

VOL. I., No. 14. DECEMBER 29TH, 1917.

“

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Chronicles
of
Cliveden.

Fred. C. Owen -

TWOPENCE.

H. E. HEWENS

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Chronicles of Cliveden.

Vol. I., No. 14.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29TH, 1917.

TWOPENCE.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ... LT.-COLONEL MEAKINS.
EDITORIAL STAFF ... { PTE. W. C. PIKE.
... { PTE. F. HEASELL.
... { A.-SERGT. BAKER.

NEW YEAR'S DAY, the first day, of the first month, of the new year, the day when we all, whether we wish it or no, must turn over another page in the Book of Life. Some there are who do this with undisguised satisfaction, curious to see what is to be revealed to them; or, perhaps, keen to hide from sight some unpleasant blot on the once clean surface of the old page. Others, more timid souls, or, perhaps, more thoughtful, turn with hesitancy, fearful for what the future may hold in store. On many calendars the special significance of this particular Day is indicated by the use of red ink, the rest of the days being printed in black. To my mind, however, gold would be more appropriate, for is it not on New Year's Day when to those whose Life is yet in its early chapters another golden opportunity is given to prove their worth; while to those whose Book is almost done each New Year's Day brings added radiance to the golden sunset of a life well spent. To everyone, New Year's Day should be the most solemn of any during the year. It is the beginning of a new offensive against the trials and tribulations of this life, and as such a considerable part of it could not be better spent than in quiet contemplation of the mistakes of the past year, and, with these in mind, in drawing up fresh plans with renewed energy and determination. It is a great mistake to hastily form a number of good resolutions, and having thus acquired a comfortable feeling of piety (which, under such conditions, can only be skin deep) to rush out and join in more or less riotous celebrations with other thoughtless people, during which all serious thoughts and good resolutions are scattered to the winds, some, alas, to remain lost for ever. There was never a truer saying than that "The way to Hell is paved with Good Resolutions"; good resolutions made, and then quickly broken. It is better not to make them than, having made them, to break them, for by so doing the very foundations of character are undermined. To a certain extent each day in the year should be a "New

Year's Day," for, with every sunrise, good resolutions should be renewed, and advantage taken of the knowledge acquired by the mistakes of the day before to strengthen one for the struggle of the day just commencing; but inasmuch as January 1st marks the beginning of a new chapter, so it should be begun with special earnestness and firm resolve. Let the Christmas Season be your time for rejoicing, but keep New Year's Day for serious thoughts, and, incidentally, perhaps, for getting over the effects of Christmas celebrations prior to starting work bright and early on Jan. 2nd.

J.D.M.

Now and Then.

A Subaltern stood in a blasted trench,
More like a field well ploughed.
He cursed old Fritz and his dirty tricks,
And he spoke his thoughts aloud.

"The Brigadier comes round to-day,
What lots of faults he'll find;
His little book is full of notes
And 'strafes' of every kind."

"What are those sandbags doing there?
Why is this place not clean?
When did the Primus stove get lost?
Where has the rifle been?"

"Where are your men at work just now?
When did you visit your posts?
Why is your cookhouse in this state?
What's this?—Oh, 'Lord of Hosts'!"

EPILOGUE.

St. Peter sat at the gate of Heaven,
When a weary soul drew nigh;
'Twas the Subaltern with his shrapnel hat
And his muddy gum boots, thigh.

St. Peter opened the golden gate,
And said, as he stepped aside,
"If you satisfied the Brigadier
You'll do—come right inside."

A.R., in the New Year Souvenir of the Welsh Division.

THERE are times when the German Bight is bad for the German barque.

Christmas at Taplow.

Christmas has come and gone, the little flash of excitement and gaiety is almost extinguished, and once again we settle down with renewed courage to face the difficulties which the future may hold in store, and with renewed hope that before another Yuletide draws nigh peace may reign again and the dread nightmare of war may have passed away for ever.

Those who were privileged to spend the season in the Duchess of Connaught Canadian Military Hospital will never forget it, the experience will be indelibly impressed upon their minds, and when war is no more and families are re-united many will be the tale related around the home fireside of the Christmas of 1917 spent at Taplow. It was wonderful—truly wonderful. The spirit of Christmas infused itself into every nook and corner of the Hospital; it was in the very atmosphere, and every patient and member of the staff was inflicted by it. Peace and goodwill were manifested everywhere, and nothing could have been done to give more enjoyment or happiness to the patients.

The wards during the two or three days prior to the 25th became hives of industry, and, gradually changing their appearance, assumed a grace and beauty which was astonishing. In this direction there was, of course, considerable rivalry, particularly as prizes were offered for the best decorated wards. The Lady Visitors and the Sisters spared nothing to give the men every opportunity for demonstrating their decorative skill, and the results were extraordinary. Every ward was a remarkable galaxy of colour, and the schemes were as ingenious as they were beautiful. So excellent were the ward designs and so cleverly were they carried out that many visitors were heard to express their sympathies with the judges upon the great difficulty of making a selection. The judging was done by outside friends, who were absolutely unbiassed in their decision. They made their rounds on Christmas Eve. The result was awaited with great interest, and there were many who were highly delighted and others who were—well, slightly disappointed when it was announced that K.1 had the premier honours. A. and D. came second, and H.2 obtained the third award. K.1 was certainly charming. It had the appearance of a Hall of Flowers, and was a perfect harmony of colour.

