

DEFENCE, NOT DEFIANCE.

TO the boy of the present day the Volunteer appears as natural as the bicycle. Every large town has its battalion of Rifles, or its battery of Artillery; even tiny villages combine to turn out their Company. Throughout the summer the country is dotted with camps, some containing their thousands, others their hundreds of civilian soldiers, drilling, marching, firing, sham-fighting, learning in fact something of the soldier's trade. We do not laugh at a man now, because after perhaps a hard day's work, he gets into uniform, shoulders his rifle, and betakes himself to the drill-hall to learn how to do something toward the defence of his country. On the contrary we praise him, call him a good fellow, and look to him as a home protector against any possible enemy.

Only the other day when the C.I.V.'s and thousands of good men and true from all parts of the kingdom went to South Africa, we admired their pluck, patted them on the back, entertained them at banquets, cheered them wildly through the streets, hung around them on shipboard, waved our handkerchiefs, and hurrahed till the huge transports swung down with the tide, and our throats were hoarse.

Then when the mysterious wires brought home word how this or that Volunteer Company had distinguished itself on the stricken field, had shared with the regulars in some marvellous forced march, had cheerfully borne hardships and privations, we cheered again, while those of us who had relatives in the ranks were not slow to talk of it.

And yet again when the message was of another kind, when it told how Private A or Trooper B had been shot down or seized by the grim fever-fiend who so rarely looses his victim, we bared our heads and whispered solemnly, "God rest him!" For you see we knew him, he was one of us, mayhap had grown up with us, had sat with us at the same desk, had bowled in our school eleven, or played in the football team.

Why there is hardly a school in the country which has not an Old Boy somewhere with "Bobs." How we will cheer and make much of him, if he comes back safely; how deeply we shall mourn him if it be his fate to lie out there evermore till the breaking of the New Day! And meanwhile we shall point proudly to his name, set up I hope in a conspicuous

place, and say, "One of ours. An Old Boy. Volunteered for South Africa."

But we did not always make much of our Volunteers. To the modern boy who has not read his history, it may come as a shock to learn how stupidly we behaved to them. We mocked and jeered at them, snubbed them times without number, said they were no good, and covered them with ridicule. But these old Volunteers of ours had plenty of sound British pluck, and they kept on pegging away with the magnificent result we see.

Of course they made mistakes, and many laughable stories date from the time when the Volunteer movement was in its infancy, but then who that has ever done anything at all has not made mistakes?

By far the oldest Volunteer force in the country is the Honourable Artillery Company of the City of London, which was formed in the reign of Bluff King Hal, and received its charter from that burly monarch. Naturally the H.A.C. is very proud of its venerable old age, though it strives with great success to keep up a perennial youth.

Putting aside the H.A.C., we owe our first attempt at Volunteering to the French Revolution, when the Yeomanry, constituted in 1761, was increased to 20,000 men, forming a body of cavalry called the Yeomen of England. The officers were mainly noblemen and country gentlemen, while the ranks were filled by farmers and their sons. Each man provided his own horse, and during the annual training received a certain sum of money per day. In 1828 various corps were disbanded, but the Transvaal War has brought the Yeomanry to the front again, and so valuable have their services proved that the Yeomen of England are likely to become of more importance than they have ever been.

But of course the main strength of the Volunteers lies in the infantry. The lads of the farm, the tenants of some patriotic landowner easily obtained horses, but the men of the town for the most part had only Shanks' nag at their service. But they could shoulder a musket, and if their bullets did not hit anyone the enemy would have to come within reach of their bayonets.

Thus it happened that when "Boney" undertook to invade England, thousands of men willingly came forward in defence of "hearths and homes." In 1803, George III reviewed in Hyde Park two bodies of civilian

soldiers, numbering in all over 27,000 men, formed in London itself, or who had marched in from the country.

Then, as now, the merchant princes, unlocked their coffers, the country noblemen raised corps on their own estates, the public readily subscribed the needed funds for the citizen warriors. Men of sixty and youths of eighteen, tall and short, fat and thin, strong and weak, dressed in various picturesque costumes, formed Rifle Clubs, and went out to drill and to practise shooting.

According to an old newspaper extract which I saw the other day they needed some amount of practice, for the writer, in praising the doings of a certain corps, announced in high glee that many of them *nearly hit the target*. How a present Public School boy would smile at such praise! But the rifle of to-day is very different from the old weapon, which was very clumsy, ludicrously inaccurate, and carried but a short distance. Many a man is killed now by a bullet fired more than a thousand yards away; but less than half-a-century ago an experienced General stated in Parliament that "*it was ridiculous to suppose that two armies could fight at a distance of 500 or 600 yards.*"

But to return to our worthy forefathers. While the scare of Bonaparte's threatened invasion lasted they drilled and marched and expended much ammunition, getting ready to meet the hundred thousand Frenchmen who never came. Personally I believe they would have done good service, but I fear the army rather looked down on them, regarding them as little better than play soldiers.

