

PAGE of NEWS from OVERSEAS

LIFE IN PETROGRAD ALMOST UNRUFFLED

Grit: Determination to Conquer at Any Cost Underlies Seeming Apathy of Russian Capital—A Danish Woman's Observations of War-time Conditions

Writing in a Copenhagen paper the well known Danish authoress Karen Bransen gave the following description of Petrograd in war time:

You really feel the war very little here at Petrograd. Nobody speaks of it. It has become a fact with which everybody reckons a habit which is of no interest to discuss. The first day's enthusiasm has turned into a firm and calm determination to go on regardless of cost, and the endless resources of the gigantic empire appear everywhere sufficient to satisfy the immense demand for men, as well as for food and materials of war. The stranger who arrives here does not get into touch with the war at all. The thousand versts lying between Petrograd and the front prevent even the swell of the struggle from reaching you. One occasional glimpse here and there unexpectedly gives you an idea of the dreadful and inconceivable drama that is being played in the distance.

It was on the day that I arrived at Petrograd. The streets were full of life. The horses danced in front of the light carriages and the promenading crowds were smiling. A small group of officers came down the stairs of my hotel. They did not appear to have been touched by the war, but were chatting and laughing aloud. In the middle was an officer, whose face was smiling, but his brows were strangely convulsed and the eyelids half closed (a blinding nerve). The other officers were addressing him in a peculiarly cordial and respectful manner. As he reached the bottom step of the stair, he felt about with his foot to discover if there were any more steps. He came near stumbling but was immediately assisted by half a dozen sympathizing hands. He was blind! He thanked them with a sad embarrassed smile, almost as if he wanted to apologize, and went through the hall and out of the door. The sun was shining! The blind officer stopped short, almost as if he had received a blow in the face. What did he feel? The sun that he had forgotten! The sun that he had never seen again. With an unerring late low cry he opened his arms in the direction from which he felt the warming rays coming. His comrades tenderly assisted him into the carriage waiting for him. His head fell down and his chin was resting on his breast as he drove away.

In the Alexandra Museum there are some small paintings by Verestchagin. One of them, called "The Victor,"

shows a heap of mulatto-colored bodies of soldiers in front of a sun-baked wall. In the middle of the heap lies a body of an almost gay, life-like position, but the whole forehead is crushed by a bullet and the blood, still red and warm, runs down both cheeks. A few steps away from this heap of human flesh stands "The Victor," a white soldier, looking with an expression of absolute indifference towards the horizon, while he calmly lights his well-earned pipe with his blood-stained hands. While I was looking at this picture a group of wounded soldiers came through the hall. It is customary here, as soon as the wounded are well enough, to show them the sights of the city in little groups, conducted by a Sister of Mercy. You see all kinds of faces among these groups, indifferent or surprised, troubled or thoughtful. But silent and obedient they walk along in their long grey manes, reminding you of medieval crusaders.

War's Awful Realism

One of the soldiers stopped in front of Verestchagin's painting. His eyes, until now indifferent and without expression, suddenly opened wide and, turning as pale as a ghost, he caught the soldier's hand. The other shook him off and the soldier remained standing in front of the painting with eyes wide open and hanging jaw. He recognized it all. It was all there—the unspeakable horror of war. One of the strongest evidences is the dress in the Marinsky Theatre. All gals is banished. And what do the many empty seats mean? Certainly not that Petrograd society has lost interest in its favorite corps de ballet. The old general in whose box I was sitting explained it to me.

"We all know one another here," he said. "We know who has each box, which has been in the possession of the same family for generations. Number 4, which is empty, belongs to Prince P., who was taken a prisoner in East Prussia. The one next to it belongs to Prince W., who had both legs crushed by a shell. Number 18 belonged to Count, the aviator, who was brought down at Lemberg. Number 23 in Colobol's box. He is paralyzed with a bullet through his spine. Yes, it costs and costs. But you think perhaps we are tired? No, we are only just beginning. Who of you knows Russia? None know Russia's greatness. There has cost us two million and a half men, but if it costs us five times as many we would not stop. We shall not stop until we have accomplished what we set out to do."

