

Miss Dee Van Balkom: "A Girl Without a Country"

CHICAGO.—Her name is Dee Van Balkom. She was born on her father's tobacco plantation in Sumatra. She was sent to Paris to be educated at an early age, and graduated from the London Conservatory of Music. When she was sixteen years old her father, who was a Hollander, died of fever and Dee came to America with her mother, a French woman. She had been in this country one a short time when the war broke out.



Dee Van Balkom wanted to do something to help. She had traveled all over the world, spoke five languages, and was an accomplished pianist. She could drive a car. She joined the ambulance service of the Canadian army, and sailed for the front. In 1916 the girl veteran returned to America; but not to stay. After a brief rest she sailed for France once more, this time as a wireless operator in the signal corps of the United States army. After the signing of the armistice, Miss Van Balkom was transported back to this country and honorably discharged.

It was not until she had been offered a position in South America and had attempted to get her passports that Miss Van Balkom discovered that she was a "girl without a country."

Then some ingenious person suggested that she go to one of the large base hospitals and be married to a dying soldier. Thus she would automatically assume her husband's nationality.

The idea rather appealed to the "girl without a country" until she happened to wander into the court of domestic relations and remained for an hour.

"But after what I've heard here—no!" she said. "If I married a stranger and he lived to prove like some of these men! No—I'd rather be a 'girl without a country.'"

Historic Strasbourg.

In establishing the administration of the restored province of Alsace Lorraine in the city of Strasbourg, the people of France have regained a richly historic ground, says the Boston Transcript. Its cathedral, whose building engaged the services of famous architects and decorators for the period of four centuries before reaching the completion in which it stands today, is one of the marvels of the world. Its great university has a library of a million volumes and before the war its students numbered more than 2,000.

These are the local glories, but a universal fame has been gained by the products of its more intimate world-wide recognition since the middle ages; Strasbourg beer was known before America was discovered, and as for that delicacy so prized by the fastidious taste of gourmards, the pate de fois gras, the name of Strasbourg is the certificate of extreme excellence.

Improved Oil-Burner.

A new oil-burner for the kitchen stove, announced from Cairo, Egypt, is attachable by a special flange to the grate door, and it neither requires alteration of the solid fuel stove, nor prevents the use of solid fuel. The nozzle projects about an inch into the grate, the oil tank being mounted on a suitable rack outside the stove. A small fire heats the fuel oil to about 180 degrees Fahrenheit, and as the oil passes from the nozzle, a jet of compressed air or steam converts it into a spray that burns with a continuous smokeless and odorless flame. In Cairo, it is noted, compressed air is supplied in pipes to houses.

Farmers

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HAD "GONE WEST"

Pathetic Incident in Hospital Bombarded by Huns.

Wounded Young French Infantry Officer Thought He was Going "Over the Top," and in That Belief Passed On.

The head nurse watched the stretcher bearers clatter slowly and awkwardly down the path and disappear in the darkness bearing between them a silent, blanket-wrapped figure. Then slowly and thoughtfully she turned and entered the field hospital tent. The pale little nurses' aid, garbed in the picturesque blue of the American Red Cross, rose and came to meet her. In subdued whispers, scarcely audible in the big vacant stillness of the tent, she told the story of any changes which had taken place in the condition of the boys who lay so bravely silent on the 50 tiny cots.

"Bertrand, that young infantry officer in bed No. 9, with the bad chest wound—he does not seem right," she said softly. "His lips are blue, and he sleeps so much."

"Bring your flash," replied the head nurse, as she led the way over to the dark corner, where, in a bed separated from the rest, the young Bertrand lay, apparently sleeping. Leaning over him lightly, with a mother touch she laid her hand on his forehead. The boy's eyes opened, dazedly, and blinked in the glare of the aid's flashlight. Then, as with an effort, he smiled.

Suddenly the tent flap nearest them opened. The Scotch orderly entered, reached quickly for the knob that governed the big center tent light and

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switched it off. Without a word the aid covered her flash and sprang to extinguish the desk light, while old Macleun, the trusty, crept along the tent wall behind the beds to be sure that each window was tightly closed.

