

Christmas and After—Anticipations.

Of the "Great Birthday" itself I shall say but little. So far as the religious aspect of the day is concerned—if all is well we shall gather together for a brief service, which will give us the opportunity of singing, as we have been accustomed to at home, such lovely old hymns as "O Come all ye Faithful," "Hark! the Herald Angels," etc. Our hearts will be filled with tenderness and perhaps happy homesickness (note that I was born in Ireland) as we think of past Christmas days with the family circle unbroken.

Now for something about the word "After." To some, no doubt, "After" is of almost equal importance with Christmas itself.

The day after Christmas is known in the dear old motherland as "Boxing Day." Struck by the simple yet curious title, I asked a friend as to its meaning. I will not mention this friend's name, first, because he might not like it, and secondly, because his explanation of Boxing Day may not be altogether correct. But I will say of my friend that he is a very good fellow. He has been my "right bower" in the game of making things pleasant once or twice a week for some of the more crippled of the lads in hospital. All of you know him by sight. Many have used him as a "conveyance", and more have heard his jolly voice in song and chorus. Can anyone now guess his name?

This is what he told me as to "Boxing Day" and its significance. It is so called because it is the day for giving Christmas Boxes—*i.e.* Tips. Every one who has served you in any way during the year, expects a Christmas Box. So general is the custom, that the tips, or boxes, have by an unwritten law, their prescribed limits, at least so far as the minimum is concerned.

I will try to name a few of these. I am saving up to meet them myself.

Postman 2/-; dustman 1/-; grocer boy 6d.; butcher's boy 6d.; baker's boy 1/-; milkman 1/-; greengrocer's boy 6d.; chauffeur 2/-; chimney sweep 1/-; newspaper boy 1/-; coal man 1/-; besides an army of delivery boys, not regularly but occasionally brought into contact with you in your endeavour to live.

You notice that no box is to be more than 2/- and none less than sixpence.

In naming these restrictions it will be noted for your guidance that neither medical officers nor chaplains are referred to. So far as they are concerned there is absolutely no limit.

Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Robbins of the Bell Inn at Minster, together with my friend Mr. Redbourne who has driven many a load of patients for me during the last few months, I am looking forward to a very happy Boxing Day with three bus loads of my lads. The plan is to leave at 10 a.m., go to Canterbury, make a specially conducted tour of the glorious and historic Cathedral, then drive on to Minster for a good old-fashioned