

A pastor of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John Irwin, last Sunday at Cambridge (Waikato) said from the pulpit that it was British greed that had caused the war in South Africa, and had it not been for the enormous wealth of gold and diamonds in the Transvaal no notice would have been taken of the treatment the Uitlanders received. The rev. gentleman then denounced Lord Roberts for telling the troops they would have an opportunity of avenging the reverse they had sustained at Magerfontein. One of the elders, as a protest, rose and left the building.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE LONDON IRISH RIFLES OFFER THEIR SERVICES.

Captain W. Farquaharson, son of the late John Farquaharson, Dundalk, and 14 officers and 500 men of the 16th London Irish Rifles, offered their services to serve in South Africa, and were accepted by the Commander-in-Chief, and were to leave their headquarters, 2 Duke street, Charing Cross, W.C., on the 9th January for the front.

THE ONLY SCOTTISH MILITIA REGIMENT AT THE FRONT.

The only Scottish militia regiment accepted for service at the front (says the *London Tablet*) is that of the 14th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who were to sail on January 17 from Queenstown on the City of Rome—a name that might once have been of happy and most appropriate augury. For 300 of the men of this regiment are Catholic Highlanders, and they are commanded by a Catholic—Colonel Douglas Dick.

THE BATTLE OF TUGELA RIVER.

In the battle at Tugela River the Irish troops constituted 20 per cent. of the men engaged, and 70 per cent. of the whole number of killed.

AN OPEN QUESTION.

Special prayers have been ordered for Sunday next (January 14) by the bishops (says the *Liverpool Catholic Times*), most of whose letters, we are glad to see, avoid the political question as to whether the war is just or unjust—a question whereupon bishops, priests, and laymen have a right to hold and express their own unfettered opinions, which bind only themselves.

A FRENCHMAN'S OPINIONS.

Mr D. Hotmaul, a magistrate of Natal, writes as a Catholic to the *Paris Univers* to remonstrate against its sympathy with the Boers. He urges that Catholics at the Cape enjoy the greatest liberty under English rule and that their schools receive encouragement such as is not granted in France, whereas the Boers dislike Catholics and exclude them from public offices. He adds that England is not the cause of the war, for it had been prepared for eighteen years by the Afrikaner Bond, a secret society like Freemasonry.

ATTENDING TO THEIR RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

The following is an extract from a letter received from Corporal F. O'Grady, East Surrey Regiment, under date December 12 from Frere Camp, Natal.—On Saturday evening I was speaking to Father Matthews. He is the military chaplain who came from Egypt. It is wonderful to see the men of the Irish Brigade waiting outside Father Matthews' tent to go to confession, long rows of them, all waiting patiently for their turn, and the same at Holy Communion in the morning, more troops than I have ever seen in my life at their duties. So you see we are trying to serve our God as well as our Queen and country. On Sunday we went to service to Father Keatinge, from Aldershot. I have not had an opportunity of speaking to him yet. We have all we require here, that is just the same as the officers, but milk and butter we never see, and can do without them. We can see the Boers scampering about, and we will give them some music in a couple of days.

THE SISTERS OF NAZARETH AT PORT ELIZABETH.

One of the Sisters of Nazareth House, Port Elizabeth, writing to Hammersmith on December 3 says—

The war is still too terrible, and the end, I fear, very far off. How hard it is for those poor soldiers who have to go to the front not knowing the moment they may appear face to face with Almighty God. We do pray for them and help them all in our power. A thousand volunteers left here yesterday. Our doctor (Dr. Slater) has gone with them. He brought his dear old father for us to take care of during his absence. We trust he will come back safe. He is a Protestant, and said he wished the Sisters were going, too, to help him, for there is very hard work before him. Mass was said for the soldiers the morning before their departure in the stables at the racecourse. The Sisters went up to arrange the altar. They tried to cover up some of the advertisements on the wall—'Morgan's Pale Ale, etc.' One of our boys served the Mass. Three hundred men went to Holy Communion.

How good of that kind lady to send £10 for the refugees. Do you know, dear Mother, the sufferings of the poor creatures are dreadful. They look such nice people, and when they come to ask for relief I scarcely like to look them in the face. The Sisters go round to them. They found three families in one small room; three of the children were dying, and the poor mothers were so exhausted and overcome with suffering that they did not seem able to look after them. You would be pleased with the Sisters, dear Mother; they work so hard and yet are happy and brave, just what our dear Mother-General would like them to be. You cannot imagine what a joy it was to them to receive our dear Holy Father's blessing. If we are not good it is our own fault.

