

PRIVATE BROWN'S CHRISTMAS BOX.

"This 'ere is orl right for Christmas," says Bill huskily to himself, as he tramps backwards and forwards in the cold, dirty, slushy streets. "Jist abart to get to bed I was, my first night back, too, when my gal said she felt queer and I best go for the nuss. So off I starts and when I gets to 'er 'ouse blest if I could wake 'er. Howsomever, I manages to at last and she pops 'er 'ead art of the winder. "Oo is it?" she says and when she ketches sight of me khaki she ses, "If I didn't think it would be Mr. Brarn. I 'eerd you was 'ome. Jess you wait a minute," she says, and in a few twinkles she opens the door and puts some mince pies and 'ot coffee into my 'ands. "To keep you art o' mischief whiles I finishes dressin'," she says. A fair sport I calls 'er, though I'd sooner 'ad a drop of Scotch. She arstes me a few questions as we goes along, and I felt a fair fool, it being the first occasion, yer see.

When we gets back poor old Nell warnt 'alf bad and nuss she says, "Na, Mr. Brarn," she says, "I must trouble you to make yourself scarce," she says, "whiles I sees to yer wife." All right that fer a man whats fought for 'is country, ain't it only to 'ave one room wot 'e can call 'is own, and 'ave to walk the streets Christmas night when 'is missis is in 'er trouble?

"You'll 'ave to alter this, Mr. Lloyd George, you and your Coalition. Strikes me that's abart all the coal we shall git, if the prices don't come down soon. 'Ark at me grousin' wen I might be art in the bloomin' trenches wif somefin' to grouse for. Last Christmas I were art in 'em, and Fritz 'e wern't 'alf lettin' loose, and me athinkin' abart my gal and wondering if I should ever be alive to go 'ome to marry 'er when my leaf come due.

Wonder 'ow she's gettin' on. I daresn't go in. I'm skeered o' that nuss. She's a starchy piece for all 'er mince pies, and corfee. Poor ole Nell! She was fair knocked when I walked in to-day. She *said* it gave her a turn. It seems a long time. I 'opes she ain't wus nor she ought to be. "Orl right, nuss, 'ere I am. 'Ow's the missis? Is it over? Which is it, boy or gel? Both? Get out! Yer kiddin'. No? Stright? Well I'm blowed! Never mind, Nell, old dear, you'll get the extry allowance and there's that ere subsidy comin' for kids, as they say the women *means* to 'ave.

Good night, Sister, and thank yer. The same to you. I shall be merry to-night, I don't fink! Give us a kiss, Nell. You done your bit, the same as I done mine. Thank God I'm 'ome with yer to-night. I used sometimes to think when I was in the trenches—but, there, you'd best get to sleep, old dear. *Four* of us. It don't 'alf seem rum. But I wishes us all four a 'appy Christmas, and I mean to see as we gets it for the future.

H. H.

MARGARET PATTESON.

AN APPRECIATION.

Dr. Annie McCall writes:—"Margaret Patteson, who passed away on November 21st, 1918, became known to me in October, 1899, when she first entered my house to train for the L.O.S. Already a fully-trained nurse, she had held several good appointments and had won golden opinions from all those with whom she worked.

In 1900 she became Matron of Rudgwick Sanatorium, Sussex, and only left that post towards the end of 1901 to take up the greater responsibility of the Matronship of Clapham Maternity Hospital. This she held until late in 1906, when her health made it imperative to take on less work, and she took a trip to the Canary Islands for some months. Later again in 1910 she helped us as Honorary Tuberculosis Nurse at St. John's House, Battersea, for three years, until war broke out, when she felt it incumbent upon her to nurse in a Military Hospital first, and then for a year was Night Superintendent at Queen Mary Hospital, Roehampton (for armless and legless soldiers). Then she became Army Nurse in charge of ambulance trains, but her health again broke down, and after recovering she took the post of Home Sister to the London Homœopathic Hospital.

She was absolutely an ideal nurse, fulfilling all the best traditions of the nursing profession. A strong supporter of the Registration of Nurses, she kept herself up in all directions by reading and study. As a personal friend, I can hardly yet realise what I have lost. Unvarying in her kindness and consideration for the feelings of other people, she was an example in her devoted unselfishness, which characteristic is what made her the best of friends. As a valued worker on the Committee of our hospital for the last twelve years she is truly mourned, and the Committee hope to start a small scholarship in her name.

CHRISTMAS.

Come sail with me
O'er the golden sea
To the land where the rainbow ends;
Where the rainbow ends,
And the great earth bends
To the weight of the starry sky;
Where tempests die
With a last fierce cry,
And never a wind is wild—
There's a Mother mild,
With a little child
Like a star set on her knee.
Then bow you down,
Give Him the crown,
'Tis the Lord of the world you see.

—From "Rough Rhymes of a Padre,"

By G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY, M.C. C.F.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)