

October Woods.

BY IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM.

The frost has opened the chestnut burrs,
And the nuts fall lazily, two and three;
The squirrel chatters, the partridge
whirrs,
And the red-capped woodpecker bores
his tree.
Oh, lightly and lightly the birch leaves
float!
Like golden butterflies loosed in
spring;
And bright as the sails of a fairy boat
The walnut leaves take wing.

Now come, now come, far down the lane
The asters beckon, the robins call!
The shrunken brook grows broader again,
And leaps in a laughing waterfall.
Over the stile, and over the bridge,
Adown the path where the meek
cows stray
By glen and hollow and windy ridge
Let us follow the woodland way.

See! how the marvellous cloth of gold—
A Tyrian tapestry woven fine—
Wide as we wander is still unrolled,
Rustling under your feet and mine!
The breadth of the woodland is joy to
breathe—
The mingled odors of leaf and flower,
And clustering fruit where the wild
vines wreath
The oak tree's mossy tower.

Softly into the vistaed wood
Through painted windows the sun-
beams smile;
The hushed winds walk in pensive mood
Down many a solemn Gothic aisle.
The golden clouds hang low in air,
Wrapped in their folds the late sun
rests;
And the tall trees stand as if in prayer
With their beards upon their breasts.
—Our Dumb Animals.

Letters From Boys at the Front.

[The first of these letters was sent to his mother by Lieut. Hamilton Bingle, who went overseas with the Princess Pats in August, 1914, and is still fighting in the trenches, now with a regiment from Middlesex, England.]

The second is from a young private, George T. Noice, who also went to the front in 1914, was severely wounded twice in France, took part in the famous landing at Suvla Bay, and is now in Egypt, still "On Active Service" doing office work for the army, although incapacitated, by reason of his injuries, from doing further duty on the field.

Our readers will be pleased to read what these brave boys have to say.—Ed.]

Farming in France.

My Dear Mother:—

I had one letter from you this week, and I've no doubt there is more for me somewhere, as the mail has been held up for us a little. This is Saturday night, mother, and the best Saturday night I've had since I came out this time.—Fancy a nice rest for a few days behind the line where there are no shells and things, and where the sound of the guns is faint.—It's like being in some kind of a sixth heaven or something like that. It won't be for long, for long before this reaches you I expect I will be back and into it again—but while this rest is on we will certainly make the best of it.

The country looks absolutely beautiful. Tell dad that the crops are perfect. The wheat is a bumper crop. I was in one wheat field to-day and found some heads which measure seven inches. That is almost a record, isn't it? I've seen some big heads at home, but these seem to be the very limit—well filled

out too, and the straw very clear and bright but awfully tough. The farmers (or at least the women and very old men) are doing the harvesting. They have Deering and McCormick binders here. I notice a great many of these binders. It makes me think that the French Government may have taken a hand and provided binders to facilitate getting the crops in. You should see these big teams of Percheron horses get along with a binder. They walk up fast and seem to pull it with apparent ease. None of the field furrows are as deep as we have at home, so going across the end there is hardly any dip to the machine—no weeds nor grass in the bottom of the sheaves. I watched a man cutting to-day, and I suggested to him to tighten up the tension on his trip to get a bigger sheaf and showed him how to do it, as he did not seem familiar with the machine, and he was quite tickled. He thanked me quite profusely, but as it was in his own language our conversation was rather limited. I also got him to use a longer neckyoke, for the fiddling little, short things the I. H. C. send out are no good for these big teams they have over here. The old man explained to me that his team ran away the first time he hitched them on to the binder and they saw the reel going around behind them.

This country has England beaten forty ways for farming on a big scale. They have big fields here, like we do at home, and decent rounds. England is too much like a big park, and all chopped up with hedges running in every direction, to really make a business of farming. The trouble here is that the people simply grow stuff to eat and not to sell, which makes the biggest difference in their methods. The crops are not put in the barns, simply stacked up in a series of small stacks, which are called "ricks." The straw is done the same after threshing. The barns, of course, being all brick, are not big enough to put much inside.

They have a remarkable way of

have a garden. Fancy, cabbages and spuds growing out in front of the house! They also have their clotheslines up over the garden too, and on wash day all the family linen hung up for all the passers-by to look at. Nothing seems to be done with any idea of beauty at all. To see anything nice one has to get out into the fields and away from the buildings. These people need to have some Americans come over here and build a few country farm places for them and show them how to live. As for a telephone, they would no more have one in the house than keep an aeroplane to go for the cows. I might tell you that they milk the cows three times a day here. Why they do, I don't know. Perhaps they think they get more milk. They make butter in a barrel churn, and have cream separators (Sharpless), and in most other things are quite rational. Windmills (the big, four-blade kind) are stuck up all over the country, and very little use is made of electricity. The main roads are all cobblestone, and traffic goes at a walk,—no such thing as a light rig, like a buggy or victoria,—just big carts or gigs, with a Percheron horse in it,—the thing with an axle in it, like our farm wagons at home. Every farm has two or three wolfish looking dogs, which are always kept chained up, and the smell from their kennels is in keeping with the various other odors about the place.

