

## THE RETURN OF THE CANADIAN TROOPS FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

(BY SPECIAL PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR).

The seal set on our nationhood, are these  
 Strong men returning victors from the war ;  
 Up to the battle's very front they bore  
 Our country's honor, till with every breeze  
 Fame sang their valor round the seven seas.  
 For us they braved death in the cannon's roar,  
 For us their comrades died and nevermore  
 Will see the loved homes 'neath our maple trees.  
 Throw wide thy gates, O Canada, throw wide  
 The portals of thy gratitude ; these men  
 Have roused the God in us. Now cast aside  
 All littleness of aim. With courage high  
 And loftier purpose, to thy tasks again,  
 And carve thine own illustrious destiny.

FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT.

October, 1900.

## MR. MILLAR'S EXPERIENCE.

*Mr. Editor.*

Your readers have no doubt heard a great deal about South Africa and the war during the past year, but as you have requested me to relate something of my experience as a member of the Canadian Contingent, I shall endeavor to do so. To many of us the experience was entirely novel and in some respects, I might say, disappointing. When we had taken the oath and donned the uniform of a British private, we became veritable Tommies. However, we soon became acquainted with our new duties, and made the best use of the scant comforts that were available.

Our voyage from Halifax to Capetown was uneventful, like all long voyages it became somewhat monotonous. The only point of land we saw during the voyage was St. Vincent Island, Cape Verde, and that at so great a distance that we could not make our signals understood. Our time was taken up with drill and fatigue duties during the day and guard duty during the night. The fatigues consisted of washing down the decks, carrying coal to the galley, cleaning our quarters, etc. etc.

In due time we arrived at Cape Town and disembarked and went into camp at Greenpoint, two miles from Cape Town, a rather pretty location situated between Table Mountain and the ocean. About 200 yards distant from our camp was the old race course, then occupied by the Boer prisoners, a motley crowd, ranging in years from youth to old age. Most of them could speak English, but with a Dutch accent. Our stay at Greenpoint was but eight days when orders came to proceed to Bloemfontein. Accordingly we struck camp and by eight o'clock were entrained. The distance from Cape Town to Bloemfontein is 700 miles, and the time it takes to make the journey is three days. In the vicinity of Cape Town and for the distance of about fifty miles green grass and large trees with abundant foliage abound, but beyond this the aspect is completely changed—the grass and trees are replaced by sand and rock, and everything presents a grey appearance. It is a veritable desert. When we reached Orange River, where the Boers had previously blown up the bridge, our train crossed on a temporary bridge which had been speedily constructed by the Royal Engineers. Great ingenuity was displayed in the work. There were three piers

built in the stream on a foundation of stones, the piers being constructed by laying alternately layers of wooden beams and iron rails. The length of the bridge would be about 100 feet and the rails were laid on large timbers supported between the piers and the shore by braces. After crossing the Orange River we enter the Orange Free State. The general appearances here were not much changed from the barren desert through which we had traveled in northern Cape Colony. In this district ostrich farming abounds, and we were very much interested as we passed along to see the dogs herding the ostriches as we do cattle here.

At last we arrived in Bloemfontein, the one-time capital of the Orange Free State, a small old-fashioned Dutch city, of mingled Dutch and English inhabitants. But we had very little time to see this city, as the next day we commenced our march up country, and at last tasted the real hardships of a campaign. After four days of hard marching we joined our regiment not far from Winburg, a small town about eighty miles from Bloemfontein, and after resting a few days started out once more for Pretoria. Walking over the loose stones and soft sand was very hard on one's feet, and the lack of water greatly added to our discomfort. Altogether we found out that we had not come out to a picnic.

After a couple of weeks' hard marching and a little skirmishing intermingled we caught up to a large party of Boers, and had our first real engagement. The Boers were very strongly entrenched on a kopje, and it took the British nearly twelve hours to dislodge them, but finally after fighting from daylight until nearly dark the Boers were defeated and driven back. After this engagement nothing of importance happened until we reached Kronstadt, where I was unfortunate enough to take sick, and a few days later I was sent back to Bloemfontein hospital.

C. J. MILLAR, S.P.S.

## VARSAITY BOYS AT THE WAR.

Captain Robert K. Barker, '92, son of Mr. R. K. Barker of the Toronto Post Office, has been called by one of his men the best officer in the Royal Canadians. He distinguished himself in football circles both before and after leaving Varsity, and was for a time secretary of the O.R. F.U.; but gave that up to attend to his law practice, for he was an Osgoode man in his day, too. It is a proof of his diligence as an officer of the Queen's Own, that he retained the same rank for active service that he held in the militia. Captain Barker took part in all the important engagements of C. Company, and was conspicuous during the campaign both for his bravery on the field and for his self-sacrifice in camp and on the march. He is one of the passengers on the Idaho.

Private Clarence J. Millar, son of Dr. L. F. Millar, Toronto, has chosen to repeat his first year at S.P.S. He went off in January to help fill the gaps in the ranks of the Royal Canadians last January. After going through several fights, notably at Zand River and Heilbron, he took enteric fever, and after six or eight weeks in hospital at Bloemfontein and a week in Devonshire, returned home last month. Like Private Odium, he speaks well of the hospital service.

Corporal Joseph Jordan, another Queen's Own man from Toronto, is a brother of Harry Jordan, '97. He was in his fourth year at Toronto Medical School when he went to the front. He was present at all C company's hot fights, but later was wounded in the sternum at Doornkop. When last heard from he had fully recovered and expected to leave for home with the rest of his company.