# RECRUITING TO CONTINUE HERE

## Regular Army Office to Be Maintained Permanently; Guard Awaits Call

That the regular army recruiting office in this place will be maintained here permanently, is the interesting information given out this morning by Lieutenant R. W. Lesher at the local recruiting headquarters.

More or less uncertainty has existed regarding what disposition might be made of the recruiting offices scattered over the country, now that the machinery of the draft boards is in operation. Many persons have been of the opinion that all candidates for the vacancies in the National Army as well as the National Guard would be filed by the selective process.

Positive assurance has been given by the War Department that the recruiting offices will remain open, said Lieutenant Lesher, who is in charge of the activities of the local office. Not only will the recruiting offices be maintained, but the work of securing men for the army will be pushed with new activity. That there will be plenty of work for the recruiting officers is evidenced by the fact that the regular army is to be kept up to its full strength of 300,000 men and the National Guard to its full strength of 450,000 persons, through recruiting.

Pennsylvania holds an enviable record in the work of enlisting men. This State has led all other States from the very start, but New York is a close second. To-day's reports give Pennsylvania's enlistments as 21,784. New York is credited with 21,539 enlistments.

Pennsylvania not only leads the United States, but Harrisburg leads in the State in recruiting. This fact should have weight with the young man who expects to enlist, for Harrisburg men promise to play a prominent part in the world war.

**Expect Rush of Recruits**

Reports received from the conference held by the various exemption boards in this city indicate that there will be a general tightening of the rules, and there is a feeling that young men of military age who have not yet been called should enlist at the army headquarters and select the branch of service desired. This privilege is denied after a man has been actually called for examination by a local examining board.

Raymond A. Miller, 1116 North Eighteenth stret, and Jacob L. Nickoll, 1245 Swatara street, this city, have been accepted at recruiting headquarters for the Signal Corps, and have been assigned to the Columbus, Ohio, barracks. Alfonso Stella, 234 South Second street, enlisted for the infantry and was sent to Gettysburg.

**To Call Reserve Soon**

Sergeant Howard B. Ellinger, of the Signal Reserve Corps, has been notified that no date has been set calling the field battalions of the Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps to duty. Sergeant Ellinger has been advised, however, to have his affairs in such shape that the staff can leave upon short notice, and there is a feeling that the call may not be long delayed.

The following enlistments in the Signal Reserve Corps were made at the local headquarters yesterday: Donald F. Gerbig, Chambersburg; Joseph A. Barnes, Williamstown, and John H. Countryman, Middletown.

At Hargest Island, the men are anxiously awaiting the call to leave for Camp Hancock. While it is believed that the orders to move may be received at any moment, there is nothing certain about the time of leaving, and it is possible that the orders will not be received earlier than ten hours prior to the time of leaving.

Reports received from Company D tend to make the boys at the Island all the more anxious to entrain for Georgia.

**Co. I Needs But Two**

There are but two more vacancies to be filled in Company I, and when these are filled, the company will be at full strength. The following recruits have been accepted by Company I: Isaac Rolneck, 222 Chestnut street; Fred B. Ritter, Lewistown; Ray M. Keller, 1061 South Ninth street; John M. Shenck, York. George E. Sponsler, of Eberlys Mills, has enlisted in the Supply Company.

The ball game yesterday afternoon between the Company I boys and the Forty-seventh Infantry of New York, resulted in a victory for the Company I boys, the score being 14 to 2.

An event of unusual interest is the guard mount ceremony, which will be held at the Island to-morrow evening at 6.30 o'clock. Following this, the famous Eighth Regiment band will give a concert.

The Harrisburg Bridge Company has announced that $100 will be added to the general fund of the Eighth Regiment. This amount represents the tolls collected by the bridge company on the evenings when parades and drills were held at the Island. The company has no desire to make money as a result of the visits of friends and relatives to the soldiers, and for this reason it was decided to make a liberal donation to the general fund.

