

FATHER BURKE.

THE GREAT DOMINICAN IN DUBLIN.

HIS GOODFRIDAY SERMON.

"THE CRUCIFIXION."

On the evening of the 19th ult., the regular Good Friday sermon was preached by the Very Rev. T. N. Burke, O.P., in the Church of St. Saviour, Dominick street, Dublin, before an immense congregation. The eloquent divine spoke as follows:—

"In die illa erit placatus magnus in Israel.—In that day there shall be great grief and lamentation in Israel."

My beloved brethren: we have considered during the past few days the sufferings and the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; we have witnessed His agony in the garden at Gethsemane; we have seen Him tormented and scourged at the pillar. We now take up, on this solemn evening, the thread of our meditation upon the Passion, at that point where Pilate finds our Lord as the soldiers brought him back after having scourged Him. The Roman Governor commanded that our Divine Redeemer should be scourged, and he intended that His punishment should be severe, indeed, for he intended so to mist and disgrace our Lord as to make Him an object of pity even to His enemies; and when the victim was brought back from the place of His punishment, Pilate came down into the pretorium; but he was horrified at the sight that he beheld. Never was human being so disgraced, so lacerated, so torn to pieces, as the Man whom they brought and presented to the Roman Governor. He saw Him one open wound from head to foot; he saw the torn flesh hanging from the very bones; he saw Him all crimson in the redness of His own blood; and the stout heart of the Roman Governor stood for fear and horror when he beheld the Son of God thus lacerated and bleeding before him. On the head of the Saviour had been placed a crown of thorns, those long, hard, subtle, cruel thorns, that to this day are to be found in the hedges round Jerusalem; they took them; they placed them into a crown; they put the keenest and the sharpest of them all turning inwards; they placed this on the bleeding brows of the Lord;—then with a reed they struck that crown firmly and deeply into His sacred head; the very brain within Him throbbled from the agony of this crown of thorns; they embedded it firmly into His sacred brows; they hung around Him a purple garment of derision; and in the lauged and trembling hands, still tied with the cords, they placed a reed for a sceptre. Then they brought Him before Pilate and said—"We have scourged this man." And Pilate, with his very heart trembling for fear within him, at the awful sternness with which his sentence had been executed, took our Lord, led Him forth upon the balcony or tribune of his house, walked out himself with Him, and there before a multitude of the Jewish people, he spoke and said, "Behold the Man!" "Ecco homo!" "Behold Him," he said, "behold to what I have reduced him. See how He is standing here, scarcely able to hold Himself erect—trembling, fainting, bleeding—and I believe dying before you. Behold the Man!" He thought to move in their hearts some emotions of pity or compassion for our Divine Saviour. But, dearly beloved, the moment the Jewish people saw our Lord thus stricken, thus afflicted, instead of feeling the slightest emotion of sympathy or pity for Him, the very sight of His sufferings excited them more, and they cried out—"He has not yet suffered enough. Bring Him forth and crucify Him!"

Pilate, my dearly beloved, finding that he could not save the Redeemer's life—all innocent though he was,—passed sentence of death upon Him. That sentence was, that He was to be crucified on the hill of Calvary, outside Jerusalem. That hill of Calvary was a memorable hill. It was a mountain that rose, and an ancient tradition tells us that, upon the summit of Calvary, our first father, Adam, was buried after his death, and the grave of the first man was opened, and his dead body laid to rest upon the spot whereon the cross of the Saviour the Son of God, was raised; so that the blood that redeemed man fell down to the earth, and mingled with the dust of the first sinner.

