

KITCHENER'S MOB

By Jas. NORMAN HALL.

CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd.)

The excitement was intense. Urgent calls for "More lemons! More cricket balls!" were sent back constantly. Box after box, each containing a dozen grenades, was passed up the line from hand to hand, and still the call for "More bombs!" We could send them up fast enough.

The wounded were coming back in twos and threes. One lad, his eyes covered with a bloody bandage, was led by another with a shattered hand. "Poor old Tich! She went off right in 'is face! But you did yer bit, Tich! You ought to 'a' seen 'im, you blokes! Wasn't 'e a-lettin' 'em 'ave it!"

Another man hobbled past on one foot, supporting himself against the side of the trench. "Got a Blightey one," he said gleefully. "Solong, you lads! I'll be with you again arter the 'olidays."

Those who do not know the horrors of modern warfare cannot readily understand the joy of the soldier at receiving a wound which is not likely to prove serious. A bullet in the arm or the shoulder, even though it shatters the bone, or a piece of shrapnel or shell casing in the leg, was always a matter for congratulation. These were "Blightey wounds." When Tommy received one of this kind, he was a candidate for hospital in "Bligh-tey," as England is affectionately called. For several months he would be far away from the awful turmoil. His body would be clean; he would be rid of the vermin and sleep comfortably in a bed at night. The strain would be relaxed, and, who knows, the war might be over before he was again fit for active service. And so the less seriously wounded made their way painfully but cheerfully along the trench, on their way to the field dressing-station, the motor ambulance, the hospital ship, and—home! while their unwounded comrades gave them words of encouragement and good cheer.

"Good luck to you, Sammy boy! If you see my missus, tell 'er I'm as right as rain!"

"Sammy, you lucky blighter! W'en yer convalescin', 'ave a pint of ale at the White Lion fer me."

"An' a good feed o' fish an' chips fer me, Sammy. Mind yer foot! There's a 'ole just bet'wixt 'em. 'Ere com' old Sid! W'ere you caught it, mate?"

"In me bloomin' shoulder. It ain't 'arf givin' it to me!"

"Hi Sid! Tell me old lady I'm still up an' comin', will you? You know w'ere she lives, forty-six Bromley Road."

One lad, his nerve gone, pushed his way frantically down the trench. He had "fucked it." He was hysterical with fright and crying in a dry, shaking voice.

"It's too 'orrible! I can't stand it! Blow you to 'ell they do! Look at me! I'm slathered in blood! I can't stand it! They ain't no man can stand it!"

He met with scant courtesy. A trench during an attack is no place for the faint-hearted. An unsympathetic Tommy kicked him savagely.

"Go 'ide yerself, you bloody little coward!"

"More lemons! More cricket balls!" and at last, "Victory! Fritzie had 'chucked it," and men of the Royal Engineers, that wonderfully efficient corps, were on the spot with picks and shovels and sandbags, clearing out the wreckage, and building a new barricade at the farther end of the communication trench.

It was only a minor affair, one of many which take place nightly in the firing-line. Two score yards of trench were captured. The cost was, perhaps, one man per yard; but as Tommy said,—

"It ain't the trench wot counts. It's the more-ale. Buckle the blokes up to win, an' that's worth a 'ole bloomin' 'army corps."

II. "Go It, The Norfolks!"

Rumors of all degrees of absurdity reached us. The enemy was massing on our right, on our left, on our immediate front. The division was to attack at dawn under cover of a hundred bomb-dropping battle-planes. Units of the new armies to the number of five hundred thousand were concentrating behind the line from La Bassee to Arras, and another tremendous drive was to be made in conjunction with the French. (As a matter of fact we knew less of what was actually happening than did people in England and America.) Most of these reports sprang, full grown, from the fertile brains of officers' servants. Scraps of information which they gathered while in attendance at the officers' mess dugout were pieced together, and much new material of their own invention added. The striving was for piquancy rather than plausibility. A wild tale was always better than a dull one; furthermore the "batmen" were our only sources



