

**Sem's Entrance
Into Verdun**

A CHOICE bit of "Un Pekin sure le Front" (and, this time, in a humorous vein) is the chapter describing the entry of Sem, Parisian cartoonist beloved by the French, into Verdun.

"It is morning and it rains. A formidable, uninterrupted rumbling keeps the air vibrating and the rain trembling.

"Over yonder, just beyond this tragically desolate open space, is Verdun.

"Look out!" says Captain — to me, "we are going to cross a dangerous spot."

"Ah! Ah! I shrink up into the corner of the auto. I roll myself into a ball.

"I make sure of my helmet, entering it as far as I can, pulling it down with both hands, as if I wanted to get my whole self into it. Et allez donc. The chauffeur, a bit pale, makes the motor do its best, the auto plunges into the danger zone and is engulfed in one of the monumental gates that pierce the venerable ramparts of Vauban. Ca y est! I am in Verdun!

"We drive on toward the citadel on the other side of the city, where we are expected.

"At last, we are confronted with lofty, added glacis, a sort of geometrically-ribbed hill, at the foot of which opens an arched portal, black as the entrance of a tunnel, whose depths appear to be punctured with tiny bright lights. Soldiers are grouped before it; two sentinels, with bayonets set, mount guard. It is the citadel.

"The auto stops. At the precise instant I step out, our arrival is saluted by four terrific explosions—four German shells that fall I know not where. Surely, not so very far away. As to that, for every self-respecting war correspondent, every shell falls at a distance of from thirty to fifty yards—never more.

"There are something like a hundred paces between me and the citadel entrance, a hundred exposed paces. I do not hesitate. I take my fear in both hands, I make a wild dash, and I throw myself, completely winded, under the protecting porch.

"Ouf! None too soon! A second night of mitraille bursts with a crash as before, near the auto. I am seized with a little nervous panting, relieved laugh, like the people who, surprised by a shower, take refuge after a hurried flight under a porte cochere.

"All the same, I am a bit ashamed of my precipitation. In the presence of these impassive soldiers, who are eyeing me, I feel myself grow bright red under my too-blue helmet. There is no mistake about it, I lacked nerve, my entry is a flat failure. I should have arrived smiling, with the easy step of a man taking a constitutional. I endeavor to save my face, to create a diversion. I try to attribute my short panic to the alluvial rain. I snort with affectation. I brush the drops from my coat. I shake myself like a wet dog. Brrr! And I risk a flippant, "Good heavens, what a shower!"

"Monsieur should have taken his rifle!" breathes behind me a bawling voice. I do not insist and I plunge into the darkness of the long tunnel.

"I am unutterably relieved, un-speakably tranquil under the thick layer of rocks and earth interposed between my head and the redoubtable sky which my imagination pictures to me so braced with obuses.

"After the frightful uproar outside I appreciate deeply this peaceful silence. I even allow myself to forget deliciously the great drama that is being played up above.

"But the General calls me back to reality: "Messieurs, we lunch at noon. We have just time to go to the fort of X— where you will have a bird's-eye view of the battlefield."

"Humph! We were so comfortable here. I have, I admit it, a slight inner hesitation. Is it altogether indispensable to view this battlefield? For that matter, it appears that one sees very little. To begin with, it rains. And then, this subterranean

city is so novel, so interesting—How agreeable I find this citadel!

"'Aren't you ashamed, espèce de pekin! Allons, onste! Into the auto with you!"

"Daylight again, under a shower, in the tumult of the cannon. We cross hill after the deserted country. At last, on an elevation, the fort. The auto stops. We climb the slope. We enter. Under the sonorous posters, a sound of musket butts, an energetic command: "Present arms!" The post salutes.

"Just behind the general, between the lines of motionless fixed-eyed soldiers, I advance, convinced of my importance, taking to myself a part of the salute—my hand at the rim of my helmet, in the most approved military fashion.

"Barely past, I look back, just in time to see a sturdy 'pollu' fairly convulsed with hilarity.

"But what is he laughing at? Can it be at me perchance?

"I begin to distrust my helmet.

"We rest only an instant at the fort.

