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EDITORIAL.

WELCOME TO OUR WOUNDED.

The after-math of war is much in evidence in the streets of London just now, as ambulance after ambulance carrying sick and wounded men passes along to its destination. To realize to the fullest extent what is happening one must take up one's place near the exit of one of the great termini when an ambulance train is expected.

Recently, in the station yard at Charing Cross about 7 o'clock in the evening, the pavement from the hotel to the Strand was lined with a crowd, most of whom carried spring flowers, while up and down the curb passed women with great baskets of daffodils, primroses, tulips—a wealth of beauty and sweetness. "Flowers for the wounded, flowers for our boys," they cried, and the flowers quickly changed hands until the whole crowd seemed to be waiting to greet those who had been newly wedded. And a wedding indeed there was—the wedding of unimaginable pain and supreme heroism before our eyes, as ambulance after ambulance passed by.

It is a true instinct which draws Londoners to the stations to give a welcome to our wounded as they pass through.

"I always come to see the boys and bring them a flower when I can," said one.

"Did you ought to stay," said her companion doubtfully. Manifestly the first speaker was shortly to become a mother. Was it right that she should stand about, and perhaps see sights which it were well she should not see or realize?

"Oh, I'm all right," she replied, bravely. "I may have to go through much worse than this before my time."

Then the cry "Here they are," and out of the station came the motor cars and

taxis with the "sitting-up" cases. Head injuries predominated, many officers and men having their heads swathed in bandages. Quickly they passed, and as quickly into the cars were thrown bunches of sweet spring flowers, while "Welcome back to Blighty" resounded, and was smilingly acknowledged by heroes as modest as any bride.

"They look quite bashful," said one onlooker.

"So they be, but they wouldn't like it if no one were here to welcome them," said another.

Then came the ambulances with the "lying-down" cases, and, with the deftness born of practice, flower after flower, bunch after bunch found its billet as they passed. "Welcome, boys, cheero," sounded along the line, and the welcome was kept up till the train was emptied and the last ambulance, with its sad load, had passed out and was merged for the time being in the traffic of the great Metropolis.

Welcome to the wounded! When we think of all they have risked and endured for those of us who stay at home, can any welcome be too warm, any consideration too great for those who went forth in the full vigour of their splendid young manhood to do battle for Empire and Freedom, and have returned maimed and mutilated, some permanently, deprived of limbs, of sight, of all that made life worth living to them in former days, and before some of whom stretches the weary length of the road that leads from youth to old age, a veritable Via Dolorosa.

A sense almost of shame overpowers us at being sound of limb, possessed of all our senses, vigorous and alive. The best is not good enough for our wounded, and life not long enough in which to show our gratitude.

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