The Invasion of America

Communication With Boston Cut Off as by a Stroke of Lightning—New England Unable to Reach the Rest of the Country—$50,000 a Day Is Levied—A Great City as Helpless as Any Village—Clearing the Wharves — Stripping Boston of Its Treasure — The Citizens of No Country—The Foe's Slow Advance—A Mad Adventure—What Americans Could Have Accomplished—Thirty Minutes Late—The Massacre of Connecticut River Carefully Prepared by Elaborate Carelessness Through Many a Year Before—Western Connecticut Broken Under the Invader's Rod.

CHAPTER VIII.

"WHAT is happening in Boston?" The question stood before the United States and there was no answer. All communication with it had been annihilated as if by a lightning stroke.

Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire still were able to reach the rest of the country with entire freedom, except that everything—mail, telegraph messages and freight—had to pass by way of the Lake Champlain valley exclusively. But Boston, the richest half of Massachusetts, all of Rhode Island and the whole eastern end of Connecticut were as completely cut off as if all that great territory had been torn from the continent and dropped into the sea.

Of the 195 American cities with more than 30,000 population, twenty-two were in the section that had been lost by the United States. The assessed valuation of those cities alone was more than $2,700,000,000. Ten thousand manufacturing establishments were in the grip of the conqueror.[1]

The grip lay on the captured country like a thing of iron. Telegraph and telephone could be used only under the supervision of soldiers who controlled every central operating station and scrutinized everything, cutting out any expressions that did not suit them or refusing transmission altogether. Against these decisions there was no appeal.

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The post offices were occupied by censors. Every piece of mail passed under their eyes and reached those to whom it was addressed only after long delay and generally with parts of it obliterated by heavy daubs of printing ink.

All the springs of creative work were broken. Shops and manufactories were open, under orders from the military commanders, but the owners and managers did not know what to do. They continued to produce, dully and without plan. They dared not make even the most unimportant contract, for no man could guess what might happen next. There was no money to be had, except for pressing needs. The banks throughout the conquered territory had been commanded to hold all cash in their vaults. Every man who applied for money had to prove to military officers that it was for immediate subsistence.

In the banks and trust companies' offices everywhere there were posted placards reading as follows:

"Our conquest, having been completed, carries with it absolute ownership of property conquered from the enemy state, including debts as well as personal or real property."[2]

The richest man in New England was on a level with the poorest. However much wealth he might have lying in the banks, he could draw only enough for daily food. He could not take anything from his safety deposit vaults. They were guarded by armed sentries who permitted access only to those who came accompanied by officers.

This condition would last, as the invaders informed the people, until a complete list of all funds had been made.

In every financial department of cities and towns were uniformed men demanding cash statements and lists of assessed valuations for the purpose of apportioning the amount of contribution to be levied on each community.

While the enemy was going thus systematically to work to ascertain the full money value of his prize, he made requisitions for immediate needs in every place occupied by him. The troops demanded hay, oats, corn and other forage. They paid for the supplies with written papers that acknowledged receipt, but it was noticed that these receipts did not promise payment.[3]

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In Boston the municipal authorities were informed that the city was subject to a cash levy for the support of troops at the rate of $1 daily for each man of the occupying army, making an amount payable in bank funds of $50,000 a day.[4]

The authorities had no recourse except to find the money. Nominally in control, they were held rigorously to account for the obedience of their city. The headquarters staff of the invading army had possession of the statehouse, and from this point sent out brief orders.

Prominent among the notices that were posted here and in all public places of Boston was the announcement of the institution of the new government. It was:

"On and after this date the city of Boston is under the rule of the headquarters staff of this army. The present civil officials of the city will continue their functions. A continuance of existing civil and penal laws, and the exercise of legislative, executive and administrative duties are permitted under the sanction and with the participation of the military government."[5]

Had Boston town gone under in flame and terror, the very fury of the catastrophe might have carried men through it with less of despair than this cold conquest. Instead of blows to be struck, or blood to be shed, there was only humiliation—humiliation intensified hourly by the cool, unimpassioned correctness with which the enemy treated the fallen city.

