

The Catholic World

ENGLAND

A COURAGEOUS PRIEST.

The coolness and presence of mind displayed by a priest saved two lives from the flames in a Sheffield suburb on April 11. Father Rooney's house-keeper, an elderly woman, was awakened at an early hour with a feeling of suffocation, and found that her bedroom, on the top floor of the house, at Abbey lane, Woodseats, was filled with smoke. She roused the priest, but a burning staircase barred their escape. Father Rooney straightway lowered the terrified woman by means of a sheet from the window to the ground, afterwards letting himself down in a similar manner. By this time the fire had attained considerable proportions, and the heat became so intense that the inmates of the buildings adjoining had to fly from their houses, carrying with them a woman eighty years of age. Before the fire brigade had mastered the outbreak Father Rooney's house had been rendered uninhabitable.

GERMANY

A PRELATE'S GREAT POSITION.

The success with which the German Centre Party defend the interests of religion has made a considerable impression in Great Britain, but it is doubtful if even Catholics in other lands yet adequately realise the power of the Catholic Church in Germany. There has been so much written by Protestants about Germany as the home of the Reformation that we (*Catholic Times*) are still somewhat inclined to underrate the value of the work done for religion by the German Catholics. But an event such as the enthronement of Dr. Felix von Hartmann, the new Archbishop of Cologne, is a reminder—a pleasant one—of the influence wielded amongst the Germans by the Catholic Church. Up to the end of October last year, when he was chosen to be the successor of Cardinal Fischer in the See of Cologne, Dr. von Hartmann was little known to the people of that diocese but such is the devotion of the German Catholics to the authorities of their Church, that when he left Munster and proceeded to Cologne, he received a wonderful ovation at every stage of the journey. The welcome which Father Euskirchen gave him at Essen, in the name of three hundred thousand Catholics, was repeated at Dusseldorf, and the procession at Cologne was one of those remarkable demonstrations that linger while life lasts in the memory of those who have seen them. Ruling spiritually over three million of the faithful, upon whose sterling fidelity he can always count, the Archbishop of Cologne is a tower of strength to the Catholic Church.

ROME

RECEPTIONS AT THE VATICAN.

The Cardinal Secretary of State, on April 12, received the Bishop of Treviso (the diocese in which Pius the Tenth was born) and one thousand pilgrims, to whom his Eminence conveyed words of welcome to the Vatican on the part of the Holy Father. The Cardinal, after replying to the address of the pilgrims, imparted the Papal blessing to the people.

THE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY.

Rev. Mother Mary, the foundress and first Mother-General of the Little Company of Mary, died on the evening of April 9. She passed to her eternal reward surrounded by her religious children in the convent, on the Coelian Hill in Rome. Mother Mary was born in 1840, and thirty-six years ago founded at Nottingham the Order with which her name will be always associated. A few years later the community had grown sufficiently to allow the first approbation. Houses were founded in London, Ireland, and elsewhere, and in the month of April, twenty years ago, the congregation

received the final approbation of the Holy See. Throughout the life of the late Mother-General she endured intense suffering, and from her sick-bed she attended to the smallest details of the Order, now spread all over the world, counting some 500 Sisters in its ranks. The zealous and self-sacrificing work of the nursing Sisters is too well known throughout the English-speaking world to require recapitulation.

THE ILLNESS OF THE HOLY FATHER.

The Rome correspondent of the *Universe*, writing under date April 13, says:—True there has been unnecessary and even wild exaggeration with regard to the illness of the Holy Father. Some of the Roman papers have alarmed us absurdly and almost wickedly, while the best informed of all, the *Osservatore Romano*, kept on reassuring us. But for all that, we in Rome have spent a week of keen anxiety, ever since it became known that the Holy Father had had a relapse. It is an undeniable fact that this anxiety has been shared by the eminent doctors who are in attendance and by the Vatican authorities, chiefly on account of the possibility of pneumonia supervening. That fear, happily, has not been verified, and, on the contrary, the last news, as I write, points to an improvement. But you can imagine that there has been good reason for anxiety. Pius X. is 78 years of age; he is subject to chronic gouty affection and bronchial trouble, and now, for the third time in a very short period, he has been attacked by a severe influenza with high temperature, weak pulse, and trying bronchial catarrh. Add to this that most unfortunately there has been a sudden change to persistent rain, damp, and cold weather—most unusual for April in Rome. Dr. Marchiafava, who has visited his august patient regularly every morning and evening, was suddenly summoned to the Vatican on April 12, and found that the fever, which had been absent for three days, had returned, and that the bronchial catarrh, especially on the left side, had become intensified. The news of this further relapse caused such alarm that it was wisely decided to communicate henceforth to the press regular bulletins signed by the doctors. This will put an end to all the wild reports invented by the tired brains of the reporters, who (quite uselessly) keep vigil all day and night on the Square of St. Peter's in the hope of obtaining good 'copy' for their papers.

THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH.

One of the most remarkable of the lectures delivered in Rome in connection with the Constantinian centenary has been that by Monsignor Kirsch, Professor of the Catholic University of Freiburg, whose conference, 'Christianity and the Hierarchy in Rome under Constantine the Great,' gained the applause of the Cardinals, prelates, and other learned men who listened to his exposition of the status of the Church at its centre at that period. A few passages from the lecture, which gave evidence of wonderful research, will not be inopportune. 'What, then,' asked the German historian, speaking in Italian, 'was the state of Christianity and the Hierarchy in the age of Constantine? Notwithstanding the scarcity of historical documents, it is certain that in the twenty-five years between 312 and 327 conversions of the Romans to Christianity were very numerous. From a letter of Pope Cornelius in the year 251 one gathers that out of the 900,000 inhabitants of the capital of the Empire 30,000 or 40,000 were Christians; and, considering the extraordinary development of the catacombs between 330 and 360, it may be calculated that their number increased to twice or thrice those figures. Among them are to be reckoned the members of the highest nobility, such as the relatives of the illustrious Pompeia Octavia Attica Cæciliana, who is buried in the Catacomb of St. Callixtus, Acilius Severus, who kept up correspondence with Lactantius, and many others. Regarding the clergy, one learns from the same letter of Pope Cornelius that in the year 251 no fewer than 155 persons belonged to its ranks, of whom forty-six were priests, while the signatures of the Roman Council of 499 give us the names of sixty-seven Roman priests who were divided up among twenty-five titular churches.'

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