

should be avoided, so as not to give cause for offence, and as showing further that the Committee of workmen are able to present their views without assistance.

for dear ones far away, and a lump comes into at least one throat there, and while inwardly echoing the prayer he cannot sing it.

Holy Father, in Thy mercy,

Hear our anxious prayer;

Keep our loved ones, now far absent,

Neath Thy care

## THE PADRE'S TURN.

### A Sunday Evening in France.

The Camp Cinema, provided and run by the Y. M. C. A., is no longer darkened; its half-dozen exit doors are flung wide open, the curtains are drawn across the screen, and yet there is a show on. It is Sunday evening, and the hut is full of troops, presumably Free Churchmen, because those who attend a Nonconformist service in the Army are avowedly Free Churchmen. Church parade means C. of E. unless a soldier voluntarily states that his profession is otherwise. But this is not even a parade service; it is voluntary. Some have come because they have been before, and found the padre a man after their own heart, a sportsman, and, when occasion demands, a straight hitter too.

For others, it is their first Sunday on French soil, and they have come because it has been their custom to attend their chapel at home twice a day on Sundays. They would not admit that they were feeling homesick, but somehow a spring Sunday evening takes one's thoughts across the water to home and loved ones, and the prospect of a quiet service appeals to their souls.

The padre is a cheerful soul. There is an honest light in his blue eyes and a frank, open expression which at once appeals to the men, and seems to tell them he is their friend before he is their officer. All eyes are upon him as he takes his seat on the stage behind the Union Jack covered table. Not 24 hours ago the same stage was occupied by a "funny man" entertaining his audience of laughing Tommies, but the padre now holds the boards, and it is his star turn. To be sure, he will have an appreciative audience; Tommy recognizes a good man when he sees him and hears him, be he comedian or padre.

"One of you chaps give us a hymn!" Not one, but half a dozen, shout their favourite number. One is chosen, the unlucky ones vow to be in front the next time, and as soon as the padre has said, "One of you —," comes the reply, "447, Sir!" It happens to be "Jesus, lover of my soul." "Shall we have the English or the Welsh tune?" asks the padre. Nearly all ask for the Welsh one, and so "Aberstwyth" it is to be.

There is something very moving about a body of men singing a majestic hymn tune, but Tommy is not a very sensitive soul, and if he feels any emotion he does not show it as a rule. After two or three hymns are chosen and sung, a cello solo by Gunner G., is announced. This is loudly applauded, as also are other solos that follow, and we think how shocked the congregation at home would be!

The padre strikes the right note in his prayer. He appeals for Divine help for the great adventure in front of the men; he touchingly pleads for loved ones at home. The hymn following is also a prayer

The lesson is the Good Samaritan story, and the sermon is the same tale retold and adapted to the modern needs of the congregation. The padre puts it in a new light to some; they had not looked upon the percentage of magnesium chloride and other regiment, but when he asks, "What would you chaps think of a man coming down a communication trench and seeing a Tommy badly wounded saying to himself, 'By Jove, that chap's got it badly in the neck, but it's no business of mine, he's not in my regiment,' and so passed him by?" They see his point, that every ill is somebody's business. The British soldier hates a dirty trick and an unsportsmanlike action, that is how the Levite's and priest's conduct appears to him now. The sermon or straight talk, call it what you will, ends on a high note, an appeal to service to one's fellow-men as service done for Christ.

The padre announces that Rifleman S. will sing "O rest in the Lord," and "Please not to applaud this item." It is beautifully and reverently sung and listened to, and the men who on the morrow are to go up the line to the front will surely go into action with a calmer trust for having heard it.

The closing hymn is another favourite, and one wonders whether one more suitable both as regards words and music has ever been written with which to close a service. "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is Ended." Recollections of home circles on Sunday evenings, May meetings at the City Temple, and other occasions of the past all intimately connected with home and all that it means are roused by that hymn, and how those men sing it—bless their dear, uncultivated voices! There is genuine feeling, and, though the lump will come, it is swallowed quickly in case one line may be lost, every note must be sung and enjoyed. Not every eye is dry at the last line, "Till every creature own Thy sway"—that means no more war; it means Blighty, home and for once forget themselves. Follows the padre's benediction. But one thing remains—a chord brings every man to his feet with a smart click of the heels, and rigid attention is preserved while the National Anthem is sung.

The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended—in a few minutes the "Last Post" will sound, to be followed by "Lights out" and silence will reign over this vast camp.

W. A. CHAPLIN.

## ASBESTOS.

A fibrous mineral named by the finders Asbestos, has at intervals been reported as having been found at certain points in the province, but as to the quality, exact information is unavailable, as the work done on any find was more experimental than