

The Hydra: the magazine of Craiglockhart War Hospital

No. 5 New Series March 1918

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EDITORIAL

[The Editor will be pleased to consider articles, verses, and line-drawings, not only from members of the Officers' Club, but from the outside public. Articles should consist of not more than 1000 words, and should be written, on one side of the paper only. All contributions should be addressed to the Editor, "The Hydra," Craiglockhart War Hospital, Slateford, Midlothian.]

"We needs must love the highest when we see it."—TENNYSON.

The other day we disguised ourself and walked out into the Hospital with the air of a new patient. Our object was to find out what the world really thinks of The Hydra. Accosting the first intelligent-looking fellow that we met, we addressed him jovially : " What do you think of The Hydra this month ? Not bad, what !" " Oh," he answered with a slight drawl, " not bad, if only they'd cut out some of this high-brow stuff and get a little snap into it ! They're too much in the ether : want to get back to the mud a bit more." " Back to the land ! " we murmured as we returned to our solitude.

How easy to criticise. How difficult to create! Our readers never realise the extreme scarcity of this much desired " snap." Cheap wit is an abomination; real wit (here, at any rate), almost extinct. We are forced sometimes to choose between " light " matter of an inferior quality and serious prose or verse which is really good. There is only one way of choosing in such circumstances. If our readers can produce any gems of wit, we shall be only too happy to print them. So far such gems have been sadly lacking. The tone of The Hydra has been getting steadily lighter, but it never has been, nor was ever intended to be, merely a comic paper.

This month we have been unable to secure a serious article. No doubt to our readers this will be a source of great joy, but to ourselves it is a sorrow. We have throughout acted on the principle that a magazine is carried on not so much for the delectation of its readers as for the gratification of editorial fancies! So, having no serious article, we are sorry!

Chairmen of the Club come and go with kaleidoscopic rapidity. We have this month to say good-bye both to Captain Barry O'Brien and to Captain Gibson. Captain O'Brien deserves our thanks for the skilful way in which he piloted the Club through an extremely difficult period. Captain Gibson's tenure of office, while hardly so exciting, has been no less arduous. We tender to both these gentlemen our good wishes and thanks.

We would draw our readers' attention to the illustrations which appear in this number. They are printed from blocks cut by Mr W. W. Peploe from drawings by himself. The art of block-making is by no means difficult to any one with a knowledge of drawing and an average craftsmanship. Mr Peploe has very kindly offered to help any one who is interested, and it is

hoped that some of our craftsmen will take up this hobby and so save The Hydra the expense of having its blocks made by the printers.

NOTES AND NEWS

We regret that owing to unforeseen circumstances it has been necessary to hold over the photographs of our Sisters until next month.

On 9th February, Mr Baskett, R.G.A., and on 16th February, Captain Gibson, R.A.M.C., were invested at Buckingham Palace with the Military Cross.

We beg to acknowledge the loan of the show-case from the Red Cross Society.

BITTER-SWEET

A TRAGEDY

It was one of these cloudless days for which Edinburgh (the Riviera of the North) is so famous. Filled with new-born hope and fervour after my first interview with my M.O., but puzzled as to which of the many occupations he had suggested would best suit my case, I determined to hie me to Princes Street, of which I had read and heard so much, there to give the matter my earnest consideration. My interview with the M.O. had been fixed for 10.30 a.m., so by 2 p.m. I was quite free to occupy the remaining hours till 6.

The journey there was uneventful. At least I was given to understand that for the E.T.C. it was uneventful, as nothing of note happened except an altercation between the driver of my car and that of another coming in the opposite direction. We met on a single line, as neither driver had thought it worth while to wait at the loop-line till the other passed. The argument only took fifteen minutes to decide, which was surprising, as both drivers vowed they would stay where they were till a new system was installed rather than prove a weakling. However, persuaded by a few unreasonably annoyed passengers, who, though they stated were in a hurry, had taken the car instead of walking, one driver gave in. To push our car back to the loop-line, with the assistance of an iron bar (which iron bar interested me greatly as being the invention of no average brain), took the other tram but a few minutes.

The only other incident was that the cable stopped as we reached the " King's,"- but as I got another car at Tollcoss, after only fifteen minutes' wait and a short walk, I was lucky.

Princes Street I found all my fancy had painted it. Countless ladies seemed to be brimming over with admiration of my blue band and a genuine desire to make our poor wounded feel at home.

Henceforth, I determined my hobby shall be ornithology.

As the crowd all seemed to move in the one direction, I followed and found myself at the spacious portals of the Picture House wherein I entered. Being of a retiring disposition, I made for the smoke-room downstairs, not wishing to sit myself alone in the presence of ladies whom I could see would consider it nothing less than their duty to try and solace me in my loneliness. To my surprise, not even the smoke-room was absolutely devoid of the charming sex. But notwithstanding, I sat me down and ordered a coffee from the presiding goddess.

And then SHE came in.

Only a mere man, I cannot describe her charms. She was fair, her complexion perfect, her teeth like pearls, her eyes big and innocent, and her smile frank and engaging. With bated breath I watched her as she pulled off her gloves from her shapely hands, and sighed with relief as I noticed the fourth finger of her left hand naked of ornament. Then, filled with the charity that seems part of her charming sex in Edinburgh, she deigned to speak to me and asked from which hospital I was come. The rest of my coffee I drank in heaven. But my time was short. I had to return to Hospital, but before I left her I asked her with anxiety if I might meet her again. Shyly she murmured assent, and we fixed on Monday at the same place. "Don't forget on Monday we must provide our own sugar. You had better bring some saccharine."

I cherished these words, the last words I was to hear from her till Monday!

I left her, and walking on air entered the first chemist's to purchase the saccharine, lest in my transports of delight I should forget.

The next two days were torture. I felt that to speak to other damsels, knowing her, was sacrilege, and so Princes Street saw me no more till Monday.

All Monday morning I polished and cleaned to make myself a little more worthy to meet her. After lunch I put the last touch to my glory, and with hardly a second to spare snatched my bottle of saccharine from my dressing-table and rushed for the car.

I arrived at last, and I flatter myself no smarter officer ever entered that marble hall where I found her.

Tea she rejected, so we went within to see the pictures. Rapture of raptures, she permitted me to hold her hand and buy her chocolates. Nay, she even let me press them (her hands, not the chocolates), and time flew on till perforce we had to leave.

Then to the N.B. The dinner which followed seemed to me a banquet in all but length. I cursed the Food Controller for reducing courses. But there was still the coffee.

In the lounge I ordered it, giving at the same time a proud glance round to see who could boast of so fair a companion ; and she whispered, " Did you remember the saccharine?"

Proudly I answered, and brought the bottle from my pocket and dropped the tiny pellet in her cup. I never take coffee sweetened.

