

no chance whatever. While listening to their address the words of the old song were brought forcibly to his mind. 'I'm not myself at all.' He could not believe that the sentiments they had spoken were not intended for him for had not the great and loved national poet given expression to a much quoted and favorite sentiment:—

Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as ithers see us.'

They had looked at him through very curious spectacles indeed when they could see in him all the qualities attributed to him by the address. But he would thank them however for their kind feeling towards him and he prayed that God would spare them all to his care for many years and all have lives full of prosperity.

His Lordship then presented the Papal Brief and expressed the great pleasure it gave him to have been the bearer of an authority conferring the high dignity of the Right Rev. Monsignor.

Right Rev. Mgr. Mackay said his feelings almost overcame him. When the announcement was made by his Lordship that this great dignity was to be conferred on him he thought that he was being made the subject of some great joke. He had been trying to find a cause for the choice having fallen on him and when he looked back upon the long years when the diocese of Dunedin was in its infancy, and when he followed its progress, religious fervor marching hand in hand with education until the diocese came to be spoken of as foremost among the many in the promotion spiritual and educational advancement, it was then that the thought of how choice had been made of him for bearing the honor conferred by his Holiness on this far away diocese occurred to him. It was he thought owing to the circumstances that he was senior priest of the diocese that he was made the recipient of this mark of favor from the Holy Father for the priests and people of Otago. He thanked his Lordship for having obtained this honor for the diocese and hoped that their prayers would be offered to God that he might worthily bear the high dignity.

No doubt you are already aware of the dire misfortune that has overtaken the Dominican community here by a fire on the morning of Tuesday, the 31st ult. About 3 a.m. one of the Sisters was disturbed by an unusual crackling sound, and on going to ascertain the cause found the store room in flames. As this building was only removed about three feet from the convent, and as all the buildings are of wood, the imminence of the danger will be easily realised. By the great presence of mind of the Mother Superior there was no panic nor confusion amongst the Sisters. The alarm was given by the ringing of the church bell, and owing to the dense darkness of the night the Sister who rang it had the greatest difficulty in making her way over building material and debris to where the belfry stands. Monsignor Mackay was quickly on the scene and his first care was to carry away the Blessed Sacrament. It was soon found that the storeroom with its contents was doomed. The alarm quickly brought help, and willing hands directed all their efforts to save the main building. On three different occasions the woodwork was on fire, but fortunately the flames were got under. The Sisters have suffered a very great loss, as in the storeroom they had put away all the articles intended for the forthcoming bazaar.

THE BOER WAR.

NOTES AND POINTS OF INTEREST TO CATHOLIC READERS

AN UNDESIRABLE VISITOR.

Mr. Donald Macdonald, the Melbourne *Argus* war correspondent, in his graphic description of the siege of Ladysmith, says:— 'One day we were undecided as to whether we should take the convent or the next building for our noonday lounge, and as the Dutch gunners had been paying the convent much attention lately, decided against it. Half an hour later, as Father Ford—a man whom nature intended for a soldier and his parents made a priest—was reading on the verandah, one eye on the book, the other lifting at intervals to a set telescope and Long Tom. As he glanced up he saw the gun muzzle raised—a tiny black disc above the sand-bags of the redoubt. "Come out, quickly," he shouted to the naval officer writing in the room behind. "It's coming right at us." They ran down the steps to the shelter of the bluestone foundations. The shell tore a hole in the brick wall, burst in the room where the naval officer sat writing 20 seconds before, and splintered things in the usual way. This illustrated the keenness with which that gun was watched, and how accurately we were able to do so, even at 8200 yards.'

BRAVE SISTERS AND NURSES.

Some day, now that Mafeking is relieved after a siege extending over 30 weeks, we shall hear of the great suffering and privations which the inhabitants underwent during that period. The correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, in the course of his description of the place and its people, says:— A party of nuns who lived in the convent, which forms an integral part of the town, had to leave the shelter of the convent walls owing to the persistent manner in which the Boers fired thereupon. Nothing daunted, they took up their quarters elsewhere, and energetically devoted themselves heart and soul to the tending of the sick and wounded. In this they distinguished themselves heroically, and did such brave and unflinching service that the inhabitants of Mafeking, individually and collectively feel a personal sense of gratitude to the brave Sisters. The nurses at the Mafeking Hospital were in no way less indefatigable, and worked like so many heroines at their noble and self-sacrificing task. They had much to do, as the casualties were many and the nurses none too numerous; but, in the true spirit of devotion characteristic of their profession, they made themselves fully equal to the great demand made upon them.

KILLED NEAR LADYSMITH.

Judge Kane, of Dublin, has lost his son, Lieutenant Kane, who was killed near Ladysmith in March.

THOUGHTFUL FOR THE POOR.

