

WHY PATRIOTIC SINGING SOCIETY WAS ORGANIZED

The Singing Soldier Makes Best Contented Fighting Man

One thing we must have to hold in our hearts: the true picture of the boys on the transport Tuscania when the fatal hour came. Discipline was their ally, but what songs did they sing? In general terms the New York Globe speaks of our soldiers as "singing the battery of freedom," and one wonders if by some instinct the refrain from old Civil War days welled up in "Hurrah, hurrah, we bring the jubilee," putting in the background the syncopations of "Over There." Whatever it was, we can trust the Globe's words that "the spirit of America was in the songs that came from the sinking ship, rather than in imprecations against the foe that strikes in the dark and wrecks his fury on women and children."

The songs that rose from the flooding decks of the Tuscania are etched in the hearts of the hundred million Americans, cheering them on to redoubled effort. Not in hymns of hate shall our feelings and expressions of our own threats. Not in cries for vengeance. But as we, too, begin to feel the wounds of the treacherous enemy of mankind the song that rose to the lips of our sons facing death shall swell our hearts with the love of honor, of liberty, of justice that alone makes war glorious, that dispels all doubts, that makes us possessors dear to us only for what they count in the battle for victory.

"Over the crushed bodies of our soldiers dashed upon the rocks of the Irish coast we consecrate all that we are, all that we have, to the cause of man for which our fathers raised the standard, our armies fight under in France. Of those that have fallen as men fall it is our part to be worthy. Cheering each other, they went to their deaths; cheering each other, we must bear their deaths, and, counting not the cost, so serve that their deaths may not be in vain. Unhastily, unskillfully, we took up the burden laid upon us. Unnervously, unconfidently, we must carry it, determined only that we will fight as those fight that know their strength and the justice of their quarrel."

"They sang of America, those that bore our colors upon the water that engulfed them. So let us that stand upon the shores take up their songs, so let us still live to honor them that have fallen, and to carry on cheerfully, wisely, thoroughly, the struggle in which ungrudgingly they gave their lives."

"The singing of the army will be one of the inspiring chapters in the history of the war. Changes have already come about. The British Army is less of a singing force than it was in the early days. There is not so much singing of route songs, says E. B. Osborn, in The Illustrated London News, as there used to be when the troops were being moved up into the forward sections of the fighting-zone. The officer who receives information insists that this change does not mean that the fine edge of morale has been blunted. But changes of personnel have come over the Army."

"The men are as good as ever they were—better, perhaps, now that even the conscripted recruits are becoming war veterans and the iron determination of the whole great brotherhood is tempered to steel. But it was the 'Tommy' of the old Army—who is now no more and the Reservists who were so fond of singing and whistling when on the road or in billets as to surprise even the gay, gallant politicians who inherited such a store of quaint marching chants—many of them closely resembling the counting-out rhymes used in children's games. The Territorials who had had camp holidays were also a tuneful race."

"But the multitudes that arrived here on, taken out of industrial occupations which were always being speeded up, had been worked too hard all their lives to acquire the habit of open-air singing. The modern factory or warehouse or shop has no use for chants; the wheels of our vast industrial mechanism have not ground out a single joyous folk-song. The successors of the Territorials only knew the choruses of a few popular musical songs; and their junior officers—the majorly men accustomed to the silent, engrossing toil of all of business life—could teach them nothing better, as a rule. Such officers and men look on war as a business rather than as a game—and there can be no doubt that their point of view makes for a higher degree of efficiency in the end. The picturesque side of warfare has vanished forever; the late Ivor Campbell (that new Stevenson in becoming who fell on the road to Kut, after serving in France with his fellow clansmen) speaks the salutary truth when he defined modern war as 'organized boredom,' and he felt its incessant drudgery in his own bones. So the men of the New Armies will march on, regardless of hours and miles—just as they walked aforetime to the dour day's work through the dim, echoing streets of still-slumbering industrial cities."

Considered aright, their grim silence is that of some tremendous machine which is running smoothly and achieving its purpose without any fuss at all.

The defect might be remedied, Mr. Osborn points out, and since "singing breeds cheerfulness," it is suggested that the men of the new armies be provided with suitable song-books.

"The book which would be most useful to them would contain, in the first place, the words of the old familiar tunes that have survived many of the wittily popular music-hall ditties. The British workman turned soldier is curiously conscientious in this matter, and quite unlike the concert-singers, who think more of tune and tone than of the human significance of a song; he will not open his mouth if he does not do so by heart. If he comes from Scotland or Wales, he almost always knows the words time has wedded to his inherited melodies. That is why Scottish and Welsh regiments are so much better

able to sing their songs to a finish than English soldiers. With the latter, the first verse of 'Annie Laurie' (the greatest favorite of all), or 'Suwaha River,' or 'Clementine' (revived in compliment to American comrades), is apt to go well enough; but is almost sure to be followed by a gradual dwindling of sound, until at the end, perhaps, no more than half-a-dozen are really singing, the others being reduced to absolute silence or a hesitating bumbling as of a bluebottle in a window-pane. The song-book required should therefore contain, to begin with, the words of twenty or thirty favorite old songs—it would be easy enough to make a suitable list. Then would follow a few of the good music-hall songs (words only) which have survived their vogue on the barrel-organ. 'Tipperary' would have to be included, though it was never so much sung in the Army as most people—among them our French and American friends, and enemy musical critics in Germany—have been taught to believe. 'Daisy' and 'The

Honeysuckle and the Bee' (the latter a pretty tune with a touch of the folk-song spirit), and others that are still well remembered, ought not to be left out. Next would come a small selection of the beautiful folk-songs collected by Mr. Cecil Sharp and others. Last would be included a liberal selection of the parodies, marching songs and 'ragging' ditties which have been collected in Lieut. F. T. Nettleingham's 'Tommy's Tunes'—the most previous of all war-anthologies. If the War Office had a little more imaginative insight the soldiers' song-book I have in mind would already be a part of every soldier's equipment.—Literary Digest.

INDIANS TO ENLIST
Following a visit to Carlisle yesterday, members of the Harrisburg recruiting staff, who were guests of honor at a dinner there yesterday, reported that they have secured the promises of a number of the Indians to enlist on completion of the school year. The recruiting staff was royally treated at the Indian school.

People's Forum to Hold Great Public Meeting
The aggressive campaign for better education of the colored race which was launched this week by the People's Forum at the enthusiastic meeting addressed by Governor Brumbaugh, Dr. Nathan Schaeffer and other students of education will be continued on Sunday afternoon next in the hall of the House of Representatives, where the principal speaker will be W. H. Lewis, a colored attorney of Boston, of nationwide reputation.
Mr. Lewis is probably the most capable colored lawyer in the country, giving valuable services under President Taft as Assistant Attorney General. The meeting will be called to order at 3 p. m.
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PLAN 15-MINUTE SPEAKERS
Within the next future fifteen-minute speakers will likely address all meetings of fraternal and labor organizations if plans now being worked out by Francis C. Menamin, publicity director for lodges and fraternities, materialize. The plan is for regularly authorized speakers to address the lodge members at their meeting, as a means of spreading facts concerning the war that should be known by the people. The propaganda is also suggested as a means of offsetting the German propaganda now rife in this country.
DR. REED TO SPEAK
Dr. George Edward Reed will address the men's mass meeting in Falmestock Hall, Sunday afternoon, on the subject, "Playing the Game." Dr. Reed was formerly president of Dickinson College. The meeting will open at 3.30 o'clock. Meredith Germer, a local musician, will play several trombone solos.

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