

B. K. Sandwell

[Medical/Military]

The Cabendish Lecture
ON
A DAY'S WORK

*Delivered before the West London Medico-Chirurgical Society
on June 22, 1917*

BY
ANDREW MACPHAIL, B.A., M.D., M.R.C.S.

CAPTAIN, CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS; PROFESSOR OF THE
HISTORY OF MEDICINE, MCGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL.

Reprinted from THE LANCET, June 30, 1917

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Young Ridge

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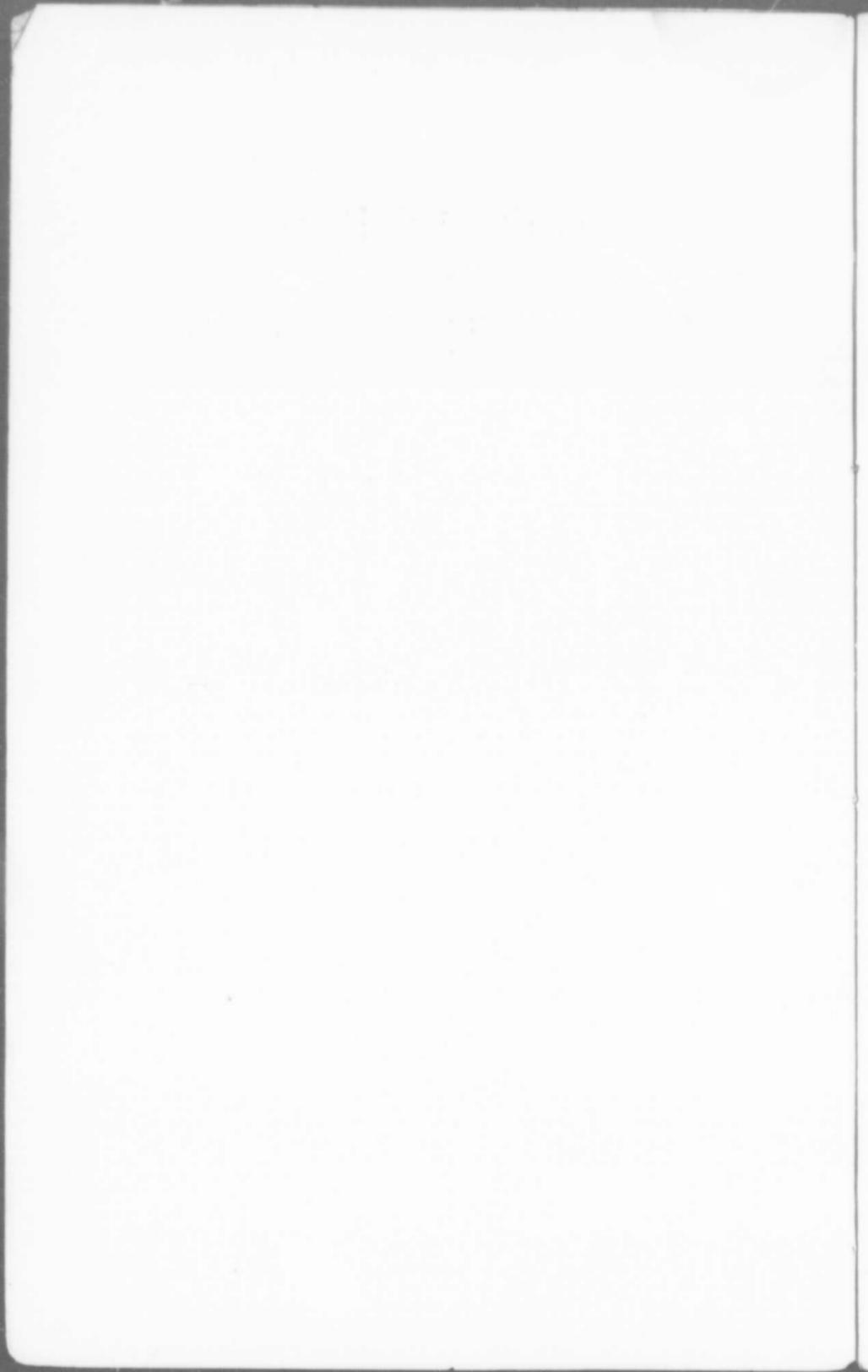
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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—The Canadian Corps is ordered to take the Vimy Ridge : so ran the official order. Never was an order obeyed with greater alacrity or executed with more complete success. This task was set in January ; it was performed on Easter Monday. It is of that day's work I propose to speak.

But, first, I take leave to assure you that I am fully sensible of this high honour—an honour which is shared by all who come from overseas : addressing an audience such as this from a foundation so famous as the Cavendish, made still more famous by the long line of my predecessors in this office.

