

Fighting In the Air

TRENCH AND CAMP

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THE "FINISHED" SOLDIER

Some of this new life may seem hard. Duties from reveille to taps, drill and more drill, a thousand things to do and another thousand to leave undone—perhaps, when weary muscles rebel, we may ask ourselves if all are necessary. We read of the clash of armies and we wonder the more: "Over There" it seems to be man against man, bayonet against bayonet, strong heart against heart that does not fail. Over here it is work and discipline, training and tramping; must we learn it all, to the last detail, before we take our places by our comrades of France and Britain? The questions will rise, battle against them though we may.

If it be so, remember this: the critical campaigns of France and of Flanders are being fought today on the drill-grounds of our canteenments. The boys who march back to barracks, these October afternoons, are the same boys who will march into Berlin in the glorious noon of victory or else will struggle, broken, into the streets of Bordeaux in the dismal night of disaster. Our success or failure here will mean our fitness or our downfall there.

And why? Because, of all the weapons with which we shall fight when at length we reach the trenches, none will prove so potent as knowledge. We shall see our mustered divisions as they go into action and we shall hear the endless roar of that long, long line of guns, but we shall find that the greatest strength of our army lies in the heads and the hearts of its men. As we know, so shall we be able to fight.

The country wants the courage of knowledge, not the wild abandon of recklessness sacrifice. It wants an army mighty in numbers, but mightier still in its ability to impose the maximum losses and achieve the greatest results with the minimum sacrifice. France entered this war with crowded battalions and with hosts that rejoiced at the sound of battle. In the first engagement—at Charleroi, in front of Mauthausen and in Lorraine—her soldiers threw themselves against the German as though they craved the machine-gun and the bayonet. They died as heroes, but they might have lived as the saviors of their country. Today, every poilu who is sent to the front is trained in every method of defense as well as in all the arts of offense, because his life means more to his country than his death could possibly accomplish.

In this sober spirit, our commanding officers are laboring. Not a man is to be taken from his home, equipped, trained, sent overseas and thrown into action with any other view than that of wasting the least to gain the most. That is why they insist upon the fundamentals. That is why they drill us and school us and train us in every trick of war. That is why they harden us by long marches and prepare us by patient drills. We are to go: they would not have us go in vain. And in this stern school, a quick mind is not less to be desired than a good eye; a strong heart is as precious as stout legs. The soldier who serves America best in France will be the soldier who sought in his canteenment to learn the most.

By Castner Browder

The great war has developed among other things the science of fighting in the air. There is no more fascinating and entraining game in the world than this new art of flying, at tremendous speed, thousands of feet above the ground, through clouds or above them. And when an enemy machine is sighted, then the real thing begins and it becomes a contest of skill, endurance and quick wit, as to which shall bring down the other.

However, air fighting is only incidental to the main objects of the aerial arms of the armies. Reconnaissance is the big thing, and this involves not only the flying of machines, but also photography, map making and the use of wireless to convey information quickly. Direction of artillery fire, or spotting, and bomb dropping are other major duties of the flying corps, and the actual fighting is done only in protection of these other duties.

When a fleet of reconnaissance machines or bombers goes up on the daily job they are accompanied by some of the very fast single scatter fighting machines. It is the duty of the pilots of these machines,

which are armed with a machine gun (The American Legion gun is much used for this work), to attack and drive off any hostile machines which try to interfere with the work in hand.

As both sides follow these same tactics, this brings on many aerial battles, which are usually waged far above the slower bombing or reconnaissance machines. Pilots of opposing machines climb, dive, turn, loop, and try every known device to get in a position to train his gun on his adversary, and to get close enough to do some damage when he first. When he thinks he is in the right position, he lets him have it. Some times a clever and skillful pilot will allow his machine to drop, as if hit and out of control, thus hood-winking the other fellow, only a few minutes later to reappear right under the tail of the man who thought he had finished him, and in turn lets him have it.

An authority on air fighting has stated that the ranges at which actual firing may occur vary from 400 yards to 4 yards, that he never heard of a single instance where a hit was made at more than 400 yards, and that in order to do any damage, one should try to get with-

in 50 yards of the other machine. He also said that it is very difficult to get within 100 yards without being seen, although the peculiar conditions of the air at the time cut a figure in this.

The speed at which these fighting machines travel (will over 100 miles per hour), accounts for the fact that it is necessary to get so close before any damage can be done by firing.

It is unnecessary to say that military aviators on active duty do not lead a monotonous life. Far from it. From the stories which are brought over and which are sometimes seen in print (although it is necessary to take most of those in the papers with about a barrel of salt), they get enough adventure of all kinds. An American who served in the Lafayette Escadrille of the French Army said recently that one day he turned the corner of a cloud when flying at about 13,000 feet and found himself in the middle of a squadron of eight or ten German machines.

"What did you do?" he was asked. "I turned her nose down and went away from that place," he replied.

FRANCE NOW IN THE GREAT AMERICAN PIE BELT

All sorts of clubs have been formed in France where the American fighting man may be entertained during his furloughs. In countless instances private homes have been opened with a right royal welcome to lads in khaki—yet notwithstanding all this spirit of hospitality and comradeship on the part of France, the men "Over There" have felt something lacking. There is a void in the numbers, so to speak; the world did not seem fully equipped. And at last some bright mind, pondering the situation, hit the target with a single word.

"Pie!" exclaimed this talented one. "Pie! That's what the Americans want! That's what they're used to and that's what they must have!"

