

Caring for the Wounded.

There is probably greater interest taken in the letters written from the front by the men and officers than in those of the professional correspondents, while Sir William MacCormac, president of the Royal College of Surgeons who volunteered for service in South Africa, is, as it were, in a class of his own as a writer of war news. Sir William's last report to the Lancet contains the following passages:

"Dec. 16.—We arrived at Chieveley station about 1:30 p. m. yesterday. The cannonading had ceased about 1 o'clock. We found the station occupied by a hospital train under Major Brazier-Creagh, R. A. M. C., and every one available helping to provide comforts for the freight it carried. There were 119 wounded in the train. They had been taken on board direct from the field, the train having run into the actual scene of action; in fact, it was ordered back by (the principal medical officer, two shells having fallen close to it. This train carried the first results of the battle, and it was a very distressing sight. The wounded filled the carriages just as they had come from the field; every wound had been dressed, and had been dressed extremely well under fire. A noticeable feature was the fact that very few of these dressings needed adjustment. Rifle splints, tourniquets, and other dressings had been adjusted carefully under circumstances of great difficulty and danger.

"There had been, we learned, a rush with the wounded to the train, which was rapidly filled and had then immediately steamed away, and when we saw it at Chieveley, four miles from the battlefield, the men were still under the excitement of the action. The wounded were cheerful and thankful for their treatment, many remarking that their chief anxiety was to get back soon enough to pay the Boers out. We saw the train start away from Escourt (it was back again at Chieveley last night). On its arrival No. 4 hospital was immediately unloaded and the erection of the tents began at once, before the weary officers and men of the Royal Army Medical Corps had had a chance of sleep. The Stationary Hospital was yesterday, therefore, evacuated of sick at Frere, the whole equipment packed and brought to Chieveley, the tents re-erected, made ready for 100 wounded, and almost immediately they received about 50—all this being completed between 7 a. m. and midnight (strength, 4 officers and 37 men of the Royal Army Medical Corps.)

"To return ourselves, having obtained the necessary information and permission we walked to the field hospitals of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Brigades, situated about three miles from Chieveley and under the crest of a hillcock about 400 yards outside the fire zone. Each of the three operating tents contained two operating tables, and as fast as a patient was taken off the table another took his place. Awaiting their turn the wounded were lying outside in rows which were being continually augmented by the civilian bearers coming in from the field. As each wounded man reached the hospital he was served with a hot cup of bovril, large cans of which were boiling outside the tents. The way in which the wounded had been dressed on the field and each man ticketed with the nature of his wound, his name and his regiment, was excellent, and was very useful for identification. This also saved much time at the field hospitals, because the seriously wounded could be at once discriminated from the more trivial cases. The latter went away at once to the tents and the former were redressed and operated upon when necessary by the four officers of each of the field hospitals and the three surgeons of each of the bearer companies. The praise of the regimental officers and men in respect to the way in which the Royal Medical Corps had done their duty under heavy fire was unanimous and unstinted. An officer of the Devons, wounded in the foot, told me that he managed to get to a hut near the bank of the river which was being used as a dressing station. This hut was continually under heavy fire and he described the behavior of the medical officers as magnificent.

"The spectacle at the field hospitals was most painful. Ambulance wagon after wagon and stretcher squad after stretcher squad came in while I was there, pouring in the wounded, some of whom had died on the way and could unfortunately only be carried to the mortuary tents. The work performed in the operating tents was, in my opinion, of great efficiency, the operations being deliberately carried out with skill and despatch under the very trying circumstances of intense heat, hurry and excitement all round. The Royal

A RHEUMATIC CRIPPLE'S RELEASE.

A "jury" of doctors, specialists and medicine vendors decreed that James Smith, of Grimsby, Ont., should spend the rest of his days in the agonizing chains of rheumatism

But common sense and modern medical science produced rebuttal evidence and procured his release.

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discussing its formula at all, has proved the most efficacious of remedies, and to back up their convictions, are prescribing it daily in practice; and doctors have always been the slowest to convince of the merits of any proprietary remedy.

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the gentlest touch of the hand on the body. In twelve hours after the first dose was taken all pain was gone, and inside of three days recovery was so marked that the patient walked without assistance. Many have had a similar experience and have testified to it.

James Smith, a dairyman of Grimsby, Ont., was a great sufferer from sciatica and rheumatism. He was almost helpless; could not walk without crutches. He had tried any number of remedies, and had been treated by almost innumerable doctors without any permanent help. He began using South American Rheumatic Cure. In a few hours the pain left him; in a few days he threw away the crutches and has never had a touch of the trouble since. You are at liberty to write him about his own case. No need for an hour's suffering. South American Rheumatic Cure can do as much for you as it has done for thousands.