Our Lord receives His sentence of death, and they bring the large, heavy cross—two great beams of wood, one crossed against the other, and firmly nailed,—strong enough, large enough to take and uphold in mid-air the form of a full-grown man, a full-grown man dying in all the strength and bloom, and vigor of his manhood;—they bring this cross laboriously along; and when our Divine Saviour, having received the sentence of death, started upon that sad journey to the place of His execution, they laid this cross upon His poor wounded shoulders, and they commanded Him to drag it along through the streets of Jerusalem. It was a burthen that a full-grown, healthy, strong man could scarcely carry along; it was a burthen that the very Gyrenean, Simon, tottered and labored under as he bore it, after our Lord; and they laid this cross—this hard, sharp wood—upon the naked shoulder that was already striped, and gored, and gashed by the scourges. Our Divine Redeemer set out from Pilate's house, and they led him through the streets of Jerusalem, Behold Him—behold Him—as the Evangelist describes Him—fainting from loss of blood, His heart within Him breaking from utter desolation and sorrow,—bleeding almost from every pore, from every wound of His scourged and lacerated flesh,—tossing and struggling along with the faintness of death upon Him, and trailing after Him the heavy weight of the cross. He went along that street that to this day is called the *Via dolorosa*, the street of pain. As he went along all vital force within him seemed to die out. The blood streaming down from His thorn-crowned brow blinded Him. A film as of death came before His eyes. He toiled along painfully; yet at a certain point He stood still. He could go no further; He fainted away, reeled, tottered, fell down upon the hard stones, and the great cross came crashing down upon Him. Insensible and unable to move he remained; the executioners rudely lifted the cross off His shoulders, and then, grasping Him, with blows, and blasphemies, and insults, they raised Him up, and, all but lifeless as He was, they led Him on; but they gave in charge to Simon and Cyrene, the heavy cross, lest He might die in their hands before they had crucified Him. Three times during that awful journey the Son of God fell to the earth unable to proceed; three times His breaking heart gave way, and still He rose, determined to persevere his path and consummate the Father's charge and the Father's work which was given Him to do.

And now, dearly beloved he arrives at the summit of Calvary. He is stripped of His garments, whilst the great cross is laid down upon the ground. He is roughly commanded to lie down upon the cross, and to stretch out His sacred hands and feet, in order that He may be nailed thereto; and the meek and humble Lamb of God, burning with love for man, and anxious only for man's salvation, of His own grand, free, and divine act, laid down upon the cross; stretched out His right hand and His left, hung back His thorn-crowned head, and submitted Himself to "those who crucified Him." They came; they took His hands and stretched them roughly and painfully to the places that were

marked for them on the cross; and when they had strained and drawn up every muscle; then the nail was placed in the centre of the hand, the heavy hammer was applied to it with repeated blows; in through the skin, and muscle, and flesh, penetrated that terrible spike, rending and breaking every thing that came before it, until it was driven into the very head, and its blood-stained point came out on the other side of the cross, where it was rudely clenched,—thus both hands were secured; and His sacred feet, and through the instep of each foot, the nail was driven again, until at length He was securely fastened to the cross with those terrible nails; and then with cords and various appliances the cross is slowly raised up. For a time the people make a circle around, and they see the great cross swaying hither and thither as it rises slowly, impelled by the sinewy hands of men, and raised by ropes, until at length it remains perpendicular in the air; falls into the socket that was made for it in Adam's grave,—remains erect in the air, an awful thing to see,—the two wide-spreading arms of the great cross, and on them raised and hanging out by those three nails, the disgraced, blood-stained, lacerated figure of our Divine Saviour,—the head drooped, and from every torn wound great drops of blood falling to the ground; the hands quivering nervously under the torment of the nails which held them, whilst the whole body hung out from the cross; the sacred heart strained and almost breaking for the agony which He suffered; every member and fibre of His sacred body distorted and strained to its utmost;—a fearful sight, a terrible vision,—enough to move even a heart of stone. And it did, my brethren. The very Roman soldiers that crucified Him,—rugged, fierce, barbarous men as they were,—the moment the cross was raised up, and that they looked at Him once,—turned aside those eyes that never before glanced at the sight of blood; they leaned upon their spears and shields; they began to think "What have we done;" and dashed from their eyes the tears that came too late to tell Him, that they began to believe that truly He was the Son of God.

