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CANADIAN HOSPITAL

NEWS

VOL. III

DECEMBER 30, 1916

No. 11

The Old Year.

IN that delicious hour, when darkness has swallowed the sunlight, and the dancing flames in the grate cast a weird glow over everything in the room, silhouetting one's figure hugely upon the hangings, the pictures, and the walls; in that musing hour we were wondering just what we might venture to inflict upon you, our readers of the *Canadian Hospital News*, this last issue of Nine-teen-Sixteen, when we felt a gentle touch upon our cheek. Oh! but it was indeed a feeble touch, very like the breathing of the soft summer zephyr, and a very gentle voice whispered in our ear:—

"You were dreaming," said the voice.

We started, half rose, and turned to find at our side a very old man, bent and trembling.

"You are ill," we said, "pray take this chair."

"No, my friend, I must not tarry," whispered the old gentleman in shaky tones. "'Tis true, I am exhausted, for I am very old, and have but a few hours to live. I have come to ask you to express to the dear Canadian Soldier Boys my thanks and benediction. They have done great things for me. I am the Old Year."

"But, Old Year," we ventured, "why so sad?"

"There has been nothing very joyous in my journey," he answered, with a sigh. "In my ears has ever been the din of the world conflict; before my eyes have passed pictures of suffering, too harrowing for description; through all the suffering and the sorrow I have listened to the jingling of the profiteers' gold; I have looked upon the purple and fine linen of his family, who fare sumptuously every day; I have had to endure the painful procrastination of the politicians. Is there any cause for gladness?"

"But surely, Old Year," we protested, "some things must have gladdened your heart."

He hung his head for a moment, and then glanced up with a brighter light in his eye:—

"Yes," said he, slowly. "Your soldiers have given me any joy I may have experienced. The brave fellows who have bled and died in a righteous cause—words cannot express all I owe to them. Their sacrifice will not be in vain."

"Can you tell us, Old Year, when all this horror will end, and Peace come again?" we questioned.

"Ah, that I cannot say," groaned the old man. "In a few hours I shall have gone. I die, and my name will become a sad, sad

memory. But this I do know right well—Peace can only come when Despotism has been utterly destroyed. Tell your Soldier Boys to welcome the New Year with hope and stern determination.

We bowed in assent. When we looked up the Old Year had vanished.

O. C. J. W.

Christmas Day At The Granville.

Outside of being actually back at the home fireside, it would have been hard to spend a Christmas that more completely upheld the old traditions of the Day, or more happily contributed new attractions than the third War Christmas as celebrated at the Granville.

The evergreens, holly and laurel boughs, stripped by lorry-loads from Kentish parks, made not only the old Granville, but all its annexes as well, one maze of verdant bowers and sylvan arcades. There was keen artistic rivalry in the decoration contest; and the committee had almost as invidious a task as the judges at a baby show. Either by majority vote or toss-up, they finally decided to give the first prize to Ward 1, with second and third money to Wards 40 and 92 respectively.

"While it was yet dark," the patients were roused by the ward-sergeants, not in harsh reveillé mood to-day, but in a fatherly St. Nicholas spirit. Their arms were loaded with parcels and stockings, and presently with a gleeful relapse to Santa Claus days, the "blessés" were sitting up in bed, plunging their hands into the well-stuffed stockings, knitted and filled by the girls of the Maritimes, and hilariously unwrapping the thoughtfully compiled parcels from the Canadian Red Cross, and from the nurses and officers, staff and patient, of the hospital.

The patients were relieved for the day by a willing personnel from all duties, except that of engulfing the fatted turkeys, enemy sausages, 10 mm.-crust mince pies, brandy-soaked plum pudding, excessive oranges, and gullet-clearing Bass. That such a spread should be possible on the third War Christmas, is at once a tribute to British sea power and British generosity. It made us feel almost sorry for Fritz's starved and rationed "Weihnachten."

Although the Christmas morning services were purely voluntary, they were largely and whole-heartedly attended, both at the Granville and Chatham House. In the few but invariably home-reaching words which Capt. Hooper always employs, he fitted the world's first Christmas message to the hour. The old favourite Christmas hymns, with John Oxenham's noble litany, "For the Men at the Front," were sung with a lift and a thrill that stirred the evergreens in the chapel, and of the memory, too.

