

SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR

GENERAL.

Mrs Farrell, Coatbridge, Lanarkshire, has been informed that her son, Corporal J. Farrell, of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, has been doubly honored, having received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous bravery and the Cross of the Legion of Honor for having saved a French officer.

News has reached Johnstone of the death of Private John McGinley, Royal Scots Fusiliers, who has been killed in action. His brother, Private Joseph McGinley, of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, is at present home wounded. Sergeant McGhee, of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, has also been killed at the front, leaving a wife and family; and still another Johnstone soldier, Private John McCluskey, of the Black Watch, was killed in action at the Marne. Needless to say all these were members of the Irish Catholic community of Johnstone.

THE LOSSES AT SEA.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* publishes some instructive figures regarding the respective losses in men of England and Germany. It says that one aspect of Germany's naval losses has been quite overlooked: the serious decrease in personnel which they have entailed. Taking the official figures of the complements of the 33 units of the German Navy which have been sunk during the war and deducting those known to have been saved, at least 11,000 officers and men have lost their lives. As the total effective strength of the personnel of the German Navy before the war broke out was less than 80,000, the death-roll already amounts to about one-seventh of the whole.

THE GURKHAS' SURPRISE.

An artillery officer writes: The other night I went to the headquarters of the Gurkhas and asked for someone to hold my horse. One of the Gurkha guard was wakened up to do it. He did not know what his job was to be, but he came out prepared for anything, with his kukri in his hand and his eyes gleaming. He was quite disappointed when he found he had to put his armory away and only hold a horse. They were very funny coming over in the boat, I believe. When they had been on the sea for two whole days without seeing land they became very perturbed. 'Without doubt the captain of the ship has lost his way,' they said, but they counselled together and decided at last that all was well. Someone asked them how the captain knew where to go. They led him to the stern of the vessel and pointed to the long wake of water boiling behind them, and with a smile as broad as the greatness of the discovery. 'Without doubt he follows the path.' Two Sikhs, finding themselves tired of sitting still, wandered forth the other evening and returned later to the commanding officer. 'Sahib,' they said, 'we found a man with a rifle: here is the rifle.'

IRISH RECRUITING.

At the present time, when so many misstatements are being circulated in certain circles about Irish recruiting (says the *Melbourne Tribune*), the following letter, received by Mr P. Tracey, North Fitzroy, from his father, Color-sergeant P. Tracey, 6th Battalion, Connaught Rangers, Fermoy, County Cork, will be of interest. It may be mentioned that Color-sergeant Tracey came to Victoria 28 years ago to take a position on the military instructional staff, on which he served for 18 years as sergeant-major. Last June he took a trip to the Old Land, and on the outbreak of the war he volunteered for service. His offer was accepted, with the right to retain his Imperial rank. He has since been employed on the instructional staff at Fermoy barracks. This is what the sergeant-major has to say

in regard to Irish recruiting:—'The 6th Battalion Connaught Rangers is complete. They are going up to Dublin in a few days. Then we start on the 7th Battalion for the same regiment. We have now completed three battalions for the Connaughts in Fermoy alone, each battalion consisting of 1500 officers and men. We had a mission here for the troops, and in all my long life I never saw anything more beautiful. Our colonel and officers at the head of the regiment approached Holy Communion in a body at the close of the mission. It was a sight that made a fellow's heart swell out to witness it. The priest here has obtained a commission in the regiment, and will go to the front with the boys.'

A TRIBUTE TO IRISH BRAVERY.

His Excellency the Governor-General, on rising to address the audience at the St. Patrick's Night concert in Melbourne, was accorded an ovation. After thanking his Grace the Archbishop for his kind words, he said he was glad to have the opportunity of expressing his and Lady Helen's delight and pleasure at being amongst that great Irish gathering on St. Patrick's Night. Lady Helen had the advantage of being Irish. Her father was said to be by origin a Scotsman, but was greatly improved by his many years' residence in Ireland. He had not the advantage of such culture. But he could well imagine how he had improved Scotland by bringing Lady Helen there. She, despite the attractions of Scotland, would say, as did the Irish emigrant in the song they had just heard, 'I shall not forget old Ireland were it fifty times as fair.' Even in Scotland, where there was once an Irish colony, they still wore green coats brought from Ireland. They could join with them in reverencing the name and memory of St. Patrick, who, with the Irish missionaries, carried the light of the Gospel to Scotland long before it came to England. There was nothing so famed as the old chapels built by the Irish missionaries who Christianised Scotland. He had noticed the great progress which had been made in Ireland recently in regard to agriculture, in material well-being, in art, of which there had been an extraordinary revival, in her public policy, and in the better understanding which existed between the sister islands, which had undoubtedly been accelerated by the war. In this the Irish regiments had fought bravely in the trenches, defending the cause of Belgium and the public right of the whole world. These Irish regiments had shown themselves second to none in kindness, cheerfulness, and courage, and in their determination to overthrow that power which has sought to crush the whole civilised world. Hence on this St. Patrick's Day celebration they could say with one voice, as perhaps they never could before: 'God save Ireland!' and 'God save the King!'

SUPPLIES FOR THE ARMY.

'Eye Witness' present with General Headquarters, in a despatch, deals with the important work of supplies. The term 'supply,' he points out, does not apply only to the feeding of an army. The furnishing of food for man and beast is the duty of the Army Service Corps, furnishing of drugs and appliances necessary for sick and wounded is carried out by the Royal Army Medical Corps, assisted by various voluntary organisations; while the provision of stores for disabled animals falls to the Army Veterinary Department. Broadly speaking, the Ordnance Department supplies the army with all the clothing equipment, arms, ammunition, tools, appliances, machinery, and expendable material that can be required, from guns weighing many tons to tin tacks. In one month there were issued to the troops—

450 miles of telephone wire,
570 telephones,
534,000 sandbags,
10,000lbs of dubbing for boots,
38,000 bars of soap,