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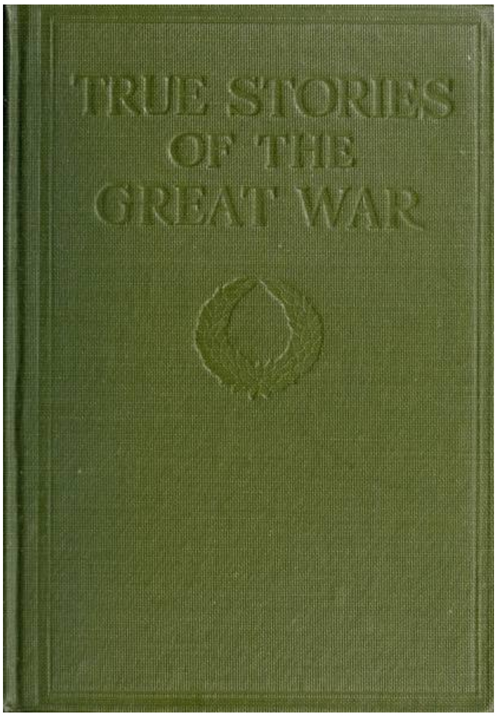

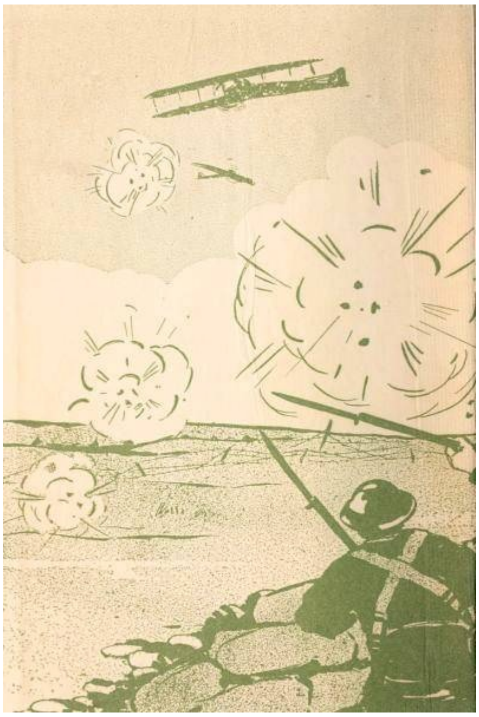

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TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR

TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR

TALES OF ADVENTURE—HEROIC DEEDS—EXPLOITS
TOLD BY THE SOLDIERS, OFFICERS, NURSES,
DIPLOMATS, EYE WITNESSES

Collected in Six Volumes
From Official and Authoritative Sources
(*See Introductory to Volume I*)

VOLUME VI

Editor-in-Chief
FRANCIS TREVELYAN MILLER (Litt. D., LL.D.)
Editor of The Search-Light Library

1917
REVIEW OF REVIEWS COMPANY
NEW YORK

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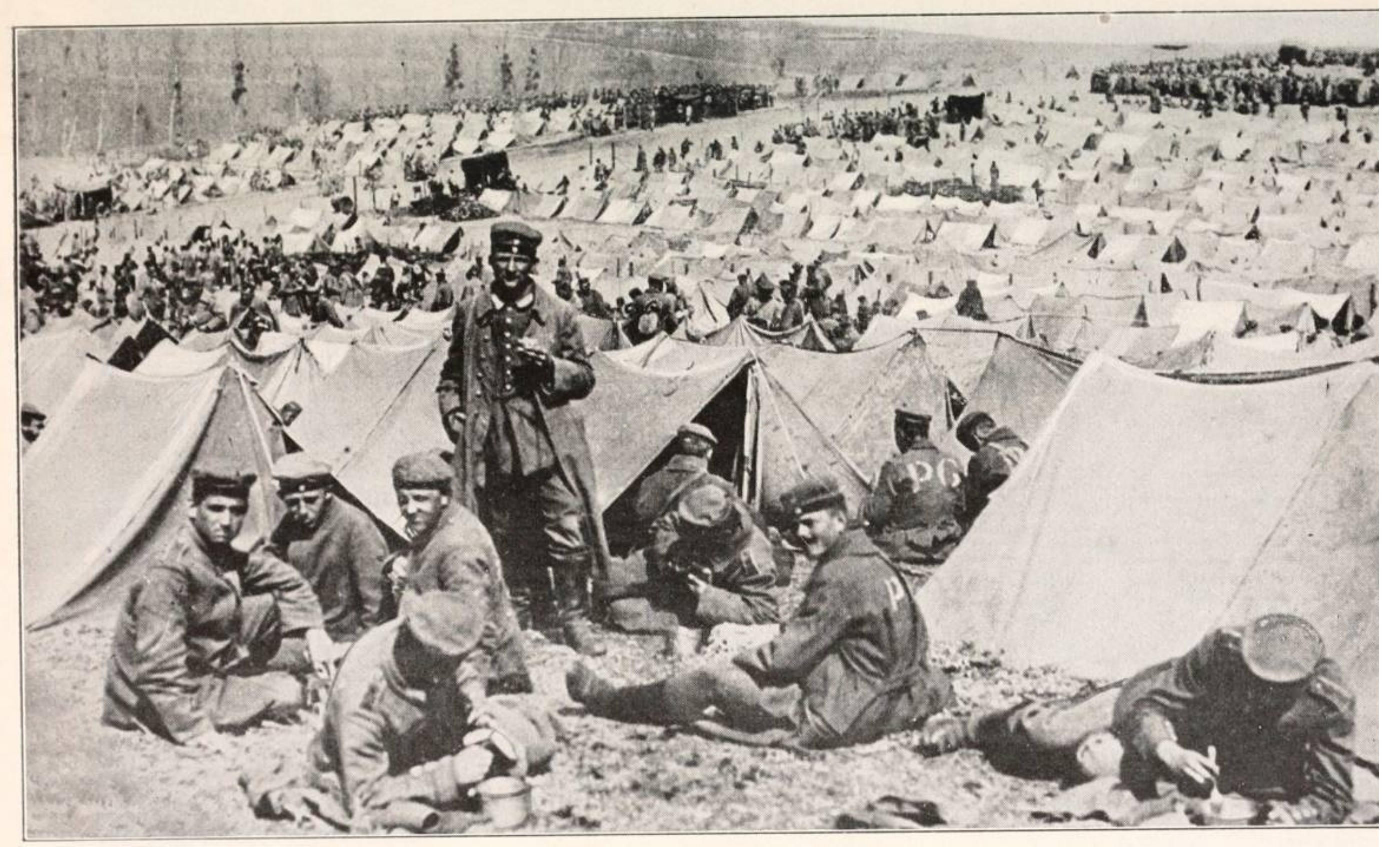

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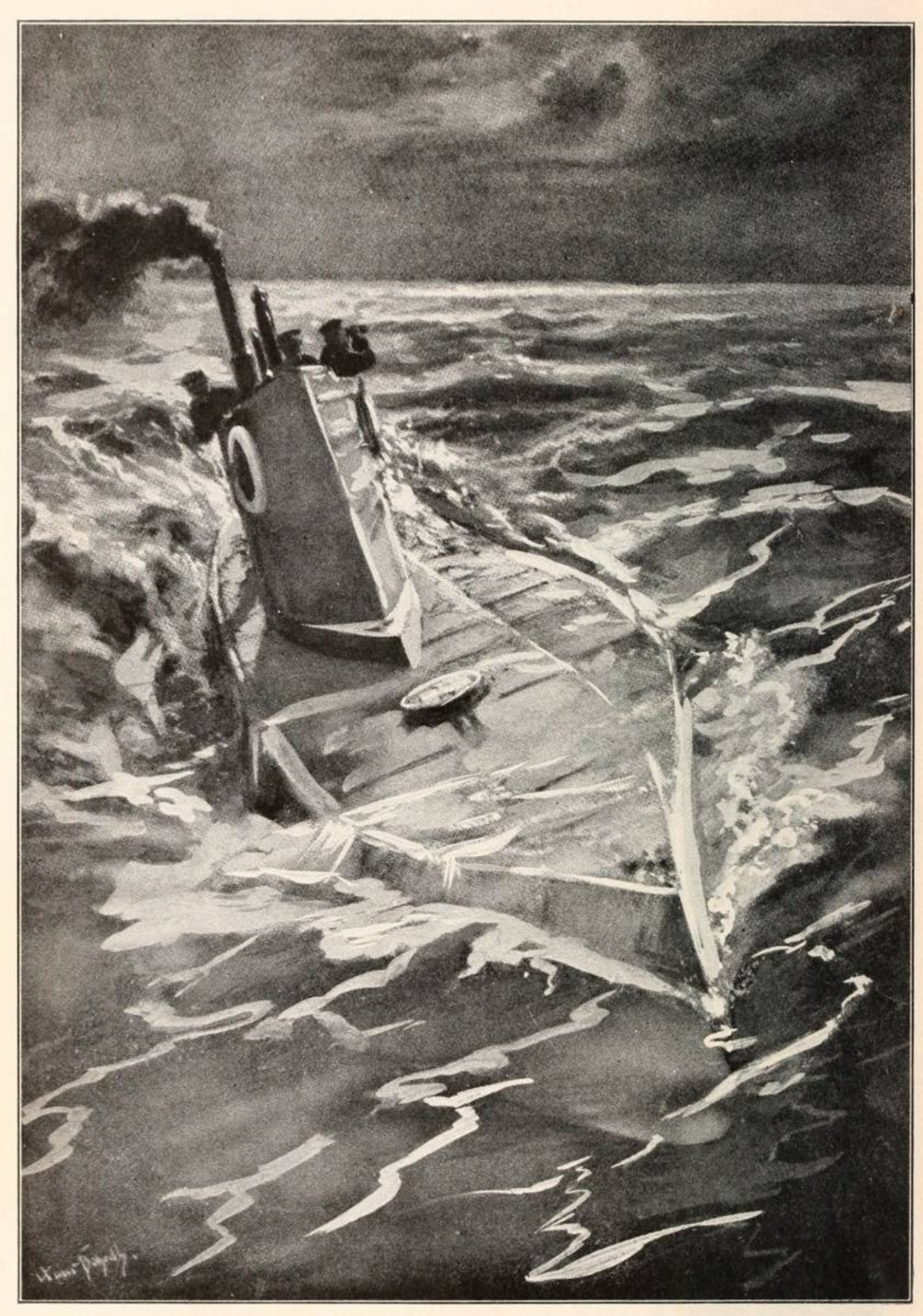

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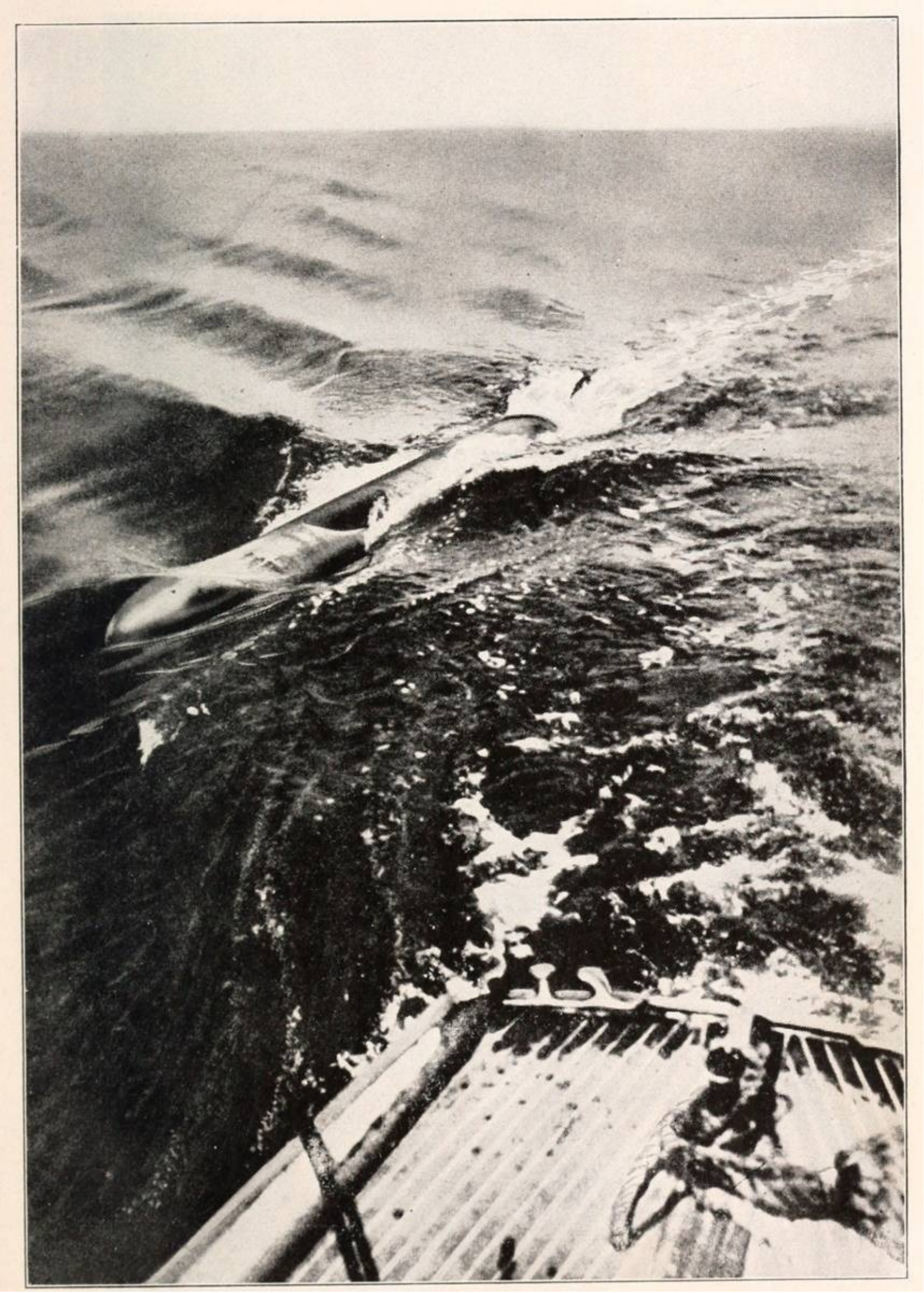

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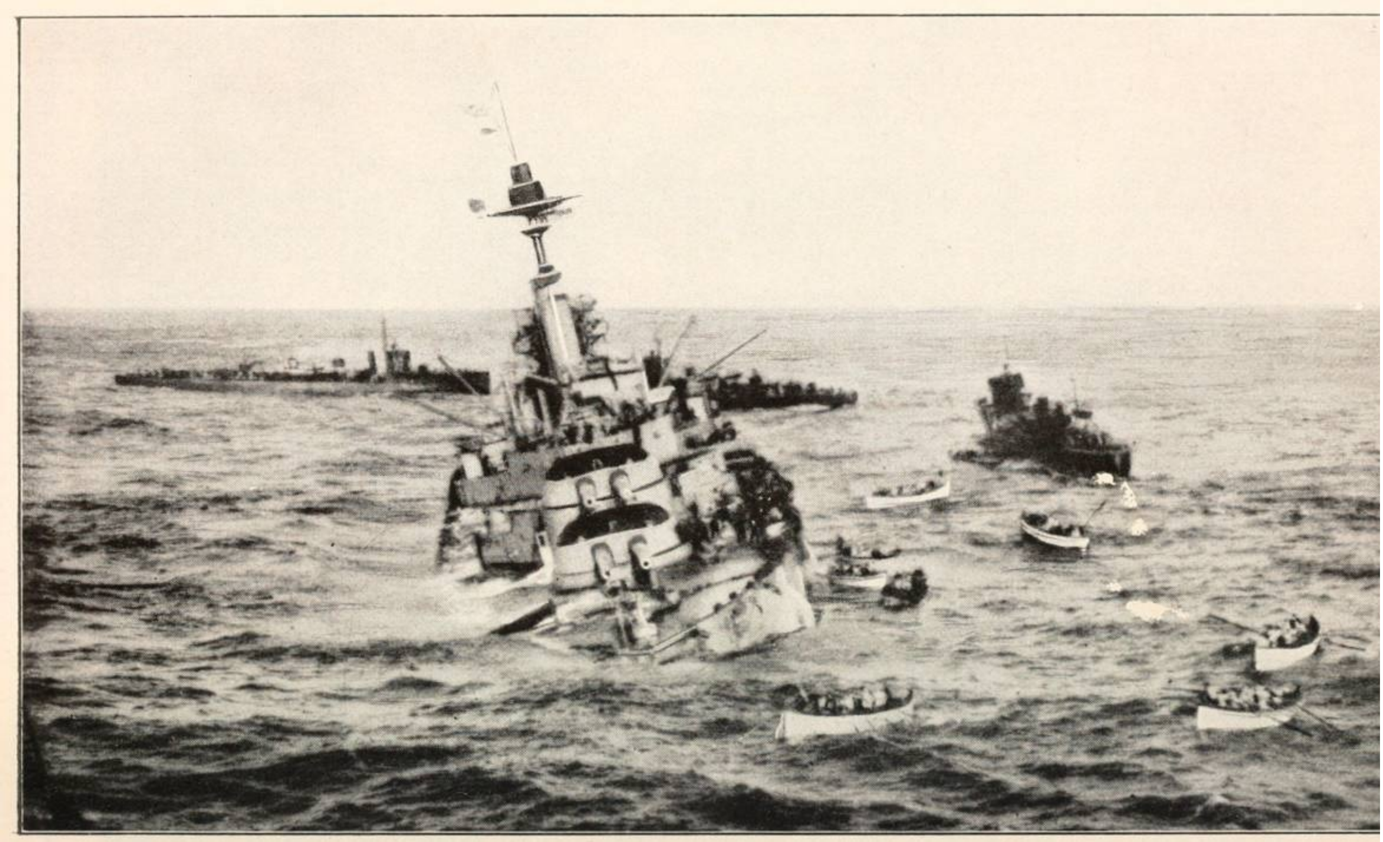

THE LAST ACT OF A SUDDEN SEA TRAGEDY

Rescuing Sailors From H. M. S. Audacious

"BEHIND THE GERMAN VEIL" WITH VON HINDENBURG [1]

Record of a Remarkable War Pilgrimage

Told by Count Van Maurik De Beaufort

> This is the remarkable story of a titled Hollander, who was living in America at the outbreak of the War. "Europe called me," he says. "Blood will tell. I soon found myself getting restless. My sympathies with the Allies ... urged that I had no right to lag behind in making sacrifices. Before starting for the War, I applied for my first American citizenship papers. I hope to obtain my final papers shortly, after which I shall place my services at the disposal of the American Government." This Hollander was educated in Germany and recalls how in his youth he was forced to stand up in front of the class and recite five verses, each ending with: "I am a Prussian and a Prussian I will be." He later became a student at Bonn. Count De Beaufort has written a book of sensational revelations in which the German veil is lifted. With a magic passport, nothing less than a letter to Von Hindenburg from his nephew, he gained access to German headquarters and to the Eastern front in Poland and East Prussia. We here record what he thinks of Von Hindenburg from his book: "Behind the German Veil," by permission of his publishers, *Dodd, Mead and Company*: Copyright 1917.

[1] I—GOING TO SEE VON HINDENBURG

Yes, if the truth be told, I must say that I felt just a wee bit shaky about the knees. I wondered what view they would take of my perseverance, worthy, I am sure, of a kind reception.

[2] I would wager that in the whole of Germany there could not be found one ... whose hair would not have stood on end at the mere suggestion of travelling to Hindenburg's headquarters without a pass. Why, he would sooner think of calling at the Palace "*Unter den Linden*," and of asking to interview the Kaiser.

I think I must describe to you the way I appeared at headquarters. At Allenstein I had bought, the day before, a huge portrait of Hindenburg; it must have been nearly thirty inches long.

Under one arm I carried the photograph, in my hand my letter of introduction, and in my other hand a huge umbrella, which was a local acquisition. On my face I wore that beatific, enthusiastic and very naïve expression of "the innocent abroad." I had blossomed out into that modern pest—the autographic maniac.

Army corps, headquarters, strategy and tactics were words that meant nothing to me. How could they, stupid, unmilitary foreigner that I was! It was a pure case of "Fools will enter where angels fear to tread." You may be sure that my subsequent conversation with the Staff captain confirmed the idea that I was innocent of all military knowledge, and that I probably—so he thought—did not know the difference between an army corps and a section of snipers.

Why had I come to Lötzen? Why, of course, to shake hands with the famous General, the new Napoleon; to have a little chat with him, and—last, but not least—to obtain his most priceless signature to my most priceless photograph. What? Not as easy as all that, but why? Could there be any harm in granting me those favors? Could it by the furthest stretch of imagination be considered as giving information to the enemy? What good was my letter of introduction from the General's dear nephew? Of course, I would not ask the General where he had his guns hidden, and when he intended to take Petrograd, Moscow or Kieff. [3] Oh, no; I knew enough about military matters not to ask such leading questions.

But joking apart. On showing my famous letter I had no difficulty whatsoever in entering the buildings of the General Staff. The first man I met was Hauptmann Frantz. He didn't seem a bad sort at all, and appeared rather to enjoy the joke and my "innocence," at imagining that I could walk up to Hindenburg's Eastern headquarters and say "Hello!" to the General.

He thought it was most "original," and certainly exceedingly American. Still, it got him into the right mood. "Make people smile," might be a good motto for itinerant journalists in the war zones. Few people, not excepting Germans, are so mean as to bite you with a smile on their faces. Make them laugh, and half the battle is won.

Frantz read my letter and was duly impressed. He never asked me whether I had any passes. He advised me to go to the General's house, shook hands, and wished me luck.

Phew! I was glad that my first contact with the General Staff had come off so smoothly. I had been fully prepared for stormy weather, if not for a hurricane. Cockily, I went off to Hindenburg's residence, a very modest suburban village not far from the station, and belonging to a country lawyer. There was a bit of garden in front, and at the back; the house was new, and the bricks still bright red. Across the road on two poles a wide banner was stretched, with "Willkommen" painted on it.

Two old Mecklenburger Landstrum men guarded the little wooden gate. I told them that I came from Great Headquarters, and once more produced the letter. They saluted, opened the gate, and one of them ran ahead to ring the door bell.

II—HE ENTERS THE STRANGE HOUSE [4]

I walked up the little gravel path with here and there a patch of green dilapidated grass on either side. I remember the window curtains were of yellow plush. In the window seat stood a tall vase with artificial flowers flanked by a birdcage with two canaries. It was all very suburban, and did not look at all like the residence of such a famous man. An orderly, with his left arm thrust into a top-boot, opened the door. In a tone of voice that left no chance for the familiar War-Office question: "Have you an appointment, sir?" I inquired whether the Field-Marshal was at home, at the same time giving him my letter. The orderly peeled off his top-boot, unfastened his overalls, and slipped on his coat.

Then he carefully took my letter, holding it gingerly between thumb and third finger, so as not to leave any marks on it, and ushered me into the "Wohnzimmer," a sort of living- and dining-room combined. It was the usual German affair. A couch, a table, a huge porcelain stove, were the prominent pieces of furniture. All three were ranged against the long wall. The straight-backed chairs were covered with red plush. On the walls hung several monstrosities, near-etchings representing the effigies of the Kaiser, the Kaiserin, and, of course, of "Our" Hindenburg. There was the usual overabundance of artificial flowers and ferns so dear to the heart of every German Hausfrau.

The two canaries lived in the most elaborate homemade cage. (I understand they were the property of the "Hausfrau," not of Hindenburg!) On the table, covered with a check tablecloth, stood a bowl containing three goldfish. The floor was covered with a bright carpet, and in front of one of the doors lay a mat with "Salve" on it. Over the couch hung a photographic enlargement [5] of a middle-aged soldier leaning nonchalantly against a door on which was chalked "Kriegsjahr, 1914." Over the frame hung a wreath with a black and white ribbon, inscribed "In Memoriam," telling its eloquent story.

Behind me was a map of the Eastern front, and pinned alongside of it a caricature of a British Tommy sitting astride of a pyramid and pulling a number of strings fastened to the legs, arms and head of the Sultan, who was apparently dancing a jig.

That room impressed itself upon my memory for all time. I often dream of it.

* * *

I had waited only a few minutes when a young officer came in, who, bowing obsequiously, wished me a very formal good-morning. I took my cue from the way he bowed. He explained that the General was out in the car but was expected back before noon. Would I condescend to wait? Needless to say, I did "condescend."

I forgot to mention one point in my meditations. When I took the chance of continuing East instead of returning to Berlin, I thought there might just be a possibility that the Adjutant or Staff Officer who had spoken with von Schlieffen had entirely taken it upon himself to say "No," and that it was not unlikely that the General knew nothing whatever about my letter or my contemplated visit. If my surmise was correct, I would stand a sporting chance, because it was hardly to be expected that out of the thirty-odd officers comprising the Staff, I should run bang into the very man who had telephoned.

I soon knew that the officer in immediate attendance on Hindenburg was not aware of my *contretempts* at Allenstein on the previous day. Neither did he inquire after my passes. You see, they take these things for granted. Would I prefer to wait here or come in his office, where the stove was lit? Of course, I thought that would be more pleasant. I thought, and am glad to say [6] was not mistaken, that probably the young officer felt he needed some mental relaxation. This will sound strange, but I have found during my travels through Germany, that in spite of the many warnings not to talk shop, every soldier, from the humblest private to the highest General—I am sure not excepting the War Lord himself—dearly loves to expatiate on matters military, his ambitions and hopes. This one was no exception. He chatted away very merrily, and more than once I recognized points and arguments which I had read weeks ago in interviews granted by General Hindenburg to Austrian journalists. He quite imagined himself an embryo Field-Marshal.

He showed me several excellent maps, which gave every railroad line on both sides of the Polish frontier. They certainly emphasized the enormous difference and the many advantages of German *versus* Russian railroad communications. Many of his predictions have since come true, but most of them have not. He hinted very mysteriously, but quite unmistakably, at a prospective Russian *débâcle*, and predicted a separate peace with Russia before the end of 1915! "And then," he added, "we will shake up the old women at the Western front a bit and show them the 'Hindenburg method.'"

* * *

The room we were in was fitted up as an emergency staff office. There were several large tables, maps galore, a safe, a number of books that looked like ledgers and journals, six telephones and a telegraph instrument. Two non-commissioned officers were writing in a corner. In case anything important happens at night, such as an urgent despatch that demands immediate attention, everything was at hand to enable the General to issue new orders. A staff-officer and a clerk are always on duty.

I learned later on, though, that a position in that auxiliary staff-office at Hindenburg's residence is more or less of a sinecure. [7] All despatches go first to Ludendorff, Hindenburg's Chief-of-Staff, who, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, issues orders without consulting his Chief.

III—HE STANDS BEFORE VON HINDENBURG

In the midst of a long explanation of the Russian plight, the voluble subaltern suddenly stopped short. I heard a car halt in front of the house, and a minute or two later the door of the office opened and Germany's giant idol entered. I rose and bowed. The officer and the two sergeants clicked their heels audibly, and replied to the stentorian "*Morgen, meine Herren*," with a brisk "*Morgen, Excellence*."

Hindenburg looked questions at me, but I thought I would let my young friend do the talking and act as master of ceremonies. He handed Hindenburg my letter, and introduced me as "Herr 'von' Beaufort, who has just arrived from Rome." (I had left Rome nearly three months before!) The General read his nephew's letter and then shook hands with me, assuring me of the pleasure it gave him to meet me. Of course, I was glad that he was glad, and expressed reciprocity of sentiments. I looked at him—well, for lack of a better word, I will say, with affection; you know the kind of childlike, simple admiration which expresses so much. I tried to look at him as a certain little girl would have done, who wrote: "You are like my governess: she, too, knows everything." I felt sure that that attitude was a better one than to pretend that I was overawed. That sort of homage he must receive every day. Besides, as soon as I realized that he knew nothing of the telephone message from and to [8] Allenstein, my old self-assurance had returned.

* * *

Now for my impressions of Germany's—and, as some people try to make us believe, the world's—greatest military genius. They might be summed up in two words: "Strength and cruelty." Hindenburg stands over six feet high. His whole personality radiates strength, brute, animal strength. He was, when I met him, sixty-nine years of age, but looked very much younger. His hair and moustache were still pepper and salt color. His face and forehead are deeply furrowed, which adds to his forbidding appearance. His nose and chin are prominent, but the most striking feature of the man's whole appearance are his eyes. They are steel-blue and very small, much too small for his head, which, in turn, is much too small compared with his large body. But what the eyes lacked in size they fully made up for in intensity and penetrating powers. Until I met Hindenburg I always thought that the eyes of the Mexican rebel Villa were the worst and most cruel I had ever seen. They are mild compared with those of Hindenburg. *Never in all my life have I seen such hard, cruel, nay, such utterly brutal eyes as those of Hindenburg.* The moment I looked at him I believed every story of refined (and unrefined) cruelty I had ever heard about him.

He has the disagreeable habit of looking at you as if he did not believe a word you said. Frequently in conversation he closes his eyes, but even then it seemed as if their steel-like sharpness pierced his eyelids. Instead of deep circles, such as, for instance, I have noticed on the Kaiser, he has big fat cushions of flesh under his eyes, which accentuate their smallness. When he closes his eyes, these cushions almost touch his bushy eyebrows and give his face a somewhat prehistoric appearance. His [9] hair, about an inch long I should judge, was brushed straight up—what the French call *en brosse*. The general contour of his head seemed that of a square, rounded off at the corners.

Speaking about the stories of cruelty, one or two of them may bear re-telling.

When during the heavy fighting, early in 1915, General Rennenkampf was forced to evacuate Insterburg somewhat hastily, he was unable to find transport for about fifty thousand loaves of bread. Not feeling inclined to make a present of them to the Germans, he ordered paraffin to be poured over them. When the Germans found that bread and discovered its condition, Hindenburg is reported to have been frantic with rage. The next day, after he had calmed down, he said to one of his aides: "Well, it seems to be a matter of taste. If the Russians like their bread that way, very well. *Give it to the Russian prisoners.*"

You may feel certain that his orders were scrupulously carried out.

Another incident which they are very fond of relating in Germany is more amusing, though it also plays on their idol's cruelty.

It is a fact that both officers and men are deadly afraid of him. It is said that the great General has a special predilection for bringing the tip of his riding boots into contact with certain parts of the human anatomy. A private would far rather face day and night the Russian guns than be orderly to Hindenburg.

But one day a man came up and offered himself for the job.

"And what are you in private life?" the General snorted at him.

"At your orders, sir, I am a wild animal trainer."

IV—"WHAT VON HINDENBURG TOLD ME" [10]

Hindenburg and I talked for about twenty minutes on various subjects—Holland, Italy, America, and, of course, the campaign.

When he tried to point out to me how all-important it was for Holland that Germany should crush England's "world-domination," I mentioned the Dutch Colonies. That really set him going. "Colonies," he shouted. "Pah! I am sick of all this talk about colonies. It would be better for people, and I am not referring to our enemies alone, to pay more attention to events in Europe. I say 'to the devil' (*zum Teufel*) with the colonies. Let us first safeguard our own country; the colonies will follow. It is here," and he went up to a large map of Poland hanging on the wall, and laid a hand almost as large as a medium-sized breakfast tray over the center of it—"It is here," he continued, "that European and colonial affairs will be settled and nowhere else. As far as the colonies are concerned, it will be a matter of a foot for a mile, as long as we hold large slices of enemy territory."

He spoke with great respect of the Russian soldier, but maintained that they lacked proper leaders. "It takes more than ten years to reform the morale of an officers' corps. From what I have learned, the morale of the Russian officer is to this day much the same as it was in the Russo-Japanese war. We will show you one of their ambulance trains captured near Kirbaty. It is the last word in luxury. By all means give your wounded all the comfort, all the attention you can; but I do not think that car-loads of champagne, oysters, caviare and the finest French liqueurs are necessary adjuncts to an ambulance train. The Russian soldier is splendid, but his discipline is not of the same quality as that of our men. In our armies discipline is the result of spiritual and moral training; in the Russian armies discipline stands for dumb obedience. The Russian soldier remains at his [11] post because he has been ordered to stay there, and he stands as if nailed to the spot. What Napoleon I. said still applies to-day: 'It is not sufficient to kill a Russian, you have to throw him over as well.'

"It is absurd," the General continued, "for the enemy Press to compare this campaign with that of Napoleon in 1812." Again he got up, and pointing to another map, he said: "This is what will win the war for us." The map showed the close railroad net of Eastern Germany and the paucity of permanent roads in Russia. Hindenburg is almost a crank on the subject of railroads in connection with strategy. In the early days of the war he shuffled his army corps about from one corner of Poland to the other. It is said that he transferred four army corps (160,000 men—about 600 trains) in two days from Kalish, in Western Poland, to Tannenberg, a distance of nearly two hundred miles. On some tracks the trains followed each other at intervals of six minutes.

"Our enemies reckon without two great factors unknown in Napoleon's time: railroads and German organization. Next to artillery this war means railroads, railroads, and then still more railroads. The Russians built forts; we built railroads. They would have spent their millions better if they had emulated our policy instead of spending millions on forts. For the present fortresses are of no value against modern siege guns—at least, not until another military genius such as Vauban, Brialmont, Montalembert, Coehoorn, springs up, who will be able to invent proper defensive measures against heavy howitzers.

"Another delusion under which our enemies are laboring is that of Russia's colossal supply of men. He who fights with Russia must always expect superiority in numbers; but in this age of science, strategy and organization, numbers are only decisive, 'all [12] else being equal.' The Russian forces opposed to us on this front have always been far superior in numbers to ours, but we are not afraid of that. A crowd of men fully armed and equipped does not make an army in these days."

This brought him to the subject of the British forces, more especially to Kitchener's army. "It is a great mistake to underestimate your enemy," said Hindenburg, referring to the continual slights and attacks appearing in the German Press. "I by no means underrate the thoroughness, the fighting qualities of the British soldier. England is a fighting nation, and has won her spurs on many battlefields. But to-day they are up against a different problem. Even supposing that Kitchener should be able to raise his army of several millions, where is he going to get his officers and his non-commissioned officers from? How is he going to train them, so to speak, overnight, when it has taken us several generations of uninterrupted instruction, study and work to create an efficient staff? Let me emphasize, and with all the force I can: 'Efficiency and training are everything.' There lies their difficulty. I have many officers here with me who have fought opposite the English, and all are united in their opinion that they are brave and worthy opponents; but one criticism was also unanimously made: 'Their officers often lead their men needlessly to death, either from sheer foolhardiness, but more often through inefficiency.'"

V—"WHEN I LEFT VON HINDENBURG"

Although he did not express this opinion to me personally, I have it on excellent authority that Hindenburg believes this war will last close on four years at least. And the result—stalemate. He does not believe that the Allies will be able to push the [13] Germans out of Belgium, France or Poland.

Personally, I found it impossible to get him to make any definite statement on the probable outcome and duration of the war. "Until we have gained an honorable peace," was his cryptic reply. He refused to state what, in his opinion, constituted an honorable peace. If I am to believe several of his officers—and I discussed the subject almost every day—then Hindenburg must by now be a very disappointed man. I was told that he calculated as a practical certainty on a separate peace with Russia soon after the fall of Warsaw. (I should like to point out here that this "separate peace with Russia" idea was one of the most popular and most universal topics of conversation in Germany last year.)

When Hindenburg learnt that I had come all the way from Berlin without a pass from the General Staff, he appeared very much amused; but in a quasi-serious manner he said:

"Well, you know that I ought to send you back at once, otherwise I shall risk getting the sack myself; still, as all ordinary train-service between here and Posen will be suspended for four days, the only way for you to get back is by motor-car. It would be a pity to come all the way from sunny Italy to this Siberian cold, and not see something of the men and of the hardships of a Russian winter campaign. Travelling by motor-car, you will have ample opportunity to see something of the country, and, if you feel so inclined, of the fighting as well. And then go home and tell them abroad about the insurmountable obstacles, the enormous difficulties the German has to overcome."

Hindenburg does not like the Berlin General Staff officers, and that is why he was so amused at my having got the better of [14] them. He describes them as "drawing-room" officers, who remain safely in Berlin. With their spick and span uniforms they look askance at their mud-stained colleagues at the front. His officers, who know Hindenburg's feelings towards these gentlemen, play many a practical joke on their Berlin *confrères*. The latter have frequently returned from a visit to some communication trenches only to find that their car has mysteriously retreated some two or three miles ... over Polish roads.

Any one who can tell of such an experience befalling a "Salon Offizier" is sure to raise a good laugh from Hindenburg.

At the conclusion of our conversation he instructed the young A.D.C. to take me over to Headquarters and present me to Captain Cämmerer. "Tell him," and I inscribed the words that followed deeply on my mind, "to be kind to Herr Beaufort."

My introduction to Cämmerer proved to be one of those curious vagaries of fate. He was the very man who less than twenty-four hours ago had spoken with General von Schlieffen, and who had assured him how impossible it was for me to continue, and that I was to be sent back to Berlin at once!

"Beaufort, Beaufort," he sniffed once or twice before he could place me. Then suddenly he remembered. "Ah, yes, him! You are the man General von Schlieffen telephoned about yesterday? But did he not instruct you to return to Berlin?"

However, I remembered Hindenburg's injunction: "Tell Cämmerer to be kind to him," so what did I care for a mere captain?

Consequently, as they say in the moving pictures, I "registered" my most angelic smile, and sweetly said: [15]

"Ah, yes, Captain, quite so, quite so. But, you see, I felt *certain* that there was some misunderstanding at this end of the wire. Probably it was not clearly explained to you that I had this very important letter of introduction to General von Hindenburg from my friend his nephew. As you see," and I waved my hand at the A.D.C., my master of ceremonies, "I was quite right in my surmise."

However that may be, you may be certain that I saw to it that when we mapped out my return journey, Cämmerer was being "kind" to me. Consequently, I spent two most interesting weeks in the German Eastern war-zones, much to the surprise and disgust of the "Drawing-room Staff" in Berlin.

(Count De Beaufort's revelations form one of the most valuable records of the war. He tells about "Spies and Spying;" "German Women;" "When I Prayed with the Kaiser;" "An Incognito Visit to the Fleet and German Naval Harbors;" "Interviews with the Leading Naval, Military and Civil Authorities in Germany"—closing with an interview that upset Berlin, caused his arrest, and as he describes it, "My Ultimate Escape Across the Baltic.")

FOOTNOTE:

[1] All numerals throughout this volume relate to the stories herein told—not to chapters in the original sources.

"KITCHENER'S MOB"—ADVENTURES OF AN AMERICAN WITH THE BRITISH ARMY [16]

Uncensored Account of a Young Volunteer

Told by James Norman Hall, of the First Expeditionary Force

> This is a glimpse of life in a battalion of one of Lord Kitchener's first armies. It gives an intimate view of the men who are so gallantly laying down their lives for England. Kitchener's Mob has become the greatest volunteer army in the history of the world—for more than three million of disciplined fighting men are united under one flag in this magnificent military organization. Their fighting has become an epic of heroism in France, Belgium, Africa and the Balkans. Some of them have seen service in India, Egypt and South Africa; they might have stepped out of any of the "Barrack-Room Ballads." The name which they bear was fastened upon them by themselves—thereby hangs a tale. Stories of their adventures have been gathered into a volume under title of "Kitchener's Mob"—and published by *Houghton, Mifflin Company*: Copyright, 1916, by *Atlantic Monthly Company*; Copyright, 1916, by James Norman Hall.

[2] I—STORY OF A YANKEE IN THE TRENCHES

With Kitchener's mob we wandered through the trenches listening to the learned discourse of the genial professors of the Parapet-etic School, storing up much useful information for future reference. I made a serious blunder when I asked one of them a question about Ypres, for I pronounced the name French fashion, which put me under suspicion as a "swanker."

"Don't try to come it, son," he said. "S'y 'Wipers.' That's wot we calls it." [17]

Henceforth it was "Wipers" for me, although I learned that "Eeps" and "Yipps" are sanctioned by some trench authorities. I made no further mistakes of this nature, and by keeping silent about the names of the towns and villages along our front, I soon learned the accepted pronunciation of all of them. Armentières is called "Armenteers"; Balleul, "Ballyall"; Hazebrouck, "Hazy-Brook"; and what more natural than "Plug-Street," Atkinsese for Ploegsteert?

As was the case wherever I went, my accent betrayed my American birth; and again, as an American Expeditionary Force of one, I was shown many favors. Private Shorty Holloway, upon learning that I was a "Yank," offered to tell me "every bloomin' thing about the trenches that a bloke needs to know." I was only too glad to place myself under his instruction.

"Right you are!" said Shorty; "now, sit down 'ere w'ile I'm going over me shirt, an' arsk me anything yer a mind to." I began immediately by asking him what he meant by "going over" his shirt.

"Blimy! You are new to this game, mate! You mean to s'y you ain't got any graybacks?"

I confessed shamefacedly that I had not. He stripped to the waist, turned his shirt wrong side out, and laid it upon his knee.

"'Ave a look," he said proudly.

The less said about my discoveries the better for the fastidiously minded. Suffice it to say that I made my first acquaintance with members of a British Expeditionary Force which is not mentioned in official *communiqués*.

"Trench pets," said Shorty. Then he told me that they were not all graybacks. There is a great variety of species, but they all belong to the same parasitical family, and wage a non-discriminating warfare upon the soldiery on both sides of No-man's-Land. Germans, British, French, Belgians alike were their victims. [18]

"You'll soon 'ave plenty," he said reassuringly; "I give you about a week to get covered with 'em. Now, wot you want to do is this: always 'ave an extra shirt in yer pack. Don't be a bloomin' ass an' sell it fer a packet o' fags like I did! An' the next time you writes to England, get some one to send you out some Keatings"—he displayed a box of grayish-colored powder. "It won't kill 'em, mind you! They ain't nothin' but fire that'll kill 'em. But Keatings tykes all the ginger out o' 'em. They ain't near so lively arter you strafe 'em with this 'ere powder."

I remembered Shorty's advice later when I became a reluctant host to a prolific colony of graybacks. For nearly six months I was never without a box of Keatings, and I was never without the need for it.

II—IN THE BARBED-WIRE "MAN-TRAPS"

Barbed wire had a new and terrible significance for me from the first day which we spent in the trenches. I could more readily understand why there had been so long a deadlock on the western front. The entanglements in front of the first line of trenches were from fifteen to twenty yards wide, the wires being twisted from post to post in such a hopeless jumble that no man could possibly get through them under fire. The posts were set firmly in the ground, but there were movable segments, every fifty or sixty yards, which could be put to one side in case an attack was to be launched against the German lines.

[19] At certain positions there were what appeared to be openings through the wire, but these were nothing less than man-traps which have been found serviceable in case of an enemy attack. In an assault men follow the line of least resistance when they reach the barbed wire. These apparent openings are V-shaped with the open end toward the enemy. The attacking troops think they see a clear passage-way. They rush into the trap and when it is filled with struggling men machine guns are turned upon them, and, as Shorty said, "You got 'em cold."

That, at least, was the presumption. Practically, man-traps were not always a success. The intensive bombardments which precede infantry attacks play havoc with entanglements, but there is always a chance of the destruction being incomplete, as upon one occasion farther north, where, Shorty told me, a man-trap caught a whole platoon of Germans "dead to rights."

"But this is wot gives you the pip," he said. "'Ere we got three lines of trenches, all of 'em wired up so that a rat couldn't get through without scratchin' hisself to death. Fritzie's got better wire than wot we 'ave, an' more of it. An' 'e's got more machine guns, more artill'ry, more shells. They ain't any little old man-killer ever invented wot they 'aven't got more of than we 'ave. An' at 'ome they're a-s'yin', 'W'y don't they get on with it? W'y don't they smash through?' Let some of 'em come out 'ere an' 'ave a try! That's all I got to s'y."

I didn't tell Shorty that I had been, not exactly an armchair critic, but at least a barrack-room critic in England. I had wondered why British and French troops had failed to smash through. A few weeks in the trenches gave me a new viewpoint. I could only wonder at the magnificent fighting qualities of soldiers who had held their own so effectively against armies equipped and armed and munitioned as the Germans were.

[20] After he had finished drugging his trench pets, Shorty and I made a tour of the trenches. I was much surprised at seeing how clean and comfortable they can be kept in pleasant summer weather. Men were busily at work sweeping up the walks, collecting the rubbish, which was put into sandbags hung on pegs at intervals along the fire trench. At night the refuse was taken back of the trenches and buried. Most of this work devolved upon the pioneers whose business it was to keep the trenches sanitary.

The fire trench was built in much the same way as those which we had made during our training in England. In pattern it was something like a tesselated border. For the space of five yards it ran straight, then it turned at right angles around a traverse of solid earth six feet square, then straight again for another five yards, then around another traverse, and so throughout the length of the line. Each five-yard segment, which is called a "bay," offered firing room for five men. The traverses, of course, were for the purpose of preventing enfilade fire. They also limited the execution which might be done by one shell. Even so they were not an unmixed blessing, for they were always in the way when you wanted to get anywhere in a hurry.

"An' you are in a 'urry w'en you sees a Minnie [*Minnenwerfer*] comin' your w'y. But you gets trench legs arter a w'ile. It'll be a funny sight to see blokes walkin' along the street in Lunnon w'en the war's over. They'll be so used to dogin' in an' out o' traverses they won't be able to go in a straight line."

III—STORIES OF SHORTY HOLLOWAY—"PROFESSOR OF TRENCHES"

[21] As we walked through the firing-line trenches, I could quite understand the possibility of one's acquiring trench legs. Five paces forward, two to the right, two to the left, two to the left again, then five to the right, and so on to Switzerland. Shorty was of the opinion that one could enter the trenches on the Channel coast and walk through to the Alps without once coming out on top of the ground. I am not in a position either to affirm or to question this statement. My own experience was confined to that part of the British front which lies between Messines in Belgium and Loos in France. There, certainly, one could walk for miles, through an intricate maze of continuous underground passages.

But the firing-line trench was neither a traffic route nor a promenade. The great bulk of inter-trench business passed through the travelling trench, about fifteen yards in rear of the fire trench and running parallel to it. The two were connected by many passageways, the chief difference between them being that the fire trench was the business district, while the traveling trench was primarily residential. Along the latter were built most of the dugouts, lavatories, and trench kitchens. The sleeping quarters for the men were not very elaborate. Recesses were made in the wall of the trench about two feet above the floor. They were not more than three feet high, so that one had to crawl in head first when going to bed. They were partitioned in the middle, and were supposed to offer accommodations for four men, two on each side. But, as Shorty said, everything depended on the ration allowance. Two men who had eaten to repletion could not hope to occupy the same apartment. One had a choice of going to bed hungry or of eating heartily and sleeping outside on the firing-bench.

"'Ere's a funny thing," he said. "W'y do you suppose they makes the dugouts open at one end?"

I had no explanation to offer.

"Crawl inside an' I'll show you."

[22] I stood my rifle against the side of the trench and crept in.

"Now, yer supposed to be asleep," said Shorty, and with that he gave me a whack on the soles of my boots with his entrenching tool handle. I can still feel the pain of the blow.

"Stand to! Wyke up 'ere! Stand to!" he shouted, and gave me another resounding wallop.

I backed out in all haste.

"Get the idea? That's 'ow they wykes you up at stand-to, or w'en your turn comes fer sentry. Not bad, wot?"

I said that it all depended on whether one was doing the waking or the sleeping, and that, for my part, when sleeping, I would lie with my head out.

"You wouldn't if you belonged to our lot. They'd give it to you on the napper just as quick as 'it you on the feet. You ain't on to the game, that's all. Let me show you suthin'."

He crept inside and drew his knees up to his chest so that his feet were well out of reach. At his suggestion I tried to use the active service alarm clock on him, but there was not room enough in which to wield it. My feet were tingling from the effect of his blows, and I felt that the reputation for resourcefulness of Kitchener's Mob was at stake. In a moment of inspiration I seized my rifle, gave him a dig in the shins with the butt, and shouted, "Stand to, Shorty!" He came out rubbing his leg ruefully.

"You got the idea, mate," he said. "That's just wot they does w'en you tries to double-cross 'em by pullin' yer feet in. I ain't sure w'ere I likes it best, on the shins or on the feet."

[23] This explanation of the reason for building three-sided dugouts, while not, of course, the true one, was none the less interesting. And certainly, the task of arousing sleeping men for sentry duty was greatly facilitated with rows of protruding boot soles "simply arskin' to be 'it," as Shorty put it.

All of the dugouts for privates and N.C.O.s were of equal size and built on the same model, the reason being that the walls and floors, which were made of wood, and the roofs, which were of corrugated iron, were put together in sections at the headquarters of the Royal Engineers, who superintended all the work of trench construction. The material was brought up at night ready to be fitted into excavations. Furthermore, with thousands of men to house within a very limited area, space was a most important consideration. There was no room for indulging individual tastes in dugout architecture. The roofs were covered with from three to four feet of earth, which made them proof against shrapnel or shell splinters. In case of a heavy bombardment with high explosives, the men took shelter in deep and narrow "slip trenches." These were blind alley-ways leading off from the traveling trench, with room for from ten to fifteen men in each. At this part of the line there were none of the very deep shell-proof shelters, from fifteen to twenty feet below the surface of the ground, of which I had read. Most of the men seemed to be glad of this. They preferred taking their chances in an open trench during heavy shell fire.

IV—THE "SUICIDE CLUB"—A BOMBING SQUAD

Realists and Romanticists lived side by side in the traveling trench. "My Little Gray Home in the West" was the modest legend over one apartment. The "Ritz Carlton" was next door to "The Rats' Retreat," with "Vermin Villa" next door but one. "The Suicide Club" was the suburban residence of some members of the bombing squad. I remarked that the bombers seemed to [24] take rather a pessimistic view of their profession, whereupon Shorty told me that if there were any men slated for the Order of the Wooden Cross, the bombers were those unfortunate ones. In an assault they were first at the enemy's position. They had dangerous work to do even on the quietest of days. But theirs was a post of honor, and no one of them but was proud of his membership in the Suicide Club.

The officers' quarters were on a much more generous and elaborate scale than those of the men. This I gathered from Shorty's description of them, for I saw only the exteriors as we passed along the trench. Those for platoon and company commanders were built along the traveling trench. The colonel, major, and adjutant lived in a luxurious palace, about fifty yards down a communication trench. Near it was the officers' mess, a café de luxe with glass panels in the door, a cooking stove, a long wooden table, chairs,—everything, in fact, but hot and cold running water.

"You know," said Shorty, "the officers thinks they 'as to rough it, but they got it soft, I'm tellin' you! Wooden bunks to sleep in, batmen to bring 'em 'ot water fer shavin' in the mornin', all the fags they wants,——Blimy, I wonder wot they calls livin' 'igh?"

I agreed that in so far as living quarters are concerned, they were roughing it under very pleasant circumstances. However, they were not always so fortunate, as later experience proved. Here there had been little serious fighting for months and the trenches were at their best. Elsewhere the officers' dugouts were often but little better than those of the men.

The first-line trenches were connected with two lines of support or reserve trenches built in precisely the same fashion, and [25] each heavily wired. The communication trenches which joined them were from seven to eight feet deep and wide enough to permit the convenient passage of incoming and outgoing troops, and the transport of the wounded back to the field dressing stations. From the last reserve line they wound on backward through the fields until troops might leave them well out of range of rifle fire. Under Shorty's guidance I saw the field dressing stations, the dugouts for the reserve ammunition supply and the stores of bombs and hand grenades, battalion and brigade trench headquarters. We wandered from one part of the line to another through trenches, all of which were kept amazingly neat and clean. The walls were stayed with fine-mesh wire to hold the earth in place. The floors were covered with board walks carefully laid over the drains, which ran along the center of the trench and emptied into deep wells, built in recesses in the walls. I felt very much encouraged when I saw the careful provision for sanitation and drainage. On a fine June morning it seemed probable that living in ditches was not to be so unpleasant as I had imagined it. Shorty listened to my comments with a smile.

"Don't pat yerself on the back yet a w'ile, mate," he said. "They looks right enough now, but wite till you've seen 'em arter a 'eavy rain."

I had this opportunity many times during the summer and autumn. A more wretched existence than that of soldiering in wet weather could hardly be imagined. The walls of the trenches caved in in great masses. The drains filled to overflowing, and the trench walks were covered deep in mud. After a few hours of rain, dry and comfortable trenches became a quagmire, and we were kept busy for days afterward repairing the damage.

As a machine gunner I was particularly interested in the construction of the machine-gun emplacements. The covered battle [26] positions were very solidly built. The roofs were supported with immense logs or steel girders covered over with many layers of sandbags. There were two carefully concealed loopholes looking out to a flank, but none for frontal fire, as this dangerous little weapon best enjoys catching troops in enfilade owing to the rapidity and the narrow cone of its fire. Its own front is protected by the guns on its right and left. At each emplacement there was a range chart giving the ranges to all parts of the enemy's trenches, and to every prominent object both in front of and behind them, within its field of fire. When not in use the gun was kept mounted and ready for action in the battle position.

"But remember this," said Shorty, "you never fires from your battle position except in case of attack. W'en you goes out at night to 'ave a little go at Fritzie, you always tykes yer gun sommers else. If you don't, you'll 'ave Minnie an' Busy Bertha an' all the rest o' the Krupp childern comin' over to see w'ere you live."

This was a wise precaution, as we were soon to learn from experience. Machine guns are objects of special interest to the artillery, and the locality from which they are fired becomes very unhealthy for some little time thereafter.

V—AT THE "MUD LARKS'" BEAUTY SHOP

We stopped for a moment at "The Mud Larks' Hair-dressing Parlor," a very important institution if one might judge by its patronage. It was housed in a recess in the wall of the traveling trench, and was open to the sky. There I saw the latest fashion in "oversea" hair cuts. The victims sat on a ration box while the barber mowed great swaths through tangled thatch with a pair [27] of close-cutting clippers. But instead of making a complete job of it, a thick fringe of hair which resembled a misplaced scalping tuft was left for decorative purposes, just above the forehead. The effect was so grotesque that I had to invent an excuse for laughing. It was a lame one, I fear, for Shorty looked at me warningly. When we had gone on a little way he said:—

"Ain't it a proper beauty parlor? But you got to be careful about larfin'. Some o' the blokes thinks that 'edge-row is a regular ornament."

I had supposed that a daily shave was out of the question on the firing-line; but the British Tommy is nothing if not resourceful. Although water is scarce and fuel even more so, the self-respecting soldier easily surmounts difficulties, and the Gloucesters were all nice in matters pertaining to the toilet. Instead of draining their canteens of tea, they saved a few drops for shaving purposes.

"It's a bit sticky," said Shorty, "but it's 'ot, an' not 'arf bad w'en you gets used to it. Now, another thing you don't want to ferget is this: W'en yer movin' up fer yer week in the first line, always bring a bundle o' firewood with you. They ain't so much as a match-stick left in the trenches. Then you wants to be savin' of it. Don't go an use it all the first d'y or you'll 'ave to do without yer tea the rest o' the week."

I remembered his emphasis upon this point afterward when I saw men risking their lives in order to procure firewood. Without his tea Tommy was a wretched being. I do not remember a day, no matter how serious the fighting, when he did not find both the time and the means for making it.

VI—FLIES—RATS—AND DOMESTIC SCIENCE [28]

Shorty was a Ph.D. in every subject in the curriculum, including domestic science. In preparing breakfast he gave me a practical demonstration of the art of conserving a limited resource of fuel, bringing our two canteens to a boil with a very meager handful of sticks; and while doing so he delivered an oral thesis on the best methods of food preparation. For example, there was the item of corned beef—familiarly called "bully." It was the *pièce de résistance* at every meal with the possible exception of breakfast, when there was usually a strip of bacon. Now, one's appetite for "bully" becomes jaded in the course of a few weeks or months. To use the German expression one doesn't eat it *gern*. But it is not a question of liking it. One must eat it or go hungry. Therefore, said Shorty, save carefully all of your bacon grease, and instead of eating your "bully" cold out of the tin, mix it with bread crumbs and grated cheese and fry it in the grease. He prepared some in this way, and I thought it a most delectable dish. Another way of stimulating the palate was to boil the beef in a solution of bacon grease and water, and then, while eating it, "kid yerself that it's Irish stew." This second method of taking away the curse did not appeal to me very strongly, and Shorty admitted that he practiced such self-deception with very indifferent success; for after all "bully" was "bully" in whatever form you ate it.

In addition to this staple, the daily rations consisted of bacon, bread, cheese, jam, army biscuits, tea, and sugar. Sometimes they received a tinned meat and vegetable ration, already cooked, and at welcome intervals fresh meat and potatoes were substituted for corned beef. Each man had a very generous allowance of food, a great deal more, I thought, than he could [29] possibly eat. Shorty explained this by saying that allowance was made for the amount which would be consumed by the rats and the blue-bottle flies.

There were, in fact, millions of flies. They settled in great swarms along the walls of the trenches, which were filled to the brim with warm light as soon as the sun had climbed a little way up the sky. Empty tin-lined ammunition boxes were used as cupboards for food. But of what avail were cupboards to a jam-loving and jam-fed British army living in open ditches in the summer time? Flytraps made of empty jam tins were set along the top of the parapet. As soon as one was filled, another was set in its place. But it was an unequal war against an expeditionary force of countless numbers.

"They ain't nothin' you can do," said Shorty. "They steal the jam right off yer bread."

As for the rats, speaking in the light of later experience, I can say that an army corps of Pied Pipers would not have sufficed to entice away the hordes of them that infested the trenches, living like house pets on our rations. They were great lazy animals, almost as large as cats, and so gorged with food that they could hardly move. They ran over us in the dugouts at night, and filched cheese and crackers right through the heavy waterproofed coverings of our haversacks. They squealed and fought among themselves at all hours. I think it possible that they were carrion eaters, but never, to my knowledge, did they attack living men. While they were unpleasant bedfellows, we became so accustomed to them that we were not greatly concerned about our very intimate associations.

Our course of instruction at the Parapet-etic School was brought to a close late in the evening when we shouldered our packs, bade good-bye to our friends the Gloucesters, and marched back in the moonlight to our billets. I had gained an entirely new [30] conception of trench life, of the difficulties involved in trench building, and the immense amount of material and labor needed for the work.

Americans who are interested in learning of these things at first hand will do well to make the grand tour of the trenches when the war is finished. Perhaps the thrifty continentals will seek to commercialize such advantage as misfortune as brought them, in providing favorable opportunities. Perhaps the Touring Club of France will lay out a new route, following the windings of the firing line from the Channel coast across the level fields of Flanders, over the Vosges Mountains to the borders of Switzerland. Pedestrians may wish to make the journey on foot, cooking their supper over Tommy's rusty biscuit-tin stoves, sleeping at night in the dugouts where he lay shivering with cold during the winter nights of 1914 and 1915. If there are enthusiasts who will be satisfied with only the most intimate personal view of the trenches, if there are those who would try to understand the hardships and discomforts of trench life by living it during a summer vacation, I would suggest that they remember Private Shorty Holloway's parting injunction to me:—

"Now, don't ferget, Jamie!" he said as we shook hands, "always 'ave a box o' Keatings 'andy, an' 'ang on to yer extra shirt!"

(Private Hall, of Kitchener's Mob, describes the scenes when the army was being organized for the first British expeditionary force. He tells about "The Rookies"; "The Mob in Training"; "Ordered Abroad." He describes their fights; their life under cover; their lodgings, billets and experiences in the trenches, "sitting tight." It is "men of this stamp," he says, "who have the fortunes [31] of England in their keeping. And they are called 'The Boys of the Bulldog Breed.'")

FOOTNOTE:

[2] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

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[32]

"HOW BELGIUM SAVED EUROPE"—THE LITTLE KINGDOM OF HEROES

Tragedy of the Belgians

Told by Dr. Charles Sarolea, Ph. D. (Liège), Litt. D.
(Brussels), Belgian Consul in Edinburgh

> Dr. Sarolea is the historian of the Belgian people in the world tragedy through which they have passed. Count D'Aviella, Belgian Secretary of State, exclaims: "I am sure no one can read these tragic pages without becoming more than ever confirmed in his conviction that we are fighting in the cause of right, of liberty, and of civilization." Dr. Sarolea has for twelve years been Belgian Consul in Scotland; he is the personal friend of His Majesty King Albert of Belgium, with whom he frequently sits in private audience. He has written a book, "How Belgium Saved Europe," which sets forth the great tragedy which places the Belgian people on the same plane with those soul stirring heroes of universal history in the Persian Wars of Greece, the Punic Wars of Rome, the Wars of Spain against the Moors, the epic of Joan of Arc, the Wars of the French Revolution—and all the outstanding and inspiring chapters in the drama of human heroism. He tells about "The Hero-King" and "The German Plot in Belgium." We here record his story on "The Destruction of Louvain," by permission of his publishers, *J. B. Lippincott Company*: Copyright 1915.

