

THE past week has been very full of heated discussion in regard to the Government decision that the clergy shall be exempt from conscription. We tremble for the future of the parson of military age and fitness who stayed at home to care for the souls of the women and children (and incidentally pass the cake at the tea hour), when our men come back from the war. Will he have the courage to stand up and point out the way of salvation to the man who has offered his life for his country, the man who knows more of real life and—alas! death, than anyone away from the struggle possibly can? I fear his ministry will be short-lived. The Padres who have gone over—and played the game—are the ones they will listen to, and they will preach a different kind of sermon too. This question recalls a verse or two of Kipling's in his wonderful story of the part our brave trawlers and fishermen, whom he calls the "Fringes of the Fleet," have played in the war:

"In Lowestoft a boat was laid,
Mark well what I do say!
And she was built for the herring trade,
But she has gone a-rovin', a-rovin',
a-rovin'.
The Lord knows where!

"Her skipper was mate of a bucko ship
Which always killed one man per trip,
So he is used to rovin', a-rovin', a-rovin',
The Lord knows where!

"Her mate was skipper of a chapel in
Wales
And so he fights in topper and tails—
Religious tho' rovin', a-rovin', a-rovin',
The Lord knows where!"

When the curtain is finally raised and secrets can be told, I am sure the most thrilling tales of all will be the exploits of our silent trawlers and fishermen, the "Fringes of the Fleet."

MY horizon has been very limited the past week. I seem to have lived, moved and had my being in the hospital. A recent convoy brought several Canadians among the others, and one is so happy in waiting upon one's very own, though the English Tommy is dear to our hearts. Occasionally among the rest is a miner of the toughest type of humanity. One came with the latest batch. Next day, by way of getting acquainted, I asked him if he would like an illustrated paper, and he replied gruffly in broad Lancashire that he would. He appeared distraught and uncomfortable, and I tried in various ways to make him feel welcome among the men who had been there ahead of him, and already looked upon their little environment as home. Later I tempted him with a cup of cocoa, for which I received "no thank you." His big eyes seemed studying everything, and I wondered if he would profit by the good spirit and pleasing manners of the others. As his wound was in the hand, he was able in a day or two to get up and move about, and at last his reserve began to melt. Yesterday morning when I took in the lunch trays, to my intense surprise he came forward and said: "I'll help to pass the coops" (help to pass the cups), and later he produced a photograph of his wife to show me, and actually smiled when I admired it. When I left he was sitting on the end of another patient's bed, comparing notes on a recent engagement on the Somme. This kind of man usually turns out to be a good sort, and as soon as he is able, tries to do his bit to help us in our work. They seem happier when busy; we talk to them and teach them games and start them on needlework when we have a spare moment. They all say they are so glad when they get to a V. A. D. hospital instead of a real military one with its adamant rules and entirely professional staff. I am sorry to say that my hospital days will soon be over, for a time at least. Pleasant as it is, the strain begins to tell on one's nerves if kept up too long. I am taking up another department of war-work, and shall hope to tell you about it when I next write.

MY only dissipation this week was the drinking of the afternoon cup that cheers, in a quaint little tea-room on the High Street. It sounds very tame, but to me half an hour spent there is full of human interest. Yesterday it was crowded with men from the camps, as it happened to be the weekly half-holiday. This little "olde tea-shope" is

very well known to all our men who have been stationed at Witley, and I predict that the afternoon-tea habit which has never been general in Canada will become an established after-the-war custom. One gets a good cup of tea here, and a slice of toast or a wedge of war-time cake, eggless, butterless and fruitless, but nevertheless cake. Whole families come in, parents and little tots, all to drink the beloved beverage. It is a great pleasure to watch the pretty English girls with their matchless complexions saunter in, and the tiny boys, dressed like little old men, always carrying canes and accompanied by the family dog. Nowhere does this dear animal enter into the family life as in England.

In spite of what is going on beyond, the scene was a gay one, and carried one out of oneself. Pretty spring hats and gowns—noticeably tighter in the skirt now—were much in evidence, and everywhere was a profusion of flowers, on tables and mantels, in charming harmony with the mellow browns of the beamed ceiling and mantels. Saccharine tablets were purchased for the tea at a penny each, extra, and I saw one lucky lady produce a good lump of sugar from some secret pocket and drop it surreptitiously into her cup.

PEOPLE over here are deeply interested in Canadian Indians, numbers of whom came over in our army, and fine soldiers they have proved themselves to be. I think they were dis-

Hope's Quiet Hour.

The Privilege of Giving

David said . . . Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.—I Chron. 29:14.

"Strength for to-day, what a precious boon,

For earnest souls who labor—
For the willing hands that minister
To the needy friend and neighbor."