The wards in the old building were most difficult to decorate, but the men were amazingly successful, and that award at least gave universal pleasure. H.2 was very beautiful and artistic. The colouring was certainly lovely, and the Japanese effect obtained by strings of mimosa and evergreen at the end of the ward was most effective. The decorations were not confined to the wards, however, and the Recreation Hall and Dining Hall were beautifully bedecked.

The festivities commenced on Christmas Eve, and were inaugurated by the ward parties given by the Lady Visitors. There was not a whit of dullness in the whole Hospital, and aches and pains were all forgotten in the jollity of the proceedings. In many wards patients attired in extraordinary fantastic costumes paraded, and inter-ward visitations by these added greatly to the merriment of the evening. Scarcely a ward was without a Father Christmas, and there was plenty for him to do, for many were the presents which well-wishers had sent for distribution. The Canadian Red Cross Society kindly sent each patient a pocket wallet, and the gift to each man from other Canadian friends was a stocking, literally filled with many beautiful and useful gifts. Col. and Mrs. Watt also presented each patient with cigarettes and the Sisters also had a little token of goodwill for their patients. Late in the evening the Chaplains conducted a party of carol singers through the whole of the wards, and the music was very delightful.

The Dining Hall patients were entertained to tea by Col. and Mrs. Watt. They had a gorgeous spread, and during the progress of the meal the Hospital Orchestra (under Sergeant Sinclair) played selections.

In the evening a smoker was held in the Hall, and Col. W. L. Watt presided over the large gathering. The patients were delighted with the beautiful singing of Mr. Beardmore, the famous Canadian tenor soloist, and the stories which Major Fallis had to tell were original and amusing.

On the evening of Boxing Day a whist drive was given in the Recreation Hall, and an hour or two were pleasantly spent in cards and smoke. The Christmas was, indeed, far more enjoyable than could have been anticipated, and the grateful thanks of the whole of the patients are tendered to those who so generously and willingly contributed to the happiness of the men.

Mike Dooley Home Again.

Many of the older patients will have pleasant recollections of L./Cpl. Kane, who for some time was a patient in the Hospital, and was among the first contributors to this Magazine. His "Mike Dooley" letters were always most amusing. It was but a short while since that he was discharged, but the following letter from him was received by one of the Magazine staff a few days ago:—

"'Tis a long wile sinse I rote you last but I hav bin to the war and havnt had tym to rite at all, at all, the dirty germuns hav been kapin us pretty busy wid drivin thim of the pashendale ridge. Divil a scrap did we iver hav in Dublin that cud cum up wid the rarin tarin bludy murder of the swine.

ivery day twas a donegal fair and the way we lambasted thim were a joy to the hart of me. wat wid sticking thim ful of holes and crakin their skulls twas the finest place on Gods green earth for a true irishman.

big tim Dooley were the very hart and sole of us lad and manys the sausage will remane for the dogs on akount of the plasin way he ad wid the Germuns and he niver stood fer no back talk from thim ofisers an all. wance he wuz takin one of our liftinents down to the dresin station also som prisoners we had captured an wan of thim sed he wuz an ofiser an sez he did not hav to carry a stretcher so tim takes his jac nife out an cuts of his bages of an ofiser and sez he to him yer redused to the ranks get hold of the far side and get down to work.

another day he wuz takin prisoners to the burd cages and a foine lot of burds they wuz. well he started out an we didnt expect him back fer a cupple of ours but he wuz bac fillin his amunition bags in 15 minits cause he sed they tried to escape.

but now I supose you wonder were I am. well Im on me way down the line fer blightey I tried to stop a shel an only got some pieces so Im hopin to say gud mornin to yez and to Curnel Muburn and som of the Sisters who wuz kind to me.

so gud by fer now,

MIKE.

Some of the wealthier Huns are said to be living largely on melons, for which they have to pay from fifty to sixty marks apiece. No wonder they are feeling melon-colic!

Monkey Wrench and Elbow Grease.

They built a sawmill some years back
Across the way from Hackensack;
And when they sought an engineer,
Hank Armstrong thought he'd volunteer.
He said he'd run a mowing machine,
An' grindstone since he was thirteen,
An' sulky plough, an' corn drill, too—
They said they kinder guessed he'd do.

He filled that boiler full 's a tick
With water hauled from Slocum's Creek;
And then he took that fire-box,
And chucked it full of hemlock blocks:
He poured in coal-oil by the cup,
And lit a match, to start her up.
The flame shot out as he looked in,
And singed the whiskers off his chin.

That thingumbob that stands on top
Jumped open with an awful pop,
And steam came shooting in a cloud
Till Hank he said he kinder 'lowed
The thing was making such a noise
That it might rile the other boys,
And so he twisted down the nut
Until the peaky thing stayed shut.

We never thought Hank knew so much
'Bout boilers, engines, belts and such,
But if a belt got loose and slipped
He'd smear on tar until she gripped,
Or if a bearing box got hot
He'd just pour water on the spot
Until the place got cool, and then
He'd start the whole shebang again.

And when the governor shaft got bent
He grabbed that dog-gone monkey wrench,
And hit the dingus one good smack
Across the side and bent it back.
Hank said he never worked by rule,
'Cause any sort of gol-darned fool
Could use horse sense and mend a piece,
With monkey wrench and elbow grease.

And regular, twelve times a week,
Those boiler joints would spring a leak,
Then Hank would jump up off his bench,
And grab that dog-gone monkey wrench,
And go and hammer every seam
Until it quit its spittin' steam;
And when we asked him, "Wont it bust?"
Hank grinned and said, "In God we trust!"