The following letter, signed by a number of the men of the 2nd Royal Irish Rifles, appeared in a recent issue of the *Irish Catholic*:—
Dear Sir,—£4 enclosed for Sacred Heart Convent, Leeson street, to buy bread for St. Anthony's poor, in honor of the Infant Jesus, Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Anthony, and Blessed Gerard, asking the Sisters to offer a Novena for our safe return from the war, and to be able to keep the holy resolutions we have taken of loving and serving God for the remainder of our lives.

LEADING CATHOLICS FOR THE FRONT.

The departure of the Duke of Norfolk, the highest Catholic peer in England, as a volunteer for the seat of war recalls (says a writer in the *Westminster Gazette*) the fact that the Earl of Fingall, the highest Catholic peer in the Irish peerage, is on the eve of his departure for the front with the second contingent of the Imperial Yeomanry. Lord Fingall, who is the head of the Plunkett family, is the holder of a peerage which was created in 1403. His residence, Killeen Castle, County Meath, is the oldest inhabited building in Ireland, and King John, when in Ireland in 1210, was the guest of the Plunketts of the day within its walls.

HIS DEAD COMRADE.

A wounded Connaught Ranger related the following to a nurse while lying in Pietermaritzburg hospital. He was wounded in the Colenso battle, and being parched with thirst crawled down to the river. To use his own words:— I bent over the river side and was just lowering my bottle into the river when I started back aghast. What did I see? From the bottom of the river, looking up through the water, his eyes fixed upon me, gleamed up the dead face of my old comrade. We had been boys together, we had joined the regiment together, in the early part of that very day we had fought side by side, and now, after the long day's awful work, I found my comrade once more. Very quiet and peaceful, his face was telling nothing of the terrible death anguish that must have been his. He, with many others, had jumped into the river to swim across, and had got caught in a great lacework of barbed wire in the river bed.'

A CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN'S LETTER.

The Rev. Father Patrick, C.P., who went as chaplain to the earlier contingents from New South Wales for South Africa, has written to friends in Sydney. Here is portion of a letter written at Modder River and dated March 3:—

This is the site of the famous battle. The river hard by is where the Boers made their big stand, and which afterwards served as a graveyard, whilst the few large mounds around us mark the resting place of many a gallant Scotchman and Irishman. I don't know why they are keeping us here, but we may receive an order any moment to go to Bloemfontein, where a big engagement is hourly expected. I go over every day to see the poor prisoners, and I am altogether changed in my opinion of the Boers. There they are, poor fellows, just as they were ordered from their farms—no uniform, no military outfit of any kind, excepting rifle and ammunition. They are a simple, misguided, misdirected lot. I love to have a chat with them, and they not only enjoy it themselves, but also seem pleased with the circumstances in which they find themselves. They are simply tired of the war, but were determined to follow Cronje to death if necessary.

In a letter dated March 21, from Bloemfontein, he says:—As you may see, we are camped at the now famous Bloemfontein, or to speak truly, two miles outside the town, a very pretty little town indeed, which surrendered to Lord Roberts last week. You may have seen we are now attached to his (Lord Roberts's) staff, and have everything ready for bombardment—the naval Maxim guns of enormous proportions, and close upon 40,000 troops; but President Steyn fled the place and the poor people surrendered before a shot was fired, to the great delight of everyone. It would have been a crying shame if the necessity demanded its shelling, for it is a very picturesque town. There are two priests here, a small church, and a fine convent, but very few Catholics, mostly, in fact, English and Irish. The good Sisters hailing from the Emerald Isle made a grand stroke by placing their fine convent at the disposal of Lord Roberts as an hospital, and for position and comfort it is an ideal one. We have had only two engagements so far, but quiet sufficient to give me a horror of war for ever. Our boys behaved under fire like brave men, but the sound of the guns and rifles, and the shrieking of the bursting shells, will for ever ring in my ears. It is edifying to see the piety not only of our own men, but of the various regiments camped near us, some of whom have not seen a priest since they left England. I have a great congregation at Mass and sermon on Sundays—a novel sight surely on the veldt of South Africa. We have had very severe times since we left Modder River. In our forced march here we did not have tents, and so experienced to the full the terror of South African thunderstorms. At Klipps Drift we had to move about all night amid a most fearful storm and downpour of rain. Everybody has been very kind to me, and though the rations at times were very scant, owing to the breakdown and delay of transports, there is not a man who would not share his biscuit and drop of water with Father Patrick.

I said Mass at the Convent on St. Patrick's Day. I slept at the Presbytery and was awakened in the morning by the children singing 'Hail, glorious St. Patrick.' I don't know how long we will be camped here, but it is Lord Roberts's intention to mobilize 80,000 troops here before we make another move. I think we will have only two or three more fights, and they will all surrender. Poor fellows? I hope they do. It's simply suicide for them to hold out. Total surrender and disarming are Lord Roberts's conditions.