As I scan the roll three persons arise before me with singular clearness : Jonathan Hutchinson, who first directed my young feet—they were young in those days, although they have since made many a weary step—towards the London Hospital, where I learned the master truth that nothing pertaining to humanity is alien to the practice of medicine. It was in his company on the hills of Surrey I first heard the lark sing as it sang that day over the trenches in Artois. Next on the roll is Frederick Treves, from whom I learned the purity of surgery—for in those days surgical cleanliness was quite new ; and, last of all, William Osler, who gave to medicine in the New World a fresh direction and an upward turn.

There was a time when even in such company as this I should have felt no embarrassment, for the professor's gown had been familiar to me, and I was accustomed to the use and even the embroidery of words. But I have long

since abandoned the way of letters, and left that no-man's-land of ambiguity, where jest and earnest meet. Fresh, now, from a life of reticence, in which yea is yea, and nay nay, I listen with alarm to the sound of my own voice.

Nor do I fail to remind myself that this is a scientific assemblage accustomed on such occasions to the precision and austerity of science. Far from laboratories and books, concerned, for the most part, with horses and men, content with a hasty guess at diagnosis, and practising the rough surgery of the field I am fully aware that to-night I am doing deliberate violence to that long tradition of science which has made the Cavendish lecture sacrosanct.

THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT.

But, having embarked upon this new adventure, I shall be bold, and look even Science in the face. We are at war not alone with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers. One of the principalities and powers with which we are at war is that unmitigated scientific spirit which is the peculiar possession of the enemy and is, happily, alien to our race.

That spirit is not our inheritance, yet none have done more than we for the advancement of real science, including the ancillary science of medicine and all sound learning. When I practised the trade of Professor of the History of Medicine I always regarded Sydenham as the great exponent of our method: "I take the view," he said, "that we shall go without any hypothesis, and study the conditions as they appear—the process before the explanation."

Upon many occasions I have developed that theme, but such is not my task to-night. Yet I cannot refrain from reminding you of an example, because it is the most recent, the work of James Mackenzie, who, by 20 years of quiet, patient observation set at naught the meretricious theory of the German upon the action of the heart. The German works in science as he works in war. He loves the underground. He throws out saps; he lives and moves and has his being in the darkness, when suddenly the free English spirit comes over the top in the full light of day.

Science with us is only a part of Life and a development from it. Our medicine is but a closer definition of what our fathers knew. The snake in India, the brazen serpent in the

wilderness, the cat in Egypt—these sacred emblems indicate that those ancient peoples understood the genesis of "plague." This badge of maple leaves which I wear is copied boldly from a Roman coin, struck to commemorate the discovery that malaria can be mastered by draining the land and planting trees.

Let us grant to the uttermost that the pursuit of science is the pursuit of truth. The German cares nothing for the pursuit; he is all for the result, unaware that any given truth by itself is half a lie. There is the truth of the soldier, which is courage; the truth of the artist, which is beauty; the truth of the woman, which is virtue. The German believes that he has attained to all truth when he has discovered only a partial truth, forgetting that God alone is Truth, and that no man—certainly, no German—has looked upon God and lived. A lie which is only half a lie is far less deadly than a partial truth which is believed to be the whole truth.

Even to science the scientific spirit is fatal. It becomes dogmatic and then sterile. We have always kept in mind that there is a spiritual law in the natural world, whilst the German, lacking a philosophy of life, takes what he filches, and develops it in the cold void of abstract science. That is the genesis of his superman, a monstrosity developed from the tentative hypothesis of our own Darwin. Nay, more, the scientific spirit is the enemy of life. We live not by truth but by illusion, and the human heart creates those illusions which alone make life tolerable. There is a profound instinct which impels us to war against the truth, against reality. We eschew the fact, and take refuge in evasion. From the facts of life we fly to hope. The human race has nourished itself upon fiction, myth, and miracle. It still finds its fulfilment not in life but in immortality, not in formulæ but in religion.

The strength of the English race lies in its capacity to live and move in the realm of illusion, of poetry, whereby it discovers the higher truth and enters into the realm of emotion. The German, on the other hand, has deliberately shut himself out from this realm. As a consequence he sees darkly, judges falsely, fatally. He cuts himself off from the tree of life, and by becoming a scientist—"falsely so-called," as the Apostle is careful to specify—is become a beast without a background. "One of your own has said it. We may then depart with some freedom, this year at least, from the tradition, and look at a common day's work.

THE SCENE OF ACTION.

I have selected as a text this day's work merely because by a piece of good fortune it fell to our division to act as the point of the spear. Two Scottish divisions held one flank, and many a man went forward with a lighter heart on that account. The 13th Brigade—of an English Division—went over with us, those wondrous English soldiers who work in a rage and then fall into silence. Down Arras way the Australians were working, those handsome soldiers who will not hold back. When they get a free road to Berlin there will be such doings as the Seer never saw from Patmos. Our comrades from South Africa and from New Zealand were engaged elsewhere, as all the world has since learned.

