PAGE of NEWS from OVERSEAS

Russian Warriors Respect Women Who Serve In The Czar's Army

Men Take It As a Matter of Course That They Should Fight—Instances of Splendid Gallantry of Women in Hard-fought Battles

About five hundred women are fighting as regular soldiers of the Czar. They have to enlist nominally as men, but their presence is winked at by the higher military officials and many of them have been decorated with important honors for gallantry on the field of battle.

The treatment of these notable women warriors by the Russian common soldiers well illustrates some peculiarities of the Russian temperament. The Russian mujik, or peasant, is of an intensely religious nature. He is ignorant, but dreamy and philosophical, holding to many beautiful superstitions. He is used to living in small communities where women are held in as high esteem as anywhere else in the world. If a husband dies, the widow takes his place in the village council and has a full voice in the local government. It is a measure of woman suffrage which has come down from antiquity. As a result, the Russian soldier in the trenches does not joke about a woman fighter who happens to be in his division. He does not see in it a subject for jest. It is for him quite a matter of course.

Still less is he inclined to offer her any indignity. This woman who is exposing herself to shell and bullet and poison gas for the glory of the Russians he treats with the highest respect. Indeed, as the woman who has donned soldiers' uniforms is of a much higher order of intelligence than the common soldier, the latter looks up to her and in an emergency follows her leadership unhesitatingly.

Sacrificed Her All

Numerous incidents reported from the front bear out these statements. A case that is attracting much attention is that of Mme. Kokovtzoff, a woman of considerable wealth. She first spent all her fortune in hospital work for wounded soldiers. Finding her usefulness along this line at an end, she applied to a General in the city of Batum for permission to enlist as a volunteer in the forces he was raising.

"No, that would be impossible," replied the General, "no soldier could be taken with such hair, in the first place."

Mme. Kokovtzoff indeed had beautiful masses of dark hair, and every Russian soldier must wear his hair closely clipped. The following day Mme. Kokovtzoff again sought an interview with the General. As she entered the room he sprang from his seat and uttered an exclamation of astonishment. Mme. Kokovtzoff's fine locks were gone. The General capitulated and the woman was allowed to enlist.

She was engaged in many battles and took part in such a way that she roused the courage of the soldiers to high pitches of valor and encouraged them to many deeds of heroism. Then she was seriously injured and was brought to a hospital which she herself had established and endowed. She recovered and as soon as she was allowed to leave her bed, and while her wound was still not completely healed, she busied herself with the care of the other wounded.

It is expected that she will be allowed to return to the front soon, as is her wish. Persons who have interviewed her say that war has not roughened her in the least, and that she has retained her fine, womanly character throughout.

Girl Won Man's Decoration

The duties of a field nurse, or Sister of Mercy, do not satisfy the craving of the Russian woman to assist in the great struggle. In the political disorders of the last thirty years women have done at least half the work. Kira Baskiroff was a pupil in a girls' college when the war started. She cut off her tresses and enlisted as a volunteer in one of the infantry regiments of Grand Duke Nicholas. She took part in a series of daring reconnoitering expeditions and aroused the enthusiasm of the soldiers of her regiment, but the activity of this life did not satisfy her. So she enlisted under the name of Nicolas Popoff in one of the regiments of Siberian sharpshooters which bore the brunt of the great battle of Lodz. Again she performed deeds of valor, and her company unanimously petitioned that she receive the Cross of St. George, the badge of courage. She had concealed her sex in this command, but shortly after receiving the cross her secret was discovered. She was then sent home. By a special order of the Czar she is permitted to retain her distinction, which is usually given only to men. Two other women, Mlle. Krassilnikoff and Mme. Samsonoff, have also had the Cross of St. George pinned on their uniforms.

One might also mention Ogla Jehlweiser, who proved to be of special value to the Russian forces. She is a Lithuanian woman and served as a soldier in the war against the Japanese, taking part in several engagements.

At the beginning of the great war she again put herself at the disposal of General Rennenkampf, under whom she had fought in Manchuria. She was brought up in the vicinity of Grodno and has special knowledge of the roads, forests and swamps of this difficult country. She led the Russian detachments on several raids which brought highly gratifying results.

When the history of this great war comes to be written, the work of these daring Muscovite women will not be forgotten. These women are not woman suffrage workers or "feminists," in the sense meant by Western Europe. But their deeds cannot help having an effect on the place of woman in the Russian Empire.

