

The Sunlight On The Sword

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF TRENCH AND CAMP FROM A CHRISTIAN SOLDIER IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

TRENCH AND CAMP

Published weekly at the National Camps and Cantonnments for the soldiers of the United States

National Headquarters Room 304, Pulitzer Building New York City

JOHN KEENE BRYAN Chairman of Advisory Board of Co-operating Publishers

Table listing various newspapers and their publishers across different states and territories, including Louisiana, Texas, Michigan, and others.

Published under the auspices of the National War Work Council, Y. M. C. A. of the United States, with the co-operation of the above named publishers and papers.

A WORD OF GREETING TO OUR NEW SOLDIERS

With the response to the second draft, hundreds of thousands of American citizens will be brought into contact with Trench and Camp.

In a very special sense this is a soldiers' newspaper, as President Wilson wrote when Trench and Camp was first projected.

Trench and Camp is unique in two respects. It is unique in the history of warfare because this is the first time that an entire army in the field at home has ever had its own exclusive paper.

The aim and ambition of Trench and Camp, in the words of President Wilson, is to "interpret to the soldiers the hope and enthusiasm of the nation behind them and to interpret to the nation the fine determination and spirit of our men in arms."

It is true that Trench and Camp is published under the auspices of the National War Work Council of the Young Men's Christian Association.

But that is merely incidental. The paper is "THE AMERICAN SOLDIER'S OWN NEWSPAPER."

A newspaper plays an important part in any community life—and an especially important part in such communities as characterize the army.

The young men of the second draft are to feel then, as they read the pages of Trench and Camp, that soldiers all over the country are reading the same editorials and writing the same special articles.

Every issue of Trench and Camp has certain local pages which tell of the happenings in the camp which that particular edition aims to serve.

Trench and Camp looks upon the arrival of the increments of the second draft as a splendid opportunity for further service—that service in which this newspaper was conceived by those having a deep and abiding interest in the welfare and contentment of the nation's soldiery.

SEDITION IN THE SQUAD TENT

When all is quiet in the company street and men have retired to their tents they do not cease to be soldiers. This is a fact which the new men particularly should bear in mind.

In the quiet hours in the squad tents come many opportunities to forget the obligations of soldiers. Freedom of speech sometimes runs riot. The men come to feel that they are away from restraining influences and they sometimes express themselves in a manner that they would not dare to assume in public.

There is criticism of the sergeant, of the commissioned officer, even of the government itself. This is sedition in a hideous form. The way to win the war is to forget all disagreements and differences and to hope for, believe in and think only of VICTORY.

The President of the United States is the Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces of the country. To do this is a great right of the young soldier. Disrespect to him is punishable according to army regulations.

Disrespect to him, especially at a time like this, should be unthinkable, according to American traditions.

The soldier in the ranks, the officer in the subordinate place—everyone in the army—needs something of the spirit of "They are immortalized in those lines, 'Thyrs not to reason why; theirs but to do and die.'"

One of the most fertile fields upon which Prussian propaganda thrives is that of discontent; and discontent would be impossible if a man catches something of the true spirit of Americanism.

From discontent to outspoken criticism is but a step. Outspoken criticism is a breach of discipline, which is a cancer in the side of the army.

Yet it is not in defense of rules and regulations that this message is addressed to the American soldiers. Rather it is an appeal to that intangible something that binds us all, that feeling which is common to every one of us which makes us thrill and fills us with pride when the first notes of the National anthem mark the close of a soldier's day.

A good soldier does his duty and keeps his mouth shut. Let us all be good soldiers.

Prussian propaganda manifests itself in many forms. Not the least insidious is that which constantly refers to the attitude of the Prince of Peace towards this war.

What would Jesus Christ think of the war? Can you as a Christian justify your own participation? Can you conceive of Jesus, bayonet in hand, going over the top to plunge the cold steel into the vitals of another human being?

Germany Hears That "Ah Goes Well"

These questions follow each other in just about the order given, all of which is carefully studied, as is every other move of the German propagandists. There is no minister in the country that has not been confronted by the questions and there is scarcely any active layman who has escaped.

Meantime the German propagandist gets word through some mysterious channels that all goes well and he wins the commendation of his chief. His report is no exaggeration. All does go well with his own project.

Prince of Righteousness First

1. What would Jesus Christ think of the war? The question is given in the phraseology of the church and, in the opinion of a simple soldier, is very poorly expressed. It is not what WOULD Jesus think but what DOES Jesus think.

2. Can you as a Christian justify your own participation? May not the question be answered by asking another? Can you as a Christian justify your failure to participate?

3. Can you conceive of Jesus, bayonet in hand, going over the top to plunge the cold steel into the vitals of another human being? It is difficult. But it is infinitely more difficult to think of the same Jesus standing unshaken by while a great fleet is torpedoed and her precious cargo of helpless women and little children are sent to the bottom.

4. Can't the churches do something to stop it all? Undoubtedly they can. In the first place they can refrain from diverting the thought of the country from the one great issue. America has only one task just now. That task is to stop the war by winning it; and by winning it so decisively that the monstrous thing which reared its ugly head shall remain inert to the end of time.

What, shall we see but the shot and thorn

Here is our manhood's might outspored?

Warlike calls to the fortified Orme

What of the Sunlight on the sword?

There is sunlight on the sword. As the course of the war runs we are coming more and more to realize that life is not ease, not the sum of possessions, not length of days—but the grandeur of the human soul.

"Then conquer we must for our cause it is just; And this be our motto, 'In God is our Trust.'"

Can't the church do something? Yes! It can preach the kingdom of righteousness as a forerunner to the reign of peace. Righteousness first—then peace!

Now it is "peace, peace, when there is no peace." The most effective way for the church to deal with the present crisis is to preach a gospel of unselfish devotion to the common cause. And if the church would reach the ultimate in her effort, let her translate that gospel into terms of food-saving, of labor conservation, of bond-buying—of doing.

The church of dim religious light and medieval symbolism is as dead as the lifeless Christ that some of her ministers have preached. The church of sacrifice and of sacrifice is as vital and as vitalizing as the Christ Who hovers about the battlefield and gives unto parched lips the water of life; Who visits the widows and the fatherless in their affliction—the Christ Who is the same yesterday, today and forever and Who is only just being comprehended.

LIEUTENANT, U. S. A.

RECORD INSURANCE

The members of one company of Marines now in France took out government insurance aggregating \$2,545,000. This is the high record. Out of the 255 men in the company, 254 took out the full \$10,000 of insurance. The other man took out \$5,000 worth.

NO HALF ESCAPED

Tommy—"Half of 'em we got with machine gun fire, half of 'em with the rifle, then we fixed bayonets and killed another half of 'em!"

MAIL IT TODAY

Mail this copy of Trench and Camp home. Also mail all the other copies you get. It will make mighty interesting reading for the home folks and for you when you get back from "Over There."

SEEKING REST

"Why do you think a man like Jagers, with a wife and growing daughter, is so anxious to go to the front?"

