

The Hydra: journal of the Craiglockhart War Hospital

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Editorial

It is in a spirit of complete confidence that we pen our second editorial. The hearty welcome accorded to our first issue has proved both a justification of *The Hydra's* existence and a stimulus to yet further enterprise, while we feel that it augers well for future success.

Yet, in answer to our critics, if such there be, we would remind our readers that our success or failure are in their hands. Their's is the responsibility, and it is to them that we look for contributions and aid. If they will ensure a constant supply of "copy", we shall speedily find the increasing circulation at which we aim. The demand for our first number proved greater than the supply, and we were soon sold out. We would, therefore, while regretting our inability to satisfy some of our would be readers, advise them to avoid delay in purchasing future issues.

We hope, in time, to enlarge our circulation outside the Hospital, and, with this end in view, we ask our readers to introduce *The Hydra* to their friends outside. There are a large number of people interested in the Hospital and its inmates, who would, in consequence, welcome a record of their life and work. Once help us to increase circulation in this manner, and the financial position of the Magazine will become unquestionable, while the quality of its contents will tend to become higher. But this is for our readers to decide. It is to them, too, that we look for criticism and suggestions. In a new magazine there is always room for both, and, to both, therefore, we offer a hearty welcome.

After some anxious thoughts - printing prices are high and our contributors lamentably few - we decided to increase the Magazine to its present size. This, we trust, will satisfy a large number of people, whose one complaint was the *The Hydra* was too small; and we hope that those same people will ensure that the extra pages are always filled full. We have experienced enormous difficulty, so far, in persuading people to write: some are apathetic, but most are so firmly convinced of their inability that they never even try. The result is that we are compelled to perform the degrading office of dogging nervous patients about the Hospital, and exorting by truculence, or a professional whine, at most the promise of a contribution. Under these circumstances, the Editorial Office is likely to incur unpopularity as well as hard work, and we hope our readers will change this in the future. It's up to them!

One word more. We hope that strangers to Edinburgh, desirous of making purchases, will find the advertising map of use to them. Each advertiser's shop has its position indicated by a figure on the map, and we trust that this scheme will prove satisfactory, both from the point of view of the stranger and that of the shop he visits.

Notes and News

Editorial Staff

It is with the utmost regret that we announce the departure of Mr Whitehead, who gave so much expert help to the production of this Magazine. When *The Hydra* was first suggested, he at once threw himself into the task of producing a magazine in the face of many difficulties. His knowledge and his efforts were invaluable; one difficulty vanished after another, and although he could not stay to see the Magazine in print, he was yet able to leave knowing that the first number was at last in the printer's hands.

We thank him sincerely for his work, and we wish him the best of luck in the world of letters to which he has gone.

Golf

The ancient and honourable game of golf is, unhappily, one which has but few enthusiastic followers in the Hospital at present, despite the facilities which have been most generously granted for its pursuit by the Merchants of Edinburgh Golf Club. Such a state of circumstances is most deplorable, especially when one considers how much more beneficial for patients to play even once round the course daily - and it is not a long or fatiguing one - than to be perpetually immured in a picture house, or to parade Princes Street for the gratification of their own vanity. Clubs are provided by the House Committee, which are of a most serviceable nature, and, with every incitement offered them, it is a pity that more officers, be they beginners or not, do not avail themselves of such opportunities. Perhaps, were the Committee to arrange for handicap and other competitions, interest might be stimulated in this great health-giving national game, and the result would be advantageous to the patients, morally and physically.

S.

Cricket

In spite of their experience of the possibilities of Edinburgh weather, a number of gentlemen interested in the game have started a cricket club, and all wishing to join should put their names on the notice pinned on the board in the hall. The club has written to Merchiston School with a view to obtaining the loan of their ground for practice and games. No definite answer has so far been received, but we understand that leave will probably be granted. We wish the club the best of luck.

Debating Society

On Monday, 23rd April, the debating society met to discuss the question of Woman Suffrage. Mr Seager proposed "that the electoral laws of Great Britain require no alteration in their relation to women." After a few bold statements, which were rather inclined to beg the question, he confined himself almost entirely to the question of women workers, striving to show that in no way would they receive better treatment at the hands of their own sex.

Mr McGregor, who rose to oppose this motion, made a concise and well-phrased speech, and proved himself a master of oratory. If anything, he was too fond of abstract generalities, and seemed disinclined to descend to the more practical and very complicated details of the question. In this he was the direct antithesis of Mr Seager, who was inclined to dwell on them too much.

