

Science Siftings

By 'VOLT.'

Wireless From Paris to Warsaw.

The wireless station of the Eiffel Tower may be utilised to communicate with Russia from Paris, *via* British stations to the Mediterranean, instead of by way of German stations. But the Eiffel Tower, however, could easily get its messages to Petrograd direct, for it is the most powerful station on the Continent. The terrific 'sparking' from its antennæ, nearly 1000ft above the ground, is so distinct that those conversant with the Morse code can read its time and weather reports in the streets of Paris without any instruments. But there is no powerful wireless station in Russia, and the round-about route will be necessary. The British Government is building a station more than 500ft above sea-level in a remote part of Oxfordshire, which will have a dozen masts, each as high as St. Paul's Cathedral. This station will be able, it is anticipated, to get into direct communication with Egypt in the daytime, and possibly with India at night, when the ether is always a better carrier.

Modern Shell Fire.

The naval correspondent of the *Standard*, writing about the recent victory won by Sir David Beatty, says that some time ago Sir Percy Scott gave a description of modern gunfire which will convey some idea of what took place when, tearing through the water, the British men-of-war were pounding at the enemy—dots on the far horizon. This officer was referring to the 12in gun. The home for this projectile is the enemy. The art of gunnery is to get it to that home; to arrive there we point the gun at the moment of firing at a certain spot. That spot is not the spot that you want to hit: the gun must be pointed high, so as to counteract the effect of gravity. The wear of the gun, the temperature of the air, the density of the air, the strength and direction of the wind, must all be taken into consideration when settling where you are to point the gun. The admiral then illustrated the course which the shell takes, saying that in firing at a range of fifteen miles, which is possible, the shot would go to an altitude of 22,500 feet, which is 7500 feet over the summit of Mont Blanc. One can realise what a variety of atmospheres it will pass through and how impossible it is for anyone on earth to divine what will be the direction and the force of the winds it will meet with in its ascent and descent. When a mass of iron, the size of a man's body, has to pass even five miles through the air, one may imagine what a difference wind behind it, or in front of it, or right, or left of it, will make in its final destination.

Rubber Armour-Plate!

If the present war has proved anything it has proved the inadequacy of the protection afforded by armour-plate covering the under-water vital parts of a ship. The armour does not extend sufficiently far below the water-line to assure complete protection when the vessel is rolling, and in this respect a suggestion put forward by a writer in *Popular Science Siftings* might be worth serious consideration. Describing an experiment made in 1860 on the recoiling strength of rubber, he says that a piece of rubber two inches thick and a foot square was placed under a steam hammer and a six-inch round shot was placed on it. The hammer fell with tremendous force and broke the shot to pieces, the rubber remaining elastic and unimpaired. Results from great explosive force on rubber flooring and buffers have shown that beyond fusing by heat the rubber remained uninjured, so apparently rubber would make a ship more shot-proof than armour-plate.

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ST. COLUMBA CLUB, GREYMOUTH

(From our own correspondent.)

At the eleventh annual meeting of the St. Columba Club, Greymouth, there was a large attendance. The balance sheet, which was received and adopted, showed the club to be in a sound position financially.

The secretary's report was, in part, as follows:—Financially, the club has had a very fair year. The subscriptions collected for the first half year exceeded the amount for any previous half year, but unfortunately they dropped off towards the end of the season. We were honored during the year with a visit from the late Bishop Grimes. The club, together with the other Catholic associations, held a social evening in the rooms at which his Lordship was the recipient of an address from each society. His Lordship subsequently delivered a splendid address on the life of 'Daniel O'Connell.' There were twenty new members elected during the year. We have now 92 active members on the roll. Messrs. M. Keating, B. Rasmussen, J. Cain, and F. Hargreaves represented the club at the annual tournament and conference of Catholic clubs, which was held at Auckland. The tournament shield, previously held by this club, was won by St. Benedict's Club, Auckland, our team being defeated by the narrow margin of two points in the aggregate scores. Messrs. M. Keating and B. Rasmussen acted as delegates at the conference. The club maintained a very high standard in the debates, defeating Trinity in both A and B grades. A billiard tournament was held and was won by Mr. W. Minahan. The 1913 and 1914 oratorical competitions were held. Mr. Keating was the winner of the former. There were eight competitors. Mr. J. K. Campbell acted as judge, and paid a flattering tribute to the competitors for the standard attained. Mr. B. Rasmussen was the winner of the latter. There were seven competitors. Mr. A. A. Adams acted as judge. He also expressed his appreciation of the standard attained by the competitors. In the annual competitions success again followed our efforts, as both senior and junior teams won the much-coveted cups. The senior cup now becomes the property of the club, having been won three years in succession. The junior club hold two cups. Mr. A. A. Adams kindly donated a prize to the club competitor gaining the highest aggregate points in four specified items. Mr. H. F. Doogan proved the winner. The club has been unfortunate in losing the valuable services of Mr. K. S. Dillon, who has gone to reside at Hokitika. An appropriate presentation was made to him by the members of the competition team, and also to Mrs. Dillon by the members of the club. The four quarterly Communions and the annual breakfast were held, and were well attended. The usual series of socials were held, and became very popular as the year progressed. Twenty-two meetings were held, and were all fairly well attended. There are several members serving with the colors at the front.

The report was adopted.

Two new members were elected, and Mr. K. S. Dillon was elected a life member.

The election of officers for the ensuing year was then proceeded with, and after extremely close voting, ties being quite a common occurrence, the following were elected:—President, Mr. H. F. Doogan; hon. vice-presidents, Rev. Brothers Alfred and Arthur; spiritual director, Rev. Father Lacroix; secretary, Mr. M. McGilligan; vice-secretary, Mr. H. Millard; vice-presidents—Messrs. P. J. Smythe, C. Rasmussen, and F. Hargreaves; treasurer, Mr. M. Keating; librarian, Mr. Renai; committee, Messrs. W. Martin and W. B. Gilbert; auditors, Messrs. W. B. Gilbert and M. Renai; sub-editor, Mr. H. Millard; delegates to competitions society—Messrs. H. F. Doogan, W. B. Gilbert, and M. Keating.

The spirit in which the business of the meeting was conducted, and the enthusiasm shown by members, augurs well for the future success of the club.

'Oh, would some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as others see us!'

IN COLD WEATHER

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