Ramsgate Canadians are still talking and writing home about the contribution of the R.E.'s from Sandwich to the Granville

Christmas. The excellent concert of the afternoon served but to whet the appetite for the evening's spectacle.

Certainly Granville Hall never held a bigger or a more boisterously appreciative audience than that which rocked and shouted with laughter over the adapted pantomime of "Dick Whittington and His Cat." No one could have enjoyed himself better at Drury Lane. The stage scenery and properties, produced by Sappers Williamson and Pearce, showed that the R.E. may also be Royal Embellishers. The inter-scenic shifts—remarkably speedy for a first production—were delightfully beguiled by the orchestra which under the masterly direction of Sapper Curran, was a rich treat in itself. The generosity of the Engineers' officers made possible costumes lavish enough and grotesque enough to please the most exacting fancy.

Sergt. Prout's (King Rat) magnificent baritone in "Will o' the Wisp" in the opening scene, and Mrs. Williamson (as the truly luminous Fairy) in her superlatively delicate rendering of "Carissima," provided, with perfect orchestral support, the musical tidbits of the performance. Sapper Terry, as Dick Whittington, possesses a finished stage enunciation, which made whatever he had to say or sing particularly pleasing. The anagrammatic RATS quartet number was as clever in execution as in conception. Matilda, the cook, with her top-heavy, brick-hued Psyche knot, was responsible for many an aching diaphragm in the audience, especially in her culinary lyric—"That tin of tasty tinned tomatoes that tiny Tommy Tucker took."

But after all it was Sapper Maddison (Idle Jack) who won the crowd most uproariously. No depression or pessimism could have been proof against his grinning "Good Morning", always untimely and yet never out of place; his demonstrations of how to secure police co-operation in piano-moving; his appeal to Matilda to witness "the love oozing out of my kisser"; and his hundred indescribable grotesqueries, army quips, and impromptu inspirations. The quartet, "The Day on Which Peace is Declared," was a consummately clever thing, while Sapper Insul's court magic in the closing scene was as comical as it was mystical. Colonel Clark's speech of thanks was smothered in the vociferous endorsement of the Granville men.

Yarrow Annex had a lively concert of its own, in which Pte. Wray and Sergt. Simonson "pulled off the funny stuff." It also had a Christmas tree of its own, hung with ludicrous presents provided by the nurses, and distributed to the patients, who drew for them, by Capt. Withrow in the guise of a hyper-genial Santa Claus.

To the Canadian Red Cross, and friends in Canada, to the Hospital Christmas Committee, to the Nurses, to the Y.M.C.A., and the Inland Water Transport R. E., the wounded Canadians at Ramsgate pay unstinted thanks for the best possible Christmas away from home. May the next be spent in peace in Canada.

The Lucky Seventy-Five.

There was a grave shortage of limbs, but a gay excess of spirits, among the seventy-five chosen patients who sped away to Canterbury on Boxing Day morning on three char-à-bancs, with the Padre as Providence-in-Charge.

At Canterbury Cathedral the party was met by the Chief Vesturer, who conducted the patients through every chapel, shrine and recess of this most famous of all English cathedrals. Sarcophagi that had been sandbagged since the beginning of the war, and portions of the cathedral that had been closed for years, were specially "revealed" in honour of the wounded Canadians; while a message of welcome from the Archbishop was read by the Chief Vesturer. Members of the St. John's Ambulance Association were also on hand to assist those least able to walk.

By 2 o'clock the seventy-five were sitting down in the church schoolroom at Minster to a sumptuous Christmas dinner, supplied, and partly provided as well, by Mr. and Mrs. Robbins, of the Bell Inn. Mrs. Hooper, Mrs. Redbourne, and the Misses Hooper, accompanied the party, and served at the dinner in a manner that won the boys' hearty appreciation. Canon Molyneux was a most courteous host, and despite his 70 years contributed a couple of very vigorous songs to the Smoking Concert which followed the dinner. The boys found keen enjoyment in the genuine "coon" songs of Mr. White, and the lively recitations of Miss White.

"The Seventy-five," who returned at 5.30 p.m., thoroughly satisfied in body, mind, and spirits, are enthusiastically grateful to the Chaplain for arranging this memorable trip; and to all who assisted to provide and entertain,—not forgetting the Third Floor Sister who, anonymously, "financed" one of the bus-loads.

In Hyphenated Chicago.

