

"CORPORALS' MESS."

YOU will probably have noticed, Mr. Editor, that the first number of your esteemed paper lacked a body. Etymologically at all events we can claim that distinction, and we shall endeavour to show ourselves a "live body" and not a "Corpse" Mess. The "corpus" contains the "cor," the body the heart, and while we naturally do not wish our name to be expanded by the insertion of the letter "e," we do wish to assure you that our hearts beat true, whether it be on the field of battle or in that subtler field where men will hazard their all to achieve success.

Having introduced ourselves, we desire in a practical manner to convey to you our hearty wishes for the success and popularity of the "Ontario Stretcher."

HISTORY OF THE MESS.

For many days prior to its inauguration on May 9th, 1916, Corporal Turner might have been seen wrapped in thought. His brow, ever pensive, was furrowed with lines of care. He smoked furiously. Cumming's poems, "Songs of a Sick Tum-Tum," were near at hand. Suddenly the title attracted him. In response to the law of gravity, his pipe, as he gazed open-mouthed, fell to the floor.

"Just what ails me," he gasped, "I need a stretcher."

And so the Corporals' Mess became a reality, with Turner as its first President. Of Vice-Presidents there seem to have been no end, for with so many varied tastes it is not easy to satisfy each man's fastidious cravings. Our Corporal-cook, M. A. C. Powell, is proving himself a worthy successor to the great thinker of the past.

MESS MEETINGS.

Four well-attended meetings have been held, and the spirit of camaraderie has been most gratifying. The erudition shown on these occasions has been wonderful indeed, and the moral atmosphere decidedly ennobling. Matters of extreme moment have been thrashed out, now and again literally, and we have proved ourselves awake to the needs of the hour. The wise use of H.P. sauce has added vim to our arguments, and repartee has assumed colossal proportions. Our fondness for pie should be a sufficient criterion as to the excellence of our characters. We leave each meeting convinced that we will raise the tone of the hospital and strengthen its esprit de corps.

It was with peculiar pleasure that we placed on record our pride in our comrade, Corporal L. J. Rimmer, of the 10th Battalion, who, after being mentioned in despatches, has been awarded the D.C.M. On his own request we make but brief reference to his valour. Canada has shown that she has worthy sons, but they are greatest upon whose brow shines the nimbus of humility.

QUESTIONS THAT ARE ASKED.

Are the N.C.O.'s to be asked to a certain Corporal's wedding in August?

Why does another Corporal's wife find it wise to reside in Orpington?

Does another believe that platonic friendship can be cultivated with a grass-widow?

How did Corporal X. succeed in showing his stripes so well in the Hospital Group?

Who is the sporty Corporal who came down from London in a taxi recently?

Did two Corporals who spent an afternoon in the Bromley Summerhouse bar-maids?

Why do some of the Orderly Officers ask if there are any complaints when they stand by the Corporals' tables?

RASPBERRY.

STAGE-STRUCK!

"Ontario's Overseas Thespians"—which embraces—not embrace—any members of the unit who feel they have any histrionic tendency, and are willing to work to develop it, made a most excellent start on Friday, June 16th, with "Who is Who?" Those taking part were Capt. Currey ("Brambleton"), Sergt. Bradfield (the model young bachelor, "Simonides Swanhopper"), Pte. Richardson (Lawrence Lavender, a valet), Nursing Sister Carscallen ("Matilda Jane"), Nursing Sister Bunting ("Cicely"). On Friday, July 21st, the farce "Bowled Out" will be presented, the cast being:—"Yearner," Sergt. Bradfield; "Arlington," Capt. Currey; "Quorms," Pte. Griffiths; "Kidmon," Pte. Saunders; "Mrs. Bufton," Nursing Sister Marston; "Marian," Nursing Sister Gleason; "Sarah Ann," Nursing Sister Carscallen.

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An entertainment for which the patients

will provide the programme will be an "extra" in the near future.

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The company of singers who kindly came to us early in May, under the management of Sergt. Jones, will provide the concert on Friday, July 7th, and on the following Friday the "Scarlet Runners" will again appear.

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Among those to whom we have been indebted for much appreciated help in providing entertainments for patients and all members of the Unit are the boys of the Orpington Orphanage, whose masterly work as a band reflects great credit. The Orpington Orchestra provided the larger part of the evening's programme on one occasion. "The Scarlet Runners," a quintette of Bromley ladies, were much appreciated alike on and off the stage. Captain Morell, the Chaplain of the Honourable Artillery Company, scored a big hit with his presentation of character songs. Private "Nobby," as a "Drum-head" soloist, suggests that even in the trenches (the ranks of the H.A.C. could provide a complete programme in one member. The most varied entertainment was that provided quite recently by Mdme. Edna Thornton and Miss Caroline Hatchard, both well-known members of the Royal Opera Company, and Miss Marguerite Swale, and Mr. Rupert Hazell and Mr. Ernest Sewell. From the first number to the last the enthusiasm and appreciation of the audience was maintained at the highest pitch.

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It was a kindly thought that inspired Mr. Spencer-May, proprietor of the Orpington Picture Palace, to invite the wounded who were able to go to attend a full performance free of charge. In close formation the Battalion of the Broken went to the assault, and easily succeeded in gaining an entrance into the Palace, where they exploded loud bombs of laughter, and finally sent a volley of Loud Cheer throughout the building as a token of appreciation of Mr. Spencer-May's having voluntarily cut away the barbed-wire entanglements of admittance fees.

FROM THE CHAPLAIN TO THE PATIENTS.

AT present there is only one Chaplain of the Ontario Military Hospital, who is a Clergyman of the Church of England, but provision is made for members of other communions to be visited by Ministers of other denominations if they so desire.

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The Church Parade for others than Roman Catholics is held at 9.30 every Sunday morning in the Recreation Hall. The R.C. Church Parade is announced in orders for the day.

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Holy Communion (Church of England) is administered in the Chapel at 6.30, 7.30, and 11.30 a.m. Sundays, and 6.30 on Thursdays.

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Any patient wishing to see the Chaplain at other times than when he is in the wards can do so, any week-day, if able to go out, from 9.30 to 11 in the Chaplain's Study next to the Chapel. Patients who cannot leave their beds or wards should fill in one of the "Chaplain's slips" and enclose in envelope provided and already addressed "Chaplain," and hand to Nursing Sister or Orderly.

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Short Services are held in four wards every Sunday afternoon from 3 to 4.15, and the Chaplain will be glad if the patients of these wards who are not confined to bed or ward will attend and help to make the Services as hearty and helpful as possible for those confined to bed or ward.

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By the kindness of the Vicar of All Saints', Orpington, and of the organist and choir-master, we have the much-appreciated help of the choir-master and several choir boys.

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The Chaplain would like patients of any denomination to clearly understand that any help he can render in any way he will be glad to give.

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