in the Pythian games. The plant was sacred to Apollo, and was forbidden to be employed in profane use. Our badge therefore includes the emblem of honour and distinction for which the poets, athletes, and warriors of ancient Greece and Rome contended, and which lives in the saying of “looking to one’s laurels.”

The imperial crown doubtless signifies the fact that we are a royal corps. Our motto is an inspiriting one, and not undeserved. We may read it freely as meaning “faithful in difficulties.”

It is evident, then, that the constituents of our badge are marks of honour in which we may well take pride. The imperial crown alone is a high distinction, binding us to loyalty and faithful service. The laurel wreath sets up for us a great ideal; it is the reward for which men strove and fought in the days when the world was young. The rod and serpent is the mark of one of the two honourable professions to which we belong, and except perhaps for the dragon and the sphinx there is no older badge in the Army. It was old when many a badge that is now prized and cherished was not even thought of, and it carries us far back in the mists of time to the legendary days when the sons of Æsculapius, perhaps even then using the symbol of their father, as we do now, cared for the stricken soldiers before the walls of Troy.

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A STRETCHER BELT.

By Captain Colin Clarke.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

The following five principles are observed in the disposition of the British infantryman’s equipment:

The weight is carried—
(1) On the back, shoulders, and loins.
(2) Close to the centre of gravity of the body.
(3) With many points of support.
(4) Without pressure on the chest.
(5) With no constriction of blood-vessels and nerves.

These principles are the outcome of many years of practical experience, and the closer any equipment conforms to them the greater is the ease and comfort of the soldier.

The service stretcher sling represents an almost complete disregard for all these principles. It places the weight—
(1) On the back of the neck.
(2) High above the centre of gravity of the body.
(3) Concentrated on the neck.
(4) Pressing on the front of the chest.
(5) Constricting the blood-vessels and nerves at the root of the neck.
The narrow stretcher sling is galling, and to relieve their necks, the stretcher bearers carry most of the weight with their hands. Six bearers are allotted to each stretcher squad, and when carrying wounded, frequent changes of the bearers are necessary owing to fatigue.

An eleven-stone man lying on a stretcher represents a total weight of 184 lb. to be carried, that is, roughly, 92 lb. at each end of the stretcher. This 92 lb. is not an excessive weight, for according to Kirschner, the German infantry soldier in 1893 carried over 71 lb. in marching order.
The great fatigue caused by stretcher bearing is chiefly due to the way in which the stretcher is carried. If the weight of the loaded stretcher were distributed over the shoulders, backs, and loins of the bearers by means of a broad webbing equipment, the fatigue of stretcher bearing would be greatly reduced. With such an equipment three bearers would be sufficient to carry a stretcher in place of the present six.

In order to test this theory, Colonel Bunny, A.O.D., very kindly gave permission for two web stretcher belts to be made in the ordnance department at Malta, on the same principles as the British soldier's web equipment. The stretcher belt, which is worn quite loose round the waist, is much more comfortable than the ordinary stretcher sling, and can be worn as part of the stretcher bearer's equipment. During carriage the handles of the stretcher rest in hooks, which are attached to the sides of the belt by means of webbing, and hang just below the level of the great trochanter of the femur on each side. The hooks fit loosely to the narrow part of the stretcher handle, but cannot be pulled off the enlarged rounded ends.

The advantages claimed for the stretcher belt are:—

(1) On the back, shoulders, and loins.
(2) Close to the centre of gravity of the body.
(3) With a wide area of support.
(4) Without pressure on the chest, or respiratory interference.
(5) With no constriction of blood-vessels or nerves.

With this stretcher belt the arms, neck, and chest of the bearer are remarkably free, and three bearers are quite sufficient for the carriage of a wounded man and his equipment.

At Cottonera, Malta, three stretcher bearers, using this stretcher belt, carried a man weighing 11 st. 6 lb. half a mile in fourteen minutes, and one mile in twenty-nine and a half minutes, without any difficulty.

The belts are made of Indian tent webbing, costing one penny per yard. Each belt costs half a crown to make in Malta, namely, one and six for webbing, straps, hooks, &c., and a shilling for labour. The weight of each belt is 1 lb. 4 oz.

A CASE OF BERI-BERI COMPLICATED BY DUODENAL ULCER.

BY CAPTAIN E. M. MIDDLETON.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

Sapper W. was admitted to hospital at Fort Pitt on January 19, 1914, from Christmas furlough, complaining of extreme weakness, abdominal pain, and vomiting. The previous history of the case obtained from his medical history sheet and supplemented by himself is as follows:—

At Dover, in April, 1912, he was admitted to hospital for nineteen