

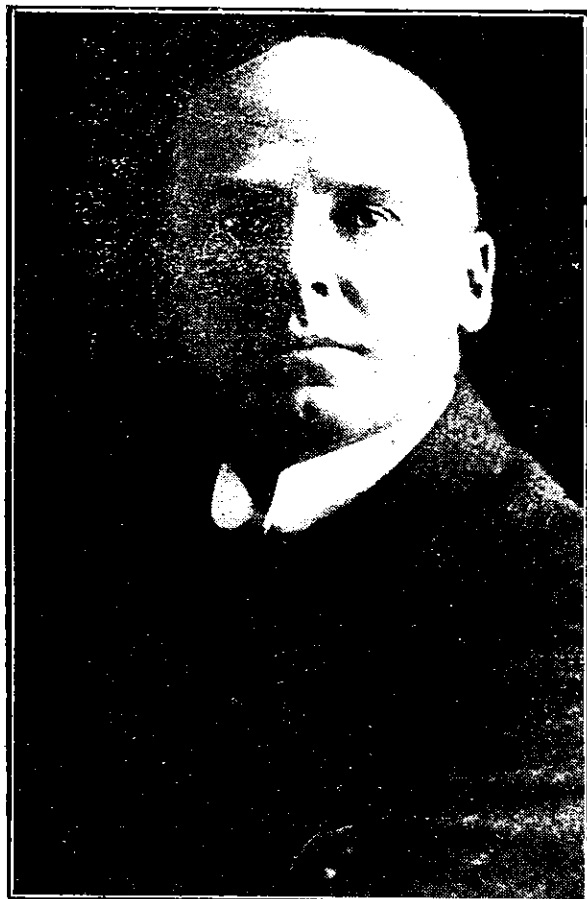
SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR

GENERAL.

According to the *Matin* (Paris), the battle front held by the French is 543 miles long, while the British front is 31, and the Belgian 17. This, better than anything else, affords a comprehensive idea of the respective numerical strength of the Allies in the west, and the tremendous task imposed upon France.

MAJOR E. J. O'NEILL, D.S.O.

Major Eugene Joseph O'Neill, who has been awarded the Distinguished Service Order for gallantry and devotion to duty at the Dardanelles, is a son of the late Sergeant O'Neill, of Dunedin, and brother of Rev. Fathers P. J. O'Neill (Riversdale), and D. O'Neill



MAJOR E. J. O'NEILL, D.S.O.

(Invercargill). He was born in Dunedin in 1875, and received his primary education at the local Christian Brothers' School, where he was dux. He graduated M.B. and Ch.B., at the University of Otago. During 1899-1900 he was house surgeon at the Dunedin Hospital, and in 1902 he went to South Africa as surgeon-captain with the Sixth New Zealand Contingent, and was mentioned in despatches for gallant conduct in attending to wounded under fire. At the close of the war he went Home to continue his studies in the London Hospital, and in August, 1903, after holding several important medical appointments and obtaining his diplomas as M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., London, F.R.C.S., Edin.—he returned to his native city. He joined the medical staff of the First New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and proceeded with it to Egypt, and from there to the Dardanelles. Those who are personally acquainted with Major O'Neill will not be in the least surprised to hear of his winning distinction for gallantry. He is a born fighter, absolutely without fear; and valuable as is the medical and surgical service which he is rendering, it is just a question whether his energy, determination, and resourcefulness would not find

greater scope and an even more congenial sphere in the fighting line itself. In whatever capacity he serves, Major O'Neill can be relied upon to bring credit to himself and to his city.

The following particulars of Major O'Neill's service are taken from the Army List:—South African war, 1901-2. Operations in the Transvaal, March to July, 1901, and October, 1901, to March, 1902. Operations in the Orange River Colony—July, 1901, and August to October, 1901. Operations in Cape Colony—July and August, 1901. Mentioned in despatches, *London Gazette*, August 20, 1901. Queen's medal with five clasps. Major O'Neill has the added honor of having been recommended for the D.S.O. for his gallantry during the Boer war.

A LETTER FROM EGYPT.

The following letter (writes our Auckland correspondent) was read by the Rev. Father Cahill at the meeting last week of the confraternity of the Holy Family. The writer is Corporal P. Ashton Warner, of the Howitzer Battery, and the letter, which was written at Zeitoun, Cairo, on March 9, was addressed to the Rev. Dr. Ormond:—'Just a few lines from a member of the Holy Family Confraternity of Auckland. I am writing these because I think it my duty towards my brother members, and am enclosing two post cards, which show the picture of the sycamore tree and the church, which is built on the exact spot where it is said the Holy Family rested. I daresay you have seen these pictures before, but I would like the other members to see them. I entered the church and offered a prayer for all the members of the confraternity, and, as this is the night of the meeting, my mind carries me back to those beautiful meetings which I always enjoyed, and will never forget. We have Mass every Sunday morning at the magnificent church at Heliopolis. Rev. Father Richards generally officiates. I hope you will excuse me writing with a pencil, as I think myself lucky to have even that, as we are camped right in the desert, seven miles from Cairo, and this is all the paper I can get. I am glad to say that all the boys are keeping well, and are as happy as can be expected. Will you kindly ask the members of the Holy Family Confraternity to say a prayer or two for us. I can assure you you are never forgotten by us.'

A TRIBUTE TO CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

The Rev. Richard Hall, a Wesleyan minister, who had acted as chaplain to the Expeditionary Forces since the beginning of the war, was for ten weeks associated with Father Bradley, S.I. 'I never met a more unselfish man than Father Bradley,' said Mr. Hall, in a public address at Derry: 'I remember one night we were sleeping by a river, and I thought I felt a cold coming upon me. Father Bradley wanted me to take his blankets. Of course I would not consent to that, but when I wakened up the next morning I found Father Bradley had taken his own blankets and placed them on me. Another name I would like to mention is that of Father Strickland. I saw how unselfishly he performed his work and when he heard that I was coming to England he made a journey of twenty-five miles for the purpose of bidding me good-bye. These two men, when they met a member of the Wesleyan Church and thought he had need of the ministrations of a chaplain, went out of their way to let me know.'

CONFIDENCE IN GENERAL JOFFRE.

In a remarkable article, the well-known patriot, deputy, writer, and Academician, M. Maurice Barres, expresses a fact that dominates the mental attitude of the French people with regard to the war; their absolute confidence in the talent and conscience of General Joffre. 'Joffre the Silent,' as he is often called, has gained their confidence, not by high-flown phrases or theatrical demonstrations (indeed the reticence of his

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