THE POST OF HONOUR

RICHARD WILSON


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NURSE CAVELL WITH HER FAVOURITE DOGS.

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STORIES OF DARING DEEDS DONE BY MEN OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN THE GREAT WAR

TOLD BY

RICHARD WILSON

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CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE author has used a large number of sources — newspapers, official reports, private letters and diaries, as well as books—in gathering the facts for these simple stories. Acknowledgments have been made wherever it was possible to trace the source, and indulgence is asked if through inadvertence or inability to find the original report any requisite acknowledgment has been omitted. Very meagre particulars of most of these brave deeds are at present available, for the British V.C. does not talk of his exploits. But such facts as are actually known ought surely to be given the widest possible publicity, especially in the schools of the Empire.

" If I should die, think only this of me,
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England."

Rupert Brooke.

" Will you at least try, if I am killed, not to let the things I have loved cause you pain, but rather to get increased enjoyment from the Sussex Downs, or from Janie singing folk-songs, because I have found such joy in them, and in that way the joy I have found can continue to live."

Letter to his Mother, from a young British officer who was killed in action.

" O ye who fell, mistake not our warm tears,
We would not wish you back lest we should see
Your souls defiled by undistinguished years."

Charles Vincent.

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that " the post of danger is the post of honour." The post of danger is given to the bravest, and the knowledge that much depends upon him often nerves him to the doing of dauntless deeds.

The record of valour which the Great War gave to history is the finest in the memory of mankind. The knowledge of science which men had won made fighting much more terrible than it had ever been before ; but still the post of danger was eagerly sought by those men who could echo the words of King Harry of England :

> " If it be a sin to covet honour,
> I am the most offending soul alive."

Many brave deeds were also done in that great struggle by men who had no idea that they were heroes. They just did their duty as it came along without any thought of honour or fame. They were like Jack Cornwell, the boy hero of the Battle of Jutland. They were " just carrying on."

These deeds of daring were done by men, and even by women, in the armies of all the fighters—and among the Germans too. Each army had

its ever-increasing band of heroes, until the numbers seemed to pass beyond counting. It was a sad world during that war time, but it was a brave world as well.

Among the bravest were the soldiers of Britain. This does not mean only the soldiers of the British Isles. It means the soldiers of the British Empire. It includes men from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the islands of the sea. It also includes natives of India, for many brave deeds were done by the men from that far-off land, who came so willingly to help their Emperor who was also our King.

What is a brave deed? Was it brave of Robert Clive to climb to the top of Market Drayton steeple in his boyhood? We smile at the story, but somehow we feel that the act was not what we should call brave.

It was daring, fearless, and a fine test of steady nerve. But it was not brave or heroic. Why? What was wanting to make it a matter for praise? The call of duty, I think, and I imagine that you will agree with me.

The deed was not done in the course of duty or to help some one in peril. If the boy's daring had saved the life of a child we should hail him as a hero. A brave deed is a deed done in forgetfulness of self and at the call of duty.

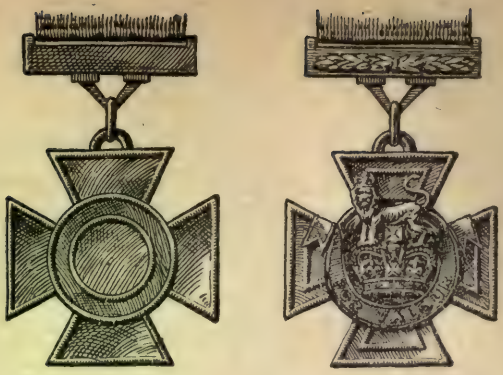
In the Great War thousands of such deeds were done which were never reported. Only now and again a heroic action was brought to the notice of those whose business it was to set it down and to ask the King for a reward. No story of the Great War, however long, will ever tell of *all* the heroes.

The stories which are collected in this little book are only isolated instances. They are types or examples. But I have tried to tell of those which have some special lesson to teach us. Each of the heroes whose story is told here had a message for all those who were to follow them. It will be well to ask at the end of each story what this lesson was.

One word more, before we begin our stories. It is not true that a brave man feels no fear. Some of the bravest deeds on record have been done in secret fear and trembling.

A story is told of a great leader who always inwardly felt great fear when he was going into action. One day when this dread came upon him, he said to himself, " Ah, you are trembling, are you? But you would tremble more if you knew where I was going to take you to-day."

Such a man is the bravest of the brave; for he must conquer himself as well as the enemy.



THE VICTORIA CROSS

THAT man is proud indeed, with the proper kind of pride, who has the right to use the letters V.C. after his name and to wear the medal known as the Victoria Cross. For this is the highest honour that can be won by any man in the British fighting services.

The Victoria Cross is made of bronze, and the picture shows you the exact shape of the medal. It is that of a " Maltese " cross, so called because it was the badge of the company of Christian warriors known as the Knights of Malta.

Hundreds of years ago, in the time of the Crusades, these knights fought against the Turks who held the Holy Places in Palestine and tried to drive them out. You see, then, that the chief medal of our Army and Navy reminds us that we belong to a Christian country, and one which

ought always to fight on the side of justice and right.

It was the good Queen Victoria who gave orders for the first Victoria Crosses to be made, as the name of the medal will always remind us. She saw that there was no decoration that could be given to her soldiers and sailors who had done very brave deeds. There were many of these brave men who had fought for her and for their country in the Crimean War which was fought about sixty years before the Great War broke out.

The Queen, therefore, gave careful instructions for the designing and awarding of the new medal. It was to be made from the metal of cannon captured in the Crimean War. In the centre of the bronze cross was to be the figure of a lion standing on guard above the royal crown; and under the crown there was to be a scroll bearing the simple inscription, "For Valour."

The ribbon attached to the medal was to be blue for the Navy and red for the Army. On the clasp there were to be two branches of laurel, which were to signify that the wearer had been a victor in the fight; for the laurel branch has been for long ages the sign of victory in the arts of peace as well as of war. The Cross was to hang from the clasp on a support made in the shape of a very broad capital letter V.

The first Victoria Crosses were presented by Queen Victoria herself at a review in Hyde Park in London. Not long afterwards the Cross was won in the Indian Mutiny by a young officer who was afterwards to become famous all over the world and to be known as Lord Roberts.

Lord Roberts died in France during the early part of the Great War, though he was too old to be in command of our troops. But his winning of the V.C. has always acted as an example to brave soldiers, and the simple story of what he did may well be told here once more.

He was a lieutenant when he won the Cross, and was fighting in the Indian Mutiny which broke out in 1857. The rebels had gathered together in a certain Indian village; and General Grant received orders from his commander-in-chief, Sir Colin Campbell, to drive them out. He took Roberts with him in the force which was to carry out this piece of work; and although the rebels had several guns and fought with great bravery, they were at last driven out of the village.

While this stern work was going on, Roberts saw two sepoys running away with a British flag. This was a sight to fire the blood of any British officer, and the young lieutenant did not pause to consider what he should do. He rode

swiftly down upon the two men, drawing his sword as he came near to them. The men turned and faced him, each with a musket in his hands. Roberts reined in his horse and raised his sword. At that moment the barrel of a musket was pushed close to his face.

There was a sharp click—but no discharge. The cap had missed fire and at the same moment the sepoy carrying the standard was struck to the ground with a blow from Roberts' sword. As the man fell, the young officer deftly snatched the flag from his dying grasp. The other man dropped his musket and made off at full speed.

Once again Roberts put spurs to his horse to take a further share in the pursuit of the rebels. Some distance away he met with two more sepoys standing at bay, each armed with a musket to which a bayonet was fixed. Not only Roberts but the flag was once more in danger, for it was two against one and the native soldiers were very skilful with their weapons.

Roberts set his teeth and rode straight forward, sword in hand. His attack was so direct and furious that the two men were thrown off their guard. In a moment one of them lay stretched upon the ground and the other had joined once more in the quick retreat.

CAPTAIN GRENFELL AND THE CHARGE OF THE LANCERS

It was at Mons in Belgium that the British soldiers first met the Germans. They were outnumbered by three to one; and they were therefore forced to fall back till fresh troops could be brought up to their assistance.

But they put up a glorious fight as they fell slowly back to a better position for making an advance; and the story of Mons and afterwards is so full of accounts of brave deeds that it is not easy to choose from among them.

The name of Captain Grenfell, however, stands out boldly on the roll of honour; and the story of his winning of the Victoria Cross is one of the finest in the history of the British Army.

At half-past ten one morning, the Second British Cavalry Brigade received a welcome order. They were to "charge for the guns" as the Light Brigade had been ordered to do at Balaklava in the Crimean War. The order was received with the greatest glee, for the troopers had waited for three days listening to the roar of the guns but taking no part in the great fight.

The men were the 9th Lancers, 18th Hussars, and 4th Dragoons. On they rode, singing, shouting, cheering; but they had not ridden

far before some of the riders dropped from their saddles while their horses galloped away. The rest set their teeth, gripped their lances more tightly and urged on their horses until the thunder of the iron-shod hoofs seemed to drown that of the German guns.

All at once, a merciless fire broke out from a number of machine-guns which had been cleverly hidden on their flank, about 150 yards away. The withering fire swept their close-set ranks and men and horses fell in scores; but there was no faltering among the rest. Onward they rode, careless of the ceaseless hail of bullets and of the shells which now burst round them from the heavy guns ahead.

At last they reached the German battery, and what happened there is thus described by a German soldier :—

" We were outside Mons in open country," he said, " with a clump of hills before us, when a troop of howling, yelling men with lances came racing round a hill and then straight for us. Your artillery and your infantry, yes, they are like ourselves and we can fight them, but these lancers ;—ach !

" We were four to one of them, but in a flash they were on us and through us ! And there were not more than fifty of them. Every one of them speared a man—I got this in the shoulder

—and some of our horses went over. Before we could re-form or get ready, they came dashing back, yelling like furies, and they went through us again. This time they stayed with us longer. . . . I will never meet them again, please you ! "

The stern work was over, but the British cavalry had paid a heavy price to silence the German guns. The men who were left now looked about for cover, and soon found it behind a railway embankment ; but they also found in this place a company of men of the Royal Field Artillery whose guns had been knocked out of action.

Captain Grenfell was among the surviving officers of the 9th Lancers, but he had been wounded in the thigh as well as in one hand. Weary and hurt as he was, the news that British guns were in danger of capture roused him to further efforts. Without a moment's delay, he rode off into the fire zone to make observations.

Having satisfied himself that the guns could be drawn off he came back—at a slow pace, in order to give courage to his men. Then he asked for volunteers for the job, and got them too, for British soldiers always answer to the call to " save the guns." " It's all right," he said simply, " they can't hit us. Come along ! "

The men loosed their horses and followed the captain on foot. In a few minutes they set off at

the double heedless of the flying bullets and bursting shells, and came at last to the first guns which they quickly hauled out of danger. They went back again and again until all the precious guns were safe.

It was for his bravery on this day that Captain Grenfell was awarded the Victoria Cross—one of the first to be awarded in the Great War. At a later period of the war he was killed in action.

BRITISH SAILORS WHO KNEW HOW TO DIE

THE British Navy suffered several heavy losses during the early stages of the war. Off the Isle of May in the Firth of Forth the *Pathfinder* was cruising about when an enemy submarine came along, a torpedo was launched, and the cruiser was struck and sank with great loss of life. The men who were afterwards picked up had then been in the water for more than an hour. About a week later, however, the British submarine E9 gave blow for blow by sinking a German cruiser about six miles from Heligoland.

When the *Pathfinder* was struck the order was given, "Every man for himself." In a few moments the water was full of struggling swimmers. One petty officer was a very strong

swimmer and did all he could to help others who were not so strong as himself.

As soon as he found himself in the water he swam about among his mates helping them to lay hold of spars and pieces of wreckage. In time he got together a group of eleven men and kept cheering them up and making them as secure as he could. Some of them had only their heads and shoulders above the water; and four of them sank while trying to raise themselves to get a better hold.

Meanwhile several boats were racing across the water to pick up the exhausted men. When they came up, the poor fellows had to be dragged on board; and even the hardy and heroic petty officer was too much spent to help himself.

Only a few days passed and our Navy suffered a still heavier loss. The three cruisers *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, and *Cressy* were on patrol work in the North Sea and were steaming along three miles apart, through a choppy sea. All at once the first cruiser was seen to reel and then settle down sideways. She had been struck by a torpedo.

The *Cressy* and the *Hogue* immediately closed in to save life while the men on the sinking ship tried to lower one of their boats. But they were not able to do so, and they ran or slid over the hull of the vessel into the water.

Just as the *Aboukir* was heeling over, the

Hogue was struck in two places. The great ship reared up in the water like a charger upon its hind legs, and quivered all over. Then she settled down, and sank in a few minutes, leaving the greater part of her crew in the water. But, strangely enough, as she went down, she righted herself, and two of her boats becoming detached, floated from her. The boats were soon filled and were the means of saving many lives.

It was now the turn of the *Cressy*, which had come up and was standing by for rescue work. She was struck by two torpedoes and sank almost at once. Two Dutch ships and a British trawler picked up as many men as they could crowd on board and made for the English coast. The total loss on the ships was 1500 men.

Even in this terrible disaster, the men of the British Navy were "ready, aye ready" when all that was now asked of them was that they should die like heroes.

SOME OF THE FIRST V.C.'S

When the Great War broke out in August 1914 the Victoria Cross had not been conferred for ten years. But it was not long before the newspapers began to report one deed after another of "signal valour and devotion performed in the presence of the enemy."

The heroic spirit of the British Army and Navy was as strong as ever; and, of course, the greatness of the struggle gave our men more chances of performing deeds of heroism than they had ever had before.

During the first five months of the war, twenty-eight Crosses were awarded; this was a large number, for the Cross is never given without a great deal of careful consideration. One hundred were awarded during the first eighteen months. Let us see how some of these first Crosses were won, and how the earlier fighters set the example to all the rest.

In a military retreat or "withdrawal" it is important to place as many obstacles as possible in the path of the foe; and as soon as bridges have been safely crossed they must be destroyed.

It will readily be seen that the engineers who carry out this work of destruction have a very dangerous task to perform. They are the last men to leave the scene of action, and their destructive work holds up the pursuit.

In an advance the engineers go first, in a retreat they stay last; so that, on the whole, this "arm" of the forces is always in the post of danger, which is the post of honour.

Near the end of the first month of the war, Lance-Corporal Jarvis of the Royal Engineers won the V.C. for a piece of work which was

carried out under a persistent and steady fire. He went out alone in a boat on the River Jemmapes, and worked steadily for an hour and a half in fixing and firing charges for the destruction of a bridge.

The bullets whistled about his ears, and the shells burst all round him on the bridge and below it; but the brave fellow worked coolly on until his task was finished—and properly finished too—and then got away unharmed. His devotion to duty had been of great value to his own side in a way which does not need further explanation.

The L Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery is now known all over the world for its gallant stand at the beginning of September 1914.

Field-guns and machine-guns were pounding away at this battery at a range of no more than 600 yards. All the officers fell, dead or wounded, and the men looked round for directions. Then Sergeant-Major Dorrell took charge of one gun and continued to serve it steadily until all the ammunition was used up.

Sergeant Nelson took command of another, and although severely wounded, kept grimly to his task until the shells had all been fired, when the shattered battery was relieved. Its steadiness had been of the greatest use in the engagement; and the two men who had thus proved their

right to lead were not only given the V.C. but were made commissioned officers.

About a fortnight later, Bombardier Horlock of the Royal Field Artillery won the Cross by a wonderful display of fortitude, persistence, and a kind of disobedience a little akin to that of Lord Nelson at Copenhagen. His battery had not been long in action when a shell burst under his gun and he was wounded in the right thigh. He was told to go to the hospital, but went first to a dressing-station where he was bandaged and sent on to the rear. But he went back to the battery and five minutes later was hit again.

For a second time he came before the doctor, was given first aid, and was then placed in charge of an orderly who was told to take him to the field-hospital farther back. On the way Horlock told his companion that there were many poor fellows who needed help much more than he did, and that he could find his way alone with perfect ease.

The orderly fell into the trap, and no sooner had he gone out of sight than Horlock limped back again to his battery and went on serving his gun. A little later, he was wounded in the arm, but, brave as he was, did not dare to face the doctor for the third time. He stayed with his comrades until the end of the day, and was at last picked up and taken to hospital.

Drummer Bent of the East Lancashires was the kind of soldier who is "good at need," ready for any job which comes his way, and the more dangerous the work the better worth doing. The man who brings up the ammunition to the firing line seems to be merely a kind of porter; but when his work is carefully considered he is easily seen to be very important indeed. And when he does that work in the open under heavy fire without the excitement of taking a hand in the fighting, he is surely among the bravest of the brave. And this was the kind of work which first drew attention to Drummer Bent, who was only twenty-two years of age.

Having learnt that the oft-repeated sentence "every bullet has its billet" is merely a silly saying, Bent was quite ready to face fire on another occasion. Several wounded men were lying in the open and he went out to bring some of them under cover. This heroic action alone was worthy of the highest reward, for it showed that disregard of self which is the root of all true heroism; but Bent was to do still more than this.