FOUR BRITISH MEDALS

There are four military decorations to be won in the war. The greatest of these is the Victoria Cross, a bronze Maltese cross, 1½ inches in diameter; in the centre is the royal cross and below in scroll "for Valor." It was instituted by Queen Victoria in 1856, and is open to Officers and men alike. It is cast from Russian cannon captured at Sebastopol, and its material value is estimated at nine cents, but those who are given it rank as "the bravest of the brave." Until the present war but 522 crosses had been given—111 for the Crimea war, 182 for the Indian mutiny, 78 for the Boer war and the rest among 37 other wars.

The Distinguished Service Order was instituted by Queen Victoria in 1886, it purpose giving the "recognition of special services of commissioned officers in the army and navy." The order entitles its members to bear the letters D.S.O. after their names. The badge is a gold cross enamelled white, one side bearing an heraldic crown surrounded by a wreath of laurels. It is worn by a red ribbon edged blue.

The Military Cross is of silver. It is 1⅝ inches square, and the bar is 1½ inches wide. The ribbon is 1⅜ inches wide by 1½ inches high, of three equal stripes, the centre dark purple and the others white. From the top of the ribbon to the bottom of the cross is 3 11-16 inches. The cross bears in the centre the letters G.R.I., and on each arm of the cross is the Imperial Crown. The Royal Warrant says: "No person shall be eligible for this decoration unless he is a captain, a commissioned officer of a lower grade, or warrant officer in the British army or Indian or colonial military force, and the cross shall be awarded only to officers of the above ranks on the recommendation of the secretary of state for war. Foreign officers of an equivalent rank to those mentioned above, who have been associated in military operations with the British, Indian or Colonial forces shall be eligible for the honorary award of the cross. The Military Cross shall not confer any individual precedence, and shall not entitle the recipient to any addition after his name as part of his description or title."

The Distinguished Conduct Medal was very extensively awarded after the South African war. It is a decoration designed for warrant and noncommissioned officers and men.

DIDN'T NEED A LEG

Disabled French Piano Teacher Was Not Downhearted

A French deputy who is serving as a captain of artillery tells in a letter to a friend a story illustrating the bravery of the French soldiers. During a bayonet attack a shell exploded in the advancing line of French and took off the left leg of one of the soldiers. When an ambulance attendant came up to the wounded man the latter shouted to him: "Hurry up and look for my leg; it is lying over there. Maybe I can have use for it yet."

After the soldier had been brought to the hospital the general commanding, who had heard of the incident, went to see the soldier and complimented him on his courage. "Tank you very much, my General," the wounded soldier responded. "I have yet one leg for the service of my country, and I can even afford to lose that, too."

"But, my dear man"—

"Oh, I know what you are going to say," the soldier interrupted, "but really my legs are not so necessary in my profession, because I am a piano instructor and my hands are enough for me to get along with."

Heroic French Girl

A pretty girl of Saint Pol, near Arras, named Berthe Alibet, nineteen years old, was discovered in a French uniform in the region of the firing line. She had cut her hair short and otherwise disguised herself, and she cried bitterly when the military authorities sent her back to her parents. She said that her brother had been killed at Clarency, and she was determined to avenge his death. She had dressed herself in one of his uniforms, and had walked twenty miles, intending to take her place in the firing line.

The First Asphyxiating Bombs

Admiral C. C. Penrose Fitzgerald, of the British navy, writes that the use of poisonous fumes in warfare is very old. "It is certain," he adds, "that the Chinese used them quite lately. Anyone who served in the China War of 1857 will vouch for this, even if he was not serving in H.M.S. Niger. I was not personally serving in the Niger, and I do not know the chemical composition of the Chinese bombs. Our sailors contemptuously called them 'stink pots,' but I have no doubt that modern German Kultur has considerably improved upon them."

Buttons covered with cloth were prohibited by a statute in George I.'s reign.

German officers are forbidden to patronize matrimonial agencies.