It's Pure
Cleans sinks, closets
Kills roaches, rats, mice
Dissolves dirt that nothing else will move

of official information, and could always command a hearing. When one of them came down the trench with that mysterious "I-could-a-tale-unfold" air, he was certain to be halted by willingly gullible comrades. "Wot's up, Jerry? Anything new?" "Nor 'arf! Now, keep this under yer 'ats, you blokes! My gov'nor was a-talkin' to Major Bradley this mornin' w'ile I was a-mykin' 'is tea, an' 'e says—"

Then followed the thrilling narrative, a disclosure of official secrets while groups of war-worn Tommies listened with eager interest. "Spreading the News" was a tragic-comedy enacted daily in the trenches.

But we were not entirely in the dark. The signs which preceded an engagement were unmistakable, and toward the middle of October there was general agreement that an important action was about to take place. British aircraft had been patrolling our front ceaselessly for hours. Several battalions (including our own which had just gone into reserve at Vermelles) were placed on the firing-line with our first load, we found all of the support trenches filled to overflowing with troops in fighting order.

We reached the first line as the preliminary bombardment started. Scores of batteries were concentrating their fire on the enemy's trenches directly opposite us. It is useless to attempt to depict what lay before us as we looked over the parapet. The trenches were hidden from view in a cloud of smoke and flame and dirt. The earth was like a muddy sea dashed high in spray against hidden rocks.

The men who were to lead the attack were standing rifle in hand, waiting for the sudden cessation of fire which would be the signal for them to mount the parapet. Bombers and bayonet-men alternated in series of two. The bombers wore their medieval-looking shrapnel-proof helmets and heavy canvas grenade coats with twelve pockets sagging with bombs. Their rifles were slung on their backs to give them free use of their hands.

Every one was smoking—some calmly, some with short, nervous puffs. It was interesting to watch the faces of the men. One could read, almost to a certainty, what was going on in their minds. Some of them were thinking of the terrible events so near at hand. They were imagining the horrors of the attack in detail. Others were unconcerned, intent upon adjusting straps of their clips of ammunition with an oily rag. Several men were singing to a mouth-organ accompanied by a saw.

Some were moving, but not a sound reached me above the din of the guns, although I was standing only a few yards distant. It was like an absurd pantomime.

As I watched them, the sense of the unreality of the whole thing swept over me more strongly than ever before. "This can't be true," I forethought. "I have never been a soldier. There isn't any European war."

I had the curious feeling that my body and brain were functioning quite apart from me. I was only a slow-witted, incredulous spectator looking on with a stupid animal wonder.

Some have learned that this feeling is quite common among men in the trenches. A part of the mind, which seems to be one's essential self, refuses to assimilate and classify experiences so unusual, so different from anything in the catalogue of memory.

For two hours and a half the roar of guns continued. Then it stopped suddenly as it had begun. An officer near me shouted, "Now men! Follow me!" and clambered over the parapet. There was no hesitation. In a moment the trench was empty save for the bomb-carrying parties and an artillery observation officer, who was jumping up and down on the firing-bench, shouting—

"Go it, the Norfolks! Go it, the Norfolks! My God! Isn't it fine! Isn't it splendid!"

There you have the British officer true to type. He is a sportsman; next to taking part in a fight he loves to see one—and he says "isn't it not 'ain't," even under stress of the greatest excitement.

The German artillery, which had been reserving fire, now poured forth a deluge of shrapnel. The sound of rifle fire was scattered and ragged at first, but it increased steadily in volume. Then came the "boller-factory chorus" the sharp rattle of dozens of machine guns. The bullets were flying over our heads like swarms of angry wasps. A ration-box board which I held above the parapet was struck almost immediately. Fortunately for the artillery officer, a disrespectful N.C.O. pulled him down into the trench.

"It's no use throwin' yer life aw'y, sir. You won't 'elps 'em over by barkin' 'at 'em."

