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EDITORIAL

We Canadians, in common with our American cousins, have been apt to regard the Mother Country as unduly wed to precedent, rather a slave to ancient rites and usages, and guarding her privileges and customs with a jealousy that was regarded with something of an indulgent smile by Colonials, and, perhaps, a little wonder not unmixed with envy by our cousins—the one living example of a monarchical government more democratic than the greatest democracy—an ancient ritual unparalleled in its modernity.

Only the old change slowly—and the very old not at all—only virile youth—with its adaptability and abounding confidence in the future and its own powers—moves quickly. If it were not a work of supererogation, if any proof were needed, of the intense virility of our race, its abounding confidence in itself—its undying belief in its future and its marvelous adaptability to circumstances, the two Bills now before the Imperial Parliament, and which will undoubtedly receive the Royal Assent, are proof. To the individual to decide to serve his King and Country, seems to us of course natural. That a nation which has for so long fought shy of any appearance of compulsion should herself demand it: that a nation which prides herself on the faithful guarding of her ways—which looks askance on innovations, should decide to alter her clocks to one hour earlier, that thereby the nation may gain: that a whole nation should so unanimously accept the restrictions of the liquor laws. These are the signs of eternal youth, of a strength which is but reaching its zenith, not indeed declining—and which makes us hope for the early realization of the dream of those ardent Imperialists who have blazed the way we are treading, but to whom the realization of that vision which now seems so near to us, was not given.

The Work of a Clearing Hospital

By Major R. WILSON, C.A. M.C.

Being the Fourth of a Series of Articles on the Canadian Medical Service

The work of a Clearing Hospital attached to a Division in the Field commences with the receipt of patients for the Field Ambulance. Its proper and distinctive title is a "Casualty Clearing Station" and exactly describes its functions. It is a reservoir, expansile and adaptable, situated somewhere back of the line, eight or ten miles, as circumstances dictate, mobile, and the number of patients it is capable of assimilating is limited only by the accommodation, and the facility for passing them on to the Stationary, General or Base Hospital. The normal capacity is for two hundred wounded, and there are no beds. While this is the theoretical condition actual circumstances may alter the status of a Clearing Station even in neighbouring Divisions. The condition and nature of wounds of the injured—the facilities for transportation—all these decide whether, in addition to the normal functions of a clearing station, it may not partake in more or less degree of the status of a stationary hospital, and indeed, events have shown that a vast amount of splendid surgical work, ranking high in surgical skill and results, has been performed under circum-

stances that pre-war opinion would have deemed impossible—and as a result, nursing sisters have been attached, and are now part of the establishment with us.

Naturally the work varies. In the absence of a "Push," or "Marked Infantry Activity" on either side, there is only the normal intake—empty beds are the rule, and ground sheets are not in evidence—but on occasion every available corner is busy—emergency dressings, antiseptic precautions when needed, and where the field ambulance dressers have had little or no time to do more than apply first field dressings—urgent and minor operations—prophylactic injections where not already given, and most important of all—classification—the quick decision what cases to send in, what minimum to keep.

With an eye on the facilities for transport, the Casualty Clearing Station will as a rule be situated out of the direct line, and fairly out of reach of the enemy's big gun fire. There is not the same anxiety and necessity for preparedness to move at short notice. Its immediate predecessor, the Field Ambulance's functions do not vary—its duties are to collect, dress as far as possible, and evacuate as soon as possible—the Casualty Clearing Station is concerned with evacuation, returns, rolls, and to some degree, with the reception and retaining of a few patients, with the necessary operations this implies.

With this part of the work done, the patient passes smoothly by ambulance train, canal barge, or other more regular means of transport, to the Stationery or General Hospital, our next link in the chain concerned in the care and speedy return of the wounded soldier to his active duties.

Contributions and Acknowledgments

IN MEMORIAM

Just once again to hear your cheery voice,
And once again to watch with you at night;
To whisper, through the darkness, "Are you hit?"
And get your whisper back, "No, I'm alright!"

How I remember up at Ypres that night—
When we were getting shelled for hours on end,
You said: "I bet you'd laugh if I got hit;"
You didn't think I'd miss you, did you friend?

You made no noise or fuss when you were shot,
You put a hand up to you curly head
And moaned, so very softly, "Comrade, here!"
But when I reached you—you were dead.

'Twas I who got your disc, boy, from your neck,
And I who wiped the blood from your dim eyes:
My own, I think, were very wet just then—
That you were gone, I seemed to realize.

Its damned hard lines, for you were such a kid
To go through all that hell-on-earth out there:
No man of "OURS" fought better; that I know!
And so, God bless your rest, you've done your share

And really, since there's no one here to grieve,
And life is dull with idleness and pain—
I shall not worry when I'm called, to march
For "Somewhere," with a rifle, once again."

M.E.G.—Ramsgate