She stirred it, then raising the cup sipped with her ruby lips. Then it happened. With a look of

disgust she gathered up her furs, drank my liqueur, and whispering in a voice full of hate, Brute!" she left me.

I was heart-broken. What had I done? But no flash of comprehension came to me.

I reached Hospital a weary man, and climbing to my bedroom cast myself on the bed in despair. But at 10.15 p.m. despair is not permitted, and the sweet tones of the night sister bade me get to bed.

With weary fingers I undid my collar and laid it on the dressing-table. As I did so, my eyes fell on a bottle labelled " Saccharine!"

Horror-stricken, I snatched the bottle from my pocket and read the label. It read :—

WRECKSALL'S PILLS FOR DYSPEPSIA.

Directions.— As these pills are highly disagreeable to the palate, they must be dissolved in sugar and water before swallowing.

My bedfellow is dyspeptic !

E. HUNTER.

1914

"Let man be free !"

So ran the note that called an Empire's fate.

Like an embedded tree,

Whose roots are dug like fangs beneath the sea,

We stood—and swore

To stand for liberty.

Man let loose war,

Blind-eyed he swung his fundamental hate

Across the world.

And lo ! the roots were rotten and he fell ;

God pity him, and pick him up again.

C. G. R.

WANTED – A SHEPHERDESS

[BIRMINGHAM LABOUR EXCHANGE]

There was a stir the other side of the Wood of Things as they Used to Be, and voices calling, down the cypress-bordered silent paths of the sunny Dutch garden where the Half-Forgotten People go :—" We shall have to wake her . . . " they said ; and : " The poor animals must have come back at last ! " "Fancy, after all these years, to have shepherdesses again ! " Then the voices called, and brocade and shawls were rustling past the flowering borders. They found her at last, still sleeping under an old, old twisted bush of lavender. " Bo-peep ! " And again : " Bo-peep ! you're wanted ! "

When she was quite awake and understood, she set off very quickly, smiling to herself; and all the people watched her run away through the wood, in her little full pannier dress and ribboned hat.

It was a policeman who told her where to go, and on she trotted, while all the folks in the streets turned to stare and comment on her dress. "

Outrageous, these new fashions," chortled one wide-bosomed dame ; " for all the world like a silly china figure. I wouldn't wear such things ! " "

I hear they want a shepherdess," she whispered, at the Labour Exchange ; "so I've come."

" What is your name ?" the young person behind the desk asked, and forthwith wrote down " Beaupeake " in a book. "

It's hard work. You'll have to be up all hours : wear rough clothes : you don't look the sort."

Bo-peep's eyes filled up : everything so cold and strange, and she did want her sheep back : she had made no end of good resolutions to look after them better than before !

" Have you an unemployment insurance card ?" the young person went on.

" No," very timidly.

" Who were your last employers ?"

" Oh, they're not in this world at all, now," a voice full of tears by this.

" Well, what references have you ?" the clerk asked sharply, annoyed at having to waste time on such an imbecile.

" I haven't any."

" You haven't any And you expect farmers to trust their sheep to you ! The clerk took breath, and had begun to tell the applicant what she thought, but poor Bo-peep couldn't face it, and had run away.

Some time afterwards a tired, frightened Bo-peep sobbed herself to sleep again under the lavender-bush the other side of the Wood of Things as they Used to Be. The people were troubled and sorry, but they too were awed by unemployment insurance talk and the necessity for references : they not know what to advise about finding the lost animals.

" Bo - peep always was careless," the Dutch doll said "She'd never do."

Eventually another hard-featured young woman went from the Labour Exchange to look after the woolly sheep.

Iris Barry

APPRECIATION

The last sweet lingering notes of music died
In richest silence ; and the singer's eyes,
Wrapt but a moment since in magic guise,
Fast lost the spell of melody. I tried
To catch the charm in others by my side,
And dimly saw faint fire-lit ghosts arise
In their still faces. Then as sea-mist flies,
The radiance vanished in the breaking tide
Of cackling voices, twisted smiles of praise;
Pale thanks that were no thanks; dead strings of sound.
O God ! I could have choked their mouths ! A blaze
Of sudden anger burnt my quiet round ;
But swiftly cooled to pity for the ways
Of those whom honesty has left uncrowned.

G. M. B

HOW I WROTE AN ARTICLE

It was the morning after my arrival, and I was wandering about the corridor finding out what there was to do should bad weather keep me in. Eventually the notice board came into view, and I immediately began to scan the advertisements of the various societies. I am the fortunate possessor of a very vivid imagination, which amuses me for hours on end. After finding that the Choral Society would positively meet on Thursday at 8.30 p.m., I pictured myself finishing a solo on top A, after which the enraptured choirmaster burst into tears and kissed me on both cheeks, to the accompaniment of applause and enthusiastic Bravos " from the chorus. Then, again, I saw myself producing such marvellous decorative pottery that all the world wondered ! I heard the slow, stately peroration of my speech in the Debating

Society reverberating sonorously around the Light Diet Room—such a triumph of oratory that even the great Mr P-n came and silently shook my hand! I had just returned the last of the forty missing volumes to the Librarian with the modesty of a Sherlock Holmes, when my day-dreams were interrupted by another officer. He was my own height, wore rimless glasses, and stooped somewhat with head thrust forward.

Have you bought a copy of “The Hydra” he queried, aggressively.

“N-no !” I replied, somewhat taken aback ; for although my imagination always serves me in good stead afterwards in picturing myself as the strong-willed man, it never helps me a little bit in an actual encounter. But I shall be very pleased to,” I continued.

Here are our November, December, January, and February numbers,” he said, producing them as by magic. “Two shillings, please!

As I was paying up, he suddenly snapped out, “Can you write?”

Now, if there is anything of which I can be legitimately proud it is my calligraphy, and I therefore boldly replied in the affirmative.

“Then write an article for the March number,” he commanded, with gaze so fervid and mien so minatory that I quailed before him. “Hand it in by Thursday morning at the latest. With this he left me ; and my imagination, usually so consoling to poor ordinary me, left me also, too shocked to come up to the scratch. I wandered up and down the corridor, calling the Muses to witness that I had been maltreated, and yet unable to summon up sufficient courage to beard the Editor in his den, and tell him it was all a pitiful mistake.

My mind grew disordered by direful forebodings my pace quickened, my eye rolled in frenzy, my hair was dishevelled, and at least two buttons of my tunic were undone. Then I stopped, and found myself clutching in an iron grip - the four magazines I had purchased !

I sat down and began to read them voraciously, in the hope of extracting an idea from them. I had not got very far into the second number before I found a golf story, and I at once thought how fine it would be if I wrote one as well. True, I knew nothing about golf, but I could learn. It was then Monday morning, and I had till Thursday. I immediately sallied forth, and, after hunting round the second-hand bookshops for an hour, I brought to light a musty tome on the royal and ancient game which became mine for sixpence. Hugging this treasure, I hastened back again, and after lunch proceeded to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it. By tea-time I was hail-fellow-well-met with all the famous professionals, past and present, and could repeat the definition of a stymie without faltering. I read late into the night, and awoke in the morning with a head like nothing on earth. My breakfast did not cheer me up, and my stomach became rebellious. I was in evil case.