**Bombs Here Taboo**

When asked if Troop C had ever had under contemplation the use of bombs upon the old buildings in the Capitol Park extension, Captain Roberts replied that such a thing had never been thought of for while it would no doubt be interesting to give the men practical demonstrations of how the explosives work, the project would be attended by grave danger to pedestrians and persons living in that neighborhood.

The men are receiving instruction of a most practical sort under the direction of Captain Roberts, and when they arrive in France, they will be able to put their knowledge to a practical use.

**MR. McFARLAND MAKES ADDRESS**

J. Horace McFarland, president of the American Civic Association, of this city, delivered an address of a reminiscent character at the tenth annual reunion of the Society of the McAllisterville Soldiers' Orphans' School, at that place this afternoon. Mr. McFarland's father, the late Colonel G. F. McFarland, was the founder of the school.

**TRACK MEET POSTPONED**

Owing to the inclement weather, the annual Playground track meet, scheduled for to-morrow, has been postponed until next Tuesday afternoon. The meet will be held on the Island under the supervision of the Park Department. The same schedule of events will be used.

**HEAVY ISSUES FILED**

The State Public Service Commission to-day announced that during 1916 there were filed with certificates of notification calling for issues of stocks and bonds by Pennsylvania common carriers and public utility companies amounting to $156,148,107.50, of which $112,862,800 were bonds, $30,780,307.50 stocks, $10,780,000 equipment obligations, $1,725,000 receivers certificates.

**HURT IN CRASH**

Emmet Wolf, 226 Hummel street, was injured last night when his motorcycle crashed into a Reservoir Park street car at Second and Blackberry streets. He was taken to the Harrisburg Hospital for treatment. His condition is not serious.

# *BRITAIN SEEKS TO MAKE SUPERMEN OF HER TROOPS*

## England Preparing to Turn Scales Against Adversary So They May Never Swing Back Again—Ban Weapons of Frightfulness and Teach Use of Three B's

A Place in England, July 16 (by mail Associated Press). — British military authorities are convinced that the day of the superman has arrived, and that the part he is to play in ending the war and regenerating the world cannot be overestimated.

A representative of the Associated Press, who was permitted to visit a great training school as the guest of the Foreign Office, obtained an insight to the remarkable change brought about in the British viewpoint during the past three years.

The British are not only putting forth all their energy in further perfecting their fighting forces, but actually and earnestly are devoting themselves to the developments of their youth in a manner calculated to fit them for any and all years to come.

If the Germans cherished the idea of eliminating Britain as a world Power, Britain, it is said, far from being beaten, now sees with a clearer vision than ever and is preparing to turn the scales against her adversary in such a way as they may never again swing back.

**Endless Chain of Troops**

While statesmen are being made or unmade with the changing fortunes of war, the great silent forces of a nation proud of its traditions and thoroughly aroused to its own shortcomings, are constantly marching, in an almost endless chain, from training schools to battle fronts and back again. Stretched over many miles of rolling hills, carpeted with green foilage, is the school wherein hundreds of thousands of British youth are being taught to master themselves, as one of their instructors expressed it, "so that they be better prepared to master their enemy and live their lives as they would live them."

"Use your eyes and your brain," is the new British watchword which is being instilled into the British youth with all the force at the command of his superiors.

"We are training our men to believe in themselves," said the general commanding the school. "Each must not only feel that he is better equipped physically and mentally than his antagonist, but he must be able to demonstrate it. That is the lesson we have learned from the world war."

As the average Britisher is naturally a sportsman, his games are being made to play an impressive part in his training. In shooting, bombing and all the various arts of warfare these are proving inavaluable to him.

"I have been very much impressed with the fact that most men who are prominent in our games distinguish themselves at the front," declared the general. "They are keen, thoughtful and clear-sighted and for that reason become the best fighters."

