

getting better, but we quote at length from various parts of Billy's letters to his Mother. We feel that every Canadian ought to read this little book. It is one of the most delightful things ever produced by a Canuck. It is not literature—thank Heaven—but good interesting human writing. It makes one feel that one would like to know Billy—at all events if one could see him always as he reveals himself to his mother—and that one would like to know his mother. Please Heaven they will never reveal themselves.

The following excerpt is taken very much at random just to show the frank impressions of a young Canadian lieutenant in his first visit to the Old World. The reader should remember that the book consists of the letters Billy wrote home:

I went through my first heavy bombardment at really close range. They dumped "Crumps," Coal Boxes, Shrapnel and Whizz-bangs to the number of about three hundred all around us for two hours and then attacked. Just as night overshadowed daylight and objects began to grow indistinct, one of my sentries reported a party out in the front. Suddenly from our right, rapid fire and machine guns opened up, and so I gave the order "fifteen rounds rapid." Keyed up and ready were the boys, and we gave them a few hundred capsules of steel. Squeals, grunts, and moans, then the reverberating roar of machine guns, and rifle fire ceased. So our first real attack was repulsed. Further on, our line suffered more heavily but I guess we were fairly lucky. All the night they kept at us with bombs, rifle grenades and

trench mortars, to which we replied in kind vigorously, but they learned their lesson from that taut tense ten minutes. No more attacks.

That is, I suppose, a pretty tame story of a bombardment, an attack, its repulsion, but words fail me. The confines of expression are not competent to tell you much more. I've refrained from writing, hoping that in the interim some inspiration would come that would adequately convey to you a picture. I tried to dissect my emotions so that you might visualize, partially at least, what a day and a night—twenty-four hours in a front line trench mean; but I have failed dismally.

To begin with, the nervous strain is great, and when one has his heart broken in addition, it's hard to limn for another, the lines etched on your soul, the impressions registered in your memory.

My heart was broken, dear, because before this bombardment at all I lost eighteen men of my own platoon; eighteen of the best and truest fellows I've ever known; saw five of them die—one in my arms—all hit by these devils of Huns—hit by snipers who use explosive bullets—a bullet that tears a hole as large as a tomato can, and if it strikes anything hard bursts into three pieces, each the size of a quarter, that maims and wounds—a bullet that if it hits the head tears off the top.

God! I wonder if you could even imagine the primordial lust of battle that courses through one's brain, the desire to kill that permeates the muscle, the exhilaration that comes when you know you've actually hit one of your enemies.

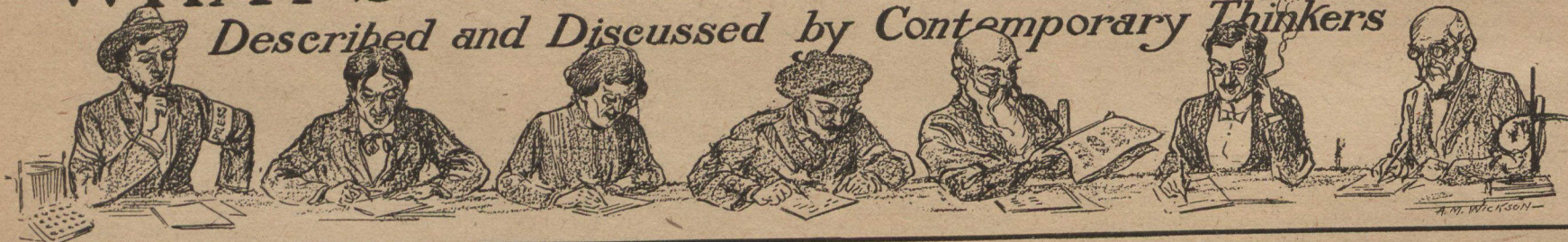
I can candidly say there was no fear in me.

For months, in fact long ere we left old Canada, the fear I had that dominated my waking moments was not will I be afraid, but will I be able to control my fear. I was always afraid I would be afraid. Well, after the bombardment ceased I wasn't, and even during that two hours of mental torture I wasn't afraid, just nervous. But when I knew they were actually coming, ah! what exhilaration, what primeval bloody thoughts I had! A valiant desire came amid the fight to do all the damage I could, and I rushed from bay to bay of the sector of trench I commanded, exhorting my men to be steady and cursing them if they weren't, here grabbing an extra rifle and blazing its magazine full at the indistinct forms, or there firing one shot from my revolver. No fear, no thought of self; just the hope that we'd beat them off; just the thought constantly of what was best to do, how best to preserve every life in my charge—every life in my charge that was preserving my life. So you see, analyzed and tested down, the ancient self-preservation rule holds good.

But the aftermath—the vacuum at the stomach—the palpitating heart—the deep breaths you needed, that, if you did not take, it seemed as if you'd choke, the feeling you must sit down—the desire for a drink—the insatiable way in which you ate up cigarette after cigarette in long deep inhales—the hope they would not start bombarding again—the cheery voice you forced as you walked along a bath mat and jokingly curbed your own desire to shout by praising the men and belittling "the show"; all these when your emotions that had bubbled to the boiling point again simmered down.

