

Several hundreds of seats were regularly reserved for members of the Allied forces. Unfortunately one's enjoyment of the music was rather spoilt by the boorish behaviour of our own officers and men, behaviour which was in very striking contrast to that of the German civilians, who certainly do enjoy good music and know how to listen to it quietly. It was no uncommon thing during the overture or first act of an opera to be disturbed by some officer coming in late, generally attached to a huge and noisy pair of spurs. He would, very probably, keep time to the music with these same spurs, or with his boot in the small of your back, or with his riding-crop and spurs he could contrive a very pretty little tattoo to while away the time. When tired of this diversion he would ask his neighbour if he had seen "Joy Bells" in town—"topping show"—and then meander on about liking music better if it had a tune to it, but at any rate his people at home would be awfully pleased that he had gone to see "Lohengrin". Yes, with a huge grin, he was glad they had come after all and where were they going to feed afterwards, old thing! On one occasion a beery old major came in half-way through the opera, and, having got his feet comfortably distributed among several of his neighbours, proceeded to light a cigar. We persuaded him to put it out, having convinced him that even at the opera in England smoking was not allowed. He did not stay very long with us; just waited till the middle of a solo, and stepped out as obtrusively and noisily as he could. I used to go to the opera very often with a certain Lieutenant O—, a Scotsman, who had spent fifteen years studying pianoforte in Germany, part of the time on the staff of Kiel Conservatory of Music. O— is really a very fine artist himself, a pre-war friend of Backhaus, in Stuttgart, and a tremendous lover of good music. It was agony to him to have the music spoilt by these people. On

one occasion a chatty and be-spurred cavalry officer was cavorting round behind us with his friends, when O— turned around in a most savage manner and waded into the cavalry officer in his best Scots; told him he had no d—d right to come to the opera if he couldn't — well behave himself. "You've no d—d soul for music, you poor thing, that's what is wrong with you," concluded O—. They were quiet after that and we could listen to the music; but when the lights went up we found that the cavalry hero with no soul for music was a colonel. The remainder of O—'s military career looked very sketchy to me, very sketchy indeed, and I felt like shaking hands and saying good-bye to O—, who was only a simple lieutenant. However, the colonel said nothing and O— walked off with the honours of war. On one occasion we arrived late for the overture and were content to wait until the door was opened. Not so a young and fussy brigadier-general, who arrived later and asked the door-keeper what the devil he meant by keeping *him* out just because the blank music was going on, and ordering the latter to open the door. A quiet old major-general, who was standing by, however, soon made the B.G. see that he was really making rather a fool of himself, to the joy of us humbler members, who had never seen a brigadier-general roughly handled before.

During the first two months of the occupation a very pretty little business was inaugurated by some Germans in Cologne and Düsseldorf. It was no less than the selling of British automobile tires to people in the unoccupied territory. Rubber was, of course, almost impossible to get in Germany, so these particular Germans thought that the simplest way would be to take the British military tires from the stores when the British were not looking and transport them across the perimeter of the Cologne bridge-head. I believe that they got quite a