

IRISH AT THE FRONT.

FINE TRIBUTE BY MR. REDMOND.

"CORPS D'ELITE" OF THE ARMY.

In a preface for Mr. Michael Mac-Donagh's "The Irish at the Front," Mr. John E. Redmond, M.P., says—"It is these soldiers of ours, with their astonishing courage and their beautiful faith, with their natural military genius, with their tenderness as well as strength, carrying with them their green flags and their Irish war pipes, advancing to the charge, their fearless officers at their head, and followed by their beloved chaplains, as great-hearted as themselves, bringing with them a quality all their own to the sordid modern battlefield, exhibiting the character of the Irishman at its noblest and greatest—it is these soldiers of ours to whose keeping the cause of Ireland has passed to day.

"It was never in worthier, holier, keeping than that of these boys offering up their supreme sacrifice of life with a smile on their lips, because it was given for Ireland. May God bless them! And may Ireland, cherishing them in her bosom, know how to prove her love and pride, and send their brothers leaping to keep full their battle-torn ranks, and to keep high and glad their heroic hearts!"

"CREAM OF THE ARMY."

To show how the war has brought into view again the military qualities of the Irish race, he quotes an English General at the Dardanelles as saying that "the Irish soldiers are the cream of the army"; while on the Western front an Irish regiment is looked upon as a corps d'elite. Indeed, it is a maxim with British Generals, as it was in Sir Ralph Abercrombie's day, always to try and have some Irish troops to be on hand for work about which no risks of failure could be taken, and for which an inspiring lead is essential.

"It is important for Ireland, and I am sure it is also important for the British Empire, and perhaps for America as well," Mr. Redmond says, "to appreciate the part taken by the Irish troops in this war."

The war, which in a night changed so many things, offered to Ireland a new international place, and her brave sons, not hesitating, acting upon a sure and noble instinct, have leaped forward to occupy it for her."

He then describes what the Irish people have won from England in regard to the land, religious equality, educational freedom, local self-government, and, lastly, the Home Rule Act. Ireland had said, "Trust me with this, and I will wipe out the past and be loyal to the Empire," and the answer—somewhat long-delayed, no doubt, but still it came—was the King's signature to the Government of Ireland Act. Thus, when the war arrived, Ireland had at once a charter of rights and liberties of her own to defend and, like Botha's South Africa, her plighted word to make good.

UNITY OF PRINCIPLES.

"The war," says Mr. Redmond, "by a most fortunate conjunction united in a common cause the defence of England against a mighty danger, and the defence of principles for which Ireland, to be true to herself, must ever be ready to raise her voice or draw her sword. Besides her honour and her interest—always the last thing to move her but now happily involved in the same cause—human freedom, justice, pity, and the cry of the small nationality crushed under the despot's heel, appealed to her.

"These things she has followed throughout her history mostly up to now to her bitter loss, but not to the loss of her soul; in that is her distinction now. It is for honour, justice, freedom, pity she will stand in that new place of influence she is winning in the world's councils. There, acting with and through her sister democracies, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Great Britain—in all of which, as in the great Republic of the West, her children are a potent leaven—her spirit will help to bend the British Empire to a mission of new significance for humanity. That is the heritage of her tradition."

Mr. Redmond again draws attention to the scanty recognition given to the gallantry of the Irish troops in Gallipoli, and says—"We Irish are determined that henceforth the doings of our armies in the field shall not be in vain in any sense. The British public knows a little of the glorious history of Savla now, but does it realise the part played by the Irish in almost every sphere of the war?"

MORE IRISH "FRESHIES."

In a reference to the terrific open fighting at Savla by Gen. Mahon's Division, Mr. Redmond quotes Capt. Thornhill, a representative of the Australian and New Zealand troops, as saying, "The Empire can do with a heap more 'freshies' of the Irish brand," and he closes his preface with an appeal for recruits which, the "British Weekly" says, will move the heart of every Irishman the world over.

"Never until now," he says, "have we as a people set a national army in the field. How do their brothers at home regard these brothers in the battle line, who at the call of danger and national opportunity, by passing into the soldier's panoply, have lifted the name of Irishmen to a new plane in the world's eyes, and opened to their country's cause a new outlook? To themselves the same opportunity of ennoblement comes. The ranks of their brothers in the field are thinning under the wastage of war. Will they keep them filled?"

To this he gives a confident answer in the affirmative.

LIQUOR TRADE PRO GERMAN.

A public meeting in Belfast, under the auspices of the Irish Temperance League, adopted a resolution, moved by Rev. J. Gailey:—

Calling the Government's attention to the fact that since the declaration of war "the liquor traffic has shown itself to be a more deadly and unscrupulous enemy to the Commonwealth than had ever been realised before," and stating that every proposal by members of the Government, and every effort to restrict its ravages has been fought against by the traffic and its friends in the most determined manner, although warned that the existence of the nation is at stake.

It seemed to him, said Mr. Gailey, that the liquor traffic is pro-German and anti-British. A trade making such a demand on transit facilities and squandering so much of their financial resources was an enemy in the circumstances. A further resolution called on the Government to prohibit immediately the manufacture and sale of all intoxicating drinks during the war and for at least six months after.

GERMANS' AERIAL OFFENSIVE.

Referring to the German report of an aerial attack on an English camp between Poperinghe and Dixmude, the "Pall Mall Gazette" says it had been represented that the Germans' efforts were confined to the protection of their own lines, and that should her airmen attack we had apparatus quite adequate for dealing with them. "The affair of Poperinghe," it adds, "should afford an interesting test of those assurances."

An official report from the War Office last night says that Sir Douglas Haig reports that on the occasion in question a hostile aeroplane dropped four bombs near Poperinghe Station but that no damage was done.