

A blue mark here means that you are behind with your subscription and you are asked to make a payment soon or the paper will be discontinued.

The Mount Airy News.

VOL. XI

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1917.

NO. 17

FINDING AVIATORS FOR THE UNITED STATES

When a chief of detectives selects one of his men to watch the comings and goings of some one suspected of a crime, he takes care to pick for that duty one who is not nearsighted; when he posts one of his men to overhear the plotting of conspirators, he takes care to choose one who is not hard of hearing; when Uncle Sam selects a man for his flying corps, he takes care to select one who is not lacking in the sense of balance.

Because so much error has crept into public print in connection with descriptions of the tests to which candidates for the army flying corps are subjected, the medical department of the army has given approval to the publication of authentic information concerning this part of the service by those who have been specially designated. This description of the examination of prospective aviators covers every test; if you can pass it, you are fit to attempt to become a flyer.

What the Flyer Must be.

The following extracts from an official circular letter will give an idea of the general requirements that a candidate for the army flying corps must meet: "The candidate should be naturally athletic and have a reputation for reliability, punctuality and honesty. He should have a cool head in emergency, a good eye for distance, a keen ear for familiar sounds, a steady hand and a sound body, with plenty of reserve; he should be quick-witted, highly intelligent and tractable. Immature, high-strung, overconfident, impatient candidates are not desired. There are thousands of splendid young men now in the training camps whose only drawback is that they are too youthful in appearance to be officers of a national army composed of older men. It is precisely the keen young men of this class that make the best aviators."

The age limits are nineteen to thirty-one years. The signal-service examining boards are given discretion in the matter of extending the age limits when peculiar fitness, previous flying experience or other special reasons may make it desirable. A year or so of college work or its equivalent is made the basis of the general mental requirements. In that matter also the examining boards are given discretion in deciding what shall be acceptable as the equivalent. Special familiarity with gasoline engines and experience in operating and caring for automobiles make an advantageous background for training as aviators. Knowledge of photography, of map reading, of map-making, of telegraphy, and especially of wireless telegraphy, is important to the military aviator.

The military aviator is not merely an aero-chauffeur. He has to perform three distinctly different kinds of work and his work is done "solo."

Three Roles of the Aviator.

First, he is the free-lance scout. His photographs and maps of the enemy country, and his reports of enemy troops, artillery and so on, make up the foundation of the military plans for that part of the front on which he happens to be serving. During an offensive he reports the success or failure of artillery fire and corrects its range, and he keeps headquarters in touch with the enemy's movements and activities. In a word, he is the eye of the army.

In his second role the aviator is the watch-dog that guards against air prowlers. In the fast-pursuit machine he must keep the enemy aeroplane scout from making observations. The scout flyers cannot get too high or they will not be able to see clearly what they are sent out to observe. The pursuit plane, flying at an altitude of from sixteen thousand to twenty-two thousand feet, lies in wait

for the enemy scout machine, darts down and either "wings" the enemy scout or drives him away.

The third kind of work for the aviator is bomb-dropping. From a height of not more than two thousand to four thousand feet, he drops bombs upon enemy gun factories, munitions plants or depots, hangars and similar structures. A single aviator from the western front, who escaped successfully after his adventure, managed to destroy a large part of the Essen munition works in Germany.

This short outline of the military activities of the aviator is enough to show that he must indeed be a real man in every sense. The Medical Corps of the army has established special examining units in between twenty and thirty centres in the United States, where men who wish to take the training course in aviation may appear for examination.

First of all, the candidate must pass the physical examination—by far the most exacting of all such examinations in military service. If he passes it, a board of examiners then looks into his educational qualifications, character, experience and mental poise. If he proves satisfactorily to the board that mentally and morally, as well as physically, he is promising material for the training, he is accepted and commissioned in the aviation branch of the signal corps. He then begins his training.

The special examining units that conduct the physical examination are each organized under the auspices of some such institution as a state university or a large general hospital and are made up of the most highly trained medical specialists. General diagnosticians, who themselves constitute a staff of consultants upon conditions of the heart, lungs and other internal organs, make the general examinations. They examine the applicant thoroughly making notes as to his height, weight, condition of chest, lungs, heart and blood-vessel system, bones and joints, digestive organism, muscles, skin and nervous system; they carefully measure his blood pressure, test his kidneys and make sure that he is free from such conditions as hernia, falling arches and spinal curvature.