Railways are fairly frequent, but no electric inter-urban trains.—The people seem to stay at home, and what they do for any form of amusement I don't know,—go into the villages, and drink beer or *cafe cognac* at the Estaminets, seems to be the principal relaxation. The country is absolutely full of churches, and I suppose there is quite a hit doing in the religion line. If they built a few bowling greens and tennis courts, and baseball grounds, I should think life would be much more pleasant. Perhaps it is much better here in peace time though. The men all seem lazy, and the women work like drudgery,

The weather lately has been beautiful, and the evenings are fine and cool—quite enjoyable after the turn in the trenches we have had, even if it isn't for long. You had some hot weather at home, according to the letters I've had, which I suppose is to make up for the wet, late spring. All the officers in my company, except the Major, are boys who were either at college in England or professors of some part, and they take very little interest in anything they see in the country. One of them didn't know, the other day, whether a hen laid one egg a day or three or four, and another one didn't know what the hames were on a horse's harness. So, of course, they take very little interest in the agricultural side of the war. The cows and cattle in general are not up to much, just plain red cows, without any particular breeding; and outside of family use, I don't think dairying is much of a business. No such thing as Jersey and Holstein cattle like we have at home.—Just the plain, red variety without any fancy touches.—They are rather small, too, and poor looking for beef. I think a packing house would go broke in a week. There are very few fruit trees of any kind, and I think the people put in most of their fruit-time on hops, which go to the breweries. These people drink a terrific amount of beer, (poor stuff, too, like 2½%). They even give it to a twenty-months-old baby, but it doesn't seem to hurt the kids any.

Now I am going to finish this and go to bed, (real bed with sheets). I haven't told you anything about the war, because I'm having a respite from the war and I will give you one. I will write again in a day or so. Give my love to dad and the boys, and with lots for your dear old self, I am,

Your loving son,
HAMILTON.

A Moonlight Trip to the Pyramids.

Cairo, August 31st.

Like most people who have ever been to Cairo I had made the journey to the pyramids in the day-time, but having been told that to get the best effect they should be seen by moonlight, I and three of my chums decided that on the first opportunity we would "do the Pyramids" by moonlight.

Choosing the first full moon we started out, and having only a limited time at our disposal chose the electric car as the quickest means of accomplishing the journey out.

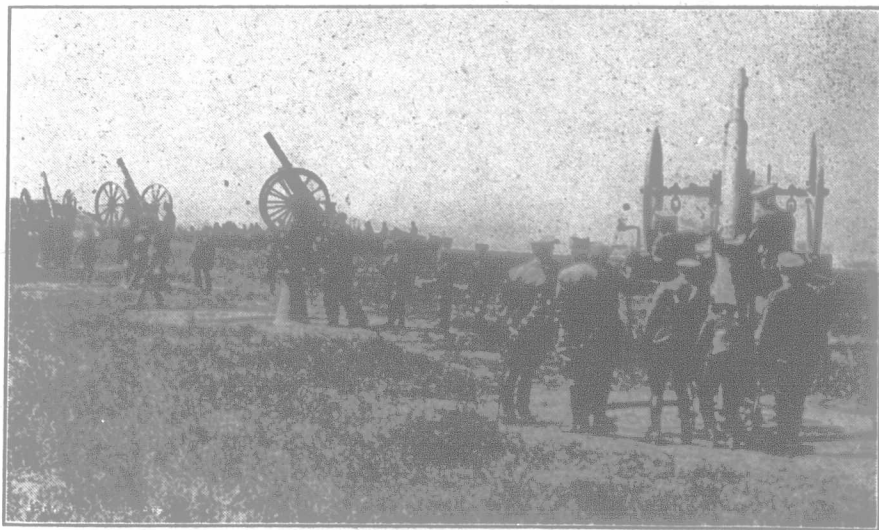
It was a beautiful night, and although we had already been over the ground in the daylight, the soft moonlight gave the surrounding country such an added effect as to alter it almost beyond recognition.

After a ride of about an hour over a road lined with avenues of lebbek trees, we came to the foot of the path leading to the largest and most famous of the three Pyramids of Giza—The Pyramid of Cheops.

Standing at the foot of this immense erection, one is almost overpowered by the tremendous size of the whole structure, and of the separate pieces used in the construction. One of the first things that strikes one is to wonder how, without the aid of machinery, these huge pieces of stone were ever put in their places.

It will give you some idea of the greatness of this Pyramid if I tell you that the height is about 451 feet, and each side is 755 feet at the base, the whole occupying an area of 535,824 square feet.

Having got rid of the inevitable crowd of Arab guides and donkey boys all clamoring for hire, we decided to



A Battery of Aircraft Guns Mounted on Pivots.

Photo taken on the Belgian front. International Film Service.

building what they call their "farms" here—house, barn, pig and sheep pens, and stables, all adjoin in a big square, with a brick paved walk all around, on the inside. Inside the walk, and in the centre of everything, is the manure heap. Fancy—this inner square is filled with manure and straw from the stables as well as rubbish from the house, and there are usually about 8 to 10 pigs running about loose over it! I don't see how the people stand it, but you won't find a farm house in the whole country different. In front of the house, where they could have a nice lawn and some flower-beds and trees, they

and they haven't any shape, (perhaps I should call it figure) but you can't expect a woman to get out and hoe spuds and pitch hay and then look muth, can you? Most of the women have a pair of arms like a blacksmith's, and a back like a butcher, and from what I've seen, they all wear red flannel petticoats. (Perhaps I'm getting too explicit, but while I am at it I ought, perhaps, to be definite). I can't tell you much about the children, except that they are awful noisy, and there seem to be millions of them, as though this country expected another invasion in about twenty years.