

Government on earth, except for the few reservations contained in the Treaty with regard to harbors, defences, etc. Surely the time has now arrived when all rational friends of Ireland should concentrate attention upon the positive powers enjoyed by the Free State rather than upon its relatively insignificant limitations. The time for rhetorical protestation is past; the opportunity for constructive action is at hand.

Since these articles were written, the Draft Constitution has been considered and, with a few amendments, adopted by the Dail Eireann, or Provisional Parliament. In the first article of the series, I deplored the omission of the name of God from the Draft. That matter was rectified in the Dail, October 11, by prefixing to the document the following preamble: "Dail Eireann, sitting as a constituent assembly in this Provisional Parliament, acknowledging that all lawful authority comes from God to the people, and in the confidence that we shall thus restore our national life and unity, hereby proclaims the establishment of Saorstát Eireann, etc." The preamble was adopted unanimously.

At the request of the university members of the Dail, the provisions relating to representation in the Parliament were changed so that the university representatives will have seats in the Chamber of Deputies, instead of in the Senate.

In the fifth article of the series appearing in this issue of *America*, the right of appeal to his Majesty in Council is criticised as dangerously indefinite. While this provision was adopted by the Dail just as it exists in the Draft, the discussion shows that it is not as indefinite and comprehensive as might be inferred from its language. The tribunal to which appeals would be taken consists of lawyers from England, Ireland, and the Dominions. The subjects that may be appealed lie exclusively in the field of international relations; no appeal can be taken in the case of "ordinary, routine, domestic legislation." This is the arrangement that exists in South Africa, and it is better than that prevailing in Canada, for in the latter country appeals may be taken to the Privy Council in domestic, as well as in international, cases.—J.A.R.

Our Roman Letter

(By "STANNOUS.")

(Concluded from last week.)

In ecclesiastical life the outstanding event of the year has been the election of a new Pope, with all the accompanying functions of his enthronement and his coronation. With the dying year Pope Benedict's days were being numbered and in the second week of January the great Pontiff who had ruled the Church during the anxious years of war prepared to lay down his burden. On the 22nd of that month of January he died, offering his life "for the peace of the world." Fifteen days later Cardinal Achille Ratti became the chosen of the Conclave and was elected to the Papacy under the name of Pope Pius XI. How the new Pope's name was received by Italy and by the world is all matter of history now. But I recollect as if it were but yesterday that, as I stood in the rain outside St. Peter's on that bleak Monday morning and joined in Rome's welcome to the new Pontiff, a Propaganda student at my side voiced my own very thoughts when he said: "I hope, sir, that he'll be good to Ireland." I knew very little of Cardinal Achille Ratti at the time; in fact, most of us knew nothing at all. But I am glad to be able to say now what I found myself unable to assure my young friend then, namely—that in the opinion of those who are best qualified to form a judgment on the matter the policy of this pontificate is unlikely to affect adversely the fortunes of our country. As is well known, the Holy Father was at one time of his life deeply interested in the study of Irish manuscripts and, incidentally, in the missionary activities of the Irish monks. In more than one Irish audience he has given evidence to show that he still retains an interest in the history of what may justly be called the oldest nation in Europe.

In the middle of December the Holy Father held his first public Consistory wherein eight new Cardinals were added to the membership of the Sacred College. The word *Consistory*, like not a few other technical words in ecclesias-

tical terminology, comes to us from the days of imperial Rome, when the word "consistorium" was employed to designate the sacred council of the emperors; wherefore the same expression is now used to denote the senate of the Supreme Pontiff, for the Consistory is the assemblage of the Cardinals in council round the Pope. The Cardinals therefore are the counsellors of the Holy Father. The word Cardinal however, and the dignity which it now implies, are largely the direct result of the growing activities of the Papacy. Originally the name was applied to every priest or cleric permanently attached to a church. In the fourth century it was the usual designation for a priest attached to a principal church or sometimes specially to the episcopal church of a diocese (*presbyteri cardinales*, probably from the Latin word *cardo*, a hinge). In historical fact the origin of the Cardinalate is to be found in the origin of what ecclesiastical writers call the *presbyterium*. In the early ages of the Church's history there was in each diocese an assembly known by this name of *presbyterium* and formed of priests and deacons whose common duty was to assist the bishop of the diocese in council and to aid him in ruling the flock committed to his care. Like other bishops the Bishop of Rome had need of a chosen body of clergy to assist him in the administration of his diocese; in this connection the *Liber Pontificalis*, a work that is one of the standard authorities on the point, tells us in regard to the times of St. Evarist (martyred A.D. 107 probably) about a body of seven Roman deacons constituted to assist the bishop in the celebration of the Mass; and the same authority, which by the way was edited by Duchesne nearly 40 years ago, informs us that St. Cletus, the second successor of St. Peter in the Papacy, nominated a body of 25 priests to whom the spiritual administration of the various parts of the city of Rome was to be entrusted. As St. Cletus was martyred in the year 90 A.D. it would appear that in the life of this first-century Pope we find the first suggestion of the quasi-parochial system of ancient Christian Rome, a system which was already in full working order at the end of the fifth century.

To all such priests and clerics, both in the diocese of Rome and in all other dioceses, the name *cardinal* was originally applied. The word was therefore primitively generic in its meaning and signified no special role in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The exact meaning of the term was determined by local circumstances. But in course of time a very far-reaching difference began to be apparent between the priests and clerics who were known as cardinals in the diocese of Rome and the similar ecclesiastics in other dioceses. Necessarily, the early assistants or cardinals of any diocese outside Rome received from their bishops administrative power or advisory standing to be enjoyed only within the limits of their respective dioceses. But the city priests associated with the Sovereign Pontiff almost necessarily attained a dignity and importance not possible in any other diocese. We find evidence of this relative importance of the Roman clergy as far back as the middle of the third century. In the Decian persecution Pope Fabian was put to death, and from his martyrdom in January, 250, till the accession of St. Cornelius in May, 251, the infant Church was without a Supreme Pastor. During this period of 16 months the priests and deacons of the city of Rome sent to St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, a most important letter on the reconciliation of certain sinners; this document was afterwards carried to the knowledge of all the dioceses of the Christian Church, and the illustrious St. Cyprian himself in his dutiful reply bore witness to the esteem in which he held the clergy of Rome and faithfully undertook to communicate the letter to his flock. In course of time the appellation became restricted to certain members of the clergy of the city of Rome, and in the earlier centuries of the medieval period of ecclesiastical history the title seems to be restricted to the diocese of Rome altogether, or, more correctly, to those of the Roman clergy who were more intimately associated with the Sovereign Pontiff in the administration of his diocese.

To understand the division of the Cardinals into Cardinal-Priests, Cardinal-Deacons, and Cardinal-Bishops, it is necessary to take note of the fact that in early Papal Rome there was a distinction between two classes of the clergy whom the Bishop of Rome associated with himself in the sacred functions of the Church; there were those

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