UNDER FIRE by Richard Harding Davis.

ONE cold day on the Aisne when the Germans had just withdrawn to the east bank and the allies held the west, the French soldiers built huge bonfires and huddled around them. When the "Jack Johnsons," as they call the six-inch howitzer shells that strike with a burst of black smoke, began to fall, sooner than leave the warm fires, the soldiers accepted the chance of being hit by the shells. Their officers had to order them back.

I saw this and wrote of it. A friend refused to credit it. He said it was against his experience. He did not believe that for the sake of keeping warm, men would chance being killed. But the incident was quite characteristic. In times of war you constantly see men, and women too, who, sooner than suffer discomfort or even inconvenience, risk death. The psychology of the thing is, I think, that a man knows very little about being dead, but has a very acute knowledge of what it is to be uncomfortable. His brain is not able to grasp death, but it is quite capable of informing him that his fingers are cold. Often men receive credit for showing coolness and courage in times of danger, when in reality, they are not properly aware of the danger, and through habit are acting automatically. The girl in Chicago who went back into the Iroquois Theater fire to rescue her rubber overshoes was not a heroine. She merely lacked imagination. Her mind was capable of appreciating how serious for her would be the loss of her overshoes but not of being burned alive.

Dared Death for a Cigarette.

At the battle of Velestinos in the Greek-Turkish war, John F. Bass, of the Chicago Daily News, and myself got into a trench at the foot of a hill on which later the Greeks placed a battery. All day the Turks bombarded this battery with a cross fire of shrapnel and rifle bullets, which did not touch our trench, but cut off our return to Velestinos. Sooner than pass through this cross-fire all day we crouched in the trench until about sunset, when it came on to rain. We exclaimed with dismay. We had neglected to bring our ponchos. "If we don't get back to the village at once," we assured each other, "we will get wet." So we raced through half a mile of falling shells and bullets and, before the rain fell, got under cover. Then Bass said: "For 12 hours we stuck to that trench because we were afraid if we left it we would be killed. And the only reason we ever did leave it was because we were more afraid of catching cold."

In the same war I was in a trench with some infantrymen, one of whom never raised his head. Whenever he was ordered to fire he would shove his rifle barrel over the edge of the trench, shut his eyes and pull the trigger. He took no chances. His comrades laughed at him and swore at him, but he would only grin sheepishly and burrow deeper. After several hours a friend in another trench held up a bag of tobacco and some cigarette papers and in pantomime "dared" him to come for them. To the intense surprise of everyone, he scrambled out of our trench and, exposed against the skyline, walked to the other trench; and while he rolled a handful of cigarettes, drew the fire of the enemy. It was not that he was brave; he had shown that he was not. He was merely stupid. Between death and cigarettes his mind could not rise above cigarettes.

Why the same kind of people are so differently affected by danger is very hard to understand. It is almost impossible to get a line on it.

I was in the city of Rheims for three days and two nights while it was being bombarded. During that time 50,000 people remained in the city and, so far as the shells permitted, continued about their business. The other 50,000 fled from the city, and camped out along the road to Paris. For five miles outside Rheims they lined both edges of that road like people waiting for a circus parade. With them they brought rugs, blankets and loaves of bread and from daybreak until night fell and the shells ceased to fall, they sat in the hay fields and along the grass gutters of the road.

Some of them were most intelligent looking, and had the manner and clothes of the rich. There was one family of five that on four different occasions, on our way to and from Paris, we saw seated on the ground at a place certainly five miles away from any spot where a shell had fallen. They were all in deep mourning, but as they sat in the hay field around a wicker basket and wrapped in steamer rugs, they were comic. Their lives were no more valuable than those of their fellow townsfolk who in Rheims were carrying on the daily routine. These kept the shops open or in the streets were assisting the Red Cross.

One elderly gentleman told me how he had been seized by the Germans as a hostage and threatened with death by hanging. With 40 other first citizens, from the 4th to the 12th of September he had been in jail. After such an experience one would have thought that between himself and the Germans he would have placed as many miles as possible, but instead he was strolling around the Place du Parvis, Notre Dame, in front of the Cathedral. For the French officers who on sightseeing bent were motoring into Rheims from the battle line, he was acting as a sort of guide. Pointing with his umbrella, he would say: "On the left is the new Palace of Justice, the facade entirely destroyed; on the right you see the Palace of the Archbishop completely wrecked. The shells that just passed over us have apparently fallen in the garden of the Hotel Lion d'Or." He was as cool as the conductor on a "Seeing Rheims" observation car.

