



# The Denstonian.

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## EDITORIAL.

**I**N these days the *Denstonian* goes through much tribulation before it arrives, breathless but triumphant, in the hands of its readers.

Before the war (which phrase by this time denotes ancient history) contributions reached the Editor and were accepted or consigned to the long-suffering "w.p.b."; then the manuscript was sent off to the publishers, who invariably received and returned it quickly. Corrected, it made its way back to them, and finally appeared in all its glory.

Now, however, it is very different. A contributor sends an article from some remote corner of the earth; on its way, the ship which brings it is rudely accosted by a submarine of alien extraction, which is of

the opinion that the matter must not reach the *Denstonian*; the British Navy, however, thinks otherwise, and, after removing the U boat from the seas, it rescues the article from its moist abode. Subsequently the Editor receives a mass of pulp which, after the expenditure of much time and temper, he resolves into sheets of paper covered with mysterious signs. These he at length translates, and the translation is posted to the publisher's, whom it may or may not reach. With ordinary luck, however, the proofs arrive, are corrected, and are again entrusted to Dame Fortune, in the form of the post. At last, if the publishers have not received any attention from obliging Gothas, the finished product makes its appearance, bearing no signs of the troublous times it has had between writer and reader.

## IN A GERMAN PRISON CAMP.

[We are indebted for the materials for this paper to a repatriated officer.]

When war was declared, our O.T.C. was in camp at Aldershot, and therefore in the very centre of military activity. Great was the excitement as rumours grew more definite ; and at last, when the die was cast, we had the unique experience of seeing many of the details connected with the preparations for the equipment of the Expeditionary Force, and the early stages of the gathering of the clans which made up the " Old Contemptibles."

Among our representatives at Aldershot was L. B. Helder. He had just finished a distinguished school career. He had been Captain of School and Captain of Cricket; a prefect of rare efficiency and courtesy, and a cricketer of exceptional ability. He excelled as a singer and a pianist. He was to have gone in October to Cambridge, where he had gained a musical scholarship; and a distinguished career lay before him.

Of course, all this went by the board when the country called for men. Helder happened to live in London, and on the formation of the Public Schools Battalion, promptly offered his services. His military efficiency in the O.T.C., his fine physique, and his charming personality, of course made him an eminently desirable assistant, and in the formation and initial organisation of the force he was invaluable. His services were so much appreciated that he had the unusual experience of being gazetted directly to a lieutenancy, instead of passing through the usual 2nd lieutenancy. He went to France in November, 1915, attached to the 98th Infantry Brigade headquarters staff. A few months later he joined the Flying Corps, and quickly became an admirable observer,

Then came the advent of the Fokkers, and at length, in August, 1916, Helder's machine was attacked by one of these new monsters, and disabled behind the enemy's lines. It came down with a dangerous nose-dive, but, most fortunately, just as it reached the ground, both Helder and his pilot managed to fling themselves out. They escaped practically unhurt, as the machine burst into flames.

He was taken first to the prisoners' camp at Osnabrtick, the picturesque old town in Hanover, where our German king, George I., died in 1727.

That was in the early days, when the one branch of the German Army which retained feelings of chivalry was the Flying Corps, and English airmen who were captured were treated with something like the consideration which has invariably marked our own treatment of enemy prisoners. So far as can be learned, Helder was well treated as Osnabrtick. Later he was moved further east and north, to Clausthal. This is the principal town in the mining district of the Harz Mountains. It lies on the top and sides of a hill, 1800 feet above sea-level, in a bleak, bare region where mists and rain are frequent, and where corn will not ripen. None of the supposed beauty of the Harz Mountains (much overrated) is evident at Clausthal. The place itself wears a desolate appearance, and the neighbourhood resembles Shakespeare's " blasted heath," owing to the destructive effects produced upon vegetation by the vapours of lead and arsenic which issue from the smelting houses ; for, near by, gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc are all found, and there are enormous slate quarries.

In this unpromising district the English prisoners' camp consists of a hotel and two huts. It is not a good camp, though there are worse. The cold, of course, is

severe, and the arrangements for warming are bad. In the huts coal is supposed to be supplied every other day, but when some of the officers were removed from Clausthal to Holland in the early part of this year, none had been supplied for over three weeks. In the hotel the radiators were all shut off, with the exception of one in the large room which was originally used both as dining-room and reading-room. Later, another room in the hotel has been given as a reading-room, Helder has in his own room a stove, but a small bucket of coal has to last three days.

A favourite form of annoyance is to restrict the lighting. In the darkest days of the year, during November and December, actually lights were allowed in the rooms for only a quarter of an hour a day, by which to undress for bed. Candles if found were confiscated.

Discomfort reigns everywhere. Before the reading-room was added, the 250 officers who were there had to make the best of things in the one large dining-room. As one of them (now in Holland) says: "Imagine 250 officers eating and working and reading in one room, with the orderlies clearing the tables and washing up and laying them for the next meal. Under such circumstances, it is hard to work or write." Again, there is such overcrowding that everything is filthy—dining-rooms and bedrooms alike. Very few orderlies are allowed, and things are so crowded together that it is almost impossible to sweep or wash a room. The meals, try as English gentlemen will, are described as "simply disgusting."

Lunch consists of potatoes and a second vegetable, the ration per man being about two tablespoonsful of carrots, beans, etc., with about three potatoes. At dinner, a thin, watery soup is added, or sometimes two small rolls of bread, with a little

sausage. The bread ration is 250 grammes per day. A small piece of meat is given once a week, and it is usually not good, though the food is at any rate decently cooked.

To supplement the prison fare, there is a canteen, but prices are very exorbitant. Half a dozen small tomatoes cost four marks, and a cauliflower 11 marks. White wine rose in six months from 5 to 11 marks a bottle.

The commandant is a most unsatisfactory official. He is the proprietor of a local gin factory; vulgar, and with no idea of any decent treatment of gentlemen. He has absolute power. He can confine the officers in "arrest" cells, where no reading, writing or smoking is allowed, for an indefinite period, at his mere whim; and cases have occurred where officers have been so confined, without any trial or any charge being brought against them, for as long as six weeks.

A keen delight—which would be childish if it were not fiendish—seems to be taken in thwarting every wish on the part of the prisoners. If a window is opened for the sake of fresh air, the heating apparatus is turned off because it is evident the place is too warm! A German general came to visit the camp, and found that some of the officers had purchased spring beds; few though these were, the beds were dismantled of their springs, and supplied with boards instead. All cushions were carefully confiscated. Such things may be small in themselves, and individually of trifling importance, but the cumulative effect is galling in the extreme. An English general of high rank was invited at a conference with the authorities to give his opinion on certain matters, and when he described something as being "unfair," he was placed in solitary confinement for eight days. A favourite trick is to sell something at the

canteen and order it to be confiscated a few days later.

Not only are the buildings small and crowded, and dirty and noisy in consequence, but the grounds in which they are situated are cramped. The longest way round the camp is not more than a two-minutes' walk. Walks outside the bounds are few and far between. In most camps, two walks a week are allowed, but at Clausthal the usual allowance is less than that a month.

A pathetic touch is supplied by one of the officers removed to Holland. He tells how glad a friend who was remaining behind was at his departure "because I left him my new snow-boots, and his boots leaked—he will have no more chilblains."

Nevertheless, in spite of such unpromising surroundings, Helder invariably writes cheerfully. He and his fellow-officers have done their best with their confined grounds; they have put up two wooden "Squash" courts, and made two lawn-tennis courts, and a tiny mashie golf course. Lately, a cinema has been supplied on Sundays. They realise that the great thing is to keep themselves occupied, and to refuse to let the continual annoyances affect them. Helder has set himself to learn Russian and German. A friend of his is working hard at military history. Entertainments of various kinds are managed somehow. Helder's musical abilities are of the greatest value. He can always be depended upon for any amount of singing, and he has formed a really good orchestra. In it there are the following instruments: three first violins, four second violins, 'cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, oboe, two cornets and a French horn. These he has trained himself, and lately his orchestra gave a successful concert two nights in succession, and also played for a dance,

LEAVES FROM AN EASTERN  
NOTEBOOK.

By A. W. Huskinson.

IV.

The November *Denstonian* has just turned up, and I am answering it by sending my subscription—a five-rupee note. I seem to have missed some copies last year. I am surprised that we get what we do. Letters seem to arrive all right, but anything in the nature of a parcel—boxes of cigarettes in particular—faint by the way-side, and are devoured (rumour has it) by the fowls in Italy!

Life out here is very pleasant just at present, and the much-talked-of icy blasts which, according to the Blue Book of the Mesopotamian Report, sweep down from the hills over this country in January and February, have not put in an appearance this year, and with the exception of a week of excessively cold nights just before Christmas, nothing unpleasantly chilly has arrived. We have had rain off and on this month, but the general type of day has been delightfully warm, a combination of an English spring and an English summer day. Now we are nearing the beginning of the heat, and are even now moving back further down the line to a camp by the side of the Dialah River. There our large E.P. double-fly tents will arrive shortly, and we shall settle down to fight with the heat and its attendant ills.

