

**OUR DUTY TO THE HOMEWARD BOUND.**

"Soldier, soldier come from the wars,  
Why don't you march with my true love?"

A year ago, followed by the best wishes of their countrymen, the first thousand Canadians sailed across the seas to assist in upholding the might and majesty of the Empire in distant South Africa. That our people volunteered to leave the pursuits of peaceful industry for the purpose of fighting for the flag under which we live is an object lesson not likely to be lost upon nations which, in the dark days of December last, indulged in sneering references to what they were pleased to call "the decadence" of Britain: It is true, as Lord Roseberry says in his published letter to Captain Lambton, that in the early stages of the South African struggle we endured "humiliations unparalleled in our history since the American war." No one anticipated that, the grim bit of work would take so long, and there is a pretty general consensus of opinion that it need not have taken so long. However, it must be remembered that the obstinacy, cunning and power of resistance of the Boers was universally under-estimated.

And now that Krugerism has been annihilated, and the supremacy of the British Empire in the extinct Orange Free State and the Transvaal definitely established, we must hope with Lord Roseberry that the new administration across the Atlantic will "maintain and consolidate the priceless heritage of the Empire; pursue a foreign policy which will preserve its interests with firmness and dignity, but be courteous and conciliatory in method; and will in the immediate problem of South Africa only support a settlement which guarantees that the results of our sacrifices shall in no jot or tittle be prejudiced, but have as its ultimate aim that the Queen's South African dominions present as fair a picture of contentment, confidence and loyal harmony as the other regions of her Empire."

There is no doubt the settling-down process will take some time; the country has been badly devastated, and industry has been disorganized. We must, therefore, not look for a very early union of prosperity with peace, and we must cultivate a sobriety of anticipation, trusting to General Baden-Powell and his police to restore order with the least possible display of severity in dealing with a brave and misguided people.

The closing scenes in the South African tragedy are described in recent dispatches from Lorenzo Marquez and Pretoria. The Boer officials, Van Alphen, Grobler and Malherbe, and "a large quantity of bar gold," are now on the high seas in a German steamer bound for Europe. Other vessels are conveying the mercenaries of all nations to any country willing to receive them; while thousands of Tommies are singing the ballad of their own poet, Kipling:

The Malabar in 'arbor with the *summer* at 'er tail,  
An' the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders for'to sail.

A year ago! The scenes and talk which attended the departure of Canada's contribution to the maintenance of the honor of

*The bloomin' old rag over 'ead.*

are still fresh in our memories. Who cannot recall the speculation indulged in as to the probable disposition of that splendid "First Contingent"? Fortunately nothing came of the suggestion to divide the Canadian force into companies or units wherewith to sprinkle the trained regiments of the British Isles. The desire of the Canadians to fight together was acceded to, and the fortune of war has enabled them to gain credit and renown, and to surround the maple leaf with a wreath of laurels. We never wavered in the belief that our volunteers would maintain the honour of the land they love, the country of great woods and vast prairie lands, of inland seas, noble rivers and mountain ranges. From the time when first called upon to take part in active operations in the field, to that day of last month when Lord Roberts reviewed the survivors at Pretoria on the eve of the departure of those homeward bound on the "Idaho," the Royal Canadians never forgot that their countrymen were eagerly devouring the news from South Africa, and with shining eyes sorrowing o'er the dead while rejoicing that they had done their duty.

And what is our pleasure and duty towards the homeward bound soldiers? Of course, like the good citizens of London, now preparing to welcome their own special representatives—the young lawyers, architects, bankers, brokers and mercantile men comprising the City Imperial Volunteers—we must be

"joyous in our joy,"

and see to it that in every hamlet, village, town and city, from ocean to ocean, all over the land of the maple and the beaver, those returning from the war are welcomed and made much of, and that memorial services are held and masses sung for those who never shall return. And when we have once again followed the band, shouted "Rule Britannia" and "God Save the Queen," let it be our duty to see that the men who have fought for Queen and Empire, who have made us frequently forget in the contemplation of their courage the carnage and woes the crimes and miseries of the savage custom of war, are speedily found employment in those quiet pursuits of business which, in a far greater measure than war, contribute to the majesty and glory of a country. And let our remaining and much more solemn and binding duty be to care for any who may be "weeping by the hearth" for husbands and sons now sleeping in honored rest in distant South Africa.

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest  
Your truth and valor wearing;  
The bravest are the tenderest—  
The loving are the daring.