

A Padre in the Great War

(Continued From Page 9.)

BREAKING UP THE GAME

Dominion Day fell on a Monday, and on the previous afternoon, knowing that large bodies of men, including the contestants, were congregated at Tinques, I determined to go over and pay them a visit. I found the village full of troops and very keen about the next day's show. In a little lane, there were some of our 1st Divisional men, and they were enjoying the excitement of a game which was very popular at the front, called "Crown and Anchor." It is played with special dice on a board of square green canvas. On the canvas were painted an anchor and crown and I think a heart and a spade. The game was banned by the army on account of its unfairness. The banker had, I think, sixty-four chances to one in his favor. The consequence of this was that very soon he became possessed of all the money which green youths, unsuspecting their disadvantages, chose to lay on the board. This game, in the hands of a sharper, was often the means of robbing a battalion of very large sums of money, sometimes forty thousand francs were made by the banker. The police had orders to arrest anyone playing it, and I used to go by my best to stamp it out. Though I do not play for money myself, I never could see any great harm in those poor boys out there getting a little relaxation from their terrible nervous strain by a game of bridge or poker for a few francs. But a game which was founded wholly in dishonesty was something which I felt was unworthy of our men. When I saw them "working round a little spot on the grass I knew there was a game of crown and anchor going on and I could shout, "Look out boys, I'm going to put the horse on the ground book"—a phrase I had heard the men use—and then catch them in all directions. Over and over again I went into a game of men and even the banker's minutes to decide whether he could hand over his board and dice to me or have his name reported to the police. He never failed to be former although sometimes he looked rather surly at losing a very fruitful source of revenue. I have brought home with me enough crown and anchor dice to make the mouth of an old soldier war.

ed about on the ground. I gave them a long talk which lasted till it was too dark for any more Crown and Anchor.

The next day brought us glorious weather, and from early in the morning battalions were pouring into Tinques. The grounds were splendidly laid out and bordered with many stands and marquees. There must have been nearly forty thousand spectators present. The Duke of Connaught, Sir Robert Borden and all sorts of great people attended and the playing of "O Canada" by the massed bands was something which, as a British General told me, made a big big lump come in one's throat. It was the last Dominion Day we were to spend in France. We were on the eve of tremendous events, and it was a splendid manifestation of Canada's glory at the front. There was such a gathering of old friends who had not met for years, that really one could not attend to the various events and sports that were taking place. We met for a moment, and the old days would be talked over, and then we parted, some, alas, never to meet again in this world. That vast crowd which fringed the huge expanse of ground was quite the most thrilling spectacle that Canadians had ever seen. Tinques must be a quiet place now, and perhaps only a few marks in the great field still remain to show where the sports were held. But there were gathered there that day the vast host of noble gentlemen who saved the honor and freedom of our young country.

CHAPTER 16

THE BEGINNING OF THE END—JULY TO AUGUST 7TH, 1918

The possession of a side car gave me the opportunity of getting much further afield in my visits. Our 1st Divisional wing, where the new drafts were received and trained for the front line, was at this time back in a place called Losen, in the quiet and beautiful country of western St. Pol, and General Headquarters had done a great deal of parish visiting among the battalions in rest and given the story of our leave trip to Rome many times. So I thought I could make an excursion to the Base. We had a delightful trip down the St. Pol road through little villages and towns, which looked as they did in pre-war days. The country where the Divisional wing was stationed was very charming. It was well watered, and had many trees, and a hill covered with trees gave diversity to the landscape. I told the men they were in a land flowing with milk and honey. I stayed at the headquarters of the wing in a delightful old house on a hill surrounded with fine trees. Factories and its own reserve, so there were many men in the village, and old mill ponds enabled me to have two or three good swims in the Y.M.C.A. tank, courses of lectures in connection with the King's University were being given on various subjects. One evening, naturally I gave them a talk on our leave trip to Rome. On another, a corner of the field, I gave them an informal lecture on English literature. Having gone so far from home I determined to see a hill bit further, and so we made a trip to Boulogne, where my son was had been gassed was still in a C.C.S., and that afternoon on our return we went to Montreuil to see what G. H. Q. looked like.

"G. H. Q."

