

## OVER THE TOP

naturally very limited in variety of use, the latter particularly so. But flares are of great service when a hurried artillery retaliation is desired, S. O. S. flares then being sent up. The wireless apparatus on aeroplanes and the throwing of flares by aviators are also used to good account. But there are times when all these different methods are found wanting. Through force of circumstance a battalion or company may be completely isolated, and then it is that the last and least employed method, that of carrier pigeons, is resorted to. In each battalion are a couple or more specially trained carrier pigeons, and to speak of the "O. C. Pigeons" is a standing joke. The pigeons are rarely employed. It may be almost forgotten that they are with a unit, as was practically the case of one battalion at the Somme of which the following story is told:

The commanding officer had waited in vain for hours for some message as to the success or failure of a show one company was putting on. He was impatiently striding up and down when a poor little carrier pigeon fluttered into his presence. He hurriedly caught it, and