LET'S MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES.

The report (says a London paper, December 30) has been confirmed that the Dublin Fusiliers succeeded in crossing the Tugela and effecting a foothold on the Boer side of the river. But, support failing them, they were withdrawn. The bodies of several of those dapper little Dubliners have been found in the historic stream. The correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, describing the fight, in which the Dubliners were foremost, says they were surprised when, on reaching the bank, a storm of bullets greeted them from Boers entrenched at a distance of only 200 yards. The men returned the fire, but, though they fought bravely, they were handicapped by not being able to see their adversaries, and a retirement was ordered. The correspondent adds—

'Just previously the Dublin Fusiliers had been preparing for a bayonet charge, the men standing up to inspire each other with confidence, and shouting, "Let's make a name for ourselves."

As to the Irish in the war and their conspicuous valour, we take the following from the *Westminster Gazette*—

'In looking through the long list of brave men who fell wounded in the Tugela battle, one will be struck, not only with the losses suffered by the Irish regiments, but by the number of Irish names in the English and Scotch battalions. The bravery of our Irish soldiers was conspicuously displayed in last Friday's battle. "Let's make a name for ourselves" was the cry that came from the ranks of the Dublin Fusiliers as they dashed through the "torrent of lead."

A Wexford rhymist, who modestly signs himself the 'Poet Laureate of Bridgetown,' elaborates some verses upon incidents of the war. As is often the case in Irish affairs, the comic and the tragic are so blended as to be indissoluble. The following is one verse of rhythmical dialogue between a Catholic chaplain and a wounded Irish soldier—

'And what religion are you?'

Asked the priest in holy fear;

Then the soldier slowly murmured,

'I'm a Dublin Fusilier!'

I was sick for want of fighting,

But now I've got my fill,

An', Father, kindly make my soul,

I needn't make my will.'

We need not call attention to the vein of humour in the last line. Having no worldly goods to bequeath to any one, the making of wills does not trouble the last hours of the dying soldier.

CATHOLICS IN THE ARMY.

The Rev. J. E. Rockliff, acting-chaplain to the forces at Malta, writes thus to a Home paper—

The following list of regiments with the greatest number of Catholic men will serve as a guide to those who are so generously sending papers and Catholic literature: 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers, 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, 1st Liverpool Regiment, 2nd Royal Lancaster Regiment, 2nd Scottish Rifles, 5th Royal Irish Lancers, 2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Connaught Rangers, 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers, 1st Manchester Regiment, 1st South Lancashire Regiment, 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, 8th Royal Irish Hussars.

THE ENGLISH, IRISH, AND SCOTCH.

In talks with General Joubert, Commander Cronje, Commissioner Smit, Postmaster-General Van Allen, and other Boer leaders (says a correspondent of a Home paper) I gathered that the Boers make an exception of the rank and file of the Scotch, Irish and colonial regiments. In them, say the Boers, the officers have confidence. As for the troops recruited in England proper—Devonshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Manchester, and other provinces, cities, and rural districts—they are not counted upon.

When it comes to a charge where desperate and steadfast courage is needed Highlanders or Irishmen are called to the front. This is an unwritten but also an unbroken rule in English military science.

The Irish soldier is a fighter pure and simple. A coward among these men is likely to be shot by his comrades. General White has been making good use of this well-known quality in the Irish.

The courage of the Scotch is different from that of the Irish. They too are inspired by the ties of clan and traditional pride. But the Highlanders do not fight with the ferocity of the Fusiliers. With them it is quiet, steady determination to go through and fight to the death. They have patience, while the Irish have not.

When men are required to lie in the trenches and bide their time under hot fire it is the Highlanders who are wanted. The Irish cannot stand still under fire. They are at their best only in a charge. That is why at Glencoe they were ordered to lead that reckless charge. The officers knew that their Irishmen would go at anything—white, black, or brown—each man to show what his country could do.

THE BRITISH LION MEANS BUSINESS.

The following is an extract from a leading article regarding the war which appeared in an up-country paper in South Africa:—'The hoary old British Lion is beginning to raise his head once more in South Africa; his resonant roar is now making itself heard in the great veld of this sub-continent; and those short-sighted antagonists of his who spat at him and pin-pricked him when he slept are now trembling in fearful amazement as they see him arising in all his power, shaking off the shackles of apathy and indulgence which hitherto bound him, and rushing forth in all his majesty and strength to engulf for ever in a chasm of destruction those who were mad enough to thwart his will and to scoff at his power.'