

A Night at the C.D.D. Bath.

(Being the chronicle of a few old Granvillians awaiting discharge there.)

BY KRITICOS.

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The night was windy and damp, and the attractions of the nearby town had failed to interest me; so I turned into camp, stumbling my way through the maze of tent-ropes to my canvas quarters, some half-an-hour before the 9.30 roll-call. Lighting up candle and cigarette, I proceeded to amuse myself by going through my kit—a process which consists of turning the contents of one's kit-bag in a disorderly pile on the floor, fingering lovingly one's letters, gloating over one's souvenirs, and then of packing the stuff up again with a sigh of content.

Just as I was finishing this operation there came the sounds of feet staggering among the guy-ropes, the flap opened, and the First Sea Lord entered. Here I must state that the personnel of our tent has resolved itself into a War Government on a small scale, the sergeant-in-charge rejoicing in the position of Prime Minister.

"Where's the Chief of Staff?" said the First Sea Lord. His enquiry referred to a private, well-known to Granvillians, who wears the D.C.M. ribbon. "Well," I replied, "I left him half an hour ago down at General Headquarters (that the Blue Goose Inn, by-the-way)—He was in deep discussion with the Brigadier; some new plan of campaign, I believe, which requires much Scotch and many sodas to formulate properly."

"How about the Admiral of the Channel Fleet?" asked the First Sea Lord—"Missing," I replied. "I went around to the Home Office (The Full Moon), the Foreign Office (The Cobweb Inn), and District Headquarters (The New Tavern)—but though I carefully examined the waters at each place, I failed to locate the Channel Fleet."

At this moment came the battering of a swagger-stick on the tent, a leathery voice shouted "Shun!", and the Prime Minister burst into the tent, flopping on his bed, which, with the cunning of an old hand, he had made down before going out.

After warbling a few bars of "If the Sergeant drinks your Rum" in a tremulous falsetto, the Prime Minister sat up and enquired as to the whereabouts of the Staff. I explained that of the sixteen members only we three had as yet returned—that the rest had probably been detained down town on Affairs of State. He looked at his watch and saw the hands had crept around to 9.30—the hour at which he had to report absentees from the tent. "Only three out of sixteen", he exclaimed, "this is terrible!" "It can't be helped," said the First Sea Lord, "when a country is at war