

TO A V.A.D. FROM A V.A.D.

I.

When you start by oversleeping, and the bath is bagged three deep,
 When you stagger to the window 'neath the blind to take a peep,
 When you find the snow is snowing, and it's murky overhead,
 When your room-mate has a day off, and lies snugly tucked in bed,
 When your cap falls in the coal-box and you lose your collar-stud,
 When it's time to start, and then you find your shoes are thick in mud,
 When you scramble in to breakfast, just too late to drink your tea—
 Don't grouse, my dear; remember you're a "War-time V.A.D."

2.

When you start to scrub the lockers and the bowl falls on the floor,
 When you finish them and then you find that they were done before,
 When you haven't got a hanky and you want to blow your nose,
 When the patients shriek with laughter 'cos a bed drops on your toes,
 When you use the last Sapolio and can't get any more,
 When you've lost the key belonging to the Linen Cupboard door,
 When your head is fairly splitting, and you're feeling up a tree—
 Don't grouse, my dear; remember you're a "War-time V.A.D."

3.

When the Doctor comes into the ward, and each stands to his bed,
 When he asks you for a probe and you hand him gauze instead,
 When the Sister "strafes" you soundly 'cos Brown's kit is incomplete,
 When you take a man some dinner, and upset it on the sheet,
 When you make the beds and sweep the ward and rush with all your might,
 When you stagger off duty and the wretched fire won't light,
 When you think of those at home and long for luxury and ease—
 Don't grouse, my dears; remember you're the "War-time V.A.D's."

4.

When your name's read out for night shift and
 | | they leave you on your own,
 When you're suddenly in darkness and you hear
 | | the telephone,
 When you crash into a coke-bin as you rush to take
 | the call,
 When they tell you there are Zepps, and that you
 mayn't have lights at all.
 When you go into the kitchen and a rat runs
 through the door,

When it chases you into a chair, and both fall on the floor,
 When you try to eat your food, mistaking paraffin for tea—
 Don't grouse, my dear; remember you're a "War-time V.A.D."

LESLIE M. GODDARD.

"The Gazette," 3rd London General Hospital.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"THE IRON AGE."*

Really good literature in fiction is as rare as it is satisfying. When it is combined with a really interesting study of men and things, the reader can settle himself or herself down to a real—if short—respite from the stern realities of the present time. Not that the story under consideration deals with the pleasanter aspects of human nature; rather, it is of one of the, perhaps, most soul destroying—the successful manufacturer, whose higher aspirations have been swamped in the pursuit of success, and who, when it is attained, fails to use it as a means of rising to a higher and purer atmosphere. The tragedy of his son Edward's life—for a life lived in a wholly un-congenial environment must always be a tragedy—is the chief centre of the story. It was said of an older Willis that he had not worshipped gold but the iron of his factory. The thoroughly commonplace and unimaginative Willis is drawn with the discriminating and critical pen which marks Mr. Brett Young's writings.

"The green fringe of the Black Country," was the way Mr. Willis described his surroundings. "Southwards you can see a long way—Worcester Cathedral—I haven't been there for years. My son Edward would take you with pleasure. Did Mrs. Willis show you the fish pond? . . . We're very homely people," depreciating with a smile the velvety lawns, the elaborate lounge chairs with their red cushions disposed under the spreading cedar, the heavy silver tea-tray at which Mrs. Willis sat pouring, rapt in the drone of her husband's voice.

Charles Stafford, the newly married engineer, was a great acquisition to the firm. "This new steel of Mr. Stafford's is going to be a big affair." His wife was a languid, rather contemptuous beauty, who appealed to Edward on the night they first dined with the Willis's. Her thick chestnut hair and milky-white shoulders reduced the men on either side of her to the level of a setting. She alone seemed wilfully to detach herself from the little lighted area around and above the dinner table. She was listening for her husband's voice. It came rather fresh through the bland atmosphere—with the mean accent of the Midlands. Edward, looking at the husband, wondered where in the world the man had picked up the idea of tucking a silk handkerchief into his shirt front.

* By E. Brett Young. Martin Secker. London.

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