

SIDELIGHTS ON THE WAR

GENERAL.

Father Bouvier, the eminent Jesuit scholar, who was killed by a shell while attending the wounded on the battlefield, heard confessions in seven languages. When he fell at the side of a dying soldier, he feebly raised his arms in the form of a cross, absolved him, and then died at his side.

The regular army medical officer who had been examining the men of the Ninth Regiment, of Boston, Mass., declared that he never examined a finer set of men physically than the men of the old Fighting Ninth. "Thus," comments one writer, "is the present generation keeping good the record of their fathers and grandfathers who fought so nobly under the flags of Erin and the republic in the great Civil War." The same compliment may be paid to our own gallant Sixty-ninth. The regiments made up of Celtic stock always rank A1 in the manhood and the courage tests.

A Catholic girl was the first to enter the naval service when women were called to that branch of Uncle Sam's business. But she is by no means alone among her co-religionists who are serving the United States Government. Many of her friends were surprised to learn, on the occasion of the golden jubilee of Sister Mary Agnes McCann, M.A., of the Sisters of Charity, of the mother house, Mount St. Joseph on the Ohio, that since the declaration of a state of war with Germany, she has been officially listed in the secret service of the United States Government. Sister Mary Agnes is post-mistress at Mount St. Joseph, and, therefore, is officially a federal employee, and, as such, received the notice of the Government which made all federal employees members of the secret service, and ordered them to report all suspicious cases to the proper officials. Many other nuns throughout the country who are postmistresses of their communities, received similar notices.

The war is having its evil effect on Catholics. A mission recently opened at Cobham by a Silesian Father, who has established several new missions in country districts with marked success, has had to be closed for want of funds to support a priest, and even a temporary chapel. The Catholics of Cobham will be without Sunday Mass, a sad thing in these days, except occasionally when a priest from another mission will endeavor to visit them. On account of paper restrictions and the depletion of the staff owing to military exigencies, the group of Catholic newspapers known as the *Catholic Herald*, which appear with local variations in several Catholic centres of the North and Scotland, and also in London, have ceased publication at least while the war lasts. The necessities for the altar service are increasingly difficult to obtain, although the altar breads and the sacramental wine are assured. Candles have been reduced in number at Benediction and other services, and incense is used sparingly. Brass ornaments, candlesticks, etc., are impossible to obtain once the present stock is exhausted, and that is running low.

VIMY RIDGE: A PREDICTION.

(Written in March, 1917.)

The Germans laugh on Vimy Ridge,
Where once the children played:
And on the slopes of Vimy Ridge,
The bloody slopes of Vimy Ridge,
The sons of France are laid.

But soon, but soon on Vimy Ridge,
Courage shall answer craft:
Spring on the slopes of Vimy Ridge,
The grassy slopes of Vimy Ridge,
A sweeter sound shall waft:

Children shall play on Vimy Ridge,
Where once the Germans laughed!

—“M.B.,” in the *Westminster Gazette*.

AMERICA'S FIRST ARMY.

The American Army authorities are reported, in a cable message (says an exchange), to be hopeful that the first lot of men to be drawn in the "selective draft" from some ten million registrations will have been chosen by the first of next month, and will be in camp two months later. For how long a period their home training will last has not been stated, but it will probably not extend long after their complete equipment, and they will then cross over to France, to be trained within sound of the guns at the front under the personal supervision of Marshal Joffre. They should be ready to take the field early next spring, and until then the French armies will attempt little more, apparently, than hold the Germans opposed to them. Another winter of the trench siege is therefore almost a certainty. America's first "half million" army, according to a Washington despatch of May 7, will consist of 528,659 men and 18,538 officers, and will be divided thus:—Sixteen infantry divisions of 913 officers and 27,245 men each; 16 divisional hospitals of 24 officers and 222 men each to care for the infantry divisions; 64 infantry camp infirmaries, two men each; 2 cavalry divisions, 607 officers and 16,021 men each; 2 divisional hospitals of 24 officers and 238 men each to care for the cavalry divisions; 6 cavalry camp infirmaries, two men each; Coast Artillery Corps, 666 officers and 20,000 men; Medical Corps with 288 officers and 1000 men; 16 regiments heavy field artillery, 48 officers and 1319 men each; 8 aero squadrons, 10 officers and 154 men each; 8 balloon companies, 19 officers and 154 men each; 10 field hospitals, 6 officers and 73 men each; 10 ambulance companies, 5 officers and 150 men each; 22 field bakeries, 1 officer and 215 men each; 6 telephone battalions, 10 officers and 215 men each; 16 pack companies, 14 men each; 6 ammunition trains, 4 officers and 852 men each; 6 supply trains.

CARDINAL FARLEY'S APPEAL TO AMERICANS.

Cardinal John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York, issued the following letter on April 13, to be read at all Masses next day in all the Catholic churches in the New Year archdiocese:

My Dear People.—Our country is at war. The fateful hour has struck. Fraught with momentous events, solemn is the thought of it, and though reachless still the import of it, yet inexorable are its demands. Long and anxiously had we hoped that our land would not be drawn into the seething vortex which has engulfed so many nations of the world. Long and anxiously had we hoped that the lurid flames of war would not cast their baneful shadows upon our shores. Our Government withheld no effort to avert the peril, while our President employed the whole ascendancy of his great intellect and character and of his high position for the prevalence of the ideals of a true, genuine Americanism. But what was so ardently and so wholeheartedly desired was not to be. Our country had to take up the arms that were forced into their hands—had no choice but to grasp and wield the weapon wherewith to defend her honor, to vindicate the right and the justice of her cause and to insure a triumph that will be the victory of civilisation and humanity.

"In this solemn hour, then, when her fortunes are at stake, when all that she has stood for and stands for is jeopardised by the hazard of impending warfare, will not her sons hearken to her call? Will they not buckle on the armor of the conflict, and, rushing to her rescue, lift high her glorious banner of liberty and justice? Our President having spoken, and our national representatives having spoken, the response to the voice of the authority they embody will be that we will rally around our flag with the completest fullness of devotion, and with loyal hearts, and sturdiest arms place all that we have and all we are at our country's service. We will not shrink, then, from any service in her behalf. We will render to her what our Catholic faith and our Catholic teaching