CURRENT LITERATURE.

FRONTIERS.

In "Political Frontiers and Boundary Making" Sir Thomas Holdich writes on a subject which few have better claims than himself to discuss. He has personally helped in the delimitation of boundaries in many parts of the earth, and he is convinced that few people grasp the principles which should govern the making of an effective frontier. This ignorance extends from the man in the street to those in high places. The politician, for instance, in his desire to preserve racial associations, is apt to overlook things of as vital importance. Too often boundaries have been drawn by men who have neglected the geographical factor. The amount of mischief that has been done in the world by the establishment of unscientific frontiers is immense. The first essential of a frontier is that it should be a barrier of defence; everything should be subordinate to this consideration. Sir Thomas Holdich believes that mankind is bellicose by instinct, and that the less opportunity of contact two communities enjoy the greater the possibility of peace between them. The ideal frontier, to his mind, is not one that permits intercourse between neighbours, but one that keeps them far apart. Nature has provided striking examples of natural boundaries, which have stood as such throughout recorded history, the Andean Cordillera, for instance, and the great wall that separates India from the rest of Asia. A desert is as good a frontier as a mountain range, for a desert is a no-man's land, productive of no local disputes, and presenting an insurmountable obstacle to sudden attack. "Many countries owe their continued national existence to the protection afforded by flanking deserts—as, for instance, Egypt. Not even in these later days, when advancing armies can be supported by light railways, and these railways can be laid at the rate of two or three miles a day, have the advantages of a desert frontier been seriously discounted. We have had an example of some force in the abortive Turkish expedition across the Sinaitic peninsula from Palestine to the Suez Canal. Not even Turkish troops (the most enduring of all troops) could compass a successful raid across that short 100 miles of desert space, nor can the passing of troops in sufficient numbers to be a menace to Egypt be effected until the supporting line of railway becomes a fait accompli."

Rivers, on the other hand, are failures as boundaries. They are easily identifiable, and dispense with any artificial system of demarcation, but, remembering that the primary object of a frontier is that it should be a barrier of defence, rivers are not satisfactory. In the first place, the fact that they are thoroughfares of traffic is apt to provoke disputes. "Rival claims for the right-of-way are far more likely to arise than friendly interchange of civilities and international goodwill." In the second place, they do not offer any very great obstacle to an invading army. This war has proved again and again the inferiority of a river as a check to even moderately high mountains. Flat Roumania, which, despite its many streams, has been overrun, is a case in point, whereas, though the Russians reached the gentle slopes of the Carpathians, they could not pass them in force. Sir Thomas Holdich considers that Germany's annexation of Alsace was a gross political blunder, but was nevertheless sound strategy, for it gave her as a frontier not the Rhine but the Vosges Mountains. For the same reason, the loss of this province did the French no harm from a purely military aspect. Germany's defence of her territory in this war depends on her occupation of the heights above the Meuse and the Vosges. Let her once be forced from these, and the Meuse, the Moselle, and even the Rhine will not stay the Allies for long.

Where nature has not furnished an easily identifiable landmark for a boundary man has been compelled to devise one for himself. His efforts in this direction have not been conspicuously successful. The ancient peoples had, at any rate, the wit to see that a frontier should be a buckler of resistance, so they built walls such as that which separated England from Scotland in the Roman days, or that with which China encircled herself. The later analogy of this was not a continuous wall, but a succession of forts dominating points of strategic value. The latter-day boundary-maker, however, has become infatuated with the idea of the straight line, a thing, by the way, quite unknown to nature. Sir Thomas Holdich pours scorn on those who believe that an artificial and arbitrary boundary of this kind is useful, and gives many instances to show how unfortunate such a principle of delimitation may be. It sounds delightfully easy to say that this or that degree of latitude or longitude is to be the boundary; in practice it has worked badly. Till comparatively recent times it was hard to guarantee complete accuracy in calculation. Thus a flourishing community in British East Africa was disconcerted to learn that owing to a correction in the map it was in Belgian Congo! We in Australia well know the history of the border line between Victoria and South Australia. A great proportion of the boundary between Canada and the United States—another arbitrary straight line—is a grave blunder from the soldier's point of view, and though we are never likely to be at war with America now, there were several occasions in the nineteenth century when the Canadians were a little apprehensive. So, too, the straight line boundary between the United States and part of Mexico has been an endless source of trouble. And as a final monument to the futility of the straight line school, Sir Thomas Holdich quotes the boundary between British territory in Africa and what used to be German South-west Africa. This runs through the centre of the Kalahari desert—a complete frontier in itself. It would have been enough, for all practical purposes, to name an imaginary line and leave it at that, for no man or beast lives in the Kalahari, and even the natives who cross it are insignificant in number. But the authorities must in their wisdom establish an elaborate system of cairns and marks along the whole length of the line. The cost in human life and money was immense, and now that the cairns have been built there is no one to see them.

The author applies the lessons of the past to the requirements of the future. One result of the war, he says, will be a redistribution of national frontiers both in Europe and in Africa. "The present tendency is to demand this rearrangement on ethnographical grounds only, leaving out of account all questions of geographical suitability; fitting a frontier to the positions (irregular and scattered though they may be) occupied by a spread-out nationality rather than securing a sound defensible line within which the great body of the people may find peace and security." The author cites the aspirations of Roumania in Hungary, and of Greece in Asia Minor; however desirable the fulfilment of these may be on other grounds, he believes that it would weaken the respective nations from a military standpoint. However, he leaves these matters for the politician, and proceeds to forecast the type of the new frontiers where nature has provided no boundary. He thinks that mutatis mutandis these will resemble the very oldest artificial boundaries of which we have knowledge. They will be of the "wall" class, except that there is not likely to be any wall. There may be an intervening space of "No man's land," like the old border marches, inhabited by none save outlaws, and owned by none. The actual frontiers will be some miles apart, an elaborate system of trenches with barbed wire entanglements, redoubts at intervals, and lateral railway communications behind to ensure the rapid concentration of troops at any threatened spot. From this it may be gathered that Sir Thomas does not believe that this is going to be the war that ends war, or, at any rate, that a frontier will have lost its original purpose as an effective line of defence. (Macmillan.)

A RUSSIAN PRETENDER.