It would be a misuse of the occasion and a mis-spending of this short hour to attempt a description in detail of that day's work. The result would be merely a piece of journalism. No description can make intelligible the events which happen in the operating-room or the lying-in ward, and there are many subjects over which it is proper to draw the veil. I should merely mislead you. The task can only be performed by an artist with time and space for selection. By an infinity of small things he would create a picture. He would make you see a long cliff, extending for 20 miles from the north-west to the south-east, in shape like a dog's hind leg, with the Souchez river breaking through at the joint. He would lead you up the landward slope, over ridges and valleys, until you came to the summit. He would guide across a high plateau, and from the edge you would look down upon the old sea which is now the French Flanders plain, with its red villages and green fields. This is the Vimy Ridge, which rises from Souchez and slopes down to Arras.

You should know also that it was on this very spot, and upon the Lorette Ridge, which is the twin ridge to the north, across the Souchez river, that the French made their supreme offensive in 1915. Here was the Labyrinth—Souchez, Neuville St. Vaast, Ablain St. Nazaire, La Targette, and Aux Rietz—where rifles were discarded and knives served out in their stead. Upon these heights lie 60,000 of their noble dead in fields of crosses which extend as wide as a forest, although at the time we were somewhat insensible to this great struggle.

More than 18 months had passed, until on that April morning the business of the Canadian Corps was to pivot upon its left flank, and drive the enemy into this old sea bottom, which was done according to schedule in 468 minutes. I say minutes, because the plans were drawn as rigidly as that, and they were drawn in as fine detail as an architect would employ for the building of a house. For three months we worked upon those plans with as much care as one would bestow upon a performance on a stage. The humblest actor had his rôle, and he was ready against the hour when the curtain should rise.

A DIVISION : ORGANISATION AND LIFE IN THE TRENCHES.

An army is an extremely simple affair. It is composed of divisions, each one of which is self-contained, and has a staff with several branches. One branch deals with operations; another has to do with the persons who are to carry out those operations; a third is concerned with the house-keeping, by which all are clothed, housed, fed, and cared for in sickness and wounds. It is with this branch the medical service is identified. To each man it appears that he alone is carrying on the war, and in a sense he is. If he fails, something else goes wrong until all may be in jeopardy. In the end some single man in an army, like a housemaid in a house, has to do any given piece of work. I shall offer you an illustration. There is no water on the Ridge, and men need water. It was the business of a housemaid—he was really a staff major—to provide water. In the winter he began collecting petrol tins, and many a night I have heard him adjuring marauders to leave them untouched. To make quite sure, he had them stored behind his own hut until he had accumulated a pile as big as a church. One by one he had them burned out. He had special pack-saddles made to accommodate six tins. He filled these tins with sterilised water and had them loaded on mules. The pack-train was ready before the battle began, and the men drank water in the hour of their need. It was by no accident the Vimy Ridge was won. It was carried by the same methodical process by which a piece of land is farmed, a dinner party made a success, or a stage performance a triumph.

It is difficult, too, for you to appreciate how small is the battle area occupied by a division. It measured in this case 2000 yards in depth with a frontage of 1000 yards—about the size of a nice farm. This area was approached only by night or in fog, though ambulances and persons singly on foot might take a chance. Once the area is entered all life is underground. The road from Arras to Bethune runs at the rear, and the ground slopes gently upwards to the ominous crest of the flat-topped, gloomy Ridge. Through the bank by this road four trenches enter: two for going up, two for coming down. These trenches are joined by laterals according to the configuration of the ground, and one must learn his way about as a worm would learn his particular cheese. It is all very mysterious at first, but in time becomes as familiar as the streets of London. To cover the whole ground required a full day, and in clear, dry weather no exercise could be more pleasant, the trench floors clean, the walls defending from the wind, a strip of sky overhead, and it might be the voice of a lark against the background of noise.

It was a bitter winter there, as here. The soil was frozen to a depth of 14 inches. Rain fell. There was little drainage. The earth slid in on top of the water, and was trodden into a mass like dough. To walk the trenches under such circumstances is the last test of human endurance. On earth one can walk; through water one can swim; but progress can only be made inch by inch when earth and water are mixed in due proportion. One wears rubber boots hip-high, and from the tops a strap is fastened over the shoulders to prevent the boots being pulled off by the mud. On one occasion my orderly lost boots and socks, and came in with bare feet. If a man falls he may be lifted over the parapet, and left there till night; or he may lie where he fell, and be trampled under foot. It requires very little resolution to lie down and die: life is so hard, and death so easeful.

· MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

When we took over early in February our business was to devise medical arrangements in accordance with the battle plan, by which casualties should be removed to a main dressing station on their way to railhead. No one system will suit all engagements, and the system must be devised in view of

defeat as well as of victory. Happily our labour was largely wasted, since the advance was so rapid that our underground fortress dressing stations were not urgently required. This was especially hard on the man who laboured all winter at the construction of the posts. One officer almost wept with grief when he saw our troops storming overland rather than make their way through a series of tunnels to which he had devoted a year in constructing. In this area we spent two months excavating ten dug-outs, commodious as this room, 20 feet below the surface, shoring the roofs and walls, and fitting the place with racks for stretchers. Nearly all this work was done by the medical personnel under the supervision of a sapper. Remember, too, that the work could only be carried on by night, in fog, or in quiet intervals during the day, and that every stick had to be carried through such trenches as I have described.