**Instructions in Three "B's."**

Unlike the armies of other belligerents the British are discarding what are termed weapons of frightfulness and instructing their young manhood in the use of what they are pleased to call the "three B's—the bullet, bayonet and the bomb.

"Experience has shown us that the rifle and the bayonet are the best defense weapons with which to arm a man," asserted one officer. "If he has the proper physical and mental traininig and knows how to handle his rifle and his bayonet, he is certainly the match, if not the superior of his adversarry."

With a single eye to their task, the British have established elaborate systems of trenches wherein the young men are taught every conceivable method of present day warfare. Young officers and others recommend for promotion are regularly brought back form the front for intensive traininng of from ten to twenty days, so that they may return to the front and instruct their respective units In this way, the British argue, their men never become 'stale' and are ever fit and ready for any emergency.

The message the British would impart to their American allies was summarized af follows:—

Train your young men to be physically and mentally strong.

Train them to think for themselves.

Make them supermen in the modern sense—and the world will be made safe for democracy.

# *PAINTS VIVID PICTURE OF ARMENIAN SUFFERING*

Bombay—The following statement given to the Associated Press by a British officer now in a hospital here presents a vivid picture of the sufferings undergone by the Armenians of whom comparatively little first-hand infromation has hitherto been forthcoming.

Before I got my wound in the fighting up beyond Bagdad I came into contact on several occasions with a highly educated Armenian who had escaped from the Turks and was being employed by us as interpreter. The stories he told of the inhumanities inflicted upon his compatriots were so appalling that I made notes of his conversations and have attempted here to reproduce them in something like his own language so that you can get at the heart of the man and realize what he and all educated Armenians feel. The interpreter was in Constantinople until the end of last year when he was sent to the front with a party of Armenians, several of whom escaped.

The interpreter's story follows:

**Cold Blooded Murder**

"What you have read and heard about Armenia is not a hundredth part of the truth. Dante's Inferno was a heaven compared with the hell that the Turks have made of my country. Something of the awful reality of the past twelve months I have myself seen in passing through on the way to the front.

"At Aleppo there are four factories in which, under the supervision of deported Armenians, two thousand Armenian women are being employed under terrible conditions. The women are all deportees. One of them said to me: 'On a halt during our deportations, I saw a gendarme bury a sick woman alive. Cold blooded murders were every day occurrence. Our guards had orders to kill on the spot any one who lagged behind on the journey. Often several were killed at once, and there was no separate grave for them—the bodies were just thrown into a ditch together and covered. It was all horrible to behold, but our eyes eventually became hardened to the sight.

"Bab, Messguene and Zor are three places never to be forgotten by the Armenians. I have visited them. Do you know what happened there a few months since? By the order of the governor Afiv, nearly one thousand of my brothers were massacred by armed Circarians.

**Deport Children**

"At Bozanti I saw six railway trucks of little Aremnian children being dispatched to 'an unknown destination.' What had these little innocents done to defend? Was it to the mere fact of being alive and being sons and daughters of our thrice unhappy race?

"The German soldiers that one sees around the stations in Armenia are generally of a low type and not far behind the Turks in their disregard for the rights of our people.

**Nothing Sacred to Germans**

"Their cruelty is a little different from that of the Turk, but the difference is only one of kind. The Turk, for example, often respects certain things which I have learned to associate with our religious or racial beliefs; the German has no respect for anything, nothing is too sacred for his profane hands. The German as soon as he arrived here pointed out the educated Armenian as the most dangerous of all and instigated the Turks into organizing a ruthless persecution of the intellectual classes of Armenians. One day they surrounded the offices of the conservative newspaper Asadamard, arrested all the staff and deported them, I know not whither. Will they ever return? Who knows?