Instantly a search was made for some one who could evolve real, home-made, American Pie, with the U. S. A. permeating every flake of crust, and insinuating itself through every atom of "filling." Word flew from the American base camp to Paris, and there met response. A quick inquiry was started as to whether any one in the Capital City could construct American Pie—not an imitation made from cook book recipe, but a real home-baked Pie made from experience, from hereditary influence. And at once this Someone was found, a true-blue American whose folks have been in the United States from way back of Revolutionary times, who was brought up in the Middle West, returned to live in her ancestral state of Vermont, married a Columbia University football captain, and has been in France for two years working day and night at her own expense to do her part in Civilization's fight against the Hun.

Mrs. John R. Fisher, better known as the novelist Dorothy Canfield, came to relieve a strained Pie situation. She took hold a few weeks ago, and since then has been teaching French cooks not only how to make pie, but how to construct rice pudding, corn fritters, buckwheat cakes, and other staples. This she is doing not alone for the benefit of American army cooks, but for French cooks of French households who now are depending to an unusual extent upon American food as materials. Thanks to her efforts, the great and glorious Gallic Republic has had new lustre added to its halo. At last La Belle France has achieved the ultimate. It is now in the American Pie Belt.

NELSON'S CARELESSNESS (?)

She was an admirable person and never lost an opportunity of pointing a moral to her small nephews and nieces. She took them to the museum for a treat. "This," said the guide, "is Nelson's vest, worn at the battle of Trafalgar, and this is the hole where the fatal bullet went through." "There, children," said the aunt. "You remember what I said about a stitch in time saving nine. If that hole had been mended the bullet wouldn't have gone through." Then she capped it by adding, "And Nelson might have been living yet."

What'll We Do, When We're Back?

By Robert W. Service in Rhymes of the Red Cross Man

THE same old spirit in the morning, boys, to the same old din and snarl;
Chained all day to the same old desk, down in the same old hall;
Facing the same old greasy boards, catching the same old train;
Oh, how will I manage to stick it all, if I ever get back again.

We've hidden goodbye to life in a cage, we're finished with pushing a pen;
They're pummeling us full of bellows rage, they're showing us how to be men.
We're only beginning to find ourselves, we're wanderers of brain and bone;
But when we go back to our noisy jobs—oh, what are we going to do?

For shoulders curved with the counter stoop will be carried erect and square;
And eyes whose light will be housed by the open air,
And we'll walk with the stride of a new-born pride, with a new-found joy in our eyes,
Sweepful men who have dived with death under the naked skies.

And when we get back to the dreary grind, and the bald-headed boss's call,
Don't you think that the dingy window-blind, and the barb-wire's misty gray?
Will suddenly smelt to a blast of space, of violet, flame-scarred night?
Then, oh, the joy of the danger-thrill, and oh, the roar of the fight!

Don't you think as we peddle a card of pins, the counter will fade away,
And again we'll be seeing the sand-bag rim, and the barb-wire's misty gray?
As a fat voice asks for a pound of tea, don't you fancy we'll hear instead,
The night-wind moan and the soothing drone of the pocket that's overstead?

Don't you guess that the things we're seeing now will haunt us through all the years;
Heaven and hell rolled into one, glory and blood and tears;
Life's pattern picked with a scarlet thread, where once we wore with a grey,
To remind us all how we played our part in the shock of an epic day?

Oh, we're booked for the Great Adventure now, we're pledged to the Real Romance;
We'll find ourselves or we'll lose ourselves somewhere in giddy old France;
We'll know the rest of the fighter's life; the best that we have; we'll give;
We'll hunger and thirst; we'll die . . . but first—we'll live by the gods, we'll live!

We'll breathe free air and we'll breathe under the starry sky;
We'll march with men and we'll fight with men, and we'll see men laugh and die;
We'll know such joys as we never dreamed; we'll fathom the depths of pain;
But the hardest bit of it all will be—when we have to come back home again.

For some of us smirk in a child's shop, and some of us teach in a school;
Some of us help with the seat of our pants in a jail, some of us seek to explain,
The merits of somebody's soup or jam, some of us have to explain,
But all of us wonder what we'll do when we have to go back again.

THE PROPER SPIRIT

A company of Plattburgers was drawn up to learn how many of them were to graduate as officers. The names of those who had passed were read out. The officer in charge said:

"The rest of you may go. In my opinion you are not good for anything, but I may be mistaken, and I hope the future will show that I am. There is one way for you to prove this now. You can enter the ranks and take a chance of working up. Any who desire to do this will please step three paces forward."

Three men stepped forward. "I see," said the instructor officer, "that I made three mistakes. I am sorry I missed you three men. You certainly have the right spirit."

THE SMITHY SPEAKS OUT

At a concert for charity in a country town Miss Carter obtained by reciting "The Village Blacksmith." At the conclusion of the recitation the rural audience cheered.

"Encore!" they cried. "Encore!" Miss Carter was about to grant the request when a burly fellow very much out of breath, tapped her on the shoulder. "I've just come round from in front," whispered the man, excitedly. "I want yer to do me a favor."

"Well, what is it?" queried Miss Carter. "It's this," whispered the intruder. "I happen to be the fellow you've been talking about, and I want yer to put in a verse this time saying as how I hire out bicycles."

Draw Nigh, Soldier!

Also Draw Well

There's a Wrist Watch Involved

Can you draw a patriotic cartoon of interest to all the soldiers in the thirty-two National Guard and National Army camps? Can you draw sketches of army life as you see it about you every day?

That is what Trench and Camp wants to ascertain. If you cannot draw cartoons, perhaps you are a regular, "straight artist" and can interest or entertain your fellow soldiers with your pen. Trench and Camp will give a wrist watch to the soldier who draws the best cartoon or sketch and sends it to the editor at Room 504, Pulitzer Building, New York City.

America's foremost pen and ink sketch artists and cartoonists will be the judges. The watch-winning cartoon or drawing and as many others as space permits will be published in Trench and Camp. All cartoons and drawings should reach Room 504, Pulitzer Building, New York City, by noon, November 15.