The secretary, Mr Fincken, who supported Mr Seager, bristled with statistics. Reams and reams of figures were hurled at the chairman's head to prove that women did not want to vote, but that if they did they could swamp the men by a quarter of a million or so. After this display of bellicosity there seemed a general desire to hide from the feminine menace behind the hon. secretary's stalwart frame. However, a trenchant speech by Captain Buchanan seemed to restore the balance again, for after contradicting every statement made by the opposition, he threw new light on the subject from the medical point of view. In a most interesting and capable speech Mr Tappenden also spoke on the motion. The shock of the debate, however, came when Mr Seager made his concluding remarks. Under the scathing criticism of the opposition the pent-up fury of the original speaker vented itself into a fiery harangue. This inspired the meeting with much more life. It is hoped that in future, without, of course, going to extremes, gentlemen will endeavour to instil more life and vigour into their debates.

The motion was lost, only four members voting for the motion, and the suggestion that there were only four married men present must be treated as a malicious libel by the anti-suffragists. On the whole the debate was a very successful one, and it is hoped that, the Society being now fairly launched, more members will volunteer to move or oppose some motion. The meetings form a very interesting and instructive way of passing an evening each week, and should prove welcome to many.

On Monday, 30th April, a general meeting of the Debating Society was held, in lieu of the customary weekly debate. The minutes of the last meeting were signed, and Mr Clark then read a paper on the evolution of offensive weapons, which he illustrated with sketches on a blackboard. In an interesting and illuminating address he traced the history of the catapult and mangonel and their gradual development into modern ordnance. At the end of this, there took place one of the readiest and most general discussions that have so far been held. From the weapons of modern warfare we passed by easy stages to the whole question of progress, and thence to a seemingly general appreciation of Jules Verne, Mark Twain, and H.G. Wells, as writers of fantastic fiction.

The evening was undoubtedly a success, and it is a great pity that more people do not avail themselves of the opportunity for mental recreation afforded by the Debating Society; but perhaps the apathy so evident in this hospital has atrophied their minds.

The Baths

During the last few days the baths would seem to have gained in popularity, and at any moment of the day one can usually find one or two people disporting themselves in the water. Most especially is this noticeable in the early morning, and we have nothing but praise for those who can rise in time to indulge in a swim before breakfast. People, too, are forsaking the Turkish bath proper, and are commencing to use it more as a drying-room after a swim. It seems that they are finding out what a devitalising experience a Turkish bath can prove.

But there is still plenty of room down there; and the cold water might succeed in awakening the literary talents of the most perverse generation that ever turned an editor's hair grey.

Gardening and Poultry-Keeping Association

The gardeners and poultry keepers have suffered a great loss in their chairman, Mr Ritchie, who has just left us, but his office is now being ably filled by Mr Judge, while Mr Nicholson has undertaken the secretarial work, and we wish them both the best of luck.

With the advent of finer and more spring-like weather considerable progress has been made in the garden. All the available ground has been dug, and some of it is already planted. This is due largely to the interest taken in the association by the C.O. and Captain Brock, which has resulted in a large influx of new members. They are now numerous enough to work a much

larger plot than that at their disposal, and efforts are being made to secure a further piece of ground, so that, if the war continues, we may yet see the Association the proud possessor of at least "three acres and a cow". Meanwhile, lest inaction should damp the enthusiasm of the members who yearn to get back to the land, the Association proposes to undertake the care and upkeep of the tennis lawn and bowling-greens.

Up to the present the poultry keepers have been handicapped by lack of space, but if, as is hoped, they secure the loan of a piece of grass land, they hope to extend their section considerably. Before this can be done, however, and the model poultry farm of their dreams realised, houses and runs will have to be erected, and so there will still be a lot of work waiting for volunteers.

