

SOLDIERS AND CANADIANS. ESSAYS BY LITTLE SCHOOLGIRLS

WITH the good people of Orpington and St. Mary Cray "Sports Day" had its inspiration in commendable desire to aid the various local V.A.D. Hospitals and to provide entertainment for the wounded of our own and other hospitals. The local school-master (or mistress) is very practical, and made the occasion provide the theme for an essay by young pupils. Some of these essays have been sent to us, and the two that we publish below are deservedly interesting as representing the young English village school girls' point of view of things military and things Canadian:

"SPORTS DAY."

By DORIS GRAY.

The Sports Day of St. Mary Cray and Orpington was held last Thursday at Grassmead Meadow, St. Mary Cray. The people mostly interested in it were the Special and Regular local police, joined by the Canadians. It began at two in the afternoon and lasted until ten in the evening. The programme consisted chiefly of races for boys and girls varying in ages. There were also races for the nurses and wounded soldiers of the Ontario Hospital, who were there in hundreds. They seemed to enjoy it immensely, and what struck them mostly was the roundabouts—they had never seen any before. Many of them had rides on the horses, and must have thought it better fun than riding the real animals. The donkey rides proved themselves very attractive, especially to the children. Bowling for the live pig was an attraction for the men, especially those who had had plenty of practice and could aim well. As for the other shows, including "Throwing at Kaiser Bill" and the "Hall of Laughter," they made a great success. The wounded soldiers surrounded the cokenut shies, and thoroughly enjoyed the Maypole and National Dances by the children of St. Mary Cray Council School. It certainly was a very great affair, especially as it was a new thing for either village. It concluded with dancing on the green, accompanied by the band, which must have been something similar to what they had in olden times.

By MARGARET CAMP.

The St. Mary Cray and Orpington Sports Day was held last Thursday in Grassmead Meadow; it was a large affair, and the first of its kind that there has been in either village. The Canadians, local police, and special constables took part in it; the Canadians beat the Specials at cricket, and played Bearwood at baseball. In this they were beaten. The game was watched with interest by the Colonials and the local people: much amusement was caused by the excited shouts of the Canadians. The match was enjoyed by all who saw it, but to those who had never before seen one it seemed very rough and typically American. A band played during a great part of the day, and livened up the proceedings, and at intervals there were dances by the school girls. There were races for people of various ages, and a hat-trimming competition for wounded soldiers. It was very amusing to watch the people having donkey rides, and in fact there was something amusing all through, but the thing that caused most laughter was the Hall of Mirrors, which was crowded most of the time. This very pleasant day ended up with dancing, to the accompaniment of the band, on the green.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

Of the 2nd Canadian Field Ambulance.

AS IT IS WRITTEN BY WILLIAM, SON OF HISDAD, SURNAMED THE FOX, AND A CAPTAIN AND A MASTER IN THE GREAT ARMY.

CHAPTER IV.

1. And for fourteen days the thirty-two great ships and the ships of war did sail on the great sea, each keeping in their appointed places in the three lines.

2. And on the fourteenth day of the tenth month the ships drew nigh unto the land, and the hearts of the soldiers were made glad when they did behold the Eddystone Light-house.

3. And in the evening of the same day the ships entered the Harbour of Plymouth, and great was the joy of the people when they did behold the ships and the soldiers that were on their decks.

4. And they gathered in multitudes along the banks of the river, and the air was rent with their cheers as the ships passed up to a place called Devonport.

5. Here they did drop the anchor, and each in their turn was taken to the landing stage, and great was the joy of man and beast when they stood again on the land.

6. On the third day that the good ship Laurentic had been at anchor she was taken unto landing stage, and the hearts of the tribe of the 2nd Field Ambulance were made glad.

7. And in the evening of the same day they did leave the ship and did march through dark streets many miles to the station, and at the eleventh hour did enter into the train that should take them unto the camp on the plains called Salisbury.

8. And while it was yet dark, at the third hour, the train came to a place called Lavington. Here they did leave the train and did follow one who was sent to lead them to the camp on the plains.

9. And as they marched through the sleeping village the people did rise from their beds so that they might behold the soldiers from across the sea who had come to aid them in their hour of trial.

10. And it came to pass at the sixth hour he who had been sent to lead them, and who had led them up hills and down valleys till they were sorely tired, said unto the leader of the tribe: "This is West Down South on the Plains of Salisbury."

11. And in these tents we shall dwell and complete your learning in the arts of war."

12. And it came to pass that they did tarry on these plains for three score and ten days, and lo for forty days and forty nights it did rain and snow, and the winds did blow, and great was the sufferings thereof.

13. The earth became a sea of mud, and their raiment was dry neither by day nor by night, and the tents were torn asunder by the winds, and the patience of the soldiers was sorely tried.

14. And there were murmurings of discontent amongst them, for they said one to the other: "What manner of man hath done this?"

15. We came to this distant land to fight the good fight, and not to be fed on Brussels sprouts and be drowned in seas of mud. But their mutterings availed them nothing.

16. And verily I saw unto you the suffer-

ings on these plains have not been equalled on the fields of battle.

17. In order that they might retain their reason and not go mad during the long nights and wet days they did bedeck themselves in rubber boots and coats, and did visit the other tribes in the camps on the plains that were called BUSTARD, PONDS FARM, LARK HILL, WEST DOWN NORTH, WEST DOWN SOUTH.

18. Yea, and they did visit the villages around about that were called Tillshead, Shrewton, Amesbury, Devizes, Market Lavington. And many did go as far as the great City of London, and many are the tales that are told thereof.

19. Now on the third day of the new year 1915 all the soldiers had departed from the plains to the huts at a place called Lark Hill and Bulford. The 2nd Field Ambulance were sent to a great dwelling that was called the Lavington Manor House.

20. Here for forty days they did live in comfort, and did minister to the sick. And it came to pass that the King said unto the great General Kitchener, on the fourth day of the second month: "We will together review these troops from across the seas and judge as to their fitness for war."

21. And it came to pass and the King was well pleased, and he said unto the General, whose name was Alderson: "Ye have an army of great promise. Take ye them unto the fields of battle, and in the days to come all peoples shall hear of their great deeds of valour."

22. And on the 9th day of the second month they did journey to a place called Avonmouth, and did again go on the ships and did sail for three days and three nights, and they did pass through the Bay of Biscay, and a great storm arose, and great was the sickness thereof.

23. And on the Sabbath Day, being the 14th day of the month, we did land in France at a place called St. Nazarre.

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