Regimental aid-posts and field ambulance relay posts were parts of a system which ended at the rear of the battle area where a huge advanced dressing station was partly excavated and partly built. Two tram-lines had been thrust up by night on either flank to be used for sending ammunition and rations up, and they were of great service in bringing casualties down.

Let us now attempt to follow the progress of a wounded man. When he falls he is attended by the regimental medical orderlies and is sent back a few hundred yards by regimental bearers to the aid-post, where he is more carefully dressed by the regimental medical officer. There he is handed over to the field ambulance bearers and borne by hand, by wheeled stretcher, or by trolley from one relay post to another until, finally, at a distance of one or two miles he arrives at the advanced dressing station. There the dressings are examined and, if necessary, renewed. Trains of trolleys drawn by gasoline engines are in waiting to bear the loads farther to the rear, where they may be accessible to the motor ambulance convoy, which takes them to the main dressing station. Here the cases are re-dressed and so sent on to railhead, clean, warm, and fed.

Of the wounded in detail one sees little; one sees them in the mass. Our business is to speed them on their way, and 12 surgeons in a dressing station, working night and day, will clear the casualties as fast as they are brought in. The walking cases went direct from the field to collecting points

and were sent down in 'buses, 40 at a load. It is wonderful how they find their way to the rear, hobbling, resting, and helping each other. The lying cases neither move, nor speak, nor utter a sound. It is only when we go to the base or come to England that we see the wreck of war and the pity of it all.

I cannot insist too strongly that medical arrangements must be devised anew for each action; they vary with the plan of battle, and must be modified as the battle proceeds. On the day in question an ample supply of blankets was assembled, but in the night a bitter wind arose, with wet driving snow. Within an hour 600 additional blankets were at the front, assembled and transported—it does not matter how.

Zero hour was at the dawn of a bleak morning. By 6 o'clock the wounded were coming in; by 7 the prisoners were marching down by companies; by 8 the supply trains were moving up, and by 9 o'clock the whole world was alive with men and horses and motors over roads that were spewing up their stony entrails. When the action was over the battle area was like a heavy cross-sea which had been partially transformed into land. Further advance was impossible by reason of the elements, earth, and water.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE ADVANCE: RAPID EVACUATION OF WOUNDED.

Wonder is often expressed that after a large action the advance is not more rapid. The example of little things will help towards an understanding. The morning after, I was making my way through crater and crevass upon some special business, when I saw a boy gathering flints in a sand-bag. We two seemed to be alone in the world. There were others, but they were concealed as they toiled up the holes and hollows. He was finding material to make cement for wheel bases of the guns. A mule climbed out of the earth. He had a pannier with six shells on each side. The advance was laborious as that. Horses must have footing, else they will go downward instead of forward. Roads must be built from the bottom upward, and material for railways must be carried by the strength of men.

Sixteen battalions were engaged on this 1000-yard front, 16 men to a yard. Each one had its piece to do, and

when done another battalion passed over and took up the advance. All winter the performance had been rehearsed behind the lines on a terrain marked off with tapes to imitate the battle area as discovered by aerial photographs. To each battalion was allotted a certain number of minutes for its task. All was over by 2 o'clock, and before darkness fell the field was clear. The evacuation from the front was so perfect and rapid that cases began to accumulate at the advanced dressing station; and there they lay, a piteous spectacle, but their presence was the finest tribute ever paid to the Medical Service. A general passed by, and—ever solicitous for the comfort of his men—when he saw the wounded lying in ranks on each side of the road, covered with snow, he thought the Medical Service had broken down, until it was explained to him that all casualties were dressed and fed, eased with morphia, and covered with blankets, instead of lying where they fell. Additional convoy was procured, and by midnight all were in their beds. That day's work was over.

THE MEDICAL SERVICE OF A DIVISION.

You have heard much of our unpreparedness for war, but the Medical Service leaped up full-armed when the first call sounded. For long years the Royal Army Medical Corps had worked upon the problem and found a plan. This plan had been adopted in Canada, was well understood, and the two services have operated in a perfect harmony. The best of the profession volunteered, and many of them had some previous training in military affairs. In my own small unit we had in command a surgeon of the first rank; second, an officer who was at once a surgeon and a soldier; third, a dermatologist of the first class, two accomplished physicians, and at least two surgeons who had already had a thorough training. Indeed, I have heard it said that the professional qualification of the men at the front is too high. A man who can succeed in medicine and surgery can succeed at anything.

It is a canon of military law that one may neither praise nor blame his superior officers; and I am neither praising nor blaming when I say that our D.M.S., Surgeon-General Foster, is a master of organisation, proven by two years service in the field from Ypres to the Somme and back to

Souchez ; that Colonel Ross, his successor in the corps, has not left the front since the early days of 1915 ; that our A. D. M. S., Colonel Fotheringham, was on the strength for nearly 30 years, and had long been one of the leading consultants in Canada ; and that his successor, Colonel Jacques, who was in immediate command during that day's work, has had 10 years' experience in the permanent force. It was, then, not by accident that the work went well.