Now He is on the cross; now He is lifted up; and I ask you to consider all the mysteries that surrounded Him, all the grandeur that involved Him, all the majesty that was in Him; for never did our Divine Lord appear—no, not even upon the summit of Tabor—in the hour of His glorious Transfiguration—so grand, so awful, so terrible in His majesty, as when He hung naked and bleeding, with breaking heart and dying frame, upon the ribbet of execution. Every class is around Him. He is the Son of God, and He is dying for man. He is the Almighty and Eternal God who made all things; and He is now dying for the redemption of the love of man. He is the all-pure and all-holy God, infinitely holy,—infinite sanctity and purity itself;—and now all the sins of all men are upon Him, and the anger of Heaven is upon Him, and the curse of the Eternal Father is upon Him; for it is written, "Accursed is He that hangeth upon the wood." Yes the curse of God is upon Him,—not in Himself, for He is still all holy,—but in His character as the victim and the sin-offering for the sins of men. The rage of hell is let loose against Him; all that is evil of earth is around Him; every class of persons is represented, there, and he dying Lord, casts a wide and comprehensive glance on all. Over all—raised up over the heads of all—He deals upon the cross, calmly, majestically, grandly, with every class of men upon this earth, and with His Eternal Father in Heaven.

Three hours passed away, three long hours of agony, three hours that saw Him growing fainter and weaker as every minute passed; and during these three hours the Son of God spoke. First of all he spoke to that surging crowd that were around Him—to those who knew him not, to those who in their ignorance crucified Him; "For," said St. Paul, "had they known Him, they never would have crucified the Lord of Glory." What had He to say to them, my brethren? He could offer them nothing more than His mercy and His prayers, while they were yet driving the nails into his hands and feet,—while the wild hubbub and the murmur of the crowd around Him was at its very height,—while maledictions filled the air with blasphemies,—one voice was heard amid them all, and it came from the Man who was nailed to the cross, and that voice was, "Father in Heaven, forgive them for they know not what they are doing! Forgive them, O Father! If they knew Me, Thy Child, O Almighty God, they never would treat Me thus!" And He finds for them an excuse in their ignorance; and He puts up a prayer to the Eternal Father to have mercy upon them. Blind, foolish, infidel, ignorant men,—pagans who had never heard of God,—they came up to the hill of Calvary with hearts as hard as adamant; they came up with a strange rage of hell, unconscious to themselves, in their bosoms; they could not account to themselves why they took so much pleasure in torturing this poor victim more than any other. While they are venting their rage upon Him, His prayer goes forth; and the hardest heart amongst them is softened—first touched with pity, then shaken with remorse, then enlightened by faith, until the very Roman soldiers who crucified Him and nailed him to the cross were the very first to kneel before Him when He was dying, and to cry out, "This man is truly the Son of God!"

Behold how He dealt with His utter enemies—with those who did Him to death! I grant you, for the Pharisees, for the Scribes, for the doctors of the law, for those who knew Him only too well, and who crucified Him because they knew him so well; for those who were learned and familiar with His law; for those who were able to point out to the Magi from the East the place of His nativity; for those who prophesied in their rage against Him, saying, "One man must die for the people;" for them there was no pardon, for he who sins against the Holy Ghost; and that sin is not forgiven in this world nor in the next;—but for those who sinned in their ignorance, the prayer of the Lord dying upon the cross went up, and it saved them.

There was another class of men represented in that awful scene, and the dying Saviour upon the cross must legislate for them too. Who were they? They were the penitent sinners, those who have deeply sinned but who are deeply sorry for their sins; those, my dearly beloved, whom we resemble so much,—we, who are daily stumbling, falling into sin again, betrayed by a thousand passions and temptations, yet in the midst of all our misery trying every day of our lives to get back to God if we can. The penitent sinner is represented upon Calvary, for whilst the Saviour is hanging dying upon the cross, and beneath Him are the voices of insult from the outrageous multitude that surround Him, there were two thieves crucified, one at His right hand, one at His left. One of these joined in the choir of blasphemy, and began to insult our Lord; the other, hanging upon his cross, and dying, looked upon the face of the Saviour; and, through the veil of blood, through the ignominy and shame that was upon Him, he saw the light of God. Divine faith came upon him—his heart was illumined, "Lord," said he to him—"Lord, wilt Thou remember me when Thou goest into Thy kingdom?" The Saviour turned His dying head and said to him, "This very day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." This very day—mercy flung abroad, mercy going forth from the fountain of mercy—the bleeding heart of Jesus Christ—mercy, without condition, mercy without delay! It was not to a patriarch of old—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David—no, they had to long and wait for many hundreds of years for the coming of their Paradise; but to the poor, wretched, misguided criminal who never prayed before in his life, and who now prays at the last moment of his life, the mercy of God is flung out