In "The False 'Dmitri'" Mrs. Sonia Howe, herself a Russian, has unearthed an extraordinary tale of intrigue, violence, and blood from the Russian past. Not the least extraordinary feature of it is that though Russia was still almost a *terra incognita* to Western Europe—for it was not so long since Chancellor had "discovered" Muscovy—much of the evidence depends on the narratives of enterprising Britons who had found their way to Russia in various capacities. The true Dmitri was the Csarevitch, son of Ivan the Terrible. He is said to have been killed by his brother-in-law to facilitate the latter's usurpation of the throne. In 1605 a mysterious youth suddenly appears in Poland claiming to be the Csarevitch Dmitri, miraculously preserved from murder. The King of Poland supports his claim, and gives him his daughter to wife. The reigning Czar declares that he is an impostor; a certain renegade monk, but the Russians welcome him as their lawful ruler. His reign does not last long. He brings with him to Moscow a following of six thousand Poles, a turbulent overbearing crew whom he cannot control. Their plunderings and injuries to the people become intolerable; Prince Suiski, a second usurper, takes advantage of the change of opinion. As a result of his plots Dmitri is assassinated and the gutters of Moscow run red with the blood of a hideous massacre. So much for the first pretender. A few years later a second one appears who calls himself Dmitri, and alleges that once again he has been miraculously preserved from the massacre. He certainly is well primed with a knowledge of the other Dmitri's life, but he is probably not genuine. The captain of the guard, a cautious Scot, admits that "this Demetrius could cunningly and confidently relate particular passages of past occurrents." This circumstance "had moved him to believe this to be the former Demetrius had he not differed from this in person as night from day, for the former was of goodly personage, and this a very deformed wretch." The fact that the Poles and Cossacks supported the second pretender, and that her father, a Polish magnate, compelled Marina to recognise him as husband, is not conclusive; they would do this out of enmity to Russia. Although the second Dmitri was probably an impostor, there is considerable doubt whether the first was not genuine. Russian historical opinion is divided on the subject. The whole tragic episode was closed by the accession of the Romanoff dynasty.

The British come into the story in a number of ways. Dmitri, on coming to the throne, wrote to the British Ambassador at Archangel to assure him of Russia's friendship. Suiski, the usurper, sends to the same authority a long explanation of the circumstances which led to his accession, and protests his goodwill. Then there is the worthy Captain Gilbert, mentioned above, whose narrative is reported by Purchas. There are several versions by English traders resident in Moscow. The horrors of the massacre so impressed them that they feel it their duty to set them on permanent record. Most interesting of all is the diary of an English mercenary, a member of a force of twelve hundred under Captain Crale, who had hired themselves to the King of Sweden and served Suiski the usurper in Russia against the Poles. (Williams and Norgate.)

AT THE WAR.

"At the War," by Lord Northcliffe, is an interesting series of articles which describe the manifold activities of the Allies, and, it may be added, the manifold activities of the enemy in neutral countries. Lord Northcliffe controls a group of journals which have constantly exhorted the British Government, in season and out, to amend their ways and to put "more ginger" into the conduct of the war. But in this book criticism is absent; it is chiefly a record of things seen, in Britain and Belgium, in France, and in Italy; in the fighting line and behind it. Lord Northcliffe saw the reconstructed and reanimated Belgian army, and marvelled at its spirit; he saw the Australians after a sharp and nasty engagement, and is whole-hearted in his admiration of them; he spoke to General Cadorna somewhere in the Alps, and he reminds us that if we knew more about the terrain we would not be surprised that Italy has adopted the motto, "festina lente."

Many have written about the military operations; few have given a more comprehensive idea of their auxiliaries, the various organisations which are trying to alleviate some of the more obvious horrors of war. Lord Northcliffe points out that the Governments of the various belligerents have had their hands full, for the most part, in providing for the needs of the actual combatants. It has been left to private enterprise to look after the others. And rightly so, for in this direction money, talent for organisation, and zeal have found opportunities for patriotism otherwise denied to them. The enormous ramifications of Red Cross work will surprise many. The attitude of the Red Cross has been simply that it relieves the Government of certain international responsibilities and performs its duties more promptly and cheaply than would be possible for any Government department. This is the motto of all who work under the Red Cross, whether they are V.A.D.'s, clerks in the Geneva Correspondence Bureau, or neutral generals who organise relief works. The pride of the Red Cross is its freedom from red tape. Switzerland has justified the emblem of her flag. She has been the host of those broken in war of every nation. She has treated them as honoured guests, has healed them and comforted them, and, even if they cannot depart, her hospitality has in a measure reconciled them to their exile.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is Lord Northcliffe's estimate of the "war-feeling" in neutral countries. The author is certainly an expert in the science of judging popular opinion, and he is doubtless right in saying that the Allies have not paid enough attention to the vulgar art of advertisement. The French are reticent when they talk about the things nearest to their heart. The British pray to be delivered from the sin of boastfulness. Between French reserve and inverse British pride, Germany has scored rather heavily in neutral countries. The French or the British make a successful raid on the German trenches. Their communiques describe it as a raid. But should the Germans make a raid the wireless station at Nauen floods the world with exultant sparks. "We have penetrated the enemy trenches." When a naval battle is fought Britain promptly and straightforwardly announces the whole of its losses. The Nauen wireless proclaims a German victory, and little by little admits that for "military reasons" certain German losses had been concealed. We may think that this sort of thing profited little at this time of day, but Lord Northcliffe assures us that it counts with some sections of some neutrals. "It pays to advertise." Germany must keep herself one way or another before the eyes of the neutrals who may be her customers after this war. If neutrals cannot be stimulated by commerce-raiders let them be terrorised by rape and murder. All profits of this book are to go to the joint committee of the Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

THE AIR SERVICE.

"In the Royal Naval Air Service" the late Flight-lieutenant Harold Rosher gives one an admirable glimpse of the spirit that informs the newest and most exigent branch of the British army and of the personnel that compose it. Rosher was barely out of his teens when war came with its demands on the nation's youth. The very day of Britain's declaration he applied for a commission in the Royal Naval Air Service, made himself a competent aviator in an unusually short time, and from then until February, 1916, when he was killed through some accident to a machine he was testing, made himself useful in many roles. For part of the period he was employed on home duties, training recruits to the flying corps, patrolling, and chasing Zeppelins. He was also for some time in Flanders, and took part in various raids, of which the most important were those that aimed at the destruction of various German submarine bases on the Belgian coast.

