

News in Brief.

A ton of coal is needed to produce three big shells.

A single projectile from a 15-in. naval gun weighs 1,950 lbs.

The French armies are being supplied with 200,000 shells a day.

A number of famous American airmen are flying for the French army.

British coinage is now being used instead of German in Samoa, formerly a German Colony.

No fewer than sixty-five Austrian generals have been compulsorily retired for negligence.

The country to the north-east of Strumitza is the flattest part of the whole of the Balkans.

German snipers are allowed to wear a special yellow and blue tassel on their caps to show their superiority in shooting.

The men of the French Army wear their identification discs round their wrists.

The distinction of having contributed most men to His Majesty's Forces, in comparison with population, is held by Tottenham.

The record for bullet-holes in a flying machine, a much prized record, is held by a pilot who returned from one flight recently with over 300 holes, the previous record being 240 odd.

Over one hundred Victoria Crosses have been awarded in this war.

The personnel of the Greek Navy is given as 8,000 officers and men.

The Russian Parliament has lost over twenty of its members at the Front.

The grapes on the famous vine at Hampton Court are all to be given to wounded soldiers this year.

Every Bulgar has a stake in the country. Even if he is only a peasant he owns a small farm and knows no landlord.

General Sir Herbert Plumer has the reputation of being the politest man in the British Army.

Private Jim Harris, of the Black Watch, is credited with being the youngest holder of the D.C.M.

Merchant vessels are being built in greater numbers than they are being sunk by German submarines.

Twelve Chaplains able to speak Gaelic have been appointed for service with the army.

London is 746 miles from Berlin by mail route.

A single projectile from a 15 in. naval gun weighs 1,950 lbs.

Every time a 15 in. gun is fired a bale of cotton weighing 500 lbs. is blown away.

Mr. Winston Churchill, formerly First Lord of the Admiralty, is now in France on active service.

"War Mates," a little play from the pen of Private De Hamel, of the London Scottish, has achieved a striking success in London and the provinces.

An order came into effect on November 29th limiting the hours for the sale of intoxicants in hotels and clubs in the London area to 5½ each weekday and five on Sundays.

By next June, it is anticipated that Australia will have dispatched 300,000 men to the front.

No man between 18 and 45 is to be allowed to leave New Zealand without a military permit.

Scotsmen in the British army average 5 ft. 8½ in.; Irishmen, 5 ft. 8 in., and Welshmen, 5 ft. 6½ in. The English average 5 ft. 7½ in., a trifle less than either the Scotch or the Irish.

Jabez Wolfe, the famous swimmer, is a Lieutenant in the 18th Middlesex.

Lord Kitchener built the railway across the desert at Khartoum at the rate of two miles a day.

Admiral du Fournet, the new Commander-in-Chief of the French fleet, is seventy-two years of age.

General Sir Douglas Haig has been killed by rumour more frequently than any other General at the front. On three occasions he has been reported as having been killed in action; twice he has been reported killed by accident, and once as having died from fever.

Captain Towse, V.C., who was blinded in the South African War, is realising his ambition to serve his country in the present crisis, having been appointed honorary Staff Captain without pay or allowance. He is able to do typewriting, among other things.

Not only is he ambidextrous, but Sir Robert Baden-Powell can use his feet equally well. A clever artist, he was invited to paint the scenery for the regimental theatre at Simla.

General Porro, second in command of the Italian Army, worked for two years as a bricklayer. But those two years he spent in Austria.

The Flemish women are not the only ones of their sex who can do men's work. The women of Hammon, Okla., recently repaired the roads because their menfolk were busy harvesting.

Disabled soldiers are to take the places of men of the Enfield Royal Small Arms Factory and the Waltham Gunpowder Factory who have enlisted under Lord Derby's scheme.

So far as is known at present the distinction of being the oldest subaltern in the army belongs to Second-Lieutenant J. T. Shaw, of the Lancashire Fusiliers. As he is fifty-three, it seems unlikely that his claim will be challenged. Mr. Shaw has thirty-four years of service to his credit.

Nearly 40 aeroplanes have been added to the imperial aircraft flotilla through the medium of the "Overseas Club."

Australia has organised its resources for the manufacture of shells and ammunition.

Nineteen of the 25 chief flags of the world contain red.

The bayonet was adopted by the British army in 1693. The city of Bayonne claims the invention of this instrument of warfare.

Mr. Bonar Law is one of the best chess players in the House of Commons.

It is said that the average loss of German aeroplanes is ten per day.

The average age of general officers in the French army has been lowered in this war by ten years.

For the first time on record the British National Debt is over a thousand millions.

The Russians are providing respirators for horses to safeguard them against the German gas attacks.

Pensions for disabled Canadians vary from \$75 to \$265 a year. A British Private gets as much as £65 a year pension for his wounds, according to their nature.

There are 425 Chaplains with the British in France—213 Church of England, 96 Roman Catholic, 55 Presbyterian, 34 Wesleyan, and 27 others.

The British bullet weighs 160 grains, or just over one-third of an ounce. The German bullet weighs six grains less, and the French bullet turns the scale at 198 grains.

Captain W. Haig, of the Black Watch, is thought to be the tallest officer in the British army. He is seven feet tall.

The population of Bulgaria is 4,752,997, and that of Roumania 7,508,000. That of Prussia is 37,278,820, or nearly eight millions less than that of the United Kingdom. But the population of all the States that make up Germany was 64,896,881 at the last census in 1910. It is now reckoned to be between 68,000,000 and 70,000,000.

Tod Sloan, ex-jockey, has been deported from England by the Home Secretary, under a clause of the Defence of the Realm Act.

Germany is organising in various central countries sales of objects stolen in France and Belgium, and advertisements are appearing in Danish, Swiss, Norwegian, and other newspapers announcing the sale of valuable works of art, pictures, and even clothing.

Austria is said to be employing a gun of remarkable type. It is mounted on an automobile capable of a speed of forty miles an hour, and carrying 140 shells. These shells, which are fired almost vertically, act partly like grenades and partly like shrapnel. Should they miss their actual target, they burst about 100 yards farther on.

The latest Zeppelins are over 200 yards long, longer than any of our battleships before the *Queen Elizabeth*, and their four engines are of an aggregate 1,000 horse-power.