"This day," He said, "thou shalt be with Me in My kingdom of Heaven."

There remained another class of men around that cross; and they were the friends of Jesus Christ. No longer the multitude in their ignorance crucifying Him; no longer the penitent sinner, though tardy in his repentance, crying out for mercy at the last moment. Oh! no; but there, amongst that great crowd, there were two who represented the friends and lovers of Jesus Christ. There was John the Evangelist, the true friend, the faithful companion, the man who was never ashamed of his Divine Master, the man who never strayed away for an instant, or withdrew from the side of our Lord—the man who was quite prepared to share in all the shame and all the ignominy that might fall upon his Friend, because he loved Him. He was there, standing at the foot of the cross, boldly acknowledging himself to be the disciple, the friend, and the lover of Him who was crucified, and manfully accepting whatever treatment the enemies of his God might inflict upon him—John, the true friend (for it is in tribulation that the true friend is found;—it is when shame and disgrace are the consequences of love, then, my brethren, it is that our real love for our friend comes out; and John was tested by this, and he was found true, and there he stood at the foot of the cross; and beside him stood the figure of a woman;—that woman was the Virgin Mother of the dying Saviour who hung upon the cross before her. Mary, the mother of sorrows; Mary, the most heartbroken of mothers, the most aggrieved of creatures;—Mary who heard every word of outrage that was uttered against her adorable Son; and it smote her heart, for well she knew the depths of the blasphemy against God.—Mary, whose spirit suffered every stripe and every torment that was inflicted upon His most sacred flesh;—Mary, compared with whose grief all other sorrow of mother, of sister, of child, of lover, sinks away and disappears into nothing;—Mary stood there at the foot of the cross for three hours, and looked upon Him. She heard the heavy blows of the hammer falling upon the nails; she counted every wound upon His lacerated flesh; she saw His head drooping in its weakness; she would have given her very heart's blood to be able to wipe away the sweat and blood that was upon His brow, to raise His languid head, and to refresh His parched lips for a moment. No, she must stand there, and she also must drain to the dregs her cup of sorrow, the greatest that was ever offered to human creature. She stands there, opposite to John. Picture it to yourself. I will not go into her deeper sufferings. I will not, my brethren, go into the awful sufferings which she felt, because she was the greatest and holiest of God's creatures. I will only ask you to consider the mother—the mother that bore him—the mother, the fruit of whose immaculate womb He was,—the mother who loved Him and Him alone,—the mother who never knew other love than that one absorbing love for her child, and who now sees her son—her only one her only hope, her only joy, her only love—raised up, bleeding, and suffering, and dying upon the cross amid the indignities of men. But still Mary and John there represented the element of holiness in human nature, and the friends of the Lord. For them, also the dying Saviour had His word. It was not a word of prayer; it was not necessary; for all that prayer could obtain John and Mary had already received;—it was not a word of pardon, or of promise; there was no necessity of pardon where there was no sin; but, while the tim of death was coming rapidly over his eyes, He spoke from the cross, and spoke to Mary first, and He said to her "O mother, a woman behold thy Son in John." Then turning to John He said, "And thou, my friend, behold thy mother." He gave the Blessed Virgin Mary, His mother, to St. John, that she might be to him all that she was to Jesus, her true child; and He commanded John to take His own place and to receive Mary for His mother. The moment these words fell from His dying lips the disciple who loved Him, the friend who stood by Him, felt in the midst of his sorrow a great joy: he turned to the Virgin, opened his arms and clasped her to her as her son; and when these two embraced, forth from the very brows of the Lord came the blood of Jesus Christ, sealing and sanctifying the great compact that was made in that hour—for in that hour John represented every Christian man that ever should live; John was the representative man of our race. Taking Mary, he took her in the name of us all,—acknowledging her to be his mother; and Mary, folding John to her embrace, adopted us all in him, and became the spiritual, the mystical, but the true mother in the order of grace of all those who are ever to be saved.