It must be hard for you to understand how strictly military is the Medical Service at the front, that is, the service in the division as distinguished from the service on the lines and at the base. Between the two a gulf is fixed ; and it is with the division we are especially concerned to-night. In a division there are about 20 regimental medical officers, and three field ambulances with 9 medical officers each, or 27 in all. The personnel is divided into bearer, tent, and transport sections, comprising 250 men, or 750 to the three ambulances. For transport each ambulance has 50 horses, 7 motor and 3 horsed ambulances, with general service, limbered wagons, and carts. Each section is self-contained, and marches with bearers, tent orderlies, transport, and equipment. At any moment a section can fall out, march off, and open up with all appliances for life and work in the field. Fuel, food, fodder, and water are carried which suffice until rations are drawn. The sections can be as quickly assembled, and the bearers of all ambulances may be pooled for such large operations as took place at Vimy and on the Somme.

For such precise movements a high degree of military training is essential ; and in physique the men must be the best, for the work is heavy and the marches arduous. These ambulance bearers and their officers have their advanced headquarters 200 yards from the parapet in the regimental aid-posts, and in action they go over just behind the infantry. They are trained soldiers, the transport carried arms until quite recently ; they were practised in musketry, and all were qualified to take their place on parade with the other elements of the division.

The Red Cross no longer exists except as the emblem of an eleemosynary institution which provides an outlet for the love of civilians for their soldiers. The Medical Service has become an integral, and not an ancillary, part of the Army. The Red Cross provides no especial protection because it is so closely identified with the service that neither side can

recognise it, although I am bound to say that I have never seen any deliberate violation of the traditional emblem. On the contrary, I think the enemy has withheld his fire from our stations which could be observed as such. He has, of course, destroyed our ambulances by shell fire; he has killed our officers and bearers; he has dropped shells and bombs upon our stations—but that is the chance of war.

A field ambulance, then, is not especially a medical problem. In my own unit, which contains nine medical officers, the Colonel fell at Courcellette, a Major gained the D.S.O., two Captains won the Military Cross, two were mentioned in despatches—all for military virtue as apart from professional knowledge and skill.

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SICKNESS.

But this day's work was merely an incident or an interruption in the regular work of the Medical Service. We have several million of men to keep in health and care in sickness, and the system by which those ends are gained is much more efficiently organised than it is here in London for the civil population. First come sanitation and prevention of sickness. In all this time I have never detected a foul odour except the foetid odour of asphyxiating gas or the noisome smell which arises when an old burying-place is disturbed. Except for a few days on the Somme, I have not seen more flies than one would see upon a well-kept farm. Purified water is put into the men's bottles. To drink from an unauthorised source is a crime. Wells are examined even whilst they are yet under fire and the food is scrutinised before every meal. Men are bathed as methodically as they are fed, and by fire and steam the advances of the humble, but friendly, louse are discouraged. One acquires a certain pity for this most dependent and helpless of all creatures—his means of livelihood are so restricted and he is so unbeloved. A battalion of 1000 men can be inoculated in 35 minutes; that is an illustration of the speed and organisation of the Service.

The number and variety of hospitals is almost perplexing and it taxes one at the front to remember where each class of case is to be sent. Mild infections go to one place, more virulent cases to another, and the channels are kept distinct.

There is segregation or quarantine, and a mobile laboratory is always available for exact diagnosis.

I am astonished continually at the extraordinary talent that is available. London itself is not more rich. Specialists abound on every hand. A man came to me with an obscure skin disease. I referred it to our Major, who just happened to be a dermatologist. He named the condition "erythema multiforme exudativum iris." The diagnosis was written on a field medical card, and with the man it went forward to England. It came under the eye of one of the most famous of London specialists. He sent back an inquiry through the usual channels because the diagnosis was correct; and he was, I thought, a little irritated, as he supposed no one in the Army but himself was entitled to make so fine a distinction. It turned out that this young Canadian Major had once been a pupil of this London dermatologist.

The Medical Service, above all other services, has done its perfect work. It has yielded an army without sickness. I have never seen a case of typhoid, and the few infectious cases are of the nature of children's diseases—measles, mumps, chicken-pox. For the first time, also, in the history of the world we have an Army which is free from venereal disease. For a time it was part of my business every morning to scrutinise the returns from 30,000 men, and days would pass without a single case, especially when leave was off. We have come to think of London as a place where men contract venereal diseases. That is a saying which I commend to you. There are occasional sporadic cases. To conceal the disease is a crime. The infected man is handed over to the assistant provost-marshal, who ascertains the source and has the source of contagion deported. The disease is regarded as a self-inflicted wound by which a man may secure his return from the front, and some base fellows contract the disease deliberately, just as they shoot off their fingers or toes. In one house were two women. One of them was infected and the other was free. The one who was infected demanded 4 francs for her services; the other had to be content with 2. I can recommend to you a provost-marshal who will free England from venereal disease in six months. It might be worth the effort.

