

On Going on Draft.

There are some things which an innate sense of justice and propriety compel us to approach with a certain grave reverence. There always arrives a moment when we find ourselves stopping suddenly—as it were—and re-adjusting all our prepared opinions and views of life.

The best known examples of this, of course, are the moments when we get married; when the O.C. sends for us and asks us to please accept some leave; when the Paymaster presses us to pocket a double issue of Bradburys (brown ones, not pink); and when the Sergt.-Major, in a nice voice, invites us to go on draft.

All these instances are quite interesting, but the last is the greatest.

There are several different ways of receiving this invitation—all good in their way.

The old soldier, who is tough, who lives on cast iron and spits French nails, just says "That's torn it," and goes off to the canteen with the definite (but only half-understood) object of waking up in the Guard-room.

At the other extreme, the young, young soldier—who lives on ice cream cones, coffee, and every word that falleth from the mouth of a simpering Jane he knows in Brighton—gets very happy and excited, throws his hat up in the air, writes ten long and happy letters, and goes off to bed to dream of killing ten thousand Huns at one crack. An enthusiast, pure and simple (that is to say, probably pure, and certainly simple); and who shall deny that enthusiasm and simplicity are not fine qualities to take with you to war.

Better these than the morbid minded pessimist who has no particular vices, and therefore no outstanding virtues; who reads pretty little books on international politics, by out-of-work social agitators, who take that means of airing the fact that they are too old to fight, and too wise to work, and capable only of destroying other people's convictions without giving them anything in their place.

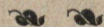
There are hundreds of other types of individual soldiers who all receive this invitation differently, and all unfavourably—with one or two exceptions.

But when all the foolish preparations and preliminaries are over; when the last button has been polished, and the last strap adjusted; when the Sergt.-Major, the Adjutant, the Major, the Colonel, and finally the Brigadier, have all had

a go at inspecting it, and the draft is ready to move off, there comes a moment of grave silence; a silence of true human feeling, of communion and comradeship, when every man is glad and happy (whether he admits it or not) that he is going back for another show at old Fritz.

That is the moment of grave reverence I referred to above. That is what makes us a great nation and a great empire; that is what makes us certain of final victory and eternal glory.

Men will curse the Army, and blaspheme against the system, and grumble at the Government and all its works—but when, after months of tedious training and irritating regimental foolishness, that last command to "Fall in, the draft" is given, they will fall in and march off with a feeling that they are being set free, free to be men instead of misunderstood children; and all the months of preparation are forgotten in the forward feeling that gets into a man's soul when he parades in the middle of the night on a draft for France.



The Clinton Hall.

The disastrous fire which attacked the Clinton Hall in the month of March last, and only ceased its nefarious work when it had demolished the whole of the building, is much to be regretted. It is felt not only by those considerate ladies and gentlemen of Seaford who, with the interests of the individual soldier at heart, so generously gave of their time and money in providing and maintaining this concert and refreshment hall, but also by the hundreds of service men of all ranks who nightly partook of the kindly hospitality afforded them, which with music and song greatly alleviated the strain and fatigue familiar in the life of a soldier.

It is worth while noting that the night previous to the calamity recorded the 1090th free performance given to the troops in this hall.

We feel it our duty as Canadian Engineers, and as the grateful recipients of the many past favours extended to us, to do what we can to financially assist in the rebuilding of the Clinton Hall; and it is earnestly hoped that both officers and men will mark their appreciation by supporting the fund organised by this magazine for the purpose of this reconstruction.

Subscriptions will be duly acknowledged, and may be addressed to Capt. G. R. Chetwynd at the office of this paper.