Cadorna and Caesar Faced Same Problems

Augustus Caesar, having pacified Rome and turned a republic into a stable empire, found that his country was not safe until the mountains to the north of the peninsula had been brought under Roman authority. Peace for the plains of Lombardy, and what is now Venetia, was impossible so long as there remained upon the northern boundary warlike tribes ever ready to descend upon the Roman provinces and ravage them with fire and sword. What was needed was a natural and impregnable barrier that words prevent the incursions of the barbarians. In those days Italy was bounded by the Alps, occupied by barbarian tribes, and while what are now France and Belgium were Roman, only the Ligurian Alps gave secure access to these provinces. The civilized provinces of Greece, Macedonia, the towns along the Dardaneles, Bosphorus and the Aegan lacked protection from the barbarias beyond the Danube.

To Protect the Plains

The conquest of what are now Bulgaria and Serbia guaranteed the safety of the provinces in the Balkan peninsula, but here a strong army had to be maintained until the empire began to crumble some centuries later. There remained the necessity of conquering the Alps, a problem which was successfully attacked in several campaigns, and upper Austria, Salzkammergut, Eastern Bavaria and Tyrol were thoroughly pacified and organized, most of what is now Switzerland being already Roman. Thus Augustus and his generals solved the problem which is now occupying the thoughts of the Italian general staff, and the Italian plains were protected from the attacks of the northern barbarians.

Germans Then

Nevertheless, this frontier was unsatisfactory, for southwestern Germany still cut into the frontier as a corner, and made it necessary that a large army should be maintained along the frontier of Gaul. It was this situation that prompted Augustus to attempt the conquest of Germany, then disorganized. For a few years he succeeded. Then came the victory of Hermann over Varus at the Teutoburger Wald in A.D. 9, which resulted in the Roman frontier between the Rhine and the Elbe being broken, and the old frontier restored.

Sixty years later the frontier question was settled when Rome occupied the extreme angle of southwestern Germany, the present Baden, Wuerttemburg and Western Bavaria, thus rounding off the frontier in a satisfactory manner. Along this border a great Roman wall was erected, which served the purpose almost as well as a range of mountains. In recent years German archæologists have discovered portions of this wall which held back the barbarians until the Roman Empire fell into decay.

LONDON POLICE IN WAR

Red Tape Does Not Bind "Specials" Now-a-days

The London police do nothing by halves these days. One evening there came an urgent call for a strong force of special constables to be dispatched post haste to a distant destination, so the authorities in charge of the "specials," having collected their men, telephoned to the principal omnibus company to supply six motor-buses at once. The company replied that all their 'buses were out at work. Then from Scotland Yard police were sent out into Whitehall with orders to stop the first six motor-buses that came by, turn out their passengers, and bring the vehicles and their drivers round to the embankment. In ten minutes the commandeered 'buses were speeding away with their loads of "specials" on government service.

WATERLOO MONUMENT TURNED INTO GERMAN BULLETS

The famous artificial hill topped with the "Lion Monument" erected in memory of the victory over Napoleon won on the field of Waterloo, which brought to the Belgians their sovereignty. The monument is now reported to have been overthrown and cast into bullets by the German occupyers of Belgium for use against the British nation which erected it.

Brave Albanian Leader Now Helps The Serbins

Half-wild "Rob Roy of the Balkans" Was Man Who Told Abdul Hamid That He was Deposed—Is Absolutely Fearless.

The Rob Roy of Albania, Essad Pasha, is allied with the Serbians in their invasion of their neighbor to the South, and the turn affairs is particularly to the relish of the Italian authorities. Essad has a great following, and if the Albanians ever compose their differences, religious and political, he will undoubtedly be their choice for king. Essad Pasha is superior to the average run of Albanian chieftains. He comes of an old Moslem family, the Toptani, whose seat is at Tirana. This is probably the richest and most powerful clan in the country. Essad could summon 500 faithful retainers in a day from among his own personal followers.

Essad Pasha was educated for the Turkish Army, and fought bravely in the war between Greece and Turkey in 1897. His reputation as a first class fighting man reached the ears of Abdul Hamid, who made his brother, Ghani Bey, his aide-camp. There came a dispute between the Sultan and Ghani Bey, and the latter was shot by the Sultan's order. Essad went to Constantinople blazing with anger, and the man who shot Ghani Bey was himself slashed to death in broad daylight on the Galata bridge. A card pinned on his body bore the words, "Done by Essad Toptani." In spite of this flagrant defiance of his authority, the Sultan was afraid to tackle the wild, hawk-nosed Albanian chief, or perhaps he admired him. Abdul sent him back to Yanina to command the local gedarmerie, and gave him the rank of Brigadier-General.