As far as I can see, that will be our contribution to the great conflict of 1918. The whole campaign out here has been such a great success since we really began to move in 1916 that the scrapping is virtually over. We have pushed the old Turk up through the Jebul Hamrin Hills, and he is too broken to put up a struggle. Consequently, with the exception of one

affair in December last, I have seen no fighting at all. We are now merely sitting down, keeping ourselves fit and on the *qui vive*, and firing occasional practice rounds. I am not sufficiently a fire-eater to regret this lack of active hostilities; indeed, I take it, one is very fortunate to be out here in this "fire-pit by the Euphrates" rather than in France, where, too, the climate is not of the healthiest.

I was attached to the Flying Corps for an Observer's Course last week, and quite enjoyed myself. I was in the air for three separate flights, and on one occasion witnessed a miniature bombardment by artillery on enemy gun pits. It was rather exciting from my point of view, for it required more nerve than I possessed in my first flight to stand up in the machine, and, tightly clutching the Lewis gun stand, to battle with the tremendous wind and spot the shell-bursts on the ground. On the first occasion our wireless would not work, and the pilot and I spent half-an-hour conversing with each other by written notes, speech being impossible owing to the unearthly din made by wind and propeller. We could not put matters straight, however, and we descended. During his nose-dive downward, the pilot thought fit to test his forward Maxim—the one which fires between the propeller-blades. This did not cheer us up much.

However, in my second flight I was courageous enough to stand up and take a photograph over the side. A certain amount of excitement was caused this time by the throttle refusing to shut right off when we attempted to land. We rushed along the ground through the aerodrome at a tremendous pace. The pilot, realising in time that he could not stop, inclined his planes and shot up again, just clearing the top of the hangars by a few feet. Our

second effort to land was more successful.

In our summer camp we shall be within striking distance of Baghdad on our motor-cycles. I explored the city pretty thoroughly during the month we were encamped near it—in November last; and again just before Christmas, when, in order to buy Christmas fare, I conducted a motor convoy down there from our advanced position up the line.

It is indeed a fine, interesting place, with its domes and minarets and its motley collection of Eastern types. The insides of all the mosques are out of bounds; but it is the general effect of their domes, as seen from outside, which struck me. I have spent hours wandering through the bazaars—they cover miles of ground, but are narrow and smelly. The Silver Bazaar is most interesting—booth after booth with its silversmith working his blow-pipe and melting up his silver in a clay crucible over a little charcoal fire. Coppersmiths and tinsmiths too are always busy, each in their own section of the bazaar—the latter converting petrol tins into lamps, boxes, candlesticks, and so on. I saw a fine display of Persian carpets at one booth, but everything is put up to an absurdly high price, now that the English have arrived. Every other booth you pass is stocked with cheap trash from Birmingham, the tawdriest stuff imaginable—looking-glasses, brooches, scissors, knives, trays. Where the booth-keepers have been able to obtain them beats me. They always have plenty of cheap cigarettes, matches, candles, tinned fruit, milk, and other things in stock, and even when you cannot get them at the E.F. Canteen, you can buy them in the bazaar—at a price. Matches are 12 annas a dozen, "Gold Flakes" 1 rupee 8 annas a tin!

DENSTONIANS IN THE HOLY  
LAND.

I.

We have from time to time received news of several O.Ds. who have been fortunate enough to enter the Holy City during this Last Crusade. Some account of Jerusalem and its wonderful memorials would at any time be of interest, but just now, when the British are completing the work of Godfrey de Bouillon and Richard I., we must feel a peculiar attraction in any personal narratives from Denstonians engaged in the great adventure. We intend, therefore, to publish two or three papers dealing with the campaign in Palestine, based upon the letters of our comrades in the Holy Land.

The time spent in the country by E. T. Greenwood has been full of interest. As recently as last December we printed a letter from him, lamenting that he was still in India, and had had no opportunity of killing Turks and Germans. To-day he lies in hospital at El Arish, recovering from a wound in the chest. He left India in October, and reached Beersheba—where D. J. Couldrey was killed—two days after it fell. He stayed in the town for about a month. After leaving the place, he marched about thirty-six miles in four days in order to join his Division. There followed three days' rest, and then a move up into the line; but by this time the Turks had moved some miles away, and there was no determined fighting.

In January Greenwood was for three weeks in Cairo, upon a course. He met various Denstonians, including Edgar Rhodes, whom he recalled as playing full-back for Meynell against Woodard in 1909. J. R. Birchall had rejoined the regiment in India, and with him and with C. W. Townsend, Greenwood had many talks of old

times. Both Birchall—of whose work as an officer he speaks most highly—and Greenwood have Companies, so that "half the battalion is commanded by Denstone."

"We are at present well in the Holy Land," wrote Greenwood in March. "I had a splendid trip to Jerusalem last week, on three days' leave. It was a journey of about thirty miles from here, and we went in lorries from the motor dump." How strange a contrast with the mediæval hosts of Cœur de Lion! "I was most wonderfully impressed by the whole place. We got hold of a good guide, who showed us everything, and we saw all the spots connected with our Lord's life.

"The places that impressed me most were the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Mosque of Omar, and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is a most wonderful building; its construction is marvellous, as it embraces the whole area of Mount Calvary and our Lord's tomb. There are small altars marking the places where each event took place in the long story of the Crucifixion. On Mount Calvary one can see the points at which each of the three crosses stood. There is also before one the natural rock, with a huge cleft in it—the rocks cleft in twain. There is little doubt but that it is the identical place.

"The Mosque of Omar is built on the site of the Temple.

"The Temples of Solomon and Herod almost certainly lie in ruins beneath this great mosque—which is covered, by the way, with the most wonderful mosaics. Inside is the natural rock altar on which Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac, and there is also the threshing-floor of Oman the Jebusite. The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem is a magnificent building, and one can easily imagine the scenes connected with the birth of our Lord."

C. S. Little is a chaplain. He met B. K. Bond, M.C., within the walls of Jerusalem itself. He writes: "The first time I saw Palestine was in January, 1917, at the Rafa action, when I was within a mile of the border, but did not cross it. Since then, however, I have been at both battles of Gaza, at the capture of Beersheba, and in the last campaign right across Palestine to some miles North of Jaffa. Fortunately I was able to go into Jaffa twice, and saw the house of Simon the Tanner and so on. I have also been through four of the five Philistine royal cities—Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod and Ekron. Jerusalem impressed me immensely. I was not in the least disappointed. Of course I made my pilgrimage to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem was the only place guarded by British troops. The village has become quite a town in these days. I was also able to spend a good deal of time in Beer-sheba and had to water my camel there. There is still 'strife at the wells,' as in the days of Abraham and Isaac. On the other hand, I was only a few hours in Hebron."

C. VV. Townsend did not enter Jerusalem, though, like Cœur de Lion in *Richard Yea and Nay*, he saw the city from the neighbouring hills. He had a very strenuous time during the rapid advance through Palestine. He was in the front line all the time when Intelligence Officer. Night and day he was busy, never getting more than two consecutive hours' sleep. He was for long Adjutant during a time of continuous marching, fighting and wet weather. "I never remember feeling so cold," he says. "'Jacko,' or 'Johnny Turk,' is close in view the whole time, and between the beginning of operations and December 20 we've never had more than three days' rest at a time."

At the latter end of January, however, he was sent to Cairo for a special senior

officer's training course, partly as a rest and partly in view of promotion. This, too, was very strenuous, but a change from the arduous campaigning life. He was able to pass his time in Cairo itself every week-end; and, moreover, the escape from tinned provisions was a great relief.

He had arranged that on conclusion of the training he should go up the Nile to Assouan and Luxor. Then suddenly he was given his captaincy, and at seven hours' notice was ordered on a weird mission in quite another part of the world. What that mission was we do not know. But readers of the *Denstonian*, recalling Townsend's various exploits, have at any-rate a wide field for conjecture.

## II.

The following extracts from Townsend's letters are of great value. We can but make a selection from an account of quite exceptional interest.

One thing that is charming up in these rocky mountain fastnesses where we are now, is the lovely wild mountain flowers that have come up in a night with the recent heavy rains. When wandering about the rocks in dismounted advances and patrols, I have found the most gorgeous clumps of cyclamen, growing right in the clefts between the rocks. It is a most delicate purplish white. Also there are huge clumps of narcissus; and we tread or ride over the pure white, yellow and purple crocuses wherever we go. Also we find snowdrops, daisies—all sorts of wonderful flowers of all colours that I don't know the names of. We've seen at two yards range big gazelles about four feet high, jackals, partridges, capercaillie, and yesterday, in action, I saw a pure black and white *robin*, with a snowy breast and coal black head, tail and bar each side; no other colour,

and the black and white colour joined in a hard line—a most striking bird. I've heard of this variety before. Of course the oranges, grapes and olives are delicious, the biggest oranges I've seen—six inches from top to bottom.

Talking of fruit, about two weeks ago we were in a bivouac about two miles from the coast, and I was astonished when going down for a bathe, to find colossal blackberry bushes all the way down the Wadi. I had a huge feed. Since then we have had tons.

I've been in some wonderful old Franciscan and Benedictine monasteries about here, and what are very interesting are the thriving Jewish colonies, where we can buy the most delicious brown whole-meal bread, a good wine (dry) and also a heavy brand like very good port; also oranges, dried figs, and raisins—so we can always get a good meal.

