

Irish News

THE BOARDING-OUT SYSTEM AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—IRISH FRANCISCANS IN ROME—HOUSING CONDITIONS OF DUBLIN—STRIKING CHRISTIAN CENTENARIES—NATIONAL HIBERNIAN PILGRIMAGE—DEATH OF A WELL-KNOWN PASTOR—FATHER LUKE WADDING AND ST. ISIDORE'S.

The Free State Government Commission of Inquiry finds itself obliged to weigh the comparative merits of the boarding-out system and of the industrial schools. In theory it is, of course, possible to say a good deal on both sides, and each method has its advocates. In Ireland, where the industrial schools are in charge of religious Orders, that system has naturally its best defence.

Artane, which is under the control of the Christian Brothers, is indeed one of the sights of Dublin, and provokes the admiration of visitors. Its pupils are fortunate in the care bestowed upon them. They are free to choose a career, and trained adequately for many. They may be electrical engineers, or bakers, or weavers, or farm laborers. The grounds and buildings are lit by electric power generated on the premises.

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The Irish Franciscans in Rome celebrated recently the 300th anniversary of the founding of the convent of St. Isidore.

Three hundred years ago—1625—Pope Urban VIII granted permission to Father Luke Wadding, O.F.M., to found this house in Rome. The name of St. Isidore is familiar to all students of history, and from its cloisters have gone forth a host of learned and holy priests. It was fitting, then, that the Feast of St. Luke should have been chosen as the day most appropriate for the Tercentenary Celebration.

The church was beautifully decorated and illuminated, and from an early hour crowds filled every part of it. The Bishop of Waterford, Father Luke Wadding's native diocese, sang the High Mass, and his Grace the Lord Primate of Ireland preached an eloquent sermon. Several of the Irish bishops at present in Rome, as well as priests and pilgrims, took part in the functions.

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The housing conditions of Dublin have aroused the conscience of the citizens. Last year, it will be remembered, the most impressive paper at the annual Conference of the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland, was that read by Father Fitzgibbon. Its points revealed in detail a deplorable state of affairs. He gave figures for each district of the city, showing the straits to which the people are reduced and the difficulties of a Christian life in such surroundings.

Something has been done since to diminish the housing shortage, and further plans are in progress; but the problem is an enormous one, and, with all the assistance that the Government and private enterprise can give, it will take many years before it is adequately solved. The number of persons to the acre should not exceed fifty. Yet, in Wood Quay, the figure is 138.3, in Mountjoy 117.6, in the Rotunda Ward 113.2, and in Inns Quay 103.1. Over twenty thousand

families of one to twelve persons each are living in one-roomed tenements. There are in the city about 3000 insanitary houses with a population of 20,000 persons. It is estimated that approximately 26,000 new houses are required for immediate needs.

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Ireland is starting preparations for three very striking Christian centenaries. The greatest of them all will occur in 1932, which will be the fifteenth centenary of St. Patrick's coming to preach the Gospel in Ireland.

In 1929 the Catholics of Ireland will have enjoyed exactly one hundred years of Emancipation, and widespread celebrations will crown the immortal achievement of Daniel O'Connell, who freed his country from the Penal Laws.

The year 1926 will see the seventh centenary of the canonisation of one of the greatest of the Irish saints, St. Laurence O'Toole.

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Those accompanying the National Hibernian Pilgrimage to Rome for the Holy Year had the privilege of being present at one of the strangest phenomena of religion in the world—the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, at Naples.

The pilgrims were led to Naples for a two-day stay, and the great public miracle occurred September 19, on the saint's feast day.

Sceptics have been confounded for centuries by the miracle of St. Januarius's blood. The fluid, which according to tradition was recovered in phials when Januarius, Bishop of Beneventum, was martyred seventeen centuries ago under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, is a solidified mass throughout the year, but on the feast day returns to its liquid state.

Exhaustive scientific investigations, many of them by sceptics, have failed to explain the phenomenon, and annually thousands of pilgrims gather to watch the centuries-old miracle.

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In his 80th year, Very Rev. Archdeacon Power, P.P., V.G., Dungarvan, died on the 15th October, after a brief illness. One of the best known priests in Ireland, he was pastor of Dungarvan for 23 years.

While a curate in the same town he took a prominent part in the land agitation, and was under police surveillance for a time along with Very Rev. Father Prendergast. On a few occasions he had narrow escapes from arrest.

Mgr. Power was born at Carrickbeg, and was educated at the famous monastery at Melleray, afterwards going to St. John's College, Waterford, and the Irish College, Paris, where he was ordained.

If Father Luke Wadding had done no more than found at Rome, as he did in

1625, the Franciscan College of St. Isidore, besides the Ludovisian College for secular priests, he would still deserve well of us all, in praise and recollection, after three hundred years; but these two colleges are but a part, and some may think a minor part, of the fruits of his great labors (says the *London Tablet* in its "Et Cetera" page. The tercentenary celebrations shortly to take place at St. Isidore's will honor not only a founder, but one of the most notable of Franciscan scholars, who in his day rejected over and over again offers of high place—it is even said that votes were cast for him at Conclave—in order to do the works nearer to his heart. Father Wadding's life extended almost to the "allotted span"; he was born at Waterford in 1588 and died at St. Isidore's in 1657; and into it he packed an immensity of scholarship and literary toil for which the marvel is that he found time when many duties were pressing upon him in other and daily tasks. His fame rests chiefly upon his work as the historian of his Order—the monumental *Annales ord Minorum*; but he wrote many books besides—volumes of theology and hagiography, lives of Popes and Cardinals, and much more. His great annotated edition of Scotus would alone suffice to establish proof of his literary zeal, cultivated year after year in the late evening hours, when other men sought rest or recreation.

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