

'Contempt on the minion who calls you disloyal,
Though fierce to your foe, to your friends you are true;
And the tribute most high to a head that is royal,
Is love from a heart that loves liberty too.
While cowards who blight
Your fame, your right,
Would shrink from the blaze of the battle array,
The standard of Green
In front would be seen.

Oh, my life on your faith were your summoned this minute,
You'd cast every bitter remembrance away,
And show what the arm of old Erin has in it,
When roused by the foe, you would join in the fray.'

A very enjoyable concert (says the *Standard*) was given in the Town Hall on Wednesday evening by the pupils of the East Gore Convent School. Notwithstanding the wet evening the Hall was filled. The concert opened with a pianoforte overture, exquisitely played by the Misses Archibald (2), Roche, and Smaill. The next item was a chorus by the girl pupils. In this the pupils looked very nice dressed in white, with blue sashes. The chorus was creditably performed. A song, 'Hunting doy,' by the boys, appropriately dressed, was excellently rendered. Miss Sherborne contributed a vocal solo. A pianoforte trio (two pianos) by the Misses Leahy, Fleming, Sherborne, Ward, Whitefield and Holland was a good number, the young ladies displaying excellent execution and touch. The Misses Archibald then sang 'Songs of our Fatherland' very sweetly, and had to respond to a well-deserved encore. The Misses Johnston, Smith, and Taylor then gave a song and dance in costume, 'Swiss Toy Girls,' the little maids performing very well. A chorus followed by the pupils, the performers doing their parts admirably. A trio for pianos was well played by Misses Fleming, Archibald (2), Stuart, Smaill, and Sherborne. A vocal duet by the Misses Sparks and Sherborne was another good number. The Misses Archibald sang a comic duet in character. The young ladies were vociferously encored, but did not respond. A pianoforte duet by the Misses Smith, Holland, Whitefield, and Walsh followed. The piece was done full justice to by the young performers. The vocal duet, 'The harp that once,' with violin, piano, and guitar accompaniment, by the Misses Archibald, Sherborne, and Sparks was one of the best items on the programme. A chorus by the pupils was sung with effect. The concert part of the programme was brought to a close by Miss Cowie, who played a violin solo, 'Life let us cherish.' Miss Cowie performed her solo in a very creditable manner. The entertainment was brought to a close by a one-act comedy, entitled 'Who is to Inherit?' the principal parts being taken by Misses Archibald and P. Fleming. The minor characters were filled by Misses Fleming, M. Archibald, Leahy, Johnston, Bowie, and Roche. His Worship the Mayor thanked the audience for their attendance on behalf of the management, and said that no doubt they were all satisfied at the performance. He wished them a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

BISHOP GRIMES ON THE WAR.

(By telegraph, from our Christchurch correspondent.)

THE following circular from his Lordship Bishop Grimes was read at the Pro-Cathedral, Christchurch, on Sunday, and is to be read in the churches in Westland and other parts of the diocese on next Sunday.

Rev. dear Father,

Nearly 2000 years ago, the first Christmas morn was ushered into the world by the angelic greeting 'Glory be to God in the highest; and on earth, peace to men of good will.' (L. 2, 14.) Every recurring Christmas these heaven sent words are repeated and go forth filling countless souls with admiration, love, and delight. This year, the same holy greeting will be heard, but not, alas! unmingled with feelings of the bitterest sorrow and distress. That peace, so lovingly proclaimed from on high, has been disturbed by the horrors of war. It were needless, even though possible, to go into the origin of that fearful war. As far as we can judge, with the facts before us, the Home Government were forced to take up arms in defence of the outraged rights of those whom they were bound to protect. What we do know, with sad certainty, is that thousands of our own kith and kin, are now fighting at the call of their Queen and country to defend those rights. We know, too, that many have been struck down on the field of battle whilst nobly doing their duty.

Many a home will be desolate, many a father or mother, sister or brother, relative or friend will be cast down with the deepest affliction this holy season. Shall not our hearts go out to them in sorrow and sympathy in the midst of their distress? Have we not recently shown the world a grand object lesson revealing the fact, too often forgotten, that true loyalty and patriotism are bounded by neither geographical, political, nor even religious divisions? Who could behold without admiration every British colony, even the remotest, rallying round the mother country in the hour of her own and her children's distress? Was it not the spontaneous outcome of a loyal patriotism unparalleled in the annals of any nation, ancient or modern? Was it not a marvellous sight to see millions of minds waiving every other consideration, social, political, or racial; gladly merging all into the one noble, sacred feeling of love and sympathy towards those allied to them by the great bond of brotherhood. Have we not, rev. dear Father and beloved children in Christ, made common cause with our fellow-colonists? Assuredly we have. Does not there still remain a noble task to fulfil? Whilst so many near and dear to us are risking their lives at the call of duty in a foreign land, should we not lift up our hearts in prayer and supplication to the God of Mercy, the Prince of Peace, that fresh disasters may be averted, the atrocities of war soon cease, and peace be restored?

