HEARTRENDING SCENES.

THE Rev. F. W. Gallagher, P.P., Carrick. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal, writing to the daily papers, tells the following heartrending story :—

Sheer want and the cry of my dying poor force me with great pain and reluctance to bring before your many readers a s cond time their wretched, starving condition. Absolute famine and deep distress are increasing daily, and are being intensified by the great severity of the weather. I am hourly surrounded by crowds of poor sufferers begging with heartrending appeals the price of a few pounds of Indian meal to save life. By the charity of some few individuals (for which I heartily thank them, and earnestly hope that God may reward them a thousandfold) I have been enabled to prolong their lives up to the present. All resources are now exhausted, and it is heartrending to have to listen to their piteous cry when one cannot assist them. Take for example a few instances of yesterday's applicants. One family of six children, and the father, mother, and grandmother, had been subsisting (or rather languishing) for three days previously on the entire store of four pounds of Indian meal. Another applicant was a poor woman, who in frost and snow travelled ten miles. She left her husband and three children behind without food, nor had they had any for two days before, and she was apprehensive that she would find some of them dead on her return. A third instance was the case of a family where the mother had been confined to bed after childbirth. her only food in this critical and delicate state being the extract of Indian meal, obtained by pouring hot water upon it, and known amongst the poor as Indianmeal tea. I could supply instances of similar distress by the score. I may mention that the relieving officer for the district, a most respectable man, made the application for relief for the last mentioned family. He was also present when the others above referred to made application, and on my observing that it was a crying shame and an unpardonable cruelty to allow these poor people to perish, he replied that his written instructions were to give relief in the poorhouse only, and he believed this was all the guardians could do. I have been given to understand by their respected chairman that though anxious to give relief to those in great distress they had no power to do so, that the Poor-law Act forbade outdoor relief to occupiers of more than a rood of land, and that unless their powers were enlarged by the Local Government Board no relief could be expected from them but the odious poorhouse, though they know full well that the poor of Glencolumbkille would rather die than enter it. The memory of the great mortality of 1846, which ensued from overcrowding in the workhouse, is still fresh in their minds. Again, their going to the poorhouse means the breaking up of their little houses for ever, the abandoning of their little farms and homesteads. the separation of husband from wife, and children from both. For these reasons they view the poorhouse with unconquerable loathing, and will die bit by bit before they will enter it. The Irish executive alone, it would appear, have the power to give assistance, nor can they shirk the responsibility of the lives of those about to perish. Up to the present they have viewed the situation with heartless apathy, and I am left alone single-handed to cope with this gigantic famine. Since the beginning of last October I have been distributing alms to the extent of £30 sterling per week ; these alms were given as a rule in lieu of work done on their own farms, etc. I have hitherto succeeded in warding off death, but now all available resources are exhausted, and unless immediate and abundant relief be sent me I shall not be able to do so any longer, whilst the lives of over twenty-five hundred individuals, who are without food or the means of procuring it, are in imminent danger. The situation, then, may be rendered somewhat thus—immediate relief or immediate deaths.

THE MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

IT is hard for a young mother, who has not yet overcome the impulsive tendencies of her youthful nature, to realize the influence she exerts over her own little ones. She is constantly surrounded by successful imitators, who copy her morals and manners. As the mother is so are her sons and daughters. If a family of children is blessed with an intelligent mother, who is delicate and refined in her manners, and does not, consider it necessary to be one woman in a drawing-room, and an entirely different person in every-day life, but who is a true mother, and always a tender, charming woman, you will invariably see her habits of speech and perfect manners repeated in her children. Great, rough men, and noisy, busy boys, will always tone down their voices, and step lightly, and try to be more mannerly, when she stops to give them a kind word or a pleasant smile, for a true mother will never fail to say or do all the pleasant things she can that will cheer those whose lives are shaded with care and toil. The mother of to-day rules the world of to-morrow.—*Exchange.*

I was particularly desirous to meet Michael Davitt. It was only after his second liberation that I had the pleasure of doing so. About a dozen of us were one day consulting about a certain matter. The door was opened. An armless sleeve was the first thing I saw through the opening door. I knew it was Davitt. He is a man of light, middle build—probably of 11 stone weight. To one who knew of his world-wide fame he was striking in being no way striking. Did you not know it was Davitt, you would say that it was some ordinary individual. He sat at a heap of paper, and his left hand flew along across the paper, quicker you would think than any man's right hand could. He wears black whiskers and moustache. His head is beginning to be a little bald. His face is sallow and fleshless. His teeth show white and full when he is speaking. He's as active as a cat, and seems always in good temper. But walking along he has the appearance of a man continually thinking.—"Ego," in *Dundalk Democrat.*

IRISH SOLDIERS IN THE BRITISH ARMY.

