

# HOME MAGAZINE

## LIFE · LITERATURE & EDUCATION

### Kitchener, of Khartoum.

On the morning of June 6th, all Canada stood aghast; the British Empire stood aghast; the world stood aghast. For across the cables had flashed everywhere the report that "Kitchener of Khartoum,"—long regarded as Britain's greatest soldier, Secretary of State for War during this the greatest crisis in the history of the British Empire—had sunk to his death in the cold waters off the coast of the West Orkney Islands. And not only Lord Kitchener, but with him his entire staff, and the brave seamen aboard the fast cruiser Hampshire. During the past year Earl Kitchener had visited Greece and the Balkans; a similar mission to Russia brought death. En route to Archangel, the Hampshire received the fatal blow either from a submarine or a mine. Perhaps the Teutons knew that the great British soldier was aboard. Perhaps not. The shot may have been for them a lucky accident.—But the joybells have rung throughout Germany.

Earl Kitchener was born at Croter House, Ballylongford, County Kerry, Ireland, on June 24th, 1850, but, while claiming the Emerald Isle as his birthplace, he was English to the core, by race and by temperament. His father was Lt.-Col. H. H. Kitchener of Cossington, Leicestershire, and his mother a native of Suffolk. Even his name, "Horatio Herbert," spoke of English lineage, while his education in early life was carried on at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

In 1871 he entered the Royal Engineers, and from that day his promotion was rapid and honors fell upon him thick and fast. In almost every part of the British Empire—Canada excepted—his services were requisitioned. Commander of the Egyptian cavalry 1882-84; of the Nile Expedition 1884-85; Governor of Suakim 1886-88; Adjutant-General of the Egyptian Army 1888-92; Commander of the Dongola Expeditionary Force in 1896—All this a record. Then came the expedition to Khartoum in 1898. As a result of that he was raised to the Peerage and voted a grant of £30,000. Henceforth he was "Kitchener of Khartoum."

When the South African war broke out he was made Chief of Staff of the Forces, and, later, during 1900-1902, Commander-in-Chief, receiving subsequently, for his services, a viscounty and a further grant of £50,000. From 1903 to 1909 he was in command in India, then, after refusing the Mediterranean command, he was appointed in 1911 to the post of British Agent in Egypt in succession to Sir Eldon Gorst, a position that made him master, as well, of all movements of the fleet in the Mediterranean.

At the beginning of the present war, Earl Kitchener was appointed Secretary of State for War, and the Government's decision to entrust him with the supreme direction of the war was unanimous. Later, as the cataclysm developed into wider and ever wider proportions, it was thought well to divide his duties, and the ministry of munitions was formed with Mr. Lloyd George as Minister. About the same time the burden was lessened still further by the appointment of Gen. Sir William Robertson as Chief of the Imperial Staff.

While these changes were in progress, he was subjected to severe criticism, especially by the Northcliffe papers, yet the fact remains that, beginning with a comparatively small army in August 1914, it has been largely due

to Lord Kitchener's efforts and powers for organization that Great Britain now boasts a trained force of over 5,000,000 men.

Kitchener never married. He has always been a man of silence, little given to social or domestic life, known as a "man of iron," most at home in the saddle or on the field. His steady blue-gray eyes and implacable bearing have always been the terror of his soldiers, and yet, too, he has been the idol of the British army.

Perhaps one of the best character sketches of him is to be found in A. G. Gardiner's book, "Pillars of Society." Such sentences as these tell much: "He came into the room like the Day of Judgment, searching, implacable. . . . At his coming the idle chatter is silenced as the birds are silenced at the oncoming of a storm. . . . His gift of silence is one of the secrets of his power over the crowd. . . . He lives in deeds, not words. . . . There is about him something of the quality of General Kleber, of whom it was said that it made men brave to look at him. If he does not make you feel brave at least he makes you feel strong. But he has not the magic that Napoleon exercised over the minds of men. . . . It is not by his battles that he will take high rank among commanders. Neither Omdurman nor Paardeberg was a military exploit of high quality. It is as the business man of war—cold, calculating, merciless, moving without pity to his goal—that he will have an enduring place in history."

Yet with all his implacability, all his sternness, all his hardness of militarism, there was somewhere the streak of softness that proclaims a man human.



The Late Field Marshal Earl Kitchener.

Napoleon loved violets, Chamberlain loved orchids, and Kitchener had a weakness for the blue and white china that figured everywhere in his luxuriously furnished Canterbury home.—Nor is it utterly unknown that he has done, more than once, a kind deed.

