

Canadian Hospital

GRANVILLE
CHATHAM HOUSE

News

YARROW HOME
TOWNLEY CASTLE

VOL. IV

RAMSGATE, FEBRUARY 17, 1917

No. 7

EDITORIAL

ESPRIT DE CORPS

DON'T tell us that there is no *esprit de corps* in the units of the Canadian forces. We know better. During the last two weeks we have had to withstand the most terrific barrage of persistent protests against the shoulder strap of our wounded comrade upon the cover. Here are some of the bombs hurled at the editor: "How much did the R.C.R. pay you?" And again, "How many friends have you in the R.C.R.?" And jealously—"Why not the 226th?" How innocently these things happen! This poor fellow was wounded. He happened to be an R.C.R. Our artist sketched him, and there you are.

However, the whole situation set us thinking about the loyal devotion of our boys to their original units. Just think of it! Many of these units had been in existence a year perhaps, or less, and then broken up into drafts, yet the enthusiasm engendered during months of training in Canada, and carried across the seas along with the eager anticipation of fighting in the trenches side by side, has endured through bitterest disappointment. We recall two instances.

One morning a draft of four hundred men of the Nth battalion were drawn up on the parade ground of a training brigade in England. It meant, no doubt, the demolition of the battalion, at best absorption. Form fours—right—quick march—and a subaltern, left behind, rushed headlong to his room in a nearby hut, and throwing himself prone upon his couch, burst into convulsive sobbing. It was the breaking of a camaraderie cemented during the hundred miles trek from Niagara, and the subsequent months of training. One day the band of the Mth battalion was playing off a large draft. The swinging march tune went fairly well, but "Auld Lang Syne" broke down completely, because of the deep emotion of bandsmen who had taken a real pride in their corps. In the hospital, as the weeks go by, are to be found men from every corps, of every branch of the service, and we love them for their regimental pride, and suffer heroically their healthy barrage. We'll see what can be done.

O. C. J. W.