

RICKMAN'S DIARY

Limerick priest's great work for emigrant families in Britain

A LIMERICK priest, Father Eamonn Casey, is doing remarkable work for the housing of emigrant families in England. Due to lack of planning in large centres of employment like Birmingham and London, accommodation has not kept pace with industrial expansion, and many families have to live with in-laws or pay rents which in some cases reach the exorbitant figure of £11 or £12 per week.

"We are trying to do something about this problem," Father Casey told me. "In Britain to-day, the people are hard-working, provident and respectable, and we are trying to help people who are faced with these housing problems to find a home of their own."

With the Catholic Housing Aid Society, which he founded, Father Casey has done much to solve the problem. The Society helps every applicant as far as conditions will allow, independent of nationality, race or religion. "Our doors are open to everybody," he told me, "but 70 to 75 per cent. of the cases we handle are Irish."

SCHEMES

The Society operates eight different types of schemes. These are:—

- Advisory Scheme . . . professional people, working on a voluntary basis, give advice and encouragement.
- Mortgage Scheme . . . expert advice is given on the complex mortgage market.
- Bank Loan Scheme . . . families are helped to complete the deposit on their homes, on a short loan basis, and sums of from £50 to £300 are provided through the National Bank.
- Savings and Investments Scheme . . . many people fail to save, not because of irresponsibility, but because they do not see the point. This scheme encourages them to save through a Society or Bank, thereby establishing their stability and saving capacity, and so influencing the amount of the loan they can get when it is required.
- Half-way House Scheme . . . the Scheme is operated in conjunction with the Local Authority. Large houses are acquired, divided into family



Rev. Fr. Eamonn Casey.

units, and let at a reasonable rent which includes compulsory savings.

- Masonette Scheme . . . Houses are divided into two Masonettes, completely self contained, and let for a period of three years at a subsidised rent. The tenant then has the option of purchasing the masonette, which can be bought at about two-thirds of the price, it would cost on the open market.

- Out-of-London Scheme . . . families may move to centres such as Northampton, where a house which would cost three to five thousand pounds in London, can be bought at from £1,200 to £1,600. Alter-

native employment is arranged through the Society's local branch.

- Fatherless Family Scheme . . . permanent accommodation is provided at a reasonable rent. These eight schemes are run from the Society's central office, but each of the 30 branches of the Society in the larger cities throughout Britain, run, at least, a Bank Loan, Advisory and Savings Scheme. Many, too, run Half-way House Schemes. Last year, the Society helped 328 families throughout the country.

Have there been any 'let downs' on the repayment of loans? Father Casey first became interested in the scheme in Slough, and there, by loaning £13,500, he helped 75 families to buy their own houses. "We were not caught for one penny of this sum," he told me.

EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

Father Casey, who is son of Mr. John Casey, Creamery Manager, Black Abbey, Adare, ministered in Monaleen parish for four years and St. John's for five years before leaving for the English mission. During that period many boys and girls came to see him before emigrating to England.

He told me: "I would have given my right hand to have had some organisation in England to put them in touch with, and that I would be absolutely confident that they would be

given effective advice both on accommodation and employment."

This was another problem effectively tackled by Father Casey. With the aid of Father John Dore, O.M.I., a native of Shanagolden, and now P.P. of Quex Road Church, Kilburn, London, N.W.6., and helped by three expert laymen, he founded a non-profit making company and established an employment agency whose complete interests are basically welfare.

This employment agency, if contacted, will arrange both accommodation and employment for anybody emigrating to England, before they leave home. The agency will also make sure that the type of employment is not only of good standard, but is also suited to the ability and education of the individual concerned. The Agency Manager is trained in career guidance, and knows of all the educational facilities which are available. This service is particularly valuable to many who later decide to return to skilled work in Ireland.

Welfare is also attended to. Emigrants are given leaflets on Church information, sports and social clubs, so that they can become part of the community when they arrive.

The address of the Agency is: Marian Employment Agency, 14 Quex Road, Kilburn, London, N.W.6. Intending emigrants in the Limerick area should note that the Agency works through the Emigrant Welfare Bureau, The Crescent, Limerick.

Talented singer

Margaret Daly, who plays the "Queen" in the very entertaining panto "Mother Goose," is making her second appearance with "Panto Frolics." She is daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Daly, 5 Hyde Avenue,

"A TOAST TO YOUNG MUNSTERS"

THIS week the Bateman Cup returned to Limerick for the first time in 37 years, and it was a closely-guarded object of honour at Young Munster's

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IVAL

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s now becoming difficult to cast He believes, too, needs a better a: "It is time rom the kitchen became more Limerick should