

# HEADING OFF HOMESICKNESS IS IMPORTANT JOB WITH THE ARMY

Work of the Y. M. C. A. is Not So Much With the Morals of the Men as With the Morale—How the Bishop Broke Up Case of Blues—Son of Idle Rich Finds His Job—Pershing's Men a Fine, Clean Bunch.

By CLARENCE B. HOLLAND.

Bill Jones and Jack Stevens, late of the United States but now of "somewhere in France," sat on a bench. They just sat. They didn't talk, they didn't smoke, they didn't cuss. You could reach out your finger and touch the gloom that exuded from them. They weren't bunkies or townmates or intimates of any sort, but they had both gotten up with a gloom and had inevitably sought each other out. It was just before mess call.

A little man with a wrinkled face and a cane and a uniform and eyes that twinkled, watched John and Bill at their occupation of being homesick, and he sidled up to them. Pretty soon he was sitting on an end of their bench—and they didn't notice him any more than if he had been an extra coodle.

"The —th have got the best ball team in France," he said positively, apropos of nothing.

"Huh," said Bill Jones.

"They can clean up anything in France. I've been down there a week, and that outfit is class."

"Huh," said Jack Stevens.

"Officers keep 'em busy. Say, where you from?"

"Michigann," said Bill.

"New York," said Jack.

"Met some New York and Michigan men with the —th," said the little man casually.

"Who?" said Bill and Jack at once.

The little man named half a dozen, with their towns. Bill knew some and Jack knew some, and before they realized it they were in the middle of a conversation about Detroit and Utica and Lansing and Long Island, and politics and the —th regiment.

"Mess call," said the little man.

"Ain't hungry," said Bill.

"Don't want to eat," said Jack.

Dispelling the Gloom.

"Reminds me of Tom Judkins of Pontiac," said the little man. "Always getting off his feed. Know Pontiac?" he asked of the Michigan man.

"Played football there."

"Judkins used to play."

"What year?"

"About fourteen."

"Bet I played against him."

And so on and so on, talking about the home localities and the home folks and giving the boys a chance to mention towns and streets that lay close to their hearts. You could see their eyes brighten; you could feel a difference in the air that surrounded them.

Bill stood up.

"Guess I'll go feed," he said, and banged Jack on the back.

"Pretty hungry myself," said Jack.

"Gimme a light before you go," said the little man, without enthusiasm.

One of the boys held a match over his pipe and then both strolled off to the mess tent with a bad case of homesickness operated on skillfully and removed without pain—removed by a man they had never seen before, but who would always find a welcome in their locality thereafter—just why, they would never be able to tell you. . . . And they didn't know, nor would it have mattered if they had, that the little man in uniform, wearing a Red Triangle, was that imposing and awe-inspiring dignitary known as Bishop of the Church of England back in America.

That's his job in France, just talking to the fellows. He has put in months at it. Sometimes of a Sunday, or in the evening he preaches, but mostly he just wanders around looking for cases of gloom, and homesickness and talking them back to the cheerfulness and enthusiasm which is the quality that is almost the outstanding characteristic of the A. E. F. in France.

Important Job With Army.

Curing or heading off homesickness is an important job in an army three thousand miles from home. Officers, from the new second lieutenant up, will tell us that an army which sits on benches and bottles up gloom is not an army that will fight. They say any man is liable to an attack, but they say, too, that the number and violence of attacks is amazingly few when one considers the circumstances.

Judge Galloway of New York said the other night, "The job of the Y. M. C. A. here is not so much with the morals of the army as with the morale."

The Judge claims to know. For months he has been traveling around France from camp to camp, night after night, almost without rest or relief, talking to the boys about France. His job has been to interest the fellows in the country where they are guests—and welcome guests.

The army declares that the "Y" has bitten off a large contract. Officer after officer whom you meet on the streets of Paris will tell you how important he believes the "Y" is to the effectiveness of our military—and then he will point out where the "Y" is falling down in his estimation. Almost everybody you meet can tell you where the "Y" or the commissary or the Red Cross or this, that and the other, is falling down. In this country you have to earn praise, and to earn it you have to work for it.

For instance, a part of the service

which the "Y" performs for the army is running those country stores which pass under the noms de guerre of post exchanges and canteens. Here is a fertile field for criticism, sporadic and local and individual criticism, but criticism which must be answered before the highest efficiency can be reached.

