

III

INITIATION

March 23, 1915.

LAST night I had to take out a party of stretcher bearers to collect the wounded from a certain regimental aid-post, a very interesting experience. The exposed part of the road is not long, but while we were on it bullets kept singing past in the dark, producing a curious sinking sensation in my epigastric region, and an intense longing to become like the mathematical point, which, as Euclid assures us, has position but no magnitude. When for the first time you hear a bullet with its long-drawn "wh-e-e-w" crossing the road on which you are walking you experience a remarkable disinclination to move forward rapidly, and a great and affectionate yearning for the ditch at the side of the road. I believe, however, that you soon get over these preliminary feelings of discomfort, and you forget all about bullets when shells begin to fly around.