

tious value; he said that fish particularly should be eaten fresh, and the same applied to fruit; that cold storage meat and fowl was not to be compared to fresh. Then, although the point was not argued, a fact was mentioned which proved that by refrigerating meat properly, all physical changes in that body were absolutely arrested—in other words it should be as good as when freshly killed. Dr. McConnell said that in one refrigerating plant he had seen a hog which had been there for years and was still solidly frozen.

The section under the heading of Social Workers, of which Dr. Grace Ritchie England was Convener, struck at the root of the whole question—in the main it dealt with infantile mortality. Dr. Helen MacMurchy showed a collection of pictures illustrative of her paper, which were appalling. The average mother is perfectly ignorant of such conditions existing in what are called the slums. Just here might be mentioned what Dr. Hastings said of cities which denied having slums. He took Milwaukee for example (although he might have hit nearer home!) and quoted a statement to the effect that Milwaukee said it was a city of homes—it had no slums. Dr. Hastings said that meant it had no investigation! One of the "homes" subsequently visited by an inspector was a place of two rooms—one of them quite dark, and the front one facing upon disgraceful filth in an alley. The house harboured one man, two women—one of whom was bedridden, ten children, six dogs, five pigeons, and practically two horses, beside other animals of a lower order which escaped the inspectors hurried notice. This was only one! Dr. Hastings dealt seriously with the appalling immortality among infants caused by lack of light and ventilation; he drew comparisons between figures showing the deaths of babies born in one and two-roomed houses as against those born in more spacious quarters. He said that 25,000 people in New York lived in cellars, and that 1,000,000 of them lived without baths, and that THIS WAS NOT PROPORTIONATELY MORE THAN THOSE IN THE SAME CONDITION IN LARGE CANADIAN CITIES!

MISS ETHEL HURLBATT showed that as Sanitary Inspectors women were more successful than men. That the people of the slums felt like the old man who said, "Well, if we must have some one ferrettin' out our back yards and kitchens, let it be a lady, and a nice young lady at that." She said that women needed training for this work as well as infinite tact and patience; it was in some cases difficult to make a raid upon a home where there was something to conceal, and to get away with the desired information leaving behind a feeling of sympathy and willingness to help—and, to

carry away at least a shred of self respect! Women have been urged to let this work alone, because men have said it was not fit for them, but Miss Hurlbatt said that where some women had to live others should be able to go! Beside, their intimate knowledge of domestic affairs makes them more acceptable as visitors to those squalid homes and they can perform their duties with an air of comradeship and understanding which from a man would look like an insult. Of Miss Ellen Babbitt's paper and interesting work more will be given later; it is my regret that all the papers could not even receive a mention here, and gain the ear of the thousands of women who would be interested if they knew what was needed of them. The W. C. T. U. sent Mrs. John Bruce as a representative and her report upon the work of the Convention will be sent to the various superintendents all over Ontario and by them distributed amongst the thousands of women who are members of that organization.

DR. STARKEY vacated the president's chair in favour of Dr. Hodgetts. In his short address Dr. Starkey thanked his colleagues for their assistance and support and assured the new president of their loyalty to him also. Dr. Hodgetts took the chair amidst great applause and a business meeting followed. Major Drum is the General Secretary and Dr. George Porter the Treasurer. It was decided that the next Convention would be held in Toronto. In concluding his brief and cursory sketch of a stupendous work I would just like to say that there are practical lines laid down for the eradication of our worst evils, and the officers merely ask that helpers do not work futilely or at cross purposes. It is the sanguine belief that in a few years, Canada can stand unique in the eyes of the world as being a country where health, happiness and morality prevail.

The Canadian Record in Real Estate

A SIXTY-FOOT lot at the north-east corner of Yonge and King Streets, Toronto, has recently changed hands, making what is said to be a new record in Canadian real estate. The lot has sixty-foot frontage on King Street and ninety-foot frontage on Yonge Street. On it there is an office building five stories in height. Two years ago this lot and building were purchased by the Manufacturers' Life Insurance Company for \$550,000. Recently it was resold to the Dominion Bond Company for \$800,000. Leaving out the value of the building this makes the land worth over \$150.00 per square foot. Less than eighty years ago it was sold for five dollars a foot.

CHRISTMAS IN BARRACKS

Tommy Atkins Celebrates the Day With Enthusiasm

By HORACE WYNDHAM

NOWHERE is the celebration of Christmas Day carried out with more enthusiasm than in the British Army. Peace and good will and seasonable fare rule from "Reveille" to "Lights out." It makes very little difference whether the soldier be stationed at home or abroad—with orthodox surroundings of frost and snow at Aldershot, or torrid heat at Capetown (where December is midsummer) Mr. Atkins will not be deprived of his Christmas. Whatever the quarter of the globe—India, Canada, China, or South Africa, just as much as England—in which he is serving at the time, the 25th of December is marked with its own special ceremonies. Many of these are founded on long established tradition, and are observed as carefully as if they formed part and parcel of the "Drill Book." Indeed, there is a regular routine which nothing but the exigencies of active service is allowed to alter.

