

FATAL ACCIDENT TO A FRANCISCAN.

(From the *Drogheda Independent*.)

We deeply regret to announce the sad end of a zealous priest, whose name will be remembered by most people in Drogheda. The Rev. Andrew Francis M'Dermott, O.S.F., guardian of the Franciscan Convent, Carrick-on-Suir, had been on a visit with his brethren at Willow Bank, Ennis, and went on Thursday last to Drumquin, situated about three miles from the town, where the extensive slob reclamation works are being carried out on the river Fergus. It is a busy spot, where lines of waggons are constantly passing and repassing, some run by men, others by steam engines, and on the embankment which juts out to connect the mainland with the island of Avanna, trains of waggons, both empty and laden, make it rather a dangerous place for the visitor. Father M'Dermott, while standing in company with the Very Rev. J. A. White, the respected guardian of the Ennis Convent, was occupied in observing distant points of the works when a lorry driven by some workmen struck him with full force in the back, knocked him down, and rolled over one of his hands, completely crushing it. The rev. gentleman also sustained terrible internal injuries. No medical aid was at hand, and all that could be done was resorted to in order to sustain life. His reverend and sorrow-stricken companion heard his last confession, and administered the final absolution. Father M'Dermott had been for some time past in delicate health, and had not the strength requisite to bear up against the effects of the accident. Medical aid was sent for, but before it could arrive he resignedly breathed his last, being at the time in the thirty-third year of his age.

The Rev. A. F. M'Dermott was born in Dublin on the 30th November, 1850, and took the Franciscan habit in the Novitiate in Drogheda on the 27th August, 1867. He was ordained in Rome, and lived again in Drogheda for some years. He was afterwards stationed in Wexford, Waterford, Clonmel, and Athlone, and in August, 1883, was elected guardian of the Convent at Carrick-on-Suir. It was a very sad and sudden termination for a zealous and useful career, but the Master whom he served so well knew best when to call him from the scene of his labours. May he rest in peace.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

Ennis, Saturday.—An inquest was held to-day at the Franciscan Convent, Ennis, by Mr. Coroner Cullinan and a respectable jury, on the remains of the late Rev. Andrew M'Dermott, O.S.F., Guardian Carrick-on-Suir, who met with such a shocking death on Thursday, at the Fergus slob reclamation works.

Mr. Dowell, C.E., one of the officials, was present to watch the proceedings.

Rev. J. A. White, O.S.F., Guardian Ennis Convent, was the first witness. He deposed that the deceased clergyman had been on a visit to them. He went with him and Brother Francis Ryan to Drumquin to see the slob reclamation works. They were walking along the tramway line. He was about two perches in advance of the deceased. He heard a shout, and, on looking back, he then saw him in the act of endeavouring to get up. A tram waggon had passed over him, and a second waggon caught him under it. The men took him up at once, and brought him on a litter to Drumquin. He lived for half an hour.

The Coroner—It would be well to give a satisfactory answer, whether blame was attached to any of the employes?

Rev. Mr. White—I don't attach blame to anyone. The waggon was going slow, and making no noise.

Garrett Fitzgerald deposed that he was employed at the slob reclamation work at Drumquin as a labourer. He was shoving a waggon along the line with another labourer named Pat Callaghan. The engine had brought them down a lot of waggons, and was then detached from them. They were pushing the waggon up the hill, and when they got at the top they stopped; the waggon then ran down the incline without any propulsion—they merely had their hands on it. Didn't know that anybody was on the line till he heard a shout; he then saw three men on the line. Deceased was within a couple of yards of the waggon. Saw him trying to get away from it. He appeared to slip, and fell on his side across the rail. Saw the waggon pass over him. It was going faster than a man could walk; twenty men could not stop it. The deceased got entangled in the second waggon. It did not pass over him. Two men could stand almost at either side of the rails. He could have saved himself if he did not slip.

Patrick Callaghan and John M'Mahon, two other workmen who saw the accident, were examined, and gave corroborative evidence. They said the waggon contained two and a half tons of stones.

Dr. Williams, Surgeon, County Infirmary, deposed that he was sent for to see the deceased clergyman, Rev. Mr. M'Dermott. He was dead when he arrived. The palm of his left hand was all lacerated, and his left thumb almost cut off. The right hand was bruised, and the left chest terribly crushed. The ribs on the left side were broken; they protruded through his lungs. That was the cause of death.

This closed the evidence.

The Coroner said there was no doubt it was a pure accident, and one of the most melancholy and distressing character.

The Jury found the following verdict:—"That the Rev. Andrew M'Dermott, O.S.F., was accidentally killed on the 28th inst., at the Fergus Slob Reclamation Works, by having a waggon run over him when passing down an incline, and that in attempting to get out of the way of the waggon his foot slipped and he fell in front of the waggon, which passed over his body, causing his death. We find that no blame is attached to the men pushing the waggon, or to any of the officials. We tender to the Rev. Mr. White, and the community of which he is a member, our expressions of sympathy and regret for the loss of such a good and pious clergyman."

Deceased was in his 34th year, and a native of Dublin, where his father and sisters reside in Church-street. His remains were interred to-day in the aisle of the Franciscan Church, Ennis. The obsequies were carried out with great solemnity, about fifty clergymen attending, including secular priests and friars from every order in Ireland.