**Graves of a Nation**

"One day I walked from a place where thousands of innocent women, girls and children were bivouacked, suffering nameless miseries. I walked away because I could not bear any more to gaze upon them, and I came to a hill where I saw a little child. I was in Turkish uniform. The child came near me and cried in Turkish, 'Give me for God's sake a piece of bread. For five days I have eaten nothing but this.' He pointed to some melon skin that had been left lying on the road. I answered him in Armenian and the poor boy jumped up into my arms, saying, 'Art thou Armenian?' He remained there a minute uttering no other word. But I felt warm tears falling down my cheek.

"The waters of the Euphrates, the sands of the desert of Mesopotamia, are the graves of the whole Armenian nation. I cannot longer weep. My tears have frozen in my eyes."

## Five War Veterans Are Attending Encampment

A. Wilson Black, 139 North Thirteenth street; Harry S. Watson, 1803 North Third street; David Challenger, 64 North Fourteenth street; Thomas Numbers, 1446 Regina street; George N. Shetter, 1504 State street, are representing Post 58, G. A. R., at the national encampment in Boston. They left for Boston last Sunday and are expected to return about Saturday.

N. A. Walmer, of Post 58, G. A. R., has been reappointed post inspector of Dauphin county. This inspection is made every fall.

## Chinese Pirates Try to Seize British Steamer

*By Associated Press*

Amoy, China, Aug. 23. — The British steamer Laertes, bound from Singapore for Amoy, reports a piratical attempt to seize the ship. The Laertes carried 900 Chinese passengers, among them, unknown to the officers, 41 desperadoes who had been deported. These criminals attacked the European officers, but after a hard fight were overpowered by the Europeans with the help of the Chinese crew.

# TIME TO MAKE SAUERKRAUT

## Tremendous Rainfall Results in Enormous Crop of Cabbage; Predict Low Price

Washington, Aug. 23.—Now is the time to make sauerkraut, say officials of the United States department of Agriculture. Tremendous rainfall throughout the country has resulted in an enormous cabbage crop. Nine out of every ten pounds of cabbage is water. Lack of rain last year from $2 and $5 a ton to $100 and $200.

One million dollars' worth of last year's crop of cabbage was made into sauerkraut, but even so there was such a shortage of this valuable food material that the price rose from $3.50 a barrel to $35.

**Indorse Pickling of Foods**

The ancient art of pickling or fermenting food, as a cheap and simple means of preserving it in large quantities, is highly indorsed by the department's experts. On account of the great development of canning industries, this healthful method of food preservation has been lost sight of in recent years in the individual homes, but it now offers a safe and sane method of caring for the perishable products coming onto the market in quantities too great for immediate consumption.

The advantages of this method of food conservation, say the department's officials, are that it is simple, requires little labor, practically no outlay of capital, and takes care of food in larger quantities. The method also lends variety to the home menu. The ferment which develops in the food is thought by some to have a beneficial effect on the health.

**Same Acid in Milk**

It is the same acid that develops in sour milk, which has had such a wide vogue as a healthful beverage. To a certain kind of pickle, fermented by the sauerkraut process, was ascribed the good health of Japanese soldiers during the Russo-Japanese War. Uncle Sam has been quick to appreciate the value of fermented food in the diet of soldiers, and has ordered large quantities of cucumber pickles, sauerkraut, etc. Not only cabbages, cucumbers and beets can be very successfully preserved by this process, but string beans, beet tops, turnip tops and other food materials which would otherwise go to waste.

Fermentation of vegetables is successful either in northern or southern states. Full information will be sent by the department to anyone wishing full details regarding the method.

## University Club Has Many Members in Army

The University club of Harrisburg has been doing its bit in the present war. Inroads have been made into its membership by enlistments and the club is well represented in the various fields of service.

The following members received commissions from Fort Niagara: Jackson Herr Boyd, Alfred S. Ellenberger, J. Harold Fox, George Kunkel, Jr., Richard Robinson, John McIlhenny Smith.