Strange Human Types Found in Czar's Army

Over the Vistula bridge at Warsaw, which leads from the Moscow depot—the "finest bridge in Europe"—up the Jerusalem alley, thence to the Vienna depot for the front, march battalions of warriors from Asia. It seems they will never end. You get the impression that after half Europe is out fighting for Mother Russia, half of Asia is on the walk. In the new troops you see more and more Asiatic types; sometimes Asiatics from Europe such as Volga Tartars; sometimes Caucasus Asiatics; sometimes Kirghises and Turcomans from Asia proper; sometimes Siberians who, though Europeans by race, have a physical type of their own. But in this war all Russians.

Two hundred thousand men of Russia's big army in peace time are men from Asia or from the Caucasus. Now in war there are at least half a million Asiatics in the field. Had it not been for the Siberians Warsaw today would be in German hands. The Asiatic troops are the best officered and have the biggest proportion of well-trained men. They came late, have had few losses, and their corps are still intact.

A correspondent writes of seeing a big, water-filled hole, made by a German 12-inch shell and in the middle of the water bathed a good looking ruddy soldier with oblique eyes. Around the pit were other Asiatic soldiers in uniform. The letters on their shoulder straps showed that they came from different units. They were all sturdy, intelligent looking men, with the same oblique eyes. The man in the water took with his left hand a handful of beans, threw them on the surface, and with his right hand scooped up the water and the beans and sent both flying over the soldiers who stood around. The soldiers looked serious and howled "Ya, Ya, Ya." The naked soldier dived entirely under the water reappeared, got out and dressed. It was a "Kama christening." The soldiers were half Christians, half Moslems from a Finno-Tartar tribe which lives on the Kama River, a Volga tributary. The "Kama christening" has nothing to do with christening. It has aboriginal significance. There are fire-worshippers in the Eleventh Army. These also come

from the Volga. They worship the sun, and in Poland in winter when the sun is mostly absent, they light a fire and worship it. The fire worshiper soldier carries, sewn in his uniform, a ball of yellow silk. This symbolizes the sun.

In a Siberian corps which is part of one of the Southern armies are pagan yakhuts, Buriats from Mongolia, and Japanese (Russian subjects) Sintoists.

