

DENT'S SCHOOL PAMPHLETS

JUNIOR, No. 2

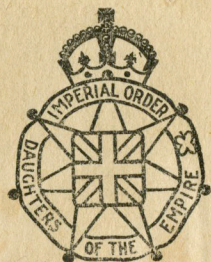
BROTHER BRITONS



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No. 391



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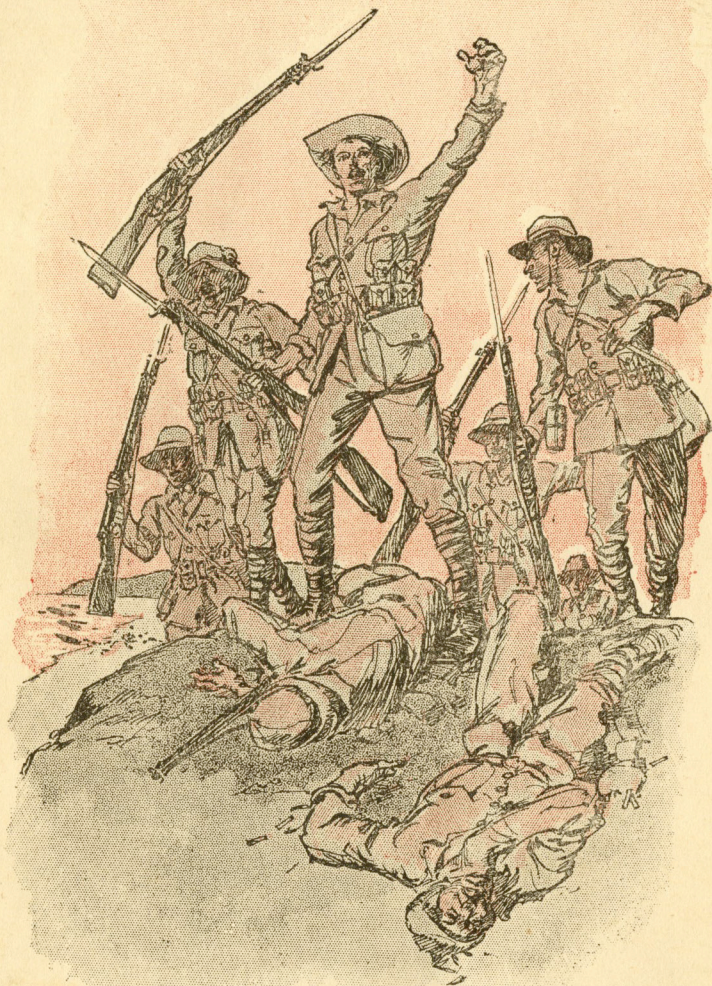
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That the Children of this School may remember
the men and women who gave their lives in defence of
the Empire and may learn more of the British Ideals
and Institutions for which they died.

BROTHER BRITONS



THE AUSTRALIANS STOOD HIGH ON THE RIDGE (see p. 21)

DENT'S SCHOOL PAMPHLETS

EDITED BY RICHARD WILSON, D.Litt., F.R.G.S.

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THE MAPLE LEAF OF CANADA

BROTHER BRITONS

1. BROTHERS-IN-ARMS

MEN who fight boldly against the foe, standing shoulder to shoulder, learn to love and understand each other; they become "comrades," or "brothers-in-arms," and the feeling that binds them together can never be completely broken.

After the fighting time, they might be separated by many hundreds of miles; but if they came together again, their hands would go out to grip each other with a warm clasp because, years before, they had faced death together.

You remember reading in your history books of King Henry V., who fought and won the Battle of Agincourt, not far from the place where our brave soldiers fought the Germans and held them back from Paris? Our greatest poet, William Shakespeare, wrote a play about this King, and makes him say before the battle began :—

"He to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother."