The Medical Service is no longer the poor relation of the Army. By the miracle it has performed of keeping the Army fit the consideration accorded to the service is un-

bounded. New problems face it every day, problems that must be solved. Trench feet in the first and second winters were likely to cripple the Army. Last winter the methods of prevention were so sure that a case of trench foot was a curiosity and brought stoppage of leave upon a battalion which produced them. Medical officers may not command; they advise. But he would be a rash commanding officer who would disregard advice repeatedly given.

For a year we were perplexed by trench fever, and I am afraid we showed too little sympathy with the men who were suffering from the malady. The pain in the shins, which is almost intolerable, was too often attributed to myalgia, but, thanks to the service at the base, we now know better. We have learned to discriminate between the varieties of "shell shock," which range from cowardice to mania.

THE OUTLOOK.

By that day's work on Vimy Ridge we convinced ourselves, and proved to the enemy, that we cannot be beaten. After that other, and later, day's work on the Messines Ridge—a ridge I watched for 11 weary months—we can say with surety that we shall win, that the enemy will be defeated, that he will defeat himself in the slow effluxion of time. We are now free to prolong the war until it suits us to bring it to a close. Up to the present we have been fighting for our lives, unable to indulge with confidence in the full hope of a slow, relentless, methodical victory.

In the beginning we were inclined to take the German at his own estimate of himself, to look upon him as a tree walking. Now we have the true measure of him, and we are not in the least afraid. Docile yet courageous, hating other lands yet loving his own, hysterical yet obstinate, he continues to be a formidable foe. Although we have long since matched him in equipment and surpassed him in organisation, we still deceive ourselves about his powers of subsistence, since comfort to him is penury to us. We were close upon his heels in Vimy village, and a detailed examination of his abandoned stores was not encouraging. In one dug-out there were sides of bacon, abundant bread, potatoes, bottled waters, dressings, drugs, articles of new, sound leather, phonographs, and a copy of Kant—by no means a

bad equipment for carrying on war. Prisoners who have helped us to clear many a field are capable and diligent, with a certain patient, pathetic helplessness, but a high confidence even yet. Nor do we forget the surety of the enemy's intelligence and his quickness to act upon the results of his experience. Liège, Namur, and Antwerp taught us the futility of the Vauban fortress. Vimy and Messines taught him the futility of massed trenches, and he instantly adopted a new defence. His line is now not a line. It is a fortified country; but to that also we shall find an answer.

The end is not yet, nor is it even in sight. My counsel is that you should close your eyes to the end. Look upon war as a normal condition. Forget it, as all normal things are forgotten. Cease praying for a speedy end—and peace, else you will acquire what the French call the psychopathy of the barbed wire. Peace and the end will come when your unhampered armies shall have performed their task. At one time there was ground for alarm, and excuse for panic. Now there is none. This very night we see the days grow short for the fourth time since we took arms in our hands. Several times we shall see the days grow long and short again before we shall have our will upon our enemy; but we are now free to turn our eyes away from the thing itself and to reflect upon it, to scan the long course by which we have arrived, and so shape our course towards the end—in short, to examine our experience and be governed by it.

In these three years we have seen grow up the most perfect military organisation the world has ever known. This force was created by the genius of this people. It has arisen out of their life, out of their traditions, out of their way of doing things, the tradition, namely, that each man shall go upon his own way with unimpaired liberty, to think, believe, and talk as he likes, to trade as he likes, to work, or refrain from working, with perfect assurance that in time of need the old, dull instinct and dumb sagacity of the race will assert itself, that every man will fall into ordered ranks and proceed upon the appointed way, even unto the end.

THE INSPIRATION OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

All these years I have heard a cry of self-deprecation and self-pity that we are not as other men—even as the Germans—are. I have seen it urged, for example, that we should retain the classics in our schools, since the Germans spend more time upon classics than we do. The Hun is yet in our hearts. He discovered the association between the teaching of science and material prosperity. There are, on that account, persons now amongst us, interested in education, who never thought of the subject until it was presented to them in this light. If they had their way we should lose the war even by winning it. We have put the matter to the test, and it will be time enough when we have lost to recast any element of our life in a Germanic mould.

We have put all upon the cast of war—our lives, our property, our way of life. We have not yet won. We shall lose, and we shall deserve to lose, if now we are false to the civilisation by which we have attained to these heights, and forsake our old custom—namely, "to defy power which seemed omnipotent, never to change, nor falter, nor repent." We have no cause for repentance. This is not the time to falter or change. You English require no alien teacher. Trust your own. It is written in your books. All else to you will be as a garment put on. Trust your Chaucer, your Shakespeare, your Dickens, your Kipling. They will carry you through. Trust your own poetry, and let German science go. Poetry is the last possible utterance of humanity. Not by wisdom alone do poets write poetry. By some sort of inspiration they say many fine things, and do not themselves understand the meaning of them. It is the Race which speaks.