On Tuesday morning I went round the golf course with two keen golfers, in order to add actual experience of the game to my growing knowledge of its theory. I was much exercised by the stymie problem, and reflected considerably on it during the afternoon, while I was recapitulating and making notes on the book. When I went to bed I was full of an idea concerning stymies, about which more anon.

All day on Wednesday I struggled valiantly to utilise my new-gained knowledge and to invent a plot for my golf story, but none came. I toiled all day and caught nothing. At ten o'clock I went upstairs, a white-faced wreck ! Yet, no sooner was I in bed than the plot came. I seized my pen and some paper, and began to write feverishly. When I had safely piloted my hero, Aubrey Ashwell, and the villain, Marmaduke Montmorency, past six holes with fluctuating fortunes, the night sister entered, and, seeing the feverish glint of my eyes, removed my writing materials gently but firmly, and turned the gas out! Perforce I waited, quivering with anticipation, till all was clear, and, setting to work once more, wrote solidly for four hours I Then I read my manuscript, and a thrill of joy passed through me. My story was wonderful. Listen to the climax :

" On the last green and stymied ! Yet Aubrey must hole out in one or lose the game and his wager. A smile of confidence replaced Montmorency's usual sneer. Aubrey braced himself for a final effort. He must win that game and save his paternal acres ! Selecting his thinnest-handled club, he chalked the end of it and went down on his knees. Montmorency's look of triumph became slightly dashed. Then, judging his aim with nicety, Ashwell played a beautiful follow-through shot, and went in off his opponent's ball ! A scowl of fierce rage overspread Montmorency's sallow face, and he muttered inarticulate curses, tearing his hair and grinding his teeth. Then, with a yell of rage, he proceeded to break his clubs over the unoffending caddie's head, while Ashwell calmly lit a cigarette, and saw visions of happiness with Phyllis." Viewed in the calm, clear, reasoning period that follows a hectic night, my story did not appear such a wonderful thing as when I was, so to speak, in medio cursu. However, although I recognised that it had its faults, I still had sufficient confidence in it to take it boldly to the Editor on Thursday morning.

It was a sadder and wiser man that emerged with tottering step from the editorial sanctum. For the Editor blinked dubiously when he first saw the mass of black and white which I had produced, and somehow I quite appreciated his feeling. My story was not published.

VENEFICO

A VALENTINE

I meant it for Nurse,
But I gave it to Sister,
Which made it much worse
(As I meant it for Nurse) ;
'Twas an excellent verse

Rhyming " Mr " with " kissed her " :
I meant it for Nurse,
But I gave it to Sister.

H.

A VISIT TO THE WESTERN DEPOT

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT, MR.W. TOM BEACHAS)

A thick mist was blotting out the town as we made our way along to the Tollcross Depot of the Tramway Company. Night had fallen, and the darkness, accentuated by the mist, could almost be felt. I was accompanied by an official of the Company, through the kindness of whom I was enabled to visit this particular station. The approach was through a back street, more gloomy than the main road, if that were possible, and as we passed between the lines of empty coal carts, the subdued beat of the engines and faint hiss of escaping steam added to the weirdness of the surroundings.

At length we reached the works office and stated our errand to the foreman in charge, who wasted no time in pleasantries, merely searching for the inevitable lump of cotton-waste, and leading the way into the engine-house. A blast of warm air, laden with the odour of lubricating oil, rushed by us as we passed through the swing-doors. The place seemed enormous. The electric bulbs, suspended from a ceiling lost to sight in the gloom, did little in the way of illumination. They were, however, mirrored in the polished steel of the massive piston-rods, which pounded away monotonously, driving the drums around which ran the six cables of the depot.

My first impression, the one that persisted, was of wheels. Huge fly-wheels giving momentum, still larger cog-wheels attached to drums, others round which cables raced and rattled at a furious speed ; old bogey-wheels from the cars, and a miscellaneous assortment of pulleys, cog-wheels, etc., as if some Brobdingnagian watch had been disembowelled. The foreman very soon got into his stride and with a glibness which no broad vernacular could impede, soon had my brain whirling like one of the many wheels with which we were surrounded. He launched forth into a stream of technicalities that overwhelmed me. Automatic oil-feeds, high and low pressure cylinders, three-way cocks, pressure indicators, meters, escape valves, were pointed out and passed by before I could sort them out. However, I managed to get in one or two questions, and he was most patient with them. After a general inspection of the engines, we were led along to the huge water-meters,, through which pass the 25,000 gallons of water which the boilers require daily. Close by

these stood an ingenious tank through which the seam is passed after having driven the pistons. This heats the water before it the boilers, thereby saving coal.

Close by were the four boilers—two marine and two Babcock—the water, in the case of the former, circulating round the boiler tubes, in the latter in the tubes. These monstrous boilers, with their revolving fire-bars, varying air-blasts, automatic coal-feeders, and other labour-saving appliances, consume forty tons of coal per day. This is the minimum daily consumption ; it varies according to the strain on the cars. During the recent snowfall, when the cars became virtual snow-ploughs, the consumption of coal was nearly doubled. A seven-inch pipe conveys the steam to the three engines, one of which is kept in reserve in case of breakdown, a very few minutes sufficing to connect it up to the main shaft if either of the others fail.

I expressed a desire to see the grippers working, if possible, and was straightway taken under the road at the Tollcross junction. We squeezed fearfully past flying cables and whirling wheels, which formed a fantastic fresco on the walls of the narrow vault-like passages, damp with water that had dripped down through the slot in the road ; past the force-pump that was getting rid of the water, under huge slanting wheels that half blocked up the way, until at length our guide stopped, and pointing upwards, shouted that we were under the junction. A rumbling announced the approach of a car ; the red light of the sign in front was plainly visible through the opening. The car, without stopping, released the cable which had just drawn it along Lothian Road and gripped the one for Marchmont Road. Had the driver been careless and not released the cable before it dipped down into the depot, either the cable would have snapped or the car would have been pulled through the road. I was not sorry when at length we turned and retraced our footsteps, for the noise and rattle of the wheels, and the swishing of the cables through the air, were like to make me giddy. On the way back from " down under " we passed through a very long room, wherein there stood on rails six trolleys bearing huge wheels round which the cables ran. To one end of the trolley a pulley was attached, connected by a piece of cable to huge weights. As the cars in the streets caused the cable to tighten or slacken, this trolley automatically moved to adjust the strain. The system may be antiquated, but it is certainly ingenious.

