

FOR THE "TRUE WITNESS."

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Gleaming with light are the skies to-night,
Bright skies of my native land,
Studded with jewels each one a star,
Placed there by the Maker's hand.

Doing the work He assigned them,
Flashing their pure diamond beams,
Far thro' the depths of the forest,
Over the ice covered streams.

Gleaming o'er mountain and moorland,
Cities, and hamlets that sleep,
Knowing that o'er and around them,
Angels their night watches keep.

Hark! thro' the light of the star shine,
Breaks the soft murmur of bells,
Borne on the wings of the night wind,
Each one the same story tells.

Tells the sweet song that the angels,
Sang at Immanuel's birth,
"Glory to God in the highest,
Peace unto men upon earth."

Beautiful bells of the midnight,
Pouring your music along,
Filling the clear arch of heaven,
With billows of jubilant song.

Earthwards returning ye bring us,
Messages laden with love,
Caught from the whispers of angels,
While soaring with them far above.

Around us above us beside us,
Floats Bourdon King tone of the chime,
Calling with voice rich and tender,
Come, worship at Bethlehem's shrine.

Haste ye, while echoes are ringing,
Your musical tones far and wide,
Haste ye, your summons attending,
Sweet bells of the Christmas tide.

AGNES BEATT.

Montreal, Dec. 24th, 1876.

TOM KEARNEY.

His Visit to the Infernal Regions.

Some two score years ago, or over, on the road to Coal Island, in the county of Tyrone, lived Jack McConnaughey, the blacksmith. I remember him well, and his appearance. To the shoulders he was about middle height, but his exceedingly long, thin, scraggy neck, made him fully two or three inches taller.

Jack was a prudent, careful, and extremely frugal soul, who regarded any kind of waste on his premises as an unpardonable sin. Yet he did not stand very high in the esteem of his neighbors; they failed utterly to award him either merit or respect for his saving virtues; on the contrary, they designated him "a miserable old crog." He had a simple simpering manner which indicated anything but the skilful hand he really was. In the words of Tom Kearney, who was once his journeyman, "Jack was very soft about the mouth till you came to feel his teeth." Tom, however, was somewhat prejudiced in the matter, as the reader most likely will find out.

Jack never married, and there were those who were ill-natured enough to regard the fact as a wise and beneficent stroke of Providence. It was said that he had an old stocking lid away somewhere, and upon it all his affections concentrated and into it went every sovereign, half-crown and shilling his anvil yielded. Even the priest declared he "could not get a rap out of him but the bare dues that he couldn't help." His sister Nancy kept his house, and was said to be the counterpart of Jack himself, but Tom Kearney insisted that had as Jack was, Nancy was ten times worse.

Tom was not a native of the place; he was a Leinster man that tramped in there some years before, and got employment from Jack McConnaughey not knowing anything about him at the time; as he verified afterwards, he "would as soon stay in hell as wud old Nancy."

Tom Kearney was a superior workman, deeply versed in the mysterious secrets of his trade; could make a plow or any other mechanism fashioned in a forge, only give him the pattern. At shoeing horses he had no superior, and many believed he had no equal. At periods ranging from four to six months, Tom would go off on a spree, get gloriously drunk, and keep it up for a week or over. Then came a season of repentance, in which he labored with sickness and headache for several days more. During those special seasons of regret he was invariably the proponent of many wise and moral sayings on the folly of drunkenness, always ending with the most strongly affirmed resolutions and solemn promises to avoid the cursed thing for the time to come. Many farmers and others liked Tom's workmanship so well that if their horses needed shoeing during his aberrations, they would keep them back until he got sober again. He had not been long in McConnaughey's employment when his talent brought business crowding to Jack's forge, and the latter, though he found him profitable took advantage of the stranger, paid him as little wages as possible notwithstanding his superior workmanship.

Barney Muldoon was another blacksmith, living at the cross roads, some two miles off, and a generous good fellow, who used to have a good deal of business to do, but Jack's new journeyman took the shine out of them all. Tom in the meantime did not like his quarters, and was saving up what money he could to get away from the place; this was the reason why, that for six months he never tasted barley juice. He was preparing to leave when on a Sunday he met Barney Muldoon for the first time, and after the usual salutations were over, the latter invited Tom to a social drink, and off they went together. Barney was a genial, warm-hearted fellow, and Tom feeling the influence could not resist. Hour after hour of cosy enjoyment stole over them conversing about their trade and other interesting matters, until it was night before they departed. Barney went home and was at his work next day, but Tom went on a spree, and continued at it till all his money was gone.