[3] I—STORIES OF MAD FURY IN LOUVAIN

On September 1 (1914) a procession of refugees from Louvain arrived at Malines in a frenzy of terror with the news that the town of Louvain had been set on fire by the Germans and that the whole city was a heap of ruins. The wildest stories added to the horror of the tale. It was said that there had been a wholesale massacre of men, women, and children, and that hundreds of priests, and especially Jesuits, had been singled out for murder. Many of the stories proved to be without any foundation. But when all the exaggerations had been discounted there remained a body of substantial facts that were enough to send a thrill of indignation through Europe.

Two certainties emerged from the chaos of conflicting evidence. First, there had been indiscriminate slaughter of civilians and [33] looting of property. Secondly, the Germans, armed with incendiary fuses and obeying the order of the military authorities, had methodically burned the whole section of Louvain which extends from the station in the centre of the town, including the University and the church of St. Pierre.

Since the destruction of the hapless University town other atrocities have followed in almost daily succession, Termonde, Aerschot, Malines, Antwerp. The world has almost got accustomed to them. There has been nothing like this mad fury of destruction in the whole history of modern warfare. Rheims has outdone even Louvain, and the ruin of the Cathedral of Rheims is an even greater loss than the destruction of the old Belgian Catholic University.

Still Louvain remains the one crowning infamy. German casuistry may at least find some extenuating circumstances in the fact that Rheims was a fortified town, and that the Cathedral tower might have been used as an observation post for the French armies. For the crime of Louvain no extenuating circumstance can be urged. Louvain was undefended. It was a peaceful city of students, priests, and landladies. It was in the occupation of the Germans. Its destruction, therefore, was both a wanton and a [34] cowardly act of cruelty, and being both wanton and cruel, it will stand out as the typical atrocity of German militarism.

Only those who are familiar with the history of Belgium and Brabant, and with the history of Belgian Universities, know what Louvain and the University stood for. Founded in 1425, in the days of Petrarch, Froissart, and Chaucer, it was one of the oldest and most illustrious seats of learning in Europe. It was the seat of Pope Adrian VI, the tutor of Charles V. It still remained the most famous Catholic University in the world. It still attracted scholars from every country. It was still the nursery of Irish, English, and American priests.

And not only had Louvain 500 years of learning behind it, it was also a city with a magnificent municipal tradition. The town hall, one of the gems of Gothic architecture, was a glorious monument to that municipal tradition. By the destruction of Louvain the German soldiery have wiped out five centuries of religious and intellectual culture and of municipal freedom.

II—THE TRUTH ABOUT GERMAN ATROCITIES

Wherever the Germans have perpetrated some atrocious crime they have used the same threadbare excuse—the shooting of German soldiers by civilians. Civilians fired on German soldiers at Visé, therefore Visé was razed to the ground. The fourteen-year-old son of the Burgomaster of Aerschot killed a German officer, therefore the whole city of Aerschot had to be destroyed. Similarly, it was to avenge the murder of German soldiers that Louvain was burned. It is the civilian population of Louvain who must ultimately be held responsible.

On the face of it, the German version is an incredible invention. Louvain was in the occupation of German troops. *All the arms* [35] *had been handed in days before by the civil population.* The authorities had posted placards recommending tranquility to the population, and warning them that any individual act of hostility would bring down instant vengeance. Those placards could still be read on the walls on the day of the destruction of Louvain. Under those circumstances, is it credible that a few peaceful citizens should have brought down destruction by their own deliberate act, which they knew would be met with instant and ruthless retribution?

But even assuming that individual Belgians had been guilty of firing on the German troops, supposing a civilian exasperated by the monstrous treatment described in the narrative of Mr. Van Ernem, the Town Treasurer. When the Belgian troops were repulsed by the enemy's crushing numbers, and the Germans had put their big guns in position on all the heights dominating the town, the Germans sent a deputation to the Burgomaster, who agreed to receive the officers to hear their proposals and conditions for occupying the town.

The German General with his état-major then came to the town hall to confer with the Burgomaster, councillors, and myself as treasurer of the town.

These were the stipulated conditions.

First: That the town should fully provide for the invaders, in consideration of which no war contributions would be exacted.

Secondly: The soldiers not billeted in private houses were to pay cash for all goods obtained; also, they were not to molest the inhabitants under any circumstances.

These stiplations, agreed to on both sides, were most scrupulously kept by the Belgians, but not by the Germans. On certain days, for example, the Germans would exact 67,000 pounds of meat, and would let 20,000 pounds of it rot, although the [36] population were suffering from hunger.

On Monday, August 24, toward 10 P. M., the Burgomaster—a respectable merchant, sixty-two years of age—was arrested in his bed, where he was lying ill. He was forced to rise and marched to the railway station, where it was demanded of him that he should provide immediately 250 warm meals and as many mattresses for the soldiers, under penalty of being shot. With admirable dispatch the inhabitants rushed to comply with the German demand. In their solicitude and pity for their aged chief, and their anxiety to save his life, they gave their own beds and their last drops of wine.

The Germans acted without the slightest consideration or regard for the faithful promises of their état-major. The troops rushed into private houses, making forcible entrances, and taking from old and young, many of the latter already orphans, whatever they fancied, paying for nothing except with paper money to be presented to the "caisse communal" at the end of the war.

The promise of exemption from contribution to a war levy was violated, like every other contract. Failing to find enough money in the treasury, the Germans in authority ordered the immediate payment of 100,000 francs.

This large sum could not be gathered from the inhabitants, and nearly all the banks had on the first warning of the approach of the enemy succeeded in transferring their funds to the National Bank.

Finally, after much bickering, the officer in command of the German troops agreed to accept 3,000 fr., to be paid the next day. But with the next morning came a further demand for 5,000 fr. The Burgomaster vigorously protested against this new exaction; but nevertheless I, as treasurer of the town, was held responsible for collecting 5,000 fr. With the greatest difficulty, [37] I succeeded in procuring 3,080 fr., and after considerable bickering this sum was accepted by the enemy, and the horrors of reprisals were delayed. The population, conscious of the terrible risk which they ran, submitted with calm resignation to the inevitable. As a functionary of the city, I can vouch for the absolutely dignified and passive attitude of the whole population of Louvain. They understood perfectly well their grave individual responsibility, and that any break of their promises would be instantly met by crushing action.

The position of affairs was minutely explained to the inhabitants in several printed proclamations, and they were personally warned by our venerable Burgomaster. Good order was so rigorously maintained that the German authorities praised the exemplary conduct of the inhabitants.

This attitude was all the more laudable because the invaders, immediately upon entering the city, liberated nine of their compatriots who had been incarcerated before the war for murder, theft, and other felonies.

III—TRUE STORIES OF "THE UNSPEAKABLE CRIME"

At last, on the Tuesday night, there took place the unspeakable crime, the shame of which can be understood only by those who followed and watched the different phases of the German occupation of Louvain.

It is a significant fact that the German wounded and sick, including their Red Cross nurses, were all removed from the hospitals. The Germans meanwhile proceeded methodically to make a last and supreme requisition, although they knew the town could not satisfy it.

Towards 6 o'clock the bugle sounded, and officers lodging in private houses left at once with arms and luggage. At the same [38] time thousands of additional soldiers, with numerous field-pieces and cannon, marched into the town to their allotted positions. The gas factory, which had been idle, had been worked through the previous night and day by Germans, so that during this premeditated outrage the people could not take advantage of darkness to escape from the town. A further fact that proves their premeditation is that the attack took place at 8 o'clock, the exact time at which the population entered their houses in conformity with the German orders—consequently escape became well-nigh impossible. At 8.20 a full fusillade with the roar of the cannons came from all sides of the town at once.

The sky at the same time was lit up with the sinister light of fires from all quarters. The cavalry charged through the streets, sabring fugitives, while the infantry, posted on the footpaths, had their fingers on the triggers of their guns waiting for the unfortunate people to rush from the houses or appear at the windows, the soldiers complimenting each other on their marksmanship as they fired at the unhappy fugitives.

Those whose homes were not yet destroyed were ordered to quit and follow the soldiers to the railway station. There the men were separated from mothers, wives, and children, and thrown, some bound, into trains leaving in the direction of Germany.

I cannot but feel that, following the system they have inaugurated in this campaign, the Germans will use these non-combatant prisoners as human shields when they are fighting the Allies. The cruelty of these madmen surpasses all limits. They shot numbers of absolutely inoffensive people, forcing those who survived to bury their dead in the square, already encumbered with corpses whose positions suggested that they had fallen with arms uplifted in token of surrender. [39]

Others who have been allowed to live were driven past approving drunken officers by the brutal use of rifle butts, and while they were being maltreated they saw their carefully collected art and other treasures being shared out by the soldiers, the officers looking on. Those who attempted to appeal to their tormentors' better feelings were immediately shot. A few were let loose, but most of them were sent to Germany.

On Wednesday at daybreak the remaining women and children were driven out of the town—a lamentable spectacle—with uplifted arms and under the menace of bayonets and revolvers.

The day was practically calm. The destruction of the most beautiful part of the town seemed to have momentarily soothed the barbarian rage of the invaders.

On the Thursday the remnant of the Civil Guard was called up on the pretext of extinguishing the conflagration; those who demurred were chained and sent with some wounded Germans to the Fatherland. The population had to quit at a moment's notice before the final destruction.

Then, to complete their devastation, the German hordes fell back on the surrounding villages to burn them. They tracked down the men—some were shot, some made prisoners—and during many long hours they tortured the helpless women and children. This country of Eastern Brabant, so rich, so fertile, and so beautiful, is to-day a deserted charnel-house.

Why should these individual deeds have been visited on thousands of innocent and inoffensive people? Why should those deeds have been visited on monuments of brick and stone? Why should treasuries of learning and shrines of religion be destroyed? Why should the six centuries of European history be destroyed because of the acts of a few patriots acting under the impulse of [40] terror or indignation?

As I said, the whole truth cannot yet be revealed. It is difficult to disentangle the facts even from ocular witnesses, from terrorized victims who were present at the ghastly crime. I have cross-examined some of those witnesses. I have read private letters from my cousin, Professor Albert Nerincx, at present Acting-Burgomaster of Louvain, who assumed office when the civic authorities had left, and whose heroic conduct is one of the few bright spots in the tragedy. Comparing and collating all the evidence at our disposal, we may take the following version given by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry as substantially correct:

"On Tuesday evening a German corps, after receiving a check, withdrew in disorder into the town of Louvain. A German guard at the entrance of the town mistook the nature of this incursion and fired on their routed fellow-countrymen, mistaking them for Belgians.

"In spite of all denials from the authorities the Germans, in order to cover their mistake, pretended that it was the inhabitants who had fired on them, whereas the inhabitants, including the police, had been disarmed more than a week ago.

"Without inquiry, and without listening to any protests, the German Commander-in-Chief announced that the town would be immediately destroyed. The inhabitants were ordered to leave their dwellings; a party of men were made prisoners and the women and children put into trains the destination of which is unknown. Soldiers furnished with bombs set fire to all parts of the town."

IV—MURDER—LOOT—RAPINE—IN BELGIUM [41]

An Oxford student who visited the scene of the disaster with Mr. Henry Fürst, of Exeter College, Oxford, on August 29, gives the following description of the awful picture:

"Burning houses were every moment falling into the roads; shooting was still going on. The dead and dying, burnt and burning, lay on all sides. Over some the Germans had placed sacks. I saw about half a dozen women and children. In one street I saw two little children walking hand in hand over the bodies of dead men. I have no words to describe these things. I hope people will not make too much of the saving of the Hôtel de Ville.

"The Hôtel de Ville was standing on Friday morning last, and, as we plainly saw, every effort was being made to save it from the flames. We were told by German officers that it was not to be destroyed. I have personally no doubt that it is still standing. The German officers dashing about the streets in fine motor-cars made a wonderful sight. They were well-dressed, shaven, and contented-looking; they might have been assisting at a fashionable race-meeting. The soldiers were looting everywhere; champagne, wines, boots, cigars—everything was being carried off."

But let it not be thought that Louvain was destroyed in vain. To the Belgian people it has meant more than a glorious victory. To the Germans it has been more disastrous than the most ignominious defeat. Until Louvain neutral peoples might still hesitate in their sympathies. Pacifists might still waver as to the justice of the cause. After Louvain any hesitation or doubt became impossible. The destruction of Louvain was needed to drive home the meaning of German culture. The crime of Louvain branded the German rulers and the commanders of the German armies as the enemies of the human race. [42]

The atrocities committed by the German armies have roused the indignation of both hemispheres. They have placed Germany outside the pale of civilization. They have covered the German armies with eternal infamy. In the full light of the twentieth century the German terror has outdone the deeds and wiped out the memory of the Spanish terror. We make ample allowances for wild rumors bred of panic, although in the present instance the panic caused by the mere approach of the German soldiery is in itself a most significant symptom. If the German armies had observed the laws of civilized warfare which protect the defenceless inhabitants, there would have been no need for the population to fly for their lives, and there would not be at present a million homeless exiles wandering over the high roads of Holland.

(Dr. Sarolea describes the vicissitudes of Belgian triumphants alternating with Belgian reverses, the pathetic story of brave endeavor and of suffering nobly endured in the noblest of causes. The Defense of Liège, the fall of Namur, the capture of Brussels and the beleaguering of Antwerp: the destruction of Dinant and Termonde, the bursting of the dykes of the Scheldt, the German Terror and the wholesale exodus of the stricken nation which through all time will be the favorite theme of historians and poets.)

FOOTNOTE:

[3] All numerals throughout this volume relate to the stories herein told—not to chapters in the original books.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S VISIT TO THE FRONT [43]

Taking the Message of Christ to the Battle Lines

Told by The Reverend G. Vernon Smith, Resident
Chaplain to the Bishop of London, Deputy
Priest in Ordinary to the King

> This is an account of how a Bishop of the Church of England visited the troops at the front. He went to France as the guest of Sir John French, Field Marshall of the British Army, to spend Holy Week and Easter with the troops. The chaplain who relates these experiences was one of the guests. He said before he left London, the Bishop received most cordial letters of God-speed from the Bishops of Canterbury and York. The Bishop's first evening in France was spent at the Soldiers' Institute at Boulogne, and this building was packed with soldiers at a concert. He then started in a motor car for the headquarters of the British Army, where he was received by the Field Marshall with all the members of the staff. A complete record of his journeys has been published by *Longmans, Green and Company*, with whose permission the following chapter is here presented.

[4] I—HOLY COMMUNION AT THE FRONT

It was in —— that the Bishop for the first time came close to the actual front and within range of the German guns. The cars were at the door of the house where the Bishop was billeted, in a quiet little side-street, at 6:45 in the morning, for an early start had been arranged.

We drove through the narrow streets to one of the large Hospitals in the town, where he celebrated the Holy Communion at seven o'clock for those of the officers and patients who wished to attend. After this service the other patients came in for morning prayers, at which the Bishop said a few words to them. It was invariably the case, when the Bishop visited a hospital, that there were many patients who wished to have a word with him. There were always, also, some men to whom, for some special reason, the Medical Officer or Chaplain wished to take him, and not infrequently in the Officers' Hospitals there were men whom he knew personally. [44]

It was, therefore, a hard task to keep up to time in saying "Good-bye" at a hospital, and Mr. Macpherson, whom the Bishop soon called his "nigger-driver," and who was responsible for seeing that the time-table was strictly kept—a task of considerable difficulty—had generally to remind the Bishop at a suitable moment that his car was waiting at the door.

In a few minutes we had arrived at the Jute Factory again, where thirty men were ready and waiting to be confirmed in the little Chapel which has been carefully partitioned off in one corner of the building.

It had been arranged that on this day the Bishop should visit some of the London Regiments that have recently gone to the front. Naturally he always looked forward with special eagerness to an opportunity of meeting, in these fresh surroundings, London men, to so many of whom he has spoken and preached in his diocese. Fortunately he was able in the course of the week to visit nearly all these regiments, although some of the men who were in the trenches could not, of course, be present at his services. To us, coming out from London, it was a great source of satisfaction and pride to hear of the high esteem in which [45] these Territorial regiments are held by the leaders of our Army.

It was not a very long time, as the motors slipped along the quiet country roads, before we began to hear the distant sound of guns, and as long as we were within a short distance of the firing-line there was seldom an hour in which guns could not be distinctly heard.

Here and there, too, could be seen a battery hidden beneath a belt of trees, or sheltered under the hedge by the side of the road. We were curious to see how the countryside would look after its long occupation by the British Army. We had expected, perhaps, to see more signs of war, although we had not known what to anticipate.

Beyond the fact that there were many bodies of troops moving on the roads, and that many farms and other large houses had notices fixed up outside to show they were the Headquarters of some unit, there was nothing, as a rule, except in the areas which have been actually shelled, to give any indication of the terrible nature of the struggle which is being waged so close at hand. Indeed, if the road took us to the top of one of the few hills in that country, and we looked out over the landscape, just beginning to show the first touches of spring, it was almost impossible to realize that between us and the horizon stretched that long valley of trenches which divides the two great armies.

When we drove along the roads at some distance from the actual front, it was often hard to believe that this was the real seat of war; but a passing transport wagon or a patrol of cavalry riding by soon reminded us of stern realities. The recent absence of rain, and the warm sun, had caused the roads to dry up considerably, and many officers seemed to be quite disappointed not to be able to show us many samples of the mud to which they had become so accustomed, and of which we had heard so much. [46] We wondered, also, very much how the men would look after their hard and trying winter. Certainly I was surprised to notice how very clean and tidy they invariably appeared to be; although, of course, uniforms must show signs of wear and tear. In every case, except where the men were actually fresh from the trenches, the Battalions presented a smart appearance.

II—SOLDIERS SINGING: "JESUS LOVER OF MY SOUL"

At our first halt a Battalion of the London Regiment was drawn up on parade in a field, and for the first time we opened the large red box and handed round the hymn-sheets. It was here that we were to begin to understand the wonderful uplifting power of our great English hymns when they are sung on great occasions. After all, the heart of a nation is often to be found in its hymns. They express a simple theology in simple terms, and words and tunes of hymns learned in childhood are very dear to men, even if in the rush of life they have not, as many said, "found much time for religion before I came to France." The Bishop had chosen hymns which he knew would be familiar to all the men of all denominations.

Only four hymns were sung throughout the week—"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me," "There Is a Green Hill Far Away," and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"—hymns which are known throughout the world wherever British men have gone. There was no necessity to have an accompaniment, for everybody knew the tunes. Once or twice a band was present, and now and then a small harmonium was used, but as a rule the hymns were sung unaccompanied, except by the [47] thunder of the guns.

It is always moving and inspiring to join in hymns when they are sung by large bodies of men, especially when those hymns have been associated with great moments in our lives, but never before can these familiar tunes have had such a setting; never, certainly, have they been sung more reverently or with greater earnestness. Perhaps, as children they liked the tunes best, but now that they have become men and put away childish things, the soldiers think first of the words.

How much those words meant to many hearts no one but He to Whom all hearts are open can ever know; but that they moved thoughts too deep for words was clearly written on every face in those great gatherings of men. As they must have raised many memories of childhood in the hearts of many of the men, so now they will in future years be sung by many with another and a deeper memory of the occasions when they were sung upon the battlefields of Flanders in the days of the Great War.

There was one verse in the Gospels which was continually in my mind at these great services. In Holy Week, of course, we were often thinking of that last night of our Lord with His disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem before He went out to His great battle in Gethsemane, and on the Cross: "When they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."

We were with men at the great moments of their lives, many of them having come straight out of the trenches, many going back to the trenches in but a few moments after we had left them—men who had been in battle, and men who were preparing for battle. Nobody who was present at those services would ever forget what it meant to say: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went back to the trenches."

Every service, of course, was closed with the National Anthem. At the front, men seem instinctively to know that this great [48] hymn is in reality a prayer, and on not a few occasions the whole body of men reverently sang "Amen" at the conclusion of the last line. So also "God Save the King" will have won for itself an even deeper place in the hearts of men than that which it has held for so many generations.

From the open field, it was not far to pass on to a little French town where another regiment was drawn up in the principal square. No more suitable place could have been chosen for a service, and a wagon, which served as a pulpit for the Bishop, was just in front of the western door of the fine old church.

III—"THE KINGDOM OF GOD"—NEAR THE GUNS

To see a Bishop of the Anglican Communion preaching in France at the door of a Roman Catholic church raised many thoughts in my mind. I could not but hope that these days of trial may draw the Allies together by something that is deeper than the bonds of friendship. We had heard not infrequently of the sympathetic help which is being offered by many priests of the Roman Catholic Church to our own Chaplains, and I thought, as many are thinking at this time, that if the war could serve in any way to help the two great Communions to understand better their distinctive points of view, some real step will have been taken to advance the cause of the Kingdom of God. This service was reverently watched by a considerable number of the inhabitants of the place.

After holding a short service for two batteries near their guns, the Bishop came to another open square where a Brigade was assembled, which included a regiment almost, if not entirely, recruited from East London. The East Londoner has his own [49] unique characteristics, and his friends will be glad to know that he is just as cheerful and bright in France at war as he is in England in times of peace. It was hard to distinguish faces, but as the regiment swung by the place where I was standing, I saw many who remembered me from the time that I spent at Oxford House, and they waved just as hearty a greeting from the ranks as they used to wave from the top of a van in the Bethnal Green Road five years ago.

The deepest note on this day was struck when we came to a little town filled with British troops, a very large number of whom had been recently engaged in heavy fighting. The Chaplain had sent a notice throughout one Division that the Bishop would hold a short service in the evening for officers, and that this would be followed by a service for non-commissioned officers and men. As he entered the large hall which is used for a church in that town, he found at least five hundred officers, including many Generals, waiting in silence. They had come, some of them, from considerable distances, and almost every officer who was off duty in that district must have been present. It was only a bare, whitewashed building, with a hard stone floor, and a little platform at the end, but in it were gathered together some of the flower of the British Army.

There were Generals kneeling side by side with subalterns—men who had faced together the terrible ordeal of battle. Those who were present will surely never forget the silence and reverence of that service.

IV—THE CANADIANS—AND A BENEDICTION

After so long a day the Bishop was naturally beginning to feel tired, and his voice began to show signs of the great tax which [50] frequent speaking in the open air had placed upon it. But there was one more gathering at which he was to be present, and in many ways this was the most striking and memorable of the whole Mission.

The Canadians were there, and they wished to see him. That was quite enough for the Bishop. His two visits to the Dominion have made Canada very dear to his heart, and to Canada he will always give of his best. It was not far to go to the large open square in the town where the Canadians were waiting for him. The square was packed with men, and in the center was a statue or fountain—I really could not distinguish which, so completely was it concealed by the men sitting and standing upon it.

The last rays of the sun came across the old tiled roofs, and lent a touch of color to the scene. On one side of the square was the Town Hall, and the Bishop stood in the balcony, surrounded by the General and staff officers. It was a moving sight to look down from the balcony of this old French Town Hall upon this great gathering of men who had come so many thousands of miles from their homes to fight for the honor of the Empire. There was no opportunity for an ordinary service. The gathering darkness would have made it impossible for the men to read, and, even if it had been lighter, the men were so closely packed together that hymn-sheets could not have been held.

It is always difficult to estimate numbers, but someone said that nearly ten thousand men must have been present. When the Bishop appeared on the balcony there was a Canadian cheer. He is well known in the Dominion, and the volume of sound left no doubt as to the warmth of feeling with which he is regarded there.

"This is a sight," he began, "which reminds me of Montreal and Toronto."

"How about Winnipeg?" came a voice from the crowd, and the men all laughed. It was a glorious chance to tell them of the way in which the Mother Country appreciates the splendid loyalty with which her sons beyond the seas have rallied at the Empire's call, and the Bishop was not slow to let them know that we in Great Britain rejoice to feel that the men of Canada and the men of Britain are standing shoulder to shoulder in France. And then they cheered again. [51]

"Yes, you may cheer that," he added, "while I get breath for the next sentence." He passed on to speak of the great cause of the freedom of the world for which the Empire and the Allies are fighting to-day. Canada, the great self-governing Dominion—free, and yet part of the Empire—would understand what freedom means.

"Yes, you may cheer that too," the Bishop said, "while I get breath again."

And then, as he turned to deeper thoughts and closed, he added: "Now we will all together say the Lord's Prayer." In a flash there was not a cap to be seen in the square, but only the bared heads of that great throng of men reverently bent forward in prayer. Then, in absolute silence, the Bishop gave the Blessing, and as he left the balcony a staff officer turned to me and said: "That is a really great man."

FOOTNOTE:

[4] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

"GRAPES OF WRATH"—WITH THE "BIG PUSH" ON THE SOMME [52]

Twenty-four Hours in the Life of a Private Soldier

Told by Boyd Cable, an English Author in the British Army

> Boyd Cable has suddenly become one of the foremost word painters of active fighting—"the greatest literary discovery of the War." He is primarily a man of action. At the age of twenty, he joined a corps of Scouts in the Boer War and fought in South Africa. He then became a traveler and spent some time in Australia and New Zealand, in the Philippines, Java and the Islands of the Pacific. He is a "knight of adventure"—he has been an ordinary seaman, a typewriter agent, a steamer fireman, office manager, hobo, gold prospector, coach driver, navvy. He was one of the first men not in the Regular Army to get a commission and be sent to the front in 1914. As an observation officer in the artillery, he was "spotted" by the enemy sharpshooters, got a bullet through his cap, one through the inside of his sleeve close to his heart, and fifty-three others near enough for him to hear them pass—all in less than an hour. After eighteen months of this death-defying work without even a wound, he was invalided home on account of stomach trouble and then began to write of his adventures. His books, "Behind the Line," "Action Front," and "Doing Their Bit," are acknowledged to be the most vivid and stimulating pictures of the War as seen by the men in the trenches. We here record his story of the tanks from his volume of tales entitled "Grapes of Wrath," by permission of his publishers, *E. P. Dutton and Company*: Copyright 1917.

[5] I—STORY OF "KENTUCKY"—AN AMERICAN IN THE BRITISH TRENCHES [53]

Soon after Kentucky rejoined them the Stonewalls were moved forward a little clear of the village they had helped to take, just as one or two heavy shells whooped over from the German guns and dropped crashing on the ground that had been theirs. The men were spread out along shell holes and told to dig in for better cover because a bit of a redoubt on the left flank hadn't been taken and bullets were falling in enfilade from it.

"Dig, you cripples," said the sergeant, "dig in. Can't you see that if they counter-attack from the front now you'll get shot in the back while you're lining the front edge of those shell holes. Get to it there, you Pug."

"Shot in the back, linin' the front," said Pug as the sergeant passed on. "Is it a conundrum, Kentuck?"

"Sounds sort of mixed," admitted Kentucky. "But it's tainted some with the truth. That redoubt is half rear to us. If another lot comes at us in front and we get up on the front edge of this shell hole, there's nothing to stop the redoubt bullets hitting us in the back. Look at that," he concluded, nodding upward to where a bullet had smacked noisily into the mud above their heads as they squatted in the hole.

The two commenced wearily to cut out with their trenching tools a couple of niches in the sides of the crater which would give them protection from the flank and rear bullets. They made reasonably secure cover and then stayed to watch a hurricane bombardment that was developing on the redoubt. "*Goo* on the guns," said Pug joyfully. "That's the talk; smack 'em about."

The gunners "smacked 'em about" with fifteen savage minutes' deluge of light and heavy shells, blotting out the redoubt in a whirlwind of fire-flashes, belching smoke clouds and dust haze. Then suddenly the tempest ceased to play there, lifted and shifted and fell roaring in a wall of fire and steel beyond the low slope which the redoubt crowned. [54]

With past knowledge of what the lift and the further barrage meant the two men in the shell-pit turned and craned their necks and looked out along the line.

"There they go," said Pug suddenly, and "Attacking round a half-circle," said Kentucky. The British line was curved in a horseshoe shape about the redoubt and the two being out near one of the points could look back and watch clearly the infantry attack launching from the center and half-way round the sides of the horseshoe. They saw the khaki figures running heavily, scrambling round and through the scattered shell holes, and presently, as a crackle of rifle fire rose and rose and swelled to a sullen roar with the quick, rhythmic clatter of machine guns beating through it, they saw also the figures stumbling and falling, the line thinning and shredding out and wasting away under the withering fire.

The sergeant dodged along the pit-edge above them. "Covering fire," he shouted, "at four hundred—slam it in," and disappeared. The two opened fire, aiming at the crest of the slope and beyond the tangle of barbed wire which alone indicated the position of the redoubt.

They only ceased to fire when they saw the advanced fringe of the line, of a line by now woefully thinned and weakened, come to the edge of the barbed wire and try to force a way through it.

"They're beat," gasped Pug. "They're done in ..." and cursed long and bitterly, fingering nervously at his rifle the while. "Time we rung in again," said Kentucky. "Aim steady and pitch 'em well clear of the wire." The two opened careful fire again while [55] the broken remnants of the attacking line ran and hobbled and crawled back to it or into the cover of shell holes. A second wave flooded out in a new assault, but by now the German artillery joining in helped it and the new line was cut down, broken and beaten back before it had covered half the distance to the entanglements. Kentucky and Pug and others of the Stonewalls near them could only curse helplessly as they watched the tragedy and plied their rifles in a slender hope of some of their bullets finding those unseen loopholes and embrasures.

II—HIS MAJESTY'S LAND SHIP—"WE ARE HERE"

"An' wot's the next item o' the program, I wonder?" said Pug half an hour after the last attack had failed, half an hour filled with a little shooting, a good deal of listening to the pipe and whistle of overhead bullets and the rolling thunder of the guns, a watching of the shells falling and spouting earth and smoke on the defiant redoubt.

"Reinforcements and another butt-in at it, I expect," surmised Kentucky. "Don't see anything else for it. Looks like this pimple-on-the-map of a redoubt was holdin' up any advance on this front. Anyhow I'm not hankering to go pushin' on with that redoubt bunch shootin' holes in my back, which they'd surely do."

"Wot's all the buzz about be'ind us?" said Pug suddenly, raising himself for a quick look over the covering edge of earth behind him, and in the act of dropping again stopped and stared with raised eyebrows and gaping mouth.

"What is it?" said Kentucky quickly, and also rose, and also stayed risen and staring in amazement. Towards them, lumbering and rolling, dipping heavily into the shell holes, heaving clumsily out of them, moving with a motion something between that of a half-sunken ship and a hamstrung toad, striped and banded and splashed from head to foot, or, if you prefer, from fo'c'sl-head to cutwater, with splashes of lurid color, came His Majesty's Land Ship "Here We Are." [56]

"Gor-*strewth*!" ejaculated Pug. "Wha-what is it?"

Kentucky only gasped.

"'Ere," said Pug hurriedly, "let's gerrout o' this. It's comin' over atop of us," and he commenced to scramble clear.

But a light of understanding was dawning on Kentucky's face and a wide grin growing on his lips. "It's one of the Tanks," he said, and giggled aloud as the Here We Are dipped her nose and slid head first into a huge shell-crater in ludicrous likeness to a squat bull-pup sitting back on its haunches and dragged into a hole: "I've heard lots about 'em, but the seein' beats all the hearin' by whole streets," and he and Pug laughed aloud together as the Here We Are's face and gun-port eyes and bent-elbow driving gear appeared above the crater rim in still more ridiculous resemblance to an amazed toad emerging from a rain-barrel. The creature lumbered past them, taking in its stride the narrow trench dug to link up the shell holes, and the laughter on Kentucky's lips died to thoughtfully serious lines as his eye caught the glint of fat, vicious-looking gun muzzles peering from their ports.

"Haw haw haw," guffawed Pug as the monster lurched drunkenly, checked and steadied itself with one foot poised over a deep hole, halted and backed away, and edged nervously round the rim of the hole. "See them machine guns pokin' out, Kentucky," he continued delightedly. "They won't 'arf pepper them Huns when they gets near enough." [57]

Fifty yards in the wake of the Here We Are a line of men followed up until an officer halted them along the front line where Pug and Kentucky were posted.

"You blokes just takin' 'im out for an airin'?" Pug asked one of the newcomers. "Oughtn't you to 'ave 'im on a leadin' string?"

"Here we are, Here we are again," chanted the other and giggled spasmodically. "An' ain't he just hot stuff! But wait till you see 'im get to work with his sprinklers."

"Does 'e bite?" asked Pug, grinning joyously. "Oughtn't you to 'ave 'is muzzle on?"

"Bite," retorted another. "He's a bloomin' Hun-eater. Jes' gulps 'em whole, coal-scuttle 'ats an' all."

"He's a taed," said another. "A lollopin, flat-nosed, splay-fittit, ugly puddock, wi's hin' legs stuck oot whaur his front should be."

"Look at 'im, oh, look at 'im ... he's alive, lad, nobbut alive."... "Does every bloomin' thing but talk."... "Skatin' he is now, skatin' on 'is off hind leg," came a chorus of delighted comment.

"Is he goin' to waltz in and take that redoubt on his ownsum?" asked Kentucky. "No," some one told him. "We give him ten minutes' start and then follow on and pick up the pieces, and the prisoners."

III—HOW THE "TOMMIES" CHEERED THE "PEPPER POTS"—TANK TALES

They lay there laughing and joking and watching the uncouth antics of the monster waddling across the shell-riddled ground, cheering when it appeared to trip and recover itself, cheering when it floundered sideways into a hole and crawled out again, cheering most wildly of all when it reached the barbed-wire entanglements, waddled through, bursting them apart and trailing them in long tangles behind it, or trampling them calmly under its churning caterpillar-wheel-bands. [58] It was little wonder they cheered and less wonder they laughed. The Here We Are's motions were so weirdly alive and life-like, so playfully ponderous, so massively ridiculous, that it belonged by nature to nothing outside a Drury Lane Panto. At one moment it looked exactly like a squat tug-boat in a heavy cross sea or an ugly tide-rip, lurching, dipping, rolling rail and rail, plunging wildly bows under, tossing its nose up and squattering again stern-rail deep, pitching and heaving and diving and staggering, but always pushing forward. Next minute it was a monster out of Prehistoric Peeps, or a new patent fire-breathing dragon from the pages of a very Grimm Fairy Tale, nosing its way blindly over the Fairy Prince's pitfalls; next it was a big broad-buttocked sow nuzzling and rooting as it went; next it was a drunk man reeling and staggering, rolling and falling, scrabbling and crawling; next it was—was anything on or in, or underneath the earth, anything at all except a deadly, grim, purposeful murdering product of modern war.

The infantry pushed out after it when it reached the barbed wire, and although they took little heed to keep cover—being much more concerned not to miss any of the grave and comic antics of their giant joke than to shelter from flying bullets—the line went on almost without casualties. "Mighty few bullets about this time," remarked Kentucky, who with Pug had moved out along with the others "to see the fun." "That's 'cos they're too busy with the old Pepper-pots, an' the Pepper-pots is too busy wi' them to leave much time for shootin' at us," said Pug gayly. It was true too. The Pepper-pots—a second one had lumbered into sight from the center of the horseshoe curve—were drawing a tearing hurricane of machine-gun bullets that beat and rattled on their armored sides like hail on a window-pane. [59] They waddled indifferently through the storm and Here We Are, crawling carefully across a trench, halted half-way over and sprinkled bullets up and down its length to port and starboard for a minute, hitched itself over, steered straight for a fire-streaming machine-gun embrasure. It squirted a jet of lead into the loophole, walked on, butted at the emplacement once or twice, got a grip of it under the upward sloped caterpillar band, climbed jerkily till it stood reared up on end like a frightened colt, ground its driving bands round and round, and—fell forward on its face with a cloud of dust belching up and out from the collapsed dug-out. Then it crawled out of the wreckage, crunching over splintered beams and broken concrete, wheeled and cruised casually down the length of a crooked trench, halting every now and then to spray bullets on any German who showed or to hail a stream of them down the black entrance to a dug-out, straying aside to nose over any suspicious cranny, swinging round again to plod up the slope in search of more trenches.

The infantry followed up, cheering and laughing like children at a fair, rounding up batches of prisoners who crawled white-faced and with scared eyes from dug-out doors and trench corners, shouting jests and comments at the lumbering Pepper-pots.

A yell went up as the Here We Are, edging along a trench, lurched suddenly, staggered, side-slipped, and half disappeared in a fog of dust. The infantry raced up and found it with its starboard driving gear grinding and churning full power and speed of revolution above ground and the whole port side and gear down somewhere in the depths of the collapsed trench, grating and squealing and flinging out clods of earth as big as clothes-baskets. Then the engines eased, slowed, and stopped, and after a little and in answer to the encouraging yells of the men outside, a scuttle jerked open and a grimy figure crawled out. [60]

"Blimey," said Pug rapturously, "'ere's Jonah 'isself. Ol' Pepper-pot's spewed 'im out."

IV—JONAH'S SHIP RECHRISTENED—"THE D.T.'S"

But "Jonah" addressed himself pointedly and at some length to the laughing spectators, and they, urged on by a stream of objurgation and invective, fell to work with trenching-tools, with spades retrieved from the trench, with bare hands and busy fingers, to break down the trench-side under Here We Are's starboard driver, and pile it down into the trench and under the uplifted end of her port one. The second Pepper-pot cruised up and brought to adjacent to the operations with a watchful eye on the horizon. It was well she did, for suddenly a crowd of Germans seeing or sensing that one of the monsters was out of action, swarmed out of cover on the crest and came storming down on the party. Here We Are could do nothing; but the sister ship could, and did, do quite a lot to those Germans. It sidled round so as to bring both bow guns and all its broadside to bear and let loose a close-quarter tornado of bullets that cut the attackers to rags. The men who had ceased digging to grab their rifles had not time to fire a shot before the affair was over and "Jonah" was again urging them to their spade-work. Then when he thought the way ready, Here We Are at his orders steamed ahead again, its lower port side scraping and jarring along the trench wall, the drivers biting and gripping at the soft ground. Jerkily, a foot at a time, it scuffled its way along the trench till it came to a sharp angle of it where a big shell hole had broken down the wall. But just as the starboard driver was reaching out [61] over the shell hole and the easy job of plunging into it, gaining a level keel and climbing out the other side, the trench wall on the right gave way and the Here We Are sank its starboard side level to and then below the port one. She had fallen bodily into a German dug-out, but after a pause to regain its shaken breath—or the crew's—it began once more to revolve its drivers slowly, and to churn out behind them, first a cloud of dust and clots of earth, then, as the starboard driver bit deeper into the dug-out, a mangled débris of clothing and trench-made furniture. On the ground above the infantry stood shrieking with laughter, while the frantic skipper raved unheard-of oaths and the Here We Are pawed and hoofed behind, or caught on its driving band and hoisted in turn into the naked light of day, a splintered bedstead, a chewed-up blanket or two, separately and severally the legs, back, and seat of a red velvet armchair, a torn gray coat and a forlorn and muddy pair of pink pajama trousers tangled up in one officer's field boot. And when the drivers got their grip again and the Here We are rolled majestically forward and up the further sloping side of the shell-crater and halted to take the skipper aboard again, Pug dragged a long branch from the fascines in the trench débris, slid it up one leg and down the other of the pink pajamas, tied the boot by its laces to the tip and jammed the root into a convenient crevice in the Tank's stern. And so beflagged she rolled her triumphant way up over the captured redoubt and down the other side, with the boot-tip bobbing and swaying and jerking at the end of her pink tail. The sequel to her story may be told here, although it only came back to the men who decorated her after filtering round the firing line, up and down the communication lines, round half the hospitals and most of the messes at or [62] behind the Front.

And many as came to be the Tales of the Tanks, this of the Pink-Tailed 'un, as Pug called her, belonged unmistakably to her and, being so, was joyfully recognized and acclaimed by her decorators. She came in due time across the redoubt, says the story, and bore down on the British line at the other extreme of the horseshoe to where a certain infantry C.O., famed in past days for a somewhat speedy and hectic career, glared in amazement at the apparition lurching and bobbing and bowing and crawling toad-like towards him.

"I knew," he is reported to have afterwards admitted, "I knew it couldn't be that I'd got 'em again. But in the old days I always had one infallible sign. Crimson rats and purple snakes I might get over; but if they had pink tails, I knew I was in for it certain. And I tell you it gave me quite a turn to see this blighter waddling up and wagging the old pink tail."

But this end of the story only came to the Stonewalls long enough after—just as it is said to have come in time to the ears of the Here We Are's skipper, and, mightily pleasing him and his crew, set him chuckling delightedly and swearing he meant to apply and in due and formal course obtain permission to change his land-ship's name, and having regretfully parted with the pink tail, immortalize it in the name of H.M.L.S. *The D.T.'s*.

FOOTNOTE:

[5] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

A NOVELIST AND SOLDIER ON THE BATTLE LINE [63]

Letters by Coningsby Dawson

British-American Author of Many Notable Books

> Coningsby Dawson, the brilliant young novelist, was 31 years of age at the outbreak of the war. He was graduated with honors from Oxford in 1905 and came to the United States to take a theological course at Union Seminary. After a year at the Seminary, he reached the conclusion that his life work lay in literature. His family left England and established their home in Taunton, Massachusetts. Here, young Dawson began the career which is to place him in the front rank of modern novelists. At the outbreak of the Great War, he laid his pen aside and took up his sword for his native country. Enlisting with the gallant Canadians, he went to the front where he soon became a lieutenant. His letters home have been collected by his father and published in book form under the title "Carry On—Letters in War Time" by *John Lane Company*: Copyright 1917. These intimate letters written from dug-outs on the Somme battle fronts in the intervals of incessant artillery fire reveal the heart of the young man who embodies the elements of greatness. They breathe the very spirit of heroism. Several of the most inspirational of these letters are here reproduced.

[6] I—WITH 6,000 TROOPS AND A CONVOY

Ottawa, July 16th, 1916.

Dearest All:

So much has happened since last I saw you that it's difficult to know where to start. On Thursday, after lunch, I got the news that we were to entrain from Petewawa next Friday morning. I at once put in for leave to go to Ottawa the next day until the following Thursday at Reveille. We came here with a lot of the other officers who are going over and have been having a very full time.

I am sailing from a port unknown on board the *Olympic* with 6,000 troops—there is to be a big convoy. I feel more than ever I [64] did—and I'm sure it's a feeling that you share since visiting the camp—that I am setting out on a Crusade from which it would have been impossible to withhold myself with honor. I go quite gladly and contentedly, and pray that in God's good time we may all sit again in the little shack at Kootenay and listen to the rustling of the orchard outside. It will be of those summer days that I shall be thinking all the time.

Yours, with very much love,
Con.

II—OFF FOR FRANCE—ACROSS THE CHANNEL

Shorncliff, August 30th, 1916.

My Dearests:

I have just returned from sending you a cable to let you know that I'm off to France. The word came out in orders yesterday, and I shall leave before the end of the week with a draft of officers—I have been in England just a day over four weeks....

Selfishly I wish that you were here at this moment—actually I'm glad that you are away. Everybody goes out quite unemotionally and with very few good-byes—we made far more fuss in the old days about a week-end visit.

Now that at last it has come—this privileged moment for which I have worked and waited—my heart is very quiet. It's the test of a character which I have often doubted. I shall be glad not to have to doubt it again. Whatever happens, I know you will be [65] glad to remember that at a great crisis I tried to play the man, however small my qualifications. We have always lived so near to one another's affections that this going out alone is more lonely to me than to most men. I have always had some one near at hand with love-blinded eyes to see my faults as springing from higher motives. Now I reach out my hands across six thousand miles and only touch yours with my imagination to say good-bye. What queer sights these eyes, which have been almost your eyes, will witness! If my hands do anything respectable, remember that it is your hands that are doing it. It is your influence as a family that has made me ready for the part I have to play, and where I go, you follow me.

Poor little circle of three loving persons, please be tremendously brave. Don't let anything turn you into cowards—we've all got to be worthy of each other's sacrifice; the greater the sacrifice may prove to be for the one the greater the nobility demanded of the remainder. How idle the words sound, and yet they will take deep meanings when time has given them graver sanctions.

I think gallant is the word I've been trying to find—we must be gallant English women and gentlemen....

How far away the childish past seems—almost as though it never happened. And was I really the budding novelist in New York? Life has become so stern and scarlet—and so brave. From my window I look out on the English Channel, a cold, grey-green sea, with rain driving across it and a fleet of small craft taking shelter. Over there beyond the curtain of mist lies France—and everything that awaits me.

News has just come that I have to start. Will continue from France.

Yours ever lovingly,
Con.

III—"HERE I AM IN FRANCE—A SOLDIER" [66]

France, September 1st, 1916.

Dearest M.:

Here I am in France with the same strange smells and street cries, and almost the same little boys bowling hoops over the very cobbly cobble stones. I had afternoon tea at a patisserie and ate a great many gâteaux for the sake of old times. We had a very choppy crossing, and you would most certainly have been sick had you been on board. It seemed to me that I must be coming on one of those romantic holidays to see churches and dead history—only the khaki-clad figures reminded me that I was coming to see history in the making. It's a funny world that batters us about so. It's three years since I was in France—the last time was with Arthur in Provence. It's five years since you and I did our famous trip together.

I wish you were here—there are heaps of English nurses in the streets. I expect to sleep in this place and proceed to my destination to-morrow. How I wish I could send you a really descriptive letter! If I did, I fear you would not get it—so I have to write in generalities. None of this seems real—it's a kind of wild pretence from which I shall awake—and when I tell you my dream you'll laugh and say, "How absurd of you, dreaming that you were a soldier. I must say you look like it."

Good-bye, my dearest girl,

God bless you,
Con.

IV—"I HAVE SEEN MY FIRST BATTLEFIELD" [67]

September 19th, 1916.

Dearest Father:

I'm writing you your birthday letter early, as I don't know how busy I may be in the next week, nor how long this may take to reach you. You know how much love I send you and how I would like to be with you. D'you remember the birthday three years ago when we set the victrola going outside your room door? Those were my high-jinks days when very many things seemed possible. I'd rather be the person I am now than the person I was then. Life was selfish though glorious.

Well, I've seen my first modern battlefield and am quite disillusioned about the splendor of war. The splendor is all in the souls of the men who creep through the squalor like vermin—it's in nothing external. There was a chap here the other day who deserved the V. C. four times over by running back through the Hun shell fire to bring news that the infantry wanted more artillery support. I was observing for my brigade in the forward station at the time. How he managed to live through the ordeal nobody knows. But men laugh while they do these things. It's fine.

A modern battlefield is the abomination of abominations. Imagine a vast stretch of dead country, pitted with shell-holes as though it had been mutilated with smallpox. There's not a leaf or a blade of grass in sight. Every house has either been leveled or is in ruins. No bird sings. Nothing stirs. The only live sound is at night—the scurry of rats. You enter a kind of ditch, called a trench; it leads on to another and another in an unjoyful maze. From the sides feet stick out, and arms and faces—the dead of previous encounters. "One of our chaps," you say casually, recognizing him by his boots or khaki, or "Poor blighter—a Hun!" [68] One can afford to forget enmity in the presence of the dead. It is horribly difficult sometimes to distinguish between the living and the slaughtered—they both lie so silently in their little kennels in the earthen bank. You push on—especially if you are doing observation work, till you are past your own front line and out in No Man's Land. You have to crouch and move warily now. Zing! A bullet from a German sniper. You laugh and whisper, "A near one, that." My first trip to the trenches was up to No Man's Land. I went in the early dawn and came to a Madame Tussaud's show of the dead, frozen into immobility in the most extraordinary attitudes. Some of them were part way out of the ground, one hand pressed to the wound, the other pointing, the head sunken and the hair plastered over the forehead by repeated rains. I kept on wondering what my companions would look like had they been three weeks dead. My imagination became ingeniously and vividly morbid. When I had to step over them to pass, it seemed as though they must clutch at my trench coat and ask me to help. Poor lonely people, so brave and so anonymous in their death! Somewhere there is a woman who loved each one of them and would give her life for my opportunity to touch the poor clay that had been kind to her. It's like walking through the day of resurrection to visit No Man's Land. Then the Huns see you and the shrapnel begins to fall—you crouch like a dog and run for it.

One gets used to shell-fire up to a point, but there's not a man who doesn't want to duck when he hears one coming. The worst of all is the whizz-bang, because it doesn't give you a chance—it pounces and is on you the same moment that it bangs. There's so much I wish that I could tell you. I can only say this, at the moment we're making history.

What a curious birthday letter! I think of all your other birthdays—the ones before I met these silent men with the green and yellow faces, and the blackened lips which will never speak again. What happy times we have had as a family—what happy jaunts when you took me in those early days, dressed in a sailor suit, when you went hunting pictures. Yet, for all the damnability of what I now witness, I was never quieter in my heart. To have surrendered to an imperative self-denial brings a peace which self-seeking never brought. [69]

So don't let this birthday be less gay for my absence. It ought to be the proudest in your life—proud because your example has taught each of your sons to do the difficult things which seem right. It would have been a condemnation of you if any one of us had been a shirker.

> "I want to buy fine things for you
> And be a soldier if I can."

The lines come back to me now. You read them to me first in the dark little study from a green oblong book. You little thought that I would be a soldier—even now I can hardly realize the fact. It seems a dream from which I shall wake up. Am I really killing men day by day? Am I really in jeopardy myself?

Whatever happens I'm not afraid, and I'll give you reason to be glad of me.

Very much love,
Con.

V—"I AM IN THE TRENCHES—UNDER FIRE"

November 6th, 1916.

My Dear Ones:

Such a wonderful day it has been—I scarcely know where to start. I came down last night from twenty-four hours in the mud, [70] where I had been observing. I'd spent the night in a hole dug in the side of the trench and a dead Hun forming part of the roof. I'd sat there reliving so many things—the ecstatic moments of my life when I first touched fame—and my feet were so cold that I could not feel them, so I thought all the harder of the pleasant things of the past. Then, as I say, I came back to the gun position to learn that I was to have one day off at the back of the lines. You can't imagine what that meant to me—one day in a country that is green, one day where there is no shell-fire, one day where you don't turn up corpses with your tread! For two months I have never left the guns except to go forward and I have never been from under shell-fire. All night long as I have slept the ground had been shaken by the stamping of the guns—and now after two months, to come back to comparative normality! The reason for this privilege being granted was that the powers that be had come to the conclusion that it was time I had a bath. Since I sleep in my clothes and water is too valuable for washing anything but the face and hands, they were probably right in their guess at my condition.

So with the greatest holiday of my life in prospect I went to the empty gunpit in which I sleep, and turned in. This morning I set out early with my servant, tramping back across the long, long battlefields which our boys have won. The mud was knee-deep in places, but we floundered on till we came to our old and deserted gun-position where my horses waited for me. From there I rode to the wagon-lines—the first time I've sat a horse since I came into action. Far behind me the thunder of winged murder grew more faint. The country became greener; trees even had leaves upon them which fluttered against the grey-blue sky. It was wonderful—like awaking from an appalling nightmare. My little beast was fresh and seemed to share my joy, for she stepped out bravely. [71]

When I arrived at the wagon-lines I would not wait—I longed to see something even greener and quieter. My groom packed up some oats and away we went again. My first objective was the military baths; I lay in hot water for half-an-hour and read the advertisements of my book. As I lay there, for the first time since I've been out, I began to get a half-way true perspective of myself. What's left of the egotism of the author came to life, and—now laugh—I planned my next novel—planned it to the sound of men singing, because they were clean for the first time in months. I left my towels and soap with a military policeman, by the roadside, and went prancing off along country roads in search of the almost forgotten places where people don't kill one another. Was it imagination? There seemed to me to be a different look in the faces of the men I met—for the time being they were neither hunters nor hunted. There were actually cows in the fields. At one point, where pollarded trees stand like a Hobbema sketch against the sky, a group of officers were coursing a hare, following a big black hound on horseback. We lost our way. A drenching rainstorm fell over us—we didn't care; and we saw as we looked back a most beautiful thing—a rainbow over green fields. It was as romantic as the first rainbow in childhood.

All day I have been seeing lovely and familiar things as though for the first time. I've been a sort of Lazarus, rising out of his tomb and praising God at the sound of a divine voice. You don't know how exquisite a ploughed field can look, especially after rain, unless you have feared that you might never see one again....

[72] Life, how I love you! What a wonderful, kindly thing I could make of you to-night. Strangely the vision has come to me of all that you mean. Now I could write. So soon you may go from me or be changed into a form of existence which all my training has taught me to dread. After death is there only nothingness? I think that for those who have missed love in this life there must be compensations—the little children whom they ought to have had, perhaps. To-day, after so many weeks, I have seen little children again.

And yet, so strange a havoc does this war work that, if I have to "Go West," I shall go *proudly* and quietly. I have seen too many men die bravely to make a fuss if my turn comes. A mixed passenger list old Father Charon must have each night—Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Huns. To-morrow I shall have another sight of the greenness and then—the guns.

I don't know whether I have been able to make any of my emotions clear to you in my letters. Terror has a terrible fascination. Up to now I have always been afraid—afraid of small fears. At last I meet fear itself and it stings my pride into an unpremeditated courage.

I've just had a pile of letters from you all. How ripping it is to be remembered! Letters keep one civilized.

It's late and I'm very tired. God bless you each and all.

CON.

VI—LIVING WITH DEATH AS YOUR COMRADE

December 20th, 1916.

DEAR MR. A. D.:

I've just come in from an argument with Fritz when your chocolate formed my meal. You were very kind to think of me and to send it, and you were extraordinarily understanding in the letter that you sent me. One's life out here is like a pollarded tree—all the lower branches are gone—one gazes on great nobilities, on the fascinating horror of Eternity sometimes—I said horror, [73] but it's often fine in its spaciousness—one gazes on many inverted splendors of Titans, but it's giddy work being so high and rarefied, and all the gentle past seems gone. That's why it is pleasant in this grimy anonymity of death and courage to get reminders, such as your letter, that one was once localized and had a familiar history. If I come back, I shall be like Rip Van Winkle, or a Robinson Crusoe—like any and all of the creatures of legend and history to whom abnormality has grown to seem normal. If you can imagine yourself living in a world in which every day is a demonstration of a Puritan's conception of what happens when the last trump sounds, then you have some idea of my queer situation. One has come to a point when death seems very inconsiderable and only failure to do one's duty is an utter loss. Love and the future, and all the sweet and tender dreams of bygone days are like a house in which the blinds are lowered and from which the sight has gone. Landscapes have lost their beauty, everything God-made and man-made is destroyed except man's power to endure with a smile the things he once most dreaded, because he believes that only so may he be righteous in his own eyes. How one has longed for that sure confidence in the petty failings of little living—the confidence to believe that he can stand up and suffer for principle! God has given all men who are out here that opportunity—the supremest that can be hoped for—so, in spite of exile, Christmas for most of us will be a happy day. Does one see more truly life's worth on a battlefield? I often ask myself that question. Is the contempt that is hourly shown for life the real standard of life's worth? I shrug my shoulders at my own unanswerable questions—all I know is that I move daily with men who have everything to live for who, nevertheless, are urged by an unconscious [74] magnanimity to die. I don't think any of our dead pity themselves—but they would have done so if they had faltered in their choice. One lives only from sunrise to sunrise, but there's a more real happiness in this brief living than I ever knew before, because it is so exactingly worth while.

Thank you again for your kindness.

Very sincerely yours,
C. D.

VII—GLORY OF WAR IS IN MEN'S SOULS

February 2d.

The gramophone is playing an air from *La Tosca* to which the guns beat out a bass accompaniment. I close my eyes and picture the many times I have heard the (probably) German orchestras of Broadway Joy Palaces play that same music. How incongruous that I should be listening to it here and under these circumstances! It must have been listened to so often by gay crowds in the beauty places of the world. A romantic picture grows up in my mind of a blue night, the laughter of youth in evening dress, lamps twinkling through trees, far off the velvety shadow of water and mountains, and as a voice to it all, that air from *La Tosca*. I can believe that the silent people near by raise themselves up in their snow-beds to listen, each one recalling some ecstatic moment before the dream of life was shattered.

There's a picture in the Pantheon at Paris, I remember; I believe it's called *To Glory*. One sees all the armies of the ages charging out of the middle distance with Death riding at their head. The only glory that I have discovered in this war is in [75] men's hearts—it's not external. Were one to paint the spirit of this war he would depict a mud landscape, blasted trees, an iron sky; wading through the slush and shell-holes would come a file of bowed figures, more like outcasts from the Embankment than soldiers. They're loaded down like pack animals, their shoulders are rounded, they're wearied to death, but they go on and go on. There's no "To Glory" about what we're doing out here; there's no flash of swords or splendor of uniforms. There are only very tired men determined to carry on. The war will be won by tired men who could never again pass an insurance test, a mob of broken counter-jumpers, ragged ex-plumbers and quite unheroic persons. We're civilians in khaki, but because of the ideals for which we fight we've managed to acquire soldiers' hearts.

My flow of thought was interrupted by a burst of song in which I was compelled to join. We're all writing letters around one candle; suddenly the O. C. looked up and began, "God Be with You Till We Meet Again." We sang it in parts. It was in Southport, when I was about nine years old, that I first heard that sung. You had gone for your first trip to America, leaving a very lonely family behind you. We children were scared to death that you'd be drowned. One evening, coming back from a walk on the sand-hills, we heard voices singing in a garden, "God Be with You Till We Meet Again." The words and the soft dusk, and the vague figures in the English summer garden, seemed to typify the terror of all partings. We've said good-bye so often since, and God has been with us. I don't think any parting was more hard than our last at the prosaic dock-gates with the cold wind of duty blowing, and the sentry barring your entrance, and your path leading back to America while mine led on to France. But you three were regular soldiers—just as much soldiers as we chaps who were embarking. One talks of our armies in the field, [76] but there are the other armies, millions strong, of mothers and fathers and sisters, who keep their eyes dry, treasure muddy letters beneath their pillows, offer up prayers and wait, wait, wait so eternally for God to open another door.

To-morrow I again go forward, which means rising early and taking a long plod through the snows; that's one reason for not writing any more, and another is that our one poor candle is literally on its last legs.

Your poem, written years ago when the poor were marching in London, is often in my mind:

"Yesterday and to-day
Have been heavy with labor and sorrow;
I should faint if I did not see
The day that is after to-morrow."

And there's that last verse which prophesied utterly the spirit in which we men at the Front are fighting to-day:

"And for me, with spirit elate
The mire and the fog I press through,
For Heaven shines under the cloud
Of the day that is after to-morrow."

We civilians who have been taught so long to love our enemies and do good to them who hate us—much too long ever to make professional soldiers—are watching with our hearts in our eyes for that day which comes after to-morrow. Meanwhile we plod on determinedly, hoping for the hidden glory.

Yours very lovingly,
CON.

VIII—MEN MARCHING TO "CALVARY" [77]

February 4th, 1917.

DEAR MR. B.:

War's a queer game—not at all what one's civilian mind imagined; it's far more horrible and less exciting. The horrors which the civilian mind dreads most are mutilation and death. Out here we rarely think about them; the thing which wears on one most and calls out his gravest courage is the endless sequence of physical discomfort. Not to be able to wash, not to be able to sleep, to have to be wet and cold for long periods at a stretch, to find mud on your person, in your food, to have to stand in mud, see mud, sleep in mud and to continue to smile—that's what tests courage. Our chaps are splendid. They're not the hair-brained idiots that some war-correspondents depict from day to day. They're perfectly sane people who know to a fraction what they're up against, but who carry on with a grim good-nature and a determination to win with a smile. I never before appreciated as I do to-day the latent capacity for big-hearted endurance that is in the heart of every man. Here are apparently quite ordinary chaps—chaps who washed, liked theatres, loved kiddies and sweethearts, had a zest for life—they're bankrupt of all pleasures except the supreme pleasure of knowing that they're doing the ordinary and finest thing of which they are capable. There are millions to whom the mere consciousness of doing their duty has brought an heretofore unexperienced peace of mind. For myself I was never happier than I am at present; there's a novel zip added to life by the daily risks and the knowledge that at last you're doing something into which no trace of selfishness enters. One can only die once; the chief concern that matters is *how* and not *when* you die. I don't pity the weary men who have attained eternal leisure in the [78] corruption of our shell-furrowed battles; they "went West" in their supreme moment. The men I pity are those who could not hear the call of duty and whose consciences will grow more flabby every day. With the brutal roar of the first Prussian gun the cry came to the civilized world, "Follow thou me," just as truly as it did in Palestine. Men went to their Calvary singing Tipperary, rubbish, rhymed doggerel, but their spirit was equal to that of any Christian martyr in a Roman amphitheatre. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend." Our chaps are doing that consciously, willingly, almost without bitterness towards their enemies; for the rest it doesn't matter whether they sing hymns or ragtime. They've followed their ideal—freedom—and died for it. A former age expressed itself in Gregorian chants; ours, no less sincerely, disguises its feelings in ragtime.

