

were quite happy. Father Ryan is the name of this fine priest.

Private Percy King, of Warwick, writing from the front, mentions the visit of an indefatigable English priest 'who travels miles and miles to attend to the spiritual wants of Catholics in the troops.'

#### EXPECTED CRISIS NEXT MONTH.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc, lecturing on the war to a crowded audience in the Victoria Hall, Exeter, on March 13, said the Prussian armies crossed the Belgian frontier on the same day and hour as they crossed the French frontier in 1870. It was obviously superstitious, but it was premeditated. Since August the plans of the enemy had been fundamentally changed. At the beginning their plan was to hold up the Russian forces, while on the west the French were rapidly destroyed. They started out to accomplish it with vastly superior forces, and calculated rightly that Russia would not be able to put more than two million men in the field in two and a half months. The conception which was widely spread in this country at the beginning of the war that Russia controlled innumerable hosts which were going to be poured like a flood upon Germany was the conception of men who did not know what they were talking about; but it was true that if the war went on year after year Russia would be first as regards numbers. The whole story of the beginning of the campaign was the failure of Germany to crush the Franco-British resistance. The fact that every other large German strategic plan in the war had failed should harden on-lookers against the belief that they would take Warsaw, and if he were a betting man he would offer two to one that Warsaw would not be taken by the 1st of June. The Russian plan was to avoid being pushed back over the Vistula until they could get equipment and supplies through the Dardanelles, or what were now the ice fields; and in the west the plan of the Allies was to wait for the better weather, which would make an advance possible, and for a great reserve of munitions and men, and eventually wear down the German forces. The Allies' policy of attrition was going on all along the line. In the western theatre there would be an addition of at least one million men on the side of the Allies by the summer, and Russia would very likely have two million more. What had the enemy to put against that? He doubted whether Germany had another million men to train and put into the field unless she weakened herself militarily. The Germans could not run their military machine with much less than two million efficient kept from the army for military work. Mr. Belloc enumerated various causes which would lead towards a crisis in June, when he thought the effect of the blockade would begin to be severely felt. Unless the enemy got a decision in the east and came back and got a decision in the west within the comparatively brief period of ten or twelve weeks, they would have lost the campaign.

#### AN ANGLICAN ON THE CHURCH IN BELGIUM.

Last week in referring to the bitter attack made on the Catholics of Belgium at a meeting of the Clapham and Wandsworth branches of the Women's Protestant Union in the Northcote road Baptist Church, we (*Catholic Times*) said it is no wonder that Protestantism is held in contempt on the Continent. It is pleasant to be able to quote the words of an Anglican in reply to the bigoted critics. In the last issue of the *Church Times* a writer who had had personal experience in Belgium gives his opinion of the work done there by the Catholic clergy. On the whole it is exceedingly favorable. The Belgian priest, he tells his readers, understands the lives and sympathies with the lot of his people as few Anglican clergymen can do, and he considers that, at his best, the Belgian P.P. is perhaps the most edifying specimen of a parish priest that can be found. 'The Belgian priest, in town or country,' affirms the writer in summing up his impressions, 'well deserves to be called the father of his people, and no

class of citizens has come out in a finer light during the war. Nor must it be forgotten that Belgium, though the Government is Catholic, is Liberal in the best sense; for all religious communities, Roman Catholics, Jews, Anglicans, Lutherans, etc., are subsidised by the State in proportion to their membership.' The fact is that there is no nation in the world in which, prior to the war, the condition of the people was at a higher level morally and industrially.

#### BELGIAN STUDENTS MOBILISED.

One of the first results of the Royal Decree which has been signed by the King of the Belgians is (writes O. F. C.) the mobilisation of the ecclesiastical students of the diocese of Bruges. Most of them had fled to England together with their fellow-countrymen of the devastated parts of Flanders. The Rev. A. Legrand, the spiritual director of the Seminary at Bruges, had just succeeded in gathering them together and placing them in a house secured through the good offices of the Bishop of Portsmouth. Now, however, they are all bound to be at the front by the 15th of April. They left Portsmouth on the 8th to spend a few days in Retreat at Holy Rood House, in London, preparatory to their departure on the 12th. This is just one other proof, if any were needed, that Belgium is prepared to give all she can in the present struggle, with which she is personally so little concerned. The Reverend Director is asking for prayers for those young men, whose peaceful preparation for the sanctuary has been thus rudely interrupted.

#### A CONTRAST.

A Protestant chaplain at the front, writing in the *Church Times*, says: 'The almost entire ignorance of the average soldier of the elements of religion, the paucity of confirmed men or regular communicants, is simply appalling. A Roman Catholic soldier knows at once what to do: he asks for a Rosary to help him to say his prayers; he asks you to get him a priest; he wants to receive Communion or make his confession. He knows the Gospel of Christ; he understands about repentance, about grace, about the presence of the unseen army of saints and angels. Our poor Tommy, not from any lack of his own, but from our neglect, is quite unconscious of most of this as a reality. Someone wrote to me the other day these words: "This war should make a different manhood for the Church of the future. Men cannot live by the French churches for nothing. Their eyes must be opened." My friend meant that this great company of "Anglicans"—soldiers, orderlies, doctors, nurses, chaplains, etc.—living in a Catholic country day by day, feeling a need for religion, as they must, in the midst of such a critical experience, will ask themselves: "Does Anglicanism give us what these Catholic Allies of ours find in their religion?" Here we have churches crammed day by day with Roman Catholics doing just the same work as we are doing. They find time to pray, to make their confessions and Communions. Why do not we? Why do we not want these things?'

His Holiness Pope Benedict XV. has appointed the Hon. Thomas Hughes, M.L.C., a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory. Mr. Hughes, who was 52 years of age on April 19, was born in Sydney, and educated at Stonyhurst, England. He is a solicitor by profession. On four occasions he was Lord Mayor of Sydney.

I canna' leave the auld folks now,  
I'd better 'bide a wee,  
Dad's got a cold, and Mum's not well,  
And pipes the ither e'e.  
I'll gang doon to the corner store  
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