Captain Edward J. Stackpole, Jr., received his commission from Madison barracks and Dr. John L. Good from Fort Benjamin Harrison. W. B. Everhard and J. B. Marshall received commissions as first lieutenants in the Dental Reserve Corps and George Moffitt in the medical corps. The following have gone to Fort Oglethorpe: Earl T. Wrenn and John B. Zink.

## Wilson Discusses Strike Situation With Gompers

*By Associated Press*

Washington, Aug. 23.—The general strike situation throughout the country was discussed to-day at a conference between President Wilson and President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Gompers declined to discuss it further than to say that he had laid "labor's just grievances" before the President and that he had been assured that the rights of labor would be cared for.

Some time ago Mr. Gompers was credited with having expressed the opinion that unless labor had a better representation in handling some of the war problems the no-strike promise made at the beginning of hostilities might not be respected.

## B. M. Baruch, Successful Stock Trader, Sells Seat

*By Associated Press*

New York, Aug. 23.—Bernard M. Baruch, member of the War Industries Board, who for years has been known as one of the most successful stock market traders in Wall street, has sold his seat on the New York Stock Exchange, it became known today.

Mr. Baruch's stock market activities during the period of peace discussion drew the attention of the congressional committee which investigated the "leak" on the President's peace note. He testified that he made several hundred thousand dollars selling short at that time, but denied that he had advance information on the President's note, in which he was supported by other testimony.

**DRAFT CONSPIRATORS HELD**

New York, Aug. 23.—After a hearing in the federal court in Brooklyn to-day Dr. Henry Seligman, assistant physician at exemption board 52, and Lazarus Jacobson, an insurance agent, charged with conspiracy to obstruct the working of the selective draft law, were held in $5,000 bail each for trial on September 10.

# *FORTY FRENCH DRAGOONS WIPE OUT MANY GERMANS*

French Front—Forty French cavalrymen were the heroes of one of the most brilliant feat of arms which stands out by itself among the innumerable stories of heroic deeds of this war during the German attack on June 20 on the French positions around the Mort Homme, to the northwest of Verdun. These few men, who were in charge of a sharp salient whose point stuck far into the German position, not only held out against half a battalion of the famous German shock troops supported by flame projectors, grenades and machine guns, as well as by only of the most intense artillery bombardment ever accomplished, beat them back after inflicting on them heavy losses.

The German attack, preceded by a bombardment, in which more than five hundred of their cannon rained shells on the French positions along a front of only about 1,800 yards, was led by the model battalion of German shock troops headed by Captain Roehr, the inventor of the new system of selecting special troops to make sudden strong rushes on the opposing positions. These shock troops, while their comrades were attacking the other part of the French line, came forward with an impetuous rush on to the little salient held by the forty dragoons, since it was most important for the Germans to take that point if their attack was to be completely successful.

The dragoons comprised two sergeants, four corporals and thirty-four privates. They could see the enemy approaching rapidly. Three squads of pioneers led the way, each equipped with a flame projector throwing burning liquid before them as they advanced. Behind them in the intervals could be seen three squads of hand grenade throwers and still further in the rear a wave of ordinary infantrymen carrying besides their rifles with fixed bayonets, spades for the purpose of organizing the French positions after they had captured it. Other lines could be seen dimly in the distance carrying sandbags and ammunition supplies.

This overwhelming force did not affect the nerves of the dragoons, who belonged to the determined Breton race. One of their sergeants took command.

Their rifles spoke out with rapid fire and their portable machine gun worked unceasingly.

It took three hours to make 200 yards and by that time the dragoons had reached the opening to a communication trench leading to the rear. Here they decided to form a redoubt and make their last stand.

Just then the sergeant in charge of the dragoons noticed a relaxation in the German attack. He gathered all his remaining men together, made a dash forward and in less than half an hour had reconquered the entire salient and had taken four prisoners.

The roll call showed that only twenty of the dragoons had escaped wounds or death. They had accounted during the fight for two full companies of Germans and had retained the salient which had been entrusted to their charge.

