

is most cordial. The Southern Irishmen recently presented a cup for competition between the various companies of the Northern Force, and of late there has been swearing of the utmost rivalry as to which would get to the top of the Messines Ridge first. I do not yet know which won, but I have no doubt that both were first in good Irish fashion. Certainly, the whole face, and most of the top, of the Ridge is ours, and the German is going to have a thoroughly Irish time in trying to push us off again."

Next day, the 8th inst., the same correspondent telegraphs: "The Ulstermen are in the happy position of having hardly any story to tell of their achievement. They had no hitch, their casualties were very slight, and they took over a thousand prisoners, or immensely more than their total casualties. They did their work cleanly and beautifully. And the South Irish, on their left, were just as good. In Wytschaete Wood, which I have just been describing, they found that the Germans had organised the wood for defence on all its sides. It was full of machine guns and wire. They took it with grenades and the bayonet. In the village of Wytschaete or the dust heaps which represent it there was one strong point in the middle which gave them some trouble, but it hardly checked them."

Mr. Beech Thomas, special correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, says:—"I spent most of the morning with the South Irish, who took Wytschaete Wood and Village. They fought side by side with the Ulsters. 'I have heard that the Irish were great fighters,' said a German officer, 'but I never expected to see anyone advance like that.'"

"The Irish and the New Zealanders can claim the best trophies of the Ridge," says Mr. Percival Phillips in the *Daily Express*.

Mr. Philip Gibbs, special correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, tells how a wounded New Zealander coming back from the battle exalted over the part played by the New Zealanders in it and then added, "But I am told the Irish were splendid and the Australians could not be held back."

A British observation officer, describing the battle, said: "One of the Northern Irish battalions pressed ahead with such impetuosity that it was temporarily out of touch with supports, and had to withstand a fierce onset from three fresh Bavarian battalions. The nearest support battalion was one belonging to a famous West of Ireland regiment. They made their way through a tornado of shells and arrived on the left of the Ulstermen in time to thwart a German move to enfilade the latter. The enemy were then pressing the Ulstermen very hard. The latter had withstood a fierce pounding with artillery and had thrown back four separate infantry attacks. The West of Ireland men charged, and like a whirlwind they swept into action. The Germans were swept off the field."

#### AN UNDERGROUND FORTRESS.

Mr. Philip Gibbs says that the thing which interested him in the recent British advance was "the revelation of the German way of life behind his lines—these abundant lines—his military methods of defence and observation and organisation, and the domestic arrangements by which he has tried to make himself comfortable in the field of war."

"As a builder of dug-outs the German soldier has no equal. But in addition to these trench systems, he made behind his lines a series of strong posts cunningly secreted and commanding a wide field of fire with dominating observation over our side of the country. I found such a place quite by accident."

"I suddenly looked down an enormous sand-pit covering an acre or so, and saw that it was a concealed fortress of extraordinary strength and organisation—an underground citadel for a garrison of at least 3000 men, perfectly screened by the wood above."

"Into the sand-banks on every side of the vast pit were built hundreds of chambers leading deeper down into a maze of tunnels, which ran right round the central arena. Before leaving, the enemy had busied himself with an elaborate packing-up, and had

taken away most of his movable property, but the 'fixtures' still remained, and a litter of mattresses stuffed with shavings, empty wine bottles, candles which had been burnt down on the last night in the old home, old socks, and old boots and old clothes no longer good for active service, and just the usual relics which people leave behind them when they change houses. The officers' quarters were all timbered and panelled and papered, with glass windows and fancy curtains. They were furnished with bedsteads looted from French houses, and with mirrors, cabinets, washstands, marble-top tables, and easy chairs."

"The men's quarters were hardly less comfortable, and the whole place was organised as a self-contained garrison, with carpenters' shops and blacksmiths' sheds, and a quartermaster's stores still crowded with bomb and aerial torpedoes—thousands of them which the enemy had left behind in his hurry—and kitchens with great stoves and boilers, and a Red Cross establishment for first aid, and concrete bath-houses with shower baths and cigar-racks for officers, who smoke before and after bathing."

#### DIocese of AUCKLAND

(From our own correspondent.)

August 2.

The working bee formed to improve the presbytery property at Otahuhu has been working assiduously. When the work is completed the Rev. Father Taylor will be comfortably equipped with an up-to-date residence.

A concert is being promoted to further augment the organ fund of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and tickets are being readily disposed of. The fund has already accumulated to considerable proportions, due to the untiring efforts of the Rev. Father Murphy, Adm.

References were made at the various churches on Sunday last to the conscription of the Marist Brothers for military service, and the parishioners were exhorted to support the ecclesiastical authorities in the constitutional efforts that were being made in regard to the matter.

At a largely attended meeting of the parishioners of the Sacred Heart Church, Ponsonby, last week, it was proposed by Mr. J. T. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. P. Darby, that the meeting tender its heartfelt thanks to the Rev. Dr. Kelly, of the *N.Z. Tablet*, for the courageous and effective manner in which he has promoted the claims of the Marist Brothers and students for exemption, and also to express the general approval and appreciation of the manner in which he has edited the paper. The motion was very enthusiastically carried.

By the kind permission of the Rev. Mother, a most enjoyable concert was given to the inmates of the Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor, on Saturday afternoon, July 28. It was under the auspices of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the immediate management of Mr. M. Moodabe. Assisting him were some thirty members of the St. Cecilia Convent Choir, and among other items were an Irish jig and Scotch reels by pupils of Miss Beresford. Pupils of Mr. Leo Whittaker also contributed. Miss Clark was accompanist. Every credit is due to Mr. Moodabe for his able organisation, and his successful rendering of several items on the programme. The Rev. Father Golden, on behalf of the Sisters, returned thanks in a humorous speech, which terminated a most delightful afternoon's entertainment.

#### REPRESENTATIVES' MOVEMENTS

MR. RYAN—Hastings and Napier.  
MR. DEERE—Hamilton.  
MR. HANRAHAN—Oamaru.

It takes time and pains to learn what it is most profitable to do.