

STRENGTH AND STAY

Medicine for the Downhearted

Two months after the war started, the "Countryman" sent this letter to a representative group of its readers:

"It would be of great help just now to many of your fellow-readers if you could say what book or books (old or new), or what study, pursuit, recreation, practice, or habit of mind you have found most efficacious in yielding you refreshment at this time."

Here are some of the replies:

Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, M.P.

(Leader of the Opposition)

BRIEFLY, I find the best occupation in vigorous forms of manual work; and for books, preferably English classics — Jane Austen is very soothing.

Canon Alexander

(St. Paul's Cathedral)

My refuge is Shakespeare.

F. Ashton-Gwatkin, C.M.G.

I find that a visit to a Turkish bath cleanses the body and clarifies the mind. I have no advice about reading, for which in its literary sense I have no time at all; but I have made a little progress in learning by heart some psalms of David and some fables of La Fontaine.

Mrs. Bramwell Booth

(Salvation Army)

The Book of Books to me for sixty years past has proved the book for the moment, bringing just the word of authority, guidance and comfort. The Bible is unique in that it lifts our eyes with hope to the future, so let all who know the Bible induce others, apart from their faith, to read it. The very familiarity of certain passages of the Bible sometimes acts like a veil and obscures the meaning of the whole, and I suggest that in these days of dark evenings the Bible should be read aloud in the family group, the Old Testament as well as the New, for they are one and explain each other, and reading aloud will bring the right perspective.

Reading aloud has been the chief recreation of my family since the days when, in the short intervals of leisure from public work, I read aloud to our seven children. We are reading now Mr. Churchill's "Marlborough"; the British armies were then on the Continent for years in a similar struggle for the freedom and protection of the smaller and weaker nations. A history to be proud of, as we have pride in the record of the Great War, and shall, I believe, be thankful for the results of this present effort. My spirit has been refreshed, as I have found in Marlborough's letters and in official documents such phrases as "I trust in the Almighty that He will protect and give success to our just cause." I wish to-day there might be more open expression of faith and prayer. We delight also in *The Countryman*, and find it

specially acceptable at this time when it forms such a pleasing contrast to much that is so distressing.

R. D. Blumenfeld

(Chairman "Daily Express")

I divide my time mainly between studies of great soldiers and sailors, such as Marlborough, Caesar, Napoleon, Frederick the Great, Stonewall Jackson, Lee and Nelson. Mahan's "Influence of Sea Power" is a tower of strength. When I can't get from the radio what I need, I turn for my lighter entertainment to the Continental stations controlled by Germany: their bulletins are extremely funny, provided you do not give way to impatience at their criminal intent.

Dame Elizabeth Cadbury

Re-reading Charles Dickens.

The Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps, K.C., M.P.

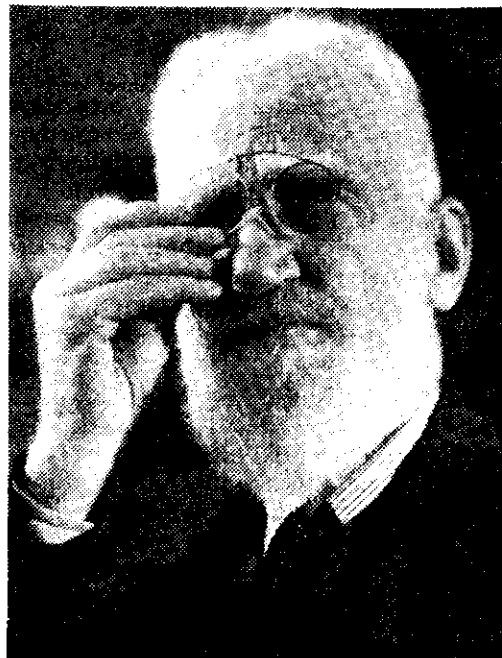
Nothing except trying to think and work out some method by which we may get a better and saner world after the tragedy is over.

Bernard Shaw

I go about the lanes and woods with a secateur and a little saw and clear up overgrown paths.

Rt. Hon. Leslie Hore-Belisha

My farm.



He Cleans Up



"... My Farm"

An Editor

For refreshment without having one's eyes on type: (1) A cold shower every morning. (2) A collie, a terrier, and a sealyham, lately brought together in my home, who have civility, courage, individuality, sufficiency, quietness, intelligence and self-respect. The more I know of dogs—

Viscount Esher

For any kind of worry there are two certain remedies: manual labour during the hours of daylight, classical music on a good gramophone during the hours of darkness.

Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies (Actress)

The book I find most helpful in this or any other time is the Bible. My greatest relaxation and spiritual refreshment comes from working in the garden and galloping over the countryside. Making jam is also very restful, and if one has gathered the blackberries oneself, extremely exciting, especially putting it into little pots and sticking the labels on!

John Hassall (Artist)

I play a game of Snap by myself with two packs of cards, both sides of which are so worn out as to be indecipherable, but I know them by the different shapes of the broken corners. Two of the knaves are bent in half, so I have to leave them out to shuffle the rest.

Viscount Kano

(Director Yokohama Specie Bank)

Since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict up to the present, my consolations are (1) in listening to any composition of Beethoven for 30 to 45 minutes, (2) in keeping the following five books permanently at my bedside, and reading for about thirty minutes before going to sleep: Aesop's Fables, Hans Andersen's Tales, Edward Carpenter's poem "Towards Democracy," Plutarch's Lives, and the Psalms.

Eric Kennington (Artist)

Building sheds for carts, trailers and bikes, repairing gates, wire, etc., and sticking to the earth on all fours.

The Poet Laureate

The ever-present hope that this war may end before the minds of the nations have been made savage. All good wishes.

H. de Vere Stacpoole (Novelist)

Unable to use a sword, I am using a ploughshare—at least a spade. Have put in, among other things, winter pansies in case flowers are rationed. One never knows what will happen after what has been done with whisky.