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THE GUARDS' INQUIRY.

The case of Lieutenant Woods, of the Grenadier Guards, on which the War Office has just made a public report, roused considerable interest in England at the commencement of last month, and reopened a number of controversial points with respect to Army efficiency and Army sentiment. These controversies have hitherto been persistent enough in a desultory way, although there has been at least as much misunderstanding as warmth of feeling; and it was therefore quite desirable that for once the matter should be threshed out in a public Court, if only to prove to a sceptical minority that unpopularity in a regiment and actual lack of efficiency do not constitute an identical charge against an officer. The prevalent misunderstanding, to which the circumstance that unpopular officers have from time to time been 'ragged' has given additional weight, depends on the assumption that genuine ability and the sober pursuit of military studies render a man unpopular with his brother officers; and that, consequently, exceptional ability, so far from being an advantage, is an impediment to a career. It was unquestionably this idea that underlay Lieutenant Woods' appeal to the Army Council. This appeal was made according to the provision of the Army Act, as amended in 1904. Lieutenant Woods' complaint came under two main heads: first, he maintained that the reports made upon him by his commanding officer and by two of his superior officers were unduly severe, and were, moreover, biased by the knowledge that he was unpopular with his brother officers and with the men; secondly, he contended that superior officers of the battalion had brought pressure upon him with a view to his resigning his commission. Lieutenant Woods appears to have been actuated to make his appeal largely by the consciousness that his ability, apart from his duties as a regimental officer, was above the average—a fact that was not denied by his superior officers; but against this claim was urged the damning contention that Lieutenant Woods was quite incapable of commanding his men. Since his influence was useless in the ranks and his real ability unsuited to his particular vocation, the Army Council find that he is "inefficient as a regimental officer, and that his retention in the service is not in the interests of the Army". In determining the point of whether the reports were biased by a knowledge of his unpopularity, the Army Council hold the opinion, which was indeed rendered inevitable by the evidence, that Lieutenant Woods' unpopularity was due more to his aloofness from the general interests of the battalion as a body than to his temperate and studious habits or his reluctance to share the social life of his colleagues. Further, they absolve the officers in question of any suggestion of bias, conceiving them on the contrary, to have been actuated simply by a sense of duty, though they hold that the reports are occasionally too strongly worded; but they point out that in so far as the reports made on Lieutenant Woods by his former commanding officer were unduly favourable, he had some cause to resent the abrupt severity of subsequent reports. The Army Council, however, deprecate the advice tendered to Lieutenant Woods by his superior officers that he should resign his commission. Such advice, however friendly its intention, is highly improper in the mouth of a superior officer; since it is only by the impartiality of a superior officer's report that constant efficiency can be secured.

It will readily be admitted that the decision of the Army Council is eminently fair; but, unless more lies in the background than is generally conceived, there is less unanimity on behalf of Lieutenant Woods. Yet for him, too, there is ample justification. Here is a man of application, of ability, of ambition; anxious to do his best and always trying to do it; yet without



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the requisite quality of the soldier—the power of influencing men, of winning the sympathy of the ranks. If there have been cases of unpopularity simply on account of personal traits or of friction in the mess-room which necessitated a withdrawal from the service, why should not a man such as Lieutenant Woods believe that some back-stairs diplomacy was being engineered for his removal? No one but a man conscious of his merit, and with sufficient self-respect to insist upon its recognition, could have taken the step that Lieutenant Woods took. So much is to his credit; and it certainly outweighs his great fault in not realizing that the military profession, or at any rate that branch of it to which he belonged, was unsuited to his abilities. Incidentally, a light has been thrown upon the methods of Army promotion sufficiently satisfactory to pacify those pessimists who see no colour but black at every point of the horizon.

MOVING A THEATRE.

The moving of a stone Colossus, that of the Montauk Theatre in New York, one of the most interesting of such removals, has just been successfully carried out at a cost of 75,000 dollars. The ground on which the theatre has hitherto stood was required for the city for public purposes. The theatre proprietors purchased a site about a street distant and determined to move the theatre thither at once. The actual work of moving it began on August 16, but the general preliminary preparations were taken in hand months before. The building had to be secured and to be lifted with its foundations on a mass of beams, steel girders and wheels; only at one moment was the removal threatened with disaster. The steel and wooden supports suddenly sank one day and a fissure appeared in the masonry. The security of the walls was at once strengthened with wooden and steel supports. The undertaking, the greatest of its kind in the country, where entire house removals are by no means rare, is certainly one of the most remarkable achievements of modern architectural technique.

