

SECOND-HAND TALES

By - Professor M.L. Turner

"Some re-written - some just told -
Some new - some old."



A few days ago I read the following statement:
"The future of our whole nation and mankind itself depends upon our unqualified victory. There can't be too many parades, and bands, and rousing marching songs like "Over There, and, yes, good laughs, to make the load a little lighter as we face the tasks at hand."

By way of beginning, I understand that Mr. Putnam is having some new experience since becoming our new postmaster. For instance, it has been reported that a short time ago an old colored woman presented herself at the post-

office window and requested Mr. Putnam to put a stamp which she had on a letter that she wished to mail. Of course, Mr. Putnam obligingly licked the stamp and placed it on the letter. It stuck beautifully. "You know," said the old colored woman, "I bet I licked that stamp fifty times and I couldn't get it to stick." Mrs. Putnam received word a little later that her husband would not be at home for lunch that day.

Recently one of our good neighbors went into the Company Store at Lawndale to do a little trading. Among other things he told Mrs. Ben Palmer that he wished to buy a corselet for his wife. Mrs. Palmer asked, "What bust?" "Oh, nothing," said the man, "It just wore out."

Now back to the army again. The sergeant's face wore a mystified look as he deposited Private Tompkins into the custody of the head doctor at the Post. "Strangest case I have ever seen, doctor," he concluded. "This fellow Tompkins has been wandering all over camp the last two days picking up scraps of paper on the ground, report sheets from the company clerk's office, and orders posted on the bulletin board. Every time he grabs one of the papers he cries, "This isn't it."

As though to prove the Sergeant's point, Private Tompkins suddenly rushed past the astonished doctor and began picking pieces of paper off his desk. As he lifted each piece of paper he cried, "This isn't it." The doctor was nonplussed.

"Come, come, my boy," he said in a soothing tone. "You seem to have a pretty bad case of something or other. I don't want to break your heart, but I guess we can't have you in the army any more. Sergeant, I will hold Private Tompkins here while you get his discharge papers."

The sergeant returned a short while later and thrust the discharge into Private Tompkin's hand. "Now scat," he said. Private Tompkins took one look at the paper and let out a shriek of glee. "This is it," he exclaimed, and vanished from sight.

This one is a little hoary with age. The famous American humorist, Artemus Ward, tells many amusing stories of individual exploits during the Civil War. One of them concerned an irascible and impatient Southern Colonel who was anxious to rejoin his regiment and resented the snail-like pace of the dinky little train on which he found himself. He stamped up to the conductor and remarked with elaborate irony, "Will this railroad company allow a mere military man to give it some advice if it is done in a respectful manner?" (Continued on next page)