At time of going to press it is not known who will be appointed as Kitchener's successor. A number have been mentioned, among them Sir William Robertson, now chief of the Imperial Staff; David Lloyd George; Col. Seeley and Lord Derby. The post is one of the greatest importance and difficulty. Much will depend upon Britain's choice.

### Travel Notes.

From Helen's Diary.

Geneva, April 16, '16.

I never saw such a place as Geneva for "expositions" and "teas." Nearly every week there is a new exposition of some kind, and as for teas—there is no counting them. In connection with the teas there is always a bazaar or special sale of something, and the proceeds go to swell the funds of some of the thousand and one charitable organizations of Geneva. Teas draw the ducats. For making a fat purse lean, I don't know of anything equal to a tea. If any society wants to raise money it forthwith has a tea, and the money rolls in so fast it can hardly be counted. People go to teas prepared to part with their coins and become the owners of knick-knacks they haven't any use for, but the transaction seems to make the buyers feel pleasantly philanthropic, and brings great joy to the hearts of the sellers. During the course of the winter I think every society in Geneva has had a tea, and some of them have had several. The daily papers keep one informed on the subject. Glancing at one of the papers I read:

Hotel Beau-Rivage, tea sale for Armenians in Asia Minor.

Hotel des Berges, tea concert for the help of Israelite-Russian prisoners.

Hotel National, tea concert to raise funds for a gramophone for the sick soldiers at Leysin.

Pension Mathey, tea sale for free dispensaries.

Parish House, Eaux Vives, tea sale for benefit of Serbs.

Blue Cross, tea sale.

duplicates of the articles exhibited, not all of them, but nearly all.

The exhibition is thrilling and also it makes one feel very sad, for one cannot help thinking of the tragic circumstances under which the things were produced. The toys, for instance. The sight of toys does not usually make one lachrymose, but the sight of toys made by wounded and crippled soldiers does.

My companion did nothing but mop her eyes while we were looking at the toys. She was a pick-up acquaintance I made over there—a most agreeable and entertaining and instructive person. We happened to be standing elbow to elbow in front of a glass case full of articles made by the sick soldiers at Leysin. As I had a catalogue and she had not, and as she wanted to know something that was in the catalogue, and as I wanted to know something that was not in the catalogue, we drifted into conversation.

In the case in front of us were several extraordinary chains—neck-chains and watch-guards, made of "crin." That word was not in my French vocabulary, so I asked my amiable-looking neighbor what it meant. I asked her in French, and she answered me in the same language, but, after a few sentences branched off into excellent English. That is what they always do—these foreigners. Try as you will they won't give you a chance to practice their language, they always insist on talking in yours.

"Crin," said my new acquaintance, means horsehair.

"But they don't look a bit like horsehair," I said, "they look more like enamelled metal, or some kind of jet. And they did. It was hard to believe they were made of anything so commonplace as horsehair. The workmanship was marvellous. One would suppose it would take a lifetime to make one of the chains, but evidently not, for orders were taken for duplicates to be finished in June. The prices ranged from three to nine dollars.

In the same case as the horsehair jewelry was a display of aluminum articles which had been so profusely decorated that there was hardly enough plain surface left on any one of them for a contemplative fly to rest on. The soldiers had taken their ordinary aluminum drinking cups, water bottles and soup pails, and so covered them with fantastic designs, that they were transformed into things of beauty. In addition to the engraving and carving, some of the articles were embellished with copper and brass ornaments, such as buttons, medallions, badges, etc., taken from the uniforms of the soldiers. One of the soldiers had etched the portrait of his wife and child on the inside of his soup pail.

Carving is one of the chief diversions of soldiers in the prisons and camps. They carve wood, they carve metal, they carve any old thing that turns up. A bone in the soup, for instance. Lucky the soldier who gets a bone in his soup pail. That bone gives him hours of occupation. It is carved into something fantastic—a leaf, a bunch of grapes, a napkin-ring, a bas-relief, an animal. With imagination, ingenuity, application and limitless time, much can be done with a soup-bone.

Another favorite occupation of the soldier-prisoners is the making of finger rings. There is a great display of these "war-rings" at this exhibition. They sell like hot cakes. People buy them for souvenirs. Most of them are made of iron, and remind one of the prehistoric rings, the "dug-ups" that are displayed in museums. But some of them are really beautiful, both in design and workmanship.

"That one was made by a real