Then Bill Gets Sore.

Bill Jones goes to his quartermaster and buys a package of cigarettes. He pays for it less than he paid in America. Next morning he drops into a "Y" canteen and buys the same sort of cigarettes. He pays a trifle more for it than he would pay in America, and he is sore. Not only is he sore, but he exerts the fine old American privilege of kicking about it and of airing his soreness. The burden of his complaint is that the "Y" is trying to make money off him.

The investigator hears of it and asks the reason why this should be so. The "Y" purchasing department tells you that the army commissary department transports supplies to its posts free of charge. It pays no freight on steamers from America; it pays no cartage or truckage in France. That huge item of cost does not enter into commissariat considerations. This cannot be so with the Y. M. C. A. It has to pay for freighting its commodities across the ocean, and freight rates are not on the bargain counter at this writing. It has to pay railroad freight in France; it has to pay for its motor transport. The wonder is, we are told, that chocolate, or cigarettes, or handkerchiefs or what not can be had as cheaply here as they are had. The regrettable point is that "Y" canteens have to enter into competition with commissariats which possess all the advantage.

The commissariats cannot begin to supply the demand. The "Y" canteens are a necessity. Both are selling at the figure which to each is the lowest possible, so when your son writes home and tells you it looks as if he were being stung by the "Y" canteen, just think it over, and you will see.

Personality That Counts.

Then it comes to the matter of the personality of the man who is running the canteen. There are men in France who have the ability to get so close to the soldiers that when they say, "Jack, this is the fact. We've got to do it so because—" Jack believes him and is satisfied, because Jack knows that man is on the spot to do everything in his power for the soldier.

But there are exceptions, and there must be exceptions when thousands of men are picked hurriedly for emergency employment. Men land in France without fully understanding what is expected of them, and without understanding France or that splendid organization, the A. E. F. They come with enthusiasm, but without definite knowledge of what the army wants of them, and until they adjust themselves to conditions, they are apt to come to much grief.

One thing few men realize until they have been here a week or two, and that is that they are an integral part of the A. E. F. and that they are working under the authority of the military—not as they suspected, on their own hook or for the Y. M. C. A. Their job is to do as they are told, and to do it quickly and exactly. That they can learn, and do learn, or they hear the approaching footsteps of grim retribution. Most of them learn more—they learn what real service means. They learn to forget their own egos and to love humanity as exemplified by an army of bully young men in khaki.

Hundreds of men are landing here monthly to take up some service under the Red Triangle. They are of all sorts and of all environments. It approaches the marvelous how they are made to fit. Preachers have arrived filled with ardor to evangelize. They find their true service can best be done by driving a motor truck. Bankers come and speedily find out that they can do the best job getting up entertainments in some lonely hut.

Finds His Job.

One rich and useless bachelor struck these shores filled with the desire to do something, but alarmed at his poverty of abilities.

"Can you preach?" he was asked.

"No."

"Can you sing?"

"No."

"Can you run a motor car?"

"No."

"What can you do?"

"Nothing that I know of. I'm just one of the idle rich."

"Go out and fuss around a few days and then come back," he was told.

That night he met up with a western sergeant who was in Paris to see the town, and who had started to view the sights through the bottom of a glass. He was half seas over and ambitious to be submerged. The member of the Idle Rich inveigled him into conversation, furnished him cigarettes and a light. Pretty soon, by sheer personality, he persuaded the man to go to bed without finishing off his evening artistically. In the morning the sergeant came around and cornered the Idle Rich Man.

"Bo," said he, "you done me a

favor last night. I was bound for a trip to In Bad. Any time you want anything of me, just drop around."

The Idle Rich young man made tracks for headquarters.

"I've found my job," he said. "I can make friends with men."

"Go to it," were his orders, and he went to it. Now he is somewhere recuperating because he wore himself out working for his boys.

This has been about men up to date. Now there are men in America who think women should not be sent to work with the A. E. F. in France; among those who have seen what is going on, there are few of them.

