

The road north from Ladysmith to Elands Laagte (which, by the way, means the slaughtering place of elands, a kind of deer) and beyond, follows the hills along their eastern slopes, and the country to the eastward is of the rolling nature before referred to, till low hills are met again at a distance of from three to six miles. From this account it will appear that the crest of the range above Ladysmith overlooks the country east and west for a considerable distance. The Tugela river, which, being in flood, has been mentioned as a barrier to the passage of the Free Staters south, is rapid and runs between high banks, but does not long remain swollen, and at other times may be easily crossed.

There are excellent roads leading from Van Reenan's and Bezuidenhout's passes towards Colenso and Estcourt, and the country is open, so that the Free Staters should have little trouble in advancing within striking range of these towns. However, by doing so, they would be a long way from their base, and in the event of reinforcements arriving quickly would be in danger of being nipped between General White's troops and the new arrivals. Colenso is situated on a flat on the south bank of the Tugela, and is entirely dominated by higher ground on the northern bank, which is precipitous.

PRESIDENT KRUGER.

Mr. Lecky's appreciation of President Kruger at the opening meeting of the College Historical Society in the University of Dublin, three years ago, is of interest at the present moment. He said of the President of the Transvaal Republic: 'I can speak of him with some personal knowledge. He has been more than once in my house, and I have come in contact with several men who have known him well. In many respects he resembles strikingly the stern Puritan warrior of the Commonwealth—a strong, stubborn man, with indomitable courage and resolution, with very little tinge of cultivation, but with a rare and natural shrewdness in judging men and events, he impresses all who come in contact with him with the extraordinary force of his nature. He is the father of no less than seventeen children. He belongs to a sect called the Doppers, which is derived from a Dutch word for an extinguisher, because they are desirous of extinguishing all novelties since the Synod of Dorp. Ardently religious, he is said to believe as strongly as Wesley in a direct personal inspiration guiding him in his acts. He is a great hunter of the most savage wild beasts. One finger is wanting on one of his hands: it was broken in a hunting expedition, and it is a characteristic trait that he then and there amputated it himself. In a semi-regal position, and with even more than regal power, he lives the life of a peasant, and although, I believe, an essentially just, wise, and strong man, he has all his countrymen's dread of an immigration of an alien element, and all their dislike and suspicion of an industrial and mining community.'

A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ON THE CAUSE OF THE WAR.

From time to time we have given the opinions of persons holding diametrically opposite views on the Transvaal question. We now place before our readers the opinion of Mr. Brenton, a son of ex-Alderman Brenton, of Broken Hill, South Australia, who has just returned from the Transvaal, which he left about the end of September. He is positive that war was brought about by the capitalists and Jingoos. Of the 40,000 or so white men employed on the Rand—there are sixty miles of reef, he says—a vote would show that the majority are as emphatic and of the same opinion as himself. 'The franchise,' he added; 'that was all nonsense. You remember that petition with twenty-one thousand odd signatures sent to Queen Victoria, asking her to intervene on behalf of the Uitlanders. Most of those signatures were bought at a shilling a piece. I suppose my name is on that petition, but I never placed it there. I knew, say, 500 men on the field, but I never met a man who had signed it. Canvassers were sent round by some capitalists, and a shilling was the price of a signature. I knew of a case where a man sat down and wrote twelve signatures of men whose names he knew. The men don't want the franchise. If they had it they would not use it. Those who have been on the field seven years and can get it don't trouble themselves to get it. They are quite satisfied with things as they are. I tell you,' he added, 'the Transvaal is all right for the miner. See how independent he can be! Sixty miles of reef, and companies all along the reef. If a miner leaves one company, all he has to do is to go to the next one.' Asked why the mining companies and capitalists desired war when so many of the workers were opposed to it, Mr. Brenton replied: 'There are about 100,000 Kaffirs employed on the Rand mines, but under Boer laws. These Kaffir workmen will never be a serious menace to white workmen, but under English rule it is feared that things will be different. A few miles from Pretoria there is another goldfield said to be as extensive and fully as rich as the Rand. Kruger was requested to proclaim a goldfield. He refused, saying he had already one—Johannesburg—and that had caused enough agitation for him.' The newspaper accounts of Boer brutality and incivility to the Uitlanders were scouted by Mr. Brenton. It was admitted that they treat their Kaffir servants barbarously; but some of the Englishmen were just as bad, and it was no uncommon thing to see Englishmen belting the Kaffirs with drills. Hundreds of refugees were leaving Johannesburg at the same time as he did; and these, according to the cables, were cruelly ill-used by the Boers. He was there, yet saw none of the ill-usage. Even at the time of the Jameson raid the Boers were quite civil to the English. They knew that the workers were not responsible for the trouble. When a Boer entered a saloon he usually raised his hat in salutation to any Englishman who might be present. An incident illustrating the feelings of the Boers towards the various personages who are at present looming large in the eyes of the world was related by Mr. Brenton. Two Hollanders entered a saloon. A drunken cousin Jack called for three cheers for the Queen. The Hollanders lifted their hats. Another cousin Jack called for three cheers for Joe Chamberlain, and there was trouble on the instant. Cecil Rhodes and Chamberlain, Mr. Brenton asserts, are blamed for the whole of the present trouble.