## Reported Plans of U. S. to Regulate Price Is Cause of Price Drop

*By Associated Press*

New York, Aug. 23.—All classes of stocks dropped in the stock market to-day in the early trading, the decline being attributed to reports of plans on the part of the national government to regulate the prices of leading commodities.

War shares lost 1 to 3 points and prices for all other active issues indicated renewed liquidation and short selling. U. S. Steel was sold in large amounts during the first hour down to 119, an overnight loss of 1⅝. Other stocks sold off 1 to 2 points.

Coalers were again depressed, at declines of 1 to 2½ points, while coppers, tobaccos and other issues lost 1 to 6 points. Shippings showed reversals of 1½ to 2½ and petroleum, as represented by Texas Company, lost several points.

## Arrested Here on Charge of Bigamy

Charged with bigamy by Buelah M. Johnston, of Bellefonte, Ross Dickey, who gave his address as 311 Hamilton street, was arrested this afternoon. The police claim he has a wife and baby in this city. The Bellefonte woman says he married her in June. He will be taken there by the police tomorrow.

**D. M. BOWERS IS DEAD**

David M. Bowers, aged 64, died at his home, 631 Peffer street, yesterday. Funeral services will be held to-morrow afternoon at 1.30 o'clock from the parlors of the Hawkins Estate, 1207 North Third street. The Rev. H. S. Hershey, of the Green Street Church of God, will officiate. Burial will be made in the East Harrisburg Cemetery.

## *To Be Chief of Staff of "Rainbow Division"*

MAJ. DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

Major Douglas MacArthur, former army press censor, who has been selected as chief of staff to Major General William A. Mann, who will command the "Rainbow Division" of American troops, composed of National Guard units, which soon will be sent to France. Major MacArthur, besides being an able officer, is one of the most popular of the younger officers of the army. While ocupying the position of press censor he did what few censors have ever been abel to do—he retained the friendship of the newspaper men.

## *Commands Negro Regiment*

COL. WILLIAM HAYWARD

Colonel William Hayward, of New York City and Nebraska, is the commander of the Negro regiment of New York militia, the Fifteenth, which is ready for war. Colonel Hayward believes his black troops will make as good a showing when they go to France as any regiment in the service, and he believes every man is anxious to go.

## Drafting of State Policemen Raises New Conscription Problem

Drafting of state policemen by local boards has raised a new problem for the State government under the conscription act and according to the latest statement obtainable at the State Capiol the matter is one for local boards to handle.

A few days ago one of the men at headquarters of one of the troops was drafted and after being accepted was ordered into a mobilization camp and this week a local board at Paxtang, Dauphin county, drafted another. Provost Marshal General Crowder has ruled that exemption of state policemen is a matter for local boards, but some of the members of the local boards think the question should go to district boards.

The State Police Department recently gave three of its men to the United States Department of Justice to handle finger prints and has been co-operating with the Post Office, Navy and Justice Departments in rooting out illegal wireless plants and rounding up suspicious aliens.

## *French Gain Objective to North of Verdun*

*By Associated Press*

Paris, Aug. 23.—The French objective north of Verdun appeared to have been attained. If the offensive were continued fresh artillery preparation would be necessary.

The German counterattacks yesterday against dominant positions such as Dead Man's Hill and Hill 344 proved to be costly failures, leaving the French masters of the points they held before the beginning of the great battle of Verdun last year with the exception of Hill 304, which as yet is in the enemy's hands.

Those who believe in the theory that cannonfire brings on rain, always refer to the offensives of the allies in support of their contention, as they have frequently been hampered by downpours after a day or two of fighting. In the present instance, however, their argument has failed. Although the firing on the Verdun front has never been equalled, there has been no rain since Friday.

A projectile fired by a French battery which was silencing batteries struck a depot of asphyxiating gas. It burst, silencing three batteries.

German prisoners express envious admiration of the French artillery fire. "No troops could have got through your barrages," said one.