There he quarrelled with Tatar Osman Pasha, the commander of the Yanina division. Essad, an austere Moslem, raided certain houses, in one of which he discovered his superior, Tatar Osman Pasha. As the Pasha refused to give his name, Essad gave him a particular sound thrashing.

He withdrew after this incident to his estates, and was there in 1908 when the revolution took place at Constantinople. He turned Young Turk, was elected as member of Parliament for Durazzo by his faithful followers, and went to Constantinople, where he became rather an awkward supporter of the Committee of Union and Progress owing to his Albanian sympathies.

In April, 1909, the revolution broke out. The troops marched from Salonica to depose the Sultan, and the Sheikh-ul-Islam issued a fetwa deposing Abdul Hamid. Then the question arose who should take the message to the Sultan. Essad rose to the occasion, and slowly and slyly replied: "I will go." Tremble from head to foot the Sultan met the brother of Ghani Bey, who announced his deposition. His warfare with the Young Turks continued in spite of this incident. He figured in violent scenes in the last Chamber that he had to be dragged away from threatening the Speaker.

Then he returned to Albania where he declared his severance from the Young Turks. But on the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912 he was anxious that Albania should not be cut up by the Powers, and hastened to Scutari with a relief column, became Governor, and gallantly defended it for many weeks against the Montenegrins.

At last he made peace with Nicholas, under which he was to march out with 24,000 men, his arms and all the honors of war. One of the conditions was that King Nicholas recognized Essad as an independent Prince of Albania, and Essad was proclaimed at Tirana in April, 1914. The Great Powers, however, refused to accept him and selected Prince William of Wied. For a time Essad Pasha acted as War Minister under the German Mpret, but it was only a hollow peace, and Essad organized a revolt. He was for the time unsuccessful, but escaped on an Italian steamer to Brindisi. After the flight of the unlucky Mpret Essad returned and entered Durazzo with 10,000 men. There the Albanian Senate elected him President of the Albanian Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the military forces.

Amid shouts of "Long live our Essad-" the new ruler took the seals of the Palace, and went to sleep in Prince William's bed.

But as soon as he began to extend his rule beyond Durazzo the old troubles began. Villages were surrounded on all sides and had to cut their way back to Durazzo.

Kitchener's Aid

At an early stage in Italy's fight for possession of Tripoli, which Egypt, as part of Turkey, was, Lord Kitchener was interested—certain notables who proposed that Egypt should send several regiments to the aid of the Turks, in accordance with the Turco Egyptian Treaty which Kitchener was known to uphold. Kitchener replied that he would have no objection if the Sultan would make the request, but that in order to preserve unruffled relations he would be obliged to recall the present troops by an equal number of British regiments, at which the proposal was hastily withdrawn.

WAR BY COMPASS FULL OF EXCITEMENT

Difficult Night Attacks a Feature of the Conflict—"Tommies" Know When One is Coming by the Use of the "Death Watch."

Among British wounded soldiers the compass is often known as the Death Watch. And for very good reason. Says Jock, "When you see the officer squinting along the sights of his compass all the afternoon, marking the direction of churches and mills, it means a night attack sure, and that some of you will never take tea in the trenches again." In night attacks at close quarters the compass is the only sure guide. Most night attacks are delivered in oblique lines, and when four or five regiments, covering maybe a mile of front, are on the move, there is a chance of a dreadful mix-up.

Tricks In All Trades

The orders may read: At a given signal, leave trench and advance at angle of 25 degrees north of east. The officer sights his compass on some prominent object, gives instructions to his men to advance right or left of it, and starts. As all officers have given similar instructions it is wonderful how many thousands may advance parallel, yet invisible. "Our regiment did not know that the next was in the game at all until they came out of the darkness, yelling like blazes, just on our left ten paces." Many a night attack, guided by bump of location only, has come to grief, one regiment firing on its friends by mistake or even charging them. In Belgium and Northern France, where every detail of military importance is carefully mapped, the compass is less used for long distance work than in other wars. The greatest mistake in using the compass in peace or in war is to sight on too near objects. Given a fairly distinctive and lofty point the officer and his men should keep true direction, though the hill may only occasionally come into view. More important still is the checking off of progress. A man trailing a few yards in the rear will help to pivot the company back to the true line by looking backward as often as forward. In absolutely shell-cleared country one must carefully fix a line of route, and trust to the bump of location, dangerous though such may be. There is a temptation to change direction when the British searchlight picks out the glinting rifle barrels of the enemy. But the officer has his compass direction to remember, and to appreciate that the slightest change in his front will give the enemy opportunity, through the gap left in the living wall, to press home a successful counter-attack.