Badminton

It was to be expected that with the advent of finer weather badminton, as an indoor game, would decline in popularity, but we suggest that, owing to the vagaries of this northern clime, it may be necessary to resort to it later. Practice, therefore, should not be neglected. There are apparently other reasons for the neglect of the game, and complaints have reached us about the shortage of shuttles. Players, and especially learners of the game, have themselves largely to blame for this, as it is entirely due to the harsh treatment which the shuttles receive that there is any scarcity. Shuttles are expensive, and players are very prodigal of their use, partly through ignorance and partly through carelessness. An improvement in this state of affairs would be effectual if attention were paid to the condition of the shuttles when in use. Slight damage to the feathers can frequently be remedied by straightening out bent or twisted feathers before serving. Again, players have been noticed knocking shuttles along the ground and trying to pick them up with raquets. These practices are very injurious to the life of the shuttle and should be avoided. After a game is finished it is only sportsman-like to put away the raquets and shuttles carefully so that unnecessary damage may be avoided. Remember that the expense is borne by the House Club, whose funds are limited. (Please excuse my verbosity, Mr Editor.)

The handicap, which started off so splendidly with an entry of 18 singles and 11 doubles, has suffered a death-blow by the departure of several of our most enthusiastic players, but there is no reason why a fresh start should not be made. The game affords good exercise, and the wind can be tempered to the shorn lamb as required. Some of the heats were played off, but no doubt those who took part and are still with us will only be too willing to back up another

handicap. Let the shuttle continue to weave health and strength into our tired muscles. We hope to note renewed enthusiasm in our next issue.

Mr Wheatley, who has supervised the interests of badminton and lawn tennis so well, and who was so active in arranging the handicap, has now left us, but his place is being filled by Mr Lidbury, than whom no one could be better qualified. He is the only survivor of the small coterie of experienced players which first started the badminton club, but we hope that, with practice, the House will soon produce a number of players of equal calibre to those who have left.

Lawn Tennis

There is very little to report regarding tennis, as the weather has been somewhat backward for this time of year, but practice has gone on when possible on the hard court. This court is somewhat strange to those accustomed to grass, but the exercise obtained and the quickness required are of the utmost value to those in want of practice. More use could be made of the hard court with advantage. At the time of writing the weather has improved very considerably, and it is hoped that the grass courts may be available by the second week in May. Balls, nets, etc., will be arranged for by the House Club, but players will require to supply their own racquets. Again we would call attention to the necessity of having the lawns rolled, and players and others able and willing might spend a profitable time in putting their shoulder to the wheel.

Billiards

Many familiar faces have gone from amongst us since our last issue, and it seems strange indeed to miss Lee's cheery voice on entering the billiard room. Dott, the runner-up in our last handicap, has also departed. Some men are favoured of the gods indeed! It is given to few to carry away a billiard prize, a railway warrant, and last but not least, a "ticket", all in the short space of an afternoon. The last two weeks have been somewhat uneventful, with the exception of two noteworthy breaks, one of 50, neatly strung together by Cruikshank, and a somewhat smaller, though still praiseworthy, effort by a member who is both topical and "tropical" in his play. By the way, who was the unkind member who suggested that Captain Brock might find a few useful recruits for his pet potato plot amongst the strenuous players on No. 2 table? The new handicap, for which no less than thirty-two entries were received, is progressing well, and the first-round matches have all been decided with the exception of one - that between Major Bryce and Seager. Two of the entrants - Lidbury and Scotchburn -

were, unfortunately, compelled to scratch through illness. The two backmarkers - Cruikshank and Nichol - thus each get a walk-over, for which they should be truly thankful. Lamb has again started well, vanquishing McKay and Lecomber in the first and second rounds respectively. The match between Lake and Scott was a stiff tussle, the latter winning by the narrow margin of two. Major Smith defeated Wilson with ease, the latter scarcely showing his true form; while Major Maclagen beat Evans, who is very much "off" at present. Major Maclagan followed this up by winning a rather slow game against Major Smith by 29. Our noble Editor carried all before him in his game with Fincken, and enters the second round in a blaze of glory. (This may fetch something a line extra, although "blood out of a stone" isn't in with our Editor.) [Or with our contributor when it comes to getting "copy". - ED.]

"CAUSA BELLI."

Time: 2.30 A.M.

Place: Suburban Police Station.

Special Constable had just arrived off his beat after having been relieved. His uniform, much bespattered, showed other signs of recent rough usage. His face was beyond recognition, which, no doubt, is the reason why his name cannot be mentioned. Both eyes bunged up, or nearly so; lips delightfully contused, and a thick ear, presented a vision that made the Inspector on duty stare for a bit. Then, gradually, as the scene presented itself more vividly and revealed a slight tinge of humour, an irrepressible smile stole o'er the superior officer's genial countenance as he blandly inquired:

"What's up?"

