

outwardly," but, "Send us purity; help us as individuals to 'begin with ourselves.'"

Some are saying, "We know we ought to be pure, but how?"

Doubtless some of us are conscious enough of failures. That which they desire is, not so much condemning, but cheering, guiding, delivering, elevating. Well, see how Christ treated a Zaccheus. He trusted him, showed him His love, went to stay with him, defended him, made manifest that the man was more than his position or occupation, and called him by the name of honour—a son of Abraham. He lifted the man by letting him see what was expected of him. So He treats us. He cleanses also by His sacrificial work. Directly we believe that He died for us individually, we are accounted as pure before the great avenging, implacable law of righteousness. Our sins are covered;

they are not imputed to us. This release is life and strength; it leads to purity. There is mention in Virgil of a river in the Campania to which fable attached the power of making all beings white that drank thereof or touched it; it made the oxen and sheep white; it made articles of darkest dye white; it made black men white. That is fable. There is, however, a stream in which we may wash, and of which we may drink and become pure—the stream of mercy and self-sacrificing love which flowed from Him who died for us. Drink thereof, and our strength shall be renewed for the uphill climb to heaven's gate. Wash therein, and no enemy shall be able to point to spot of contamination. Shall we not be prepared for worship here, and finally to ascend the Hill of the Lord, and stand in the Holy Place with clean hands and pure heart?



## OUR SOLDIERS' AMUSEMENTS.

AT THE TIN HALL, ALDERSHOT.



AN ACCOMPANIST.

THIN the last few years great efforts, in which earnest, warm-hearted women take the lead, have been, and are still being made to better the condition, socially and morally, of those who may be called upon at any moment to give their lives for their country.

With this view the soldiers' amusements are borne in mind, for Tommy Atkins must have his share of play as

well as the routine work of cleaning accoutrements and learning the art of war; and at the present time the monotony of drill or the barrack-room cannot be pleaded as an excuse for his frequenting the public-house or the low music-hall.

Books and periodicals—if not always as plentiful as they might be, now cheap and good literature is to be had—are found in the recreation-rooms. Soldiers' Institutes—on the admirable plan inaugurated at Portsmouth by Miss Robinson, at Aldershot by Mrs.

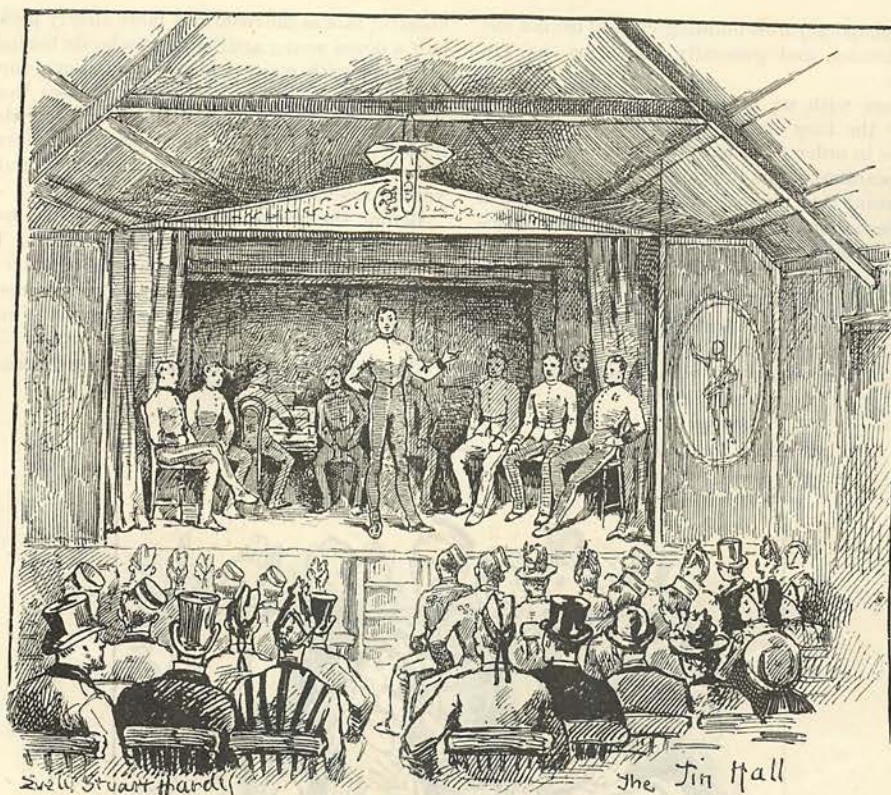
Daniels and her daughter—are either built or projected at all large garrison towns, and are as well known to the general public as they are appreciated by the more thoughtful of the men for whose use they are intended; while so much encouragement is given to athletics that annual meetings for military sports have been instituted by every regiment in the service, and are looked upon as the regular events of the summer season.