The time for jollification was over at last, and the time for repentance came; his head ached fearfully, augmented by conjoint lectures from Jack and Nancy for neglecting his work, "and money so hard to be got." Tom walked out to escape the cross-firing of tantalizing words, and did not return. Jack was soon in the fidgets to know where he went or what had become of him, when sometime during the next week he made the terrible discovery that Tom Kearney was hard at work in Barney Muldoon's forge! This news was very irritating—Barney Muldoon to take away his journeyman! He went there to know how any one dared to it. As he approached the place, however, the thing began to look a little different to his view; he knew it would not be safe to say much to Barney, and so he addressed himself to Tom, who felt little disposed to treat him even civilly. Tom's head was quite recovered now; he was getting better wages, and not at all the meek creature he was when weak, sick and nervous, just after the spree. He ordered McConnaughey to leave, or if not, he was preparing for hostile demonstrations. Being an active, powerful young man, and looking cross at Jack, the latter took the hint and departed at the same time. Feeling his loss acutely, he judged that as soon as it went forth that Tom had left him, his business, now so flourishing, would soon fall back into the old ruts again, and maybe worse.

His anticipations were not incorrect, for Barney soon got all the horse shoeing he could do in consequence. Still Jack did not give up hope of coaxing Tom back again, an accession of which he felt the need, for even now that winter was approaching, he had little or nothing to do. He was never done accusing himself for letting Tom go, and was earnestly wishing for an opportunity of talking with him, away from Barney Muldoon's presence. Thus, with his mind-tormented in this way, the time was come to lay in his year's stock of coals for the forge, according to his custom. He had got a load or two from the Island, and was going for more, when passing by the public house, a mile or so from his own place, on a fine day, somebody called him from the inside. He went over to see who it was, and had scarcely got in when his attention was directed to a man laying helplessly drunk and asleep, who turned out to be no other than his jour, Tom Kearney.

The meeting seemed providential, but how was he going to improve the opportunity, and the fellow so dead drunk? A bright thought occurred to Jack; that he would take Tom along in his cart to the coal pits, and when the latter awoke he might induce him to return and domicile with Nancy again. Full of this promising project, he got more straw into his vehicle, and with the help of some bystanders he succeeded in transferring Tom to it, more like a dead man than a living one. Jack drove on to the pits; though it was a long way, he arrived there at last, and still his charge slept fast as ever. He immediately sought out Bryan Campbell, his first cousin, to whom he communicated all his troubles and desires; how he wished to get Tom back, and the ruse he had practiced in order to get him to return.

Now, Bryan Campbell was the wag of the coal mines, an inveterate practical joker. He was a man of considerable intelligence, and though he indulged in the social bowl occasionally, few ever saw him drunk. He was the very centre of all the fun, amongst the miners, and when he went on a game of sport, all obeyed him as a commander. Though McConnaughey was his near relative, he had little respect for him, knowing his niggardly disposition well.

"What'll ye give me," said Bryan, "if I git this fellow to go back till you?"

Jack was willing to promise him almost anything if he only effected that. Campbell got Tom carefully into the bucket with himself, and both were lowered down the shaft. The sleeper was conveyed with quiet caution into a coal chamber which had little resemblance to the lady's chamber. There he was peacefully divested of his clothing. An old blanket, procured for the occasion, was wrapped round him, and he was tranquilly placed by his conductor, sitting by a great pillar of coal, just as the inebriate was showing some signs of returning animation.

Tom, at length, had gradually slept off his drunken stupor, and opened his eyes; it was all dark around him. He tried hard to recollect himself, where he went to sleep, but his memory was sorely at fault; he could not recall the most distant glimmer. He remembered being at Sam Dick-Vicker's public house, where the big picture of King William crossing the Boyne was up; and how Sam saved him from a set of Orangemen, who were about to pound him for cursing King Billy—but where was he now? He felt sick, his throat was dry and husky, and O! how bitterly he regretted going on that infernal spree, and he doing so well with Barney Muldoon. He soon discovered he was naked, with nothing but an old blanket round him. Where were his clothes, or where did he lose them? He was sensible of a strong odor of brimstone, very ominous; and again the terribly perplexing question smote him—where was he now? He heard the miners picking, but he did not understand it; he had never seen a coal pit in his life, nor had he the remotest notion of what it looked like, and of course the least suspicion of where he was never entered his thoughts.

