

AMERICAN HIERARCHY HOLD FIRST ANNUAL MEETING.

Brief Summary of Work Done by Prelates.

(Special to Catholic Journal).

Ninety-two Archbishops and Bishops were present at the first annual meeting of the American Catholic hierarchy which took place in Divinity Hall at the Catholic University of America in Washington, September 24 and 25th. Cardinal Gibbons presided. All the Archbishops were present, and the opening scene of the meeting was most impressive. Only Cardinal Gibbons remains of the prelates who assisted at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, the last full assembly of our American prelates. All the Bishops were the guests of the University during the two days' proceedings, and the pleasant weather added greatly to their comfort during the long and arduous sessions of the meeting. The University grounds, with their noble crown of buildings, and the numerous surrounding houses of the religious orders, lent natural surroundings of great beauty and distinction. The most remote members of the hierarchy made long journeys to be present at this memorable conference, among them Bishop Jones of Porto Rico.

The attention of the Bishops was largely centered upon a comprehensive and efficient organization of the episcopal body. For that purpose it was agreed to establish a National Catholic Welfare Council to further the religious, educational and social well-being of the Catholic Church in the United States, to aid the Catholic press and to promote Catholic publicity, to assist all recognized agencies engaged in foreign and home missions—in a word, to provide regularly and efficiently for all the public interests of the Catholic Church in the United States. The National Catholic Welfare Council is made up of Bishops only, but the administrator of any See is entitled to a seat at the meetings and enjoys a vote. In this capacity the Bishops will hold an annual meeting, and for the purpose of conducting its business in the interval between meetings, an administrative committee has been appointed consisting of seven members. These members are Archbishop Hanna of San Francisco, Chairman; Archbishop Dougherty of Philadelphia, Archbishop Dowling of St. Paul, Bishop Canavin of Pittsburgh, Bishop Muldoon of Rockford, Ill., Bishop Russell of Charleston, S. C., and Bishop Schrembs of Toledo, Ohio.

Belgian Primate Speaks Before Catholic Hierarchy.

The heroic Primate of Belgium, Cardinal Mercier, addressed the members of the American Catholic Hierarchy on Wednesday-morning, September 24th. At precisely 12 o'clock he entered the hall of assembly, accompanied by Bishop Wachter and other ecclesiastics, and was received in a most cordial manner by Cardinal Gibbons, Cardinal O'Connell, and all the assembled members of the hierarchy. In a discourse of about thirty minutes Cardinal Mercier conveyed the eternal and profound gratitude of the Belgian people to the American Catholic Hierarchy and our Catholic people generally for the generous aid extended to Belgium during the Great War. He said that close as had been the ties of Belgium and the United States in the past, owing to the equally democratic constitutions and habits of both peoples they would still be more intimately related by reason of American generosity and the common labors and sacrifices sustained since the entry of the United States into the conflict. He expressed his happy astonishment at the splendid growth of Catholicism in our country, and assured his hearers that he would never tire of describing to his people the marvels of both charity and education which he had witnessed since his arrival on our shores. He then described at great length the incredible losses which the Catholic Church had sustained in Belgium, the murder and death of a great many priests, the scattering of the Catholic flock, suffering by starvation and deprivation; and other gross wrongs and abuses; and in particular the sad condition of 800 churches in his Diocese, many of them destroyed, and all brought into more or less dilapidated condition. He trusted that the Catholics of America would continue to aid generously their suffering brethren in Belgium who had hitherto never asked help from anyone outside their own little prosperous land. He said that very soon, under God's providence, Belgium would rise from her present conditions of misery and suffering, and would again take her place among the great national churches of Catholicism.

Cardinal Mercier remained to dinner with the Bishops, and after dinner spent a pleasant hour meeting them individually and renewing his acquaintance with several whom he already knew personally, either as Louvain students, or as visitors to his episcopal residence.

Five Boards or Departments were established to care for the following general Catholic interests: education, social work, press and literature, lay societies, home and foreign missions. The Board of Home and Foreign Missions is made responsible directly to the annual meeting of the National Catholic Welfare Council, whereas the other four Boards are placed immediately under the Administrative Committee, which appoints a Bishop as chairman of each Board, under whose direction and responsibility its assigned work is carried on. In this way every important Catholic interest of a public or general nature is henceforth provided for, and all Catholic activities are assured of the immediate guidance and assistance of the entire episcopate. Each Board will present an annual report of its doings, its needs and possibilities to the American hierarchy, which will henceforth have both the necessary knowledge and proper opportunity to further efficiently all our Catholic works, and can bring to bear on our

general Catholic development all the strength that lies in the united counsel and charity of the hierarchy. The constitution of the National Catholic Welfare Council marks a great advance in our Catholic public life, and seems indeed an inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Other matters of importance engaged the attention of the Bishops during their stay at the Catholic University. It was decided to make provision for a full and accurate census of our Catholic population, also to urge the more timely appearance of the Catholic Directory. The new code of canon law was discussed at length in its numerous bearings on the religious and ecclesiastical life of the people of the United States, and it was decided to obtain from the Holy Father more definite instruction on various points of practical importance. Educational bills pending before Congress were very generally and earnestly discussed, and a committee of Bishops was appointed to represent the views of the American hierarchy in as far as these bills might affect Catholic educational interests.