The book is composed of letters written by Rosher to members of his family. He had no idea that they would ever be published, which makes them the more effective. Their keynote is sincerity and absolute freedom from any self-consciousness. Rosher's record shows that he was brave almost to the point of recklessness, but he is not afraid to say that on many occasions his feet became very cold, when engine trouble, for instance, forced him to land willy-nilly as best he could, or when the shrapnel of the enemy's anti-aircraft guns was singing all around him. He is cheerful about the risks of the service, though the aviator's life is seldom a long one. He mentions without comment that this good comrade has not returned, and that that one has been hurled to destruction. His version of the raids in which he took part is modest and bald to a degree. He states briefly that he was caught in a snow blizzard in the upper air, or that his petrol froze, or that he lost his way in a fog, or that he was successful in reaching the point of attack. He leaves the reader to imagine what these things mean. It is not hard to do so. The fragile machine buffeted by the gale, with its pilot's nerves astrain to meet the changing perils of the storm; the comet-like career through the black void, with nothing above and nothing below but infinity. When they raided Ostend and Zeebrugge it was in such weather. In the raid on Hoboken the conditions were better, but that meant that the enemy could make a more effective reply. Here is Lieut. Rosher's description of the 'supreme moment' on this occasion:—"As the wind was dead against me, I decided to come round in a semi-circle, to cross the submarine yards with the wind, so as to attain greater speed. I was only 5500 up, and they opened fire on me with shrapnel as soon as I got within range. It was getting a bit hot. . . . I passed over the yards at about 1000 feet only *and loosed all my bombs over* the place. The whole way down I was under fire, two anti-aircrafts in the yard, guns from the posts on either side, rifle fire, mitrailleuse, machine-guns, and most weird of all, great bunches of what looked like green rockets, but I think they were flaming bullets. The excitement of the moment was terrific. I have never travelled so fast before in my life. My chief impressions were the great speed, the flaming bullets streaking by, the incessant rattle of the machine-gun and rifle fire, and one or two shells bursting close by, knocking my machine all sideways and pretty nearly deafening me. . . . I found myself across the yards and felt a mild sort of surprise. My eyes must have been sticking out of my head like a shrimp's. I know I was gasping for breath and crouching down in the fuselage (body of the machine). I was, however, by no means clear, for shrapnel was still bursting around me. I jammed the rudder first one way and then the other. I banked first on to one wing-tip, and then on to the other; now slipping outwards, and now up and now down. I was literally hedged in by forts (and only 1000 feet up), and had to run the gauntlet before getting away. I was under rifle fire right up to the frontier, and even then the Dutch potted me. (Chatto and Windus.)

NEW NOVELS.

"The Leopard Woman," by Mr. Stewart E. White, is an admirable story worthy to rank with Mr. John Buchan's "Greenmantle" as one of the best war novels yet written. True, much of the action takes place a little before the war breaks out. It would be unfair to describe the plot, but it is permissible to say that it revolves upon the efforts of the British and German Governments to secure an alliance with a native prince in the fastnesses of Central Africa. Not only has M'tala a fine army, but his country lies in an important strategical position, and dominates the frontiers of the British and German East African possessions alike. His friendship is well worth having. The British send as envoy one Culbertson, a mighty hunter, who has proved his quality in many a tight corner. The Germans rely on the persuasive powers of Winkelman, a Bavarian savant, who knows the native mind as no other European. But Winkelman has to come from the Congo right across Africa. Unless something can be arranged the Englishman will get first to his goal; something is arranged, and that something is the "Leopard Woman." Khingosi, as his followers call him, is surprised to come upon her in the middle of Africa; but women do all sorts of queer, adventurous things nowadays, and for a time at least he is content with her explanation. The subsequent fortunes of the two are engrossing, and though the reader expects the eventual discomfiture of Winkelman, he does not quite see how it is to be managed; but it is managed, and Winkelman turns out to be a thoroughly good fellow, who takes his defeat like a sportsman. The characterisation is excellent, both of white and black. The author had no easy task in gaining our sympathies for the Leopard woman, but he has succeeded. Like "Khingosi" himself, we are prejudiced against her at first; also like Khingosi we end as the best of friends. But even more admirable are the coloured gentlemen. Simba, the Lion, is true to his name. Cazi Moto is the worthiest of stewards. Mr. White is an American, and his testimony is the more valuable. It is that these types develop under British rule with its even-handed justice, its firmness, and its reliability. These natives have become what they are because they can trust their British "Bwana" absolutely. They will follow him to death because they know he regards their life as sacred as his own. And finally Mr. White's book is an admirable background to the campaign in German East Africa now drawing to a close. He shows us the theatre of war and the manner of men that are fighting therein. All who read "The Leopard Woman" will be able to supplement the bald communiques issued by General Smuts, and will follow the operations with a more understanding interest. (Hodder and Stoughton: Dymock's.)

"Lady Connie," Mrs. Humphry Ward's latest novel, is slighter in texture than many of its predecessors, perhaps, because the scene is set in a University town, where youth is triumphant and aggressively reluctant to profit by the wisdom of its seniors. Yet the Oxford to which the author introduces us was earnest enough in its way. It was the Oxford of the 'Seventies and 'Eighties, the Oxford of Jowett and Pattison, the Oxford of all manner of religious and socialistic theorising. Undergraduates with an intellectual bent took themselves much more seriously in those days; the later generation, whatever its shortcomings, has a better sense of perspective and a lighter touch, a wider tolerance, a levity that sometimes amounts almost to flippancy, a feeling that apostolic fervour in a very young man may become ridiculous unless he possesses the saving grace of humour. Mrs. Humphry Ward's Oxonians, whether old or young, are true to type, but the type has vanished. The motif is a good one. Lady Connie is a brilliant girl, older than her 20 years, through her association with the cosmopolitanism of fashionable Continental resorts. When her father dies she comes to Oxford to live with her uncle, a University don. The transition to the narrowness of academic life is abrupt, but she has sufficient tact to settle down readily enough, and sufficient of the old Eve in her to enjoy the sensation she causes among the susceptible undergraduates. Here her love story develops, and she realises that even with boys it is dangerous to play with fire. Her headstrong admirer learns his lesson, while she, less directly, learns hers, and the end of the book finds them "grown up" in mind and spirit, as well as in body. The characterisation is good, particularly in the case of the women. The Don's two daughters are each in their way an excellent foil for the brilliant Lady Connie, according to their respective qualities, and just because the didactic element is not emphasised in this novel it is, perhaps, more effective than many which Mrs. Humphry Ward has written with an avowed purpose. It is doubtful, however, whether the author would admit this herself. (Macmillan and Co.)

DEATH OF MRS. E. GEACH.

The death is announced of Mrs. Edwin Geach, of Cremorne Point, widow of Mr. Edwin Geach, after a protracted illness. She was a native of Cornwall, and arrived in New South Wales in the early 'Sixties, but lived in Melbourne for a decade. Two sons and three daughters survive her. The funeral, which took place at Gore Hill on Thursday last, was of a private nature.

Mr. HARRY INGHAM, Oxford-street, Woollahra, says:—"I had a bad attack of rheumatism, and tried several medicines uselessly, until I tried your Clements Tonic. I took four large bottles, and am as well as ever I was in my life."—Advt.

Dr. Sheldon's Magnetic Liniment relives Neuralgia, Stiff Neck, and Rheumatism. Banishes all pain. 1/6 and 3/.—Advt.

MUSIC AND DRAMA.

The passing of Mr. Henry Bracy at the age of 75 will turn the thoughts of old theatregoers back to the days, or nights, in Sydney of French comic opera under William Saurin Lyster, before the dawn of the Gilbert and Sullivan period. After many successful seasons of Italian opera and English opera of the Wallace-Balfe class, Lyster decided to give the Australian public what he spoke of as "light French dishes." That was in 1875. The two English principals who were engaged were Clara Thompson, sister of the famous Lydia Thompson, and her husband, Mr. Henry Bracy, then a popular comic opera tenor. Lecocq's "La Fille de Madame Angot" was one of the first productions. The same composer's "Girofle Girofla" served to introduce Emelie Melville, a dainty American artist, who is still appearing in the United States, but not in singing parts. A little later Offenbach was represented by "The Grand Duchess," "Madame Favart," "La Belle Helene," and "Barbe Bleue." The opera bouffe repertory included "La Perichole," "The Princess of Trebizonde," "Chilperic," and "The Brigands." Then came the first Australian production of "Les Cloches de Corneville." Shortly before the death of Lyster, in 1880, Mr. and Mrs. Bracy returned to England. While a member of the Gilbert and Sullivan Company at the Savoy, London, Mr. Bracy was selected as the first Prince Hilarion in "Princess Ida."