Did you ever step into a big, bare, ill furnished room—may be an uncomfortable room—and suddenly see on the wall a beautiful picture, or on a shelf a wonderful piece of old china? That little object immediately made that cold, uninteresting room a place where you desired to be. And that's how it is with the right kind of woman in a canteen in France. All she has to do is to be there, be natural, be impersonal, and she has men's of a hundred men better fighters for democracy.

Best of Chaperons.

One big thing that must be impressed on folks back home is that these women are safe—safer than in their own home town. A woman in a canteen has a whole regiment who make it their job to look after her. There never was an old maid aunt who could chaperon a young woman the way a regiment of Yanks can do it. Somehow she represents so much to them. She is not a girl but a symbol. She means to them all they left behind in their homes.

One important point to remember back home is that the A. E. F. is the finest, most upstanding, two-fisted aggregation of regular men that the world has ever seen in an army. A few—fortunately very few—have the idea that our army is surrounded by depravity. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The army is proud of itself and rejects imputations against its decency. Officers resent it and men resent it. A captain in the regular establishment said the other day: "Every mother in America ought to know that her son is safer in our army than he ever was at home." Which was not more than bare truth.

Laboratory Aboard A Hospital Ship

Official pictures of the army have been abundant, but the navy seems to have been overlooked. The first of official naval pictures are now being released. This one shows a laboratory aboard the hospital ship Mercy, in American waters. Here experiments are made by chemists, and their findings have proved of value.

There were some smaller shells containing phosgene, a gas used very extensively, and others filled with a new gas used by the Germans. This is not poisonous but is calculated to pave the way for a genuine gas attack. The little shells contain a quantity of the chemical, which is in powdered form and a surrounding layer of TNT which causes an explosion which suggests shrapnel and high explosives instead of gas. The powder is widely spread and is intended to irritate the membranes of the throat and nose just enough to cause the person reached by it to sneeze. When he begins to do this the supposition is that he will remove his gas mask and on the theory that he will do so the apparently harmless powder shells are followed by a blast of mustard gas or phosgene.

Working on New Gases.

"Suppose," I asked one of the distinguished experts, "a gas shell should explode in a city street on a perfectly still day, how far would the fumes penetrate and how long would they take to cover a given area?"

The expert opened a jar containing about a quart of dark liquid. When the air touched it a white smoke arose slowly. The expert blew this softly into the room and it settled with about the speed of a ring of smoke from a fragrant cigar.

"That's about the way the gas would travel if the air were perfectly still. One shell probably would cover an area 50 feet in circumference and the gas would remain for a half hour or more."

Shells gathered by the Americans show that the Germans are constantly working on new gases. This, coupled with the statements made by German prisoners, indicate that the German believes gas will be the biggest weapon to hasten the end of the war.

No gas bombs have yet been dropped by either side to the war. Not long ago some small rubber balloons were found after a German airplane had passed and they were thought to have contained a poisonous gas. This is found to have been untrue. The balloons were filled with ordinary gas and were used for meteorological purposes.

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Subscribed for the news

# GAS IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN WAR

Chemists Are Constantly Studying New Fumes.

## STARTED BY BRUTAL HUNS

Forces Rest of World to Enter Upon Cold, Calculating, Merciless Work of Human Destruction—Germany Believes Gas Will Be the Biggest and Most Effective Weapon to Hasten the End of the War.

On a table in a large room in which were several American officers—until recently professors of chemistry and noted scientists connected with prominent American corporations—were several shells, jars of liquid, small containers filled with powder and every imaginable thing connected with the business of "killing and safeguarding with and against gas attacks." For gas has become the big element of warfare and there is no telling how gigantic it may be before the war comes to an end.

To sit with these experts in killing and listen to their simple statements about the possibilities of destruction, and at the same time to know them as men of finest sensibilities and humane impulses, is a sort of grim revelation of the terrible nature of this war and the appalling transformation that is overcoming at least a part of humanity. Of course everyone knows that Germany started the use of gas. She has specialized in the use of gases of most deadly character. She has perfected methods of spreading these ghastly fumes where soldiers cannot escape, but must stand or sit and face death in gas masks. But she has forced the rest of the world, as a means of self-protection, to enter upon this cold, calculating, merciless work of human destruction. Without revealing any information not already known to the Hun, it may be stated that Germany realizes that if she insists upon carrying on her war with gas she will be met with the spirit of a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye, and it is not unlikely that it may be two for one.

