

A NEW CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

In the past forty years or so projects for linking up England with France by means of a channel tunnel have been under discussion in both countries. Schemes were formulated at various intervals of time, some conjointly by Englishmen and Frenchmen, and others by Englishmen themselves. Opinions for and against were expressed in the House of Commons, and outside it. Military experts in the old times did not view the tunnel project with favor, and again the cost of any such scheme from a tax-payer's point of view was a vital consideration. Whatever be the reason nothing came of the scheme or schemes, but during the past year the subject was once more revived in England, and its economic and other possibilities are still being considered in a somewhat haphazard fashion. Now a plan of a very ingenious and novel character has just been evolved by a French marine engineer, M. Prevost de Saint-Cyr. If this scheme ever sees realisation, it will undoubtedly be a great boon to travellers, especially those who dread "mal de mer," which is not an uncommon experience on the cross-Channel trip, short as it is, say from Dover to Calais, or Boulogne. Instead of doing the journey by steamer, they could proceed by a tube express train, and reach their destination in forty minutes, comfortably and quietly. An ordinary underground tunnel is not alone costly but difficult, and long of achievement. But a submerged bridge tunnel on supports would, M. Prevost declares, be inexpensive and easy of accomplishment. This appears to be the principle of his schema. A concrete "tube" stretching from shore to shore would be constructed on the principle of bridge building, and sunk to a depth of twenty metres, leaving the space above it free for navigation, and that below it open to the flow of currents. The giant tube would be constructed on shore from reinforced concrete. It would be in sections of from 300 to 500 metres, which would be hermetically sealed at each end when completed. They would then be floated out to their positions above the pillars already established in place, being sunk to the proper level by weight and anchors. Tight-fitting couplings, lowered from boats on the surface, would be placed at the joints of the various sections to prevent infiltration. The scheme, as said, possesses all the merits of originality, and in this go-a-head age, when the march of scientific skill knows no limit, it is not surprising to learn that the French engineer's ideas are being eagerly discussed in Paris. No doubt the world will have much to gain from the scheme.

DEATH OF BISHOP ORPEN.

Venerable Churchman Passes Away.

We deeply regret to record the death of the Right Rev. Raymond d'Audemar Orpen, D.D., former Bishop of Limerick, Ardfer, and Aghadoc, which took place at the Rectory, Rathronan, Ardagh, late on Thursday evening last. He had been confined to bed for some three weeks, but up to that time was in his usual good health, and he was remarkably hale and hearty, considering his great age of 92 years.

His Lordship was son of Sir Richard Orpen, Ardully, County Kerry, and was born in Dublin in 1837. In 1867 he married a daughter of the late Mr D. de Courcy McGillycuddy, J.P. She died in 1891. He had a distinguished University career in Trinity College, Dublin, obtaining his B.A. degree in 1858; Divinity Testimonial, 1860; M.A., 1864, and D.D., 1907. Ordained in 1860 he held successively the curacies of Rathronan, Trinity, Limerick, Tralee, and Adare. He became Rector of Tralee in 1869, and here he spent the long span of over 57 years, enjoying the respect and esteem of all classes of the community to whom his charm of manner, kindly and unassuming, and charitable to a degree, had endeared him. This, indeed, was demonstrated when in Tralee on the 28th February, 1907, Archbishop Orpen, as he then was, obtained a two-thirds clear majority of both orders at the special meeting of the joint Synods of Limerick and Ardfer for the election of Bishop in room of the late Right Rev. Dr. Banbury. He was consecrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on the 2nd April, 1907, and for fourteen years he discharged the duties of his exalted office with dignity and kindness to all. He resigned the Episcopacy owing to advancing years, when, in 1921, he was succeeded by the present occupant of the See, the Right Rev. H. V. White, D.D.

