

# KITCHENER'S MOB



By Jas. NORMAN HALL.

## CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd.)

It was surprising how quickly the men became accustomed to the nerve-trying duties in the firing-line. Fortunately for Tommy, the longer he is in the army, the greater becomes his indifference to danger. His philosophy is fatalistic. "What is to be will be" is his only comment when one of his comrades is killed. A bullet or a shell works with such lightning speed that danger is passed before one realizes that it is at hand. Therefore, men work doggedly, carelessly, and in the background of consciousness there is always that comforting belief, common to all soldiers, that "others may be killed, but somehow, I shall escape."

The most important in-trench duty, as well as the most wearisome one for the men, is their period on "sentry-go." Eight hours in twenty-four—four two-hour shifts—each man stands at his post on the firing-line, rifle in hand, keeping a sharp lookout over the "front yard." At night he observes as well as he can over the top of the parapet; in the daytime by means of his periscope. Most of our large periscopes were shattered by keen-sighted German snipers. We used a very good substitute, one of the simplest kind, a piece of broken pocket mirror placed on the end of a split stick, and set at an angle on top of the parapet. During the two hours of sentry duty we had nothing to do other than to keep watch and keep awake. The latter was by far the more difficult business at night.

"Ere, sergeant!" Tommy would say, as the platoon sergeant felt his way along the trench in the darkness. "When is the next relief comin' on? Yer watch needs a good blink'n'ish. I been on sentry three hours if I been a minute!"

"Never you mind about my watch, son! You got another forty-five minutes to do."

"Will you listen to that, you blokes! S'y! I could make a better timepiece out of an old bully tin! I'm tellin' you straight, I'll be asleep when you come 'round again!"

But he isn't. Although the temptation may be great, Tommy isn't long for the court-martial. When the platoon officer or the company commander makes his hourly rounds, flashing his electric pocket lamp before him, he is ready with a cheery "Post all correct, sir!" He whistles or sings to himself until, at last, he hears the platoon sergeant waking the next relief by whacking the soles of their boots with his rifle butt.

"Wake up 'ere! Come along, my lads! Your sentry-go!"

## CHAPTER IX.

### Billets

Cave life had its alleviations, and chief among these was the pleasure of anticipating our week in reserve. We could look forward to this with certainty. During the long stalemate on the western front, British military organization has been perfected until, in times of quiet, it works with the monotonous smoothness of a machine. (Even during periods of prolonged and heavy fighting there is but little confusion. Only twice, during six months of campaigning, did we fail to receive our daily post of letters and parcels from England, and then, we were told, the delay was due to mine-sweeping in the Channel.) With every detail of military routine carefully thought out and every possible emergency provided for in advance, we lived as methodically in the firing-line as we had during our months of training in England.

The movements of troops in and out of the trenches were excellently arranged and timed. The outgoing battalion was prepared to move back as soon as the "relief" had taken place. The trench water-cans had been filled, an act of courtesy between battalions, the dugouts thoroughly cleaned, and the refuse buried. The process of "taking over" was a very brief one. The sentries of the incoming battalion were posted and listening patrols sent out to relieve those of the outgoing battalion, which then moved down the communication trenches, the men happy in the prospect of a night of undisturbed sleep.

Second only to sleep in importance was the fortnightly bath. Sometimes we cleansed ourselves, as best we could, in muddy little duck ponds, populous with frogs and green with

I wish there was a Walker House in every little town

I wish there was a WALKER HOUSE in every little town; Then I could travel merrily, And always sit me down At night in peace and comfort, Happier than king with crown, If there was just one Walker House in every little town.

I wish there was a WALKER HOUSE in each place where I go. The comforts of my dear old home While on the road I'd know. The meals—the Cheerful Service, too, Would leave no cause to frown, If there was just one Walker House in every little town.

The Walker House  
The House of Plenty Toronto Geo. Wright E. M. Carroll

# Gunns Shur-Gain Fertilizer

Old cricketers were especially good for the bomb must be thrown overhead, with a full-arm movement.

Instruction in bayonet-fighting was made as realistic as possible. Upon a given signal, we rushed forward, jumping in and out of successive lines of trenches, where dummy figures—clad in the uniforms of German foot soldiers, to give zest to the game—took our blades both front and rear with conciliatory indifference.

In the afternoon Tommy's time was his own. He could sleep, or wander along the country roads, within a prescribed area, or, which was more often the case, indulge in those games of chance which were as the breath of life to him. Pay-day was the event of the week in billets because it gave him the wherewithal to satisfy the promptings of his sporting blood. Our fortnightly allowance of from five to ten francs was not a princely sum; but in pennies and halfpennies, it was quite enough to provide many hours of absorbing amusement. Tommy gambled because he could not help it. When he had no money he wagered his allowance of cigarettes or his share of the daily jam ration. I believe that the appeal which war made to him was largely one to his sporting instincts. Life and Death were playing stakes for his soul with the betting odds about even.