Huge Gas Dud.

One of the big projectiles on the desk in the room referred to was a gas dud—a shell which did not explode. It was one of 500 which were hurled simultaneously into the American lines. The projectile is 9 inches in diameter, about 18 inches long, weighs about 75 pounds and has a rather blunt nose. It contains about two gallons of the deadly phosgene gas.

"Isn't it a rather dangerous thing to keep around as an office pet?" I asked.

"We took the fuse out. It's quite harmless," was the reply.

This dud is hurled by the mine-throwers. The Germans have a system of attaching a long string of these weapons so that they are fired with the touch of a button. This chorus firing is continued for perhaps 15 minutes and sends a veritable shower of the big projectiles into the selected spot and releases a great quantity of the deadly gas. If the range is right and the wind at all favorable the result is likely to be serious. The fumes are shot out with terrific speed over a small area by the explosion of the shell.

There were some smaller shells containing phosgene, a gas used very extensively, and others filled with a new gas used by the Germans. This is not poisonous but is calculated to pave the way for a genuine gas attack. The little shells contain a quantity of the chemical, which is in powdered form and a surrounding layer of TNT which causes an explosion which suggests shrapnel and high explosives instead of gas. The powder is widely spread and is intended to irritate the membranes of the throat and nose just enough to cause the person reached by it to sneeze. When he begins to do this the supposition is that he will remove his gas mask and on the theory that he will do so the apparently harmless powder shells are followed by a blast of mustard gas or phosgene.

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# PLAYS THE ROLE OF LADY OF CAMELLIAS



When the civil war broke out in 1861 there marched away from Richmond, Va., a company of young men who cast their fortunes with the North. As they left the capital of the Confederacy, a young belle in crinolines bestowed upon each of them a bouquet of camellias. The blossoms of the shrub were given as a sort of good luck token and each soldier was cautioned not to part with the flowers but to keep them always about their person. The girl was known there as the "Lady of the Camellias."

Years later, when the North and the South united in the fight against Spanish misrule in Cuba, the daughter of the first "Lady of the Camellias" gave to each soldier who left Richmond a bouquet of the flowers for good luck. Today, from the same old-fashioned camellia garden, the third representative of the family, Hepzibah E. Kendrick is bestowing sprays of the camellia to the soldiers from her native city, with the same "good luck" wish. The present "Lady of the Camellias" also presents a copy of her American battlecry set to the tune of "Dixie."

## CHEER AS U. S. ENGINE DRAWS FRENCH TRAIN

Whistle of Locomotive Sounds Like "Home, Sweet Home" to American Fighters.

One of the things that gets deeply into a doughboy's blood is the whistle of a good old American locomotive in France, and the clang of its bell.

It sounds like home. The American locomotives are big, husky ones, making the French engines look like toys.

When the first American locomotives arrived in France, the natives were astonished at the deep-toned bells and whistles. French locomotives have a "tooter" on them resembling an enlarged peanut-wagon whistle, say the doughboys, and there is no bell at all. The Americans contend that the shrill French whistle is too screechy and effeminate.

A truckload of doughboys was bouncing over the road near a wood, from which a railroad emerged, in the vicinity of Verdun. Suddenly there came a deep-toned blast of a locomotive from the woods, followed by the panting chug that reminded you of a train going over the Rockies.

"Sounds like an American locomotive, surer than thunder!" shouted one of the doughboys; "you could tell that noise a mile away. Let's stop until it comes out of the wood."

"We're liable to get shelled here," said the truck driver, "but if you fellows are game, I am. I'd take a chance on shells any day to see a Baldwin locomotive go by, with a good old American puff and chug and whistle."

The group insisted on stopping, and the locomotive, hauling a host of tiny French freight cars, came puffing out into cheers, and more doughboys running the engine replied with a full-steam resounding whistle that echoed clear into Germany.

"I can die happy now!" said one of the doughboys, as the truck moved on toward the front, after the husky American locomotive had been watched out of sight.

## ASKED FOR PRIVATE BROWN

Twelve of Him of All Sizes and Complexions Respond.

Whisking into the office of Capt. Monroe T. Simpson of the camp quartermaster department at Camp Fremont, the young person announced that she wanted to see Private Brown.