Poor Tom was thus seriously and sadly ruminating, his usually strong nerves unstrung and his system weakened down, for he had eaten no food for nearly a week—when he saw some strange looking beings approaching, each with a light on his head! They came and ranged silently around him. He could see they were black, and for fear of exposing his nakedness he drew the blanket closer round him. After standing some time in silence, one of these mysterious visitors spoke at last, and he heard in solemn tones: "What is your name?"

"My name," said he, "is Tom Kearney; but tell me, if you please sir, where am I now, or what place is this?"

"Don't you know without asking? Can't you see we're all black? And don't you smell the brimstone?"

"Oh," said Tom, groaning inwardly, "how did I get here, and what's the name of the place?"

"You got here as all like you get. You died drunk, and why need you ask the name of the place?"

"Am I dead?" said Tom, now fairly sobered.

"Of course you're dead."

"And are you the—imps?" he faintly faltered.

"Yes, we're the imps," was the reply, and they all laughed, which sounded dreadfully hellish in Tom's ears.

"What did you work at in the other world?" resumed the talking imp again.

"I was a blacksmith," said Tom.

"Are you a good blacksmith?"

"I used to be able to forge almost any kind of a job."

"Where did you serve your time?"

"In Dublin, on the mail coach road, with McGuire, that used to be called 'The Big Fish,' for a nick-name."

"Can you make chains and bolts?"

"Yes, I can make bolts after a pattern, and I can make chains and close them if I have a good anvil."

"Ye'll have a good anvil, and ye'll be very useful here, for we want a lot of o' chains made, and bolts, too, for there's a great deal o' quality coming here just now. There's Lord Castlereagh, that cut his throat the other day; ye've heard o' him, didn't you?"

"Yes," answered Tom, "but wasn't it in England he did that?"

"O, aye, indeed was it, but he must come to the Irish part o' hell for his punishment. He betrayed and robbed Ireland, you know, and it's Irishmen must keep the hot blast till his skin. He is the traitor that sold the country to Billy Pitt, and it's their own fault if they let the fire go down on him—but there's no danger o' that. We use traitors the worst of all here. The '98 informers are all crammed down very far—Tom Reynolds is undermost."

Kearney was well pleased at the information the imp gave him. He thought it was quite right, and said so. His lucid informant asked him if he was not very dry? "Yes, indeed," said Tom, "but sure you have nothing to drink here?"

"O, aye have we troth, for poor fellows like you," and to Tom's astonishment and delight, he was handed a small tin porringer full of pure poteen. He smelled of it and drank it down gratefully, remarking how good it was, and that he never thought they had such good whiskey down here.

"Hut, man," said the imp, "why wouldn't it be good, when it was down in hell whiskey was first made?"

Kearney felt much better after this kindness, even if it was in hell, and would have stood up but for shame of his nakedness. Though amongst the devils he felt shy of appearing with nothing

but an old blanket round him. The spokesman fied, noticing his inclination told him he must keep sitting, until he was called, and continued to enlighten him on the usage of the ether world.

"You see," he resumed, "we do things down here a good deal different to what ye thought. In the other world the rich have it all their own way, and have mercy on the poor, so we turn the thing right around, when we git them down here, and pay them back in their own coin. All the punishment we give till the poor fellows that come here, is to make them keep the fires up till the rich rascals, for all their persecutions on earth, and it's hardly any punishment at all to the poor to do this work, for most o' them take comfort in paying back old scores to the scoundrels that punished themselves above. That's the way we work down here. Do you see?"

Tom did see and appreciated too; he listened very attentively, though it was a new system of theology to him; he had never heard it before, but concluded it was about right.

"Yes," rejoined the fiend, "it is right, and many of the tyrants would come off a great deal worse, only the people they injured went up to the other place, and it's drunkards and other poor creatures that didn't know much about them, that must attend to them here, but they keep the fire up to them purty well for all that."

The imp walked off to some other place, leaving Kearney in deep thought; he soon returned, however, and accosted his victim:

"Thomas Kearney, who did you work for last?"

