

An Anzac Day March

AN ANZAC DAY MARCH.

BY COLONEL S. F. CLARK.

APRIL 25, the date on which the landing at Gallipoli took place in 1915, is observed as a public holiday in Australia, and the celebrations in Sydney include a march of ex-soldiers through the city to the Domain, where a great service is held in the presence of many thousands of persons. The troops who parade are, of course, mainly Australians, but any man who has served the King or the Allies by sea, land or air is welcomed. Uniform is worn by bands and colour parties only; all others, marching in sections of eight, are in mufti with medals and decorations. I have taken part in the last four of these marches. On the first occasion I took up an inconspicuous position with the British troops, but the next year, as nobody seemed to be in command of them, and as no pre-war officer was present, on my own initiative and supported by the request of others who recognized my seniority, I took command of all the British troops, exclusive of the Fellowship of Mons who marched as a separate body under their president.

In the next celebration (1930) I wrote to the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, which manages the function, informed it of my action, gave my rank and corps, said that the British soldiers would prefer to be led by one of their own officers, with all respect to the Australians, and tendered my services if I could be of any use. My offer was accepted, so both last year and this year I was officially appointed to command the British, Dominion and Allied ex-soldiers, and walked at their head through the chief streets of Sydney to the Domain, which is an immense public park.

The march is an impressive sight. There are many bands, and the colours of the Australian battalions are carried, while the Imperial men (as the British are called here) follow a Union Jack. The column divides as it nears the flower-laden city Cenotaph, and passes it on each side four abreast, with bared heads and eyes right or left as required in salute. This is the supreme moment of the march. The bands and the crowd are silent, no words of command are given for the salute, and the bared heads give evidence that the men are ageing. After this homage to the dead, the original formation is resumed.

The streets are lined by the populace, and the British men are acclaimed all along the route. In fact, theirs is almost the only body which elicits any demonstration from the crowds—presumably every British-born soul present gives vent to his or her feelings—and as they march into the Domain at the end of the procession, the Australian troops in position, whom they pass, join in the applause.

It is probably a unique event for one of our officers to lead former British soldiers of all arms through the streets of a great city, and I feel the honour very keenly. This year unusually great interest was taken in

the march by the fact that Air Vice-Marshal Sir Philip Game, the Governor of the State of New South Wales, had announced his intention of joining in it. He declined to walk in front with the Headquarters Staff, but said that he would fall in with the British ex-soldiers. All the troops assembled in the grounds of Government House, and I was instructed to call for Sir Philip at the proper moment. I did so, and of course asked him to take the command, which he declined; so he, his private secretary (General Anderson) and I walked together at the head of our men. About 10,000 Australian and New Zealand troops preceded us, and we were followed by some 70 of the Mons Fellowship, 350 other British soldiers, and 40 Canadians. No Allies appeared on parade, but last year a few Russians attended.

As the Governor passed along he received an ovation from the crowds in the streets, and many people could be seen pointing him out to their children. The women were the most enthusiastic; one excited lady, who was evidently thinking of the communistic element here, with eager face and flashing eyes, repeatedly shouted "Come on, you soldiers," as our formation went by.

A number of veterans, many of them wearing the Egyptian medals of nearly fifty years ago, marched as a separate unit apart from us, but our ranks showed decorations from Victoria Crosses downwards, and the medals of many campaigns.

The service was impressive, and at its close all troops were dismissed.

Current Literature.

WHITTINGHAM, H. E., KILPATRICK, J. M., GRIFFITHS, E. W. B. **A Cerebrospinal Fever Outbreak in the Royal Air Force in 1931.** *The British Medical Journal*, 1931, i, 1101.

The writers, officers of the Royal Air Force, describe an outbreak of twelve cases of cerebrospinal meningitis at the Royal Air Force Depot at Uxbridge. The first patient had been found to be a meningococcus carrier in May, 1930, and two months later was considered to be free from infection. Type I meningococcus was found in his carrier state and also when he was a sufferer from the disease, there was, however, no evidence to show that he caused the outbreak as the disease had been prevalent in the civil population for three months.

In the depot beds were spaced at intervals of two and a half to three feet, and the windows were kept open night and day. There were twenty to twenty-five men in each barrack-room and the rooms were heated by open fires at either end of the rooms. The men sat round these fires at night, and it is noted that all but one of the cases were in men whose beds