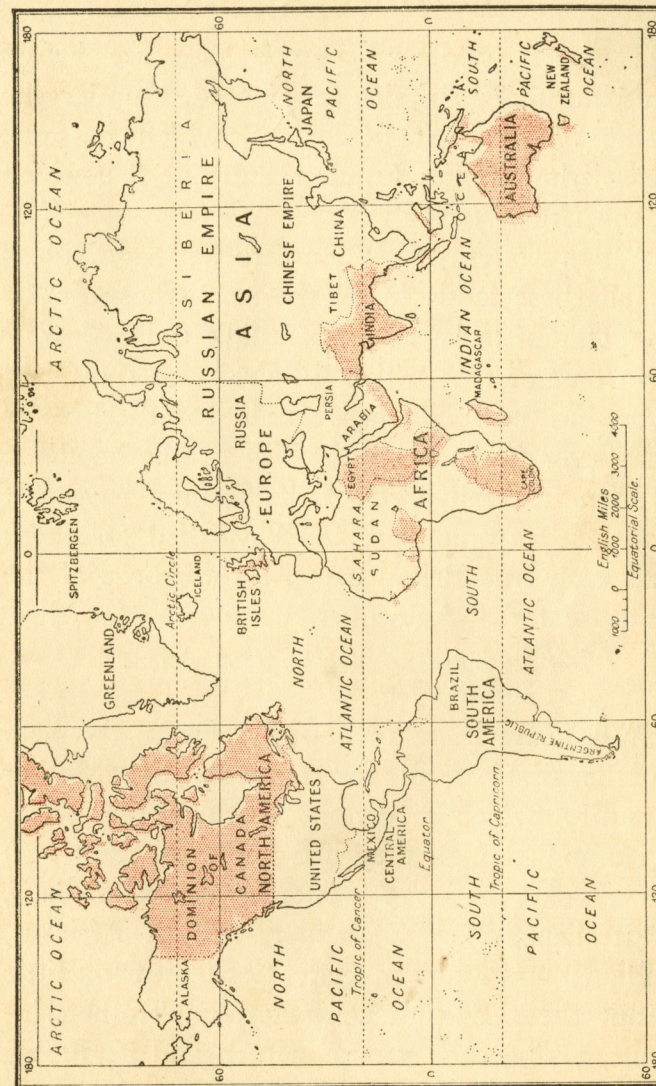
And the King goes on to say that no matter what the man's place in life may be, he shall, after Agincourt, be able to claim the King himself as his comrade, or brother-in-arms; for they, too, had faced death together. There is no stronger bond between man and man.

The fighting in the Great War, and especially the fighting in the trenches, made many soldiers of the King into comrades who had been complete strangers to each other before the great struggle began. The danger to the whole country bound the nation together, too, so that people learnt to be more kindly to each other, and tried in all kinds of ways to help those who needed help.

War is a terrible thing, but it has its bright side; and this feeling of friendship is, as it were, the silver lining to the black cloud.

But the Great War did more than teach the English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh to know each other better. These men are all "Britons"; but there are other Britons besides them, in other parts of the world, far away from the little group of islands where the name began.

We speak of Britain, Great Britain, and the British Isles; but there is also a Greater Britain, which includes a number of lands beyond the



THE RED PATCHES SHOW THE LANDS OF THE UNION JACK

sea where people of British race are living. And all these Britains are included under the name of the British Empire, which has one King who lives in London, and one flag which is the Union Jack.

When you say that you are a Briton, think of all these lands in all the seas whose flag is the Union Jack. Do not think only of your own part of the British Empire; for the Great War has knit all these lands together closer than ever in one great British brotherhood.

Men from all parts of the Empire have met and faced a cruel foe, and have died together; and each true Briton can use the words of the brave victor of Agincourt,

"He to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother."

Who were these men who came to the help of the first of all the Britains, the Mother Country which many of them spoke of as "Home" though they had homes of their own far across the sea? There were Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, Indians, and many others. Let us learn a little about these Empire comrades, or brothers-in-arms, taking each group in turn and beginning with the brave Canadians.

2. THE CANADIANS

The sign or badge of these "Brother Britons" from Canada is the maple leaf; just as the badge of England is the rose, of Scotland the thistle, and of Ireland the shamrock. You can see a picture of the Canadian badge on page 4.

Now look at a map of the world, and find out Canada; note also which ocean has to be crossed before Canada can be reached from Britain.