"For Barney Muldoon, at the cross, a very decent man."

"And who did you work for before that?"

"For Jack McConnaughey, God forgive me."

A laugh among the imps followed this remark, and there was a movement behind the great pillar that Tom was sitting against; for Jack himself was there; he came down with a few others who wanted to see the fun, though to him it was no fun at all but real business. He could not restrain himself, or leave the management of the affair to Bryan; he was so much interested he must come eaves-dropping. It is an old saying that an eaves-dropper seldom hears anything creditable or pleasing to himself. Let us see if Jack's experience was an exception.

"Well," said the fiend, who was no other than Bryan Campbell, "why did you leave Jack McConnaughey?"

"For very good reason," replied Tom, who, by the way, grew quite familiar since he got the drink, "for the very good reason that he was the meanest man I ever knew."

There was a general laugh at this, and Tom was surprised to hear it echoed in different directions away behind him.

"Thomas Kearney," said the dark spokesman, again, "if you got a chance to get out o' this place wouldn't you take it?"

"Why, to be sure I would."

"Well, now, Thomas, if you git out of this on conditions of going back to Jack McConnaughey, will you go?—but mind, you can't break any bargain you make here."

This was a terrible and serious dilemma, to which Tom gave the most grave consideration. He thought of Jack's meanness—Nancy's hard visage never appeared more repulsive to him. Feeling that the contract must be binding, he had much difficulty in making up his mind, but notwithstanding this, he arrived at the conclusion finally. McConnaughey, from behind the wall of coal, stretched out his long neck and listened breathlessly, thinking he was to have his journeyman back again.

"Well," said the victim, and all were attentive, "from all you tell me about this place, it's not so bad as I thought. I'd like to scorch old Castle-reagh; and anyhow I'd rather stay here than have to live my life with Jack, and above all with old Nancy!"

The wild roar of laughter that followed this declaration startled poor Kearney; it reverberated all around through the dark space, where he could not see any one or anything. The black fiends seemed all merriment, while poor Tom could not understand the cause. Soon the spokesman recovered his equanimity, and he returned to the examination:

"Thomas Kearney, what have you against Jack McConnaughey or his sister Nancy?"

"Well," began Tom, looking at the crowd of imps coming and going with lights on their heads, "I tell you as well as I can: Jack is a man I couldn't bear to work for; if he was paying me a shilling I earned from him, he'd squeeze it so hard atween his finger and thumb that you could read the date of the coin there for hours after—faith, his own neighbors say he'd skin a flea for the hide and fat; and as for old Nancy—she's ten times worse; she'd starve the devil with her thin strabont! Gentlemen," he added, looking hard at the infernals, "I don't mean any offence to you; but I think she counts the grains of oatmeal going into the pot."

During the delivery of this speech the imps were in agonies of laughter, screaming in uproarious glee, after which many of them disappeared.

"And so, Tom Kearney," said the familiar fiend, "you'd rather stay here than with old Nancy McConnaughey?"

"Yes," answered Tom, who began to feel rather sick again, "I'd rather stay here than with old Nancy McConnaughey."

"Well," said the familiar voice, "don't you think you could eat something now?"

"No, I'm too sick; but I'd take another drink of whiskey if you have it."

He got the other drink, and felt but little better when the friendly fiend asked him if he could sleep but no he could not. He was now alone, save the one dark habitant who spoke to him all the time, and who now addressed him in a solemn, friendly manner:

"Tom Kearney, ye're too good a fellow to be kept here, so if you let me bandage your eyes and bind your hands, and do everything as I tell you, I think I can lead you out and set you at liberty."

Tom consented, and with his eyes blindfolded, the other led him to where there was some clothing, and told him to dress himself in the dark. He wondered how the clothes fitted him so well, they felt like his own. His hands were then tied securely behind his back, and his companion led him along, until, by his directions, they were seated together in a large tub, and soon they began to ascend up, until at last Tom found himself in the fresh, cool air. He walked a long way with his conductor holding him by the arm, until they entered a house, where he was seated and told to remain very quiet until somebody would come and set him free, which would surely be in a short time. He complied faithfully with the injunction, and after a while some person entered, asking what was the matter with him. But before he could answer the new-comer unbound his hands, and took off the bandage, when Tom found himself in the presence of a stout, good-natured looking man, who eyed him curiously.