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South American Kidney Cure is a liquid kidney specific; it cures Diabetes, Bright's Disease, Inflammation of the Bladder and all disorders arising from imperfect working of the kidneys. It gives relief in six hours. Sold by E. C. Brown.

Army Medical Corps officers of these hospitals had started their surgical work about 3 a. m., and when I visited them in the evening they were still hard at it, having had no food meanwhile and no time for rest, and the work went on for hours after wards. I gave advice in many cases where I was asked, and advised against operation in the case of a poor fellow with a fearful shell wound of the hip. Altogether some eight hundred patients passed through the field hospitals during the day. The men show utmost pluck and endurance; there was not the smallest despondency, the predominant feeling being anxiety to return and fight again. This was very splendid of them after such a day as they had experienced, and makes one feel very proud of their fine mettle.

"The hospital trains rapidly took them away. Each train carries on an average 100 cases and is equipped with every possible requirement, besides iced soda, champagne, soup, and other comforts in abundance, so I am certain that all that human foresight could accomplish was done during the journeys for the mitigation of the sufferings of the wounded."

Sir William MacCormac concludes his account by saying: "Considering the great strain of the work and the number of the wounded after this hotly contested engagement (where both rifle and shell fire were something, it is said, never seen before) I would like to draw attention to these facts: 1. The skill and care displayed in treating compound fractures and injuries requiring calm attention and time under heavy fire. 2. The skillful and efficient way in which serious major operations were performed on the same day as the battle (under considerable pressure and disadvantages) by the medical officers of the field hospitals. 3. Eight hundred wounded were cleared from the field by 6 P. M., the action having finished at 2 P. M. 4. By midnight on the second day after the battle (tonight) the last wounded man will have left the hospitals at the front and will have been conveyed to Escourt, Pietermaritzburg, Durban and the hospital ships. 5. Eight train loads have been taken away in the hospital trains in two days.

"There can be no doubt in the minds of those who have watched the proceedings at the front that a trying emergency had been met, under circumstances of extreme tension, with complete success, and I know that the army has had the greatest confidence in its medical corps and feels that all has been done for the wounded that could have been done. I accordingly returned this morning in the hospital train conveying 120 wounded to Pietermaritzburg. The heat has been intense. We have had three very busy hard-working days and returned weary and sad for such grievous loss and suffering. It was indeed a pitiable spectacle of suffering and death; but one could console oneself somewhat by the reflection that so much had been accomplished to mitigate the distress, and the poor sufferers themselves were full of pluck and endurance."

The Lancet's correspondent, at Wynberg hospital, writing under date of Dec. 22, says: "I cannot help thinking that in future campaigns where the modern arms

of precision are used it will be necessary to argument considerably the capacity of the present general hospitals both for officers and for men. The fact that accommodation in a general hospital as regards officers is limited to twenty-five cases points to a total inadequacy to the requirements. I consider that an officers' hospital of 100 beds should be a sine qua non.

A graphic letter comes from a private soldier who was in the disastrous affair of Magersfontein. He writes:

"If ever I felt any pleasure in writing a letter, it is this one, as no doubt you will have seen in the papers about the fight at Magersfontein, and when we were in that, both I and all the other men engaged thought that we should never live to come out of it. * * * We marched to within thirty yards of their rifles, and then (as though a theatre stage curtain had been lifted and a play commenced) their fire started, and swept us as the rain had been sweeping us from the Sunday before. * * * Men and horses fell like skittles. Those who were not shot and killed were being trampled to death. Of course, all we could do was to get under cover, and get into some sort of formation. This we eventually did, and made an advance over a level plain, and they swept us down like corn. After sticking at it for fifteen and one-half hours, we had to retire, and again laid out in position, the rain not having ceased from the time it started on Sunday. And when we retired to our proper camp, and the roll was called, there was a terrible death roll. * * * Gen. Wauchope was killed within thirty yards from the trenches. * * * We have a corporal struck

deaf and dumb with fright so you can form a faint idea what the shock was like. I can assure you I never ran as hard in my life as I ran the half mile to get under cover. Sounds well, doesn't it—a British Tommy Atkins running? But believe me, the next attack we make the Boers will pay dearly for what they have done; and let it be as bad as it may, it can never be as bad as it was on Monday, the 11th and if I get through what ever other few engagements we have to face, believe me, I shall never forget the 11 12 '99. We had lots of men take sunstroke. Their helmets got knocked off in the rush, and one of our Majors went mad, and half the men are knocking about hysterical, and its no use denying it, the division dread the moment when they may get an order to make another attack, and the best of it is the enemy stand about four to one; but never mind. There is not the slightest doubt we shall manage it somehow. * * * The feeding we are having is disgraceful—one pound loaf between six men, and one biscuit per man; but mind you, I am not grumbling, only a man must express his feelings to somebody. And so after reading about the repulse of the Highland Brigade, don't think they are no use. It is not the men's fault; it is through—[here some words have been struck out.] Now, my dear mother and father, this may be the last letter I may ever write to you. If it is, be sure I shall not die with my back to them."

