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THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE REV. FATHER MATTHEWS.

The Rev. Lewis Joseph Matthews, chaplain to the Forces, who was taken prisoner at the time of the Ladysmith disaster, is about 44 years of age. He was partly educated at Barnet, under Father Bampfild, and was ordained priest in 1879. When he left Barnet he went to St. Thomas's Seminary, Harrowsmith, to complete his ecclesiastical education. In 1881 he was sent to the Guardian Angels, Mile End road, as curate to Mgr. Roope, and after about a year of mission life joined the army as chaplain to the Forces. He has served at Gosport, Aldershot, and Egypt, whence he was sent to South Africa on the breaking out of the war. The soldier has a relief to his feelings, he can shoot and otherwise give vent to his excitement. But this is not for the priest. He has only the thought of the presence of God to shield him and the love of souls to shelter him. A Catholic chaplain's duty is heroic in the highest degree; for his duty is done without any of the natural aids and stimulus which his soldiers enjoy.

CATHOLIC OFFICERS AT THE FRONT.

In addition to those Catholic officers whose names appeared in recent issues of the N.Z. TABLET the following are also at the seat of war:—Lieut. Adrian, 10th Hussars; Lieut. M. Archer-Shee, 19th Hussars; Francis Pope, M.D.; Mr F. Murray, Mafeking; Colonel Ivor Herber, C.B., Grenadier Guards; Lieut. Percy D. FitzGerald, Indian Cavalry Contingent; Major G. N. Prendergast, King's Royal Rifles; Lieut. Carlos Hickie, 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, wounded Rietfontein; Captain Frank Fuller, R.E.; Lieut. Cuthbert Fuller, R.E.; Lieut. James Lyons, 13th Hussars; Lieut. J. L. Lawlor, 6th Inniskilling Dragoons; Lieut. the Hon. Reginald Forbes, Gordon Highlanders; Lieut. H. E. Green, Scottish Rifles; Lieut. Charles Wood, Northumberland Fusiliers; Lieut. E. M. Vaughan, 3rd Grenadiers; Lieut. C. T. Martin, Highland Light Infantry, Traffic Manager at Durban; Mr Duke Lattey, Cape Mounted Rifles; Captain E. S. Bulfin, Yorkshire Regiment; Captain John White, Shropshire Light Infantry; Lieut. J. Creagh, Manchester Regiment; Lieut. W. T. Synnott, R.A.; Mr T. Stapleton, B.S.A. Police, Downside; Mr. C. de la Pasture, Mr A. Purcell, Mr F. Worwick, Mr A. Sidgreaves, Mr B. Ware, Mr A. Mackey; Lieut. Cecil Harrington, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade; the Rev. Father E. M. Morgan, Chaplain 2nd Class; the Rev. Father Edward Ryan, Chaplain 3rd Class; Major Francis Lambkin, M.D., with the 13th Hussars; Major Arthur C. Hamilton, 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers).

THE BRAVERY OF THE DUBLIN FUSILIERS.

This is how the correspondent of the London *Daily Mail* describes the pluck and heroism of the Dublin Fusiliers during the attack by the Boers on the armoured train at Estcourt:—“Sergeant E. Hassett, of the Dublin Fusiliers, also behaved with great gallantry. After the accident to the train he took charge of the firing party, and stood up unflinchingly facing the hot fire which the Boers poured in, issuing his orders to his men like a true soldier. His example inspired the Fusiliers with heroic determination, and for some time, firing volley after volley, they kept the enemy at bay. Lieutenant Alexander had an exciting experience. One of the Dublin Fusiliers was shot by a shell in the arm. The shattered limb swung round and hit Lieutenant Alexander on the neck, almost smothering him in blood. The shell at the same moment burst in front of him on a level with his face. He was staggered and blinded for an instant. When he recovered his self-possession he saw a comrade lying dead at his feet, while he himself had escaped unharmed. Private Coyle, of the Dublin Fusiliers, has had his right arm amputated. When I saw him he was smoking and doing well. Private Cavanagh, Dublin Fusiliers, performed splendid work. When the firing line fell back he, time after time, rallied his comrades, who, by firing volleys, prevented the horse-shoe line of the enemy from enveloping the train. It certainly takes a very brave man to sit down and smoke his pipe immediately after his arm had been amputated. This splendid regiment has lost very heavily so far in this campaign. It is impossible to read the list of the killed or missing after the train fight without a sigh of regret. All Irish names—Hallahan, O'Rorke, Kavanagh, Byrne, Lynch, Murphy, Burke, and so on, and presumably all Catholics to a man.