Since September I have been less than a month out of action. The game doesn't pall as time goes on—it fascinates. We've got to win so that men may never again be tortured by the ingenious inquisition of modern warfare. The winning of the war becomes a personal affair to the chaps who are fighting. The world which sits behind the lines, buys extra specials of the daily papers and eats three square meals a day, will never know what this other world has endured for its safety, for no man of this other world will have the vocabulary in which to tell. But don't for a moment mistake me—we're grimly happy.

What a serial I'll write for you if I emerge from this turmoil! Thank God, my outlook is all altered. I don't want to live any longer—only to live well.

Good-bye and good luck.

Yours,
CONINGSBY DAWSON.

IX—AMERICA MUST SACRIFICE—OR DIE [79]

February 6th, 1917.

MY VERY DEAR M.:

I read in to-day's paper that U. S. A. threatens to come over and help us. I wish she would. The very thought of the possibility fills me with joy. I've been lightheaded all day. It would be so ripping to live among people, when the war is ended, of whom you need not be ashamed. Somewhere deep down in my heart I've felt a sadness ever since I've been out here, at America's lack of gallantry—it's so easy to find excuses for not climbing to Calvary; sacrifice was always too noble to be sensible. I would like to see the country of our adoption become splendidly irrational even at this eleventh hour in the game; it would redeem her in the world's eyes. She doesn't know what she's losing. From these carcase-strewn fields of khaki there's a cleansing wind blowing for the nations that have died. Though there was only one Englishman left to carry on the race when this war is victoriously ended, I would give more for the future of England than for the future of America with her ninety millions whose sluggish blood was not stirred by the call of duty. It's bigness of soul that makes nations great and not population. Money, comfort, limousines and ragtime are not the requisites of men when heroes are dying. I hate the thought of Fifth Avenue, with its pretty faces, its fashions, its smiling frivolity. America as a great nation will die, as all coward civilizations have died, unless she accepts the stigmata of sacrifice, which a divine opportunity again offers her.

If it were but possible to show those ninety millions one battlefield with its sprawling dead, its pity, its marvellous forgetfulness of self, I think then—no, they wouldn't be afraid. Fear isn't the emotion one feels—they would experience the shame of living [80] when so many have shed their youth freely. This war is a prolonged moment of exultation for most of us—we are redeeming ourselves in our own eyes. To lay down one's life for one's friend once seemed impossible. All that is altered. We lay down our lives that the future generations may be good and kind, and so we can contemplate oblivion with quiet eyes. Nothing that is noblest that the Greeks taught is unpractised by the simplest men out here to-day. They may die childless, but their example will father the imagination of all the coming ages. These men, in the noble indignation of a great ideal, face a worse hell than the most ingenious of fanatics ever planned or plotted. Men die scorched like moths in a furnace, blown to atoms, gassed, tortured. And again other men step forward to take their places well knowing what will be their fate. Bodies may die, but the spirit of England grows greater as each new soul speeds upon its way. The battened souls of America will die and be buried. I believe the decision of the next few days will prove to be the crisis in America's nationhood. If she refuses the pain which will save her, the cancer of self-despising will rob her of her life.

This feeling is strong with us. It's past midnight, but I could write of nothing else to-night.

God bless you.

Yours ever,
CON.

FOOTNOTE:

[6] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

STORIES OF THE WAR PHOTOGRAPHERS IN BELGIUM [81]

An American at the Battlefront

Told by Albert Rhys Williams, War Correspondent

This narrator tells of his experiences with the spy hunters of Belgium. He was swept into the war-stricken country where he was arrested by the Germans, sweating under the German third degree, spending a fearful night on a prison floor, suffering with his fellow prisoners the torments of a trial as a spy in a German military court in Brussels, and finally securing his liberty. He has collected his experiences in a volume under title "In the Claws of the German Eagle," thus preserving in book form his remarkable articles which were first published in The Outlook. A few episodes from his amazing adventures are here given by permission of the publishers, *E. P. Dutton and Company*: Copyright 1917.

[7] I—STORY OF AN AMERICAN IN GHENT

In the last days of September, the Belgians moving in and through Ghent in their rainbow-colored costumes, gave to the city a distinctively holiday touch. The clatter of cavalry hoofs and the throb of racing motors rose above the voices of the mobs that surged along the streets.

Service was normal in the cafés. To the accompaniment of music and clinking glasses the dress-suited waiter served me a five-course lunch for two francs. It was uncanny to see this blaze of life while the city sat under the shadow of a grave disaster. At any moment the gray German tide might break out of Brussels and pour its turbid flood of soldiers through these very streets. Even now a Taube hovered in the sky, and from the skirmish-line an occasional ambulance rumbled in with its crimsoned load.

I chanced into Gambrinus' café and was lost in the babbling sea of French and Flemish. Above the mêlée of sounds, however, I [82] caught a gladdening bit of English. Turning about, I espied a little group of men whose plain clothes stood out in contrast to the colored uniforms of officers and soldiers crowded into the café. Wearied of my efforts at conversing in a foreign tongue, I went over and said:

"Do you really speak English?"

"Well, rather!" answered the one who seemed to act as leader of the group. "We are the only ones now and it will be scarcer still around here in a few days."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because Ghent will be in German hands."

This brought an emphatic denial from one of his confrères who insisted that the Germans had already reached the end of their rope. A certain correspondent, joining in the argument, came in for a deal of banter for taking the war *de luxe* in a good hotel far from the front.

"What do you know about the war?" they twitted him. "You've pumped all your best stories out of the refugees ten miles from the front, after priming them with a glass of beer."

They were a group of young war-photographers to whom danger was a magnet. Though none of them had yet reached the age of thirty, they had seen service in all the stirring events of Europe and even around the globe. Where the clouds lowered and the seas tossed, there they flocked. Like stormy petrels they rushed to the center of the swirling world. That was their element. [83] A freelance, a representative of the Northcliffe press, and two movie-men comprised this little group and made an island of English amidst the general babel.

Like most men who have seen much of the world, they had ceased to be cynics. When I came to them out of the rain, carrying no other introduction than a dripping overcoat, they welcomed me into their company and whiled away the evening with tales of the Balkan wars.

They were in high spirits over their exploits of the previous day, when the Germans, withdrawing from Melle on the outskirts of the city, had left a long row of cottages still burning. As the enemy troops pulled out the further end of the street, the movie men came in at the other and caught the pictures of the still blazing houses. We went down to view them on the screen. To the gentle throbbing of drums and piano, the citizens of Ghent viewed the unique spectacle of their own suburbs going up in smoke.

At the end of the show they invited me to fill out their automobile on the morrow. Nearly every other motor had been commandeered by the authorities for the "Service Militaire" and bore on the front the letters "S. M." Our car was by no means in the blue-ribbon class. It had a hesitating disposition and the authorities, regarding it as more of a liability than an asset, passed it over.

But the correspondents counted it a great stroke of fortune to have any car at all; and, that they might continue to have it, they kept it at night carefully locked in a room in the hotel. They had their chauffeur under like supervision. He was one of their kind, and with the cunning of a diplomat obtained the permit to buy petrol, most precious of all treasures in the field of war. Indeed, gasoline, along with courage and discipline, completed the trinity of success in the military mind.

II—STORIES OF THE WAR PHOTOGRAPHERS IN BELGIUM [84]

With the British flag flying at the front, we sped away next morning on the road to Termonde. At Melle we came upon the blazing cottages we had seen pictured the night before. Here we encountered a roving band of Belgian soldiers who were in a free and careless mood and evinced a ready willingness to put themselves at our disposal. Under the command of the photographers, they charged across the fields with fixed bayonets, wriggled up through the grass, or, standing behind the trenches, blazed away with their guns at an imaginary enemy. They did some good acting, grim and serious as death. All except one.

This youth couldn't suppress his sense of humor. He could not, or would not, keep from laughing, even when he was supposed to be blowing the head off a Boche. He was properly disciplined and put out of the game, and we went on with our manoeuvers to the accompaniment of the clicking cameras until the photographers had gathered in a fine lot of realistic fighting-line pictures.

One of the photographers sat stolidly in the automobile smoking his cigarette while the others were reaping their harvest.

"Why don't you take these too?" I asked.

"Oh," he replied, "I've been sending in so much of that stuff that I just got a telegram from my paper saying, 'Pension off that Belgian regiment which is doing stunts in the trenches.'"

While his little army rested from their manoeuvers the Director-in-Chief turned to me and said:

"Wouldn't you like to have a photograph of yourself in these war-surroundings, just to take home as a souvenir?"

That appealed to me. After rejecting some commonplace suggestions, he exclaimed: "I have it. Shot as a German Spy. There's [85] the wall to stand up against; and we'll pick a crack firing-squad out of these Belgians. A little bit of all right, eh?"

I acquiesced in the plan and was led over to the wall while a movie-man whipped out a handkerchief and tied it over my eyes. The director then took a firing squad in hand. He had but recently witnessed the execution of a spy where he had almost burst with a desire to photograph the scene. It had been excruciating torture to restrain himself. But the experience had made him feel conversant with the etiquette of shooting a spy, as it was being done amongst the very best firing-squads. He made it now stand him in good stead.

"Aim right across the bandage," the director coached them. I could hear one of the soldiers laughing excitedly as he was warming up to the rehearsal. It occurred to me that I was reposing a lot of confidence in a stray band of soldiers. Some one of those Belgians, gifted with a lively imagination, might get carried away with the suggestion and act as if I really were a German spy.

"Shoot the blooming blighter in the eye," said one movie man playfully.

"Bally good idea!" exclaimed the other one approvingly, while one eager actor realistically clicked his rifle-hammer. That was altogether too much. I tore the bandage from my eyes, exclaiming:

"It would be a bally good idea to take those cartridges out first." Some fellow might think his cartridge was blank or try to fire wild, just as a joke in order to see me jump. I wasn't going to take any risk and flatly refused to play my part until the cartridges were ejected. Even when the bandage was readjusted "Didn't-know-it-was-loaded" stories still were haunting me. In a moment, however, it was over and I was promised my picture within a fortnight. [86]

A week later I picked up the London *Daily Mirror* from a news-stand. It had the caption:

Belgian Soldiers Shoot a German Spy Caught at
Termonde ... Picture

I opened up the paper and what was my surprise to see a big spread picture of myself, lined up against that row of Melle cottages and being shot for the delectation of the British public. There is the same long raincoat that runs as a *motif* through all the other pictures. Underneath it were the words:

"The Belgians have a short, sharp method of dealing with the Kaiser's rat-hole spies. This one was caught near Termonde and, after being blindfolded, the firing-squad soon put an end to his inglorious career."

One would not call it fame exactly, even though I played the star-rôle. But it is a source of some satisfaction to have helped a royal lot of fellows to a first-class scoop. As the "authentic spy-picture of the war," it has had a broadcast circulation. I have seen it in publications ranging all the way from *The Police Gazette to Collier's Photographic History of the European War*. In a university club I once chanced upon a group gathered around this identical picture. They were discussing the psychology of this "poor devil" in the moments before he was shot. It was a further source of satisfaction to step in and arbitrarily contradict all their conclusions and, having shown them how totally mistaken they were, proceed to tell them exactly how the victim felt. This high-handed manner nettled one fellow terribly:

"Not so arbitrary, my friend!" he said. "You haven't any right to be so devilish cock-sure."

"Haven't I?" I replied. "Who has any better right? I happen to be that identical man!" [87]

But that little episode has been of real value to me. It is said that if one goes through the motions he gets the emotions. I believe that I have an inkling of how a man feels when he momentarily expects a volley of cold lead to turn his skull into a sieve.

III—HOW CAMERA MEN RISK THEIR LIVES

Most of the pictures which the public casually gazes on have been secured at a price—and a large one, too. The names of these men who go to the front with cameras, rather than with rifles or pens, are generally unknown. They are rarely found beneath the pictures, yet where would be our vivid impression of courage in daring and of skill in doing, of cunning strategy upon the field of battle, of wounded soldiers sacrificing for their comrades, if we had no pictures? A few pictures are faked, but behind most pictures there is another tale of daring and of strategy, and that is the tale concerning the man who took it. That very day thrice these same men risked their lives.

The apparatus loaded in the car, we were off again. Past a few barricades of paving-stones and wagons, past the burned houses which marked the place where the Germans had come within five miles of Ghent, we encountered some uniformed Belgians who looked quite as dismal and dispirited as the fog which hung above the fields. They were the famous Guarde Civique of Belgium. Our Union Jack, flapping in the wind, was very likely quite the most thrilling spectacle they had seen in a week, and they hailed it with a cheer and a cry of "*Vive l'Angleterre!*" (Long live England!) The Guarde Civique had a rather inglorious time of it. Wearisomely in their wearisome-looking uniform, they stood for hours on their guns or marched and counter-marched in dreary patrolling, often doomed not even to scent the battle from afar off. [88]

Whenever we were called to a halt for the examination of our passports, these men crowded around and begged for newspapers. We held up our stock, and they would clamor for the ones with pictures. The English text was unintelligible to most of them, but the pictures they could understand, and they bore them away to enjoy the sight of other soldiers fighting, even if they themselves were denied that excitement. Our question to them was always the same, "Where are the Germans?"

Out of the conflicting reports it was hard to tell whether the Germans were heading this way or not. That they were expected was shown by the sign-posts whose directions had just been obliterated by fresh paint—a rather futile operation, because the Germans had better maps and plans of the region than the Belgians themselves, maps which showed every by-path, well and barn. The chauffeur's brother had been shot in his car by the Germans but a week before, and he didn't relish the idea of thus flaunting the enemy's flag along a road where some German scouting party might appear at any moment. The Union Jack had done good service in getting us easy passage so far, but the driver was not keen for going further with it.

It was proposed to turn the car around and back it down the road, as had been done the previous day. Thus the car would be headed in the home direction, and at sight of the dreaded uniform we could make a quick leap for safety. At this juncture, however, I produced a small Stars and Stripes, which the chauffeur hailed with delight, and we continued our journey now under the ægis of a neutral flag.

It might have secured temporary safety, but only temporary; for if the Englishmen with only British passports had fallen into the hands of the Germans, like their unfortunate kinsmen who did venture too far into the war zone, they, too, would have had a chance to cool their ardor in some detention-camp of Germany. This cheerful prospect was in the mind of these men, for, when we espied coming around a distant corner two gray-looking men on horseback, they turned white as the chauffeur cried, "Uhlans!" [89]

It is a question whether the car or our hearts came to a dead standstill first. Our shock was unnecessary. They proved to be Belgians, and assured us that the road was clear all the way to Termonde; and, except for an occasional peasant tilling his fields, the countryside was quite deserted until at Grembergen we came upon an unending procession of refugees streaming down the road. They were all coming out of Termonde. Termonde, after being taken and retaken, bombarded and burned, was for the moment neutral territory. A Belgian commandant had allowed the refugees that morning to return and gather what they might from among the ruins.

In the early morning, then, they had gone into the city, and now at high noon they were pouring out, a great procession of the dispossessed. They came tracking their way to where—God only knows. All they knew was that in their hearts was set the fear of Uhlans, and in the sky the smoke and flames of their burning homesteads. They came laden with their lares and penates,—mainly dogs, feather beds, and crayon portraits of their ancestors.

IV—WHEN LENS HAS A HEART

Women came carrying on their heads packs which looked like their entire household paraphernalia. The men were more unassuming, and, as a rule, carried a package considerably lighter and comporting more with their superior masculine dignity. I recall one little woman in particular. She was bearing a burden heavy enough to send a strong American athlete staggering down to the ground, while at her side majestically marched her faithful knight, bearing a birdcage, and there wasn't any bird in it, either. [90]

Nothing could be more mirth-provoking than that sight; yet, strangely enough, the most tear-compelling memory of the war is connected with another birdcage. Two children rummaging through their ruined home dug it out of the débris. In it was their little pet canary. While fire and smoke rolled through the house it had beat its wings against the bars in vain. Its prison had become its tomb. Its feathers were but slightly singed, yet it was dead with that pathetic finality which attaches itself to only a dead bird—its silver songs and flutterings, once the delight of the children, now stilled forever.

The photographers had long looked for what they termed a first-class sob-picture. Here it was *par excellence*. The larger child stood stroking the feathers of her pet and murmuring over and over "Poor Annette," "Poor Annette!" Then the smaller one snuggling the limp little thing against her neck wept inconsolably.

Instead of seizing their opportunity, the movie man was clearing his throat while the freelance was busy on what he said was a cinder in his eye. Yet this very man had brought back from the Balkan War of 1907 a prime collection of horrors; corpses thrown into the death-cart with arms and legs sticking out like so much stubble; the death-cart creeping away with its ghastly load; and the dumping together of bodies of men and beasts into a pit to be eaten by the lime. This man who had gone through all this with good nerve was now touched to tears by two children crying over their pet canary. There are some things that are [91] too much for the heart of even a war-photographer.

To give the whole exodus the right tragic setting, one is tempted to write that tears were streaming down all the faces of the refugees, but on the contrary, indeed, most of them carried a smile and a pipe, and trudged stolidly along, much as though bound for a fair. Some of our pictures show laughing refugees. That may not be fair, for man is so constituted that the muscles of his face automatically relax to the click of the camera. But as I recall that pitiful procession, there was in it very little outward expression of sorrow.

Undoubtedly there was sadness enough in all their hearts, but people in Europe have learned to live on short rations; they rarely indulge in luxuries like weeping, but bear the most unwonted afflictions as though they were the ordinary fortunes of life. War has set a new standard for grief. So these victims passed along the road, but not before the record of their passing was etched for ever on our moving-picture films. The coming generation will not have to reconstruct the scene from the colored accounts of the journalist, but with their own eyes they can see the hegira of the homeless as it really was.

The resignation of the peasant in the face of the great calamity was a continual source of amazement to us. Zola in "*Le Debacle*" puts into his picture of the battle of Sedan an old peasant plowing on his farm in the valley. While shells go screaming overhead he placidly drives his old white horse through the accustomed furrows. One naturally presumed that this was a dramatic touch of the great novelist. But similar incidents we saw in this Great War over and over again.

V—A THOUSAND HORSES STRAIN AT THEIR BRIDLES [92]

We were with Consul van Hee one morning early before the clinging veil of sleep had lifted from our spirits or the mists from the low-lying meadows. Without warning our car shot through a bank of fog into a spectacle of mediæval splendor—a veritable Field of the Cloth of Gold, spread out on the green plains of Flanders.

A thousand horses strained at their bridles while their thousand riders in great fur busbies loomed up almost like giants. A thousand pennons stirred in the morning air while the sun burning through the mists glinted on the tips of as many lances. The crack Belgian cavalry divisions had been gathered here just behind the firing-lines in readiness for a sortie; the Lancers in their cherry and green and the Guides in their blue and gold making a blaze of color.

It was as if in a trance we had been carried back to a tourney of ancient chivalry—this was before privations and the new drab uniforms had taken all glamor out of the war. As we gazed upon the glittering spectacle the order from the commander came to us:

"Back, back out of danger!"

"Forward!" was the charge to the Lancers.

The field-guns rumbled into line and each rider unslung his carbine. Putting spurs to the horses, the whole line rode past saluting our Stars and Stripes with a "*Vive L'Amerique*." Bringing up the rear two cassocked priests served to give this pageantry a touch of prophetic grimness.

[93] And yet as the cavalcade swept across the fields thrilling us with its color and its action, the nearby peasants went on spreading fertilizer quite as calm and unconcerned as we were exhilarated.

"Stupid," "Clods," "Souls of oxen," we commented, yet a protagonist of the peasant might point out that it was perhaps as noble and certainly quite as useful to be held by a passion for the soil as to be caught by the glamor of men riding out to slaughter. And Zola puts this in the mind of his peasants.

"Why should I lose a day? Soldiers must fight, but folks must live. It is for me to keep the corn growing."

Deep down into the soil the peasant strikes his roots. Urban people can never comprehend when these roots are cut away how hopelessly lost and adrift this European peasant in particular becomes. Wicked as the Great War has seemed to us in its bearing down upon these innocent folks, yet we can never understand the cruelty that they have suffered in being uprooted from the land and sent forth to become beggars and wanderers upon the highroads of the world.

FOOTNOTE:

[7] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

TALES OF THE FIRST BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO FRANCE [94]

Impressions of a Subaltern

Told by "Casualty" (Name of Soldier Suppressed)

> This is another of the soldiers' tales of the Great War. This soldier tells thirty-six fascinating experiences in which death is defied. He describes: "The Advance to Mons"; "Sir John French"; "The Crossing of the Marne"; "The Crossing of the Aisne"; "The Jaws of Death," among his many adventures. The story here told gives his impressions on "Leaving England." It is reprinted from his volume "Contemptible," by permission of his publishers, *J. B. Lippincott Company*.

[8] I—WHEN THE FIRST BATTALION SWUNG OUT

No cheers, no handkerchiefs, no bands. Nothing that even suggested the time-honored scene of soldiers leaving home to fight the Empire's battles. Parade was at midnight. Except for the lighted windows of the barracks, and the rush of hurrying feet, all was dark and quiet. It was more like ordinary night operations than the dramatic departure of a Unit of the First British Expeditionary Force to France.

As the Battalion swung into the road, the Subaltern could not help thinking that this was indeed a queer send-off. A few sergeants' wives, standing at the corner of the Parade ground, were saying good-bye to their friends as they passed. "Good-bye, Bill;" "Good luck, Sam!" Not a hint of emotion in their voices. One might have thought that husbands and fathers went away to risk their lives in war every day of the week. And if the men were at all moved at leaving what had served for their home, they hid it remarkably well. Songs were soon breaking out from all parts of the column of route.

[95]

In an hour the station was reached. An engine was shunting up and down, piecing the troop trains together, and in twenty minutes the Battalion was shuffling down the platform, the empty trains on either side. Two companies were to go to each train, twelve men to a third-class compartment, N.C.O.s second class, Officers first. As soon as the men were in their seats, the Subaltern made his way to the seat he had "bagged," and prepared to go to sleep. Another fellow pushed his head through the window and wondered what had become of the regimental transport. Somebody else said he didn't know or care; his valise was always lost, he said; they always make a point of it.

Soon after, they were all asleep, and the train pulled slowly out of the station.

When the Subaltern awoke it was early morning, and they were moving through Hampshire fields at a rather sober pace. He was assailed with a poignant feeling of annoyance and resentment that this war should be forced upon them. England looked so good in the morning sunshine, and the comforts of English civilization were so hard to leave. The sinister uncertainty of the Future brooded over them like a thunder cloud.

Isolated houses thickened into clusters, streets sprang up, and soon they were in Southampton.

The train pulled up at the Embarkation Station, quite close to the wharf to which some half-dozen steamers were moored. There was little or no delay. The Battalion fell straight into "massed formation," and began immediately to move on to one of [96] the ships. The Colonel stood by the gangway talking to an Embarkation Officer. Everything was in perfect readiness, and the Subaltern was soon able to secure a berth.

II—CROSSING THE CHANNEL ON TRANSPORTS

There was plenty of excitement on deck while the horses of the regimental transport were being shipped into the hold.

To induce "Light Draft," "Heavy Draft" horses and "Officers' Chargers"—in all some sixty animals—to trust themselves to be lowered into a dark and evil-smelling cavern, was no easy matter. Some shied from the gangway, neighing; others walked peaceably onto it, and, with a "thus far and no farther" expression in every line of their bodies, took up a firm stand, and had to be pushed into the hold with the combined weight of many men. Several of the transport section narrowly escaped death and mutilation at the hands, or rather hoofs, of the Officers' Chargers. Meanwhile a sentry, with fixed bayonet, was observed watching some Lascars, who were engaged in getting the transport on board. It appeared that the wretched fellows, thinking that they were to be taken to France and forced to fight the Germans, had deserted to a man on the previous night, and had had to be routed out of their hiding-places in Southampton.

Not that such a small thing as that could upset for one moment the steady progress of the Embarkation of the Army. It was like a huge, slow-moving machine; there was a hint of the inexorable in its exactitude. Nothing had been forgotten—not even eggs for the Officers' breakfast in the Captain's cabin.

Meanwhile the other ships were filling up. By midday they began to slide down the Solent, and guesses were being freely [97] exchanged about the destination of the little flotilla. Some said Bolougne, others Calais; but the general opinion was Havre, though nobody knew for certain, for the Captain of the ship had not yet opened his sealed orders. The transports crept slowly along the coast of the Isle of Wight, but it was not until evening that the business of crossing the Channel was begun in earnest.

The day had been lovely, and Officers and men had spent it mostly in sleeping and smoking upon the deck. Spirits had risen as the day grew older. For at dawn the cheeriest optimist is a pessimist, while at midday pessimists become optimists. In the early morning the German Army had been invincible. At lunch the Battalion was going to Berlin, on the biggest holiday of its long life!

The Subaltern, still suffering from the after-effects of inoculation against enteric, which had been unfortunately augmented by a premature indulgence in fruit, and by the inability to rest during the rush of mobilization, did not spend a very happy night. The men fared even worse, for the smell of hot, cramped horses, steaming up from the lower deck, was almost unbearable. But their troubles were soon over, for by seven o'clock the boat was gliding through the crowded docks of Havre.

Naturally most of the Mess had been in France before, but to Tommy it was a world undiscovered. The first impression made on the men was created by a huge negro working on the docks. He was greeted with roars of laughter, and cries of, "Hallo, Jack Johnson!" The red trousers of the French sentries, too, created a tremendous sensation. At length the right landing-stage was reached. Equipments were thrown on, and the Battalion was paraded on the dock.

III—LANDING IN FRANCE—TOMMIES IN HAVRE [98]

The march through the cobbled streets of Havre rapidly developed into a fiasco. This was one of the first, if not the very first, landing of British Troops in France, and to the French it was a novelty, calling for a tremendous display of open-armed welcome. Children rushed from the houses, and fell upon the men crying for "souvenirs." Ladies pursued them with basins full of wine and what they were pleased to call beer. Men were literally carried from the ranks, under the eyes of their Officers, and borne in triumph into houses and inns. What with the heat of the day and the heaviness of the equipment and the after-effects of the noisome deck, the men could scarcely be blamed for availing themselves of such hospitality, though to drink intoxicants on the march is suicidal. Men "fell out," first by ones and twos, then by whole half-dozens and dozens. The Subaltern himself was scarcely strong enough to stagger up the long hills at the back of the town, let alone worrying about his men. The Colonel was aghast, and very furious. He couldn't understand it. (He was riding.)

The camp was prepared for the troops in a wonderfully complete fashion—not the least thing seemed to have been forgotten. The men, stripped of their boots, coats and equipments, were resting in the shade of the tents. A caterer from Havre had come up to supply the Mess, and the Subaltern was able to procure from him a bottle of rather heady claret, which, as he was thirsty and exhausted, he consumed too rapidly, and found himself hopelessly inebriate. Luckily there was nothing to do, so he slept for many hours.

Waking up in the cool of the evening he heard the voices of another Second-Lieutenant and a reservist Subaltern talking about [99] some people he knew near his home. It was good to forget about wars and soldiers, and everything that filled so amply the present and future, and to lose himself in pleasant talk of pleasant things at home.... The dinner provided by the French caterer was very French, and altogether the last sort of meal that a young gentleman suffering from anti-enteric inoculation ought to have indulged in. Everything conspired to make him worse, and what with the heat and the malady, he spent a very miserable time.

After about two days' stay, the Battalion moved away from the rest camp, and, setting out before dawn, marched back through those fatal streets of Havre, this time deserted in the moonlight, to a sort of shed, called by the French authorities a troop station. Here as usual the train was waiting, and the men had but to be put in. The carriages could not be called luxurious; to be frank, they were cattle-trucks. But it takes more than that to damp the spirits of Mr. Thomas Atkins. Cries imitating the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep broke out from the trucks!

The train moved out of the depot, and wended its way in the most casual manner through the streets of Havre. This so amused Tommy that he roared with laughter. The people who rushed to give the train a send-off, with many cries of "*Vive les Anglais*." "*A bas les Bosches*," were greeted with more bleatings and brayings.

IV—QUARTERED IN A BELGIAN WATER-MILL

The journey through France was quite uneventful. Sleeping or reading the whole day through, the Subaltern only remembered Rouen, passed at about midday, and Amiens later in the evening. The train had paused at numerous villages on its way, and in every case there had been violent demonstrations of enthusiasm. In one case a young lady of prepossessing appearance had [100] thrust her face through the window, and talked very excitedly and quite incomprehensibly, until one of the fellows in the carriage grasped the situation, leant forward, and did honor to the occasion. The damsel retired blushing.

At Amiens various rumors were afloat. Somebody had heard the Colonel say the magic word "Liège." Pictures of battles to be fought that very night thrilled some of them not a little.

Dawn found the Battalion hungry, shivering and miserable, paraded by the side of the track, at a little wayside station called Wassigné. The train shunted away, leaving the Battalion with a positive feeling of desolation. A Staff Officer, rubbing sleep from his eyes, emerged from a little "estaminet" and gave the Colonel the necessary orders. During the march that ensued the Battalion passed through villages where the three other regiments in the Brigade were billeted. At length a village called Iron was reached, and their various billets were allotted to each Company.

The Subaltern's Company settled down in a huge water-mill; its Officers being quartered in the miller's private house.

A wash, a shave and a meal worked wonders.

And so the journey was finished, and the Battalion found itself at length in the theater of operations.

I have tried in this chapter to give some idea of the ease and smoothness with which this delicate operation of transportation was carried out. The Battalions which composed the First Expeditionary Force had been spread in small groups over the whole length and breadth of Britain. They had been mobilized, embarked, piloted across the Channel in the face of an undefeated enemy fleet, rested, and trained to their various areas of concentration, to take their place by the side of their French Allies. [101]

All this was accomplished without a single hitch, and with a speed that was astonishing. When the time comes for the inner history of the war to be written, no doubt proper praise for these preliminary arrangements will be given to those who so eminently deserve it.

V—AT MADAM MERE'S—BEFORE THE STORM

Peace reigned for the next five days, the last taste of careless days that so many of those poor fellows were to have.

A route march generally occupied the mornings, and a musketry parade the evenings. Meanwhile, the men were rapidly accustoming themselves to the new conditions. The Officers occupied themselves with polishing up their French, and getting a hold upon the reservists who had joined the Battalion on mobilization.

The French did everything in their power to make the Battalion at home. Cider was given to the men in buckets. The Officers were treated like the best friends of the families with whom they were billeted. The fatted calf was not spared, and this in a land where there were not too many fatted calves.

The Company "struck a particularly soft spot." The miller had gone to the war leaving behind him his wife, his mother and two children. Nothing they could do for the five Officers of the Company was too much trouble. Madame Mère resigned her bedroom to the Major and his second in command, while Madame herself slew the fattest of her chickens and rabbits for the meals of her hungry Officers.

[102] The talk that was indulged in must have been interesting, even though the French was halting and ungrammatical. Of all the companies' Messes, this one took the most serious view of the future, and earned for itself the nickname of "*Les Misérables*." The Senior Subaltern said openly that this calm preceded a storm. The papers they got—*Le Petit Parisien* and such like—talked vaguely of a successful offensive on the extreme right: Mülhouse, it was said, had been taken. But of the left, of Belgium, there was silence. Such ideas as the Subaltern himself had on the strategical situation were but crude. The line of battle, he fancied, would stretch north and south, from Mülhouse to Liège. If it were true that Liège had fallen, he thought the left would rest successfully on Namur. The English Army, he imagined, was acting as "general reserve," behind the French line, and would not be employed until the time had arrived to hurl the last reserve into the mêlée, at the most critical point.

And all the while, never a sound of firing, never a sight of the red and blue of the French uniforms. The war might have been two hundred miles away!

Meanwhile Tommy on his marches was discovering things. Wonder of wonders, this curious people called "baccy" tabac! "And if yer wants a bit of bread yer awsks for pain, strewth!" He loved to hear the French gabble to him in their excited way; he never thought that reciprocally his talk was just as funny. The French matches earned unprintable names. But on the whole he admired sunny France with its squares of golden corn and vegetables, and when he passed a painted Crucifix with its cluster of flowering graves, he would say: "Golly, Bill, ain't it pretty? We oughter 'ave them at 'ome, yer know." And of course he kept on saying what he was going to do with "Kayser Bill."

[103] One night after the evening meal, the men of the Company gave a little concert outside the mill. The flower-scented twilight was fragrantly beautiful, and the mill stream gurgled a lullaby accompaniment as it swept past the trailing grass. Nor was there any lack of talent. One reservist, a miner since he had left the army, roared out several songs concerning the feminine element at the seaside, or voicing an inquiry as to a gentleman's companion on the previous night. Then, with an entire lack of appropriateness, another got up and recited "The Wreck of the *Titanic*" in a most touching and dramatic manner. Followed a song with a much appreciated chorus—

"Though your heart may ache awhile,
Never mind!
Though your face may lose its smile,
Never mind!
For there's sunshine after rain,
And then gladness follows pain,
You'll be happy once again,
Never mind!"

The ditty deals with broken vows, and faithless hearts, and blighted lives; just the sort of song that Tommy loves to warble after a good meal in the evening. It conjured to the Subaltern's eyes the picture of the dainty little star who had sung it on the boards of the Coliseum. And to conclude, Madame's voice, French, and sonorously metallic, was heard in the dining-room striking up the "*Marseillaise*." Tommy did not know a word of it, but he yelled "March on" (a very good translation of "*Marchons*") and sang "lar lar" to the rest of the tune.

Thus passed peacefully enough those five days—the calm before the storm.

FOOTNOTE:

[8] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY—EXPERIENCES OF A PRISONER OF WAR [104]

Told by Benjamin G. O'Rorke, M. A., Chaplain to the Forces

This narrative reveals the actual scenes and experiences in a German prison where this British chaplain was incarcerated. He dedicates it "To my fellow prisoners, who already during twelve months have borne disappointment with patient resignation and insults with silent dignity: who have made the name of Britain respected in the heart of Germany." Nearly the whole of the diary on which this narrative is based was confiscated by the Germans when the writer was searched for the last time before his release. It was restored to him by post a few weeks later, bearing the mark showing that it had been passed by the censor. The diary has been published complete by *Longmans, Green and Company*, with whose permission the following interesting extracts are given.

[9] I—STORY OF THE CONSECRATED SWORDS

On Saturday, August 15, 1914, we entrained, whither we knew not. The railway officials either did not know or would not tell, but we were not long before we discovered that our destination was Southampton.

Here we spent a wearisome afternoon and evening at the docks, embarking horses and wagons on board our transport, a cattle-boat named *Armenian*, which has since been sunk by the Germans. With us embarked contingents of the 18th Hussars and 9th Lancers. It was a calm journey, and there were no signs of sea-sickness. Pipes and cigarettes were freely smoked, a good sign on the first day of a voyage. Once more our destination was kept a profound secret, even from the captain, until we got well out to sea. It being Sunday, we had a service on board, which gave me a golden opportunity of addressing my flock for the first time. Speaking on the text, "Whoso feareth the Lord shall not be afraid, and shall not play the coward," Eccl. xxiv. 14

(R.V.), I reminded them that we were setting out to take our part in the greatest war in history.

After the service on deck, a number of officers and men, after the example of the knights of old who consecrated their swords at the altar, partook of the Holy Communion in the saloon. [105]

In the course of the afternoon we sighted the beautiful harbor of Boulogne, where we landed. "'Eep, 'eep, 'ooray!" called out the crowds of French people who lined the pier and landing-stage to give us a hearty welcome as their allies. From the first moment we were made to feel at home in France, and careful arrangements had been undertaken for our comfort. To every regiment a Frenchman was appointed as interpreter, many of whom were educated men of good standing....

Strolling through the town, I passed the barracks where the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were quartered. True to their national characteristic that "a Scotsman is never at home unless he is abroad," they appeared to have been at Boulogne for years, and already to be on intimate terms with the townsfolk. On the steps of the Post-Office was a bareheaded woman in the act of posting a letter to her son at the front. She spoke to me about him very tenderly, and it was obvious that all sorts of good wishes and prayers were dropped into the letterbox with her letter....

Flags were in evidence everywhere. Men wore in their buttonholes the colors of France, Belgium, and England intertwined, and women pinned them to their dresses. Little children followed the soldiers about, crying, "Souvenir, souvenir!" and pointed to their regimental badges. After a while it was a rare sight to meet a soldier with a badge, or a French woman or child without one. The sole distinguishing mark between one regiment and another was the design of the badge on cap and the initials of the regiment on shoulder-strap drawn in indelible pencil. [106]

The next morning the march through the town to the station was little short of a triumphal procession. The most popular figure amongst us was a diminutive soldier boy of the R.A.M.C., Trumpeter Berry. Some of the French women were with difficulty restrained from rushing out to kiss him. The crowd around the station as we left, pressing against the railings beyond which they were not permitted to go, gave us a send-off as enthusiastic as the welcome had been. Keepsakes, charms, blessings, and prayers were bestowed upon us generously. "*Vive la France!*" we shouted from the railway carriage, and we heard, dying away in the distance, the hearty response, "*Vive l'Angleterre!*"

The Belgians in the villages through which we passed had already begun to flee into France for protection. A long line of refugees marched with us, carrying such of their worldly goods as they could snatch up at the last moment. There were white-haired old men being wheeled along in barrows, cripples limping as fast as they could go, hatless women with a heavy bundle in one arm and an infant in the other, and by their side were two or three little toddlers wondering what it was all about. Behind were the homes with all their associations of the past and with the last meal, perhaps, still on the table untouched, so [107] suddenly had the warning come. When would they see those homes again? If ever, probably as a heap of ruins. And in front, whither should they go?...

Along the road they would have constant reminders that there was One above who knew all about it, and would not leave them comfortless. For at irregular intervals by the roadside in Belgium and France there are "Calvaries," little sanctuaries containing a figure of the Crucified One, seeming to whisper to all who pass by, "I have trodden this path before you."

II—WITH THE DYING SOLDIERS AT LANDRECIES

The sun was well up before we set out on Tuesday, August 25. Southwards again our direction lay: a strategic retirement, we were told. Early in the evening we reached Landrecies. Hardly had we passed the outskirts of the town before a scare arose. Civilians came tearing out of Landrecies. Motor cars and carts rushed past us at breakneck speed. The cry went up, "*Les Allemands!*" ("The Germans!") A certain peasant who for the moment had lost control of himself whipped the horse which he was driving into a gallop, deaf to the heartrending call of some children who ran in panic after him begging him to give them a lift. Out rushed a footsore guardsman from one of the ambulance wagons, placed a rifle at his head, and compelled him to stop and pick them up....

At about 8 P.M. we heard the rat-a-tat-tat of machine guns and the boom of field artillery. The men of the Royal Army Medical Corps meanwhile awaited the summons that did not come. The rain came down in torrents, and they lay down wherever they could find a sheltered spot. Sleep for most of us was impossible. The din of battle was terrific.... [108]

I went at once in search of the Hon. Rupert Keppel and handed to him Major Matheson's note. He was in an upstairs room with five or six wounded men. He was lying on a bed with a bandage round his forehead, but made light of the wounds which he had received. After a few words and a short prayer at each bedside, I made inquiries for Lord Hawarden. I was told that he was already dead, but I found him in a little room by himself, still breathing although apparently unconscious. He had lost his left arm, and a portion of his back had been shot away. I knelt down beside him and commended him to God, saying in the form of a prayer as from myself the hymn "Abide with Me." As I rose from my knees he opened his eyes and smiled. He had been asleep merely, and now began to speak with quite a strong voice. Not a word did he say about himself, or his sufferings. He talked about the battle, about his old home near Bordon, which was within a couple of miles of my own home and formed a happy link between us, and about his mother....

The other poor patients were terribly knocked about. Limbs in some cases had been entirely blown off by shells. Lyddite had turned many complexions to a jaundiced yellow. And yet every man was calm and resigned, and proud to have had a share in the fight.... A kindly French priest was going from bed to bed saying comforting words in French. Probably not one of the patients understood his words, but they all understood and appreciated his meaning.

Meanwhile the Germans began to appear on the canal bridge near the hospital. Major Collingwood went out to meet them, and they entered the hospital with him. The officer in charge of them, Herr Ruttner of Berlin, shook hands with me and said that [109] my work would not be interfered with, and that I had his permission to go anywhere over the scene of battle in search of the killed, and that I might bury them where most convenient. He said he was personally acquainted with Sir Douglas Haig, who with Sir John French had actually been in Landrecies the previous afternoon. He seemed disappointed not to find Sir Douglas there still, and desired to be remembered to him. By his orders the hospital was examined and all arms and ammunition were removed. A sentry was then placed at the gate.

In the early morning of the next day, Thursday, August 27, the gallant young Lord Hawarden died. The medical officer who looked after him said that he had never met a braver patient. A party of twelve men, under the command of Lieut. Hattersley, went with me to lay him to rest, together with the two officers and men whose bodies had been placed in the compound of the hospital. We selected the best spot in the pretty little cemetery of Landrecies.

III—ON A PRISON TRAIN—GOING TO GERMANY

We remained in Landrecies until Saturday, August 29, expecting daily to be returned to our own people in accordance with the terms of the Geneva Convention. Our destination, however, was fated to be in the opposite direction. Under an escort of half a dozen German soldiers, commanded by an under-officer, we marched out of the town, up the hill where the battle had taken place, to Bavay. It was a tiring journey for the wounded men lying in ambulance wagons. The Hon. R. Keppel was the only wounded officer. He traveled in a wagon with certain men of his regiment, with whom he appeared to be on exceedingly [110] friendly terms. Two of the occupants of that wagon had lost an arm each, and they were the cheeriest of our party.

It was dark when we reached Bavay, and everyone was tired out. The journey seemed to be quite twenty miles. The first thing we did was to see the wounded safely into the hospital, which was a young men's college. M. L'Abbé J. Lebrun, the Superior, and his colleague were at the door to welcome us. I was at once taken into the English ward, and arrived just in time to commend the soul of a dying man, a private of the 12th Lancers. His officer—though wounded—had got out of bed to see the last of him, and besought me as I entered to visit his dying comrade without delay. His anxiety on his friend's behalf was a touching sight.

On the morrow, Sunday, August 30, I held a service, at the request of the patients, in the English ward. I spoke on "Be of good cheer," or, as we had so often heard it put by our French friends along the road, "*Bon courage*."...

At the funeral of the 12th Lancer that afternoon we had an imposing procession. The body was laid on a stretcher covered over with a Union Jack and the French national flag. I led the way before the coffin, robed in a cassock and surplice which had been presented to me by a French priest to replace my own lost robes. After the coffin came the three R.C. priests of the town and a number of the French Red Cross nurses; then Major Collingwood and the men of the 4th Field Ambulance. One of the nurses, noticing that I had no stole, on returning from the funeral made me one of black material with three white crosses, and presented it within a couple of hours.

The next day we were marched under escort to Mons. This is a large, well-built town of about 35,000 inhabitants. We were [111] paraded through the cobbled streets to the barracks, then (evidently by a mistake) to the station, and finally back again to the barracks, where, in some dirty rooms over a filthy stable, we spent the night. Here we met the Hon. Ivan Hay, of the 5th Lancers, who had narrowly escaped being shot after his capture by the Germans, but he was not allowed to accompany our party. The following morning we were marched once more to the station, and were bundled into the station-master's office, which was littered with looted papers. The men meanwhile were herded in a shed. A sentry was posted at the entrance of the station to prevent anyone going to the town. Just outside the station were the ambulance wagons and our servants. Whyman, my soldier-servant, was amongst them with my horse. That was the last I saw of either of them. I parted from them with a very sad heart.

During the afternoon an ill-mannered under-officer bade us hand over knives, razors, and sticks. At 6 P.M. we were entrained with about 1,000 wounded, of whom some forty or fifty were ours, the rest being Germans. The train must have been a quarter of a mile long. In the middle of the night we passed through Brussels, and in the early morning through Louvain and Liège. Louvain seemed to be a heap of ruins; hardly a house visible from the station was intact.... We looked with great interest upon Liège as we passed through it, and recalled the gallant defence of the town by the Belgians. A few more miles brought us over the border into Germany.

At Aachen a hostile demonstration took place at our expense. There happened to be a German troop train in the station at the time. A soldier of our escort displayed a specimen of the British soldier's knife, holding it up with the marline-spike open, and declared that this was the deadly instrument which British medical officers had been using to gouge out the eyes of the [112] wounded Germans who had fallen into their vindictive hands! From the knife he pointed to the medical officers sitting placidly in the train, as much as to say, "And these are some of the culprits." This was too much for the German soldiers. They strained like bloodhounds on the leash. "Out with them!" said their irate colonel, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder to the carriages in which these bloodthirsty British officers sat. The colonel, however, did not wait to see his behest carried out, and a very gentlemanly German subaltern quietly urged his men to get back to their train and leave us alone. The only daggers that pierced us were the eyes of a couple of priests, a few women and boys, who appeared to be shocked beyond words that even a clergyman was amongst such wicked men. The enormity of the crimes which had necessitated my capture I could only conjecture from their looks.

At Düsseldorf we crossed the Rhine—a beautiful sight. At Essen I was permitted to visit one of our wounded men who was dying of tetanus. The unfortunate patients lay in rows on the floor of luggage vans, with straw beneath them. When the train stopped at a station the doors of these vans were sometimes flung open in order that the crowd might have a look at them....

Even the Red Cross ladies at the stations steeled their hearts against us, giving us not so much as a cup of coffee or a piece of bread. But for the haversack rations and chocolate, which most of us carried with us, we should have fared badly. Now, however, we were to receive our first meal from our captors. This consisted of a plate of hot soup and a slice of bread and butter, which we ate ravenously. Two kind ladies brought us this food, and we were duly grateful. One of them was standing [113] near me as we ate the meal, and I thanked her cordially in English. She paid no attention, so I asked her if she understood English. "I do, but I don't mean to," was her laconic reply, which seemed highly to amuse my companions....

At length, on Friday morning, the journey came to an end on our arrival at Torgau. We were ordered out of the train and drawn up on the platform in fours. Each officer carried what articles of clothing he possessed. Several of them had preserved their medical panniers, and, heavy as these were, they had to be carried or left behind. On either side of us a German guard with fixed bayonets was drawn up, and then was given the word, "Quick march!" With our bundle on our shoulder, there was no man could be bolder, yet this same bundle and the burning sun prevented there being anything "quick" about our march. The townsfolk evidently had heard that we were coming, and they were at the station gate in scores to show us how pleased they were to welcome us to their town. In fact, they told us quite freely what they thought of us and the nation which we represented. They walked beside us every inch of the way, keeping up our spirits by telling us the particular kind of *Schweinhunds* they believed the *Engländer* to be. Not until they had crossed the massive bridge which spans the Elbe and reached the Brückenkopf fortress did they turn back home, and the doors of the fortress closed behind us.

IV—STORY OF PRISON LIFE AT TORGAU

Passing over the moat through two iron doors, we enter a courtyard, about 100 yards long by 40 broad. Facing the gateway is a semi-circular building two stories high, with an entrance at either end and one in the centre. A turret with windows and [114] battlements surmounts each entrance; and from the central turret rises a flag-pole....

The commandant was a Prussian reservist officer with a long heavy moustache. We were told that he was courteous and considerate in every respect, and that, provided we took care to salute him whenever we passed him, we should find him everything we could reasonably wish.

Supper was at 6 P.M. The same plate did duty for both courses, soup and meat, the more fastidious taking it under the pump in the interval. When the meal was over the junior members of the messes did the washing up. After supper we walked a mile, as the old adage recommends. We soon knew to a nicety how many turns round the court made up this distance, and some active spirits improved on the advice by walking several miles. At 8.30 a bugle sounded, and everyone had to retire to his room; at 9 sounded "lights out."

That first night was memorable for the little occupants which we found already in possession of our beds. Just when we hoped we had finished our labours for the day these little bedfellows began theirs. The more we wanted to sleep, the more wakeful they became. Scratching, tossing, and—it must be owned—a little mild swearing could be heard, where snoring would have been much more tolerable....

At 6 A.M. reveillé sounded, and before it was finished Major Yate was up and out of bed. I followed his example, and then the two of us began a practice which we kept up while the warm weather lasted, namely, a cold bath under the pump in the solitude of the courtyard.

Poor Major Yate! He attempted to escape ten days later, and lost his life in so doing. One of the sentries affirmed that he shot [115] him as he made his way through the barbed wire, and that the Major fled wounded into the river, from which he never came forth alive.... He has since been awarded posthumously the Victoria Cross for his gallantry in the campaign.

We selected as our chapel the passage over the entrance at one end of the building. There was an inspiring atmosphere about that first service. Our altar was a dormitory table, our altar linen a couple of white handkerchiefs, our chalice a twopenny wine-glass (the best we could procure), our paten an ordinary dinner-plate. Pews, of course, there were none, and as for books, we were fortunate enough to have one, a hymn-book, prayer-book, and Bible bound together in a single volume, which I was carrying in my haversack at the time we were captured. The pew difficulty was overcome by each officer bringing his stool. The lack of books made no difference to the heartiness of the service, for the hymns and chants were familiar to most of us from childhood. The mighty volume of sound that went up that morning in hymns of thankfulness and praise was a never-to-be-forgotten sensation to those who heard it or joined in it. The place whereon we stood was holy ground, and it was good for us to be there....

As time went on, our numbers increased to about 230 British officers, and 800 French officers joined us from Maubeuge, including four generals. One of the latter had been interned in Torgau before, in the 1870 war, and had made good his escape. The authorities guarded against the recurrence of such an eventuality on the present occasion, their most elaborate precaution being the enlistment of dogs to reinforce the sentries. Their barkings could be heard occasionally by night, but their presence disturbed neither our repose nor our equanimity....

[116]

During the last two months of our stay at Torgau I occupied a small room in the centre of the building with Major (now Lieut.-Col.) A. G. Thompson, Major W. H. Long, and Captain P. C. T. Davy, of the R.A.M.C., as companions. Like the Hindus, we divided ourselves into exclusive castes, as far as the necessary duties in connection with the room were concerned. The Colonel (as we may call him by anticipation) lit the stove, the Major washed the cups and saucers, the Captain swept the floor, and I, with the assistance of a member of our mess, brought in the coal.

We often dreamt and spoke of the day when we should march out of Torgau. There were two destinations only which came within the range of our contemplation—one was Berlin, and the other was England. Meanwhile, however, there was a place of four short letters which was to be our home for six long months.

(The chaplain continues to relate his experiences in this German prison with many interesting anecdotes. He tells about the prison occupations, how they spent their time in work and recreation, and describes his parole and visits to several internment camps.)

FOOTNOTE:

[9] All numerals relate to stories herein told—not to chapters from original sources.

"AT SUVLA BAY"—THE WAR AGAINST THE TURKS [117]

Adventures on the Blue Aegean Shores

Told by John Hargrave, the Famous Scoutmaster in
the Mediterranean Expeditionary Forces

> John Hargrave is known throughout England as "White Fox," the famous scoutmaster. On September 8th, 1914, he said farewell to his little camp in the beechwoods of Buckinghamshire and to his woodcraft scouts and went off to enlist in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He was assigned to the 32nd Field Ambulance, X Division, Mediterranean Expeditionary Forces, and sailed away to Suvla Bay, where he passed through the tragic scenes of the Dardanelles Campaign. He soon began sending stories "back home," achieving for the Gallipoli Campaign what Ian Hay did for the Western Front. These stories have been collected into a volume entitled: "At Suvla Bay," which is published in America by *Houghton, Mifflin and Company*. There are twenty-eight narratives told in the jargon of the common soldier. He tells about its being "A Long Way to Tipperary"; "Mediterranean Nights"; "Marooned on Lemnos Island"; "The Adventure of the White Pack Mule"; "The Sniper of Pear-Tree Gulley"; "The Adventure of the Lost Squads"; "Dug-Out Yarns"; "The Sharpshooters"; and many other incidents of Army life. One of his narratives, "Jhill-O! Johnnie!" is here retold by permission of his publishers.

I—STORY OF THE INDIAN PACK MULE CORPS

One evening the colonel sent me from our dugout near the Salt Lake to "A" Beach to make a report on the water supply which was pumped ashore from the tank-boats. I trudged along the sandy shore. At one spot I remember the carcass of a mule [118] washed up by the tide, the flesh rotted and sodden, and here and there a yellow rib bursting through the skin. Its head floated in the water and nodded to and fro with a most uncanny motion with every ripple of the bay.

The wet season was coming on, and the chill winds went through my khaki drill uniform. The sky was overcast, and the bay, generally a kaleidoscope of Eastern blues and greens, was dull and gray.

At "A" Beach I examined the pipes and tanks of the water-supply system and had a chat with the Australians who were in charge. I drew a small plan, showing how the water was pumped from the tanks afloat to the standing tank ashore, and suggested the probable cause of the sand and dirt of which the C.O. complained.

This done I found our own ambulance water-cart just ready to return to our camp with its nightly supply. Evening was giving place to darkness, and soon the misty hills and the bay were enveloped in starless gloom.

The traffic about "A" Beach was always congested. It reminded you of the Bank and the Mansion House crush far away in London town.

Here were clanking water-carts, dozens of them waiting in their turn, stamping mules and snorting horses; here were motor-transport wagons with "W.D." in white on their gray sides; ambulance wagons jolting slowly back to their respective units, sometimes full of wounded, sometimes empty. Here all was bustle and noise. Sergeants shouting and corporals cursing; transport-officers giving directions; a party of New Zealand sharpshooters in scout hats and leggings laughing and yarning; a patrol of the R.E.'s Telegraph Section coming in after repairing the wires along the beach; or a new batch of men, just arrived, falling in with new-looking kit-bags.

It was through this throng of seething khaki and transport traffic that our water-cart jostled and pushed. [119]

Often we had to pull up to let the Indian Pack-mule Corps pass, and it was at one of these halts that I happened to come close to one of these dusky soldiers waiting calmly by the side of his mules.

I wished I had some knowledge of Hindustani, and began to think over any words he might recognize.

"You ever hear of Rabindranarth Tagore, Johnnie?" I asked him. The name of the great writer came to mind.

He shook his head. "No, sergeant," he answered.

"Buddha, Johnnie?" His face gleamed and he showed his great white teeth.

"No, Buddie."

"Mahomet, Johnnie?"

"Yes—me, Mahommedie," he said proudly.

"Gunga, Johnnie?" I asked, remembering the name of the sacred river Ganges from Kipling's *Kim*.

"No Gunga, sa'b—Mahommedie, me."

"You go Benares, Johnnie?"

"No Benares."

"Mecca?"

"Mokka, yes; afterwards me go Mokka."

"After the war you going to Mokka, Johnnie?"

"Yes; Indee, France—here—Indee back again—then Mokka."

"You been to France, Johnnie?"

"Yes, sa'b."

"You know Kashmir, Johnnie?"

"Kashmir my house," he replied.

"You live in Kashmir?"

"Yes;—you go Indee, sergeant?"

"No, I've never been."

"No go Indee?"

"Not yet." [120]

"Indee very good—English very good—Turk, finish!"

With a sudden jerk and a rattle of chains our water-cart mules pulled out on the trail again and the ghostly figure with its well-folded turban and gleaming white teeth was left behind.

II—HEROISM OF THE SILENT HINDUS

A beautifully calm race, the Hindus. They did wonderful work at Suvla Bay. Up and down, up and down, hour after hour they worked steadily on; taking up biscuits, bully-beef and ammunition to the firing-line, and returning for more and still more. Day and night these splendidly built Easterns kept up the supply.

I remember one man who had had his left leg blown off by shrapnel sitting on a rock smoking a cigarette and great tears rolling down his cheeks. But he said no word. Not a groan or a cry of pain.

They ate little, and said little. But they were always extraordinarily polite and courteous to each other. They never neglected their prayers, even under heavy shell fire.

Once, when we were moving from the Salt Lake to "C" Beach, Lala Baba, the Indians moved all our equipment in their little two-wheeled carts.

They were much amused and interested in our sergeant clerk, who stood 6 feet 8 inches. They were joking and pointing to him in a little bunch.

Going up to them, I pointed up to the sky, and then to the Sergeant, saying: "Himalayas, Johnnie!"

They roared with laughter, and ever afterwards called him "Himalayas."

THE INDIAN TRANSPORT TRAIN [121]

(Across the bed of the Salt Lake every night from the Supply Depot at Kangaroo Beach to the firing-line beyond Chocolate Hill, September, 1915.)

The Indian whallahs go up to the hills;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"[10]
They pass by the spot where the gun-cotton kills;
They shiver and huddle—they feel the night chills;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

With creaking and jingle of harness and pack;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"
Where the moonlight is white and the shadows are black,
They are climbing the winding and rocky mule-track;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

By the blessing of Allah he's more than one wife;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"
He's forbidden the wine which encourages strife,
But you don't like the look of his dangerous knife;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

The picturesque whallah is dusky and spare;
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"
A turban he wears with magnificent air,
But he chucks down his pack when it's time for his prayer;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

When his moment arrives he'll be dropped in a hole;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"
'Tis Kismet, he says, and beyond his control;
But the dear little houris will comfort his soul;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

The Indian whallahs go up to the hills;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"
They pass by the spot where the gun-cotton kills;
But those who come down carry something that chills;—
"Jhill-o! Johnnie, Jhill-o!"

FOOTNOTE:

[10] "Jhill-o!"—Hindustani for "Gee-up"; used by the drivers of the Indian Pack-mule Corps.

SEEING THE WAR THROUGH A WOMAN'S EYES [122]

Soul-Stirring Description of Scenes Among the Wounded in Paris

Told by (Name Suppressed)

I—"THEY HAVE NOTHING LEFT—NOT EVEN TEARS"

What I have seen—can that be told? When will words be found simple enough and infinite enough to tell of so much heroism, so much sorrow, so much beauty, so much terror? All those sublimities: how can they be explained without losing their soul, without taking away their value, which is of mystery and miracle? All those hideous things, all those unnatural crimes; how can they be revealed with cold and ponderous reasoning, while one is still trembling, keeping back tears, smothering cries?

It must be done, though, and that French shyness that hates all that is bluff or bragging, and which fain would wait that our glory and suffering be understood, it too must be conquered. We must rise above that too delicate conscience which says: "Speak? What good will it do? Truth is luminous; it shines before all eyes." Yes, but it must be helped to shine, and without delay.

That is why, I have decided to address the American nation, to tell it that which I know, that which is evident, undeniable—to take it to the frightful and divine Calvary of truth.

For six months I have been living among our soldiers, our wounded. I live in my Paris. That Paris that every one visits and that no one knows. I have only left it for some brief excursions to the cathedrals in agony, to the villages in ashes, to the ambulances at the front, to the old peasants who have nothing left—not even tears! To the little orphans with tragic and stupefied eyes. [123]

Sent to distribute woolens to the combatants, I have heard a language, haughty and superb. I have clasped the rude hands, sometimes deformed, of more than twenty-two thousand soldiers, some wounded, others well again, returning to the firing line, a flame in their eyes and in their hearts. I have bent over more than ten thousand beds of mutilated young men, many of them with gangrene. I have held hundreds in my arms on the operating tables—I who could not support the sight of blood, nor of illness—hundreds of poor things with atrocious wounds, and only felt during those minutes one care—a superhuman desire to discover in the surgeon's look or attitude the hope the poor boy would be saved.

II—"IF HE DIED, I SHOULD HAVE FELT GUILTY"

I remember, above all, a youth twenty years old, who had such a complicated wound in the chest that it is indescribable. I held the poor, inert body while the surgeon lay wide open the thorax. "Take him back," said the surgeon, "and be careful." I did so. Then from the deep, bleeding wound the whole chest emptied itself, as one empties a bucket of I don't know what unnamable liquid. The surgeon approached then, and leaning over the now visible palpitating lung murmured: "What can be done? It will only begin again." However, he did find out what could be done. He had him put back in his bed—he was still unconscious. Sitting near him, filled with anxiety I waited his awakening. I wanted him to be saved, that child! While he was being [124] chloroformed a few minutes before, while he was holding my hand without saying a word, there was in his look, before his eyes closed, such a gentle desire to live, such a prayer for protection—such confidence in the infinite aid I gave him. If he died I should have felt myself guilty—I don't know of what.

He awoke—looked at me and smiled. He then murmured: "Why are you so good to us, madame? We are not near to you."

To this dying child, to give him back his life, it was necessary I should explain to him his glory. I said: "Not near, my boy? Why, understand then what I owe you! If the enemy has not entered our Paris—if Notre Dame is intact—if I, myself, am living—it is because you gave your blood for us. But that is not all. When you fight for France you do not only fight for your country, you do not only save your native land; you save an ideal, an ideal supreme, universal. In helping all that is pure and beautiful in the world you save the liberty of peoples, the liberty of the soul. You say to each one of us 'the yoke that weighs you down I shall help you to cast off.'

"You do not understand me well, my boy. But see—you must live. Later in the eternal books of history you will learn the meaning of the blood you have given. You must live! *You must live!* Years from now your little children will look at you with eyes of love and admiration because you were a soldier in the great war. They will know the meaning of the medal shining on your chest, and for generations they will be proud of the honour of their name. You must live, my dear boy!"