I had seen and heard all I wanted to by this time, so I found myself at the swing-doors once more. Out in the mist again, with my head ringing, I felt a wiser if not a sadder man. Only a smear of grease on my coat saved me from thinking that very shortly I should wake up out of the nightmare.

AT DUSK

At dusk as I lay
Between sleep and waking

There came a thought to me
Out of the shadows,
(A bright green moth
Flitting silently
Through the grey air),
And settled on my bed ;
But I was too tired
To get my net,
And so
It danced away
Into the shadows.

G. A.

LONDON TO EDINBURGH

We're just a bit bewildered by the unexpected thrill,
We didn't think they'd send us to the north ;
But after just a month or two of life at Denmark Hill,
We're looking at the waters of the Forth.
From Leicester Square to Princes Street's a pretty lengthy gap ;
But, after all, what's in a paltry name?
For, though we've had to do a leading turn in " Round the map,"
The faces seem to us to be the same.

The place seems rather hilly, and there isn't such a rush ;
The trams all travel umpteen yards a day ;
The shows are rather fewer, and there isn't quite the crush
We used to know down Piccadilly way.
The way they talk is difficult for us to understand,
It muddled us a bit the day we came ;
But girls are just as beautiful as in the other land :
The " glad eye " gleams in Scotland just the same !

G. D. M.

A GOLF PROBLEM

Two golfers met one morning on the links and arranged to play a round of nine holes ; the loser was to pay for both lunches.

Though Jones was the better golfer by far, he found to his great annoyance, at the end of the seventh hole, that he had to win both the remaining ones if he was to save his pocket. Now, Jones was not a sportsman.

Brown got a good long drive from the eighth tee, but pulled to the left, and his ball fell off the fairway. Jones was very excited when he tee'd his ball, and sliced it into a bunker. He got more and more flurried, and took five more shots to get on to the green. He saw that only a miracle could now save him.

When Brown went to play his second stroke he could not find his ball, and Jones went to help him. Jones saw it first, and, while Brown was looking the other way, picked it up and slipped it into his pocket.

Now, Brown was not a sportsman, either. Unable to find his ball, he awaited his opportunity, then took another from his pocket and dropped it on to a little patch of turf—an almost perfect lie.

With a cry of glad surprise, he called Jones' attention to the fact that he had found his ball, and then prepared to play his second stroke—an easy mashie shot on to the green.

Problem : What can Jones do about it ?

H. G. L.

FAVOURITE BOOKS OF FAMOUS PEOPLE

It has been my privilege and pleasure during the last few days to interview various patients in the Hospital, and some of the Staff, with a view to discovering what are their favourite books. Here is a selection from the mass of information I have gathered together—

I met Capt. GIBSON during his matutinal promenade along the corridor. He seemed to favour " Tramps Abroad " and " Round the World in Eighty Days."

At the show-case I met Mr W. A. C. Scott, and without hesitation he decided on " Many Inventions " and " The Old Curiosity Shop."

Capt. BROCK had some difficulty in choosing his favourite book. He decided at length in favour of "Actions and Reactions." He said to me : " I have never read the book, but the title is suggestive. I should imagine that the writer deals with the 'Art of Doing.' Action, action, and again action is what we want, as he no doubt points out. To act well is to be well. In the

Bolsheviks we have an example . . ." and so on.

Capt. GRIFFITHS, C.F., said when I approached him on the subject : " Before I came to this Hospital I should have replied, A Joy for Ever.' Now, however, I personally would ask for nothing better than a copy of "The Hydra."

I found Mr CARTER wandering idly on the stage, and he said the book he loved best was " A Peep Behind the Scenes," and, after that, a collection of verse entitled " The Kipling Reciter." Mr BAYLEY wired from Bowhill—" Far from the Madding Crowd."

Our POULTRY FARMING EXPERT likes "Great Expectations " and "Much Ado About Nothing." Mr SOTHERAN talked at great length on his favourite book " Lest we Forget," and then asked me for my overdue subscription.

Other selections were –

Mr WAKELIN SCOTT " The Choir Invisible," " Christy's Old Organ."

Mr S. SMITH " Handy Andy," " The Lamp-lighter," " The Light that Failed."

Capt. MARSHALL " The Wealth of Nations," " Scarlet Pimpernel."

Mr W. WOOD-" Camera Fiend."

Mr PROCTOR--" Arms and the Man."

Mr EASTWOOD " Barrack-Room Ballads."

Mr BONNER " The Importance of Being Earnest."

Mr MILTON " Paradise Regained."

Mr PATERSON " Many Cargoes."

Mr NEVILLE " Beau Brocade."

Mr MORRIS " Wee M'Greggor," " Mighty Atom."

Mr HUNTER " Boy," " Innocents Abroad."

Mr REED--" In the Hands of the Potter."

Mr BOYD--" Tennyson's Poems."

I had little difficulty in finding the favourite books of the domestic staff and the orderlies -

THE COOK " Food of the Gods."

THE MAIDS "Broken Earthenware."

THE ORDERLIES--" The Toilers."

Pte. NICHOLSON-" It's never Too Late to Mend."

Pte. SOLOMON----" Henry VIII."

THE MAID WHO SWEEPS THE STAIRS---" Ethics of the Dust."

Other books I found were very popular with many patients. From among them I would select

–

" Les Miserables," " The Lure of the City," " The Heart of Midlothian," " Waverley," " The Prodigal," " Little Women."

CYNIC.

CLUB NOTES

Craiglockhart War Hospital Officers' Club.

Chairman - Capt. GIBSON.

Hon. Treasurer - Capt. G. MARSHALL.

Secretary — Mr W. H. SOTHERAM.

General.—The Club provides all writing materials, papers and periodicals, and soap in the lavatories ; all gratuities are paid to the staff out of Club funds, and among other advantages which may be enjoyed by members, we may mention the following :—Bridge, chess, draughts, the use of a telephone, and classes in various languages and engineering.

Concerts (Mr Irwin, Secretary).—There is a fine concert every week. The C.W.H. orchestra is quite renowned. All can help.

Debating Society (Mr Hunter, Secretary). —Meets every Wednesday, at 8 p.m. Come along and argue !

Model/Yacht Club (Mr Murray, Secretary). —This Club is very popular. About twenty model yachts have been built in the workshop.

Camera Club (Mr Leys, Secretary).— Meetings are held every Sunday at 8 o'clock. Competitions are run and prizes given. There is a completely equipped dark room in the basement.

Field Club (Mr V. C. Clarke, Secretary). —A lecture is held weekly, every Monday at 8 o'clock, and an optical lantern has been purchased by the Club to illustrate the various subjects. Weekly excursions are made to the Edinburgh region, which is being systemati-cally surveyed.

Agriculture and Gardening (Mr V. C. Clarke. Secretary). —Every facility is given for those interested, including lectures at the East of Scotland College of Agriculture.

Boys' Training Club (Mr Drewitt, Secretary). —Officers lecture and assist Buy Scout movement.