I was told that Montreuil was a very picturesque old walled city, but that we should not be allowed to enter. However, I had been able to do so many forbidden things in the war that I thought it would be worth trying, so the old Cline sped over the hard macadamized roads from Boulogne till we came to the valley on the opposite side of which the town is situated. We saw many cars coming and going, and many troops by the way, and finally we went up the hill which leads to the entrance gate. A sentry was standing there who saluted most respectfully, and we passed into the sacred city without any molestation. It was a delightful old French town, full of historical interest. The narrow streets and quaint old buildings carried one back in thought to the days of chivalry and battles waged by knights in shining armor. We saw some of the churches and then went to the officers' club for tea. The waitresses at the club were English girls who had taken the place of the men at the front. I got them to provide for my friend Lyons in their sitting room, and I went in to have tea with the officers. There were a great many there sitting at small tables. It was interesting to see the badges of so many different regiments. Most of the officers had a good supply of ribbons, and a few of them had lost an eye, or a limb, or bore other marks of wounds. I think that almost all of them were staff officers and that some of them were generals. It struck me that he as a sphere to a stranger was rather Gilly. The demeanour of the people was much less free than that which we had been accustomed to at the front. Of course Montreuil held the brain of the army, and it was quite right that the direction of the army should be in the hands of the staff. I made up two lines as I was having my tea, which I thought hit off the mental attitude of some of the officers present, when they saw a stranger and looked at him up and down through their monocles.

"I'm on the staff of the G.H.Q. And I'd like to know who the devil are you?"

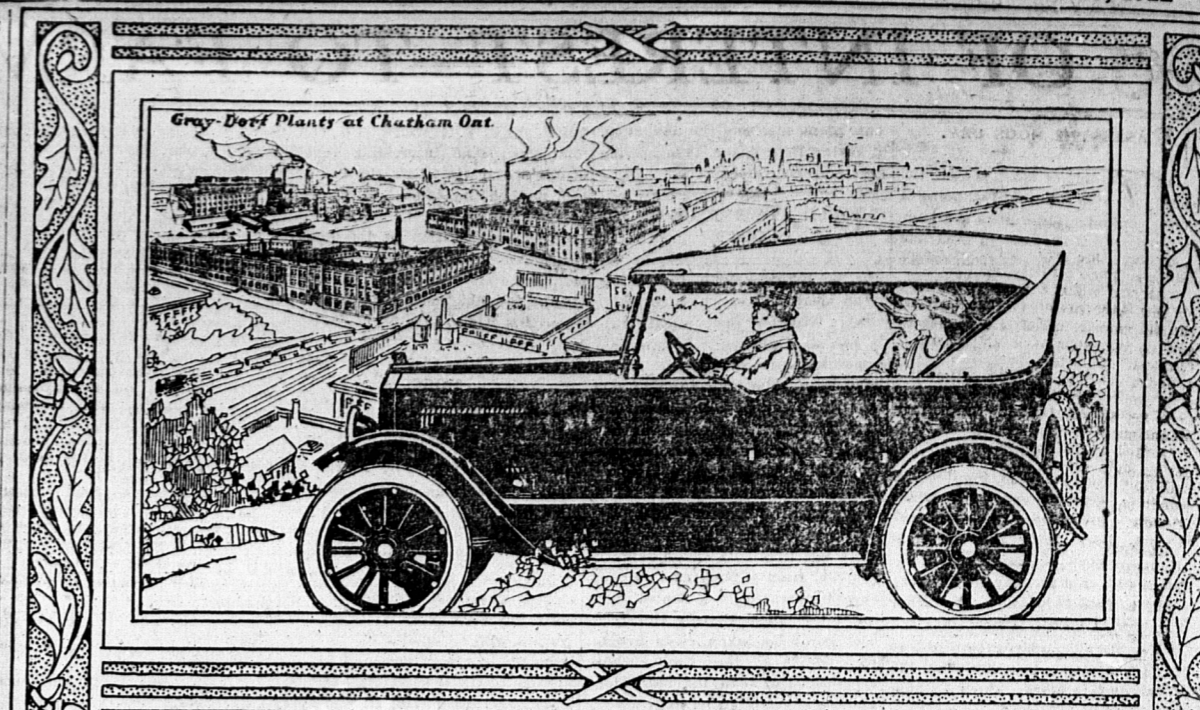
There had been such a democratic upsetting of traditions and customs in the Service, owing to the obliterating of the original British

Army, that it was quite refreshing to find that a remnant of Israel had been saved.