THE following letter has appeared in the *Irish Times* :—

SIR,—In reference to Mr. M'Coan's remarks in Parliament concerning the proportion of Irishmen in the army the following statistics for 1881 are accurate, and will doubtless prove interesting to many of your readers. They are taken from the official returns, and are exclusive of those serving in India :—

Description of Troops.	English.	Irish.	Scotch.
Cavalry of the Line	12,978	2,058	1,611
Household Cavalry	995	93	204
Royal Horse Artillery	4,684	690	355
Royal Artillery	21,061	5,627	2,026
Royal Engineers	4,450	637	573
Foot Guards	5,047	363	703
Infantry of the Line...	77,599	3,037	9,916
Army Service Corps	2,598	264	136
Army Hospital Corps	1,034	401	133
Totals	130,446	13,170	15,057

From these figures you will perceive that out of a total of 158,673, Irishmen number 13,170, or slightly more than one-twelfth of the force, thus representing little more than 8 per cent., instead of 22 per cent., as stated by Mr. M'Coan.

It should further be added that the proportion of last year's recruits born in England was higher than that of the previous year by 21 per 1000, whilst of those born in Scotland the proportion was, on the contrary, 15 per 1000, and of those born in Ireland 8 per 1000 less. Thus the natives of England and Wales represent 702 per 1000 of the year's recruits ; Ireland, 202 per 1000 ; and Scotland 82 per 1000. These are figures which can readily be verified by reference to the Army Official Returns for 1881.—Yours, &c.,

ENGLISH STATIST.

DO FATHERS CARE?

(From *Harper's Magazine.*)

THE old-fashioned stories which the unhappy boys of the last generation read have been succeeded by the manly and fascinating criminal novel. In the old story books it was assumed that truthfulness, honesty and obedience to parents were virtues, and that the Christian religion was not wholly devoid of merit. If these views were not directly taught in the juvenile literature of our fathers, at all events they were never directly or indirectly attacked. Boys could learn nothing from their story books except preposterous platitudes—nothing that was of any practical use, or that tended to develop in them manly and brilliant traits. No such complaint can be made of the dime and half-dime novels of the criminal school which are now read by all our boys, either openly or secretly. In these delightful stories new forms of profanity and slang are taught in the most effective way. The pleasures of burglary and highway robbery, the manliness of gambling and fighting, and the heroism of successful lying, are set forth in what is regarded by youthful readers as glowing eloquence ; while the great truths that all parents are tyrants, that all religious young people are hypocrites, and that disobedience to fathers and teachers is obedience to the noble instincts of juvenile nature, are sedulously taught. Such stories as these develop all that is manly and lawless in our boys, and teach them lessons that cannot fail to be of immense service to them in whatever criminal career they may adopt. There are a few old-fashioned people who denounce the new juvenile literature in unsparing terms, but that nearly all fathers approve of it is self-evident. They know that their boys are reading novels illustrative of the excellence of crime, but they make no effort to suppress that sort of literature, as they certainly would do did they disapprove of it. Nothing would be simpler than to drive these novels out of existence. All that would be necessary to do would be to "Boycott" the newsdealers who keep them for sale. The truth evidently is that fathers do not care what their boys read, or that they have no fault to find with "Jack Harkaway" and the "Boy Burglars." It cannot be that respectable gentlemen, who dislike crime, profanity and vulgarity wilfully refuse to know what their boys are reading, or weakly hope that by some happy chance their reading will do no harm.

Within two years twenty-five British officers have entered the wine trade.

Mr. Crawford, a wealthy Londoner, offers to erect at his own cost a statue of Burns, the poet, on the Victoria Embankment. The statues already in position there are those of Mill, Brunel, and Outram.

Mr. Lilyvick, in "Nicholas Nickleby," considered that French was not a cheerful language, and if recent stories published concerning the streets of the French capital be true, Paris is not a cheerful city to be abroad in after dark. This is what a late report says of it :—"The strange and horrible scenes enacted nightly in some of the ordinarily frequented quarters of Paris would make one imagine that the most civilised people of the universe had suddenly become more savage and lawless than the Ku Klux Klan of America. It is not an uncommon thing for a foot passenger returning home from the theatre to be stayed in his promenade by a human form flung from an upper window and falling lifeless at his feet. Nor is it rare to be accosted by a group of brigands who pinion their victim behind while the accomplice rifles his pockets. Even in the aristocratic streets it is dangerous to remain out late at night, and the police are becoming less and less able to compete with the dangerous organisation of thieves, who usurp the pavement."—*Pilot.*