The most interesting feature of our life in billets was the contact which it gave us with the civilian population which remained in the war zone, either because they had no place else to go, or because of that indomitable, unconquerable spirit which is characteristic of the British soldier. There are few British soldiers along the western front who do not have memories of the heroic mothers who clung to their ruined homes as long as there was a wall standing. It was one of these who summed up for me, in five words, all the heart-breaking tragedy of war.

She kept a little shop, in Armentieres, on one of the streets leading to the firing-line. We often stopped there, to buy a loaf of delicious French bread. She had candles for sale as well, and chocolate, and packets of stationery. Her stock was exhausted daily, and in some way replenished daily. I think she made long journeys to the other side of the town, bringing back fresh supplies in a pushcart which stood outside her door. Her cottage, which was less than a mile from our first-line trenches, was partly in ruins. I couldn't understand her being there in such danger. Evidently it was with the consent of the military authorities. There were other women living on the same street; but somehow, she was different from the others. There was a spiritual fitness about her which impressed one at once. Her eyes were dry as though the tears had been drained from them, to the last drop, long ago.

One day, calling for a packet of candles, I found her standing at the barricaded window which looks toward the trenches, and the desolate towns and villages back of the German lines. My curiosity got the better of my courtesy, and I asked her, in my poor French, why she was living there. She was silent for a moment, and then she pointed toward that part of France which was on the other side of the world to us.

"Monsieur! Mes enfants! La-bas!" (To be continued.)

Classes in grenade-fighting were under the supervision of officers of the Royal Engineers. In the early days of the war there was but one grenade in use, and that a crude affair made by the soldiers themselves. An empty jam tin was filled with explosive and snap iron, and tightly bound with wire. A fuse was attached and the bomb was ready for use. But England early anticipated the importance which grenade-fighting was to play in trench warfare. Her experts in explosives were set to work, and by the time we were ready for active service, ten or a dozen varieties of bombs were in use, all of them made in the munition factories in England. The "hairbrush," the "lemon bomb," the "rickety ball," and the "policeman's truncheon" were the most important of these, all of them so-called because of their resemblance to the articles for which they were named. The first three were exploded by a time-fuse set for from three to five seconds. The fourth was a percussion bomb, which had long cloth streamers fastened to the handle to insure greater accuracy in throwing. The men became remarkably accurate at a distance of thirty to forty yards.

# The Housewife's Corner

WAR AND FOOD SERIES, No. 11.—RICE.

Although rice has been recognized as a good food on this continent since early Colonial times yet it has not been given as important a place as it deserves among our staple articles of diet. Especially now, when we are called upon to use substitutes for flour, should its uses be tested to the utmost.

In the Orient rice is chief among foods. Indeed, the Anglo-Indians seem to "live by rice alone." But he always sees to it that it is cooked par excellence. Indifferent cooking has done much to prejudice the people of this continent against the common everyday use of rice.

One of the chief virtues of rice is that it is a concentrated food. It is very nutritious and is easily digested. Analysis shows that it compares most favorably with potatoes. Its principal food constituent is starch. It also contains a small percentage of protein and a little fat.

In buying rice, care should be taken to get an uncoated or natural finish product. Coated rice is an inferior product that has been put through a special solution to whiten it. When crystal clear and without any grains in it, rice is pure.

As a staple article of diet rice may be boiled in salted water and used as a vegetable. Wholly or partially cooked rice can be used with cheese, minced meat, poultry, fish, beans, etc. It may also be used as the major or minor ingredient in stews and soups.

Instead of serving rice plain as a vegetable it may be stewed with tomatoes, cooked in a double boiler with tomato juice, soup stock or milk. It may be seasoned with curry powder or onions.

Again, as a cereal for breakfast, rice fills a useful place in the menu. Cold boiled rice, mixed with pancake

or muffin batters, makes a pleasing combination. Rice pudding, of course, is almost as familiar as porridge and is just as wholesome in its way.

This important food should not be left out of her calculations when the housewife is considering how best she may save and substitute.

### Cleaning Beds in March.

"Clean the beds in the dark of the moon in March," was the slogan of our grandmothers. We, of the younger generation, may scoff at the idea of the dark or light of the moon having any effect on bed-bugs, but the idea, in the main, is not a bad one. Should there be eggs on the beds they will not have a chance to hatch if the beds are cleaned before the first warm days.

