

ver and made to appear unimportant. It is known that General Mackensen sacrificed life as recklessly as he fired shells, and the retaking of denuded Przemyśl was scarcely worth the sacrifice. Some idea of the German and Austrian losses may be imagined when it is understood that on a front of forty miles, between 120,000 and 150,000 Germans and Austrians were put out of action. Possibly the losses in the whole attack amounted to half a million, and if the remnants of the regiments who fought in Galicia are to be transferred to the West, as has been stated, such shattered and weary men would require rest and time for recuperation before they could hope to put up a fight against the British, Irish, French, and Belgian troops that are awaiting the threatened attack of the enemy with quiet confidence and the knowledge of their own strength and organisation. Meanwhile the call on the people of these countries who are not facing the enemy is that they must pay freely and make financial provision of the most liberal kind for the men in the trenches. In a word they are being asked to put their savings at the disposal of the Government at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and new and increased taxes may be ~~referred~~ as certain in the autumn.

We have published from time to time remarkable tributes paid by non-Catholics to French, English, and Irish chaplains at the front. Our contemporary, the "Stratford Express," now publishes the following interesting letter sent to it by Driver Frederick J. Collinson, who is engaged on ambulance work in France:—"As you granted me my wish by inserting my last letter in the 'Stratford Express,' I trust that this letter may be of some interest to you. My sole idea in writing this is to try and impress people at home how faithful the Roman Catholic priests are to their duty. Although I have been brought up as a strict Protestant, I must plainly express that I have never seen or heard of such heroism as these abbess show. They practically fight among themselves to be able to go into the first line of trenches, and when the wounded are put in our ambulance and are beyond aid the priests will suffer any inconvenience to be able to pray by their side while we are tearing along on our errand of mercy. They come for a few days' rest from the trenches, and, whenever they meet me, always a cheerful and brave phrase comes from their lips. Most of them are in soldier's clothes, and by the manly way they work one would never think that they held such a high rank in private life. I have never seen one of them show any signs of weariness. When I have a puncture or engine trouble, they are always the first to have their hands black. My opinion of them is more than I can express. While writing this there are two of them washing a bloody ambulance down, with coats off and buckets in hand. One of them, being an old man, is puffing and blowing, yet he is singing a song which I cannot understand. While all this is going on there is the boom, boom, boom of the heavy artillery, the ping of the rifle, and three men are manning a mitrailleuse on a Taube which is hovering over the lines. Yet these brave men work day by day without a flinch, or, when they are hurt, without a cry or a curse. I trust that this letter will not bore you, but my opinion of the Roman Catholic priest will always be of the highest, although my religion will never change from Protestant."

THE creation of the office of Minister of Munitions in the Coalition Government is justified by an extraordinary set of circumstances. It is not easy to understand the lethargy which eclipsed the vital essentials in the life of a nation, such as England, and which now convulses in a supreme effort to meet the present situation—and that too one that cannot be spoken of as unforeseen or unthought of. The position of the War Office in regard to shells is difficult to appreciate. We had in Ireland a number of factories where powder and shot were manufactured, but the policy at Whitehall did not encourage them. Not merely that, but when the manufacture of high explosives was established successfully in Arklow by the late Mr. Chamberlain, he complained much of the hostility of the Home Office. Recently, in the House of Commons, some questions were put to the Under Secretary for War, Mr. Tennant, concerning the cast-iron shells used by the Germans against trenches. Mr. Tennant replied that he was not aware that the most destructive shells used by the Germans were of cast-iron. Further, he went on to say that there is no lack of production of shell bodies, and that it is the production of other components that entirely governs the output.

THIS statement does not elucidate matters, nor does it make the attitude of the War Office towards the question of the manufacture of shells more satisfactory. The Attorney General (Sir Edward Carson) at the Lusitania Inquiry handed in the ship's manifest, which set out that she carried certain cases of ammunition and "some empty shells." The question naturally arises why, if Mr. Tennant were correctly informed, a giant ship like the Lusitania was engaged in importing shell bodies. What was the necessity for such importation? These shell cases could be manufactured in Ireland with a reasonable organisation of the country's resources. We have got the iron, the copper, and the lead. We could make the nitric acid too. The only thing we lack is cotton. As regards premises and machinery, there are several places in Ireland suitable for the manufacture of war material, places where powder and shot were formerly made. There are many who can recollect when ammunition was manufactured at the Powder Mills, Ballincollig (to which attention was previously directed in this journal). There is abundant evidence that the making of war material is one of the past industries of Ireland, and it is to be hoped that the golden opportunity to revive it will be seized, and that the efforts of the commercial and trade bodies of Cork, Dublin, and Belfast will be rewarded in re-awakening the hum of industry in many a mill now idle. The War Office will, we hope, take Irish manufacturers into their confidence and tell them what is wanted. Obscurity on such a subject is fatal to success.

A wise step is taken in appointing a Departmental Committee, over which Lord Milner is to preside, to consider the steps necessary to increase food production in England, assuming that the war should continue beyond the harvest of 1916. Farmers perhaps do not want much stimulation to do their best in these days. A full incentive is provided by the prices that they are realising at market. Farming was never more prosperous than at this moment. Yet there is more land that can be developed if the men to work it can be obtained. The committee will serve an excellent purpose if it enables more food to be produced, since a greater supply is the best guarantee against the high prices which have ruled lately.

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