"Hold on a bit," replied the Special Constable, "let me collect my shattered wits."

A moment lapsed, and the Inspector grew more curious.

"Well go on," said he.

"Oh, yes! Now I remember," rejoined the Special Constable, eager to unfold his tale.

"Yes," said the Inspector.

"You know my beat in Pickle Street?" inquired the S.C.

"Yes," was the Inspector's interested reply.

"Do you know No. 34, where that charming brunette with nice ankles, lives?"

The Inspector's eyebrows rose, his eyes stared with curiosity, not knowing what to anticipate.

"Yes, yes," he said eagerly.

Then the S.C. leaned on his elbow towards his chief, resuming:

"Whose husband is out in Mesopotamia?"

"Yes, yes!" was the excited reply.

The Special upon this stood erect. Then, resting his hands upon the table, he cautiously stretched across the table towards his listener's ear, and, in a deep guttural whisper, handed in his report:

"Well - he - isn't!!!"

SYNJIN.

CRUCIFIXION.

Tell me, ye birds that mate in seasons due,
Nor blush for shame to sport your honest love,
When shall man do
As well as you,
Ceasing from pride which thinks itself above
Your wild wood love?

Man labours to get gain,
When he should woo.
Sweet love turns to sour pain;
What shall man do?
To rid himself of love turned to distress,
Like Judas doth he kiss his happiness.

At night with legal emissaries round,
Kissing for gain!
Whence it doth come, he buys his burial-ground,
While love is slain:
Crucified 'twixt two thieves, themselves a-dying -
Love shall arise; for them is endless lying.

O Land of Love, when shall thy dictates be
Our heart's desire, our key of liberty?
All thy commands in bird and beast we own
Loving fertility,
Even in the moving atoms of a stone;
But thy commands in us we lightly scorn:
On Mammon wait our babes unborn:
All other gods we serve before
A casual knee
We bend to thee,
Whom even to adore
Is life and joy and true felicity.
Purge us from self-mistrust:
Since we are dust
Let us be faithful to our earthly trust,
Nor with indifferent lust
Make of our heavenly light the fires of hell.
Oh, set us wholly instinct free,
That like the birds and beasts we dwell
In sweet unquestioned liberty.
Freed from the anguish

Of those who languish
In self-confined and self-consuming flames,
Preferring ought before thy Name of names.

COCKNEY.

EDINBURGH. A Vindication

To Scotsmen, be they at home or abroad, any vindication of the beauty and majesty of the capital of their country, Modern Athens set on her Seven Hills, is at once unnecessary and insulting, but, in the case of those who come from across the Border it is imperative that they should not carry away with them a vision of a squalid city, gathered from taxi-drives or from promenades from tea-shop to tea-shop in Princes Street; nor that to them the name Edinburgh should mean no more than the crowded thoroughfare stretching from the Caledonian Hotel in the west to its rival caravanserai, the North British, in the east. Such a crabbed conception of a noble city is, happily, possible only to the unimaginative few who are unstirred by the glamour of history and the memories that everywhere meet the eye of a mighty bye-gone age of battle and romance. But to those who can picture the stirring life of the town in the days of old, menaced by the wild, raiding caterans from the Highlands, and the objective of every English army, there are innumerable spots that recall some thrilling episode or tragic incident from the time that David I. founded the Augustine Abbey of Holyrood, in 1128 A.D., to the days when Prince Charles Edward had his father proclaimed King of "the United Kingdom of Scotland and England" at the Market Cross. It is unnecessary here to give a detailed topographical description of all the famous places in Edinburgh, for such may be found in any guide-book, but it may be of interest to sketch briefly what historical interest attaches to the various landmarks of the city. All these buildings are within easy reach, and it would well repay the historian, the scholar, or the photographer to visit them.

Seated beneath the domination of Arthur's Seat and the Salisbury Crags, lies the Palace of Holyrood, the home of the Scottish Court, the burial-place of their kings, and the scene of many a gay and turbulent event from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards. It is, however, with the name and period of the luckless Mary Queen of Scots that the most tragic and romantic episodes in the history of Holyrood and of Edinburgh are associated. The unhappy marriage with Darnley, and the murder of the favourite Italian, Rizzio, took place

within the Palace walls, and with our typical love of the gruesome, a plate shows the exact spot of the latter tragedy to the morbid visitor. With the Union of the Crowns, the prosperity of the city and the popularity of the Palace wane; but, in 1633, we read of Charles I. being crowned King of Scotland, with all due pomp and ceremony, within the Chapel Royal at Holyrood. The Abbey suffered at the hands of the mob during the Revolution of 1688, when vandalism was for a time rampant, and the royal tombs desecrated, so that now all we have left of the Abbey is the roofless fragment of the nave, containing the royal vault, in which were buried David Bruce, James II. and V. of Scots, and Darnley.