One dark night in November, a portion of his regiment was holding a certain position of some importance. The enemy made a fierce attack and the three officers in charge were struck down. Then Bent took command and, under his cool direction, the position was held until

relief came. The young soldier had nobly earned the Cross which he afterwards received.

You will remember how Indian troops came to the help of Britain in the Great War and how some of them fought very bravely in Northern France. It is said that there was great rejoicing in India when news reached that country that two of the native soldiers had won the Victoria Cross.

These were Naik (*i.e.* Corporal) Darwan Sing Negi and Sepoy Khudadad, who were the first soldiers of India to receive the highest military honour that it was in the power of their Emperor to grant.

Naik Darwan Sing Negi was in action one night in late November near Festubert in France. Certain trenches had been taken by the enemy and his regiment was given the task of recapturing them. This was a very difficult piece of work, for it meant hand-to-hand bayonet fighting in narrow passages half filled with water, where a fighter had little elbow-room and, if he went first in an attack, could get very little help from his comrades.

The Garhwal Rifles, to which the Corporal belonged, rushed to the attack with fierce shouts and flashing eyes. Darwan Sing Negi was wounded more than once, but he stuck to his work with grim valour, fighting his way foot

by foot along the narrow passages, and striking terror into the hearts of his enemies.

When the stern work had been well done, the company fell in and it was found that the Corporal was very badly wounded; but he received his reward a little later at the hands of King George himself, who first visited the British lines in December 1914.

Sepoy Khudadad was fighting in Belgium and was one of a machine-gun section which was told off to support the 5th Lancers. The place in which he fought was heavily bombarded by the enemy and the machine-gun company suffered greatly. In a short time one of their two guns was put out of action.

The six men who manned the second gun fought with splendid bravery until the Germans rushed the position in great numbers and struck down five of them. Sepoy Khudadad saw his chance to escape, but stayed behind for a time in order to make his gun useless before it fell into the hands of the enemy. Then he slipped away to a place of safety, to the great surprise of the Germans, each of whom probably thought that some one else had secured him! He was, however, very badly wounded; and when King George came over to France the Indian hero was too ill to receive at his hands the Cross which was afterwards given to him in London.

THE SPIRIT OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

THE old story of Sir Philip Sidney might well be written in letters of gold upon the wall of every school in the Empire. It will be remembered that he fought at Zutphen in Eastern Holland during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and that he was mortally wounded in the thigh with a musket-ball. The immortal tale is told in the following words by his friend, Fulke Greville :—

"Being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for drink which was presently brought him; but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth, he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, casting up his eyes at the bottle. Which Sir Philip perceiving, took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man with these words, 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.'"

Over and over again the brave fighters on the Western Front showed that the spirit of Sir Philip Sidney still lived and that it survived under conditions of horror and misery such as no soldier of Queen Elizabeth ever saw. Discipline and self-denial showed themselves in situations where the most severe judge might well forgive a man for thinking only of himself and his

pressing and immediate needs. Here is one incident of the retirement from Mons.

Major Fawcett was in charge of two ambulance wagons and a water-cart, and saw with pity and anxiety that the poor wounded soldiers were suffering untold agonies owing to their long ride over rough and uneven ground. He therefore made up his mind to call a halt in order that the men might be refreshed with some beef-tea. The wagons were drawn up by the wayside, and the Major rode ahead to find some cottage or farm where the water might be boiled.

A few minutes after he disappeared from sight, a company of infantry came along. The men were weary, footsore, thirsty, and indescribably dirty; and as soon as they saw the water-carts drawn up by the side of the road, they crowded round them eager to quench their burning thirst.

Then an officer rode up to them and explained the situation. He said that there was very little water left in the carts and that it was badly needed for the wounded men in the two ambulances.

"I am thirsty myself," he said, "and I'm awfully sorry for you fellows, but you see how it is; the wounded must come first."

The reply was worthy of Sir Philip Sidney: "Quite right, sir; we didn't know it was a hospital water-cart." Then the thirsty men turned away and went on with their march.

There was the same Sidney spirit in Lieutenant Wynn of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, of whom one of his men wrote after the officer had died: "He was a gentleman and a soldier. The last day he was alive we had got a cup of tea in the trenches, and we asked him if he would have a drink. He said, 'No, drink it yourselves: you are in want of it.' And then with a smile, he added simply, 'We are to hold these trenches to-day.'" Self-denial and pride in duty! These were the marks of British officers and men in that time of fiery trial.

THE MESSENGERS

SOME of the bravest and most daring of our men were those who carried the messages or dispatches; and many thrilling stories can be told of their adventures. One of the most exciting is that of four men of the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

A certain section of ground of about a quarter of a mile in width was swept by a fierce and continuous German fire. On either side of this open space were British troops, one section of which was in great danger of being surrounded by the enemy. The British officers on the other side saw the danger and wished to warn the company and instruct them to make a certain movement which would prevent disaster.

The buglers were ordered to give calls of warning, but these were either unheard in the din or were not properly understood. There was no way open but across that fire-swept space, and when other methods of sending warning had been tried and had failed, it was decided to send a dispatch carrier.

A call was made for volunteers for the dangerous task, and every single man in the company expressed his willingness to go. This was more than was wanted so coins were quickly produced, spun in the air, and by this boyish method the volunteers were thinned down to the number required. Then the men who had won the honour stepped forward.

The first in the line was given the message and made a desperate dash through the hail of bullets. He ran for a short distance, then tumbled over, and lay still. Two others advanced and commenced the race with death. One of them stopped to lift his wounded comrade, and the other ran on, only to fall in a few moments—dead.

A fourth man rushed out and raced across the zone of death. The bullets flew round him and his comrades watched him with tense anxiety as he seemed to dodge them until he came to a point at a short distance from the British trenches. Then he fell and lay still.

But the men in the trench had seen him and guessed that he had some message for them; otherwise he surely would not have set out on that desperate race with death. A number of them sprang forward as one man, eager to go to his help. They leapt " over the top " and commenced their own gallant race. In a few moments every man of the little party was wounded. But by this time the messenger was on his hands and knees crawling slowly and painfully towards the British cover.

Then a second rescue party came out, in spite of the bullets which seemed to fall thicker than ever, and in a short time they came up with him and were able to draw him into safety. The battalion was saved, for the required movement was instantly made which rendered the German efforts of no avail.

Dispatch carriers on motor bicycles had many great adventures during those stirring days, and many narrow escapes from death, while numbers of them made the last great sacrifice in the performance of their dangerous duty. One of these men was the means of saving a whole French regiment which was in close touch with a British force.

It was necessary to carry a warning to the French not to venture along a certain road where there was a German ambush. Signals

were tried by men who paid for their daring in going out into the open by meeting their death from the bullets of German marksmen. The British were hidden in a wood, and when the signallers had failed to carry the necessary warning, a motor-cyclist sped out from the cover and raced at breathless speed along the road. He had not gone far before he was hit and tumbled over with his machine on top of him. A second messenger followed, but in a short time he too went down. A third man came out and began the race which he won after marvellous escapes. The message was safely delivered to the French officer, and the company of our Allies was saved.

The machine and clothes of the last messenger were riddled with bullets but he himself was quite unhurt!

THE STORY OF CORPORAL HOLMES

ALL true hearts go out to the man who risks his life to save a comrade. There were numberless instances of this supreme act of unselfish courage in the Great War; and one of the best of the earlier stories is that of Corporal Holmes.

He belonged to the 2nd Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and he won the Cross for rescue work under heavy fire.

He was only twenty-three years of age when his great chance came. Let him tell his own story[1] :—

"We were at Le Cateau and the order had been passed to reinforce us at 11 a.m.; but the men were delayed, and we were still on the spot at 4.30 in the afternoon. Then the order to retire was given, but this did not reach my own particular detachment. We went on for another half-hour, and then one of our officers said that we must get back if there were to be any more of us left, for the Germans were very close to us and in much greater force.

"Just as I was jumping out, I saw a wounded man on the top of the trenches, and noticed that he was a comrade. 'For Heaven's sake, Freddie, save me if you can!' he said. I looked at him and my heart stood still; for at that moment I had little hope of saving myself, let alone anybody else.

"Then I thought I must have a try, somehow. So I picked him up. But my equipment hurt him, for he was badly wounded. So I slung it off as fast as I could, gave him the fireman's hold, and somehow carried him about 200 yards, with shrapnel spraying round us all the time. I thought over and over again that I was done, but I had to go on.

"After a bit we came to a few houses, and at

[1] As reported in the *Daily Graphic*, with acknowledgments.

the door of one of them a young woman was standing. When she saw my burden she said, 'Put him in here,' and I did so. I rested a few minutes and then went back towards the firing line. At first I saw nobody, but very soon I made out the Germans coming on in extended order. All the time shells were coming from their batteries behind. I reached the crest of a hill and saw a gun with its horses isolated.

"All around the gunners were lying—dead as far as I could see. But another man, a trumpeter, was not dead; so I took him up and stuck him on the limber. Then I started to drive off the gun.

"By this time the Germans had seen me and were advancing, shooting at me as they came. I struck at the horses with my bayonet, and off we went, and I never slackened until the sound of the German guns had died down. Then the horses dropped from exhaustion, and I found that the trumpeter was gone. I have never heard of him again.

"At the moment a few artillerymen came up, and I handed over the gun; and they took charge of me too. And that's all there is to it. Lots of others deserve the V.C. as much as ever I did, and a good deal more."

The reader must not take this modest hero at his own value.

THE MEN OF THE FIRST LINE

It was the pick of the British Army which was selected for the work of the firing line. Among these men there were deeds done daily and at times almost hourly which were deserving of the highest reward. And only a small number of these deeds of daring and devotion were ever reported to those whose duty it was to recommend the granting of medals. Apart from the actual fighting it was a severe trial of strength, nerve, and endurance to stay for any length of time in the front system of trenches at all.

Let us never forget the heroism of endurance in paying our tribute to the heroism of "the crowded hour of glorious life."

During the first winter months of the war the life in the trenches which were made across open country was almost unbearable; and it was only made possible by continual use of the pumps. Within and without the ditch men sank to the knees and sometimes to the waist in water and slime. A few shelters of corrugated iron were set up here and there which gave a little protection and made possible the lighting of a fire.

One of the civilian visitors to the Western Front thus described the trench system:—

"The trenches are immense labyrinths, miles

in extent, branching in every direction, a guide being always required in entering their mazes. Unpleasant surprises crop up at every point. The sniper is a constant danger, and cover from the enemy's bullets is scanty enough. I myself passed through one of the communication trenches behind a long double wall of sand-bags from 3 to 4 feet high.

" This trench runs in serpentine fashion for miles through fields, roads, villages, houses, bedrooms, the latter mostly in ruins though much of the furniture is still there. The height of the sand-bag wall renders it advisable to proceed in a stooping fashion, bent almost double.

" Many of the passages cannot be safely used by day. I saw in one place the body of a horse which had lain in the same position for a long time ; and yet it could not be taken away, for it was certain death for any one to attempt to move it.

" An officer said to me, ' If you are tired of life try to move it.' Through this dreadful lane of death soldiers were constantly passing and re-passing, perspiring, laughing, joking, and teasing one another ; but the officers in charge did not joke. They were responsible for the lives of these merry, thoughtless boys, and many a growl was heard as a specially daring private

failed to take due care of the life that was too precious to be thrown away to no purpose." [1]

Between the front-line trench system of the British and that of the Germans was the open space often spoken of as "No Man's Land." Across this space there was incessant firing of rifles and machine-guns, throwing of bombs and hand grenades, and the firing of bombs from trench mortars.

The attacks and counter-attacks on the trenches were of a grim character such as defies description; and the horror of the work was increased by the use of chlorine gas and flame-throwers. The Germans first began to use the dreadful gas round about Ypres, and the brave Canadian troops were some of the first to feel its deadly effects. The use of the gas by the Germans in one of their attacks upon our trenches is thus described:—

"When the gas cylinders were opened, the thick green mist came rolling towards the parapet from the enemy's empty front trench, several hundreds of yards away. It looked like vapour rising from a marsh, and the wind was strong enough to carry it rapidly towards the parapet.

"The battalion had time to load and fire two rounds through the screen of gas before it came pouring over the sand-bags, penetrating into

[1] From the *Sphere*, with acknowledgments.

every crevice of the dug-out, and choking the men who lay there. It was so thick at first that objects three feet away could hardly be seen."

At a later date the Germans began to make attacks under cover of flame-projectors. The liquid used was a mixture of petrol and kerosene and was thrown towards the trench in such a way that it was fired by an electric spark as it left the tube. Such were some of the horrors of trench life which were borne without complaint day after day by the men who held the post of honour, the long front line facing a clever and determined foe.

It may seem difficult to believe that there was a funny side to this dread business of death, ruin, and hatred. Yet there were many humourous incidents which were not missed by our cheery soldiers. One story tells of a poor private who had toothache very badly and was sitting by the roadside like the old woman who "went to the market her eggs for to sell." By came—not "a pedlar" but a shell which exploded in the sufferer's vicinity, but did not hurt him.

In fact it proved of great benefit to him; for he was so much "shocked" that he instantly lost his toothache.

On the first of April 1915 an Allied airman flew over the aerodrome of the French town of Lille which was in German hands. He dropped

not a bomb but a football. The Germans ran for cover and watched the " bomb " strike the earth and then bounce to a great height !

They watched carefully to take notes for the Kaiser on the new " postponed " fuse. Only when the ball had rested for some time quite peacefully on the ground did they come out to read the inscription with which it was furnished, namely—" April Fool ! "

The flying men on both sides in the fight on the Western Front had a great deal of respect for each other ; and in some cases courtesies were exchanged between them which remind us of the olden days of chivalry.

If, for example, a machine was brought down within either of the opposing lines, it was the custom for the captors to drop a weighted letter over the enemy positions giving information as to the fate of the pilot and the observer.

One day, one of these letters fell within the British lines. It told the men of a certain section of the air service that one of their pilots had died the day before. The men at once prepared a wreath which was taken over the German lines on a fast monoplane. The machine was fired at by the Germans as usual ; but the British pilot flew low and was able to drop the wreath in a suitable spot, whence it was carried by the Germans to the dead pilot's grave.

During Christmas time in 1914 a very strange thing happened. At one part of the line on the Western Front the Germans came out of their trenches and met some of the British to wish them the compliments of the season! Small gifts were exchanged and there was some singing and merriment. Then the men went back to their trenches and the cruel war went on.

Stories are told of other instances of friendliness between the men whose business it was to kill each other as quickly as possible. It is said that during a lull in one battle a tin was set up on a branch half-way between the two opposing trenches in order that the men on both sides might try their skill in a sniping match.

There are several instances of football matches being arranged between men on the opposing "international" sides. In one case, the players were ready, but a ball could not be found. In another, all was ready to begin when the British colonel forbade the play, evidently placing no trust in the goodwill of Germans, and being anxious for the safety of his men. In a third instance the match actually came off and the British team was beaten by one goal.

At one point some British soldiers took their enemies some hot cocoa on a bitter wintry day. The shivering men would not drink it until the "Tommies" had first tasted it themselves!

LIEUTENANT LEACH AND SERGEANT HOGAN

THESE two gallant officers belonged to the Manchester Regiment which fought with special bravery on the Western Front. The former was only twenty when he won the V.C., in company with Sergeant Hogan who had seen service in the South African War.

The Manchesters were stationed at Festubert not far from Ypres and, near the end of October, their trenches were fiercely bombarded by the Germans and then rushed with the utmost violence. One morning, just before day began to break, and at the time when the courage of most men is at its lowest, the enemy made an attack in great numbers.

They climbed over the parapet of the first trench and the British were forced to fall back into the second, where they were quite able to hold their own. By this time the massed attack of the Germans had spent itself, and the Manchesters prepared to drive them out of their front trench as soon as they could.

At about nine o'clock, Lieutenant Leach left the second trench and crept out to discover what the Germans were doing. What followed may be partly gathered from his own very modest account which was afterwards published :—

" I found that they had occupied three out of four of the traverses. At eleven o'clock I went again and found that they had occupied the lot. Later, I called for Sergeant Hogan and for ten volunteers. I took the first ten men, and we crawled along the communication trench, which led into the right of the advance trench.

" Our idea was to push the Germans as far to the left as we could and then wait for them to attempt to get back to their own lines, and shoot them. After some time we managed to push them to the left traverse.

" As we crawled along we had to climb over the bodies of dead or wounded Germans. Gradually we drove the others along until they were in the left traverse as far as they could go. I was surprised then to hear a voice call in English, ' Don't shoot, sir ! ' and there was one of my own men who had been with me in the morning. He told me that the German officer had sent him to say that they wished to surrender.

" We went round the corner, and there were the officer and about fourteen Germans on their knees with their hands up crying ' Mercy ! ' I told them to take their equipment off, and then run into our main trench. This they did, and I was surprised that their own friends did not snipe them for surrendering. Twenty wounded Germans also joined the others.

" I found that the Germans had captured two of my men in the early morning, and the German officer, who could speak English, had told them that they would have a good time when they were sent to Berlin as prisoners."

The lieutenant's story does not make it clear what was the nature of the " push " which was applied to the Germans to bring them in a huddled heap to the end of the left traverse. He really employed a very clever ruse which completely deceived the enemy.