"After a rather long course across country, we reach a sort of eminence that dominates the entire region. There, the general stops, and, suddenly growing grave, he points to the panorama spread out before us, and says: "The battlefield of Verdun!"

"I shiver. Instinctively, I uncover, as in a church."

GERMANY AND IRELAND.

How Huns Have Tried to Use Feelings of Unrest.

German love for the Irish was born of expediency.

The Imperial Government looked upon Ireland as a desirable base of operations and upon the Irish people as fitting mediums for the advancement of Germany's plans.

Bernstorff recommended intensive cultivation of the spirit of unrest exhibited by the Irish and to that end urged that money and influence be exerted by German emissaries in the United States as well as in Ireland.

Casement was galled into taking action that cost him his life and with the exception of rioting, led by that body of irreconcilables which has ever afflicted Ireland, German plotting proved abortive.

German propaganda failed as regards Ireland and no wonder.

The professions of friendship and comradeship expressed at that time for Ireland by Germany was too palpably part of the German game.

The true German opinion of the Irish may be gathered from the following extract culled from the great German encyclopedia, the Conversations-Lexicon of Meyer:

"The character of the genuine Irish is a singular mixture of opposite traits; many of them, no doubt, developed by their unfortunate history. The main feature of the Irish is inconsistency and thoughtlessness, though they possess such characters as are compatible with these vices. The Irishman lacks reasoning power, perseverance, and self-control. He possesses a poetical faculty and a taste for music, legend, cunning, clever, and witty, although for the sake of deception he often pretends to be stupid and naive. But with all his intellectual powers he lacks profundity. Suspicious in his actions and thoughts, untrustworthy as a worker, lacking perseverance, and fickle, he is not equal to the performance of any great task in life and is incapable of attaining results commensurate with his sporadic activity. Those who are not his relations or friends dare not trust him. The proverb seems true that when an Irishman is stabbed, another Irishman is always bound to drive the dagger in. Treason has always been a prominent feature in all Irish risings. Conscientiousness is conspicuously lacking in the Irishman, and he is not distinguished for his love of truth. Irritable as he is and inclined to quarrels and violence, he is fond, too, of amusement. Eccentric and extravagant, he forgets to provide for the future. Though often a victim of intemperance, he can put up with dearth when necessary, and is quite contented if he only has potatoes to sate out his life."

That would make good reading at the next meeting of professional German-Irish agitators who masquerade as Friends of Irish Freedom.

Crop Worth \$930 an Acre. Harvesting three crops of broom corn from one planting in a single season, the yield from each cutting being about one ton to the acre of broom corn, is what is being accomplished in one section of the lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas, this year.

The average price received for the brush, which is used in the manufacture of high-grade brooms, is \$310 per ton, or a total of \$930 per acre.

In this region, which only a few years ago was a wilderness of mesquite trees and prickly pear, situated more than 100 miles from the nearest railroad outlet, there is being rapidly developed the greatest broom corn growing industry in the United States.

There is being grown there this season 40,000 acres of this product and the extremely high prices which dealers are paying for the brush are bringing fortunes to many farmers. The fact that the growing season is practically continuous throughout the twelve months of the year makes the possibilities of the industry unusually attractive.

The first planting is usually made in January, and as rapidly as one crop is matured it is cut and from the stubble there is quickly produced a second and third crop. All of the broom crop in the valley territory is grown by means of irrigation.

Canadian Casualties. Killed in Action—R. J. Donaldson, Fenelon Falls. Presumed to Have Died—J. Dwyer, Cornwall. Wounded—F. B. Adamson, Port Hope.

Cures Colds in France. LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE tablets remove the cause.—E. W. GROVE'S signature on box. 30c.

Seven men were drowned when the sand steamer Desmond capsized in the heavy seas and sank off South Chicago. Six men were rescued.

Fire breaking out in the Episcopal church at St. Anne de la Poetiere, Que., badly damaged the edifice, together with the presbytery.

The Canadian Government steamer Stucce foundered Friday night off the Magdalen Islands. The fate of the crew of forty-six, mostly from St. John, N.B., is unknown.