Resuming their stage work in Australia Mr. and Mrs. Bracy were again in Sydney in 1889. They were prominent during a season under the conductorship of the late M. Henri Kowalski at the Opera House, which stood on the corner of King and York streets. In addition to the pianist-composer's own comic opera "Moustique," the company introduced "The Beggar Student." In 1890 the Bracy-Thompson company performed "The Sultan of Mocha," "The Beggar Student," and "The Lady of the Locket" at the Criterion Theatre. The following year Mr. Bracy appeared under the Williamson management, at the Theatre Royal, in "The Gondoliers." Miss Florence Young, Miss Elsie Cameron, Mr. Charles Ryley and Mr. William Elton were in the cast. During the season Planquette's "The Old Guard" was performed. In 1892, at Her Majesty's Theatre, Mr. Bracy produced for the Williamson management Audran's "La Cigale," with the late M. Leon Caron as conductor. The late Mr. J. C. Williamson, Miss Marie Halton, Miss Flora Graupner, Miss Florence Young, Miss Elsie Cameron, Mr. Charles Ryley, and Mr. Howard Vernon were associated in "La Cigale." Among other successful comic operas in which Mr. Bracy figured as a graceful actor and a singer with refinement of style, were "Dorothy," "The Yeoman of the Guard," and "Pepita."

For a good number of years before his retirement in 1914, Mr. Bracy was retained by the Williamson management chiefly as a producer of comic opera. He assisted during the season of Italian opera at Her Majesty's in 1901, and directed the first Australian performance of Puccini's "Madame Butterfly" (in English) at the Theatre Royal in 1910, with Signor Hazon as conductor. Miss Amy Castles and Mdlle Bel Sorel were seen on alternate nights in the name part. Mdlle Bel Sorel left Australia at the conclusion of her engagement. The Australian operatic artist is now in the United States. Mrs. Bracy, unfortunately, was not in Sydney when her husband died. She has been living in New York with her married son, Mr. Sydney Bracy, who, following in his father's footsteps, had a successful comic opera career in America, before yielding to the temptation of photo play acting. Mr. Phil Bracy, the other son, is a returned invalided soldier. Mr. Phil Bracy came from Melbourne to attend his father's funeral. Of the "old guard" of comic opera in Australia only Mrs. Bracy and Emelie Melville, now remain. Mr. Armes Beaumont died in Melbourne in 1913. Mr. Edward Farley answered "the last call" in Sydney a year ago.

Miss Betty Ward, a Sydney girl, and daughter of the veteran Australian journalist, Dr. F. W. Ward, is now under a year's engagement to manager Charlot in England. Miss Ward must have filled a scrap-book if she collected all the "good notices" of her acting in "Poached Eggs and Pearls," a canteen comedy from the pen of Miss Gertrude Jennings, which was produced by Mr. Charlot as one of the Christmas attractions at the Apollo Theatre, London. In what was intended to illustrate the humorous side of war-time in England, the young Australian actress appeared as an elderly spinster, with a genius for blundering, who helps other aristocratic women to provide meals and refreshments for soldiers.

Miss Daisy Atherton, who will make her first Australian appearance to-night under the J. C. Williamson management at the Criterion Theatre in "Fair and Warmer," is a daughter of the celebrated comedian, Willie Edouin, and a niece of one of our old favourites, Mrs. G. B. W. Lewis. Though Willie Edouin never visited this part of the world, his talent has been reflected, so to speak, in many of the characters we have seen here in musical comedy. Mr. Edouin was the creator of all sorts of low comedy parts, including Tweedlepunch in "Florodora." Before accepting her present engagement, Miss Atherton was the heroine in England of "A Pair of Silk Stockings," and she will appear later on in the same comedy here. Mr. Percy Marmont, the juvenile of the new company, is an experienced actor. While associated with the Liverpool Repertory Theatre he secured the English provincial rights of "The Blindness of Virtue," and went on tour with the play at the head of his own company. Mr. Marmont was appearing at the Coliseum, London, in a revue when he was engaged by Mr. Clyde Meynell, of the Williamson management, for a South African and Australian tour. Mr. Thomas A. Braidon, another newcomer, has supported in London Sir George Alexander, Sir Charles Wyndham, and Mr. Cyril Maude. He has also played in New York as a member of Miss Maxine Elliott's company. Miss Elma Royton will play in "Fair and Warmer" the part in which she had a large measure of success during the South African tour.

Miss Emily Fitzroy, who returned last week from America for the J. and N. Tait musical comedy production, "Very Good Eddie," will be remembered in connection with the Meynell and Gunn Sydney productions. Miss Fitzroy left Australia in 1910 for England, her last appearance here being in the role of Mrs. Wilmore in the "Hypocrites." After appearing in "A Woman's Way" at the Globe Theatre, and "Dombey and Son" at the Savoy, Miss Fitzroy left London for New York, where she was fortunate enough to secure the leading character part in "Just to Get Married," a farce produced by William Brady at the Maxine Elliott Theatre. This was followed by an appearance at the Empire Theatre, N.Y., with Mrs. Fisk in "Lady Patricia." Afterwards Miss Fitzroy played for thirty-eight weeks with William Collier, the well-known comedian, in "Never Say Die," at the 48th Street Theatre, subsequently appearing with the Shubert firm in musical comedy at the Casino Theatre. She then returned to London, and played in the production of "The Land of Promise" at the Duke of York's Theatre, after which she went back to New York to appear at the 48th Street Theatre again in "Rich Man, Poor Man." She was then engaged by Mr. E. J. Tait to come to Australia.

The contractors for the renovation of the interior of the Palace Theatre have their work so much advanced that they hope to be able to allow the management to take possession on Tuesday. "Very Good Eddie" will be staged on Saturday next.

Mr. George F. Boyle, of Sydney, who has been for some time in the United States, was announced to give his first pianoforte recital in New York at the Aeolian Hall on January 2. The young artist included in his programme four of his own compositions. Of the celebrities who have toured Australia five had "concert fixtures" in New York for January—Paderewski, Mischa Elman, Harold Bauer, John M'Cormack, and David Bispham. The Cherniavsky Trio, Jan, Leo, and Mischel, (violinist, 'cellist, and pianist), were billed to appear at Carnegie Hall on January 16.

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THE DISABLED SOLDIER.

(FROM THE "LANCET" OF DECEMBER 9.)