He and his companion left the rest of their party some distance behind them and went forward alone to drive the Germans along the winding trench which they knew had a blind end. When they came to a square corner Leach put his right hand round and fired at the Germans without exposing his body, which a man with a rifle could not do. Meanwhile, Hogan, who was a little way behind him, was watching the parapet to ward off attacks from above.

When the two men had cleared one section in this manner, they took up their stand at the next corner where Leach repeated the treatment ; while Hogan raised his cap on the end of his rifle to show his friends how far progress had been made, and prevent the trench being swept by their fire. The whole operation showed remarkable coolness as well as daring and resource.

WILSON, O'LEARY, AND MARTIN-LEAKE

BEFORE the outbreak of the Great War, George Wilson was selling newspapers in the streets of Edinburgh. He had already served as a private in the Highland Light Infantry, and, being in the Reserve, was called out at the beginning of the great struggle. In a very short time he was fighting in France with his old regiment.

In the middle of September 1914, the H.L.I. were hard at work trying to check and drive back the Germans not very far from Paris. During the fighting in one quarter, some of our men were greatly worried by a German machine-gun which was posted in a wood ; and Private Wilson made up his mind to do what he could to silence the gun.

Taking another private with him, he set out on his errand. The two men were able to come quite close to the enemy's position, and then, all at once, Wilson's comrade fell over with a bullet in his body.

This did not check Wilson in the least, and he went on alone. After a while he was able to find cover behind some trees. Here he was quite hidden, and had a good view of the gun which had worried his mates.

From this position he picked off, one by one, the entire crew of the machine-gun which included an officer and six men. Then he ran forward and took over the gun, together with a supply of ammunition. For this piece of splendid work Wilson received the Victoria Cross, which he well deserved.

His exploit was somewhat like that of Michael O'Leary of the Irish Guards, except that the latter captured two machine-guns single-handed. He was a lance-corporal when the great chance came to him, and the story of how he won the Cross is told by his own quartermaster-sergeant in the following words :—

" My company was ordered from our trench to keep up a hot rifle and machine-gun fire across the German trenches and points of cover. After the rain of bullets and shrapnel had been kept up for twenty minutes, No. 1 Company was let loose on the left. They came out of the trenches with a yell, bayonets fixed, and went for the enemy at the double. They had from 100 to 150 yards to travel, and they went at a tidy pace, but were easily outstripped by O'Leary. He never looked to see if his mates were coming, and he must have done pretty near even time over that patch of ground.

" When he got near the end of one of the German trenches, he dropped, and so did many

others a long way behind him. The enemy had discovered what was up. A machine-gun was O'Leary's mark. Before the Germans could manage to slew it round, and meet the charging men, O'Leary picked off the whole five of the machine-gun crew.

" Then leaving his mates to capture the gun, he dashed forward to the second barricade which the Germans were quitting in a hurry and shot three men. O'Leary came back as cool as if he had been for a walk in the park, and with two prisoners." The prisoners were taken because O'Leary's shot was exhausted!

A soldier or sailor cannot win the V.C. a second time; but if a man who holds the medal does another very brave deed he is given an extra clasp. This distinction was awarded to Captain Martin-Leake of the Royal Army Medical Corps for continuous bravery during the early months of the war.

In our very proper admiration for the fighting men, we are a little apt to overlook the work of that branch of the army to which Captain Martin-Leake belonged; and this is somewhat unjust.

No section of the British forces did better, more skilful, or more heroic work than the Medical Corps. After a fight, parties of stretcher-bearers would be quickly on the scene no matter

how great was the danger to themselves. Many of these brave men were struck down while engaged in this work of mercy.

The wounded were tenderly lifted, placed upon stretchers and given first-aid. They were then, without the loss of a moment, taken in motor ambulances from a collecting station to the base hospitals far away from the firing line.

Captain Martin-Leake had won his Cross in the South African War for great bravery shown in tending the wounded under fire; and while engaged in this splendid work he had been wounded no less than three times.

He did the same kind of work in the fighting during the Great War. Over and over again, he went out into the open, careless of shell and rifle fire, to bring in the wounded or render first-aid. Some of the men whom he rescued had been shot in storming the enemy's trenches, and lay quite near to the parapets; but the brave captain brought several of them back from the very grasp of the foe.

THE CANADIAN SCOTTISH

At times during a battle a body of comrades seem to act together as one man. Their spirit and discipline are so good and they each forget themselves so completely in the effort of the fight

that the foe cannot stand before them. When a brave effort of this special kind is made, Crosses are not granted, but the name of the battle is worked on the flag or colours of the regiment.

Never was such a distinction better earned than by the Canadians at Ypres.

In the spring of 1915, the Germans were making desperate efforts to get to Calais, as a step on the road to London. They were so eager to get there that they began to use poison gas against our men and their friends, the French and Belgians.

The Canadians were among the first to feel the effects of that horrible, choking, blinding gas. The use of it gave the Germans an advantage at first; and it seemed likely, for a time, that they would be able to make a way through the British lines. It was the Canadians who stepped into the gap and helped to save Calais. The people of Britain and the Empire can never forget that splendid service.

At another time there was a desperate fight in a wood near Ypres from which the Canadian Scottish drove the Germans one moonlight night. The story, as told by an officer, forms another fine page in the history of the British Army. Here it is:—

"It was just a few minutes before midnight when we got to a hollow which was about 300

yards from the wood. The moon came out now and then, but we could have done without her, for farm buildings were blazing all round. The fire from the Germans in the wood had now ceased, and we had a spell of silence that could be felt.

" Whispered orders were given to fix bayonets and were obeyed in a flash. Our coats, packs, and everything were dropped and we advanced in light order. When we reached a low ridge in full view of the wood, a storm of fire was loosed upon us from the undergrowth skirting the wood. At once the word was given to charge, and on we rushed, cheering, yelling, and shouting, straight for the foe.

" At first they fired too high, and our losses were small. Then some of our men began to drop, and the whole front line seemed to melt away, only to be instantly closed up again. Cheering and yelling, we jumped over the bodies of the wounded and tore on. Of the Germans with the machine-guns not one escaped, but those inside the wood stood up to us in fine style.

" The struggle became a dreadful hand-to-hand conflict ; we fought in clumps and batches, and the living struggled over the bodies of the dead and dying. At the height of the conflict, while we were steadily driving the Germans

before us, the moon burst out. The clashing bayonets flashed like quicksilver, and faces were lit up as if by limelight.

"Sweeping on, we came upon lines of trenches, which had been hastily made and could not be well defended. All who held out were bayoneted; those who gave in were sent to the rear."

The officer spoke modestly as all British heroes do; but no words could convey a full idea of the desperate character of the fighting on that moonlight night. The Canadians knew perfectly well what depended upon them in that frantic struggle round about the poor battered town of Ypres; and they nobly performed the duty laid upon them.

Remember that these men were not fighting, directly at least, for the safety of their own homes, which were thousands of miles away in peaceful Canada; nor for their wives and children, mothers, or sweethearts, who had sent them out so bravely from their homes in the western land. They might have stayed at home, and no one would have had any right to call them slackers or shirkers.

But they did not stay at home. The "Old Grey Mother" of them all was in danger—the Britain to whom it was their pride to belong. So they came racing across the seas as quick

as steam could bring them; and after some months of training in the Old Country, they went out to fight and win and die.

THE CANADIAN SPIRIT

WHEN the Canadian troops arrived at the Western Front Sir John French wrote of them, "The soldierly bearing and the steadiness with which the men stay in the ranks on a bleak, cold, and snowy day are most remarkable." Other leaders spoke of their high spirits and love of fun; others again of their cleverness in finding out new ways of doing things, and, later, of tricking the enemy.

The men from overseas soon became comrades with the Britons from the Motherland. "The British Tommy," wrote a young Canadian, "is splendid. He is alive to his fingertips. He is full of devices to deceive the enemy; he knows all kinds of tricks; he hasn't a mean streak in him, and he's a first-class fighting man. He uses his brains. It has been a revelation to me to find him as he really is."

Briton and Canadian, therefore, were prepared to think the best of each other; and the feeling of brotherliness with which they began their stern work carried them shoulder to shoulder through many a terrible day and yet more terrible night.

The Canadians, after their custom, treated their officers in a free-and-easy manner which seemed at first somewhat strange to the ordinary British soldier. But when the time for duty came there was no difference between Canadian and British discipline. But there was always a standing dispute among Canadian officers and men in the heat of action as to who should go first into the stiffest part of the fight.

At one battle a Canadian captain was leading his men in single file through a dangerous place, when a non-commissioned officer stepped forward and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but bomb-throwers always go first." Then he ran on ahead before the officer could speak to order him to go back.

There are numberless stories of Canadian pluck and resource. In one engagement, Lieutenant Campbell, leading a small number of men, made his way into the front trench of the Germans, and passed along for some distance until he was held up by a barricade. They were under very heavy fire, and in a short time only two of the party were left, namely, the lieutenant and Private Vincent.

The two men, however, kept on fighting. They had a machine-gun, but it was useless because they had no tripod to stand it on. So

Vincent stooped down and the officer strapped the gun upon his back. It was worked with its human tripod for some time, but at last a German bombing party entered the trench and Campbell was wounded to death. Vincent, however, succeeded in dragging the gun away to a place of safety.

Our men were, naturally enough, very anxious to prevent their guns from falling into the enemy's hands and being used against themselves. A British gun, lost near Ypres, was afterwards recovered in a surprising manner.

One bright morning a German aeroplane was seen circling gracefully over the headquarters of a British division. Soon the shrapnel was bursting round it; but the airman flew too high to be hit, and he and his pilot seemed to the thousands of watchers to be thoroughly enjoying the risks of their morning flight.

Then a British machine appeared at some distance away, and it was not observed by the German airmen until it was close upon them. The enemy turned to escape but the sound of an aerial machine-gun soon told the watchers that the fight had begun. The German made a spirited reply, until his gun went wrong and his pilot was wounded. Then his machine fell rapidly to the ground and came to earth not far from the Montreal Battalion, while the British

machine rose again to avoid the attentions of the German gunners.

The German airman was able to get clear of the wreckage of his machine and creeping to the Canadian trench gave himself up, saying that his pilot was dead. Our men were anxious to capture the machine but the German gunners were equally anxious to pound it to pieces. The Canadians, however, were able to gather the fragments of the wreck, and among them found the machine-gun which had been lost near Ypres some six months before.[1]

It was a French-Canadian officer, Major Roy, who performed one of the bravest deeds of the early part of the war in Flanders. A huge shell from a trench-mortar fell into a trench full of men. The gallant major picked it up to hurl it over the parapet, but his foot slipped and the shell exploded as he held it! There was little doubt that with men like these the Canadian spirit would carry the troops of the Dominion very far, as indeed it did, in the months of terror and glory which were to follow.

A young Canadian, Private Smith, was merrily singing a song during a bombing attack by some of his comrades when a mine exploded near him

[1] The story is fully told, with many others of great interest, in *Canada in Flanders*, Part II., by Lord Beaverbrook. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

and he was almost completely buried in the falling earth. When he had dug himself out he found that he had lost his rifle and looked about to find some useful work.

He was soon made aware that the supply of bombs was running short, and the idea struck him that he might crawl round among the dead or wounded bomb-throwers and collect the bombs which they had not used.

Without wasting a moment, he moved carefully round on hands and knees and made his collection, hanging the bombs at various points on his own person. The missiles were duly delivered by the smiling "carrier," to the great delight of his comrades who cheered him on in his very useful but risky work. He made five collections in all and safely delivered his precious burden to the men who were attacking the German trenches. His clothes and cap were riddled with bullets, but he was not hit, because, as he explained, he kept always "on the move."

At last he could find no more bombs, and his company was forced to fall back before the terrible German fire. One of the bombing party was seen wounded, standing on the parapet of the German front-line trench. He had thrown every bomb he carried, and then weeping with rage at being unable to do more, he flung earth and stones at the enemy until the end came.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE *KENT*

THE long and glorious history of the British Navy contains many a story of a fight against great odds. We think with pride of the little *Revenge* which fought fifty-three Spanish ships, and only gave in when its gallant captain Sir Richard Grenville was wounded to the death. And this story of the time of Queen Elizabeth is only one out of many in the records of our Navy.

Now it was a splendid and glorious thing for Sir Richard Grenville to fight so bravely. But it would have been a foolish and cruel thing if Queen Elizabeth had *ordered* him to fight single-handed against ten, or even five, Spanish ships.

In much the same way, it would be a splendid thing if two of our ships were to fight half a dozen Germans which had caught them unawares. But it would be very foolish of the rulers of our Navy to allow such a thing to happen if it could be helped. They must make as sure as they can that any group of our ships will not be outnumbered, or meet with an equal number of vessels of a newer type and carrying heavier guns.

Both these things happened off the coast of Chile in South America on November 1, 1914. On that day four German cruisers met three

British cruisers and a battle took place. The German ships were of a newer type and carried much heavier guns than the British, so that the latter were "outclassed"; and though the British fought with great bravery against the heavy odds, two ships were lost.

A strong British squadron was at once got together and placed under the command of Admiral Doveton Sturdee. It was sent off in secret, and people at home knew nothing about it until news of victory came.

Turn to the map of South America and find out the group of islands known as the Falklands which lie off the south-east coast. These islands are part of the British Empire and at Port Stanley, the chief town, there is an important wireless station.

A message was sent from London to the governor of the Falklands to the effect that a German squadron was cruising near, and might, at any moment, make a raid upon the islands. The German ships, under Admiral von Spee, did indeed come to the Falklands intending to destroy the wireless station and take possession of the islands. But they found Admiral Sturdee awaiting them, and on December 8th the Battle of the Falklands was fought.

Sturdee in the *Invincible* gave the signal,—"God save the King." The firing began shortly

THE ENEMY CRUISER WAS ABOUT TO SINK.

after noon at a range of about nine miles. When night had fallen four of the five German ships lay at the bottom of the ocean, and two thousand of the enemy had died in doing their duty. The other enemy warship, the *Dresden*, made her escape. The loss on the British side was only eight men.

In connection with this battle the story of the cruiser *Kent* is worth preserving, while one of the stokers won the praise and reward of his leaders for a deed of coolness and bravery. The *Kent* was ordered to chase and engage one of the German cruisers and set out on the trail. But before long she found herself running short of fuel.

This fact was reported to the captain and though it was a very serious matter he was not put out. " Very well then," he said, " have a go at the boats." The word was passed along, and some of the men unslung the boats and broke them up with hatchets and crowbars. Then the pieces were thickly smeared with oil and carried below to the stokers whose stock of coal was now almost at an end. Soon the ship's boats were blazing in the furnaces and the *Kent* raced along.

But this was not enough. Still more fuel was needed, and officers and men cast their eyes around in search of something more that would

burn. Some one pointed to the wooden ladders; and in a few moments they had been taken down and sent below to the stokers.

Other men wrenched off the doors of cabins and ward-rooms. Young officers ran laughing to their cabins, and brought out chairs, tables, chests of drawers, and other pieces of furniture. These were quickly passed below. The stokers worked with a will and by and by a hearty cheer told them that the German was being over-hauled.

Then the guns began to speak and after a brisk exchange the enemy cruiser was seen to be on fire and about to sink. She hauled down her colours, whereupon the *Kent* ceased firing and closed in to save life if possible. But the German ship heeled over and went down like a stone, only twelve men being rescued by the British.

While these exciting things were happening Sergeant Mayes showed coolness and bravery which saved the lives of many of his comrades and probably saved his ship. A shell burst and set fire to some powder charges in the bomb-proof shelter. A flash of flame went down the hoist into the passage leading to the place where the shells were kept. Sergeant Mayes picked up a charge of powder and threw it into the sea.

He then got hold of a fire-hose and flooded

the shelter, in this way putting out the fire in some empty shell bags which were burning. These things were done in a few seconds, but they were indeed fateful moments; for the firing of the magazine was the cause of the loss of more than one gallant vessel during the Great War.

THE LANCASHIRE LANDING

AGAIN and again in our fighting history, a regiment acting as one man has performed a "deed of signal valour and devotion in the presence of the enemy," such as is required for the winning of the Victoria Cross. There is, however, as we have seen, no V.C. for a regiment; but in one case at least during the Great War a regiment selected by vote the names of those men among them who were thought most worthy to wear the Victoria Cross.

The First Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers landed on Beach W in the Gallipoli Peninsula on April 25th, 1915—a day to be marked and remembered by all lovers of heroic deeds. And having won immortal glory by their valour they—or the survivors from among them—selected for the V.C. three of their number, namely Private Keneally, Sergeant Richards,

THE LANDING OF THE LANCASHIRES.

and Captain Willis. The story of the landing, however, concerns the whole regiment.

Beach W was in a bay enclosed by hills through which a narrow gully running down to the sea opened out a break in the cliffs. The Turks had expected a landing on this beach, and had made every possible preparation to repel the invaders. There were mines in the sea and mines on the land. At the edge of the water there was a thick fence of barbed wire.

There were trenches and gun positions on the slopes overlooking the beach; and the guns were so cleverly hidden that the gunners on our warships, even when helped by the airmen, could not find them out. Behind each heap of sand and each tuft of brushwood a Turkish sniper was concealed.

