

VOLUNTEER CORPS IN IRELAND.

(From the *Times*, May 9.)

It has too readily been taken for granted by successive Ministries that Irishmen when at home cannot be safely permitted to form Volunteer regiments. The accuracy of this official tradition was never fairly discussed in the House of Commons until Wednesday afternoon, when the second reading of the Volunteer Corps (Ireland) Bill came on; and a calm examination showed that there no longer existed good reason for withholding from Ireland the facilities which are enjoyed by other parts of the United Kingdom. As far back as June of last year, we ventured to question the propriety of the old policy of distrust of Irish loyalty. With reference to a brief discussion which then took place on the subject, we made certain observations to the effect that it was prudent and seemly to remove an invidious and unnecessary distinction. The fact is that Ministries have not adequately recognised the changed circumstances of Ireland. They have continued to quote obsolete arguments. They have repeated phrases which have come down from past administrations as official furniture or heirlooms. Lord Palmerston's observation that the formation of a volunteer force in Ireland would be troublesome, if not dangerous, has been reverently cited by successive Secretaries for Ireland when invited to put an end to a superfluous distinction. Ireland has been totally transformed since Lord Palmerston expressed this opinion. The roots of some causes of disaffection are, we may hope, torn up. The country is quiet and prosperous, whatever a malcontent here and there may say to the contrary. "A new Ireland" has arisen on the ruins of that which existed before 1848. Many things have been done since that date, at no small sacrifice of pride on the part of large classes and to the mortification of many, in order to conciliate the Irish people. The conscience of England is at rest; and when Irishmen come forward in a time of profound peace in Europe to ask permission to drill as citizen soldiers, we need not suspect that it is intended to use the military skill thus acquired for sinister purposes. In the discussion of Wednesday representatives of all parts of Ireland took part, and with almost one voice they declared that there was no danger to be apprehended in putting arms into the hands of Irish volunteers or imparting to them military instruction. Scarcely an Irish member questioned the propriety of the step; and the Attorney-General for Ireland was constrained to admit, in the name of the Government, the overwhelming weight of the arguments for the measure by consenting to the second reading.

There are many familiar facts to re-assure the timid. In the Regular Army there are, as Mr. Isaac pointed out, no fewer than 89,121 Irish non-commissioned officers and men. This remarkable circumstance ought of itself to go far to remove apprehensions of disloyalty. This large element contains many of the best soldiers in the world. Wherever our arms go, the Irish soldier distinguishes himself. He is at once brave and amenable to discipline; he lacks no military virtue possessed by his English comrades; and he proves himself loyal and trustworthy. The Irish Militia, which is drawn, as the Attorney-General for Ireland pointed out, from a lower social stratum than that from which the volunteers are likely to come, has never in recent times given any cause for uneasiness, and the praise of the Irish Royal Constabulary for discipline and fidelity is in all mouths. If the atmosphere of sedition was so pervading as has been always assumed by those who have denied the propriety of conceding to Irishmen the right to drill, it could not fail to penetrate the ranks of the Irish regiments of the Regular Army and the Militia. And if it is imperceptible there, except in rare cases, we need not be greatly apprehensive about its spread among the volunteers. We prefer to judge of the expediency of the proposed step by reference to present circumstances. A search for historical analogies in Ireland is apt to be unprofitable and irritating; and it is no loss that the House did not direct its attention to this side of the discussion. But the friends of the measure which was read a second time on Wednesday need not shrink from an appeal to Irish history. The volunteers of 1782 did, indeed, make themselves formidable to the English Government. But they were dangerous more by reason of their numbers and unity and the circumstances of the time, which conspired in their favour, than their discipline and their arms. Pikes and miserable firelocks were all in the way of arms many of them had; and such weapons can always be improvised if there is the will to use them. The fact is that the Irish forces most closely corresponding to the volunteers have always been distinguished for loyalty. The Duke of Wellington's despatches on Ireland contain many flattering allusions to the Yeomanry. Their fault was that they carried, in critical times—as in 1798, for instance—their zeal for the Government to excess, sometimes of a terrible character. The men of whom it was said that they went out in their raids against rebels "with general orders to shoot anybody they pleased," and of whose fierce vindictiveness Lord Cornwallis declared that "murder appears to be their favourite pastime," had many grievous faults, and they are answerable for such; but disloyalty was not among their offences.

Mr. J. Fleming reports for the week ending July 16th, 1879:—Wholesale prices, oats, 2s to 2s 3d per bushel; milling wheat, 4s to 4s 4d per bushel; chicks, 3s to 3s 6d; barley, malting, 5s 6d per bushel; feed, 3s to 3s 6d; pollard, 2s 10s per ton; bran, 2s 5s per ton; flour, 210 to 210 10s per ton; oatmeal, 213 10s per ton; potatoes, 25 10s per ton; hay, 24 per ton; chaff, 24 to 24 10s per ton; straw, 22 5s per ton; onions 14s per cwt.