Preparations for the great day begin early. By the end of the first week in December the different companies and troops appoint committees of experts to carry out the details on behalf of their comrades. The first matter to settle is that of finance, and the mess-book is accordingly subjected to anxious scrutiny. In order to accumulate funds, "extras" are voluntarily dispensed with for some time beforehand. As each man is stopped 3d. a day for extra-messing to supplement the authorized ration of bread and meat, a fair amount can thus be saved. This stoppage, however, is not the only source of income, as every company is also entitled to a substantial share of the canteen profits. The officers,

too, subscribe generously. Altogether, there is usually plenty of money forthcoming. How to lay it out to the best advantage is the next problem which the catering committee have to solve. This is anxious work, and calls for much discussion, in which all hands from the youngest drummer-boy to the oldest veteran take part. Specimen menus are drawn up, the sergeant-cook and his staff giving expert advice on the subject. At length one is definitely decided upon, and the necessary orders are issued to the canteen, through which institution all supplies are purchased.

Where his Christmas dinner is concerned, the average soldier has large ideas and demands a meal that at a pinch would almost sustain an Army Corps. The two principal features of the banquet are, of course, turkey and plum-pudding. This latter delicacy, usually known as "duff," is mixed with porter or stout. It weighs several pounds when boiled, and strongly resembles a cannon-ball in appearance. The turkey and "duff," however, are only the groundwork, as it were. Joints of beef, mutton, and pork, and a number of hams, together with vegetables and pickles, and plenty of cheese and fruit with which to fill up the crevices, are considered necessary adjuncts. Then, after the solids have been arranged for, the liquids demand serious attention. On this matter the veterans are full of helpful hints. First and foremost, there has to be beer—barrels of it—and an ample supply of mineral waters, together with a small quantity of wine for honouring loyal toasts. The beer, however, is the most important, and a committee that neglected to lay in a suffi-

cient stock would be considered deserving of a barrack-room court-martial. It would probably get one, too!

So far as possible the routine of Christmas Day approximates that of Sunday and work is reduced to a minimum. Although there are no drills, guards and pickets have, of course, to be carried out as usual. If, however, any Highland battalions happen to be in the garrison, they generally undertake these duties, as Scotch regiments prefer to celebrate the New Year. About 10 o'clock the bugle sounds the fall-in for Church Parade, and the troops assemble on the square. Then, headed by the colonel, and with the band playing a rousing quick-step, they march off to the garrison chapel, which is decorated for the occasion with an abundance of holly and evergreens. Knowing very well that the thoughts of the majority of his hearers are more intent upon dinner than anything else, the chaplain does not prolong the service. It is probably concluded by 12 o'clock, and the men are promptly dismissed to their own quarters. A busy half hour then ensues at the canteen (where everybody pledges everybody else) while finishing touches are also put to the barrack-rooms. The bed cots are pushed up against the walls, and the tables set for dinner. This is heralded in military fashion by a bugle-call. As the welcome notes peal across the parade ground, the orderlies appointed for the purpose assemble at the cook-house, where they receive their respective dishes from the sergeant-cook. These are then carried off to the barrack-rooms and carved in a more or less dexterous fashion by the orderly-men and a band of willing helpers. At one o'clock the hard-working bugler splits the air again with a succession of shrill blasts. This is the signal for the banquet to commence. No second bidding is required, and the next moment all hands are attacking the menu as though they anticipated a prolonged siege.

While the knives and forks are thus busy, the colonel, with the adjutant and other officers, starts on a tour of inspection round the barracks. Looking as though he never gave anybody a day's pack-drill in his life, he visits each room in turns, his approach being heralded by a sergeant who bellows "Tension!" in a voice that makes recruits fancy the Germans have landed. To the stereotyped question, "Any complaints?" the unanimous response, "None, sir," is returned, for with such a bountiful meal staring them in the face not even the most chronic "grouser" could find a grievance. "I wish you all a Merry Christmas," returns the colonel. Then, just as he is about to withdraw, the oldest soldier present salutes and requests him to drink the company's health in a glass of wine. The toast is honoured with vociferous applause, and amid fervid assurances that "He's a jolly good fellow!" the colonel hurries off to the next room, where a similar ceremony is repeated.

With the withdrawal of the officers, all restraint vanishes. Most of the men remove their tunics in order to do better justice to the good things provided. In addition to being a first-class trencherman at all times, it must be remembered that Mr. Atkins has trained for this particular meal during the previous twelve months. Accordingly, he makes short work of the various dishes, and before his vigorous onslaught their contents vanish like a deftly performed conjuring-trick. A cheerful popping of corks furnishes an obligato to the clatter of plates and requests for "another wedge of plum-duff." Spirits are forbidden, but there is no lack of other liquids. Then, when the desert has disappeared, pipes are brought out and everybody begins to smoke. Beer and turkey are found to induce melody and a concert is promptly started. The regimental Harry Lauder displays his talent, and an ambitious lance-corporal volunteers a pathetic ballad. The songs in most request, however, are those with a good chorus. One highly popular ditty on such occasions declares that—

"If ever we meet the German fleet,
And it is as strong as ours is;
I give you my word, Lord Charles Beresford
Will give it a slap on the trousers!"

As may be imagined, tremendous applause always greets this bellicose assurance.

While the private soldiers are thus making merry in their barrack-rooms, the officers and sergeants have a convivial gathering of their own in their well-appointed messes. Nor are the married women forgotten, as the officers' wives look after their comfort; and a Christmas tree loaded with suitable gifts is arranged for the regimental children. Altogether it is a red-letter day for everybody concerned; and when at 10.15 p.m. the bugler marks its official expiry by sounding "Lights Out" all hands feel that it has not lasted half long enough.

"Roll on next Christmas!" remarks a recruit, voicing the sentiment of his comrades.