## New Boys' Work Head to Come Here Sept. 15

ARCH H. DINSMORE

Arch H. Dinsmore, who was recently elected boys' work secretary of the Harrisburg Y. M. C. A., will assume his new duties at the local association about September 15.

Mr. Dinsmore comes to this city highly recommended, having years of experience with boys' work in western cities. The second floor of the Y. M. C. A. will be turned over to the new boys' department, and additional equipment purchased.

## *British Weakness in Air Is Scored by the Manchester Guardian*

*By Associated Press*

London, Aug. 23.—The Manchester Guardian expresses great dissatisfaction over what it terms weakness in the air and says that Great Britain's position should be such that an invasion of the United Kingdom by air would be as impossible as on the water on the surface.

"The air service," the newspaper continues "comes into conflict with two great vested interests, that of the Army and of the Navy, who are both conceded to push their own solutions of military difficulties and regard the newcomer—air powers—with a certain degree of jealousy. It must be put at the service of the nation and above any mere detrimental subordinations.

"Until the air ministry becomes a separate department of state, equal to the war office and the admiralty, we shall never realize all the value that is to be got out of it. As well subordinate the Navy to the Army as the air service to either."

**COLGATE IN FIELD**

Seagirt, N. J., Aug. 23.—The candidacy of Austen Colgate, well-known Jersey City manufacturer, for the United States Senate was announced to-day at the annual summer meeting here of the New Jersey staet Republican committee. Mr. Colgate is a former state senator.

**HOPE TO AVERT STRIKE**

Birmingham, Ala., Aug. 23.—Conferences seeking to avert the threatened strike of 28,000 soft coal miners were begun here to-day by Secretary Wilson, of the Department of Labor, with operators and workers.

**NEWTON NOMINATED**

Washington, Aug. 23.—James T. Newton, of Georgia, was nominated to-day by President Wilson as Commissios of Patents.

**DIES FROM COMPLICATION**

John Quann, aged 28, 103 Cherry street, died at the Harrisburg Hospital from complications. He is survived by a wife and two children.

## *Adjutant General of U. S. A.*

General Henry P. McCain is Adjutant General of the United States Army with headquarters at Washington. With the increase of the Army to more than a quarter of a million he is a much busier man than were those who held the same place in years past.

# MUCH NEGLECTED COMMANDMENT

## Whisper of Evil Often Grows and Ruins a Reputation

Beatrice Fairfax

A very much-neglected commandment tucked away between others, which seems vastly more important, is the ninth: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

And yet people who entertain themselves with gossip and scandal would be rather startled to find that they are set down on the Books of Law in very close juxtaposition to those who kill and steal. Of course, the commandments have gone a little out of style—honoring your father and your mother and remembering the Sabbath Day to keep it holy and omitting to swear, do not seem to have the hold they once had. However, a few old-fashioned people think about these things nowadays; and I have never denied my old-fashioned tendency.

The ninth commandment is a particular favorite of mine. Sometimes I think that it almost takes in the sixth and the eighth and paves the way for the tenth! If you don't happen to see the application, I suggest you go read those ten very excellent and interesting documents. Whether you regard them as inspired and God-given as not, you will have to acknowledge that they have lasted longer than most literary products. Behold them triumphantly outwearing several hundred of millions of generations of best sellers!

Bearing false witness against your neighbor is not a matter of standing up in court and giving testimony which may steal his reputation, his fortune, his happiness or even his life itself. That is the melodramatic last ugly possibility at which breakers of the ninth commandment may arrive. But along the road which leads to public and sworn and malicious false testimony there are miles and miles of sinister possibilities.

**An Evil Growth**

A whisper of evil often manages to grow into a veritable thunder storm of cruel ugliness. An unkind suggestion may be the beginning of destroying a reputation, for unkind suggestions are fertile seeds when they fall into the ground of human imagination.

