

KNITTIN' FIR DA BOYS.
(WRITTEN IN THE SHETLANDIC.)

Bi a cloddy fire dey sit
Lookin' ower some maps
While dir busy fingers knit
Jersey, Stocking, Belt or Mitt,
Fir da sodjer chaps.

"Here," says Jeanie, "is da place
Whar dir fechtin doon;
Whar wir boys da Germans face.
O! dat sic a wicked race
Might dis battle rue."

Katie, in a low, saft voice,
Answers fir da rest:--
"Lass; dis toucht maks me rejoice!
Love o' honour I' wir boys
Shöre will stand da test."

"Fir dir, ye ken, as true as steel,
An' dey'd never stoop
E inhuman blow ta deal;
Prood we trooly oucht ta feel
O' each British troop."

"Courage rins trou every vein,
Truth is dir seal;
Honour dey will aye retain,
On dir names sall rest nae stain
Whether woe, or weal."

Quick da oors each idder shase,
An' da fire burns low;
Dan each lassie loves ta trace
E dear laddie's laachin' face
I' da embers' glow.

Still dir knittin' needles ply—
Tho' da night grows aald—
Sped bi touchts o' boys 'at lie
'Neath a bleak an' sunless sky
I' da trenches caald.

I' dis wark some Shetlan' lasses
Every oor employs:
Nae matter what dir creed, dir class is;
Da best wie dir time ta pass is

Knittin' fir da boys.

FOR BRITAIN'S SAKE.

There is a call—it sounds more louder—clearer,
As if 'twere only given yesterday,
And, tho' by thought of parting you've grown
dearer,
When duty calls, how can I bid you stay?

There is a call—"Your King and country need you,"
For Right and Liberty to lend a hand:
Go forth, my boy, and may God's blessing speed you
To help in saving our dear Motherland.

There is a call—a call from hearts grown weary
Of this dread strife, but courage stays my fears,
And, tho' for sundered hearts days will be dreary,
My seal of love is smiles—not sighs or tears.

List to the bugle call; yet sounds it clearer!
Death may be thine; to me life's shrouded woe:
Hope gives us strength as parting-ways draw nearer,
And thus, for Britain's sake, I bid thee "Go"!

[NOTE.—The above verses, written on 25th October, 1915, were suggested by recruiting poster "Go! It's your duty, lad; join to-day."]

DESERT SANDS AND SILVER STARS.

O! Desert Sands—

Cold with the touch of limp, unfriendly hands!
Hot with the burning taint of bitter hate,
And trackless! An exile thrown by fate,
I stand alone, in fetters of distress,
Forged to restrain my hope of loneliness:
No sound save that of cricket, and no scene—
An empty space; a stage without a screen!
Alas! That actors in life's "pitch and toss,"
Should be curtained be by sorrow and sad loss!
The date palms cleave my view bold, dark and grim,
And Evening gilds the skies that Night shall dim.

Ah! Silver Stars—

A miracle divine night-skies unfold:
In every twinkling star, a heart of gold
Pulsates, and happy faces from each peep.
'Neath such an arch of love I woo Dame Sleep,
My bead of sand becomes a couch of down,
I covet neither Kingdoms, nor Fame's crown—
Home is bought near, tho' leagues and leagues afar,
The medium—eloquent of silence—"silver star";
Tender, ineffable, poetic, sweet . . .
Realm of glad contentment where fond hearts meet
(Our near and dear ones, whom we've missed awhile)
In severed eagerness to love and smile.