Try now to recall anything that you have read or heard about Canada. Perhaps you have friends or relatives living in that great country—for it is a *very* great country in size compared with the first of the Britains, as your map will show you at a glance. If you have a friend living in or near to a certain Canadian town, that town is now of special interest to you; and I expect that through that friend you already know something about Canada.

Perhaps you have post cards at home which have been sent to you from Canada; if so, they will give you some information about the country in a way that you will never forget.

The Canadian soldiers who came over to help

the Mother Country in the Great War were very strong-looking men ; but then, you see, most of them were used to a life in the open air.

Canada is a land of great farms and of corn-fields miles and miles in extent. Besides this, it is a bracing country where, in winter and spring at least, people have to keep moving to keep warm. It is a splendid country for skating, and tobogganing, for ski-ing, and sailing ice-yachts, and other glowing, healthy delights. It is also a country of blizzards, such as the people of the British Isles know little about.

Many Canadian people belong to families which came first from Scotland. They have not forgotten the country of their fathers ; and the Great War showed that they do not only *think* of her, but are ready to lay down their lives for her. Among the men who came to fight in Flanders, none were braver than those in the regiment known as the Canadian Scottish.

It is well that we should try to understand what every single person in the British Isles and Empire owes to these Canadians. The Germans were trying to get to Calais, as a step on the road to London. They were so eager to get there, that they began, in the spring of 1915, to use poison gas against our men.



CANADIAN ICE-YACHTS

The Canadians were among the first of those who felt the effects of that horrible, choking, blinding gas. The use of it gave the Germans such an advantage that it seemed likely for a time that they would make a road through the British lines. And it was the brave Canadians who stepped into the gap, and saved Calais. The people of Mother Britain can never forget this splendid brotherly service.

Then there was that famous fight in the wood from which the men of Canada drove the enemy one moonlight night. The story as told by an officer is worth learning by heart:—

“ It was just a few minutes before midnight when we got to a hollow which was about 300 yards from the wood. The moon came out now and then, but we could have done without her, for farm buildings were blazing all around. The fire from the Germans in the wood had now ceased, and we had a spell of silence which could be felt.

“ Whispered orders were given to fix bayonets and were obeyed in a flash. Our coats, packs, and everything were dropped, and we advanced in light order. When we reached a low ridge in full view of the wood, a storm of fire was loosed upon us from the undergrowth skirting

the wood. At once the word was given to charge, and on we rushed, cheering, yelling, and shouting—straight for the foe.

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

“ The struggle became a dreadful hand-to-hand conflict; we fought in clumps and batches, and the living struggled over the bodies of the dead and dying. At the height of the conflict, while we were steadily driving the Germans before us, the moon burst out. The clashing bayonets flashed like quicksilver, and faces were lit up as if by limelight.

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

This is a story to live through all time in the hearts of the British people. It gives us only

a glimpse of the kind of work that was being done in other parts of the fighting round about the poor battered town of Ypres, which the British soldier re-named "Wipers," as you may know.

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

But they did not stay at home. The "Old Grey Mother" of them all was in danger, the Britain to which it was their pride to belong. So they came, racing across the seas, as quick as steam would bring them; and they trained themselves on Salisbury Plain near the old British monument of Stonehenge. Then they went out to fight and win and die; and to conquer best of all in dying, for this showed the whole world what Brother Britons were prepared to do for each other when the hour of danger came.