Importance of the Eyes

The candidate then goes to the eye specialist, who tests his eye movements, the stereoscopic vision and the reactions of the pupils, and who notes any existing abnormal condition of his eyes. The examiner also carefully maps out the limits of his field of vision, and thus makes sure that the applicant can catch sight of anything moving into the line of vision from above, below, or either side. The specialist then tests his color perception, and measures the so-called muscle balance of his eyes, to determine whether there is any tendency toward crossing of the eyes or its opposite, upward or downward or lateral divergence of the eyes. That part of the test is very important, for under stress or great fatigue a latent tendency of that kind might become active, and the aviator might in making a landing wrongly estimate the distance to the ground.

Before the days when a prospective aviator's eyes were tested for muscle balance, a certain student kept smashing machines in making landings. He had wrecked six before it was discovered that one of his eyes tended to swing upward when he became tired, and that he thus received a false impression of the level of the landing field.

The eye specialist examines the sharpness of vision if the candidate—the standard required is full normal, both for distance and for near objects. Finally, he dilated the pupils and examines the interior of the eye to ascertain that the nerves and the tissues within the eyeballs are in normal, healthy condition.

Ears, Nose, Sense of Balance

The candidate next goes to the nose-and-throat specialist, who makes note

of any obstruction to normal nasal respiration. Conditions of nasal obstruction that causes little, if any, trouble on the ground are likely to result in considerable discomfort and possibly serious difficulty in the rarer atmosphere of a flight, particularly when the ascent is rapid. Adenoids, by affecting the Eustachian tubes, which lead from the throat to the eardrums, may prevent the automatic equalizing to the air pressure in the eardrum, and thus be indirectly responsible for dangerous attacks of head noises and dizziness during an ascent. The same is true of abnormal tonsils, particularly the kind commonly called "buried." The specialist examines the Eustachian tubes to make sure that they are normal.

Now the ear specialist takes the applicant and asks him about all the troubles he may have had with his ears—attacks of head noises, ringing or buzzing in the ears, earaches, discharge from the ears, and hardness of hearing. The specialist inquires, too, whether the applicant has had attacks of dizziness, which frequently are caused by obscure ear troubles; and whether he has been seasick, as that is one of the ways by which a normal balance-sense is ascertained. The examiner also investigates thoroughly the nature and severity of injuries to the head that the candidate may have suffered. Then he examines his ear canals and drumheads and carefully tests his hearing. Full normal hearing is absolutely required.

Last, the physician measures the candidate's balance-sense.

Man is normally provided by nature with sound-producing apparatus, the voice, and with a special sense by which he can also perceive sound. In the same way nature has provided man with an apparatus that enables him to move about and with a special sense whereby he can perceive motion.

Using his special senses, man is able to educate himself to do certain things using his hearing sense, for example, he is able to educate himself to talk. Similarly, using his motion-perceiving special sense, he is able to learn to balance himself. The baby first meaningless sounds and falls over on attempting to sit up; but as its education proceeds it learns to talk and to balance itself properly.

The reason that a man can balance himself on two legs of a chair in which he is seated is because his special motion-perceiving sense notifies him the instant a motion begins, which unless he had time to compensate for it would pitch him over backward. What we call "balance" is really skillful muscular control of the body and limbs in accordance with the information that comes in constantly from this special motion-perceiving sense.

Odd Test in a Tank

If a fully developed man has normal motion-perceiving sense, and has educated himself to be able to exercise normally skillful muscular control of his body and limbs, we do not need to worry whether he will be able to master the difficult part of flying.

This special motion-perceiving apparatus is in the inner ear! but although it is situated next to the hearing organ in the ear, it has nothing to do with the hearing. Of course, a man perceives motion in other ways than by this special motion-perceiving sense he can see himself moving, and he feels motion through his feet, his back or whatever part of him is in contact with anything outside his own body. That feeling is called "muscle-and-joint sense," or, for short, "muscle sense."

But under certain conditions a man is deprived largely of the contributory information that comes from his muscle sense and from sight; yet he remains just as much as ever in need of definite and trustworthy information concerning motion. The following description of an interesting experiment will serve to illustrate how certainly you can rely on a normal balance-sense

(Continued to page five)

FOLKS MUST GIVE and GIVE and AFTER THAT THEY MUST GIVE MORE

Give Until They Feel it; and Then Till they Don't.

