

People We Hear About.

It is not generally known that General French served four years in the navy before he entered the army, and was on board the Warrior when the Captain went down.

The French Government has purchased for the Luxemburg Gallery the picture, 'Father and Child,' by Mr. John Lavery, the distinguished Catholic artist.

One of the greatest war correspondents of this era is Sir William H. Russell, who celebrated his eightieth birthday on March 28, and who went through the Crimean, Indian Mutiny, Austro-Prussian, American Civil, and Franco-German Wars for the *Times* newspaper. During the Crimean War he wrote his despatches, frequently under fire. In South Africa, in 1879, Sir William was very nearly drowned near Pretoria, and during the Indian Mutiny in 1856, the mere fact that he fell down senseless from sunstroke, and was thought to be dead, only saved him from the rebels.

When at Cape Town the Rev. Father Timoney, chaplain to the Australian Bushmen's contingent, met Mr. Rudyard Kipling at the Lord Nelson Hotel. The cynosure of all eyes (writes Father Timoney) was Rudyard Kipling himself, fresh from the battlefield with new materials for songs and stories. He has not a commanding or a distinguished presence, but his doggerel verses have placed him, in the estimation of many, far above Lord Roberts. I was introduced to the illustrious man and had a short conversation with him. He seems to be a shrewd business man and evidently enjoys his popularity.

Lieutenant John Charles McKenna, who was the only native Victorian officer in the Mafeking garrison, is 28 years of age, and is of a fine physique, standing 6ft. 4in. in height. He was born in Dunolly, but his parents removed to Castlemaine when he was about two years of age, and have resided there ever since. He was educated in the Castlemaine Grammar School and at St. Francis Xavier's College, Kew. He left for South Africa in September, 1896, and on a volunteer force being formed in Mafeking he was appointed sergeant of D Company, and during the siege on January 11 last was appointed lieutenant. Like his versatile chief, he dabbles in journalism, has done some sketching, and has also written verses.

A charming Connemara story illustrative of Lord and Lady Roberts's amiability. On one occasion (says a correspondent of *"M.A.P."*) we found him talking to a poor woman who was sitting by the side of the road. She was barefooted, and in a bag lying beside her was a bonham, or young pig. We pulled up, and told her ladyship that this poor woman had got very tired carrying the young pig. She had carried it from Lettergeeh. They asked me how far this was, and I said seven or eight miles, and his lordship thought that was a long way for her to have come; however, they got the woman and her pig into the carriage alongside her ladyship, and Lady Roberts began at once to talk to her in Irish, asking her all sorts of questions. When we reached where the woman wanted to be set down, we stopped and let her down, and they gave her some money. Yes, Lord Roberts is the kindest man I ever saw.

The letter 'Z' is very unusual as the initial of a surname. There are nearly 700 members of the House of Commons, but not within living memory has one of their names commenced with a Z. On the other hand (says an Australian Exchange), the Parliament of Victoria has never in its living memory been without a 'Z.' A goldfields constituency started the idea by sending down to Melbourne a member named Zincke. Then East Melbourne elected a Jewish gentleman named Zox, and returned him regularly for twenty years. Sir William Austin Zeal, who now presides over the Legislative Council in Melbourne, is a third case in point.

Many Catholics of middle age (says the *London Tablet*) will remember the visits to Catholic Colleges of Professor Pepper, himself a convert to the Church. Great was the disappointment when he appeared without his ghost; but his lectures, nevertheless, were among the most interesting. The death of the Professor (a title Matthew Arnold fastidiously refused, under all the circumstances, to take, but which Ruskin gaily bore), is now announced. Born at Westminster in 1821, and educated at King's College School, he became in 1810 Chemical Lecturer at the Granger School of Medicine. In 1847 he gave his first Lectures at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, of which he afterwards became Honorary Director. He improved Dirck's rough model, and rendered the exhibition of the ghost, known as 'Pepper's Ghost,' a practical thing. The ghost during the first six months realised £12,000—a decidedly substantial sum. Professor Pepper was an honorary life member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a Fellow of the Chemical Society. While in Australia he was Public Analyst to the town of Brisbane, holding the appointment for many years. He was the writer of several books, the design of which was to popularise science for the beginner.

The death of Mr. James Roderick O'Flanagan, which took place on Lady Day, creates a void among eminent Irishmen and Irish authors. Born at Fermoy in 1814, he claimed descent from an old Celtic race, the O'Flanagans of Tuath-Ratha. Educated at Fermoy, he in his eighteenth year resolved to become an M.D., but before starting in the medical schools he made the 'Grand Tour' of Europe, with this result: the publication of his first book *Impressions at Home and Abroad*, the success of which confirmed the natural bent of his mind in favor of authorship. A favorable change of circumstances enabled him to change his intentions and to proceed to London to read for the Bar. He was called in the Easter Term, 1838. In 1843 he compiled the *Illustrated Guide to the Blackwater*, which attracted considerable attention. While reading for the Bar in London Mr. O'Flanagan became acquainted with the family of Mr. Witham, a well-known lawyer residing in Eaton square, and later, on May 4, 1859, he married Miss Witham. Just previous to this step Mr. O'Flanagan was appointed to a position in the now extinct Court of Insolvency and Bankruptcy at the Four Courts, Dublin, and he was also occupied with literary work. In this position he remained for 20 years, when, retiring on a pension, he returned to London. In 1873 he caused to be erected on the lands of Grange the handsome house in which he lived so happily until his death, at the age of 85. To give a list of Mr. O'Flanagan's many works of fact and fiction would take up too much space, but they include *A History of Dundalk*, *The Lives of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland*, *The Munster Bars*, *The Munster Circuit*, and many interesting novels.

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