The American steamer Godorouh struck on Escumiac Point and will probably be a total loss. The crew is safe.

The death of one of Belgium's most famous aviators, Pierre Bracon, is reported.

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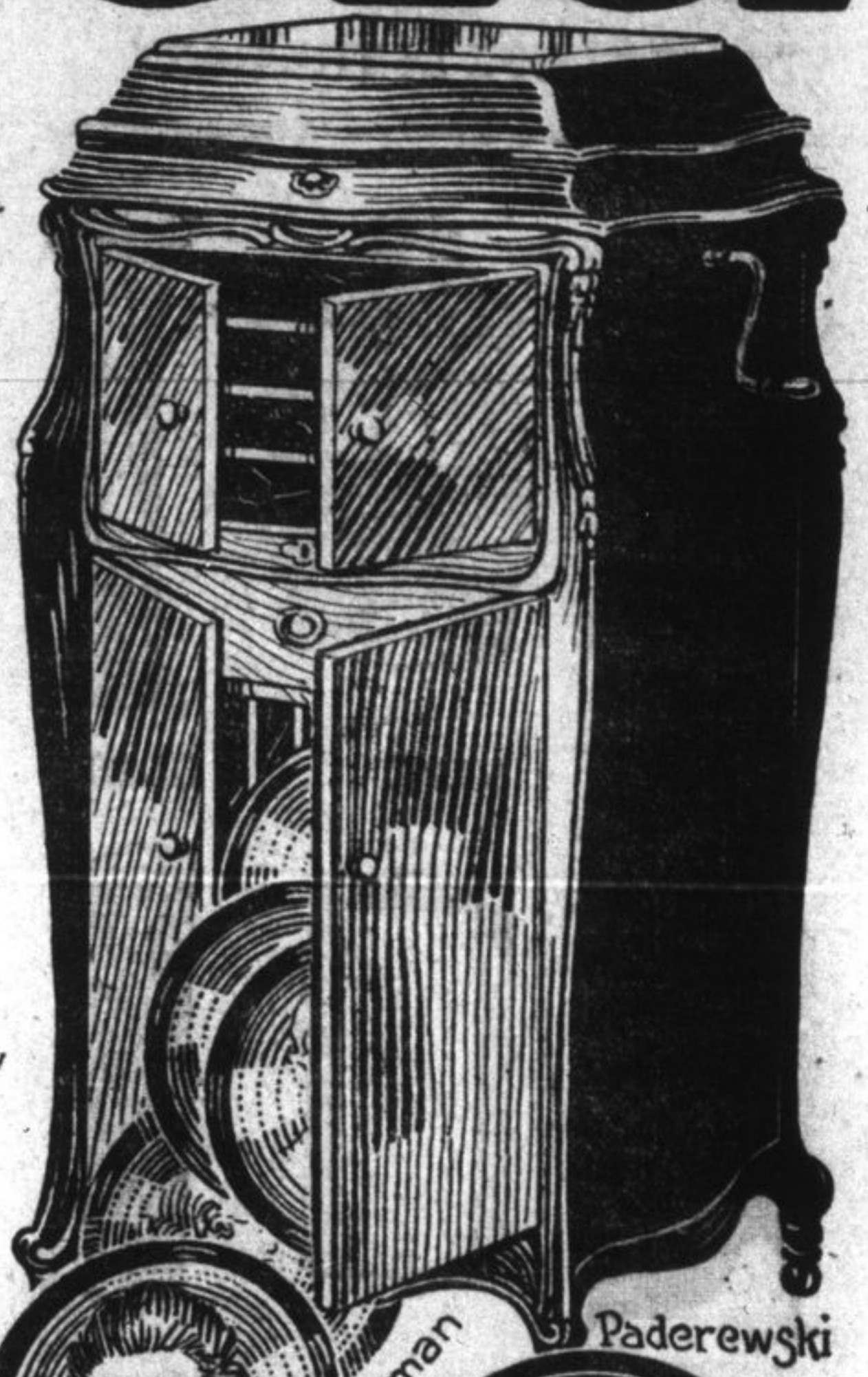
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