Charlotte Oct. 31.—"Before this war ends," exclaimed Big Jack Virgo of London at a banquet in the Selwyn, this afternoon, "you have got to give and give until you feel it and then you have got to keep on giving until you don't feel it" he continued in Chesteronian paradox.

The wherefore of this big talk from this big man is the demand upon the United States for \$35,000,000 to carry on the war Y. M. C. A. work. Jack Virgo, head of the London Y. M. C. A., parent association of all the world, is now field secretary of the Y. M. C. A. of the British empire, a big title at which he laughs, but into which he fits and fills with his big body, his big voice and his brain.

Charlotteans have rarely heard any such talking as he gave them today. First he met a hundred or so in the ballroom and there as the dessert at the banquet gave a 35-minute talk that thrilled leaders in Charlotte business and thought. Two hours later he went to the First Presbyterian church and gave his ample experiences in the great countries of the world, beginning at London, continuing in Flanders jam up to No-Man's land, back to Mesopotamia, over a dozen seas, through the submarines and back to America which he is a-mind to call his country.

Quit Stage for Bigger Work

Jack Virgo left the London work with its 10,000 peace members to do something for his adopted country, he and Bob Fitzsimmons were born in Australia and while Bob took the squared circles with his big fists Jack Virgo, just as powerful looking and then some, went on the professional stage. He sang baritone in grand opera but quit for the bigger work in the Kingdom of God. Now he is the biggest single individual engaged in raising the \$35,000,000 that is needed and North Carolina is allotted \$300,000. Charlotte will undertake \$30,000 of it and the city made a fine beginning today. When the banqueters sat down to their plates they numbered among the guests the most prominent Charlotte men. C. W. Dietrich came over from South Carolina and told much of the work, the elements that will make it go and the world's tribute to its worth. F. C. Abbott, one of the finest advertisers that any newspaper ever claimed, introduced Mr. Virgo and in doing so betrayed the secret of that business success. Mr. Abbott attends only to his business; he conceives that the purpose of an introducer is not to make the speech and he turned Jack Virgo loose.

This man Virgo sung his way into renown. But more recently he put the art and the enthusiasm in him into the work of the Kingdom. It was he who moved Harold Begbie, who wrote that great book, "Twice Born Men," to try something less spectacular and Begbie at Virgo's suggestion indited a book on "The Ordinary Man and the Extraordinary Thing." It is not such a thrilling work, but it sustains Begbie Couldn't Talk Atrocities.

Mr. Virgo in the beginning declared that he has no heart to talk atrocities that he has seen and knows. "The 'lads who go over there and come back rarely speak of them," he said "but Harry Lauder's son, who was killed, did after a long time tell his father, my dear friend, how he saw 62 of his comrades, stripped stark naked put under the rain all night, then made to flee before their captors who leveled guns on them and shot them as they fled. This poor boy had no heart to talk about these horrible things when he got away from them. He wished to forget them."

"And then I know of one man captured who was made to turn and run. He was unfortunately wounded but

slightly, and I use the word advisedly.

And these people who now have the world arrayed against them, took that poor fellow before his wife and children and made them bury him alive. No wonder the woman went mad and I should not be surprised if the children do not grow the thirty second of an inch."

Seven Nights; Six Air Raids

"I left London October 3," Mr. Virgo continued, "and the last seven nights I spent in London I witnessed six air raids. I do not need to tell you that these raids are not getting on the nerves of our people, they are. I spent hours in the cellar during these last days there. I counted in the air once 35 of these machines above our building. When we get the warning of the raids, the guns to our right and those to our left sent up these barrage fires and the only thing to which they can be likened is the firing on the battle-fronts."

He has humor. He told how he dodged submarines and every devilish device of the Germans by land and sea and when he got back to Liverpool, then to London, he found the Germans "potting at me from the air." He found the tubes in the great city "literally crowded with hundreds of thousands" and the cellars were doing a land office business, evidently.

"When I think of the men who have gone over there and the number who have been wounded, I am appalled that any remain to carry the war on," he said.