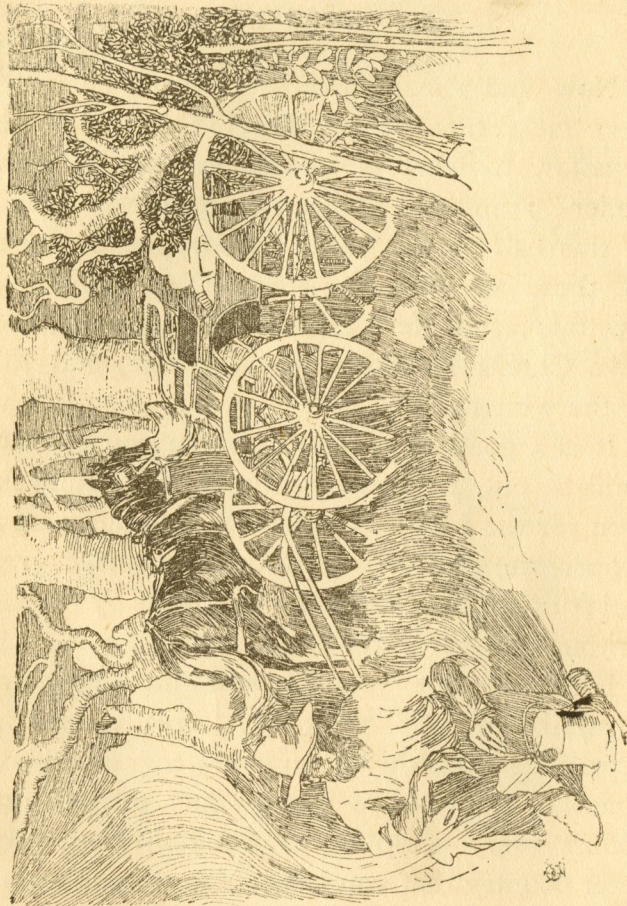
3. THE AUSTRALIANS

Now find Australia on a map of the world. You must turn to the lower half, below the Equator, to what is sometimes called "down under"; and you will not forget that the lands in this half of the world have opposite seasons to those of Great Britain. The people of Australia, and New Zealand, and South Africa have Christmas in the summer time, and July in the winter.

It is a good arrangement, when you come to think it out, for getting supplies of fruit and corn for the Mother Country. If things were in proper working order, we ought to have grain and fruit all the year round sent to us by Brother Britons in other parts of the Empire.

I expect that you know something about Australia and the Australians already, without depending altogether upon your geography book. Think it out, before you go any further, and collect every scrap of information about this great country that you can. You do not readily forget the things that you find out for yourselves and by yourselves.

It is a common thing for people in Sydney



THE MAN WHO GOES FIRST

and other Australian cities to speak of the British Isles as "home," though they may never have seen the Mother Country. This is one of the little things which knit hearts together and prove that brotherliness exists, without much talk about it.

But who can now doubt the brotherliness of these brave Britons from "down under"? Like the Canadians, they leapt to arms as soon as they heard that "home" and the Empire were in danger; and it was not long before the brave fighters of Australia were standing shoulder to shoulder with the men of the Old Country against the cruel foe.

Among all the fighters, the Australians were some of the strongest and the most active. They, too, live an open-air life and are very fond of exercise. They come from the great sheep farms and wheat-fields of a country large enough to take in the whole of restless, struggling fighting Europe. They are used to moving about, they love the fresh air, and when they *do* build a town to live in they use up a lot of space in doing so.

At first the soldiers from Australia went to Egypt to guard the Suez Canal against the Turks. But this was too easy a task for many

of them ; and they were glad enough when they were sent to make a landing on the rocky peninsula of Gallipoli, near the strait known as the Dardanelles.

They were given the very hard task of making a landing on a narrow beach with high cliffs behind it. In the cliffs the Turks had made trenches, from which they could defend the shore. All round the bay, too, the Turks had batteries of machine guns and field guns which the Germans had taught them how to use very cleverly.

Yet, in spite of all the difficulties, the Australians¹ made a landing, not only on the beach, but on the heights above. And while they were doing this, on April 25th, 1915, the Canadians were being "gassed" at Ypres.

It was very early in the morning when the long line of ship's boats, containing the Australians and New Zealanders, were towed by steam picket boats towards the narrow beach. Six British destroyers came close behind these boats, and these war ships were also filled with men ready for landing in their turn.

The sea was calm, and the air was still. The moon was setting behind the ships, and made

¹ There were New Zealanders with them.

them show black against the sky from the shore. Quietly the boats drew near to the beach, and they were quite close to it before the enemy gave a sign of their presence.

Then the whisper passed about among the Australians sitting huddled up in the boats, "They're coming!" Peering through the dimness of the dawn, they saw parties of Turks running across the beach to prevent the men from landing ; and high up on the cliffs the men on the destroyers saw a light flash again and again, as a warning to the defenders that the "invaders" were near.

Suddenly the silence was broken. Fire flashed out from the rifles of the Turks on the beach, and some of the men in the boats were hit. But they made no sign.