"So strong, in fact," wrote the British general, Sir Ian Hamilton, "were the defences of Beach W that the Turks may well have thought them impregnable. And it is my firm conviction that no finer feat of arms has ever been achieved by the British soldier—or any other soldier—than the storming of those trenches from open boats on the morning of April 25."

Very early in the morning, the Lancashires under Major Bishop were embarked in boats from the cruiser which had brought them to the scene of action. As soon as they were ready,

the British battleships began a terrific bombardment of the Turkish positions. This lasted for an hour, and at six o'clock eight lines of four cutters, each drawn by a small steamboat, made for the beach. When shallow water was reached, the steamboats cast off and the cutters were rowed towards the shore. Meanwhile, the enemy had made no sign.

But as the first boat grounded upon the beach, a furious fire was opened upon it from rifles, machine-guns, and pom-poms. Of the first line of fearless men who advanced upon the barbed-wire hedge along the shore nearly all were swept away. There was a pause, and the watchers on the ships asked each other, "Why are our men resting?" not knowing that most of the brave fellows had found the last great rest of all.

But the pause was only for a few moments. In a very short time the Lancashires were hacking doggedly at the bristling hedge of wire. Meanwhile, others of their comrades had been able to land on some rocks at the end of the bay; and a few had already found out some of the Turkish machine-gun positions and had accounted for the men who held them. Others had got round the ends of the wire hedge and were now steadily replying to the enemy's fire.

But the struggle on the open beach was still going on. Captain Willis and a few men were

able, after desperate efforts, to break a way through the wire and then ran forward to take cover behind a sandbank. When the men looked at their rifles they found the barrels and locks clogged with sand; but they coolly set to work to clean them, while the bullets whistled and sang around them. At last the rifles were ready for use and they did good service while other men of the Lancashires were engaged in landing on the beach.

The newcomers worked their way through or round the ends of the barbed-wire fence, and Captain Willis then led the charge upon the enemy's trenches. The Turks fought with great gallantry, but the Lancashires drove them from their first line and gradually worked up to higher and higher positions.

All this was done in the face of a withering fire from the Turkish machine-guns and pom-poms; and the enemy also exploded several land mines without checking the steady advance of our brave fellows. Just before ten o'clock that morning more men were landed, and by this time no less than three lines of enemy trenches were in British hands above Beach W.

Sir Ian Hamilton afterwards wrote: "It was to the complete lack of the sense of danger or of fear in this daring battalion that we owed our astonishing success in this quarter."

But no words can convey in the least degree the fierceness of the struggle which took place that morning, or the dogged character of the effort of the Lancashires to gain a footing on the beach. During the Great War men rose to such a height of heroism that deeds of wonderful daring became matters of daily routine. One unhappy result of this was that people at home took brave deeds for granted, and forgot to do honour to those who had done such great things for their country.

COMMANDER UNWIN AND THE TWO MIDSHIPMEN

On Beach V of the Gallipoli Peninsula another method of landing men was used. A collier named the *River Clyde* was filled with soldiers and run ashore, after a landing had been tried in the ordinary way and had failed. Wide openings had been made in the sides of the vessel from which gangways were slung on ropes to give the men passage either to the shallow water or to flat boats known as lighters which were to form a kind of bridge to the beach. The *River Clyde* was in charge of Commander Edward Unwin.

The first landing from small boats upon this

beach had been a disastrous affair. The men were shot down as they landed, and very soon the beach was strewn with dead and dying. Many were killed or wounded before they could leave the boats and the fire was so severe that one boat with all its men was blown to pieces. A few of the men who waded ashore were entangled in the barbed wire and were shot down as they struggled to get loose. Not a single boat returned to the ships.

One seaman named Lewis Jacobs of the *Lord Nelson* showed the utmost bravery in this dread hour. Every other man in his boat had been killed or wounded, but he pulled steadily for the beach and then took out the pole to guide the boat to a suitable landing place. He was last seen standing among the dead and dying, going steadily on with his work, carrying out an invasion on his own account. Then he fell to rise no more.

Meanwhile, the *River Clyde* had been run upon the beach not far from some rocks, and as soon as she came to a stop a terrific fire was directed upon her from the Turkish trenches.

The vessel had grounded in water too deep to allow the men to wade ashore. A bridge was therefore formed with two lighters, but before long it was broken by the strong tide which swung one of the boats out of position.

Several bluejackets faced the heavy fire and went ashore to get the boats into a suitable position. One of them named Charles Williams was in the water for an hour engaged in this difficult task and was then shot down. He was awarded the Victoria Cross after his heroic death.

A number of the Munster Fusiliers now left one of the openings in the side of the vessel, ran quickly down the sloping gangway, and jumped into the first lighter. They could not jump across the space between the two lighters, so some of them leapt into the water.

Many were instantly shot down. A few reached the shore. Others scrambled upon the second lighter which had now been swirled by the current into a still more unfavourable position.

Matters were becoming truly desperate when Commander Unwin leapt into the water, which took him up to the waist, and set to work with a few others to try to make the bridge more useful. Among the little party were two midshipmen named Drewry and Malleson who stuck to their desperate task with a cool bravery beyond all praise.

After working hard for some time, Commander Unwin began to feel the effects of the cold water and was forced to go back to the shelter of the

ship. The doctors attended to him, wrapping him in hot flannels, giving him hot drinks and rubbing his limbs to restore the circulation. As soon as he was somewhat recovered, he returned to his work, and was helped again by the two midshipmen who showed a cheery disregard for shot and shell.

Midshipman Drewry was wounded in the head, but, in spite of this, he went on with his work. He made two attempts to swim from one lighter to the other in order to carry a line across the gap, but he was not able to carry out his plan, to his great disappointment. Then Malleson took the line in hand, and swam with it to the second lighter.

This was a piece of very useful work, for a fresh lot of men were now able to reach the beach. Meanwhile, the fire from the Turkish guns was becoming hotter and hotter, but it was now met by a terrific bombardment from the guns of the British warships, including the *Queen Elizabeth*.

More men and still more men came out from the *River Clyde* and ran down the gangway to the lighters. After a short time the current once more swung the second lighter aside and the line broke. Malleson swam across with the rope, but was not successful in joining up the two lighters. Again he tried, and again he failed.

MALLESON SWAM ACROSS WITH THE ROPE.

Meanwhile Commander Unwin had been for a second time through the doctors' hands in order to have his bullet wounds attended to. When this had been done he came up on deck and saw that a number of men who were still alive were lying helpless half in and half out of the water. He ordered out a lifeboat and set out to try to save them. A few of the men were picked up before the brave commander was obliged to give up his work. He was now almost fainting from weariness and was forced to go below again to be attended by the doctors.

The Turks now concentrated their fire upon the bridge to the shore and any man appearing upon it was at once shot down. Our men were therefore ordered to remain under cover, and they spent the rest of the day listening to the pattering of the leaden hail upon the steel sides of the ship. When darkness had fallen, the troops were able to disembark and found some shelter on the beach as well as in the ruined houses of a village not far away.

ANZAC

THIS word is worthy of careful examination. It means rather more than most words do, and it is one of the most honourable names in the British Empire.

The word is made up of the initial letters of the following words, all except one which does not greatly matter: Australian (and) New Zealand Army Corps. The name Anzac was given to that part of the coast of the Peninsula of Gallipoli on which the Australians and New Zealanders landed on the same day as the Lancashires made their landing farther to the south. And in time the name Anzacs was given to the Australians and New Zealanders alike. It was a convenient short term for them.

They were a merry lot of men. "We are having an iron time," one of them wrote home, "we live in an iron ship, sleep on an iron floor, have nothing to eat but iron rations, and now, to crown all, I hear we are commanded by a fellow called 'Iron' Hamilton."

The various operations of April 25, 1915, are known as the Battle of the Landing, and the attack delivered by the Anzacs was by far the greatest of all. The force numbered some 12,000 men and the place chosen for the landing was one of the most difficult on that rocky coast. The

assault is one of the most heroic in the records of the British Army. A single body of men seemed to act as one, and won everlasting fame not only for themselves but for the nations to which they belonged.

The landing was to be made with the help of a squadron consisting of five battleships, one cruiser, eight destroyers, a seaplane carrier, a balloon ship and fifteen trawlers carrying supplies as well as a number of transports. Some of the men were carried on the battleships, and to these was given the honour of making the first landing.

The ships left their base on the afternoon of the 24th and steamed all night with lights out. At one o'clock they were all collected about five miles from the place where the landing was to be made. It was a bright moonlight night, which was rather unfortunate, for it gave the sentries on the slopes above the bay a warning which they were not slow to act upon.

At one o'clock the men on the battleships were silently roused and were served with a hot meal. They were very quiet and steady but cheery, and quite confident that they could give a good account of themselves in the coming fight. It was, indeed, a severe trial of strength, skill, and nerve power which lay before these brave colonials. They were not like the Germans or even the British regulars who had been trained

for fighting over a long period. Yet these men from the farms and pastures as well as from the towns of the Southern Land had been selected for the post of honour on that great day.

As soon as the meal was finished, orders were given to lower the boats. These included not only the cutters but also the steam picket boats which were to tow them to the beach. In a very short time the men had embarked to the number of 1500 and the boats were towed towards the shore. The battleships were cleared for action and steamed closer in.

It was a few minutes before five o'clock when the first boats drew near to the shore above which towered a lofty cliff with a winding pathway leading from the beach to its right flank. At that moment a light was seen on shore which proved to be a signal, for a few minutes later a rifle volley rang out followed by the sound of a machine-gun, and a number of men in the leading boats fell dead or wounded. The landing of the Anzacs was to be disputed.

This reception was exactly what the men needed to nerve them to their attack. A body of Turkish soldiers was seen advancing to meet them. Without waiting for the word of command they sprang from the boats into the shallow water, and ran to meet the foe. " Their magazines were not even charged," we read, " so they

just went in with cold steel, and I believe I am right in saying that the first Ottoman Turk since the Last Crusade received an Anglo-Saxon bayonet in him at five minutes after five a.m. on April 25. It was over in a minute. The Turks in the first trench were bayoneted or ran away and a Maxim gun was captured. Then the Australians found themselves facing an almost perpendicular cliff of loose sandstone."[1]

Half-way up the face of this cliff was a second trench, from which a steady fire was now pouring from rifle and machine-gun. The face of the precipice was dotted with short bushes and behind each of these pieces of scrub a marksman was concealed. The fire from the enemy was directed not only upon those men who had already landed but also upon those who were now being brought from the transports.

The men at the foot of the cliff threw their packs to the ground, charged their rifles and set out on their desperate climb. In about fifteen minutes they were in possession of the second line of trenches and the Turks were on the run, or rather on the climb, to the top of the lofty cliff. The men were so full of eagerness that some of them pressed too far and were cut off from the main attack.

[1] From *Despatches from the Dardanelles*, by Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett (Newnes), with acknowledgments.

Meanwhile the battleships were bombarding the Turkish positions and were receiving such a heavy fire in return that the landing was greatly checked. The beach was very narrow and soon became crowded to such an extent that the men got in each other's way and there were more casualties than there would have been in more open country. But there was no quenching the spirit of the men. One eager Australian fell over a cliff 100 feet high and was picked up little the worse for his fall. A man from New Zealand was seen going down a deep hollow and was warned that there would probably be a mine at the bottom. He laughed and called out, " Then you can catch me as I come up."

A dressing station protected by sandbags had been set up on the beach, and when the wounded had been given first-aid they were quickly conveyed to the ships. The men showed wonderful courage and cheerfulness. " I saw some lighters full of bad cases," wrote one who was there, " as they passed the battleships. Some of those on board recognised our vessel as the ship they had left that morning; whereupon, in spite of their sufferings and discomforts, they set up a cheer which was answered by a deepening shout of encouragement from our crew."

By the afternoon of that great day the Anzacs found themselves in a strong position above the

beach for which they had won immortal fame. Their first task was accomplished. They had invaded Gallipoli, and had fixed themselves ready for the next stage in the stern work, which was not long delayed; for the Turks soon attacked in force, but were unable to move the Anzacs from their position.

SUBMARINES IN THE DARDANELLES

We heard so much during the war about German submarines that many people forgot that we had under-water craft of our own. If the German fleet had come out from the harbours of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven they would have learnt a little about the number and efficiency of the British submarines, as well as about the chivalry of their commanders.

The British submarines had a better chance to show what they could do at the Dardanelles; and some of the bravest deeds of the naval warfare were done in this quarter. Take a large map of Europe and find out the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and Constantinople; and remember that at the time we are now considering a British fleet was lying off the entrance to the straits known as the Dardanelles.

THE B11 PASSING UNDER THE MINES.

Remember, also, that the strait was strongly guarded on either side by a number of Turkish forts, while mines were laid in the water all around. The distance from the entrance of the Dardanelles to Constantinople is about 230 miles.

One day the British submarine E11, under Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, set out on a voyage to Constantinople, where there were several Turkish troopships carrying men who were to be sent to fight us in the Gallipoli Peninsula. This little boat had to pass under or round the mine-fields; to dodge the Turkish destroyers; to avoid being detected by the guns of the shore batteries; and to be prepared to spend long hours under water.

All these things were done, and a great deal more, so much, indeed, that it is difficult to believe that one little boat could do so much. It was the means of destroying a Turkish gunboat, two troopships, one powder-ship, and three storeships, while it drove another storeship ashore. Then the plucky little E11 set out for home and passed safely through the most difficult part of the return journey. But even yet its daring work was not completed; for it returned to torpedo another Turkish troopship! The brave and resourceful commander well deserved the Victoria Cross which was granted to him by King George.

The British submarine B11 had an even more adventurous journey in the same quarter. In the month of December of the first year of the war the British fleet was waiting for a fitting time to bombard the forts at the entrance to the Dardanelles; and in order to pass the time of waiting Lieutenant-Commander Norman D. Holbrook set out on a voyage of adventure.

There was a large mine-field at the entrance to the Straits consisting of several rows of mines. The B11 dived under these mines and came safely within the straits. Then a torpedo was fired at a Turkish battleship named the *Messudiyeh*, and in a very short time the vessel heeled over and then settled slowly down. Meanwhile the periscope was sighted from the batteries on the shore as well as by the torpedo boats which were patrolling the Straits, and in a very short time the shells were hissing around it. But it dodged them cleverly, and after sighting the battleship so as to make quite sure that it was really sinking, the B11 set out on the return journey.

It was now so much harried by the Turkish guns from various quarters, that it was forced to keep under water as much as possible. At one part of its journey it was submerged for no less than nine and a half hours. Then the compass got out of order, and the boat was driven

about in the strong undercurrents of the Straits. Sometimes the men could feel it grating upon the bottom; then it would be suddenly carried near the surface and every man held his breath while he waited for a mine to go off. But passing through all the dangers, the little craft at last reached "home" in safety, to be given a warm reception by men and officers of the Allied fleets. Lieutenant Holbrook was awarded the V.C. for this daring deed, while every other man in the submarine was given a medal. On the following day the B9 tried to rival the exploit, but was soon detected and was forced to come back.

In one of the actions against the Turks the *Inflexible* was hit in the foremast by a shell. Several of the men in the control station at the top of this steel tripod mast were badly wounded by the explosion; and those on the deck began to make preparations for bringing the men who had been hurt down from the control.

As they looked upward, they saw to their astonishment that one of the wounded men was already tackling the problem. He had taken on his shoulders one of his comrades who was more hurt than himself and was carrying him down the steel ladder attached to one of the legs of the tripod.

After him came another carrying a second wounded man in a similar manner, and after a

painful and perilous descent both the carriers reached the deck in safety. It must not be forgotten that the rungs of the ladder were coated with greasy soot from the smoke of the funnels; and they were therefore by no means secure resting places for the feet of wounded men so heavily burdened as these brave rescuers were.

WARNEFORD AND THE ZEPPELIN

One Sunday night in the early part of June 1915, a Zeppelin airship paid a visit to the East Coast of England. It sailed over a wide area and bombs were dropped in various places. As a result of this visit several people were killed and a number were badly hurt.

About twenty-four hours later, a Zeppelin was sighted on the coast of Belgium by two airmen, one British and the other French. The airship was chased and the British aviator came up with it between Ghent and Brussels.

He dropped bombs upon it which caused the gas in the envelope to explode. The airship was set on fire and fell to the ground and its crew of about twenty-eight men were killed. It is most probable that this was the airship which had just paid a visit to England.

The British airman who did this splendid piece of work was Flight Sub-Lieutenant Warneford of the Royal Naval Air Service and he was only twenty-four at the time. His machine was a monoplane, and very small compared with a Zeppelin, as can be seen in the picture.

The splendid deed was performed at a height of about 6000 feet above ground. The Zeppelin was flying lower than usual as it was nearing its hangar or shed. This gave Warneford his chance to get above it, and after that his work was a matter of careful aim. It really took only one bomb to fire the envelope, and then there was no hope for the Zeppelin.

The gas in the envelope exploded with such force that it made Warneford's machine turn completely over.

This somersault in the air emptied one of the petrol tanks; and the airman, righting his machine, saw that he must go down to fill it from the supply kept in another part of the machine. Meanwhile, the bullets from German rifles were flying all round him. He was, of course, in enemy country and near the town of Amandsberg.