Overhead there gradually came into being a steady, regularly interrupted drone, like that of a malignant insect—then a flash—a great roar, not very far away—and the tent shook like a leaf in the wind. At the first sound of the raid Bertrand had started, sitting upright in bed. The head nurse, helpless in the intense darkness and fearing to make him more restless by attempting to put him down, held him in her arms. Soon, says Modern Hospital, in relating the story, he began to call out orders, rapidly, precisely, like a man who was used to being obeyed, and then still louder, with more spirit, until his voice rang and reverberated through the open spaces of the tent. "Attention! — Allons, mes enfants! — En avant!"

"From somewhere in the darkness the voice of the aid, a trifle shuky, said: "He thinks he's going over."

Another flash—another detonation—this time nearer. The head nurse felt something warm and wet soaking the front of her uniform. Then a silence—it seemed for ages. Finally Macleun, flashing on the light, called out: "They're gone, the Germans!"

He came over to the bed and gave one look at the burden the head nurse held in her arms. Then, taking off his hat, he held it, folded, in front of his coat.

"You can lay him down, miss. I think there's just work for me and the stretcher bearers now. The poor lad's gone west."

Mule Objected to Burden.

An observer attached to the First Army had been up for several hours making notes on enemy infantry operations when he was suddenly attacked by a single-seat combat plane, says the Popular Mechanics Magazine. The balloon crew on the ground immediately began to haul the big gas bag down, but the observer was running no chances and took to his parachute. This drifted well back of the lines and deposited him in the midst of a number of grazing army mules, and right astride one mule. The mule, not taking kindly to the sudden load forced on him, began to rear and plunge, starting quite a commotion among the herd, and the observer was rescued with difficulty from his precarious position.

CULTIVATION NEEDED IN CORN PRODUCTION

Object Is to Promote Early Growth and Development.

Methods Will Vary to Meet Requirements of Planting—Prevent Weeds From Robbing Soil of Moisture and Fertility.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Approximately 100,000,000 acres of corn in the United States are annually given two or more cultivations. Cultivation is considered essential in the corn production. The general purpose of cultivation is to promote the early growth and later development of the corn plant. The usual type of cultivation is sometimes modified to meet special conditions, such as retarding the vegetative growth of the plant by cutting the corn roots in early cultivation. The kind of cultivation will also vary to some extent to meet the requirements of different methods of planting.

Some of the most successful corn growers begin their cultivation before they plant their crop. They claim that a deep cultivation of the soil at this time is of as much value as later cultivations. It causes the soil to warm more quickly, destroys early weed growth, and incorporates the vegetable matter more thoroughly into the soil.

Corn is cultivated to prevent weeds from robbing the corn of soil moisture and fertility, to put the surface in the best condition to absorb rainfall, to warm the soil by drying its surface quickly, and to save moisture by checking the capillary rise to the soil surface.

Corn should be cultivated often enough to keep down the weeds and to maintain a loose soil mulch until the crop has attained its growth. To satisfy this end a greater number of cultivations will be necessary when rains at intervals of a week or so cause the surface soil to run together and crust. This crust must be broken and



Cultivation is Essential in the Production of Corn.

the soil mulch restored or excessive run-off and evaporation will soon rob the crop of much-needed moisture. Promptness in restoring the soil mulch after each rain is of great importance. This work can be rapidly and less expensively performed by use of double cultivators widened, and by driving astride each alternate row, as by this practice the mulch is restored in half the time necessary to drive astride of every row.

Corn should not be cultivated so long as the soil mulch is in good condition and free of weeds. Corn should not be cultivated when the soil turns up in clods, breaking the corn roots and permitting the soil to dry out to a greater depth than it would if not cultivated.

HAY CROPS FOR LIVE STOCK

Many Farmers Unmindful of Necessity of Providing for Fall and Winter Feeding.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The high price of rough feed emphasizes the necessity of all farmers planting a sufficient acreage of summer forage crops to enable them to provide themselves with live stock during the coming year. With the abundance of pasture available in the springtime farmers oftentimes are unmindful of the necessity of providing for that period during the fall when pasture will be dry, or during the winter when there will be no feed available.

The county agents should be consulted with reference to the availability of seed. Where outside purchases have to be made the order should be placed at once, so that the seed may be on hand to sow when the soil is in good condition and the season is not too far advanced.

Among the several summer hay crops for the Southwest sorghum or Sudan grass are undoubtedly in most favor. In the southeastern territory sorghum and cowpeas, planted any time before the first of July, will mature a great abundance of good quality rough feed for mules or cattle. The county agents should be consulted with reference to best crops for local conditions, method of planting and quantity of seed per acre to be used in different localities.

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