As I spoke something wonderful illuminated the youth's eyes. "Oh, I shall live, madame. One only has to will it. I shall live."

He is saved! [125]

I do not know why I stopped to recount the agony and resurrection of that child, because almost all of them are divinely alike—childlike, confident, smiling.

Another had had a whole leg amputated—a young man of twenty-two, with a charming face. Doubtless he had already been loved by some pretty girl. At last the day came when for the first time he was to get out of bed and try to walk with crutches. I dreaded that moment. I expected complaints. I already had made up my consoling arguments.

Ah, how little I knew the soul of our children of France. He arose, poor boy, so thin, on his one leg; and as he was also wounded in one arm, in spite of the crutches he couldn't balance himself. That made him laugh; *made him laugh*!

I turned him over to a nurse because tears were choking me. But they were not tears of sorrow; they were sobs of tenderness, respect, admiration.

Another had received nine wounds. He didn't want to have them spoken of. He only wanted to talk about his days of battle—to live them over again. "Those last days, madame, we were so near the enemy that they could not get to us to bring us our rations. We had to find our nourishment ourselves. When evening arrived some of us would steal out of the trenches and pick carrots—we lived eleven days like that. One day I brought down a pigeon. When I was able to get it we broiled it with matches. Ah, that was a royal feast! How glad we were!"

"Content" (glad, happy), that was the word he used most frequently. One morning when I got to the hospital, believing him still very ill, he greeted me with, "I go back to my depot in three days; in a fortnight I shall be under fire! Oh, how 'content' I am!"

Since then he has written me, "I received the tobacco. We had an awful fight at ——. I have a finger less and am still in the [126] ambulance, but still 'content.'"

III—STORY OF THE DYING ALGERIAN

Ah, let me still tell of my country's smile in her sorrow—so sweet, and which is such a comfort to my heart. I have so much to tell that is horrible.

Another time I conducted a celebrated visitor to a "tirailleur" (a part of the colonial infantry who leave the ranks in action and fight individually). This "tirailleur" had had his right arm amputated. I said, "he is an Algerian." The wounded man looked at me reproachfully with his great soft eyes, saying: "Don't say Algerian, madame, me French, me give arm for France."

Another time I was with another Algerian; this one was about to die; nothing could save him. I was trying to soften his agony. He let me go on awhile, then suddenly stopped me with the melancholy childish accent of the Arabs, saying: "Don't bother about me any more, madame. All over. Me dead in two hours. Me just as happy as if get well. Thee write my mother that." I wrote his mother. She replied: "He has served France well. Allah has taken him to his breast."

IV—"WHAT I HAVE SEEN IN PARIS"

What I have seen! I have seen Paris under the Teutonic shadow cast from the north. Three days, on opening my windows at dawn, I anxiously listened for the expected rumble of the cannonading. Nothing.... It will be soon, this evening, to-morrow, I said. Everything in my threatened city became sacred to me. For me to die, that was nothing. But for Paris to be destroyed; my [127] Paris! the city that cannot be described; cannot be explained! I couldn't stand that. I burst out weeping in the deserted streets, leaning perchance against a humble and old house. This mere relic had feelings, regrets, like the most sublime monuments.

The gravest day dawned. Those who only stayed in Paris for the pleasure they receive from it, and those who have children to take care of, were hastening toward the stations or crowding into automobiles. I stayed there. My heart wrung with agony, I drifted through my ordinary occupations. Then the unbelievable happened. As I was crossing the Place de la Madeleine, in a semi-dazed condition, a little boy, about five or six years old, ran up to me and gave me a slip of paper. I saw distractedly that he was decently dressed and had large blue eyes. I automatically opened the paper. The following unheard of phrase was typewritten on it: "*France is invincible*."

I turned toward the child: "Who gave you that?"

"Madame," said the little one, raising his head with a look that was grand, immense, "We wrote them ourselves, all night." Tears filled my eyes; I had a presentiment they were tears of deliverance. So, while we knew the Uhlans were in Chantilly, while in the hearts of the grown-up people horror placed its claws on faith, on hope, there was a little child with immense blue eyes, who knew nothing, like the good shepherds, St. Genevieve and Joan of Arc, but who knew that "France was invincible" and who passed the night writing it.

Yes, the miracle that saved Paris was revealed to us. But there was another miracle, something imponderable, which was the soul of the little boy with his eyes of light—which is the soul of Paris.

Paris ... even during those hours did not lose its sweet disposition of smiling independence. [128] And it was among the children that we found the most touching proofs. One day—at the hour when the German aviators were storming Paris with bombs—we called it our *five o'clock taube*—I went out with a friend near the Park Monceau. All the passers-by were walking with their noses in the air, as they already had got the habit of the visits of "the bad pigeons."

One little boy had his bicycle to follow the flight, another a pair of opera glasses. But look around in the sky as I might, I could see nothing. Then a little boy, this one about six or seven years old, pulled my coat. "Straight up, madame; straight up, over my head!" That's how they frightened our little kiddies!

The next day I was passing through a thickly populated neighbourhood over which they had been flying for an hour. Suddenly a child bolted out of a house as fast as it could go. But his mother caught him and administered two resounding slaps. "I told you to stay in the house." "Ah," protested the urchin, "ye don't only keep me from seein' de tobe, but cher lick me in der bargain."

These are trifles, will perhaps be said. Do you think so? Nothing is small that reveals the immortal soul of a people. And we found it so everywhere. Don't lose patience with me if I speak without order. My words resemble the days I am living. They have a unity, however, as from them always shines forth the trials, the smiles, the bravery of my country.

V—"THEY ARE ALL DEAD NOW"

What have I seen?... I saw a white glove stained with a gray spot and a brown spot. Here is its history. When war was declared all the young students of the Saint Cyr Army School were promoted second lieutenants. Their average age was about twenty years. How happy they were to fight for France. But to fight was not enough. They must do it with grace, with style, carelessly, [129] according to French traditions. They all swore, those boys, to go to the first battle wearing white gloves. They kept their word. But the white gloves made them a mark for the ambushed sharpshooters. They are all dead. The glove I saw belonged to one of them. The gray spot is of brain—the brown spot is blood. Piously this relic was brought to the mother of the dead young man. This special one was only nineteen years old.

And let us not think that it was a useless sacrifice. It is well that in the beginning of this war of surprises, mud and shadow, some of our children died in the light, facing the enemy, and facing the sun, for the good renown of French allegiance.

What I have seen ... Yesterday I received a letter. It came from a sergeant in the Argonne, an uneducated workman. Here it is, with the spelling and punctuation corrected:

"Madame, thanks for letting me know that my wife has had a little girl. But do not think I am worried. We love our families, but our duty is to love our country first. And if I do, those at home will be taken care of, I know it, madame.

"I'm going to tell you something you'll be glad to hear, not at the beginning, but you'll see at the end. A couple of weeks ago we lost a trench and almost everybody was massacred, including our commander. I escaped with a few more of my men. From our new trench we could see the bodies of our comrades and officers down there. The worst of it was that the Germans would get behind them to shoot at us. Ah, that all those Frenchmen, dead for their country, were made to protect the enemy! I couldn't [130] look at that. So here's what I did. I said to my men, 'I'm going for them, but if I stay there I don't want my body to be made a rampart. Tie a rope around my body and if you see I'm done for, pull me back by it.' At first things went all right. I got back three of our comrades' corpses. But the Germans began to see something was up. To mix them up I ordered a feint on the right—another on the left. I kept on.

"I was all right. Never would those people suspect that I would risk my life to save dead bodies. So I had the joy of getting them all back—there were sixty-seven. And can you believe it, madame, there were two men still living. They are in a good way to getting well, and they can indeed say they came back from pretty far off. We buried the others. They are now sleeping peacefully. But I couldn't resist letting those in the opposite trench know. Not a bad trick, was it, madame?"

VI—"THEY WILL PAY FOR THIS MISERY"

What have I seen.... The other morning among the men who came to the vestiaire (wardrobe), where I am occupied part of the time, and who are generally very gay and good-humoured, there was a young soldier with a sober, set, disagreeable face. I shook him up with, "Why, what's the matter that a French soldier makes such a face? Won't you look me in the face and make me a nice smile?" But he didn't change expression. I took him to one side. "What's the matter with you, my child? First of all, where are you from?"

"I am from the North, madame."

"Oh, then I understand why you are sad. You do not know where your dear ones are."

[131] He looked at me with a fierce, wild expression and suddenly replied: "I do know, madame. My elder brother was killed beside me, struck by the same shell that wounded me. That is war. They have burned my home, killed my mother and my father. My sister, sixteen years old, has been violated and abused; my little sister, of nine years, has disappeared." A black flame burned in the sombre look of the boy and made it unbearable. I received that look straight in my eyes. "Tell me, madame, we will get to their country, won't we, won't we?"

"Why, certainly, my boy—nothing surer."

"Oh, madame, they will pay for all this misery. But do not fear, *their women and children will not be touched*."

"Their women and children will not be touched." That is what this martyr of barbarism and of the cruelty of the enemy found in his heart to say—this sombre, uncultivated child of a northern village. I shook his rough hand—I squeezed it—I kissed the poor cheeks of this orphan with maternal kisses, and I said: "I thank thee."

VII—"THE CHILDREN WHO ARE MUTILATED"

But they—what are they doing with our little children? Here's a letter from a lady friend—a great musician. "My son-in-law, Lieutenant —— has been defending Verdun since August. He's all right. But when will these barbarians be entirely driven away? Lately my son-in-law had a German soldier who was very badly wounded picked up. When stripping him to give him aid they found a child's hand in his pocket. He was immediately shot."

Don't think it's a single case. The children who are mutilated, assassinated, burned, are counted by hundreds. At Blamont, in the presence of the Baroness de V——, the Germans killed a child in its mother's arms. "Why did you do that?" asked the [132] Baroness. "We are obliged to, otherwise we are shot," replied the men.

Witnesses who have seen like things are too numerous to be counted. Everybody in France remembers the sad question of the little girl who asked her mother, "Will Santa Claus bring me back my hands for Christmas?"

Some time I shall go into the details of the arrival of the Belgian children in Paris, with their terrorized looks, their screams of fear if anyone approached them. I haven't yet the courage to go over it. The memory I am going to call up is almost as frightful, though. It was Sunday, August 30. All at once I got a telephone call from a hospital where I often assisted: "Come, quick; they're bringing a lot of wounded."

As I arrived they were carrying in a young woman, either dead or unconscious. Everybody was under the strain of deep emotion. We undressed her. Her body was horribly mutilated with hideous wounds. She was the victim of the first "taube," as the Parisiennes called the German aeroplanes. She was passing along the street, humble and inoffensive. Her husband was at the front. She had a child at home. From above death smote her. The French gave men wings, and that is how the barbarians use them.

I left the young woman dead. I went to see the child. He was playing at a table, laughing. The contrast was so sad I couldn't stand it. I took away his toys. "You mustn't play any more just now, baby. You will not see your mother again to-day." He looked up at me sadly as if he understood. I took him in my arms and wept over him.

There is a little—so little—of what I have seen and heard.

[133] Just as I finished writing I received a photograph from the painter Guirand de Scévola, showing an old woman of sixty-five, who had been attacked—then slaughtered. With it was a part of the Belgium official report, not yet made public. I shall divulge the paragraph: "September 11th, Josephy Louis Buron, of the Twenty-fourth regiment of the line, declared that having been made prisoner by the Germans, near Aerschot, they made him plunge both hands into a kettle of boiling water. Dr. Thone, of the Twenty-fourth regiment of the line, declared he saw the wounds of the hero." (Told in the *New York American*.)

LOST ON A SEAPLANE AND SET ADRIFT IN A MINE-FIELD [134]

Adventures on the North Sea

Told by a Seaplane Observer

> The Great War has introduced new perils both on land and sea. Here is the story of one of them—two men drifting through a mine-field on a crippled seaplane, fending off mines with their bare hands, and expecting every moment to be blown to pieces! Daring adventure told in the *Wide World*.

I—"MY HUNDREDTH FLIGHT OVER THE NORTH SEA"

I completed my "century" of seaplane flights over the North Sea with an adventure the like of which, I trust, will never occur again.

Many varied experiences have gone to total up that number of ascents—some far from pleasant, others most interesting, and well repaying one for occasional hardships.

The sequel to my one-hundredth flight, however, will take a lot of effacing from my memory.

The atmosphere was a trifle thick when we started off from our base with the intention of flying an ordinary hundred-and-fifty-mile circular patrol.

The farther we progressed, the thicker grew the haze, till we at last were travelling through dense fog.

We left at 7.30 a.m., and climbed to two thousand five hundred feet to get above the heat-haze and fog over the water.

At eight-twenty-five, almost an hour later, the revolutions of the eight-foot tractor began slackening perceptibly, and presently, [135] to our dismay, the engine stopped dead.

We were compelled to descend so quickly that there was no time to send a wireless signal; in fact, I just barely managed to cut the trailing aerial wire free before we struck the sea.

That I did so was a slice of luck, as, otherwise, the fuselage would probably have been ripped up, and the machine capsized.

When the floats smacked the water we got quite a bump, and a decided jar in the nape of our necks.

Fortunately, however, the under-carriage struts retained their rigidity and did not buckle, and the seaplane rode the water right way up.

I will not worry the reader with a technical explanation of the trouble which had befallen our engine. Sufficient to state that it was of so serious a nature as to preclude us from any attempt at "patching her up."

"Do you know where we are?" inquired the pilot, after we had heartily chorused a round of expletives appropriate to such an eventuality. I shook my head.

It must be remembered we had been travelling through fog most of the journey, and therefore could not spot the regular aids to maritime aerial pilotage, such as light-vessels, sandbanks, buoys, and coast contours. In addition to this there are always air currents about, to counteract a dead compass-reckoning alone.

By taking the mean of our calculations, however, we were eventually able to place a finger on the approximate area where we believed ourselves to be on the chart.

The result was anything but encouraging. We were at least fifty miles from the shores of England, and in a neighbourhood devoid of all shipping, even in times of peace. What was worse, it was gradually borne in upon us that we were perilously near, [136] if not actually in, a most extensive mine-field!

Personally, I was feeling anything but buoyant, and the reason is not far to seek. I had had the middle watch (12-4 a.m.) in the wireless cabin ashore the previous night. A report then came through that there was "something buzzing"—hostile submarines scudding round, or Zeppelins or other aircraft—and I had the wireless of half-a-dozen machines to overhaul, and superintend their going off. Then my own turn came, and, minus breakfast or a bite of anything, off I went, having had no food since the previous afternoon at five. Worse still, I had not so much as a bite of "grub" about me, or even a smoke.

The pilot went through his pockets, and discovered one solitary cigarette resting in state in his case. Being a sportsman, as well as a companion in misfortune, he offered it to me, and, on my emphatic refusal, halved it. So we both lit up whilst we reviewed the situation.

I don't believe I ever treated a smoke with greater care than I did that half-cigarette. For aught I knew it might be my last.

When we had finished our cogitations the joint result of our thinking was by no means hopeful.

II—"S. O. S." MESSAGE ON MACHINE GUN

A strong sun was beginning to shine through the intense heat-haze, and the glare of the water was very trying.

At regular intervals I fired off a Very's light, with the idea of attracting attention. As the coloured projectiles curved high into the air and plunged downwards, so did our hopes seem to rise and fall.

When my Very's cartridges were exhausted, I commenced a series of "S.O.S." messages in the Morse code on the machine-gun. [137] The nickel bullets of two trays of Mark VII. ammunition had winged through the heavy air before we realized the practical futility of it all.

We therefore kept the remainder of our gun magazines intact, as also a brace of heavy service revolvers, 455 calibre, fully loaded.

We were not to know what might crop up at any moment. A Taube might find us and swoop down for bombing practice, or to make an easy prey. We could not in any event be taken prisoners by hostile aircraft, as there would be no space for us in a machine already full.

At any moment, too, a U-boat might pop up and either make a target of us for their quick-firer or take us in tow for the Belgian coast, which was uncomfortably near at hand.

However, come what might, we were in a mood to fight to a finish.

Unfortunately, my wireless transmitter was worked from the engine direct, otherwise I might have rigged up an extempore aerial from the spare reel carried, and sent a "S.O.S." from accumulators.

It is doubtful if such a scheme would have proved effective, but it would have been worth trying. But in the circumstances I was helpless.

The heat was now simply awful, the sea dead calm. We had taken off our leather coats long since, and now rigged them up across the fuselage overhead, for shelter from the sun's rays.

Presently it became so hot and stuffy on the seats that both the pilot and myself took our boots and trousers off, climbed down on the floats, and stretched ourselves along them in the comparative shelter of the wings and fuselage body.

The stern part of the floats was, of course, submerged, so we lay with our lower limbs under water, and felt cooler. This we did [138] for about three hours, each of which seemed an age.

What with the heat and the want of food, which caused a dull throbbing in my temples, by noon I was in such a state that I did not care what happened to us.

The pilot (poor chap) had only recently been married, and he rattled along continually about his young wife.

I have no wish to be in like straits again, but if such a misfortune *should* happen, I earnestly trust I shall not have the misfortune to be beside a young fellow newly wedded! In the long weary time we spent together I had the whole of his history, from childhood to courtship, and I suppose he had mine!

What surprised us was the great number of logs floating about. Apparently a timber boat had foundered somewhere close by.

Every log that hove in sight through the haze we thought was a ship. It was a terrible time.

At intervals we either heard—or imagined we did—the engines of aircraft. Sometimes they seemed all around us; sometimes a long way off.

"Our only chance is a relief seaplane being sent after us," said the pilot. "Otherwise we are done for!"

There was precious little chance of us ever being spotted, we reckoned, owing to the extremely low visibility.

At least a dozen times, as the day wore on, we heard the unmistakable roar of aircraft, and it was torture to listen to them.

"It's coming nearer. They will see us!" the pilot would cry, hopefully.

Then the sound would recede into the distance, and we would become despondent again.

III—"WE WERE FLOATING OVER DYNAMITE" [139]

It was extremely irritating, whilst anxiously following these sounds with straining ears, to hear the swish, swish of the water across the floats, the ripple as it rejoined the ocean again, and the creak, creak of the great wings as we rose and fell with a squelch on the gentle undulations of a swell.

These sounds eventually developed into a perfect nightmare. Every swish and creak seemed to pierce our brains.

Eventually we climbed up into the seats again for a while and stared our eyes out scanning the horizon with our powerful glasses. Every piece of flotsam seen we dubbed a boat, till it drifted near enough to make out detail.

The wind got up a little and died down again, but it shifted the haze somewhat.

In the afternoon we saw a sight which gladdened our hearts.

High up to the nor'-west, and dropping towards us, was a bird-like machine. Nearer and nearer it came, till we could hear the engines clearly. Soon we identified her marks, which set our fears at rest. It was a British 'plane.

We sprang up, gesticulated wildly, and fired a few pistol-shots just to relieve our excitement.

She was a rescue seaplane from our own base, it appeared, and presently she dropped on the water beside us and "taxied" as close as she might.

Her pilot steered within twenty yards or so of us, and the observer heaved overboard in our direction a huge vacuum flask.

Then, without stopping their engine, and waving cheerily, they droned along the surface and tilted into the air again. We watched her until the machine became a mere speck and finally faded into the blue. [140]

Then, and not till then, we remembered the flask. We were fated never to taste its contents, however, for it floated past out of reach, in the midst of a great school of giant jellyfish.

I have never been stung by one of these loathsome-looking creatures, and I had no desire to be on this occasion. Neither had the pilot, so the bottle floated out of sight without giving us anything but moral support.

After this interlude our long impatient wait recommenced. The episode had instilled hope into us, but the hours seemed to drag more heavily than ever. There was nothing but sea on every hand—a great circular expanse of glaring, shimmering water.

Presently schools of porpoises began to put in an appearance, sporting about in their own unmistakable style. There must have been hundreds of them. One group frolicked close around us, and several times a glossy black tail caught one or other of the floats a resounding smack.

The fabric of these floats is exceedingly frail, and we were rather concerned about them. It seemed a pity to shoot the playful creatures, particularly as their antics created a diversion, but we trembled for the safety of the floats every time they were struck.

As the tide went down, several dark, spheroidal objects commenced bobbing up by twos to the surface—on our starboard beam, as we were floating at that time.

Through our glasses we could spot scores more of them in the distance. No need to tell one another what they were. We *knew*—deadly contact mines!

The nearest pair were only a matter of half a cable's length away, and presently our worst ordeal commenced.

We were drifting towards them with the ebbing tide, and were now on the fringe of the great mine-field, perhaps the most extensive ever laid. Once in among those floating engines of death we should have a lively time. [141]

It was with no very pleasant thoughts that we considered this new danger. I might have turned the machine gun on the mines, but there was the risk of exploding instead of sinking them, and if one went off it was fairly safe to assume that its mate, a couple of fathoms away, would detonate in sympathy. I presume that this is the underlying idea of distributing mines in this fashion.

During the next four hours these horrid death-traps gave us a terribly anxious time. We had some very narrow shaves, for at low-water hundreds were in sight, and as the seaplane drifted along we were powerless to avoid them.

The pilot got on one float and I got on the other, and once or twice we actually had to ward the mines off with our bare hands in order to keep them from knocking against the machine. Had one of them done so this story would never have been written. Fending off the mines was a ticklish operation, as you may suppose. Great care had to be observed in exerting our strength, and we had to place our hands on parts of the casing of the mine that were devoid of horns, or between two horns, if it was not floating high enough. While engaged in this delightful occupation I went overboard twice, but managed to scramble back safely without getting into trouble with the mines.

Once a mine went off. It was too far away, however, for us to see what caused the explosion. It is not improbable that a luckless porpoise might have bent a horn in one of its leaps.

At length, to our heartfelt relief, the tide turned, and the mines began to disappear under the water again.

By that time we were drifting nearly the opposite way again, carried along by the flood-tide.

IV—"AN AEROPLANE COMES TO RESCUE" [142]

Six o'clock came, by our chronometer—seven p.m. summer time—and we were still intact, having for about ten hours been dependent on our frail seaplane floats for buoyancy. Had the sea risen at all, even to a decent cat's paw, we should have been below the surface long ere this.

It was shortly after six o'clock, when—burnt almost black by the sun, with parched throats and swollen tongues—we heard the sound of a propeller chugging away at no great distance. The haze had thickened again as the sun moved west, and at first we could see nothing. In fact, we both thought we were dreaming.

But there was no mistake. The chugging and throbbing grew louder and louder, and I fired three single pistol-shots into the air at intervals. Thereupon the sound intensified, and out of the haze ploughed a trim little armed motor-launch—officially known as an "M.L."

She crept alongside very gingerly, lowered her dinghy, and took us off. Then she made fast a line to the seaplane, and took her in tow at a good seven or eight knots.

We were heartily welcomed by the bluff sailormen aboard.

Curiously enough, I did not feel thirst so badly as hunger. I am not of a thirsty nature at any time, and perhaps that accounted for it.

The first mouthful of food was torture; it seemed to rasp the skin off my throat. After that I ate ravenously. It was the first touch of real hunger I had known, and after the experience, I vowed that if it lay in my power I would never again see a poor beggar go hungry.

When our bodily wants had been attended to we settled down to a comfortable smoke in the ward-room. The skipper, a Lieutenant R.N.R., told us he had just made up his mind he was not going to venture another fathom farther when he heard our shots. Owing to the proximity of the mine-field he had been very anxious. [143]

After our smoke we turned in for a sleep which only terminated when the "M.L." reached the shores of Old England and her Diesel oil-engines ceased throbbing! This was long after midnight.

They say our little experience has left its mark on us, but personally I feel as fit as ever.

HOW I HELPED TO TAKE THE TURKISH TRENCHES AT GALLIPOLI [144]

An American Boy's War Adventures

Told by Wilfred Raymond Doyle, on His Majesty's
Ship "The Queen Elizabeth"

> This is the first-hand narrative of an American boy's extraordinary yet characteristic exploits, told from his own viewpoint and in his own language. Young Doyle's noticeable aptitude at telling his story may be accounted for by the fact that he is a born journalist. His parents, who reside in Yonkers, are people of education and refinement. The father is a blind poet of some local repute, and at one time published a little newspaper in the Harlem district of New York City. The special causes which led to the enterprising lad's departure from home, and how he came to enlist in the British Navy, are best detailed by himself in the *New York World*.

I—STORY OF AN AMERICAN RUN-AWAY

At the age of nineteen I was employed in the shipping department of a large publishing house at a salary of six dollars a week, with small prospect of advancement. My family were in need of all the help I could give. I grew restless, and one day February (1916) suddenly decided to make a change. Instead of taking a car for home I boarded a steamer for Boston, expecting to do better in that city, and then to surprise my parents with my success. I could get nothing better than a place as a "bus boy" in a lunch room. After working there for three days I saw a chance of getting a better position, but unfortunately was too late. I was [145] delayed two hours and that cost me my first job.

I could find nothing else to do, and the next day I signed on an ocean steamer, *Etonin*, bound for Liverpool with a cargo of horses. My job was working the donkey engine for getting the feed up out of the hold; it was an easy job—two hours a day. The rest of the time we played cards, and when we reached Liverpool I had one penny in my pocket. The ship was not to return to Boston before fourteen days, and I had either to secure some work or starve. There was many a job I might have gotten but for the fact that I was an American. At least that was the excuse given for refusing me employment.

I had no choice but to go to the Naval Recruiting Office. I said I was born in Dublin and was at once accepted. I received a half crown, which was one shilling from the King, another from the Queen, and six pence from the Prince of Wales. I signed for the period of hostilities only, and that night had a good supper at the Government's expense.

II—"HOW I REACHED THE DARDANELLES"

The next day I was sent to the training depot at Portsmouth, where I received my uniform and kit. I was two weeks training with the rifle and bayonet and one week at target practice. On April 16, after physical examination, I was declared fit for service on His Majesty's ships. That afternoon I was drafted to the torpedo boat destroyer *Lynx*, which reached the Dardanelles in safety at noon of April 19. There I was assigned for service on the *Queen Elizabeth*, which I boarded two days later when she came out from the firing line for ammunition.

In the distance the *Queen Elizabeth* appeared like a huge island, with four trees in the centre, but on a closer view was seen to [146] be an immense floating fortress with huge guns, ready for action.

The complement of the *Queen Elizabeth* is twelve hundred men, including all ratings. I was assigned to No. 4 boiler room, which to my surprise, was not a grimy place but scrupulously clean, and everything in it polished as bright as a mirror. The ship uses oil fuel exclusively. My duties were: To keep the oil sprayers and steel combs clean, to take the density of the water every four hours, to regulate the supply of water and the fan engine for supplying the air pressure to the fires, and lastly to test the different safety valves. All orders are given by means of two telegraphs, an engine room telegraph and an oil supply telegraph.

The *Queen Elizabeth* went into action from midnight April 21 to midnight April 24. I was on duty without relief. During that time I had four times a day biscuits and water, with a half pint of rum. At noon I was allowed two hours' rest, but could not sleep on account of the noise. Our ship was hit every few minutes.

During action the fire pumps are pounding tons of water over the deck to prevent fire in case of a shell exploding on the wooden deck. It was our duty to keep the pipes and connections clear, for the water sucked up from the sea often contains foreign substances. One occasion we were subjected to a heavy rapid-fire gun bombardment. The structure shielding us was punctured like a piece of Swiss cheese and the deck about us was splintered before the guns on our ship found the range and destroyed the enemy's battery of guns that were turned upon us. It was a miracle that the seven of us escaped.

Once I was sent to the store room for tools. I had to pass the six-inch guns and neglected to get a piece of India rubber to place [147] between my teeth; the result was a dislocated jaw from the shock of the firing. I hastened to the doctor and pointed to my jaw. He put his left hand on my head, and with his right gave me a couple of "Jim Jeffries" punches, and, while I saw stars, reset my jaw.

On April 26 the *Queen Elizabeth* was ordered out from the firing line to bring up troops to the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Royal Scots were taken aboard from a transport in the Aegean Sea. We returned at once and landed the Royal Scots safely under heavy fire.

We withdrew at once about ten miles from the enemy's range, and, borrowing a telescope, I watched the Royal Scots, 1,100 strong, make their heroic charge, which began at 2 P. M.

They advanced on the double and took the three rows of Turkish trenches at the point of the bayonet without firing a shot. Then, without waiting for reinforcements, they advanced two and a half miles into the enemy's country. Their lines were gradually getting thinner, and realizing that they were in a tight place, they began to retreat. That is all that I saw. Corporal Joseph Nicolson was the only survivor of that ill-fated regiment.

On May 8 the news of the sinking of the *Lusitania* reached us by wireless, and the bombardment by the *Queen Elizabeth* became doubly terrific. I think more damage was done to the enemy that day than ordinarily in a week.

The next day there was a call for 1,000 men, 200 from each of the five largest ships, to support the soldiers on land on May 9. I was one of the number from the *Queen Elizabeth*, told off to go as landing parties at 6 A. M. Every man received a rifle, bayonet, two hundred rounds of ammunition, and two days' supply of food.

III—"TAKE THOSE TRENCHES OR DON'T COME BACK!" [148]

On leaving the ship the commander's order was: "My boys, take those trenches or don't come back." Six hours later we landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and reached the trenches safely though under heavy firing of the enemy. I was for twelve hours in the third line of trenches, knee deep in mud and water. Our time there was spent in sharpening our bayonets like razors.

At midnight we advanced to the first line trenches. All around us were the dead and wounded of both sides. Four unsuccessful attempts were made by the Turks to take our trenches, but each time they were beaten back, with a heavy loss. Our side also suffered heavily. Before we landed the British troops had lost 3,000 men in six attempts to take the Turkish trenches. The enemy's fire had been so severe that the transports could not land reinforcements without being sunk.

We navy men were told that the Turkish trenches must be taken at all costs. They were only fifty yards in front of ours. At 10.15 A. M. our rifles were loaded with fifteen rounds, the magazine safety catch was put on and the respirators were adjusted over our faces. Not a shot was to be fired in our charge.

Meanwhile our ships were firing on the enemy's trenches. At 10.25 the order rang out, "Cold steel!" We fixed our bayonets. At 10.30 the bugles sounded the charge. Fifty men fell while getting out; but in ten minutes we took the Turkish trenches. Our losses were 250 killed and 200 wounded.

It is almost impossible to describe a bayonet charge. On the instant of the order you spring out, jump or crawl from the trenches, with bayonet fixed, and charge on the double. Sometimes you have to creep to make an attack. You become like a [149] raving maniac; your senses seem to leave you. All around comrades are dropping, but you do not think of them. Reaching the enemy's trench, a terrific hand-to-hand struggle takes place. Strategy is the main point. Our bayonets were eighteen inches in length, while those of the Turks were all lengths from 12 to 15 inches. We wore the gas respirators in our charge, as our commander thought that our appearance would frighten the enemy. It did. We looked like black devils.

At 10.45 the Turkish trench was taken. After the victory our captain made a brief address. Facing the dead and wounded with the tears streaming from his eyes, he said:

"I am proud of my boys who fought so splendidly and did what seven thousand soldiers failed to do in six attempts, losing three thousand. You, a mere handful, one thousand strong, succeeded in the first attempt. The army has much to thank the navy for."

The last was uttered loud enough to be heard by the soldiers in the neighboring trenches. They were so sore about it that they would not speak to us navy men for several days.

IV—THE TURKISH GIRL BEFORE THE FIRING SQUAD

One day we were allowed a few hours' leave to go where we pleased. In our wanderings we came to a farm where women were working in the fields. In one field was a huge haystack. Approaching it, one of my comrades said that he would show how he killed six Turks. He fixed his bayonet to his rifle and made a charge at the haystack. There was blood on his bayonet when he withdrew it. We ripped open the haystack and in the hollow found a young Turkish girl trying to bandage her arm where my [150] chum's bayonet had wounded her. There were a cot, table and chair in the stack, and the girl had a rifle with a telescopic sight, and a box of cartridges. We were about to let her go, when she dropped a package which broke, and thirty-one identification disks, such as are worn by every soldier and sailor in the British Army and Navy, fell on the ground!

She was a sniper. We had to turn her over to our superior officer. She was court martialed and ordered to be shot in a half hour. We could not bear to see a woman face the firing squad, so we left the place and went back to our trench. We stayed there until the troops were landed and relieved us.

While in the trenches we went through many an ordeal, the chief of which was the vermin that, combined with the heat and filthy water, made life almost unbearable. When we returned to our ship all our clothing was taken from us and burned. We were then subjected to a bath of hot water containing some powerful disinfectant which took away a part of our skin. New uniforms were given us and we put them on our raw hides with a sense of unspeakable delight.

While on land we saw something of the Turkish sniper. He is a sharpshooter, painted green from head to foot, as he is usually hidden among the leaves of the trees. His cartridges are in a box fastened to a branch above his head, and on his rifle is the famous telescopic sight, an Austrian invention by means of which a child could hardly miss the mark. When their hiding place was discovered and they were shot, we let them hang from the branches as a warning to others. If the sniper sees that he cannot escape, he destroys his telescopic sight. No more than six of these wonderful inventions had been found up to that date. I picked up one in the Turkish trench and had it in my hand for a few minutes, but was obliged to turn it over to my superior [151] officer of the division to be sent to the Government arsenal for examination.

... Shortly after our arrival in the Dardanelles one of the mine sweepers was sunk and the body of a boy seaman floated by our ship. One of the survivors of the sunken *Irresistible* jumped overboard and found the boy was not dead, though unconscious. We threw a rope and hauled them in. A marine stepped forward and took the boy from the arms of his rescuer. As he was carrying him to shelter a small shell from the enemy's gun blew off the marine's head. A sailor snatched the boy away from him. For half a minute the headless man, having his lungs still full of air, threw up his arms, and dashed madly about the deck. This was the only casualty on our ship during my service.

V—CAPTURED ON BELGIAN COAST

On May 23 we left the Dardanelles to have our guns refitted. May 27 we were fifteen miles off the Belgian coast and there we heard heavy bombardment. The following day H.M.S. *Drake* asked for a loan of fifty men from our ship. I was one of the fifty.

The *Drake* was trying to locate a heavy German battery, and a lucky shot killed the gun crew but did not damage the guns. We fifty from the *Queen Elizabeth* were sent ashore to destroy the guns by blowing them up. We reached them under the heavy fire of the enemy, took off the breeches and destroyed the mechanism. As we were setting the dynamite to blow up these guns, a party of about three hundred Germans surrounded us. Our rifles were stacked up about thirty feet away and in running to reach them several of us were wounded. I received slight flesh wounds in the arm and leg. After being searched and relieved of [152] all weapons, we were marched to a barbed wire stockade, about a mile and a half inland, and were told that we were to be sent to Germany the next day. There was another stockade with British, French and Belgian prisoners near by, and over the barbed wire they threw us a football to amuse ourselves. We played football until dusk.

A German soldier was sent with a spade to dig a hole for another post in support of the barbed wire gate. We played football all around the field and managed to get the German soldier in our midst. We bound and gagged him, seized his weapons and took his spade. It was getting dark and no one suspected but that we were still playing football.

We took turns in digging under the barbed wire fence a tunnel for escape. While we were at work we had a genuine surprise. A German sentry on his rounds, trod on a weak spot over our tunnel and fell in, face downward. He could make no outcry as his mouth was filled with grass and dirt. We immediately bound and gagged him, took his weapons and left him there.

We all escaped through this tunnel and beat it for the coast as fast as our legs could carry us. The searchlights of our ship were in action and were playing all over the coast looking for us. One of our number was a signal man. He ripped off his jumper and, tearing it in two pieces, waved them over his head. The signal was seen—we knew it because the guns of the ship were brought to bear over us, to protect us from an attack in the rear, and recapture. We received a flash light signal to lie down, and soon we heard the sound of two engines. It was the ship's picket boats, mounted with machine guns on stern and bow. We were conveyed in short order to the *Drake*.

All ships have a master of arms and a ship's corporal; they are the ship's police, and they are always looking for trouble. As [153] soon as we were on the deck we were placed under arrest and taken before the captain. The charges against us were: overstaying shore leave fourteen hours, disobeying orders and general untidiness. We did, in fact, look like a bunch of Hooligans. Several of us had no caps and the faces of all of us were covered with blood and muck. Our new uniforms were so torn that a rag man would not have given us two cents for the lot.

The following are some of the captain's questions, and our answers:

"Where were you men?"

"Ashore, sir."

"Why were you not back in time?"

"The Germans would not let us come back, sir."

"Where are your rifles? And did you destroy the enemy's guns? What happened to your uniforms?"

"We destroyed the guns, sir, but were captured. We tried to escape, but were caught between liquid fire and poisonous gas. We lost part of our uniforms trying to climb over the barbed wire fence, sir."

"You pack of fools!"

"Yes, sir."

Then the captain, smiling, congratulated us and ordered the steward to supply us with new uniforms and send us back to our ship as soon as possible. We went back next day, June 2.

VI—BACK TO TURKEY—THEN TO AMERICA

The *Queen Elizabeth* was ordered back to the Dardanelles and remained there until July 26. Through the telescope we saw many demolished Turkish forts and big black holes where clusters of houses and groves had been. [154]

On July 26 we sailed for Gibraltar. We left there on August 1 and sailed for the North Sea and went in harbor to give the ship a thorough overhauling. From August 10 to Sept. 5 we were cruising around the North Sea and North Atlantic Ocean in search of the German fleet. This sort of life, after the excitement of battle grew wearisome to every one on board. Thoughts of home and family came to me. There had been no chance to write or to have our letters mailed. The only mail boat leaving the *Queen Elizabeth* was sunk. I told the officer in charge that I was an American.

After hearing my story he sent a message to the Admiralty and they ordered my discharge. I was sent to Portsmouth Naval Branch to receive my final papers. On obtaining these I thought I was free; but I was arrested for having failed to register as an alien when I first landed in Liverpool.

I was brought before a magistrate and remanded for a week. Acting on advice I wrote to the American Consul at London. The Consul replied that he had been looking for me since June, and he requested the magistrate to release me so that I could be sent back to the United States. The letter to the magistrate took fifteen minutes to read in court. It stated that the whole army had been looking for me, at the instigation of my parents, through the Secretary of State at Washington.

The magistrate discharged me at once, regretting my imprisonment for a week and stating that it was no disgrace. I left Portsmouth the next day, Sept. 25, for Liverpool but had to stop over in London for several hours, awaiting the fast mail train. It was shortly after the last Zeppelin raid and, being in uniform, I was allowed to pass the lines, to look at the effects of the bombs. Many houses were wrecked, streets torn up and soldiers were searching the ruins for the missing. Now and then they [155] recovered a body, usually that of a woman or a child. The official death list reported 150 killed. I saw a cartoon reprinted from a German paper, picturing the people of London kneeling in prayer in their cellars during and after a Zeppelin raid. But the fact is that the London police had their hands full keeping the people from rushing out of their houses to get a glimpse of the raider.

I reached Liverpool that night and the day following I signed for my passage on the steamship *Minian*, sailing for Boston Oct. 9. While in Liverpool I was offered a position in a munition factory as a gun tester at a salary of four pounds per week, but I refused the offer because I had secured my discharge from the British Navy for the purpose of going home.

"BIG-BANG"—STORY OF AN AMERICAN ADVENTURER [156]

A Tale of the Great Trench Mortars

Told by C. P. Thompson

> "Big-Bang" was Tommy's name for one of our pioneer trench mortars, invented and operated by a man named X——. The author met X—— in a café not far from the front, and heard from him the details of the story that is here set down. "So far as I am aware," he writes, "the tale is perfectly true. I had it confirmed by the men of the R. E. company to which X—— was attached." Recorded in the *Wide World*.

I—THE SOLDIERS IN THE CAFE SALOME

It was at Nœux-les-Mines, in the Café Salome, at the bottom of the old slag-heap by the station. After tea, there being no further parade until the working party assembled at ten o'clock that night, I had repaired thither to drink wine and smoke until closing time. As always, the *café* was crowded with the men of half-a-dozen London regiments, with Scotsmen in stained and muddy kilts, and French artillerymen from the South. Later in the evening they would begin to sing in unison—great roaring choruses swung and tossed from *café* to *café* and taken up by the crowded-out groups in the street.

I had managed to secure a chair at a little table in the corner, and for companion saw before me a small, grizzled man, about fifty, whose blue eyes, despite the dark rings underneath them, were yet singularly intelligent, keen, and clear. We exchanged a few remarks whilst taking each other's measure, and then, apropos of my description of a terrible bombardment by the [157] German *minenwerfers* which we had recently endured, he began to talk, and gave me a rambling impression of his strange and original career, and especially of his adventures in connection with his masterpiece, "Big-Bang"—a device now extinct.

I will call him X——. Before his connection with the British Army I gathered he had wandered widely in an up-and-down, rolling-stone sort of fashion. The Klondike had known his store during the gold rush. He was one of those men who did undefined but profitable things in the Western States before the days of their organized exploitation; made thousands of dollars and spent every cent of them, roving here and there, never staying anywhere for long, as is the way with these pioneers of the human race.

II—THE AMERICAN ADVENTURER TELLS HIS TALE

When the war broke out he was in the West, the manager of an opera company touring the coast towns, and immediately he determined to take a hand. At first he experienced considerable perplexity as to how he was to get "mixed up" in the war. Apart from his nationality, his small stature, a finger missing from his right hand, and a pronounced limp—both legacies from the Spanish-American war in the Philippines—seemed destined to preclude him from serving in the army of any country in any capacity. He was even refused by a party of Americans forming a Red Cross contingent for duty with any of the belligerents willing to accept their service.

However, he remembered an old friend, a major of Engineers in charge of a company at a China station, and he immediately hurried from San Francisco across the Pacific to Hong-Kong, where he found the —th Siege Company, R.E., under orders to [158] move, and cursing destiny, in the shape of the British War Office, which refused to allow them to be in at the fall of Tsing-tau. Forthwith he attached himself to them. His sole qualification consisted of an erratic but handy knowledge of mechanics, picked up here and there—as chauffeur to a Vancouver millionaire, as a greaser, ganger, and a stoker, but principally during eighteen months of desultory employment in the machine-shops of Pittsburg. After much argument concerning the King's Regulations with regard to recruits and the position of a man in the ranks, the major had taken him on the strength as mechanic for the three motor-cycles owned by his command. In September, 1914, he left the Western theatre of war—quietly exultant, as I imagine.

He was curiously frank as to his attitude towards the war.

"I have always liked big things, and I had to get into this somehow," he said, finishing a large *cassis*. "This war is the biggest thing that ever happened to this old world, and if I were left out of it I should go mad—I should, or commit suicide. That's how I feel about it. Looking on is no good to me; I have to be right in it. But I've no illusions. Neither your cause nor the Germans' nor the newspaper gas of both parties interest me. If the Allies hadn't adopted me I should have squeezed somehow into one of the armies of the Central Powers. Of course, the party I joined, that party I stick to; you can count on me to the last drop of my blood. But you take me—I've no patriotism, as you understand these things."

They landed in France early in October, and within forty-eight hours were with a corps at a point where the British forces lay resting after the Marne and the Aisne. With those battles the operations passed the mobile phase and began to settle down to [159] the stagnation of the trenches.

The novel conditions of warfare in the earth demanded new methods and ingenious adaptations, and soon the Engineers found themselves overwhelmed with orders from corps headquarters and harassed by perplexed divisions and brigades. Bombs and explosive missiles of all sorts were in great demand, but materials other than Tickler's jam-pots were not to be procured. And pumps were wanted; emplacements, redoubts, trenches, field works of all descriptions required overseers from the Engineers to superintend the working-parties, composed of uninitiated infantry.

III—CATAPULT THAT HURLS BOMBS

One day while he was busy upon a patent catapult the major came to X—— and showed him a message from the corps, who, introduced suddenly and unexpectedly to that formidable engine of destruction, the *minenwerfer*, desired urgently some improvised machine or gun wherewith to retaliate until supplies of the new weapon arrived from home arsenals. Nor were the elaborate specifications peculiar to all staff instructions lacking. The proposed machine must be capable of hurling a heavy bomb a distance of not less than two hundred yards; but at the same time, if a gun, it must not require a powerful propelling charge. It must be portable and sufficiently compact to allow of its introduction into a front-line trench; its working must not demand intricate mechanical knowledge, nor must more than four men be needed for its crew, and so on and so forth. X——, if I recollect his narrative aright, remarked, "Jehoshaphat!" and went away to a nearby *café* to ponder out this problem in mechanics. By the next morning he had planned and partly constructed the first of his famous simplified mortars.

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It was, so far as I remember the constructional details, merely a large tube, about three feet long and with a diameter of six inches, made of very thick sheet-iron and closed at one end by a block of wrought iron, pinned and welded on. The barrel mounted on a cradle, the bed weighed under half a hundredweight, and was secured to the ground by long iron pins like glorified tent-pegs. The ammunition consisted of huge canisters packed with gun-cotton and exploded by a time fuse or a simple percussion detonator. And if one did not look what he was doing, the bomb might easily be slipped into the mortar detonator first—to the dire confusion of the gun-crew. Gunpowder, rammed and wadded and ignited through a touch-hole, discharged the canister upon its travel. This creation was dispatched with precise instructions as to its use and probable eccentricities, and all hoped it would "make good."

Two days later came the report that at the first discharge the mortar had burst. It was requested that a stronger one be made, and, further, that the engineer-constructor should accompany his engine into the trenches, there to superintend its working. Thus one day X—— descended upon the lines with a new and larger mortar of more solid construction, one dubious artilleryman as assistant gunner, canister, a bag of powder, and a ramrod.

I can imagine the breathless interest with which the garrison in the trenches observed the loading of the mortar, the swift retirement from its vicinity, and the stunned confusion following the first shot. It went off with a stupendous roar, belching forth smoke and flame. The canister, turning over and over in the air, was seen to describe a mighty arc and fall upon a ruined house behind the German lines and there explode mightily, demolishing the place as completely and spectacularly as if a mine had been sprung beneath it. A great cheer burst forth. The delighted soldiers promptly poured in "fifteen rounds rapid," and a [161] machine-gun rattled through a belt in honour of the occasion and to follow up the bomb. The new weapon was voted a huge success.

It was fired five times in all, two bombs failing to explode, one excavating a ton or so of earth from the centre of No Man's Land, whilst the fifth fell plump into the German fire-trench, levelling it for half-a-dozen yards in either direction and sending high into the air a vast shower of earth, rent sandbags, timber, and human fragments.

Then, just as a sixth projectile was being loaded, the German artillery got to work. A storm of "whizz-bang" shells hurtled over, exploding everywhere—in the air, on the ground, and sometimes against the high parapet, which was sent flying. Two batteries of heavy howitzers concentrated a slow, deliberate fire, dropping 5.2 and 9-inch shells in the zone of the mortar, which was buried under tons of earth. At length the bombardment ceased, and rescue parties came to dig out those men whose dug-outs had fallen in upon them or who had been buried in the ruins of the trench. X—— had remained by his mortar and was rescued unconscious.

Yet, with the tenaciousness of his breed, he came back again—having spent a week at the field ambulance's barn hospital and a few days at his company's quarters—armed with a third and more powerful mortar. This time he had taken the precaution to provide himself with smokeless powder. The German artillery observers, however, were on the look-out for him, and although there was no longer a mountain of smoke to serve as a target, the position of the mortar was disclosed by the enormous roar of its discharge, which could be heard four miles away. Not five minutes elapsed before half-a-dozen batteries, informed by telephone, opened a tremendous fire and speedily rendered the vicinity untenable. Casualties were high, and X—— and his [162] weapon lost favour with the neighbouring infantry.

IV—"BIG-BANG" HIS ONLY FRIEND

Then this intrepid man mounted "Big-Bang" upon a base to which were affixed four small wheels with broad treads. Having fired the mortar, he would trundle it away down the trench as fast as he could go, invariably getting clear of the fatal area before the shells began to fall. Then he would stop and fire another shot and again make off, dragging his mortar at the end of a rope. His ammunition he placed in recess here and there along the line. The enraged infantry took to heaving the canisters over the parapet until one so thrown exploded, blowing in the trench, upon which they left them severely alone. But whenever the maker of those canisters appeared with his mortar round the corner of the traverse they cursed him heartily.

In this way X—— became the best-hated man from Richebourg to the sea. Refused admittance to dug-outs, he was obliged to sleep on firing-platforms, on the floors of side trenches, or in saps where night working-parties trod on him. No one spoke to him except to utter oaths. Men said upon seeing him:—

"Here comes the Kaiser's best friend!"

Sarcastic remarks were also passed on his mortar; and, strangely enough, these hurt him more than personal abuse. He had come almost to love his creation. Hatred of it he could tolerate, but anything savouring of contempt; anything derogatory uttered against its power as a destroyer, touched him to the quick; and I fancy singularly biting language was heard in those winter trenches of 1914 and 1915.

[163] So he dragged on his solitary existence—desolate, hated, yet feared because of his power of avenging himself by firing his weapon from any spot he pleased, and thus dooming it to a tremendous "strafing" by the enemy. He wanted someone to own him, and tried to attach himself to the artillery, but they refused to have anything to do with him. The thing his peculiar nature found it hardest to endure was the knowledge, gradually forced upon him, that he was "out of it," a mere independent unit belonging actually to neither side, a man whose decease many of the British, equally with the Huns, would have hailed with much glee.

This must have weighed upon him. Possibly he brooded. And all the time, with an invincible obstinacy that was almost heroic, he fired and fled and fled and fired, retreating sometimes up, sometimes down the trenches, dodging the shells all day and sometimes at night. And then he broke down.

"It was one of those illnesses your Army doesn't recognize officially," he told me. "It began with a sort of tired, discouraged feeling, and I used to have queer dreams. The noise of 'Big-Bang' going off made me jump like a marionette. I'd sweat and grow dizzy and my knees trembled and my stomach rose. I fell down one day and they came and took me away to the field ambulance, and after a bit they sent me down to Boulogne. I don't quite know what happened there during the first weeks. But when I got better they gave me a pretty good time—made quite a fuss of me, in fact. The colonel wanted to send me to England, but I told him how great I am on seeing this war through, and he grunted and said he'd see what he could do. When I came out I found this staff job waiting for me. It's not what I'd like exactly, but I suppose I'm getting old now. Still, we're close to the guns and I have a pretty free hand here, and can make trips to the trenches to say 'How-do' to the boys and see how [164] things are getting along. Oh, yes; it's not so bad. But I was sorry to leave old 'Big-Bang.' I made her and I worked her, and I guess she did her bit."

For a space he meditated, puffing clouds of smoke from a ten-sou cigar. Then with a start he returned to life.

"Will you have a *vin blanc*, old chap? Hi, papa, *deux vins blancs*!"

As he pushed back his soft cap I saw that "Big-Bang" had set its mark upon him. The hair about his temples was white as snow.

"WITH OUR ARMY IN FLANDERS"—FIGHTING WITH TOMMY ATKINS [165]

Where Men Hold Rendezvous with Death

Told by G. Valentine Williams, with the British Army

Written in the field and under the eye of the censor, G. Valentine Williams presents in "With Our Army in Flanders" (Edward Arnold, London) a series of vivid war chapters differing in many respects from the current conventional accounts from the battle fronts. Mr. Williams is the *London Daily Mail* correspondent. He tells about the babel of tongues where men gather in khaki, strange meetings at the front of long separated friends and brothers, the hunger of the big guns.

I—WHERE ALL DIALECTS MEET AT BATTLE

One of the most fascinating things to me about our army in France are the variations of speech. I have sometimes closed my eyes when a battalion has been marching past me on the road and tried to guess, often with some measure of success, at the recruiting area of the regiment from the men's accents or from their tricks of speech.

Take the Scottish regiments, for instance. I have little acquaintance with the dialects of Scotland, but my ear has told me that the speech of almost every Scottish regiment, save such regiments as the Gordons and the Black Watch, that attract men from all over the United Kingdom, differs.

I spent a most fascinating half hour one morning with a handful of Glasgow newsboys serving in a famous Scottish regiment [166] that wears the trews. Their speech was unmistakably the speech of the Glasgow streets, and their wits were as sharp as their bayonets. I told them they were newsboys and newsboys they were, or of the same class, vanboys and the like.

I visited the Cameron Highlanders—what was left of their Territorial battalion—after the second battle of Ypres and heard, in the speech of Inverness-shire, their story of the battle. Many of them speak Gaelic. One of their officers confided to me that during the battle, requiring two men to go down to the rear, the wires being cut, to ascertain the whereabouts of the brigade headquarters, he selected two notorious deer poachers as likely to have their wits about them.

It is a gratifying task, this identification of dialects. I have heard two sappers "fra' Wigan" engaged in a lively argument with two privates (from Cork) of the Leinster Regiment, in whose trench the two gentlemen "fra' Wigan" were operating. A London cockney, say, from one of the innumerable battalions of the Royal Fusiliers, would have understood less of that conversation if it had been carried on in German, but only a little less.

During the Battle of Ypres two privates of the Monmouthshire Regiment, who were talking Welsh, were pounced upon by two prowling Southerners from one of the home counties and carried off to brigade headquarters as German spies. What with Welsh miners talking Welsh and Cameron Highlanders Gaelic, the broad speech of the Yorkshire Geordines, the homely burr of the Third Hussars and other regiments recruited in the West Country, the familiar twang of the cockneys, the rich brogue of the Irish regiments, the strong American intonation of the Canadians, a man out here begins to realize of what composite layers our race is formed.

II—OLD FRIENDS AT THE FRONT [167]

Everybody who is anything is at the front. Never was there such a place for meeting as at Flanders. The Strand is not in it. My own experience is that of everybody else. One finds at the front men one has lost sight of for years, old friends who have dropped away in the hurry of existence, chance acquaintances of a Riviera train de luxe, men one has met in business, men who have measured one for clothes.

Often I have heard my name sung out from the center of a column of marching troops, and a figure has stepped out to the roadside who, after my mind has shredded it of the unfamiliar uniform, the deep brown sunburn, the set expression, has revealed itself as old Tubby Somebody whom one had known at school, or Brown with whom one had played golf on those little links behind the Casino at Monte Carlo, or the manager of Messrs. Blank in the city.

I wanted to find a relation of mine, a sergeant in a famous London regiment, and wrote to his people to get the number of his battalion and his company. When the reply came I discovered that the man I wanted was billetted not a hundred yards from me in the village, in which the War Correspondents' Headquarters were situated, where he had come with the shattered remnant of his battalion to rest, after the terrible "gruelling" they sustained in the second battle of Ypres.

At the front one constantly witnesses joyous reunions, brother meeting brother in the happy, hazardous encounter of two battalions on the road or in the trenches. The very first man I met on coming out to the front was a motor-car driver, whose father had particularly asked me to look out for his boy. I discovered that he was the man appointed to drive me!

Humor is probably the largest component part of the spirit of the British soldier, a paradoxical, phlegmatic sense of humor that [168] comes out strongest when the danger is the most threatening. A Jack Johnson bursts close beside a British soldier who is lighting his pipe with one of those odious French sulphur matches. The shell blows a foul whiff of chemicals right across the man's face. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" he exclaimed with a perfectly genuine sigh, "these 'ere French matches will be the death o' me!"

A reply which is equally characteristic of the state of mind of the British soldier who goes forth to war is that given by the irate driver of a staff car to a sentry in the early days of the war. The sentry in the dead of night had levelled his rifle at the chauffeur because the car had not stopped instantly on challenge. The driver backed his car toward where the sentry was standing. "I'll 'ave a word with you, young feller," he said. "Allow me to inform you that this car can't be stopped in less than twenty yards. If you go shoving that rifle of yours in people's faces some one will get shot before this war's over!"

There is a great strain of tenderness in the British soldier, a great readiness to serve. Hear him on a wet night in the trenches, begrimed, red-eyed with fatigue, chilled to the bone, just about to lie down for a rest, offer to make his officer, tired as he is, "a drop of 'ot tea!" Watch him with German prisoners! His attitude is paternal, patronizing, rather that of a friendly London policeman guiding homeward the errant footsteps of a drunkard.

III—DEEP IN A SOLDIER'S HEART

Under influence of nameless German atrocities of all descriptions, the attitude of the British soldier in the fighting line is [169] becoming fierce and embittered. Nothing will induce him, however, to vent his spite on prisoners, though few Germans understand anything else but force as the expression of power. They look upon our men as miserable mercenaries whose friendliness is simply an attempt to curry favor with the noble German krieger; our men regard them as misguided individuals who don't know any better....

The German phrase, "*Stellungskrieg*," is a very accurate description of the great stalemate on the western front which we, more vaguely, term "trench warfare." It is, indeed, a constant manoeuvering for positions, a kind of great game of chess, in which the Germans, generally speaking, are seeking to gain the advantage for the purposes of their defensive, whilst the Allies' aim is to obtain the best positions for an offensive when the moment for this is ripe.

The ground is under ceaseless survey. A move by the enemy calls for a counter-move on our part. A new trench dug by him may be found to enfilade our trenches from a certain angle, and while by the construction of new traverses or the heightening of parapet and parados the trench may be rendered immune from sniping, a fresh trench will be dug at a new angle or a machine gun brought up to make life sour for the occupants of the new German position, and force them in their turn to counter-measures.

Any one who saw the trenches at Mons or even, much later, the trenches on the Aisne, would scarcely recognize them in the deep, elaborate earthworks of Flanders, with the construction of which our army is now so familiar.

High explosive shells in unlimited quantities are necessary to keep the hammer pounding away at one given spot. To break a path for our infantry through the weakly held German trenches around Neuve Chapelle we had many scores of guns pouring in [170] a concentrated fire on a front of 1,400 yards for a period of thirty-five minutes. In the operations around Arras the French are said to have fired nearly 800,000 shells in one day.

Even this colossal figure was surpassed by the expenditure of high-explosive shells by the German and Austrian armies in their successful thrust against Przemysl. Our bombardment of Neuve Chapelle was, in the main, effective, though barbed-wire entanglements in front of part of the German trenches were not cut, and heavy casualties were thus caused to the infantry when they advanced.

For the most part, however, we found the German trenches obliterated, the little village a smoking heap of ruins, and those Germans who survived, dazed and frightened, amid piles of torn corpses. If this enormous concentration of guns was required to blast a path of 1,400 yards with a thirty-five-minute bombardment, what a gigantic concentration of artillery, what a colossal expenditure of ammunition, will be required to drive a wedge several miles deep through positions which the Germans have spent three seasons in strengthening and consolidating!

IV—IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH

I went down one of our mines one night. I was spending the night in our trenches and the captain in command of this particular section asked me if I would care to see "our mine." Considerations of the censorship impel me to abridge what follows up to the moment when I found myself in a square, greasy gallery, with clay walls propped up by timber balks leading straight out in the direction of the German trenches. Guttering candles stuck on the balks at intervals faintly lit up as strange a scene as I have witnessed in this war.

[171] Deep in the bowels of the earth a thick, square-set man in khaki trousers and trench boots, a ragged vest displaying a tremendous torso all glistening with sweat, was tipping clay out of a trolley and gently chaffing in a quite unprintable English of the region of Lancashire a hoarse but invisible person somewhere down the shaft.

I crawled round the quizzer, slipping on the greasy planks awash with muddy water on the floor of the gallery, and found myself confronted by another of the troglodytes, a man who was so coated with clay that he appeared to be dyed khaki (like the horses of the Scots Greys) from top to toe. I asked him whence he came, so different was he, in speech and appearance, from the black-haired, low-browed Irishmen watching at the parapet of the trench far above us. "A coom fra' Wigan!" he said, wiping the sweat from his forehead with a grimy hand, and, thus saying, he turned round and made off swiftly, bent double as he was, down the low gallery.

I followed, the water swishing ankle-deep round my field boots. The air was dank and foul; the stooping position became almost unbearable after a few paces; one slipped and slithered at every step.

At intervals side-galleries ran out from the main gap, unlit, dark and forbidding—listening posts. After a hundred paces or so a trolley blocked the way. Behind it two men were working, my taciturn acquaintance and another. The latter was hacking at the virgin earth with a pick; the former was shoveling the clay into the trolley.

I had not been out of that mine for more than a minute when an electric lamp flashed in my eyes, and an excitable young man, who held an automatic pistol uncomfortably near my person, accosted me thus: "I beg your pardon, sir"—it occurred to me that the pistol accorded ill with this polite form of address—"but may I ask what you were doing down my mine?" My friend, the [172] Captain, rushed forward with an explanation and an introduction, the pistol was put away, and the sapper subaltern was easily persuaded to come along to the dugout and have a drop of grog before turning in.

One story of the mines which made everybody laugh was that of the subaltern fresh out from home, a keen young officer, who came one night to the dug-out of the sapper officer supervising the digging of a mine.

"You must go up at once," he whispered in his ear in a voice hoarse with excitement, "it is very important. Lose no time." The sapper had gone to his dug-out worn out after several sleepless nights, and was very loath to sally forth into the cold and frosty air. "It is a mine, a German mine," said the subaltern fresh out from home; "you can see them working through the glasses." The sapper was out in a brace of shakes, and hurriedly followed the subaltern along the interminable windings of the trenches.