From Holyrood to the Castle by the High Street, with its many-storied tenements and its narrow closes, we pass by many buildings of historic fame in this, the Old Town of Edinburgh. On our left is the far-famed Cathedral Church of St. Giles, dating back for three centuries, to the time when Jenny Geddes flung her stool at the bishop's "lug," and started Edinburgh upon the cause of the National Covenant against the King. Near at hand, too, is the site of the Tolbooth (Scott's "Heart of Midlothian"), broken into by the mob at the time of the Porteous Riots, and the Grassmarket, scene of many a street fight and of many a hanging. And so we proceed, past the "Merkat" Cross, which is to be found in any ancient town of note in the country, to the crowning feature of Edinburgh that overshadows and frowns over the city, the Castle set on its rock.

How often have we gazed up at its rugged pedestal and towering battlements from the gardens or from Princes Street - and yet how few of us have been stirred to explore within its fastnesses? On the highest pinnacle of the Castle Rock stands the tiny Chapel of St Margaret, with the mutilated old cannon, "Mons Meg", a victim to overloading by some gunner of the days when solid stone balls were the crowning triumph of the munitioner's art. On a lower level, above the drawbridge and portcullis gate which we pass through from the Esplanade, is the State prison of former days, the Argyll Tower, and on the south side of the rock, overhanging the Grassmarket, we find the old Parliament Hall, with, adjoining it, buildings of the sixteenth century, where Mary Queen of Scots and her mother, the Princess of Guise, used to dwell, and, where, after many adventures in strange hiding-places, from a hay-loft to a pulpit, the Scottish Regalia are now housed. Down below are the dungeons, cruel and evil-smelling places of torture and imprisonment, where, within recent years, excavation has brought to light bones of unfortunate prisoners, and even of wild beasts caged therein to gladden a despot king on some festive day.

The only other buildings of note in the Old Town are to be found grouped together behind St Giles, where, in the old Parliament House, with its magnificent Great Hall, the Court of Session now sits. Out in the old Parliament Square, neglected and unheeded by the passer-by, is the grave of Scotland's greatest religious reformer and preacher, the man who feared not to thunder against the iniquities of the Court, John Knox. Fragments of the old city wall still exist in places, and in the Grassmarket, close by Greyfriar's Churchyard, a spot of many memories and monuments, quaint or gruesome, is to be found all that remains of the Flodden Wall, built in haste by the burghers after the news had reached them that the "Flowers o' the Forest were a' wede awa'." Finally, amongst the older buildings we have the University, occupying the site of the Kirk o' Field, the scene of Darnley's murder, and dating back to the time of James VI.

Crossing the ravine along which the railway now runs, we step from the old world into the new, to be surrounded at once by buildings of recent architecture - from the classical edifices of the National Gallery, the Royal Institution, and the beautiful Gothic structure of the Scott Monument to that degrading emblem of our modern luxurious civilisation - the Picture Palace. Architecturally, some of the buildings in the new town compare favourably with those of any modern town in Europe, but have no historic interests that date further back than the days of Edinburgh's fame as a centre of literary and intellectual life, when Sir Walter Scott and Lockhart started a revival of literature, in the days of the *Edinburgh Review*, that was to be carried on by Thomas Carlyle and Robert Louis Stevenson during the last century.

With a city of such historic interest close at hand, where every building of note is open to public view, we are, indeed, vandals equally with the Hun who despoils the monuments of a past age, if we do not avail ourselves of such opportunities that may never occur again, instead of frittering away our time in the daily, monotonous round of self-gratification and amusement. We are, meantime, far removed from the horror and devastation of war, but the memory of past tragedies still lingers with us, which we must try to banish by alienating our minds from anything that bears on strife and carnage, and this we can do, not by indulging in orgies of amusement, but by wandering amongst those grand old relics of a past romantic age and conjuring up in our minds pictures of the knights and ladies of that golden age.

K.

DEDICATED TO OUR EMPIRE'S NURSING STAFF DURING THE GREAT WAR.

