

The old soldier was silent for several moments, and under the influence of scarce-contained emotion, his eyelids trembled, his thin cheeks contracted, and with his right hand he thrice nervously stroked his white imperial.

'So, you see, my young friends,' said he at length, 'animals are sometimes even better than ourselves.'

Then in a stifled tone he resumed:

'Poor Toto! Three months later, he, in his turn, fell into an ambush of the insurgents, and no one arrived in time to save him.'

'On that day the entire garrison went into mourning. As to myself, I wept bitterly for the loss of my preserver, and of my best friend.'

'Eh bien! messieurs,' concluded Colonel Laroux, 'here am I, now nearly seventy-five years of age; many a battle have I seen, and many deeds of valor and devotion have I witnessed; but never, during my long career, have I experienced for one of my fellow-beings the gratitude that I have preserved, and that I shall ever preserve, even to the day of my death, for my brave, my faithful Toto.'—Translated from the French.

Ashburton

(From our own correspondent.)

March 2.

The Catholic Young Men's Club resumed its usual weekly meetings on Tuesday week. The president (Mr. J. A. Lennon) presided over a good attendance of members. The monthly report of the council was submitted to the members, and was adopted. The greater part of the evening was devoted to a general discussion as to the best means of popularising the club. The officers anticipate a successful session this year.

Close on 700 adults and children from the Cathedral parish, Christchurch, journeyed to Ashburton on Saturday last by special train on the occasion of their annual outing. The day was an ideal one for picnicking, and the visitors thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Several of the Christchurch clergy accompanied the excursionists.

Temuka

(From our own correspondent.)

March 2.

Rev. Father Ainsworth, S.M., has taken up his duties as successor to Rev. Father Tymons, S.M.

Mr. R. Connell, of the local district high school staff, has received word of having been successful in his recent examination, thereby getting his M.A. degree.

The usual fortnightly meeting of the local branch of the H.A.C.B. Society was held on Monday last, the president (Bro. J. Scott) presiding, when a large amount of routine business was transacted. Rev. Father Ainsworth, who was present, was heartily welcomed by the president.

A eucyre party in aid of the Ireland candidate at the forthcoming Queen of the Carnival fete was held on Tuesday evening last in the local clubrooms. The function was very well attended, and the prizes were won by Mrs Walker, Miss N. Bourke, and Messrs Fitzgerald and Kennedy.

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'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

(A Weekly Instruction specially written for the N.Z. TABLET by GHIMEL.)

WHEN WAR IS LAWFUL.

If it is easy enough to see that war is at times lawful, nay, a solemn duty, it is not so easy to give an answer to the practical question what kind of war is lawful; in other words, what are the objects and conditions justifying strife between nations?

One or two observations may tend to clearness of view:—

(1) There is a vast difference between the justice of a war and its ultimate issue. Truth prevails and justice, but not always, some think seldom, in the immediate present. If God's mills grind surely, yet they do so slowly. Hence a nation unjustly assailed, the Belgium nation for example in the present struggle, is perfectly justified in resisting unto death and in offering more than a feint resistance. A nation has rights, which, if it values its place in the eyes of men, it will take care to defend, even in presence of a vastly superior opponent. 'It is sweet to die for one's country.'

(2) But what is right? Father Slater, in his *Manual of Moral Theology*, gives this definition: 'That which is in justice due to me is my right. I have a right to my life, to my good name, to my property; and anyone who deprives me of these rights is guilty of injustice. In its strict sense, a right may be defined a moral power of having, doing, or exacting something. It is said to be a moral power, to distinguish it from the mere physical capacity of brute force, which confers no rights of itself. It is a moral power, which may not without injustice be interfered with' (I., p. 343).

(3) When two nations go to war, both cannot in the sight of God, Who cannot be deceived, be objectively right. Justice lies on one side or the other. But both may be in the best of good faith, and think that right and justice are on their side. Here, of course, I am not referring to rulers and diplomatists, for some of them at least in every war must surely know their cause to be unjust; I have in mind rather the bulk of the nation who in these days are allowed to know little of the inner workings, and whose patriotism readily believes what their governments choose to tell them.

(4) Soldiers actually in military service, or liable to such service by the law of conscription are bound to obey the call of the authorities and, if needs be, give their life for their country. 'Greater love than this no man hath.' 'I was asked lately by a staff officer,' writes Cardinal Mercier in his now famous Pastoral, 'whether a soldier falling in a righteous cause . . . is not veritably a martyr. Well, he is not a martyr in the rigorous theological meaning of the word, inasmuch as he dies in arms, whereas the martyr delivers himself, undefended and unarmed, into the hands of the executioner. But if I am asked what I think of the eternal salvation of a brave man who has consciously given his life in defence of his country's honor, and in vindication of violated justice, I shall not hesitate to reply that without any doubt whatever Christ crowns his military valor, and that death, accepted in this Christian spirit, assures the safety of that man's soul. And the soldier who dies to save his brothers, and to defend the hearths and altars of his country, reaches this highest of all degrees of charity. He may not have made a close analysis of the value of his sacrifice; but must we suppose that God requires of the plain soldier in the excitement of battle the methodical precision of the moralist or the theologian? Can we, who revere his heroism, doubt that his God welcomes him with love?'

(5) War brings such tremendous evils in its train that it must be entered upon by a nation only after all other means have been tried and failed.

Dr. J. J. GRESHAM

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