

TOUCHED BY SERVICE FLAG

Youngster on Brink of Disgrace Resolved to Be Worthy of Emblem Displayed in His Honor.

"Why the service flag?" is an old question, but from one of our middle West towns comes a new answer. A wealthy family in an Indiana town had a son, who had never done anything to reflect honor on his family—a family which was proud of its famous ancestry. He didn't enlist when this war broke out, and they tried to evade the draft, but was compelled to go in a recent call. He entered a training camp a few miles from his home town.

Rules and a regular life were hard for him. Smarting under a well-deserved reproof, he one night decided to desert. He slipped away from the camp and, under cover of darkness, made his way to his home in order to get his civilian clothes and better effect his escape.

Just as he was ready to scale the front veranda of his home he noticed the service flag in one of the house's great front windows. There it was—in the most conspicuous place the house afforded—a great silk flag with its one blue star.

"It's for me," the boy thought. Through his mind passed the memory of his life—a failure in winning any of the honors his family had wanted for him. No college diploma, not even a high school one, had he received—nothing except this one star in this flag had he ever let his people claim as his contribution to the family famous name.

He turned back toward the window. "They'll get to keep that honor," he told himself. "I'll make it bigger, too," and he slipped back to camp, elated to find that his absence had not been discovered.

WHO CAN RISE TO OCCASION?

Name of Man Capable of Formulating "Umbrella Regulations" Will Live in History.

With the passing of each rainy day it becomes increasingly strange that no benefactor of the race has been prodded, goaded or spattered into preparing a "Manual of Umbrellas." People have been carrying some sort of protection against the rain ever since anybody can remember, yet the only thing they have really learned to do well is to lose umbrellas. No two persons, not even lovers, can walk under one umbrella without getting wet, and raincoats probably were first devised by a man who tried to carry an umbrella over his wife's hat. What excuse is there for the person who goes through crowded streets holding an umbrella before him in a charge-bayonets fashion? An apology does not exactly meet the requirements after the tip of an umbrella rim has been thrust into some one's eye. Folded, the umbrella is just as dangerous, when some one comes plunging along the sidewalk holding the umbrella at an angle of about 45 degrees ahead of him, tripping every one but himself. Then there is the person who tucks the handle under the arm, so that an innocent person may become speared on the sharp end which sticks out like a 60-foot telephone pole on a 15-foot truck. Furthermore, wet umbrellas never were intended as partitions between seats, even at a motion-picture theater. There is no desire to distract the best brains of the country from consideration of war problems, but some sort of umbrella regulations are needed.

Silvery Bark of the Yellow Birch.

The bark of the yellow birch can be compared with nothing else. The tree is unique among trees. The yellow birch, often better called the silvery birch, has a bark more tinsel-like than that of any other tree. It seems to have been made for campers to admire, or perhaps, in an emergency, to use to kindle the camp fire, says Edward F. Bigelow in Boys' Life. But do not allow the appreciation of the useful silvery-bark to prevent your appreciation of the beautiful. It is true that the bark may thus be used for kindling, and it is also probably true that the removal of the loose bark does not injure the tree, but such removal injures the beauty of the tree, as you then deprive it of its chief characteristic. The manner in which the bark breaks on the main trunk, expands and rolls back in ribbonlike curls and strips, which long remain attached and rustle in every passing breeze, could not fail to elicit the admiration of every lover of the forest.

It is noticeable that on old trunks the character of the bark is different, as there it is roughened by irregular platelike scales.

In Vaudeville.

Draft men coming to Camp Keefey recently for training decorated the rail-road cars in which they traveled with all sorts of notions and inscriptions. When they got there they were required to wash them off. However, one car got away from camp in some unexplained fashion, while three words still adorned its sides: "This is the bunch that's going to make the Kaiser whistle the 'Star-Spangled Banner!'"

Peculiar Cause for Divorce.

In a divorce case at London, England, the petitioner, a lady compared to the Gordon Lightfooters, said his wife, an Englishwoman, refused to be seen with him on the street because she did not like him in a kilt. When he was on leave leave she greeted him with "Oh, those old kilts!" The husband was granted a decree.

ENGLISH UNIVERSITYS - BACK TO NORMAL

Virtually Every Collegian in War Service Anxious to Resume His Educational Work.



great universities of England whose student bodies and teaching staffs were greatly depleted by service in the army or in government offices during the war are again filling with students and resuming normal life. This is shown by a letter received here by Lieutenant Colonel J. C. Fountaine of the British Embassy from A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol College, Oxford. New schools are being opened at Oxford and plans for greater efficiency are being set into effect, he writes. According to the Master of Balliol, Oxford sent approximately 12,000 of its men to the war or into the government service. Of these 2,394 were killed and 160 are missing. More than 1,000 won honors in the war, including 16 Victoria crosses. The figures of Cambridge University would be about the same, the Master estimates.

Outlining the styles rendered by men of the forty colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, the Master writes that owing to the response for war service, the student life "dwindled to a thread." He adds that "the importance of the response of these two older universities was that it filled up the gap between the destruction of the old regular army in the last year of August and September of 1917 and the coming forward of the newly trained territorial in the spring of 1917. This immediate response to the call of the country and the personal courage and devotion of these young men were a complete and decisive answer to any 'class' jealousy or feeling that the war was being made to last the longest."

"We doubted how many of the men would want to come back," continues the Master. "We are finding that practically every man who possibly can is applying to be taken back at any rate for a shorter course lasting an average of one-and-two-thirds years) and already the colleges are overfull."

The general tone and character of these men is described by Balliol's Master as remarkably high. There is quite as much life and cheerful activity as before the war and a great deal more seriousness of purpose. The Master notes not only a marked improvement in the strength of character shown by the returning students but that they have gained intellectually what they had lost in book knowledge and have more than made up for this loss by the power of contact to the point, and by a sense of reality about their work.

This, he concludes, shows that their previous university education was far too bookish and abstract in type and "neglect" too much the intellectual effect of beginning things at the practical and concrete end. These returned men are not only knower to work but they work with more willfulness and directness than before they went out; for, as one of them said, that you had to do a lot of thinking in the trenches, or else your number was soon up."

Oxford has made many concessions to these men which the Master regards as justified. In the showing they now are making in their studies. Formerly nine terms residence was required to obtain an Oxford degree, now the men who served in the army are exempt from half this requirement and from some of the examinations requirements. These concessions will enable the majority of them to take their degree and go into the profession only a year or two later than would have been the case but for the war.

"In character and in general intellectual development they will be better men than they would have been under normal conditions and, in intellectual equipment of knowledge, hardly, if at all inferior," writes the Balliol Master.

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