In great excitement the subaltern led him to where a telescope rested on the parapet. "Look!" he said dramatically. The sapper applied his eye to the glass. There was a bright moon, and by its rays he saw, sure enough, figures working feverishly about a shaft. There was something familiar about it, though; then he realized that he was looking down his own mine. The wretched youth who had dragged him from his slumbers had forgotten the windings of the trench.

V—INVENTIVE GENIUS OF THE SOLDIERS

"Bombing" is one form of trench warfare particularly annoying to the enemy. The revival of bombing began when a British soldier, to while away an idle moment, put some high explosive and a lighted fuse in a discarded bully-beef tin, and pitched it into the German trench opposite him.

[173] In his way the British soldier is as handy as the bluejacket, and the long days of the winter monotony produced all kinds of inventions in the way of mortars and bombs, which led to the scientific development of this mode of warfare. A Territorial officer was discovered making all manner of ingenious bombs and trench appliances in his spare time. He was taken out of the trenches and installed in an empty school, and when last I heard of him had a regular factory turning out bombs for the firing line.

Bombing is very tricky work. Your bomb must be safe as long as it is in your possession. Nor must it be liable to explosion if dropped after the safety-catch has been removed. That is why bombs are provided with time fuses. Some nicety of judgment is required to hurl them so that they will explode on impact or immediately afterward.

If the time fuse has still a second or so to burn when the bomb falls in the enemy trench, a resolute man will pick it up and fling it back, with disastrous consequences to the bomber. Therefore bombers must be trained. The training is extremely simple, but it is essential, and I look forward to the time when every soldier who comes out to France from home will have gone through a course of bombing just as he has gone through a course of musketry.

Just as the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 introduced the needle-gun, and the Franco-Prussian War the chassepot rifle, and the South African War was the war of the magazine rifle, so the present war will be known as the war of the automatic gun. When the German General Staff sits down to write its official history of the great war it will be able to attribute the greater part of the success that German arms may have achieved to its foresight in accumulating an immense stock of machine-guns, and in [174] studying the whole theory and tactics of this comparatively new weapon before any other army in the world became alive to its paramount importance.

The only factor that furnishes anything like a certain basis for calculation as to the date of the conclusion of the war is the number of fighting men available for each of the different belligerents. Of all the supplies required for making war, the supply of men is limited. The Germans recognized this sooner than any of their opponents. In the machine-gun they had a machine that does the work of many men.

The machine-gun is the multiplication of the rifle. The Vickers gun fires up to 500 shots a minute. This is also the average performance of the German gun. To silence this multiplication of fire you must outbid it, you must beat it down with an even greater multiplication. This is where the difficulty comes in for an attacking force.

The machine-gun, with its mounting and ammunition and spare parts, is neither light in weight nor inconspicuous to carry. When the infantry has rushed a trench after the preliminary bombardment the machine-guns have to be carried bodily forward over a shell and bullet swept area, where the machine-gun detachment is a familiar and unexpected target for the German marksmen. This is where the automatic rifle is destined to play a part—a part so decisive, in my opinion, as may win the war for us.

The automatic rifle is a light machine-gun. In appearance it resembles an ordinary service rifle, with rather a complicated and swollen-looking magazine. It is not water-cooled like the machine-gun, but air-cooled, and is therefore not absolutely reliable for long usage, as it inevitably becomes heated after much firing. It will fire, however, up to 300-odd shots a minute, and can be regarded as the ideal weapon for beating down German machine-gun fire and checking the advance of bombers while the [175] heavier but more reliable machine-guns are coming up.

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COMEDIES OF THE GREAT WAR

Tales of Humor on the Fighting Lines

Told by W. F. Martindale

> In the Great War, as in everything else, comedy treads hard on the heels of tragedy, and all sorts of quaint and comical things happen. Here are some little stories, from a variety of reliable sources, which will serve to show that our fighting-men, both ashore and afloat, are still able to preserve a sense of humor. Narrated in the *Wide World*.

I—STORIES TOLD "ON THE SOLDIERS"

Human nature is whetted to a keep edge under the stress of warfare; that is why every war is rich in anecdote.

Character is the basis of all comedy, and the conditions of military life, whether on active service or not, are such that "character will out." In barracks, in camp, or in the field, soldiering applies a test which no man can evade. Ranker, non-com., or officer, he is bound soon or late (generally soon) to be "found out."

There is a pretty little comedy of character which concerns a young subaltern, fresh from an English public school, who found himself attached, through one of the unexpected chances of war, to a battalion of Colonial infantry. The subaltern was youthful

—and looked it. His cheek was smooth and innocent of hair, the accents of his voice cultured and refined, his manner languid to the point of seeming boredom. He was slight of stature, and he wore a monocle permanently fixed in one eye. In short, he was a complete antithesis to the brawny brood of Anak which constituted his platoon, amongst whom his advent aroused no [177] enthusiasm whatever. He was not popular.

There is little risk of offence at this time of day in observing that some of the Overseas troops are not remarkable for the strictness of their discipline. It is a little idiosyncrasy at which no one, with memories of Ypres and Anzac still fresh, will be disposed to cavil. This is not to say that they cannot be handled; on the contrary, there is ample evidence of their instant response to leadership of the sort which they understand. But one would hardly look for that particular sort from a beardless youth with an eye permanently glazed, and a refined taste in language and clothes. A manner which might be acceptable to the Guards is as little suited to Colonials as Colonial methods to the Household Brigade. There is a custom and usage in these matters.

So it came to pass that the platoon took counsel with itself and darkly determined to take its young subaltern down a peg or two. Is it necessary to observe that the prime offences of the latter, in the eyes of these critics, were his monocle and his accent—those traditional marks and insignia of the "dude"? It is strange that so often the dandy (whom history has shown to be invariably a man of spirit and courage) should be mistaken for the dude.

II—THE OFFICER WITH THE MONOCLE

On a certain morning, therefore, behold the platoon drawn up on parade, accoutred with meticulous care, aligned in the most precise formation—each man wearing his "identity disc" in his eye! For the benefit of any reader who has never seen an identity disc, it may be mentioned that the latter is the small plate of metal on which is stamped certain information concerning [178] the wearer which enable his body, if necessary, to be identified. Being of the same shape, and about the same size, as an eyeglass, and, moreover, suspended from a cord worn round the neck, it can be made to form an admirable travesty of a monocle.

Not a twitch of a single muscle in the face of the young subaltern, not a flicker of his unmonocled eye, betrayed that he was aware of anything unusual in the appearance of his men. He took the situation in coolly, and when, in answer to routine questions, the sergeants answered smartly and respectfully but with a pointed imitation of his own "haw-haw" accent, he ignored the studied insult with equal nonchalance.

It was a good start, for an attempt at sarcasm when quietly ignored falls flatter even than when it is wholly unperceived. In the present case there was no possibility of an insult having been missed, and the platoon began to feel that things were not going quite as had been anticipated. Each man kept his identity disc firmly screwed in one eye, however, and stared fixedly out of the other in expectation of the officer's present discomfort. The latter could never afford to dismiss the parade without taking cognizance of what had occurred, and the platoon awaited the crux with interest.

But the moment of dismissal arrived and nothing had been said. Some of the men were covertly smiling.

As he gave the order, the subaltern let the monocle drop from his eye, and while the command was being obeyed, swung the glass round and round, with the cord between finger and thumb, in a rapid circle. Scanning the line narrowly and noting every glance upon him, he jerked the twirling glass suddenly into the air and with the neatness of a juggler caught it in his eye as it fell. Then he glared fiercely through it.

"See if you can do *that*!" he observed. "Dis-MISS!" [179]

Thereafter no officer ever had men under him more ready to do whatever he asked them. And it was by a sure instinct that the latter "gave him best." As one of them remarked, "I've seen men take risks in my time, but that beat everything. *Suppose he'd missed catchin' that glass?*"

If wit is a Gallic prerogative, humor belongs to the British, and not a few comedies of the war pivot on that uniquely humorous character Thomas Atkins. Humor is an elusive and baffling quantity, as the wit discovered who mixed up all the boots in an hotel corridor one evening and learned the next morning that his friend (a humorist) had sorted them out again as soon as his back was turned. The humorist can sometimes understand the wit, but the compliment is seldom, if ever, returned; which is the reason why Mr. Atkins and his idiosyncrasies remain an inscrutable enigma to our French allies.

And if the British soldier appears incomprehensible to the nimble-minded French, one can readily perceive that to the slow and methodically-thinking German he must seem merely mad. The French marvel that he is never "serious"; the Boche is perplexed to find that Hymns of Hate and other laborious insults afford him the keenest possible enjoyment. The secret lies in Mr. Atkins's sense of humor, which is another way of saying his sense of proportion. He may be guilty of little aberrations such as dribbling a football in front of him as he advances with cold steel to the charge, but *au fond* he has a pretty just sense of values.

III—THE GERMANS WHO SANG "RULE BRITTANIA"

At all events, his humor has the dry quality which connotes an even mind and temper, as the following incident will show. In [180] the earlier days of the war, before the opposing armies in the West had burrowed into the soil and some freedom of movement was still possible, a patrol of three British soldiers under a sergeant were prowling abroad one night. Within disputed territory they espied a lighted window in a lonely farmhouse which they knew had been deserted by its owners. They approached it stealthily. The house was surrounded without challenge, and having posted his men at points which commanded the exits the sergeant crept forward to reconnoitre. Music and sounds of revelry were audible within, and the sergeant had no difficulty in discovering the presence of four German soldiers in the farmer's best sitting-room. The cellar had been looted, the piano commandeered, and four Teutonic voices were upraised in melody.

The sergeant beckoned to the waiting figures outside, and four large but softly-treading men tiptoed delicately to the scene of the carousal. At a given signal the door was flung open and four rifles were levelled.

"Hands up!"

A chorus of "*Deutschland, Deutschland, über Alles*" was interrupted a shade abruptly, and four pairs of arms shot up into the air. The Boche does not shine in an emergency.

With a gesture the sergeant marshalled the captives against the wall, where they stood in a row, blinking and crestfallen. Their weapons having been collected and removed, they were allowed to put their hands down, and their captors regarded them quizzically.

"Any of you blokes speak English?" queried the sergeant, genially.

A smile of modest pride momentarily illumined one of the four wooden faces.

"*Ja*, I spik leedle English," ventured its owner. [181]

"In-*deed*!" was the rejoinder; "and where did *you* learn it—in the Tottenham Court Road?"

The linguist simpered deprecatingly, with evident gratification over the good impression which he appeared to be making. It takes a lot to upset the complacence of the Boche.

"Been havin' a sing-song?" continued the sergeant, encouragingly.

The other nodded. "Der Shermans vas always der beoble of singing," he observed, in faintly patronizing tones.

"Ho, *are* they?" said the sergeant. "Then suppose you start in and sing us 'Rule Britannia' for a bit. Give us a tune, Bill."

Bill propped his rifle against the wall, and sat himself solemnly at the open piano. He was not a great performer, but rose to the occasion and produced a rendering of the familiar tune which was at least recognizable.

"Now, then," said the sergeant, warming to his work, "not bein' a blinkin' German I don't 'appen to be no singer, but just you listen, and if you don't know the words, say 'em after me. '*When Brit-ain fir-ir-ir-ir-irst at——*'"

The musical evening was a great success, said the member of the party from whom the present writer had the story. "We kept 'em there for four hours, and by the time we'd finished with 'em they could sing it a fair treat. And we didn't spare 'em the encores neither. Course, they wasn't singin' *all* the time, 'cos we spent some of it in moppin' up the liquor and the food and the cigars they hadn't finished. But I reckon they did all the singin' they wanted. Then we fell 'em into line and drove 'em home as prisoners. They *asked* for it, you see!"

IV—STORY OF A FISHERMAN AND A MINE [182]

The chief officer of a steamer under charter to the Admiralty tells a very amusing story concerning an encounter with a mine, though he candidly admits that he didn't see the humor of it until some time after the incident occurred.

His ship was lying alongside the quay at X——, taking in some hundreds of tons of explosives. He himself, having nothing particular to do at the moment, was leaning over the bridge-rails looking thoughtfully out to sea. All of a sudden he noticed an aged waterman rowing towards the ship, with some odd-looking object towing astern of his bluff-bowed craft. The old man seemed to have difficulty in getting along, and the officer watched him curiously, speculating as to what he was hauling. At first sight it looked like a mooring-buoy, but as the boat came nearer the watcher got the shock of his life. The fisherman was towing a German mine of the very largest type!

There flashed through the officer's mind the thought of the latent power stored away in that wicked-looking sphere, only needing a slight shock to set it free; he thought, too, of the vast store of explosives under his feet and on the quay. If that mine exploded against the steamer's side there would not be one stone of X—— left upon another!

"Hi, you!" he shouted to the oncoming rower. "Sheer off with that thing! We've got explosive aboard!"

By way of answer the old man—now scarce a dozen yards away—cupped his hand behind his ear.

"What d'yer say, sir?" he called back, mildly. "I found this 'ere in the tideway, an' I knew there was a bit of a reward offered, an' so——"

[183] The big mine was now bobbing dangerously close to the steamer's side, and the officer, frantic with anxiety, literally bellowed orders for the man to remove himself and his prize. In his excitement he suggested regions where it is possible the temperature might have had a disastrous effect.

The fisherman looked up at him with a smile. "That's all right, sir," he replied. "He 'on't do no harm. I knocked the horns off he with a boat-hook."

And so it proved. The old man, in his ignorance, had taken a million to one chance, and it had come off. They say there is a special Providence that looks after fools, but it must be peculiarly irritating to the apostle of "frightfulness" to know that an aged waterman, encountering a drifting mine, can lightheartedly knock off the detonator-equipped "horns" or projections and live to bring his prize into port and receive a reward. The chief officer aforesaid, however is not anxious for another experience of the kind; he says they are too trying to the nerves.

V—THE COCKNEY AND HIS "SOOVENEER"

Comedy, it has been observed, turns upon character, and many little comedies of the war hinge upon the mere personality of Thomas Atkins himself, and the somewhat difficult adjustment of that uniquely stubborn thing to a new environment. The resulting incidents derive a great part of their humor from Mr. Atkins's manner of narrating them—especially if he chance to be from London. There is no wittier or more tersely vivid *raconteur* than the Cockney, and though one often hears the humor of the British soldier described as unconscious, it is really nothing of the kind. Spontaneous and unpremeditated it may be, but such penetrating acumen as his racy idiom reveals was never unconscious.

[184] Half-a-dozen soldiers home from the Front on short leave found themselves in a railway carriage bound for Victoria. They were of different battalions, and fell naturally to the swapping of yarns. Soon the conversation drifted to "souvenirs," a topic of surpassing interest. Trophies were produced by each in turn, with the exception of one taciturn member of the party who sat in a corner seat morosely sucking at a short clay pipe.

"*I* ain't brought nothin' 'ome wiv me," was the curt response to a suggestion that the silent one should produce his little lot. There ensued a dialogue.

"Wot, nothin' at all?"

"No!"

"Well, I'm blowed! Fancy a bloke comin' 'ome on leave and not bringin' nothin' wiv 'im! Ain't you got no sooverneer?"

"Sooveneer! No, I ain't got no sooveneer—not unless you call this 'ere a sooverneer."

The morose one fumbled in his haversack and pulled forth a brass door-knob, which he displayed upon an extended palm. Its appearance excited derision.

"That's a perishin' fine sooveneer, I *don't* think! Why, it's only a ornery door-knob!"

"Well, wot abaht it? S'posin' it is only an ornery door-knob! Maybe you dunno 'ow I come by it!"

Pressed for the story, the owner of the unexpected article proceeded:—

"It was like this 'ere. I'd been two weeks on a stretch in the trenches, and never a drink—wot you might *call* a drink—the 'ole blinkin' time. Goin' back through the billets after we was relieved I seed a place where they had liquor for sale, and I goes up to the door to get a drink. Well, I 'adn't no more than took 'old o' the knob when a blinkin' Jack Johnson come over and blew the 'ole blinkin' 'ouse out of my 'and!"

[185] And with an evident sense of personal grievance not yet allayed the speaker pouched his "sooveneer" and relapsed into gloomy taciturnity.

VI—THE COOK AND THE BOMB IN GREECE

Of comedies arising out of Mr. Atkins's imperturbable phlegm there is no end. One will suffice here—a little incident which occurred at Salonica. At the Greek port some of our troops, it seems, are encamped upon the hills above the town. One morning a covey of six enemy aeroplanes flew overhead and dropped three bombs in passing. The first exploded harmlessly, but the second fell plumb on a cook's tent, and blew it sky-high. Shirts, coats, and trousers went hurtling up into the air with a grim resemblance to mutilated bodies. Fortunately no one was inside the tent. The cook was only five yards away, however, busily marshalling an array of "dixies" (military camp-kettles) which had been newly filled at the distant water-supply below. The force of the explosion blew him off his feet, and likewise overturned the row of dixies.

Those near at hand feared their comrade had been hit by a fragment of the bomb and ran to his assistance. But as they approached a dishevelled figure rose from amidst the *débris* and wrathfully surveyed the wreckage of his "kitchen." At the spot where his tent had been two minutes previously he hardly glanced. "And now," was his indignant comment, "I serpose I'll 'ave to go down the —— 'ill and fill up the —— dixies again!"

VII—A SEA-TALE—THE LIEUTENANT'S STANCHIONS

[186] By way of conclusion here is a little naval comedy. A minor unit of His Majesty's Navy was undergoing the process known as "fitting out." Her commander, one of the many good sportsmen who have placed their personal services and such seamanship as they have acquired as amateur yachtsmen and sailors at the disposal of the Admiralty, arrived one morning to find a score or two of dockyard workmen on board, all busy (in theory) with the multifarious tasks awaiting completion. In practice, something like half the number were, if not idle, at least less occupied than the immediate requirements of the vessel seemed to warrant.

The commander, being in private life a business man of considerable energy, with a habit of getting things done, regarded the scene with considerable disfavour, and set himself at once to remedy the state of affairs. But the dockyard workman is an individual with very definite ideas of his own as to how a job should be done, and a fixed determination to do it that way unless thwarted by an authority which he dare not evade.

Finding orders, though respectfully received, were inadequate to the occasion, the commander tried reason and persuasion. But though the latter was carried to the point of cajolery the result was the same. Baffled in the exercise of his own authority and a trifle nettled in consequence, the energetic lieutenant determined upon a desperate expedient. In his best sarcastic vein he wrote out a signal and requested its transmission to the flag-captain. The officer in whose discretion it lay to forward or suppress the message being likewise an amateur, not yet too deeply imbued with a respect for conventions, the signal was duly made. It was to the following effect:—

"Submitted: That as there are at present forty workmen on No. 001, of which number half are seated permanently on the ship's rail, a further working party be at once sent down to strengthen the stanchions, which will otherwise collapse under the [187] strain."

Within half an hour a party of workmen reported themselves at No. 001 and gravely proceeded to strengthen the stanchions! Protests were unavailing: the men had their orders, and with bolts, rivets, rods, and who shall say what other contraptions, they proceeded to carry them out with a thoroughness almost menacing.

The commanding officer of No. 001 delights to tell this story to his friends as a shining example of the crass ineptitude of which the official mind, even in the Navy, is sometimes capable. It may be so; but his friends, observing those admirably buttressed stanchions, and noting the considerable inconvenience to which their immovable presence permanently condemns the maker of that rash signal, sometimes wonder whether the laugh is altogether on the latter's side.

Lieutenant X—— looks forward to some future day when he may meet the flag-captain in person, and there is no doubt he already has a very good notion of what he then intends to say. But suppose he should be greeted, before ever he can introduce the topic himself, with the genial inquiry, "And how are your stanchions lasting?"

They have a way of their own in the Navy.

LITTLE STORIES OF THE BIG WAR [188]

Unusual Anecdotes at First Hand

Told by Karl K. Kitchen in Germany

> The four war stories which follow—stories of adventure, suffering and daring—were heard by Karl K. Kitchen of the *New York World* during his sojourn in Germany. Two of the stories he had at first hand, and can vouch for. A third was related to him by His Excellency Baron von Bissing, the Military Governor of Belgium. The fourth—recounting the exploits of Capt. Peifer, perhaps the most remarkable story of the war—was related to the writer by a naval officer. Copyright, 1916, Press Publishing Company.

I—STORY OF A MOTHER'S TRAGEDY

One of my best friends in Vienna was Ernst Karczag. Shortly after the outbreak of the war I received a postal from him stating that he was about to rejoin his regiment—he was a lieutenant in a crack hussar regiment—and proceed to the Galician front. At Christmas I received a long letter from him and a photograph of himself in his hussar uniform. Then one morning in March I received a cablegram from a mutual friend in London, stating that Ernst had died of cholera in Poland.

Ernst was in his twenty-fifth year and was tenderly attached to his mother. Until the war broke out he had never been away from home except on a brief holiday, and his long absence at the front last winter brought his mother to the verge of a nervous collapse. It came to a point where it was absolutely necessary for her to see her son. Mr. Karczag, although a millionaire and a man of considerable influence, was unable to get a pass for his wife to visit the line near Lodz in Poland, where the son's [189] regiment was stationed. She set out for Lodz alone.

After nearly a week of the hardest kind of travelling, much of it in troop trains, she reached Lodz, where she found every hotel occupied by German and Austrian officers. In desperation she decided to appeal to Gen. Mackensen, the famous German General, who was in supreme command.

"You shall see your son to-morrow morning," he told her when he learned that her boy was a lieutenant of a certain hussar regiment. "I am reviewing the Austrian troops at 6 o'clock to-morrow morning. If you will come to my headquarters at that time I shall permit you to witness the review."

The review of the Austrian troops lasted nearly five hours, and it was witnessed by Gen. Mackensen, his staff and the mother of my friend. Regiment after regiment passed by, but there was no sign of the young hussar officer. The anxious mother was almost ready to break down, when at the very end of the last regiment in the review she caught sight of her son. Forgetting her peculiar position she called to her boy. But he did not hear her, and a few moments later he galloped out of sight.

"I must have a few words with my boy," she pleaded with Gen. Mackensen; "I must talk with him."

Evidently she struck a sympathetic chord in his nature, for he told her he would send a motor car to the hotel to take her to her son's regiment. For two days she waited for the car, but as it did not arrive she again went to Gen. Mackensen's headquarters, only to learn that he had been called away to another position on the front. Apparently he had forgotten all about his promise. There was no one to help her, so she started out alone to reach the little Polish village where her son's regiment was stationed. [190] No conveyance was obtainable for any sum, so for three days and three nights the poor mother walked the frozen roads to her son's side.

It was a wonderful meeting between mother and son, and when the Colonel of the regiment heard what she had gone through he placed his own quarters at her disposal. When the time came for her return he sent her back to Lodz in a military wagon. Three days later she was back in Vienna, rejoicing with her husband that their son was alive and well.

Imagine their great shock when two days after her return they received a telegram from the Colonel of the regiment stating that Ernst had died suddenly of cholera.

It is difficult to convey any idea of the grief of the parents of this young officer. The father has lost all interest in life—money means nothing to him. The mother is inconsolable and her mental condition is becoming critical.

II—HOW CAPT. PEIFER WON HIS "POUR LE MERITE"

Shortly after the outbreak of the war, Capt. Peifer, a German naval officer in command of the cruiser *Yorke*, ran his ship on a mine and the cruiser sank with nearly all on board, but Capt. Peifer was saved. He was court-martialled and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.

The Captain being an expert in high explosives, influential friends pleaded his cause with the Kaiser, who suspended the sentence. Capt. Peifer accordingly was released and offered his services to the commander of the German forces in Turkey. He was assigned to duties connected with the production of munitions when the Gallipoli campaign began. According to the story, the British forces might have succeeded in reaching Constantinople if it had not been for Major Peifer. [191]

With characteristic energy and ingenuity he started several munition factories for the production of high explosive shells within a few miles of Constantinople. His knowledge, combined with German efficiency and tireless Turk labor, gave the defenders of the Dardanelles sufficient high explosive shells to check the invaders until munitions arrived from Germany.

Of course the Turkish and the German commanders-in-chief were highly pleased with Capt. Peifer's service, and the latter sent in his name to the Kaiser as an officer deserving the order of "Pour le Merite"—one of the most coveted honors of all Germany.

For once German thoroughness and efficiency were inoperative. Neither the Kaiser nor his closest advisers recognized in Major Peifer the former naval captain who had sent his ship on a mine in violation of proper warnings. The order of "Pour le Merite" was conferred on the new military officer, who naturally thought that his previous blunder had been forgiven.

Accordingly he applied to the naval ministry for permission to rejoin his old branch of the service. This let the cat out of the bag, and the entire matter was laid before the Kaiser. With true magnanimity he commuted the twenty years' sentence, but ordered the Major to remain in the army, promising him promotion in the very near future.

III—STORY OF AUTOMOBILE THAT CAPTURED AN AEROPLANE

The day Germany declared war on France, Gunther Hensel, the twenty-two-year-old son of Ernest Johannes Hensel, a wealthy real estate operator in Berlin, offered his services to his Fatherland. As he had been engaged in the automobile business in [192] Berlin he was enlisted in a motor car battalion, where he became what is known in Germany as a "benzine lieutenant," with no immediate prospects of ever becoming anything else.

However, last October, after driving military motors at the front for more than a year, an opportunity presented itself which won Gunther Hensel his coveted promotion.

While driving behind the lines near Arras he caught sight of a French aeroplane which had landed because of motor trouble. Young Hensel's only companion at the time was an orderly, so it was a question of acting without orders.

Without hesitation he drove at full speed toward the aeroplane. The Frenchmen opened fire with their revolvers, but their shots went wild, and before they could prevent it the heavy motor car crossed the field and crashed into the flying machine, wrecking it beyond all hope of immediate repair.

Both Frenchmen were caught in the wreckage, and the orderly, who of course had a rifle, forced them to surrender. Thus in one fell swoop the young benzine lieutenant captured a valuable French aeroplane and two enemy soldiers. In all probability this was the first aeroplane ever captured by an automobile.

As a reward for this exploit he received an Iron Cross and was transferred to the officers' college, where he is now getting instruction in the duties of a full-fledged infantry officer.

IV—STORY OF THE "UNDERGROUND RAILROAD"

Ever since the Germans have been in Brussels there has existed an "underground railroad" to aid escaped French and Belgian prisoners of war in reaching the Holland border and thus regaining their lines. The German secret service tried in vain to discover how the prisoners got away, but without success—until last September. Then one of the "operatives," as Detective Burns would say, conceived the idea of donning part of a French uniform and appealing to Belgian farmers on the outskirts of Brussels to help him to get over the frontier. [193]

When a train load of French prisoners was moved from Lille to Aix la Chapelle, this secret service man jumped from the train just before it reached Brussels, and, taking refuge in a barn until dusk, appealed to the farmer to let him remain there until he could obtain other clothes to effect his escape.

Impressed by the spy's French language and uniform, the unsuspecting farmer provided him with the desired garments. The spy then asked him for the name of some one in Brussels who would help him. The farmer directed him to a wealthy flour and feed dealer in the Belgian capital. This man in turn passed him on to another Belgian who was connected with the "underground railroad," and in less than two weeks the German spy found himself in Rotterdam.

Of course he had learned the identity of every Belgian who had befriended him, and on his return to Brussels he uncovered the entire "underground" system. The trail led right to the chief surgical hospital in the capital—the hospital in which Miss Edith Cavell was the head nurse.

POGROM—THE TRAGEDY OF THE JEWS AND THE ARMENIANS [194]

A Masterful Tale of the Eastern Front

Told by M. C. della Grazie of Vienna

> No result of the war has been more pitiable than the suffering inflicted on the subject races caught in its grip. These submerged peoples have had to submit helplessly to the brutalities of both sets of combatants. The Poles, the Ruthenians, the Ukranians, the Slavs of Bohemia and Moravia, have fought with little heart for Russia, Austria or Prussia, as the case might be. But the Jews of the Polish Pale and of Galicia have had an even harder fate; for while the men of military age have followed the flags of their masters, the women, the children and the old men have been obliged to face at home all the evils which travel in the wake of war—disorder, violence, disease, spoliation and semi-starvation. The following story is by M. C. della Grazie, a well known Viennese writer. It makes a masterly use of a single, simple incident to bring home the meaning of one of the war's most hopeless and poignant tragedies. It was written at the time when the Russians still occupied the greater part of the Austrian province of Galicia. This translation, with editorial comment, is by William L. McPherson in the *New York Tribune*.

I—STORY OF GABRIEL GABRILOVITCH

The colonel sat on the edge of his rumpled-up peasant's bed and with an impatient movement knocked the ashes from his cigar. On the dirty table before him lay the last number of a Russian weekly, which had just arrived by field post in Galicia—a little crumpled, but otherwise fresh looking, and with pictures which made one's mouth water.

The devil! Was it still going so comfortably back in Petersburg (he stopped suddenly and substituted Petrograd) with those rascals of civilians and war cripples? Did such attractive girls still come in and sing and dance as those whose pictures stared at him out of the pages of the last number of the *Nida*? They must be damnably well off, those dogs, able to frequent the Varieties, where people sit in cozy warmth about the tables and worry about nothing more serious than the genuineness of the labels on the wine bottles. [195]

And he, Gabriel Gabrilovitch! He had lain with his regiment for nearly two weeks in this miserable Galician hole and was forced to congratulate himself that a single windproof hut remained in which to stop for breath after all those futile attacks—that he was able at night to throw himself on a bundle of straw under this foul roof and drink punch brewed from whiskey stolen from the Jews.

For this time no headway was to be made against the devils opposite. Not even once as far as their barbed wire defences! So well was their artillery posted. To such a raking fire was every moving object exposed which came in sight within an area several hundred meters wide!

A tiresome game that—an accursedly tiresome game—and if Gabriel Gabrilovitch himself should be one of the victims! He sprang up and began to pace with heavy steps the uneven clay floor. He knew of better things than that!

Those Petrogradians—look, look!

The slender, willowy, singing girl there in the *Nida*, with that smile which was in itself a seduction! She evoked another image in his excited fancy. It was his last evening of pleasure in golden Petrograd. In a variety cabaret, too.

The stage is already empty, the programme finished. But in a room off the stage reserved for the performers and their guests he sees just such a piquant little creature take form in the thin smoke clouds of his cigarette. Exactly the same smile—acquired in Paris, and then carried triumphantly from stage to stage, from banquet to banquet. [196]

The imitation diamonds glitter in the deep corsage of her dress. The coquettish curls hang like golden orchids over her ears. The atrophied stare of the wide pupils has the fascination of a serpent's eye. Before her stands a tall, narrow glass vase, out of which nod the blood-red, long-stemmed pinks which he had brought her. He, Gabriel Gabrilovitch!

It is a picture imprinted so vividly on his senses by the warm rush of recollection that he thinks he really sees it—not least of all the purplish red of the vase of flowers.

They take it easy, those Nevsky Prospekt loungers—they take it easy!

He reaches for the glass—already cold, curse it! Not very long now and it will be day again and a new assault, as vain as the others, will bring them face to face with death.

A cold draft strikes his neck. He turns around, half angry, to see who has entered.

II—THE COSSACK LIEUTENANT'S HATRED

"Ah, so!"

It is the sotnik (lieutenant) of a Cossack detachment which has received the order to drive the last Jews out of the surrounding villages, so that the army can have a free field. The snow, which has frozen finger thick on his green overcoat, begins to melt in the close, hot air of the room. The small, hard Asiatic eyes shine. The red, frosted fists are still clenched, as if they had just beaten somebody. [197]

"One can't be really angry with these fellows," says the colonel to himself, with a feeling of soldierly satisfaction.

"They are such splendid beasts."

But he asks aloud:

"Finished?"

The Cossack's laugh is quick and harsh.

"All herded together, Colonel. Nothing is lacking but the Red Sea."

"How many?"

"Several hundred."

"And where are you going to drive them?"

The young lieutenant raises his shoulders slowly, so that the snow on them touches and cools his red cheeks.

"I'll have to get an order from you as to that!"

"An order!" cries the colonel. "An order! Now, by all three metropolitans! The devil take me if I know!"

The sotnik raises his shoulder again.

"While they're here they will be in our way."

"The vermin," growls the colonel, "always pestering us like——"

"Like others we are on intimate terms with," laughs the Cossack.

"Look there, if you please!" And half jokingly, half disgustedly, he points to a black swarm of roaches hurrying like a wagon train from behind the stove and making for a crack in the floor near the open door.

"They are emigrating, the vermin," exclaims the colonel; "upon my soul, they are."

"Because they are hungry," says the Cossack, with a grin.

"But the Jews. The Jews, those——" curses the colonel.

"Just as black and just as hungry—but good patriots." [198]

The colonel lifts his head, gazes thoughtfully for a while into the flickering flame of the slowly melting candle. Then he begins to laugh.

"Why didn't I think of it before? Why didn't I think of it before? Ah, Little Brother, what asses we have been!"

The Cossack's eyes snap. He, too, has a plan which in all this orgy of bloodthirstiness appeals to him with an even bloodier zest.

"Do you know what we shall do with them—with all these patriots?"

"Drive them together somewhere and sabre them," suggests the sotnik.

"So that they can fill the newspapers again with their tale of martyrdom," laughs Gabriel Gabrilovitch, scornfully. "Beware, Little Brother, beware! We shall leave that to their countrymen this time."

The blank eyes of the Cossack follow the colonel questioningly—like the eyes of a hunting dog.

"So," laughs the latter, softly stroking his cheek. "We'll drive these patriots to the Austrian wire entanglements. What do you think? Will those people over there shoot down their own subjects?"

"But they are non-combatants, Gabriel Gabrilovitch——"

The young man suppressed the thought before he had put it into words. There was something in the voice of his superior which cowered him. And, like a hunting dog, he merely listened.

"Don't you see, Little Brother?" continues Gabriel Gabrilovitch, rubbing his hands together with satisfaction. "And just because in that case they will not fire, we shall rush in on the enemy. We shall have cover and can excuse ourselves for using it."

"It would take the devil himself to think of that!" exclaims the sotnik, full of submissiveness and admiration. [199]

"I am a good Christian," declares Gabriel Gabrilovitch with bitter humor. "And now I must have an intermediary; for, naturally, I must inform the enemy so that they will not shoot down so many patriots."

The young Cossack rocked his body as if already in the saddle.

"Won't you permit me to go?"

"Muttonhead! Shall I send one on whose face are the imprints of all the Devil's ten fingers? Pick out the youngest, the handsomest and the stupidist of the sotnia and send him over. The kind that believes anything anybody tells him. Then they over there will believe him. And what we are going to do nobody but you and I will know. Well, have you any such 'steed of God?'"

The sotnik strikes his body with both hands, smiles and nods. "There is a Raskolnik here."

"Is that so, Little Brother?"

Both burst into violent peals of laughter as if overcome by the humor of the situation.

III—THE PLOT THAT FAILED

They would send the Raskolnik—the sectarian who was prepared to die at any moment rather than sin in any particular against the teachings of Jesus, who even in war abhorred attacking the enemy and wanted only to defend himself—one of these religious enthusiasts who had to be driven into military service with a whip. What a joke for these two orthodox Slavs to load upon this "steed of God" the bloodguilt of their stratagem!

They laugh—laugh till their eyes fill with water.

Half an hour later a young cavalryman trots away into the murky dawn.

The fresh wind of the steppe whistles about his ears. Over his head flutters the little white flag, which they have fastened to the top of his lance. [200]

"How is it that he has found so much favor in the eyes of his commander as to be sent as a parlamentaire to the enemy?"

But he puzzles little about that. He is glad that the poor creatures of God who have been driven like mice out of their holes will be allowed to go to-morrow over into the camp of their friends. He must be a real man, the colonel, even if so far the soldiers have found little good in him.

In the east it is getting lighter. Already a silvery wave spreads over the plain from the edge of the horizon. By the time he arrives at the first entrenchment it will be so light that the enemy can easily see the flag on his lance.

"It is cold," he muses. "But yet it is already spring, and where my horse steps the snow gives way. Soon the steppe will be green again, just as it will be back in Russia."

And in the midst of the deep silence which surrounds him, in sight of all the horrible traces which war and death have left upon his pathway, there blossoms out of his innocent soul a pure, sweet memory—of home. He recalls the straw-covered hut, the calm and mighty waves of the distant Don, the peace of the steppe purling like a breath from heaven through the tall grasses.

He was only a pious peasant's son—not a Cossack. But now they have put him as a supernumerary in a Cossack regiment, and he must go along, through all the blood, through all the horror.

With a slight shudder he puts his hand upon the crucifix beneath his soldier's coat and crosses himself.

"God grant me His grace!"

On the other side they had caught sight of him. A sentinel advanced to meet him. Soon he stands before the Austrian officer. [201]

The latter is a handsome, sturdy man. Everything neat about him, although he has lain so long with his men in the trenches. Close up to him the soldier stands, so that he can feel the other's breath—but it doesn't smell of brandy. The gray eyes hold him fast while he speaks. Not a muscle moves. But suddenly he laughs in the messenger's face.

"Good. Now ride back. And say to your colonel that he has miscalculated if he believes that I shall not open fire if you try to sneak in behind those unfortunates. I know my duty, and should innocent blood be shed the blame will rest on you."

He speaks and turns upon his heel. The sentinel leads the dejected messenger back to his horse and calls scornfully after him: "Are you really so stupid or did you think that we were so stupid?"

The latter makes no answer. But a few steps further on he strips the white flag from his lance and throws it in the muck. Then that was the colonel's idea. And he will stick to it. At his command they are to hide like cowards behind the victims who are to be pushed—as a living wall—up to the enemy's trenches!

"They are, of course, only Jews," he says to himself. "But yet—but yet——"

Why does he feel that way about it?

Suddenly he realizes.

Like a picture it stands before him.

The sputtering fire about which the half-frozen Jews are huddled together—women, children, grizzled old men. Here and there a sentinel to guard them. He, too, one of the guards.

IV—IN HIS BREAST HIS OWN BULLET [202]

Like shadows they crouch about the fire, rub the freezing hands of the children between their own, weep, groan, pray softly. One has prayer boxes bound on his brow and on his arms and nods and bows unceasingly, so that his shadow dances like a curious grotesque against the light of the fire. The Cossacks laugh. He, too, has laughed, carelessly, unconcerned.

Laughed until he has suddenly noticed the woman at the side of the bearded Jew—with the slumbering child at her breast. Something in that sight appealed to him strangely. But then they had summoned him before the sotnik. And he had thought of it no more.

How sharply that whole picture stands before him now—and among the other details especially these three: The man in prayer, the shivering mother bent toward the fire, her head cloth like a veil drawn deep over the unconscious, slumbering child.

"Bethlehem," he murmurs reverently, and crosses himself.

And he is going to take part to-day in this infamy—he, a Christian!

Then it must be true what they believe back home. That the Pravoslavine is Anti-Christ. And he fights with him—for him—is part of his army. Have they then altered the text of the Holy Books? So that some day God's word of love will no longer be found in it—the Holy Word spoken by Him who lay in the womb of a daughter of the House of David?

It must be so! It must be so! And if till to-day he has doubted it, now all is clear. Only Anti-Christ can give such orders.

Shall he return to the camp? Stain his hands, too, with the blood of these innocents?

"When the master speaks the servant must hearken," they say back home. [203]

He must obey.

Something flashes in front of him like the flash of a gun.

"A bullet," he thinks.

"Would it were one!" he exclaims in the torment of his soul.

It is only a sun ray which suddenly shoots through the mist. But it has shown a poor mortal the right way.

They found the Raskolnik just outside the village—in his breast his own bullet, in his right hand the cross. On his lips the smile of peace that passeth understanding.

TALE OF THE SAVING OF PARIS [204]

How a Woman's Wit Averted a Great Disaster

> Little by little the "inner history" of the Great War is coming to light. This remarkable story shows how the presence of mind of a humble woodman's widow, in the early days of hostilities, led to the preservation of the Western Railway of France, on which at that time Paris depended for its supplies and the transport of troops. Told in the *Wide World*.

I—IN NORMANDY—STORY OF OCTAVIE DELACOURT

In a clearing of the Forêt de Lyons, near Martagny, in Normandy, and by the side of a barely distinguishable road, stands the rustic half-timbered cottage of Octavie Delacourt. A solitary habitation indeed, but one well fitted to the mental outlook of a lonely woman—no fair young heroine of romance, as some readers may hastily conclude, but a widow of over fifty with hair turning a silvery grey. Her husband—a forester, and the builder of the little home—had died from a fever a year before the war. Childless, she had elected to live on there alone, partly through necessity, partly because of the memories which the surroundings stirred in her mind whenever she went forth to collect sticks for her fire, or when, lying in bed at night, she heard the wind in the trees. Twenty years with "her man," twenty years of labour in common, had made her a fervent lover of the forest. It had become, as it were, her domain. Certainly no one knew better its confusing tangle of roads and pathways.

The outbreak of the war naturally had an effect on the mind and habits of Octavie Delacourt, but, alone in the world as she was, it affected her much less than it had done her friends and acquaintances in the neighbouring villages. In her case the war fever took the form of restlessness—an eager, insatiable desire to learn the truth about the danger which was threatening her dear France. [205]

As the cloud darkened over the country her anxiety for news grew keener and keener. It seemed as though her sub-conscious self was aware that the tide of invasion was drawing nearer and nearer to the fair fields and orchards of Normandy, and that one morning she would wake up to find Martagny, Gournay, and Les Andelys in the hands of the Boches. So every day, in those early weeks of the war, she was up betimes and, having carefully done up her grey tresses and put on a newly-ironed blue apron, set forth to one or other of the neighbouring villages, where she would be able to read the latest "communiqué" and pick up any stray item of news that might filter through from Paris.

About eight o'clock on the morning of September 16th, 1914, Octavie Delacourt set out in this way, her destination on this occasion being Gournay and the house of an old friend of her husband, a small landowner named Rismude. It is a good distance by road from Martagny to Gournay, so she decided to take a short cut through the Forêt de Lyons. Setting her best foot foremost, she struck off through the trees with the swinging stride of a hardy countrywoman, and soon picked up a little pathway amidst the undergrowth which she knew would lead her in the right direction. After walking for some ten minutes at full speed, she came to a part of the forest known as "La Molière," the site of a disused chalk quarry, the gasping white mouth of which is partly hidden by dense foliage. It was here that her eye—long experienced in woodcraft—noticed something unusual near the path she was following: a number of green branches, freshly cut from the trees, which someone—apparently in vain—had been trying to make into a fire. Stopping in front of the charred remains, she could not suppress the utterance of the reflection which sprang to her mind:— [206]

"How stupid to cut green branches for a fire!"

Hardly had the words passed her lips than Octavie felt a heavy hand descended on her shoulder. With thumping heart and suddenly blanched face she spun half round and beheld her aggressor—a heavy-featured man in a strange dress who, with a cynical smile on his thick lips and a hard look in his little grey eyes, had noiselessly appeared from behind a tree.

"How you frightened me!" exclaimed Octavie, retaining her self-possession, in spite of her fright, and endeavouring to shake off the leaden fingers which weighed on her slender frame.

But not a word in reply came from the mysterious man, who might have been made of cast-iron, so motionless did he stand. Gradually, as Octavie Delacourt fell to examining him, the hideous truth began to dawn upon her, and her heart almost stopped beating. She had never set eyes before on a German soldier; she had never even seen a picture of one. But she had heard tell of their uniform, in a vague sort of way, and suddenly, one might say instinctively, she recognized the ash-grey dress and the round cap of the same colour. How came the wearer of these tell-tale clothes to be in her forest, not fifteen miles from Les Andelys, and within rifle-shot of her native village of Martagny?

II—WAS HE GOING TO BAYONET HER?

The mystery terrified her. However, no trace of fear or the tumult in her breast appeared on her face. Her simple peasant logic [207] told her that would have been fatal. In the presence of the hidden and perhaps imminent danger into which she divined she had stumbled, she told herself, with feminine shrewdness, that at all costs she must preserve a brave countenance and combat the enemy by craft.

"What do you want with me? Can I be of any service to you? If you have lost your way I can set you right. No one knows the forest better than I."

She paused and smiled.

The German soldier's only reply was a sort of grunt and a slightly relaxed hold on her shoulder. At the same time he led her in the direction of a deep excavation, formerly used as a wolf-trap. What was he going to do to her? She now noticed that he carried in his right hand a bayonet, with which he swished, as they walked along, at the tall grass and weeds. Was he going to kill her? She would have turned and fled like a hare but for the grip in which she was held. Perhaps, after all, she thought, there was greater safety in non-resistance than in attempted flight. So she allowed herself to be led to the very edge of the excavation before saying to her captor, in a pleading voice:—

"You are not going to do me any harm, are you? I'm only a poor, inoffensive woman."

Whilst making this appeal, standing on the edge of what she imagined might be her grave, she noticed that the greater part of the hole was skilfully hidden by a roof of branches. The next moment she heard the man with the bayonet whistle, whereupon the head of a blond, blue-eyed giant, also dressed in grey, but with the rank marks of an officer, suddenly appeared through the aperture. Words in a gutteral tongue passed between the two soldiers. Then the fair-complexioned Boche, eyeing her critically, shrugged his shoulders disdainfully, uttered an order, and disappeared.

The leaden hand immediately fell from Octavie Delacourt's shoulder and she was once more free. Now, however, all her [208] strength seemed to have gone from her. The feeling that she had just escaped a very real danger robbed her of her desire to flee. Slowly, timidly, like a frightened animal, she moved away, with her head slightly turned towards her captor, who stood watching her, as a cat will a mouse, his bayonet still in his hand and a look of mingled cruelty and regret on his coarse, heavy features. A few steps more and he called to her to halt.

"Has he changed his mind?" thought Octavie, seeing him walk towards her. No; he intended to do her no harm; all he wanted to do was to take her by the hand and lead her in an entirely opposite direction to the one she was heading in. This done, he released her.

Once through the trees, and hidden from view, Octavie Delacourt made a *détour* and ran as fast as her legs would carry her to Neuf-Marché. At first she thought of returning to Martagny, but the fear of being recaptured restrained her. Moreover, she felt that she had now an urgent duty to perform—to inform the nearest authorities of her discovery. That it foreboded something extremely serious for the country she could now no longer doubt for a moment. In her flight she had caught sight through an opening in the trees, of a third grey-clad soldier, lying flat on his stomach at the edge of the forest and, with his rifle close to hand, watching the movements of a peasant guiding his plough.

Dupont, the *aubergiste* of Neuf-Marché, listened to her story with a puzzled face. But, though his scepticism was great, he did not allow it to get the better of his judgment. "Nothing would astonish him in these times," he declared; so off he went in search of the *garde champêtre*, one of the keepers of the forest. He was lucky in catching him before he went for his leisurely morning round, and brought him to the inn, ready to explode with hilarity. [209]

"My poor woman, you must be suffering from illusions," he exclaimed, bursting into a roar of laughter. "Prussians in the Forêt de Lyons? No more than there are cockchafers on a switch!"

Whilst he hastened to turn to his wine and touch glasses with the innkeeper, Octavie, seeing that it would be useless to discuss the matter, slipped out without a word and hurried off to the *gendarmerie*. Here Quartermaster Crosnier was almost as difficult to convince as the *garde champêtre*.

"Prussians at Martagny?" he said, with wrinkled brow and a look of doubt in his eyes, as he twisted his moustache. "Are you quite sure? You astonish me."

"Yes, I'm quite sure," affirmed Octavie, in an almost supplicating voice. "Quite, *quite* sure. And if you go after them, take care you go in force, otherwise they will kill you. There is one Boche, as I've told you, at the edge of the wood, ready to fire, and I've no doubt there are others also lying in waiting."

"Certainly we shall go and see if there's anything in what you say, my good woman," replied the Quartermaster, in a condescending tone, which proved to her that he was still undecided whether to accept her story for gospel.

However, there was no knowing. So he promised he would see to the matter at once. Fraets and Lebas, his *gendarmes*, should accompany him into the wood. They would look into the mystery as a matter of duty.

III—"BUT FOR A CURSED COUNTRY WOMAN!"

On leaving the constabulary Octavie Delacourt, not wholly satisfied that she had set the administrative machinery sufficiently in motion, asked herself what more she could do. All at once she thought of the post-mistress she knew at Mainneville, a village [210] some three miles off. Excellent idea! A post-mistress had both the telegraph and telephone at her disposal, and she knew that this official, at any rate, would not laugh at her. Pulling herself together once more, she set off at a brisk walk—almost a run—in the direction of Mainneville.

There, as she had foreseen, she met with the most sympathetic of receptions. Mme. B——, the post-mistress, lost not a moment in telephoning to M. Armand Bernard, the Prefect of the Eure, who immediately passed on the news to his colleagues of the adjoining departments. Within half an hour not a prefect, not a commissary of police, not a *gendarme* with a radius of a hundred miles was uninformed. The Germans in the Forêt de Lyons and their accomplices were entrapped, as it were, within the meshes of a net.

Octavie Delacourt went to sleep that night content indeed. But she little knew what a service she had rendered to France—nothing less, in fact, than the saving of the Western Railway line, on which Paris depended at that time for its supplies and the transport of troops.

The facts relating to the capture of the Huns in the Forêt de Lyons, and those working in conjunction with them, were briefly recorded at the time, but, overshadowed by the greater events of those early days of the war, their true significance was lost sight of. A Prussian captain, a non-commissioned officer, and eleven engineers were arrested at Oissel, thanks to the good marksmanship of Sergeant Leroy, of the G.V.C. Service, who punctured with rifle-bullets the tyres of the motor-cars in which they were fleeing. One of the cars bore the plate and number of the prefect of police of Aix-la-Chapelle. In a motor-lorry which formed part of the convoy was half a ton of explosives.

In the course of his examination the German officer declared that he had crossed the departments of the Somme and the Oise [211] without being troubled, and that he had come into the Eure with the intention of blowing up the Oissel bridge, or, failing this, that of Manoir. He added that "but for a cursed countrywoman" whom one of his men had caught in the forest, and whom he ought to have "suppressed," he would certainly have succeeded.

This happened about three o'clock in the afternoon. Less than an hour later it was discovered that the capture had not been made without bloodshed. Between the "Molière" quarry and the excavation where the blond Hun had appeared to Octavie Delacourt three bodies were found stretched on the ground—those of the luckless Quartermaster Crosnier and his *gendarmes*, who had been shot almost point-blank when calling on the automobilists to surrender.

Octavie Delacourt's presence of mind, bravery, and persistence were recognized by the French Government. But the service she rendered was infinitely greater than either the praise or the monetary reward—one hundred francs!—which she received for having been instrumental in preventing the perpetration of an act which might have resulted in grave disaster to the capital of France.

HOW IT FEELS TO A CLERGYMAN TO BE TORPEDOED ON A MAN-OF-WAR [212]

Told by the Rev. G. H. Collier, Chaplain on Board the
British Cruiser "Cressy"

I—"MY LIFE SPARED IN MIRACULOUS WAY"

As you know, I was on the cruiser *Cressy* on September 22, 1914, when in company with the cruisers *Aboukir* and *Hogue* she was torpedoed by a German submarine. My life has been spared in a most miraculous way.

About 6:15 a.m. I was awakened by some marines waking their comrades. "Get up quick, the *Aboukir* is sinking."

I tumbled out of my bunk, put on my shoes and slipping my big coat over my pajamas I hastened up to the sheltered deck. I should tell you that we were proceeding in line formation, the *Hogue* leading, our ship, the *Cressy*, bringing up the rear. We were steaming between six to nine knots, and at a distance of about a mile or so apart. When I got on deck the *Hogue* had fallen back on the starboard side of the *Aboukir*, while we stood by on the port side, both of us a good distance off.

The *Aboukir* had signalled asking for boats, which, of course, were sent off to them. Their ship gradually began to turn turtle, and it was an inspiring sight to see the ship's company lined up on the side of the ship awaiting the order, "Every man for himself." After a while I went down to the quarter deck and began with the others to throw planks of wood, etc., overboard.

While doing this the Hogue was hit by a torpedo from a German submarine and very quickly settled down. Indeed, no sooner [213] was she hit than her quarter deck was below water. She then listed, turned turtle, and in about ten minutes had disappeared.

Our captain sent me word to take photographs, and I had taken five when I saw the white line of a torpedo approaching us in the starboard side, in line with the aft-bridge.

A few shouts heralded her approach, but nothing could be done, as our engines were not going, and she bored her hole in our side.

The impact was not so great or so terrible as I should have thought, indeed it was a dull thud, and did not even throw me off my feet. Previous to this the order to close watertight doors had been given, an order which prevented this torpedo doing so much serious damage.

We listed to starboard about 40 degrees, and after a time the ship righted herself to about 30 degrees. Everyone was on the look-out for submarines, and guns were fired at every suspicious-looking object that looked like like a periscope. I am not going to make any assertions, as I am much too inexperienced. I was standing by when three guns were fired.

The first was fired at what I thought to be a man's head. At any rate the shell hit something, for it exploded.

Unfortunately, I was called down from the boat deck then, so did not see what ensued, but the gunner says he saw two men pop up from the spot after he fired a second shot, and the torpedo lieutenant supports his assertion of having hit the submarine.

The second shot I saw (of course, other guns were fired) was at what I feel sure was a submarine. She came up, and it was a plucky thing to do, amid a mass of struggling men. I do not know if she was hit, but I admit I felt a spasm of horror at the [214] damage to our own men in the water.

The third shot went right home, and did its work, and I cheered heartily with the rest. The Germans evidently attacked us under cover of a sailing trawler carrying the Dutch flag. This trawler, after we had all been hit, made no attempt at rescue work, a heartless act that roused our anger, and the captain of the after 9.2 gun trained his gun on her and fired. The shell hit her in the stern and she at once took fire.

II—"I SAW THE TORPEDO APPROACH"

While this was going on the Germans had fired another torpedo at us, but it missed and went astern. Meanwhile several men had swum alongside, and we helped them aboard, rubbed them down, pumped water out of them, and wrapping them in blankets gave them hot tea. One of those rescued was a midshipman. He was taken to the sick bay and after drinking his tea, he turned to his commander and said:

"Why shouldn't we get into these cots, sir?"

"Quite right, sonny, jump in." He hadn't been there long when we were struck again. The plucky boy jumped out and said, "Look here, sir, I'm off," and away he went and jumped over the ship's side, and was picked up by a boat some half-an-hour later.

It was this torpedo that settled our fate.

I saw her approaching about 400 yards distant, and she entered the ship's side just abaft of the fore-bridge and entered No. 5 boiler room. No doubt many poor fellows were killed outright. The ship seemed to rise out of the water, settled back and at once listed badly and began to turn turtle.

There was no panic whatever. The officers supervised the collecting of all woodwork, etc., and the order was then given, [215] "Every man for himself."

Our middies were awfully brave and busily set to work to construct a small raft with chairs and a boxing dummy. Staff-Surgeon Sawdy came up to me, after Dr. Martin had procured me a lifebuoy, and said, "Shall I come with you, Padre?" He is a west-country man and you may guess how readily I said "Yes."

After a time we had to kneel on the deck and hang on to the side. It was just before this that I slipped off my coat and shoes. When the ship was at an angle of 75 to 80 degrees, we stepped over the port side on to a ledge, and hung on to the chains. A wave caught us and knocked us against the side a bit, but not enough to injure us, but with the next the ship turned over.

I retained my hold of the chain and the lifebuoy, and when I felt the ship steady I let go the chain, and after what seemed a very long time came to the surface. Dr. Sawdy had also retained his hold of the lifebuoy and we appeared together in the water.

You may not realize how we could do it, but we actually laughed. He complained of the length of time below water (I had been keeping him down), and to suddenly pop up together, was really funny. We at once struck out with our feet (as I can't swim) and succeeded in getting away from the ship.

We were soon joined by others, and six of us stuck to our lifebuoys and a plank of wood which came floating by. After about ten minutes I began to shake badly and my teeth were chattering.

It was a horrible feeling, and I told the doctor I couldn't hang on much longer, but he told me—good fellow that he is—to hang on, and after a while the shivering passed off, but a sort of numbness set in and occasionally we had cramps. To keep the [216] circulation going we rubbed each other's legs, or kicked about a bit.

III—THE WAY MEN MEET DEATH

The scenes in the water were not so terrible as you may think. Here and there men were singing, "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," "We All Go the Same Way Home," indeed, one man who joined us actually began joking.

The way men met their death was wonderful. They would give a smile to their comrades, wish them luck, and slide away quite peacefully without a struggle.

Floating spars, etc., occasionally put us in difficulties and several of us were badly bruised. It was a strange sight to see one's comrades, some fully dressed, even to their caps, others naked, while others like myself were clothed only in their pajamas.

Before going into the water I happened to look at my watch and it was 7:50. It speaks well for an English watch, doesn't it? when I tell you it didn't stop till 9:15. This watch and my crucifix I still have.

Well, there we were floating about until 9:45, when we sighted some trawlers approaching. It seemed as if they would never come to the doctor, a marine, and myself—for we were but three then.

At 10:20 I turned and saw a steam trawler near us and I suppose the relief was too much for me, as I became unconscious, so from then till 1 p.m. I must give information supplied me by the doctor. Becoming unconscious, he tells me I released my hold of the plank, but still kept my arm around the lifebuoy.

The steam trawler did not see us and headed away in another direction, but from behind her came a small cutter. The doctor shouted "If you come now you can save the Padre," and come they did, and, thank God, saved our lives. They hauled me into the boat and pumped away at me. I just remember being conscious for a moment and hearing voices. [217]

We were then put on the Lowestoft trawler, S. S. *Coriandar*, and put in the stokehold. It was not until 1 p.m. that I became conscious, a most painful awakening and I was very sick. The fishermen had put an under flannel over me and given me hot tea. They were indeed good to us.

Our commander was picked up by the same boat and was superintending the boats which were in company with the Lowestoft trawler and others transferring us to H. M. S. *Lennox*. (They had their reward off the Dutch coast, eh?)

We buried one poor fellow there and then, but brought home another. After being massaged, I was put to bed, where I remained till 5 p.m. until the worst of the soreness had passed off. We were landed at Harwich at 8:30. The passage home, I'm told, was not without interest!

An order was given to "clear for action." Those who could, rushed on deck to see what was happening, and in the far distance saw an aeroplane and a waterplane approaching, but as they put it, "There was nothing doing," as they turned out to be British.

On landing we were received at the Great Eastern Hotel, equipped as a hospital, by the matron and her staff of Red Cross nurses. After being examined by the doctor, and found to have no bones broken, I had my first meal since 7 p.m. the previous day, and it was good!

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[218]

LEON BARBESSE, SLACKER, SOLDIER, HERO

Told by Fred B. Pitney, War Correspondent

I—"I MET HIM IN THE TRENCHES ON THE SOMME"

This is the story of Léon Barbèsse, a volunteer of France. I met him first in the trenches on the Somme. He stood in a first line post, where we were halted because the Germans had begun a fierce rain of shells on the French lines. They were nervous that day, the Germans. All the day and night before there had been a succession of sallies from the French trenches. They were really only reconnoitering expeditions, but the Germans had come to think each the precursor of an attack in force, and every time there was the least sign of activity in the French lines the German artillery burst into furious action, shelling the French trenches to prevent a sortie. We arrive as one of these *rafales* began, and we were halted to seek shelter.

The best trench is not proof against a real bombardment of heavy shells. Parapets crumble in like walls of sand. There is nothing reassuring about coming suddenly upon a great gaping hole in what has been considered a moment before a solid rampart, a hole still steaming from the impact of a white hot shell weighing half a ton. It does not add to one's confidence to find that instead of walking quietly along a well ordered corridor with a decent, dry plank floor one is crossing a miniature mountain chain, sinking suddenly into narrow valleys, waist deep in water, rising as suddenly to heights that leave half one's body exposed to the full view of the enemy. And to know that those valleys and those heights have been caused by the explosion in the trench of the shells that are constantly screaming overhead—that is the most disconcerting of all. [219]

Such was the position we were in when I first saw Léon Barbèsse. We had come to a comparatively quiet spot. The shells whined above us or exploded in the barbed wire in front, but they had not found the trench. We stopped to take stock, to look about us, to get our breath, to straighten our backs and get a new thought in our minds, something except where the next shell would land. And standing in front of us in the trench, some ten feet away, I saw a bearded soldier with the stripes of a sergeant and the ribbon of the *Medaille Militaire*—the highest honor any French soldier, from ranking general down, can win—and the *Croix de Guerre* with two palms, meaning that he had been mentioned twice for conspicuous bravery in the general orders of the army. Despite his beard he was a young man, well under thirty, and he stood with a quiet air of confidence and looked at us with a certain amusement.