Illusion is the prerogative of the English. Their strength lies in that; because it goes with eternal youth. When the illusion fades old age has come upon us. It is the inspiration of all our literature, for great writing and all religion is an attempt to weave a veil of beauty to hide the facts of life. All other writing is an attempt to tear this veil aside. This is the work of the cheapjacks of literature and of religion. Religion and literature are great according to the promise which they hold out, like the promise of spring which by some magic persuades the hungry human heart that even the dead will come back to life, the promise to

youth of the perfect woman—all dreams of youth which men reverence even after they are awakened. Above all others we have created the illusion of war in virtue of which men go eagerly to their death. If it were not for this quality how should we have survived those dreadful days of 1914?

THE LESSONS OF THE PAST.

To this old race there is nothing new. This is not the first time we have been at war, nor will it be the last. War is always the same in principle, though it may vary in method. Even the battle-fields are the same from the time of Caesar until now. On the way up from the Somme we followed the very road by which the war-like Henry retreated from Amiens and Peronne and we passed within a little of the field of Agincourt. This area might well be set apart by this new League of Peace as lists which nations must use when they feel that they must fight. At first the situation was new to us. It is over a hundred years since we were at war. All affairs in the interval were merely expeditions, and we still describe our considerable establishment in France not as an army or armies, but as an "Expeditionary Force."

We made one miscalculation—only one. We were well aware that a nation goes to war as a pastime or diversion from the *ennui* of peace. For the first time in our history we found ourselves face to face with an enemy which attacked us as a matter of business.

But for all else you will find precedent. Look in your own old Langland and you will see as in a looking-glass the situation in which we find ourselves to-day. This very people was in trouble with war and want of food. Hers Plowman offered to guide them to the truth, for, he said, Conscience and Mother-wit had showed him her dwelling. But, first, they must help him to finish a piece of ploughing. Remark that the Plowman does not employ women on the land. Those of the common sort are "to sew the sack to keep the wheat from spilling," to "spin wool and flax," to "weave cloth," and teach their daughters the art. Lovely ladies are to make embroideries "to honour churches." The knights, too, were eager though ignorant. "Teach me, quoth the Knight, and, by Christ, I will try." The Plowman would have no amateurs—women or men. Let the knight

administer justice so as to "keep down the wasters and the wicked men who spoil the world." Then they all fell to work "full eagerly" each man in his own way.

I take it upon myself merely as a Voice to utter one word of warning to this people. It is for Eng'and we all are fighting, the England of history, not for a Utopia or any figment of disordered minds. There are disordered minds in our absence working to wrench the old internal polity from its foundations, and no department of life is to remain untouched. There is to be a new electorate, a new drink or no drink at all, a new religion, a new education.

We know what labour is; but we do not know a Labour which confers, and deposes, and strikes, and has Ministers of its own. When a section of the community develops an interest and authority apart from the interest and authority of the community as a whole, there is then in the organism an overgrowth which is at first a foreign body and eventually becomes indistinguishable from a cancer.

In all this spectacle of war the noblest spectacle of all is "the golden metall of our souldiers"; and the means by which we are attaining to victory are the means by which victory has been attained from the days of Raleigh even until now—namely, "the employment of our common English souldier leaved in haste from following the cart or sitting on the shop-stall." To this we have added a new element, the very flower of the flock, the precious offspring of the universities and schools, all our beauty and our youth.

Has this "souldier" from the soil done so badly that his children must be educated from books after the technical, practical, Gradgrind, German method? The soldier will see to it. He himself may have been educated to such a point that he knows the nature of the soil, the place and time for sowing his corn, the public-house which sells an ale most tasty to his palate, the choicest spot in the parish for sunning himself on a Sunday afternoon. In this new hard school of poverty, temperance, and obedience he has educated himself still more finely, and by practising those virtues he has made of himself a "sufficient man."

Only the other day I read a solemn lamentation over the indisposition of the English to speak with foreign tongues. An experience on a ship trading in the Levant was cited. The captain had traded along those coasts for 20 years, and yet could not speak a word of Italian or Greek. His method

of unloading his ship was to take a big stick in his hand, make himself red in the face, sweat at every pore, and curse in his own vernacular, whilst an Austrian lying alongside was addressing the natives in their own language. The narrator adds, however, that the stevedores grinned, wondered, and obeyed the English sea captain. It may be that he had the proper way of unloading a ship, and that his education was the best for life in the Mercantile Marine.

THE MESSAGES OF WAR.

The value of war lies in this: it restores simplicity to life, and brings down the top-hammer which peace has superimposed. At the moment you are striving to reform a social life which is passing away. This generation has been dominated by the machine; and all effort has been expended upon machines for making more machines instead of towards the work itself. Science has been crying aloud: "Come and see what I will do for your souls"—and we have seen. I think that in future his giantship will go somewhat crestfallen, and that machines and those who tend them will have less power.

