

In the Foreign Legion

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voyage. I saw a gendarme, whom I took to be my friend, at a distance, but I did not haul any closer to make sure. I was glad he was still living, but I imagined he would not want to get chummy with me, so I thought I would not bother him.

We loaded a cargo of aeroplanes for the Italian aviators at the French flying schools, and started back to Brest. On the way we had target practice. In fact, at most times on the open sea, it was a regular part of the routine.

It was during one of these practices that the French officers wanted to find out what the Yankee gunner knew about gunnery. At a range of eight miles, while the ship was making eight knots an hour, with a fourteen-inch gun I scored three d's—that is, three direct hits out of five trials. After that there was no question about it. As a result, I was awarded three bars. These bars, which are strips of red braid, are worn on the left sleeve, and signify extra marksmanship. I also received two hundred and fifty francs, or about fifty dollars in American money, and fourteen days' shore leave.

All this made me *very* angry, oh, very much wrought up indeed, what do you think? I saw a merry life for myself on the French rolling wave if they felt that way about gunnery.

I spent most of my leave with my grandmother in St. Nazaire, except for a short trip I made to a star-shell factory. This factory was just about like