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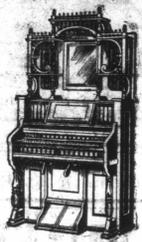
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Winter Again At the Front

Wool and Wood for Dug-Out Homes in the Trenches—Preparing for Cold, Wet Days in Low Countries.

GENERAL BRITISH HEADQUARTERS, Nov. 24.—It does not seem long ago since people were asking—*anxiety mingled with hope in their voice*—"Shall we have another winter campaign?" Nobody asks the question now. Here along the British front nature itself gives the answer. Winter is close upon us.

It is here, at least before midday when a white fog fills the trenches, steals down the dug-outs, and drifts densely over the fields. The pale sun gleams for a few hours, giving a fictitious sense of summer, and then when the darkness comes the mist creeps up again from marshes and woods and—*Lo!*—it is cold for any poor-beggar staring towards the German lines through a loophole in the parapet.

It is a sad thing, this passing of the summer across the fields of war, for not even the trenches that scar them, nor the barbed wire that has been planted in them, nor the dead bodies that lie out beyond the parapets could quite spoil the splendor of this natural beauty which strewed its flowers and the fruits of the earth even to the very edge of the war's black trail.

Sister Susie and Warm Garments.

And now there will be another winter campaign. To those who saw the misery of last winter in our boggy trenches it is a horrid thought. Must our men suffer all that again?—The wet mud, the ice-cold water beyond their knees in the communication trenches, the wind that lashed them like sharp whips, the ooze and slime in the dug-outs, the water-spouts through the roofs of broken barns. Yes, all that will have to be gone through again, and there are no illusions on the subject among our men. "We shall have to stick it," is the philosophy with which they face the prospect, and the words are spoken cheerily. Many of the French soldiers have already been supplied with their "small-coats"—those full skins with long hair which make them look like music-hall motorists. Our own men are beginning to think of their old sheepskins, which gave them a pastoral look, and much comfort, last winter. Not yet have our Sister Susies sent out their first batch of woolen comforters and knitted vests. Well, it is time to hurry up, because the men are beginning to sneeze.

It will not be quite so bad this year along some sections of the line. Many of the trenches in which I have been lately have nicely bricked floors, and drains to carry the water away. That will make a big difference to the comforts of the men. Forests of timber, too, have been cut into logs and put in the dug-outs and bridge over the boggy ways. The pioneer battalions have done splendid work in this way, and engineer officers have labored with enthusiasm and skill, begging, borrowing and stealing material to keep the trenches dry.

In The Low Countries.

It will be impossible to keep some of them dry. The lie of the land just empties the water into them. Even in August I waded up to the thighs in a communication trench at the bottom of a sloping field. Nor does there seem wood enough to go round. In some parts of our line officers cry out for more logs with the hungry appetite of so many Oliver Twists. The Third Army has the best of it in that respect, judging from the number of wood-cutters I saw the other day in the thick copes on the banks of the Somme. Those were sylvan scenes, of an old-fashioned type of war-fare, bivouac fires between the trees, so that at night they are filled with ruddy flickering lights and the dark figures of soldiers among painted tents by lines of tethered mules touched with the glow of burning embers.

For some time, at least, it looks as though we shall get back again to the conditions of last winter—the same old trench warfare along a stationary line, with the same old frontal attacks from the enemy, and the daily bombardment on both sides. As I said in my last despatch the enemy's plan of an autumn campaign on this front, and perhaps on other fronts, was much disorganized by our offensive last month and it seems clear that they have been severely sobered in spirit by our successful and most bloody repulse of their various counter-attacks against the positions gained and held since September 25.

For the last few days they have at-

tempted no further infantry attack upon the trenches now held by us in the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Even their artillery fire has slackened down for a time, and our guns were certainly most busy today in the direction of Fosse 3. Our trenches are within thirty yards of the enemy by the quarries and the Redoubt, "re-organized" since we captured them from the Germans, whose dead bodies lie about in dreadful groups between our old lines and the new.

GOOD FOR THE "COP"

A burly man, the picture of perfect health and strength, walked into the office of a prominent accident insurance company the other day and wanted to be insured.

"Are you engaged in any hazardous business," asked the secretary.

"Not in the least replied the applicant. "Does your business make it necessary for you to be without sleep at night?"

"No, sir."

"Would your business ever require you to be where there were excited crowds—for instance, at a riot or a fire?"

"Never, sir."

"Is your business such as to render you liable to injury from carriages or runaway horses?"

"Does your business throw you in contact with the criminal classes?"

"Good gracious! No, sir."

"I think you are eligible. What is your business?"

"I am a policeman."

"Oh, no, sir."

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THE PENITENT OF NOOVE CHAPELLE

The following poem by Lance-Corporal Joseph Lee, 4th Battalion Black Watch, has reached us from France," says the Manchester Guardian:

As I lay in the trenches at Noove Chapelle,
Where the big guns barked like the Hounds of Hell,

Sez I to mysel', sez I to mysel':—
Billy, me boy, here's the end o' you—
But if, by good luck, ye should chance to slip thro',

Ye'll bid' all ye's evil companions adieu;

Keep the Lord's ten Commands—and Lord Kitchener's two—
Sez I to mysel'—at Noove Chapelle.

No more women, and no more wine,
No more hedgin' to get down the line,
No more higg'in' around like a swine,
After Noove Chapelle—sez I to mysel'.

But only the good God in Heaven knows
The wayward way that a soldier goes,
And He must ha' left me to walk by myself—
For three times I've fell since Noove Chapelle.

Once at Bethune and twice at Estaires,
The devil gripped hold o' me un-awares—
Yet often and often I've prayed me prayers,
Since I prayed by mysel', at Noove Chapelle.

Me throat was dry and the night was damp
And the rum was raw—and bright was the lamp—
And—Billy, me boy, ye'r a bit o' a scamp,
That's the truth to tell—theo' I sez it myself.

What's worrin' me isn't fear that they'll miss
Me out o' the ranks in the realms o' bliss;
It ain't hope o' Heaven, nor horror o' Hell,
But just breakin' the promise, twixt God and mysel'—
Made at Noove Chapelle.

Well, there's always a way that is open to men
When they gets the knock-out—that's get up again;
And, sure now, auld Satan ain't yet counted ten,
I'm game for another good bout wi' mysel'—
As at Noove Chapelle.

Canada and War Scandals.
Stratford Beacon

The following editorial paragraph appears in The Buffalo Express, a paper that is certainly not unfriendly to Canada or to the British cause in this war: "Canada has a new war scandal. This time it relates to shells on which profits of 100 per cent have been charged. No country is ever free of grafters in time of war, but Canada has been particularly prolific in them." This makes unpleasant reading; but perhaps it will do Canadians no harm to see themselves as others see them occasionally.

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