WHAT'S WHAT *the* WORLD OVER

Described and Discussed by Contemporary Thinkers



LAUDS BLACK LIST

Writer in American Review Shows What an Excellent Weapon It Is

FEW acts of the British Government during this war have been more widely misunderstood and, as a consequence, less favourably received in the United States than its publication last July of the so-called "blacklist," declares Sydney Brooks, in the North American Review. It staggered some of the warmest among the many warm supporters of the Allied cause in America. The pro-Germans fell upon it with a whoop of joy. The press all but unanimously denounced it. Legitimate apprehensions and fantastic misapprehensions at once gath-

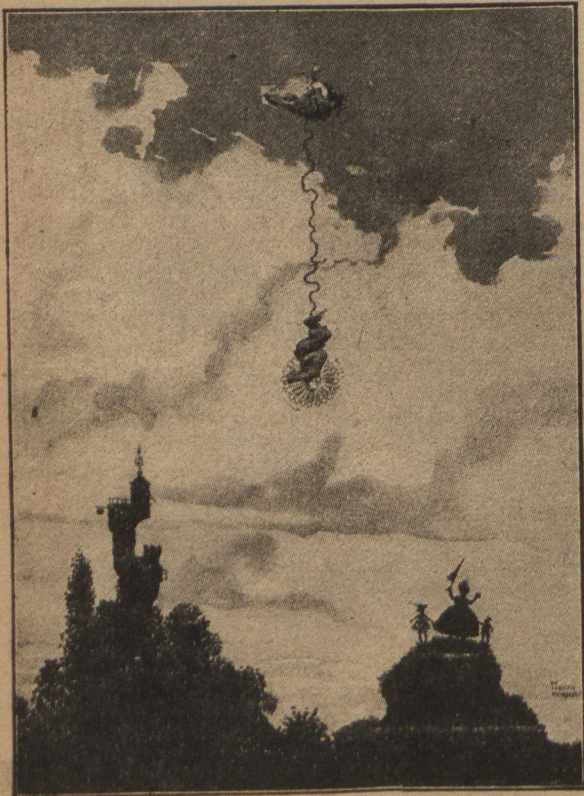
ered around it. "Quite the most tactless, foolish and unnecessary act of the British Government during the war," wrote one of the sanest of the New York journals. "Morally, of course," declared the New York Times, "the thing is indefensible." The "man in the street" became obsessed with the idea that the "blacklist" was the first clear sign of a British plot to "dominate the commerce of the world." I do not, indeed, know how any subject, least of all one of such transparent simplicity and directness, could have lent itself to greater distortions.

Even the State Department proved to be not immune from the prevailing hallucinations. On July 26, Mr. Polk, as Acting Secretary of State, addressed a note to the British Government that will scarcely, I think, rank among the happiest efforts of American diplomacy. It spoke of "The most painful surprise" with which the blacklist had been received by the people and Government of the United States; of the "harsh and even disastrous effects" it might have upon American trade and neutral rights; and of the limitless possibilities "of serious and incalculable interruption" to neutral commerce that were latent in it.

Yet the facts are quite simple. The British Government has forbidden all British subjects in the United Kingdom to trade with certain specified firms and individuals in the United States. In doing so it is acting, of course, absolutely within its rights. That, I believe, has not been and cannot be disputed by anyone. It is one of the clearest and most fundamental prerogatives of a sovereign State to control in whatever way it pleases the trading relations of its own subjects. No issue of international law can possibly arise in this connection, any more than it can arise when a Government forbids its subjects to import certain commodities, as the British Government has constantly done during the war. There is a blacklist in Japan, readily concurred in and loyally supported by the Japanese Government. That disposes completely of the notion that Americans and American commerce have been singled out for special discrimination. United States citizens stand in this respect precisely on the same footing as the nationals of all other neutral lands.

When the British Government comes across a firm of this (pro-German) character and occupied in these activities, what does it do? It says to its own subjects: "This firm is in effect an enemy firm. It is working all day long in Germany's interests.

To that we have no objection. It is acting within its rights. We have neither the wish nor the intention to interfere with its operations except when they transgress our rights as a belligerent under international law. But we are not going to allow you, who are British subjects and under our jurisdiction, to furnish this firm with business facilities and to swell its business profits when we know that those facilities and those profits are being used to help the enemy and damage us. We therefore forbid you to have any dealings with it. It may ship goods wherever it likes, but it shall not do so in British bottoms. It may finance Germany to its heart's content, but not through British banks. It may carry on its business transactions and communications with Germany and with neutral countries to the full limit of its capacity, but not by the



The Sole Survivor of a Wrecked Zeppelin Propelling Himself Home.
—Drawn by W. Heath Robinson.



"Chuck us out that bag o' bombs, mate; it's under your 'ead."
—Bruce Bairnsfather.