A young girl named Susan Johnson, of Uniontown, Ky., who is addicted to reading novels, dressed herself in boys' clothes, and, armed with two pistols and a dagger, took the steamboat for Evansville, intending to lead a life that would be a terror to the foe. On the boat some deck hands were moving freight, and a big rat ran out in the direction of our hero. Miss Johnson jumped on a bale of tobacco and screamed. They carried her to the ladies' cabin, where she remained the round trip, and she is now at home, with no desire for a life of adventure.

THE ANTI-CATHOLIC LECTURER.

THE quondam Brother Aloysius, now known to fame as Francis George Widdows, has lately been lecturing against the Catholic Church in Dundee and other Scottish cities, and always with the monks' gown thrown round his person. This, of course, is to give force to his remarks, although, indeed, they do not require any, being strong and villainous enough in all conscience. His obscene abuse of the Catholic Church in Dundee roused the blood of the Irish Catholics, who mustered in force and prevented him lecturing. A howl was immediately raised by the bigots, who asked in spurious amazement:—"Are we, then, living in a free country? Is this what our fathers fought and died for?" One sensible, hard-headed Scotchman, however, the editor of the *Dundee Advertiser*, who was not led away by the frenzy of the hour, quietly cabled the following message to the *Toronto Globe*:—

"Was Widdows convicted at York County Assizes? If so, telegraph full name, crime, sentence, and date. Answer prepaid."

To this message the Dundee paper received the following answer:—"Francis George Widdows, convicted July, 1875, (an abominable offence), five months, Central Prison, Toronto."

The above (says the *Advertiser*) needs no comment, and we are sincerely of the same opinion. And these be the men who are honored for maligning the Catholic Church.—*True Witness*.

General News.

In an *Academia* held in Perugia to commemorate the anniversary of the Sovereign Pontiff's coronation, Professor Geremia Brunelli delivered a discourse, in which he recorded an incident in the life of the Pope which is worth repeating. The Professor relates that on a certain day he had been delayed, and reached his class later than usual. His surprise was great when, on entering the class-room, he beheld Cardinal Pecci, Archbishop of Perugia, seated in the professor's chair, and delivering a discourse to the pupils on Cicero's oration "Pro Milone." The students were delighted beyond measure, and seemed to be wholly enchanted with the learned comments delivered on the language and style of the great Roman orator. The Professor, enchanted in his turn, sat down amongst the scholars, and begged the Cardinal to continue his exposition. But the latter invited him courteously to return to his chair, and recommended the students to profit by the Professor's instruction. As he was leaving the lecture-hall he smiled graciously on the Professor, which the latter regarded as a tacit and gentle reproof of his remissness.

The religion of Mr. Disraeli that was, and the Earl of Beaconsfield and Premier of England that is, has long been a subject of speculation. That the noble earl is of Jewish extraction is well known, but what particular reformation sect he most effects is still, we believe a moot point. He, however, let the cat slightly out of the bag at the Royal Academy dinner on Saturday evening. In speaking to the toast of "Her Majesty's Ministers" the Premier of England went out of his way to ridicule memories most sacred to all Christians by suggesting that artists could in Shakespeare's works find subjects as interesting as "Madonnas and Martyrs." Whatever else he is, it would appear from this that the present chief adviser of her Majesty is not a Christian.

The *Edinburgh Daily Review*, a Protestant paper, bears testimony to the growth of the Church in Dumfries. It says:—"The Roman Catholic Church is making great advances in Dumfries—not in the way of converting, but of natural increment, and the acquirement of property. A few years ago the old infirmary was purchased, and made into a college of the Marist Brothers; later, the beautiful little suburban estate of Laurelmount was purchased for a "retreat" in connection with the same Order; last year it was made the seat of the new Roman Catholic Bishop of Galloway. The Corbelly Hill, belongs to Lord Herries. It is situated on the Galloway side of the river and commands a magnificent panorama. It has long been advertised for feuing purposes, but the expense of building on such an elevation has proved an effectual discouragement.

A correspondent of the *Indo-European Correspondence* states that Babu Ghosh, the late mathematical teacher of the Protestant Cathedral Mission College, in India, has embraced Catholicity. It appears that he has been a member of the Presbyterian Free Church of Calcutta for the past sixteen years.

Rev. Arthur Hutton, M.A., of the Birmingham Oratory, has in preparation a work on Anglican Orders, the preface of which will probably be written by Dr. Newman. The volume is looked for with much interest in England. Father Hutton is a convert, and a graduate of Exeter College, Oxford. He was formerly rector of Spridlington.

A recent convert to the Church in Washington Territory attributes her conversion to the reading of Father Damen's sermon on "The Rule of Faith" which she came across in the *Catholic Sentinel* of Oregon.

The missionary spirit is vital in France. During the year 1878, according to an incomplete list in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, no less than one hundred and eleven priests set out for foreign fields of labour.

PERSONS interested in building matters are invited to read the advertisement in another column of Messrs. O'Sullivan and Co.'s timber yards at Christchurch. This enterprising firm have made extensive arrangements by which they are enabled to supply timber and building materials of all kinds at the lowest possible and totally unprecedented rates.

Messrs. Burton Brothers, the eminent photographers, have removed their well-known establishment in Princes street, Dunedin, to other premises in the same street, situated opposite the Criterion Hotel, where they have obtained accommodation more suited to their extensive business.