As soon as their boats grounded on the beach, they jumped out without waiting for orders. Then they made for the Turks at top speed—and the sight of an Australian athlete going "at the double" is one which would make glad the heart of any British boy.

The Turks stopped, looked this way and that, then turned and ran for their lives, with the men from "down under" close upon their heels. Some were overtaken ; others fled up

and up the ridges with the Australians after them, heedless of the fire from the guns of the Turkish batteries.

The landing party now gathered together at the foot of the cliff, and took time to take breath. Then they looked upward and saw a kind of wall rising above them, set here and there with low shrubs rather like those of the Australian "bush." Half-way up this cliff wall was a Turkish trench, from which the rifles were already speaking to the invaders. That trench had to be taken!

The Australians flung off their packs and everything that would be likely to check them. Then they charged their rifles, and with a "Come along, boys," began to climb the wall with the help of the bushes.

Up, up they went, up and ever upward, while the bullets fell around them. Some of them were hit and fell dead or wounded down the cliff. But the others pressed onward, never heeding, gaining foot by foot upon that Turkish ditch.

At last they reached it. Some of the foe were bayoneted, while others made off, mad with fear, up the higher part of the cliff, with the Australian athletes after them. In the

shortest possible time, the men from "down under" stood high on the ridge waving their rifles as schoolboys wave their caps when they are given a holiday.

But it was not only Australian soldiers who came to act a brother's part. Australia has a small Navy of her own; and as soon as the war broke out these warships were handed over to the King's officers in London, to do what was wanted of them.

One day, two of these ships were escorting troopships to Egypt when they had a wireless message. They were told that an enemy warship was near a group of small islands belonging to Britain. This was the German cruiser *Emden*, which had been taking and sinking British ships for a long time, and which every naval captain wished he could catch.

The Australian warship *Sydney* was at once sent to meet the German, and after a long run came up with her. There was a stiff fight between the two ships, but at last the *Sydney* knocked out the German, which made for the beach of an island and ran aground. Still she would not haul down her flag, and it was only when the *Sydney* had fired at her again that she did so. The German sailors were taken off, and

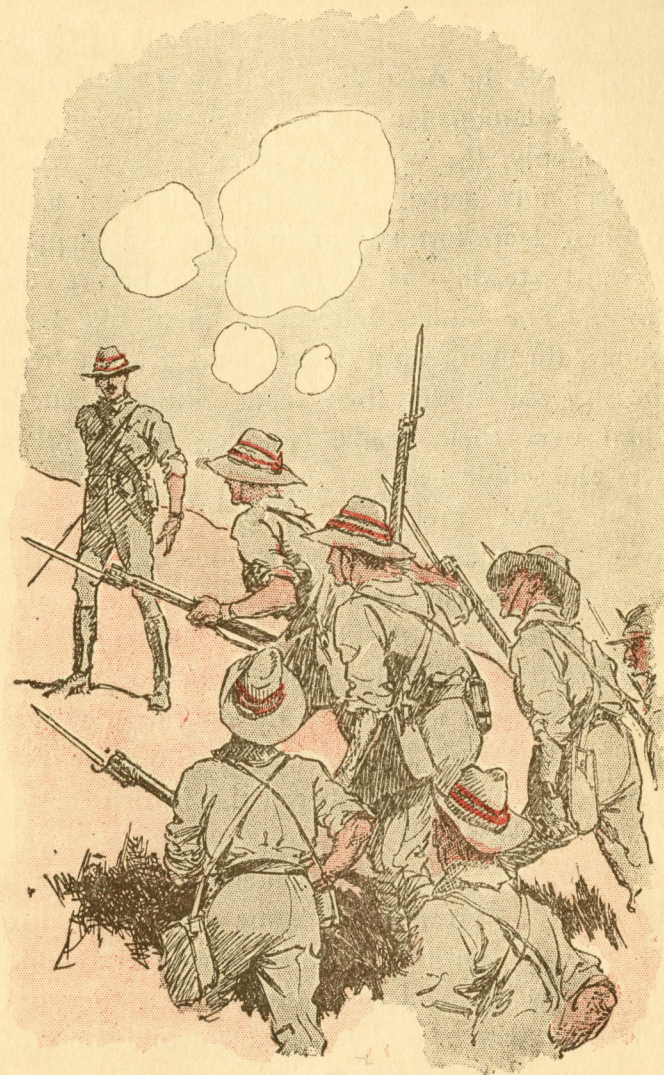
carried to Colombo in Ceylon; and the Australian sailors were very kind to the wounded.