S.N.

Ward Notes.

F.1.

Welcome to the boys of the last convoy. Hope they will join with us and uphold the name that F.1 has the honour of possessing.

We got a large bunch of flowers in the ward last Sunday, as usual, but have been asked, by special request, not to say anything about it in this issue.

We have a very industrious kitchen staff, with a "Beaver" on the job.

Things we would like to know—

Does anybody in the ward know "Kate"?

Who are the two patients in the ward who are trying "Deacon's" as a hair restorer?

Who is the patient who walks on crutches and forgets which foot to hold up?

Where will I be by the time you get this issue, boys? Across the Channel, teasing mules, but wish you all a happy New Year.

Who tied "Wotton" and "Mac" together while they were sleeping in the same bed? You would be surprised if you knew.

Who will help the newly-wed with his correspondence?

Who was the gentleman from J.2 who came into our ward on Sunday, 10th, looking for an introduction? Stick around and you *might* get on steady.

Who sat on the locker after it was newly painted?

Who is the sapper who says he can blow up Hill 60 with a 6-inch fuse?

Who is the Jock who holds the honour of putting up the best argument in the ward?

Who hid the "furs" and "umbrellas"? It sounds like a mean Australian trick.

F.2.

We were all very sorry to say good bye to our M.O., Capt. Stewart, upon the occasion of his recent departure for France. By his quiet, friendly manner and thorough, conscientious work, he has won both our hearts and admiration. Our heartiest good wishes go with him wherever he may be.

We welcome Capt. Tremayne, whom we hope and feel sure will prove a worthy successor.

Though with us but a few days we became much attached to Sister Rea, recently from Malta, and regret her removal to some other ward for night duty. We wonder which ward is the lucky one?

But good fortune smiles upon us in sending back to us again our genial Sister Forgie.

Inspired by the untiring energy and industry of Sister Davies, and ably assisted by our other Sisters, the boys have been on the "hump" for the last two or three days at the art of decorating—and the ward that beats us will win our congratulations.

And now we hope the "mis" will be under, not in, our mistletoe! Any volunteers? We'll conscript 'em if they don't.

And we take this opportunity of expressing to our Sisters our thanks and hearty appreciation for the excellent treatment we have received at their hands during the present year. To them all we extend our best wishes for a large measure of good fortune in 1918.

To the Hospital staff and all our fellow patients the seasons greetings.

G.1.

We have a case who still clings to us.

There has been great activity on both sides, especially in raids, and our Very-lights and 9.5's are a treat. Did you hear the command, "No. 1 gun—one round—salvo—fire"?

It is pleasing to note we have a worker in our new arrivals. They are always welcome.

Our night orderly was trying to give us an exhibition of gymnastics one night, but the floor "rose to the occasion"!

We are again charmed by our tin whistle specialist. It was a great suspense while he was away.

Now "Winnipeg" has got to know who the mysterious "George" is we shall expect to hear something about him.

Some of our boys are showing traces of almost human intelligence in the art of needlework. One more spoke has been completed of one artillery badge.

All advanced pupils in music, apply to our ward for the finished product. The charge per lesson is, square it with the patients—not more than £1 or less than 10/-. Our teachers are all fully qualified in "ragtime."

Things we want to know—

Is the willow tree still in bloom, Sister F.? "Cheep" isn't it?

If "Dinkie" is really "Busy"?

What brand Demar is substituting for his own special brand? Not the favourite colour for the troops.

G.2.

We have had to say good bye to quite a number of our old friends lately. We wish them all the best of good fortune wherever they may be, and if it be their lot to return to the front may all their "blighties" be quick and little ones.

The junior partner in the famous firm of Bluebell Bros. is unfortunately among our absent friends, but anyway his activities had ceased as this little verse will illustrate:

'Tis in the stilly night
The Bluebell brothers rise
And make their way with footsteps light
To where the K.S. lies.
With evil words and muffled laugh
They tear those beds asunder,
But e'er they have completed half
Behind them comes a ghostly sound,
As of far-off distant thunder;
They turn about and clutch with fear
The bed rails and each other,
But still that awful groan they hear,
As their fright they try to smother.
With quaking heart and misty eye,
They wring their hands, and turn and fly,
And never stop till safe in bed
With quivering limbs and aching head.
And now those brothers they raid no more,
Frightened to death by our Gilke's snore!

We should like to take this opportunity of wishing everyone as good a Christmas as possible this year and a safe return home to peace in 1918.

Things we should like to know—

Who used to have six blankets in France, and how much he tipped the Q.M.S.?

Who was it aroused our kitchen staff at 10.30 p.m. the other night and wanted to know, "Is this G.2, mate?" and what had he been doing?

What "Raspberry's" pressing engagement was, and what she reciprocated?

Who is it prefers hymns to ragtimes, and does he really think he is persuading us to believe that he was an innocent choirboy but three short years ago? (We could a tale unfold, but—)

H.1.

Xmas preparations are in full swing here, and everything indicates that we are going to have a jolly time.

The ward is wonderfully decorated, thanks to the untiring efforts of Miss Stephenson (our ward lady), the Sisters and the patients. We take this opportunity of thanking Miss Stephenson and Mrs. Bridgewater for their many kindnesses to us, and wish them both every good wish for the coming year.

It was a great disappointment to the boys who were expecting leave to have it cancelled. We don't blame the Hospital authorities, but the general opinion is, that someone at the Southern Command should be drawn and quartered!