I had a birthday the other day and, as I woke from a refreshing sleep that morning, God whispered a birthday message to me. Before I was quite awake the words which stamped themselves in my mind were:

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

How did those words apply to me? Why, having reached the age of fifty-five, I must remember that my remaining time—my opportunity for service in this room of God's house—will probably be short. I must not waste the splendid

thoropists of this utilitarian age murmur "to what purpose is this waste?" It might seem to many kindly and generous people as if the costly ointment, poured out like water on the feet of Christ, might better have been "sold for much and given to the poor." They understand the practical value of gifts when they evidently help somebody; but, when they are the outpourings of love and gratitude, given with whole-hearted lavishness, they seem like extravagant waste.

David's mighty men loved him so dearly that they gladly risked their lives in order to procure for him a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem. He did not drink the water, feeling it was too sacred and precious for his use, but he poured it out before the Lord.

A real gift of love brings joy to the giver and, if it is offered gladly it also brings joy to God. Mary's gift was not wasted, for it was the natural and joyful expression of her affection for her Lord; and far more refreshing to him than the fragrant ointment was the fragrance of her grateful love.

I know that many of our readers have found out that giving—the giving of money or service—is a high privilege instead of a disagreeable duty. During the past week two donations of five dollars each have reached me "for the needy." One came from Mrs. A. M., Parkhill, Ont., and the other from Mrs. Wm. J., Perth, Ont. Several packages of S. S. papers for the "shut-in" have also arrived. I passed on most of these before moving to 6



British Tommies in a Rest Room in Paris.

Kadel & Herbert, N. Y.

appointed to find that they were not decked out in feathers and beads, and the many trappings of romance. I heard a story from a nurse the other day which I must pass on to you. She affirms it is true; you may decide for yourselves, but I took it *cum grano salis*. An Indian patient on arrival at the hospital, from France, refused absolutely to relinquish a parcel he brought with him, to the kitchen where all such belongings are taken care of. After some dispute, he overcame all objections and was allowed to keep it in the locker at his bedside. The other patients had their curiosity appeased by the Indian's explanation that it was a German helmet. Soon a disagreeable odor was noticed in the ward, which kept getting worse as days went by, and suspicion fastened itself on the mysterious parcel. The nurses could do nothing so asked the doctor to wrestle with the patient. After many threats he succeeded in getting it into his hands. He opened it, and found it was a German helmet—with the head inside! The Big Brave wanted to take proudly home the scalp to hang on his belt, after the custom of his forefathers. SIBYL.

■ A recent issue of The Independent bears upon its cover a very suggestive reminder. It is "While someone gives his life—what are you giving?"

opportunity of life in selfishness, but must "buy up" the time.

When David made his great offering of gold, silver and other things needed for the building of the Temple, he "prepared with all his might," and—though he was not permitted to build the Temple himself—he "rejoiced with great joy" because he was allowed to contribute vast sums for that great work.

Nowadays we seem to have almost lost the idea of giving as a *privilege*, or, even as a duty. Of course, there are endless demands for money and service, and everybody is expected to give something, in these strenuous times, to help the millions who are in such desperate need.

But giving is not only a thing required in days of special need, it is a necessity of our nature. Even if there were no poor people we should still want to give, because we are children of God—the Giver of all good gifts—and the Spirit of our Father is within us.

When Noah came out of the ark there were no poor to help; yet he felt that he owed a debt of gratitude to God and could not rest until he had presented a costly offering. Think how valuable each animal was when there were so few left alive; still he did not hesitate, but "took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."

Would not many practical philan-

West Ave., and another parcel arrived since. I feel sure that those who have so willingly offered their gifts to God, through His needy children, have discovered that it is a privilege for which they should thank Him. As for the \$10.00, sent early in May by A. C. H., that was poured out—like the alabaster box of ointment—on one person. She is a very good woman, whom I have known for years (a member of my Bible Class). Though she is over sixty, and crippled so that she can't get down on her knees to scrub, she has supported herself by sweeping and dusting a large building every day. Last Wednesday she fell and broke her wrist. Instead of going to bed she went to the doctor and had it set, and then (very pluckily) went to the place where she works, which is about two miles away, and asked to have the job kept open for her until she is able to sweep again. This request was willingly granted; but, in the meantime, she needs a real lift. So—for the first time, I think—a ten-dollar bill went straight from the Q. H. P. into the hands of one poor and suffering woman. I wish the giver could have seen her face.

One reason it is a privilege to have the opportunity of service is that it will endure. What we spend on ourselves lasts only for a time, what we put into the hand of God, in real consecration will last eternally.