Workshop (Mr N. Wood, Secretary). —A completely fitted workshop on the premises provides for any branch of workmanship.

Billiards (Mr Wright, Secretary).—There are two billiard tables, and the Club is endeavouring to add another at an early date. Competitions are held monthly. No charge for a game !

Golf (Mr Davies, Secretary). —Several sets of clubs are provided for use of Members.

Competitions are organised. Golf balls can be purchased from the tobacco stall. Beginners can be assisted by the representative.

Tennis, Badminton, Croquet, Bowls, etc. (Mr Milsom, Secretary).—All the materials for these games are provided and competitions held monthly.

Choral Society (Mr Robertson, Secretary). -- A meeting is held every Tuesday at 8 o'clock. Come and help.

Fine Arts Society (Mr King, Secretary). Classes in all subjects are held at the Edinburgh College of Art to which officers are invited.

Arts and Crafts (Mr Warne, Secretary).— Instruction is given in rug making, wood carving, decorative art pottery, wood block printing, etc. Materials to be had from the show -case.

Literary Society (Mr Lewis, Secretary).— A paper is read each week.

Magazine (Mr Bonner, Editor).—This worthy chronicle of all our doings, etc., adds interest to our stay here. Send an article along !

Tobacco Stall (Mr Proctor, Club Steward). - Little need be said to advertise the boon this offers to all !

Library (Mr C. W. Scott, Librarian). — Books to suit all tastes. Additions monthly.

Laundry (Mr White). —Laundry collected and delivered at special contract prices. Laundry must be ready each week by 10 a.m. on Sunday.

Church Notices.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Sundays, 3rd March and 17th March.

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion. Room 6.

10 a.m. Morning Prayer. Concert Room.

29th Mar. Good Friday. Special services will be announced later.

31st Mar. Easter Day.

PRESBYTERIAN.

Sundays, 10th March and 24th March.

10 a.m.. Morning Service. Concert Room.

BIBLE STUDY CIRCLE.

This meets now on Fridays at 8 p. m. in Room 6. New members are welcomed each week.

R.B. WINSER, C.F., C. of E.

Concerts.

At the concert on 2nd February the principal artistes were Miss Mentiplay, Miss Edith Caird, Gunner Bamford, and Mr Eric Masters. All of these artistes are well known to us, and they could never be too well known. On many occasions they have won our whole-

hearted appreciation of their talents. It would be invidious to draw any comparisons, but I think the most popular items of the evening were the duets of Miss Edith Caird and Gunner Bamford.

Capt. Marshall and Mr Dundas gave us some " Back Chat " as a curtain-raiser. It's one virtue was that it enabled the inevitable late comers to get into their seats without disturbing any good item. I never have heard such a painful string of chestnuts, bad puns, and weak jokes. However — !

A pleasing item on the programme was the "Hydra Waltz," composed by Mr Wakelin Scott, and delicately played by the orchestra. It was deservedly well received.

The orchestra, which was in great form, also gave us "Chu Chin Chow," "Poet and Peasant," and "Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna."

Of the concert held on 9th February one can only say that when it was good it was very very good, but when it was bad it was — ! It rose to great heights and it sank to great depths. Several new artistes were with us—Miss May M'Kay, a sweet soprano, Miss Lamond, who is one of the finest contraltos we have heard at Craiglockhart, and Miss M. M'Cullagh, who gave a number of delightful little dances. Miss M'Dougal, who is well known among us, sweetly sang one or two songs, and Mr Eric Masters, though not announced on the programme, once more came forward with some of his old songs. I think Mr Masters will soon have worn out his repertoire at the Hydro.

The unfortunate " back chat " turn of the previous week seemed to have acted as an inspiration to our budding " Robeys " and " Formbys " and " Lesters ." On looking at our programmes we found three items vaguely described as " humorous ." A good label can often do much, but it cannot do everything.

The first was a song and back chat by Messrs Robinson and Hughes. It can only be described as a " regrettable incident ."

Then Mr Baylis attempted to amuse us. He gave a fairly good rendering of " Good-bye-e," but when it came to an encore —. What is so delightfully refreshing about Mr Baylis is the cheerful way in which he overcomes such difficulties as utter lack of vocal powers, and inability to remember either words or tune of his songs.

The weight-lifting burlesque of Messrs Dundas and Gibson was much better. It showed more than a glimmer of humour and it was fortunately all dumb show ; so chestnuts, puns, and pointless remarks about tramcars were avoided.

The orchestra during the evening gave us " Empireland," " Reminiscences of Scotland," " Grand Match from Tannhauser," and " Chant Sans Paroles."

The concert on 23rd February was the first one organised by Mr S. Smith. He did splendidly. We had a feast of good things. One pleasing feature of the concert was the introduction of several novel turns. A number of new artistes were with us—Miss Marie Thompson sang several songs. Her soprano voice is of the finest quality. She has a wonderful range. Her top

notes, particularly, are delightful, they are so full of tone. We look forward eagerly to hearing her again in the near future.

Miss Goldie Scott gave us some contralto songs. Her first number was composed by Mr Wakelin Scott, the words written by Mr Bonner. The setting seemed too delicate and restrained for the passionate words, but then one does not look for passion in Mr Wakelin Scott.

Staff-Sergeant Lennie was a welcome addition to the programme. His burlesques and humorous songs were really funny and were extremely popular.

We have to welcome Mr Irwin to our midst. He is a great asset to any dramatic or musical evening. Personally, I think I shall like Mr Irwin best in his light musical comedy pieces. The two monologues, " The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God " and " I Wonder if My Mother Knew," were unfortunate selections for displaying his ability. I wish he had chosen other pieces. His scenas, "Bachelor Gay" and " Hello, my dearie," were cleverly staged and were deservedly well received. In them Mr S. Smith had an opportunity of using the lighting effects made possible by the splendid new system of lights he has been working at so untiringly of late.

Mr Steger gave us one or two songs and sang a duet with Miss Galloway. Miss Grieve played us two violin solos.

The orchestra gave us " Jorok Magyar " March, Rachmanninoff's " Prelude," and a truncated selection, " Victoryland."

LOLLIUS.

Dramatic Notes.

On Saturday, 16th February, there was an orchestral and dramatic evening. Such an evening is full of hopes and fears for performers and audience alike. Both hopes and fears were fully realised. The performance was like the curate's egg. Three sketches were produced ; the first was " Phipps."

The cast was :—

Phipps . . Mr Milton.

Lady Fanny . Miss Janet May.

Sir Gerald . Capt. S. Gordon Marshall.

Shades of Stanley Houghton ! He must have turned in his grave at this rendering of what is really a brilliantly witty and scathing satire on society life. The performance was lifeless and halting. The characters had no grasp of the parts they were playing. The butler made a praiseworthy effort to interpret a difficult role and to pull the sketch together, but his exit, which should have been the climax, was appalling bathos. Had more attention been paid to

the rendering of the closing speeches we could have forgiven and forgotten many faults that went before.