Why did our Dressing Sister go to Bexhill-on-Sea for the week-end?

Why do things run so smoothly in the ward now?

Oh, please, dear Night Sister. have a little pity on the poor up-patients?

Who was the patient on the kitchen staff who cut butter for cheese?

J. I.

We are pleased to have you back with us, Sister Henderson, and we hope your stay will be a long one.

Oh, Paddy, how we miss your musical voice.

What about "The Donah," "nah Karno"? Will she be entirely forgotten?

Look out, Lowe, here's Papa.

Good old Cuthbert! you are worth a dozen dead ones yet. Can anyone repeat old Robinson's morning prayer? We are s'prised!

Will our Night Sister ever forget Austie we wonder?

ALEX. 2.

We are wondering what "Dad" thinks of the London tubes, and also if the tin can that he had fastened under his bed was to attract the attention of the orderly during the night?

We have lost two more of our old pals, namely, Micky and Cpl. Watson. We wish them the best of luck wherever they may go.

Our orderly, "Samoa," keeps us lively in the ward with his raggy songs, etc. May he remain with us for a long time.

We seem to be having quite a few arguments recently—Lancashire versus Canada—the chief subject being baseball. They usually finish up by being told to "sock it."

Scottie (at the end of the ward), when he is not filling hot water bottles, gives us a wonderful dance, which is something between an Indian war dance and a ragtime.

ONTARIO 1.

How quiet the ward seems since the old boys went! However, we live in hope. There are a few noisy ones left. All we lack is a "phonograph fiend."

We welcome Sister Smith back from her furlough. We understand she visited the "Ould Sod." We weren't aware you were Irish, Sister.

The bed-patient who received the call-down for "Roaming in the gloaming" says he's sure he will never do it any more. We want to know—

Who took his shaving kit to the bun fight?

Who received the 'phone call the other evening?

Who keeps the ward awake at night, calling "Orderly"? MACK.

"Here's to the old boys"

Who have joined the ranks again,

Back to the dear old regiment

Regardless of ache or pain.

And on in the distant future

Will the children gleefully tell,

How grandpa fought in the great war

And gave the Germans hell!

For this game is a boys' game,

As we all of us must admit,

But they're in with the great adventure,

For they longed to do their bit.

All honour and glory be with them,

And the gallant part they play,

To take their chance with the youngsters

And help us win the day.

MARY ISABEL BAKER.

"Ranworth," Cookham,
Dec. 20th, 1917.

SAY, boys, did you ever stop to think that it would be great if we could only get paid on some morning instead of Tuesday afternoon, as Tuesday is one of the few days on which we are allowed down to Maidenhead, and by the time we are through with our work and take our turn in the line-up the afternoon is gone. Oh! That would be joyful!

Pictures to-night at 6.30.

"Say, chum, are you going to the pictures? They've got a good programme to-night, and if we get round nice and early we'll sure get a good view alright.

Don't care much for pictures? That shows now you haven't been round there to see the stuff that they give you at Cliveden; so just you come right now with me."

Item 1 was a real thrilling drama—"Dark Deeds in the Deep," it was called,

And much dirty work was soon doing, which held our two heroes enthralled.

The Huns in a U-boat were trying to waylay a small British crew

With important despatches for Beatty, which at all cost they had to get through.

After many exciting adventures, the screen showed our craft nearly done,

And unless something wonderful happened the job was a gift for the Hun.

Now they're boarding us. Look at our skipper; he shows not the least sign of fear

As he faces the U-boat commander, well knowing the end must be near.

But the game's not yet won by the pirates, they've noticed a spec on the sky.

Calls for help have been flashed from our wireless, and a sea-plane is fast drawing nigh.

Old Fritz gets "wind up" in a "jiffy," for he sees that his chance of a scoop

Is slipping away from him quickly as the seaplane roars on in a swoop.

Now she's down on the water and training her guns on the Hun submarine.

Watch our skipper; he's—biff! and the picture, with a click, disappears from the screen.

"Say, 'guy,' now if that's not the limit." "Put a sock in it."

"Give him the bird."

"Some picture show this." "Stuff to give 'em." Pandemonium isn't the word.

But so it is always at Cliveden; something's bound to go wrong with the works

And cut out the best of the story, or else the film's run through in jerks.

Why are we so cruelly treated? That there must be a reason is plain.

Can it be that the Colonel's arranged it with a view to avoiding nerve strain?

But what does it matter if films go wrong? That doesn't worry the boys.

They're ready to jump at the chance it gives of "rooting" and making a noise.

So we'll laugh at the "duds," as we did "out there," through dark and stormy weather.

And nothing shall shake our faith in ourselves while the Empire holds together.

"LEV. (K.1.)

"And how did the poor man meet his death?"

"His bride made her first mince pie with war flour, and he cut his throat with the crust!"

Staff Notes.

Through the medium of these notes, Pte. and Mrs. J. Malcolm desire to express their appreciation and thanks to the boys for the present of silverware given them on the occasion of their marriage.

What has happened to Scottie in Hut 3 these days? We no longer hear his melodious voice calling *Llandudno* about 5.30 a.m. any more. We need the services of the bugler more than ever now!

Paddy—our Irish orderly (Registrar's Office)—was asked why he did not wear his good conduct badge? "Well," says he, "my good conduct sheet is full of absence, and so I can't be after wearing one!"