In the open country outside of the town he saw a piece of waste land which seemed to be lonely and deserted. Down he planed to this spot and set to work at breathless speed to fill his

WARNEFORD AND THE ZEPPELIN.

tank while the Germans were racing to the place to try to capture or kill him.

At last all was ready and he took his seat in the machine. It rose into the air just as a number of Germans came in sight and began to fire at it. But no shot took effect, and the plucky airman made his way in safety to the French lines.

There were many people watching this famous fight in the air, which took place over the town about four o'clock in the morning. Here is the story of the fight as told by one of these spectators :

" The airship was flying over Amandsberg and attempting to escape the two airmen by descending. A great number of civilians watched the fight.

" Obviously, the Zeppelin had already had a skirmish with its pursuers, as it was slightly listing to the left side. Shots were exchanged with the two airmen, one of whom was daring enough to approach close to the airship in an attempt to fly over it.

" After a sudden bold swoop this airman was seen to drop some explosives on the Zeppelin which was at once wrapped in flames. The balloon covering was now fiercely burning, and after some minor reports and one big explosion, the airship dropped upon the convent school of Amandsberg. The nuns tried to bring the

children to a place of safety, and two sisters who had rushed into the street with little ones in their arms were badly hurt.

" The Zeppelin crew were all killed and only the framework of the great airship remained. The streets of the town were at once closed, and the people were ordered indoors. The British airman finally disappeared in a north-easterly direction."

Not long afterwards Warneford was killed while flying near Paris in an aeroplane of a new type which was being tested. It was a sad ending to what promised to be a useful career, but the fame of the young airman V.C. was already made ; and boys who love adventure will always be proud to read the story of the first Briton who was able, single-handed, to bring down a Zeppelin.

SMITH AND FORSHAW : TWO HEROES OF GALLIPOLI

Second-Lieutenant Smith of the East Lancashire Regiment was engaged in the fighting against the Turks in Gallipoli. He was in the act of throwing a grenade when it slipped from his hand and fell to the bottom of the trench. At

the moment there were several officers and men quite near to him.

Smith shouted out a warning and gave a jump which landed him clear of danger. Then he saw that the other men would not be able to get into cover. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, he jumped back into the trench and flung himself upon the grenade. He was at once killed by the explosion, but the rest of the men were uninjured.

"Possibly," wrote Smith's commander to the young man's father, "he thought he could extinguish it; more likely he gave up his own life to save others from death and injury. Whatever his thoughts may have been, his act was one of bravery such as I, personally, have never heard surpassed.

"There was only one result possible. I am afraid no decoration can make up for the loss of your only son, but the explanation must make you the proudest man in England, when every one reads the story and couples the memory of his name with that old and honoured phrase 'A soldier and a gentleman.'"

Lieutenant Forshaw hailed from the same part of England as the brave young officer of whom we have just read. He belonged to the Manchester Territorials, and he won the Cross in trench fighting against the Turks. His station

was at an important corner which was to be held at all costs; and in holding it Forshaw showed what is perhaps a higher form of courage than impulse—that of stern unflinching endurance.

By his spirit and example he encouraged his men to hold their own against repeated and savage attacks of the enemy. He set them an example of heroism by his cool disregard for danger. At the end of 24 hours' continuous fighting his men were relieved; but he offered to go on directing operations, and his offer was accepted.

For another 17 hours he repeatedly threw bombs at the enemy, lighting the fuses with a cigarette. He was choked by acid fumes, bruised by fragments of shell, and scarcely able to lift his arm for weariness, but he "stuck it" until the position was safe.

"It was due to his personal example, magnificent courage and endurance," said his superiors, "that this very important corner was held." When a brave man is in a tight place of any kind he will do well to remember "Forshaw's corner."

THE STORY OF EDITH CAVELL

THERE is a lofty, snow-clad peak in the Canadian Rockies which is known by the name of Mount Edith Cavell. It was named in the year 1915 to enshrine the memory of a noble woman who laid down her life for the love of humanity. She was an English patriot, but, as we shall see as we go on with her story, she was much more than that.

Edith Cavell was a hospital nurse who was trained in London and went to Belgium in 1900 to take charge of a training school for nurses in a suburb of Brussels. She threw herself into her work with great devotion and in a few years made it a real success. Then the war began and the Germans marched into Brussels as victors; but Miss Cavell was allowed to stay at her hospital.

The Germans seemed to know that she might be useful even to their own men; and they were not mistaken. The course of events brought many German wounded to Brussels and these men received the same care as the Belgian wounded. All hurt or sick men were the same to Edith Cavell, and her one aim was to get them well again.

After the retreat from Mons and from Namur, a number of French and English soldiers were cut off from the main army and were left behind

in Belgium. These men hid themselves in the woods or in the ruins of shattered towns, watching for an opportunity to escape either into France or Holland. Some of them were captured by the Germans, and many were shot at once without any form of trial. Others were taken care of by the country people and many stories could be told, and probably will be told in the future, of the adventures of these refugees in their own land.

There were many Belgians, too, who had been left behind after the earlier battles of the war, and these poor fugitives in their native land had the same experiences. Some were taken and instantly shot; others were dressed in civilian clothing and given work on the land, and when the chance came were helped across the frontier into Holland. Many were shot by the German guards as they made their last dash for freedom across the barbed-wire fence which marked off Holland from Belgium.

There was constant movement among the English, French, and Belgians to get away. Many of them had been brought into touch with Miss Cavell at one or other of her hospitals and they seem to have begged for her help. She had means of helping them and she did not hesitate to use them. She did not count the cost to herself. Here were men who, if taken, would most

probably be shot out of hand. What could a good woman do but help them to escape? She would thereby break the German military law, but she would be faithful to the higher law of kindness.

It was afterwards told against her by the Germans that she helped 130 men to leave Belgium. We do not know whether this number is correct, but if it were halved the record would still be a proud one.

After a time the Germans began to be suspicious of Miss Cavell. Spies were ordered to watch her. One of these men, it is said, went to ask her to help him to leave the country; she listened to his story, promised to help him, and then in accordance with his "duty" he betrayed her to his higher officers. She was made a prisoner on the 5th of August 1915.

In the military prison she was closely confined and no one was allowed to see her. She was considered a most dangerous person, as indeed she was when it was a question of mercy and pity before obedience to a brutal law. The Germans tell that she made no effort to hide or excuse the fact that she had helped men to escape from the country. She had acted as she did, knowing full well that she was breaking the rule of the Germans. It was said that she fully expected to be caught some day and to suffer punishment,

but that she thought it would take the form of imprisonment for a time.

There was living in Brussels at this time a Mr. Brand Whitlock who was American Minister, that is to say, he was in charge of American affairs in Belgium. As soon as he heard that Miss Cavell had been arrested, he wrote to the German officers and did all he could to get a fair trial for the lady. The Germans said that no one would be allowed to see Miss Cavell, but that she should have a trial in accordance with the soldier's law.

Mr. Whitlock was told that Miss Cavell had said that she was "guilty"; that she had hidden in her house French, English, and Belgians who were anxious to get away from Belgium; and that she had given them money and other help, sometimes providing guides to conduct them to the frontier.

Her trial began on the 7th October, and thirty-four other prisoners were tried with her. The language used in the court was German, and when a question was put to Miss Cavell it was translated into French, with which she was familiar. She was allowed to have a lawyer to speak in her defence, but she did not see him until the day of the trial, so that his help was of no great service to her. She had, however, confessed her "fault," so that it did not matter.

She probably thought of cases in English military history where women had been found guilty of military offences and had been imprisoned; and the punishment seemed light when she thought of the young lives that she had saved and of the mothers and sisters and sweethearts who would bless her name until their dying day.

Perhaps she was as much surprised as were many other people when she was sentenced to die. Before sentence was passed upon her she was asked why she had helped soldiers to go to England. She replied quite simply that she thought if she had not done so they would have been shot by the Germans; and she considered she only did her duty to her country in saving their lives. The order of the court was that she should be shot the next morning at two o'clock.

During the following evening the American Minister made almost frantic efforts to save her life. He was nobly helped by the Spanish Minister, but all their efforts were of no avail. Mr. Gahan, the British chaplain in Brussels, was, however, allowed to see Miss Cavell in her prison.

"I found her," he afterwards wrote, "perfectly calm and resigned. She said that she wished her friends to know that she willingly gave her life for her country and said, 'I have no fear nor shrinking; I have seen death so

often that it is not strange or fearful to me.'

" She further said, ' I thank God for this ten weeks' quiet before the end. Life has always been hurried and full of difficulty. This time of rest has been a great mercy. They have all been very kind to me here. But this I would say, standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards any one.'

" We sat quietly talking until it was time for me to go. She gave me parting messages for relations and friends. Then I said, ' Good-bye,' and she smiled and said, ' We shall meet again.' "

Next morning she was shot. The place of her burial was kept secret, for the Germans feared that the Belgians would make it a rallying place for rebellion. In this way they showed that they knew they had acted not only inhumanly but foolishly.

The execution of Edith Cavell roused great anger throughout the world, except of course in Germany. British and French soldiers fought with greater courage with her name upon their lips. From every civilised country came protests against the shooting of a woman whose only military offence was that she had followed the promptings of a tender heart.

Her story was told in every British school and

the Education Minister of France gave orders that the teachers of Paris should also tell it to their pupils. " The great and sublime figure of Edith Cavell," he said, " stands forth among the black horrors of the war as a living image of outraged humanity." Her death and the way it was regarded in Germany reminded the Allies once again that in fighting Germany they were fighting barbarism and the spirit which aims at " success " at any price.

In our just anger at the executioners of this noble lady let us not miss the true lesson of her splendid life and her heroic death.

She loved England first as became an Englishwoman. That was made quite clear in all that she said and did. She loved the friends of England too—all those who were fighting for the same great cause. That also was perfectly clear.

But mark once more that noble utterance spoken on the last evening of her life, " This I would say, standing as I do in view of God and eternity, *I realise that patriotism is not enough.* I must have no hatred or bitterness towards any one."

We know that she had helped German wounded and had shown them all the care and tenderness that the sight of a suffering man could arouse in her. She did this, not because

she had any desire to help the rulers of Germany whose ways she hated, but because the men were human beings.

Her kindness to German wounded and her last words which are twice quoted above were her woman's protest against the folly and the wickedness of all war. She could put aside with a quiet smile the pompous military rule which laid down that certain things were to be done because men were living in a state of war. She followed a higher rule, the law of pity and of mercy, remembering the words of the great poet of her beloved country :

> " Earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice."

JACK CORNWELL, THE BOY WHO " CARRIED ON "

One day, in the summer of 1917, a group of people were standing before a large picture which was hung upon the wall of one of the rooms in the Royal Academy.

The painting showed a wounded sailor-boy standing on the deck of a warship near the shield of a naval gun while shells were bursting all round him, and the gun's crew were lying dead or wounded at his feet.

" What did he do ? " asked a lady after look-

ing closely at the picture for some time. "Oh," said a gentleman who was with her, "he just stuck it, you know." That was all that the boy had done, "just stuck it" at the post of honour, although hurt so cruelly that he afterwards died.

But his simple action had been enough to rouse the admiration of the whole British Empire, to win for him the Victoria Cross, and to afford an example to every boy and man in the British Navy. There were many brave deeds done in the Battle of Jutland, but when Admiral Beatty afterwards made out his report it was John Travers Cornwell whom he picked out as at least one glorious example.

The boy won his Cross at the Battle of Jutland Bank, which began in the afternoon of Wednesday, May 31st, of the year 1916. This fight was one of the most important naval battles of the Great War and might have been as momentous as Trafalgar if the Germans had not retired when Admiral Jellicoe came up to the aid of Admiral Beatty with the Grand Fleet.

We can form some idea of the terrible nature of the battle from the British losses. These included six of the larger ships and eight destroyers, as well as a large number of brave British sailors. But the German losses were very much heavier, both in ships and men.

One of the British ships engaged in the fight

was H.M.S. *Chester*, the crew of which included the boy John Travers Cornwell, whose age was about 16½ years. He belonged to a party whose duty it was to work one of the guns, and during the first part of the fighting he received a very bad wound.

But he stayed at his post in a most exposed position, and went quietly on with his work though the men of the gun crew fell, one by one, dead or dying around him. He was hurt again and again, but he did not give up. He stood waiting for orders with the speaking tube at his ears, until the fight was over, when he was taken tenderly below.

His captain afterwards wrote of him to his mother :—" The wounds which resulted in his death were received in the first few minutes of the action. He remained steady at his most exposed post at the gun, waiting for orders. . . . He felt that he might be needed—as indeed he might have been—so he stayed there, standing and waiting under heavy fire, with just his own brave heart and God's help to support him."

After the battle the boy was taken to a hospital at Grimsby. He was attended with the greatest care, but his wounds were too severe to be cured. Cornwell had indeed been " faithful unto death."

Before he died some one asked him what he

and his mates were doing during that terrible time. "Oh," said the dying boy, "we were just carrying on."

HEROES OF LOOS

LET us begin with a heroine if only to remind ourselves that it was not only the British who showed the most wonderful heroism on the Western Front, but the French also, not excluding the French women and girls. When the British re-took the French town of Loos in the autumn of 1915, they found a ready helper in a French girl of seventeen years named Emilienne Moreau, who had lived there during the German occupation.

She shared the work which women did so nobly during the Great War, that of nursing the wounded. This was done under the most trying conditions, for the fighting was still going on and all was din and confusion around her. In spite of the heavy bombardment, some of the people of Loos had stayed behind in their shattered houses; and one of the first duties of our troops on entering the town was to carry terrified women and children into places of cover.

Emilienne Moreau did more than tend the wounded. She took a hand in the fighting,

young as she was. The Germans fought every foot of the way, but she helped them to go. She killed no less than five of them by throwing hand grenades and using a revolver. At a later date she was decorated by a French general with the Military Cross, which might be described as the V.C. of France.

The fighting in this quarter was marked by the usual deeds of heroism which one had come to expect from British troops. At one place the British attacked, but were forced to fall back. They took shelter behind a parapet, and when they had time to think of what had happened, Captain Kerr of the R.A.M.C. looked over the top of the barrier and saw two wounded men lying in the open. The enemy were at close range and were firing heavily; but Captain Kerr took the hero's chance, jumped over the parapet, and brought both the men to a place of safety.

Our men were gassed in this engagement, and some of the most heroic and desperate fighting was done by soldiers suffering from the effects of the hideous yellow cloud. The King's Own Scottish Borderers were shaken by the gas and seemed to waver in their trenches. Piper Daniel Laidlaw saw this and at once jumped upon the parapet, careless of his life.

Then he marched up and down, blowing his

pipes with great vigour. The men lifted their heads. The sound of the pipes seemed to rouse them to fresh efforts. They leapt from the ditch "over the top" and rushed to the attack as if driven by madness. But a bullet found Piper Laidlaw and he fell wounded. His work was done, however, and he lived to receive the Victoria Cross as a reward for his bravery.

Meanwhile, officers and men in every part of the field were "carrying on" in the most wonderful way. Lieutenant Hollwey's business was to lay a telephone wire and to do so under heavy fire. He had not gone far before he was wounded in the leg. He took little notice of the wound and went steadily on with his work, until another bullet fractured his leg. Then he lay down and waited for no less than sixteen hours. Men were so desperately busy all round him that he refused to be helped while more important work was to be done.

Sergeant Wells immediately took charge of his platoon when the officer in command had been killed, and the men followed him to within a short distance of the German barbed wire. As they ran across the open, many were killed and wounded, and when Wells was last seen he was shouting to his men to pull themselves together and rush the German line. The fire was, however, too severe, and the men were forced to take

cover; but the brave sergeant had done all that man could do and had given his life as an offering to duty.

The Germans had laid mines under the church tower of Loos and shells were bursting round it. At any moment the mines might explode and bring down the masonry upon the heads of our men. So Major Blogg of the Royal Engineers went forward through the storm of shells, found the fuse and cut it in two.

Many heroic deeds were done amongst the barbed wire in that battle. At one place the Royal Warwicks were stopped by an entanglement when they were near to the first line of German trenches. It was daylight and the men were in a very exposed place while shells and bullets whistled round them. Then Private Vickers stood up in his place and coolly cut the wire in several points so that his comrades were able to force their way through.

So the "great game" went on until Loos was finally and completely in British hands, after a brave resistance by our determined foes.

HOW MOORHOUSE BROUGHT IN HIS REPORT

THE railway at Courtrai was a very important part of the German lines of communication; but it was not out of reach of the Allied airmen. Orders were sent out that the line at this place was to be destroyed and W. B. R. Moorhouse was chosen to do the work.

His machine was a biplane and he was to go alone so as to be able to carry as much ammunition as possible. The risks did not trouble him, for he was of the type of airman that asks for risk as a kind of spice to the adventure.

Off he flew, and before long he came within sight of the junction at Courtrai. After a while, he switched off his engine and descended to a height of about 250 feet above the ground. By this time he had been sighted by the German gunners and riflemen, and at this low altitude he made an easy mark.