The Committee of Reference of the English Royal Colleges, a statutory body under an Order-in-Council, and appointed to advise the War Office through the Central Medical War Committee, have reported in clear terms upon the problem of the dischargeable disabled soldier. The committee have worked in association with the Central Medical War Committee, and the two bodies have acquired definite information that a large number of disabled soldiers have already been discharged from the army as being unfit for further military service; their case will be made the subject of a further report, which is already drafted. As the number of men thus "broken" will amount to many thousands before the war is over, the committee urge that continued medical and surgical treatment should be organised for them at once, as success must depend on its being prompt. It is the especial function of the Committee of Reference to safeguard the interests of the civil community by ascertaining that civilian hospital staffs remain during the war adequate to provide medical and surgical treatment. If the disabled soldiers are discharged from military hospitals while requiring further treatment to render them useful members of the community, they will fall back upon the already depleted civilian hospitals, and a vast body of brave men, damaged while in the army, may fail to obtain proper chances for return to civil life as useful citizens, capable in more or less degree of maintaining their independence. If such a position should arise for lack of forethought and effective machinery, it would be a lasting reproach to all of us.

The Committee of Reference have confronted the situation squarely and agreed upon certain general principles. They hold that a considerable proportion of the disabled soldiers require continued institutional treatment, and that an essential condition of success in any scheme for such treatment is that the patient be thoroughly under discipline. As no form of discipline can adequately replace military discipline, they state that the disabled soldiers should not be discharged from the army until a specially constituted board of medical experts has decided that no further institutional treatment will improve their condition, but they allow that such treatment cannot be extended beyond some maximum limit of time to be determined by the military authorities. These principles, or conclusions, have been arrived at by consideration of the probable number of men concerned, the classes under which their cases would fall, and the possibility of any substitute for military discipline which would secure with certainty the continued treatment. The terms of the report of the Committee of Reference are so clear and so far-reaching that it must necessarily move the military authorities either to undertake the task of the continued treatment of the disabled soldier or to render every assistance to some alternative scheme, such as the setting up of convalescent camps, similar to military convalescent camps. But the number of these would have to be extended as occasion required, for no data are at present forthcoming as to the number of men already discharged who would be benefited by continued treatment, while the uncertain duration of the war makes speculation as to the ultimate figures valueless. The memorandum attached to the report considers the problem under two heads, premising that the wounded men are allowed to remain in the army for some period. The first of these heads, the provision of institutional treatment for those who can only be satisfactorily treated in this way, is discussed at greater length; the second, the provision of temporary supervision for those who can be treated at home, is dealt with by the obvious statement that this will have to be left to local activities, assisted by the advice of local practitioners. A classification is then made of medical and surgical cases which should be treated in institutions, with subsequent transference to homes where attention can be given until the maximum benefit has been obtained; and the committee suggest that the centres for the convalescent patients should take the form of annexes to the existing military convalescent camps. In regard to cases of neurasthenia and shell shock, other than mental cases, they point out that special treatment under military control may be required, but that it should not be given in camps specialised for the purpose, such patients deriving benefit from distribution among others. Mental cases the committee consider require institutional treatment under the care of specialists, while tuberculosis cases present the difficulty that in one group the pathological manifestations may be due to the recurrence of definite disease present before enlisting, while in another group the disease may have been acquired on active service. The committee hold that no soldier suffering from tuberculosis should be discharged from the army, but that all these men should be treated under military discipline until the best possible has been done, with the admission that in prolonged cases the military authorities would have to prescribe some time limit for their responsibilities.

The conclusions of the Committee of Reference, therefore, are that dischargeable disabled soldiers should be kept in the army until they have gained all the good that can be expected from institutional treatment administered over some maximum period; that they should be retained, in great majority, in military hospitals until they are fit to be discharged to convalescent camps; that annexes to these camps should be set up where the cases could be treated by the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps with civilian help. They consider that in the convalescent camps the treatment should be as far as possible the same as that of soldiers who are expected *to return to* active duty, save that technical and mechanical treatment should take the place of military exercises, while they think that special boards should be set up to supervise not only general cases, but ophthalmic, neurasthenic, epileptic, and mental ones. The memorandum deals only with the treatment of soldiers who have not as yet been discharged from the army; the case of the numerous soldiers already discharged and disabled is being dealt with separately. The committee state clearly that they cannot contemplate that the military authorities will refuse to undertake the task of the treatment of disabled soldiers, and point out the objections to the only alternative way of meeting the situation—namely, the setting up of a number of new camps similar to the military convalescent camps.

A PROHIBITED FILM.

Mr. Fuller, Chief Secretary, acting upon the recommendation of the Film Censorship Board, has issued instructions that the film "Smashing the Vice Trust" shall not be permitted to be exhibited in this State.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN SERVICE FUND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir,—Will you allow me to encroach on your space to call the attention of your readers to the annual service, which will be held to-morrow afternoon in the Macquarie-place Reserve, to commemorate the first Christian service held in Australia.

Might I appeal to the public to give liberally to the collection which will be taken up then. The committee of the above fund, recognising the demands made by the numerous necessities caused by the war, has abstained from making any effort that would interfere in any way with the urgent call of the national objects, trusting that the annual commemorative service, under the auspices of the Church of England Men's Society, would be availed of by those wishing to contribute to the fund.

It is the intention to erect a memorial of this service on the site of the first church, at the junction of Bligh and Hunter streets, at a cost of about £350. About £180 of this amount is in hand, and the committee looks to the public to contribute the balance, so that something worthy the object may perpetually commemorate the event.

I am, etc., JAMES H. WATSON,
Honorary Secretary.

THE CHURCHES.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICE.

On February 3, 1788—129 years ago to-day—the first Christian service was held in Australia. To commemorate that event an anniversary service, conducted by the Church of England Men's Society, will be held to-morrow afternoon. At 2.45 p.m. a procession will start from St. Andrew's Cathedral and march to Macquarie-place, near which the first service was held. Addresses will be delivered by the Primate of Australia (Archbishop Wright) and Mr. M. Atkinson. The State Military Band, under Captain W. G. Bentley, will play throughout the afternoon, and Mr. J. Massey, the Cathedral organist, will conduct massed choirs. The day will be honoured in the other dioceses in accordance with a resolution of the Provincial Synod.

In an article in the Diocesan magazine, Captain J. H. Watson, writing of the first service in 1788, says: "Who can describe the scene of this first service, or those who attended it? There is no description of it in any of the accounts of the founding of Sydney—all is left to the imagination. If the public records could give a description of the first body of worshippers—if such they may be termed—it would be found that they resembled Falstaff's ragged regiment more than any other known body; whilst their appearance was 'weary, and worn, and sad.'"

The collection which will be taken up on Sunday will be given to the committee who are entrusted with the "First Christian Service Memorial Fund." The amount already in hand is £180. When £300 is reached a commencement will be made to erect the memorial on the site where once stood the first church in Australia, at the junction of Bligh-street with Hunter-street.

BIBLE SOCIETY'S CENTENARY.