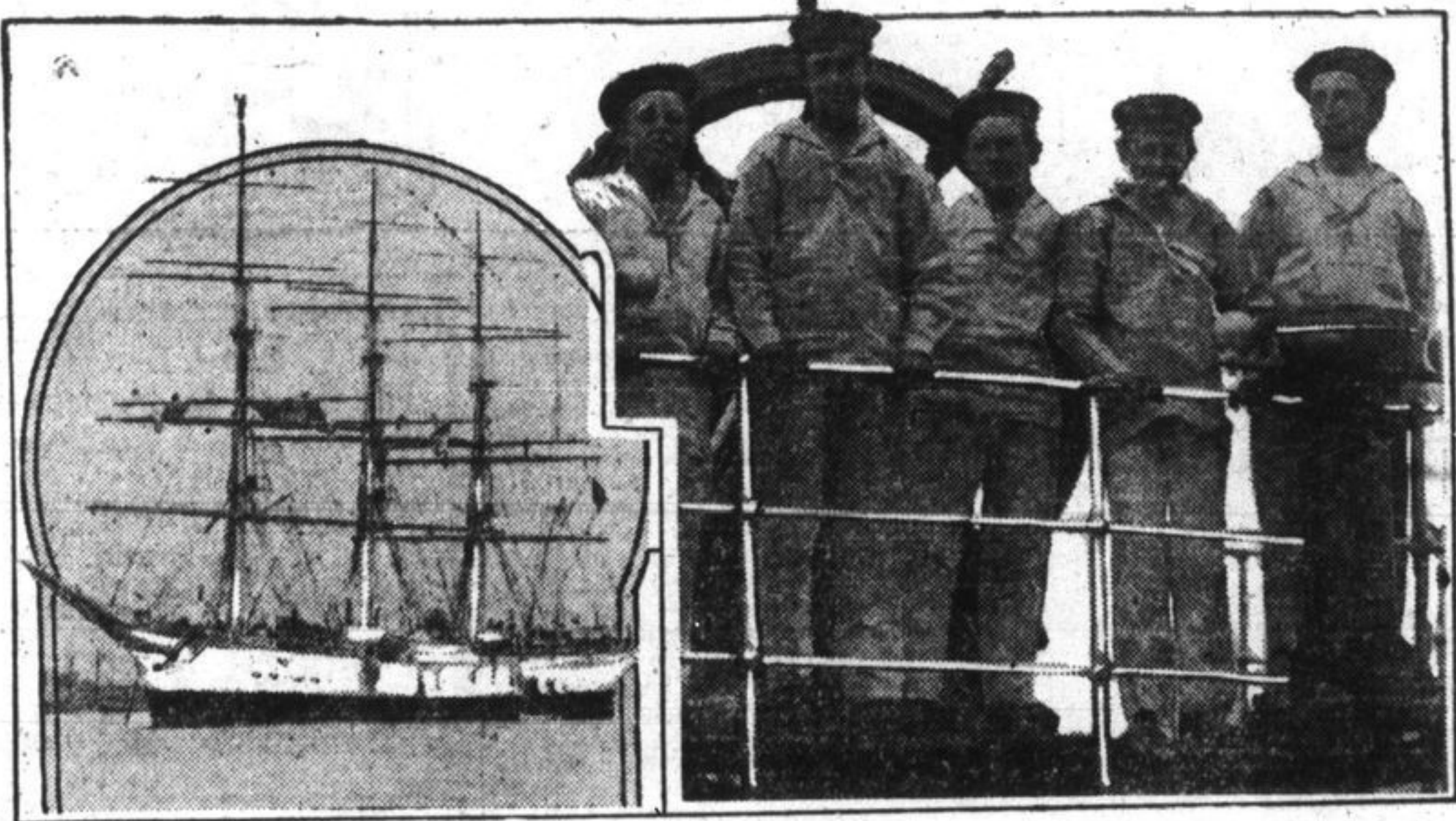
SURVIVED BLOW OF SHELL

Irish Fusilier Had Bullet Pouches Torn Off But Was Unhurt

Private P. McKenna of the Royal Fusiliers in a letter to friends told of being struck by a German shell and escaping in a remarkable manner. "We held a line of German trenches in the Festubert district all Saturday night and all day Sunday," he said, "although we had no rations or anything to eat, and could not get up any support. The general was here since, and gave us great praise for what we did then. I was nearly knocked out by a shell which struck me on the right side, but my pouches caught it. There were 30 rounds of ammunition in my pouch, and it tore the pouches off me and my strap caught fire. The ammunition went out, and I was sent on my back for about ten yards, but was little the worse for it. I had some holy pictures in my pocket, and these were riddled, and some cigarettes I had in my pocket were also riddled, and I am sending these home as a souvenir.

"On the night we went into action our company was in front leading the attack, and we had then four hundred yards to go to the German trenches. The men fell all around me in dozens, and I do not know how I escaped, for the men fell on every side of me. We kept going on, however, and I had no fear, and felt just like going for a walk until we got to the German trench, and I then came to my senses. We took the trench, but at an awful cost. Your prayers must have been heard, or I would never have come out of it."

LITTLE BELGIAN SAILORS WORK FOR THEIR COUNTRY



Cadets on the bridge of the former Belgian school-ship L'Avenir, which has entered the merchant service and turns over all profits to the Belgian Government for war purposes. The youngsters were all students on board when the war started and are serving without pay. The training ship also is shown.

British Soldiers Amazingly Cheerful Under the Most Adverse Conditions

Khaki-clad Sons of England Joke and Sing in Face of German Gas clouds, and on the March When Every Tired Muscle Calls for Rest—Filled With Joy When They Get Into Billets in Village Where Tobacco and Eatables May be Obtained

A special correspondent with British Headquarters in the Field, commenting on the cheerfulness of the British soldiers, wrote: "The more I see of the British army in the field the more I am impressed by its cheery optimism and unquenchable good spirits. It works and plays with the same good-humored zest; nothing can dishearten it. Until the gas-poisoners began their work it was an army that regarded the foe facing it impersonally. Killing was the business in hand, but killing without malice; flower-covered graves for dead enemies and cigarettes for live prisoners. Now the business of killing is full of bitterness, and there are no flowers. Yet even the menace of the new death has not checked the spirit of cheerfulness. Men take their turn in the gas zone with a grim resolve to swell the enemy's casualty list with their own, but they can just even when they are gasping for breath. Another peasant 'fog' said a North Somerset lad to a comrade in the trenches, when he saw the wall of gas vapor stealing towards him. 'It isn't safe to be out in the night air.'