Absolute knowledge have I none,
But I know a wise old son-of-a-gun,
Who heard a policeman down the street
Telling a girl he'd arranged to meet
That he heard a Sergeant tell a friend
Just when the war was going to end!

There are many points of similarity between "the plumber" and Capt. Bairnsfather's "Old Bill"; they are apparent to us all, but "Old Bill" would have to "step some" if he could outdo "the plumber" in word-slinging!

Overheard in Hut 3.—

"Whatever ye do, don't let me slape afther cookhouse blows in the morning. If ye don't wake yourself, wake me, anyhow!"

"Going on leave?" someone remarked.
"Yes, we're all dressed up and know where to go."

Bell-a-Thompie attended the Cpls.' and Ptes.' Ball the other Friday with his hair nicely brushed and perfumed. He could not understand why his hair felt so sticky as he polished his dome after the third dance until he happened to smell his handkerchief. Then he realized that he had put cough mixture on his "Pompie" instead of hair tonic! Good old Thompie!

You can't always tell from a man's expression whether he has loved and lost or loved and won. It is all in the point of view one takes of it.

Hurooh! The Anti-Conscriptionists are "snowed under" in Canada, with the soldiers' votes yet to come. We know how *they* voted, and we are hoping that as soon as the reinforcements are ready the Canada furlough for the

1st Division men will materialise. The rest of us would welcome some sort of addition to our pay. "Everybody's doing it"—but us, and we need it!

The Book of the Sage of Cliveden.

¶ 1.—Now in Cliveden, in the glories of beauteous space, there dwelt One Sage, placid in the contemplation of the woes of man.

¶ 2.—True the men of Cliveden exacted tribute of the Sage in much wise thought and distributment of red tape. Likewise, he was a great ruler. His sway held in ward and kitchen, in operating theatre and store he was a mighty man!

3.—"And there were many of his disciples, forsooth, and others, who sat not at his feet, but made lightsome the weary toil of mending limbs.

4.—"One there was who gave of all she had most gladsomely, and of others there was she who was not blest with good health, but who assisted thereto."

¶ 5.—The wisemen and their henchmen were as fruit in the desert in the way that they did serve as slaves and carvers.

6.—"Disciples had they, too, who with tender prudence, as only woman may, administered strange meats to the careworn toiler of the trench.

7.—"And because of One who toiled to pleasure them; of rosy countenance and much kind ways, pleasure was much rife in devious motor parties, and gaiety abounded.

8.—"Now it came to pass that those who had been forth to fight and had returned as wounded warriors were glad their paths of pain lay in such rosy ways."

¶ 9.—And because they had done so bravely they lay in warmth and much content.

10.—"And as a crow carping in the wilderness they beheld their whilom brother, the Conscientious Objector, and were sad thereto.

11.—"And because it was the season of much festivity they were glad they had not failed their honour. So they turned them in their beds and bethought them of the many V.C.'s they had won had they been seen by their own particular wisemen.

12.—"Therefore take heed, my son, and when again ye do great deeds let them be seen and hide them not in a shell hole."

The Ordeal.

They stood looking in the windows of a great emporium. He and she had made the rounds of the house-furnishing stores for many nights now and both enjoyed it, for it seemed to bring that day nearer when they would be able to be with each other for all time.

"What lovely things," she said, pointing to a Davenport, which bore a price card on which was printed, "Complete, £9-19-11." "Yes, and so is the price!" said he. Suddenly a feeling of revolution came over him, and he exclaimed sharply, "It wont do, old girl. £20 to feather the nest with, and a job at 30/- a week. What prospects? Let's take a shot at a country where a fellow does get a chance."

She looked at him, and saw determination written on his face, and then said, "If you think it best then I am willing to wait a little while longer."

* * * * *

She stood beside him at the Dock. The ship that was to take him from her was just about ready to sail, and now that the moment of parting had come she felt that she could not let him go. "Cheer up, dear, it wont be long before I am able to send for you, and then no more parting." He could not bear the strain another minute. A last kiss and a long hug, and then he walked rapidly up the gangway.

Even a journey in the steerage of an emigrant ship must come to an end sometime, and eventually he found himself sailing up the beautiful St. Lawrence River, and what a sail it was. A majestic river, gradually becoming narrower as they sailed up, for the better part of two days, to Quebec. Tiny French-Canadian villages lay scattered on both banks, looking as if they had been placed promiscuously by a giant hand. At any rate, he thought to himself as he leaned over the side of the ship, that place must be very holy, for it seemed to him that the villages were composed mainly of Churches, the steeples of which clustered in bunches and the ringing of Church bells could be heard as the breeze wafted the sound from the shore.

Quebec at last, and here the steerage passengers were "dumped." A funny town this; narrow climbing streets, and mostly French. It didn't look good to him at all, and he made all haste to the station to get aboard the train that was to take him to his "Utopia."

"Got any grub with you? You will need it, for I hear we will be four days on the train before we get to Winnipeg." "Gosh!" In his excitement he had forgotten that part of the business, so he hurried to a shop and bought a stock. "How much?" he asked the man. "Dollar, twenty-five," was the reply. He looked wise, and handed over a two-dollar bill and pretended to count his change, but it was all foreign to him, so he stuck it in his pocket—in all probability short-changed.

He climbed aboard the "Colonist" car that was to be his home for the next four days, took his seat and looked around him. Here there was a man and wife and a young family. Ye gods! a brave couple this to set out on a voyage of discovery with such a responsibility. Thank the Lord that he had only himself to look after.

