

SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR

STUDENTS FROM JESUIT COLLEGES AND THE WAR.

Father Bernard Vaughan in a Christmas message to *Answers* says he is prouder than ever of being a Catholic, for from England alone a far larger average of Catholics had gone to the front than of members belonging to any other denomination. And never was he so proud of being a Jesuit as when he learnt that from Stonyhurst and Beaumont—two out of seven Jesuit colleges in England—seven hundred lads had rallied to the colors and many more were in training.

THE IRISH OF TORONTO.

Canada is sending another Irish regiment to the fighting line. It is being organised by the Irish Rifle Club of Toronto, and is to comprise 800 members who will purchase their own uniform, accoutrements, and arms. Creed, religion, and politics are to be ignored, Irish birth or extraction, together with the ability to shoot, being the only essential qualifications.

OBNOXIOUS FRENCH RULE.

We (*Irish Catholic*) have reason to know that the French Government has withdrawn the obnoxious notification which sick or wounded soldiers of the Expeditionary Force were required to sign on admission to hospital if they desired the attendance of a priest or Christian burial in the event of their death. It will be remembered that the resolutions adopted by our bishops at their recent meeting at Maynooth contained a strong protest against this monstrously restrictive document, which, being in French, was practically unintelligible to most of the British and Irish soldiers received in the French military hospitals.

IRISH-AMERICAN DOCTOR'S WORK.

The correspondent of *The Times* in Belgrade says that no account of the recovery of that city by the Serbians would be complete without reference to the splendid part played by Dr. Ryan, director of the American Red Cross, during the occupation. Having volunteered to stay when the Serbs left, he preserved order for the 48 hours preceding the Austrian entry and protected all the Serbian wounded and fed them. It is due to his fearless and determined intervention that the city was not destroyed and that a greater number of women and children were not carried off into captivity. To him also must be allowed the credit of the attention received by the Austrian wounded.

HOLLAND'S WATER DEFENCES.

If the Germans were interfering with Holland a resolute defence would be offered—the troops would quickly fall back on the famous Water Line. Mr. J. W. Robertson-Scott, in the new edition of his book about the Dutch which he now entitles *War Time and Peace in Holland*, gives an interesting account of this old plan of defence. The Water Line is roughly 70 miles long, and from seven to eight miles wide. The flooding is carefully restricted in area. This is done by means of specially built sluices and dykes, and a most carefully worked out system of running on the water. The object is to obtain a uniform depth of 18 in. But the country lies at all sorts of levels. So the flooding must be done in well-planned sections. The only way in which the inundation can be coped with is by turning off the water before the flooding is complete, or by force of artillery and high explosives later on when it is complete. Formerly the flooding took a fortnight. It can be done now in two days. The water is drawn from the Rhine, but in an emergency recourse would also be had to the Zuider Zee. It is undesirable to use Zuider Zee water if it can be avoided, for it is salt, and would inflict damage on the flooded land from which it would take years to recover. The Amsterdam

Water Line has been supposed to make of that city one of the strongest military positions in the world.

FATHER BERNARD VAUGHAN AND STRICKEN BELGIUM.

The Commission for Relief in Belgium have published in 150 American newspapers an open letter to American citizens written by Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J., at their request, appealing for aid in the effort to send food to the starving Belgians. In the course of his letter, Father Vaughan says:—'Experts calculate that to avert the extinction of Belgians through starvation 60,000 tons of wheat, 15,000 of corn, with 5000 tons of peas or beans, together with other foodstuffs, must be passed into the country monthly. If this supply is kept up every starving citizen may feel sure of getting each day about one-half a soldier's ration—ten ounces. If this supply is to be maintained there must flow into the relief fund more than a million dollars a week, practically five million dollars a month.' It is a work for which America would seem to have been specially deputed by God, says Father Vaughan, and already a generous beginning has been made. Thirty-eight steamers are carrying on the high seas 128,000 tons of relief supplies, valued at over eight million dollars.

A HARD NUT TO CRACK.

This utterance from the Rev. K. A. Bray, pastor of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Geneva, N.Y., is well worthy of space in a Catholic publication (remarks the *Sacred Heart Review*). 'To those who are forever harping on the power of the Pope, meaning thereby not his spiritual but his temporal power, the problem set by this war must be a hard nut to crack. Here Catholic fights his brother, each owing allegiance to the same spiritual head, yet each with his life protesting allegiance to different and opposing temporal rulers. Austria, one of Rome's most faithful children, neglecting the pressure of Rome, along with Germany so largely independent of Rome, fighting France still very largely Catholic; England dominantly Anglican, aided by Ireland, herself divided as by a line into Catholic and non-Catholic camps. If to be a Catholic means loyalty to the Pope in antagonism to loyalty to one's country, what is the answer to the present situation?'

BRILLIANT RECORD OF IRISH GUARDS.

The *Times*, in announcing the appointment of Lord Kitchener as Colonel of the Irish Guards in succession to the late Lord Roberts, says: The Brigadier-General, Lord Cavan, commanding the 4th (Guards) Brigade, has paid the following fine tribute to the work of the Irish Guards in a letter received by the officer commanding the 1st Battalion, Colonel Proby:—'I want you to convey to every man in the battalion that I consider that the safety of the right flank of the British section depended entirely on their staunchness after the disastrous day, November 1. Those of them that were left have made history, and I can never thank them enough for the way in which they recovered themselves, and showed the enemy that Irish Guards must be reckoned with, however hard hit.'

The Irish Guards, the youngest regiment of his Majesty's Foot Guards, were formed in 1902, after the South African War, as a mark of Queen Victoria's appreciation of the services rendered by the various Irish regiments of the line. They went out under the command of Brigadier-General Scott-Kerr, who was wounded early in September, and was succeeded by Lord Cavan. Their Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Col. Morris, and the second in command were killed quite early in the campaign during the retreat from Mons. The battalion was then under the command of Major H. Herbert-Stepney, who has since been killed. His place was filled by Lieut.-Col. Lord Ardee, who was attached to the Irish Guards from the Grenadiers owing to the dearth of senior officers. Lord Ardee was himself wounded shortly afterwards, and the battalion is now under the command of Major the Hon. J. F. Trefuss.

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