This was a splendid start for the little Australian Navy, was it not? When the British Navy heard of it, it felt as proud as a big brother feels when his youngest brother, whom he has taught to bat, makes a huge score "not out" in an important match. And that is very proud indeed!

4. THE NEW ZEALANDERS

Picture to yourselves a piece of open country across which stretches a deep trench full of riflemen and other soldiers with machine guns. At some distance from this deep ditch are a number of scattered shrubs and bushes behind which riflemen in British khaki and slouch hats are taking cover.

The men in the trench are Turks under German officers, and the men behind the bushes are New Zealanders. The order has been given to drive the Turks from the trench, although between the bushes and the enemy there is a broad space of open country, where there is no cover at all.



THE MEN LEAPT TO THEIR FEET

The scene is in the rocky peninsula of Gallipoli, where the Australians and New Zealanders made the famous landing of which we have read.

Suddenly, the word was given to leave cover and advance across the open. The men leapt to their feet, formed up in line, and stepped forward steadily as if on parade before the King. The bullets fell round them like hailstones, throwing up a dense cloud of dust from the dry soil under their feet. Shrapnel shells burst over their heads, spraying their bullets over the whole line.

One man after another fell, wounded or dying, but their places were filled up and the line of men went steadily on, sometimes walking, sometimes at the double. Half-way across that dreadful space they halted, for the Turkish fire was too hot to be faced by any men however brave. But they did not fall back to their own trenches. They remembered the British motto, "What we have we hold."

Without the loss of a moment they lay down flat upon the ground, and some of them tried to reply to the Turkish fire; but the riflemen and gunners were so cleverly hidden that they did not know where to shoot. Meanwhile some of our brave "Brother Britons" were busily digging,

for in this place they meant to stay; and in a very short time a new trench had been dug from which an advance might be made at a later time.

The New Zealanders had answered as eagerly to the King's call as the brave Canadians and Australians, leaving their own beautiful land far away in the Southern Seas. They call it the "Britain of the South," and in many ways it is very like "home," as they also speak of the Mother Country.

It is made up of two islands, and no part of the country is far from the sea, which is like the Motherland, as you know. It has a climate very like that of the British Isles, and it is well watered by a large number of rivers. Its surface, like that of the Old Country, is full of change; for there are hills, mountains, plains, downs, and fruitful river valleys.

But there are certain differences, too.

Sometimes there are shocks of earthquake in parts of New Zealand; and in one district there are many hot pools and springs. In some places in this strange district the ground is so hot that it will burn the soles of your feet; for here the fires in the heart of the world have come up close to the surface.

In some parts the Maoris, or natives of New

Zealand, use the hot pools for cooking food ; so we may conclude that there is nothing very terrifying about the " hot lakes district " so long as there is no earthquake, and the visitor is careful where he walks.

New Zealand has also very high mountains, in the sides of which there are glaciers or rivers of ice, so that this is another way in which the country differs from the Britain of the Northern Seas. But on the whole, the work and the life of the people is like that of the Old Country, except for its crowded and dirty towns. The New Zealanders are very fond of the water, and of sailing upon it in yachts. And the Motherland can never forget the present of the warship which the New Zealanders bought for her great Navy.

This ship was called the *New Zealand*, and it took part in a fight with the Germans in the first part of the Great War. Some German cruisers were coming towards the East Coast of Britain when they were caught by a squadron under Sir David Beatty, and made to hurry home again, to get their damage repaired—that is to say, those which were not sunk. And in this fight of the Dogger Bank the *New Zealand* had a worthy share.

So the people of far-away New Zealand took part, like the Canadians, in defending the towns and people of the Motherland against her foes.

5. THE SOUTH AFRICANS

Pause once more for a moment to gather up all the little bits that you already know about South Africa. Look at the great red patch at the southern end of Africa, and note its size and position.