The centenary of the New South Wales auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society is to be celebrated in March. Following closely on the footsteps of the great parent society, an important meeting was held in the courthouse, Sydney, in the year 1817, with the object of establishing a society that would co-operate with the British and Foreign Bible Society in supplying the Scriptures to the inhabitants of the infant colony. The original name was "The New South Wales Auxiliary Bible Society," but always the closest ties of kinship existed, and in course of time the change of title to "New South Wales Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society" found favour and still continues. It was intended to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary in a fitting manner, and quite a number of schemes were propounded. The war, however, has caused a modification in the original plans. It is intended to secure the help of Sunday-school scholars in collecting a substantial sum, to be expended in circulating the Scriptures in the countries of our brave allies. There will be much reconstruction work required in these lands after the war, and it is to assist the home society in this most important development of their work that the scheme is propounded. A great children's meeting will be held in the Sydney Town Hall on Saturday, March 3, preceded by a procession. On Monday, March 5, the centenary meeting will take place. During that week conferences and meetings will be held for the benefit of country delegates. It is hoped to make the celebrations educational and inspiring.

UNION OF THE CHURCHES.

A strong and persuasive plea that the time is opportune for creating a new advisory council of the churches, representing both the Anglican and the Free Churches, is made by Dr. Scott Lidgett (says the "Christian World"). He marshals all the encouraging facts that show what a deep and widespread desire there is for unity, and how this desire has been finding expression and been bringing not only the Free Churches within vision of a vital federation, but also most hopeful conferences between leading Anglicans and Nonconformists. Free churchmen have found that, beneath all their variations, there is a real catholic fellowship, founded upon a common spiritual experience, a common life in the spirit of faith in Jesus Christ. The differences that have arisen through the free energy of this life in the Spirit are not to be crushed, but to be fulfilled in a universal fellowship. The conferences with Anglicans have revealed serious differences of opinion as to the Church, the sacraments, and the ministry, which are still under examination. Dr. Lidgett, however, urges that some measure of common counsel, co-operation, and mutual adjustment is immediately possible, giving effect to our agreements, while respecting our conscientious differences. Such a counsel would deal with the broad national bearings of the Christian religion, would give united practical effect to Christian principles of moral and social reform, would uphold Christian interests in public life, and would seek sympathetic co-ordination of distinctively denominational efforts in these directions.

The standing committee of the Anglican Synod has passed a resolution expressing its appreciation of the long and strenuous services given to the Church by Archdeacon Gunther, M.A., of Camden, and wishing him happiness. The Archdeacon recently retired from the office of Vicar-General.

The Rev. A. B. Wyrill is acting as locum tenens at Barmedman during the absence of the Rev. W. Parkes, who is taking holiday duty in the parish of Moruya.

The resignation is announced of Dean Mercer, of Perth, W.A. He left Perth in November as a military chaplain, and will remain in England.

The Rev. C. J. Armstrong, vicar of South Grafton, has accepted the position of provincial secretary of the A.B.M. for Queensland, vacated some months ago by the Rev. J. S. Needham.

The death is announced at Ealing, at the age of 67, of the Rev. Edwin James Sturdee, who was assistant priest at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney, from 1881 to 1884, and rector of St. John's, Balmain, between 1884 and 1887, when he returned to England.

In our local church life (says Archbishop Wright in the *Diocesan magazine*), the year 1917 will be full of importance. The Provincial Synod will meet in August, and the Diocesan in September. The Church congress will, however, be postponed, since many could not attend, including the metropolitan and bishops of the province of Queensland, who will be detained by the engagements of their provincial mission.

The following appointments are announced in the "Diocesan Magazine":—Archdeacon D'Arcy Irvine to be Vicar-General; Archdeacon Martin to be Archdeacon of Camden; the Rev. D. J. Davies, *principal of* Moore Theological College, to the office of archdeacon without territorial jurisdiction; Archdeacon Gunther, late of Camden, to retain the title of archdeacon as a retired archdeacon.

The Church of the Resurrection, Jamberoo, celebrated its jubilee last week, commencing with a special service on Sunday evening, January 21, at which the Bishop of Armidale was the preacher. The Rev. W. J. Cakebread, of St. Jude's, Randwick, brought down the choir of St. Jude's (48 in all), under the conductorship of Mr. Arnold Mote. On Sunday, January 28, special services were held. The week's proceeds netted over £200.

The deeds of St. John's rectory, Moss Vale, were handed to Archbishop Wright on Tuesday. Mrs. Richardson, secretary of the Women's Working Guild, on behalf of the parishioners, presented a marble clock to the rector. The guild members during the past 10 or 11 years succeeded in practically wiping off the whole debt of £1000 on the building.

The Bishop of Willochra, in the course of a letter to the "Church Standard," says that the constant deficits in connection with the New Guinea mission seem to point to something wrong with the business side of the mission. He urges that every missionary station should have a trained business man at headquarters to be responsible for the issue of all stores and the supervision of all expenditure, and suggests that in future details should be given as to the amounts spent in connection with the various departments.

The Rev. J. H. Oldham, who has been rector of Coonabarabran for the past seven years, has resigned, and is accepting the curacy of St. George's, Hurstville.

Rev. A. Phillips has left Holbrook (Goulburn) to take up work at Temora. He succeeds the Rev. D. Bryant, who has gone to Bega.

Rev. H. J. Velvin has resigned the parish of Mullumbimby, and will shortly take up work in the Goulburn diocese.

Archbishop Kelly will leave Sydney to-day for Tasmania on a short holiday.

Solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament will be celebrated in St. Mary's Cathedral to-morrow evening.

The Roman Catholic Bishops of Bathurst, Goulburn, Armidale, Maitland, and Lismore have been visiting Sydney during the week.

The Very Rev. Father J. P. Dunne (Wollongong), the Rev. Father Dalton (Pyrmont), and the Rev. Father Roche (Lewisham), left by the Manuka on Thursday on a holiday tour of New Zealand.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney has issued circular letters to the priests and teachers of the archdiocese, in connection with the completion of St. Mary's Cathedral. He emphasises his anxiety to ensure the success of the forthcoming campaign to raise funds for the mother church of the Commonwealth, and says that a successful appeal should enable the extensions to be completed in time for the centenary celebrations.

The Rev. Father Collins has been appointed assistant priest in the Berrigan parish, in succession to Father M'Donnell, who is now a chaplain with the A.I.F. Father Collins only arrived in Australia a few weeks ago, from All Hallows' College, Ireland.

The committee of the Coolah Roman Catholic Church has decided to erect a memorial to the soldiers of the district. The memorial will take the form of a huge calvary, erected inside a grotto. The cost will be £100.

At St. Francis', Paddington, a bazaar, organised by the Rev. Fr. R. D. O'Callaghan, was held recently. The parishioners are making an effort to build a new church.

The united intercession services held in Pitt-street Congregational Church every Tuesday continue to command good attendances. Recent speakers have been the Dean of Sydney and the Revs. R. J. Williams and Victor Bell, of the Methodist Church. The Revs. N. J. Cocks and Charles Whyte have rendered valuable assistance at each service.