Five minutes later we were all distributed at the bottoms of various deep shelters. The shells had begun to fall on the section of trench where we were, and we had been ordered underground. I had descended eighteen steep steps, a matter of twenty feet, and found myself in a little, low celled, earth walled, square chamber, with six bunks in double tiers taking up three sides and the narrow door in the fourth side. The bearded soldier was in our party. He had preceded me and lent me a helping hand down the ladder-like stairs. When we were safe in the cave he lighted a candle and pulled up an empty shell box for me to sit on.

"You are safe here," he said. [220]

"That is all right," I replied. "I want to know why you smiled at us when we came up. We had come across pretty dangerous ground."

"I know you had," he said. "That was why I smiled. You know now something more of what it means to be a soldier. You don't know very much. You can go back and tell of the narrow escape you had, and you need never come again. But for a few minutes, when you were under that rain of shells, you knew the glory of war. You prayed. That was why I smiled."

II—THE CONFESSION OF A SLACKER

It was not exactly what one expects from a man wearing the *Medaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* with two palms. There was a certain implication in it. It sounded as though he meant that any man not in military uniform was a curiosity seeker or a sensation monger. I said something to that effect.

"No," he said hastily. "Not at all. Not at all. I only meant you could understand now, perhaps what it is that moves men in this, what makes them take part in it."

"Most of the men are conscripts," I said. "You are, I suppose."

"No," he answered. "I am a volunteer. I might be at the rear; I might even be writing for some paper."

It was a fine answer to my brutality.

"I beg your pardon," I said. "You are a volunteer. Tell me why you are here."

"I will tell you my name first," he said. "It is Léon Barbèsse. I was a schoolteacher in the centre of France, married, and with a boy four years old. The war came and I was called to the colors, as every one was called. But I was sent home. My lungs, you know. They are all right now, though. A few months of this life and your lungs kill you or they get all right. Mine are all right." [221]

He struck himself a heavy blow on the chest and grinned.

"I could not have done that in 1914," he said. "I would have coughed for half an hour."

"So I was sent back," he continued, "and I was glad of it. I can't tell you how glad. I did not want to go to war. I was afraid. That is the truth. I was afraid. And when the doctor said I would not do, I could have cheered. The doctor was sorry for me, and I pretended to be sorry, also, but not too sorry, for he might have passed me.

"I went home. I was safe. I did not have to fight. I did not have to be killed. I did not have to be ashamed, for the doctors had turned me back. Well, I was ashamed. My country was in danger. The Germans were in France. And I was at home. But I was afraid. There you have it, I was ashamed because I would not fight for my country, my country that needed me, and I was afraid to fight. I was afraid to be hurt. I was afraid to die.

"Do you remember when they called the 1917 class a year ahead of time? I went then. I volunteered. God, what a struggle that was! I walked the road to the *caserne* with the sweat running off me. For a year I had dreamed nightly of the shells. I had heard them. They had fallen around me. I had been wounded. I had felt the impact of the steel on my yielding flesh. For a year I had spent my days trying to hide my terror from my wife, my friends and my neighbors. And all the time my country had called. Fear and shame! Fear and shame! My country called and I was afraid to go!

[222] "For a man who loves his country, there is nothing harder than to be a coward and know it. I went at last because I could not stand the torture of failing to do my duty. No one else knew. I had been sent back by the doctors. I was blameless before the community. But I knew it was because I was afraid to be hurt, afraid to die. So when they called the class 1917 I went.

"They sent me to Verdun. Can you imagine what that meant to me? It was in the very midst of the German attack on the left bank of the Meuse. I had been drafted into a veteran regiment with a lot of others to help fill up the gaps, and I joined just in time to go into the front line.

"You know how the papers were filled at that time with the terrors of the Verdun fighting. It was not of the bravery of our troops that I read, but of the terrors. I don't know how I ever got into line on the day we marched from the rear to go to the front. Everything I did was mechanical. We were called before daylight; we had a cup of coffee; we were marching along the road.

"I had managed it up to then without giving myself away. True, I talked little to my comrades, and probably that saved me. But the morning we marched to the front, what saved me then I don't know, except possibly because I said nothing. I was unable to speak. I was numb with fear. I was sick. My stomach turned. I walked with my head down and my feet dragged like great weights.

"You know, at that time you could always hear at Verdun the pounding of the big guns. I had heard it for days, while my regiment was in repose. I used to go out in the woods by myself and listen to it and terrify myself by thinking what it would be like to be under that rain of shells. A foolish thing to do, but for more than a year, nearly two years, I had been under the obsession of my fear. I could no longer control it."

III—"WE WERE MARCHING TO INFERNO" [223]

"And then we were on the road, marching toward that inferno. By imperceptible degrees the pounding grew louder. I moved mechanically because I was in the ranks, with a man on each side of me and one in front and one behind. I had to go on. My will could not control my movements. I was part of a machine. The machine went toward the pounding and I went with it. That was all, except that once I vomited.

"Mind you, I had never really heard a shell, only the distant sound of the explosions. We had been marching nearly two hours, when I heard my first shell. There was a long, thin whine some place in the air. It was a new sound, and it was so strange to me that I raised my head for the first time since we started on the march. The man next to me laughed.

"'A shell,' he said.

"I looked all around me. I tried to stop to see the path of that queer whine, but the man behind me prodded me on. Several of them laughed.

"'You will hear plenty more,' they said.

"They thought I was eager for them.

"The shells began to come at regular intervals, all following the same path with the same peculiar whine. I tried every time to see them.

"'The Boches are hunting for a battery over on our left,' the veterans said. There was no change in the pace. I was saying to myself, 'I have really heard a shell, and I did not run.'

"It was very queer to me; I tried to think it out. I was afraid. I knew I was afraid. But I had not run. I began to wonder just how afraid I was, and I wanted to know. I had heard the shell and my curiosity was aroused. I wanted to go on and see how far I would go before my fear overcame me. With every one of their long whines I studied myself to see if I would run, then when I [224] continued marching with the regiment I would say:

"'Not yet; perhaps the next time. Certainly, there is a limit beyond which I will not go.'

"It was as though I were studying some other man. There was the me who was afraid and knew it, and the me who watched to see how afraid I was.

"Eleven o'clock came and we stopped for luncheon. We stacked our arms beside the road and eased off our equipment. I felt wonderfully relieved that I had got that far. I was not really hungry, because I was afraid, but I was enough master of myself to know that I must eat, and to force myself to do so.

"While we waited there shells began to fall close to us—close enough so that we could hear the explosion after the whine. Before we had only heard the whine. The first one made me jump. The whine was loud and strong and the explosion came quick and sharp. With the second I was strong enough to turn and look at the cloud of earth, smoke and rocks. I was doing pretty well. A shell fell short of us. Some of the men looked up and saw an aeroplane sailing around over our heads.

"'Better get out of here,' they said. 'That is a Boche. He is giving our range to his battery.' A shell dropped up near the head of the line, almost in the road. I heard no orders, but we all gathered up our rifles and equipment and marched off at quick step.

"I had looked straight in the face of the shell that fell in the field beside us. It was another triumph for me. I had looked at it, shivering, to be sure, wondering if I would run. But I had not run. There was still a little further to go to pursue my investigation and find out how much I could stand before I ran."

My curiosity got the better of me. [225]

"Have you found out yet?" I asked.

"I am coming to that," he replied. "We went on up that road at the quick step until we came to the entrance of a *boyau* leading to the supporting trenches. Shells fell around us all the time. The Boche aeroplane was still trying to regulate the fire of its battery, and there was a maddening wait at the mouth of the *boyau* until it came time for us to go in. We had been marching in the road four abreast, but we had to go into the *boyau* single file. My platoon was well toward the rear, and that made us wait. We had nothing to do but stand in the road and watch the shells and wait our turn."

IV—"HOW I CONQUERED MY FEAR"

"I tried to follow the course of every shell. My head was continually twisting. I jumped at every explosion. I could not control the muscles of my back and shoulders. But I stepped out of the line and walked a little way into the field, toward the shells. I wanted to see if I could do it. I got close enough so that I could hear a piece of shell whiz past my ear. Then I waited for another piece. It was a hard job, but I waited, leaning on my rifle and looking at the ground a little way in front of me, where the last shell had exploded. If I had moved my eyes from that spot I could not have stayed. Not until the third one came did I hear another piece of shell. The others had struck too far to one side.

"'Now I can go back,' I said to myself. But I walked very fast going back.

"In the *boyau* it was not so bad. A French *avion* had come up and chased away the Boche.

"I thought of the things I had done and hoped that having done them once I could do them again. But I was not sure. I was afraid. I knew that. I have always been afraid, and there has always been the question in my mind if my fear would conquer or if I would conquer my fear. [226]

"There was the time when it became necessary to take a message from our support trenches to our advanced lines in the *Bois des Corbeaux*. There was a *tir de barrage* to be crossed and volunteers were called for. I was chosen.

"By that time I had formed the theory that a man can do anything if his duty demands it of him and he will keep that in his mind. It was a part of the thought that came to me that first day in the *boyau* and I developed it later in the long nights. The first day I had no really coherent thoughts, only a great fear of my own fear. Afterward I found that I could control it, if there was a reason. And then I found that the reason was France.

"Of course, you may say that it was France that made me volunteer, but I do not think so. I think it was shame—shame that I feared to go when others went. With all the good reasons that I had for not going, with the doctor's word, I knew, nevertheless, it was fear that kept me back. It was because I could not tell the truth to my wife and friends and neighbours that I went.

"Only afterward did I find out that a great duty will take a man any place with a calm mind. I stood against German attacks. I was in counter attacks. I lay out in shell holes, helping to hold a line where there were no trenches. I never forgot my fear, but I thought of France, my country, my duty; and though I shivered and the cold sweat rolled off me, I held steady.

"Have you ever seen a *tir de barrage*? You can walk up to it and draw a line with a surveyor's chain on the ground, marking [227] exactly the limit where the shells fall, and all beyond that line will be a mass of boiling earth, like waves in a storm dashing on a rocky coast. There is no interval between the explosions. They are constant, unremitting, one following so closely on another that their detonations mingle in a steady roar."

V—"I DASHED FORWARD INTO EXPLODING SHELLS"

"I came within fifty yards of the *tir de barrage* and stopped to watch it and try to mark out a path. But no path was possible. No sooner was one chosen than it was wiped out, all the little landmarks gone, the whole face of the ground changed by a new rain of shells. My heart sank. My stomach went suddenly empty. I knew that I had reached the limit beyond which I could not go. I had found the point where my fear was greater than my duty. I lay flat down on the earth. I do not know how long I lay. I thought of nothing. There was only a horrible blank fear.

"And then I found that unconsciously, not knowing it, I was digging my fingers into the ground, clutching the roots of grass and dragging myself into the *tir de barrage*. I might as well have been dragging myself the other way, but I had lain down with my face toward my duty.

"When I made that discovery I got to my feet and stood upright for a second, not more, only time to say, 'I must not give myself time to think,' and dashed forward into the exploding shells. Such a race as that is like the last steps of a dying horse, one that has broken a blood vessel, straining for the wire, and plunges on his face in the midst of his stride. I floundered blindly into the raw earth and fell again on my face. But this time my mind was working. There was only one thing for me to do, and I knew it. [228] That was to go on. I crawled forward on my hands and knees. I could not stand. It would be certain death. Twenty times I was knocked flat, my wind gone, by the explosion of a shell almost beside me. But I crawled on. I did not know if I had been hit. I thought I had. Two hundred yards I crawled through the *tir de barrage* and then I got to our lines. They gave me the *Medaille Militaire* for that.

"You asked me why I smiled when you came up to us in the trench. I was wondering what you had to take you through the shells. I thought of my own struggles. I wondered if you had any of the thoughts that have crowded in on me under fire. And I smiled."

The next time I saw him was in a hospital back of the Somme, one of the hospitals where wounded soldiers stay only a few hours, unless they are too badly hurt to be moved on. He was one of those who could not be moved. He lay with closed eyes, asleep or exhausted—more likely exhausted—propped up a little with pillows behind his head and shoulders. His tunic hung beside his cot, and on it there was a new ribbon, the *Legion d'Honneur*. I stopped before him.

"There is little chance for him," the doctor said.

"What did he do?" I asked.

"Led his company into the Park of Deniécourt, when all the officers were gone," replied the doctor. "They got a footing in the park and stuck there for two days, because he would not give up, until we made a new attack and got the park, the château and the village. He had been wounded the first day, but he would not give up. He has received the *Legion d'Honneur* and been made a sous-lieutenant, but he will probably never know it."

I saw him once more. This time was on the boulevards of Paris. His left sleeve was pinned across his breast and above it were [229] his three medals, from left to right the *Croix de Guerre*, now with three palms; the *Medaille Militaire* and the *Legion d'Honneur*. He was having a look at Paris, he told me, while he waited for the train to take him home to the centre of France, to his wife and boy.

"I can tell them now that I was afraid," he said. (Told in the *New York Tribune*.)

THE DESERTER—A BELGIAN INCIDENT [230]

Told by Edward Eyre Hunt, formerly Antwerp
Delegate of the American Commission for Relief in Belgium

I—STORY OF AN AMERICAN AT THE BARONIAL CASTLE

It was five o'clock in the morning. A riotous sunrise deluged the Campine as I slipped into my clothes and ran down the narrow, twisting tower-stair to keep a secret tryst with the *Baas*, or overseer. Little slits in the tower wall, cut for mediæval archers, let in the arrows of the sun; and as I ran through the gloomy armory and the high-roofed Flemish dining hall—stripped of their treasure of old pikes, swords, crossbars, and blunderbusses by the diligent Germans—out to the causeway, and over the creaking drawbridge on my way to the stables and the dismantled brewery, I imagined myself an escaped prisoner from the donjons of Château Drie Toren. In truth, I was running away from Baron van Steen's week-end house-party for a breath of rustic air while the others slept.

The stables, tool sheds, hostlers' barracks, bake-oven, and brewery were thatch roofed and walled with brick, toned to a claret-red, pierced with small windows and heavy oaken doors. The doors were banded with the baronial colors—blue stripes, alternating with yellow, like the stripes on a barber pole—and in the centre of the hollow square of farm buildings fumed a mammoth brown manure pile. A smell of fresh cut hay and the warm smell of animals clung about the stables, and I heard the [231] watch-dog rattle his chain and sniff at the door as I passed.

I found the Baas standing before his door, his face wrinkled with pleasure, his cap in his hand. Behind him his wife peered out at us, wiping her fat hands on her skirts, and two half-grown children stared from the nearest window. The Baas and his wife were the parents of sixteen children!

"Good day, mynheer!" every one shouted in chorus.

"Good day, madame; good day, Baas." (I used the Flemish title for overseer—the word from which has come our much-abused word "Boss.") "I'm a deserter this morning: the rest of the Baron's party sleeps."

"Ah, so," laughed the wife. "Mynheer is like the German soldiers who desert by dozens nowadays. And would your Honor hide in the forest like them—like the Germans?"

"To be sure. The Baas is to show me the deepest coverts, where mynheer the Baron will never find me more."

We laughed and passed on. A girl with a neckyoke and full milk pails came by from the dairy; nodding faces appeared at the windows of the farm buildings as we walked toward the woods; bees sped in the air from conical straw hives close to our path;

and in a few minutes we were threading our way through a nursery of young pines, tilled like corn rows in Kansas, and all of equal age.

"Monsieur, there is a soul in trees," said the Baas, affectionately patting an ancient linden on the border of the old forest. The Baas was a man from the Province of Liège, and he preferred to speak French with me rather than Flemish. He had, too, a Walloon lightness of wit which went sometimes incongruously with his heavy frame, as when he said to me once when we were [232] debating the joys of youth versus age, "To be old has its advantages, monsieur. One can then be virtuous, and it is not hard."

"There is a soul in trees," he repeated. "All together the trees have a soul. A forest is one spirit. These trees are old men and old women, very patient and kindly and sluggish of blood. They nod their heads in the wind like peasants over a stove. And they talk. Sometimes I think I can understand their talk—very wise and patient and slow. Men hurry apart, monsieur, but the trees remain together like old married people and watch their children grow up around them.

"Here,"—we had turned down a path and were in the fringes of another forest of small pines—"here the Germans have taken trees for their fortifications, slashed and cut, and those trees that are left are like wounded soldiers: they have arms too long or too short, heads smashed; feet uprooted, and yet they wish to live, because they are one spirit."

"What is this?" I demanded abruptly; for at my feet yawned a little pit, with lumpy clay still fresh about it and a fallen cross lying half hidden in the weeds.

"Ho, that? It is the grave of a German," said the Baas heartily. He spat into the raw pit. "The German has been taken away, but the children of Drie Toren are still afraid. They will not come by this path, on account of the dead *Deutscher*."

His foot crushed the rude cross as he talked, and we walked on. But I was vaguely troubled. That vile pit and the thought of what it had contained had spoiled my promenade. As I had found on a thousand other occasions, my freedom in Belgium was only a fiction. The war could not be forgotten, even for an hour.

A partridge thundered up at our feet and rocketed to earth again beyond the protecting pines. In a little glade we surprised [233] four young rabbits together at breakfast. The Baas laid his hand lightly on my arm. "It is sad, monsieur, isn't it?" he said. "The poachers steal right and left nowadays. The *gardes champêtres* are no longer armed, so the thieves do as they will. There is more pheasant in the city markets than chicken, and more rabbit than veal. The game will soon be gone, like our horses and cattle.

"You remember, monsieur, the sand dunes by Blankenberghe and Knocke on the Belgian coast? Ah, the rabbits that used to be in those dunes! But now the firing of cannon has driven them all away."

A silence fell upon us both. The thickets grew denser, and we pushed our way slowly toward the deeper coverts. I found myself thinking of the little crosses along the seaside dunes which marked where greater game than rabbits had fallen—the graves of men—the biggest game on earth—the shallow pits and the frail wooden crosses, like that which the Baas's leather boot had crushed a half hour before.

II—"WE FOUND A STARVING GERMAN"

We had reached the deepest woods, when a gasping, choking cry stopped us short. The thicket directly before us stirred and then lay still as death. The cry had been horrible as a Banshee's wail, and as mysterious, but it was not the cry of an animal; it was human, and it came from a human being in agony. The Baas crossed himself swiftly and leaped forward, and instantly we had parted the protecting bushes and were looking down on a man lying flat on the ground—a spectre with a thin white face, chattering teeth, enormous frightened eyes, and a filthy, much worn German uniform.

"What are you doing here?" I demanded. [234]

The soldier did not answer, he did not rise, he lay motionless and hideous like a beast. Then I caught sight of his left ankle, enormously swollen and wrapped in rags, and his hands—they were thin as sticks. The man was helpless, and he was starving.

And now came a strange thing. We two walked slowly around the man on the ground as if he were a wild creature caught in a snare. We felt no pity or astonishment; only curiosity. Utterly unemotionally we took note of him and his surroundings. He had no gun, no knife, and no blankets. He lay on some broken boughs, and he seemed to have covered himself with boughs at night. The wild, haggard eyes turned in their sockets and watched us as we moved, but otherwise no part of the man stirred. He seemed transfixed, frozen in an agony of fear and horror.

"Ashes! He has had a fire here, monsieur, but it was days ago." At the man's feet the Baas had discovered the remnants of a little fire. "Holy blue!" he added in astonishment, "he has eaten these!"

A pile of small green twigs lay near the fire. The bark had been chewed from them!

A buzzing swarm of flies, disturbed by our investigations, rotated in the air, and a faint, bad odor hung about the place, indescribably stale and filthy.

At the end of our search we turned again to the man on the ground. "Who are you? What are you doing here?" I demanded again. There was no answer. "Baas, have you a flask?"

The old man slowly drew a little leather-clad bottle from his breast pocket and passed it to me in silence. He offered it with obvious reluctance, and watched jealously as I knelt and dropped a little stream of liquid between the parted lips of the creature on the ground. The man's lips sucked inward, his throat choked at the raw liquor, he opened his mouth wide and [235] gasped horribly for breath, his knees twitched, and his wrists trembled as if he were dying. Then the parched mouth tried to form words; it could only grimace.

For a moment I felt a mad impulse to leap on that moving mouth and crush it into stillness; such an impulse as makes a hunter wring the neck of a wounded bird. Instead, I continued dropping the stinging liquor and listening.

Then came the first word. "More!" the black lips begged, and I emptied the flask into them. The Baas sighed plaintively. "German?" the soldier whispered.

"No. American," I answered.

"The other one?"

"Belgian."

The frightened eyes closed in evident relief. The man seemed to sleep.

"But you?" I asked.

"I'm German—a soldier," he said.

"Lost?"

"Missing." He used the German word *vermisst*—the word employed in the official lists of losses to designate the wounded or dead who are not recovered, and those lost by capture or desertion.

"You understand, Baas?"

"No, monsieur."

"He says he is a German soldier—a deserter, I suppose, trying to make his way over the frontier to Holland. And he is starving."

The Baas's face became a battle-ground of emotions. His kindly eyes glared merrily, his lips twisted until his beard seemed to spread to twice its natural width. Instantly his face became grave again, then puzzled, even anxious. A stream of invective and imprecation in mingled French and Flemish poured from his troubled lips, and he stamped his feet vigorously. [236]

"He can't stay here," I concluded.

"It is death to help him," said the Baas.

"For you, yes; for me, no. The Germans can only disgrace me as a member of the Relief Commission. They cannot kill me."

"He must not be left to die here, monsieur."

"The Germans will probably search your house if we take him there."

"He may betray us if we help him."

"That is possible. But you see he is very weak—almost dead."

"He may be a spy."

"That again is possible. But see! He has eaten twigs!"

"He is a damned pig of a German!"

"But you do not feed even pigs on sticks and leaves."

"I am afraid, monsieur."

"So am I, Baas. Yet you must decide, and not I. It is much more dangerous for you than for me."

III—THE DESERTER'S LAST HOUR

We stared into each other's eyes, trying to guess each other's thoughts. Every one in Belgium knows that the German army sows its informers everywhere. We could not even trust each other in that stricken country. Deserters and traitors were tracked down like dogs. Any one who gave aid or comfort to such persons did so at the risk of his life. It is said that pretended deserters deliberately trapped Belgians into aiding them, and then betrayed their hosts. Something of the sort was hinted in the famous case of Miss Edith Cavell. Knowledge, then, bade us be cautious: instinct alone bade us be kind.

[237] The Baas's wide eyes turned again to the creature on the ground, and he sighed plaintively. "Monsieur," he began, in a very low, gentle voice, "I will help him. Give me my flask and I will go for food and drink. Then we must plan. Does it please you to remain here?"

"I shall stay here with him."

"Good! I will go."

I knelt beside the soldier and chafed his filthy hands until blood flowed again in his dry veins. The swollen pupils of his heavy eyes brightened. He talked continuously in a thin trickling whisper—a patter of information about dinners he had eaten, wines he had drunk, his military service, his hardships, and his physical and mental sensations. I had read of victims of scurvy in the Arctic snows dreaming and talking day and night of food, only of food. So it was with the starving soldier. The liquor had made him slightly delirious, and he babbled on and on.

His broken ankle pained him. When I moved him about to rest it, his lightness astonished me. The man had been large and heavy; he was shrunken to a bag of bones. His uniform hung about him like a sack, and it seemed as if the slightest jar would snap his arms and legs. Tears welled under his heavy, dirty eyelids. "Mother! Mother!" he whispered once. "Art thou there? Mother!" Then as his eyes again cleared and he saw the trees interarched above him—the trees which the Baas had told me were one spirit; the grim, silent, sepulchral trees; the haunted, malignant trees which had wooed him with their shelter and then broken him and starved him; the trees beneath which his forest-dwelling ancestors had cowered for thousands of years and to which they had offered human sacrifices—he broke down and sobbed horribly. "She is not here! She is not here! No, she is not here!" he repeated over and over again.

IV—"WE BURIED HIM IN THE PIT" [238]

When the Baas returned, we covered the deserter with our coats and fed him. Perhaps we did wrong to give him food, although I think now that he was doomed before we found him. We did our best, but it was not enough. In less than an hour, after a horrible spell of vomiting, the poor man was beyond all help of ours. His eyes rolled desperately, his breath came in horrid gasps, and he grew rigid like a man in an epileptic fit.

We tore open the breast of his uniform to ease his labored breathing. A metal identification disk hung on a cord from about his neck over a chest which was like a wicker-work of ribs. His belly was sunken until one almost saw the spinal column through it. His tortured lungs subsided little by little, the terrifying sound of his breathing sank to nothing, his head thrust far back and over to the right side, his arms stiffened slowly, his mouth fell open.

We watched, as if fascinated, the pulsing vein in his emaciated neck, still pumping blood through a body which had ceased to breathe. The top of the blood column at last appeared, like mercury in a thermometer. It fell half an inch with each stroke of the famished heart. It reached the base of the neck and sank from sight, and still we stared and stared. The man was dead, yet I seemed to have an awful vision of billions of sentient cells, billions of little selfish lives which had made up his life, fighting, choking, starving to death within that cooling clay.

The Baas bent his head, uncovered, and crossed himself. With a quick stooping motion, he closed the wide open eyes and straightened the bent limbs. Then he rose to his full height and looked at me sadly. "This man had a mother, monsieur," he [239] said. "We must forget the rest."

In the pit where the other German had lain we buried the body of the deserter, and we found and repaired the little lath cross and set it up at the grave's head. But first I took from about the neck of the corpse the oval medallion which told the man's name and regimental number. It was a silver medal, finer than those usually worn by privates in the German army. I have it by me as I write, and on it is etched the brave sentence, "God shield you from all dangers of warfare, and render you back to us safe and victorious!"

I was late for breakfast at the Château, but Van Steen kindly made room for me at his right hand. "Aha, monsieur!" he called gaily, "we thought you were helping to find the deserter."

"Wha-what, monsieur le Baron?" I stuttered in amazement.

"The German deserter. A file of soldiers woke us up at seven o'clock, inquiring for one of their men who ran away from Mons a month ago. They are searching the stables and the forest. They have traced him here to our commune. I hope they catch him!"

My fingers clutched the silver disk in my pocket. "I think they will not catch him, messieurs. He ran away a month ago, you say?"

"A month ago.... But it is nothing to us, eh? Let us eat our breakfasts." The Baron bowed grandly to me. "Monsieur le Délégue," he began in his smooth, formal voice, "once again we remind ourselves that it is thanks to you and the generous American people that we have bread. It is thanks to you that our noble Belgium is not starving.... Eh bien! Let us eat our breakfasts."

And so we did.

(Told in the *Red Cross Magazine*.)

GRIM HUMOR OF THE TRENCHES [240]

As Seen by Patrick Corcoran, of the Royal Engineers

> Patrick Corcoran, of the Royal Engineers, on leave in New York, gives a picture in which the monotony of slaughter is relieved by wagers among the men and pranks with a football as the charge begins. Told in the *New York World*.

I—AN IRISHMAN TELLS HIS TALE

"To the German soldier war is a serious business. To the Frenchman it is sublime devotion. To the Englishman it is bully sport."

This from Capt. Patrick Corcoran of the Royal Engineers, hero of a dozen "Somewheres" in France, twice wounded and on permanent leave in New York City.

"And to the Irishman?" I asked.

"Fighting always was the Irishman's great amusement," he said. "The English are good sports, but they never did get the fun out of their fun that the Irish do."

Fun in the trenches! With shells dropping all around and blowing the bodies of your comrades into red fragments! What do the soldiers do, I wondered, when this is happening?

The Frenchmen sing, this captain told me. Not to keep up their courage, but joyously, exultantly.

"And the British?"

"Sure, they lay bets on what the next shell will do."

[241] "The 'sausages' are the fine toys," the captain went on. "The Boche call 'em minnewieffers, but they look like sausages. They always come with a series of whoops, and you can tell almost exactly where they're going to hit. Then they sit down and rest five seconds before they explode; they muss things up a little sometimes, but they're decent about it.

"But the whizz-bangs—nobody loves a whizz-bang. You can't even hear them coming. You never have time to place a bet. They just whizz and bang in the same breath; and if you happen to be conscious after that, you help to bandage."

Capt. Corcoran enlisted as a private. I wondered how he came to get his commission.

"So did I," he said. "I was carrying despatches to different places within our sector; couldn't go to another sector without special orders. But one day I was asked to take a despatch to another sector and I took it. When I came back, they made me a lieutenant. Nothing at all had happened, and I couldn't understand it. I didn't have any pull that I knew of; and besides, pulls don't count nowadays.

"They told me a while later," he added, "that I was the seventh man sent out with that despatch. The first six were killed."

II—"I WAS IN A CAVE ON CHRISTMAS EVE"

It was nearing Christmas when I met Capt. Corcoran. He is a genial and, I felt sure, a rather sentimental soul; but his matter-of-fact conversation about matter-of-fact human slaughter was altogether chilling. So I asked him about Christmas in the trenches.

"I spent last Christmas at Loos," he said. Loos, one of the worst of slaughter pens! I grew expectant.

[242] "I was sapping," he said. "Part of an engineer's duties are the extension of deep underground passages toward the enemy's lines, laying mines under 'No Man's Land' and listening, if possible, for signs of activity on the other side.

"I was sapping—Christmas Eve. We were down thirty-five feet, in a little cave about nine by four. There were three of us. Along toward midnight a big shell landed right, and we were buried. We were buried thirteen hours. One of the boys lost his mind, but they dug us out Christmas afternoon."

"It wouldn't have been so bad," he added, "if we had only had to wait. But we could hear the Boche sapping just a few feet away and we hated like everything to be mined and blown up down there. You don't mind it when you're out in the open air, but you get nervous in a fix like that."

"It must have been a merry Christmas after all—just to get out," I remarked.

"No," he said. "Something happened that got on my nerves. I went as soon as I could to get my Christmas mail—wanted to see what Santa Claus had brought—and he didn't bring me a blessed thing but a bill for thirty pounds."

I have hoped for a reaction against war on the part of the troops—a psychological revulsion, in time, against the long-drawn-out killing. I tried to present my theory to the captain, but he didn't seem to grasp it.

"Everybody's nervous," he said, "for the first day or two—like a horse just in from the quiet country being driven through your city streets. But, sure, if he was going to shy at the 'Elevated,' he'd do it the first week. After that, he gets used to the noise and [243] he'd be nervous without it. 'Tis so with a soldier. He's glad to get wounded for a change, and be sent back home; but then he gets to missing the noise of the whizz-bangs and the coal boxes and the darling little sausages, and he isn't easy until he gets into the game again."

"But the horrors of hand-to-hand fighting," I protested. "How can anybody go through that and come out sane?"

"'Tis simple," he said. "You know you've got to get your man, or he'll get you."

"Get him? How?"

"With whatever you've got. Maybe your bayonet. Maybe your knife. Maybe nothing but your fists and teeth."

I tried to picture youths advancing under the smoke of artillery, through fields mowed by machine guns, dropping a moment into craters ploughed out by giant shells, creeping out under other curtains of smoke and reaching at last that other line of youths—then the thrust, the stab or the fight to the death with teeth and claws. I tried to picture young husbands and fathers and lovers, and even jolly good fellows, getting used to this—but I failed. I am an incorrigible mollycoddle.

"What is the war doing to the soldiers?" I asked. "How is it changing them most?"

"Making men of them," said the captain. "They came out little pasty-faced clerks with no lungs, no muscle, no nerve and no vision. Now they've seen life—and death—and aren't afraid of either. They have muscles and nerves of iron, and a man's outlook on life. They'll never be mere clerks or mere Londoners again."

Capt. Corcoran doesn't reminisce. He doesn't romance. Getting a war story from him is hard newspaper work; not that he isn't [244] willing to give information, but war conditions are no longer a novelty in Europe, and heroes are so common that their stories are no longer interesting. Little by little, I learned the following facts about his record, which did not seem at all extraordinary to him:

He fought in the battles of the Aisne, Pepereign, Festubert, Hooge, St. Eloi, Neuve Chapelle, Loos and Pommier. He was wounded at Neuve Chapelle, sent to England, recovered and insisted on going back. He was wounded again at Pommier last February, two miles back of the line, when a stray shell fragment struck him in the back. The force of it hurled him to the ground in the midst of some barbed wire entanglements that caught in his forehead and tore back his scalp to the crown. A comrade clapped a cap upon his head to hold the scalp in place while he was carried to the hospital. His recovery amazed the surgeons.

Once he broke military rules by staying away from his billet all night. That night a shell struck the billet and killed his partner with whom he had been sleeping for months.

At another time, a shell split a house in which he was installing signal apparatus and killed half a dozen telegraph clerks with whom he had just been talking. He was uninjured.

III—"EVERYBODY IS A HERO"

"Heroes," he mused. "I suppose everybody is a hero after he has got on to the knack of heroism. You don't call a man a hero because he rushes fearlessly across Fifth Avenue; but to a person who has never seen anything busier than a country road, the act looks heroic. It's something the same with No Man's Land. I have a friend, a doctor, who got a D.S.O. for going out on No Man's Land to bandage up some wounded comrades. He didn't know he was doing anything heroic. They needed care; they [245] couldn't come in, so he went out—that's all.

"It was different with O'Leary. He went out for the fun of the thing and got eighteen Germans."

The captain spoke of Private Michael O'Leary, V. C., who won the coveted decorations for this particular joke. It happened in the sector where Capt. Corcoran was stationed and he was well acquainted with the details.

"O'Leary had been betting on the 'sausages' for several days," he said, "and he was bored. He wanted some real fun and let everybody know he was in the mood.

"Betcha can't go across and bring back a Boche," somebody suggested. O'Leary sprung from the trench and went. In a second he was lost in the darkness and in half a minute the boys heard him yelling like a demon for help. Nobody could ever figure out how he did it—he must have brained the sentinel and disarmed the others while they were asleep. But there he was, with the arms of eighteen of them piled up before him, yelling back to the British trenches to come over and get the men. Of course, the boys answered his call and brought the whole eighteen back to the British lines.

"You see, the Germans, with all their efficiency, aren't used to that kind of fighting. They're always so darn serious about it. They're good soldiers but they don't have any fun. When they see us come over kicking a football ahead of the charge, they don't seem to know what to make of it. We do it sometimes, don't you know, just to add a little novelty to the sport.

"The war is just beginning. The Germans have a great machine and it'll take a long while to break it.

"As much as you people in the States have heard about German efficiency, there has been little overestimating of it. Only one who has seen the Germans in action can appreciate what a well-regulated business organization they have made of war. [246]

"I don't know what our boys will do when it's all over; they're so used to war that peace will probably come hard for a while.

"Seriously, now, I don't know a soldier who is even dreaming of peace. They didn't want war, but now that it is here, they're going to carry it through. And they're going to have all the fun they can out of it while it lasts."

PRIVATE McTOSHER DISCOVERS LONDON [247]

Told by C. Malcolm Hincks

> Experiences of a Highland soldier, back from the front, while visiting London for the first time in his life. The hero's correct name, of course, has been suppressed in this story in the *Wide World*.

I—STORY OF THE HIGHLANDER ON FURLOUGH

He was standing on the main-line departure platform of St. Pancras Station. Motionless, as though on guard over the bookstall, he might have been made of the granite of his native country, and I felt sure that his name was Sandy or Jock.

His war-stained khaki bore traces of many ordeals undergone; even the big, red knees were flecked with mud. Around him hung the extraordinary medley of equipment that so thoroughly justifies the old Army axiom that a soldier is "something to hang things on."

A red face beamed out like a beacon from the mass of paraphernalia, a wisp of sandy hair peeped from under the soft khaki headgear, but the steady blue eyes glanced at me with hard suspicion as I felt for my cigarette-case; and thinking my action might be misunderstood, I went into the refreshment-room and dined.

Nearly three-quarters of an hour later I emerged. It was eight o'clock, and I had half an hour longer to wait for my train to the Midlands. I gasped when I saw the Highlander still standing on sentry-go beside the bookstall. Presently he shouldered his rifle and paced along the platform. There was a clatter, and his steel helmet slipped from his back and rolled towards me. I just [248] saved it from going under the wheels of a heavy luggage truck a porter was pushing along.

The Highlander took his property with gruff word of thanks.

"Losh, mon; it's a terrible city!" he murmured, as he placed his rifle between his knees and groped among the multitudinous buckles and straps on his broad back. "D'ye ken it's been my life's dream to see yon London? Ma old mither don't believe in dreams—and I'm thinkin' she's reet. I'll be glad when eleven o'clock comes and I'm off for bonnie Scotland!"

"Eleven o'clock!" I gasped. "Why, you've nearly three hours to wait, and you were here when I arrived just after seven."

"Aye; I've been here since four o'clock. Mon, I know this platform as well as I know ma own wee house! I feel safer here than in yon streets."

Having fixed his steel helmet to his satisfaction on top of the other gear, he swung his rifle round on the sling—nearly braining an elderly gentleman who was passing behind him in the process. Ignoring the civilian's angry protest, he turned to me.

"That's the sixth," he said, shortly, and a faint glimmer of amusement came into his clear blue eyes, "the sixth thieving rascal that felt ma rifle this day. They hang round trying to steal something from ma kit. It's a terrible city. I've been discoverin' it all day."

"Look here," I said, "I've half an hour to spare, and you must be feeling hungry. I can't offer you a drink, but if you'll come and have some hot tea or cocoa and something to eat, I'll be proud, and you can tell me of your adventures."

The Scot eyed me suspiciously.

"A wee lassie made the same offer three hours since," he replied, doubtfully. "A lassie all in furs, but I didna trust her, and I [249] told her so. She was after ma money or ma kit, or she wouldn't have been so angry at having been found oot! But I'll trust ye, mon. I want a bite of something, and if it's my adventures you want to hear, it's a wonderful story I'll have to tell ye."

And here is the tale he told me, though I can only indicate the broad Scots in which he spoke.

II—THE SCOTCHMAN TELLS HIS OWN TALE

For years in ma wee Inverness-shire home I'd dreamt of seeing London. I'd never seen a city in ma life. I might have gone to Edinburgh once, but I lost the excursion ticket I'd bought and couldna find it till the train had gone. Ma mither had put it away for safety and forgotten where she'd put it! I was working for Farmer Macpherson when news of the war came, and about the end of August I was in the market-toon, when up came a chap dressed like I am now, except that he'd only got three stripes on his arm ... and was twisting a cane. "My lad," says he, "don't you wish to serve your King and Country?"

"Aye," says I, "but I'm serving Farmer Macpherson juist noo, and he and ma mither wouldna like me changing jobs."

Well, the sergeant had a lot to say. Mon, he was an awfu' liar, that sergeant! Maybe he came from here; I'm thinking he did! He talked of seeing life and of being in Berlin before Christmas.

"Mon," I says, "I'm not fashing maself about Berlin, but if I go in the Army shall I go to London?"

"Of course," says he. "As soon as you're a soldier you'll go to London."

"All reet," says I; and I sent a boy home with the pony-cart to tell them that Jock McTosher had 'listed and was going to [250] London. Well, I didna go to London. I trained in various parts of Scotland, just far enough away to miss ma home, but too close to get a real change. Then we went to an awfu' place in Wiltshire, all mud and huts and hard work; and then slipped across to France. I was a sad mon when I left the dock that night. I'd thought as a soldier I'd be sure to see London, but I'd never even seen a big town save the one we sailed from, and they marched us through that at night, when everything was quiet, and stowed us away in the big ship like smuggled goods.

Well, I'd given up all hope of seeing London unless I got wounded and was sent there, when a bit ago they told me ma name was down for a ten days' leave! "Losh!" I says to maself, "I'll have a whole day in London before going north!" Well, I've had it, mon, and it's been a wash-out!

At six o'clock this morning I arrived at Victoria, and with some pals had breakfast at a hut in the station. One of them was a Londoner, and when the laddies left me to go to their homes, he told me to keep straight along the street and I'd come to Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament.

Losh! mon, I was verra disappointed with London when I stepped out into yon street. It was quieter than the ruined wee village I'd left in France. Well, I looked at the Abbey from the outside, but no' feeling dressed for the kirk, I went across to the Houses of Parliament, thinking maybe the politicians would have had their breakfast interval and be starting again soon, as it was by then getting on for eight o'clock.

But the big gates were shut and there seemed no one about but a policeman. A nice mon he was—and he knew me, too.

"Halloa, Jock!" says he, quite friendly. "What are ye wanting?" [251]

"Mon," says I, "I'm having a day in London, and I want to see the Members of Parliament and the great lords at work. Maybe the day-shift's having breakfast and not started yet?"

The policeman laughed as though I'd made a joke. He said the members weren't working that day, and anyway they didn't start till the afternoon.

"Mon," I said, "they must make good money, or they'd never be able to live with so much standing-off time."

"They don't do so bad," says the policeman, with another laugh; and I walked up a road called Whitehall, though I couldn't see anything white about it, unless it was the faces of the wee lassies hurrying to work. Then I went into a park and sat down and had a rest and a smoke. Maybe I dozed for awhile, for when I got out into that same Whitehall again something wonderful seemed to have happened. It was all noise and rush, and I was saluting officers until my arm ached. Then I crossed the road a bit, and after having been nearly run over twice, turned down a side-street and lost myself.

III—ON THE WAY TO PICCADILLY

Presently I saw what looked like a kindly old gentleman, and I asked him the way to Piccadilly.

"You'd better take the Tube," says he. "There's a station just over there."

"Tube!" says I, doubtful like. "What's that?"

"An underground railway," says he, hurrying off. "You'll get to Piccadilly Circus in a few minutes."

He was an awfu' liar, that mon! Why, it was ten minutes before I got ma ticket! There were penny-in-the-slot machines besides the little windows; but I don't trust them. There seemed to be about half-a-dozen railways running into the place, and there [252] were maps with all the colours o' the rainbow to show you how to get to places; but as I didn't know where I was, or whether I was on a green or a brown line, they didn't help me much. I looked at the pictures and I looked at the pert lassies in uniform clippin' tickets an' all. I didn't like bothering them with questions, but at last I got to a window and asked for Piccadilly.

"Penny," says the girl.

"Aye," says I, and I put down ma rifle, not meaning to hurt the foot of the fussy mon behind me. "Is there any reduction for a return?" says I, having been brought up never to waste the bawbees.

"No," she snapped. "Penny's the fare. Hurry up, please!"

"Yes, do," growled out the mon behind, hopping about on one foot and I saw it was true about a crowd quickly gathering in London—for just in the little time I'd been talking there were dozens of people waiting in a line.

"I'll have to get at ma purse," says I, starting to search ma pockets. "Losh! I believe I have it in ma pack! Will ye give us a hand with these straps, laddie?"

"Oh, I'll pay your fare," says the man behind me; and no doubt he meant it kindly, though his way was rough. Well, I puts ma ticket in ma pocket and walks a little way. Then one of the wee lassies with clippers stops me and wants ma ticket.

"Hold ma rifle, lassie," says I, "so as I can get it."

Seeing how unsociable everyone else seemed, I spoke kindly to the lassie and told her I hoped she liked the job and her mither approved and all. But maybe, knowing Londoners, she didna trust any mon; anyway, the C.O. with a bad attack of liver couldn't have told me off much sharper; and there was a crowd behind charging at me just like a game of football!

Mon, I'm not surprised that these Londoners make good soldiers! A man that could take that Tube every day of his life would [253] think the first line of trenches restful! Down a sort of underground tunnel I walked; then suddenly I came to the funniest staircase I'd ever seen. I should have stopped to stare at the rumbling, snarling thing, but people from behind pushed me, and all of a sudden there was somethin' wrong with ma feet, and I found myself carried forwards. While I was looking about me steps formed before my eyes, and I gave a yell and clutched out to save myself.

Now mind ye, mon, I'm a respectable young chap; ma feyther was elder at the kirk and ma mither's always warned me to treat lassies with proper respect.

I didna know it was a lassie's waist I clutched hold of when I went down with a crash, ma rifle clattering and those awfu' stairs sliding downwards all the time. When I pulled myself together I saw that I'd dragged down with me a very pretty lassie, and she was sitting on ma knee! She was wearing one of those terrible short skirts, and there before my eyes was about a yard of silk stockings; but the lassie jumped to her feet just as I was going to shut ma eyes.

She was quite nice aboot it, mind ye—the only nice Londoner I'd met. She was flushed-up like, and confused, as anybody would be on that awfu' livin' staircase, but she helped me to get to ma feet and collect ma kit. It wasn't her fault, moreover, that I fell down again in getting off that movin' contraption. I thought I was going to be carried doon the crack where it disappeared, and what with marking time and trying to step off with both feet at once I came down again with another crash. I blocked the passage-way for a minute or two, and the poor Londoners, with never a second to spare, were clambering all over me. Do they get paid by the minute?

When I'd picked maself up and seen that nothing was missing, the dainty little lassie had disappeared. I was sorry, for, [254] although I've been taught to be cautious of women, she was certainly verra nice, and no weight at all on ma knee.

IV—"I'VE WALKED THE SEWERS OF LONDON"

Finding myself alone, I set off up a tunnel. Presently I came to a notice—"Exit by Stairs." I didna know what "exit" meant, but I knew all about those terrible conjuring-trick stairs, and so I turned back and tried another tunnel. Seeing a lot of people going into a little room, I followed them. I gave ma ticket to another lassie, but she was so busy love-making to a bit of a boy that she took it without so much as a glance at it or me. There were advertisements in the room, and sort of sliding doors at each end of it. "It's a waiting-room," says I to maself; and thinking there might be some time before a train came and they opened the other door, I lit a "fag." Very wisely, I saw, they'd put up "Beware of Pickpockets," so I kept my eyes about me.

"No smoking!" barks the lassie; and she came into the room, closing the other gates behind her.

I was just going to argue with her, when all of a sudden the room started to move upwards. Losh! mon, it gave me an awfu' turn! I yelled out, and a man standing next to me laughed—anyway, he laughed till I turned round and ma rifle knocked against his head. Then, before I knew what had happened, the other gates swung open in a ghostly way. Mon, I'll swear there was no one to open them! I drew in a breath of fresh air, thinking I'd got to Piccadilly but, if you'll believe me, I'd walked the sewers of London and *come out at place where I'd entered*! And that old man said the "Tube" was an underground railway! Underground maze, I call it! I walked to Piccadilly after that; I was afraid of spending the rest of ma leave down there. [255]

I have no doot that Piccadilly is gay enough. But I was feeling tired and hungry the noo there were officers thick as flies after jam; and there didn't seem room for me and ma kit on the pavement. And the lassies! Never have I seen such clothes, and some of 'em had enough fur on them to make twenty goatskin waistcoats. It's a queer thing, though, but all of them seemed to have their clothes too short for them; ma mither would have been horrified. They looked at me as if I was something out of a show, and I began to feel nervous. "Losh!" I says to maself, "I'll have a bit of dinner. I'll do maself well." So I walked into a restaurant, after dodging a naval officer who was standing at the entrance and seemed to have something to do with the place. As soon as

I got in I saw I'd made a mistake, and I'd have retired at the double, but a foreigner in evening dress, with about four square feet of starched shirt on him, came rushing up quite excited.

"You can'd sdop here," says he. "Dis blace is for ladies and gendlemen."

"Mon," says I, "there's many a rule made to be broken, or you wouldna be here."

"I'll haf no insolence!" he cries, going very red. "You go to a common restaurant. We do not serve your sort here."

That roused what ma mither calls the devil in me.

"Mon," says I, catching him by the collar, "I've been killing the likes of you for the past sixteen months. The only difference is that they wore a grey uniform, instead of that fancy dress of yours. Say 'kamerad' and bring me some sausages and mashed and a pint of beer, or you'll be the thirteenth I've finished off at close quarters, and that might be unlucky for both of us!"

"The Scotsman's quite right," piped a pretty voice; and I felt fair frightened. The whole place was in an uproar. Ma rifle—an [256] awkward thing is a rifle—had knocked over a chair, and a young Brass Hat (Staff officer) who was sitting at a table with the girl with the pretty voice, came over. I had to let the other chap go, so as to salute.

"This won't do, you know," says Brass Hat, very severe; but the pretty lassie frowned at him, and he looked a bit awkward. "Confound you, you fool!" says he, very fierce, to the man in evening dress. "The young lady wants this man to lunch with us!"

V—"AND I WENT TO THE CINEMA"

I can't quite remember what happened after that. I should have liked to have fed with that lassie, for her eyes sparkled like stars, and as the Brass Hat was afraid of her it showed she was worth knowing. Still, she wasn't my lassie, but his, and he mightn't have liked it, so I started to retire. The Brass Hat gave me half a crown and said something about being quite as keen on killing the waiter as I was; and then I found myself out in Piccadilly again. It was some time before I found a little pub where I got a good dinner, with beer, for eighteenpence. I will say that for Londoners, mon, they do throw money aboot. Within an hour or so I'd had a railway fare paid and been stood a good dinner. But they take so much more out of you than what they give you, that's my grievance.

Well, having had a good dinner, I strolled along for a bit, and then I thought I'd have a motor-bus ride. As I was standing on the pavements a 'bus stopped alongside me. Mon, I blushed and turned away ma head.

There, on the wee platform at the end, stood a lassie in a blue kilt shorter than mine and high-top boots. Ma little sister wears [257] longer skirts! She was a brown, curly-haired lassie, quite twenty years old, with a funny-shaped hat on her head and a cheeky smile on her lips.

"Want the Bank, Sandy?" says she.

"Lassie," says I, "war's a terrible thing! Go hame to your mither and ask her to lengthen your kilt!"

"Kilt, indeed!" says the hussy, unabashed. "You're out of date, old boy!" And she jerked the bell and the 'bus went off. She waved to me from the stairs, but, of course, I took no notice. By now I was tired of London, mon; I wanted a little peace. Coming to a cinema, I paid saxpence at a little ticket-office and went through a hall that was all mahogany and plush, with a sort of field-marshal in full dress sweeping the marble floor. A lassie with a torch pulled a curtain on one side, and I saw a man falling into a river with a motor-car chasing him. Then the lights went up, and I saw I'd paid saxpence just to stand. I said I'd been swindled, but the people round only cried "Hush!" and then the lights went out again and some letters came up on the screen—"The Big Advance on the Somme."

Mon, when you've been dodging shells and bullets for sixteen months, and ruins and broken trees are the only sort of scenery you've seen, you don't want to have "Big Advances" thrown at you on the pictures. I think I began a speech, and I'm sure it would have been a fine one, but things happen so sudden in London. I saw a shell coming over—on the film, ye ken—and I ducked from force of habit and jostled one or two people. In the excitement I upset a pretty lassie who picked up ma helmet—it was in the dark, ye see—and then I was put out. I wanted to go, or else they'd never have done it. After that—— Oh, is that your train, mon?

"I should have liked to hear the remainder of your adventures in London, Jock," I said, leaning out of the carriage window. [258]

"There weren't any more," replied Jock, gazing suspiciously round him. "I came straight here after that. I've had enough of London. I've only three hours to wait the noo! I'll be feeling a wee-bit lonely, but——"

The train moved away suddenly. I saw the brawny man in khaki take up his position by the bookstall, now closed. I waved to him, but he had turned to granite again. Private McTosher had discovered London!

RUSSIAN COUNTESS IN THE ARABIAN DESERT [259]

Adventures of Countess Molitor as Told in Her Diary

I—ON THE GREAT ARABIAN DESERT

One of the most striking of all the numberless enterprises of one kind and another which have been brought to naught by the war was the plan of a young, rich and beautiful Russian countess to unveil the secrets of one of the earth's last unexplored and admittedly most dangerous regions—the great Desert of Arabia, called by the tribesmen who live on its fringe "The Dwelling of the Void," a region that is three times as large as Great Britain, and upon which no European foot is yet known to have been set.

The young widow of a wealthy Russian nobleman, whose estates were in the neighborhood of Moscow, Countess Molitor's life had been full of thrilling experiences even before she made her plan to go, without any European companion, and conquer the unexplored Ruba-el-Khali.

Previously she had wandered, with only a small escort of native bearers, through savage Southwest Africa, and had been captured there and held for ransom by native torturers. She had adventured, too, among the savage Tuaregs of the Saharan Desert, known as the most bloodthirsty tribe on earth; had crossed the Alps in a balloon, made between sixty and seventy flights in aero and water planes, been attacked and kept prisoner by Apaches in Paris, had nursed in the hospitals of Europe [260] and taken part in rescue work in the slums of London.

Of the remarkable experiences that have befallen the plucky countess since then I am now able to tell as the result of having, to begin with, received several lengthy letters from her at Cartagena, in Spain, where she has been living for some months, and, more recently, having been privileged to read the mightily interesting and vividly written journal that she kept from the moment of her arrival at Port Said.

Had it not been for the war, it is extremely probable that the countess would have accomplished her project, which would have pushed her into the front rank of successful explorers. She carried out, it seems, her original intention, a venturesome one, indeed, for a white woman, of joining a Bedouin tribe and traveling with them, and had covered over nine hundred miles of her journey when she was caught in the Turkish mobilization and arrested, on suspicion of being a Russian spy, by the Moslems, who, from the beginning had frowned on her project and attempted to prevent it. Bitterly disappointed at being thus defeated just when the chance of success seemed rosiest, the countess was brought back as a prisoner to Damascus. There she had the narrowest escape of being shot for supposed espionage, and it was only after months of surveillance and affronts that she finally was permitted to return to Europe.

II—GUEST OF A BEDOUIN SULTAN

Though she failed to get across the Arabian Desert, the countess, previous to her arrest, had some of the strangest and most picturesque experiences that ever have befallen a white woman. Probably no other European woman has traveled, as she did, for weeks on end as the honored guest of a Bedouin Sultan (who insisted on believing her to be a sister of the Czar of Russia), [261] living the nomadic life of the tribe and riding on camel-back, nor lived, as did the countess, all by herself, in the heart of old-world Damascus, an experiment that does not commend itself even to the foreign consuls. What she saw of the brutalities of the Turkish mobilization alone makes as thrilling a tale as any that has been told since the war began.

Meanwhile the countess has been the victim of an astonishing accident, as a result of which she is still chary about using her right arm.

"One day here at Cartagena," she writes, "while swimming some distance out at sea, I was followed and attacked by a big dolphin. Luckily an officer at the fortress had seen it, and he fired on the dolphin. But before killing him, one bullet went through my right arm! I must say in fairness to the dolphin that it really was not he who first attacked me. I saw him following me, and I thought I could have a little ride on his back, knowing that dolphins are good-natured, as a rule. But he misunderstood my attentions and turned on me, and, had not the second shot been fired an instant later, I should have been lost."

The countess made the journey to Beyrout via Port Said.

From Beyrout she went by train to Damascus (a day's journey), where she had planned to live for a time and improve her knowledge of Arabic, which is one of the six languages which she speaks, before setting out for the desert. To begin with, she put up at the only European hotel in this famous city of the East, and found its proprietor to be a strange character, indeed. Untidy of person and appallingly rude in manner, "he reigned there," writes the countess, "with absolute despotism. This his [262] monopoly of the European hotel business in Damascus enabled him to do, as the Arab hostelries are impossible for foreigners.

"Here is a little example of his delightful ways. One day an English visitor asked for a bath and, as answer, was told to get his luggage ready and leave the hotel in two hours' time, as his hotel had no room for people who were dirty enough to need a bath! It seemed to be a special passion and sport of his to turn people out of his hotel, and any one to whom he took the smallest dislike was ejected without the slightest consideration. Those who won his favor, however, he entertained with jokes and stories worthy of an old pirate!"

She met both the English and Russian consuls, who placed themselves at her service and introduced her to other Europeans likely to advise her wisely in the matter of engaging her caravan and getting acquainted with friendly Arab chiefs, who would be able to give her a certain amount of protection at the outset of her journey, and eventually she found an old Syrian woman willing to let her house and act as cook and general factotum.

III—UNDER ESPIONAGE IN DAMASCUS

And so she settled down, and from this time, the early days of May, until when in June she began her journey the countess, with no other protector than old Sitt Trusim, as her bent and shriveled landlady, who proved to be the most capable of spies, was called, lived the life of a Syrian woman of the upper class, wearing the native dress, smoking the nargileh, studying Arabic diligently and always dreaming of what would happen when she was alone with her camels and the Arabs under the desert stars.

The pages of the journal she kept during those months are reminiscent of "Kismet" and the "Thousand and One Nights," for [263] where the countess willed to go she went, regardless of whether it was precisely safe to do so or not. And adventures she had in plenty. For while keeping nominally in touch with her European acquaintances on the hill of Sahiye, outside Damascus, she found her chief delight in wandering through the bazaars and the quaint streets of this enchanted city of minarets and in riding on horseback through the surrounding country in the cool of the evening. Once while thus doing she was attacked, as she had been warned she would be, by a couple of robbers, who possessed themselves of all the money she had, but missed her small Browning pistol, which, Bedouin fashion, she carried in her riding boot, and with this she eventually cowed them and made her escape.

It was soon made plain to the countess that all her movements were painstakingly reported to the Turkish authorities, though the Vali, or Governor, consistently posed as her friend. She had by no means agreeable experiences, too, owing to the jealousy of certain Syrian families, whose pressing invitations to various ceremonials she had been obliged to decline, while accepting those of others and immensely enjoying the impressive and occasionally screamingly funny rites which she witnessed as their guest. One of these hosts of hers, by the way, was the proud possessor of the only bath in Damascus. More than one attempt was made to lure Countess Molitor to places where it was undoubtedly intended to ill-treat if not actually to make away with her. I will let her tell of one of these plots.

"To-day Sitt Trusim brought me a letter addressed in unknown handwriting. Before opening it I asked her who brought it. She tells me that a man delivered it, whom, after questioning him, she found out to be deaf and dumb. I read the letter, which was [264] an invitation from a lady asking me to visit her and her daughters this afternoon. She complained that I had given preference to her friends by visiting them, and said that she would send her man-servant to bring me at 5 o'clock. I don't know why this letter aroused my suspicions. Perhaps on account of the mysterious deaf and dumb messenger.

"I sent for Vadra Meshaak (a friend's dragoman) to come to me, and showed him the letter quite carelessly, without mentioning my suspicions. He at once declared that it was written by a man and not by a woman and became very serious and angry, feeling sure that there was some treason behind it. At 5 o'clock the man was to come and fetch me. Well, he (Vadra) would dress up in my Arab costume, which in its largeness covers the whole figure, and go with the man and find out who the writer of the letter was. If it really was a woman he could explain his disguise as a joke. But he absolutely feared foul play! So in the afternoon we sent Sitt Trusim on an errand to the farthest end of the town, and I arranged Vadra Meshaak to look like a Syrian lady.

"Punctually at 5 o'clock the mysterious deaf-and-dumb man knocked at the door, and Vadra Meshaak opened it and went away with him. I had not been alone a quarter of an hour till he was back again, all fury and excitement. After he had calmed down a little I heard his story! He had followed the man to a house in the inner court where three Turks, very well known to Vadra Meshaak, were getting up to pounce upon him. He did not leave them any time to talk, but gave each of them a heavy blow in the face, and before they could realize what had happened he had disappeared again.

"They must have thought me a very fine pugilist! What their intrigue against me had been we shall never know. Vadra thinks [265] that they probably meant to keep me in their house by force over night and then afterward report that I was a woman of no character and thus get me expelled."

At the outset of the arrangements for the journey she was fortunate in getting acquainted with an old Arab Sheik, Mahmoud Bassaam, who had previously traveled with the Arabian lady explorer, Miss Bell, and was known to be entirely trustworthy. He had spent virtually all his life with the Bedouin and, as a camel dealer, had accumulated what was regarded in the East as a large fortune; yet he consented to accompany the countess (whose personal charm generally prevails, not only with men, but with her own sex, too), and took charge of all the arrangements for her journey, including the buying of camels and outfit.

"My idea," the countess writes in her diary, "is to join the Roalla tribe at Palmyra and make friends with their Sultan, as they are one of the greatest and richest tribes in all Arabia. Once friends with the Roalla I intend to travel with them, move with them through the inner deserts southward and, arrived south, I hope to be able to interest the Sultan and induce him to cross the Ruba-el-Khali with me. Because I think this is only possible for a great tribe, with all their herds of camels and sheep. On my journey with him I shall try my utmost to fire his imagination and to rouse his enthusiasm for the exploration of the great desert."

As her dragoman, the countess had an American university graduate, one Doctor Kahl, a Syrian, "well educated, serious and clever," who also had spent many years with the tribes of Arabia, but who, when introduced to the countess by Sheik Mahmoud Bassaam, had a lucrative practice as a dentist in Damascus.

IV—ACROSS DESERT ON CAMEL CARAVAN [266]

It was on the fifth of June that she set out, secretly, for fear that the Turkish authorities at Damascus would oppose her if they knew of her intentions. Allowing it to be supposed that she was merely going for a ride on horseback, she met her American-taught dragoman on the outskirts of Damascus, and rode with him to Adra, on the fringe of the desert, where Mahmoud Bassaam and her caravan (eight camels and camel men, an Arabian cook and a guide) were awaiting her.

It was in September, after they had traveled for more than 900 miles through the desert in company with the Sultan Al Tayar and his followers that the first echoes of the European war reached these travelers.