He gave experiences from all the lands of the wounded. One day he said 12,000 soldiers who had been shot up brought back to Egypt and they were a fearsome sight. "One particularly impressed me," he said. "I watched them unload them, and my, you ought to see the spirit of these men. It is unconquerable. Some of them who appeared to be desperately wounded, turned and walked off. Some of these went back the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, yes, the sixth time when wounded. (Applause)

"Buck up, It's all in the Game"

"Well, in Cairo that day they were unloading these wounded men. This fellow that I thought was so desperately wounded, got to the stairs. I reproached myself for not aiding him when he turned, deliberately started walking up the stairs, looked at me and what do you reckon he said. That chap said 'Buck up Mister, it's all in the game.'" (Great applause.)

Mr. Virgo talked about the work in the camps, told how it was sometimes opposed, but always the opposition the-oretically was overcome by the work actually done. "There was often objection to the preaching," he said, "but never to the practicing."

The big Britisher came right out with the discontent encountered. "We are not so popular as we think," he declared, reverting to conditions in Egypt, in India, in Ireland, in many places. "They say that 98 per cent of our colonies are loyal," he said, "and it may be true, but if it is found on my trip through India that other two per cent that are not." He had seen wounded soldiers spat upon by the natives.

He had the cause. It is the old system of intrigue and espionage. "It all goes back to that," he said, "and you and we are in this war to win it for liberty, for truth, for honor, and for humanity."

He had been in the country long enough to see that many do not realize that the nation is at war. A few had heard it from the Pacific coast on to the middle west. A few more have heard it nearer this side, but he was sorry to tell them that the thing which must bring it home to them is the disaster that will be felt and the giving that must pinch. "Before this war ends," he thundered in that great baritone, "you have got to give and give until you feel it and then keep on giving until you don't feel it."

He spoke briefly of the visitation of vice in the camps. It is one of the pro-

blems. He told how both Frenchmen and Englishmen whose first duty is to fit throw their countries down by becoming physically unfit. But where the associations have planted themselves, the major generals have given testimony to the great army aids that these religious bodies have been and the military men do not think any expense should be counted in the continuation of that work.

"You can give \$50,000,000 and I prophesy that you will do it," he said. "And you will not regret it. Nothing that you can do is good enough for those lads who are in the trenches in defense of your country."

At the Church

Mr. Virgo went to the Presbyterian church at 4 o'clock and spoke more particularly of his experiences behind the trenches.

He has watched the brave British and French boys "go over the top," and he has seen them come back limping, sometimes on stretchers "never to speak again at all." Often he was humorous in the narration of these experiences. He perhaps had difficulty convincing his congregation that he was frightened sometimes.

The most interesting mechanism the tanks not excepted, that he told about was the "motor bath," a great device for ministering to men in job-lots of hundreds. It gets out to places where the poor fellows who are separated from that great Christian institution, the bath and it is a wonderful thing as described by Mr. Virgo. He was heard at the church by many who were of his audience at the hotel.

The Londoner left on an early train for more of his southern engagements. Charlotte had one of the four and Charlotte was happy.

Twelve Men of Picket

Boat Loss their Lives

Washington, Nov. 3.—Twelve men—all the crew of a picket boat of the battleship Michigan—were lost when their little craft foundered in home waters.

In a brief announcement of the disaster today the navy department gave no details of where it occurred. Presumably the fast little picket boat was on patrol duty and foundered in a heavy sea or met with some accident.

Three bodies have been found and inasmuch as all the others are missing the navy department assumes that all were lost. With the casualty list the department made this formal statement:

"The navy department announces that on October 30, the picket boat of the United States ship Michigan foundered. Apparently the entire crew were lost. The finding of the bodies of three of the crew and the failure to find any other trace of the boat or its occupants leads the department to believe that all were lost."

Asheville Woodyard Ready.

Asheville Nov. 3.—Asheville's wood-yard will be ready for business Tuesday. The city has purchased a saw and equipment, has contracted for thousands of cords of wood, some on the stump and some f. o. b. Asheville. The wood will, of course, be sold at cost and it is believed now after much of the wood has been contracted for that the price to the individual purchaser will be around \$5 a cord.

All old trees will be cut out of the parks and school grounds and the hope is entertained of achieving the complete stabilization of the fuel market by making wood an economy substitute for coal to an extent not hitherto considered possible. Mayor Rankin is taking a most active interest in the fuel plans. It is stated today that Asheville has had under advisement some such plan as this since last August. The fuel administrators here are D. Hayden Ramsey, chairman; W. B. Williamson and R. B. Hays, the latter long a resident of Buncombe, but a son of the former President.