The Rev. A. H. Teece, M.C., C.F., chaplain to the 6th Light Horse Regiment, who has been supplying at the Homebush Congregational Church during his furlough, will preach there for the last time to-morrow previous to his departure for Adelaide.

The home missionaries' classes will begin on Tuesday next, and will be held for four hours daily until March 1. The opening address will be given by Professor Macintyre at St. Andrew's College at 11 a.m. on Tuesday.

The 17 presbyteries representing the Presbyterian Church of Victoria are arranging to hold separate retreats. In each instance a syllabus of daily readings, intercession, and addresses will be given.

The Presbyterian congregation at Bowenfels is taking steps to give a call to a minister as successor to the Rev. T. D. Evans, who was translated to Gulargambone.

The Presbytery of Sydney and Maitland in connection with the synod of Eastern Australia, met last Monday evening in St. George's Church, Castlereagh-street. The Rev. Isaac Lester Graham, M.A., licentiate of the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland, received a cordial welcome. Mr. Graham has gone to rest in his old home on the Hastings River for a few weeks, and will then go to Hamilton, Victoria.

The Rev. H. T. Williams, of Lambton, has accepted an invitation to the Merewether circuit for the ensuing year.

The Rev. David F. Brandt, of Chalmers Church, will this month preach a special course of sermons on "The Four Cardinal Vices of Australia." The first of the addresses, on Drunkenness, was delivered on Sunday last, and the remaining subjects are "Gambling," "Idolatry," and "Bad Language."

The Presbyterian Church is giving earnest support to the recruiting campaign (says the "Messenger"). Its ministers are occupying prominent places on recruiting committees, and the blood of many of its sons has been shed in defence of the Empire. The position taken up by the Church from the beginning of the war was "that we stand pledged to do our utmost to win the war as a contest between right and might," and that attitude would be determinedly maintained.

The annual report of the N.S.W. Women's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says there is little doubt that the great humanity practised in this war towards animals is the result of the teaching of the humane societies, for many of the young soldiers at the front have been members of the bands of mercy of this State.

A successful convention for the deepening of the spiritual life was held on Anniversary Day in the Harris-street Baptist Church, the Rev. T. R. Coleman presiding. A missionary session was held in the afternoon, when Mrs. N. E. King spoke on China, and the Rev. C. Benson Barnett gave a world-wide view of foreign missions. The subject for the evening session was "Loyalty to the Spirit of Christ." The Revs. J. Douglas Mill and Joseph Woodhouse delivered addresses.

Mr. H. C. Fusedale, junior branch secretary of the Sydney Y.M.C.A., has been released from the association to undertake work as a Y.M.C.A. representative abroad. Mr. Fusedale will leave by a troopship at an early date.

Commissioner Hay, of the Salvation Army, is arranging to send a party of eight missionaries to China. Among them will be Lieut.-Colonel Friedrich (late editor-in-chief of the Australian publications), and Mrs. Friedrich, and Capt. Dare, a Sydney officer, who has been in charge of the army work at Haberfield. Commissioner Hodder, who is in charge of the army in New Zealand, will be present at the send-off to the party.

The Salvation Army has resolved not to accept single men for training until the war is over. When the new training session opens on February 10 15 lasses from the Sydney division will enter it.

"TOLD IN THE HUTS."

There have been many "gift books," as they are called, since the beginning of the war, the proceeds going to one or other of the war funds, but there has been none more interesting than the Y.M.C.A. gift book—"Told in the Huts"—a copy of which has just reached us from the publishers, Messrs. Jarrold and Sons. The Y.M.C.A. huts, as we all know, are a war institution of the very greatest importance, and our own Australian soldiers have told us a good deal about them. Mr. Virgo recently told us more about them, and this book that is now before us tells us still more. "We believe it to be a fine book, worthy of the cause for which it is published," says Mr. Basil Yeaxlee, B.A., the editor; and he is right. It is dedicated to H.M. Queen Alexandra, and contains autographed contributions from Princess Victoria, Lady Beatty, General Birdwood, and others, whilst the coloured illustrations by the late Cyrus Cuneo (being the last work of this well-known artist) are in themselves well worth the price that is asked for the book. If it were only for the wonderful imaginative picture of the "landing at Gallipoli," a copy of this book should find a place in every Australian home. But Cyrus Cuneo is not the only artist represented here, and among the others is Sir Robert Baden-Powell.

This book tells a few of the thousands of stories of reckless daring and deathless heroism that have been recounted from time to time in the huts of the Y.M.C.A., and among the contributors one is glad to see an Australian—Corporal J. Doggett, who writes on "A 'Quiet' Day in Anzac Region." Other contributors include Lady Rodney, George A. Birmingham (Canon Hannay), Joseph Hocking, W. Pett Ridge, Ian Hay, Annie S. Swan, and the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell. The book has not been prepared with a view to "boosting" the Y.M.C.A., but incidentally it draws attention to one of the greatest social and religious movements of our time, and by its means it is hoped to raise a considerable sum of money to assist in "carrying on." Not the least interesting part of it is that telling of Y.M.C.A. men who have won the V.C.—Lance-corporal L. J. Keyworth, Temporary Second-Lieutenant D. S. Bell, Corporal James L. Dawson, Corporal James D. Pollock, Private Edward Barber, and Sergeant Claude Castleton, the lastnamed having belonged to the Australian forces.

THE LATE CAPTAIN RUSH.

Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Ralston, writing to Mr. and Mrs. Rush, of Marrickville, regarding the death of their son, Captain Rush, on the battlefield, says: "He was my most trusted company commander, and although he was my junior captain I was taking steps to get him his majority over the heads of the other company commanders. His loss is one which I cannot replace in the battalion. We all grudge the way in which he was killed. He had been buried by a shell the day before, and I had sent him about two miles back to a camp for a rest. While he was sleeping there in a tent with three other officers, Duffy, Carlyle, and Shaw, a long-range shell landed in the centre of the tent. Duffy and Carlyle were killed instantly, and your son only lived a few minutes. The other man, Shaw, was not touched. Your son was buried near Longueval. I know that words are useless to ease the blow at the loss of your son, but I thought that you would like to know the circumstances under which he died. We have erected a rough cross on his grave, and our Pioneers have made a good one to replace it next time we go in the line."

MY LOVE'S BUT A LASSIE

BY KATHARINE TYNAN.

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CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

Something—the wine, perhaps—had brought up Laurence Trebearne to a new attitude of mind—determinate, definite. He had long been in process of a mental and physical disintegration—breaking up, as the phrase is. He looked at the golden boy with a certain sharp suspicion. His mouth was hard. He sat up among his pillows as though he did not need their support.

"My name is Rupert Beauclerk."

"Ah, yes—I rather fancied it might be. You rendered a very great service to my niece, and consequently to me. I was sorry not to have been able to thank you personally. I understood you had gone away."

The ingenuous youth blushed.

"I have been staying at 'The Dragon,' sir," he said. "I had only a few days of leave left. It seemed hardly worth while to join my father abroad as I had intended."