Note also, with special care, that the north-western neighbour of this British land was German South-West Africa. This was the part of our Empire which had German land next door to it ; so that, in a way, South Africa had to be on her guard even more than Britain itself ; for the Old Country has the sea all round about it.

When the war began, there were British soldiers in South Africa, ready to defend the land against any foes who might attack it. Now the Mother Country needed all the soldiers she could get to send to France ; so the South Africans said they would get ready to defend their own country, and the regular soldiers

of the King could be sent where the officers in London wished them to go.

Then the "Brother Britons" in South Africa left their farms and sheep runs, their gold mining and ostrich rearing, and made up a number of regiments to go and fight the Germans over the north-western border.

Now, in the middle of this German country there was a town called Windhuk, where most of the German soldiers were. There were also at this place some wireless masts so very tall that they could "speak" to the Kaiser in Berlin. They could tell him all kinds of things which the British naval captains did not wish him to know; and it was very desirable that these tall masts should be brought down or used by "Brother Britons" to speak to London.

So a message was sent to General Botha, who was the chief man in South Africa, asking him whether he thought he could go and capture Windhuk and the very tall wireless masts which could talk to the Kaiser half the world away. General Botha said he was very busy at the moment, for some of the men in South Africa whom he had trusted very much were making friends with the Germans; and these traitors would have to be attended to first of all.

It took some time to put these matters right; but at last General Botha and his brave men were ready to go into the German colony. They had a very difficult task before them.

South Africa is, on the whole, a very dry country, where the rivers become mere chains of pools in the summer time. It is also much hotter than Britain; and the time when General Botha set out was about January, which is, of course, the midsummer month on the other side of the globe. The way by which he had to go was dry and bare and sandy; and for water he would have to depend upon a few wells at long distances apart.

When General Botha's men came to one of these wells, they found that the water had been poisoned. This had been done by the Germans as they fell back, and they had used sheep-dip for the purpose. As the soldiers went on they found that other wells had been treated in the same way.

But even this could not stop the march towards those tall wireless masts which could carry on a conversation with the Kaiser; and the men pushed on through the sand and the heat bearing up against their thirst like the heroes that they were. One small German

town after another was taken and then General Botha and his men came near to Windhuk.

The Germans did not fight here, but let the South Africans march into the place while they went off, up-country. General Botha and his men marched through the streets to the Town Hall, where the Union Jack was hoisted, the band played "God save the King," and the tired soldiers gave three hearty cheers. The people of the town seemed to be rather glad to see them, and all were very kindly treated, although many of them were Germans; but then "Brother Britons" all over the Empire are taught to be kind to their enemies when they have beaten them in a fair fight.

I expect that one of the first things to be done after the hoisting of the Union Jack was to place some men in charge of the tall wireless masts—men who did not wish to send any news to the Kaiser, at all events any news that he would be glad to receive. Then the South Africans went on again up-country, past more poisoned wells and over broken railways, after the German force. At last they came up to the camp, and by a clever movement got right round it.

Out came a German officer with a white flag to see General Botha. He wished to know what



THE GERMAN OFFICER AND GENERAL BOTHA

would be done if the Germans gave in. General Botha told him that was *his* affair, advised him to give in or take the consequences, which meant bombardment of the camp.

So the Germans gave in and were made prisoners, but were, of course, kindly treated although they *had* poisoned the wells, which was not playing the great war game fairly and according to the rules which gentlemen follow.

Even yet the South Africans had not done enough ; and many of them offered themselves to the King to go and fight for the Empire wherever his officers might care to send them.

They were ready to do this although it meant great loss to many of them. For their farms and sheep-runs and ostrich grounds needed a lot of attention, while some of them had left the diamond and gold mines to go on foreign service. You see, these men saw clearly that the whole Empire was in danger, and that it was no time to think of anything but fighting.

If your house were on fire, your big brother would not worry about saving his money or his goods before he had saved you, would he ?

6. THE INDIANS

Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are British lands, where most of the people are of British race, except, of course, in South Africa, where there are more black than white people. India, however, is not a British land peopled by men and women of British race and speech.

It is a foreign land whose people speak several strange languages, and live in many ways quite different from ourselves. It is a land under our rule, too, and the Germans said that if we were too busy to look after India some day, her people would turn against us.