He did not even fill the city with troops. Only four thousand infantry and a regiment of cavalry were sent in to hold all Boston. The rest of the army remained outside, encamped or quartered on the people of the suburbs and the towns of the metropolitan district.

Unconcerned, almost unguarded, the commander and his officers moved about the town. They went in and out of the city hall with the assurance of superiors. They occupied the two largest hotels. Brookline people reported that the Country Club there had been turned into a brigade headquarters.

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Dazed, as if in the bonds of an ugly nightmare that must vanish if they could only awaken, the people of Boston looked at this handful of men who had so easily, so calmly, made themselves utter masters of a metropolitan district of thirty-nine municipalities—thirteen cities and twenty-six towns, all within fifteen miles of the statehouse. From the statehouse this dozen or two dozen quiet, business-like men in uniform ruled with a word or two over 415 square miles, with a population of more than a million and a half of people and a taxable value of more than two and one-half billions of dollars.[6]

In the city so helplessly given over to them there were, according to the certificate then lying in the city clerk's office, 124,000 men liable to enrollment in the state militia. These were part of those "millions of men" of whom passionate orators had spoken so often—the millions of heroic, strong, intelligent American freemen who would instantly spring to arms at the call of need and sweep the most daring invader back into the sea.[7]

They were heroic. They were strong. They were intelligent. But they were confronted by the cold truth. It stared at them from all their squares, from all their parks, from the approaches to all their bridges. It was the cold truth—in the shape of cannon. Even the grounds of Harvard and of Boston University were occupied by batteries. Sentinels were on watch in Boston's church towers with machine guns that pointed down into the streets.

Against that machinery of war, courage was as futile as a dream; strength was as helpless as an infant in a cyclone. Intelligence was naken against the unintelligent steel.

So this city, one of the richest of the world, next to New York in its imports, with its enormous railroad terminals that grew together the roads of a continent's commerce, had dropped into the invader's hand almost for the picking, and lay in his grasp as incapable of resistance as if, instead of being the fourth greatest city of the United States, it had been a seaside village.[8]

There had not been a shot fired after the last shot had sounded from the harbor forts and the American flag had vanished from the harbor sky.

There was nothing to do. Slowly, systematically as it had invested Boston, so the army had taken Boston. There was no commanding point in all the country around it that was not crowned with heavy artillery. There was no road to the city that was not held by troops who demanded passes. Patrols moved constantly through the streets.

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Through the whole metropolitan district had been sent a proclamation, issued by the local authorities, warning the people that all intercourse between the territories occupied by belligerent armies whether by letter, by travel, or in any other way, had been interdicted and was punishable by fine or imprisonment, or, in cases of serious infraction, by death after summary trial. This proclamation was countersigned by the military commanders of the various districts.[9]

Another proclamation, issued from headquarters in the statehouse said:

The civil authorities, by and with the consent of the military government, proclaim that troops will be quartered on the inhabitants at the pleasure of regimental and company officers. The troops are required to respect the persons and property of citizens during the good behavior of the latter. Any treachery on the part of citizens is punishable by death. Refusal to comply with any provision of this proclamation will be punished with fine or imprisonment, or in aggravated cases by confiscation of any property whose use has been denied the troops.[10]

Along the water front an order was given to clear all the big wharves. Owners of vessels berthed there were instructed to have them towed to basins or anchored in the stream. Provided with diagrams of the mine fields that had been surrendered under the conditions of capitulation, the mine sweepers cleared the harbor for the entrance of the fleet.

Floating from more than a score of warships and transports, the Coalition's flags moved toward the city. Cannon saluted them from the forts, and they saluted in reply. Among the stricken thousands on shore there were many who sobbed as they heard the foreign thunders peal around their bay and saw the foreign flags against their sky, with never a starry banner on all those ancient American waters.

There were foreign ships lying under the forts, unloading spare guns to replace those that were destroyed. All the works were busy with enemy sailors, repairing the defenses to protect conquered Boston against attack from its own navy.

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Naval and army transports steamed up to the city and took possession of the wharves and the navy yard basins. Destroyers and small craft moved up the channel to the Mystic river and occupied the naval and marine hospitals. Marines and sailors came ashore in South Boston and established a signal station on Telegraph hill.