Concerning this there is a story told of the celebrated Sir John Moore who afterwards fell at Corunna. Pitt, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had formed two regiments of Volunteers to help guard the Kentish coasts. One day he said in a half-patronising way to Moore who was in command of the camp at Shorncliffe, "General, when the enemy lands, where do you propose to place my regiments?" "Do you see that hill, sir?" replied Moore jocularly. "They can be stationed up there, whence they will be able to obtain a good view of the battle, while my men are fighting on the beach below."

Trafalgar, as we know, put an end to Napoleon's schemes; men no longer went to sleep at night expecting to hear on waking up that the French had arrived, and in consequence the Volunteer force gradually melted away. By the year 1815 it had almost vanished.

Strangely enough it only revived when another Napoleon sat on the French throne. France and England, so often at logger-heads, had fought side by side throughout the

Crimean War, but the good feeling between the two nations did not long continue. An Italian attempted to murder the French Emperor and it was found that the plot had been hatched in England. This made a number of French colonels very angry, and in very intemperate language they called for the destruction of that "infamous haunt London." Napoleon III. paid his zealous subjects several pretty compliments but wisely declined to rush into war.

Now the French Colonels had stirred up a hornets' nest. Once again the English people sprang to arms, their ardour fanned by Tennyson's stirring verses, "Form, Riflemen, Form!" Dead Rifle Corps came to life; new ones appeared in every part of the country, and it was plain that this time the Volunteers had come to stay. In 1859 the movement was officially recognised by Government, and by the middle of that year thousands of men were enrolled, armed, and uniformed.

In 1860 a National Rifle Association was formed and its first meeting took place on Wimbledon Common. Our Beloved Queen ever foremost in all that concerns her people's welfare, fired the first shot and instituted the world-famous Queen's Prize which is now annually competed for at Bisley by the finest marksmen in the British Empire. The first winner was Mr. Ross of the 7th North York, and to show how wonderfully our shooting has improved, I give his figures. 8 points at 800 yards, 7 at 900, and 9 points at 1,000 yards.

But it was not with the rifle alone that our Volunteers soon proved themselves experts. The National Artillery Association scored an equal success and at their prize-meetings at Shoeburyness many smart things have been done with field-guns and heavy ordnance.

Less than half a century has passed since the idle vapourings of the French Colonels gave such an impetus to volunteering, yet the movement has taken firm hold on our national life. More than a quarter of a million men are now enrolled in various branches of the service, while thousands have passed through a course of training, and the Volunteer Cadet Corps is a feature of our Public Schools. In 1859 the Volunteer was something of a *rara avis*; when the twentieth century opens the majority of men capable of bearing arms will either be past or present Volunteers. And events in South Africa have shown that they are by no means play-soldiers, but able and willing to share the dangers and hardships of the real Tommy.

In fact the Volunteer is becoming every year more like the paid soldier. Each battalion is attached to a regiment of the regular army, and where possible, Volunteer

battalions are brigaded with the regulars in summer camp. The old joke of the flustered officer who exclaimed, "Right wheel! No, left wheel! Oh, hang it all, you know what I mean, turn down Fleet Street" falls somewhat flat now. Officers can manoeuvre, men can march, and both can do something better than "*nearly hit the target.*"

War is a terrible thing as many of us have lately learned through sad experience. It means wounds, death, misery, ruin and desolation, yet the day of universal peace still seems far distant, and until that time arrives the strong hand must guard our homes.

The Volunteers help to do this and therefore are worthy of our esteem. Nor should we forget that they save us from conscription. Had we no Volunteers we should be forced to adopt the Continental plan of

making every man a soldier whether he likes it or not. We English as a rule have no wish to fight; we would much prefer living on friendly terms with all nations, and our ideas are well expressed in the Volunteers' motto, "Defence, not defiance."

One other thing might be said in conclusion. In a Volunteer battalion a young man gains admirable physical training. The drill, the rifle-practice, the marching and gymnastic exercises, develop his muscles, train his sight, increase his strength, and from a physical point of view make him a better man all-round. And in this way the Volunteer gets, besides the thanks of his fellow-countrymen, some return for his freely-offered services in defence of "hearths and homes."

COLOUR-SERGEANT.



SCRAPS.

A Real Patriot.

A wounded Irishman thus rounded off his letter home:—"I've fought for my country, and bled for it; and, bedad, if the war goes on, I'll soon be able to say I've died for it."

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A Scientific Reason.

"In looking out of doors, do you note how bright is the green of the grass and the leaves?" asked an elderly gentleman of a little girl, whose house he was visiting.