I paid two visits to the Divisional wing within a few days of each other, and on one occasion, on a baking July day, addressed a battalion of drafts who were about to be sent up to the front. Poor boys, they little knew what was store for them in these last hundred days of the war.

THE NIGHT PATROL

Rumors were current now that the trip for our great attack was at hand, so there were more rides for me to the pleasant fields and sojourn of Losen. On my return on July 14th, I found our headquarters once again at Etrun and our Divisional wing holding the old trenches to the North and South of the Scarpe. Once more I had the pleasure of sleeping in Puddis, France, and doing what I call "consolidating the line." I did a good deal of parish visiting in the trenches at this time. I felt that big changes might occur any moment, and I wanted to be with the men in any ordeal through which they might have to pass. Very strange scenes came before me as I look back upon those days before our great attack. One night I stayed with the gallant Colonel of the Canadian Scottish at T. His headquarters were in No. Man's Land and the front trench ran in a semi-circle to the rear. The Colonel having found a good German dug-out in the cellars of the ruined chateau preferred to make his headquarters there. We did not know where the enemy's front line was and our men were doing outpost duty in shell holes further forward. They had to be visited every two hours, when it was dark to see that all was well. That night I asked the Colonel if I might go out with the patrol. He demurred at first, and then gave his consent only on condition that I should take off my white collar, and promise not to make any jokes with the men on duty, for fear that they should laugh and give away our position. I made my promise and started with the patrol officer and his runner. I was a curious sensation wandering off in the darkness as suddenly as possible, tripping now and then on bits of wire and almost slipping into the trenches. We came to the different shell holes and whispered conversations were held. The sentries seemed surprised when I spoke to them, as they could not recognize me in the darkness. I whispered that I had promised the Colonel not to be very chatty. It was well watered, and had many trees, and a hill covered with trees gave diversity to the landscape. I told the men they were in a land flowing with milk and honey. I stayed at the headquarters of the wing in a delightful old house on a hill surrounded with fine trees. Factories and its own reserve, so there were many men in the village, and old mill ponds enabled me to have two or three good swims in the Y.M.C.A. tank, courses of lectures in connection with the King's University were being given on various subjects. One evening, naturally I gave them a talk on our leave trip to Rome. On another, a corner of the field, I gave them an informal lecture on English literature. Having gone so far from home I determined to see a hill bit further, and so we made a trip to Boulogne, where my son was had been gassed was still in a C.C.S., and that afternoon on our return we went to Montreuil to see what G. H. Q. looked like.



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When we got back to my quarters, and to my surprise on the next morning an order came through that the American chaplain had returned immediately. Neither he nor I could understand it. I began to think he must have got into some scrape, as no explanation was given. The real reason came out afterwards.

(To be continued.)

A War on Children

It is difficult to understand the motive of those who are carrying on propaganda against aid to the starving children of Russia. The campaign at first took the form of a denial that any famine existed. When this obvious falsehood was demolished the administration of the Save the Children Fund was attacked. To end all doubt as to this the British Save the Children Fund was united with other relief organizations and placed under the management of Sir Benjamin Robertson, who had held high office in the Indian Civil Service, and was an expert in famine relief.

The last piece of propaganda is meaner and more subtle, while it is quite inconsistent with the other two. The famine (which never existed) has been relieved. The organization which had been condemned as inefficient has been so successful that the famine has been stamped out. This also is false, as is shown by a cable to Colonel Mackie. The British administrators say that the peak of the famine has not been passed. It is further pointed out that both the American relief administration and the British organizations under Sir Benjamin Robertson have lately undertaken additional responsibilities for feeding more people in the famine areas, and that distress is undoubtedly interesting.

Reports coming from American sources probably refer to distinctly American relief work. Within a few days the Canadian committee received a cable from England asking us to hasten the despatch of flour and milk. If Governor Girdrich of Indiana wants the information I that relief is urgently needed, Canadians may rely more reason why Canada should continue the good work. Last week the Canadian contributions totalled \$305,000. Make it half a million at least. Nine million people can easily afford twice that amount. The campaign against the starving children is worthy of King Herod. Even his methods were more merciful than the infliction of a painful and lingering death on millions of innocents.

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