The Jews about here are delightful people, so glad to see us, *very strict* Jews, observing all the old Jewish rites. Sabbath begins at sundown, and not two seconds later, on Friday evening, and not a penny will they change hands with in trade after sundown on Friday. They talk most languages, English, French, Russian, German, Turkish and Arabic. They have mixed with many races, but a lot of them were born in Jerusalem. The girls are very pretty and well dressed, but all wear modern clothing.

As for our horses during the very heavy fighting of three weeks ago, the longest they went without water was eighty hours for two of the squadrons, and sixty for the other squadron. This was after the big charge at Huj. We understand our regiment was the first mentioned in General Allenby's despatches. We were annoyed that reports mentioned "Australian mounted troops" only in the colossal

sweep round between Beersheba and the Dead Sea. We were with the Australians all through, and have been for eighteen months.

We are absolutely down to bed-rock in grub, tobacco, cigarettes, clothing and matches. We feed on bully beef and biscuits and occasionally fresh bread from the villages here; though we are not often within reach of them. Luckily, we get oranges and dried figs occasionally, and once or twice when we have been in certain bivouacs we have killed sheep and steers. The last heifer we had we positively revelled over the fresh meat. Smokes and clothing are the worst. The old serge tunic I am wearing is in shreds: We are positive wrecks. *I've no shirt now.* My two went to cheese rind and shreds. My last I wore till I had seven safety-pins holding it together, when I finally had to cast it, saving the safety-pins and buttons, and I now wear a cardigan next my skin. Smokes, too, were bad. For nearly three weeks I only had some poisonous Greeko-Turkish grown stuff.

It is wonderful! I've had this hour to write in with only six interruptions. I am writing in a ruined mosque in a ruined city more ruined still by shell-fire. But most of us, and all orderly rooms and signal shacks, are in huge caves under the rocks.

We spent Christmas and the New Year up in the mountains, and each of the festivals it was in pouring rain, hail, some snow and bitter cold. Our horses were a mile or two back in charge of the "Number Threes," one man to four horses. They fared worse than we did, as they were down in the plains and were flooded out, up to their breasts in water and up to their hocks in mud. Some men of the transport were nearly drowned and several horses and some donkeys were lost altogether. I was Adjutant all through our period of holding



the lines in the mountains, so (with the Colonel) I had my little mare up in the mountains with me all the time, and I was very glad. We advanced our line several times during the two months we were in the mountains, but had no very "bloody" operations, as we had in the earlier weeks of the operations. Holding a line of rocky ridges, where there was no track even for mules, and even on foot it was very precipitous, was a change after our cavalry rushes of the earlier part of the stunt, and our extraordinary mobility (as it seems now), operating at one place one day, and the next fifty miles away.

Well, we are back "nine days" trek behind the line now, *resting*, which means no rest at all, but re-fitting, making up deficiencies in saddlery and equipment—no joke after three months' wear and tear it has had in the wet season. There are reinforcements and re-mounts, new clothing, and the thousand and one things that have to be done after operations on the scale on which we have been involved. And now we are down from the hills and getting settled in a standing camp. We have polo, football, tent-pegging, sports, race meetings—and concerts—a welcome change and rest. There is a horse show in the afternoon to which the men are going and they have their Christmas (?) dinner afterwards (^"150 worth of Turkeys and plum-puddings from up the Nile).

*Cairo, January 19, 1918.* I had a pretty good journey down, all things considered, sleeping well during the nights in my blankets in a good bunk. It is wonderful really, considering the strain on the Palestine railroad—if you come to think of it.

*Cairo, January 29, 1918.* I am very fit but I was ragged when I came down the line—not a shirt to my back, and my old serge tunic literally in shreds.

Looking back on the whole operation from the beginning of October, when we started our first action, it was a glorious yet terrible experience. One wants to leave it for a time to look back on it all from a distance and so get general impressions. The Holy Land is wonderful and never to be forgotten, though there was considerably more of fighting and hardships than of sight-seeing.

*February 27. On board H.M. Troopship*—Far Eastern waters. I was suddenly searched for all over Cairo, after having been promised eight days leave, and preparing to leave for Luxor. I was ordered to leave by the 6.15 p.m. for Suez—just seven hours' notice. I had a terrible rush getting fresh kit and saying goodbye. I am off on a weird but intensely interesting expedition. There is no knowing how it may end or when I may come back.

*Above Basra, March 8.* Received the shirts—a great relief! The voyage was grand, but from Aden there was not a breath of air—suffocating. In the Arabian Gulf the nights were calm and moonlight. There was wonderful phosphorescence: a long wavy ripple from the stern like a white, flashing magnesium ribbon. One could see the fish darting about under the surface of the water like luminous balls. After an interesting stay at Basra we are now moving up country. I can give no other information.

Fifteen of us got the loan of a steam launch and went fifteen miles down the river from Basra to the wedding feast of a great Persian Sheikh, given for the wedding of his favourite son of his favourite wife—it lasted a week. It was the most interesting oriental function I have seen. This Sheikh has one hundred and thirty-one unofficial wives, forty-six official, and five to whom he has been married in state. He paraded a lot of his favourite sons before us; they were marvellous strapping fellows. Some of the

Persian architecture and art was extremely interesting, but more so were the Persians themselves. We arrived at 6 p.m., had a tremendous spread for dinner—one hundred and twenty guests. The Persian band played "God Save the King" in such a way that we hardly repressed roars of laughter. The dinner was partly Western and partly Oriental. After dinner, which lasted about three hours, there were speeches in Persian, Arabic, English, French and other languages; then a wonderful display of fireworks made on the premises. The whole palace—covering an area greater than Blenheim—was decorated with thousands of flags and hundreds of thousands of electric lights. After the fireworks was a dancing show: there were two dancing boys with the most wonderful hair I have ever seen, and three dancing girls—one a Persian, one an Arab, and the third a Syrian. We left in our launch at 2 30 a.m. with tremendous cheers, and arrived at Basra at 6 a.m.

#### A WESTERN RAID.

L. Gumby gained the Military Cross for a brilliant little raid. The Germans occupied a derelict tank and a pill-box, which were rushed by a platoon and thirty men under 2nd Lieut. Gumby at 7 a.m. on a day towards the end of March. Thirty-seven Germans were captured, three machine-guns were taken, and many casualties were inflicted by artillery, rifle, and bayonet. His Colonel wrote to Gumby as follows:

"Dear Gumby,—You will without doubt be surfeited with congratulations: Probably I was in a better position than anyone else to realize the situation, and see the whole operation. I would like you to tell your men how exceedingly proud I and the

whole battalion are of them. They went over the top like top-hole sportsmen, every one of them, and I take my hat off to them. There was not the slightest hesitation even in the face of (something that cannot be put in a letter). The advance looked grand and made me feel very humble and small because I realized how every private earned his brass better than I did. It is an achievement that you and your lads can look back upon with pride all your lives. There has been no raid in the Division to come near it, and it beats any I have heard of in any other. Every man deserved the Military Medal and more—and every man's name shall be kept in the roll of the battalion's record. Jolly good luck to you and all the lads, and may God bring you all out safe at the end of the war."

The *Halifax Courier* had the following account of the raid:

"Possibly the chief factor of success in the raid was its sheer impudence. That a single platoon should attack, even under cover of night, a pill-box of unknown garrison and on whose tough hide a field gun had about as much effect as a pea-shooter, would seem a sufficiently hazardous enterprise; yet these surprising men strolled calmly across No Man's Land in broad daylight. Picture to yourselves a brown, shell-torn declivity, commanded by our line and shrouded in the distance by the morning mist, from whose surface rose the squat, ugly form of the pill-box. The comparative quiet of dawn had succeeded the crackle of machine guns and rifles which had marked the nervous night. The prowling sniper had retired from many a point of vantage to the shelter of the pill-box, there to sleep through the day and tell how he had hated us in the dark hours. Suddenly the pandemonium of our guns broke out, and the tense watchers in our line, crouching on the fire-step and gripping their rifles, saw

a curtain of smoke and red fire drop around the objective, cutting it off from other pill-boxes left and right—an enthralling, hideous sight. A few minutes passed, the colonel gave the order, and several tiny groups crossed the parapet and meandered down the slope. One group turned off to the right and was seen to examine a stranded tank which had on previous occasions been occupied by Boche snipers. This morning it was empty, and the men rejoined the main party, by this time some forty yards from the pill-box, and faced by a formidable stretch of marsh. It was at this moment that the enemy took the alarm. Bombs were thrown, and a grey figure attempted to reach a machine gun mounted on the top of the pill-box. A pause occurred. It was the crucial moment, and the issue was decided by the coolness of the men, who proceeded with calm deliberation to shoot every Hun who showed a limb. The machine gunner on the pill-box was killed before he could fire a shot; a tall bomber who had been throwing 'tatie-mashers' flung up his arms and fell; several panicky Huns who tried to escape to the rear were shot on the run.