AN ERRATIC BEAST.

Since the stampede outside Ladysmith the mule's character has been considered from various standpoints, and the conclusion

arrived at is this, that he is a most useful animal and very tractable until he makes up his mind to take a holiday, which he does on the shortest possible notice. A newspaper representative asked an old army man why the mules stampeded near Ladysmith.

The officer replied that he was sure he didn't know; anything and nothing would make a mule stampede.

‘I think I know the mule character as well as most men,’ he continued. ‘At least I ought to—I had years of experience of him in Cyprus and in Natal, and he is a perfect beast—in the human sense, I mean.’

The mule is a native of Assyria and Cyprus. In the island whole villages subsist by mule breeding and exporting to places where the British army has need of him. It is a profitable industry, as a good, big, strong mule—they run to 16 hands in height sometimes—costs £50 or £60.

‘When I was in Cyprus,’ said the officer, ‘I had a good deal of the work of getting mules for the '82 Egyptian War; you could get ponies for £10, but mules were worth five or six times that.’

‘And what about his temper?’

‘Well, to begin with, he's the most particular brute about his food. He'll graze, if there's good grazing about; he'll eat the ordinary hay and chopped straw, if it's clean; and he'd sooner die of thirst than drink any but the cleanest water.’

‘As for his stampeding qualities they are unequalled. He'll jog quietly along and then, without the slightest warning, off he'll go down some little bridle track, or up the side of a cliff. Then he shakes his pack off, and there you are with all your luggage lying about the hills. I know it; many's the time I've camped on the road in what I had on, and nothing for supper, when the mule's gone off with my bed and board.’

‘But in justice to the mule it must be said that he is a splendid beast when he condescends to work. He can climb almost anywhere, he can bear tremendous weights, and he can go three or four miles an hour in his queer amble for any length of time.’

‘But take it all round,’ said our representative, ‘he isn't quite the wise, practised beast that Kipling's *Jungle Book* makes him out.’

‘Oh, he's wise enough, but it's the wisdom of chucking his pack and taking a holiday when the chance offers. And he's practised, too, trained to stand fire. The 10th Battery has been at Natal for five or six years and the mules are thoroughly trained to the country and to stand fire. But I suppose in the general bustle and excitement, first this side, then that, the mules took fright and off they went.’

MR. T. W. RUSSELL ON THE TRANSVAAL.

Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., delivered recently a lecture on ‘The Troubles in South Africa,’ in the hall attached to the Presbyterian Church, Adelaide Road, Dublin. In the course of his lecture Mr. Russell said that some people contended the Boers were a good, simple, God-fearing, pastoral people. He did not believe a word of it. The Dutch had little or nothing to do to the civilisation of South Africa. Zulus, Swazis, and Matabele went down before the power of the British arms. The abolition of slavery in South Africa by the British was the root of the whole trouble, and the Boer grievance. The Boers found they could not wallow their bidders under the British flag. The Transvaal, owing to its state of bankruptcy, was annexed by Great Britain in 1877, and remained so until '81. In that year the Boers declared their independence, and Mr. Gladstone after several defeats, patched up a peace with them. Mr. Gladstone, for this action, was said to be either a fool, a coward, or a sage. Gladstone was neither a coward nor a fool, and besides that, he had colleagues in '81, whom they all admired to-day. The real truth was that Mr. Gladstone's action was dictated by feelings of magnanimity, but what was done on magnanimous grounds by England was put down by the Boers as having been done through fear. This induced the Boers to settle down to a policy of hostility to every British interest throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. He now came to what made the war inevitable, the discovery of gold. He did not mean that the war was a war of capitalists. When gold was discovered anywhere a rush was made to that quarter. The influx of a new population was inevitable, and with a new population new problems developed. Coming to the position of the Uitlanders, he believed many of them were not desirable citizens. Really bad characters got a chance of pulling themselves together in South Africa, and representatives of every worthless class went to the Transvaal, but still there were others—skilled tradesmen, intelligent engineers, &c. Dealing with the Jameson Raid, he said it was a rash, stupid, criminal display of force. It did harm. It did not put things forward. It put them back. It tied the hands of England in