"Certainly," said Captain Simpson, ready to oblige. Turning to the telephone he called the top sergeant.

"Send Private Brown over here," the captain instructed.

"But—" objected the top sergeant.

"Yes, I know," replied Captain Simpson. "Send all of him."

And a few minutes later some ten or twelve Privates Brown, of all heights and complexions, filed into the office. Whereupon the young person

# BRING CHEER TO FRENCH PEOPLE

Coming of Americans is Hailed With Joy.

## GIVE AID TO THE STARVING

Story by Y. M. C. A. Man Tells of How the Arrival of Troops From the United States Has Drought Comfort to the Stricken People—Division Plays Raven to Elijah of Family of Starving French People.

How a division of American soldiers in France played raven to the Elijah of a family of starving French refugees, found covering in the attic of an old meat market, and how Elijah, in turn, made the ravens comfortable, is told in this story, written by a Y. M. C. A. man in France:

"A division of our troops was on the move. For 38 hours the men had been on the cars. Then they had de-trained, and started to hike for the front. Two days of marching had left them stiff and tired.

"The Y. M. C. A. men had gone ahead of them. They knew that the troops would be in a certain village by a certain time. So they loaded three big trucks with canteen supplies, hustled to the village, and looked around for a canteen.

Find Family in Want.

"They found an old meat market with shutters up, located the owner, and got the key. The supplies were unloaded, and the trucks started back to town. The two men left behind to 'open up' lighted a candle, and began an investigation of the place.

"Up the steep stone stairs they found a room, with a family of refugees crouching inside. The old fireplace had been opened. A few twigs, the size of a lead pencil, made a fire as big as a coffee cup.

"A mother nursing a baby sat on the floor in front of the fire, two small girls whose eyes seemed unnaturally big in their thin, little faces cowering near her, scared by the steps they heard. A daughter about fifteen years old was cooking some nondescript bits of food in an old frying-pan. The father, a little man, badly crippled in the early battles of the war, started forward as the strangers approached.

"They spoke no English and our men spoke no French, but suddenly they understood. These were 'les Americaines!' They would not be hurt. They were even going to be fed.

"When the American soldiers came they found the mother making chocolate for them, while the oldest daughter scrubbed up the old market, humming the 'Marseillaise' as she worked. The two little girls, bursting with importance, ran on small errands. The baby sat on the canteen counter, chuckling at them.

Boys Adopt Family.

"As they entered, the crippled little Frenchman, busy opening packing cases, straightened himself as well as he could, and saluted them. There was pride in the way he did it. He had worn a uniform, too.

"The American boys adopted the family at once. The Y. M. C. A. men had fed the refugees, of course, but the soldiers insisted upon buying them more food in the canteen. They tossed the baby in the air, and began teaching the little girls American slang.

"That night there was a real fire in the fireplace upstairs and real food on the table. Windows, boarded up so long, were open. The family chattered away at the top of their voices, instead of whispering, as they had done. There was nothing to be afraid of now.

"Les Americaines' had come!"

## VAPOR BATHS IN LAPLAND

Writer's Strenuous Experience of Cleansing Process Finishes With Being Bastinadoed.

In Wide World Frank Hedges Butler describes a vapor bath in the land of the Lapps. He says:

The bathhouse is a small wooden structure generally situated some way from the dwelling house. It is divided into two compartments, one to undress in, while the other contains the oven which produces the steam. The oven is arched with large stones or pebbles, and heated by a fire placed beneath. Undressing in the first room, one enters the heated compartment. After a short rest on a wooden form or bench, which contains a place for the head, the attendants come in and bathe you. Cold water is thrown over the stones and the hissing vapor soon sends up a cloud of steam. The higher you sit from the floor the greater the heat. As more water is thrown over the red-hot stones the vapor becomes so intense that one can hardly breathe. We were soon gasping for breath and covered with a profuse perspiration which issued from every pore of the skin. Hanging up in the room were tender branches or twigs in a green state and retaining their leaves. Dipping these in water, the attendant began lashing and whipping me across the legs, shoulders, loins and back, till my body seemed quite red with the switching. The bastinadoing over, I was then washed with a soft flannel covered with soap, after which a jug of the coldest water was thrown over my head and body.

Subscribed for the news