With this criticism, however, let us place on record our sympathy for the producer and the artistes, and our admiration of their determination in producing the sketch at all. Owing to unforeseen circumstances the sketch that should have taken first place on the programme had to be abandoned at the eleventh hour, and "Phipps" was called in. We have to congratulate Miss Janet May particularly, for her pluck. Not many ladies would have dared to undertake such a part with less than three days' notice and only two rehearsals. If the sketch was not a success it was not due to any lack of enterprise and determination on the part of producer and actors.

Stanley Houghton would have been better pleased with the rendering of his second sketch, "The Master of the House," a pathetic little tragedy with a number of poignant and tense situations in it. The all too common faults of amateur theatricals tended to creep in. There was too much of a "sameness" about the dialogue ; the exits were clumsy ; not enough stress was laid on the various dramatic situations ; not enough use was made of silences.

The cast was :—

Mr Ovens . Mr G. T. Eastwood.

Fred Ovens . Mr E. Wood, M.C.

Mrs Ovens . Miss Maclean.

Eddie, Mrs Ovens' sister Mrs M. A. Queen.

Dr Jellicoe . Mr H. J. Dickins.

Mr Skrumshire, a solicitor Capt. S. Gordon Marshall.

Mr Wood, whose acting throughout the evening was extremely good, failed to get the best out of the close of the sketch, when he was alone with the body of his father. His speech was too hurried, and he failed to portray that agony of remorse and dread that drove him out into the night, leaving the dead man the master of the house.

Miss Maclean, as Mrs Ovens, showed a keen appreciation of her part, and interpreted it splendidly.

Dr Jellicoe was an impossible man. He might, I think, have very well been made a little less blasé. His cynical asides to the solicitor would have gained in dramatic force if they had not ostensibly been given as part of the general conversation, for widow, son, and sister-in-law to hear. The doctor would then have been, if no less detestable, at any rate more true to life. Mr Eastwood gave a life-like interpretation of the corpse. I think I am right in saying that he was the only character who was "word perfect." From the way he played the part, I would prophesy that he has a great dramatic future before him. He should go far.

The conduct of some of the audience during the more dramatic parts of the sketch was yet another illustration of the fact that tragedy and pathos are not the best subjects with which to entertain patients at a nerve hospital. I commend this observation to the producer.

The aim of amateur producers—mistaken, in my opinion, —is to save the best sketch till last. " The Conversion of Nat Sturge " was undoubtedly the most popular and best acted piece of the evening.

The cast was :—

The Bishop Mr M. Milton.

Nat Sturge, a burglar Mr E. Wood, M.C.

Raddles, his apprentice Mr G. T. Eastwood.

Julia, the Bishop's daughter Mrs M. A. Queen.

Mr Wood, as the burglar, and Mr Milton, as the Bishop, took the principal parts. I should imagine that Mr Milton has never in reality looked down the muzzle of a revolver held by a trapped burglar. Even so, I do not think he was justified in portraying so dignified an indifference to the weapon. I am certain that Sturge was looking vicious enough for anything. A passing nervousness, a little wholesome " wind up," would at least have been more seemly.

Mr Eastwood, as the burglar's apprentice, had only a small part, but he played it as to the manner born. I only regret that he was not caught getting through the window. I should have loved him to have met the adorable Julia. Some of his remarks would have been worth remembering.

Mrs Queen, as the Bishop's passee daughter, was very good. When once she got over the shock her make-up must have given her when she looked in the mirror, she entered into her part with spirit. Her lisp, her hair curlers, her gushing exclamations were wholly delightful.

Mr Wood, as Nat Sturge, was splendid. I'm sorry, though, that he decided to reform. He was such a nice burglar. Such burglars are born, not made.

To Mr Wood, too, we extend our congratulations for the admirable production of all three sketches. The performance, though decidedly amateurish in parts, was as a whole delightful. The orchestra, waved onward enthusiastically and vigorously by Mr Proctor, gave us some good selections between the sketches. Owing to the conversational prowess of a large number of the audience, I heard but little of what the orchestra played. I gathered from the programme, however, that we listened to " March Rakoczy," " Traumerei," " Reminiscences of Scotland" (including a solo on the bells by Miss Grieve), " Petite Suite de Concert," and the " Nell Gwynne Dances."

GYP.

Debating Society

Chairman—Capt. S. GORDON MARSHALL.

Secretary—Mr E. WOOD.

The past month has seen a further increase in the membership and popularity of the above Society. Some extremely interesting subjects have been discussed, and the " Mock Trial "

which engaged the attention of the members at the last meeting proved most amusing—so much so as to deserve the dignity of a separate paragraph in this valuable and highly exclusive publication.

A pleasing feature of the debates during the last month has been the presence of the Matron and Staff. We welcome them most heartily, and will do our best to interest them whenever they honour us with their presence.

We have had our losses this month, as is inevitable. Greatly do we regret the departure of such splendid speakers as Capt. O'Brien, Mr Paterson, and Mr Milton. The vigour of the first, the delicacy of the second, and the plaintive wails of Mr Milton are things of the past ; but they have handed on their lamps, and the new members are " carrying on " in a manner beyond all praise.

To new members of the Officers' Club we cannot do better than quote the words which appeared on one of our recent posters : "Don't argue in the corridors ! Come to the Debating Society and argue there. You will find it more amusing, and more satisfactory." Come once. Some one is sure to tread on the tail of your coat, and you will rise and go for him (verbally, of course), to your own satisfaction, and to the delight of a roomful of good listeners. It is worth a trial.

Model Yacht Club.

Secretary—Lieut. H. GARBOIS MURRAY.

Now that the weather has improved so much, and, we may hope, will continue so to do, there is no reason why the above Club should not again attain its former flourishing state. We want members to build new models—or if they have old ones already, to get them out—so that we may begin the " season " as soon as possible.

Those thinking of building should inspect Mr Harcourt's model in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Case in the Main Hall.

She is very easily made, and as fast as any model of these dimensions can be. All particulars re plans, tools, etc., can be had from the Secretary, Room 27.

Camera Club.

Chairman—Mr G. E. PHILLIPS.

Secretary—Mr LEYS.

Members of Committee—Mr S. SMITH and Mr MORTON.

Owing to the inclement weather during the past month, the work of the Club has been somewhat impeded. The light and atmospheric conditions have been very poor, and offered little if any encouragement to the members, but this is no reason why the meetings held every Thursday evening at 8 o'clock, in Room 6, should not be well attended. During these unsuitable days many useful theoretical hints on Photography can be acquired at our meetings. With the co-operation of every individual member, there is no reason why the

Camera Club should not attain a high standard of efficiency.

As the weather improves, many interesting rambles will be arranged, and it is hoped that all interested will take part.