He was matched in coolness by our Consul, William Bardel. The American Consulate is at No. 14 Rue Kellerman. That morning a shell had hit the chestnut tree in the garden of his neighbor at No. 12 and had knocked all the chestnuts into the garden of the Consulate. "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," said Mr. Bardel.

The Knitting Needles.

In the bombarded city there was no rule as to how any one would act. One house would be closed and barred, and the inmates would be either in their own cellars or in the caves of the nearest champagne company. To those latter they would bring books or playing cards, and among millions of dust-covered bottles by candle light would wait for the guns to cease. Their neighbors sat in their shops, or stood at the doors of their houses, or paraded the streets. Past them their friends were hastening, trembling with terror.

Many women sat on the front steps knitting and with interested eyes watched their acquaintances fleeing towards the Paris gate. When overhead a shell passed, they would stroll, still knitting, out into the middle of the street, to see where the shell struck. By the noise it was quite easy to follow the flight of the shells. You were tricked by the sound into almost believing you could see them. The six-inch shells passed with a whistling roar that was quite terrifying. It was as though just above you invisible telegraph wires had snapped, and their rush through the air was like the roar that rises to the car window when two express trains, going in opposite directions, pass at 60 miles an hour.

When these sounds assailed them the people fleeing from the city would scream. Some of them, as though they had been hit, would fall on their knees. Others were sobbing, and praying aloud. The tears rolled down their cheeks. In their terror there was nothing ludicrous; they were in as great physical pain as were some of the hundreds in Rheims who had been hit. And yet others of their fellow townsmen living in the same street, and with the same allotment of brains and nerves, were treating the bombardment with the indifference they would show to a Summer shower.

A Matter of a Cake of Soap.

We had not expected to spend the night in Rheims, so, with Ashmead Bartlett, the military expert of the London Daily Telegraph, I went into a chemist's shop to buy some soap. The chemist, seeing I was an American, became very much excited. He was overstocked with an American shaving soap, and he begged me to take it off his hands. He would let me have it at what it cost him. He did not know where he had placed it, and he was in great alarm lest we would leave his shop before he could unload it on us. From both sides of the town French artillery was firing in salvos, the shocks shaking the air; over the shop of the chemist shrapnel was whining, and in the street the howitzer shells were opening up subways. But his mind was intent only on finding that American shaving soap. I was anxious to get on to a more peaceful neighborhood. To French soap, to soap "made in Germany," to neutral American soap, I was indifferent. Had it not been for the presence of Ashmead Bartlett, I would have fled. To die, even though clasping a cake of American soap, seemed less attractive than to live unwashed. But the chemist had no time to consider shells. He was intent only on getting rid of surplus stock.

The majority of people who are afraid are those who refuse to consider the doctrine of chance. The chances of their being hit may be one in 10,000, but they disregard the odds in their favor and fix their minds on that one chance against them. In their imagination it grows larger and larger. It looms red and bloodshot, it hovers over them; wherever they go it follows, menacing, threatening, filling them with terror. In Rheims there were 100,000 people and by shells 1000 were killed or wounded. The chances against were 100 to one. Those who left the city undoubtedly thought the odds were not good enough.

Parisians and the Bombs.

Those who on account of the bombs that fell from the German aeroplanes into Paris left the city had no such excuse. The chance of any one person being hit by a bomb was one in several millions. But even with such generous odds in their favor, during the days the bomb-dropping lasted, many thousands fled. They were obsessed by that one chance against them. In my hotel in Paris my landlady had her mind fixed on that one chance, and regularly every afternoon when the aeroplanes were expected she would go to bed. Just as regularly her husband would take a pair of opera glasses and in the Rue de la Paix hopefully scan the sky.