Oh, glorious band of women,
That heard our Empire's call,
And came to help the stricken,
And raise them from their fall.
Oh, mighty band of women,
That gave up all held dear,
To soothe and heal those sick ones,
And comfort with your cheer.
Oh, holy band of women,
Who never cease to pray!
May God's attendant mercy
Be with you night and day.
How glorious is the battle
You wage with death and pain,
Making that other battle
Prove not to be in vain.
Smiles for the sick and weary,
Cools hands for fevered brows,
Renew the life within us -
Make us renew our vows.
"You shall not find us wanting;
We will not sheathe the sword
Till Kultur's doom is settled -
Your right to live assured."
And do we know the heartache
That bids to break you down,
Or can we sense your suffering
That never shows by frown?
God knows, we want to spare you,
We try to hide our pain,
But your dear eyes upon us
Make all our efforts vain.
So, when the strife is ended,

Can Britain e'er Forget
The weighty debt she owes you?
A debt that can't be met!
Not while her sons are true men,
Sons of our Empire grand,
Can we e'er forget those women
That make that glorious band.
And throughout the wide-flung world,
On home and foreign shore,
Mankind looks on in wonder,
And views your work with awe.
So, gentle band of women,
God bless you, one and all!
Your soldiers' prayers attend you,
And Christ will hear their call.
Therefore, O God, in those grand days,
When peace shall reign once more,
Help us to show with all our hearts
True thanks to these thine angels lent,
And hold them aye in honour true,
Who never stayed to count the cost,
But simply followed after you,
And gave their all to ease our pain.

"SHALLCROSS."

"INTEGER VITAE SCCLERISQUES PURUS."

At the present day, in this titanic conflict, when so many of the flower of our youth and manhood have solemnly devoted themselves to be British soldiers for the guardianship of their native land, it were well to pause for a moment to consider what their vow really means and how it best may be fulfilled. Our country is waging a war not for dominion or conquest, but simply in her own defence, as well as in that of the weaker countries whose cause she

has espoused, and for the maintenance and execution of international law and the dictates of humanity outraged and defied by a barbarous power.

We would fain force ourselves to believe that their calling was the outcome of a severe sense of duty and of patriotism, and that mere sentimental motives, such as the love of excitement, or adventure, of fine dress, and of the pride of fame, influenced them infinitesimally, if at all. Yet, if we sift the reasonings of their inner mind, we do but find that the prosaic motive of duty, even in the best of them, was overwhelmed by the lighter attraction based on their innate love of glitter and of glory. But, after experience of the stern realities of war unmasked and unadorned, when their minds grappled with the real truth of the matter, they found that they had put themselves into the hand of their country as a weapon, and had vowed to strike when she bade them. And in such an implicit obedience there is goodness and greatness if they can trust the hand and the heart of the Britomart who has braced them to her side; but passive obedience and bravery do not constitute the ideal of soldiership. Far from it, for those who fight their country's battles may represent all that is the best and noblest in that country, and is it right that her brave men should fight and her cowards remain at home to do the thinking and to wield the whip over passive soldiers? The laws of Nature are stern and immovable on this, for a nation once corrupt can only be redeemed by a military despotism, and the health of our own country consists solely in that her wisest men are also her strongest, and that those are in the forefront of her battles are also in front of her thoughts. Therefore it is that our country's future hopes are vested now in her soldier youths, and it cannot be impressed too seriously upon them that their fitness for all future trust depends upon what they are now. If we appeal to history we find that no good soldier was ever indolent or careless in his youth, and that though many a giddy youth may have risen to aspire to England's highest honours of State or Church, yet no such a one ever became a good general or leader of men. There is no indulgence possibly due to the thoughtlessness of youth when every crisis of future fortune hangs on careful decisions, when the career of all their days may depend upon the opportunity of a moment. A man may be nobly thoughtless on his death-bed, and in truth there should be no thinking left to be done there, but in youth, when every imagination is a fountain of life or death none can afford to waste his days recklessly.