Having thus provided for His enemies, for His penitents, for His beloved and His friends, what remained for our Lord? There remained but to speak one word about Himself. He must not be a hidden mystery upon the cross. He vouchsafed with His dying lips to speak one word, and only one word, concerning Himself, that He might reveal to us in that word in what sentiments and what feeling He is dying. That word was "sio." After a long pause, when the voices of the multitude were hushed, when softer feelings of pity and repentance were creeping over their hearts; when the Roman soldiers had ceased their gambling for the clothes that they divided between them; when a silence, as if of the grave, came over all, and every eye was fixed upon the face of the dying Saviour, after a long pause they heard Him speak, and the one word He said was, "I thirst!" "I thirst!" It is true that they offered Him in that hour vinegar and gall;—one of them, taking a sponge, dipped it in the vinegar and gall, and putting the sponge upon a reed he thrust it into the mouth of the Saviour. Our Lord turned aside His head; He would not refresh Himself. They did not understand Him; but we understand Him in that word, "I thirst." He opened up before us the whole mystery of His sacred heart in dying. "I thirst as a man dying of thirst; I am longing for the refreshing waters." What were those waters,—what was the longing of that heart? Oh, it was this, dearly beloved, that as the hours stole slowly by upon the cross, and He saw the end approaching, and His death came nearer and nearer to Him, knowing that it was by that death that all men were to be redeemed,—knowing that it was that death that was to take away the Father's anger, open the gates of Heaven, close the portals of hell, and save all mankind,—He forgot Himself and His present suffering, threw out His soul before its time, threw out His very heart, and cried out, "The moment is coming; I thirst, I am longing for the consummation." It was the great word of the dying Lord; it was the cry from the sacred heart of Jesus Christ. It was not the vinegar and gall that embittered, even though it might refresh His dying lips; it was not for this He cried out when He said "I thirst;" but He saw before Him the great army of His elect, all the race of men whom He loved. He saw He could only save them by His death, and that death was approaching; it was to Him like the bride coming to her bridegroom; it was to Him like Rachel rising up before the enamored eyes of Jacob; it filled His whole heart; He sprang towards it; and that is the meaning of this word, "I thirst." Yes, He was thirsting for your souls and mine—He was thirsting for your love and mine. Those souls could never belong to Him; that love He never could get except by dying; and He died joyfully in order that He might make our souls love His own.