He was up again almost at once, coolly watching the progress of the troops from behind a small barricade of sandbags, and reporting upon it to batteries several miles in rear. The temptation to look over the parapet was not to be resisted. I saw the artillery lengthened their ranges. I saw the curtain of flame-shot, smoke leap at a bound to the next line German trenches.

(To be continued.)

In tests of brooders kept at different temperatures, a high temperature for several days and also wide variations of temperature caused a heavy mortality. The most desirable temperature is stated to be for the first week 100 degrees F.; second week, ninety-six degrees; third week, ninety-two degrees, and fourth week eighty-eight degrees.

Food Control Corner

By Order-in-Council No. 597 the "wilful waste of any food or food products where such waste results from carelessness, or from the manner of storage thereof, or is due to any other avoidable cause, is prohibited."

If the Canada Food Board has reason to believe that any food-stuff is being stored and that it is likely to become unfit for human consumption, it may notify the owner to immediately sell or otherwise deal with it so that no further loss of the commodity may be involved. If this course is not followed the Food Board may seize the food and sell it, the loss to be sustained by the owner.

Again, the Board has the power from time to time to make orders prescribing the amount of any kind of food that may be purchased or held, irrespective of the purpose, and if the amount is exceeded it may be seized and sold. This law should make it possible to prevent food which has been stored too long from having to be thrown out or destroyed.

It is now the duty of each municipality in Canada to enforce this regulation within its municipal limits. Where conviction is obtained a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and not less than \$100 or a period of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both fine and imprisonment, will be imposed. The fine will be paid to the treasurer of the municipality or to the provincial treasurer, according to whether municipal or provincial authorities instituted proceedings in the first place.

The Food Board expects that the women of Canada will be useful agents in bringing culprits to justice. Wherever they have reason to believe that waste is going on as a result of hoarding or improper storage they can notify the provincial or municipal authorities and the case will be investigated.

Waste in war-time is one of the greatest of crimes. Every pound of food-stuffs must be used to the full advantage. If we, who have so much of everything in Canada, consciously allow any waste, our iniquity is twofold. The women are especially guardians of this phase of the food problem and it is expected that they will give practical assistance in the enforcement of the new regulations.

WHAT THE PLOUGH SHOULD DO.

"Handbook for Farmers" Advises Use of Jointer.

Aside from crumbling the soil, the chief objects of ploughing are to destroy wild plants so that cultivated ones may take their place; and to bury trash, manure, stubble and potato vines. A plough that does not accomplish these things is faulty. All refuse should be completely covered so that it will not be brought to the surface by the harrow. To bury weeds, clover or other tall green manure crops, a chain should be used, one end attached to the plough beam, the other to the double tree, thus allowing the loop to pull the tall plants down into the furrow to be covered. The jointer or skim-coultter is little used in many districts. Many farmers do not even know what it is. When manure, stubble or grass is to be turned under, it is a very useful attachment. It skims a shallow furrow slice and deposits it in the bottom of the furrow, where it is covered by the main furrow slice and will rot more readily. When stubble or grass is ploughed without a jointer, there is likely to be a line of it between the furrows, which interferes with the harrow or begins to grow and cause trouble. This is a common sight, but could, and should, be overcome by the use of the jointer. The implement dealers of the country could perform a distinct service to agriculture by encouraging the general use of jointers on ploughs. There should be one on every farm.

It is well to have various kinds of ploughs for the various kinds of land to be ploughed. This costs more, but greater efficiency results. A sod plough will not do good work in soft stubble lands, nor will a stubble plough perform well in stiff sod.

Do Not Save On Milk.

A quart of whole milk gives as much nourishment as one pound of lean meat. Being a liquid, milk is sometimes classed with water, tea and coffee, simply as a beverage. This is a great mistake. If all the water were to be driven off from a quart of tea or coffee, almost nothing would be left, and the little that remained would have little or no value as food. If, on the other hand, the water were driven off from a quart of whole milk, there would be left about half a cupful of the very best substances, including butterfat, a kind of sugar not so sweet as granulated sugar, and known as milk sugar, and also materials which are needed to make muscles, bone, teeth and other parts of the body. All these valuable substances are ordinarily either dissolved or floating in the water of the milk. Do not begin to save on milk.