"Well?"

He was terribly downright. Rupert was standing up—he had not been asked to sit—turning his hat about in his hands. The momentary silence was broken through by the mysterious noise downstairs which continued, breaking out louder at intervals.

"I want to marry your niece, sir."

The two men stared at each other. Rupert's expression became one of a shocked concern. Mr. Trebearne's hand shook with the paperknife it still held. His face had gone grey. For a moment Rupert thought he was going to have a fit. He drew himself up by the arms of his chair. In the long silk dressing-gown the emaciation of his body was painfully visible. His eyes were suddenly bloodshot.

"It is out of the question," he said. "You cannot marry my niece. Go away and forget this folly."

"It is not folly, sir," said Rupert steadily. "We love each other."

"She has sent you to me?"

"I came, sir, as soon as I knew."

"So you have been hanging about all this time, making love to my girl, at a time when you knew I could not interfere. Do you think that conduct worthy of an officer and a gentleman? She, too. I thought better of her. I have spent so much love on her."

Rupert's fair young head was bowed for a moment as before a storm. The angry colour rose to his cheek, but he answered patiently.

"We had no wish to be underhand, sir. We have only been lovers . . . lately. I had no opportunity . . . I wanted to come to you at once. . . ."

"You are lovers. Do you mean that you are engaged to each other?"

"We are engaged to each other."

"Go away, and forget all about it. She will forget. She is destined for other things. She is not going to suffer shipwreck in the world. I have never loved her better than now, when I tell you to go about your business."

Rupert laughed, a laugh of angry incredulity. He had forgotten to be sorry for the obviously very sick man.

"You can't do it, sir," he said. "I can support a wife, even if my father were to cut me off, which is not at all likely. You would not let me say before that I stayed—because Sylvia is afraid of that German nurse of yours. She is a sinister woman. She bears some enmity towards Sylvia, or Sylvia thinks she does."

"The homage that ugliness pays to beauty, and age to youth. You are very free with my niece's name, sir."

"I have her own permission."

"I dare say. You need not trouble about my niece's alarms concerning Nurse Smith. My niece is leaving here for a place where she will be safe and happy. I have not very long to live. For her sake I am giving her up, although she is all the joy I have left in this world."

"But"—Rupert's eyes blazed with indignation—"this is a free country, Mr. Trebearne. There is the law—you cannot spirit away a girl against her own will. Do you think I will stand by and allow it to be done?"

Laurence Trebearne was suddenly weary and very gentle. Perhaps the transient stimulation of the wine had passed off.

"Youth is very hot-blooded and very impetuous," he said, closing his eyes and leaning back. "All the love of my heart is concentrated in Sylvia. I have done all that in me lay to alleviate her lot. Do you think I would not let her be happy in the common human way if I might, even though I should grudge her to you bitterly? This is a misfortune. I ought to have sent her away before. It has been a long strain."

Rupert felt oddly frightened for a moment. The fear made him bluster. He would not admit compassion for the man who looked indeed as though it had been a long strain, as if he could not rest even now, lying back among his pillows.

"I have only to say, sir, that I shall frustrate you," he said. "Your niece is content—*more than content*"—his voice rose like a song—"to trust me with her happiness. My father. . . ."

"Your father is Sir James Beauclerk, a proud and honourable man. You are his only son. He will not thank you for offering him my niece as a daughter-in-law."

"He knows her. He is interested in her. I believe she has made her way into his heart already."

"Perhaps. From what I have heard of him he would be attracted. . ."

His voice changed again.

"Don't think I have no pity," he said. "You force me to speak. It is many a year since the family skeleton has been out of its closet. I thought I had locked the door and thrown away the key. But I must speak, I see. I must tell you the truth. I have had my temptation to let you and Sylvia marry and say nothing. I shall not be here long to stand at the bar of anybody's opinion. The temptation is over. Indeed, I see the impossibility of it. Sir James Beauclerk's son cannot marry a girl without a family history."

Clouds had begun to come upon the day, *clouds that moved upward* sluggishly, leaving a white sky that made the sea cold. Autumn sighed in the air.

The light was cold on Laurence Trebearne's face, bringing out all its lines and shadows.

"Nothing you can tell me will alter things," Rupert said obstinately. "Now that I have told you that, please speak, sir."

"Sylvia's mother was . . . was. . . ."

The low murmuring went on. Rupert had dropped into a chair. He covered his eyes with his hands. Laurence Trebearne watched him with a curious yearning compassion while the slow words dropped from his lips.

He finished. Something happened, quite different from what he had expected.

Rupert uncovered his face. He stood up.

"Thank you for telling me, sir," he said. "Of course, it is a shock. But it makes no difference."

He turned and went to the door. His ringing feet resounded on the stone stairs as he went down. He hardly noticed the noise in the house as of someone trying to get out. He wanted to get away quickly lest Sylvia should see the shock he had suffered in his face.

As he undid the hall door he heard subconsciously the German's voice strangling with anger. "You haf lock me in, Anglische pig. You hear me knock an' keck an' you give no nod. Ach, mein Gott, I gould strangle you."

Nurse Smith's German was more pronounced in her violent anger.

Then followed Lizzie's slow, round speech.

"Don't be scoldin' and abusin', woman. What was you doin' in my pantry? I turned the key in the door as I went by an' slipped it in my pocket before I went down to the sea with Miss Sylvia."

"Ach, your bantry. You shall be punished. I shall make you bay *for it*. One, dwo hours I haf suffocate in your bandry. . . ."

Rupert had no heart to smile. As though his feet drew him unconsciously, he went heavily down the steep path to the sea.

CHAPTER XV.

"C'EST LA GUERRE."

The Judge was vaguely hurt and vexed with Rupert. What had come to the boy? There was no lack of affection in his way with his father. Sometimes, indeed, the Judge had thought that there was a more mature, a deeper tenderness in his son's manner towards him when they were together. But as the winter and the spring and the early summer slipped by, it came to the Judge that he saw much less of Rupert than formerly. There seemed somehow to have been a parting of the ways. The boy had interests and occupations which he no longer shared with his father. The Judge had an uneasy sense of a wall between them, a shadowy wall, but a wall nevertheless. There were times when he wondered at what period the wall had begun to grow. Once, while he walked alone on a holiday, he had an inspiration, an illumination. He had been pressing the boy about Ida Venning. He said to himself that it was not wise, that he must leave things to settle themselves. Yet though he made the resolution he could not keep from his mind the fact that he was ill at ease about Rupert and Ida.

Rupert's brother officer, Lord Malvern, had been in the Vennings' drawing-room when the Judge dropped in there half a dozen times between Christmas and Easter. It was a new thing. Of course the Judge could not expect to have the drawing-room in South Audley-street sacred to himself and Rupert. Other people were there as well as Malvern, other young men; but to the Judge's eyes, not because of jealousy, it seemed that Malvern was taking up the place that once was given to Rupert.

(To be continued.)

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