"But a raid, to be successful must not last too long. This the leader recognised. A bombing party, led by Corporal Caine, and covered by the deadly fire of the snipers, dashed forward and secured the exit. A moment's hand-to-hand fighting followed—a death on our side and some on theirs—and the attack was over. All that remained was to count the bag; and here came a surprise, for instead of the dozen or so persons expected, no less than 36 trooped out of the pill box, led by a smart sergeant-major, and trotted grotesquely, with hands uplifted, toward our line—this latter plain to see by the row of ecstatic faces surmounting the parapet. The whole operation had occupied about twenty minutes."

## DOCTORS OF DIVINITY.

*Yet nurs'd with skill, what dazzling fruits  
appear!  
E'en now sagacious foresight points to show  
A little bench of heedless bishops here.  
And there a Chancellor in embryo.*  
Shenstone.

Even the work of marking examination papers has its compensations. Every jaded pedagogue of the blue pencil knows how the monotony is occasionally relieved by glimpses into the schoolboy mind which afford him welcome entertainment. Such diversion is offered by the curious confusion of thought, colossal ignorance, perversion of facts, or unconscious humour displayed by some of those whose knowledge of the subject it is sought to educe. Perhaps some instances we have met with in the course of several years may be found amusing by readers of *The Denstonian*. They are drawn almost entirely from Divinity Papers, and, with one exception, we can personally vouch for them as genuine.

A form was asked why the proper ecclesiastical colour for S. John the Baptist's Day should be white, and not red, as might be expected for the festival of a martyr. One small boy's solution of the problem was this,— "Because they brought his head on a white plait" (*sic*). In speaking of this same prophet another boy once wrote, "He was prepared to suffer anything for his religion: this is shewn by his living on honey in the wilderness." It is, perhaps, surprising that any boy should deem a diet of honey a mark of the mortification of the flesh! Another young hopeful's recollection of what he had read about the outward appearance of the Baptist was somewhat inadequately expressed in the words, "He had loins about his waist."

Boys' ideas about angels are sometimes curious. (They commonly spell the word,

"angle" by the bye). Thus, "An angel is a winged person clad in white enamel." Another boy who had probably heard the saying that Providence exercises special care over children and the inebriate, concludes an essay on the Angels with these words,— "Children are able to see angels better than anybody else, and sometimes drunken men."

The successful manner in which one of our budding doctors of divinity reproduces the parable of the Unjust Steward in the modern vernacular will, no doubt, be readily appreciated. We have not altered the punctuation.

"There was once a man's servant who was going to lose his job and he went to one man and asked how much he owed his lord and he said too fathoms of oil and the servant told him to write down a cheque for 50 fathoms and this showed that the man repented."

"What reason is there for supposing that Judas Iscariot was not a fisherman like most of the Apostles?" The following answers given have at any rate the merit of ingenuity. "Because he went and hanged himself, and didn't drown himself." "By the way he tied the rope round his neck," wrote another. We imagine that he meant to imply that the unprofessional hand was manifested by the resultant falling headlong.

Our friends at Farm Street and Stonyhurst would be interested in the light here shed upon their origin and faith. "The Jesuits were the followers of Wycliffe. At the present day they are called Wesleyans." "The Jesuits were a body of Chapel people; their religion was started in the reign of William and Mary."

The Society of Friends, too, would doubtless recognise themselves in the following description—"Quakers: One of the many religious sects formed at the Revolu-

tion. They are a set of people who take life in a very serious way, and have not much religion."

Alas! for all the efforts of Dr. Pusey and his little band to make themselves understood.

"The Tractarians were a body of men who filled England at the time of the Reformation with pamphlets and tracts against the Church and its Sacraments." "The Tractarians were a body of people founded for the purpose of writing, reading and publishing religious tracts. Their headquarters were at Clapham. Hannah Moore was a prominent member." The following estimate of the great Protector is scarcely that of Carlyle, though it might be thought to shew some acquaintance with his *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*. "Cromwell, who was practically king, was a godless man who professed to be a very earnest Christian. The number of times he is said to have spent the night wrestling with God in prayer cannot be counted." Another historian informs us that "The Non-Jurors were the people who wouldn't sign the Milinery Petition."

Here we have one of the poor old Anglican relics that have survived the wreck of mediaevalism. "The Knights of S. John were a sect founded in the Crusades to fight, and also to look after the wounded. They exist in some form at the present day, known as the S. John's Ambulance Corps. This is the only relic we have of them."

That which has been profanely called "The Use of Scarum" has always proved somethin' of a puzzle to many, and we infer that the youthful liturgiologist whose opinion we quote next is not one of its votaries. "Use of Sarum: This has been almost from its beginning a mystery to anyone outside the Sarum Church. They have secret signs of their own, but it is the opinion of nearly everyone that the

English Church method is the best." The cloven hoof of the wicked ritualist surely peeps out here. Asked to write a short note on Jezebel, the candidate replied : " It (*sic*) is a kind of waistcoat worn by the priest at Mass."

An exceptionally original answer was given to the question, " Who said, and under what circumstances? Thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." " The mother of S. John the Baptist said this when she wanted a son."

The Church Catechism has yielded the following great thought:—

" The stranger that is within thy gates means the tradesmen, butcher, baker."

By way of variety we insert here an example of Latin scholarship. "*Ei nanta vestem et pannum fert.*" In perfect seriousness a boy translated the sentence, "The sailor brings him his vest and pants."

We said that with one exception we could personally guarantee all the instances given to be genuine. Here is the exception. It bears internal evidence, however, that it emanates from Denstone. " S. Paul had let his hair grow long in Cenchrea; for he had a vow. And certain men bound themselves with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had Slaney him."

E.W.E.

#### WAR NEWS.

Since our last number we have heard of the following distinctions gained by Denstonians :

C.M.G.

Brig.-Gen. C. R. P. Winser, D.S.O.

#### SPECIAL PROMOTION.

Major H. W. T. Smith, D.S.O., to be Brevet-Lieut.-Col.

#### BAR TO D.S.O.

Lieut.-Colonel H. W. T. Smith, D.S.O.

#### MILITARY CROSS.

A.-Captain F. V. Harris.

Captain C. R. Norman.

2nd Lieut. L. Gumby.

Captain J. N. Knight.

Captain I. McDonald.

#### MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES.

Major Rupert Gray.

Major C. H. Fox.

Brig.-Gen. C. R. P. Winser, D.S.O., (3rd time)

Lieut.-Col. H. M. Milward, D.S.O., (3rd time.)

Lieut-Col. H. W. T. Smith, D.S.O., (3rd time.)

Capt. G. B. Fyldes, M.C., (2nd time.)

Lieut. B. Webb.

Capt. R. P. Pollard, R.A.M.C.

Rev. G. S. Provis, C.F.

Rev. S. Groves, C.F., (Master.)

Lieut.-Colonel C. R. P. Winser has been gazetted Brigadier-General.

The following accounts appear of the winning by Denstonians of the Military Cross :

T.—Lieut. Herbert Philip Wynne Humphreys, R.F.A., for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when acting as Forward Observation Officer under most trying circumstances. In spite of exceptional heavy gun fire he succeeded in laying and maintaining a telephone line for a distance of 5,000 yards, and although it was constantly cut during two days and a night, it was immediately repaired in every case and most valuable information was sent back. For a long time this line was the only means by which the infantry could get any information back to the rear. The success of the operation was very greatly

due to the magnificent example set by this officer and his complete disregard of personal danger.

T.—Lieut. Noel Forbes Humphreys, M.-G. Corps. His tank becoming stranded, he commenced to dig it out, and though wounded he completed his task and continued in action the whole day, finally bringing his tank out of action to the rallying point.

H. C. C. Collis won his Military Cross thus: On the battery position being heavily shelled, resulting in a munition dump and the camouflage being set on fire, he immediately organized a party, which succeeded in extinguishing the fire. He supervised the party until badly wounded, and it was undoubtedly due to his prompt and gallant action that the position was saved from total destruction by fire.

His wounds have nearly healed now, but he considers massage "pretty deadly." Fie and C. Girling are at Catterick.

Dr. Lawrence U. Geraty, of Ingham, joined H.M. Forces in February, 1915, and since then has served as Regimental Medical Officer. He was in the front line with the Warwicks in Egypt and Gallipoli in 1915, and after being in hospital at Malta returned to England. In 1916 the doctor was sent to France with a Sussex battalion, and went through the fighting on the Somme and Ancre, and at Ypres. Last year he was again in the front line, with London regiments, at Bullecourt, Arras, and Passhendaele Ridges, and returned home ill. After some weeks in hospital in London, he is now in the Convalescent Home for officers at Woodhall Spa. The people of Ingham are proud to know that Captain Geraty has been awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry in attending the wounded under heavy fire, and they congratulate him on the grand

work he has accomplished at the front during the past three years.

The following is the record in the *Gazette* (March 7) relating to W. Turner's Military Cross: "He had on two occasions to change his regimental post, on account of its being destroyed by shell fire, but continued to dress the wounded of three battalions throughout the day in the open under heavy fire."

The Secretary of State for the Royal Air Force has appointed W. A. Bland Director of Departmental Finance in the War Office, to be Assistant Financial Secretary in the Air Ministry.

Roy Wilson is 2nd Lieut. and Pilot in the R.A.F., in a night flying squadron.

