

The Military Hospitals Commission at Ottawa informs us that 2,081 soldiers were under its care at the beginning of November. Of these, 426 were at sanatoria for tuberculosis, and 1,616 at convalescent hospitals, 682 of the latter being out-patients—while 39 members of the force were in asylums for the insane. Of the 426 cases of tuberculosis, it may be added, almost exactly half were discovered in time to prevent them from leaving Canada for the seat of war.

According to a statement prepared by the Militia Department, up to October 5, 1916, the number of soldiers sent back to Canada because of medical unfitness was 6,208. Of these, 961 were suffering from wounds, shell-shock, or the effect of gas; 122 were insane; 245 were afflicted with tuberculosis; while the remainder, 4,880, were suffering from other diseases and disabilities.

All Canadians ought to know what is being done by the Military Hospitals Commission, acting on behalf of the whole body of citizens, for the restoration of their wounded defenders to a position of self-support and independence.

Every disabled soldier is medically examined on arriving at Quebec. If he is no longer in need of hospital treatment, he is sent home free of expense and discharged with a pension or gratuity according to the extent of his disability.

If he needs further treatment, he is taken to the hospital or sanatorium where the treatment most suitable to his case is available, and, if possible, to the institution nearest his home. Men who cannot resume their former work on discharge from hospital are advised and enabled to take special training for new occupations. This is provided free of cost; and while the men are being trained the Dominion Government maintains them and their families.

Men needing artificial limbs are taken to Toronto, where these limbs are made and supplied without charge. Men with serious nerve disorders are treated specially in the Ontario Military Hospital at Cobourg.

Each Provincial Government has appointed a Commission to help discharged men in securing steady and remunerative work. The Dominion Government, and other authorities and employers, systematically give preference to returned soldiers, when filling vacant positions.

The public can and should co-operate heartily in this urgently necessary work, by encouraging the men to take fullest advantage of the curative and educational opportunities given them, and afterwards by seeing that they get work. Local committees have been formed for this purpose in many towns, but much more has to be done in this way.

The treatment, most carefully carried out in accordance with the latest discoveries and the proved results of medical experience, includes many forms of strengthening exercises, often requiring special and costly apparatus; the scientific use of electricity, massage, and continuous baths for affected limbs; with wise dieting and fresh air as a matter of course.

Occupation is often as necessary and beneficial as rest itself, in its curative and strengthening effect on body and mind. Classes are therefore held at the hospitals, for instruction and practice in many arts and industries, such as carpentry and wood-carving, metal and leather working, typewriting and bookkeeping, mechanical drawing and elementary engineering, gardening, bee-keeping and poultry raising.

These all help to increase the capacity of the patients, and to lessen the effect of any injury they have received, by getting them into practice for such industries as they can profitably undertake. The medical and educational officers try first to discover what each man is most likely to succeed at, and then to fit him for it as thoroughly as possible.

It has been wisely decided that no man shall forfeit any part of his pension on account of his industry and enterprise in improving his own financial position.

Let our readers write without hesitation to the Secretary of the Military Hospitals Commission at Ottawa, or to the Provincial Commission at the Provincial capital, asking any further information they may desire, or giving practical suggestions resulting from thought or experience.

How the Prussian Guard Came Home.

Hiding the Wounded.

(BY D. THOMAS CURTIN, IN THE "TIMES", LONDON.)

Various circumstances enabled Mr. Curtin to witness a sight strictly forbidden to the German public—the return of the wounded from the front.

The 4th of August is the anniversary of what is known in Germany as "England's treachery"—the day that England entered the war in what the German Government tells the people is "a base and cowardly attempt to try and beat her by starving innocent women and children".

On that sunny and fresh morning I looked out of the railway carriage window some quarter of a mile before we arrived at Potsdam and saw numerous brown trains marked with the Red Cross, trains that usually travel by night in Germany.

There were a couple of officers of the Guard Cavalry in the same carriage with me. They also looked out. "Ach, noch einmal" (What, more of them?) discontentedly remarked the elder. They were a gloomy pair, and they had reason to be. The German public has begun to know a great deal about the wounded. They do not yet know all the facts, because wounded men are, as far as possible hidden in Germany and never sent to Socialist centres unless it is absolutely unavoidable. The official figures, which are increasing in an enormous ratio since the development of England's war machine, are falsified by manipulation.