Unless detailed for guard or piquet, the soldiers' evenings are at their own disposal. After the drill or route marching of the day, they may be seen, in fine weather, strolling along such country lanes as are within a walk of their quarters, or making the



IN THE AUDIENCE.





streets of the nearest towns gay with their presence. But in the long dark nights of winter, other ways of passing the time having to be resorted to, some thoughtful friend suggested that once a week, at least, the regiments and corps stationed at Aldershot might take turns in providing entertainment for the rest by a series of concerts and recitals.

The suggestion appears to have been cordially responded to, for during the past winter these concerts—to which everyone in uniform is admitted free—were given regularly; and so thronged were they by approving audiences that they may be pronounced a decided success.

And that success appears to owe little or nothing to outsiders. The bandmaster, or his deputy, conducts; the bandsmen give their services gratuitously, and play their best "for the honour of the corps;" the singers, etc., are drawn from their own ranks, and the additional aid they frequently receive is given by such of their officers, and the ladies connected with the regiment, as are gifted with good musical talent, and good-naturedly willing to employ it for their benefit.

A couple of hours, and a concert, however elaborately got up, is at an end; but every amateur who has assisted at one knows that the mere singing of a pretty ballad, or playing of a fantasia, has little to do with the pleasurable excitement it has given him and his colleagues for many preceding days.

There have been the glees to practise; that difficult passage for the clarionet or euphonium solo to be

mastered; the most telling recitations to be selected and submitted to a few critical friends; and the charade or proverb—if one is attempted—to be rehearsed again and yet again before it approaches perfection.

In one quarter these entertainments have been



THE GENERAL.



given in a temporary iron building erected behind one of the Institutes, and generally known as the Tin Hall.

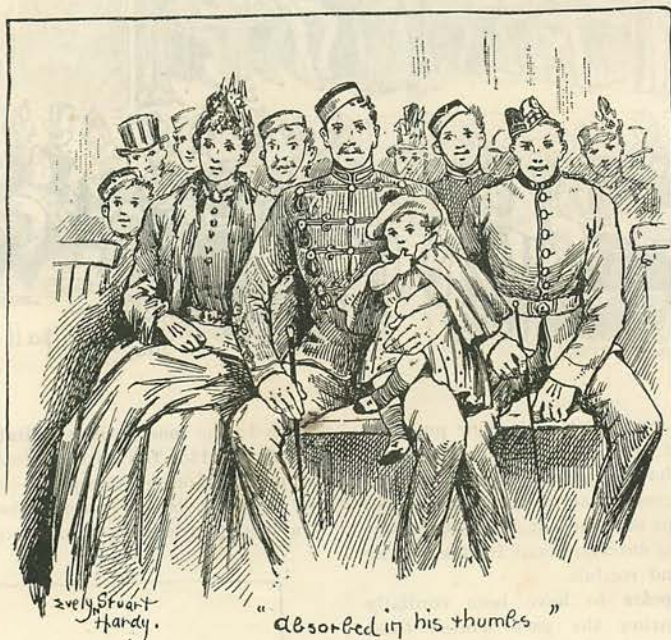
Come there with us, good reader, and do not be repelled by the long narrow entry down which you have to dive in order to reach this building, or by its homely appearance. The interior is cheerful enough, the red element that predominates imparting a much livelier aspect than an ordinary black-coated audience can give to a concert-room.

Already it is filling rapidly—so rapidly that it is a relief to see that all the doors open outward. Perhaps the first thing that strikes the inquiring stranger is the courtesy with which he is received by a couple of young dragoons, who keep the door and

cheerful talk as the room gets more closely packed, and half a dozen young artillerymen who sit behind us are enjoying, with many whispers and much suppressed laughter, some jest that mightily amuses them; but there is no noise, and very little—if any—of the horse-play in the back rows, that generally occurs to the annoyance of everyone else, wherever country-bred youths assemble.