J. L. Haidy, after leaving the Darracq Works tried to obtain a commission, but his heart was not sufficiently sound and he had to join the Motor Transport. Later he was transferred to the Herts Regiment and was trained at Luton for nine months. He tried to enter the R.F.C. but again his health stood in his way, and he is now hoping to go to France with the Suffolk's so that he may qualify for a commission.

L. A. Cumin writes to say that he and his brother are still with the French Army in the Salonika district. The latter is near the much contested Hill 1050.

R. B. Hamer, R. L. Goldsmith and W. Horsfield are, we regret to say, reported prisoners of war in German hands. Horsfield is at Holzminden, one of the few officers of his battery who survive. He still looks forward to going to Cambridge and asks for mathematical books to be sent to him so that he may continue his studies. That is very characteristic of him. He went through the fighting at Vimy and Messines and on the Somme. He was captured near S. Cjuentin.

H. M. Chapman was wounded early in

March by shell-fire, but rapidly recovered.

F. H. Brett was wounded on April 19 in Palestine and sent to 31st General Hospital, Port Said, thence to 15th General Hospital, Alexandria, and thence to Mustapha Hospital there.

R. W. Peel is flying seaplanes in the Aegean Sea.

E. Rhodes has been with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force since January 1916, and transferred to the 67th Australian Squadron R.F.C. in December 1916. He was wounded while flying near Beersheba on October 27, 1917, in the right shoulder, but made a good recovery.

H. B. Silverwood has been suffering from neurasthenia following shell shock.

M. H. Spicer is now, after his many adventures in the East, on the Dover Patrol.

J. S. G. Branscombe, B. Girling, J. R. Fallon and T. C. Keble are reported wounded.

H. S. Robinson, after thirteen months service as a wireless operator, is applying for a commission as Sub-Lieutenant, R.N.V.R.

W. N. Robinson has done nearly eighteen months' active service with the R.N.D. in Lemnos and France, but was until recently in hospital for a year.

Oswald Forrest has been on a bombing course at Godstone. He has played football for his brigade team, and has lectured to a literary society on the English Pre-Raphaelites.

E. A. Champney wrote in April to say that as he was in a forward area company, most of his work had been done under shell fire. "I cover," he writes, "at least fifteen miles a day—chiefly over ploughed fields. The other day I saw a battalion of tanks, and one afternoon I saw five balloons brought down by one airman. My knowledge of field engineering, chiefly gained in

the O.T.C. at school, is proving very useful."

F. B. Jeffries is an Armament Officer in the R.F.C.

D. Carpenter, who was captured so long ago as April 22, 1915, is still in the Province of Hanover, just now being at Hameln, the scene of the story of the "Pied Piper." He is in good health and writes cheerfully.

G. Griffin would be delighted to hear from any O.Ds. in 'Mesopotamia,' or even to meet them if they go to Karachi. Unfortunately we are not allowed to publish his address. He has met Anderson, of Woodard. He hoped when he wrote in January to go to Persia.

An O.D. in France writes: "The *Denstonian* still remains in my opinion one of the best, if not *the* best, of school magazines. The contents may change slightly from time to time according to whether the Editor is athlete or professor, but the reading is still as interesting as ever."

T. Ashley Sparks, who is President Director of the Cunard Line in New York, and President and Director of Gunch, Edge & Co., New York, is a member of the British War Mission in the United States and represents the British Shipping Controller.

Of those who took part in our last Play, in November 1913, no less than twelve have been killed and two are "missing." One is a prisoner in Germany and nine have gained the Military Cross.

R. P. Holland is a prisoner of war.

Amongst the missing of whom at the time of going to press we have still no news are Lieuts. E. C. Keble and T. C. Hanison, M.G.C.

R. A. Briggs writes to say that he has laid miles of telephone wire in the North West frontier, but that the natives cut it down in order to enclose their cattle.

G. S. Fillingham was slightly wounded in the right arm by a machine-gun bullet on the second day of the German offensive. He says that he last saw E. H. Glaisby and T. Si Andrew on the right of the Cambrai-Bapaume road.

T. Newton wrote in early May: "Your post-card arrived last night after a protracted tour of all the battle fronts. It finally tracked me down in a little dug-out in one of the most unsavoury spots in Flanders. It finds me very fit and cheery, but awfully tired, these being very hard and anxious times for us. Yesterday I was having a few hours' rest when I was roused by an officer wishing to see the O.C. Garrison. He informed me he was an artillery officer doing liason to me. I was not feeling very pleased with him as I had been up all night and many previous nights, but I discovered accidentally that he was McDonald. He whispered in some of his conversation the magic word 'Denstone' and you can guess what followed."

R. E. McDonald wrote in February saying that he had been in a very "unhealthy" spot—though this does not, we take it, refer to the "unsavoury dag-out."

Eric Wood is recovering from yet another wound, but we fear that his left arm will always be crippled.

I. McDonald, M.C., is already captain and flight-commander.

Our latest news of various Naval O.D.s. is that they are on the following ships:—G. Barker, H.M.S. *Temeraire*; A. W. Bates, H.M.S. *Inflexible*; R. R. S. Bowker, H.M.S. *Beaver*; H. W. Downward, H.M.S. *Ebro*; B. Dela<sup>n</sup>, H.M.S. *Onslaught*; G. L. F. Fleet, H.M.S. *Artois*; S. W. Griffin, H.M.S. *Princess*; A. F. Grimby, H.M.S. *Indomitable*; F. M. Jackson, hospital ship *Magic*; M. C. Rogers,

H.M.S. *Gloucestershire*; K. A. D. Waterhouse, H.M.S. *Arrogant*.

H. Musker is reported wounded.

A. Maister is with the Inns of Court O.T.C., Berkhamsted.

I. Jones Parry is stationed at Sheerness, K. W. H. Austin at Newmarket.

H. Jacks writes: "I have been ordered to join the Nigeria Regiment at Lagos. I am looking forward to Nigeria, which will be a change from other theatres of war. The Colonial Office will, they say, give me a civil appointment after the war, so I shall probably settle there for some years to come. Wilfrid is still going strong in Mesopotamia, having just brought down a couple of Huns, much to the joy of the Squadron Commander," He sailed on May 15th.

C. D. L. Turner is on the North West frontier, "30 miles out from Ivohat. We have detachments still further out, right on the hills. It is terribly cold here now (January)—about 6 degrees of frost each night. Our detachments, which are mostly 6,000 feet up, have continual snow."

C. F. W. Haseldine writes from France to say that he is studying wireless telegraphy. "Generally speaking, the country round here is disfigured by mine buildings and slag-hcaps, but just where the woods are it is delightful. The ground is carpeted with anemones and cowslips. In a way it reminds one of Alton, and yet there is an atmosphere about Alton not to be found elsewhere."

P. H. Sykes is stationed at Dunstable.

R. S. White went to France in March. He writes: "We get a good deal of work of every sort—trench strafing, bombing, offensive patrols and so on—but have comfortable quarters." He has met Mr. Woods, who is a Base Paymaster.

H. D'A. Champney wrote before he was wounded and taken prisoner: "At



present I am, as Tommy Atkins puts it, 'in the pink.' We are resting and clearing up after an energetic time in the recent operations and having no sleep for days. We shall probably enter *la guerre* again before long."

His account of the later fighting runs:—"We were awakened at 3 a.m. on the 21st of March by a terrific barrage; we stood to at 5.45; were ready to move at one and a half hours' notice all day; left at 8.30 p.m. I got no sleep at all, going with a Major to reconnoitre a defence line. The Company paraded at 3 a.m., and were in position at 4 a.m. We consolidated all day. Took duty as infantry officer of the watch, &c. We arranged sentries and reliefs, and noted gaps in the wire. I couldn't sleep, owing to the barrage. We were relieved by the Coldstream Guards at 4 p.m., and marched back and breakfasted. There was no time for sleep. I managed to get the company into huts. We paraded at 7.30 a.m., and took up a new defence line and consolidated it. After 4 p.m. we marched back and got a little sleep. We paraded at 1 a.m. to-day, and worked hard at strong points. At 8.40 a.m. we moved back and had breakfast, sleep, and peace."

Later came the distressing news that he had been killed. One of his obituary notices contained the following summary of his experiences:—"He was gazetted to a commission in the Yorkshire Regiment, January 24th, 1917, proceeding to France, March 15th, 1917. He took part, like the very best type of Public School boy, in the operations of the British Army that year, culminating in the advance on Cambrai last November, and was two or three days and nights joining on to the Guards' wire on Bourlon Wood, the foremost point reached. The men were subjected to gas-shells the whole time, and never without

their gas masks for a minute until ordered to withdraw: This was considered only part of their ordinary work. His year's work in that sector and his life were together lost, in the recent German progress. The Colonel and Major having been wounded, in default of senior officers the boy became O.C. company, and finally O.C. battalion; got the men into a sunken road, would not allow any to pass till he had collected about 600, organised them into sections and platoons, and in the end advanced amid shrapnel and high explosive, thus strengthening worn-out troops in front; took up a position with two battalions on his flank—one since almost wiped out—until orders came to clear out and go back for a rest. His division was said to have 'stood like a stone wall on the Army's right flank,' whose commander was 'proud to have them in his army,' and they received congratulations from the King."