Several years ago, we purchased a home that had been occupied by indifferent tenants for quite a while. Housecleaning of any kind was deferred until late spring on account of a number of repairs that were being made in the house. When we finally started to clean house, we found the house literally lined with bed-bugs. They seemed to thrive on window-frames and splash-boards, as well as the beds. After much painting, papering, disinfecting and the using of bed-bug powder, the bugs were finally subdued. All that season, however, the bugs would occasionally make their appearance on two wooden beds. These beds were of walnut, and were not only very valuable, but very heirlooms. We did not wish to dispose of them, but it seemed like we could not get them entirely free of bugs.

"Forewarned is forearmed," and last year I started in early and well-armed to work on those beds. I finally saw that there were cracks and cre-

ices in the beds that could not be reached by powder or brush. I purchased from the druggist a small bellows and a spray. The spray was an ordinary throat spray. I first sprayed the entire bed with gasoline. After waiting a few minutes for the gasoline to dry, the powder was blown into the crevices by means of the hand bellows. To be sure that there would be no bugs left in the walls I fumigated the room, using a sulphur candle for this purpose. Closing all doors and windows tightly, I placed the candle in a pan, lighted it and left the room.

—O.R.

### Everyday Helps.

Helps Thread the Needle.—If you will lay a piece of white paper or cloth under the sewing-machine needle, you will be surprised to find how readily you can thread it.

To Crush Lumpy Sugar.—When confectioner's sugar gets lumpy, slip it into a clean envelope with a patent clasp, and roll with the rolling pin. Pour from the envelope as needed. This does away with the after-cleaning of rolling pin and board, and saves sugar.

Cleaning Inside Woodwork.—When inside woodwork is washed with soap and water it is usually streaked. Instead, try cleaning it with whiting and it will look shiny and clean. Make a paste of the whiting by adding a little water, and then apply to the woodwork with a dry cloth. When dry wipe off.

Smooth, Creamy Cereal.—When making cornmeal mush, put the desired amount of boiling water in the mush kettle, add the salt, and remove from fire while adding the cornmeal, but stir all the time. By experience I have found that lumps are less likely to form if done this way.

Banishing Mold.—When we first moved into the very old house we live in, I had great trouble keeping food from molding in my small cellar and rather damp pantry. Since I have arranged for better ventilation and learned to paint and disinfect both pantry and cellar frequently, I have had no trouble.

How to make ice at home: Have some pans made of galvanized sheet iron 14x20 inches and eight inches deep, a little larger at top than bottom. When filled with water in zero weather they will generally freeze in a day and a night. By turning them over and pouring a little hot water over the pans the cakes of ice will readily come out. By coating the pans with a film of tallow the cakes of ice may be removed without the use of hot water. The cakes may be packed in an ice-house as fast as made.

# Food Control Corner

As a result of representations made by the Canada Food Board, the British Ministry of Food has arranged for allocation of shipping for 5000 tons of salt from Spain, for use in the Atlantic fisheries of Canada. This supply will be delivered in March.

The British Ministry of Food is also endeavoring to arrange for supplies of salmon twine for the Canadian fisheries.

### The organization of the "Soldiers of the Soil" movement, inaugurated by the Canada Food Board, is now practically complete and work will be commenced at an early date to enlist 25,000 boy volunteers to assist in food production on farms this year.

Actual enrollment will begin on March 17th, and the following week will be "Soldiers of the Soil Enrollment Week" throughout Canada. In towns of under 10,000 population, high school teachers and bank managers will act as enrollment officers, while in larger centres High school teachers, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, together with officers of the Boy Scouts and other boy organizations, will enroll the recruits.

Mr. Taylor Statten, a well-known leader in boys' work, has been appointed superintendent of the "Soldiers of the Soil". It is proposed to enlist only boys between the ages of 15 and 19 years.

Arrangements have been made by the Departments of Education in the several provinces, so that boys who enlist for this work will not lose their school standing. Every boy who gives three months of satisfactory service on the farm will be given a bronze National Honor Badge. In addition he will be paid regular wages, based upon the amount of work which he is capable of doing.

The Departments of Agriculture in the various provinces will provide machinery for placing the boys on the farms, so that farmers, who can use

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### one or more boys should notify their Provincial Departments of their requirements at an early date. In Ontario, Dr. W. A. Riddell, 15 Queen's Park, Toronto, will receive farmers' applications and arrange for placing recruits.

An Easy Way to Raise Poultry. "What," said the lady who does her own marketing, "is the price of these chickens?" "A dollar and a quarter apiece, ma'am," replied the market woman. "Did you raise them yourself?" asked the lady. "Oh, yes, ma'am. They were only a dollar ten last week," was the reply.

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Certain stores and dealers have stocks of "ROYAL HOUSEHOLD" still on hand. In order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding, all "STANDARD" FLOUR will be plainly branded as such.

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