And now there remained for Him but to speak to His Eternal Father; and to the Father He spoke three times. The three words that the dying Saviour flung up to Heaven were first, the words, "Father, into manus tuas commendo spiritum meum!" "Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Fainting and dying as He was upon the cross,—bereft, for the time, of all the sustaining power of His Divinity,—willing to be left there abandoned,—having already given up all His friends,—having already given away His own loving mother,—seemingly to say to St. John and to the Virgin, "Be all and all to one another, but leave Me here, all alone and desolate, to die!"—still He never lost His confidence in His Father's protection and His Father's love. "The eyes that found no more consolation upon earth sought it in Heaven; and His first prayer is His gift to the Eternal Father of His own imperishable and grand soul: Into Thy hands, O God, My Father I commend my spirit." Oh, how grand was the gift that Jesus Christ gave His Father in those words! He is about to spend His life in order to promote that Father's glory to appease that Father's justice to create for that Father, in the order of grace generation and countless generations of faithful children and true sons. All this he may do by his own excessive sufferings, and the shedding of His blood, and the breaking of His heart. Therefore, when He is doing all this for man, he turns to His father and seems to say "What can I do for Thee? Into Thy hands I give my soul,—this human soul of Mine that is about to leave Me,—this human spirit of Mine that has ever been most obedient and faithful to Thee; Father, I claim that Thou open Thy bosom, and receive it now. In Thy hands I place it; into Thy hands I commend this spirit of Mine!" There was nothing to come between Him and His Father. All the sins of mankind were upon Him, but they were not his own. His soul was His own. "My soul is always in my hands," says the Psalmist; and that soul, so pure, so holy, He offered to His Eternal Father; and it was the grandest, and the sublimest, and the most Godlike offering that God ever received from this earth. Great glory came to the Eternal Father when His dying Son, upon the Cross, lifting up His eyes, said, "My soul belongs to Thee, and into Thy hands I give it, O God!" Yet, dearly beloved, the Father seemed as if about to refuse the gift. A mystery of desolation! After another pause, while there is silence upon the mountain, the dying Man speaks again. The thorn-crowned head that was drooping was raised, and the dying eyes went up towards Heaven, and there was a mist of uncertainty and of apparent doubt and sorrow upon them. He looked up to the high heavens, and he saw no ray of light and comfort there. He looked into the depths of His own heart, and he saw there the infinite anguish of His sufferings for the sins of man. He looked upon His own Sacred body, and he saw Himself covered with wounds from head to foot. He looked out upon those around Him and he saw the vast multitudes of those who blasphemed. He looked out into the future ages, and he saw that for the vast majority of men all His sufferings and His death would be all endured in vain. Flung then in spirit, flying in mind and thought from this desolate picture around Him, He lifted up His eyes to Heaven; and, strange! the Father's face was no longer seen, the Father's hands no longer waved in benediction over Him, the Father's countenance was hidden; a black cloud of the anger of God hung over the Cross; and once more from the lips of the dying Man is heard a cry,—this time a loud cry,—"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!" It was God that spoke, the Eternal Son of God who spoke; it was God speaking to God; it was God, as it were, rent and sundered from God by the sins of man;—it was the Son of God pleading as a victim! "Have pity, Father, have pity! All have abandoned Me; do not Thou forsake Me!" And the voice from Heaven was—"Thou art accused, for Thou hast upon the wood."

Once again He spoke, and this just before His death; the last few moments that our Divine Saviour spent upon the Cross were a review of His whole life. He saw, with the comprehensive glance of God, all the prophecies of the old law, all the sacrifices that pre-figured His coming, all the ceremonial that indicated what manner of death His should be. He saw all the precepts that He himself had made and given to His people; and looking into Himself He saw that every prophecy had been fulfilled by Him, that every sacrifice had been accomplished by Him, that every precept had already found its grandest fulfilment in His life, and that there was not a single iota of His Father's will that He had not already fully accomplished. He saw that the great work of redemption was now approaching to its grand consummation; He saw there was nothing left to be done, nothing left to be suffered; and then, gathering up all the strength of His dying heart just before He died, He spoke the words, "Consummatum est!" They rang out clear over the heads of the multitude; they startled those who heard them; men knew not their meaning. The dying Man cried out, "All is finished—all is accomplished." Whilst these words were still ringing in their ears, the head crowned with thorns bowed down, and the soul of Jesus Christ went forth; the soul of the Lord went forth, and left a lifeless body upon the Cross. The soul of the Lord went forth. A great cry went up from earth to heaven; and that cry was, "Man is redeemed! Open, O ye golden gates! fly open, O ye gates of heaven! Man is redeemed, God is vindicated, and the work of redemption is accomplished!" What wonder that the hills of Jerusalem re-echoed the cry, and earthquakes shook the earth. The mountains rocked upon their basis; the cedars of Lebanon were tossed wildly to and fro, as if a thunder-storm were sweeping over them; the graves were opened, and the dead arose; and the cry went forth to the ends of the earth—"consummatum est," all is finished,—all is accomplished and man is redeemed!

