

Christmas. The excellent concert of the afternoon served but to whet the appetite for the evening's spectacle.

Certainly Granville Hall never held a bigger or a more boisterously appreciative audience than that which rocked and shouted with laughter over the adapted pantomime of "Dick Whittington and His Cat." No one could have enjoyed himself better at Drury Lane. The stage scenery and properties, produced by Sappers Williamson and Pearce, showed that the R.E. may also be Royal Embellishers. The inter-scenic shifts—remarkably speedy for a first production—were delightfully beguiled by the orchestra which under the masterly direction of Sapper Curran, was a rich treat in itself. The generosity of the Engineers' officers made possible costumes lavish enough and grotesque enough to please the most exacting fancy.

Sergt. Prout's (King Rat) magnificent baritone in "Will o' the Wisp'" in the opening scene, and Mrs. Williamson (as the truly luminous Fairy) in her superlatively delicate rendering of "Carissima," provided, with perfect orchestral support, the musical tidbits of the performance. Sapper Terry, as Dick Whittington, possesses a finished stage enunciation, which made whatever he had to say or sing particularly pleasing. The anagramatic RATS quartet number was as clever in execution as in conception. Matilda, the cook, with her top-heavy, brick-hued Psyche knot, was responsible for many an aching diaphragm in the audience, especially in her culinary lyric—"That tin of tasty tinned tomatoes that tiny Tommy Tucker took."

But after all it was Sapper Maddison (Idle Jack) who won the crowd most uproariously. No depression or pessimism could have been proof against his grinning "Good Morning", always untimely and yet never out of place; his demonstrations of how to secure police co-operation in piano-moving; his appeal to Matilda to witness "the love oozing out of my kisser"; and his hundred indescribable grotesqueries, army quips, and impromptu inspirations. The quartet, "The Day on Which Peace is Declared," was a consummately clever thing, while Sapper Insul's court magic in the closing scene was as comical as it was mystical. Colonel Clark's speech of thanks was smothered in the vociferous endorsement of the Granville men.

Yarrow Annex had a lively concert of its own, in which Pte. Wray and Sergt. Simonson "pulled off the funny stuff." It also had a Christmas tree of its own, hung with ludicrous presents provided by the nurses, and distributed to the patients, who drew for them, by Capt. Withrow in the guise of a hyper-genial Santa Claus.

To the Canadian Red Cross, and friends in Canada, to the Hospital Christmas Committee, to the Nurses, to the Y.M.C.A., and the Inland Water Transport R. E., the wounded Canadians at Ramsgate pay unstinted thanks for the best possible Christmas away from home. May the next be spent in peace in Canada.