The Chicago Tribune tells how Sandy MacTavish, a Scot from Canada, got even with a crowd of "boching" Germans.

Sandy had dropped into a German saloon in the Loop, where some Chicago Teutons were toasting Capt. Hans Rose of the notorious U53. The Scot from Canada refused to join the toast.

"Ma name's MacTavish," he shouted, "an' I'll gie ye a toast. Here's to King George."

It took five Germans and the porter to put Sandy out.

Two hours later MacTavish re-entered the saloon, followed by the "Hungry Five", the well-known German band in the Loop, which Sandy had hired. The Scot smiled at his late ejectors while his hyphenated musicians played "God Save the King", with swelling cheeks. The band repeated the air four times before the Germans realized what it was. After that Sandy didn't mind being put out in the street again.

Eyes That Could Not See;
 Heart That Could Not Understand:
 The Evil Soon to Come.

The Devil appeared on the earth one night,
 In beauty the stars did gleam,
 The moon was casting her silv'ry light,
 O'er Peace, in her placid dream.

As to and fro he wandered around,
 Heard strains of a joyful song,
 As swiftly it swept o'er the mystic ground,
 From the hearts of a peaceful throng:

"They are too happy," he said, "this hour,
 "This gladness I must stay;
 "If a fool I can find with love of Pow'r,
 "Peace with the Sword I'll slay!"

He wandered around from State to State,
 A braggart and fool to find,
 He at last discovered his long sought mate,
 And entered the "Kaiser's" mind.

The cup that contained the withered brain,
 He filled with illusory thoughts,
 With false ambition it became insane,
 Its purpose naught could thwart.

The Kaiser mustered his armies from near and far,
 He armed them with sword and gun,
 The Gates of Peace were rent ajar,
 God's work of Love undone.

As murder and arson filled their breasts,
 On weak ones marched they down,
 To appease the thirst of a "Cursed Beast,"
 Aflame in the Scarlet Gown.

Corp. W. J. CROW,

The Ottawa Whizz Bang

A live regimental paper is the *Whizz Bang*, published by the 207th Ottawa-Carleton Battalion, which has just come to our notice. The four companies, the M. G. and the Signalling Sections, Stretcher Bearers, Paymaster's Office and even the Brass Band are well represented in the eight large pages of the issue, but there is rather a scarcity of literary contributions.

The standing note under the title that, The "*Whizz Bang* is the name given by the boys in the trenches to a high explosive shell which travels with a *whizz* and explodes on contact with an intences *bang*"—sounds a bit gratuitous, to overseas Canadians.

Some New Year Toasts.

To Our O.C.—

May he be incredulous as to our "crimes," and credulous as to our "explanations."

To Our Chaplain—

May his Prayers and his Players never fail.

To Our Nurse—

May her hand never lose its soothing power;
Nor her smile its candle power.

To Our Masseuse—

May the "velvet glove" ever cover the "iron hand."

To the Examining Board—

May they "call us in" early, and "mark us up" late.

To the Kaiser—

May he be interned in a gallery exhibit of Raemakers' cartoons.

To Lloyd George—

May the little Welsh Attorney win his Supreme Case as the World's Advocate of Freedom.

To Ypres—

May its Canadian death-rate prove Canada's birthright.

To Peace—

No parley with the foe until the job is done;
A War to last until a Lasting Peace is won.

To the Girl We Left Behind—

May we be as true overseas as we expect her to be at home.

To Our Mothers—

"May their eyes never be opened to, and their hearts never closed to our weaknesses."

PSMITH.

A Record Record.

By winning all its December matches, against the Ash K.V.R., the 84th Provisional Battalion (postal match), the Deal V.T.C., and the Kent Cyclists (against whom all the Canadians scored "possibles" on a difficult field figure), the Granville Rifle Team completed a season's record, which entitles them indisputably to the shooting supremacy of the Isle of Thanet.

Since its reorganisation last April, under Capt. Thomas and Pte. H. Smith, the Granville R.C. has shot 51 matches with all the principal battalion, V.T.C., and cadet teams in north-east Kent. Of these contests the Canadians have—

Won, 42; Drawn, 2; Lost, 7.

A Perfect Day.

Dix 'Steenth Battalion boys eating Bully Boeuf,
 One caught the tummy-ache and then there were neuf.

Neuf 'Steenth Battalion boys munching des biscuits,
 One broke his wisdom tooth and then there were huit.

