

us everything is reversed. We grow mustaches under Army orders, we crop our hair to please the Colonel. We have no areas of privacy either in our bodies or our souls. We rise, sleep, eat, wash when we are commanded. We are physically examined, physicked, pumped full of antitoxins and marched off to church parade to worship God without our wishes being consulted. . . . We cannot give notice to our employers, we have no unions, no means of protest. To be always cheerful and smiling, the more cheerful and smiling in proportion to the hardship is a duty for the performance of which we expect no thanks. . . ."

Success in civilian life demands foresight, judgment, decisions that involve responsibility. All this must shrink to the vanishing point. In the ranks I do as I'm told. I do not think what I am to do, but I must think what I am doing. I am not a good soldier until my critical instincts are inhibited at least to the extent that they do not feel outraged nor plead for indulgences because of the limitations of my role. Nevertheless, room for initiative remains in the giving of prompt and accurate obedience, neither understepping nor overstepping the mark, expecting neither gain nor glory. Precision requires concentration and restraint, and for reward I may cultivate such chronic good humour as I will. This contraction in motives is a moulding process that requires time and adaptation. It is more diaspreeable in the learning than when accomplished, but the unlearning seems most difficult of all.

With the narrowing of motives necessarily come changes in values, some more significant than others.

The personal equation must be adjusted. In civilian life we each adopt a particular point of view to all whom we meet: our banker, our grocer boy, our member of parliament, our doctor, our aunts, the stranger we pass. We carefully classify and appraise our social environment for what it means to us, and our daily routine becomes a dove-tailing of reactions appropriate to the great variety of our associates. On enlistment this grading of associates is ironed out. We each have our number, we think together, act together, play together, we belong to the dead level of Tommies. Beyond this are no distinctions of person, only of rank, which is for the most part a philosophy of clothes and an appreciation of idiosyncrasies.

The limiting of responsibility has far-reaching effects. In ordinary life our tasks rarely stand isolated, they blend with one another and with the activities of our fellows. Under such circumstances the attainment of results is more significant than the detail of the means employed; in other words, experience counts, discretion is expected, economy in time and effort is approved. In the army tasks are sharply focussed. To concern oneself with more is to be guilty of an offense. Instructions mark the limit both of responsibility and of power. Time means nothing.