In the meanwhile the Countess who, from first to last, was treated as a guest of the highest distinction by the Sultan (to whom she had been presented by Mahmoud Bassaam) had been able to revel to the full in the dreamy "*dolce far niente*" existence which she had so often pictured to herself. She had become familiar with all the customs and observances of the Bedouins—she had even witnessed a pitched battle between her hosts and an enemy tribe—and had learned to eat with her fingers as they did without discomfort. By some means the impression that she was a sister of the Czar of Russia had become fixed in the minds of these tribesmen, and when the Countess wished to disabuse them of it, the Sultan dissuaded her, hinting that it was all to the good.

It was while crossing the Dahma Desert and heading for the wells of Wadi-al-Mustarri that a small Arab tribe brought them the tidings that Turkish soldiers were scouting the country, and that at Hail great demonstrations and assemblies of Turks and Arabs had taken place. And, on arriving at Jilfi, a small trading town, a few days later they learned that a European war had [267] broken out, though between whom nobody knew.

At Jilfi the countess was arrested, a paralyzing blow for her, considering that she had covered more than half the distance to the Ruba-el-Khali, and that another two months would have found her on its borders, and that she had succeeded in winning the Sultan to the venture of attempting to cross it. He and his chiefs, who first wished to resist, parted from their guest with keen sorrow, and the Sultan presented her, as his parting gift, with a magnificent emerald, of which, however, she was robbed while being brought back as a prisoner and ill with fever to Damascus. There the Turkish authorities greeted her with soft words, declaring that they had acted only for her safety, but, though she was allowed to go free and to live in her own house, she was aware all the time that she was carefully watched.

V—HELD PRISONER—ESCAPE TO EGYPT

The account which she gives of the Turkish mobilization in the days that immediately followed is graphic enough: "Soldiers armed to the teeth pass," she writes, "driving before them villagers to be enlisted. The boys all look terrified. Patriotism means nothing to them; they loathe their Government and are frightened to death at the thought of becoming Turkish soldiers, who are treated like dogs. Those who can, fly and hide themselves in the mountains. At present the Lebanon is full of such fugitives, and, being very desperate and nearly mad with fright and hunger, they are quite dangerous to meet. I am told they hide like animals in the grass and bushes and live on wild cucumbers. Poor things."

Then German officers arrived on the scene and things grew rapidly worse. "The commandeering in town," writes the countess, [268] "is rapidly bringing about the utter financial ruin of many families. To-day every house was ordered to provide a hundred blankets or to pay a sum equivalent to their value. Those who cannot comply are thrown into prison. From the store at which I buy my provisions they have taken $2,500 worth of rice, sugar and coffee, the poor man's entire stock, without paying him a penny or even giving him a receipt. He is ruined. From another store they have taken carpets and rugs valued at $1,000 which are, I am told, destined for the private households of the officers! The same is, no doubt, the destination of $1,500 worth of ladies' silk stockings, linen and dresses, which were also commandeered!

"A commission visited the manager of a firm of automatic pistols and took away 800 without paying for them, leaving the rest. Two days later the manager was arrested, under the pretext that he had purposely hidden the arms which the commission had not taken. They put him into prison, and only after a week's incarceration, his family having paid £50 to the Government, was released. Meanwhile he has not had a receipt for his guns."

Eventually the countess managed to escape from Damascus to Bayreuth, where she had hoped to find a friend in the Vali, or Governor, there, who had treated her with great consideration at the time of her arrival in Syria. Upon instructions from Damascus, however, he kept her a virtual prisoner, and when later her trunks were examined and the photographs and notes she had made while on her expedition discovered she was in imminent danger of being shot as a Russian secret agent. The Russian consul, who was himself in danger and had made one fruitless effort to escape, was unable to assist her.

She found her best friends, then, in the officers of the American men-of-war *North Carolina* and *Tennessee*, which were lying [269] off the town. They gave her good counsel and helped to keep her spirits up. After some weeks of agonizing uncertainty it was decided that the countess should merely be expelled from the country, and she was given an hour to get aboard of a vessel which was sailing for Egypt.

GERMAN STUDENTS TELL WHAT SHERMAN MEANT [270]

Three Confessions from German Soldiers

Told by Walther Harich, Wilhelm Spengler and Willie Treller

> What the educated German soldier thinks about the war, how he is affected by the strain and the brutalities and the heroisms of life consequent of it, is described with a fresh, powerful vividness in a book of war letters from German students issued under the editorship of Professor Philipp Witkop, of Freiburg ("Kriegsbriefe Deutscher Studenten"). Translations of some of the impressions on the German youth are here presented.

I—"DRIVEN TO DEATH BY ME"

Of the worst of all I have not written.... It is not the slaying, not the mounds of dead, which we are always passing, and not the wounded (they have the morphine needle and they lie quiet and peaceful in the straw of the requisitioned peasant carts). To me the worst is the distress and suffering to which man and beast are constantly subjected by the terrible strain. We have just buried my first mount, a glorious animal, virtually driven to his death. Driven to death by me! Can you imagine that a person as peaceable as I could find it possible to drive a horse to death with whip and spurs?

There is no help for it. The word is forward—always forward!

Oh, this everlasting driving on!

[271] One stands beside a team that can go no further and compels the drivers, with kindness or threats, to force the impossible out of the horses. The poor animals are all in, but one grabs the whip himself and mercilessly beats away at the miserable beasts till they move again. That is the shocking thing—that one is constantly compelled to make demands upon the poor animals to which they are not equal. Everything here is beyond one's strength. The impossible is made possible. It must go—till something or other breaks.

Or picture this to yourself: Shaken with fever and with burning eyes, a boy comes to me, whimpering—he can endure no more—and I ride into him and drive him back to the front. Can you picture that? But it must be!

Everything here is beyond one's strength. My God! We ourselves must do impossible things. But can one demand that of the others? We know that the struggle is for the German idea in the world—that it is to defend German understanding, German perception against the onslaught of Asiatic barbarism and Romanic indifference. We know what is on the cards if we do not do our utmost.

But the men? How often since we came to this God-forsaken region did we tell ourselves that it was impossible to go forward at night. It is really impossible. And then came an order—an order which could not be carried out during the day, so it went at night. It went because it must. Because "the order" is the great unavoidable—something that must be carried out—Fate, the all-determining. We know what "the order" means now! It is that which gives our people the ascendancy over the whole world.

WALTHER HARICH.

II—HORRORS OF "NO MAN'S LAND"

Near Maricourt, December 17, 1914.

[272] Soon after 11 we were awakened by the retiring sentries. As tired as dogs though we were, we crawled out into the open. It was still raining wet strings—a cold, ugly December night; not a star to be seen. Every once in a while the sound of a shot came to us from the other side of the stream.

"You," remarked Hias suddenly, "listen! Hear anything?"

"What do you mean?"

"Now."

It was a long, wailing cry for help. I could hear it distinctly.

"There is a poor devil out there, wounded," said Hias.

Great heavens—in this weather! And he must have been lying there without help since early yesterday.

He couldn't be in the wood anywhere, for we had gone through that thoroughly. Perhaps he had been caught by a shrapnel splinter during the retreat across the field. Well, what was it to us? Let his comrades get him. He must be just a few meters from the French trenches, anyhow.

Released at 1, we went back to our tents to get some sleep, cursing the French who left their comrade to perish so miserably.

At 3 the next afternoon, when I went on duty again, the poor devil was still calling for help, keeping it up all day. We could not help; we did not see him. And to expose ourselves to the French was a proceeding not to be lightly recommended. It was a horrible feeling to be condemned thus to inaction while a wounded soldier called for help.

When the wind changed one could hear the poor devil whimper and weep and then suddenly rouse himself and send out a call for help, "Oh, la, la!"

Why didn't the French take him away? There was no danger. We could not shoot, for we saw nothing. And we had no intention [273] of doing that. I was glad when my hour was up.

At 8 o'clock I was at my place again with Hias. The poor Frenchman was whining more pitiably than ever. For half an hour we listened; then Hias lost his patience.

"What a tribe of pigs," he broke out, "to leave a comrade to die like a dog! He can't last much longer."

"Well, Hias," I said, "what can we do? I am sorry for him myself, but there is no help. He must die."

After a few minutes a terrible scream: "Oh, la, la, la, la!" pierced the night. Then there was quiet. God be praised! Now he is dead and at peace, I thought. And quietly I repeated a few prayers for his soul. But after a while we heard his cry again.

"Well, it's enough now," exclaimed Hias. "I can't stand this any longer. I'm going to get him, with or without permission." He spoke and disappeared.

In a minute his brother took his place at my side, while he himself ran up to the trenches. He was back in about ten minutes. He had the permission. The lieutenant also was going and asked if I would come along, as I knew something of first aid and could speak a little French.

When we got to the lieutenant three more men, splendid fellows, on whom one could rely, had volunteered. In a twinkling we had gathered tent cloth, side arms and saws and were running singly across the meadow. Of course, the sentries were notified that we were out in front.

We entered the wood. While two men worked with knives and saws to cut a way through, the others held themselves ready for anything that might develop. We stumbled over bodies, weapons and knapsacks. At last I found a little path which the French [274] had made a few days previously.

I rested a while and was just about to return to my comrades when a hand gripped my foot. Great God, I was frightened! For a second I was paralyzed; then, tearing out my sword—

"Pitie! pitie!"

Some one under my feet was whining for mercy. My teeth chattered. I could hardly move or answer.

"Oh, m'sieur camarade; pitie! pitie!"

Suddenly the lieutenant appeared and I found my control again. Getting down on my knees, I carefully groped for the body.

"Look out now," whispered the lieutenant. "It may be a trap."

"Give me your hand," I ordered the Frenchman. A cold, moist, trembling hand was put into mine.

"Where is your weapon?" I asked. He had lost it as he pulled himself along till he was exhausted.

Suddenly from somewhere near we heard the horribly familiar call, "Oh, la! la!"

"Well, now," said the lieutenant, "we have one man, but not the right one."

I asked the wounded one whether we would be seen if we tried to get the other man.

"*Oui, mon brave camarade, Allemand.*" The lieutenant hesitated, but resolved nevertheless to go on.

One man remained behind with the Frenchman—a corporal, he said he was—with orders to stab him instantly if he called for help while we were working our way through the brush. We came to the edge of the wood at last and peered out.

We could make out the forms of many black objects—dead men, killed so near their own trenches, too! Hias was beside me, and with his sharp peasant eyes soon espied the body of the poor fellow we were after. The lieutenant crawled out, and we [275] followed. Coming up to him, I called softly, "*Camarade!*" I did not want to frighten him; besides, he might scream for help, then we would be in a nice fix.

"Oh, oh, *Dieu! Dieu!*" he breathed and emitted sounds like the joyful whining of a puppy when he saw me.

He grasped my hand and pressed it to his breast and cheek.

I felt him over carefully. As I fumbled along his left leg I received a sudden shock. Just below the calf it ended. The foot was torn off above the angle and hung loosely on the leg. As his whole body was wet I could not tell whether he was still bleeding. I could only make out that a rag was tied about the wound. He had bandaged it with his handkerchief, as I learned later.

We soon had him beside his comrade.

The lieutenant went back to his command, leaving the rest to me. The others carried the corporal away to the nearest aid station, while I remained with his comrade, who, as he lay there, softly spoke to me about himself—his wife and his child—of the mobilization. This was his first day at the front. Fate had overtaken him swiftly. He was a handsome man, with big, black eyes, dark hair and mustache. His pale, bloodless face made him doubly interesting. His voice was so tender and soft that I was touched; I could not help it. I gently stroked him: "*Pauvre, pauvre camarade Français!*"

"Oh, monsieur, *c'est tout pour la patrie*."

I lay down and nestled up close to him and threw my coat over him, for he was beginning to shiver with fever and frost. Then it began to rain very softly. So we lay one-half, three-quarters, a whole hour. At last, after one and a half hours, the comrades returned.

My poor wounded one was crying softly to himself.

He was soon in the hands of a physician and an attendant. His wounds were looked after and he was given some cold coffee. [276]

I had to go.

A look of unutterable gratefulness, which I shall never forget, a nod: "*Bonne nuit, monsieur,*" and I was outside in the cold, damp December night.

Wilhelm Spengler.

III—A BELGIAN MOTHER AND HER BABE

Ingelmünster, November, 1914.

In Fosses, near Namur, I happened to be the only physician in the place, as all the doctors had fled. So it came about that the first prescriptions that I have ever written were in the French language. It was rather odd, but it went. The sixty-five-year-old apothecary and I have opened many good bottles of Burgundy in his bachelor apartment while he told of his student days in

Geneva and Brussels; I of Germany and its glories.

One time I was called to a village an hour distant to the help of a young mother. And it may have presented a curious and unforgettable spectacle to the Belgian peasants when after two hours' hard work the "*jeune docteur Allemand*," shirt-sleeved, armed and girt with a woman's apron, presented the young mother with a tiny, howling Belgian, while outside the guns thundered in the distance, killing perhaps hundreds and hundreds of other Belgians.

WILLY TRELLER.

(Translations by Julian Bindley Freedman for the *New York Tribune*.)

BAITING THE BOCHE—THE WIT OF THE BELGIANS [277]

Told by W. F. Martindale

> The people of Brussels have always been noted for a very pretty turn of wit. On the other hand, not even his best friends have ever accused the German of possessing a sense of humor. With the "Boches" in possession of Brussels, it is easy to forecast that the Bruxellois would find them fair game. This amusing story shows how the citizens have "got their own back" on the invaders, as related in the *Wide World*.

I—STORY OF M. MAX—BURGOMASTER

No one ever suspected the German mind of possessing a sense of humour. But that it should prove such easy—and fair—game as Teutonic behaviour in the course of the war has shown it to be is more than the most maliciously satirical could ever have hoped. In turn, and according to their several temperaments, the Allied nations have indulged their wit at the expense of the Boche. The British have guyed him with an almost affectionate contempt; the French have sacrificed him with a wholly contemptuous hatred, and the rest have all scored off him in turn.

But it has been left to the Belgians, and more particularly the citizens of Brussels, to elevate the pleasing pastime of Boche-baiting into a fine art. The heaviest harness has its weak joints, and the comedies enacted during the German occupation of the Belgian capital have shown that even the mailed fist is not proof against the penetrating shafts of ridicule and wit.

For a contest of wit *versus* mere force the Bruxellois were well equipped. They have long enjoyed a reputation for a wit peculiarly their own, a blend of English levity and French irony, and they have had the advantage of a victim who positively, as the phrase goes, "asks for it." Moreover, a brilliant lead was set them. The exploits of M. Max, the dauntless Burgomaster of Brussels, will live long in the annals of war, for his courageous wit well matched the spirit of the troops which at Liège dared to confront and dispute the passage of the German legions. [278]

When the Germans marched into the undefended city, doing their utmost to make their entry as humiliating as possible to the inhabitants, M. Max went to meet their commander as calmly as though he were paying an ordinary official call. The Prussian general informed him that he would be held responsible for the good behaviour of the citizens and their instant obedience to every order of the conquerers. The Burgomaster knew very well what that meant—that he would be shot out of hand, as other mayors had been, if anyone dared to lift a finger against the Germans. But he received the news with a smiling face, and assured the commandant that all necessary steps had already been taken for the maintenance of public order. Then he went back to his office, showing a courage and calmness in a most difficult situation that delighted his fellow-countrymen, and even invoked the grudging admiration of the enemy.

II—HOW HE OUTWITTED THE PRUSSIANS

Some of the stories told concerning the worthy magistrate's prowess are probably fiction, but others rest upon good foundation. For instance, when M. Max was summoned to confer with the German commander, the latter ostentatiously laid his revolver on the table—just one of those characteristic little actions that have made the invaders so cordially hated everywhere. [279] It said, as plainly as spoken words, "Remember that the powers of life and death are in my hands, and that I have got force at my back." Some men would have lost their nerve in such circumstances, but the Burgomaster was made of different stuff. Without a moment's hesitation, M. Max took his fountain pen from his pocket and, with a humorously emphatic gesture, banged it down upon the table opposite the revolver. Was it a sort of hint, one wonders, that "the pen is mightier than the sword"—that the soldier's reign would be a brief one? Anyway, it evidently impressed the Prussian, as did the Burgomaster's conduct throughout the conference, for at the close of the meeting the general patronizingly congratulated M. Max on his conduct at the discussion and graciously offered to shake hands with him. But the Burgomaster was no more susceptible to soft words than to threats. He remembered how German officers had deliberately ridden their horses through the city's flower-beds and roughly jostled women and children off the sidewalks. "Excuse me," he said, firmly, "but we are enemies."

A little later there came another sharp passage of arms. The new governor of the city sent for M. Max and informed him curtly that, on account of the stubborn resistance Belgium had offered, the capital would have to pay the staggering fine of eight million pounds! How long would it take the Burgomaster to produce the money?

M. Max looked at him with a smile.

"You are a little too late, general," he said. "All the funds of the city were sent to Antwerp some time ago, and we have not a penny in our coffers."

That was check number one to the governor, but another was to follow. The good folk of Brussels, the Germans noted, were showing altogether too much spirit. They were saying among themselves that the French would soon put the Germans in their places. [280] So the governor placarded the town with a notice informing the inhabitants that France had left the Belgians to their fate; she had all she could do to look after herself, and would trouble no further about her little ally. This specious story might have had the designed effect but for M. Max. Paying no heed to the possible consequences to himself, he immediately had another notice, bearing his own signature, pasted underneath the governor's poster. It was short and very much to the point. It stated that the German statement was an out-and-out lie to which no attention should be paid. What the governor said when he heard of this swift counter-stroke may be left to the imagination. What he did was weak enough. He simply issued another notice saying that in future no proclamations were to be posted up without his sanction.

For a few days M. Max was left in peace; then he had another little tussle with the enemy. Because a clerk at the town hall refused to accept a requisition order which was not properly filled up, a blustering German officer forced his way into the Burgomaster's room with a cigar in his mouth.

M. Max looked at him coldly.

"Sir," he said, "you are the first person to walk into my rooms without being properly announced."

The Prussian began to bully and threaten, but without heeding him M. Max sent one of his staff to fetch the intruder's superior officer, General von Arnim. The general came, heard of his subordinate's rudeness, and sentenced him on the spot to eleven days' arrest. Then he turned to M. Max.

"Now, sir," he said, "the conversation can continue."

"Pardon, general," replied the Burgomaster, "it can now commence."

III—HUMOR OF THE WITTY BRUXELLOIS [281]

Throughout their dealings with the people of Brussels the Germans have found themselves time and again outwitted. Scarce a prohibition has been framed which has not been countered on the instant by some brilliant evasion that has rendered it not merely null and void, but ridiculous as well. "*Verboten*," that fetish of the docile German mind, succeeds only in stimulating the inventiveness of the witty Bruxellois.

Exception was taken, for example, to the wording of certain proclamations by the Burgomaster which had been put up on the walls in various parts of the city, and the German authorities ordered that sheets of white paper be pasted over them. The order was duly carried out. Ere nightfall blameless blank sheets marked the spots where the suppressed placards had previously figured. Next morning the sheets were still there, blank as before, but hardly blameless. An oily sponge had rendered them transparent during the night, and the censored proclamations underneath were plainly visible for all who chose—and there were many—to pause and ostentatiously read.

Again, the wearing of the Belgian national colours is forbidden. So be it. Rosettes of red, black, and yellow ribbon are discarded; not a favour adorns the decorous civilian buttonhole. But soon a new fashion in attire appears upon the boulevards. A dandy is observed handsomely, indeed strikingly, apparelled in yellow trousers, red vest, and black coat. The mode quickly becomes popular, and soon it might almost be said that for the patriotic Bruxellois "motley's the only wear." That the motley in this case should comprise the Belgian national colours is a coincidence which any wearer of it, one may be sure, would be astonished to discover.

When last year the anniversary of that fateful fourth of August came round, the Germans in Brussels, guilty of conscience, [282] sought to anticipate by prohibition all public reminiscence of the date. Their feelings may be imagined when, on the morning of that significant anniversary, they were greeted by the sight of a careless torn "scrap of paper" thrust negligently through the buttonhole of every Bruxellois. To frame an edict that would render *verboten* such subtle demonstrations as this would tax even the Teuton's encyclopædic diligence.

A scrap of paper is not the only strange but meaning device which has adorned the citizen's buttonhole in Brussels. On the day when Italy joined the Allies, the Germans, in anticipation of that long-expected event, had of their wisdom forbidden any display of the Italian colours or flag. None appeared, but from out of those resourceful buttonholes peeped neat rosettes and sprigs of macaroni.

If presently we learn that by order of the All-Highest every buttonhole in Brussels is sewn up, it will hardly be matter for surprise. It would be a charactertistic step.

Those ribbon favours have proved prickly thorns to the Germans. They seem to act upon the Prussian mind as a red rag upon the bull, and like the rag, when in the deft hands of a skilled *toriro*, they frequently lure the victim to his own undoing. It happened once, soon after the display of national colours had been prohibited, that a Prussian officer, entering a Brussels tramcar, found himself seated opposite a Belgian lady upon whose coat the forbidden red, black, and yellow ribbons were flauntingly displayed. It is the custom of many Belgian ladies, on finding themselves in a public vehicle with a German officer, to quit their seats and stand on the conductor's platform outside. Ruffled, perhaps, by the omission of this somewhat pointed [283] tribute to his presence, the intruder leaned forward and requested the removal of the offending colours. The suggestion was greeted by a stony stare, the demand which followed it by an expressive and provocative shrug of the shoulders.

"If you will not take off those colours, madam, I shall remove them myself."

This menace eliciting no response, the Prussian officer stretched forth a Prussian fist and made a Prussian grab. The favour came away in his clutch, but that was not the end of it. Within his fair antagonist's dress ample lengths of ribbon were concealed, and the more the discomfited officer pulled the more streamers of red, black, and yellow reeled forth. It was a case literally of getting more than he bargained for, and the charming murmur of thanks which he received when, in sheer desperation, he dropped the tangle of ribbon on the floor and made hastily for the door must have gratified that Prussian exceedingly.

IV—THE JOKERS OF BRUSSELS

Practical joking has become popular in Brussels since the German occupation. "Everybody's doing it"—amongst the Bruxellois, that is. A prohibition was lately placed upon the use of motor-cars by the civil population, and orders were issued for the enforcement of dire penalties in cases of disobedience. One afternoon a couple of German officers were seated in a *café* discussing mugs of beer with that portentous solemnity which the Teutonic mind finds proper to such an occasion, when a loud "Honk, honk!" the unmistakable blast of a motor-horn, was heard in the street outside. Forth dashed the officers, indignant at this flagrant transgression of orders, but when they reached the pavement no car was there. None was even in sight upon the [284] whole length of the boulevard, though the sound of the horn had been close at hand. Crestfallen, the representatives of law and order—Prussian style—returned to their beer-mugs, but were hardly seated when again the loud "Honk, honk!" fell upon their ears, and again they dashed into the street, with the same result. Convinced that some impudent guttersnipe must be playing a trick, they questioned the nearest sentry. But the latter had seen neither car nor urchin; he had not even heard the mysterious sound, he averred, and the baffled officers began almost to doubt their ears. But the smile on the face of the Belgian proprietor of the *café* was suspicious.

Fresh mugs of beer were requisitioned, but the very first "Prosit" was interrupted by the malevolent "Honk, honk!" With froth-flecked lips that gave them an aspect admirably suited to their mood, the enraged officers set down the mugs with a bang and once more strode forth in quest of the miscreant. Once more a perfectly empty street met their gaze. But even as they scowled abroad, a mocking "Honk, honk!" sounded, this time just above their heads. The listeners started and looked up, to see a green parrot in a cage upon the window-sill above regarding them imperturably with a beady inscrutable eye. So flagrant a case of *lèse majesté* could not be overlooked, and the green parrot was executed.

But even in his murders the Boche lacks a sense of proportion, which is, of course, merely another way of saying that he has no sense of humor. To the martyrdom of the parrot must be added that of two luckless pigeons whose sole crime against the Deutches Reich was that of being born after a certain date. It was decreed soon after the occupation of Brussels that all owners of pigeons must notify the authorities the number of birds which they possessed. Amongst those complying with the order was a certain shopkeeper who kept a pair of pigeons as pets. They were not of the carrier variety, and he was allowed to [285] retain them. But pigeons are notoriously domesticated creatures, and presently an interesting event occurred in the establishment of this happy couple. A couple of squabs were hatched out. These duly assumed down, which in turn became feathers, and presently there were four pigeons where formerly had been but two. At this stage a German official, armed with a registration list, paid a visit of inspection. He noted the well-preened quartette, and referred to his papers. Then he frowned ominously.

"On such and such a date you registered two pigeons."

"That is so," was the answer. "Since then——"

"But you have four there."

"Quite true. You are——"

"But you are only entitled to have two."

"A thousand pardons, mein Herr. But one cannot interfere with Nature. My two pigeons, you see——"

"If you registered two only, you cannot be allowed to have four. It is self-evident."

It is needless to repeat the colloquy at length. Though that explanations were cut short, refused a hearing. No German official was ever known to "use his discretion"; that is a prerogative of the muddle-headed British. The list had *two* pigeons; here were *four*. Obviously there was only one course to be taken. The abundant pigeons shared the fate of the indiscreet parrot.

Next day there appeared suspended in the mourning owner's shop-window two feathered corpses adorned with this pathetic placard:—

MORTS
POUR LA PATRIE!

V—THE SECRET NEWSPAPER—*LIBRE BELGIQUE* [286]

But the most brilliant and daring feat achieved in Brussels is unquestionably the publication of *Libre Belgique*, a mysterious weekly journal which makes its appearance with unfailing regularity, though how, where, and by whom produced the Germans have never been able to discover. This is the very apotheosis of Boche-baiting, for *Libre Belgique* is a fiery sheet. It does not mince words, but flagellates the Germans with the most scornful virulence, holding them up to ridicule and contempt. Every week it pours the vials of bitter wrath and hatred upon the Boche's devoted head, and the Boche can do nothing but sit meekly under this scorching cataract. For though a reward, which has already risen from a thousand pounds to three times that figure, is offered for a denunciation of those responsible for this "scurrilous rag," the secret of *Libre Belgique* remains inviolate. Exhaustive searches have been conducted, many arrests have been made upon suspicion, but except for two minor actors in the great comedy, whose function was merely the distribution of copies, no one has been caught. Yet *Libre Belgique* has already celebrated one anniversary of its birth, and is well into its second year of existence. And every week, without fail, General von Bissing, the German governor of Brussels, receives a "complimentary" copy, which he doubtless peruses with absorbed interest.

It is characteristic of Brussels wit that in conformity with law the paper announces in each issue the address of its office and printing works. These, it appears, are in "a cellar on wheels," and in view of the peripatetic habits thus suggested, correspondents are desired to address their communications to the *Kommandatur*, *i.e.*, the headquarters of the German [287] authorities!

But *Libre Belgique* has another function to discharge beyond that of a courageous jest, well calculated to keep the Bruxellois in good heart. Drastic in its satire upon the enemy, it is equally unsparing in its record of German crimes and its dissection of the often grotesque claims made by the German official communiqués. Von Bissing and his staff may affect to make light of this gadfly among journals, but the rewards offered for its betrayal and the energetic measures taken to bring about its suppression tell another story. *Libre Belgique*, indeed, aptly illustrates the parable at which Burgomaster Max so subtly hinted when he laid his pen beside his interlocutor's pistol. The pen is far mightier—in the long run—than the sword, and the Germans, though they will not perhaps admit it even to themselves, have an uncomfortable inkling of that fact.

That *Libre Belgique*, in spite of all proffered bribes, should never yet have been betrayed is a wonderful testimony to the high patriotic spirit of the Bruxellois. For though the operations of the paper's staff are doubtless closely guarded, the number of persons who are in the secret must inevitably be considerable, and leakage is difficult to prevent. But the Belgian spirit is a thing with which we are all familiar now, and when to that is added Brussels wit the whole phenomenon is explained.

One fancies, indeed, that when the Belgian capital is at length evacuated by the Germans the populace will be half sorry to see them go. The Boche is not exactly a lovable fellow, but to people of a satirical turn of mind, *naïveté*, which he possesses in unparalleled degree, is always engaging. As a butt the Boche is unique, and in that capacity, if in no other, he has positively endeared himself to the witty citizens of Brussels.

HOW SERGEANT O'LEARY WON HIS VICTORIA CROSS [288]

Story of the First Battalion of the Irish Guards

> He shot eight Germans in eight seconds, captured a machine gun, took two barricades single handed, and saved his whole company from being exterminated. The story is told in the *New York American* as dispatched from London.

I—WHO IS THE BRAVEST MAN IN THE WAR?

Who is the bravest man that the war has produced?

It would probably be impossible to answer this question with any approach to accuracy and impartiality. But it is interesting to compare some of the incidents reported and see how modern courage compares with that of past history.

It is generally admitted that all the nations engaged have fought with remarkable bravery and steadiness, so that a man must have done some extraordinarily daring action to make himself notable. Thousands and thousands of acts of bravery have been performed by many among the millions of soldiers engaged. Doubtless some of the most heroic have died without having their acts mentioned.

Of the innumerable feats of bravery reported the one that has impressed the British public most is that of Sergeant Michael O'Leary, of the Irish Guards, who is a native of Ireland, as his name suggests.

He has received the coveted Victoria Cross, been promoted Sergeant and a long description of his deeds has been given him on the official records—a very great honor. He has also been offered a commission, but will not take it at present because he does [289] not want to leave the Irish Guards, and there is no place for him there as an officer.

The cold official record says that O'Leary won his Victoria Cross "for conspicuous bravery at Cuinchy. When forming one of the storming party which advanced against the enemy's barricades he rushed to the front and himself killed five Germans who were behind the first barricade, after which he attacked a second barricade, about sixty yards further on, which he captured, after killing three of the enemy and making prisoners of two more. Lance Corporal O'Leary thus practically captured the enemy's position by himself and prevented the rest of the attacking party from being fired on."

Further details of O'Leary's wonderful exploit were given by Company Quartermaster Sergeant J. G. Lowry, of the Irish Guards, who was engaged in the fight.

"Our First Battalion," he said, "had been holding trenches near the La Bassee brickfield, and our losses were heavy. The Germans had excellent cover, both in trenches and behind stacks of bricks.

"We were all delighted when the order came that the brickfield had to be taken by assault next day.

"Lance Corporal O'Leary never looked to see if his mates were coming, and he must have done pretty near even time over that patch of ground. When he got near the end of one of the German trenches he dropped, and so did many others a long way behind him. The enemy had discovered what was up.

"A machine-gun was O'Leary's mark. Before the Germans could manage to slew it around and meet the charging men O'Leary picked off the whole of the five of the machine crew, and leaving some of his mates to come up and capture the gun, he dashed forward to the second barricade, which the Germans were quitting in a hurry and shot three more. [290]

"O'Leary came back from his killing as cool as if he had been for a walk in the park and accompanied by two prisoners he had taken. He probably saved the lives of a whole company.

"Had that machine gun got slewed round, No. 1 Company might have been nearly wiped out."

II—STORY OF THE YOUNG IRISH GUARD

What impresses people in O'Leary's deed is not only his bravery but the triumphant success with which he carried out the whole act. Other soldiers may have displayed more self-sacrifice and endurance, but not one of them appears to have done more for his side by one individual act of bravery than O'Leary.

It is the dashing quality of his deed that wins admiration and this quality, it is to be noted, is peculiarly Irish. He is credited by his admirers with having shot eight men in eight seconds. His quickness must have been phenomenal, and here again he showed a peculiarly Irish trait.

How one man could have shot eight soldiers, when all eight of them were armed and many of their comrades were only a few yards away, must appear a mystery to many. The Germans were perhaps retiring hastily from their positions, but they had magazine rifles in their hands and fired many shots at the British.

Why did they not get O'Leary, who was running out alone ahead of his companions? He must have been amazingly lucky, as well as amazingly quick.

Then it is almost equally astonishing that he could have shot eight men in a few moments while running. The best explanation of this is that the British soldier has a rifle carrying more bullets than that of any other army. [291]

The Lee Enfield rifle now used in the British army carries ten bullets in the magazine and one in the barrel. O'Leary, of course, fired all his eleven bullets, and he is credited with making eight of them kill a man apiece. That is an amazing shooting record, said to be unequalled for a soldier.

Sergeant O'Leary is not a particularly fierce looking soldier, as might be expected, but a tall, slender, fair-haired young fellow. He is only twenty-five years old.

"A quiet, easy-going young fellow O'Leary is," said his friend, Sergeant Daly, of the Second Battalion of the Irish Guards. "But he is remarkably quick on his feet."

O'Leary was born in the little village of Inchigeelach, in the County Cork. His father and mother still live there. He has an older brother and four sisters, who are now in America.

He served for several years in the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police, but went back and joined the British Army in order to be nearer home.

After the fight in which he won his decoration he wrote home:

"Dear Parents: I guess you will be glad to hear that I was promoted full sergeant on the field on account of distinguished conduct on February 1, when we charged the Huns and routed them in disorder.

"You bet the Irish Guards are getting back now."

Mrs. O'Leary, the old mother of the hero, has been interviewed at her home in Ireland. As might be expected her words were very simple.

"It's proud I am of Mike," said Mrs. O'Leary, "but I wish he was home instead of being in that cruel war.

"When that telegram came for me, I thought sure Mike was dead, but when I opened it I found that he had been promoted. [292] Sure I was better pleased to know that he was alive than promoted.

"Mike is a good boy. He never gave me a moment's uneasiness since he was in the cradle, except when he went away on his foreign adventures. I suppose he had to leave me. There's little enough chance for a boy here, with only the pigs to look after and his father and me."

We have been inclined to think that the days were over when a mighty warrior could rush in among the foe and slay many with his own hands but O'Leary and many others in this war have proved that that is not the case.

III—TALE OF A GORDON HIGHLANDER

Many of the famous deeds of antiquity have been curiously paralleled in the war. For instance, one of the ancient feats that everybody mentions occasionally was how the brave Horatius held the bridge across the Tiber with two companions against the whole Etruscan army.

Now we find again and again that a bridge has been the scene of deeds of conspicuous heroism in this war. The British were defending a river bank and bridge against a fierce German attack. The crew of a British Maxim gun had all been killed. Then Angus MacLeod, of the Gordon Highlanders, rose from cover, seized the Maxim gun and all alone carried it, under fire, to the far side of the bridge, where he played it on the advancing Germans.

He is credited with having killed sixty Germans. Finally he fell dead and thirty bullets were counted in his body. The delay enabled the British to rally and repel their opponents.

An extraordinary act of heroism was reported of an unnamed French soldier during the disastrous retreat of the French from [293] the Belgian frontier and the Meuse River early in the war.

This man had been taken prisoner with some companions. The Germans, according to the report, drove their prisoners before them when attempting to cross a strongly defended bridge, to make the French think it was a party of their own men returning. As the French prisoners stepped on the bridge, one of them, a big and strong-voiced man, yelled:

"Fire, nom de Dieu, or you will be wiped out."

His own act made his death certain. He fell riddled with bullets from both sides.

Lieutenant Leach and Sergeant Hogan of the British Army each received the Victoria Cross for an extraordinarily daring and ingenious action. The two men killed two Germans, took sixteen unwounded prisoners and twenty wounded men. Leach and Hogan with ten men crawled unobserved to a section of trench that had been captured by the Germans earlier in the day. Leach and Hogan dropped into the trench unnoticed and the ten men lay in wait to shoot any Germans who showed themselves.

A trench is built in zigzags so that there is only a straight section of about twenty yards along which an enemy could shoot. The Germans in the first section were taken by surprise and all killed or wounded. Then the two men hurried on to the next turning. As they walked Hogan put his cap on his rifle and held it above the trench to show their men outside where they were.

Lieutenant Leach poked his automatic revolver round the corner of the trench and began shooting at the Germans from cover. The German soldiers with their big clumsy rifles could not hit the deadly hand that was the only object to aim at. While the Lieutenant was shooting, Hogan watched over the top of the trench to shoot any German who tried to get out or attack them in [294] the rear. Thus all the men in each section were killed, wounded or captured.

How do these and the many other brave men who have been reported in the present war compare with the heroes of antiquity? Achilles is the foremost of Greek warriors. He personified the Greek ideal of bravery, manly beauty and fiery enthusiasm. The "Iliad" contains pages and pages about his deeds, his speeches, how he sulked in his tent, and his quarrel with Agamemnon, but it does not seem after all that he did a vast amount of harm to the enemy. Of course, he killed Hector, but that was not amazing, and he acted with considerable brutality about it.

Achilles was undoubtedly a fine orator, but in achievement he appeared to compare badly with modest Sergeant O'Leary.

STORY OF A RUSSIAN IN AN AUSTRIAN PRISON [295]

An Officer's Remarkable Experience

> This very unusual narrative, with its light on Austrian prison conditions, appeared in the Russkoe Slovo, Moscow, June 30, 1916. It was written by a petty officer of the Russian Army at the request of the paper's Paris correspondent. The correspondent tells of a party of thirty Russians who had recently arrived in Paris from Italy, all war prisoners from Austria, who had managed at different times to slip through the lines on the Italian front. It was translated for *Current History*.

I—"I WAS PRISONER OF THE MAGYARS"

I was taken prisoner by the Magyars in the Carpathians. We were driven to the station of Kashitzi, where we found more Russians, I don't know how many, and were placed in dirty cars, from which cattle had just been removed. The stench was terrible, the crowd unthinkable. The doors were locked all the time.... We travelled two days; on the third we arrived in a camp called Lintz. What did I see in this camp? Filthy barracks, naked bunks on which our soldiers were scattered, pale, exhausted, hungry, nearly all barefoot or in wooden clogs. Many were suffering from inflamed feet and exhaustion. I don't know how they call it in medicine, but to my mind it was the fever of starvation. One gets yellow, trembles incessantly, longs for food....

The prisoners were fed very poorly, mainly with turnips, beans, and peas.

Once a soldier decided to complain to Francis Joseph or Wilhelm. He went up to an electric pole, formed his fingers so that it [296] looked as if he were speaking into a telephone horn, and shouted, "Hello, Germans, give us some more bread!" He called and knocked with his fists for some time, but, of course, received no reply. Many soldiers made fun of him at first, but others began to look for a way to complain against such treatment of war prisoners. Meanwhile the bread became poorer and poorer in quality and less in quantity. The meals consisted of beans, and in addition there were bugs in the beans. We got meat three times a week, the other days we got herring.

On the 24th of May, 1915, a company was recruited among us to be sent away to do some "agricultural" work. The soldiers would not believe it, claiming that peace was near. I was in the first contingent. Our train was passing between mountains covered with evergreen. Every now and then it would shoot through tunnels. This surprised me greatly. I understood that we were not going in the direction of Russia. And so it was. We finally arrived in a place, where the thousand of us were quartered in one building. We at once began to be treated differently, much more insolently and severely. On the 27th we were driven to the fields to work. We wondered what the agricultural labour we were to do could be. We were supplied with shovels and pick-axes, led to a wood on a hill some 1,600 metres high, mustered into rows, and ordered to dig a ditch—that is what the Germans called it—but we called it otherwise. It became clear that we were to dig trenches.

The first day passed in idleness and grumbling. All unanimously refused to work, even if we had to pay with our lives for it.

We waited for the following morning. The guards came to take us out to work, but we said that we would not dig trenches. [297] Then the Colonel came and asked in Russian: "Why don't you want to work?" We all answered: "This work is against the law. You are violating the European laws and breaking all agreements by forcing us to construct defensive lines for you." The Colonel said: "Look out, don't resist, or we will shoot every one of you. We don't care now for the laws to which you point us. All Europe is at war now—this is no time for laws. If you don't go to work, I will have you shot."

We all exclaimed: "We won't. Shoot us, but we will not do the work."

II—STANDING BEFORE THE EXECUTIONER

All of the 28th we were in our yard. No food was given us. Thus we were held for three days without food. On the fourth day a company of cadets arrived. Leading them was the executioner, with stripes on his sleeves. They loaded their rifles, holding them ready. Then the Colonel asked: "Who will go to work?" The crowd answered "No!" The Colonel said: "I am sorry for you, boys, you don't understand that you are resisting in vain." Suddenly the crowd was split into two. Those who agreed to work were given dinner and put to work. The other half, in which I was included, was led away to another yard. From among us ten were picked out and taken away—we knew not where. We were ordered to lie on the ground with our faces downward, and not to turn our heads.

On June 2 there remained only fifty men who still refused to work, suffering hunger for the sixth day. The ten soldiers who were daily taken away from us were subjected to, besides hunger, suspense in the air from rings, with their hands tied to their backs. In about thirty minutes one would lose consciousness, and then he would be taken down to the ground. After he [298] recovered his senses he would be asked if he agreed to work. What could one answer? To say "I refuse" meant another ordeal. He would begin to cry and agree to work.

The following day our heroes were led out into the open, ten were selected from our midst, arranged in a line facing the rest of us, and told that they would be shot immediately. Of the remainder half were to be shot in the evening, the other half the following morning. Their graves had been dug by the ten heroes themselves. I have not the slightest hesitancy in calling them so.

Then a space was cleared, and Ivan Tistchenko, Feodor Lupin, Ivan Katayev, and Philip Kulikov were ordered forward. The first was Ivan Tistchenko. An officer and four cadets approached him. The officer asked him if he would agree to work. He answered "No," and crossed himself. His eyes were bound with a white 'kerchief, and these pitiless and unjust cadets fired at the order of the officer. Two bullets pierced his head and two his breast, and the brave fellow fell to the wet ground noiselessly and peacefully.

In the same manner the second, third, and fourth were treated. When the fifth was led forward he also refused to work, and they already had his eyes bound. But some one in the crowd exclaimed: "Halt—don't fire!" And the comrades asked for his life, all agreeing to go to work. And I never learned the identity of the chap who saved that fellow's life and many other lives.

We remained in that camp for two and a half months. Then we were removed closer to the front, to a locality inhabited by Italians. Our soldiers there would inquire from the Italian labourers, to whom the guards paid no attention, where the boundary lay. We learned the direction and the distance to the boundary, which was about thirty miles. It was even nearer to the Italian front. And so on Sept. 29 a comrade and I decided to escape. [299]

(Some particulars of the escape have been deleted by the Russian censor.)

Toward dawn we emerged from the thick of the pine trees and bushes, and descended to the base of the mountain. At our feet was a stream, about fifty feet wide, rapid, and full of rocks. Here we made good use of our training in gymnastics. My comrade, a tall fellow, was light on his feet. He jumped like a squirrel from rock to rock. To me it seemed that I would slip and be swept away by the current. My comrade was already on the opposite shore when I, making my last jump, failed to gain the beach. Fortunately he was quick to stretch out to me his long stick, and drew me out of the water as wet as a lobster.

We walked along the stream all day without encountering anybody. At the end of the day we came in sight of a tiny village, but there were no people nor soldiers to be seen. Only near one house smoke was rising. We decided to approach stealthily and investigate. We saw an old woman at the fire, bending over a kettle of sweet corn. We surmised that the inhabitants of the village must have deserted it because of its proximity to the front, while the old woman refused to abandon her home.

We approached her and confessed that we were Russian soldiers. She thought long. What "Russian" meant she did not know, but she understood the meaning of the word "soldiers." She presented us with some of her sweet corn and pointed out the way to the Italian front.

III—"WE ESCAPED TO ITALIAN FRONTIER"

It was six in the evening when we came upon an advanced Italian post. The sentinel stopped us with a "Halt!" He was pointing [300] his rifle at us, showing that he would shoot if we advanced. He called for his superior. We were searched and taken into their quarters. An officer soon came in. Through an interpreter he asked us for our names, regiments, and army branches. He gave each of us a package of cigarettes.

Only then I understood that we were received as guests. When the officer gave us the cigarettes, saying "Bravo, Russi!" the soldiers began showering us with cigarettes, chocolate, and confetti. One soldier guessed better than the rest; he brought us a dish of soup, meat, and a bottle of wine. After this there was a regular wedding feast. Each of the soldiers brought something to eat, cheese, butter, sardines. We, knowing our condition, abstained from eating too much. Thinking that on the following day we would have to suffer hunger again, we put all the presents into a bag presented us by one of the Italians. Thus we accumulated about fifteen pounds of bread, cheese, butter, chocolate, lard, and boiled beef. Then the Italians noticed that our clothes were wet, and began presenting us with underwear and clothing, so that we soon changed our appearance. We were anxious to converse with them. The interpreter, who spoke Russian imperfectly, had a great deal of work. Just the same, I will never in my life forget his first words in Russian, as he asked us, by order of the officer: "Who are you—brothers?" In tears we answered him that we were Russian officers escaped from captivity; he asked it so kindly, and we were infinitely gladdened by his sweet words.

The following day we were taken to the corps headquarters. Officers would come in, shake hands—some even kissed us, which embarrassed us. Unwittingly tears would come to our eyes when we recalled our life in the prison camp and this sudden change for the better.

The General also visited us. He pressed our hands, gave each of us a package of cigarettes, and presented us with 10 lire in [301] gold. We wanted to decline the money, but the interpreter said, "Take," and we did.

We lived for about a month in Italy. What a noble people!—soldiers, civilians, and officers. It is impossible to describe! At every station (on the way to France) the public would surround us, all anxious to do us some favours, all showing their deep affection for the Russians. Once a Sister of Mercy was distributing coffee to our party as the train began to move. She ran along till the train gained full speed, desiring not to leave some of us without coffee. Our soldiers would wonder at the affection of the entire Italian people for the Russians, and would shout incessantly: "Viva Italia! Viva Italia!"

TWO WEEKS ON A SUBMARINE [302]

Told by Carl List

This article, by a German-American sailor on a Norwegian ship bound for Queenstown with a cargo of wheat, was communicated to *L'Illustrazione Italiana*, from which it is here translated for *Current History*.

I—"I WAS ON A NORWEGIAN SHIP"

The Norwegian ship on which I was embarked was nearing the Irish Channel. The afternoon was misty, the sea rough. We were warned by an English steamer of the presence of German submarines in the vicinity. There was a certain depression among those on board.

I asked the Captain if there were anything to do. "No," he answered. Boom! a cannon shot was heard at the very moment. General confusion. All the men ran up on deck and looked about, terrified. Boom! another cannon shot. Then one of the German sailors, pointing to a spot on the horizon, said: "A German submarine."

It was true. The black spot grew rapidly larger, and then one could make out some human figures near the small cannon on the deck. It was the famous U-39. We hoisted our flag and awaited events. The Captain sent the mate with our ship's papers over to the submarine, which was now near. Soon those who were not German received orders to take to the boats. The Germans were taken on board the U-39, I among them. When this was done our ship was sunk.

So there I was on board a submarine. The impression of it was strange enough. The first evening, quite exhausted, I threw myself down in a corner. I heard a few short orders, then the sound of the machinery.... After that everything was in absolute silence. Some said we were navigating at such a depth that big ships could pass overhead of us.... I fell asleep. [303]

Next day on waking I tried to get my bearings. We Germans were treated as friends. We were permitted to go about everywhere.

The boat had the shape of a gigantic cigar, about 200 feet long, divided into numerous compartments. They were full of shining instruments. Now there was a buzzing sound, like the inside of a bee-hive, now absolute silence reigned. Every nerve was tense with the expectation of the orders on which our lives depended. Toward the prow was the room from which the torpedo was launched, a room full of tubes and valves. The officers' lodgings are very restricted, since the space on board a submarine proscribes any comfort. The commander was Lieut. Capt. Foerstner, a tall young man, thin and pale—which is not surprising, since he never had a moment's repose; neither he nor the men of the crew ever got their clothes off during the twelve days I was on board.

The periscope, the eye of the submarine, made known to us everything that took place on the surface of the water, and it did so with such clearness that it was almost like looking through a telescope. There was always a man on watch there.

II—"I WAS ABOARD THE U-39"

Suddenly a ship comes in sight. Its smoke is like a black line drawn on the horizon. A bell rings. It is a signal for each man to be at his post. The U-39 slowly rises to the surface. A last look is given at the mirror of the periscope; no English coast guard is in sight. So everything is ready for action. We hear the command, "Empty the water cistern." Freed from her ballast, the submarine rises to the surface. "Both engines ahead at full speed!" The boat cleaves her way through the water that cascades her sides with foam. In a short time the ship is reached. The submarine hoists her flag and fires a cannon shot. No flag betrays the nationality of the captured ship, but we can read the name, *Gadsby*, on her side. She is English. We signal that her whole crew is to take to the lifeboats, and quickly! At any moment we may be surprised. [304]

Through the megaphone we indicate to the men the nearest way to land; then a cannon shot, then a second one. The captured ship, after pitching for a while, sinks.

The time necessary for the sinking of a ship differs considerably in different cases. Some disappear in five minutes, others float for several hours. The finest spectacle I witnessed was the sinking of the *Fiery Cross*. The crew received orders to get off in the boats. Some of our men rowed up close to the abandoned ship and attached hand grenades to her sides. They were fired and the three-master was blown up with all her sails spread and set. The hull and the rigging went down to the depths, but the sails spread out on the surface of the water like so many little fields of polar ice. Eleven ships were destroyed during my stay on board. Quite a number of others were captured, besides these, but they were let go again.

This trip, which I shall never forget, lasted twelve days. It was dangerous, but it was exciting and so fine that I would not have missed it for anything in the world.

A GERMAN BATTALION THAT PERISHED IN THE SNOW [305]

Told by a Russian Officer

> This is a tragic story of a night fight in snow-buried barbed wire entanglements where a whole German battalion perished. It comes from Petrograd to Montgomery Schuyler in the form of a letter from a Russian officer.

I—TRAGIC STORY OF A NIGHT FIGHT

"We were creeping across the snow, when we hear a frightened '*Wer kommt da?*'

"'Hold on, Germans! Where the devil do they come from?' ask our men in surprise. 'Are they numerous?'

"'*Wer ist da?*' we hear again.

"Our only reply is to fire by the squad, and then again. The Germans are a little surprised, but pull themselves together and return the fire. It is dark and neither side can see the other. In groping about, we finally meet, and it is give and take with the bayonet. We strike in silence, but bullets are falling about us like rain. Nobody knows who is firing and every one is crying in his own language, 'Don't fire! Stop!' From the side where the firing comes from, beyond and to the right, they are yelling at us, both in German and Russian, 'What's the matter? Where are you?'

"Our men cry to the Germans, 'Surrender!'

"They answer: 'Throw down your arms. We have surrounded you and you are all prisoners.'

"Wild with rage, we throw ourselves forward with the bayonet, pushing the enemy back along the trenches. In their holes the Germans cry, peering into the impenetrable darkness, 'Help! Don't fire! Bayonet them!' Hundreds of shouts answer them, like a wave rolling in on us from every hand. [306]

"'Oh, little brothers, their force is numberless. We are surrounded on three sides. Would it not be better to surrender?' cries some one with a sob.

"'Crack him over the head! Pull out his tongue! Drive him to the Germans with the bayonet!' are the growling comments this evokes.

"A command rings out, vibrating like a cord: 'Rear ranks, wheel, fire, fire!'

"The crowd before us yells, moves, and seems to stop. But behind them new ranks groan and approach. Anew the command is given, 'Fire, fire!'

"Cries and groans answer the fusillade and a hand-to-hand struggle along the trenches ensues.

"German shouts are heard: 'Help! Here, this way! Fall on their backs!'

"But it is we who fall on their backs. We pry them out and clear the trenches.

"In front of us all is quiet. On the right we hear the Germans struggling, growling, repeating the commands of the officers: '*Vorwärts! Vorwärts!*' But nobody fires and nobody attacks our trenches. We fire in the general direction of the German voices, infrequent shots far apart answer us. The commands of '*Vorwärts*' have stopped. They are at the foot of the trenches, but they do not storm them. 'After them with the bayonet,' our men cry, 'Finish them as we finished the others.'

"'Halt, boys,' calls the sharp, vibrating voice of our commander. 'This may be only another German trick. They don't come on; we are firing and they do not answer. Shoot further and lower. Fire!'"

II—"SO PERISHED A WHOLE BATTALION" [307]

"New cries and groans come from the Germans, followed by some isolated shots, which fly high above us. After five or six rounds silence settles upon the trenches and continues unbroken. 'What can this mean?' wonder our men. 'Have we exterminated them all?'

"'Excellency, permit me to go and feel around,' offers S., chief scout, already decorated with the Cross of St. George.

"'Wait, I am going to look into it myself.'

"The officer lights a little electric lamp, and prudently sticks his arm above the rampart. The light does not draw a single shot. We peer cautiously over and see, almost within reach of our hands, the Germans lying in ranks, piled on top of one another.

"'Excellency,' the soldiers marvel, 'they are all dead. They don't move, or are they pretending?'

"The officer raises himself and directs the rays from his lamp on the heaps. We see that they are buried in the snow up to the waist, or to the neck, but none of them moves. The officer throws the light right and left, and shows us hundreds of Germans extended, their fallen rifles sticking up in the snow like planted things.

"'I don't understand,' he mutters.

"'Excellency, I am going to see,' says the chief scout.

"'Go on,' the officer consents, 'and you, boys, have your rifles ready and fire at anything suspicious without waiting for orders from me.'

"S. gets out of the trench and immediately disappears, swallowed by the soft snow up to the neck. He tries to get one leg out, but without success. He tries to lean on one hand, pushes it down into the snow, then pulls hard and swears. His hands are frightfully scratched; the blood tinges the snow with dark blotches.

"'It's the barbed wire defenses,' he cries. 'Help me, little brothers. Alone I can do nothing.' [308]

"We catch him by the collar of his tunic, and with difficulty pull him out. His coat, trousers, boots are in shreds.

"'Thousand devils,' he swears. 'I have no legs left. They're scratched to pieces.'

"The officer understands: the trenches are defended by intrenchments of barbed wire. The snow had covered and piled high above them. The whole battalion we had seen had rushed forward to the help of those who had called and had got mixed up in the wires. The first over had sunk into the snow and disappeared. Those coming after had stepped on them, passed on, become entangled wires, and had fallen in turn under our hail of lead. Rank on rank, ignorant of what had happened and rushing on like wild animals, had shared the fate of their comrades. So perished a whole battalion."

THE FATAL WOOD—"NOT ONE SHALL BE SAVED" [309]

A Story of Verdun

Told by Bernard St. Lawrence

> The following graphic account of one of the most dramatic episodes in the great Battle of Verdun was related to the writer by a Verdunois, who himself heard it from a young French officer, and recorded it in the *Wide World*.

I—POILUS GOING TO SAVE VERDUN

"Courage! We'll never allow the Boches to get through. Cheer up! They shall never get your town. *Vive Verdun et les Verdunois!*"

Thus, in a hundred and one different ways, did the brave *poilus*, marching with admirable *entrain* towards Verdun, instil hope into our downcast hearts.

We were on our way, the civilians of Verdun, to Paris and elsewhere, in cattle-trucks and military wagons—a painful journey, in bitter cold and snow, which would have been almost unbearable but for the sight of those merry-hearted troops, swinging along in the daytime on the road bordering the railway, and at night sweeping past us in trainload after trainload in the direction of the town which, shattered by shot and shell though it was, we still pictured in our hearts as home. There were long waits in the darkness at wayside stations or on sidings, whilst the saviours of France went forth to battle, but wherever possible we found help and encouragement. At the larger *gares* warmth and creature-comforts were in readiness to cheer us [310] on our way. The waiting and refreshment rooms were crowded with railway officials, charitably-disposed ladies, and military officers, all of them eager to do something to ameliorate our lot, and at the same time to hear the latest news from the Front.

I was fortunate in making the acquaintance at Chalons of a young officer, Lieutenant Marcel R——, who was able to tell me a good deal about the Battle of Verdun, or, more strictly speaking, a singular episode in it. Vague rumours of the "*Coup* of the Caures Wood" had already reached my ears, but it was not until I met Lieutenant R—— that I heard all the dramatic details, in the planning and execution of which he himself had played a part, though a minor one.

"*Eh bien!* How have you been getting on at Verdun lately?" he began by asking me. "I was quite sorry to have to leave the battlefield and go, *en mission*, to Paris. But I shall be back there to-morrow. Shall I find a soul left?"

"Only Père François, the *marchand de vin* of the Rue Nationale," I replied. "He alone remains of the three thousand inhabitants. We left him standing at the door of his wine-shop, which he said he would not abandon for all the Boches in creation."

"He plays his part, without a doubt," replied Lieutenant R——, with a laugh. "It was at Père François's that we celebrated the *coup* of the Caures Wood, and I shall never forget his enthusiasm when we told him the story."

"I envy him the privilege," said I. "Might I hope to hear you repeat it, if there is time before the train starts?"

"*Mais certainement!* This is what happened. But I must begin at the very beginning. The setting for the episode I have to describe is indispensable."

And Lieutenant R—— proceeded to tell his story as follows:—

II—LIEUTENANT R—— TELLS HIS STORY [311]

We were in the early days of the battle, but sufficient had already happened to make it clear to every one of us that at last we were face to face with a big affair. The German High Command had decided on a step which we welcomed most joyfully—to stake its all on a vain endeavour to regain the confidence which the public in Germany has fast been losing, not only in the military party, but also in the Hohenzollerns themselves. The roar of the guns was so deafening that we had to stuff our ears with cotton-wool or any material we could find to deaden the dreadful sound. The ground shook under the shock of the exploding shells. But neither the sounds which came to us, nor the sights which met our eyes as we looked down upon the ever-advancing masses of men in grey-green uniforms, had the slightest ill-effect upon our nerves. Judging by my own feelings, we were all supremely uplifted. It seemed to me that we had been preparing all our lives for that one glorious day.

"Come on, come on, grey-green battalions, and let us bite deep into your flesh! It matters not what cowardly means you adopt; poison gas or squirters of flaming liquid are all one to us, for you will never succeed in getting through. Come on, like animals to the slaughter! Those who succeed in escaping the *arrosage* of the 'seventy-fives' will find that Rosalie—the bayonet—is waiting for them." Such was the savage hymn which my men were singing in their hearts as we defended the Bois de Caures.

"Rosalie" did her work well, I can tell you, when the Boches came to close quarters. The snow-flecked ground in front of us, furrowed as though by a titanic plough, was covered with bodies. However, as they still came on in serried masses, it was decided that a retreat to the defences which had been prepared many weeks before was necessary. Full of confidence, and [312] knowing that this slow retreat would enable us to kill more and still more Germans, we made our preparations.

But first of all let me locate the Wood of Caures, though it may be superfluous to do so in the presence of an inhabitant—

perhaps a native—of Verdun. It is situated to the north of your town, and is one of a number of woods and forests which are visible as dark masses of foliage to anyone standing on the heights in the immediate neighbourhood of Verdun, or, better still, if the observer be seated in an aeroplane. The eyes of our gallant airmen were constantly fixed on the Bois de Caures, which lies between the Bois d'Haumont and the Herbe Bois, on the Bois des Fosses, which is due south of where we were, and on the Forest of Spincourt, which was to our east. These precious collaborators kept us constantly informed as to the movements of the enemy. Every few hours they brought in their reports to the Headquarters Staff, whence came the order that, in conjunction with the remainder of the line, we were to fall back.

"The move is to be made to-morrow—towards evening." Captain Peyron told me in the afternoon. "But I understand from Chief Engineer Moreau that we're to prepare a little surprise for the Kaiser's crack troops. We've got to hold the wood like grim death until everything is ready. Moreau and his staff of engineers have been out all day in the wood prospecting, and the sappers must be already at work."

III—ON THE EVE OF THE *COUP*

At nightfall I learnt a little more from one of Moreau's assistants, Lieutenant Chabert, a former brilliant pupil of the Ecole des Arts et Métiers, who, owing to his deep knowledge of electrical science, has on countless occasions rendered invaluable service. He is one of those men who can turn their hands to anything in the scientific line. He staggered into our dug-out, dead-beat, after ten hours of feverish and continuous work with the sappers, and before throwing himself down to sleep had just strength enough to mumble, "See that I'm called as early as possible, *mon ami*, will you? I've got hundreds of yards of wiring to see to yet. *Dieu merci*, we've still got a day before us!" [313]

I promised to wake him at five sharp, and, envying him his sleep, immediately went in search of Sergeant Fleury, to delegate him to carry out the duty entrusted to me in case—one never knows what the fortunes of war may bring about—I were prevented from doing it. By the time I had found the sergeant the moon had risen over the battlefield, and if I live to be a hundred I shall never forget the sight. Our machine-guns were still firing two hundred rounds a minute on the German formations. As the enemy approached through the ravines round Flasbas and Azannes they were enfiladed, and the deep clefts in the hills were positively filled up with dead. Then, towards the early hours of the morning, came a lull. The respite was doubly welcome; it gave us both time to breathe and behold the work we had done. A ghastly spectacle indeed was revealed as our searchlights swept over the battlefield.