And therefore the duties of young soldiers to their country may be summed up in the two words, industry and honour, and it is in the former that the young soldier is especially tempted to fail by imagining that, as his life may probably be shorter than other men's, he should therefore waste the portion of it that is granted to him more recklessly. On the

contrary, while for others all knowledge may be often but a means of amusement, there is no form of science which the young soldier at some time or other may not find bearing on the business of life and death; nay, the fate of those under his command hangs upon his knowledge, and lost moments now may mean lost lives then. And were there no other grounds for the justification of industry it were sufficient that it kept them from wasting the interest and energy of their minds on gambling, the vilest way of wasting time. But their vow cannot be fulfilled by industry and earnestness alone unless these are consecrated by their resolve to be in everything men of honour in the highest sense. Courage is a mere matter of course amongst our present youth, but such cannot be said of truth and gentleness, and though these latter are not exacted, yet each soldier should exact of himself a vow of stainless truth. First of all in truth and reverence or pity to all womanhood, in which every virtue of the higher phases of manly character has its being. It is this that distinguishes the true chivalrous knight from the caitiff of low degree, in that whomsoever else he may deceive or injure, he deceives not nor injures any woman of whatever rank; and then true to himself, whence "he cannot then be false to any man," and true to the promptings of his own inner conscience.

If our youth thus vow themselves to the service of the country, stainless in purity and in truth, and striving earnestly to use their days to the best advantage, the future of our country is assured. Their self-sacrifice and heroism has been proved and not found wanting, even on the hardest fought field of the most awful war in the history of the world, and shall they not strive by their industry and honour to add fresh unfading laurels to their brow and be as Chaucer's hero of old, "very perfect lenti knights"!

CIVILIAN.

THE ABSENT ONES.

In solemn gloom of a mighty temple of prayer,
'Tween avenue of towering columns, whose wealth of stone,
And beauty of structure melted heavenwards;
Surrounded by a silence whose hollow grandeur
Mated with soothing charm of solitude sublime,
Travel-stained, a wanderer, stood I, enthralled.

Spreading its halo radiance, a golden beam oblique

Lent vision in that gloom, revealing here and there
Woman, suppliant in murmur'd prayer - none else!
Man! - as tho' no need nor time was his - no,
Nor intent - and so, in awesome whisper,
Arose my doleful question: "Are men too proud to pray?"

"Men too proud to pray?" - oh, cruel thought avaunt
While echoed boom of distant guns unfalt'ring do reply!
God help our brave defenders, in this dread hour of strife;
Their grim task lies there - in sodden field of gore,
While here - we helpless - each for each retreat!
Doth it not suffice then, that alone - woman prays?

SYNJIN.

SOME MILITARY TERMS DEFINED.

Cardigan - See under Tunic.

Volunteer Force - A severe attack of "Anno Domini".

Ration Cheese - See Volunteer Force.

Standing Load - This can be successfully accomplished by the continuous practice in raising the right elbow. It will be found impossible to raise the same if weighted down by a blue armlet. It is first necessary to come to the "Order".

Lying Load - Only to be adopted when the Standing Load has become impracticable, *i.e.*, when more than ten "*rounds*" have passed from the "*barrel*" to the "*muzzle*".

Militarism - All Boche.

CONCERTS.

[Our musical and dramatic critic will tell you that we are fortunate in having such an excellent musical director, orchestra, and artistes - we hasten to add that we are fortunate in having procured, at great cost, the services of such a clever critic. We hope you will like his breezy style, and that his expert views will meet with approval.]