The naval commander seized all federal property that had anything to do with the conduct of the harbor. He assumed control of the quarantine and pilot service and declared the port open under his supervision.[11]

All this and all else of importance that was happening in their city the people of Boston could learn only slowly and in fragments as the news spread from man to man by word of mouth. The newspapers were under armed guard, like all other important places that touched on public business. Censors sitting at editorial desks permitted only the printing of the most trivial routine news of local happenings that did not touch on the real concerns of the invaded country and city.

The first pages of all the newspapers were served by the military government for its announcements. These were headed:

"OFFICIAL."

"ORDERS AND DECISIONS BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS AND THE CITY OF BOSTON."

There were so many of them that there was no room for news on the first pages, even had news been permitted.

Within twenty-four hours the city had been set back to its condition in the seventeenth century, when Boston's first newspaper was throttled by a reactionary legislature.[12]

The people of Boston did not know if Connecticut had been conquered. They did not know if New York had fallen. They did not know where their army was or what it was doing. A great battle might be deciding the fate of the entire country, but no whisper reached them.

As in colonial days, they were reduced to such knowledge as might come from rumor or from information whispered by those who learned something by chance.

It was in this way that nearly everybody in Boston came to know that in the state house there sat a council, dressed in uniform and bearing military rank, but in reality a council of men learned in international and United States law. Surrounded by great rows of books which they had brought with them, these men were the real rulers of the conquered land.[13]

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The commanding general and his field staff might act with summary authority under the rules of war. The commanding general's name might be signed to all the scores of orders that issued daily. But this council of military lawyers acted as governors, judges and soldiers at once. Their decisions in all mooted cases, their ingeniously worded orders, were perfecting the enemy's complete possession.[14]

No American, great or humble, might go a step beyond the prescribed and routine affairs of the day without first learning what their orders were. No man held property, whether it were priceless or beggarly, except by their favor. No man knew at any moment what remaining liberties might not be taken from him at a word from them.[15]

With the impersonal coldness of a judicial machine they went about the work of stripping the city of treasure. In all the departments of the municipality were soldier experts, studying the books. In the custom house were half a hundred others searching the records of exports and imports. Every financial institution of the city had been ordered to present its accounts in the statehouse.

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During all this time the invader made daily requisitions for the use of the troops or for other military purposes. He demanded for the navy a supply of 10,000 pounds of smoking tobacco, 1,000 pounds of roasted coffee, one ton of rice, 500 pounds of salt and 50,000 pounds of fresh meat. He made requisition for paint, cable, ropes, hose and steel for the ships.[16]

There were requisitions for medical supplies, for cloth and for shoes. To the harassed officials, who remonstrated against the hardships that were laid on the city, and pointed to the state of its trade, the reply was that it was one of the richest cities in the world and that the levies were modest. When a deputation of citizens pressed the protest, the council printed its reply in the "official" columns of the newspapers.

"In regard to the requisitions made by the occupying army," said this statement, "attention is called to the fact that the United States Supreme Court in the case New Orleans agt. steamship company, 20 Wall., 394, decided that the military governing authority 'may do anything to strengthen itself and to weaken the enemy,' and that the court further stated that 'there is no limit to the powers that may be exerted in such cases save those which are found in the laws and usages of war.'"[17]

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Despite the cannon that glowered in all the streets, Boston's fury at this ironic rejoinde nearly broke through all restraint. In the old city that had the famous tea party among its prized achievements the spirit of that past age woke again, and spread, almost without concerted thought or intention. Wherever men could meet they formed in groups to ease their minds by free speech, if they could do nothing else. In several quarters of the city there were incipient riots, suppressed by the police only just in time to avoid bloody interference by the soldiers.

"We must curb this town," said the commanding general to the military council in the statehouse. "It is not one to remain cowed for long, without repressive measures."

The council nodded. Next morning's newspapers had on their first pages an announcement that made many readers rub their eyes and stare incredulously at the printed page, for on it was such a proclamation as might have been read in Boston town in the reign of Charles I. It was headed:

SEDITION LAW.