A sergeant in the First Balloon Section, writing to his relations about the fight at Modder river, observes:

"I shall never forget the sight. I had some narrow squeaks; the bullets got as close as my coat. The troops were fairly exhausted with heat. I would willingly have given any money for a drink. A major came to me and begged a drink from our section; he said he had not had a bite or drink for two days. I have not had my clothes off for six days now, and have to lie down anywhere on the sand and rock with rifle and ammunition by my side. We captured four Boers with their commander. One of them asked me for a chance, I gave him one, and he was just going to fire at me when I dropped him. We are living on biscuits and tinned meat, which seems a luxury. Sometimes we cannot get anything. I was up in the balloon reconnoitering this morning, and could see the Boers with the glasses bringing in stores and forage. I have been up in the balloon several times, and I could see Kimberley quite plain. The captain has just called me to his tent and given me a small bottle of Bass. I nearly fainted at the name when he asked me if I would like one."

"Today" publishes an interesting letter written by a German officer with the besieging force outside Ladysmith:

"As you very well know (he says) in many matters the English are a practical people, and in those matters which concern them privately they exhibit a shrewdness and an energy which is remarkable and worthy of high praise. It is the more remarkable that in matters with regard to the practice of war these good qualities desert them. In this extraordinary war the enemy's generals have behaved in a

manner which must seem incredible to those who have not been here to see for themselves. When the government at Pretoria had sure information from Dr. Leyds that Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain had made their plans for sending to Natal a reinforcement of some infantry battalions. Colonel Kobner, late of the Fourteenth Field Artillery and myself, went down to the English colony, and remained there until a week after the issue of the ultimatum by President Kruger. Thus we were able to bring back a useful report upon almost every point affecting the resources, organizations, and morale of our future opponents.

"Although we lived nearly three months in Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, we, strange as it does now seem, were never recognized of the least suspicion raised as to the real nature of our business. Major C—formerly of the French Foreign Legion, was sent upon a similar mission to Cape Town. Being an Irishman, he escaped attracting the slightest inconvenient notice. Truly the English are the most unsuspicious of people under the sun.

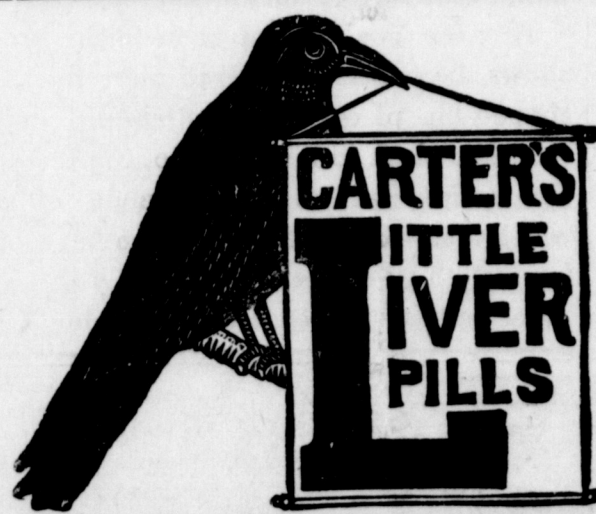
"We are a cosmopolitan band of good brothers-in-arms here around Ladysmith. There is first in rank, Gen. Count Georges Villebois de Mareuil, who was lately Colonel commanding the first regiment of the far famed Foreign Legion of the French African army. This distinguished officer speaks our own language very well, as also he does English. Of retired officers of the French active army, there are at present on the payrolls fourteen; eight are with old Mr. Joubert, three with our friend Albrecht, who is keeping the Baron Methuen amused, and the others are in charge of the ammunition supplies—a duty which cannot be entrusted to Boers officers in consequence of their utter want of method. Von Rosenfeldt and Fried Muller came by the last steamer.

"Since the siege commenced we have lost out of the foreign mess four officers killed in the big gun batteries. The Colonels in the siege batteries are paid one hundred and fifty Transvaal sovereigns a month. I am remitting home one hundred and twenty every month, and, as we expect this war to last for six months yet, I may look forward to having something considerable awaiting me at Hanover. We understand that the French Genera receives two hundred and fifty pounds per month. Our friend Albrecht had the ground in front of each successive position occupied by the Boer Commander Cronje accurately measured, and bowlders at the various distances marked by whitewashed figures upon the bowlders that are everywhere scattered about in South Africa. Then, through his field glasses, he was able to determine with precision the distance that the Baron Methuen's troops were from his batteries."

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