"Once more into the breach dear friends", etc. I took my seat in the stalls on Saturday the 28th, and brought out my little notebook and pencil, fully prepared for a big evening's work. Many ladies were among the audience, a fact that rejoiced our hearts. The orchestra kicked off with a selection from "Chin Chin Chow", which was splendid. It's rather tricky music, but Captain Bates and Co.'s interpretation was A1. Bravo Bates! If I may be allowed to make a suggestion, I think that the addition of a few shawms, rebecs, dulcimers, and sackbuts, etc., would vastly improve the orchestra, and would supply that richness of tone and timbre that is at present lacking. Mr. Clark gave us one or two songs at the piano, which didn't go as well as they might have done. He had had a rather strenuous day, and was a bit tired. Miss Grieve followed with a violin solo, "Simple Aveu," a very sweet and dainty little thing that was prettily played. I understand that although Miss Grieve has left us as far as hospital work is concerned, she is still one of us as regards the concerts. Mr Harraton then came tripping on to the stage looking like a cross between an Oxford M.A. and a Hindoo! His song, "Back to the Land", was very appropriate during times of food shortage, and his topical verse went down as smoothly and as pleasantly as a 'Manhattan'!! Miss Scott then sang the "Mull Fisher's Love Song" with her usual charm and grace, followed by Major M'Lagan in "The Veteran's Song." Major M'Lagan sang jolly well, but confessed to me that the "wind was high in the air!" Miss Thompson sang "Poor Wandering One," from "The Pirates of Penzance". We have heard Miss Thompson sing before, and I know how well we all appreciate her excellent singing. In the second half of the programme the orchestra played an overture, "Colonel Bogey", with their usual *eclat*, following which Mr Scotchburn recited "The Superior Person" in the character of George Robey. Scotchburn was splendidly made-up, and his turn caused much amusement. Major M'Lagan then sang "My Old Shako," which, like "The Veteran Song", is of a military type. The singing was very good, but I don't like warlike songs. I'm essentially a man of peace! Miss Scott sang an "Irish Love Song" very sweetly, and then our guide, philosopher, and friend, Major Bryce, sang a little Scotch ballad called "Burd Ailie." It is a charming and pathetic song, and Major Bryce did justice to it. I love all things Scotch, but it's getting most prohibitive these days owing to the price! [and then it's 35 u.p.! - ED.] Miss Thompson again delighted everyone with three songs, the best, in my opinion, being "The Crown of the Year." Miss Thompson was encored again and again, but time would not permit of any more. Mr Clark recited the "Caretaker" and "On Strike", in the character of a British workman. As usual, his make-up was fine and his recitations highly amusing. He did much better in the second half than in the first, having, mayhap, refreshed himself to some extent! Captain Bates and the orchestra ended up a really fine concert with the "Soldiers' Chorus" from "Faust", and then we sought our rum ration - I beg pardon - our cocoa, and our couches, with the feeling that once more our weekly concert had been a success.

The concert of Saturday the 5th was, I think you will all agree with me, one of the best that we have ever had. Every one was in good form, especially the Orchestra, who opened the proceedings with prayer - I mean with a selection from "Young England" very nicely played. Major M'Lagan sang "The Flying Dutchman," one of those old songs that never lose charm. Mr Livie was to have given us a piccolo solo but he failed to turn up, although search parties were sent out to find him. Captain Markham gave us George Robey's "Charles II.", in costume, which was well received, his witty remarks and sallies delighting everyone. Mr Maskelyne sang "Stone Cracker John" followed by Mrs M'Lagan in "Softly awakes my heart," from "Samson and Delilah." Mrs M'Lagan has sung at several of our concerts and I know how well everyone appreciates her singing, her voice is really fine. Mr Birch sang "Sleep and the Roses", which came as a pleasant surprise to all. Birch has a fine voice, but has been very seedy just of late, and, keeping in mind his poor state of health, it was surprising the way he sang. He has a powerful voice and he did his songs justice. Captain Bates and the Orchestra gave us two selections, one from "Push and Go" and the other from "The Bing Boys" both of which were greatly appreciated and revived old memories. Following this we had a little scene from "Julius Caesar." It was that part where Brutus and Cassius have a row over that root of all evil, money! The piece was put on in costume, Mr Christopher playing Brutus, and Captain Markham, Cassius. The make-up was good and the acting fine. Mr Clark sang "In other words", putting in two new topical verses. He delighted everyone with his subtle allusions to various patients, but I'm afraid that he has given someone deadly offence. If by any chance Clark slips off this mortal coil through the agency of powdered glass in his porridge, or by any other means - well, he should be more careful! Miss Bell and Mr Denton gave us a violin duet, followed by Mrs M'Lagan, who sang "Only for thee". As before, Mrs M'Lagan's rendering was splendid. Mr Scotchburn gave us "That's all". He appeared beautifully made up as George Robey and delighted everyone. Scotchburn has the true Robey touch, together with all the funny little mannerisms of the great comedian. The Orchestra finished up a highly successful evening with the "Pothyville Patrol", and we all left the hall knowing that we had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

"PEAS-BLOSSOM."

LINES ON WATTS' PICTURE OF "Hope."

She sits upon a world, a world of tears,

Placed by the Lord of Sorrows in mid space.
Shadows enshroud her face
And fleeting fears.

Blindfold she sits, yet never seems to tire
Of gazing blindfold through Eternity,
Fingering, so wearily,
Her one-stringed lyre.

The night of earthly sorrow, gloom, and pain,
Closes around, yet fails to dim the star
That, shining there afar,
Lights hope again.

CAROLUS.

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