On 1st February the Club went to Rosslyn and spent a most delightful day there. Many valuable pictures were obtained, although the light was not too good.

On the 21st of the month a visit was paid to the Exhibition of Photographs taken by the Edinburgh Photographical Society, and many first-rate pictures were seen.

There is no reason why our members should not reach a standard equal to the Edinburgh Society, with a little perseverance.

Competitions are still continued but very few prints are submitted. Why is this ?

The dark room is now well equipped and offers every assistance to every one.

The co-operation of all members is essential if the Club wishes to continue its increased activities. It is up to every one to help, so as to make the Camera Club one of the strongest societies of the Officers' Club.

Field Club.

Chairman—Captain BROCK, R. A. M. C.

Members of Committee—Mr AVERILL and Mr DREWITT.

Secretary—Mr V. C. CLARKE.

This Club exists for the study of nature and animal life in a popular way, and has, as one of its chief aims, the correlation of abstract knowledge with its practical appreciation in the surrounding country, and the inter-relation of one science with another.

In furtherance of these ideas, meetings are held weekly, on Mondays, when a paper is read on some subject of interest, and discussed. There are various sections devoting attention to a particular subject, and reports on the progress made in the knowledge of these subjects are given from time to time.

Then, for the development of the practical side, and for obtaining information of various subjects and local industries, excursions are made on Fridays to some place of interest. As no specialised or scientific knowledge is necessary to derive benefit from the papers read, and as the meeting is conducted in an informal and conversational way, it is hoped, and strongly urged, that more officers will take advantage of this Club's efforts to supply a few hours' diversion and pleasant and profitable intercourse.

On 21st January, Captain Gibson read a paper on " Physical basis of heredity." He detailed the cellular structure of plant and animal life, and showed how union of cells contained characteristics of parents, and elaborated the quasi-mathematical law known as Mendel's Law. An interesting discussion followed, but Capt. Gibson had aroused an enthusiasm that did not die with the close of the meeting.

On 28th January, Mr Clarke gave a paper on " Trees and their characteristics," and he

explained some of the more important points of forest botany, and the various methods of identifying the species by buds, leaf scars, leaves, flowers, and form. The paper was illustrated by lantern slides and drawings.

On 4th February, Mr Strang was unable to give his paper on " The Bacteriology of the soil," and Mr Averill filled the breach by giving a resume of the year's work on a farm, which was much appreciated.

On 11th February, Mr Miller read a paper on " The Pollination of flowers and the dispersal of seeds." He showed how the various agencies of wind, water, and insects were used in both cases, and also the contrivances employed by flowers to ensure cross-fertilisation. The lecture was illustrated by some very good lantern slides.

On 18th February, Mr Bayley, owing to his transfer to Bowhill, was unable to give his promised lecture on " Birds." Captain Brock, however, kindly stepped in and gave some interesting details of the birds shown on the slides which had been most kindly lent by the well-known naturalist, Mr Charles Kirk, of Glasgow. The lecture was well attended and the slides reached a high standard in Bird Photography.

On 25th February, Mr Robertson repeated his most interesting paper on " The City on the Nor' Loch. The paper, which had been considerably elaborated, was admirably constructed, and, together with the lantern views, drawn by the lecturer himself, provided a most educative and enjoyable evening. Now. Mr Robertson, encore !

The excursions during the past month have been very representative. One day we had our old favourite, an excursion over the Pentland Hills, stopping en route for tea at the cottage of the " Gentle Shepherdess " at Habbie's Howe ; the hills were bare but the day was mild, and we could sniff the air of coming Spring. Another day we went to the Edinburgh Botanical Gardens and were most kindly shown round by Mr Harrow. Our attention was particularly attracted by the economic and insectivorous plants. On another occasion, shepherded by Mr Scobbie, we made a raid across the water to Fife, where we were introduced to the famous Earlseat coal mines of that illustrious county (home both of our late and present Commanding Officers). The party were shown over the pits by Mr J. Burgess of Earlseat House. We saw a seam of coal varying from 11 to 23 ft. thick, and the splendid condition of the pit ponies was remarkable. We are highly indebted to Mr Burgess for his kindness in arranging this demonstration. So popular was the trip that Mr Scobbie is arranging a similar excursion in the course of a few days.

The interests of live-stock breeders were catered for by a journey which we one day made to the Home Farm at Dalmeny, where, under the guidance of Mr Sinclair, we were shown Lord Rosebery's famous herd of pedigree stock. This was one of the most enjoyable days the Club has had, and we hope a similar excursion can be arranged for a later date.

Now that the Spring is coming in, as is well evidenced by the carolling of the mavis in the garden every morning from daylight onwards, the Field Club is meditating a big push. It is hoped to get a much larger attendance of officers both at the weekly evening meetings and

at the excursions.

Following the lead set by the Arts and Crafts Committee, we purpose starting a type. museum of local natural history, which would be certain to stimulate the interest of officers outside the Club and who would be otherwise largely unaware of our existence.

The work of the Regional Survey is being carried on with increasing interest, and the scheme of linking up our work with the practical arts, such as gardening and farming, etc., is being constantly kept in view, particularly now that several of our officers are being transferred to employment of that nature on discharge from Craiglockhart.

We have now lost the services of our secretary, Mr Miller, who, in succession to Mr Chase, has worked untiringly in the Club's interests. We send our very best wishes to him.

Agriculture and Gardening.

Secretary—Mr V. C. CLARKE

Considering the time of year, great enthusiasm has been shown with the practical work at Gray's Mill Farm. During the past month the dressing of the potatoes has been finished and ploughing is now in full swing. Several officers are becoming quite proficient in the latter art. On 20th February, the officers turned out in strength to assist with the threshing. Three stacks of oats and one of wheat were put through the mill. The day was most profitably spent by all concerned, and not the least pleasing part of it, from the officers' point of view, was the excellent spread of home-baked scones, jam, and other good Scots fare which Mrs Jamieson provided for us when the day's toil was over. All officers with farming tastes should now begin to turn out regularly to Gray's Mill Farm. They will get a warm welcome, and, as the sowing season is close at hand, there will be plenty of work for everybody.

Gardening has not yet commenced, but we hope in our next number to give full details of the work of sowing, etc., done during March.

Officers are reminded that the College of Agriculture have kindly arranged classes in Agriculture, and Forest and Agricultural Botany, for officers in this Hospital. The classes, which include practical work in the laboratory, are held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, and all those who are interested are urged to join.

On Wednesday evenings, Mr Young, of the College of Agriculture, gives a lantern lecture at the Hospital on live stock. The lecturer deals at some length with the different breeds of horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs, and also dairying. These lectures are greatly appreciated, and we take this opportunity of thanking Mr Young for his great kindness and, we must add, devotion to us, for he always turns up despite the tram service !

