

tion alone distinguishable is—this is the metropolis of the British army.

Of the troops at Aldershot, about 1300 represent the average of adherents to Presbyterianism. It must be remembered that these 1300 are scattered over the two divisions of the camp—north and south—and the recently-erected barracks. To discover his sick, the clergyman must visit, every two or three days, each hospital and sick-ward. I am satisfied that, in order to an efficient ministry—a ministry that shall not perform mere routine duties, but, by God's blessing, shall vitally and powerfully influence the soldiers' hearts—another Presbyterian chaplain is required. We stand, relatively to other religious bodies, at a disadvantage. The strength of Episcopacy may be set down as 7000, and eight chaplains are allowed. Roman Catholics number generally about 2900, and three chaplains are allowed. We, with our 1300, have one. Augment the number of chaplains, however, as Government may, there is a large field of labour which they cannot overtake, which they can only oversee. As, in part, the occupiers of it, the army Scripture-readers perform good service for Christ. Some officers' ladies are also doing what they can. At Aldershot and Shorncliffe "mothers' meetings" exist, and form hallowed points of connection between the higher and lower grades of the service. And a feature full of promise is, that quiet little gatherings for praise and prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, at which officers and men commune together, are increasing in the camp. Thirteen of such gatherings have, I was told, been already established. May the fruit correspond to the desire of every pious soul!

There are three churches at Aldershot—two in the south camp and one in the north. In these churches different services are conducted at different periods, an hour being the time allowed for each. To a stranger it is something quite new to find congregations, in doctrine and ritual far apart, worshipping within the same building. At Shorncliffe, for example, the Roman Catholic mass was celebrated in the morning; then, as the Roman Catholic troops were paraded out, the Church of England troops were paraded in; and their vows performed, next drew near the sons of the Church of Scotland. One could not help feeling, this is not Scotland, when watching, on Saturday night, the progress of the arrangements for the spreading of the Lord's table in front of the Romish altar, with its candlesticks and crucifix. Not, however, that aught offensive to the eye is permitted to remain during the season of worship. The benediction pronounced, the orderlies in attendance immediately remove all that is foreign to the associations of those who are to follow. There is very little of the *odium theologicum* within the camp. The chaplains agree to differ. The clergyman of our Church and the Romish priest at Aldershot are next-door neighbours,

and treat each other with becoming courtesy and respect. Every man's position, in fact, is so clearly defined, and his work is so abundant, that there is no *casus belli*.

The day upon which I arrived was the fast-day for our troops. By order of the general, they had been exempted from military duty. A parade service was held in the Iron Church in the forenoon, and a voluntary service in a large schoolroom in the evening. The Rev. Mr. Palm, minister of the chapel at Hurst in connection with the Scottish Church officiated, and preached with great earnestness to large congregations on the evenings of Friday and Saturday also worship was held; and it was encouraging to notice that nearly 100 were, upon both occasions, present. Some officers were of the number—honorable exceptions to what I fear is the rule amongst the youth of our gentry who enter the army. Indifferent, too often, about religious things, and wishing to be quite in the fashion, they become, if the acceptance of the mere form warrants the description, Church of England men. Those whom I have noticed as exceptions were not ashamed of their national faith; what is better, they were not "ashamed to own their Lord and to maintain His cause."

The Communion Sunday was a day which I shall long remember. The morning was dull and rainy, but about 10 o'clock the clouds rose, and before the hour of assembling the sun was shining through them. The preliminary to the administration of the Eucharist, usually observed in Scotland, it was necessary to curtail—with some it was necessary to dispense. In my Master's strength I dwelt for a short time upon "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Mr. Canon afterwards gave the consecration prayer; and, in solemn silence, the "little flock" partook of the blessed sacrament. "A little flock" indeed; for, although the church was full, not more than sixty approached the table. A man must be ready to assume a decided position, and bear up against the scoffs and jeers, and little, yet aggravating persecutions of his comrades, before publicly acknowledging Christ as his Master. Hence, generally speaking, only the strong in faith eat and drink in remembrance of the Lord.

In the evening we re-assembled. The school-room was crowded, and a holy earnestness was expressed on many countenances. Exhorting them all to fight a good fight, and commending them unto the grace of God, I finished the work at Aldershot which the Church had summoned me to do.

Upon the evening of the following Wednesday I was at Shorncliffe. For picturesque-ness of situation I must give the preference to the camp at Shorncliffe. Occupying an elevated plateau between Folkestone and Hythe, it possesses the attraction of a charming sea-view, and the benefit of a delightful sea-air. But it is upon a much smaller scale than Aldershot, not more than 3000 or 4000