Carefully guiding his machine to a position above the railway points, he let fall a large bomb. It hit the mark at which he aimed and he knew that he had done enough damage to delay the German movements for some time. Then he began to think about his return.

He turned the nose of his machine skywards

and began to climb. Up, up he went, while the bullets whistled and the shells burst around him. But one of the bullets found its mark. He was struck in the thigh and it was not long before he knew that his wound would cost him his life. But he had his report to make and he pulled himself together for the last effort.

It was hard to go on that lonely journey. Blood was flowing from his wound, and twice he felt everything turn black and cold sweats break out upon him. But he stuck gamely to his task and managed somehow to keep the control of his craft.

The distance back to his own lines was about forty miles, and in spite of his wound he landed easily and without mishap. Then he made his report to those who had sent him out, and only just in time; for it was necessary to carry him off to the hospital, where he died after a short time. The Cross was afterwards awarded to him for this feat of endurance and courage.

LORAINE'S FIGHT IN THE AIR

THE airmen might be described as the "eyes of the army." They go up over the enemy's lines and find out what is going on; then they come back—if they escape the guns of the enemy—and make their reports to the British officers.

One day in November 1915, Captain Robert Loraine set out with an observer to do some work of this kind. He was well used to the task and had found out many things of great use to the commanding officers.

After a time he saw an enemy machine ahead of him and moved quickly within range. Both machines opened fire at the same moment, and blazed away at each other for some time. Then Loraine's gun and that of his companion both got out of order, and the two men were at the mercy of the Germans.

But only for a short time; Loraine's companion managed to get his gun to work again, and kept up a brisk reply to the German fire. All at once the German "bus" dived, and Loraine dived after it. Then a flame leapt up from the enemy aeroplane and in a moment it was falling to the earth, a burning wreck.

Loraine rose once more and in a few moments saw another German plane ahead of him. His observer was by this time almost frozen, but the two men took the risk and chased the new foe with the intention of giving battle. The German paused as if to make off, then accepted the challenge, and the battle was joined.

It lasted for about five minutes, and then the German pilot was hit and the second machine fell to the ground. By this time Loraine's

observer was feeling very much warmer and ready to deal with any number of enemy aircraft.

All at once, however, the engine of the British machine gave out. There was nothing for it but to come down to earth and that within the German lines! This was done without mishap, and then the two men pushed their machine towards the British lines, keeping a sharp look-out meanwhile for enemy snipers.

By and by they came to the place where the second German aeroplane had fallen. They found that the pilot was dead and his companion very severely wounded. Loraine stayed long enough to take from the German machine all that might prove useful to himself, and then set out again to take his "prisoner" to hospital. The strange little party reached the British lines without further adventure and the German was soon in the hands of the British Red Cross.

He was carefully tended, and when he had been made as comfortable as possible he asked how soon he would be taken to be tortured!

Loraine's adventure was typical of the kind of work that went on in the air during all the operations of the Western Front. As in the days of King Arthur of olden story—

"Every morning brought a noble chance."

"A GLORIOUS BAND"

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in His train?"

THE words of the old soldiers' hymn must often have come into the minds of our brave men as they fought and died to win freedom for the world. And, indeed, they were doing no less than this; for all men knew that if the Germans were not beaten there would be no more real freedom for mankind.

There was one day in the month of September of the year 1916 when the King granted no less than twenty Victoria Crosses. Some of them could not be worn by the brave men who had won them for they had been "faithful unto death"; and their medals were sent to those whom they had left behind to mourn for them and to rejoice when they forgot their sorrow that they had died so nobly.

The newspaper on the following morning was a matter for gladness and sadness; for it contained a splendid record of heroic deeds which made one feel proud to be a Briton.

There was the brave story of Major Loudoun Shand of a Yorkshire regiment. He led an attack upon an enemy trench and his men were met by

such a severe machine-gun fire that at first they were dazed and hesitated. But the major leapt first upon the parapet of the trench, and then turning helped some of his men to scramble up. The others followed and then fought bravely and well, the major calling words of cheer to them as they pressed on, driving the foe before them.

Then he received a fatal wound. "Prop me up," he said to one of his men, and they supported him against the wall of a trench. There he sat, bleeding to death; but his voice was heard loud and clear to the last, urging and cheering on his men, that they might play their part as he himself had done.

Then there was Lieutenant Cather of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, who seemed to covet honour as some men wish for gold. After a severe fight he searched the wide space between the front lines of trenches which was known as "No Man's Land," looking for wounded men. All the time the space was swept by the guns of the enemy and at each step he risked his own life.

But on he went, searching, and listening for the groans of the wounded. He found three men and brought them in, one after the other. Then he gave up the task for it was midnight and even he needed rest. But at eight o'clock the next morning he was at work again.

He brought in yet another man who had spent the night in the open, wounded and lonely; and he carried water to others though the ground was again swept by the enemy's terrible fire. At half-past ten that morning he went out yet again to carry water to a wounded man, and this time he was killed.

"Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Second-Lieutenant Bell of a Yorkshire regiment found that a certain machine-gun troubled his company greatly during an attack. So he crept up a trench with two other daring men, rushed across the open under heavy fire, and made for the machine-gun. The gunner was shot and the three men then threw bombs at the gun until it was completely wrecked. A little later Bell met his death in the course of duty, and laid down his arms like a "very gallant gentleman."

Sergeant-Major Carter of the Royal Sussex was eager to be in the post of honour. With a few men as keen as himself he worked his way to the enemy's second line of trenches. The men were all forced back to the first line, but on the way they captured and destroyed a machine-gun which was worrying their comrades. Then Carter looked about for more work and was soon busily engaged in carrying wounded men to places of safety. As he was performing this work

of mercy he was mortally wounded and died in a few minutes.

Corporal Sanders of a West Yorks regiment was another eager spirit who was cut off with a company of thirty men from the rest of the regiment. He quickly placed his men so that they could defend themselves. Then he made up a bombing party and urged his little band to hold out at all costs and not to give themselves up as prisoners.

The men remained in their position during the whole of the next night, and on the following morning they were attacked by the enemy. The Germans made two bombing attacks in strength, but both were beaten off. Sanders' men held out all that day, and were not relieved until they had stood their ground for no less than thirty-six hours.

During all that time the men had neither food nor water. The water in their bottles was given to the wounded in the true British manner, which, you may remember, was followed by Sir Philip Sidney. The corporal brought back nineteen of his party to the British trenches when at last he was relieved.

Gunner Cooke of the Australian Infantry showed that he was a true son of Britain, able to fight and to die with the best. He was ordered with his gun and gun-team to a very dangerous

part of the line. Putting his horses to the gallop he quickly took up the position allotted to him. He came under heavy fire, as he had expected, and his men soon fell around him one by one. At last he was the only man left, but he " stuck it " like a hero, working his gun single-handed and doing good shooting. Then he was observed and help was at once rushed out to him. His friends found him dead at his post, one more hero of the glorious band who counted honour first and left safety to take care of itself.

Private Faulds, of the South African Infantry, went out with a bombing party under Lieutenant Craig which tried to rush forty yards of open ground between the two front trenches. The men at once came under very heavy rifle and machine-gun fire, and several of them were almost instantly killed or wounded. Lieutenant Craig was badly hurt and lay midway between the trenches in open ground.

Faulds was now back in his own trench, and looking out saw the officer lying on the ground. Without the loss of a moment, he leapt over his own parapet followed closely by two comrades as unselfish as himself. It was full daylight and the open space between the trenches was still swept by heavy fire ; but the wounded officer was carefully lifted and carried safely " home."

Two days later Faulds performed a similar

act of unselfish heroism. At this time the fire across the open space between the trenches was so severe that stretcher-bearers were not allowed to go out to pick up the wounded, as it meant certain death for them. But Faulds leapt over the parapet, picked up a man, brought him safely in, and then carried him for half a mile to a dressing station. Private Jackson, of the Australian Infantry, did similar work of the noblest kind, and even went out to help in bringing men under cover after one of his arms had been blown off!

Private McFadzean belonged to the Royal Irish Regiment and gave an example of the most devoted courage and readiness ever reported in the annals of war.

One day he was in a trench with a number of his mates and was opening a box of bombs before an attack. The box slipped down in the crowded trench, some of the bombs fell out, and the safety pins of two of them were dislodged. When the pin is out the bomb goes off after a certain fixed time.

Without a moment's hesitation, McFadzean threw himself on top of the bombs. There was a loud explosion and the brave man was blown to pieces; but he had fallen in such a way that the explosion spent itself in killing him only. Another man was injured, but McFadzean's

devotion had saved the lives of all the men in the trench.

Then there was Drummer Ritchie of the Seaforth Highlanders who, without instructions, climbed upon the parapet of the enemy's trench and sounded the "Charge" under heavy machine-gun fire. He did not do this because he wished to make a stirring picture, but because the men with him, having lost their leaders, were beginning to waver and fall back. The sound of the drum-beat rallied them once more and they sprang forward to the attack as though following the lead of the bravest of officers. The same drummer afterwards showed great coolness and courage in carrying messages from one company to another across the fire-swept "No Man's Land."

Private Veale of the Devon Regiment heard that a wounded officer was lying between the two front trenches. He went out in search of him, and found him lying amidst growing corn about fifty yards from the enemy's line. The wounded man was too heavy for Veale to carry, but he dragged him to a shell hole, went back to his trench for water, and at the risk of his life took it out to the wounded man.

When he came back again he asked for help to carry the wounded man in and two of his comrades volunteered to go out with him. One

was killed in a few moments and the fire was so severe that the other men went back to await a better opportunity. At dusk, Veale and two others went out yet again, and saw an enemy patrol approaching. Veale ran back and brought out a Lewis gun with which he covered his companions while they brought the wounded officer " home."

These are only a few episodes out of numberless examples.—

> " They bowed their necks the death to feel.
> Who follows in their train? "

THE WORK OF THE MINE-SWEEPERS

THE British Isles are surrounded by very shallow seas in which are taken enormous quantities of fish that are good for food. In the work of catching these fish large numbers of men are employed, especially in the North Sea fishing-ground known as the Dogger Bank, where the water is very shallow.

These North Sea fishermen come from the East Coast counties not only of England but also of Scotland, right away to the most northerly parts. Their work is very hard and dangerous, but it makes them strong, brave, self-reliant, and able " to go anywhere and do

anything." It is from the families of such men as these that we get most of our merchant sailors and the " Jack Tars " of our great Navy.

When the chiefs of our Navy wanted men and boats for mine-sweeping and for catching submarines they turned to our North Sea fishermen. They took great numbers of the fishing trawlers and their crews and set them to perform these very dangerous tasks. Some of them were sent far away to the Eastern Mediterranean on the same duty. Other trawlers were drawn from the West Coast fisheries, and the men of Devon share with the men of the Eastern counties the credit for much dangerous work well done.

Two of these trawlers would set out side by side to " sweep " the sea in a part where mines were supposed to have been laid. A rope was attached to the vessels and when a mine was brought to the surface it was exploded by gunfire. The aeroplane was often of great use in work of this kind. It ought not to be necessary to insist on the dangerous character of this work. It required all the courage which might have won the V.C. and this was shown during every hour of the day and night. As a West Country skipper said one day, as he stood on the bridge of his trawler in the Eastern Mediterranean, " What would King Garge 'ave done without these 'ere trawlers ? " What indeed ?

THE MINE-SWEEPERS.

" These 'ere trawlers " were also largely used for netting submarines. The nets used were made of steel and some of them were about a hundred miles long ! They were run out from trawler to trawler so as to make a kind of open-work steel wall below the surface of the water. Each trawler carried a gun both fore and aft; and when a submarine was caught in the net it was raised to the surface and promptly dealt with by the expert naval gunners who had been allotted to each trawler or by an attendant destroyer or seaplane.

A well-known writer and poet tells a story which shows what dangers the submarine hunters were called upon to face :

" On a few occasions, the hunters have themselves been trapped. Three men, taken off a trawler by a submarine, endured an eighty hours' nightmare under the sea that shattered the mind of one and left lasting traces on the other two. Again and again, revolvers were put to their heads and they were ordered, on pain of death, to tell all they knew of our naval plans.

" They saw a good deal of the life on a German submarine and noted that the German crew on this boat at any rate were very ' jumpy,' too jumpy even to take a square meal. They munched biscuits at odd moments at their stations.

"On the third morning they heard guns going overhead, and watched the Germans handing out shells to their own guns. Finally a torpedo was fired and they heard it take effect. Then they emerged into the red wash of dawn, and saw only the floating wreckage of the big ship that had been sunk; and amongst the wreckage a small boat. They were bundled into this; told they were free to go to England or Nineveh; and the submarine left them—three longshore fishermen, who had passed through the latest invention of the modern scientific devil, two who could still pull at the oars, but the other too crazy to steer." [1]

Here is a skipper's account of his exciting experience in a mine-sweeper off the entrance to the Dardanelles:

"One night we went with lights out up to the Narrows. They let us get right in and as we turned round to take our sweeps up, one of our number was blown up. Then they peppered us from each side from 1½ to 2 miles.

"We heard cries for help. I said, 'We shall have to do the best we can and go back and pick up.' There was no waiting, no saying, 'Who shall go?' As soon as I called for volunteers

[1] Mr. Alfred Noyes in the *Daily Telegraph*, with acknowledgments.

three jumped in. I kept the vessel as close as I could to shelter the boat. I did not think any would come back, but they did come back. No one was hit and I said, ' Now we'll get the boat in.' Just as we got the boat nicely clear of the water, along came a shot and knocked it to splinters.

" I shouted, ' All hands keep under cover as much as you can,' and I got on the bridge and we went full steam ahead. I could not tell you what it was like with floating and sunken mines and shots everywhere. We got knocked about, the mast almost gone, rigging gone, and she was riddled right along the starboard side. One of the hands we picked up had his left arm smashed with shrapnel." [1]

" I am afraid," said an English statesman in the House of Commons, " that I cannot do justice to all that I feel about the work of these men. It is little known to the public. They do not work in the presence of great bodies of men, to admire and applaud them for their gallantry. Small crews in stormy seas suddenly brought face to face with unexpected peril, they never seem to me to fail. No danger, no difficulty is too great for them. The debt of this country to them cannot be counted."

[1] From the *Times History of the War*, with acknowledgments.

"THE PADRE"

THE army or navy chaplain was usually known as "the padre," and the use of the familiar name (which means "the father") shows how these brave men had won the hearts of the soldiers. This is not surprising for the chaplains were not only to be found at "the back of the front," but shared many of the dangers faced so bravely by the fighting men of the first line.

"We have a chaplain," wrote one, "who comes up into the front line every day no matter how dangerous and rough things may be; in fact he always makes for the most dangerous places on principle.

"One day, during a very hot bombardment, instead of leaving the trenches, the 'padre,' as he is called, strode up and down the line, cheering and helping. . . . All the men worship him. I shall try to find out his name, but at present he is 'the padre,' the simplest, finest gentleman I have ever met, and he has stood the test."

The presence of a man whose religion made him absolutely fearless must have been very helpful to those whose duty it was to do the fighting. One of the chaplains, at least, laid down his life while engaged in this work of

encouragement. He was in the danger zone for some time doing all he could to cheer his men. Then he made his way to the ambulance car and sat down near to it to say good-bye to some of his comrades, for he was going home for a time on leave. Suddenly a great shell burst close by and he was so badly wounded that he died shortly afterwards.

Another chaplain, the Reverend Edward Noel Mellish of Deptford, won the V.C. for deeds of great heroism. Our men had made a push and had captured a portion of the German front trench. But the German fire made the space between the two lines a very field of death. For three days there was heavy fighting in this quarter, and there were many casualties among the British soldiers.

The chaplain took upon himself a duty which was not part of his regular work. He had watched man after man fall wounded in that fire-swept belt of land, and he made it his business to go out to help them. During the first day he brought in no less than ten men who had been wounded. As soon as he reached them he did what he could to dress their awful wounds and to revive them. Three men were killed as he tended them. But he brought in the others to a place of safety.

That night the company to which he was

attached was relieved and another took its place. But the chaplain did not leave his post. During the next day he went on with his work and brought in no less than twelve men! When night had fallen on the third day, he got together a party of volunteers and led them out to rescue the wounded. Many poor fellows were brought into a place of safety.

Chaplain Parham won the Military Cross for work of a similar character in Gallipoli during August 1915. He was attached to a brigade which took part in an attack on the Turks at Suvla during which the shrubs on the battlefield were fired by shells. With the help of his servant he rescued many wounded men and carried them to a place of safety beyond reach of the flames. On the next day he got together from his own brigade a party of volunteers to act as stretcher bearers; and the devoted little band did excellent work in bringing in the wounded under heavy fire.

Another chaplain, Father Finn, lost his life at the Battle of the Landing on the 25th of April 1915.

"Father Finn," wrote a correspondent, "was one of the first to give his life in the landing at Sedd-ul-Bahr. In answer to the appeals that were made to him not to leave the ship (the *River Clyde*), he replied, 'A priest's place is

beside the dying soldier,' whereupon he stepped on to the gangway, immediately receiving a bullet through the chest.