Before the programme commences, we have just time for a cursory glance at our neighbours. Directly in our van sits a burly sergeant of the 1st Royals, flanked by men of the Ordnance Corps, some lancers in their smart undress, and more soberly clad rifle-men.

Over our shoulder we catch a glimpse of a sun-bronzed



usher him to a seat; and as soon as he has taken possession of it, he cannot but note the order that reigns in this large and varied assemblage.

Men of all ages and grades in the service are here, from the little drummer to the grey-haired general in plain clothes, who has looked in to see how the thing works. There is a sprinkling of civilians, who pay a small sum for their seats, and the female element is not lacking.

That the larger number of the privates we see around us are mere boys no one can deny; but when we compare them, smart, clean, and well set up, with the hobble-de-hoys to be found at our street corners, we feel also that the course of military training and discipline is making men of them.

We should rejoice to hear that the agitation in favour of more food and better cooking for these growing lads was bearing fruit: but this subject does not trouble them just at present. There is a buzz of

infantry man, whose badges and medals attest his long service in India. A cluster of recruits who have just arrived from the *dépôt* are not far off; a couple of the army chaplains are strolling about the room stopping to say a few kindly words to those they recognise, or to admire a fine fat baby, who must also have been reared under military discipline, for he never obtrudes himself on public notice, but sits on the knee of his proud father—one of the hussars—absorbed in his thumbs and the music till his eyes close, and he is transferred to the arms of his mother.

With military precision the curtain rises at half-past seven, and the band files on to the platform; a wave of the *bâton*, and the opening chords are struck of one of the most effective of overtures. This is followed by a glee, in which the voices of the little drummers and fifers do good service. Two or three solos are beautifully played, as well as two or



three selections from our best composers, these being interspersed with songs and recitations, both serious and playful. In the latter there is nothing of which the most captious can complain, and if the soldiers evince a preference for a ditty with a refrain in which they can join lustily, who can wonder?

"You should have been here last week," says one of my neighbours, "then you'd have heard Mrs. M— sing. She's the wife of one of our doctors, and it's a rare treat to listen to her!"

"Aye," asserts another, "and that chaplain standing over yonder, he's worth hearing, he is! But give me Major Blank if you want a good hearty laugh; he's the singer for me!"

There are several vociferous encores, but they cannot always be responded to, for at half-past nine the gun will boom forth the signal of recall. Already some of the boys are slipping quietly from the room, perhaps with a pang of regret that they may not

stay for a merry little interlude acted by four of the performers. By the time the gun does send forth its warning, the hearty applause that follows this has died away. "God save the Queen" has been played, and the hall is rapidly emptying.

We stop to read a programme for the following Tuesday, and see that it includes handbell ringing, in which some of the men are said to excel. We pause again, after threading the narrow entry, to listen to the trumpeters making the air ring with the cavalry call, and the roll of the drums at the infantry quarters.

By the time the clocks strike ten even these sounds will be silenced. A little later, and the command "Lights out!" will envelop in darkness the long lines of barracks and huts. It has been a pleasant evening to many, and who would not rejoice that such evidences of good comradeship and interest in better things than the soldier has been credited with, can be found at the Tin Hall?

LOUISA CROW.



"LIGHTS OUT."

## INFLUENCE.

(PREACHED BEFORE A YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.)

BY THE REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep and was laid to his fathers."—Acts xiii. 36.



DAVID, "the man after God's own heart," had been consigned to his grave. He had passed away like the sun of a summer or autumn evening from his place among his fellows.

But has the glory of that lustrous orb finally departed, as he sinks in the horizon? Do no surviving rays linger after his earthly course has run? Is his harp now left to moulder on the willows of Zion? Nay, nay, there is music to this hour in those silent strings. The light of his life, and influence, and character survives the tomb: the beams of the vanished luminary loiter and linger on the hoary mountain tops. As we stand by the mausoleum on the brow of his own holy hill, we listen to the panegyric pronounced over him by one who had imbibed much of his spirit,

and is sharing now his crown:—"David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep and was laid to his fathers."

### I.



IN deducing from these words moral and spiritual lessons, I would observe generally, that *each individual in this life has some great purpose to fulfil*. "David served his own generation."

Every thing in the wide universe has its special mission. The flower fulfils its design by unfolding its colours or scattering its sweet odours wherever it blooms. As we see it dropping one by one its decayed and withered leaves, we feel its little destiny in its own little world has been attained. The lark as it mounts