But Jesus Christ died upon the Cross—dead from a broken heart; dead, with greater agony than ever suffering man endured or ever shall endure again; dead under every aggravating circumstance of shame and torture; dead, after having for three hours wrestled and struggled with all the devils of hell and conquered them—with all the miseries of death; dead, and Mary looks upon the Cross of her Divine Son! But you and I are redeemed; and nothing remains for us but to kneel down before the body of our Divine Lord and Saviour, and Longinus, the centurion, after he thrust his lance right through the heart of the Lord—this Roman officer, withdrawing his lance, flung himself down to the earth and cried out, "Oh, truly Thou art the Son of God!" Nothing remains for us but to kneel down, and in all light of faith to cry out, "O, dead Man upon the Cross, Thou art truly the Son of God—our Lord, our Saviour, our Redeemer, our love, and our all;" and to give Him thanks for the life which He purchased for us by His death—the life of divine grace, the life that alone can remain when the present life passes away like the morning cloud, the life to which all our hopes for eternity are attached—the life of purity, of innocence, of integrity here; the life, if you will, sanctified by a few sacrifices and sufferings; but the life that is to live forever in the kingdom where the risen glories of Jesus Christ are the adoration and the joy of all the angels and saints of God for all eternity.

RUSSIA.

WHAT THE RUSSIAN SOLDIERS ARE LIKE. With all its evils, war produces good in spreading rapidly a true knowledge of distant peoples. The following sketch of the return of some Russian soldiers from the war is given by a correspondent at Odessa, on April 8th:—"Some reached here yesterday evening; others this morning." The former consisted of the Emperor's escort—a few hundred foot guards and two batteries of field of artillery. This escort was specially formed at the com-

mencement of the war of one non-commissioned officer and six privates from every cavalry regiment of the Guard, and of one non-commissioned officer and sixteen privates from every infantry regiment of the Guard. The officers consisted of one from every cavalry division of the Guard, and of one from every brigade of foot, fusilier, and artillery of the Guard. Of course they were all picked men. The Cuirassiers are veritable giants, being equally as tall as our Life or Horse Guards. Many are taller. One of those present to-day was over seven feet, and must have caused immense joy to certain King of Prussia could he have stepped out of his grave to our of him in his body-guard. Since the body was formed it had three successive commanders. One was placed *hors de combat* at the passage of the Danube, and the second was killed in October before Gorny-Dabnik. Until the arrival of the Emperor in Bulgaria it took part in some of the bloodiest encounters of the war, and was the first troop to cross the Balkans with General Gourka. To-day those men, or what remains of them, consisting of Cuirassiers, Dragoons, Hussars, Lancers, Foot and Horse Grenadiers—but all on foot—infantry and artillery marched on to the Exchange Place shortly after ten o'clock. They were preceded by the military commander of this town and district, General Semak, his staff, and a band of music, and were received by the town authorities and the clergy. As soon as all had taken up their appointed positions a thanksgiving service for their safe return was performed at a portable altar by the Archbishop of Odessa, assisted by the Bishop of Kleron, the Greek Archimandrite of Odessa, a numerous priesthood, the Cathedral choir, and military music. After addressing a few well chosen remarks to them, the Archbishop passed down their ranks and sprinkled them with holy water. The religious ceremony over General Semaka proposed health to the Governor, or Czar. Then the Deputy Mayor—his chief being absent—said how heartily glad he and his fellow-citizens were at being the very first to welcome the heroic fellow countrymen back to Russian soil. "The commander of the escort returned thanks. As soon as the cheering had subsided, the officers and their men were invited to the tables, and did so. It was remarked that none of the privates ate or drank anything without first taking off their caps, and that they remained uncovered the whole time they were so engaged. The Grenadiers had with them a little Turkish boy nearly four years old, whom they had rescued with a brother, scarcely older, from amid the ruins of a village which Bashli-Buzooks had pillaged and then set on fire. The authorities have allowed their protectors to adopt them. Hence the presence of this little son of the regiment at the ceremony to-day, where he was much kissed by the Russian mothers. The little fellow's brother is with another detachment stationed at San Stefano for the present."