"Undeterred, he made his way across the lighters, receiving another bullet in the thigh, and still another in the leg. By the time he reached the beach he was riddled with bullets, but in spite of the great pain he must have been suffering he went about his duties speaking words of consolation to the dying men. It was while in the act of helping one of his men that he was killed by the bursting of a shell." [1]

LIEUTENANT ROBINSON AND THE ZEPPELIN

WARNEFORD caught his Zeppelin in Belgium because it was flying low just before getting near to its shed. In the late summer of 1916, a young English airman brought down another of these airships when it was flying high over London to avoid the fire from the anti-aircraft guns.

There were many air raids on the capital during 1915 and 1916 and a great deal of damage was done. The time chosen for these visits was usually the dead of night, when there was no

[1] From a letter published in the *Times History of the War*, with acknowledgments.

moon and very little wind. People got used to saying to each other, with a kind of thrill, " This is a good night for a raid." And at one time most people went to bed fully expecting to be called up some time after midnight for an adventure of a kind which was quite new to London and to peaceful England.

The authorities gave instructions to the people what to do if a raid should take place. They were very careful to tell them to keep indoors and not to gather in crowds. But when the airships came many people felt that they must get out of the house to see what was going on ; and one morning in September 1916 great crowds of Londoners saw a sight which had never before been seen in the long and varied history of the great city.

They saw a burning Zeppelin fall from the sky like a meteor. And it was not until some days later that they learnt that it had been brought down by Lieutenant W. L. Robinson, who received the Victoria Cross for his skill and bravery, which were indeed of a very special kind.

About midnight on Saturday, September 2nd, London airmen were warned that Zeppelins were on their way to the city. At once a number of them went up in the pitch-black darkness and circled round and round in search of the

"terror that flieth by night." Lieutenant Robinson was one of the number and all were keen to do something great for the honour of their corps. For the British airman does not work to win praise for himself, but to make a fine tradition for that branch of the military service to which he belongs.

The airmen had been up for quite two hours flying about among the darting searchlights before the Zeppelins arrived. There were two of the airships at first and it was known at the time that others were on the way; but the rest did not appear for a reason which will be evident when this story has been told.

The defenders of London relied upon three things: (1) the large number of anti-aircraft guns which had been placed on the high places round about the city; (2) the searchlights which gave the gunners their chance to aim properly; (3) the airmen who had learnt a great deal about this strange kind of fighting since Warneford brought down the airship in Belgium.

The task of these airmen was a very difficult one and they were exposed to more dangers and risks than many people imagined. It was, in the first place, a severe trial of strength and nerve-power to remain in the air so long before the Zeppelins arrived. Then they were in danger from the guns of the airships which had often

sent aeroplanes toppling nose foremost to the ground, while they usually carried only one machine-gun apiece, as well as a small supply of bombs.

It was further necessary that an airman should rise to a very great height to get above a Zeppelin; for without getting some distance above it he could not make any use of his bombs at all. At this great height it is very cold even on a summer morning, and this increases the difficulty of the airman's task.

Moreover, it was a fight between the skill and endurance of one man against about twenty-eight, which was the usual number of a Zeppelin crew.

Robinson was, however, equal to the task. He boldly attacked the first monster which came within his range, but had no success for several reasons. So he turned to the other, and by skilful management of his machine contrived to get above it in such a position that he could drop a bomb on the envelope. By this time many thousands of people were gathered together in the open spaces round about London; but the fight took place at such a great height that they only saw the effect of Robinson's work.

What they saw, however, was stirring and exciting enough. Suddenly a light appeared on the Zeppelin. At first some of the watchers thought it was the searchlight of the airship.

But as they gazed they saw the light grow larger ; and soon they were aware that the envelope of the ship was in flames.

A tongue of fire swept up the structure which then turned on end and fell to earth in a curve like that of a meteor. And as it fell there rose from thousands of British throats such a cheer as man had never heard before. It was a sound to be remembered to one's dying day ; a shout of triumph mingled with awe and wonder, as if men watched the very judgment of God.

The airship fell into a field at Cuffley, not far from London, and it was fortunate that the blazing mass did not come down in a crowded district. It burnt for nearly two hours, watched by a crowd of people, and every few moments there was an explosion as the flames reached a store of machine-gun cartridges.

There was some danger of greater explosions, for the bombs might take fire at any moment ; but this did not prevent the men who were watching from trying to put out the fire. The last of the flames were extinguished with water from the village well. Such was the end of Count Zeppelin's splendid ship, one of the fleet with which he had vowed he would destroy London.

After a time the watchers saw an aeroplane wheeling round in graceful flight above their heads. It came to earth some distance away,

and the airman alighting, walked quickly to the place where the wreck of the Zeppelin was lying. He looked carefully at the wreckage and then turned away. And no one knew at the moment that this was Lieutenant Robinson himself.

THE CANADIANS AT VIMY RIDGE

THE Allies wished to clear the Germans from the mining district of Northern France of which Lens is the chief town. But their way was barred by the enemy who held Vimy Ridge. In 1915, the French tried to capture this ridge and fought for it with desperate bravery; but they were not able to drive out the enemy from his strong position. In the spring of 1917, the British took up the task; and it was the Canadians who were the chief means of completing it.

Very careful preparation was made before the fighting began. The British staff officers got some plasticine and made a careful model of the ridge and the places round about it. This model was made to scale, chiefly from the observations of the airmen. It showed the trenches, roads, tracks, railways, and streams, as well as all the ups and downs of the country.

Staff officers and those who were to lead in the attack on Vimy Ridge spent many hours in studying this model. Such careful plans were

made for the attack that when the fighting did take place the losses on the British side were light, sad as they were. After the ridge had been won, the model was compared with the ground, and was found to be wonderfully correct.

Vimy Ridge itself was a piece of ground about 600 feet above sea level at its highest point. The Germans had turned it into a kind of fortress of very great strength. The western face of the ridge formed a more or less gentle slope, while the eastern side was steeper. Away to the east stretched a wide plain like a prairie; and it was in order to command this plain with artillery that the British wished to take the ridge.

They knew well enough how heavy was the task before them. The Germans had not held the position for more than two years without making the best of it as a means of checking their foes. The slopes were cut up by lines of trenches, one behind the other. The face of the hill had been tunnelled deeply; and in these tunnels were large numbers of German soldiers who had made themselves quite at home in their burrows. They had very comfortable quarters in Vimy Ridge, and thought they were going to stay there for a long time. All over the slope guns of various kinds were placed ready to fire upon an attacking party.

It seemed madness to send any attacking

party against such a fortress. But the British commanders knew their work and they knew their men. They had a large store of munitions which had been collected for a long time; and they had numbers of the newest and heaviest guns placed in position for playing upon the western face of the ridge.

Besides they had ready a strong force of some of the best British troops, men who had seen long service and who had learnt many lessons in the art of war. Among these were some of the brave Canadians who were to have the post of danger for that great day.

The attack was made in the early hours of Easter Monday. For some time before the word was given to attack, the big guns had kept up a terrible fire upon the slopes of the ridge. The noise of the bombardment was deafening and was quite sufficient to make the enemy crouching in their trenches and tunnels quake with fear—as indeed many of them did.

Speaking of this terrible gunfire, a German prisoner afterwards said, "You English have never been through such a bombardment. You don't know what it means. We do. You'd have to give in yourselves." This fire had been kept up by the British guns for no less than a fortnight. Then the British leaders thought the time had come for the bayonet attack.

At half-past five on Easter Monday morning the word was given and the Canadians went at once " over the top." It was a wet morning, and it was not long before they looked like scarecrows in a prairie cornfield ; but they swung on laughing and cheering and joking. The rain was on their backs which was to their advantage. " Our first stretch," said one of them afterwards, " was about 600 yards of fairly level ground of what we call ' No Man's Land.' Next we came upon a maze of trenches in which we found nothing but dead men and smashed guns.

" Our first objective lay far behind these trenches, and we reached there within an hour, climbing all the way up a gentle slope. On our left front stood a village, with a haystack standing in a field to the south of it. That haystack was known to be a strongly prepared machine-gun position."

The speaker was wounded not long afterwards and was carried off to the dressing station and thence to London. He did not see the rest of the fighting of that day. But he heard with pride how his comrades had cleared the fortress of Vimy Ridge of its German defenders ; how they had pushed on in the face of machine-gun and rifle fire and had done stern work with the bayonet ; and how they had finished their work completely before night came on.

The last point of the ridge to be captured was known as Hill 145. Here the Germans had a very strong machine-gun position, but after stern fighting they were at last cleared out, and the Canadians went on to finish their task. They swept over the top of the ridge and down the steep eastern slope, clearing away the last parties of the enemy and taking many prisoners.

The fighting at Vimy was afterwards said to be " the most successful single day's work in all the operations on the Western Front since the beginning of the war." It was successful for three reasons. First, because the artillery prepared so well for the attack; second, because the officers had learnt their lesson from that useful little plasticine model; and third, because the Canadians were among the bravest of the brave.

HEROES OF A HOSPITAL SHIP

For many months the steamer *Lanfranc* had been employed in bringing wounded from France to England; but one evening in the spring of 1917 she fell a victim to a torpedo launched by a German submarine.

She had a crew of more than a hundred, and when she left France she had on board between

300 and 400 British wounded and about 160 Germans. Many of the latter were wounded and were being taken to England for treatment.

The vessel was struck about half-past seven in the evening when the sea was quite calm. There was a crash which shook the ship from end to end, and then a loud explosion. In a very short time the engines stopped, and the ship heeled over as if about to sink. Then she righted herself and remained steady on the surface of the water; but the torpedo had done its work and the ship was slowly sinking.

As soon as the crash of the torpedo was felt the German prisoners were thrown into a panic of terror. They rushed madly to the lifeboats, and it was only by threatening them with revolvers that the British officers were able to drive them back. They were sternly told to wait their turn, and knew that they must obey; but some of them showed the most abject fear and went down on their knees to beg for mercy.

Meanwhile, the crew and the hospital staff had quietly taken up their posts and begun the work of rescue. The wounded who were too ill or too maimed to help themselves were brought up on deck and carried first to the boats. The others remained on deck, and though many of them were sadly crippled they tried to stand to attention.

The vessel was slowly sinking and help had been summoned by wireless. But as yet there were no rescuers in sight and the first business was to get as many as possible into the boats. It was not, however, a matter of "every man for himself." Among the British, at least, it seemed to be "every man for his comrade." Those who afterwards told the story of that perilous hour said that they had never seen so many examples of cheery helpfulness among British soldiers.

But this is not surprising, for the good comradeship of British soldiers is well known all over the world. There is still greater praise due to those men on the *Lanfranc*. They rose to the greater height of heroism in showing pity and mercy to the comrades of the men who had attacked a hospital ship in defiance not only of the rules of war but of the higher law of humanity.

It would have been almost excusable if in that hour the British soldiers had turned upon the Prussians or had at least shown some feeling towards them. But instead of any sign of anger or contempt we are told of the most gentlemanly kindness and courtesy.

"The behaviour of our own lads," said a British officer, "I shall never forget. . . . Those who could lend a hand scurried below to help in saving friend or enemy. One man whom I saw had a leg severed and his head was heavily

bandaged. He whistled to a mate to come and help a Prussian who was unable to move owing to internal injuries. Another man limped painfully along with a Prussian officer on his arm, and helped the latter to a boat.

" It is impossible to give adequate praise to the crew and staff. They were all heroes. They remained at their posts until the last man had been taken off. Some of them took off articles of their clothing and threw them into the lifeboats for the benefit of some of the sick and wounded. The same spirit showed itself as we moved away from the scene of the outrage. I saw a sergeant take his tunic off and make a pillow for a wounded German. There was a private who had his arms around an enemy trying hard to make the best of an uncomfortable position."

The men were at last picked up by French vessels and were quickly made as comfortable as possible. It must not be forgotten that loss of life was prevented by the splendid behaviour of the men in this crisis. It is often quite as heroic to stand steady as to dash forward into the " jaws of death."

ALONG THE "V.C. WALK"

On June 8th in the third year of the war the *London Gazette* contained a list of no less than 29 names of officers and men to whom the King had awarded the Victoria Cross. The stories of "most conspicuous bravery" which followed the names in this list showed that the coveted Cross had never been lightly won. Heroism had now become a habit, but British soldiers seemed to have entered into a rivalry as to the amount of bravery and endurance which they could show.

Take the example of Major Lumsden in his determined efforts to bring away six captured German field guns. At first it was necessary to leave them in dug-out positions about 300 yards in advance of the position held by our troops. The enemy kept the captured guns under heavy fire, but Major Lumsden undertook the duty of bringing them within our lines. It ought not to be necessary to dwell upon the high value of such service.

He got together four artillery teams and a small body of infantry, and led them out into the open. In a short time one of the teams was badly knocked about, so the major left the others in a sheltered place and led the infantry to the spot where the guns were hidden.

In defiance of rifle, machine-gun, and artillery fire he managed to get away three of the guns, which were then attached to the teams and rushed back to our lines. After waiting for a time until other teams could be brought out Lumsden sent back two more guns, although the enemy were now quite near to him and their rifle fire was at very short range. Indeed the Germans were able to make a rush and blew up the breech of the last gun so as to prevent the British from using it against them at a later time. But Lumsden's men drove them back again and the last of the six guns was brought in triumph within our lines.

Then there was Captain Ball of the Royal Flying Corps who had no less than forty-three German aeroplanes and one balloon to his credit. This officer's activity and resource in the air were truly marvellous. On one occasion, when flying alone, he fought six enemy machines, on another five, and on another four, and in each fight he brought down at least one of his opponents.

One day the British airmen were engaged in bombing an enemy train when one of their pilots was forced to come down within the enemy's lines. Lieutenant Macnamara saw German horsemen approaching him and set out to the rescue. He planed down under heavy

rifle fire, and in spite of a wound in his thigh landed at about 200 yards from the damaged machine. The pilot quickly climbed on to the lieutenant's machine and an attempt was made to rise.

Owing to his wound, however, Macnamara was unable to keep his machine straight and it turned over. As soon as it touched the ground, the two men got out from the wreckage, set fire to it, and ran to the first aeroplane, which they were able to start. And although he was weak from loss of blood the lieutenant was able to take the machine a distance of seventy miles to the aerodrome. For this gallant and adventurous rescue he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Sergeant Harry Cator, of the East Surrey Regiment, was busily making secure the first line which had been captured from the enemy, but was greatly worried by a certain machine-gun. One after another of his men fell dead or wounded until the brave sergeant could endure it no longer. So, with only one companion, in full view of the enemy, and under heavy fire, he went out across the open to attack the machine-gun and put an end to the annoyance.

After a few steps across that fire-swept zone, the sergeant's companion was killed; but Cator went doggedly on, picking up a Lewis gun and some ammunition on the way. In time he came

to one end of the enemy trench and worked himself into a position where he could cover the machine-gun which he had marked out for his own. Nor was it long before the whole of the gun crew as well as the officer were accounted for. Then the sergeant went over to the gun, put it out of action, and brought away the officer's papers. But before he returned to our own lines he went back to his Lewis gun and covered a bombing party which was able to work along the trench and to capture 100 prisoners and five machine-guns.

Sergeant Sifton of the Canadian Battalion did similar work during a trench attack. He charged a machine-gun single handed, killing all the crew, and then gave up his life in holding off an enemy attack while his own platoon was gaining a desired position. Another sergeant named Steele of the Seaforths reversed the order by carrying a machine-gun well in advance of our line and was the chief means of keeping it intact during a strong attack by the enemy.

Corporal Cunningham of the Leinster Regiment was in command of a Lewis gun section on the most exposed flank of our attack. His men came under heavy fire and suffered badly, and he was almost alone when at last he was able to bring his gun into action. A party of twenty Germans came on to the attack. Cunning-

ham worked off all his ammunition upon them and then standing up in full view of the enemy commenced throwing bombs. He was wounded and fell to the ground, but picked himself up and went on fighting until his bombs were exhausted. Then he made his way back to our lines with a fractured arm and other wounds. He was taken to hospital, where he died a little later from the effects of his wounds.

Corporal George Jarratt was one of the noble army who during the war directly gave his life to save others. He had been made a prisoner with some wounded men and placed with them in a dug-out. On that same evening the enemy were driven back by our troops and the British bombers began an attack upon the dug-outs. A hand grenade fell into the hollow where Jarratt was lying, and he deliberately placed his feet upon it so as to break the force and direction of the explosion that followed and save the men who were lying at a little distance from him. He succeeded in his intention, but received injuries from which he died before he could be removed with the others who owed their lives to his ready devotion.

Here is another war picture of a stirring kind, the central figure of which was Private Michael Heaviside of the Durham Light Infantry. In the early dawn a wounded man was seen in a

shell-hole in No Man's Land about forty yards from the enemy's line. He was making signals of distress and holding up his empty water-bottle.

It was impossible at the moment to send out a stretcher party, for this particular spot was unusually "unhealthy"; but Heaviside at once volunteered to carry food and drink to the wounded man, in spite of the heavy fire. So he set out on his heroic errand and managed to reach the shell-hole unhurt to find the wounded man almost mad with thirst and suffering great pain from a severe wound. He had lain there for four days and three nights and the arrival of Heaviside was the means of saving his life. Later in the day the rescuer was able to finish his work of mercy by taking out a stretcher party and bringing the wounded man into a place of safety.

