

## AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN.

By Major G. R. N. Collins.

What a wealth of meaning the above words convey. How often have we heard the expression used, but never paused to wonder at, all the term implies. The finest and grandest tradition of which the British Army could boast was that which made the terms synonymous in the British Services. War failed to eradicate this tradition, but in the midst of turmoil and strife rather strengthened the depth and fervour with which the words were uttered by the less exalted soldier.

To know and feel that such a term was used to describe oneself would be to reach man's noblest ambition. What sacrifice, endurance or effort would one spare to merit such a paean of praise; and yet, why should we not claim it as a right, provided that we can wear the mantle with honour and humility?

It is our privilege, granted to us when His Majesty graciously approved our Commissions.

Did we sufficiently grasp all that simple "Gazette" meant, when it first published our names?

Have we since forgotten the full meaning of the words, "An Officer of His Majesty's Forces?"

To err is human; perhaps we have.

Are we careless of the future?

Emphatically, No!!!!!!

How shall we best befit ourselves, then, for this reward—greater than any which our King or Parliament can give.

A moment's reflection should help us.

Who is our judge? Our men. *The men.*

How can we earn their respect? By remembering the term itself.

An Officer, capable, a leader, jealous guardian of his men, their interests and their lives. An example in upholding the honour of the King, Country, Corps and Regiment. Cautious but courageous, stern but sympathetic. Commander and yet confidante.

So much for which to aspire, and yet the earnest effort will often beget the reward.

A gentleman, whose word is his bond, whose conduct will stand the glare of daylight, placing honour above all else. Such a man is difficult to find. We all have weaknesses, but we can curb our faults, place a check-rein on our gambols and endeavour to earn for ourselves this grand tribute surpassing all others.

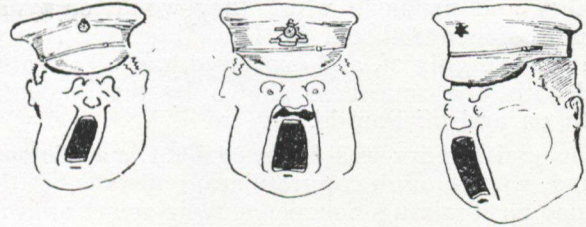
Jealousies arise; honours of the more spectacular kind will arouse them. Notoriety will momentarily elevate one, but the Officer whose men will scatter with the four winds of Heaven at the close of the war, and will spread the report that he is an Officer and a Gentleman, is luckier than he who only merits a more visible but lesser reward.

Who can rob him of that pride which is rightly his? What stronger champions than those who can say on his behalf, "He is an Officer and a Gentleman?"

When shall we start to qualify?

To-day, to-morrow, every day, throughout our waking hours. Now and always, in our casual as well as our more studied moments.

It is our duty, our privilege, and our sacred ambition, to become "Officers and Gentlemen."



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