"Yes, sir."

"Why does it appear so much brighter at this time of the year?" he next asked, looking down upon the bright sweet face with tender interest.

"Because ma has cleaned the window, and you can see out better," she said.

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A Question of Importance.

A certain Sunday School Superintendent always spends a few minutes in explaining the lesson, and then asks "Now, has anyone a question to ask?"

One Sunday he went through the lesson as usual, dwelling at length on the chief thoughts, and winding up with, "Now, has anyone a question to ask?"

A member of the boys' junior class raised his hand.

"Well, what is your question?" asked the superintendent.

"Please, sir, are we going to have a picnic this summer?"

A Bishop's Song.

Dr. Temple tells a good story against himself. He entered during a popular service in an East End Church one night, and, standing in a back pew, joined in the singing of a hymn. Next to him stood a working man, who was singing lustily in tune. The man stood the dissonance as long as he could, and then, nudging the Bishop, said in a whisper, "Here, dry up, mister; you're spoiling the show."

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Bismarck's Bell.

In his young days Bismarck was once staying at an hotel in Frankfort. The bell in his room being broken, he requested that a new one should be supplied. The landlord refused, saying that if his guest wanted a new bell he must provide it himself. That night, just as the visitors were sitting down to dinner, the report of a pistol rang through the house. The startled guests, headed by the landlord, rushed upstairs, expecting to find that some terrible tragedy had happened. The sound had come from Bismarck's room, and, pouring in they saw him sitting calmly in his chair, while a still smoking pistol lay on the table.

"What is it?" gasped the frightened host. "What is the matter? Is anyone hurt?"

"Oh, no! not at all!" replied the future Chancellor quietly. "Don't be alarmed; you will get used to it in time. I wished to summon my servant, and as my bell is useless, I used my pistol instead. It answers capitally."

Needless to say, the new bell was forthcoming early the next morning.

"O Queen, live for ever."

While staying at Balmoral the Queen met two little children one afternoon, as she was taking an airing in her donkey-carriage. She stopped the carriage, and asked the youngsters several questions. They were elated at the honour paid them, and as soon as they were free rushed home to tell the great news.

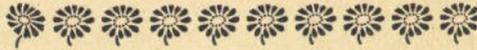
"And what did you say to the Queen?" asked the flattered parents.

"Oh!" was the surprising answer, "we said 'O Queen, live for ever,' and she laughed."

No Cause for Anxiety.

A visitor to Niagara was watching the car start, which is raised or lowered on the inclined plane by steam power. Not liking the look of the track, the stranger did not go down himself. After the car had started, he turned to the man in charge and said, "Suppose, sir, that the rope should break?"

The visitor was thinking of possible danger; the man only thought of business, and replied, "Oh, they all paid before they went."



STAMP PAGE.

THE weather has been too fine for Stamp Collectors—so the dealers say! They also add that the War has made their trade dull. But surely the War and its capture of Boer Stamps has started crowds of new Collectors, whom we heartily welcome as brethren.

The sale of "V.R.I.'s" goes on merrily, but the O.F.S. stock is being used up, and since our last number a new Orange River Colony has appeared in the shape of a green $\frac{1}{4}$ d. Cape, surcharged "Orange River Colony."

Report says that the captured stock of O.F.S. stamps is most likely to hold out in the 3d., 1s., and 5s. values until a permanent issue is made.

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Our readers are probably always interested in the stamps of countries that are now not very much sought after; but are likely, for some reason or another, to become more valuable soon.

A good place to get hints on the subject is the dealers' advertisements in the leading Philatelic Journals. "Australian" seems the best "tip" at present, on the ground that since Federation is an accomplished fact, there will be one Federal issue to take the place of the present issues of Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, &c.

"China," too, seems a likely country to collect, considering the uncertainty of its future government.

"India," with its various watermarks, papers, and "service" stamps, is an easy country to get fairly uncommon stamps, if one takes the trouble to read up the Catalogues—yet no one seems ever to know much about their Indian stamps.

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"England" is the real country to collect if you want to become an observant Philatelist. Its issues are most numerous, and a bit of information about plate numbers, watermarks, control letters, letters in the corners of the stamps, &c., enables you to refute the sarcastic remarks of a friend who looks through your English and says "Why, you have got a whole lot of stamps in here that are all the same!"

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Amongst New Issues since our last number we may note a complete set of 'Turks' Island which are reported to be very pretty, a new lot of "Federated Malay States," and a new name altogether to the Collector, the Cayman Islands.

Italy is contemplating a new issue, with the new King's head, and New Zealand is not quite sure of her own Philatelic mind.

Altogether there seems quite a lull in the production of new stamps, but there are plenty of old ones that we have not yet got in our books; and a dearth of new issues is not a grief to the Collector who has passed the elementary stage.