

of Reims and Louvain. It is not necessary to take any serious notice of Mr. Dell's article, but we may give just one illustration of his complete disregard of the truth. 'There is not,' he writes, 'a single Catholic country among the Allies, for, although Belgium has a Catholic Government at present, half the Belgian people are Freethinkers.' The King and Queen are Catholics; there has been a Catholic Government for over thirty years; and according to the last census (taken some years ago), and to the definite statement of the latest volumes of standard publications such as *Hazell's Annual* (1914), 'almost the entire population is of the Roman Catholic faith.' In the face of these facts, the man who can pretend to maintain that Belgium is not a Catholic country, puts himself completely out of court as a hopeless and unscrupulous perverter of the truth. For the rest, the Holy Father's general attitude is sufficiently indicated in the cables appearing in our dailies as we writes these lines. He is concerned for his 'beloved Italy': protests against the inhuman methods of warfare introduced by certain of the belligerents; and wishes all his children 'to be persuaded of his participation in their sorrows and troubles.'

IRELAND AND THE WAR

VOLUNTEERS WITH THE COLORS.

In the course of a speech at the first Convention of National Volunteers in Dublin on Easter Monday, Mr. John Redmond said:—

My colleagues and I did not call for the Volunteer movement; we did not initiate it; it sprung from the people themselves, and it is a movement initiated for the purpose of defence, not attack. It is not our desire, and it is not our intention, to attack any brother Irishman or anybody. The question is whether we will defend ourselves if necessary or not. This movement is an answer to that question. The question arose very early in the movement as to who were to be the leaders and guides of that movement. Were they to be the men who had led through unparalleled difficulties the constitutional movement of a generation to success; or were they to be men who, however worthy in every other respect, were new, untried, unknown, and largely irresponsible men? That question inevitably arose, and when it arose I felt it to be my duty to submit that question to the country. The country has given its answer. Yesterday the review showed that the National Volunteers of Ireland are a united force. From every quarter of Ireland—north, south, east, and west—the same answer has come, that the Volunteers will trust as their leaders and guides the men who have successfully conducted the National movement for the last thirty years, that their policy will be the policy of the Volunteers, and that the policy of the Volunteers will be to uphold the national rights of Ireland.

One of the first and most immediate effects of the war was to deprive the National Volunteers of almost all their drill instructors. We have not been able as yet to fill their places. We must, however, do the best we can, and it is evident from what we saw yesterday that notwithstanding those difficulties that the work of drilling has gone on in the country, and in some places has been carried to great perfection indeed. It is impossible for us to meet together on an occasion such as this, and shut our eyes to the facts of the world crisis in which we are living. The world war threatens Ireland as well as it threatens every other civilised country, and Irishmen would be quite unworthy of their history and past if they attempted to fold their arms and say: 'This war does not concern us.' Belgium may be drenched in blood and ruined, and every small nation, Poland and Alsace-Lorraine, and other small nations in Europe may be destroyed, but we in Ireland are so cut off from the world, so self-concentrated, so happy, so prosperous, so secure in our liberty, that we can afford to sit down and say this war does not concern us. We are protected by the four seas around our shores, and need not care about the rest of the world.'

Ireland and the War.

When the Boer war took place, Ireland thought differently, and she took a bold and a manly course, and she took it at great risk, and she took it with her eyes open, and knew the cost she would have to pay. She did that because she knew that the Boers were in the right in that war, because she knew that the fate of small nations was at stake and Ireland, notwithstanding all the difficulties of her own, did not seek refuge in selfishness, and say: 'We won't interfere.' She did interfere, and to-day she is justified before the world. Now, if when the war is for right, justice, liberty, and nationality, we refused to interfere on the side of right and justice and liberty and nationality, we would cover ourselves with dishonor and contempt. Further than that, we promised, I promised—you commissioned me to promise—that if we were given a free constitution in Ireland that we were willing to enter on equal terms into the British Empire, and to bear our share of the burden. In answer to my plea we have been given the first free constitution Ireland ever had. Do you know that in all the 600 years of Ireland's Parliaments in the past there never was an executive government responsible to Parliament? In Grattan's time nothing of the sort existed. If it had the Union could not be carried, because when the Union was defeated in Grattan's Parliament the Government should instantly have resigned. The Executive would have instantly resigned or dissolved Parliament. In any case the Union would have been defeated. We had a Parliament that covered itself with glory by its eloquence and in the main by its patriotism, but it was largely a Parliament only in name and never had the power of a free Parliament. We now have on the Statute Book a measure giving us a freely-elected Parliament, with an Executive Government responsible to it. We have that for the first time, and I say if Ireland had given any other answer when this danger arose than the one she has given she would have covered herself with contempt. Well, Ireland has given a magnificent answer. I could not help being deeply moved yesterday when I watched twenty-five thousand young Irishmen marching in the ranks of the Volunteers, and especially when I remembered that every man of them had a colleague, or comrade Volunteer, serving with the colors.

Volunteers with the Colors.

I have official figures here, and 25,000 National Volunteers are to-day with the colors. I am told that there are about the same number of Ulster Volunteers. That would mean that there are 50,000 Irish Volunteers—and why should we draw any distinction between them? There are fifty thousand Irish Volunteers to-day with the colors, and we know that, taking into account the number of men who were in the army before the war started and the number of men who have joined the army since the war started and not enrolled Volunteers, I know, from figures supplied by the Government, that Ireland herself has over 100,000 Irishmen with the colors, and I know further that, taking into account the Irish race—and we have a right to speak for the Irish race as well as for the Volunteers—I say that, taking the race as a whole, Ireland has a quarter of a million men to-day with the colors, vindicating the principles of right, justice, and nationality. So far as heroism in the field is concerned, Ireland, if she never struck another blow in the war, could for all time hold up her head with honor, but there is heroism at home as well as heroism abroad, and the Volunteers and Irishmen generally who cannot go to the front for various reasons which we all understand, and which, mark you, operate just as much, and perhaps more in Great Britain as they do here in Ireland—Irishmen who are Volunteers, or who are not Volunteers, and who cannot go to the front, can do great, and in many cases, heroic service at home. You all remember how, on 3rd August, in the House of Commons, I took on myself the grave and weighty responsibility: I took it upon myself to say that the armed sons of Ireland—I drew no distinction, I said north and south—would be willing to defend the shores of Ireland without the assistance of any of the regular troops of the Govern-