Towards midday these troops were marched back to their respective barracks, in order to make room for a second, and if possible, even a more interesting body of men. These formed the remains of the Podolsky regiment—named after the Governor of Podolia—one of the first regiments to cross the Danube, and which, having its complement of men renewed three times, has now only about 1,600 instead of 3,000 names upon its roll, after fighting for six months against Turks and the weather in the ever memorable Pass at Shipka. Many of its companies are reduced to as low as 25 men; while one company is actually stated to have only two of those who originally entered Bulgaria. It was a touching sight to see those brave, patient, hardy, browned, simple warriors, in their worn boots, and patched and sooty clothes. But there were no ragged buttons wanting. It was to be seen at a glance that all had done what they could to furnish themselves up for the day, had knocked every speck of dust out of their threadbare uniforms, and braced themselves up to look as soldierly as possible. Yet it is said that numbers had no shirts to their backs, and no socks to their feet; that many had next their skins nothing but the well-known long, gray, rough-looking, but warm, easy, comfortable, and serviceable coat worn by the Russian Army. It seems after crossing the Danube, they somehow got rid of their knapsacks, and have been all through the campaign ever since without them.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

THE IRISH LATTY ON THE SUBJECT—A GREAT MEETING HELD IN DUBLIN.

The Catholics of Ireland are evidently resolved that their educational interests shall not suffer for want of agitation. The fact that the latty as well as the clergy are urgent for Catholic rights in education was demonstrated by the aggregate meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, on the 26 ult., when an immense audience, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, expressed the sentiments of the Catholics of Ireland on the subject. Except for the fact that words of approbation were received from Pope Leo and Cardinal Cullen, and that the Primate of Ireland was called to the second chair, it may be considered as strictly a lay-meeting. As the Lord Mayor remarked, the Catholics of Ireland seek no exceptional privileges, no unjust advantages, they ask simply equality in educational opportunities, as they have gained equality in religious status. In a letter read by Mgr. Woodlock, President of the Catholic University of Ireland, Cardinal Cullen said that the amount of infidelity caused by bad schools at the present day is appalling and a case was mentioned of a young officer, with an Italian name, who studied at an infidel university in Belgium, and who having arrived in Ireland to assist the Fenians, and being made prisoner and confined in Kilmainham professed himself an atheist and laughed at everything in the way of religion.

A resolution was moved by the Rt. Hon. Wm. Coogan, M. P., and seconded by P. J. Smyth, M. P., declaring that education equality can be attained only by the concurrent endowment or disendowment of educational institutions. The latter gentleman showed as it was wholly a domestic question it should be settled according to the will of the people of Ireland, no Imperial interests being concerned. A second resolution declared that as all other denominations in Ireland enjoy the advantages of universities which fully meet their educational wants, and are not at variance with their religious opinions, the Catholics of Ireland have an undoubted right to a Catholic university endowed with every advantage and privilege given to other universities. The Earl of Granard, M. P., and the O'Connor Don, M. P., supported a resolution, calling on the intermediate education, promised in her speech at the opening of the season, and to recognize the long-deferred claims of Irish Catholics in this branch of the education question. "The O'Connor Don stated that he had given notice of his resolution to oppose the Queen's College votes, and the Hon. Judge Little moved that it was the imperative duty of Irish members to give the most rigorous opposition to any future appropriation of the public revenues to the support of the Queen's Colleges, until there is some support given to the Catholic University. In conclusion, the claims of Catholic teachers and parochial schools were urged, and a deputation was appointed to present the resolutions to the Prime Minister. The meeting may be regarded as one of the most significant and influential ever held by the latty of Ireland of late years, and its noble and comprehensive presentation of Catholic claims in education, though hitherto not immediately successful, may, by the intelligent and consolidated Catholic opinion revealed, eventually lead to it