And if easy proof be needed of the truth of my assertion I point to the monstrous official misstatement involved in the announcement that over 90 per cent. of German wounded return to the firing line! Of the great crush of wounded at Potsdam I doubt whether any appreciable portion of the serious cases will return to anything except permanent invalidism. They are suffering from shell wounds not shrapnel, for the most part, I gathered.

Broken Men.

As our train emptied it was obvious that some great spectacle was in progress. The exit to the station became blocked with staring peasant women returning from the early market in Berlin, their high fruit and vegetable baskets empty on their backs. When I eventually got through the crowd into the outer air and paused at the top of the short flight of steps I beheld a scene that will never pass from my memory. Filmed and circulated in Germany it would evoke inconceivable astonishment to this deluded nation and would swell the malcontents, already a formidable mass, into a united and dangerous army of angry, eye-opened dupes. This is not the mere expression of a neutral view, but is also the opinion of a sober and patriotic German statesman.

I saw the British wounded arrive from Neuve Chapelle at Boulogne; I saw the Russian wounded in the retreat from the Bukovina; I saw the Belgian wounded in the Antwerp retreat and the German wounded in East Prussia, but the wounded of the Prussian Guard at Potsdam surpassed in sadness anything I have witnessed in the last two bloody years.

Your Neuve Chapelle wounded were, if not gay, many of them blithe and smiling—their bodies were hurt but their minds were cheerful; but the wounded of the Prussian Guard—the proudest military force in the world—who had come back to their home town decimated and humbled—these Guards formed the most amazing agglomeration of broken men I have ever encountered. As to the numbers of them, of these five reserve regiments but few are believed to be unhurt. Vast numbers were killed, and most of the rest are back at Potsdam in the ever-growing streets of hospitals that are being built on the Bornstadterfeld.

One of the trains had just stopped. The square was blocked with vehicles of every description. I was surprised to find the great German furniture vans, which by comparison with those used in England and the United States look almost like houses on wheels were drawn up in rows with military precision. As if these were not enough, the whole of the wheeled traffic of Potsdam seemed to be commandeered by the military for the lightly wounded—cabs, tradesmen's wagons, private carriages—everything on wheels except, of course, motor-cars, which

are non-existent owing to the rubber shortage. Endless tiers of stretchers lay along the low embankment sloping up to the line. Doctors, nurses and bearers were waiting in quiet readiness.

The passengers coming out of the station, including the women with the tall baskets, stopped but only for a moment. They did not tarry, for the police, of which there will never be any dearth if the war lasts thirty years, motioned them on, a slight movement of the hand being sufficient.

Move On.

I was so absorbed that I failed to notice the big constable near me until he laid his heavy paw upon my shoulder and told me to move on. A school-master and his wife, his "rucksack" full of lunch, who had taken advantage of the glorious sunshine to get away from Berlin to spend a day amidst the woods along the Havel, asked the policeman what the matter was.

The reply was "Nichts hier zu sehen" ("Nothing to be seen here; get along"). The great "Hush! Hush! Hush!" machinery of Germany was at work.

Determined not to be baffled, I moved out of the square into the shelter of a roadside tree, on the principle that a distant view would be better than none at all, but the police were on the alert, and a police lieutenant tackled me at once. I decided to act on the German military theory that attack is the best defence, and, stepping up to him, I stated that I was a newspaper correspondent. "Might I not see the wounded taken from the train?" I requested. He very courteously replied that I might not, unless I had a special pass for that purpose from the Kriegsministerium in Berlin.

I remembered a large window in the first and second class dining-room in the station, from which a very close view of the tragedy could be gained. I knew that there was no train back to Berlin for an hour and a half. I took a ticket, handed it to the uniformed woman who deals with them as in England, and explained to the soldier and "Unteroffizier" who stood by her that I would like to go into the dining-room to read and get something to eat. I walked to the window of the dining-room and ordered butterless bread and Dutch cheese—the universal and almost standard mid-day diet of Germany to-day—and was glad that my Berlin ticket served. My ruse succeeded. I saw everything and unmolested.

By this time the wounded were being moved from the train. The slightly wounded were drawn up in double ranks, their clean white arm and head bandages gleaming in the noonday light. They stood dazed and dejected, looking on at the real work which was just beginning—the removal of the severely wounded.

Wounded in Furniture Vans.