Kearney was no less surprised than gratified at his return to daylight again, though not disposed to be very communicative with the stranger about his escape from the lower regions—his train of ideas was sadly confused, and he had too much to think of for talking, just yet. His liberator accompanied him to the turnpike road leading home. Tom was very thoughtful, when his conductor hailed a passing carman, and asked him to give his companion "a lift as far as Barney Muldoon's at the cross."

"Indeed, Bryan Campbell," said the carman, "I'm only too glad to serve a friend of yours."

Tom got home to Barney's house about night-fall, a sadder and perhaps a wiser man than when he left it. Bryan Campbell conceived quite a regard for him after that time, and always said "Kearney was a man—every inch of him—and never passed the way without calling in."

I forgot to state that Barney Muldoon's daughter, Mary, was the belle of the parish, and in less than a year from that time Tom Kearney led her to the altar, and Bryan Campbell was at the wedding.

These incidents occurred before Father Mathew's time, but Tom took good care ever after not to risk another descent into the lower regions. He became a sober, good husband, and in time the father of a fine family of handsome girls and stout boys.—*Irish National Magazine.*

FATHER BURKE.

GRAND WORDS ON REAL CATHOLICS.

In the latest sermon of Father Burke, delivered in Dublin, we find the following impressive words: "Dearly beloved brethren, there are many who believe in the Church of God, who have been born and baptized in her fold, or who by some extraordinary grace, and it is indeed an extraordinary grace, were called from the ranks of infidelity, darkness, and error into the admirable light of God. They belong to God's Holy Church, but they seem actually ashamed of what should be their proudest boast. If they go out to a dinner party they are ashamed to do this, to make this sign of the cross, this glorious sign that in the day of judgment shall shine upon the forehead of the elect of God, that cross through which alone, the Scripture tells us, the joy and glory of heaven can be obtained. But there are others who are fervent, loud, blatant in their lip professions of Catholicity, who are zealous, furious, in their denunciations of all outside the Church, even of those whom the Church herself absolves. But look at their lives. How do they correspond with their professions? Do they frequent the sacraments of the Church? Do they approach the confessional? Do you ever see them partake of the sacred banquet of the Holy Communion? No, my dearly beloved brethren; oh! no, they are a mockery and a triumph to the heretic and the infidel, they are a stumbling-block to the believers. They are spoken of as the criminal classes, the *debauche*, the drunkard, the fraudulent tradesman, the dishonest servant, are all to be found in these ranks; the careless, the ignorant, vicious Catholics, loud indeed in their profession of Catholicity, but careless of every injunction the Catholic Church imposes. Are they truthful, are they real in their lives, they whom Christ himself describes as who with their lips indeed confess his truth, but who in every action of their lives deny him? My dearly beloved brethren, the very first essential of the true Catholic, of the true man, is reality. Do you believe the Catholic faith? The Church, unlike anything else calling itself a religion on this earth, puts the professors of its doctrines to rude tests. Do you believe in the Church? If you do, you will have to starve yourself on the days of fast which she imposes. You will have to submit to pain and to humiliation. Are you a proud man? Are you an intellectual man? Well, you will have to go to some poor priest, who perhaps does not know half as much as you. You will have to kneel at his feet, you will have to confess to him, you will have to speak to him of things that you would rather die—rather commit suicide—than reveal to any other living being. If you be a true man, writhing in sorrow and humiliation, you will have to reveal the darkest secrets of your soul. You will have to acknowledge to him your sins, your excesses, your baseness, your falsehood, your dishonesty, your illthiness of soul. These are indeed rude tests. Where there is reality there must be rude tests. Contemplate the eternal God born in the stable on Christmas morning, his mother hunted from house to house, driven as a last resort to a stable; the Child God brought forth amidst beasts, and cradled in the straw of their manger, was not this a sufficiently rude test of the truth, the reality of God as he entered the world? Contemplate him as he leaves it, nailed to a cross, a hard, rough bed for a dying man, his head lacerated with thorns, his body torn with scourges, his lips parched with thirst, with wounded body and broken heart, dying for the sins of men. These were indeed rude tests that God's reality endured. He came into the world a man. He took upon himself the heritage of misery. He proved himself true man, and from the moment of his birth to the moment of his death he never shrank from agony or sorrow. Outside the Catholic Church there is no test to which those that call themselves members of the body must submit. The Protestant minister that steps into the pulpit in the trim black robes of his ministry to preach the doctrine of perfection, he is a marvellous man; he has a wife and children of his own; he has the luxuries and comforts that this life affords; he denies himself nothing—who asks him to deny himself? But the Catholic priest must resist his human inclinations and passions—must resist them ay, even to the letting of blood. He must, if necessary, lay bare his own back to the discipline, and cut the flesh and draw the blood that would rebel; but before he come into the pulpit—before he can stand at that altar—he must be like the angels of God in his personal purity. Is not this a rude test? The true Church must impose rude tests, and true men must endure them. The Catholic that will not submit to the Church's guidance—the Catholic that is a *Mo-hammedan* or a *Mormon* in his sensuality—don't tell me that he has any other claim or title to the name of Christian than that baptismal robe of innocence and adoption which he has not merely defiled, but torn into shreds by his offences. *Veritas de terra orta est.* It sprung forth from the virgin earth of the pure womb of Mary, when Jesus Christ, our fellow-man, was born into the world, and none can claim fellowship with Christ except by true conformity with the principles his life and character display—conformity not merely by the words upon our lips, but by the actions of our life, in all the truthfulness and reality that are manifested to us in this adorable mystery of the Incarnation.