Off at last! The country looked good, but as he travelled on it assumed a wild aspect, and as he got into the Northern part of Ontario it looked as if it was, in the words of another Englishman, "all bally rocks and Christmas trees." He grew tired of it and longed for the end of the journey.

The next stop Winnipeg. Everybody got excited and began to pack their luggage at once, with the result that everything was confusion when the train pulled into the station. A hurried handshake all around, and he found himself and felt himself very much alone.

* * * * *

And "She"—well, she just waited and prayed for "Him." That is the part of the game the woman has to play, and she played it just as a woman always does—bravely and with him always in her thoughts. "Letter for you, miss; Canadian postmark," said the postman, with a smile. She took it from him, and, not waiting to go into the house, opened it, and read: "Dearest, book your passage by the first boat, for I am waiting for you. The prairie has claimed me and I have homesteaded. I haven't much for you to come to, just a shack and a free life, but there is something missing, and it is just you. Your 'Him.'"

* * * * *

The weeks passed slowly, but at last the eventful day arrived when he hitched up his oxen and slowly made his way to the nearest station, twenty-five miles away, to meet "Her," and in his excitement he foolishly tried to hurry the oxen, but the the oxen travelled as oxen always have travelled, and the man has

yet to be born who can make them hurry.

* * * * *

It was only a tiny Church, but it was big enough for all requirements, and it does not need a surpliced choir and organ playing wedding marches to make them both happy. The postmaster next door slipped in and gave her away, and with the best wishes of the community they both climbed into the waggon and drove away.

How strange everything seemed to her; the funny moving oxen and the creaking waggon, the wide expanse of prairie that breathed freedom. The "gophers" sat up and looked at her as the waggon passed them. Everything welcomed her, and she was very happy.

"Just across the ridge, dear, and we are home." How slowly the oxen moved; would she never get to the top of that ridge? so anxious was she to get a first glimpse of her "Home." At last the top was reached, and he pointed out to her "His place." A feeling of disappointment went over her, but not for anything would she let him see it. She had not expected much, but this, just a small two-roomed shack with an earth floor and a sod roof. Still he had made it with his own hands, and it had all been a labour of love, and he was proud when he helped her from the waggon and took her inside and pointed out the rough articles of furniture he had made from boughs of trees. "This bed, dear! I thought of the furniture shop and what might have been when I was making it," he said, and then she kissed him, and felt proud and happy in him.

Time did not hang heavily on their hands. He was busy all day, and she felt happy in looking after his comfort. How clever he was. Did she want another chair? In an hour it was there, fashioned out of boughs of trees. She often smiled when she thought of the furniture she used to dream about and then looked at what she had, but she would not have had the "might have been," even if she could.

She learned to do many things, most important of all, to bake bread in that funny little stove, which simply ate up the wood and kept her busy carrying surplus to satisfy its enormous appetite. The one little pig and few chickens she had did take up a lot of her time and would persist in wanting to come indoors, in spite of her chasing them away. To tell the truth, she was just a wee bit afraid of that little pig, and the rooster often stood on his dignity

in her path.

Once in a while she felt lonely and would have liked to have been able to just slip in to her next-door neighbour's house for a little chat, but her next neighbour was five miles away, and she had only seen her once when she had come to bid her welcome. They were too busy, for the winter was coming along rapidly, and it must find them prepared.

"He" had told her many stories of the Canadian Prairie winter that he had heard the farmers talk about, and indications pointed to the fact that they were soon to experience it for themselves. The tall poplar trees had begun to shed their leaves; there was a sharp twang in the air at night that made her feel that she wanted to breath deeply of it, and the coyottes wailed in the dark when they felt in the air that their lean season was near at hand. They made the night hideous with their horrible howls, and she was afraid of them.

One morning they awakened to find that winter had come to pay them a long visit. The earth was covered with snow, and although the sun shone brightly during the day it did not seem to melt the snow as she had been used to see it do. That night it seemed to be covered with myriads of diamonds, and when she accepted a challenge from him to a snowball fight she found that the particles of snow were frozen so hard that they would not stick to each other. The trees bowed their snow-laden limbs as if to say that they would become tired of the snow before it would leave them.

The time flew quickly, for they were happy in each other's fellowship, and the Christmas season was upon them before they were aware of the fact. Three days before Christmas he said to her, "I think I had better take the oxen and go to the village for a stock of provisions. It will take me the better part of three days to go and return, and I will be back early on Christmas Eve. You will be all right until I return."

He hitched up the oxen and with a smile and a kiss he started. She watched him over the ridge and then turned into the shack. How lonely she felt already. She wanted to run after him and ask him to take her with him. How foolish of her, she thought; did he not say that she would be alright. She would be brave, so with a laugh she started to work. How long the day seemed now he was away, and to think that she had another long day before she could look for his return.

That night seemed like an age. The silence was deathly, except when it was broken by the horrible cries of the coyottes in the bluff near by. Sometimes a tree would crack by the action of the frost, and would make a report like a rifle being fired, and in the silent intervals she could almost hear the hard frost descending and covering everything. She didn't close her eyes during the night, but lay just waiting for the next thing to happen.

Morning came at last, and with it the beautiful daylight. She went into the frosty air and drank deep breaths into her lungs. When she saw the little pig she felt that she could almost have cuddled him, so glad was she to see something alive after that horrible night of deadness. All through the day she thought of the night that was to come, and although she tried to steel herself to be brave during the daylight hours the night crept along and found her a cringing, nerve-less creature almost on the verge of madness. Once she shrieked aloud at the terrible dread of the still dark night; the coyotte gave back an echo, and she sat and shivered when she heard it, and almost became a mindless creature, chattering at an unknown dread.