Knowledge Wins

Without the compass night tactics on a large scale would be so risky that no sane general would consider for a moment their use. Thus it is that a careful study of the compass in action is important both to officer and soldier of the line, and really the elements are simplicity. Trusting to his men, General French in his headquarters far away plans a night attack, and directs it as easily as one started by day. And, by the way, the compass comes in imperative in day work, for most of our battles begin at dawn, and troops are continually changing ground through the hours of darkness. The officer who has true command of the compass and map of the ground will never get into trouble for impeding the progress of his neighboring brigade which is taking up position by an easy road to the left, while his own command is struggling through woods and across ploughs and pastures.

CRANK INVENTORS BUSY

Would-be inventors of new devices to wipe out whole armies at a stroke, to sink powerful dreadnoughts, reduce Zeppelins to powdered form; guns that will carry great distances, fade-away howitzers, etc., are haunting the offices of London patent agents day and night. The war has caused inventive ingenuity to run riot. Here are a few inventions from the clever brains of engineers and others:

New gun that will bag a Zeppelin at any height, with an ingenious range-finder.

A gun that can fire a projectile miles beyond the range of the biggest guns now used by Germany.

Projectiles that carry all kinds of acids and chemicals that put soldiers into their death sleep if they take a sniff. One inventor with long hair and green eyes would like to finance a company to make a projectile that carries tons of snuff. On explosion regiments are thrown into violent fits of sneezing and taken prisoners before they can recover.

Aeroplanes that can be perforated with bullets and still navigate.

Mines of all shapes and sizes, guaranteed to annihilate whole cities and make a fleet of battleships good material for the scrap heap.

LOST FIVE RIFLES

German Bullet Went Down Muzzle of London Soldier's Gun

While home on leave, Cecil Bourke, of the London Rifle Brigade, gave the following account of doings in the vicinity of Ypres: "For my own part I was lucky. My coat was riddled with holes by the grazing of bullets, and I was buried for half an hour by the collapse of a traverse of our trenches, before being rescued by Sergt. (now Second Lieut. Wimble and Lance-Corporal Pace. On another occasion, the men immediately on my right and left were shot down, and while I was speaking to one of our most popular officers, Lieut. Price, who joined us from Canada, he was shot through the head. I have had five rifles smashed by bullets, a German bullet once going right down the muzzle of one, whilst two of my rifles were cut clean in two.

"At one stage a gap was left in our lines which we were called upon to fill, and for nine days and nights we held our position. After six days' rest we were again up in the firing line at Ypres. On our left and right a temporary tactical retreat took place. We were in the centre, and one of our sergeants said: 'Retreat be ——!' We stood our ground, and after reinforcements had come up we won the engagements. As to the Germans, you can take it from me, they are splendid soldiers. The Saxons and Bavarians, however, do not seem anything like so keen on fighting against us as do the Prussians."

Bees Fought British

In the bush fighting in East Africa the Germans and their black troops placed hives of bees, partially stupefied by smoke, under lids on each side of narrow tracks along which our troops must advance. Wires or cords lifted the lids when touched by the advancing troops, and swarms of infuriated bees, recovered from their temporary stupor, were let loose on the attackers. The failure of the attack at certain points is said to have been due as much to this onslaught of the "little people" as to the German rifles and machine guns, many men being so horribly stung on the face or hands as to be temporarily blinded or rendered incapable of holding their weapons. Over 100 stings are said to have been extracted from one of the men of the Loyal North Lancashires.

Short sight is very rare in savages.

Newfoundland is the oldest British colony.

Assassins were first heard of in Persia about 1090.

Dusky Kings Loyal to France

King Taimalva IV., who reigns over 50 subjects in the island of Rimatara, in the Tubual group in the Pacific Ocean, and King Tournarii V., who holds sway over 750 growers of sugar-cane, yams, and cocoanut trees in Raiatu, of the same group, sent a declaration of their loyalty to the French Government, under the protection of which, they add, they are happy to dwell.

NOW AND THEN

John Bull: "Well, I never! It must have been a joke long time ago I was like that!"—"Westminster Gazette."