EUROPE'S FIGHTERS.

THE FIGHTING STRENGTH OF THE POWERS THAT WILL OR MAY BE INVOLVED IN AN EASTERN WAR.

(Translated from the Cologne Gazette.)

For a long time no year has at its close presented so warlike an aspect as that of 1876. The belligerent attitude which Russia, Turkey, England, and Roumania have already taken, and which, according to the latest advices, Austria also is preparing to take, makes it very questionable whether, in the event of the beginning of hostilities between the two first named powers, the theatre of war can be localized or confined to their territories.

In addition to her already gathered Southern army Russia has taken steps for the mobilization of three divisions of her Caucasian army. Each of the eight infantry divisions of that army consists of sixteen battalions, numbering on a war footing, besides, twenty officers, 1,016 combatants. The strength, therefore of the infantry now being got into readiness for service in Asia Minor consists of forty-eight battalions, comprising 960 officers and 48,688 men, exclusive of non-combatants. From the information so far received, however, about these latest preparations of the Russian Government it does not clearly appear whether to this second army of operation there should be added the Caucasian rifle brigade of four battalions; what force of cavalry, artillery, or engineers have been

allotted to it, and especially what irregular troops have been ordered to join it; so that the total strength of this new Army can by no means be accurately computed.

The southern Russian army consists of 6 corps d'armee, comprising 12 infantry and 6 cavalry divisions, and containing, according to the *Military Gazette*, 216,000 men, with 49,200 horses and 648 guns—whereof only 4 corps d'armee, of 8 infantry and 4 cavalry divisions, with a strength of 144,000 men, 32,800 horses, and 432 guns, are, however, destined for active operations in the event of war. The present strength of the Turkish army is reported to amount to 644,512 men.

From Austria we learn that, to begin with, 3 army corps, each containing 30,000 men are to be got ready, whereof one is to be stationed in Transylvania, another to be sent into Dalmatia, where the third is to be concentrated on the Save. The confirmation of this report has not yet reached us, however.

England has placed one corps d'armee in readiness consisting of 3 infantry divisions and 1 cavalry brigade, subdivided into 21 battalions of infantry, 6 regiments of cavalry, and 15 batteries of field artillery—said to number 36,806 men, with 11,863 horses and 90 guns. Lord Napier is reported to have been chosen commander of this force—on whom, in the event of further warlike preparations, the chief command would probably devolve. A second British corps d'armee is to be formed of troops of the Anglo-Indian army and, so far as has been learned, placed under the command of General Johnson. A third corps could, after a lapse of considerable time, be formed from the 77 infantry battalions, 22 cavalry regiments, and 67 field batteries of the royal army still remaining in the United Kingdom. From information derived from the Anglo-Indian press there is also a probability of a second corps being formed there for active service.

Roumania's military strength, on a war footing, consists of two corps d'armee, each numbering somewhere about thirty-two thousand men, with ninety-six guns. It remains to be seen, however, in this case, how large a proportion of this force would be found ready for the field in an emergency.

