

"WELCOME HOME! OUR BRAVE BOYS"

These were the words that rang yesterday from a hundred thousand throats—words that expressed but feebly the emotions of as many hearts. From the noon hour all day long they were pealed forth, and far into the night—with the music of bands, with blazing bonfires and torches, with the waving of flags and bunting, with one glad outbreak of heartfelt joy—it was the welcome Toronto gave to her heroes returning from South Africa. One was reminded of that great day in October, '99, when they said "good-bye" to home and loved ones, and took their departure amid demonstrations of joy and sorrow; or one called to mind the unbounded joy of "Pretoria Day." But though, in these two events, Toronto enthusiasm was thought to have reached its height, they were far surpassed by the great event of yesterday.

There was no work. Neither was there any rest. There was nothing but "Welcome." Never in its history has the city donned so gay an attire. For three days previous preparations were being made on the most elaborate scale, and every street in the city threw out its welcome in "red, white and blue."

On many of the larger buildings, such as the City hall and the Parliament buildings, the decorations were gorgeous and extravagant, blazing forth by night and day, while the white arch erected on University ave. by the Ladies' Red Cross Society was indeed very beautiful.

The students of Toronto showed, as they generally do in public demonstrations, that they are no small factor in the city's life, and "Varsity" at the head of the line, led them on.

As the contingent was to arrive at the North Toronto C.P.R. station at 1.30, everything was in readiness for their reception by that hour. The organization was complete. The great mass of school children, students, citizens and soldiers partaking in the procession was divided into squads, and each allotted their special places.

The city regiments led the procession—The Body Guards, the Queen's Own, the Grenadiers and the High-

landers. Following these came the Veterans who so bravely fought in '66, '70 and '85, and it was plainly evident from many of their faces that this event brought back old recollections of those days when they, in the pride of youth and vigor, marched home victorious.

In contrast to these gray heads followed closely "Young Canada," the public school boys, many thousand strong, their bright faces showing that Toronto school boys are not lacking in enthusiastic love for the "Land of the Maple." Following these came our own University boys, marshalled by Profs. Baker, VanderSmitten and Lang. Arts, S.P.S., Dentals and Meds. contributed to the general wild delight, while close behind them came Pharmacy, Trinity, Central Business College and many other students. Between salutes and college yells could be heard many a cheer for returning classmates. Next in order came Toronto societies, making a brilliant display of banners and regalia. Then, the heroes of the day, greeted on every side by wild excitement and bursts of cheers. The march was down Yonge, and before reaching the armories the procession touched on Queen, King, Sherbourne, Bay and Spadina, arriving at its destination about 4 o'clock.

It would be presumptuous to attempt a description of the many scenes along the route and the intense enthusiasm which broke forth in showers upon the boys in khaki; suffice to say that the welcome was complete when mothers and sisters and sweethearts clasped dear ones in their arms again.

But there was one sombre note in the day's rejoicing—Toronto did not forget that her boys had not all returned, but that some are slumbering on the veldts of the Transvaal; and quick tears came as many read among splendid decorations these words of Muir:

"Stand by the Modder's blood-stained banks,
With reverential mien,
There fell the bravest of the brave
'Mong "Soldiers of the Queen,"
Oh, to their memory drop a tear
With bowed head and bare;
Among Britannia's heroes—dead,
Young Canada was there."



CAPT. R. K. BARKER, B.A., C COMPANY.
From a photograph taken at Bloemfontein.