

RED CROSS EAGER TO SHOULDER SOLDIERS' DOMESTIC WORRIES

No soldier or sailor need worry during his absence in camp or in the trenches about the folks back home, if he will but refer his troubles or anxieties to the Red Cross. He has only to apply to the Field Director of Red Cross Supplies Service in his camp, or, in the absence of such a director, write to the Home Service Bureau at any one of the thirteen Division Headquarters of the Red Cross in the United States—for example, the Potomac Division, 230-32-14th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.—or else to the Civilian Relief Department at National headquarters of the American Red Cross at Washington.

No matter how he does it, the word will be forwarded to the Red Cross Chapter wherever his family may be, with the request that a Home Service worker visit the home and report back to him in due time.

Is there sickness in the family? Is a mortgage on his home coming due? Is his wife or mother inexperienced in handling money? Is he uneasy about one of the children who was not doing well in school, or was inclined to be wayward? Has he not been hearing from his home? Does he wish to send a reassuring personal message to a mother, or wife, or little children, or any one else near and dear?

Letters and communications of this kind are now beginning to pour through the Red Cross national, divisional and chapter offices; and thousands of Home Service workers are going daily on these personal errands of service and good will.

Nobody knows better than does the Red Cross, that even though "Uncle Sam" is a good paymaster, sending his checks, as he does, for allotments and allowances and indemnities and insurance, nevertheless he and his money cannot make up for the absence of husband, father, son, brother and, for the very good reason that the soldier in camp or at the front is and was more than a paymaster or breadwinner or a bank deposit. He was the heart and the action, the general factotum of the family.

The whole idea of the Red Cross is to serve as a go-between when and wherever needed; but, along with this, to be everything possible in the absence of the man of the household to supply his place; carrying good cheer, heading off trouble, helping to maintain a proper standard of living, and looking forward to a family reunion when the home-coming soldier returns to find his home as bright and as good as not indeed better off than at the time of his call to the colors.

U. S. A. Establishes School for 10,000 Soldiers Abroad

West Point excited the admiration of every foreign visitor who was privileged to inspect it. The most frequent comment was "a great school." The word "great" meant in quality; for West Point relatively is not large.

But "somewhere in France" America is erecting a school which in a double sense will be "great"—in fact it will be the largest school of war ever conceived, unless the whole theatre of war is considered as a school.

It is estimated that 10,000 students will be trained in this school at one time. Situated in the vicinity of a town whose Roman walls still stand, the school will command a field-glass view of all parts of the battlefield.

Already the work of instruction has been begun, and the school will be extended to its full scope as rapidly as possible.

Classes have been established in trench mortar work; anti-aircraft artillery; anti-aircraft machine gun operations and sanitary work. Complete divisional units train at one time.

Classes for the training of enlisted men for commissions are also being conducted now. From this school of-war casualties will be replaced.

Soon classes in automatic weapon operation and other phases of infantry fighting will be opened. In these classes officers will be taught so that they may return to their commands as well equipped instructors.

With the arrival of some tanks that are expected soon, a school of tank warfare will be opened.

Most of the instructors are French and British, but a few Americans are members of the faculty.

The Problem of the Prisoners

A Graphic Story of Life in Prison Camps and Their "Atmosphere of Heartaches" Told by a Man Who Has Ministered to the Captives of Many Nations

By Marshall M. Bartholomew

He was only about nineteen. He was cheerful and he looked so well that as I went to his bedside I remarked:

"You don't seem to have much the matter with you."

"I haven't," he replied.

"Why don't you, then, come out and enjoy the sunshine?"

"I can't," he said quietly.

In answer to my "Why not?" he turned down the bed covering and showed me that he had no feet.

He was a prisoner of war in one of the camps abroad and he personified the problem that confronts welfare workers. There was something wrong with the Nathan Hale in the boy—for he was nothing more than a boy—as he said, "I offered my own my life and they have taken only my feet."

A Humanitarian Task

Helping men like that who are helpless themselves in one of the great humanitarian tasks of the war. Unless one sees at first hand, he finds it difficult to comprehend the problem of the prisoners. We read in news reports of 100,000 captured in a single battle. We admire the genius of the military leader who accomplished the feat—and then we forget.