There are many stories of thirst on the battle-field, but few so touching and appealing as this. Surely our men will never forget that early dawn and the faint cries from the figure in the shell-hole weakly waving a water-bottle as a signal of dire distress. The scene would make a splendid subject for a great painter.

Private Jensen of the Australian Imperial Forces suddenly appeared before a party of 45 Germans behind a barricade which also sheltered a machine-gun. He had a bomb in one

hand, and taking another from his pocket with his other hand he drew out the pin with his teeth. With both arms raised he threatened the party of cowering men before him and managed to convey to them the fact that they were surrounded. By this bold front he induced the party to surrender. He then sent one of his prisoners to another party of Germans " with orders to surrender," which, strange to say, were promptly obeyed.

Meanwhile, another party of British troops came up and began to fire upon the captured Germans, not knowing that they had surrendered. Thereupon Jensen stood on the barricade regardless of danger and waved his helmet to prevent unnecessary slaughter of his prisoners. Then the Australian's company of captives was brought in, to the great delight of his comrades.

Second-Lieutenant Baxter of the Liverpool Regiment spent two nights engaged in the very useful and dangerous work of cutting barbed wire before the German trenches. He was so close to the enemy's line that he could hear the men speaking ; but as he went on with his work he held a bomb in his left hand, ready to throw at the first sign that he had been discovered.

On one occasion, his bomb slipped and fell as he was cutting the wire with his left hand. He picked it up although he knew that it might

explode at any moment, for the pin was out, unscrewed the base plug, took out the detonator, and smothered it in the soil. In this way, at the risk of losing his own life, he prevented an alarm being given and saved many lives among his own party.

When all was ready, Baxter led the left wing of the storming party and was the first man to leap into a German trench. He spent some time in bombing dug-outs and then he was lost sight of. He was given up as dead and the V.C. was afterwards handed to his relatives.

Lance-Corporal Welch of the Royal Berkshire Regiment won the coveted medal not only for bravery but also for making good use of his wits. He was first of a party to leap into a trench which was captured largely owing to his dogged fighting. Four of the Germans got away and raced across country at breakneck speed. Welch leapt out of the trench and gave chase with an empty revolver in his hand. Under the influence of the weapon the men were persuaded to give themselves up. What they said when they learnt that the revolver was unloaded is not reported.

Private White of the Royal Lancashire Regiment made excellent use of a telephone wire and won the V.C. by his skill and resource. An attempt was being made to cross a certain river with three British pontoons — flat-bottomed

boats used for transport or for placing end to end to form a bridge. The boats came under very heavy fire and the men of the first two were bowled over one after the other. The third in which White was standing fared no better, and when it reached mid-stream every man except himself was either dead or wounded.

White now found that he was not able to control the pontoon single-handed; so he tied a telephone wire to the forepart, jumped into the water and towed the boat to the shore. In this way he saved the life of an officer and brought to the other side of the river a number of rifles as well as valuable stores.

There were countless instances of the capture of machine-guns by men who rushed forward from our ranks and shot the German gunners. One of these daring men was Sergeant-Major E. Brooks of the Oxford Light Infantry who on one occasion was taking part in a raid on the enemy's trenches.

The front rank was checked by a German machine-gun at close quarters. Brooks was in the second rank, but he made his way through the first, rushed towards the gun, killed one of the gunners with his revolver and the other with his bayonet, and so terrified the rest of the crew that they made off without loss of time. Then Brooks turned the German machine-gun on the

retreating foe, and used it with good effect for some time. When he had done all the useful work he could do, he carried off the gun to the British lines.

MIDSHIPMAN GYLES AND THE GERMAN BOARDERS

MODERN naval guns are of very long range; and in most of the fights on the sea the enemy ships were several miles apart.

In the Battle of the Falklands the fighting was at a range of about nine miles. When the Battle of Jutland Bank began Beatty's cruisers were about eleven miles from the leading ships of the Germans. When the *Queen Elizabeth* was at the Dardanelles her gunners said that they could "land on a penny at 15,000 yards."

But in the little fight off Dover on the night of April 20, 1917, British and German ships came close together, and there was a struggle with a boarding party as in the "good old days" of the story books. Moreover, a brave British boy played a very prominent part in this older type of fighting.

Half an hour after midnight, two British destroyers, *Swift* and *Broke*, came up with six German ships of the same kind. The latter

opened fire at 600 yards and were instantly answered by the *Swift*. Then Commander Peck quickly made up his mind to ram the first German destroyer and drove straight for her.

The Germans were steaming at high speed, the night was pitch dark, and the *Swift* missed her mark. But she torpedoed another enemy boat and then went in hot pursuit of the first. The German got away and without firing another shot made off into the darkness with the *Swift* after her at full speed.

Meanwhile the *Broke* (Commander Evans) had launched a torpedo at the second boat, which hit her. Then he swung round and rammed the third boat at full speed. After that the fight was at closest range.

The gunners of the *Broke* swept the decks of the boat which had been rammed amidships. The two remaining German destroyers opened a heavy fire, and before long the crews of the foremost guns of the *Broke* were reduced from eighteen men to six. On the forecastle Midshipman Donald A. Gyles was in charge; and though he had been wounded in the eye as soon as he came on deck, he did all he could to keep his guns in action.

Then a number of Germans climbed up over the forecastle of the *Broke* and jumped down upon her deck. They were rushing aft, shouting

loudly, when they were met by Gyles, revolver in hand, and half blinded with blood from the wound in his eye.

A big German seized him by the wrist and tried to take his revolver from him, but a well-aimed blow from a petty officer made the man loosen his hold. He dodged round to take the middy in the rear; but a British gunner promptly ran him through with his cutlass. Two of the Germans then tumbled over and pretended to be dead; and in a few breathless moments the rest were hustled over the side. The "dead" men were then secured.

The *Broke* had now wrenched herself free from the German boat, which was settling down, and turned to ram another of the enemy destroyers. She missed it, but as she swung round she hit another boat with a well-aimed torpedo. Then the German boats moved off into the darkness, just as an unlucky shot found out the boiler-room of the *Broke* and disabled her main engines.

She moved off, however, as best she could, towards a German destroyer which was on fire. As she drew near, shouts for help were heard which served to draw the *Broke* still closer. Then the German treacherously opened fire; so also did the *Broke;* and four rounds followed by a torpedo quickly settled the enemy.

The whole fight lasted only about seven or eight minutes. For his gallant share in it Midshipman Gyles received the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He had been wounded not only in the eye but also in the right leg and the right arm.

His story was modestly told to friends who visited him in hospital. He had, like Sir Richard Grenville, "only done his duty as a man is bound to do." He was off duty and asleep when the call came to take up positions for action, but he did not take long to summon all his wits and a little over.

The bursting of the shell which gave him his first wound "floored him," but he was quickly on his feet again and undertook the loading of the starboard gun. It was at this moment that the "boarders" appeared, and "he guessed that the reception they received would teach Germans a lesson."

HOW MAN MADE AN EARTHQUAKE

On the morning of June 7, 1917, the British Prime Minister got up very early, as early as three o'clock. He wished to hear an explosion on the Western Front; and although he was at his home near London he heard it too! For our

men had made an earthquake and had blown up a hill which had been held by the Germans since the earlier days of the war.

The high ground which gave the Germans such an advantage in this part of the line was known as Messines Ridge; and the men who held it were fiercely determined not to lose their position. Their officers had given very definite orders on this matter. "The enemy must not get the Messines Ridge *at any price*." So ran the stern command, and the defenders were assured that strong forces were ready immediately behind them to deal with any parties of their foes who might succeed in "breaking through."

The British were equally determined to take Messines Ridge and had planned to *blow it up* in order to clear the way for the advance of their guns, to straighten out a part of the line near Ypres and to gain command of the plain of Lille. The preparation for the "earthquake" took no less than a year!

Mines were driven deep down under the German front-line trenches by men from the coal districts of Britain as well as parties of stalwart Australians and New Zealanders. Their plan could not have been quite unknown to the Germans; for they too dug mines towards the British lines, and sometimes the parties of rival diggers came quite close to each other.

But the extent to which the British were prepared to go in "blasting" operations was not realised by their foes.

When the long task of digging and tunnelling was finished electric wires were placed in position; and it was arranged that the tons of explosive packed away in the earth were to be fired by the touch of a spring on a metal plate. In a dug-out some distance behind the mines a little group of men gathered together on the night of the 7th waiting for the moment at which the spring was to be touched.

A few minutes before three o'clock on the following morning the spring *was* touched, and for a moment the watchers held their breath. Then there was a deafening quivering sound unlike any other that had been heard in the long-drawn-out din of the fighting in this greatest of all great wars. The earth opened, sending out great tongues of flame and dense clouds of smoke; then came huge fragments of rock and earth mixed with the bodies of Germans and the wreckage of their first-line system of trenches.

British infantry were posted ready for the advance. The shock of the explosion threw many of them to the ground; but in a very short time they went forward with a mighty rush and quickly captured Hill 60. There was now a general advance along the line and in many

places the Germans were found to be too dazed to make any real resistance. Large numbers of prisoners fell into our hands. "This is more than human nature itself can suffer," said a German officer to those who had captured him.

Among the prisoners were two German boys of about seventeen, who had already been in the firing line for about twelve months. A British officer said to them, "You ought to be spanked and sent home to your mothers." The boys laughed merrily and one of them replied for both, "That is what we should like, sir, if you please."

The man-made earthquake was of course a preparation for the advance, not only of infantry, but also of the artillery. The latter had been specially anxious to move forward after the long period of fighting in one quarter. The artillery advance is thus described by one who saw it and who speaks of it as an "historic incident," which indeed it was:

"An order passed along to all the batteries. The gun horses were standing by. They were harnessed to the guns. The limbers of the field batteries lined up. Then, half-way through the battle, the old gun positions were left behind after two and a half years of warfare in one spot.

"The drivers urged on their horses. They moved at a gallop and dashed up the slopes. The

infantry stood by to let them pass, and from thousands of men, these dusty, hot, parched soldiers of ours, there rose a great following cheer, which swept along the track of the gunners and went with them up the ridge where they unlimbered and got into action again for the second phase of the fight." [1]

The Battle of Messines was a victory for patience. It showed also what men could do by means of organising and planning with great care. You will probably remember the little plasticine model of Vimy Ridge. There was another model made to help in the preparation for the Battle of Messines. It was much bigger than that made for Vimy, but it was built up with the same care and it was closely studied by all who were to take any part in guiding the men in this tremendous battle. Of course, the airmen were very useful in the work of making the model: and a great deal of the credit for the success of the operations at Messines is due to them.

Among those who fell in the attack delivered after the great explosion was a well-known Irish Member of Parliament, Major William Redmond. He was a Nationalist or Home Ruler, and a passionate lover of his native country, which he ardently wished to see happy and contented. In order to understand the full meaning of his

[1] Philip Gibbs in the *Daily Telegraph*, with acknowledgments.

death we must recall what had been happening in Ireland in recent years.

The British Parliament wished to give Home Rule to Ireland and had, indeed, passed a Bill to do so. The men of Ulster, however, did not wish to have an Irish Parliament at Dublin; and there was a great deal of unhappy ill-feeling between the two Irish parties on this matter. It was Major Redmond's great desire that this quarrel between Irishmen should be settled. He felt and said that if he should die in battle it might help to heal the breach between the men of the two political parties and bring peace and contentment to Ireland.

During the three nights before the battle, he slept in a cellar under the chapel of a religious house known as the Hospice not far from the front line. He was very anxious to be allowed to lead " the boys " of his regiment " over the top " and had begged his superiors to allow him to do so. After a good deal of hesitation, he was given leave to charge at the head of his old battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment.

He received the news with the joy of a schoolboy who has been promised an extra holiday. " Won't it be glorious," he said, " to breast the sand-bags ? " Then he went up to the trenches in the company of his servant, and when his men saw him they set up a cheer. " Sir," said his

servant, " this cheering is not good for you." " I'm afraid," said the major, with a twinkle in his eye, " you're getting shell-shock already."

The great explosion took place, and before the burning earth had time to descend, Major Redmond was " over the top " and the first man in the regiment to face the awful scene. Before long he fell, wounded in the leg and wrist, and he was found lying on the battlefield by stretcher bearers of the Ulster division. It was an Ulster ambulance which carried him, wounded to the death, from that awful field of battle; and it was men from Ulster who tended him in his dying moments. So he did, indeed, give his life, not only in an attempt to drive back the Germans, but also to bring peace to Ireland.

" WHEN CAN THEIR GLORY FADE? "

We have read a great deal in this little book about the courage shown by men in the heat of the fight. But it did not take the excitement of attack or defence to rouse and sustain the courage of our men. Nor were they less brave and cheerful in weakness and in pain than they were on the field of battle. Read the words of a doctor[1] at the front :—

[1] Quoted from a private letter published in the *Times*, with acknowledgments.

" We speak of brave men. Yes, these men are brave! If the people at home could see the conditions under which our fellows fight, and how they die, I swear that every head would uncover to the colours of any regiment bearing the name of a battle, because that name had been won through the blood of real heroes.

" For example, some colours will have 'Marne' upon them. I know what deeds were done, what lives were given, what wounds were received to have that one name so inscribed. Believe me, the Victoria Cross is won over and over again in a single day.

" They are brave. What if you were to see how the wounded act after the excitement of a battle? They suffer their wounds, great and small, without a murmur; they get their wounds dressed and give consent to have their limbs amputated just as if they were going to have their hair cut.

" They are gloriously brave. Men who have been in the thick of the fight all day, seen their chums wounded and killed, their own lives not worth a second's insurance, still cook their food and go off to sleep, and, most wonderful of all, go back to the thick of it next day.

" It is Sunday. In the evening we had a service in a barn. A great crowd of the officers and men collected. The scene was very impressive, with the place only lit with camp candles,

the soldiers rough and dirty with the work of war, some of them just returned from the trenches and others going there the same night —some who in all probability would be dead before another night came. The men sang heartily, but when the prayer for dear ones at home was being offered there were few dry eyes among those brave men who faced death daily."

The war made even little children careless of death. Here is a pretty little story from Italy. An Alpino came to a ruined house where three little girls were plucking roses while shells moaned and fizzed over their heads. They offered him some of their flowers, and he suggested they should go and stay with his little daughter in Italy out of harm's way. "Oh, no," they said, "thank you very much, but papa is fighting near here—and besides, the roses would all die."

"THE HEART OF A LION"

THE morning of Saturday, July 7th, 1917, was beautifully bright, a perfect English summer morning with a cloudless sky. The people of London made haste to finish the morning's work, looking forward to as pleasant a week-end as war-work and thoughts on war would permit.

But before they left their places of business they had an experience which few quiet Londoners had ever expected to pass through. Something happened which for a time seemed to blot out the light of the sun and which brought death and destruction into the very heart of the ancient city.

Suddenly the word was passed along, "An air raid!" and in many places there was a rush for cover. The city had been raided before and many lives had been lost among people in the streets.

In a very short time the boom of the traffic was hushed; but now the boom of the guns was heard and the terrifying crash of falling bombs. For about twenty minutes the strange fight went on. Then silence fell and people looked out to see the enemy squadron of aeroplanes.

It consisted of about twenty machines which kept in more or less close formation and could be distinctly seen as if poised over the Thames. At the height at which the squadron was flying it looked like a covey of wild duck or geese flying over a moor.

Londoners learnt later in the day how the enemy was headed off and driven to the coast after having caused a number of deaths and done a great deal of damage. And a few days later the story was told of Lieutenant Young of the

Royal Flying Corps who had, as his officer said, " the heart of a lion."

He was one of the British air squadron which went up to chase off the enemy from what they called " the fortress of London." He flew almost by himself right into the middle of the German squadron, and both he and his observer at once opened fire upon the enemy. The Germans replied and Young's machine was literally pelted with bullets on all sides.

But there was no retreat for the young British airman. " He flew straight on," wrote the officer in command, " until he must have been riddled with bullets. The machine then put its nose right up into the air and fell over and went spinning down into the sea from 14,000 feet."

The brave boy was entangled in the wires of his machine and though a patrol boat dashed out to the rescue he could not be saved. The observer shared the same fate and the same glory.

For it was a glorious death to die for the mother city of the Empire and to fall upon the sea which knits that Empire together, but which no longer serves England

> —" in the office of a wall
> Or as a moat defensive to a house
> Against the envy of less happier lands."

IN MEMORIAM

P. M. and A. C. D., killed in action, 1915.

LET pride with grief go hand in hand :
They join the hallowed hosts who died
In battle for their lovely land :
With light about their brows they ride.

Young hearts and hot, grey heads and wise,
Good knights of all the years foregone,
Faith in their England in their eyes,
Still ride they on, still ride they on !

By altars old their banners fade
Beneath dear spires ; their names are set
In minster aisle, in yew-tree shade :
Their memories fight for England yet.

Let pride with grief go hand in hand,
Sad Love with Patience side by side ;
In battle for their lovely land
Not vainly England's sons have died !

And well may pride this hour befit ;
For not since England's days began
More fiery clear the word was writ :
Who dies for England dies for Man !

HELEN GRAY CONE.

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