1. Every person resident in the territory occupied by the power exercising sovereignty by right of conquest, who shall utter seditious words or speeches, or write, publish or circulate scurrilous libels against the governing authority, or who shall conceal such practices that come to his knowledge, shall be punished summarily and severely.

2. Every person who joins a secret society or attends a secret meeting for the purpose of advocating sedition or rebellion shall be punished summarily and severely.[18]

Again the citizens' committee protested. Boston lawyers represented to the military council that American citizens could not be held guilty of sedition or rebellion if they adhered to their country.

"The inhabitants of conquered territory," answered the council, "are citizens of no country. They are under the jurisdiction of the occupying army; but they are not even entitled to the privilege of citizens of the country which controls that army."[19]

"But mere conquest does not entitle you to treat them as rebels," urged the committee. "They are within their rights to preserve their allegiance, so long as they do not violate the rules of war by opposing you with arms."

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One of the officers smiled. He opened a book. "Once more I must respectfully refer you to your own court decisions," he said, and read from a United States Supreme Court verdict: "'Conquest is a valid title while the victor maintains exclusive territory of the conquered country.'"[20]

"There is nothing that we can do," the committee reported to the people. It was the refrain that sounded in all the United States just then. To the wild projects for desperate defense that were being broached every day in the city of New York, to the frenzied demands that the volunteers in the western camps be rushed into the field, to the curses directed at the American army because it refused to fight, the same answer formulated itself because there was no other. Always, from all quarters, to all demands and imprecations, the only answer that was possible was: "There is nothing that we can do!"

The city multitudes surrendered wearily to the situation; but there were men whom the helpless reply drove frantic.

There were hundreds of these men in New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City, Newark and all the towns eastward from there into Connecticut. They were militiamen who had not been able to join their organizations when they went to the front, or whose organizations had been merely paper ones. There were members of sportsmen's clubs, accustomed to the use of heavy-caliber firearms and to the trail, and there were many men who were moved simply by the recklessness of courage.[21]

During the days while there drifted through the United States the broken, incomplete, but ever-growing story of New England's uprising and its fearful suppression, these men had begun to assemble in Connecticut's country between New Haven and Hartford, urged by no settled plan, but moving to that district simply because it was the last American front between New York and the invading army.

The enemy was moving westward slowly. He had to hold out a mighty screen northwestward against the American army that now lay beyond the Berkshire hills, holding the land between western Connecticut and Albany. That army, intact and out of his reach, was a constant, acute danger. It endangered his communications, it endangered his base, it endangered his divisions that occupied Boston. It forced him to advance only in continual readiness for battle on flanks and rear-lines.

During the slow approach the men who had gathered between New Haven and Hartford began to form some sort of an organization. Almost it evolved itself.

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The enemy, pushing forward along the north, took Springfield with cavalry and artillery. The undefended city surrendered without a blow.

From New Haven and Hartford to the factory cities of Wallingford and Meriden, Middletown and New Britain, along all the factory-lined valleys, there passed a word that gathered workers from shops and idle men from streets. All one long day and all one evening they moved toward the two cities. They seemed aimless enough, but there were leaders who put themselves at their head secretly in the night.

Suddenly they were angry, determined, united bodies of men. Suddenly, like a suddenly awakened wind, they stormed the great arms factories of the two towns.

They came with guns and pistols. They came with crowbars and picks. They came with stones and with nothing except their bare hands. They hauled their dead aside and withered under the fire of the guards and burst through and took the works.

In Hartford they seized a whole trainload of rapid-firers and machine guns that had been loaded for the American army. In New Haven they took almost four thousand sporting rifles.

The riot fever spread to Bridgeport. The mob arose and seized the cartridge factories.

It was a mad thing, springing less from purpose than from the insanity that invasion had laid on men's minds. It could have but one mad end. Yet this army of madmen was moved and molded by a touch of the American ability to "do things"—that very ability on which the people might, indeed, have depended with perfect assurance, if only they had not depended on it wholly.

America did, truly, have men who would fight. They were here, and they were to fight such a fight as would be remembered many a long day. America had the men to lead, too. Though they knew that this was a hopeless thing, they "took hold."