As already stated under Field Club note, an excursion was recently made to the Home Farm at Dalmeny to see Lord Rosebery's pedigree stock. All those officers who have a leaning for agriculture and its concomitant, stock-raising, should make a point of going at the next opportunity. We are deeply grateful to His Lordship for the facilities extended to us.

Boys' Training Club.

Secretary—Mr S. E. DREWITT.

Many changes have taken place during the last month. We regret the loss of Mr Waterhouse, who was Secretary of the Club, and we all hope he will have every success in the future. He was very energetic in this work, and carried the Club on very successfully. We have also lost Mr Wray and Mr Swann—they were two of our valuable instructors.

We offer a hearty invitation to all the new officers in the Hospital to fill up, not only their places, but to take up other classes. We are urgently in need of instructors ; and we want to make this good work, which means so much to the boys and their future life, to go ahead with leaps and bounds. We have already some more offers of help by Messrs Hetherington, Eastwood, Clunie, V. Clarke, Morris, Murray, and Capt. Petersen. There is still much need for more, so we trust that many will come forward.

The work of the month has been extremely successful. Many examinations have taken place in connection with the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western Divisions of Boy Scouts. Great credit is due to the instructors who have taught these boys, as in many cases these boys have reached the maximum amount of marks, and on the whole an average of 90 per cent. has been attained. Needless to say, the Higher Commands are very pleased, and even General Baden Powell (Chief of this movement) is highly satisfied by these successes. It is anticipated that we shall have a visit from the Chief Scout early in the coming season. Classes are held to suit any instructor, at any time and any place.

Golf.

Secretary—Lieut. BEERS.

Of golf there is nothing to report this month but that which is good. The weather has been particularly favourable, the entrants and interest have definitely increased, and the number of competitions have almost reached the standard of one a week which we had set ourselves.

Three competitions were held, with very satisfactory results.

The Stroke Competition on the Craiglockhart Course, on 6th February, enrolled 24 entries.

The result was interesting, four players—the Rev. G. O. E. Griffith, Messrs Beers, Courtenay, and Robertson—each scoring 78 net. On the decision that these gentlemen should contest again the three prizes, Lieut. Courtenay led with 74—a very good card, showing 4 strokes under Bogey—the Rev. Griffith came second with 81, and Lieut. Robertson third with 86.

On the following Monday, 11th February, a Bogey Competition was played on the same course. Of the 22 players who entered, the best card was returned by Capt. Davie, who had scored 1 up on Bogey, the Rev. G. O. E. Griffith again coming second with 3 down to Bogey, and Lieut. Courtenay third with 4 down.

On Thursday, 14th February, a foursome Stroke Competition was held on the Mortonhall Golf

Course, at which some very good play was seen. Sixteen members competed for the two prizes offered. The chief prize was taken by Lieuts. Gardner and Dixon with a score of 95, Capt. Davie and Lieut. Watson coming next with 99.

We are very grateful to these Clubs for the privileges which they allow us. We appreciate and enjoy them.

It is very satisfactory also to see the increased interest taken in this form of recreation. There are, indeed, few pursuits which combine in themselves all the attractions and advantages of golf.

We believe that the old golfers' axiom of " Never up, never in," will soon be changed for a golfers' aim of " Ever up, ever in " ! At least, indications here would seem to point that way. We hear rumours of golf manuals being studied, of putts practised on carpets, of stances and style suggested and tried in bedrooms, of disquisitions on drivers and drives, and of enthusiasm on all golf matters from Vardon and Braid to Brasseys and Bags (this enthusiasm, we are told, is not confined to sons of the Mother Country only !), that we have no fear for the future of " the royal and ancient game" !

Choral Society.

Choirmaster—C. WAKELIN SCOTT.

Secretary—C. D. S. ROBINSON.

Since the last report of this Society to The Hydra, it is with deep regret that the Society has lost the services of Mr V. A. Bayley, who was the original Hon. Sec. Our thanks are due to his many services. Our thanks are alp" due to Dr Paterson G. Keppie, of Edinburgh, for the loan of many useful part-songs and glees.

Regarding the actual work of the Society, there is nothing to report, as on the first evening when the new Hon. Sec. was present in his official capacity only three members were present. It is hoped that members will turn up in force in the future, as it is somewhat disheartening to the organisers.

Arts and Crafts.

We regret the departure of Mr W. A. C. Scott, who has in the past helped so much with the above, and we herewith wish to express our deep appreciation of the work and keen interest he has taken in this direction. We are, however, glad that Mr Scott is now fit again.

We also wish to express our appreciation to Miss Watson for the kind help and instruction in decorative pottery.

Mr Warne has kindly consented to take over the work of Mr Scott, and he will be only too pleased to give any information within his powers regarding " Arts and Crafts."

We therefore look to the patients of the Hospital to take advantage of the facilities offered to them in this direction.

Engineering Classes.

Officers who have a taste for engineering have for the last year been taking advantage of the kind permission offered to them by the Edinburgh School Board to work at the Tyne-castle Engineering Workshops, which are within twenty-five minutes (on foot and by car) of the Hospital.

Great benefit has been derived from this scheme, which, under the energetic guidance of Mr Mack, has throughout proved most interesting.

Additional scope for such work has been given during the past month by the Edinburgh University and Heriot-Watt College, as they have welcomed any officer to take out any class he is inclined for.

Professor Hudson Beare, of the Edinburgh University (Engineering Dept.), has granted every possible facility and rendered great help to the officers at present attending the Engineering classes there.

As this work will prove most useful to any one contemplating, for instance, an appointment under the Ministry of Munitions, it is hoped that the officers here will take advantage of this good opportunity kindly offered to them by the heads of the above educational institutions. It may be added that these classes, too, will stand those in good stead who intend to go in for engineering after the War, and, it is hoped, may even lead eventually to permanent appointments in some cases.

Literary Society.

Chairman—Mr BONNER.

Secretary—Mr LEWIS

The Society is now in full swing. Its membership is increasing and its sphere of usefulness extending.

During the month the following papers have been read : " Poetry—Its Place in Modern Life" (Mr Paterson) ; " The Modern Novel, as illustrated by Hardy, Wells, and Bennett" (Mr C. Wakelin Scott) ; " Samuel Butler " (Mr H. G. Lewis) ; and " Tennyson and Browning--a Comparative Study" (Mr Boyd).

Every paper is followed by a discussion on the subject.

The meetings are held each Tuesday evening at 8.30 p.m. in the Light Diet Room. Every one interested in literature and modern thought is invited.

Library.

Librarian --C. WAKELIN SCOTT. Room 52.

The Catalogue is completed, and a copy will shortly be placed in the Silence Room. The Librarian regrets that there are still several books long overdue.

Statistics for the month ending 16th February :—There are 300 books in the Library, of which 245 are fiction. During the month 196 books have been lent, of which 184 were fiction. It has been impossible to compile returns for the books from Macniven & Wallace's Library.