

IRISH NEWS.

GENERAL.

The oldest nun in the South of Ireland, Mother Mary de Pazzi, who has just at 85 celebrated her diamond jubilee as a nun, entered the Convent of the Presentation at Middleton, Co. Cork, 65 years ago, and took her vows in December, 1858.

Miss Hickey, a Dublin Corporation employee who was bayoneted by a sentry on duty in the City Hall in September, has been offered £5 compensation by the military authorities, as an "act of grace . . . in full discharge of all compensation alleged to be due to her." She was stabbed through the neck, and for a time her life was in danger.

The Hon. T. J. Ryan, the Irish Premier of Queensland, who is at present on a visit to the Home countries, is the only Prime Minister in the Empire who volunteered for war service. He was of military age. The military authorities decided that his political work was of such importance that he would be of more service to the Empire by retaining the Queensland Premiership than by relinquishing it.

The London correspondent of the *Independent* says it is recognised on all sides that his "maladroitness and malevolence" speech in the House of Commons recently on the Irish situation Mr. Ian Macpherson, M.P., cannot long continue to hold office as Irish Chief Secretary. His statement that no change in the Irish Government could take place so long as Ireland remains in its present unsettled condition is poor statesmanship and poorer policy. The duty of any Government is to remedy and remove, not to perpetuate unrest and disaffection. His reference to Irish "dirt" came extremely ill from a quondam Scotch Radical, himself the son of a Highland *robber* (comments the *Glasgow Herald*). It is rumored that his successor may be Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, who if not much of a political stalwart is at least an Irishman.

HOW LORD FRENCH BECAME A HOME RULER.

Discussing what he calls the evolution of Lord French, Mr. Hugh Martin, representative of the *Daily News* in Dublin, says: The Viceroy wanted certain things done at the Castle, and he was surprised they were not done. "First," he continues, "there was Mr. Shortt, who steadily refused to recognise the obvious fact that Ireland had been placed under a military Governor General. Then there were the Sinn Feiners, among whom simplicity is not exactly conspicuous. There was Dillon, too, and the Castle machine and the Kildare Street Club, and a man called Carson appearing and disappearing, like some omnipotent genius. All most disconcerting to a simple soldier. Obviously the straightforward thing to do was to get real, unquestioned, supreme control, and 'run the show.' Get rid of Shortt, hold the Sinn Feiners, abolish Dillon, make terms with the Club, smash Carson, and supersede the Castle machine! Lord French took it all on, as they say, in army sporting circles. Lord French," he adds, "was undoubtedly staggered to find that the enemy he had to tackle was nothing more nor less than the British Government, and the experience transformed him in a few months from an eminently theoretical Home Ruler into an out-and-out self-government man, an enemy of absentee rule, even (let it only be whispered) a Viceroy able to sympathise with, while condemning, the extravagance of Sinn Fein. In short, Lord French had travelled the same road as so many other conscientious men on the spot. He had found the Union out."

WHY MR. BARTON, M.P., DECIDED TO LEAVE MOUNTJOY PRISON.

The escape of Mr. R. C. Barton, Sinn Fein M.P. for West Wicklow, who was in Mountjoy Prison, awaiting trial on a charge in connection with a speech, has sorely puzzled the authorities. When his cell was opened a dummy figure was found in his bed. The warders also found a note addressed to the Governor

of the prison. In this Mr. Barton said that "owing to the discomfort of the place" he felt compelled to leave. The note concluded by asking the Governor to keep his luggage until he sent for it. Examination showed that the bars of the cell window had been filed away. Mr. Barton was confined in the prison hospital, a portion of the building which is surrounded by a wall 25ft high. Inside the wall was a military guard of 25 men. There is no theory as to the manner of his escape. It is believed that he did not pass through the gates; yet the prison authorities cannot understand how he got over the walls. It is understood that Mr. Barton is the first prisoner who ever escaped from Mountjoy. At the time of the 1916 rising, Mr. Barton, who is a large land and property owner in Co. Wicklow, was an officer of the Dublin Fusiliers. So impressed were the Sinn Feiners with his earnestness and ability, that he rapidly became a great favorite among them. He was selected to carry the Sinn Fein standard in West Wicklow at the recent general election, and he was returned by 6239 votes against 1370 for his opponent, The O'Mahony, of Grange Con, Co. Wicklow.

IRELAND'S SOUL.

The impropriety of pitchforking Mr. Macpherson into the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland is evident from the speech he delivered in the recent Irish debate (says the London *Catholic Times*). There may be administrative positions which this gentleman can fill efficiently, but he has neither the knowledge nor the sympathy requisite for one occupying his present post. He had the hardihood to say that Ireland was in danger of losing her soul. What does he know about Ireland's soul? In order to understand Ireland's soul something more is necessary than a carpet-bag and an effort to cram official figures and views into the mind. What Mr. Macpherson means by the soul is only half the soul. Homer says that the slave has only half a soul, and Mr. Macpherson would like to see the Irish people releasing the 50,000 troops, who enable him and the other authorities in Dublin Castle to rule them against their will, by renouncing the right to freedom and hugging their chains. That is a method of rule of which no number of rifles and bayonets will make them approve. They reject it decisively, but it is a calumny to suggest that their record so far as crime is concerned compares unfavorably with that of Great Britain or other nations. Were it not for the savage coercion enforced because of political opinions and acts - coercion such as produces evil results in all times and at all places - Ireland would be singularly free from crime.

BELFAST AND EDUCATION.

If statements made by Sir Edward Carson in the Irish debate lately were correct, the condition of the Protestant schools in Belfast is extremely unsatisfactory. Thousands of children are unable to attend them owing to want of accommodation. Many of the schools are insanitary. Some of them that have been condemned are still used, and money for the purpose of improving the old schools and building new ones is urgently needed. But how is it that the wealthy Protestants of the city have displayed such little interest in education that they allowed the school buildings to become dilapidated and failed to meet the requirements of the children? It appears that, as Mr. Devlin remarked, whilst they could raise money to organise a rebellion they could not contribute funds to provide school accommodation for the Protestant children. The Catholics of Belfast, who belong mainly to the working classes, have paid for schools which are well equipped, and there are no Catholic children there who cannot obtain school accommodation. Catholics have no objection to any steps that will have the effect of benefiting the Protestant children educationally, but they will strenuously resist any proposal which would prove detrimental to their own religious rights and on no terms will they consent to have the education of their children placed under the control of a body such as the Belfast Corporation, which is ruled by bigots.

FIRE
ACCIDENT
MARINE

The

Phoenix

(Established 1782)

Funds, £17,000,000.

Claims Paid, 298,000,000.