Prince of Wales as Miner.

Garbed in brown overalls and provided with a safety lantern and coal pick, the Prince of Wales recently hewed coal in company with some Scotch miners. This was at the bottom of a 600-foot shaft of a mine which he was visiting, and after working for a short time in a very cramped position the Prince brought away a chunk of coal as a memento.



The Housewife's Corner

WAR AND FOOD SERIES, ARTICLE No. 14—EGGS.

To talk to the farm woman about eggs is like bringing coals to Newcastle, and yet there are aspects of the egg business of which she never thinks, so much is it a matter of course to her to see the eggs being shipped to the city. It is estimated that about 95 per cent. of the eggs sold in Canada come from the farms and the remainder from small poultry-keepers in villages, towns and cities. Most of the farm eggs pass through the hands of the country storekeepers. From them they go to the wholesale house. Finally they are canned and turned over to the jobber, or the retail trade, or put into cold storage to be kept for winter use.

The most natural place for the farmer to sell his eggs is at the country store. Here he has the least trouble and gets the quickest returns either in trade or cash, whichever he prefers.

It is estimated that the greatest number of bad eggs which come on the market are in that state because of conditions on the farm. A small percentage of the blame is attached to the country store and still less is attributed to conditions under which eggs are shipped, or the loss that occurs in transit.

In taking measures to prevent losses of this kind the first step must be taken by the farmer. In spring the losses are inconsiderable, but as warmer weather comes they grow heavier and heavier. The following are some pointers for the farmer and his wife on how to get the best results with their hens:

1. Keep the poultryhouse clean.
2. Separate the roosters from the hens after the hatching season.
3. Provide plenty of clean straw on the floor and in the nests.
4. Do not allow broody hens on the nests.

5. "Break them up" by putting in boxes with slatted bottoms raised off the floor.
6. Gather the eggs twice a day.
7. Keep them in a cool, dry place.
8. Sell them twice a week if possible.
9. Use clean cases and fillers.
10. Sell only the best eggs, candling out any poor ones and also all small eggs.

Should Mothers Study?

Even in this day of enlightenment we meet people who ask such questions as, "Should mothers take time to study?" or, "Do mothers need to study to accomplish their daily duties in the best way?"

Need to study? To be sure. Most urgently she needs to study, to think, to read, to meet with other mothers—to do everything possible to learn the best methods of keeping her children well, happy and upright.

There is more and more good informative reading prepared, by experts, for the mother's help. And many mothers, but, unfortunately, not all, are taking advantage of such aids. It is a well known fact that it is the best educated and the most intelligent mothers who feel the need of assistance, and eagerly read everything that offers new and helpful suggestions.

Mothers' meetings are doing much to help by making possible the exchange of personal experiences. There are scores of little things, plans for caring for the children, ways of breaking them of bad habits, meth-

ods of teaching them valuable lessons in deportment, instilling love for God and purity of life, which mothers could exchange with incalculable help to each other.

The character and mental spiritual life of the child is to be stimulated and guided for many years almost solely by the mother. Surely in her effort to make the finest and best boys and girls of her sons and daughters the mother needs every good help.

Then it is the imperative duty of mothers to study the best methods of keeping the family healthy and strong, and of stimulating the mind of her child, directing its taste, and training its morals.

When we realize how easily the ignorant mother may cause a child to suffer all its life physically, we can form some estimate of how easily the neglect of thoughtful training may cause it to suffer morally.

The best mothers are taking time to study, and by putting the home on a working basis they find that this time can be taken without neglecting the other duties. In truth, the mother needs far more than the best training. She needs that priceless sixth sense that will enable her to apply her learning to the actual conditions of life.

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