The danger of insidious revolution is a real one. By winning this war we may lose it. Equal in importance to winning the war is making ourselves worthy to have won it. The winning of three wars was the ruin of the German, and we have seen the process of degradation with our own eyes. Up to the present generation there was a Germany with human ideals, that Germany about which Carlyle gabbled—by which he wrought us much evil—and Matthew Arnold, the first of our own heretics, vaunted continually; but we have seen it become detestable by reason of a carnal and spiritual vulgarity. There is no primitive truth in its inward parts; even when its words are sincere its thought is double. This people, which was once great, took its place at the mill like a blinded giant, turning out meanness and cheapness for any Philistine. It lost all sense of beauty. Music died in the orchestration of Wagner and the heathen shouting from the stage; literature perished in a contemplation of their national hero who sacrificed his soul for the lusts of the flesh—an elderly professor with the powers of Hell at his command, whose ultimate good was science and the violation of women.

Even yet I see no signs of repentance. Evil is yet their good. But I think I do witness a sign that the just and righteous judgments of God are about to fall upon hardened and unrepentant sinners, and that this Caliban which yet, alas! squats athwart the pleasant land shall soon quit the earth and depart to his own place in the cold void of history. His habits are not new. Two hundred years ago we saw the work of the Hun in Scotland. You know him as the Duke of Cumberland. By common consent we still describe him as the "Butcher." But we, for our good, are reviving amongst us certain primitive truths: that a nation cannot exist which is detached from the soil, and that the perpetuation of the Race depends upon the primitive in Woman.

Mistrust, then, your lesser intellectual breeds: your young Byrons who cursed when Waterloo was won, your young Wordsworths who cast up the red caps of Revolution, as many in these days are casting up their caps too soon. Mistrust your "intelligentsia," mere bores and busybodies, who seize the moment to put into effect their vagaries. A nation governed entirely by the paid leaders of men who work with their hands may prove to be no more desirable than a nation governed by men who trust in their sword arm alone. To exchange a military union for a trade union is to exchange thongs for scorpions. Depend upon the safe, solid sense which you have inherited from your fathers. These are no times for experiments. We have been saved in former times, and we shall be saved again if we put our trust in the old, unaltered blood, in the passion, the piety, and the prowess of the line.

You have heard it said that all great wars in the past were religious wars. This, too, is a religious war—against the calculated atheism which would make of religion a speculative department within the bounds of the scientific spirit. This is the spirit against which the mediæval church continually strove by persuasion, remonstrance, and cursing, and finally called to its aid the secular fire and sword. The church with profound instinct discovered the tendency which would inevitably produce a race of logical German ultra-Protestants of which the Fathers prophesied. It may, indeed, be that the German has lost his soul; for races, nations, and men do arrive at a point where they have no soul to save.

I think that this class of intelligentsia has been worse

infected, and has done more than any other to spread the Germanic virus. Even in the universities the "German-trained" scholar was the thing, and in those doubtful, early August days their influence was against the instincts of the people. Quite recently I heard one of them say that he considered the German method for disposal of their dead "extremely sensible."

When I came overseas, I called upon one of these "scientists," and he could not restrain his astonishment over the queer garb I wore. He asked me the meaning of it. I did not tell him. He would not understand. In a place so remote that many of you have never heard its name the alarm of war reached us 24 hours after it had sounded. A boy was sitting beside me reading a book. He laid down the book and walked a little way. I picked it up and read:—

"It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom which to the open sea
Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
Hath flowed with pomp of waters understood—
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish, and to evil and to good
Be lost forever."

The boy came back and said, "I think I will go to the war." "To-night or in the morning?" I asked. "In the morning," he said. He went away in the morning. I saw him next in Plug Street Woods. A little child does sometimes lead safely.

In the absence of your soldiers keep the national emblems bright. Keep the fountain of honour undefiled. The majesty of the King appeals with peculiar intimacy to all who can claim the northern kingdom for their home, or the home which their fathers left to adventure over other seas. By nature we are Royalists, and upon this matter we are not likely to suffer from false illusion. The Crown has become the seal and bond of Empire. We from over-seas are not especially enamoured of your Houses of Parliament or of our own either; and, if we can believe what we hear, you yourselves have no great pride in them. These Houses would do well to remember that there is always an appeal to the King, and when such an appeal is made by men accustomed to arms it is likely to be irresistible.

What love we have lost for Parliament we have reserved for our King. A soldier's love for his King is a passion in itself as profound in nature as the love of man for woman.

It is only measured by the degree to which the soldier himself is kingly. No soldier will ever forget the day when the King rode athwart our closed columns and looked into one's eyes with his lovely Stuart eyes. He is the final human being to whom the humblest soldier may make appeal. This instinct of the soldier of our race, that even in this world in the person of the King lies an abode of justice and mercy, is as ineradicable as the instinct which impels men of every age and race to lift beseeching hands to Our Father which art in Heaven.