Then it was that I learned the use of those mammoth furniture vans. Then it was I realized that these vans are part of Germany's plan by which her wounded are carried—I will not say secretly—but as unobtrusively as possible. In some of the mammoths were put 12, into others 14; others held as many as 20.

The Prussian Guard had come home. The steel corps of the army of Germany had met at Contalmaison the light-hearted boys I had seen drilling in Hyde Park last year, and in a furious counter-attack, in which they had attempted to regain the village, had been wiped out.

These were not merely wounded, but dejected wounded. The whole atmosphere of the scene was that of intense surprise and depression. Tradition going back to Frederick the Great, nearly 200 years ago, had been smashed—by amateur soldiers. The callow youth of 16 who served my lunch was muttering something to the barmaid, who replied that he was lucky to be in a class that was not likely to be called up yet.

The extreme cases were carried at a snail's pace by bearers, who put their feet down as carefully as if they were testing very thin ice, and who placed the comfortable spring stretchers in the very few vehicles which had rubber or imitation rubber tires. The work was done with military precision and great celerity. The evacuation of this train was no sooner finished than another took its place, and the same scene was repeated. Presently the great furniture vans returned from having deposited

their terrible loads, and were again filled. One van was reserved for those who had expired in the journey, and it was full.

This, then, was the battered remnant of the five reserve regiments of the Prussian Guard which had charged the British lines at Contalmaison three weeks before, in a desperate German counter-attack to wrest the village from the enemy, who had just occupied it. Each train discharged between six and seven hundred maimed passengers. Nor was this the last day of the influx.

What the Guard Means.

The Guard had its garrisons chiefly in Potsdam, but also partly in Berlin, and represents the physical flower of German manhood. On parade it was inspiring to look at, and no military officer in the world ever doubted its prowess. Nor has it failed in the war to show splendid courage and fighting qualities. English people simply do not understand its prestige at home and among neutrals.

The Guard is sent only where there is supreme work to be done. If you hear that it has been hurled into a charge you may rest assured that it is striving to gain something on which Germany sets the highest price—for the life-blood of the Guard is the dearest that she can pay.

In the battle of the Marne the active regiments of the Guard forming a link between the armies of Bulow and Hausen were dashed like spray on jagged cliffs when they surged in wave after wave against the army of Foch at Sezanne and Fere Champenoise.

Germany was willing to sacrifice those superb troops during the early part of the battle because she knew that von Kluck had only to hold his army together, even though he did not advance, and the overthrow of Foch would mean a Teuton wedge driven between Verdun and Paris.

One year and 10 months later she hurled the Guard Reserve at Contalmaison because she was determined that this important link in the chain of concrete and steel that coiled back and forth before Bapaume-Peronne must remain unbroken. The newly-formed line of Britain's sons bent but did not break under the shock. They were outnumbered, but, like all the rest of the British that the back-from-the-front German soldiers have told me about, these fought on and on, never thinking of surrender.

I know from one of these that in a first onslaught the Guard lost heavily, but was reinforced and again advanced. Another desperate encounter and the men from Potsdam withered in the hand-to-hand carnage. The Germans could not hold what they had won back, and the khaki succeeded the field grey at Contalmaison.

The evacuation of the wounded occupied hours. I purposely missed my train, for I knew that I was probably the only foreign civilian to see the historic picture of the proudest soldiery of Prussia return to its garrison town from the greatest battle in history.

Empty trains were pulled out of the way, to be succeeded by more. Doctors and nurses were attentive and always busy, and the stretcher-bearers moved back and forth until their faces grew red with exertion.

Without Hope.

But it was the visages of the men on the stretchers that riveted my attention. I never saw so many men so completely exhausted. Not one pair of lips relaxed into a smile, and not an eye lit up with the glad recognition of former surroundings.

It was not, however, the lines of suffering in those faces that impressed me, but that uncanny sameness of expression, an expression of hopeless gloom so deep that it made me forget that the sun was shining from an unclouded sky. The dejection of the police, of the soldier onlookers, of the walking wounded, and those upturned faces on the white pillows told as plainly as words could ever tell that the Guard had at last met a force superior to themselves and their war machine. They knew well that they were the idol of their Fatherland, and that they had fought with every ounce of their great physical strength, backed by their long traditions. They had been vanquished by an army of mere sportsmen.

My thoughts went back to Berlin and the uniformed coffins at the British