When the dawn came the lull continued—at least, till noon, when we had once more to face the hammer-blows of the Kaiser and the Crown Prince. I called Chabert at the appointed hour. After a great stretch and a yawn, he went off like a giant refreshed to his work among the human moles of the Caures Wood. About noon, Moreau came to hold a consultation with Captain Peyron, under whose immediate orders we were, but he was in such a hurry to get back to his sappers and electricians that he had not time to say more than:—

"*Bonjour*, R——; see you later. All goes well!" [314]

The satisfied expression on his face told me that without words.

IV—"COUP OF CAURES WOOD"

I did not meet either him or Chabert until after the retreat; and, to tell you the truth, we were so busily engaged in keeping back the Germans until it suited our purpose to let them come on *en masse* that I almost forgot about the "little surprise" which Moreau, Chabert, et Cie. had announced to me through my chief.

When evening came the gradual move back to more advantageous positions began. I shall not go into the details of a strategic retreat with which you yourself must be almost as well acquainted as myself, but simply state that we evacuated the Caures Wood and got away to the high ground in the neighbourhood of the Bois des Fosses, where Peyron, Moreau, Chabert, Sergeant Fleury and myself calmly awaited the impending catastrophe which had been so skilfully and rapidly prepared for the oncoming enemy. The Bois de Caures, in the gathering darkness of night, stood out like a huge black mass against the sky.

"What do you estimate the strength of the attacking force in our section to be?" I asked Captain Peyron.

"Two thousand odd," he replied, "and they have all of them fallen into the trap. As our men ran away through the wood, they followed in masses, blindly and stupidly—*les imbéciles*! Not one of them will escape, Moreau?"

"Not a soul," replied the chief engineer. Then, glancing at his luminous watch and turning to Chabert, he added, "One more minute, and we shall see what we shall see."

We kept our eyes fixed intently on the dark Bois de Caures. Someone, somewhere, was pressing a button; for all at once huge tongues of flames, accompanied by a series of explosions which rent the cold night air, leapt into the sky. Simultaneously a mental vision must have occurred to every one of us, as it certainly did to me—a vision of hundreds upon hundreds of Germans, caught like rats in a trap, blown to pieces amidst the shattered trees of that fatal wood. [315]

So ended the story of the "*Coup* of the Caures Wood" as related to me by Lieutenant R——. Hardly had he uttered the last words when the departure bell rang and we hurried away to the train which was to take us to Paris.

HEROISM AND PATHOS OF THE FRONT [316]

Told by Lauchlan MacLean Watt

> This touching bit of genuine literature, penned by a poetic Scot "somewhere in France," deserves to rank as a classic among war letters.

I—STORY OF A YOUNG SCOTTISH SOLDIER

Out here in the land of war we sometimes feel very far from those we love; and then, as though we had walked somehow right through reality, our thoughts are lifted oversea, and the mirage of home floats like a dream before us. The magic stop is touched in many ways. Little do the brave lads speaking to us in camp or hospital know how often they brought us underneath its spell.

Just a week ago, in a tent where the wounded lay, I was beside the bed of a fine young Scottish soldier, stricken down in the prime of his manhood, yet full of hope. The thought of the faces far away was always with him upholdingly. In fact, the whole tent seemed vibrant with the expectation of the journey across the narrow strip of blue which sunders us from home. This Scottish youth had been talking, and it was all about what to-morrow held for him. His mother, and the girl that was to share life with him—these were foremost in his thought. His face shone as he whispered, "I'm going home soon." Everything would be all right then. What a welcome would be his, what stories would be told by the fireside in the Summer evenings! But he made the greater journey that very night. We buried him two days later, where the crosses, with precious names upon them, are growing thick together. Surely that is a place most holy. There will be a rare parade there on Judgment Day of the finest youth and truest chivalry of Britain and of France. Soft be their sleep till that reveillé! [317]

We got the Pipe Major of a famous Highland regiment to come over; and when the brave dust was lowered, while a little group of bronzed and kilted men stood around the grave, he played the old wail of sorrow of our people, "Lochaber No More." I heard it last when I stood in the rain beside my mother's grave; and there can be nothing more deeply moving for the Highland heart. The sigh of the waves along Hebridean shores called to me there, among the graves in France.

The men who lie in this hospital are those who could not be carried further meanwhile, and they have been dropped here, in passing, to hover between life and death until they make a move on one side or other of the Great Divide. So it is a place where uncertainty takes her seat beside the bed of the sufferer, watching with ever unshut eye the fluctuating levels of the tide of destiny. It is a place where the meaning of war gets branded deep upon you. The merest glimpse solemnizes. Of course, the young may forget. The scars of youth heal easily. But the middle-aged of our generation will certainly carry to the grave the remembrance of this awful passion of a world.

II—THE MIRACLE OF DEATH

Here, of course, you meet all kinds of men, from everywhere. They were not forced to come, except by duty, in their country's need. They were willing in the day of sacrifice, and theirs is that glory deathless.

[318] One has been burned severely. How he escaped at all is a miracle. But they are all children of miracle. Death's pursuing hand seems just to have slipped off some as he clutched at them. This man looks through eye-holes in his bandages. He is an Irishman, and the Irish do take heavy hurts with a patient optimism wonderful to see.

There is also a fine little Welshman, quite a lad, who has lost his leg. He has been suffering continually in the limb that is not there. To-day he was lying out in the sun, and he looked up cheerily at me. "Last night," he said, "for about half an hour I had no pain. I tell you I lay still and held my breath. It was so good I scarcely could believe it. I thought my heart would never beat again, at the wonder of it."

The usual picture postcard of the family is always close at hand. One North of Ireland man, up out of bed for the first time, was very full-hearted about his "missis and the childer." Said he with pride, "She's doin' extra well. She's as brave as the best of them, and good as the red gold—that's what she is."

Another poor fellow, in terrible pain, asked me to search in a little cotton bag which was beside him for the photograph of his wife and himself and the little baby. "It was took just when I joined," he whispered. "Baby's only two months old there."

One day those who were able were outside, and a gramophone was throatily grinding the melody out of familiar tunes, with a peculiarly mesmeric effect. Suddenly the record was changed to "Mary of Argyle." The Scotsman by whose bed I was standing said: "Wheesht! D'ye hear thot? Man, is it no fine?" And the tears ran down his cheeks as he listened. It was a poor enough record. In ordinary times he would have shouted his condemnation of it. But he was now in a foreign land—a stricken, suffering man. And it made him think of some woman far away beside the Forth, where he came from. And his heart asked no further [319] question.

At the head of the bed of some of them you will see a blue paper. "You're looking grand to-day," said I to a young fellow. And he replied, "Is there anny wonder, Sir, wid that scrap o' paper there?" For it was the order for home on the first available opportunity. "Sure, won't the ould mother be glad to see me?" he continued. "The sunshine here is beautiful, but sunshine in the ould country is worth the world."

"Good-bye, Sir!" they sometimes cry. "I'll be away when you come round again." But perhaps next time a sad face looks up at you, for the day so eagerly anticipated has been again postponed.

It is always home, and what the dear ones there are like, and what they will be thinking yonder, that fills up the quiet hours toward restoration, as it strengthened the heart and arm of the brave in the hour of terrible conflict.

The endurance, patience, and courage of the men are beyond praise—as marvelous as their sufferings. I can never forget one who lay moaning a kind of chant of pain—to prevent himself screaming, as he said.

III—THE PIPER PLAYED "LOCHABER NO MORE"

Last night we had a very beautiful experience. We were searching for a man on most important business, but as the wrong address had been given, that part of it ended in wild-goose chase. Nevertheless we were brought into contact with a real bit of wonder. It was an exquisite night. The moon, big, warm, and round as a harvest moon at home, hung low near the dreaming world. The trees stood still and ghost-like, and the river ran through a picture of breathless beauty. We had got away beyond [320] houses, and were climbing up through a great far-stretching glade. The roar before us was a trellis of shadow and moonlight. Suddenly we had to stand and listen. It was the nightingale. How indescribably glorious! The note of inquiry, repeated and repeated, like a searching sadness; and then the liquid golden stream of other-world song. How wonderfully peaceful the night lay all around—the very moonlight seemed to soften in the listening. And yet again came the question with the sob in it; and then the cry of the heart running over.

The valley lay lapped in luminous haze, a lake somewhere shining. But there was no other sound, no motion, no sign of life anywhere—only ourselves standing in that shadow glade, and that song of the beginnings of the world's sadness, yearning, and delight, somewhere in the thicket near.

It was difficult to believe that we were in a land of war; that not far from us lay ruined towns of ancient story; that the same moonlight, so flooded with delight for us, was falling on the uninterred, the suffering, and the dying, and the graves where brave dust was buried. It was all very beautiful. And yet, somehow, it made me weary. For I could not help thinking of the boy we had laid down to rest, so far from home, and the piper playing "Lochaber No More" over his grave. And of the regiment we had seen that very day, marching in full equipment, with the pipers at the head of the column, so soon to be separated from the peat fires and the dear ones more widely than by sundering seas. And we hated the war. God recompenses the cruel ones who loosened that bloody curse from among the old-time sorrows which were sleeping, to afflict again the world!

AN AVIATOR'S STORY OF BOMBARDING THE ENEMY [321]

Told by a French Aviator

> This is a tale of the risks, the courage, the fears, the luck, the compulsion of duty and the haunting memory of destruction that mark the fighting service of the airmen. It is a French aviator's plain tale of experience from *Illustration*, Paris.

I—"OUR FLIGHT AT DAY BREAK"

When our flight commander came in we knew by his smiling face that he had something interesting for us. "Make a careful inspection," he said. "The staff counts on you to destroy a station of great importance. Take oil and essence enough for four hours' flight. Each of you will carry five 90's and one 155. If you do not wholly destroy the place during the first attack, rest, go back to-morrow and finish your work. You will get explicit orders before you start."

Our service is not confined to the defense of Paris. We are not the G. V. C. of the skies. We had no idea where we were going; but our chief was in such good spirits that we looked for a fine adventure. So full of ardor, we all, pilots and engineers, inspected our great flyers. Then, in view of resting for our work, we turned in for the night. When someone knocked violently on my door I sprang up broad awake.

"Get up, sergeant!" cried a voice. "It is nearly three o'clock! You will be late!"

[322] The motors were turning on the ground. I dressed hastily and went out.... Brr! it was cold. The field lay like a shadow in the moonlight; the sky was of ideal clearness; a light fog was rising from the damp ground. Our whole assembly, pilots and observers, went into the little shack used as our flight bureau. Then came a great hand-clasping, farewells—silence.

The commander pointed out our route and we traced it on our charts. Now we knew where we were going and what we had to do.

There were our machines in the half-light, drawn up in line of battle. Every pilot cast a swift glance at his craft as he went aboard. They tested the motors. The grinding of the motors had slowed down; there was an instant of relative calm. An order passed from pilot to pilot: "Start from right to left, thirty seconds headway!"

A long rattle broke the silence; an avion glided over the ground and went up: *Our Chief!* I was second. I heard my friends wishing me luck. I rolled on at full speed, rose, and rushed out, into the darkness.

When I had been flying ten minutes I realized that something was the matter. My motor was not "giving." The altimeter marked 1,800 meters. I saw the trenches stretching like cobwebs across the ground. I tried to rise—*Impossible!* I was less than 2,000 meters above the earth; I was under orders; it was up to me to get to my destination and destroy the object I had been sent to destroy; and my motor would not raise me one foot. For one moment sickly doubt assailed me. I crossed the line and, instantly, my craft was a target. The explosion of the bombs was so violent and the bombs were so near, and there was so many of them, that the air was in a tumult. My machine oscillated. The noise was head-splitting; the muzzles of their 77's formed a bar of fire.

I was taking heavy risks, but what else could I do? *I must get there and do my work.*

The 105 was going; so were the 77's, upward like a bit of fireworks, hurrying along towards the zenith until his lamps were like little stars. On the following day we set out again to do our work. *We had been sent to destroy.* [323]

II—"WE DROPPED BOMBS ON THE ENEMY"

We started at four o'clock in the afternoon and landed to reconnoiter at a camp near the lines. While the motormen examined our motors, and while the electricians put in the lights, we automobiled to a nearby town and ate our dinner. We were dressed for our trip. The time set for our ascension was nine o'clock.

At dinner the chief had said to us: "When my lights go out you will know that I am flying as a bird flies *for their lines*!" As we stood there watching his flight his lights went out. That was his signal to us; *his farewell*. But we saw him once more when his swift black plane cut across the disk of the yellow moon.

Then I went up. I rose to a height of 600 meters. I turned my last spiral and put out my lights and the lights fixed to the wings, leaving nothing but the little chart lamp.

The earth lay away below us, vast, dark and still. We heard no sound, we saw no light save the pallid light of the moon. The wind was strong. I had no guiding points. I steered by the stars. As we approached the lines the broad fan of a searchlight fixed upon me. I made a rapid turn. Something was coming. We saw two light-bombs and three golden fusees shooting worms of fire.

After a flight of fifty minutes we reached our objective point. I slowed down and we descended. When 500 meters above the earth we dropped incendiary cans and bombs. A shower of light bombs answered us; they showed us what we were doing and made it easier to do our work. Then the lights of powerful projectors fastened on us. But our work was done, and before long we were over our landing. [324]

The home run before the light wind was a pleasure. *But a man always remembers*, and the thought of the damage I had done haunted me! They fired their cannon. We were so close to them I wondered they did not hit us. On that occasion my big machine did well because my motors were normal. But, to sum it all up in a few words, everything was in my favor this last time. We escaped, and, what is more important, we contributed not a little to the success of the French in Champagne.

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A DAY IN A GERMAN WAR PRISON

Told by Wilhelm Hegeler, Popular German Novelist

> The strange mixture of races on the western front is here depicted by a noted German author in the form of a prison guard's narrative of his daily life.

I—THE ANIMALS IN THE "ZOO"

There they lie in a gloomy room of the railroad station, the English prisoners, together with their allies from the Old and New Worlds. The room used to be the waiting room for non-smokers, and it is no darker or uglier than any of the other rooms, only it seems so because of its occupants.

"Service at the Zoo." Every one of us knows what this means—duty with the prisoners. Our soldiers have invented good-natured nicknames for the Turcos, Indians, and Algerians that they meet here: "The men from the monkey theatre," "The Masqueraders," "The Hagenbeck Troop." But they walk past the Englishmen in silent hatred. A little sympathy is needed, even for banter.

The prisoners' room is empty, except for a few inmates who for various reasons could not be sent away. I am on duty here to-day. Crumpled forms squat on mattresses along the wall like multi-colored bundles of clothing. Not much is to be seen of their faces. Only a black arm, a lank yellow hand, a gaudy blue sash, a pair of wide red trousers stand out. There they crouch in the same stoical calm as they did before their houses in the distant Orient, with the exception that they, with the instinct of wounded animals, hide their faces. [326]

An Englishman lies on a bed opposite them. He looks at me expectantly as if he wants to say something. But although I am not forbidden to talk with the prisoners, I feel no necessity for doing so.

An hour goes by. From time to time I give a drink to the Orientals who ask me for it through gestures. At last the Englishman can keep silent no longer and asks:

"Will they treat us very severely?"

I shrug my shoulders. "People feel angry at the English. Our soldiers assert that they waved white flags and then threw hand grenades."

"I don't know anything about that. That may have been the case earlier, but I have been in the war only eight days. A week ago I was in Newcastle with my wife."

He takes a tin case from under his shirt, opens it, and looks at it for a long time. Then he shows me the case, which contains the picture of a woman, his wife. Then he takes a piece of paper from his trousers pocket and shows me that, too. A name and address are written on it.

"That is the man who bound up my wound on the field of battle. He was very good to me. After the war I shall write to him."

After a long period of silence he begins to talk again. But I do not think further conversation timely. I only pay attention once and that is when he explains to me his grade in the service and his rate of pay. He is something like a Sergeant and says, pointing to his insignia: "A common soldier gets only so much; with this insignia he gets so much more, and when he has both, as I have, he gets so much." He names the munificent sum with visible pride.

II—"A BELGIAN IN GERMAN UNIFORM" [327]

Then the door opens and my comrade announces in a tone that implies something unusual: "A Belgian in a German uniform." I look at the man in astonishment. Why is he allowed to run around without any guard in particular? The expression of his face is rather stupid. He sits down near the stove and crosses his legs comfortably. I ask him how he got the uniform. He answers in Flemish. Before an explanation is possible the hospital corps men bring in six or seven Englishmen on stretchers. Now quick work is necessary. Mattresses must be spread out on the floor and the people changed from bed to bed. The room is filled with inquisitive hospital corps men and soldiers. I shove them all out. When the door is finally closed again I count my prisoners and find the Belgian is missing. I rush outside to look around the station platform. There stands my Belgian on the doorstep. I seize his arm in an almost friendly manner and invite him to come inside again. At last he tells me how he got the uniform. He insists he got it in the hospital in the place of his own tattered one. I shake my head increduously, but the chaffeur who brought the prisoner hurries up and verifies the story.

Now the station commandant comes along and is also of the opinion that the prisoner must get some other kind of clothing. "But," he orders, "first ask the staff doctor if his uniform can be taken off without any danger to his wounds." I don't have to do this, because the wound is on his upper thigh. I hunt up an unclaimed English cloak and, with visible relief, the Belgian warrior crawls out of the German lion's skin.

III—PRISON KEEPER TELLS HIS STORY

New prisoners are brought in—Frenchmen, Scotchmen, and Canadians. Many of the first-named cough frightfully. When they are asked where they got that, they answer that they have had it the whole Winter long. There is a lank, powerful-looking non-commissioned officer among them. He makes a sign to me and confesses confidentially that he is very hungry. I tell him he must have patience, as there will soon be coffee and bread given out. [328]

"Bread? Black bread?" He curls up his nose. "May I not have a little pastry, perhaps?"

"You just try our black bread," is my reply. "It is the same as we have ourselves. We are better than we are supposed to be in

France."

"Yes, that's true," he agrees. "They told us that the prisoners were badly treated in Germany. Now I see that such is not the case. Besides, they tell you the same thing about our prisoners in France. But they, too, do not have it so bad. On the contrary. I have seen some of them myself in Brittany. They get a quart of cider a day. There was an enormous crop of apples last Summer. And there is enough to eat. And besides that, they are allowed to stroll through the city a couple of hours every afternoon."

I permit myself to make a mental reservation regarding the last assertion, but a Frenchman brought in a little later makes the same statement.

A fairly educated and intelligent Canadian joins in the conversation and puts the question that occupies all of them the most: "What sort of fate awaits the prisoners?"

"You will have to work a few hours a day. Still, you are paid extra for that."

"It is tough to have to sit in close rooms all the time."

"No," I answer, "the wooden houses are surrounded by broad, open places. I, myself, have seen Englishmen playing football in a prison camp." [329]

Then his eyes sparkle and he lets slip the remark: "That is certainly better than in Canada." Presumably he refers to the camp of the civilians interned there. I ask him why he enlisted. He colors up and answers, with a somewhat embarrassed smile: "Well, I knew that my country was in danger, so I wanted to aid it." And this smile seems to me to betray less the embarrassment of a man looking for a clever answer than that of an educated person not liking to use pathetic expressions. For the entire man has the appearance of frankness and decency.

In these days when fresh batches of prisoners are coming along all the time I have answered many more questions. They are almost always the same questions and receive the same answers. I have also seen convoys of unwounded prisoners wending their way by day and by night along lonely roads not so very far back of the front. I have repeatedly asked prisoners how they were being treated. Many had requests to make; none had a complaint. On the other hand, I saw many acts of kindness performed by the doctors, by the sisters, and, not the fewest, by the soldiers.

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MURDER TRIAL OF CAPT. HERAIL OF FRENCH HUSSARS

Strangest Episode of the War

Told by an Eye-Witness

I—KILLED HIS WIFE—TRIED BY COURT-MARTIAL

Captain Edouard Anselme Jean Herail, of the Eleventh Regiment of French Hussars, but formerly of a cuirassier regiment, killed his wife at Compiegne, because she insisted on staying in a place where his regiment was encamped in defiance of military orders, which required that officers' wives must not visit them. Herail was threatened with disgrace for failure to obey orders.

Captain Herail was tried for the murder before a court-martial in Paris. The courtroom was crowded by a fashionable attendance, largely consisting of women, for the case involved most delicate and unique domestic problems, and the persons concerned were of high social position. The Captain's father was a prominent judge. His wife had one brother who won the Nobel Prize, and another brother is a well-known lawyer.

She was tall, slender, with a mass of Titian red hair and large blue eyes. She had an artistic temperament and a seductive personality, when not enraged.

The Captain is a man of middle height, strongly built, his thick hair brushed back, his complexion ruddy, altogether a good type of the cavalry officer. A reddish mustache adds to the impression of physical vigor, but his manner is gentle.

[331] The address of the prosecuting attorney showed that on November 23 last the regiment of cavalry to which the captain belonged had been withdrawn from the front and sent to camp at Campiegne for a period of rest, after extremely severe fighting in Lorraine and in the north, where the officers and soldiers of the regiment had lost heavily and performed their duty in a very gallant manner. Captain Herail, for his bravery, was recommended by his superiors for the cross of knight of the Legion of Honor.

Mme. Herail, who had been at Narbonne with her three children, learned three days after the regiment came to Compiegne that it was there. She hurried immediately to meet and embrace her husband, who was embarrassed by her presence from the beginning.

He felt obliged to take every means to hide the presence of his wife in the town, for a note from the commanding general of October 4 had absolutely forbidden the wives of officers to be with their husbands, and it was added that any infraction of the order would be severely punished. Much disorder and disregard of discipline had been caused in the army by the presence of wives and also of those who were not wives. In spite of this officers' wives had frequently broken the order and had settled down in the vicinity of the camp. Lieutenant-Colonel Meneville, commanding the Captain's regiment decided to call the attention of his officers a second time to the necessity of observing the rule.

II—MME. HERAIL DEFIED MILITARY LAW

It was in the midst of this already very delicate situation that Mme. Herail arrived to stay with her husband. He represented to her in the most affectionate manner that she was breaking the orders of his superiors, but she met his remonstrances with a storm of indignant reproaches. [332]

"Your superiors are not my superiors!" exclaimed Mme. Herail, "and I owe them no obedience. Did one ever hear of such tyranny? Their orders are an outrage on personal liberty and the rights of a wife. There is no power in France that can make me leave my husband or keep my children away from their father."

Finally, Mme. Herail burst into tears and her husband, instead of pressing her to go, fell on her bosom and wept with her.

The colonel of the regiment, who learned that his orders and warnings were being disregarded by Mme. Herail, called his officers together again. This was a third warning to them. He did not wish to appear to be striking especially at Captain Herail, for whom he had a high regard, and he told them all that very severe punishment would be inflicted on those who disobeyed the order. The disobedient, he said, would be sent back from the front, which, under the circumstances, would be a humiliating disgrace for a soldier.

Then he turned to Captain Herail and asked him to speak out "like a soldier and without beating about the bush" and tell him why his wife did not go away. Captain Herail endeavored to make an explanation, but instead of saying that he had been struggling vainly to make her go away, he tried, out of affection for his wife, to excuse her conduct and to offer special reasons why she should remain.

The colonel then lost his patience, and inflicted fifteen days close arrest on the captain, and made a report to the general of the brigade that the captain should be sent back to the depot at Narbonne. The general approved the recommendation and in addition said that the captain should not receive the Cross of the Legion of Honor for which he had been recommended. The colonel ordered Major Bouchez, the immediate superior to Captain Herail, to keep the latter under arrest in his rooms at 26, rue de la Sous-Prefecture, Compiegne, where he lodged with Mme. Masson. [333]

III—DRAMATIC SCENE BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

It was here that the climax of this unique drama occurred at about 8 o'clock in the evening. Major Bouchez came into Captain Herail's room. The latter's wife remained concealed in the next room. She heard everything that was said. Major Bouchez, who knew that she was there, raised his voice so that she could hear perfectly the reproofs which he addressed to his comrade. The interview lasted an hour and the major demonstrated fully to Captain Herail the terrible and disgraceful situation in which he would be placed, from a military point of view, at this supreme crisis of the French nation, if he did not obey orders by sending his wife away.

"You will be sent before a court martial," said Major Bouchez, "for refusing to obey the orders of your superiors, you will be struck from the list of the Legion of Honor, and you will be sent back from the front to the depot with the cripples and the old women. You would be better off if you were dead."

Captain Herail went into the next room and addressed his wife:

"You have heard what he has said? I must insist that you go away immediately. Go!"

"I will not go," said Mme. Herail, squaring her shoulders and settling down upon a divan.

"I give you the order to go immediately," repeated her husband with anger.

"As a matter of morality," said Mme. Herail, "you have no right to give me such an order." [334]

"We are not in the domain of abstract morality," replied the husband, "but in the domain of civil and military law and you owe me obedience."

"If you give me that order, everything will be over between us for life, and anyhow, I will not obey the order," retorted Mme. Herail, with remarkable feminine logic.

"I give you two minutes to reflect," said the unfortunate captain, whose emotions were getting terribly wrought up.

He went back to the other room, where Major Bouchez was waiting for him, took up his service revolver, and then returned to his wife's room.

"Have you reflected? Is it no?" he asked, evidently anticipating his wife's immovable obstinacy.

"I will never leave you alive. I love you too much, Jean," said Madame Herail.

"Then you will leave me dead," said Captain Herail.

IV—"HE AIMED AT HIS WIFE—AND FIRED"

Captain Herail then aimed point-blank at his wife with his revolver and fired three shots at her. She fell to the ground dead, all three of the bullets having passed through her head. Major Bouchez rushed in, saw the body, and, as he testified at the trial, found Captain Herail in tears and out of his mind with remorse.

Witnesses said that the sorrow of Captain Herail was intense. He was continually weeping, calling on the dead woman, and asking for his three children. It was proved that during the eleven years they were married he had shown the deepest affection for his wife, and it was only the military disgrace she had brought upon him that could have caused him to commit the act.

[335] He was married to his wife in 1904 when he was a lieutenant in the First Regiment of Cuirassiers. She was then Mlle. Henriette Courel. They both belonged to wealthy families and their marriage was an event in fashionable society. They began life under the happiest auspices. They were apparently a well-matched couple. He was very good-tempered and easy-going, while she was a devoted wife and a model housekeeper, but very jealous and extremely exacting.

She required that her husband should have no interest in life apart from her. At the annual military manoeuvres she insisted on following him around, and he, from fear of being made ridiculous, asked her to stay away, but she would not do so. His comrades called her his colonel.

During the testimony relating to these facts Captain Herail's eyes were wet with tears, and finally, when it came to the description of the scene of the killing, he could not restrain himself at all and broke into heartrending sobs.

Then the presiding officer ordered him to stand up and relate what he had to say in defence of his act. His tears continued to flow and at first he was unable to utter an intelligible sentence. He could be heard sobbing:

"My poor wife! My poor wife!"

After a time he was able to make a statement concerning his difficulties with his wife, of which these were the most striking passages:

"If she had only let me fulfill my military duties we should have been the happiest family possible. She was very good and very clever, but she never would permit me to be away from her."

[336] The unfortunate captain, who had faced death from bullets, day after day for months, without a tremor, while his comrades were falling all around him, broke down as he spoke of his dead wife and buried his nails in his flesh, unable to continue. The spectacle was an intensely painful one and caused nearly everybody in the audience to weep, including some of the officers on the bench.

"What could I do?" went on the poor captain when he had recovered some self-control. "I thought of handing in my resignation, and yet, I loved my calling, although my promotion had been slow. I remained thirteen years a simple lieutenant.

"Naturally, I appeared a careless officer, without ardor, constantly trying to get away from my daily duties. The truth is that my wife, every time I went out, urged me to return home as soon as possible, complaining that I was leaving her alone.

"I wished to give my resignation, although it was a hard prospect for me to leave the army a simple lieutenant without getting the Cross of the Legion of Honor. I did not tell my conjugal difficulties to any one.

"Then I was forced to abandon the idea of resigning, because my wife would not agree to such a solution. She was proud of the service I was in.

"Our third child had just been born when my squadron was ordered to start for the frontier of Morocco, where the war had just broken out. Suddenly my wife, though still in delicate health, announced that she would go with me, that she would make the campaign."

V—THE VERDICT—"NOT GUILTY!"

The captain continued the history of his curiously troubled married life up to the time of the outbreak of the present war. When he came to the recital of the tragedy at Compiegne he lost all control of himself. He said that the only thing with which he could reproach himself was having concealed from his military superiors the truth concerning his difficulties with his wife. [337]

Colonel Jacquillart, the president of the court martial, asked Captain Herail sharply:

"Why did you not use some other method than shooting your wife to end the distressing situation?"

"I tried every other means first," replied the captain, "and I must have been mad with fear of disgrace to kill the wife I loved so much."

Many military officers testified and gave Captain Herail a splendid character. Colonel Meneville, who had recommended that the captain should not receive the Legion of Honor on account of his disobeying the order to send wives away, said that in every other respect Herail was an excellent officer, brave and competent.

Henri Robert, the most noted member of the Paris Bar, defended Captain Herail eloquently.

"A judge far more inexorable than any of you," said M. Robert, pointing to the bench, "his mother-in-law, has forgiven him. She writes me lauding him as an ideal man and officer and worthy of his country. His dead wife's sisters and brothers also forgive him freely."

The members of the court martial only took fifteen minutes to reach a decision. They returned and rendered unanimously a simple verdict of "Not guilty!"

The verdict was received with frantic applause mingled with tears by the audience. (Told in the *New York American*.)

HOW THEY KILLED "THE MAN WHO COULD NOT DIE" [338]

Told by a Soldier Under General Cantore

I—STORY OF THE ITALIAN ALPINI

They said he could not die. The men who fought under him in Tripoli, the men who stood beside him in the bloody capture of Ala, looked on Antonio Cantore with almost superstitious awe. For he ought to have been killed a hundred times. A hundred times he came back, smiling quietly behind his spectacles, out of perils through which other men could not live. So the legend grew up among the Italian Alpini that their commander led a charmed life; they said he had the camicia della madonna and that bullets could not harm him. Death got him at last, but those boys of his—as he used to call his soldiers—will not believe it, even though they carved his tomb out of the rock and heaped the earth over his body.

Gen. Cantore was not a bit like a hero, as one pictures heroes. One might have taken him for a schoolmaster, a clerk in the post office, a retired commercial traveller. He was not tall, nor was his bearing martial. His kind blue eyes looked mildly through his round spectacles. His mouth laughed under his white mustache. He wore a black mackintosh and walked with his head a little on one side and his hands in his pockets. But he was not afraid. Neither was he foolhardy. He neither feared nor courted death; he merely ignored it. He had the sublime courage of the man who knows the danger so well that he will let no [339] one else face it, but will brave it all alone.

The veterans of the Tripoli campaign talked in this wise to the young recruits of the Alpini:

"Look at that old man, with his kind face and gentle soul. He is the father of the Alpini. He has seen them born and has brought them up, all of them. They are his sons, his boys. With a word he has moulded them according to his own heart of bronze; with a smile he has forged them a heart of steel. You don't know him? Then you were not in Libya! But go to him, say 'Good morning, General!' and tell him your name. Ten years from now he will remember the name. And some night when you are on outpost duty and the hail of bullets is most furious, and the miaowing of the shells is maddest, when the air seems a-quiver with death, and the darkness is shot through with arrows and flashes, and the silence is shattered with bangs and explosions and roars, if your heart trembles a moment as you think of your little ones at home and the bells of the far-away village church ringing the Angelus, you will see the old man, the General, Antonio Cantore, rise suddenly before you, place himself between you and the enemy, shield you with his body.

"For, you see, Antonio Cantore is everywhere and always ahead of everybody. When you leap first into an enemy's trench, eyes aflame, hands clawing, bayonet between your teeth, look ahead from the trench in which you are battling, and between it and the second line of trenches from which the enemy is still bombarding you with rapid-fire guns you will see a kind old man, his eyes twinkling behind his spectacles, his mouth smiling under its white mustaches, his hands in his pockets, his head slightly bent and inclined to one side. It will be Antonio Cantore.

"For that old man, you see, is always everywhere and ahead of everybody. And he cannot die. [340] We have seen him return unscathed from places where hundreds and hundreds have been killed. We have seen him march without flinching right up to the cannon and the mitrailleuse. Shells and bullets fall before him; they are afraid of his smile!"

II—"MY GOD! A GENERAL!"

Thus the lengend grew and spread from the Adige to Leno, from the Altissimo to Coni Zugna, from Pasubio to the Col Santo, wherever the Alpini were engaged.

And every hardy mountaineer who was called to the colors cheered his loved ones on parting with the words: "Never fear! I am going to join Antonio Cantore's brigade."

One night on the slopes of Monte Campo, Gen. Cantore was on reconnoitring patrol. For he was his own scout. Most commanders ask for two or three volunteers for a night reconnaissance. This general, instead, would say: "Are there two men who would like to come with me to-night and inspect the enemy's barbed wire entanglements?" And all the men would want to go. He would pick out two, saying to the others: "No, no, boys; I need only two of you. Thank you, just the same. Your time will come." To the chosen ones it was like a promotion or receiving a medal of honor.

And so, one night he was out scouting with only his sergeant as company. "His" sergeant was Sergt. Cillario, a veteran of Libya, who had stayed in the army just to be with Antonio Cantore, whom he called "my" general. They had climbed a difficult mule-path toward the Austrian trenches, the general leading, the sergeant following in silence.

At last the general told the sergeant to stop, and he went on alone. When he would not permit a man to risk his life, that man [341] did as he was told. Only on such occasions did Gen. Cantore make his rank felt. He no longer said: "Let us go, my boy," but "Sergeant, stay there." His boys were not saints, but they obeyed. They had to, for otherwise he—raised his voice and smiled no more!

So that night, as on many others, he went on alone. And when his hands touched the first barbed wire the sentries of the Austrian trenches fired at him. This did not disconcert him. He went on with his hands in his pockets, his head on one side, stooping to examine through his spectacles the entanglements by the light of flashes from the enemy's guns. He was ten yards from the Austrian trench, a single dark shadow advancing like fate through the volleys, an invulnerable shadow seeking out the interstices of the barbed wire entanglements to find spaces through which men might pass, scrutinizing them with the calm interest of a botanist examining a garden.

A Tryolean kaiserjaeger, who has been taking careful aim at him, saw the insignia of his rank.

"My God! a General!" he exclaimed, and let his rifle fall.

III—TALES OF GENERAL CANTORE

When the town of Ala was carried by assault last June he was the first to enter it. He went through the hail of bullets with the same calmness as he would have gone through a rainstorm, and as unscathed.

When the Austrians fled a group of about one hundred and fifty took refuge in the Cafe 25 Maggio in the piazza then called Moses, and in the Villa Brazil, almost opposite, determined to resist to the last in order to cover the retreat. Gen. Cantore said the lieutenant in command of the nearest platoon, "Come on." They went to the door of the cafe. "Make them open," he said, [342] "but leave your pistol. They won't fire." But they did, sending a shower of bullets from the windows. Neither of the Italians was hit.

"They won't open," said the lieutenant.

"I'll make them," said Cantore. He approached the door, armed only with his riding whip. Another volley greeted him, and shots from the windows of the Villa Brazil. He was unwounded, but he lost his calm as he cried:

"Charge, boys, charge! Burst the place open and take them all prisoners!"

The fight lasted a quarter of an hour. The walls, windows and door of the cafe were shot full of holes; the Villa Brazil was turned into a ruin. The few Austrians left alive were made prisoners.

That street is now the Piazza Antonio Cantore.

When the fight was over Gen. Cantore and a few other officers sat down to dine in the Albergo di Ala. There were three girls from Roverto who had taken refuge there. They were so pretty that they were called the "three graces." They waited on the diners. Gen. Cantore chatted with them, joking one especially, whose name was Pina, calling her affectionately by pet names—Pinotta, Pinella, Pinina, Pignotta, Pignina—laughing like a big boy. When he rose from dinner he took her chin in his hand and said:

"Poor little Pina, far away from thy home! But we shall soon be at Roverto, and thou wilt come to Roverto right after us. Then thou wilt be happy again, eh?"

But Antonio Cantore was never to see Roverto. A man cannot snub Death indefinitely. Death had to get even with Cantore, or remain forever discredited. One day he had his revenge.

It was on July 20. The Alpini, under Gen. Cantore, were in the Ampazzano valley, trying to dislodge the Austrians from the [343] slopes of the three mountains called Tofana di Rozzes, Tofana di Mezzo and Tofana di Dentro, whence they were able to fire on Cortina and other towns. Between the Tofana di Rozzes and the Tofana di Mezzo was a refuge hut for chamois hunters from which Austrian sharpshooters picked off the Italian soldiers at their leisure. The refuge hut had been bombarded, but the effect was doubtful.

At 12.30 o'clock Gen. Cantore and Capt. Argenteri started to explore the place. They reached the advanced trenches by 5.15 o'clock. The Austrians were still firing from the hidden hut. Cantore and the Captain tried to locate the precise spot, but could not.

"Captain, we will go up higher and look," said the General. They climbed up the slope and hid behind some rocks. As they peeped over these the sun shone straight in Cantore's face.

"I cannot see well," he called to the Captain. Then he stood up and was placing his field-glasses to his eyes when three shots rang out. Cantore fell, with two bullets in his forehead. He died instantly.

"His" sergeant, veteran of many battles, grown callous by the sight and suffering, asked a month's leave of absence to go away and mourn for his general. In Verona he walked about like a spectre, his face ghastly and set. They asked, "How did the General die?" And Cillario answered, "Antonio Cantore is not dead. Antonio Cantore could not die." (Told in the *New York World*.)

HOW MLLE. DUCLOS WON THE LEGION OF HONOR [344]

Story of a Woman Who Drove Her Auto at
Full Speed into a German Force

Told by an Eye-Witness

I—DECORATED BY MARSHAL JOFFRE

PARIS, Sept. 24.

The two most romantic and brilliant features of the war, the two things that have relieved it from being a dull record of close-range slaughter, have been the use of flying machines and automobiles.

Flying machines may appear more romantic and spectacular to the outsider, but those who have seen the war at close quarters are of the opinion that the most astonishing and brilliant feats of arms have been performed by motor cars.

The experience of Mlle. Helene Duclos, who annihilated practically a whole German company with her automobile, is one of the many amazing instances of the use of this comparatively novel instrument of war. Other cases in the various warring countries have, perhaps, been equally remarkable, but hers necessarily gains added interest from the fact that she is a woman, and a very attractive one.

It has been shown that a high-powered armored motor car, running at sixty miles an hour, can, under certain conditions, disorganize a whole army and slaughter scores of soldiers. If driven into a body of men in close formation and taken by surprise its powers of injury are unlimited. [345]

Armored cars have been used for the terribly difficult work of removing barbed wire entanglements. The car runs up to the entanglements, throws grapnel irons over them, and then backs away to uproot them. The armored car can do this work under a fire that exposed men could not live in.

Armored cars are employed in coöperation with flying machines. The aviator brings information where a car can do most damage, and then hovers overhead, giving warning to the motormen when they must retire or, return for help if necessary. An armored car crew connected with the British Naval Flying Corps has received honorable mention for annihilating a whole party of Uhlans.

Some armored cars carry two machine guns and others a gun of larger calibre.

Mlle. Duclos's motor exploit has made her the great heroine of the moment. She has been decorated by General Joffre with the cross of the Legion of Honor for her brilliant and heroic act.

II—MLLE. DUCLOS TELLS HER STORY

"I was determined to do something for my country in the fighting field, something that the Germans would remember—something more than soothing the fevered brow," said Mlle. Duclos, describing her exploits. "My great-grandfather was a captain of grenadiers under Napoleon, and the blood of generations of soldiers runs in my veins.

"My first ambition was to enlist in the fighting automobile service. I had been used to running all kinds of cars since my childhood, and was as fit for this work as any human being could be. But I found the authorities obdurate. They simply would not let a woman into the combatant services. I tried disguising myself as a man, but the rigid physical examination made this attempt useless. [346]

"Finally it seemed to me that the only way of reaching the front was to join a volunteer motor ambulance corps, as several other women had done. I transformed a 60-horsepower, eight-seated touring car into a motor ambulance for four badly wounded men or eight slightly wounded ones. I qualified for the service and was authorized to proceed to the front in Alsace, accompanied by a mechanician.

"While performing my ambulance duties I had a good opportunity to watch the armored automobiles, and realized that their work was the most exciting and perhaps the most decisive of the war."

One day Mlle. Duclos, having taken some wounded men to the field hospital, was returning once more to the fighting line. Eager for adventure she drove her car up a mountain road, which was not included in the trench zone, and entered a wild, mountainous country, from which the French were desperately trying to drive the Germans by flank attacks, surprises, air raids and other stratagems.

Soon the rattle of rifle bullets and machine gun fire close at hand caught her attention. A turn in the road brought her in sight of a big armored French car that stood disabled in the middle of the road. The engine had been smashed by a shell. The Germans were firing at it from cover some distance away. The French soldiers were firing away from the protection of the armor with their machine guns and their rifles, but they were handicapped by the immobility of the car, and the Germans were gradually encircling them. Three of the eight Frenchmen forming the crew of the car lay dead in the road, killed while they had exposed themselves in an attempt to repair the engine. [347]

Mlle. Duclos saw three German soldiers rise from cover and advance in an effort to rush the car. They were shot down, but she saw that in a few more minutes the Frenchmen must be overwhelmed.

Taking in the situation at a glance, the experienced motorist sped up to the injured car and backed up her machine before she stopped.

"Get in," she cried to the French soldiers, "or you will be taken in another minute."

The five Frenchmen jumped into Mlle. Duclos's car with their rifles. Under a rain of bullets she sped back by the way she had come. Luckily they all escaped, and a turn in the zigzag road soon put them out of danger.

The Germans must have taken possession of the car in a leisurely manner after the escape of the French. It was precious booty to them. Probably they tried to repair it, and, finding that impossible, started to tow it back.

The Frenchmen were not satisfied to escape with their lives and leave their car behind. Mlle. Duclos had noted carefully the direction of the surrounding roads. After running back a short distance she found a road that would lead them to the one that the Germans would follow on their way back.

The French officer in charge of the party insisted on taking the steering wheel of the car, but Mlle. Duclos demonstrated that she was the only one who could get the best speed out of her car. Thus she forced them to let her stay in the place of danger.

Behind a pile of rocks that marked the meeting of the roads they lay in wait for the returning Germans.

Up the road came the Germans tugging at a rope that drew the great disabled French armored car. There were about forty of them, practically half a company, minus the men who had already fallen in the fight. [348]

It was impossible for the five Frenchmen to cope with them in any ordinary fight. Only surprise and stratagem could hope to meet the situation.

III—SHE PLUNGES HER MOTOR INTO THE GERMANS

Mlle. Duclos immediately suggested that she should drive the car straight down on the unsuspecting Germans. Her opportunity for a great action had come. She seized it.

Down hill upon the toiling Germans flew the great 60-horsepower car. Straight as an arrow it went, with the weight of its two tons multiplied a hundred times by its speed and downward course.

All the Germans in its full path went down like ripe corn before the scythe. Straight it flew on without being swerved in the slightest degree by the human obstacles in its way.

Severed heads flew up in the air and arms and legs were chopped off by the flying car. Ghastly fragments of flesh and bone, a muddy mixture of blood and viscera, human remains that had nothing human about them, spattered the wheels and the body and all the occupants of the car.

"I felt like the very incarnation of the spirit of destruction and revenge," says Mlle. Duclos describing this wild scene. "I was not human."

The car flew on its path of death until it reached the captured French armored car. Mlle. Duclos missed this by an incalculable fraction of an inch and then slowly brought her racing car to a stop. [349]

The French soldiers looked back. Only a few German soldiers, who were out of the path of the auto, had escaped death or maiming. Perhaps there were six in all, and they were aghast at the demon of death that had swept through them.

The French soldiers showered the Germans with hand grenades and would probably have overcome the rest of the party and recaptured their auto, when a party of Uhlans was seen riding up the road from the direction of the German lines.

It appeared that scouting aviators of both sides had witnessed the fight over the armored car and had carried word back to their respective forces.

Once more the gallant French motor fighters were in danger of being wiped out. Acting in co-operation with the officer, Mlle. Duclos ran her car back again, putting it between the survivors of the first German party and the new reinforcements. This move put the former at a great disadvantage, as they were standing about in a flat, open place, but, of course, it exposed the Frenchmen to the newly arriving German forces.

The Frenchmen with rifles and pistols disposed of the remnant of the first German party, and then started to hitch their disabled car to Madame Durand's machine.

A shower of bullets from the German side warned them that their gallant efforts would probably be in vain.

"Whir-r-r! whir-r-r!" came the frightful scream of war cars from the direction of the French lines.

Two powerful French armored cars sped down the road, with machine guns spouting death, and engaged the German reinforcements.

At the conclusion of this new battle the five French motor fighters were able to secure their disabled car, and Mlle. Duclos at the wheel of her own car led the glorious wreck back in triumph. [350]

Thus it happened that she received the military cross of the Legion of Honor and is the heroine of the hour.—(*New York American.*)

THE RUSSIAN "JOAN OF ARC'S" OWN STORY [351]

Told by Mme. Alexandra Kokotseva, the "Russian
Joan of Arc," Colonel Commanding the Sixth Ural
Cossack Regiment—Translated from a Letter
Forwarded from Petrograd to Friends in New York

I—"BELIEVE NONE OF THOSE GERMAN LIES"

As Jessaul (Colonel) of my dashing Cossack regiment I must be discreet in my letter writing. Only last week one of my officers—in fact the Sotnik (Captain) himself—let himself in for a nice wigging from the department censor by heading a letter to his mother in Moscow with the name of the nearest village to our regimental headquarters and the exact date. All such details are "verboten," as the Austrian would say whose bullet has given me this nice little rest in the field hospital.

Do not worry on my account. In a week I shall sit just as firmly in my saddle as ever. Never was a wounded soldier of either sex more petted and coddled than I am. Every day my little ones (Cossacks of her regiment) almost bury me under Spring flowers.

"Listen, Batjuschka," I had to say just now to the grimmest and fiercest of them—a grizzled giant who only yesterday captured six Austrians single-handed—"do you wish to see your Jessual shedding tears like a mere woman? For shame! About face—march!"

But the wretch had the audacity to try and kiss my hand—he left a tear on it, anyway. When I'm out I shall have to discipline him severely!

My splendid Cossacks! Who would have thought that they would consent to be commanded by a woman? Often have I told you of their superior attitude toward women. They expect their women to work for them, to serve them and be always submissive. Evidently my fierce little ones consider me as a sort of Superwoman. Or, perhaps they do not consider me a woman at all—except now that I am wounded and in the hospital—and respect merely my colonel's uniform. Truly it has little in common with the Tartar shirt, half-coat and foot-gear and kerchief of their sisters and wives. At any rate they obey my slightest wish, perform the most reckless deeds, gayly court death, to win my approval. [352]

If you should be writing to Paul ——, or to Anna in America, be sure and tell them to believe none of those German lies. Not one of my fire-eating Cossacks has been guilty of offering indignities to a woman of the enemy. Maybe my little ones do some burning and looting—if my back is turned—but to act in a beastly way to women and children, no!

II—"TO MY FRIENDS IN AMERICA"

You have heard of us in the enemy's country. Ah, there was fat living! Eggs by the hundred thousand; egg pancakes to tighten the belts of a whole army, and mutton and beef without stint. We grew fat. Our ragged and gaunt Austrian prisoners looked upon us with envy. Soon they also were fat!

You know that we of the Cossack regiments have little to do with the fighting in trenches. For us it is to make forays, to make whirlwind attacks upon detachments of the enemy guarding their line of communications, and capture positions badly defended by artillery. I may be permitted to instance our usefulness on the frontier of Galicia, between the Dniester and Pruth. [353] It was my Cossacks who surprised the Austrians at Okna.

The Austrians were intrenched. Our infantry attacked, but were repulsed. Ah, then you should have beheld my little ones! There were two Cossack regiments—two thousand dashing, fierce fellows—itching for a hand-to-hand encounter with the despised Teutons. As the infantry were retreating my little ones were given their chance.

Yelling madly and firing their carbines, they galloped west and east, covering a long front to convince the Austrians that they were in large force. The ruse worked. The enemy started to retreat to the southwest. Before they were clear of their trenches the Cossacks were riding them down, plying the cold steel right and left and cutting off large bodies for prisoners—finally taking the position.

That is the work at which my fine fire-eaters are famous. The Sotnik (Captain) of my regiment sent to me a bloodstained, grizzled victor in a hundred battles who begged the privilege of presenting to me seven caps belonging to the Austrian infantry service uniform, each pierced through its crown. Like so many grouse, they were skewered upon my brave Cossack's bayonet.

"Thank you, Batjuschka, but I am not hungry," I said, for my little ones do not mind being teased. "Neither are they hungry who lately wore them," was the quick answer. "Where are those seven Austrians?" I asked, looking about in pretended stupidity. "With God," said my gallant Cossack, as he reverently crossed himself. "Ah," I said, "afterwards you went back and with your bayonet skewered each Austrian cap where it lay beside its dead owner." "No," he replied gravely, "with my bayonet I skewered each cap with the same thrust that sent its owner to God." And again he crossed himself.

It was all true—there were witnesses of the encounter—seven to one, and all the seven now "with God." [354]

Do you shudder when I write to you of these things? Do you say to yourself that "this terrible war" has robbed me of all my estimable "woman's weaknesses?" Do you picture me brazenly calloused to scenes of human agony and violent deaths for thousands in a single engagement which probably has no effect upon the final outcome?

You would be wrong. It is simply that if you are a soldier it is your duty to kill, and perhaps to be killed, in defense of your country. No matter how dreadful the things that happen, they are inseparable from war and you must get used to them. Gradually you do get used to them. If you did not your services to your country would be of no value. You would not be a true soldier, who must be able always to shrug his shoulders and say to himself, "Well, such things happen," and then go on faithfully with his soldier's work.

But believe me, these duties performed as well as I am able to perform them, promotions, honors—afterward they will be as nothing compared with what is dear to me as a woman. Through all this violence and carnage and misery I know that I shall have gained in all that becomes a woman—in faithfulness, tenderness, pity for the poor and unfortunate, and in charity.

AN ITALIAN SOLDIER'S LAST MESSAGE TO HIS MOTHER [355]

Translated by Father Pasquale Maltese

> This is an extraordinary revelation of the heart of an Italian soldier. It is the last letter to his mother written by a young poet who fell on the Isonzo leading a platoon in battle. Father Pasquale Maltese, pastor of the church of St. Anthony, New York, translates it for *The Parish Monthly* as an "inspiration to the youth of every land."

I—"TO DIE A BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS DEATH"

Mother:

This letter, which you will receive only in case that I should fall in this battle, I am writing in an advanced trench, where I have been since last night, with my soldiers, in expectation of the order to cross the river and move to the attack.

I am calm, perfectly serene, and firmly resolved to do my duty in full and to the last, like a brave and good soldier, confident to the utmost of our final unfailing victory; although I am not equally sure that I will live to see it. But this uncertainty does not trouble me in the least, nor has it any terror for me. I am happy in offering my life to my country; I am proud to spend it for so noble a purpose, and I know not how to thank Divine Providence for the opportunity—which I deem an honor—afforded me, on this fulgent autumnal day, in the midst of this enchanting valley of our Julian Venetia, while I am in the prime of life, in the fulness of my physical and mental powers, to fight in this holy war for liberty and justice. All is propitious to me, all is favorable [356] to die a beautiful and glorious death; the weather, the place, the season, the opportunity, the age. A better end could not have crowned my life, and I feel the pleasure to have made a good and generous use of it. Do not grieve over my death, mother, or else you will offend my good fortune. Do not weep, mother, for it was written in Heaven that I should die. Do not mourn, mother, or else you would regret my happiness. I am not to be mourned but envied.

You know the ineffable hopes that give me comfort because they are the very same hopes in which you also have placed all that is dear to you. When you read these words of mine, I will be free, unfettered and in a safe place, far from the miseries of this world. My struggle will be finished and I shall be peaceful; my daily death shall have come to an end, and I shall have reached the place on high, to the life without end. I shall be face to face with the Judge whom I have greatly feared, to the Lord whom I have greatly loved.

Think of it, mother dear, when you read these words. I shall view you from heaven, side by side with our dear ones, with father, with my dear Laura, with Dino, our Guardian Angel. We shall be in the regions above, all united to celebrate your arrival, to watch over you and over Gino, to prepare for you, with our prayers, the place of your everlasting glory. Should not this thought alone be sufficient to dry your tears and to fill you with unspeakable joy?

II—"WEEP NOT, MY DEAR MOTHER"

No, no, weep not, my dear and saintly mother, and be brave, as you have always been. Should the pleasure of having offered to our adored Italy, this glorious land, this land predestined by God, should the pleasure of having offered the sacrifice of the life [357] of one of your sons, be not sufficient for you, remember, nevertheless, that you must not rebel, not even for one instant, to the divinely wise and divinely loving decrees of our Lord. If He wanted to reserve me for other work, He could have permitted me to survive. Since He has called me to Himself, it is a sign that such was the best thing that could have happened and the best thing for me. He knows what He is doing, and it remains for us to bow and to adore, accepting with trustful joy His most Exalted Will.

I do not bemoan life. I have tasted of all its insane infatuations and have withdrawn with an insurmountable weariness and disgust.

Like a young prodigal son, after so many wanderings, having returned to the house of the father, I could have hoped now, and reasonably so, to taste of the good joys, the joys of duties well performed, of the good practised and preached, the joys born of art, of labor, of charity, of a fruitful mind.

Side by side with the good, beautiful girl whom you know and esteem, and whom I have always loved, always so tenderly, timidly and faithfully loved, even in the midst of my errors and blameworthy blunders, I could have hoped to make a good husband and a good father.

In the world there are so many battles to fight, for love, for justice, for liberty, for the faith, and for a time I must confess, I presumptuously believed myself predestined and assigned to the arduous and terrible task of winning one or another of these battles.

All this was, I admit, beautiful, flattering, desirable, but it cannot compare with my present lot. This is the very truth, and indeed I cannot say whether I would really be satisfied if the writing of this letter would have been in vain. Life is sad; it is a painful and annoying duty, a long exile in the uncertainty of our own lot. In order that life might go quickly in accordance with [358] my wishes, and without leaving me in a thousand disappointments, there would be need of many very rare and difficult occurrences. Besides, I am and I feel weak, I have not the least confidence in myself. The whole battle against the ingratitude and wickedness of the world would not have frightened me as much as the battle against myself. It is better, therefore, dear mother, as it has happened. The Lord, in His wise and infinite goodness, has reserved for me just the destiny that was fit for me; a destiny that is easy, sweet, honorable, rapid; to die in battle for one's country.

With this beautiful and praiseworthy past, fulfilling the most desired of all duties as a good citizen towards the land that gave him birth, I depart, in the midst of the tears of all those that love me, from a life toward which I felt weary and disgusted. I leave the failings of life, I leave sin, I leave the sad and afflicted spectacle of the small and momentary triumphs of evil over good. I leave to my humble body the weight of all my chains and I fly away, free, free in the end, to the heavens above, where resides our Father, to the heavens above, where His holy will is always done. Just imagine, dear mother, with what joy I will receive from His hands even the chastisements that His justice will impose on account of my sins. He Himself has paid all these chastisements by His superabundant merits, a God of mercy and of love, redeeming me with His precious blood, living and dying here below for my sake. Only through His grace, only through Jesus Christ, could I have succeeded that my sins be not my eternal death. He has seen the tears of my sorrow, He has pardoned me through the mouth of His spotless spouse, the Church. I do sincerely hope that the Madonna, so loving and kind toward us, will assist me with her powerful help in the [359] instant when my eternity will be decided.

III—"GOOD-BYE, MOTHER—WE SHALL NOT DIE IN VAIN"

And as I am about to speak of forgiveness, dear mother, I have only one thing to say with all simplicity: Forgive me! Forgive me all the sorrows that I have caused you; all the agonies that you have suffered on my account every time I have been ungrateful, stubborn, forgetful, disobedient toward you. Forgive me if, by neglect and inexperience, I have failed to render your life more comfortable and tranquil since the day when my father, by his premature death, entrusted you to my care. Now I understand well the many wrongs I have been guilty of toward you, and I feel all the remorse and cruel anguish now that dying I have to entrust you to the providence of the Lord. Forgive me lastly this final sorrow that I have inflicted upon you, perhaps not without stubborn and cruel inconsideration on my part, in giving up my life voluntarily for my country, fascinated by the attractions of this beautiful lot. Forgive me also if I have not sufficiently recognized and tried to compensate the incomparable nobility of your soul, of your heart, so immense and sublime. Mother, truly perfect and exemplary, to whom I owe all that I am and the least good I have done in this world.

I have so many things to say to you that a book could hardly contain them. Nothing else, therefore, is left me but to recommend you to our Gino, on whose goodness, on whose integrity, and on whose strength of will, I put all trust. Tell him in my name to serve willingly our country as long as she will have need of him, to serve her with abnegation, with ardor, with enthusiasm, [360] even unto death, should that be necessary. Should he be destined to live a long and struggling life, let him be equal to it with serenity, with firmness, with indomitable love for justice and honesty, trusting always in the triumph of good with God's grace. Let him be a good husband and a good father; let him raise up his children in the love of God, respect for the Church, fidelity toward our King, to the observance of the law, to scrupulous devotion to our beloved country. Think often of us here above; speak of us among yourselves; remember us and love us as when we were alive, because we shall always be with you.

Pray often for me, for I am in need of it. Be courageous in the trials of life, as you have always been strong and energetic in the midst of the tempest of your earthly career; continue to be humble, pious, charitable, so that the peace of God may always be with you.

Good-bye, mother; good-bye, Gino, my dear and my belovèd! I embrace you with all the ardor of my immense love, which has increased a hundredfold during my absence in the midst of the dangers and hardships of the war. Here, far away from the world, always with the image of imminent death, I have felt how strong are the ties that bind us to this world; how mankind is in need of mutual love, of faith in each other, of discipline, of harmony, of unity, what necessary and sacred things are the fatherland, the home, the family; how blameworthy is the person who renounces these, who betrays and oppresses them.

Love and freedom for all, this is the ideal for which it is a pleasure to offer one's life. May God cause our sacrifice to be fruitful; may He take pity upon mankind, forgive and forget their offenses, and give them peace. Then, oh! dear mother, we shall not have died in vain. Just one more tender kiss.

Giosue Borsi.

Transcriber's Note

Obvious errors of punctuation and diacritical markings were corrected.

Inconsistent hyphenation was made consistent.

Both "dug-out" and "dugout" are used frequently and have not been changed.

"of" added in "Permission of New York American" in table of contents entry for "HOW MLLE. DUCLOS...".

P. 35: One the face of it -> On the face of it.
P. 35: These stiplations -> These stipulations.
P. 82: There were a group -> They were a group.
P. 94: The Advance to Monse -> The Advance to Mons.
P. 96: secure a birth -> secure a berth.
P. 115: we could could procure -> we could procure.
P. 133: Aerschat -> Aerschot.
P. 134: The sequal to my one-hundredth flight -> The sequel to my one-hundredth flight.
P. 143: Deisel -> Diesel.
P. 158: But I've illusions -> But I've no illusions.
P. 176: There it a pretty little comedy -> There is a pretty little comedy.
P. 178: as had been been anticipated -> as had been anticipated.
P. 180: Deutschland, Deutschland, über Allies -> Deutschland, Deutschland, über Alles.
P. 182: It that mine exploded -> If that mine exploded.
P. 186: undergoing the the process -> undergoing the process.
P. 186: immediate requiremenst -> immediate requirements.
P. 191: this his previous blunder -> that his previous blunder.
P. 192: one well swoop -> one fell swoop.
P. 195: back in in Petersburg -> back in Petersburg.
P. 198: non-combatatants -> non-combatants.
P. 204: barely distinguishable roads -> barely distinguishable road.
P. 206: descended on her shoulder -> descend on her shoulder.
P. 208: keepers of the the forest -> keepers of the forest.
P. 214: the German had fired -> the Germans had fired.
P. 220: as thought he meant -> as though he meant.
P. 221: turned be back -> turned me back.
P. 222: obession of my fear -> obsession of my fear.
P. 231: Flemish titler -> Flemish title.
P. 241: without specal orders -> without special orders.
P. 266: Jilfla -> Jilfi.
P. 273: leave a comrade die like a dog -> leave a comrade to die like a dog.
P. 276: jeun docteur Allemand -> jeune docteur Allemand.
P. 282: a public vehicles -> a public vehicle.
P. 284: lès majesté -> lèse majesté.

P. 309: Vive Verund -> Vive Verdun.

P. 317: the old wail of sorow -> the old wail of sorrow.

P. 325: Every one us -> Every one of us.

P. 334: replied the hsuband -> replied the husband.

P. 340: Thus the lengend grew -> Thus the legend grew.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR, VOLUME 6 (OF 6) ***

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