has been recently published in Germany a new map of China. This newest map of the Chinese Empire still rests, says the *New York Sun*, 'upon the basis established by French missionaries in the early part of the eighteenth century. These learned Jesuit Fathers were commissioned by the intelligent Emperor Kanghi, contemporary of Peter the Great, to make a large map of China. The Chinese had paid much attention to geographic studies, but all their maps utterly lacked the sense of proportion. They traced a brook, river or lake with equally bold touches of the pencil; their measurements of distances had merely a general value; their maps were, therefore, vague and misleading. But a great change was made in the mapping of China when the Jesuit missionaries became the official astronomers of the empire. They had convinced the Emperor that they could make reliable maps of his country.

'To collect information for their map they travelled through all the provinces and astronomically fixed the position of 600 places. Much of their information with regard to the water courses and

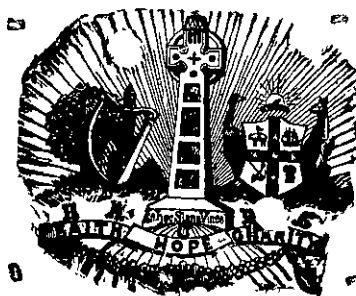
other data was derived from the officials in each district. Their monumental work was completed in 1718, and the first atlas of the whole Chinese Empire was then published by the Chinese Government.

'It was this atlas that the great cartographer, d'Anville, published in a French edition in 1737, under the title "New Atlas of China, Chinese Tartary, etc." This map has been the basis of all European maps of the Middle Kingdom. Reichardt used it as the foundation of his map of China in the third edition of Stieler's Hand Atlas (1826); but though he closely conformed to the Jesuit map, because no other material was at his command, he thought it necessary to explain that "these missionaries prepared their map of this immense region with its rivers, mountains, waste places and towns, largely from hearsay reports, modified by their own deductions, which were not without value as to the truth."

'This comment on the great work of the Jesuits did not do them justice. Their map lives still as the most important basis of all maps of China.'

Cuttlefish Ink.

THE cuttlefish are caught in great numbers off the Cornwall coast and are used as a bait for the conger eel, for which this part of the world is celebrated. The cuttlefish possesses no real mouth (says a writer in an exchange), but has a long, cylindrical sucker, with which it adheres firmly to the bait. The method of capturing the fish is as follows: A long line from which are suspended from 200 to 300 hooks baited with portions of pilchards (almost the only bait the cuttlefish will take) is let down into the sea and allowed to stop there for about half an hour. It is then drawn up and the cuttlefish are found hanging by means of their suckers to the bait. The moment that they leave the waters they eject with considerable force a great quantity of deep black, viscous substance which is about the consistency of treacle, and the stain made by it upon the clothes of the fisherman is permanent if it happens to fall upon them. I had a conversation with one man who has several times received a full charge in his face, and he assured me that beyond the smell, which is most nauseous, he felt no inconvenience at all, no smarting or pain in his eyes, and had no bad after effects. If any of the liquid gets upon the nets it rots them beyond repair unless it is washed off immediately. Another curious fact is that this fluid will not injure cloth in the slightest degree beyond making a permanent stain. One man told me that he had used a jersey for several years which had been squirted over at different times by these cephalopods, but that except for the cloth being stained it was as good as ever. When this ink is ejected under water, it hangs in a sort of cloud and does not spread.



HIBERNIAN-AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC BENEFIT SOCIETY, NEW ZEALAND DISTRICT, No. 3.

The Catholic Community is earnestly requested to support this excellent Organisation, for it inculcates a love of Holy Faith and Patriotism in addition to the unsurpassed benefits and privileges of Membership.

The Entrance Fees are from 5s to £4, according to age at time of Admission.

Sick Benefits 20s per week for 26 weeks, 15s per week for the next 13 weeks, and 10s a week for the following 13 weeks. In case of a further continuance of his illness a member of Seven Years' Standing previous to the commencement of such illness will be allowed 5s per week as superannuation during incapacity.

Funeral Allowance, £20 at the death of a Member, and £10 at the death of a Member's Wife.

In addition to the foregoing provision is made for the admission of Honorary Members, Reduced Benefit Members, and the establishment of Sisters' Branches and Juvenile Contingents. Full information may be obtained from Local Branch Officers or direct from the District Secretary.

The District Officers are anxious to open New Branches, and will give all possible assistance and information to applicants Branches being established in the various centres throughout the Colonies an invaluable measure of reciprocity obtains.

W. KANE,

District Secretary,

Auckland