One afternoon while we waited in front of Cooks, an aeroplane sailed overhead, but so far above us that no one knew whether it was a French airship or a German one preparing to launch a bomb. A man from Cook's, one of the interpreters, with a horrible knowledge of English, said: "Taube, or not Taube, that is the question." He was told he was inviting a worse death than from a bomb. To illustrate the attitude of mind of the majority of the Parisians, there is the story of the street gamin who for some time from the garden of the Tuilleries had been watching a German aeroplane threatening the city. Finally he exclaimed impatiently:

"Oh, throw your bomb; you are keeping me from my dinner."

A soldier under fire furnishes few of the surprises of conduct to which the civilian treats you. The soldier has no choice. He is tied by the leg, and whether the chances are even or ridiculously in his favor, he must accept them. The civilian can always say: "This is no place for me," and get up and walk away. But the soldier cannot say that. He and his officers, the Red Cross nurses, doctors, ambulance bearers, even the correspondents, have taken some kind of oath, or signed some kind of contract that makes it easier for them than the civilian to stay on the job. For them it would require more courage to go away than to remain.

Indeed, although courage is so highly regarded, it seems to be of all the virtues the most common. In six wars, among men of nearly every race, color, religion and training, I have seen but four men who failed to show courage. I have seen men who were scared, sometimes whole regiments, but they still fought on; and that is the highest courage, for they were fighting both a real enemy and an imaginary one.

There is a story of a certain politician General of our Army who under a brisk fire turned on one of his staff and cried:

"Why, Major, you are scared, sir; you are scared!"

"I am," said the Major, with his teeth chattering, "and if you were as scared as I am you'd be 20 miles in the rear."

Men Fight in a Kind of Daze.

In this war the onslaughts have been so terrific and so unceasing, the artillery fire especially has been so entirely beyond human experience, that the men fight in a kind of daze. Instead of arousing fear, the tumult acts as an anesthetic. With forests uprooted, houses smashing about them, and unseen express trains hurtling through space above them, they are too stunned to be afraid. And in time they become fed up on battles, and to the noise and danger grow callous.

On the Aisne I saw an artillery battle that stretched for 15 miles. Both banks of the river were wrapped in smoke; from the shells villages miles away were in flames, and 200 yards in front of us the howitzer shells were bursting in black fumes. To this the French soldiers were completely indifferent. The hills they occupied had been held that morning by the Germans, and the trenches and fields were strewn with their accoutrement. So, all the French soldiers who were not serving the guns wandered about seeking "souvenirs." They had never a glance for the villages burning crimson in the bright sunlight, or for the falling of the "Jack Johnsons." They were intent only on finding a spiked helmet; and when they came upon one they would give a shout of triumph and hold it up for their comrades to see. And their comrades would laugh delightedly and race towards them stumbling over the furrows. They were as happy and eager as children picking wild flowers.

It is not good for troops to sup entirely on horrors and also to breakfast and lunch on them. So, after in the trenches one regiment has been pounded it is withdrawn for a day or two and kept in reserve. The English Tommies spend this period in recuperating in playing football and cards. When the English learned this, they forwarded so many thousands of packs of cards to the distributing depot that the War Office had to request them not to send any more.

Sharp Contrast of War.

When the English officers are granted leave of absence they do not waste their energy on football, but motor into Paris for a bath and lunch. At 8 they leave the trenches along the Aisne and by noon arrive at Maxim's, Voisin's or La Rue's. Seldom does warfare present a sharper contrast. From a breakfast of "bully" beef, eaten from a tinplate within their nostrils the smell of camp fires, dead horses and unwashed bodies, they find themselves seated on red velvet cushions, surrounded by mirrors and walls of white and gold, and spread before them the most immaculate silver, linen and glass. And the odors that assail them are those of truffles, white wine and "artechant sauce mousseline."

It is a delight to hear them talk. Their point of view is so sane and fair. In risking their legs and arms, or life itself, they see nothing heroic, dramatic or extraordinary. They talk of the war as they would of a cricket match, or a day in the hunting field. If things are going wrong they do not whine or blame, nor when fortune smiles are they jubilant. And they are so appallingly honest and frank. A piece of shrapnel had broken the arm of one of them, and we were helping him to cut up his food and pour out his Scotch and soda. Instead of making a hero or a martyr of himself, he said, confidingly: "You know, I had no right to be hit. If I had been minding my own business I wouldn't have been hit. But Jimmie was having a hell of a time on top of a hill, and I just ran up to have a look in. And the beggars got me. Served me jolly right. What?"