The longest nights pass at last, and morning found her stretched limp and faint on the floor. Nature had tormented her long enough and had now relented. Presently she was struck by the horrible cold which had penetrated her very bones, and she arose and automatically started to light a fire in the stove.

Christmas Eve, and the sky covered with dark clouds that threatened every minute to burst and send their burden of snow to the earth. Where was he, she wondered? He ought to be well on the road home by now if the travelling was good. Thank God she would not have to suffer the agonies of another night alone. How he would comfort her when he did arrive. The hours passed slowly, and yet no sign of him. A wind was now springing up, and the snow came down like a blanket, completely covering the trail and making large drifts where it was blown by the wind against an obstacle.

She sat and listened to the wind increasing in volume and beating against the small window of the room as if it would force an entrance. Eddies of powdered snow were blown through the cracks of the door, and she found herself idly watching it being swirled about the floor, and even the heat of the stove did not

melt it.

At last she could stand the frightful inactivity of waiting no longer. She rose and looked through the window to the height of which the snow was creeping gradually in a drift and threatening to mount still higher, and altogether shut out what little light remained. Then she wrapped herself in her warmest clothing and opened the door. A blast of wind met her and almost forced her back into the room as if protesting against her going out to almost certain death. Still she struggled against it, and eventually managed to get outside and close the door, and then the blizzard enveloped her.

* * * * *

"Well, so long, and a merry Christmas to you. I had better be going. I have five miles to go and it looks as if there is going to be a blizzard." With these words he climbed into the waggon and started off from his nearest neighbour's place on his last stage towards home. The wind almost cut his face and the snow nearly blinded him before he had gone very far. This was his first experience of that terrible danger which menaced travellers and often exacts its toll of those who are caught unawares, and he had heard many tales of its horrors.

Presently he felt that he would be frozen stiff if he sat in the waggon any longer, so he jumped out, and getting hold of the waggon he managed to keep his blood in circulation by jumping up and down. The oxen started to decrease their pace, and presently they stopped altogether and tried to turn their backs to the storm, and he was compelled to walk at their heads and drag them along. He had lost all trace of the track long before this, and could only trust to his sense of direction and plunge along knee-deep in snow. Surely he must be getting nearer home now? How was "She" managing? Thank goodness he had left her lots of wood in the shack to keep herself warm. Supposing the stove had gone out during the night when she was asleep? Did she have any matches to set it alight again? Good God! he wasn't sure if she had any or not. The thought made his blood run cold, and he found himself struggling more desperately than ever against the storm.

What was that form he could just see through the blinding snow? Was it a horse in the last stage of exhaustion? It seemed to be staggering, falling and rising to stagger on

again. Now he could see a bit plainer. It wasn't a horse; surely it could not be a man? What a time he seemed to be getting up to it. He was just a few feet from it now, and could see it plainer. It was a woman—"She"! the view of it

He took her up in his arms, but she did not respond to his embraces. She was in the last stages of exhaustion, and would quickly freeze to death if she was not protected. He took off his coat and wrapped it around her, and placed her in the bottom of the waggon. Thank Heaven! The oxen had scented home, and did not now need urging. She still lay motionless. What could he do to protect her? A few more minutes and they would reach the shelter of the shack. There was only one thing to do: he must protect her body with his. So, although almost frozen through the lack of his coat, he huddled beside her and lay waiting an eternity until the oxen stopped short at the shack.

In a few moments he had carried her inside, and after working for what seemed hours to restore the circulation he was rewarded by seeing her open her eyes and smile at him.

Within a very short time she had recovered sufficiently to tell him of her anxieties and fears. The joy of his safe return was so great that it successfully counteracted the danger of her venture, and it was her own bright lovable self who on Christmas morning, when the terror of the wind had subsided, awakened him with a cheery "Merry Christmas!" J. B. M.

Maple Leaf Social Club.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION.

On the evening of Friday, December 21st, a most enjoyable gathering of the Maple Leaf Club took place at Maidenhead. Games, cards, songs, music and dancing were the features of the occasion. The hall was beautifully decorated in the usual Xmas manner, the supper table being a sight for the Gods. The club members and their guests did ample justice to the good things provided, and the whole affair was one tremendous success. The guests included Col. and Mrs. Watt, R.S.M. Jones and Q.M.S. Goddard. It was regretted by all that Major and Mrs. Astor were prevented from being present by unforeseen circumstances. The Connaught Orchestra (under Bandmaster Sgt. R. Sinclair) added largely to the success of the evening.

Concerts at Maidenhead.

To the sufferers in the terrible disaster in Halifax, N.S., the whole-hearted sympathy of Britishers on this side of the Atlantic goes out, and the Hospital staff and patients, and the residents of the district have given practical demonstration of their sympathy by the handsome manner in which they have subscribed to the fund started by Mrs. Astor. It is expected that £200 will be realized, and that is a gratifying result. A large percentage of that sum, it is satisfactory to learn, were the proceeds of the two very excellent concerts given by the Hospital Minstrel Troupe and Orchestra, at the Town Hall, Maidenhead, on Thursday, 20th inst. The afternoon performance was a repetition of the concert which was so successfully given at the Hospital a short while since, and the music of the orchestra and humour of the troupe were thoroughly enjoyed. The attendance included Major the Hon. Waldorf and Mrs. Astor, and the Mayor of Maidenhead. During the interval the Mayor, in introducing Major Astor, cordially supported the object of the entertainers. Major Astor spoke eloquently and feelingly of the tragedy at Halifax, and in briefly touching on the subject of the war indicated some of the ways by which the nation would benefit from this world catastrophe.

