

assist us to do this, but through the long period when we were so short of food, and in the repeated emergencies which called for rapid recuperation from an enfeebled condition brought about by exposure and strain, we relied upon them, and they never failed. When the *Endurance* sank in the Weddell Sea, we had to seek refuge on the shifting ice. Most of the stores had to be scrapped, as the avoidance of weight was of great importance. It was then that they were such splendid help. During our five and a half months' drift on the floe, the Bovril rations formed one of the staple diets; and after the ice broke up and we took to the boats, they were our mainstay. In the case of the invalids, we found Virol gave most excellent results. I left a supply on Elephant Island for the use of the party marooned there, and my second in command, Frank Wild, reports most favourably on it. The last few tins of Virol we had, I took on the 750-mile journey we made in the small boat from Elephant Island to South Georgia. There were six of us in a 22-ft. whaler for the sixteen days, and we went through about as exhausting a time as can be imagined."

Mr. A. E. Canney (managing director), in seconding the resolution referring to the important part played by Virol in the conservation of infant life, stated that one of the most important developments to-day was the increased interest manifested by the public generally in Infant Welfare. He thought it was now safe to assume that in a very short time we should have a department of public health set up under a responsible Minister of the Crown.

The company was now dealing directly with more than 2,000 hospitals and Infant Welfare Centres.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"A REGIMENT OF WOMEN."*

This is undoubtedly a remarkable book, and its subject is one that has not so far been squeezed dry by the novelist. Its chosen environment is a girl's school and the varied personalities of the mistresses are the chief centre of its interest.

The conception of Clare Hartill's character is exceedingly clever, but it is to be feared that it does not exist solely in the imagination. It is not an uncommon thing to find an uncanny domination of one woman over another, and where it exists it not seldom results in a subtle deterioration of both.

Clare Hartill, under the old-fashioned and often absent Miss Marsham, practically ran the school. She had originally been a pupil there. Miss Marsham describes her to her secretary as a "difficult child, my dear. An orphan—too much money. I found her at a loose end, I talked to her. She'll take plain speaking from me. I told

* By Clemence Dane. William Heinemann, London. Price 6s.

her she'd had enough of operas and art schools. I told her my difficulty; I told her to come back to the school and do a little honest work." Here we have Clare's status and the motive that brought her back to the school as Miss Marsham's lieutenant.

Alwynne Durand, a new comer, a junior mistress aged eighteen, arrived during a temporary absence of Miss Hartill. "Miss Marsham, she was given to understand, might be head-mistress, but Miss Hartill was Miss Hartill. Alwynne ended by being exceedingly curious. Yet when Miss Hartill returned to her post Alwynne could not for the life of her see what all the fuss was about. Miss Hartill was ordinary enough. Alwynne looking up one morning saw a tall woman harshly outlined against the white panelled door, against which she leaned lazily as she quizzed the roomful of women. This the Miss Hartill of a hundred legends? This the Olympian to whom three-fourths of the school said its prayers? Who had split the staff into an enthusiastic majority and a minority that concealed its dislike? Queer! And then over the heads of the group that had gathered about the door, a pair of keen roving eyes had settled upon herself, coolly appraising. Alwynne was annoyed with herself for flushing under that stare. She had a swift impression of being summed up, all raw, youthful and ambitious as she was. Her attitude of unwilling curiosity detected, expected even. There had been the flicker of a smile, amused, faintly insolent. . . . In a few days she became aware of being relieved if her work escaped that lazy criticism, of being distinctly gratified if Miss Hartill expressed satisfaction with her efforts." The following passage gives a good insight into Clare's personality:—

"Clare led a sufficiently solitary life. She was a woman of feverish friendships and sudden ruptures. Always the cleverest and most restless of her circle, she found her affinities unable to satisfy her demands on their intellects or their emotions. Disillusionment would be swift and sure. Clare never forgave a bore. Alwynne with her incoherences and her capacities caught her difficult fancy. She liked the girl's manner, its compound of shyness and audacity, deference and independence pleased her sophisticated taste." Moreover Alwynne was extremely good to look at, tall, golden-haired, with a good carriage.

Clare's parasitic instincts fastened upon her and absorbed her. This extremely interesting psychological study is in effect the *raison d'être* of the book.

The extreme effect of such a character as Clare's is brought out by the terrible fate of Louise, one of the girls, described as "thirteen but very lonely." She was Clare's most devoted satellite. Clare comes upon her alone in the schoolroom at the lunch hour, forgetting both time and place.

"I'm very sorry, I must go." She sat looking at Miss Hartill as if nothing else existed for her. The intent fearless adoration in her eyes was very

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