He was knocked over, his captain and adjutant says, "while fighting against desperate odds, covering his comrades to the finish, till the Bosche was only thirty yards away, when they shot him down. His last words to his few remaining men were to look to themselves, so that they could not even bring him back (dead, as they supposed). It was a glorious end."

We are very glad to say, however, that the news that H. D'A Champney is alive is confirmed by the War Office. They have heard from the Red Cross at Copenhagen that he is a prisoner, wounded, in German hands. He is at Ingolstadt, Bavaria. He was wounded in five places and is temporarily paralysed in the legs. However he writes cheerfully, and says that he is well treated.

R. J. Sedgwick writes:—"I ran across Knight the other day—now a captain in the She: woods—and I have also met R. Bassett,

H. D. A. Champney, and others. It was a great relief to get away from the war for a short time, and talk about the old School. We had rather a trying time during the retreat, but managed to get all our guns away, and did fairly good work fighting a rearguard action—rather an exceptional thing for six-inch howitzers to do."

*The East African Standard* published on January 3rd the following official statement:—"Operations, culminating in the defeat of the Aulihan, and the flight of the leader, Abdurrahman Mursal, have recently taken place near the western bank of the Jutsa River, below Serenli. . . . A force of the King's African Rifles was sent against them . . . . under Captain Owen Martin" [O.D.] "which, marching on Hagagable, on the river south of Serenli, was attacked by the Aulihan on the night of December 25-26. The attack was beaten off, and Hagagable was subsequently taken at the point of the bayonet. The Aulihan fled, leaving many dead.

"Captain Martin's column pursued, and on the 28th December, captured Abdurrahman Mursal's village to the south-west of Hagagable. . . . Twelve hundred camels were taken. . . . The putsuit was continued."

A. E. Barlow was still in India in February. He has met C. D. L. Turner.

C. H. Finch is in the N.W. Frontier Province. Despite rumours of a submarine attack, his journey out was uneventful. "At present," he writes, "I have to go to the riding-school, and really it is too amusing for words. There I sit, whilst the instructor talks away in Hindustani, trying to explain various things to me, whilst I can't understand a word he says. Yesterday I sent for the barber. I couldn't help laughing when I was having my hair cut, because it reminded me so much of Slaney, to sit in my bungalow with a towel

round my neck whilst the barber hacked away. • This station is a most desolate spot. It is just on the plains below the Himalayas."

N. H. Radford received two of his medals when he was home in February, and had previously received his Croix de Guerre from Sir Douglas Haig. In April he was "where most of the trouble is," but up to the 6th had not been called upon to do "anything very desperate." He is now a Major.

E. H. Glaisby wrote at the end of April:—"Our division was mentioned for its good work, so we all felt rather pleased. Things have settled down a little in our part of the globe, but it isn't like the old front. In place of the thirty-foot dug-out, we now mess and sleep in a little hole in the ground, with a waterproof sheet stretched across. Unfortunately the name doesn't suit our waterproof, as the rain drips in in streams. I lost all my kit in the retirement, and had the luxury of a clean shirt only yesterday, after six weeks." A little later he wrote again:—"We were in the thick of it for the first three days, but then the remnants of us were attached to the D.A.C., so we didn't get any very strenuous time afterwards, beyond taking up ammunition to the guns."

L. B. Helder wrote from Germany on March 30, full of affection for Denstone. "It bucks—if one may use the word—one up to hear that the same old things are going on. Things with me are the same as ever."

S. E. Jenkins wrote to Denstone to wish it good luck, before going up to the line in April.

L. J. Roskams wrote in April:—"We've been having rather a hard time of it just recently, but have emerged—at least, most of us—untouched, and still quite cheery and optimistic."

R. Larkam was very busy dealing with recruits at Sunderland in March. He wrote most feelingly of Airs. Salmon's kindness to him as a small boy: He has seen a good deal of J. Cornes. S. H. Larkam is now well enough to walk a little.

We much regret to learn that C. Venables has been very ill with diphtheria, and had temporary paralysis of the eyes.

H. L. Pearce wrote happily from his O.C.B. at Fleet early in March.

Our Vice-Provost has just been made a Colonel and Deputy - Acting - Chaplain-General to the 10th Army Corps.

P. W. A. Wood went to France in February. Part of the journey from Havre was made in a cattle-truck; and even when he was in a carriage, ice formed so thickly on the windows that he could not see out of them.

A. G. Tobias writes:—I was hit on the night of April 21—most annoying, after going through the worst of the battle without a scratch, although Fritz had two very good attempts to gas me before the 21st.

"When this show started I was close up to the support trenches with an anti-tank gun. I had been up all night working on the gun pit, and was back in my dug-out, consisting of corrugated iron and sandbags, and just splinter-proof. Well, at 4.15 a.m. Fritz started. He didn't shell the trenches, but began on the road in front of my dug-out, and went back to the battery. He kept this barrage up till about 10.30. Up to 9.15 I thought nothing of it, except that it was retaliation for a raid which we had made that morning. However, the enemy's guns knocked practically all the sandbags off the dug out, and I began patiently to wait for the shell!

"About this stage of the proceedings, I suddenly heard rifle and machine-gun bullets going overhead, so J went out to

look, and found—I must confess, more to my horror than my surprise—that we were between the two infantries. We managed to get three rounds into the Boches, and then to blow the gun up, but it missed fire three times. Of course, by this time we had given up all hope of ever seeing the battery or any of our friends again, and we did not care what happened to us, except that more than one or two Germans were coming with us. Fritz was between thirty and fifty yards in front of us. We had rifles and a few rounds, but we only had time to fire two or three rounds, because, having none of our infantry anywhere near us, we thought that 'he who fights and runs away lives to fight another day'—not that we expected to see many more dajs. I'm afraid that if it hadn't been such a terribly misty morning we should not have done. The detachment and I arrived at the battery later, and had to go across country, as Fritz was shelling the roads and paths pretty badly.

"I expect all this sounds rather like a 'penny dreadful,' but it is nevertheless true, and we were certainly fortunate in getting back without a scratch on any one of us, and only a little too much gas. We had some very good fighting during the next two or three days, and on two or three occasions we had to use open sights."

J. C. Davies is an army chaplain. He was wounded during the German offensive, his aim being fractured by a hand-grenade, and he has been taken prisoner. His address is: "Army Chaplains Dept, Festungs Lazarett No. 1, Gernersheim - a-Rhein, Germany." He says that he is being 'decently treated,' and hopes to be sent home in the summer. He retains a great affection for Denstone.

G. S. C. Weigall is in Egypt.

C. A. Beard, reported "missing" is a prisoner in Germany.

C. S. Little in now in France.

J. N. Knight won the Officers' Light Weight in boxing at the 3rd Army Infantry School.

WAR OBITUARY.

*2nd Lieut. Francis Ellington Leslie* (formerly *Wright*), 1st Batt. King's African Rifles, was killed in action on August 20th, 1917. He was in the British South African Mounted Police from August, 1913, and was in charge of the district of Penhalonga till December, 1916, when he was sent with a draft to German East Africa, where he was made sergeant. In May following he was given a commission in the S.A. Rifles. His colonel (who is the brother of H. P. Hawthorne) reported that he was killed while leading his platoon into action, shot through the heart and died instantaneously. The enemy were on the move, and his platoon seized a ridge 300 yards from them, and did exceedingly well until he was killed. His major spoke of him as an excellent officer, whose work could always be relied on. He is buried in the Mahuri Mountains. He was herein 1909-12, when he left to go to S. Edmund Hall, Oxford.

We have also heard of the death of *J. L. Watson*, killed on active service in 1917.

On the opening day of the great battle in France *Lieut. Gerald Francis Woolterton Reed* was killed. He was here, in Selwyn, from May, 1906, until July, 1912, and was a relative of Provost Meyneil, a fact of which he was naturally very proud. He proved himself a worthy member of a great family. Here he won everybody's heart by his bright cheerfulness and public spirit, and in most things played a prominent part. He left rather young to go

to Hamburg to learn business, and happened to be at home on a short holiday when war was declared. He promptly obtained a commission and in September was gazetted to the Border Regiment. In a year's time he was badly wounded, but was soon again in action and was mentioned in dispatches. But nothing could curb his cheerfulness, and all of us noted with pleasure that on his last visit to us, although he bore the scars of his grievous injury, he was "still the same frank boy as before." He returned to France not long afterwards. In this present battle he was well up in the front when the battle began, and on March 21 was in command, leading his men. He was shot above the knee. But he refused to be carried back, and ordered the stretcher-bearers to go ahead for some who were more seriously wounded before he would allow himself to be attended to. This act of noble self-denial cost him his life. He was again shot as he lay, this time in the thigh. When the bearers again came for him they found an artery had been severed and he was fast bleeding to death. To add to the pathos of the incident the fighting was so severe that not even his dead body could be brought in.

*Lieut. Herbert Wynn Jones*, Machine Gun Squadron, Cavalry Division, was severely wounded on March 23 and died next day. His commanding officer says: "He was a very gallant fellow and had done extraordinarily well under very heavy shell fire on the 21st. He is a very great loss." He was here, in Meyneil, from January, 1902, until July, 1903.