"It's a bad day for the Lord Mayor's procession," said a London woman when the fog swept over his trench. He lay in a dug-out for an hour, his face buried in a respirator, and then staggered into the open air, dizzy but practically unhurt. "Reminded me of the Thames Embankment on a November morning," he said to me when I saw him in hospital, "except that it was much safer. No trams."

"Another gassed soldier I saw was breathing painfully, but able to talk. 'Takes all your lung power to keep alive,' he gasped. 'They sang, coughing even to curse the Kaiser properly. A man ought to be given extra lungs for trench work.'

A Boy Full of Gas

"The chaplain attached to this clearing station was going among the new arrivals as they lay on stretchers in the open air, after having their wounds dressed, and giving each man a regulation postcard—one of the sort which is prepared for the post by scratching out some printed sentences and leaving others. He came to a victim of gas—a mere boy who stared at the card suspiciously.

"Would you like to send your people a postcard, my boy?" said the chaplain, and went on to the next stretcher. "Does—does this mean that I am going to die?" asked the lad, as he tried to scrawl a name across the front of the card.

"Nonsense," retorted an orderly who was passing. "You'll be as right as rain in a week."

"Then I'll wait before I write," said the soldier. "There's no use wasting the card. Besides, it says 'I am wounded.' I am not wounded—I'm full of this bloody gas, and as soon as my chest is clear I'm going back to 'do' for some of those Germans. Give us a drink."

"The cheerfulness of the wounded is very marked. A man who has been shot in the leg or arm after severe shelling, and then carted for perhaps twenty miles in a slow-moving ambulance, could be forgiven if he took a somewhat gloomy view of the immediate future. Ten to one he arrives at his destination hiding his suffering behind a mask of gaiety.

"I sat in the grounds of a casualty clearing station one afternoon watching the endless procession of Red Cross motor cars discharging their colorful burdens under the trees. I heard very few cries of pain. These men had been brought direct from the battlefield with only a halt at the dressing station where first aid is rendered. Many were, of course, wholly disabled, but those who could use their legs plainly tried to walk.

"They joked with each other as they sat or lay around the garden, waiting

for the ambulance—that would take them to the cots of our aeroplanes was sighted overhead, sailing back from the German lines with enemy's shrapnel bursting in its wake, and every man who could do so hoisted himself upright in order to watch the battle.

Artillery Critics

"Rotten shots," said a Durham miner, whose left arm was bound to his side, "they never hit anything." "Two men beside him paid no heed to the conversation. They were eagerly turning over the tattered leaves of an old copy of a London illustrated paper. Three hours before they were struck down by shrapnel, which killed men around them. Now, with their wounds dressed, they were intent on photographs of 'K's' battalions and scenes from a new London play.

"Cheerful in the trenches; cheerful under fire; cheerful on the march!" My motor-car halted at a crossroads to let a famous battalion of infantry pass. Big men they were—some of the pick of England's manhood. They had been tramping for hours through a blinding cloud of dust, and faces, uniforms, caps, were thickly powdered with it. They sang, coughing, a weird song about being very dry—dry—dry—how dry—how dry! Tunics were unbuttoned and thrown back, perspiration streamed in rivulets down their grey cheeks, and they were tired—dog tired. Yet they sang.

"The column halted beside me. A sergeant-major came out of a cottage with a magpie sitting solemnly on his thumb. Instantly a volley of ooties. 'Oo your friend, Billy?' 'Mind your pockets, boys, there's a black thief around.' 'Does he talk French?' 'That's a German magpie; watch him.' 'Cradsjests, maybe, but they served their purpose.'