Tale of Two Brothers.

I met one subaltern at La Rue's who had been given so many commissions by his brother officers to bring back tobacco, soap and underclothes that all his money save five francs was gone. He still had two days leave of absence and as he truly pointed out in Paris even in wartime five francs will not carry you far. I offered to be his banker, but he said he would first try elsewhere. The next day I met him on the boulevards and asked what kind of a riotous existence he found possible on five francs.

"I've had the most extraordinary luck," he said. "After I left you, I met my brother. He was just in from the front, and I got all his money."

"Won't your brother need it?" I asked.

"Not at all," said the subaltern cheerfully. "He's shot in the legs and they've put him to bed. Rotten luck for him you might say, but how lucky for me!"

Had he been the brother who was shot in both legs, he would have treated the matter just as light heartedly.

One English Major, before he reached his own firing line, was hit by a bursting shell in three places. While he was lying in the American ambulance hospital at Neuilly the doctor said to him:

"This cot next to yours is the only one vacant. Would you mind if we put a German in it?"

"By no means!" said the Major. "I haven't seen one yet."

The stories the English officers told us at La Rue's and Maxim's by contrast with the surroundings were all the more grewsome. Seeing them there it did not seem possible that in a few hours these same fit, suntanned youths in khaki would be back in the trenches, or scouting in advance of them, or that only the day before they had been dodging death and destroying their fellowmen.

Battle Stories Told at Maxim's.

Maxim's, which now reminds one of the last act of the "Merry Widow," was the meeting place for the French and English officers from the front, the American military attaches from our Embassy, among whom were soldiers, sailors, aviators, marines, the doctors and volunteer nurses from the American ambulance, and the correspondents, who by night dined in Paris

(Concluded on Page 6.)

SEVENTH OF A COURSE OF TWELVE MUSIC LESSONS TO APPEAR IN THE SUNDAY OREGONIAN

Key of D Sharp Minor relative of F Sharp Major

GROVE'S MUSIC SIMPLIFIER

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EIGHTH LESSON NEXT SUNDAY

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Is a method for the home where a child can from an object lesson listen to the harmonies which the lesson places under the fingers. It educates the ear and prepares the mind for an intelligent idea of music in its different pathways. It also helps the advanced music scholar and teacher, for no person can learn the grammar of music without understanding the facts contained in Grove's Music Simplifier.

In this lesson are presented the chords of the key of F sharp and its relative key of D sharp minor. Both of these keys are regarded as difficult for beginners in music to undertake, but with the use of the charts the chords may be readily played and soon committed to memory.

INSTRUCTION—Place one of the charts at right angles with the keyboard so that the small white letter D at bottom of chart with the dash above it is directly over D on the keyboard. Then the white spaces on the chart will be over the white keys and black spaces over the black keys. The top, middle and lower sections on the lower chart represent the three chords, a mastery of which will enable anyone to accompany on the piano or organ any song or melody in the key of F sharp, and the upper chart represents the chords of the key of D sharp minor.

The white letters are to be played with the left hand and the black letters with the right hand.

Now having placed the chart on the piano or organ, play the white letter on the top section with the left hand, and then the three black letters in unison with the right hand.

Next play the middle section in the same way, then the lower section, and then return to the top section.

The small white letter D at bottom of chart with a dash above it, which gives the chart position, must not be played.

The knowledge of the keys and facility in striking the proper chord form the basis of all musical knowledge. Keep the chart on the piano or organ until you are thoroughly familiar with chords in the keys given in this week's lesson, and when memorized you are quite as well equipped for the playing of accompaniments as one who has studied music for years.

Every triad in black letters is marked 1, 3, 5. Always read triads 1, 3, 5, no matter what position. Triad 1 3 5 C E G —marked—third position, 5, the highest; always read it so. 3 5 1 E G C first position, 1, the highest; read 1 3 5 5 1 3 C E G G C E second position, 3, the highest, read 1 3 5 C E G and so with every triad major or minor.

Key of F# Six Sharps or 6♭ F·C·G·D·A&E#