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They took hold of men armed with magnificent rifles, but of a score of different patterns for different kinds of sport, and demanding a score of different shapes and calibers of cartridges. They took hold of infantry miltia fragments whose companies had had only two or three assemblies a year for target practice, with average attendances of only eleven or twelve men. They improvised scout detachments of volunteers with bicycles and motors.[22]

Young doctors took hold with nothing but emergency kits, without ambulances, without litters, without even helpers who would know how to find a wound or apply a first aid bandage.

The army of madmen went forward to the Connecticut river to hold the western bank from Hartford to Middletown.

They did not know how to dig trenches. They dug ditches. They did not know how to make defenses for their machine guns. They piled trees that would skewer them with splinters under shell fire, or heaped up rocks that would fly into fragments and kill like shrapnel.

They were all of 3,000 men. They were the kind of men whom America has expected always in times of peace to call to its defense. They were callous-handed workers in metal and wood and leather; bleached workers from woolen mills and cotton spindles; longshoremen from the harbor cities of the sound; professional men resolute with the fervor of the time; roadmakers and teamsters and shoemakers; hunters, yachtsmen and foot ball players.

That day along the Connecticut river they showed what America's men could have done had they learned how to do it in advance and had they been armed for the work.

They lay behind their pitiable defenses, with their motley weapons, commanded by men who did not know war. They bore the shock of machine gun assaults from advance patrols. They bore the shock of cavalry charges from scouting detachments.

At Middletown they were attacked in force by heavy cavalry that crossed under cover of gunfire and outflanked them, and charged in mass. They sent the charge back, broken, with many empty saddles.

They lay under the fire of a three-inch gun at Cromwell for an hour, and endured, and died—but they denied the river crossing to a battalion.

For two long hours they held the river along their whole line. It seemed to them that they were fighting a great battle. Surely their dead testified to it, and the hot fire that beat on them testified to it, and across the river, or floating down with the stream, were many enemy dead to testify to it.

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They cheered and shouted to each other hoarsely that they were winning. They watched, with ever-growing savage lust, for more assailants.

In the headquarters of the advancing army there was received this report from the brigade commander: "Two or three thousand raw but determined Americans disputing passage of Connecticut river with our advance guards. They have machine guns, no artillery. Am sending field guns forward. Shall have passage clear in an hour."

"Use ample force," answered the commander. "These Americans" he said to his aid. "They aren't to be underestimated. A little more preparation——"

"And we wouldn't be here!" laughed the aid.

Thirty minutes afterward, from points wholly invisible to the Americans, there burst the shattering thunder of field artillery. Explosive shells flew over and into the trenches. Shrapnel screamed at them, and burst like sentient things right in their faces, to drive rattling bullets in all directions.[24]

Their machine guns were useless. There was nothing in sight at which to fire. The men lay face down, clutching dirt, choking with fumes and smoke, stunned by the blasting things that burrowed into their earthworks and blew them apart and tore living bodies to pieces.

At Rocky Hill a militia company of artillery tried to move its gun into better shelter. The plow horses that had been seized to drag it, wild with terror, became entangled in the traces and fell. Cutting them away, the men wheeled the cannon into position by hand. But their armory never had been fitted for subcaliber practice, as it never had been fitted for mounted instruction. None of the men had been qualified as first class or even as second class gunners, and their shots went wild, serving only to betray their situation to the enemy. They did not know how to place themselves for protection from indirect fire. So they died.[25]

A troop of militia cavalry, trying to move forward near Hartford, was cut off by an advance patrol of enemy cavalry that had crossed the river to outflank the defenders from the north. The Americans charged. But they were mounted on horses never used before for cavalry work. The enemy riders were men trained to swordsmanship. The American troop had averaged only thirteen men in mounted drill in a whole year, because they had possessed neither horses nor armory.[26]

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The green brutes reared at the sight of weapons. They pitched into one another as the enemy cavalry dashed at them, and added their iron hoofs to the melee. For one brief moment eyes stared into eyes, and it was hack and thrust. Then the enemy riders were through them, and whirled like a gale and swept through them again, and killed and killed.

"Annihilated," reported the scout cavalry a little later, when its squadrons came up. "Our loss one dead, three slightly wounded."