In all, four lengthy sessions were held, and when the prelates separated it was with the conviction that their meeting was a Providential one fraught with promise of increased welfare for the Catholic Church in the United States. Many prelates remarked that their meeting was well worth all the sacrifices that it entailed, if only because for the first time in thirty-five years they have been enabled to come together and meet personally. It was noted that most of the Bishops were men of middle life, vigorous and active in appearance, suggesting a long period of beneficent Catholic progress in the coming years.

During their stay at the Catholic University, students of the new St. Mary's Theological Seminary were honored by the opportunity to wait on the prelates, and to administer to all their needs. Every modern convenience of a large deliberative meeting was provided, and it was agreed by all that nothing was left undone which could add to the dignity and comfort of this epoch-making meeting of the Hierarchy.

Cardinal Mercier to be Guest at Big K.C. Banquet.

Cardinal Mercier will be the principal guest at a dinner in his honor at the Hotel Commodore on October 9, which will be given under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus and affiliated Roman Catholic societies of the New York archdiocese. The affair promises to bring together the greatest gathering of prominent clergy and Catholic laity ever assembled and will mark the first opportunity the Catholics of the Empire City have had afforded them to publicly honor the Belgian Cardinal. Dr. Harry P. Swift, chairman of the New York Chapter of the Knights of Columbus will be the toastmaster.

The principal speeches will be delivered by Archbishop Patrick J. Hayes, James A. Flaherty, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, William P. Larkin, Overseas Director of the Order and other notable men. The reception committee is composed of Nicholas A. Brady, Ex-Judge Morgan J. O'Brien, W. R. Grace, John D. Ryan, Thomas F. Ryan, William D. Guthrie, James J. Hoey, Dr. Harry P. Swift, and Dennis McSweeney. John McCormick the Irish tenor has volun-

teered to render several pieces and will be assisted by several other singers.

Edward A. Arnold of 64 Wall street, New York city, is in charge of the committee which is arranging the banquet. The Cardinal will leave this city on October 11 for Scranton, Pa., where he will be the guest of honor during the Americanization celebration in that city on Columbus Day under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus.

Late News of Ireland

Carlow

An hour after being bathed in Doon Holy Well, Kilmacrenan, Donagall, Margaret Higgins, aged 7, who had never been able to walk, recovered the use of her limbs. Her father, who lives at Buecluch street, Greenock, says that much to their amazement, "she toddled off in fine style, and every day her legs are getting stronger."

At a General Chapter of the Brothers of St. Patrick, held at Mountrath, Rev. Brother Boniface O'Carroll, late Provincial in Australia, was elected Superior General. The following were elected assistants: Rev. Leo Slattery, Mallow; Stanislaus Slattery, Tullow; Stanislaus Bargin, Mountrath; Adrian Keogh, India.

Cork

A deputation of lady medical students asked Cork Guardians to admit women as resident students to the district hospital. The matter was referred to a committee.

Dublin

Henry Garrett McGrath, B. L., eldest son of W. McGrath, K. C., died in a Dublin nursing home. He had a brilliant scholastic career, and in his short time at the Barr gave promise of a bright future.

Kerry

Married—At St. Patrick's Redemptorist Church, Athenry, by Rev. D. Turner, C.S.S.R., rector, cousin of the bride, assisted by Rev. M. Ryan, B. D., C.C., Camolin, brother of the bridegroom, Dr. James Ryan, T. D. E., Wexford, son of John Ryan, Tomcoole, to Mary Esther (Maureen), daughter of the late Morgan Cregan, Kilglin.

A. B. Mórrogh, accountant, Munster & Leinster Bank, Killarney, is appointed manager, Tal-low Branch.

Limerick

The death has occurred of Mrs. Mary Foley, wife of James Foley of Messrs. J. & G. Boyd, Limerick, and daughter of Michael Murphy. She was an ardent worker in the Irish-Ireland movement and was a prominent prize winner at the Oireachtas and at the Thomond Feis in 1902. The funeral to Mount St. Lawrence Cemetery was very largely attended.

Tipperary

Miss M. G. Hogan, daughter of T. Hogan, Nenagh, has passed the Junior Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (Ireland), taking first place.

Waterford

Rev. Michael Kirwan, Diocesan Inspector, Waterford, has joined the Jesuit Order.