VARIOUS.

The Rev. John Ferguson, preaching recently at St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Sydney, said the Transvaal war had to a great extent been brought about by a false sense of pride through the assertion that the prestige of Great Britain was at stake; by the lust of gold and territory; by the spirit of revenge, and the uncharitable construction put upon the actions of the Boers. All these motives were entirely opposed to the teachings of Christ. He urged that it would have been better if the British colonies had sent memorials in favour of universal peace to the late Peace Congress, or devoted the money now being spent in sending troops to a fund for the relief of all the widows and children who lost bread-winners through the war.

Major-General Sir Francis Clery, who has been appointed to command one of the divisions against the Boers, is a Catholic. The gallant soldier is the author of several excellent works on military tactics.

Diocesan News.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

November 25.

The prizes won at St. Patrick's College sports meeting are to be presented on Sunday.

The Rev. Father Keegan, for many years stationed in the archdiocese, is now a curate in a parish in London.

The midsummer entertainment and annual distribution of prizes at St. Patrick's College will take place on Thursday evening.

On Wednesday, the Feast of St. Cecilia, St. Cecilia's Choir of St. Mary's Convent, rendered some exceptionally choice music during the holy sacrifice of the Mass in honour of the patron saint.

The date on which the examinations for the two annual scholarships given by St. Patrick's College will be held is not yet definitely settled, but they will probably take place between the 11th and 18th of December.

At the first Mass on Sunday at St. Joseph's Church 13 of the students of St. Patrick's College received their First Communion. The Rev. Father Herbert, who prepared the boys, celebrated the Mass and preached an instructive sermon.

Tickets for an art union in connection with the Easter bazaar, having for its object the furnishing of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart when completed, are now being printed, and will shortly be in circulation. Besides very many good prizes there are about a dozen oil paintings, varying in value from £10 to £100.

The General Election campaign is now fairly under way. This week's meetings have been of a somewhat rowdy nature. It is now announced that the candidates who are to receive the Government support are Messrs. T. K. Macdonald and C. Luke. A third has not yet been decided on, and it is quite likely that only two will be run.

The Rev. Father Coffey, of South Dunedin, was in Wellington this week. He came for the purpose of meeting his sister who arrived from Home on Friday. She is a Dominican Nun and on her way to Dunedin. The Rev. Father Smyth, of Hastings, who is Father Coffey's cousin, was also on the wharf on the arrival of the steamer.

The entertainment given by the Dixon street School children in aid of the school requisites was, in consequence of the large numbers unable to gain admission at the previous productions, repeated on Monday, when the hall was well filled. The children deserve great praise for their efforts. The financial result of the entertainment was highly satisfactory.

A general meeting of St. Mary's Convent ex-Pupils' Association was held in the Convent on Tuesday evening. It was announced that donations, amounting to over £50 towards the cost of the Sisters' cottage at Titahi Bay, had been received from friends outside the Association. It was decided that in view of the many calls at present being made on the Catholics of the city to postpone the proposed garden party until after the Easter bazaar.

WANGANUI.

(From our own correspondent.)

November 24.

The statement I made a short time ago concerning Rev. Father Tymons should have read as follows:—'The people will, no doubt, feel highly gratified when they know that Rev. Father Tymons is the first priest born and educated in New Zealand who has been entrusted with the sole charge of a parish.'

At a meeting of the St. Columba Literary and Debating Club held last night, the prizes won during the session were presented by the Very Rev. Dean Kirk. The prize donated by the president (Father Tymons) for the best essay on the work of a standard English author, was won by Mr. E. Loftus. The same member also carried off the Dean's prize for the most useful member during the session. The former prize consisted of the *Popular Educator* (Cassell's) in six vols., and the latter was *Chambers's Cyclopaedia of English Literature* (two vols.).

The promoters of the farewell social tendered last week to Rev. Father Tymons have every reason to be satisfied with the success that attended their efforts. St. Mary's Hall was crowded in every part, and the proceedings throughout were most enthusiastic. As a