Annihilated! Yes, gentlemen of Congress, sitting in Washington at that moment and passing resolutions and appropriations, and uttering fine sentiments about millions for defense and not one cent for tribute! There were ugly things there on the Connecticut river shore that answered you more loudly in their eternal silence than if they had spoken with a thousand angry tongues.

That day's battle that filled the fields of Connecticut with dead men's bones to be plowed up in many a year afterward, went down in American history as the massacre of the Connecticut river. A massacre it was—an American massacre, carefully prepared by elaborate carelessness through many a year before.

Less than a thousand men, it was said afterward, escaped from the massacre. They crawled away down gullies or swam down the river, and hid under weeds and panted, and tied up their wounds with rags from their ragged garments. They were never able to tell what had occurred. They knew only that they had thought there was victory—and then, in front of them, and on their flanks, and behind them, there had come flames as if a hot line of blast furnaces had opened to blow in their very faces, wherever they turned.

"We have taught them their lesson!" said the hostile commander. "We shall have no more trouble."

It was true. Western Connecticut was broken under the invader's rod as eastern Massachusetts had been broken. That night the army occupied Hartford, Meriden, New Britain and New Haven, though not before the arms factories had been blown up, to welcome the soldiers with flaming ruins.

The next morning cavalry detachments began cautiously to scout into the Berkshire hills, to feel for the American outposts.

The way to the city of New York lay open.

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[1] Financial Statistics, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the census, 1914.

[2] In Brown versus the United States, the United States Supreme Court decreed that war gives to the sovereign to the conquering power, "full right to take the persons and confiscate the property of the enemy wherever found. Humane mitigations may affect exercise of this right, but cannot impair the right itself."

"The so-called exemption of private property from capture or seizure on land may be called almost nominal." Rear Admiral Stockton, (Elements of International Law).

[3] Napoleon made Valencia pay $100,000 for the support of his army. Receipts were provided for originally when troops made requisitions, not necessarily to insure pay to the despoiled inhabitants, but merely to prevent unauthorized plundering.

[4] A universally accepted form of military rule and discriminated from mere martial law. United States census bureau report, 1914. also Boston City Manual.

[5] So certified to city clerk, Boston, by board of assessors, June 30, 1914, exact number, 124,027.

[6] Statistics of cities of the United States, 1914.

[7] From "Instructions for Government of Armies of the United States in the Field" (with exception of statement as to specific punishment for infraction. Punishment mentioned here, however, is such as all military authorities will claim the right to inflict.)

[8] The right of quartering troops on the inhabitants of enemy country is unquestioned and universally exercised. Equally universal is the military commanders' right to punish treachery by death.

[9] "Complete conquest carries with it all rights of former government." U. S. Supreme Court.

[10] Benjamin Harris' Publick Occurrences, suppressed after one issue.

[11] There is an immense literature on military law and every army contains officers who have taken degrees in law, for the purpose of expounding and administering it.

[12] The legal and technical correctness of all acts is of extreme importance in the peace settlements.

[13] All authority in conquered country is only by and with the authority of the military conqueror. His power, practically, is limited only by his motives of policy or kindness.

[14] "Dole" requisition is taken almost verbatim from a requisition issued by a belligerent army in the field. It is an accepted and acknowledged principle of war that the conqueror may force the enemy to pay his expenses to as large an extent as possible. A commander may waive the right, but it is held unimpaired.

[15] This decision covered a case that arose during the civil war, and was cited by the law office, division of insular affairs, on several occasions to fortify United States procedure after the Spanish-American war.

[16] A literal extract from the sedition act (No. 292; etc.) of the Philippine commission, except that the act provides for specific imprisonment and fine.

[17] So laid down by nearly all writers on military law who touch on this subject.

[18] This principle was laid down in regard to territory subjected to military occupation by the United States during the war with Mexico. The United States claimed (and sparingly exercised) the right to court-martial and execute as rebels certain leaders of an insurrection against the military government in New Mexico, 1847-8.

[19] "In many instances the deficiency has reached such a figure as to leave militia organizations such in name only."—Page 206, last report, Gen. Mills, U. S. A.

[20] Table No. 9, report, Division of Militia Affairs, U. S. A., 1914.

