

SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR

GENERAL.

Fugitives from Poland report that German officers have said to them: 'Poland is going to be surrounded by a triple line of trenches. The Russians will not be able to drive us out, for if we find ourselves in need of men we shall arm the whole male population of Poland and force them to fight against the Russians.'

Lance-corporal Roden, 12th Royal Scots, whose home is at Forth street, West Calder, and who is a member of Father McDonna's congregation, has received the D.C.M. for conspicuous bravery in the field in France on the memorable 25th September. He rescued a comrade under heavy shell and rifle fire.

Dr. Herbert Bury, Anglican Bishop of Central and Northern Europe, in an interview which appears in *Great Thoughts*, said: 'There is no larger-hearted land, or people, in all Europe than the Belgian kingdom. So far is Belgium removed from bigotry, intolerance, and jealousy in religious matters, that the State helps freely any denomination whose clergy need it, if only they are doing really good and righteous work.'

The funeral of Captain Lord Petre, of the Coldstream Guards, who died lately in France from wounds received in battle, took place on October 9 from his residence, Thorndon Hall, Brentwood. On the same day Requiem Mass was offered at Westminster Cathedral. The Petre title is one of the oldest in England, the late Lord Petre being the sixteenth baron of his line. The thirteenth baron was a Catholic priest and probably the only Catholic ecclesiastic who has occupied a seat in the House of Lords since the Reformation. Cardinal Bourne presided at the Requiem at Brentwood. A Requiem Mass was also celebrated in Westminster Cathedral.

A Kirkcaldy Catholic Irishman, Motor Ambulance Driver McGrory, has been awarded the D.C.M. The story of how it was won will rank among the highest acts of heroism in the war. In July last, while conveying a load of wounded from the battlefield at Gallipoli, a shell burst in front of the motor, severely wounding and throwing him from the car. Despite his injuries he crawled on to the vehicle and succeeded in stopping it, thus saving many valuable lives. In one of his letters home he writes that when he was receiving the chaplain officer's congratulations, the latter remarked, 'Catholics are always so cool under fire.' Driver McGrory replied it was his faith that helped the Catholic.

IN THE TRENCHES FOR SAFETY.

A story illustrating the confidence reposed in the honor of the British soldier is told by the Ven. T. T. Churton, Archdeacon of Hastings. A convent in one of the Belgian towns near the firing line was threatened with an invasion of the Germans, and the Rev. Mother, knowing what had already happened in similar cases, did not know how to put her nuns and pupils in safety. At last one of the nuns said to her, 'Why not send us all into the British trenches? We shall be safe there.' This was done. When the Rev. Mother was asked if she was not afraid of what might happen to her flock she answered, 'The men were English.'

PRIEST PUNISHED.

The Rev. Dr. Karl Vecera, a Catholic priest and a teacher of religion at the German Grammar School at Nicholsburg, has been convicted of *lèse majesté* and sentenced to the severe penalty of four months' imprisonment. In addition he has been deprived of his diploma as doctor of divinity and of his office as teacher. It appears that Dr. Vecera, who is a Bohemian, in preaching to the assembled Grammar School, in which there was a large number of Bohemian scholars, used several expressions with regard to the Kaiser which were regarded as 'lacking in the respect due to the Monarch.' From the tendency of the sermon, as far as

it has been made public, it seems that the preacher said that the Kaiser's action in connection with the origin of the war was unwise and uncalled for.

THE LATE LORD NINIAN CRICHTON-STUART.

At a Solemn Requiem Mass at Falkland Palace for the repose of the soul of Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart, a brief panegyric was delivered by Rev. Father Joyce, chaplain, in the course of which he said that the death of Lord Ninian came as a shock and a terrible blow to Falkland and the surrounding district. In their grief they had one consolation—they knew he died in a just and noble cause. He gave his life on the battlefield for King and country. When he was leaving England about a year ago with his regiment, Lord Ninian wrote to a friend: 'I may lose my life, but my honor never.' His life had gone, but his honor remained unsullied. A day or two before he was killed he came upon a little village church near by where he was stationed, and the sight of the church brought his thoughts to God. He was told there would be Mass at half-past 6 o'clock in the morning, and there, in a dismantled little village church, Lord Ninian was found praying. A French officer, who was a priest, asked Lord Ninian if he would serve the Mass. This was willingly agreed to. Lord Ninian made his confession and received Holy Communion.

GERMAN AUDACITY.

Apparently there is no limit to the audacity of the Germans, of which Paris is having painful experience. Many Teutons were tenants of stylish apartments before the war. These Germans either rejoined the armies of the Kaiser or were expelled; but, nevertheless, they continue to pay their rent in Paris through the medium of a Swiss bank, thus affording an indication of their intention to return and install themselves in their old quarters when the war is over. The point is raised that the cashing of the cheques by the landlords is tantamount to trading with the enemy. Yet another daring example of German enterprise is recorded. French doctors have received circulars from a Stuttgart firm which manufactures artificial arms and legs, and they were actually offered commission on the sales which they facilitate of these articles to replace the limbs shattered by the Kaiser's bombs.

BRAVE CHILDREN.

Have you heard of the little bakers of Exoudun, a small village of Deux Sèvres (writes the Paris correspondent of the *Catholic Herald of India*). They are two children, Madeleine Damian, a girl of 14, and her brother, a boy of 10. Before the war their father supplied the population of the village and neighborhood with bread. Left alone when he was mobilised the brave children set themselves courageously to work to fill his place. Despite the hard work involved for such small laborers in getting the great oven going and preparing the dough these brave French infants rose every morning at 4 a.m. and succeeded in daily supplying the 400 kilos of bread to their father's customers. The president of the Department made their brave and successful efforts known to President Poincaré, who sent them two pendants and a letter apiece. The inhabitants of the village and environs assembled for the presentation by the Mayor of these souvenirs. Some disappointment was felt that M. Poincaré could not sign the letters himself, but the commune determined that the future of the children, if their brave father does not return, shall be well provided. But think of the two little ones overcoming all obstacles to fill a man's place.

GERMAN IMPOSITIONS ON BELGIUM.

The German authorities, in spite of The Hague Convention, are taking every opportunity of making the Belgian people work for them (says the *Universe*). They ordered the Municipality of Ghent to repair the