*Captain Noel Forbes Humphreys*, M.C., was here from May, 1900, until July, 1905. He was in Meyneil, as also were his three brothers, H. P. Humphreys, M.C., R.F.A., A. O. Humphreys, Canadian Forestry

Corps, and H. S. G. Humphreys who was drowned, on his way to England to obtain a commission, in the loss of the *Lusitania*. Noel was always a good athlete and went to South Africa with the English XV. At the outbreak of war he offered himself for dispatch riding, but by the end of 1914 he was offered a commission in the Motor Machine Gun Corps, proceeding to France in May, 1915. He was mentioned in dispatches. Later he joined the Tank Corps and was seriously wounded on Easter Monday 1917. In spite of his wounds he completed his task and continued in action all day, finally bringing his tank safely out of action. For this he was awarded the Military Cross. On March 25 he was fatally wounded in action in France, whither he had again gone on recovering from his wounds, and died on March 27. His Major writes: "In his death I have lost an officer and a friend whom it is quite impossible to replace, for he was unique. At his work he was thorough, conscientious and enthusiastic, whilst his great skill in all forms of athletics made him invaluable with the men. Lastly, and possibly more than anything, his unflinching cheerfulness and thoughtfulness for others made him beloved of all with whom he came in contact. His last thought, when at death's door, was for others in preference to his own welfare."

We have not previously placed on record how *Henry S. Giles Humphreys* (1900-1) met his death in the loss of the *Lusitania*. He was coming to England from Canada to obtain a commission. He was a strong swimmer and could probably have saved his own life, but by devoting his energies to helping others he himself was drowned.

and *Lieut. Robert Hilton*, R.F.A., was reported missing early in April, and news

is now to hand from Copenhagen that while flying over the German lines his machine was brought down, he and his pilot both being killed. The enemy buried them in a military cemetery. He was here in Shrewsbury from September, 1914, until December, 1916, and did well in the O.T.C., in work, and in games. He received a commission in the Manchester Regiment and went to France in 1917, afterwards joining the Flying Corps.

*Lieut. Henry Vernon Jones* was in Selwyn from September, 1899, to July, 1903, and was on the staff of the State Assurance Company at Liverpool. He was always a good sportsman and played football for Birkenhead Park and Liverpool Old Boys. He also served in the Denbighshire Hussars for eight years prior to the war. He received a commission in the R.F.A. and went to France in December 1916. He served in many severe engagements before he was severely wounded in action on April 9 last. Through the heavy fighting which immediately preceded his death he did what his Captain describes as "wonderful work," which earned for him a recommendation for the Military Cross by his Major, who himself was badly wounded. "He was ready at any time, day or night, for anything that was required of him in the most cheerful and self-sacrificing manner. He was a great example to the other officers and the men, of devotion to duty, always keen and taking the greatest interest in his horses and men." He was struck by a big piece of shell in the small of the back, and though he was removed to hospital as quickly as possible small hopes were ever entertained of his recovery. When he left the battery he was still conscious and very brave about his injuries, and his Captain says "he behaved in a splendid manner." He died on April 10.

Lieut. Frank Magens Caulfeild Houghton was in Shrewsbury from May, 1908, until war broke out. Always a boy of unusual ability, he will be remembered by all readers of the *Denstonian* for several distinctly clever things he wrote for us, especially perhaps "From the Journal of Archaeology" in 1913. He was to have gone to Cambridge to study medicine, but instead at once applied for a commission. This was soon given him, in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. His skill as a motorist caused him soon to transfer to the Army Cyclists Corps and he saw much service in France. He also originated and carried through the All-Khaki Motor-Cycle race at Brooklands in 1915. In May, 1916, he transferred to the Flying Corps, where again he did very well. He was at last accidentally killed while flying in England on May 6 last. His CO. says, "He was one of my best pilots, and it is a very real sorrow to me to lose him like this. He was a very popular officer and all feel his loss." We are sure this testimony is well deserved: he was sure to be popular and he was sure to excel.

R. I. P.

#### THE SPORTS.

The Annual Sports were held on April 3. The weather, contrary to its usual custom, was fine, and there were a good many visitors. The results were as follows:—Kicking Competition (open)—ist L. Atkinson, 2nd Fergusson. Kicking Competition (under 15)—ist Holloway. "Age" Mile—ist L. Atkinson, 2nd Pattison, 3rd Fowler. Mile (open)—ist Pattison, 2nd L. Atkinson, 3rd McMichael, 4th Cutter.

Long Jump (open)—ist Hobday, 2nd Corbishley. Long Jump (under 15)—ist Marrison, 2nd Venn. Long Jump (under 13)—ist Barker, 2nd. A. Robinson. Throwing the Cricket Ball (open)—ist E. Davies, 2nd Llewellyn. Throwing the Cricket Ball (under 15)—ist Holloway, 2nd Venn. Throwing the Cricket Ball (under 13)—ist Dodds, 2nd Barker. Hurdle Race (under 15)—ist Venn, 2nd Trantom. Half Mile (open)—ist Pattison, 2nd T. Booth, 3rd H. Newton. 100 Yards (open)—ist Whittles, 2nd Hobday, 3rd Seddon. 100 Yards (under 15)—ist Lomas, 2nd Marrison, 3rd W'hyte. 100 Yards (under 13)—ist Richardson, 2nd Barker, 3rd Fowler. Choir Race—ist Blackburn, 2nd Hunter, 3rd Colquhoun. Hurdle Race (open)—ist Hobday, 2nd Corbishley. Quarter Mile Handicap (under 15)—ist Rerrie, 2nd Edwards. High Jump (open)—ist Corbishley, 2nd Hobday. High Jump (under 13)—ist Dodds, 2nd Barker. High Jump (under 15)—ist Lomas, 2nd Venn. Quarter Mile (under 13)—ist Richardson, 2nd Fowler, 3rd Lewis. Quarter Mile (open)—ist Whittles, 2nd Cowan, 3rd H. Davies. Three Legged Race—ist Wilding and Mason. One Mile, Steeplechase (under 16)—ist L. Atkinson, 2nd Puntan, 3rd G. Smith, 4th Trantom. Two Mile Steeplechase (open)—ist Pattison, 2nd F. Smartt, 3rd T. Booth, 4th Jarratt.

N. H. Pattison won the individual Challenge Cup, Lowe the Dormitory Trophy.

Mrs. Beck kindly presented the certificates which took the place of prizes.

We congratulate Corbishley on his fine performance in the high jump. The previous record was 5 feet 3 inches by W. A. R. Coleridge in 1882. Corbishley cleared 5 feet 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches, thus beating the record by *ih* inches.

## O.T.C.

There was considerable O.T.C. activity during the closing weeks of last term. The Jenkins Cup was won by Lowe, under the leadership of Lance-Corporal Podmore. A team shot on the miniature range in the *Country Life* competition. We were twenty-second. It was almost the first shooting match since the year when G. J. Mitchell was 1st, and M. H. Spicer and J. S. Dyson were highly placed, in the Gale and Polden at Bisley. The Inter-dormitory Competition resulted in a triumph for the Headmaster's House, H.M.H i. and ii. being bracketed first, and H.M.H. iii. being third. C.-S.-M. Waghorn and Sergeant Newton were the two successful commanders. The judges were Captain H. Merrick, M.C., Gloucestershire Regiment, and Lieutenant A. J. Wood, Monmouthshire Regiment. We have also to congratulate C. J. N. Atkinson, E. H. Price, F. Smartt and F. G. Wynne on obtaining Certificate A. A number of members of the band paid a visit to Abbot's Bromley to encourage recruiting for the Volunteers. We learn that the natives were astonished and gratified by our "concord of sweet sounds" but were otherwise unresponsive.

This term shooting at Burton has been resumed.

The following O.T.C. promotions have been posted:—Sergeant Cowan to be Company Sergeant-Major; Corporals Podmore and Vidler to be Sergeants; Lance-Corporals W. Hall, Miller, Wynne, Wildsmith, Cadman and Whittles to be Corporals; Privates Finney and Alker to be Lance-Corporals.

The following appointments are announced:—Sergeants Whitfield, Newton, H., Podmore and Vidler to be Platoon Sergeants of Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 Platoons respectively; Lance-Corporal Alker to

be Section Commander No. 3 Section, and Lance-Corporal Pattison, No. 4 Section, No. 1 Platoon; Lance-Corporal Hamblin-Smith, No. 2 Section, No. 2 Platoon; Privates Horner and E. Chapman, and Lance-Corporal Finney of Sections 1, 3 and 4, No. 3 Platoon; Private Drury of No. 2 Section, No. 4 Platoon.

## O.D. NEWS.

"John Ayscough," the first Editor of the *Denstonian*, has published a new volume of short stories, entitled *The Tideway*, which has been most favourably received.

S. P. B. Mais is now a master at Tonbridge School.

H. R. Hignett is acting at the Playhouse.

R. Aitken-Quack is an apprentice in engineering shops at Rosyth.

A. A. Chalmers is the representative of Lloyds at Barcelona.

R. B. Hamer was articled as a solicitor to his father before taking a commission.

B. H. S. Stephenson was rubber planting in Ceylon before the War.

Harold White is Vicar of Killingworth, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

We have heard of the death of H. T. B. Hodges, at Ealing, on February 21, 1915. He had had a bad attack of influenza and insisted on resuming his work at Ealing Priory School before he was fit, with the result that he had a severe relapse and died. R.I.P.

