

open. I know that I'm as apt to walk into it as away from it, but remember I've been back to the recruit stage and forgotten my philosophy. Still, I guess I'm getting used to it again—all the old familiar stuff with the new experiences. The difference between being an officer in charge of four guns and an N.C.O. in charge of one is quite some difference. My job is to see that my N.C.O.'s and men are on *their* job, keep my distance and dignity and growl and snap. I'm afraid I'm a poor snapper. You see my inclination is to sit down and make friends like I used to do, and let someone else worry about "discipline" and "smartness." Only you see, there isn't anyone else—it's *my* job.

I'm a much better N.C.O. than loot. You know some guys just naturally love to walk on people, and I like to treat other people's feelings with respect, which doesn't make for efficiency. Training in the ranks isn't necessarily the best way to make an officer. Maybe it'll help when it comes to fighting, but it raises difficulties when you know just how your men think.

My duties aren't onerous. I have to visit my guns sometime every night and during daylight, when possible. With two of my guns it isn't possible so I visit them at night. It's a trip of about one hundred and fifty yards across the open. You wouldn't think an old soldier like me would mind a little thing like that, would you? But that's just where my runner has to *run*. I *can* walk *fast* when I hurry, and I hurry then because I'm not betting that he won't drop the odd whizzbang or a few messages from Emma Gee while I'm where there's nowhere to duck. Anyhow I like to get finished when I begin that walk. You