One day I was in a railroad accident. A moment before I had been eating a quiet meal in the dining car. Without any warning I was plunged into a chaos of dead, dying and mangled people. That night has left upon my memory an unforgettable picture—the mangled corpses lying in the snow, the cries of the wounded from under the wreckage; the black, endless forest that stretched on both sides of the wreck. I dream of it sometimes at night and wake in a cold perspiration; every detail of that night has burned itself into my memory in such a way that I shall carry the picture vividly real as long as I live. I remember that there were only about eighty people killed in this accident. A few days later I was reading the newspaper report on an action on the western front, where it was estimated that during a few days fighting 50,000 men had been killed or badly wounded. It came to me with a peculiar shock that this loss of 50,000 men meant infinitely less to me personally than the eighty or ninety whom I had seen with my own eyes. It is at least a problem for all of us. It is almost impossible even partially to visualize the meaning, and share in the facts of what is going on in Europe. Occasionally something happens or surges vividly into that it refuses to be pigeonholed and remains in the front of our minds, burning its way so hotly that it achieves a permanent place in our memories and sways a real influence over our thoughts and lives. And how shall we visualize the statement that there are somewhere in the neighborhood of 6,000,000 prisoners of war in the prison camps of Europe today?

The Unending Line

Have you ever watched columns of marching men? Have you felt as thrill in your throat as line after line of strong men tramped rhythmically by to the music of drum and trumpet? I remember the Dewey parade in New York in celebration of the battle of Manila in 1899. That was the first great parade that I had ever seen. From eight in the morning until late in the afternoon regiment after regiment marched past, and yet less than 100,000 men participated in that parade.

But if the prisoners of war could be stretched together and marched past a given point and you had to stand and watch this weary procession, how your eyes would ache and your heart, too, before it had passed. No music this time; no joy; no excitement; but broken regiments of weary veterans, muddy, ragged, wounded, discouraged. Watch them from the windows of your imagination, marching, marching. All day today ceaselessly they appear, boys and young men in great number; middle aged men in great number; old men, a few—Frenchmen, Belgians, English, Russians, Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Turks, Africans, Indians, Australians, Italians. The march continues to-morrow, and the next day, and on through the week, and through the next week, night and day, day and night, for over a month before this vast army has passed you by. What a vast amount of man power represented in this mass of human beings!

The Unending Line

power, of keeping these men up to a point, at least above deterioration, and perhaps even to better their stand, is the gigantic task to which the Young Men's Christian Association has dedicated itself. For the problem is not one primarily of looking out for physical needs. Even if many of the prisoners of war today are sufficiently well fed and clothed, and housed to maintain life in a healthy condition under ordinary circumstances, they are in captivity, suddenly deprived of their freedom and of the chance to serve their country in the time of greatest need. Without food, clothing and shelter is necessary, idleness, the greatest foe to personality, gets in its most deadly work in the prison camp. Men worn out with months in the trenches and the excitement and strain of warfare are suddenly plunged into inactivity, are cut off from the world. The result is one of mental and spiritual, and often moral degeneration.

Hungry for Books

And how a City Association secretary would chortle with joy to find among the members of his Association men of the talents and capacities that one finds within the barbed wire of a prison camp settlement. Professors, journalists, lawyers, engineers, skilled artisans, musicians, and so on throughout the range of talents, are at the war-prisoner secretary's hand to help in the establishment of work in the prison camps. I recall a camp of somewhere over 5,000, where, with a school which included an equipment of only fifteen text books, three blackboards and about forty benches and tables, we had within a month enrolled 1,700 students in thirty-five courses of study, including five languages, with courses in general science, mathematics up to and including plane and solid geometry, and lectures in various subjects. From eight in the morning until six at night one class after another came into the school building and forgot their captivity and their homesickness by occupying their minds with one study or another. In the prison camps, things which at home we have taken for granted and, as a result, undervalue as tremendous value. Think of a library of 250 books in which every day every book is drawn out, including the dictionary?

It is so easy to think that the man who has been removed from the contact is placed in a prison camp is out of the fight. From a moral point of view, however, his fight has really only just begun. The battle field calls for heroism, but the prison camp call a heroism even greater because it calls for a courage patiently to endure monotony, to hold one's spirit high through weeks of waiting, to suffer and perhaps to die far off from one's own country, out of touch with home, and alone.

Prisoners Steadily Increase
The Association has it in its power to save the lives of many, the sanity of many others, and preserve the power of countless thousands by the work that it is now carrying on in the prison camps. It is strange that in America, after so many months in the atmosphere of heartache, stupendous sacrifice and such magnificent heroism, I felt with a little pang the strain of self complacency, the willingness on the part of so many to forget what is going on on the other side—and their duty? It is impossible at a time like this for Christian men to divide themselves up into Nations when it comes to working for those who are helpless and destitute.