E. K. Farrow is in Messrs. Barclay's Bank.

J. C. Holden has been appointed Rector of Ashton-under-Lyne, and S. C. Thompson to the Vicarage of Knutton.

The Rev. W. H. Fisher, once a master here, has been appointed Vicar of Edstone, Kirby Moorside.

The engagement is announced of T. H. Averill to the Countess de Molle.

W. O. Wellington writes: "Unfortunately I was 'spun' by the doctor when the other Pretoria clergy left for war service, so instead of rolling up at Denstone as a private in the South African Infantry, I am still working out here. At present I am in charge of the town of Pietersburg and most of the Waterberg District. I have eight centres to look after, and that means being away for the half of each month and trekking about 400 miles. The transport is rather 'great'—varying from trains and motor-cars to ox-waggons. As luck would have it, we have had heavy rains this year—to make up for the drought of the last few years, I suppose—and that has not improved trekking conditions. The Waterberg really is the Waterberg this year."

He also sends news of Denstonians of early days:

"I have found two O.Ds. farming on adjoining farms in the Waterbeig—M. C. Jackson, of Gausse's, and C. Dawson, a day boy of 1889. Their address is P.O. Rietbokspruit, Waterberg, Transvaal. Both of them came out here during the Boer War, Jackson with the Hampshires and Dawson with the Queenslands, and stayed in Africa when they took their discharge. Jackson was through the rebellion and the G.S.W.A. campaign as a Lieutenant, M.G. Section, Natal Light Horse. I have also met the Harrison twins this year. Oliver is on the Cason Section, E.R.P.M., and Roland is an Inspector with a Faren Company."

H. L. Chadwick is married to the sister of J. N. Knight.

E. H. Jackson is with the engineering firm of Hawthorne and Leslie.

C. Zorian is a master at Merchiston.

J. M. S. Hunter has been appointed Director of Education in Burmah.

We congratulate C. Venables on his marriage.

We deeply regret to hear of the death of Litchfield Thomas Meek. He was here from 1887 until the end of 1893. He showed considerable literary ability and in *Macbeth* (in 1893) his rendering of the small part of Seyton prepared us for his thoughtful study of Antonio next year in the *Tempest*. The *Denstonian* notes how well the change from levity to crime was marked and how the stages in which he worked upon Sebastian were deepened and shaded. He practised as a solicitor at Cannock, and also at Birmingham and Wittenhall, and held a considerable number of appointments. He was a Past Master of the Earl of Shrewsbury Lodge of Freemasons, and a prominent golfer and motorist. He also was a lieutenant in the V.T.C. and it was while attending drill that he was suddenly seized with illness and died on March 15 last. The esteem in which he was held was shown by the very large attendance of representatives of public bodies at the funeral. A Requiem was said in Cannock Parish Church on the day of the funeral. He was always a true and loyal Denstonian.—R.I.P.

Everyone was much grieved to hear of Mr. Tisdall's death last term. He was on the staff here from 1899 until last year, when persistent ill-health enforced his retirement. Few have served us with more whole-hearted loyalty and enthusiasm, and Mr. Tisdall's memory will be held in affection and esteem by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.—R.I.P.



## NOTES.

It will be interesting to place on record, now that by chance the Chaplain has discovered the fact, that our very beautiful best jewelled Chalice with the crystal knob was given in 1873, at the opening of the College, by the Rev. Henry Meyneil (afterwards Provost) and Mrs. Meyneil. It was made by Messrs. Barkentin & Krall and the cost of Chalice and Paten was then £gi.

F. W. S. Podmore has passed the Oxford Local Senior Examination in the 1st Class Honours Division, with distinction in Latin and Greek, being the only one so distinguished in the latter subject. E. Finney has also passed.

F. B. Jeffries has passed the Preliminary Law Examination.

S. L. Knight and E. C. H. Everod have passed the examination for entrance to the R.M.C., Sandhurst.

A. Forsyth has passed the Preliminary Examination of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

In consequence of the resignation of the Rev. A. C. Coldham—after less than a year's residence, during which he and Mrs. Coldham have shown themselves our very good friends—the Headmaster is again in charge of the parish of Denstone.

We were very glad to learn that Miss Stevenson was appointed Matron at the end of last term in succession to Mrs. Salmon. For many years Miss Stevenson has done sterling work for the College, and we can imagine no appointment more generally popular.

When Waghorn left to join his O.C.B. towards the end of last term, there was a general shuffling of School offices—K. W. H. Austin became Captain of School, A. H. Cowan, Prefect of Hall, and H. G. Newton, Prefect of Chapel.

This term we are without the services of the Rev. W. B. Smith, who has gone to Marlborough. He had been here since 1905 and our history during the years since then is strewn with relics of his activity. At one time or another the Scouts, the Fire Brigade, the Potato Patch, a War Savings Association and the Camera Club, among other things, enjoyed the advantage of his energy. He was one of the Curators of the Museum, and some years ago he re-arranged and reorganized the Science Laboratories. We wish him all happiness in his new sphere of work.

In his place we have Mr. J. H. Tayleur, B.Sc. (London). He was Lecturer at University College, Reading, and was also in charge of the Chemical Department of the East Anglian Institute of Agriculture at Chelmsford, before joining the Army, from which he has now been discharged.

Miss Jacob has also left, to our great regret.

The following passed commercial examinations at the end of last term:—Gregg shorthand, intermediate—J. M. Shaw and A. G. Summers; book-keeping, intermediate—R. L. Berry; book-keeping elementary—F. C. Chapman, J. G. Henson, H. J. Kimbell, F. O'Hara and C. C. Peate; junior typist's certificate—F. C. Chapman, J. L. Martin and H. L. Rawson; Pitman's shorthand, theory—H. G. Lewis; Pitman's shorthand, elementary—R. Johnstone; handwriting and correspondence—J. M. Shaw and G. R. Wildsmith.

The Musical Competition saw the victory of Lowe. We were glad to welcome Major Sterndale Bennett, Music Master at Uppingham, who was kind enough to find time to act as judge and to declare himself pleased with our efforts. Indeed, there were some very good performances. C. J. N. Atkinson gained the points for Senior Piano, M. A. Mitcheson being

a good second. H. W. Wilson was first for the Junior Piano. G. Lutter played the fiddle delightfully, but only narrowly beat Griffiths, whose instrument was the organ. Lowe won the Glee, largely owing to C. Thompson's conducting of the party.

J. H. Whittles has gained his Fives Colours.

During the holidays J. C. Brishley was second in the high jump at the Public Schools Sports Meeting at Stamford Bridge. We congratulate him most heartily.

W. Hall, G. H. Wildsmith and J. H. Whittles have been elected to the Sports Committee.

The School officers this term are as follows :—

Captain of School—A. H. Cowan.  
 Prefect of Hall—H. G. Newton.  
 Prefect of Chapel—F. W. S. Podmore.  
 Captain of Cricket—D. J. Fergusson.  
 Captain of Tennis—W. Hall.

New Prefects are—C. McGregor, S. L. Kilbourn, F. C. Lockyer, H. A. Champney, M. G. C. Hobday.

The following is the list of new boys this term :—

Allport, Frederick Thomas ...	Lowe
Audiey, Robert ...	Prep.
Barker, Christopher Henry	
Binks ...	H. M. H. i.
Barker, Algernon Thomas...	H. M. H. i.
Burton, Cyril Bryan	
Rothwell ...	Meynell
Dodd, Henry Ryder	Selwyn
Dodd, John Wallace	"
Gabb, Richard George	H. M. H. i.

Hancocks, Harry	Lowe
Hibbert, Reginald Vernon ...	H. M. H. i.
Homfrey, Kenyon Unett ...	Prep.
Huntley, Forster -Charleton	Woodard
Kearsley, Roger Saxon	H. M. H. ii.
Lane, Robert George Henry	Prep.
Larmuth, George James	Victor
McConnell, John Alexander	Meynell
Nightingale, Frederick Mason	H. M. H. iii.
Squire, Ian Henry Robertson	Selwyn
Squire, Keith Norman	
	Robertson
Steward, Clarence...	Meynell
Stevenson, Reginald Allsbrook	Shrewsbury
Wood, Frank Henry	H. M. H. iii.
Wright, Derek Wilson	H. M. H. iii.

The following have left:—

K. V. H. Austin (H. M. H. iii.), Captain of School, Captain of Football, 1st XV., 1st XL, Sergeant O. T. C.

N. H. Pattison (Lowe), Prefect, 1st XV., 1st XL, Lce.-Corporal O. T. C. Sports' Cup.

E. H. Price (Meynell), Prefect, Corporal O. T. C.

The Editor acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the following contemporaries :—

*Lancing College Magazine, Marlburian, Hurst Johnian, Felstedian, Cuthbertian, Reptonian, Brighton College Magazine.*

All MSS. intended for insertion should be sent to the Editor, Denstone College, Staffordshire.

The yearly subscription of 4s. 6d. (10s. 6d. for three years) should be sent to the Rev. F. A. Hibbert, Denstone College, Staffordshire.

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