The Servian army, preparatory to a renewal of the war, is to be divided into two or, according to other advices, into four corps. The internal affairs of this army are, however, too disorganized to expect any successful result to follow its reappearance in the field.

The Montenegrin forces have, with the exception of small detachments employed in watching the various Turkish garrisons and guarding the border, been dispersed to their homes, while the Greek preparations appear, according to all accounts, not to have passed through the first stages.

Against the only too apparent earnestness with which the preparations for war are being undertaken by the Turks, there appears the tardy action of Russia in organizing for the emergency to which her action otherwise is tending. That the Russian army of the South, with the strength hitherto granted it, of 144,000 men, could not achieve any decided success, needs no particular demonstration; and the same may be said of the forces destined for the Asiatic side of war. Far more decided and promising of a successful result appear the preparations of England, and for this very reason we cannot accept the content reasoning that this power should, under all circumstances, remain neutral. On the whole, it seems that considering the present military position of Russia, there is no necessity for Turkey to submit unconditionally to whatever may be asked of her. Even if the present diplomatic undertaking were to come to naught, Russia would still want the time to carry out such measures as would assure her of success in the conflict she would have under undertake to accomplish her designs.

CHURCHES IN PARIS.

For extent, cost, and magnificence the churches of Paris rival, if they do not excel, the palaces. The Metropolitan Cathedral of Notre Dame stands at the head of the list, and ever must and ever will, for the simple fact that it was built honestly. You can see plainly that it was a work of faith, not a job by contract. Built in the Middle Ages, it was evidently erected by men of genius who had consecrated it, not to money-making, but to the glory of One who can see through artifice, and reward what is done through supernatural motives. The exterior plainly shows, in all its storied simplicity of statue and pinnacle, the grand conceptions of former times as to what ought to be a temple of the Most High; but the interior is overpoweringly grand.

Unfortunately the Cathedral has been "restored," which gives it a very flashy and modern appearance. The modern artist has evidently taken his inspiration from the theatre, so we are treated to acres of gilding and miles of ornamentation in the grandest colors, the effect of which is very suggestive of boxes and the green curtain. The high altar is in the middle of the church (as is, indeed, the custom in France), which has the effect of lessening the size of the building. On the other hand, as pews are unknown, the edifice as a whole, shows to great advantage.

In the sacristy adjoining is shown the rich treasures of the chapter, containing the sacred plate, valued at millions of dollars, every article of solid gold, while the vestments are prodigies of art and taste. During the Commune these articles were concealed by various members of the parish—some of them very poor—and yet not an article was either lost or injured. It was on the altar of this church—a magnificent work of marble and bronze—that the Goddess of Reason was seated during the wild orgies of the First Revolution, and from it Napoleon I. seized his crown in the presence of Pius VII. But as this very sanctuary is full of wonderful recollections, I will simply refer to another church and close.

The most deeply religious parish—formerly the very worst—of Paris is that of St. Sulpice. It is a magnificent building in the Roman-Corinthian style, about four hundred feet long by two hundred feet wide. It counts about sixteen thousand parishioners, and on All Saints' day five thousand communicants surround its eighteen altars. Twenty priests carry on the work of the parish. The music is peculiarly fine, the organ being one of the finest in Europe, and costs four thousand dollars per annum, while the total cost of "running the church," as we would say, is a little over twenty thousand dollars per annum. You can rely upon these figures as authentic, as I have them direct from the rector, and you can, if you please, compare American "prices" with those of Paris, should you incline to the weakness of statistics.—*Cor. of Connecticut Catholic.*

THE ANNUAL IRISHMAN.

The "Annual Irishman" appears on one day in each year amongst us, the best of good fellows. On the other three hundred and sixty-four days of the year you would find him as readily in a small-pox hospital as amongst his countrymen. But on that day "he is all there." When the parade begins to move, you notice him the busiest man of all the thousands present. He wears the biggest shawl-rook, has the most smiles, beams with the most show of patriotic fervour, and if he meets an influential American friend he grasps his hand warmer than any one else, points at the crowd, and inquires of him, "does not that show some influence?"

He is great in election times at caucuses of his party. He proclaims among them that "he has the Irish vote in his pocket" and they advance him accordingly.