Many have given their lives; that the whole world might be spiritually quickened. I wish that I might be one of the many workers who could bring home to us our duty and our responsibility at this time, who could rouse the best patriotic heart of every man in America out of every smug complacency which still dwells there. The work is well begun. It must be carried on. The war goes onward, the number of prisoners of war increases; their needs increase. It is indeed a challenge to the Christian students of America such as has never faced them before. This is our greatest opportunity to step in and with helpful service and a heart full of the Christian spirit, re-ignite and brighten the flame of Christian brotherhood which alone can heal up the wounds and bind together the shattered world. Jesus said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor."

He dare not speak of loving who can hear the his brothers suffering and die, if by any sacrifice, no matter how great, he may be the means of saving them.

YOU CAN'T BEAT US

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

I knew the United States for forty years of peace and I thought it was the best country on earth, but I had to see it at war to know what a chunk of "all right" this land of ours is. I never believed, with some good people, that war was a thing of the past and as dead as the two-toed Titticanus of the Shurian Age, which never did exist. I have always said war would come—and I have written it again and again—but I was afraid our nation and our people were getting a little soft—like, ripe, old Camembert cheese. I take it all back. We are about as soft and mushy as a piece of case-hardened steel. There was quite a bit of peace mould on the outside of us, but it wiped off right easily.

There is a young fellow from across my street who was drafted and went to the Selective Service Department, and as he was an engineer by profession they put him in charge of a gang to build rifle ranges. He had lived on velvet, but when I asked him how he liked army life he said "Fine." He said there were a lot of mighty rough fellows, but that they were dandy when you got to know them. I got the same thing all through. If I wanted to pick out a name for our drafted boys, I'd call them "The Men Behind the Grins." This same young engineer, when he had completed the rifle ranges, was put to work on an embankment around the General's Headquarters, and his gang was cut down to three men. As nearly as I can remember, one was a customhouse porter, one a pants presser, and one a buttonhole maker. To take a buttonhole maker and turn him over-night into a soldier (and an engineer with a pick and shovel, at that) and have anything left but a sad, expiring moan, is great stuff. When the mould is wiped off us we are as soft as a chilled-steel bayonet. I would hate to be a German and have about a thousand of those buttonhole makers come over the top at me with bayonets fixed.

Wet Eyes Scarce

One day I saw a few hundred drafted men leaving a railroad station in a large city for the trip to camp. The wet eyes were not among the boys who were going. There were not many who shed any eyes, and they were shouting and chaffing each other. The only really worried looking person was a negro who was carrying a banner on a pole—"We are the —th District Boys—We are going to bite the Kaiser," or something like that. He was worried, but he could not find the contingent to which the banner belonged. He wandered around the station and he was really distressed. He finally sat down on a bench. Probably someone had given him fifty cents for carrying the banner, but he was not earning it. Or perhaps he had not been paid the fifty cents and was afraid he never would get it. At any rate, he was the saddest person in the station. A negro who feels in his bones he is losing fifty cents can look mighty sad.

There was one other person there who would have seemed sad if he had not seemed such an admirable example of complete sorrow. He was an Italian, the father, no doubt, of a drafted boy, and he was weeping with all his face, both hands and one foot. I never saw any one weep so thoroughly and wholeheartedly. He wept so completely, and put his soul and body so entirely into the job, that there was nothing sad about it. Poor old duffer! I suppose he may have come to America so that his baby boy might avoid Italian military service and now the military had that very boy. But the boy—I saw him—was not downhearted. "A w, ehms!" at that cheerfully, and patted his dad on the back, and the next moment he was yelling across the station: "Hey, Tony! did you get that kiss?" Probably Tony had bragged about a farewell kiss he was going to take and he got it. He looked so cheerful I am sure he did get it, two of them, maybe.

Well, there were glum fellows, too, I suppose, I have heard of—although I have never seen—fellows who went to camp and cantoned with long miserably-drawn faces. There were bound to be some of them, but the great thing is that their glumness was not contagious and smiles and rough cheerfulness were.

We are sending abroad, and will continue to send, men with a grin. The army of the United States, at home and abroad, is an army of good sports, taking things as they find them and making a joke of one annoyance after another. You can beat the grin, and you can beat the sour-faced quitter, but you can't beat the man with a grin. You can't beat us; our motto is "GWIN AND WEN!"