[21] Range of four miles.

[22] Page 231, report on military field artillery, Gen. Mills, U. S. A., 1914.

[23] Table 9, militia cavalry statistics, Division of Militia Affairs, U. S. A., Annual Report, 1914.

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Next Sunday's installment of "The Invasion of America" will tell of the capture of New York city.

THEN THE ENEMY RIDERS WHIRLED LIKE A GALE AND SWEPT THROUGH THEM AGAIN AND KILLED AND KILLED

FLIGHTS OF HUMAN EAGLES

IT may be gathered from the war news that aviators in the war zone are making many spectacular flights, covering longer and still longer distances from the actual battle lines and giving indications that their aim in dropping bombs is improving. One wonders if the record of these flights is being kept for examination, reference and comparison when peace returns, so that they may be looked at side by side with the flight records made in the calm and peaceful period before the nearly world-wide slaughter began.

Just before the outbreak of the war there was a season of record-breaking in aviation, and especially by German airmen. July 9, 1914, Otto Linnekogel drove a monoplane up to 21,645 feet at Johannisthal, and July 10 Heinrich Olerich, in a biplane, exceeded that height by more than 3,000 feet, going up to about 25,000 feet near Leipzig. That was almost 10,000 feet higher than Mont Blanc (15,782), and almost 5,000 feet higher than Mount McKinley (20,300), and the altitude attained by that biplane was nearly five miles above sea level.

It has been computed that if the height reached by Olerich is not near the limit of biplane ascent, it must be near the limit of altitude at which a man can live. It is set forth in some of the older records of ballooning that April 15, 1875, Gaston Tissandier, H. T. Sivel and J. E. Croce-Spinelli made an ascension from Paris in a balloon which they called the "Zenith," and that they got up to 27,950 feet, but only Tissandier came down alive. The others perished in the rarefied air, being dead in the basket when the balloon returned to earth.

James Glaisher, an Englishman, in a balloon ascension which he undertook from Greenwich Observatory September 5, 1862, to make observations of the higher strata of atmosphere, reached an altitude considerably above 20,000 feet. He estimated, from the fact that the balloon was rising 1,000 feet a minute when he became insensible at 29,000 feet and was falling 2,000 feet a minute when he came to himself three minutes later, that he reached an altitude of 37,000 feet. This conclusion was not accepted by the scientists at that time, but they allowed him an altitude greater than 29,000 feet. The material fact was that Glaisher collapsed at that height.

It has been said by those who have given particular consideration to the question of extreme height at which human life can be supported that no mountain-climber has ever reached 25,000 feet. Whymper's experiments show that above 18,000 feet the slightest exertion is painfully difficult, though it has been also recorded that the Duke of the Abruzzi climbed to 24,583 feet on Bride peak in the Himalayas and did not suffer from mountain sickness, and Filippi, the chronicler of that expedition, expressed the belief that with the equipment for mountain climbing now available a man might go still higher.

There was a more or less interesting experiment July 31, 1901, when, in a balloon ascension, a barometric reading of 34,000 feet was attained, but the aeronauts, although they carried with them and consumed a supply of oxygen, became insensible about the moment that altitude was reached.

Birds do not fly very high compared with the heights reached by man in balloons and aeroplanes. Guy-Lussac, a balloonist, in 1850 threw out carrier pigeons at heights above 20,000 feet, but these birds fell heavily toward denser air. The condor nests above the ten-thousand-foot level, and Alexander von Humboldt reported that he once saw this great bird soaring at a height which he estimated at 23,000 feet.

More airmen are steadily on the wing today than at any other time in the history of the race, but it is plausible that they are not wasting petrol and imperiling themselves and their machines at greater heights than to avoid shrapnel and too easy observation. Their object is to keep as close to the earth as they can, so that their reconnissance may be the more accurate and complete, and if engaged in dropping bombs they may increase their chance of hitting the object they would destroy.

The Difference.

APROPOS of the sinking of the Palaba by a German submarine and the drowning of over a hundred men and women passengers, A. C. Ross, the English consul to San Francisco, said:

"Such an act is against international law. If England may be said to rule the waves, Germany may, with equal truth, be said to waive the rules."