
The Making of a Man

By SHOLTO.

HAROLD had just reached the mature age of twenty-seven, and though he had not been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, yet he found life very pleasant. He had a fairly good clerkship in a City office where, from ten in the morning until 5.30 in the afternoon, he worked at his desk for a salary of three pounds per week, a sum which enabled him to have quite a good time, and not being particularly extravagant, was able to indulge in the ordinary light amusements and recreations common to the young men of London. Politics did not stir him greatly, and he really had no idea as to the policies of Continental countries, so that it came upon him almost as a shock when war was declared between Great Britain and Germany. After diligently studying his morning newspaper, however, and perusing the various official publications, he recognised that no other course was open but for the British Empire to join the side of France and Russia against the Germans and Austrians.

Then came Lord Kitchener's call for men, and when almost every hoarding was covered with appeals for "Still More Men," he began to feel rather uncomfortable, as, although he was single and eligible for the army, still he was not a fighting man by instinct, and really did not feel called upon to give up all of what he considered the good things of life in order to don a khaki uniform and learn to become a soldier. Even when he had perused Lord Brice's Commission's report on the atrocities committed by the Germans in Belgium, and his soul sickened at the recital of such ghastly horrors, yet he did not have any inclination to take any action, and really only regretted that he had read the report.

One day, on his way to the office, Harold was stopped by a young recruiting sergeant, who asked him to join