Major Astor was heartily thanked for his address by the Mayor.

In the afternoon too, the Countess Grey, Lady Sybil Grey, Lady Cynthia Curzon, Lady Irene Curzon and Mrs. Astor associated themselves with the object by selling programmes.

In the evening a variety entertainment was given by the troupe, and again the show was most entertaining. Mrs. Astor offered hearty thanks for the support so readily given to the fund, and also spoke in terms of high appreciation of the efforts of Sgt. Sinclair, who had organized the entertainments, the troupe and the orchestra.

It would be interesting to know the reason why the members of the W.A.A.C. were not permitted to take advantage of Mrs. Astor's invitation to them to be present at the Boxing Day party.

The man who makes good doesn't have to prove it.

Sports & Amusements.

FOOTBALL.

CONNAUGHT ATHLETIC *v.* R.E., MARLOW.

The above game was played at Marlow on Saturday, 15th Dec., resulting in Connaughts losing their first match of the season by 2—0.

The Connaughts kicked off, and immediately took the offensive. A breakaway, however, by the home forwards resulted in a scramble in front of goal, when the opposing centre-forward dashed in and netted. The play then was of an even character until the interval.

On changing over Connaughts again took up the offensive, but lack of initiative by our inside forwards was noticeable. After 30 minutes play Marlow scored again and managed to keep Connaughts from their citadel with sterling defensive play.

A CHARITY MATCH is to be played with the R.E., Marlow, on neutral ground sometime within the next few weeks. It is proposed that the proceeds of the match be given to the Halifax Relief Fund. We are confident that the match will receive every support from the staff and patients, as well as our friends on the outside and the supporters of both teams.

BASINGSTOKE *v.* CONNAUGHT ATHLETIC.

The above match was played at Cliveden on Wednesday, Dec. 19th, and resulted in a win for the home side by 8—2. Some very pretty football was witnessed, considering the hard state of the ground, and the Connaughts showed more combination and better understanding than in any previous match.

Although outplayed, Basingstoke put up a stout fight and played good, clean football throughout. The scorers for the home team were: Bailey (3), Henwood (1), Sergt.-Major Slater (1), Scott (1), Timms (1), Ormeroyd (1).

DEBATING SOCIETY.

On Friday evening, 14th inst., Cpl. Morling (C. Ward), acceded to the request of several patients and gave a second lecture on Astronomy. Lt.-Col. Meakins, President, took the chair.

The following is a brief summary: The mind of man is not satisfied with a mere list of *facts*, but demands an explanation of the "how and why?" Now a *theory* is nothing more than a suggested explanation. It invites examination and the most rigid testing, and is

never a dogmatic assertion. . . . Knowledge, like charity, should begin at home, and therefore the lecturer proceeded to a consideration of the Earth in its relation to the Solar System. The view, still held by some, that the Earth is flat was carefully compared with the rival theory that the Earth is ball-shaped. Arguments, drawn from Analogy, Eclipses, the Raindrop, the disappearance of the hull of a ship before the masts, the altitude of the Pole Star, the use of aircraft in Naval Scouting and, perhaps most interesting of all, Earthquakes, were adduced in support of the "globular" theory. Accurate measurements of the apparent diameter of the Sun showed that its distance from the Earth varied slightly, the complete cycle of changes occupying a year. The conclusion was that the Earth's path was in the form of an Ellipse, and, indeed, it has been mathematically shown that the elliptical path is the only possible one, not only for the Earth and the other planets, but also for such comets as regularly re-appear. The Planets were next dealt with; the origins of their names explained, their more salient characteristics noted and their relative distances from the Sun shown by diagrams. In this connection much interest was shown in the so-called Asteroids, which take up a position between Mars and Jupiter, and their bearing on Bode's Law was demonstrated.

Many questions were asked and answered, embracing the Seasons, Day and Night, Earthquakes, Bode's Law and the origin of the Solar System.

Col. Meakins then voiced the sentiments of the meeting in thanking the lecturer for a very interesting evening, and the meeting closed.

CHRISTMAS PARTY.

The Officers, Sisters, N.C.O.'s and men of the personnel were the guests of Major and Mrs. Astor, on the evening of Boxing Day.

Dancing, card games, billiards and amusements of all kinds were taken part in by all, and a most enjoyable evening broke up in the "wee sma' hours." The hospitality of Cliveden is proverbial, and on this occasion certainly fell not a whit short of anything ever previously provided by Major and Mrs. Astor for their guests.

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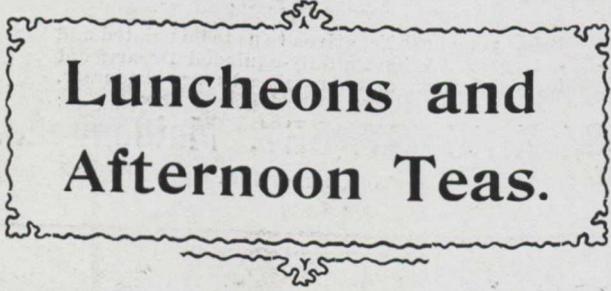
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