Mrs. Josephine Murray, wife of Alderman Murray, Waterford, and daughter of the late T. Power, Shanclune, Duthill, died at her late residence, the Imperial Hotel, Waterford.

Westmeath

Athlone No. 1 R. D. C. passed a vote of sympathy with the Carmelite Community, Meath, on the death of the Very Rev. Prior Wheatley.

Combating Proselytism In The Philippines.

Handicapped by War Developments, New Hardships Confront Bishop.

Methodists About to Buy Catholic Students' Home Over Bishop's Head.

The war has made the lot of the Catholic missionary and his spiritual superiors hard indeed, for the chronic lack of funds has been accentuated by the failure of the warring European nations to contribute in their wonted measure to the worthy cause of the Apostolate of the Faith among the pagans. Some of the missions have suffered serious loss also by the removal, through governmental action on the part of various nations, of many zealous, self-sacrificing missionaries from their field of labor. In addition to these difficulties, the Right Reverend P. J. Hurth, Bishop of Nueva Segovia in the Philippines, has been confronted by the activity of Methodists, and has been obliged to incur debts in order to prevent the Catholic Students' Home which he had opened in Vigan, his diocesan city, from being sold to the Methodists over his head. His predicament, which we do not consider unique, is best described in the Bishop's own words. Writing to the Central Bureau of the Central Society in St. Louis, in acknowledgment of a contribution for his missions, the Bishop says:

"In a few weeks I will round out my twenty-five years of experience as missionary Bishop, and I do not know when a gift came more opportunely or providentially than this one that you sent me. It is really hard to make ends meet. Articles of food now cost double of what was their price a year ago, and then it was higher than any one here thought it could ever be.

But that is not my only difficulty. You know that the foolish, perhaps I should rather say villainous—carrying out of war measures took the Divine Word Missionaries from their promising field of labor here. I had to replace them as best could be done, but the many mission schools which they had started and kept up with the aid of their friends and benefactors fell completely on my charge, and though I find it a distressing burden, I cannot bring myself to discontinue these schools as long as there is any possibility of keeping them going.

Forced Into A Purchase.

Along with this, I have been forced into a purchase, which embarrasses me very much financially. The case is as follows: There are here at Vigan three Protestant Students' Homes. To resist in some way that most terrible scheme of proselytizing we opened a Catholic Students' Home, but in a rented building. Last year we could not get the owner to renew the contract for a fixed term, because with everything else, house rents were constantly on the rise. No other in any way equally suitable building was available. At the end of April I discovered that the building was being bought by the Methodists for a Desconocidos Home and at a price, which under other circumstances I should have considered exorbitant. The same sect has a Students' Home also, with which ours has been making a very strong competition. With the purchase of that building our Home would have been on the street, and for a time made simply impossible.

No Alternative.

There was no alternative—I had to step in and negotiate the purchase of that building from out of the hands of our adversaries. Although the owner gave us a fair show with the other bidders, this purchase has put me in to real difficulty, for I had to use funds belonging to other concerns which must be replaced, so that it is a purchase with borrowed money. It is the first time in my missionary life that I have gone into a worrying debt, and I assure you I feel the worry.—I relate all these things to you to show you in what situation your gift found me, and how greatly it was appreciated in consequence.

Missionaries Everywhere In Need.

We have already intimated that the situation in which the Bishop of Nueva Segovia finds himself, though it is serious, is by no means unique. Missionaries everywhere have their old and new problems. They should be aided in their labors by generous subscriptions, and Americans should be particularly quick to respond to the call for funds for the missions, since we of all the great nations of the world have suffered the least from the war.

G. B. of the C. V.

Short Notes of Interest.

The first priest to officiate in Kentucky was a Franciscan Capuchin; he labored for two years, beginning in 1787.

The annual report of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith shows that its receipts in 1918 amounted to over one million dollars, \$1,064,481.27, in the United States.

The Bishop of Newark, Dr. O'Connor, endorses the campaign of the Friends of Irish Freedom, calling for \$100,000 in a letter read in all the churches of his diocese.

The Catholic Alumnae Federation is now organized in twelve States. At present it has a membership of 235 associations, an increase in two years of 33 associations.

The Archdiocese of New York has forty-six academies for girls; Boston has nine; Louisville, fifteen.

Notre Dame is becoming one of the great art galleries of the United States. Several old masters are there.

The press reports that the Trappist monastery at Big Tracadie, in the diocese of Antigonish, Canada, established there just 100 years ago, has been sold, and the religious will again return to France.

Both the Jews and the Turks have expressed gratitude to the Pope for his charity in their behalf.

The Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Amette, has been given another Bishop Auxiliary—Canon Roland Gosselin. His age is 97 years.

The Bishop of Southwark (London) says: "We want the Irish question settled; we want the government to do its duty to that country."

In the Colosseum, Rome, Mass was celebrated on an altar which had been carried by the Italian armies through the campaign to the Alps.