Huit 'Steenth Battalion boys did it for a bet,
 One met an A.P.M. and then there were sept.

Sept 'Steenth Battalion boys called to see Elise,
 One cut his comrades out and then there were six.

Six 'Steenth Battalion boys not heeding what they drank,
 One called for Grenadine and then there were cinq.

Cinq 'Steenth Battalion boys starting to se battre,
 One riled a heavyweight and then there were quatre.

Quatre 'Steenth Battalion boys broke the blinkin' loi,
 One made a job of it and then there were trois.

Trois 'Steenth Battalion boys feeling tres heureux,
 One spoilt the gramophone and then there were deux.

Deux 'Steenth Battalion boys called a man a Hun,
 He proved he wasn't one and then there was un.

Un 'Steenth Battalion boys feeling tres bien,
 He got estaminated, that left rien.

R. M. E., in *The Brazier*.

How I Kissed The Princess Patricia.

Several years ago, when as a young soldier in a hussar regiment, we were stationed at Aldershot, the following little incident occurred. I paid but very little heed to it at the time, but I have thought of it many times during the past two and a half years.

One afternoon a number of our fellows, on the way to witness a cricket match at the brigade cricket ground, had to pass close to the Headquarters Staff buildings, where were quartered at the time T.R.H.'s the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and the little Princess "Pat." Here we met a trim nurse-girl with a go-cart proceeding slowly along the path, while a little girl, dressed all in white, was toddling on the grass, quite oblivious to the fact that some of us were "making eyes" at the good-looking maid. Just then the child tripped and fell on her face. I hastened to pick up the wee girl in my arms, and she looked so pretty that I could not resist the temptation to kiss her before returning her to her guardian. The maid asked me if I knew whose child I had just kissed. On replying that I did not, she informed me that the child was the daughter of the Duchess of Connaught. I, like all soldiers, do not think it a crime to kiss a pretty girl, even if she be only two years old, but that is how I kissed the Princess Patricia.

Pte. J. A. FORD, 96th Batt.

We Should Like to Know.

How many fellows were "laid out" on Boxing Day.

What ward sergeant, overflowing with good spirits, went round his ward on Boxing Night, and kissed each of his patients.

What the Treatment Dept. clerk was trying to get at on his knees in front of the fire-place on Christmas morning.

Who the C.A.M.C. officer was who sent back the ambulance, and telephoned for the 3-ton truck to fetch his personal effects from the station.

If Fritz had as many sausages as we did on Christmas, 1916.

What made the R.S.M. so free and condescending in his invitations to all who passed the Sergeants' Christmas Mess.

Why the front-door policeman offered ten bob to stay the publication of his Christmas Day ward speech, which he had allowed to be taken down in shorthand.

If the Sergeants really missed that errant turkey and square-face bottle from their Christmas Dinner.

If the authorities who set the Chatham House fatigue party whitewashing pathway stones on Christmas Day, had hopes of producing the illusion of a "white Christmas."

Boxing Day Football.

A large holiday crowd was lined up on Chatham House field, when Ramsgate Town kicked off against the Nuts on Boxing Day. The Granville boys went straight to it, and within 5 minutes Sergt. Towler had registered the first score, a trick he duplicated a few minutes later. Number 3 went to Walters, the new inside left. Then Towler went after it again, and netted two more before half-time. Ramsgate couldn't score in the second half, and Granville eased up, so that there was no further change in the score when the game was called. Nuts, 5; Ramsgate, 0.

"Copy boxes" have been set up in the Recreation Room at Chatham House, and in the Main Corridor at Yarrow Annex. The News Editor invites patients and personnel to confide to these receptacles news items, "breezes," and "queries." jokes, stories, verse, parodies, and competition entries. Our forthcoming volume will be a TWELVE-PAGE weekly issue, and we shall be able to use a larger number of contributions.

The publishers of this paper are indebted to The Canadian Red Cross Society for the type, press, etc., used in printing, and to the services of the patients in composing, setting, and issuing the paper.

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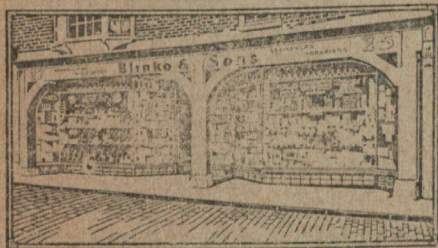
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