NEW BOOKS.

Tauchnitz Edition, to appear December 19.
The Square Peg, 1 vol. by W. E. Norris, author of "My friend Jim," &c.

WEATHER FORECAST FOR TODAY

of the Royal Saxon Meteorological Institute.

Moderate south-easterly winds, dry and rather bright, somewhat cooler.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

THE IMPERIAL DEPARTURE.

On Tuesday evening at 6.15 o'clock, the Emperor arrived at Charing Cross station, and was heartily cheered by the crowds assembled inside and outside the terminus. A select company awaited His Majesty on the platform, including the Duke of Connaught, Princess Louise, the German Ambassador (who was to accompany the Emperor on the journey) and the Embassy staff, the Lord Mayor of London, and Lord Lonsdale. The train moved away from the platform amid tumultuous cheering, which His Majesty warmly acknowledged.

THE EMPEROR THANKS LONDONERS.

Just previous to his departure from Charing Cross station on Wednesday, says a London report, the German Emperor addressed the Lord Mayor and expressed his gratification at the reception accorded him at the Guildhall, and on behalf of the Empress and himself, heartily thanked the citizens of London. In answer to the Lord Mayor's enquiry, His Majesty said: "My health is very much better; my visit to London has given me great enjoyment."

Reuter's Agency has had a communication made to it by Count Wolff-Metternich, the German Ambassador, who states that the Emperor has experienced great benefit from the change of air, and has thoroughly enjoyed his sojourn in England. It has been possible for him to lead the life of an English country gentleman, free from the worry of affairs. He has received many tokens of friendship to himself and the German nation. Hundreds of letters from all parts and all social classes of England have reached him, expressing friendly greetings and good wishes. His Majesty appreciates these kindly sentiments, and heartily reciprocates them. He leaves hospitable England in the hope that his visit has further promoted friendly feelings between the subjects of King Edward and his own.

His Majesty the German Emperor arrived at Port Victoria at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday evening and embarked on board the "Hohenzollern."

Upon arrival at the port the Emperor was received by Admiral Gerard Noel and the commander of the Home Fleet, Vice-Admiral Bridgeman. The "Hohenzollern" was moored to a buoy in Sheerness harbour, and according to the final arrangements, was expected to remain over night, and to put to sea at 7.30 o'clock yesterday morning.

The Tribune writes as follows in its issue of yesterday: "That the Kaiser has had a holiday which has been beneficial to him is worth much, that his association with the British Court and with other Royal guests has been of the most hearty character is a further personal gain, but we have entertained in Wilhelm II, not only, or not chiefly, the brilliant and untiringly active personage, but above all the recognized head of the German people. The political value of the visit consists in its representative, almost symbolical character. Many classes, differing one from another, of Englishmen and Germans had already made it their object to put an end to estrangement, jealousy, and suspicion. The two chief diplomatists of Europe have now formally set their seals to this democratic work of rapprochement between England and Germany, which is entirely compatible with the Anglo-French entente. The Anglo-German friendship is an object of itself. From a more extended point of view it is a further step towards the union of the European Powers for the general good."

MINERS' WAGES INCREASED.

In answer to a demand by the miners of the Federated Area of Great Britain for a five per cent increase in wages, Lord James of Hereford, who acted as mediator in the question, has decided in favour of the increase, and the same will come into force in the new year. The Federated Area comprises the miners of all England, with the exception of Northumberland, Durham and North Wales.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

ANOTHER BUSINESS MAN'S SUICIDE.

A San Francisco telegram reports that Mr. Dalzell Brown, the director of the Californian Safe Trust Co., who was arrested three days ago, committed suicide on Tuesday.

RACIAL RIOTS IN ALABAMA.

It is reported from New York that a racial conflict has broken out between the whites and the

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