"How long have you been on the march?" they asked. "I've been on these thousand sanguinary years," said a hoarse voice. "We do this for fun. Get a match?"

"The battalion moved on and disappeared in a whirling cloud, while the magpie, cocking his head wisely, listened to the dying chant: 'Still dry; still dry; still dry.'

Back For a Rest

"I saw another famous battalion, shorn to a third of its original strength by German shells—march into billets in a village near my quarters. For a fortnight these men had endured all imaginable horrors in the pallid of the British line beyond Ypres. Scarcecrows they were, and men with the shadow of death still across their set faces, but as they came into the narrow street, where friendly villagers smiled at them from their cottages, you could see the old spirit coming uppermost again.

"Baths," cried one man as they passed a silms-covered pool beside a stable yard.

"Billiards," exclaimed a second as he glanced through the open door of the little estaminet.

"Tobacco," said a third, as he saw a tiny shop-window cramed with boxes of English cigarettes. They sat around that night, in cottage doors, in fields and along hedges, smoking and writing letters home or watching the crimson sunset, with an air of utter contentment such as I have seldom seen. Three of them were giving an impromptu concert to some admiring youngsters with a mouth organ and an accordion. Another was chasing a reluctant cat into her night quarters, to the delight of the venerable person who owned her.

"It's a good old world," said a corporal (who is a barrister when he is

GALLIPOLI LANDING WAS GLORIOUS FEAT

COST OF GUN FIRE

To fire a single shot from Britain's biggest guns costs \$5,000, and some idea of the expenditure of naval firing can be gathered from the fact that one famous battleship could use up about \$100,000 worth of ammunition per minute if she worked all her guns at full blast, a she would do it necessary. And to this huge outlay must be added the cost of the gun, remembering that the largest weapon has a very short life, and is soon worn out. The most expensive gun is the 15-inch, though other big guns run up heavy ammunition bills.

The guns which expend \$1,000 worth of ammunition every time they are fired are really wonderful pieces of artillery. They can heave a ton weight of explosive shell over a distance of thirty miles with the certainty of hitting any spot they aim at. The power and velocity of the shot is such that on leaving the gun it has force enough to go straight through 57½ inches of wrought iron. The 12-inch guns can eat up well over \$500 worth of ammunition per minute. For a 9.2-inch it is a trifle under \$150; for a 7.5-inch it is under \$100, and for a 6-inch, under \$60.

Burning Eagerness and Fervent Initiative of Australasians Upset German Strategy and Turks Fled—Fighting Was Very Swift

According to a correspondent of the Daily Express who is serving in the Dardanelles with the Royal Naval Division, every officer and man in the first landing parties of the colonial force earned the V.C. over and over again. He says: "Only those who have had to fight their way up the precipitous and cliffs of Gallipoli, to dash through veritable death-trap gullies and gorges and beat down the strongest natural defences in the world can properly realize the overwhelming magnitude of the initial task undertaken with such amazing boldness and success by the sons of Australia and New Zealand. They forced a landing on an 'impregnable' continent at a spot immediately opposite the one objective of all the invading forces and the key to Constantinople—viz., the forts of the Narrows. Even we who have endeavored to help them retain and to increase the area of the land so gallantly seized, cannot quite comprehend the burning flames of patriotism and self-sacrifice which—fanned rather than smothered by eight weary months of waiting in training centres and in Egypt—alone enabled the 'Kangaroos' and the 'Kiwis' to send the German-Turks scampering in a frenzy of terror from the beach up the face of the cliffs and right away into the comparative security of their distant entrenchments.