A few years ago a rather conspicuously golden-haired young woman came to a summer resort where I was visiting. She held herself somewhat aloof from the guests, and her quiet dignity suggested nothing more to me than well-bred desire to be alone with her thoughts and plans until such time as she found her friends worth having. One afternoon I was sitting with a group of seven women, who began discussing the unknown.

Said the first: "There's something rather odd about her. I wonder why she's so exclusive. Do you suppose she doesn't think any of us good enough for her?"

That suggestion inspired the second, who went a bit further. 'She's a bold-looking woman. I don't think we're exactly her style. Wait until the men come down for the weekend. I'll wager she'll put herself out a bit then."

The third ventured a bit further. "She looks like that sort of woman. But there may be one particular man—perhaps that's why she's so exclusive."

With a sneer in her voice the fourth jabbed her embroidery needle a bit deeper into the human fabric we women were shading with stitches of unconscious cruelty—and rather high coloring: "Of, course. She's a notorious woman. You can see that."

The fifth laughed sardonically: "I think she's that horrible Mrs. Xavier for whom young Wilton killed himself a few years ago, after his wife had divorced him on her account. She murdered that man as surely as if she had shot him, and now they say she has Jimmy Hargrave in her toils. That will just about kill his mother, for I hear he's gong the pace, and in his position he might easily enough actually embezzle the funds of his trust company for her. Oh, she's a horrible woman, X——, I recognize her from her photograph."

"Here she comes now," said the sixth, "and she's smiling at one of us. I don't propose to sit here and be contaminated by her society."

All the women in the group were infinitely older than I, but I could not refrain from telling them a bit of what was going on in my mind "You don't know one thing about that woman except that she bears a chance resemblance to an old newspaper photograph. And you sit there serenely destroying her reputation because you resent her exclusiveness and her mystery. I don't see how you dare sit there and kill another woman's good name. I think she is smiling at me, and I'm going straight up to her and talk with her."

There was a chorus of excited exclamations. I am not going to insist that my motives were entirely beautiful and noble. I was not afraid of anything those gossips might say, and they had fairly goaded me into a desire to show them how worthless I considered their fevered and ugly imaginings.

So I walked over and said, "Good afternoon," and was met with a cordial request that I sit down and chat. "I've been wanting to get you alone for a little talk, but you're always surrounded by a crowd of people," said the unknown, "and I really have had no time for people. However, by next week, I hope to be free, and then you must introduce all your friends. I simply must finish the last chapters of my book by next Wednesday. Publishers are so insistent. I'm incognito just now—Mrs. Smith, you know, on the register. But I rather thought you would know me."

And the "notorious woman" revealed herself; she was one of America's half dozen really noted writers.

And that is gossip!

Breaking the ninth commandment cannot hurt a woman of assailable position as it can a timid and shrinking wife, an unprotected young girl, a lonely old woman, a middle-aged man who is struggling against the tide—but there is no one whose life does not hold the possibility of being wrecked by gossip and slander.

Homes have been broken up, fortunes swept away, men have actually been driven to suicide and women have become outcasts and pariahs because the world has neglected the importance of keeping the ninth commandment!

"Stupid people talk about people, moderately clever people talk about things and real intellectuals talk about ideas," says some cynic. Well—if your respect for the commandments is modern—and zero—surely cynicism is your fetish. Are you willing to be called one of the stupid people to talk about people?

Malice and deliberate lying are not in all of us—but whenever we begin discussing people, that old childish desire to "show off" takes possession of us. We want to seem well informed, wise, on "the inside of things;" and so we take ideas and suspicions and hints and suggestions and weave them into a fabric which is a very poison garment.

"Thout shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." How dare any of us satisfy our desire to appear well informed, or clever or cynical, or worldly-wise at the expense of another human being's reputation.

## *GOSH, HOW MR. WAD DOES LOVE HIS LEADING M AN* -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- *By GALE*