

# INTERNED AT HALIFAX

## ALIEN ENEMIES THERE HAVE A GOOD TIME.

They Are Sure, However, That Citizens of Allied Countries Interned in Germany Have a Much More Beautiful Life Than They Have, But Proofs of Statement Are Not Forthcoming.

THE Halifax Camp for alien enemies is in the "Citadel." It is dignified and comfortable but somewhat gloomy. High stone walls surround the fortress, and over them one looks down the steep hill to the crouching city and blue, blue waters, says a writer in The Toronto Sunday World. The view is very beautiful, though one German officer objected to it. He had been imprisoned at the beginning of the war at St. Lucia, and he liked the scenery better there. However, he allowed that the food was better in Halifax and that he liked the officials better. I longed to comfort him by quoting the ancient adage: "Heaven for climate, but hell for company!" but manfully refrained.

Major Adams, the commandant of the camp, took me through the building and introduced me to a number of the prisoners. The first group of whom I was introduced looked rather uncomfortable and suspicious. The men at Amherst had regarded my visit and me as joyously as though I had been a traveling circus with real bears and elephants; and I had proceeded to invite them to give me their views on immortality, sauerkraut, submarines, and the siege of the Dardanelles, their joy had suffered no diminishment. With these officers, however, it was different. The atmosphere was chilly.

Later on, the atmosphere was lurid, not chilly.

The Germans and I exchanged a few polite banalities; then the commandant conducted me to another little group. Here again it was no better. I had a thousand questions on the tip of my tongue, but as I looked from the faces of the prisoners to the face of the commandant, I felt that it would be waste of time to put these questions. These officers evidently felt that they were being butchered to make a Canadian holiday, and resented the butchering. I, being their butcher, naturally resented their resentment, and felt indignant with them for refusing to proceed as lambs to the slaughter.

I determined to get some information out of them "quick sticks," as an elderly relative of mine expressively remarks.

"How do you think the war is going?" I briskly inquired of the nearest officer.

He jumped.

"I think it is going well," he answered, proudly. "Very good!"

"Do you?" I replied. "I don't agree with you."

"When do you think it will end?" he asked. Two or three of the others drew a trifle nearer and waited with interest for my answer.

"I think," I said at length, profoundly, "that it will end in about a year."

To my surprise the Germans laughed.

"You really think so?" asked one, looking more friendly.

"Yes," said I, rather surprised. "What do you think?"

"A month," he answered cheerfully. "Not more than a month."

"What?" I exclaimed in amazement. "You really think that Germany will make terms in a month?"

"Will dictate terms," he amended, smiling pleasantly at me. "She will have finished all in a month."

I got my breath. I laughed. I opened my mouth to speak—

The commandant looked at me anxiously.

"There are some officers over there whom I think you would like to meet," he said firmly.

I knew it would happen. Always, always, both in Halifax and Amherst, just as I was getting into a really interesting conversation, I was solemnly trotted away to "fresh fields and pastures new." Now there is a great deal of the bulldog in my composition. As I walked meekly away with the commandant I silently registered a vow. I kept the vow. A little later on I shall tell what the vow was, and how I kept it; and if the commandant ever sees this I know that he will forgive me.

The Halifax prisoners seemed to be very comfortably housed. They had pianos, games of cards, and various other contrivances for killing time. Yet they did not seem nearly so contented as the men at Amherst. One can understand this, of course. Most of the Amherst prisoners are accustomed to a life of toil, and the ease, good food, warm bedding, and freedom for pleasure represented to them as very tolerable holiday. But to these officers imprisonment was a bore.

"Have you everything you want here?" I asked one.

"Yes, thank you," he replied, politely, but not enthusiastically. "Except that the rooms are pretty dark—and, as you see, eight officers are housed in one room. Now, in Germany—"

"Yes!" I cried. "In Germany?"

"Only three or four officers are put together in one room," he averred. "And then—although we have nothing to complain of—but in Germany the prisoners get a much better time."

Visions of the "better time" afforded to prisoners in the fatherland floated red before my eyes. I remembered Major Vandaleur and the treatment meted out to him. I thought of the men whose jailors had

accounted them as "English swine. I thought of hunger and cold and squalor endured by wounded men—and I looked at the officer. He jumped.