Daredevil vs. Red Tape

"True, the enemy's positions were shelled with great deliberation and executed beforehand with the utmost care, but there were hidden machine guns, mobile batteries and natural hiding places for troops that no artillery from the sea could destroy, however well directed by aeronautical observation. Red tape methods of landing and attack under such conditions would have been utterly disastrous. It was the personal initiative, extraordinary dash, virility and reckless daredevilism of each individual invader that completely shattered the elaborately devised schemes of defence. 'Come on, you Australian kangaroos! We have been waiting for you months!' shouted some German officers to the occupants of one of the boats but whatever forms of attack they had expected and prepared for, they certainly had not expected the invaders to throw off all their equipment, and even their rifles, to wade a half of lead and shrapnel, to wade or swim ashore with little but their rifles and bayonets, to make a mad rush in their shirt sleeves at machine guns and lines of infantry, to chase the bewildered Turks up the face of the treacherous cliffs with their primitive weapons such as sticks and stones, and to engage in hand-to-hand struggles which were bound to result in both combatants hurling through space together to destruction. These desperate and superbly heroic measures could not have been anticipated by the German strategists, and it can hardly be wondered at that the Turks were utterly demoralized from the very outset. One Australian alone shot or bayoneted an entire machine gun section on the beach and 'outed' the Maxim. He was shot through the jaw the next day.

"The fact is we had been getting our heads off in Egypt, and had been called 'popular tourists' and other complimentary names, and when at last we got a real chance to do something we couldn't hold ourselves in. I explained an entirely untrue incident in my trenches. I have actually known a colonial to stroll calmly over the open ground in front of his trench and secure part of one of his victims' equipment as a trophy. We 'Nansons' went into action just at the Kangaroos were taking a ridge. It seems incredible, but they took it at the point of the bayonet, singing 'Tipperary' all the way. Their magnificent spirit thrilled us all, but we are quite as much impressed by the cool self-reliance of the New Zealanders whose trenches we are now helping to fill. Of course the majority of the men constituting the colonial forces are quite accustomed to overcoming the natural obstacles presented by their particular kind of country. Still, it is not so in all cases, and many of those in the first landing party were town youths not out of their teens. Yet they fought as gallantly as the muscular bushmen, as the latter eagerly testify.

Turks Fine Snipers

"The art of sniping has been brought to the highest pitch of perfection by the Turks under the tuition of their German masters. Many of the snipers have managed to procure Australian or New Zealand uniforms and when any have been caught in their own garb it has nearly always been in the uniform worn by ambulance men. One Turk had young trees strapped all around him, and from a reasonable distance looked exactly like an innocent patch of saplings. Another was accidentally discovered stretched out stiff under a blanket among some bushes to resemble a corpse. The greatest surprise of all, however, was when we spotted off two snipers from a distance, and found them to be so-called women. A little pile of spent ammunition proved their activity."

REGAINED HIS NERVE

Shame and Second Chance Made Disgraced Tommy a Hero

The true story of a soldier who was afraid, yet afterwards proved himself to be a hero, was related by Professor J. H. Morgan, on his experience with the British Expeditionary Force. A sergeant in the Expeditionary Force, the lecturer said, "lost his nerve, and ran away." He was tried by court-martial, and sentenced to five years' penal servitude. But in the interval between the sentence and its confirmation the famous attempt of the Prussian Guard to break through the British line was made, and every available man was rushed up in support. They included the prisoner of course, followed suit. He had recovered his nerve, and not only fought well, but performed an act which in ordinary circumstances would certainly have brought him a medal for gallant conduct, and probably the V.C. As a result, the man's sentence was quashed, the record expunged, and he got back his stripes and an absolutely clean record.

"That sergeant," added Professor Morgan, "was responsible for an Act of Parliament for it occurred to the authorities that if there was one such case there might be others. The result was that the Attorney-General rushed through the House a special Act applying to courts-martial, the principle of the First Offenders (Probation) Act."

WATER FOR CHARGERS

Elaborate Care in Armies to Protect Horses and Men

Suitable drinking water is of vital importance to an army, and this is only one of a multitude of problems that must be studied carefully by those who conduct a successful campaign. Only running water is used. In the German army the upstream water is used for drinking purposes and the downstream water for watering horses and for bathing. Suitable signs notify the men which water is safe to drink and which may be used only for bathing. In shallow or narrow streams basins are dug, or small dams built up so as to form a reservoir of ample dimensions. Stepping stones are provided to keep the water clean, as well as board protection to prevent the banks from crumbling. Basins are dug for watering horses; troughs are provided only in case of necessity and are then propped on posts and filled by means of pumps.

There are over ten thousand islands in the British Empire.



"GRAB ALL, LOSE ALL" Jack Walker, in London Daily Express