I know well, rev. dear Father and beloved children in Christ, no words of mine are needed to remind you of your duty in this respect; nor need I exhort you, and your devoted flock to be generous in helping the Patriotic Fund set on foot in behalf of the widows and orphans or other survivors of those who may have fallen in battle. Though I have reason to know that some of our people have already contributed to the Fund started in their respective locality, I hereby authorise a special collection to be made in all the churches of the diocese at a date to be appointed by the rectors thereof. The proceeds of this collection may be handed over to the local authorities in each parish or district.

You would do well, rev. dear Father, to recommend to the prayers of your congregation the souls of the faithful slain in battle, and have a solemn *Requiem* for the same poor souls as soon as possible in the principal churches of your district. When all the priests of the diocese meet in Christchurch for the annual retreat it will be a fitting occasion to have the Solemn *Requiem* in our Pro-Cathedral for the same praiseworthy object. In the meantime, instead of the prayer hitherto prescribed, you will substitute at every Mass—as often as the Rubrics permit—and at Benediction, the prayer *Pro Pace*, '*Deus a quo sanctorum*,' etc. Believing, with the inspired penman, that 'It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins' (II. Mac., 12-46), let us make a daily memento in our prayers for the souls of those of our brethren who may have been slain, saying from the depth of our heart, 'Eternal rest give to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace! Amen.' You will be good enough to read this circular in the churches and chapels under your charge the first Sunday or holiday after you will have received it.

Wishing you and yours every blessing with the choicest gifts of this holy Christmastide, I remain, Rev. dear Father, yours faithfully in Christ,

† J. J. Grimes, S.M., Bishop of Christchurch.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE war news of the week has been very meagre, being mainly devoted to accounts of unimportant outpost engagements, and details of battles fought some days ago.

It is evident the British commanders are acting mainly on the defensive until the arrival of reinforcements, or that if any important movements are taking place, the press censor is taking very good care that neither the outside world nor the enemy will hear of them.

At latest accounts Ladysmith had provisions for three months, so there is no danger that the town will be starved out. There is more to fear on this score with regard to the towns on the western frontier, but it is not at all unlikely that both Kimberley and Mafeking will be relieved in a few weeks.

The Australian colonies and New Zealand have offered to supply a second and larger contingent, and the Imperial authorities have accepted the offer. A number of volunteer regiments are being raised in England, including one 1400 strong in London by the Lord Mayor, for South Africa. Canada proposes to mobilise 5,000 men to be in readiness for South African emergencies.

After a seven weeks' visit to Singapore for the benefit of his health, the Right Rev. Dr. Gibney has returned again to Perth. He states he is now in the best of health.

The *Brisbane Age* reports the arrival from Home of the Rev Fathers O'Keefe and Doyle, who are to assist the Rev. Father Corcoran, O.S.A., in the mission at Cairns.

The Caledonian Society, ever to the front in the encouragement of athletics, have prepared a very comprehensive programme for their annual sports' meeting on New Year's Day and January 2. Among the items in the programme are walking, running, cycling, vaulting, and wood-chopping contests. These are only a few of the many attractions. The Society, according to their usual custom, are most liberal in the matter of prizes, and the result has been that a very large number of entries has been received, so that keen competition may be expected. There is no more popular sports' meeting than that of the Caledonian Society, and it is unnecessary to tell our readers that there will be no pleasanter way of spending the New Year's holidays than at the Kensington grounds. With the present prospect nothing, save the weather, will stand in the way of a record attendance.—*.*

That centrally situated hotel—the Excelsior—at the corner of Princes street and Dowling street, has just changed hands, having been taken over by Mr. Roderick Mackenzie, late of the Oban Hotel, Dunedin. The Excelsior is newly built, and has excellent accommodation for families, and all the appointments and sanitary arrangements, including hot, cold, and shower baths, are on the most modern and approved principles. The central position occupied by the Excelsior is one which should recommend it to the patronage of the travelling public, being in the centre of the business portion of the city, and close to the banks, post office, railway station, and wharf. Mr. Mackenzie has a well-deserved reputation as a host who looks carefully after the interests of his patrons, and we doubt not that his many friends will be pleased to extend their patronage to him in his new venture.—*.*