Well, the Great War came and we were very busy indeed. But the people of India did not turn against us. Instead of this, thousands of them begged to be allowed to fight for us ; and those who could not fight went to their temples to pray to their gods that we might win.

These were not " Brother Britons " ; but they were ready to act a brother's part, because we had tried to rule their country well and in a kindly manner.

The British officers in India thanked those who offered help, and said that certain men should be picked out to go and fight for Britain. The Indian soldiers were anxious to go to France to meet the Germans ; and they were very glad when they heard that some of them would be allowed to do so.

There are many wealthy princes in India who rule certain parts of the land under the British. These princes made many offers to our King who was also their Emperor. They asked to be sent to fight ; they gave money and jewels in great abundance ; they offered their own fighting men for the war ; some of them bought a hospital ship as a present for the King's army ; others spent a great deal of money on a fleet of motor ambulances for use in France ; but best of all was their offer of service in the field. "What orders has my King for me ?" asked one of them, who had already fought for the British in past years.

The Indian troops were got ready very quickly, and were the first of the Empire's soldiers to land in France to face the foe. But it took a little time to get them used to the climate and fit them properly to face the Germans. Then they went on to the front just as the winter

was beginning, and they did their work splendidly.

It must not be forgotten that the new ways of fighting were quite strange to many of them ; but they soon got used to the terrible bursting shells, the aeroplanes dropping bombs, the strange fighting in dirty ditches, the land mines, and the cruel hedges of barbed wire.

But they loved the dashing charge best of all, and to feel that they were fighting hand to hand against a foe that they could see and touch. Watch the Bengal Lancers at their work. They were brought up at one place to help their British comrades, who gave them a rousing cheer.

"They smiled back grimly, with their eyes glancing ahead and their fingers feeling their lance-shafts. At the word of command they swept forward and rode into the Germans like a whirlwind. Who were these strange warriors, with their flashing eyes, their dark skins, their gleaming white teeth, and their terrible lances ? The Bengal Lancers did not give the Germans much time to think it over.

"With a shrill yell, they rode right through the German infantry, thrusting right and left, and bringing down a man every time. The

Germans broke and ran for their lives, pursued by the Lancers for about a mile. When the Lancers came back they were cheered right along the line ; but they were very quiet and did not seem to think that they had done anything out of the way." This is the story as told by one who was present in this part of the field.

These Indian soldiers knew little or no English ; but one of them had learnt four words at least. He was wounded in battle and was in hospital when King George went over to France in the winter of the first year of the war. The King visited the hospital, and this Indian soldier sat up in bed when he saw him and spoke his only English sentence : " God save the King ! "

The King was asked at this time to pin the Victoria Cross on the breasts of two Indian soldiers who had shown great bravery in the fighting. One of these men was too ill for the King to see him ; but the other was decorated by His Majesty. This was Naik (that is, Corporal) Darwan Sing Negi, who had led the way in an attack on a German trench.

With fixed bayonet he went forward, the first of the party, round one angle after another, and always exposed to rifle and revolver fire, as well as bayonet thrusts. But the Germans



THE BEGINNING OF A BRITISH CITY

must have been terrified of those dark flashing eyes, that gleaming bayonet, and the terrible cries of this dark-skinned warrior. They gave way before him bit by bit until at last the trench was cleared.

If I had space I could tell you many more stories about the brave Indians, who fought also at the Suez Canal against the Turks, and at the Dardanelles, where the Australians and New Zealanders fought so splendidly. But perhaps I have told you enough to make you try to find out more for yourselves.

7. CONCLUSION

What is the lesson of this little book? Let me try to set it down as simply as I can.

The Great War knit together all parts of our Empire in one great brotherhood. The feeling of brotherliness had been there before the war began, but the fighting and the danger showed it up very clearly to the whole world.

The word "Briton" no longer means one who lives in the British Islands. It means an English-speaking member of the great race which holds the British Empire.



IN A CANADIAN ORCHARD

In the olden days the people of Rome were proud indeed to use the words, "I am a Roman citizen." You have much more reason to be proud to-day for you can say, "I am a British citizen."



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