"They do have a better time," he averred earnestly. "I see you do not believe me—but they do." In "one place"—I think he said it was the "Wurtz" mountains, but I am not quite sure—"the prisoners are taken for long walks every day in the beautiful hills. Sometimes they are taken to a restaurant in the town for their mid-day meal. Sometimes—"

"Do you realize," I interrupted him suddenly, "that this is the most interesting and most extraordinary thing that I have heard for many a long day? Where did you learn these things?"

"In letters from home," he answered. "Many of us have heard."

"Won't you?" I asked, "let me have a copy of these letters? If you can find them—if you can give me these extracts relating to the treatment of prisoners—I shall see that they are published in Canada, and shall look up the exact reports which have been made by neutrals of these camps."

"I can do better," he stated positively. "Somewhere I am sure I have a picture of some of the German camps—a reproduced photograph. If I can find it you shall have it."

I thanked him. Up to date I have received neither the extracts from letters nor the reproduced photos.

## FOR NERVE-SHATTERED MEN.

### Ontario Provides a Hospital for Soldiers Suffering From Shock.

Ontario has again come to the front in a most tangible way in connection with the war. This time it is not with a gift of money, but in the equally practical and necessary way of caring for those who are suffering through the stress of battle. Recognizing that the war has produced special conditions among the disabled soldiers, the Canadian Hospitals Commission has arranged with the Ontario Government, through the Department of the Provincial Secretary, to establish a military hospital for the treatment of mental and shock cases.

For this purpose the present hospital for mental diseases at Cobourg is to be converted into a military hospital, with a staff and equipment provided by the present organization of the Department. This means that soldiers from Ontario who are brought back suffering from shock will be received into an institution specially maintained to give them proper treatment. So far as is known, Ontario is the only Province where such an innovation has been attempted, and it is regarded by those who are familiar with the wastage produced by the present war as one of the most needed branches of the medical service.

The Cobourg hospital will be made immediately available by the transfer of some 180 female patients to the new institution at Whitby. Special equipment such as continuous baths, vapor baths, electro-therapeutic baths and other apparatus will be installed at Cobourg, while detached buildings will be erected from time to time to provide for an increased accommodation up to 500 patients. The staff will be selected from the most competent in the various institutions of the Province, and should the demand warrant it, part of the new hospital at Whitby can also be used.

In making use of the facilities of the Province for this work the Canadian Hospitals Commission is not divesting itself of any responsibility. The arrangement with the Ontario Government provides for a fixed allowance per day for each patient. In this way a large capital expenditure is avoided on the one hand for the Dominion, and there will be no delay in commencing treatment for those men who are now on their way to Canada or will be immediately sent here.

### Only Four Blinded Canadians.

A statement issued by the Military Hospitals' Commission recently called attention to the fact that an entirely erroneous idea prevails regarding the number of the members of the Canadian expeditionary force who have lost their eyesight as a result of their war service. Various agencies have been started for the collection of money in order to provide homes and special training for blinded Canadian soldiers, and unauthorized persons are making collections for this purpose.

"It should be distinctly understood," said Secretary Scammell, "that these collections are quite unnecessary."

The Military Hospitals' Commission is entirely competent to deal with all blinded soldiers who may come under its care.

"Up to the present four blinded soldiers have returned to Canada, four only; not four hundred or four thousand, as some people imagine. Of these, one was trained at St. Dunstons, England, and is now earning his livelihood as an insurance agent in his home town; his typewritten letters are a model for many sighted typists. Another lives on a farm with his friends, who are well to do. A third is suffering from shock blindness, and may regain his sight. This man returned from Liverpool on the Hesperian, and when thrown into the water after the ship was torpedoed he regained his sight temporarily, but has since had a relapse.

### Ontario's Edible Fungi.

Forty-five varieties of edible fungi from Toronto and vicinity were exhibited at the first meeting of the Mycological Society in the Botanical Building of the University of Toronto a few days ago.

### Longboat's Run.

Tom Longboat, the famous Indian runner, ran sixty miles to Toronto in two days to join the Canadian Sportsmen's Battalion, in which his old trainer for the Marathon, Tom Flanagan, is a captain.