Since his retirement Dr. Orpen had resided at Rathronan Rectory with his daughter and son-in-law, Rev. P. Sweeney. In his time he filled various Church dignities, including that of Canon of Taney in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Canon of St. Mary's, Limerick, and he was a member of the Representative Body. His son, Canon H. A. H. Orpen, M.A., has for many years been Rector of Adare, and to the members of his Lordship's family the sympathy of a wide circle of friends is expressed in their bereavement.

The late Bishop was an uncle of Sir William Orpen, A.R.A., the well-known painter, and of Mr R. C. Orpen, M.R.I.A.I., R.H.A., architect, 13 South Frederick St., Dublin, and Coologe, Carrickmines.

In 1910, on the celebration of the golden jubilee of his Ministry, the late Dr. Orpen was presented with his portrait in oil (painted by his distinguished nephew) by the people of the united diocese.

It may be remarked that Dr. Orpen was an Irish scholar.

His eldest son, deceased, was Chief Justice in Barbadoes, and his second son, also deceased, served in the Indian Army Medical Service.

The remains were removed last evening to Rathronan Church, where they will rest till Monday morning, and will leave by motor hearse at eleven o'clock for interment at Tralee. The cortege will travel via Ardagh, Newcastle West, and Castleland, arriving at Tralee Church at two o'clock. The clergy are invited to wear their robes at the service there.

THE COUNTY INFIRMARY.

Proposed Abolition.

Co. Council Favours Continuance of Institution.

At the meeting of the Limerick County Council to-day, Mr J. McCormack presiding, a letter was read from the Ministry of Local Government stating that they propose to modify and amend the recommendation of the Poor Law Commission with reference to the County Infirmiry. With that object they proposed to abolish the Committee of Management of the Infirmiry within a month, and to relieve the County Council of their financial obligations to the institution. They would like an expression of opinion from the Council on the matter.

In reply to Mr Canty, the Secretary said the Council was providing by statute £1,495 annually towards the County Infirmiry, together with any deficit on the working, which brought the contribution from the rates up to approximately £2,500.

Mr Lloyd said the County Infirmiry was a very useful institution for the poor of the county—the labourers and farmers.

Mr Cahill proposed that before any action was taken the Ministry should be requested to state their intention with regard to the future of the County Infirmiry.

Mr Fahy seconded the motion.

Mr Canty considered that the Ministry should be informed that the Council were of opinion that the Infirmiry should be continued in the interests of the county.

Mr Madden said if this very valuable and beneficial institution was abolished it would deprive the county of the benefit of the best medical and surgical skill at a cheap rate. If the Ministry carried their intention it would mean that the Council would have to carry out further extensions at the County Hospital, Croom, to accommodate the patients who would otherwise be treated in the County Infirmiry.

The Chairman said the Council should recollect that the County Infirmiry was built by county funds in 1811 at a cost of £7,000. It had been maintained all along by the county—the Grand Jury and their successors, the County Council. It was a very useful, and, he should say, very efficiently and economically managed institution, and a great benefit to the people of the county. It was their duty to see how it was to be maintained in future.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

HOUSE BREAKING CHARGES.

Ernest Molloy and Henry Bendell, two young fellows, were charged before Mr J. M. Flood, District Justice, at a special court last evening with being concerned in a series of house breakings in the city over a period of twelve months.

Timothy Long was also charged in respect of the case, and Richard Greene with unlawfully receiving.

On the application of Mr M. Tynan, solr., the charge against Long was taken first, and the charge against Greene, for whom Mr N. Gaffney, solr., appeared, was adjourned until the end of the proceedings against Bendell and Molloy.

Evidence was given by John White, spirit grocer, Broad street, to the effect that his premises were broken into on the night of the 27th January, 1928, and £5 taken, as well as whiskey, port wine, cigarettes and tobacco, to the total value of £7.

Detective Sergeant Mulroy gave evidence of arrest, when the accused stated, after being cautioned, that he was watching for Bendell, who admitted breaking in the premises.