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THE ITALIAN DEFEAT.

The explanation so far given for the great defeat and retreat of the Italian army seems inadequate. The Italians up to this catastrophe had conquered the most stupendous difficulties. The English and French could barely make progress in a level country, yet those plucky Italian fighters could hack their way over precipitous cliffs and high mountains. It is hard to believe that the Italians could have met this great defeat on the basis of fighting ability alone, or even from superior German strategy. It looks like treachery somewhere. Not that any unit of the Italian army or any commander has played false, for these soldiers have shown splendid patriotic feeling.

German commanders about conditions inside the allied armies. One can't help feeling that through this spy system Germany became aware that there was a weak and poorly guarded back door to the Italian line, and was tipped off by its agents as to how that door could be broken open. This does not mean that any Italians have sold out their country, only that all through each allied country German spies are secretly listening and transmitting information. It shows what a terrible threat German power is, and how the nations of the earth must strive to put down a power that thus seeks to control the whole earth by these insidious means.

THIS WAR OF SCIENCE—SHIP VS. SUBMARINE.

What can be done to make the merchant ship proof against the submarine? The offhand reply would be to strengthen the hull wall of the ship so that it should be proof from torpedo attack. Yet this simply aggravates the danger. The torpedo will go through any steel wall that can be placed on such ships. The greater the weight of metal protection, the more that metal is broken up into bits, the more it tears to pieces the fabric of the vessel.

Technical thought today would make a light hull wall for the vulnerable portion of the ship. It would have rows of water-tight compartments. It would arrange the cargo with due proportions of freight having a capacity for absorbing heat and explosive gases. In case of explosion, if the gases were liberated into compartments filled with freight like potatoes, it is said the cargo would absorb much of this destructive force. Vents would be provided so that much of the explosive gas would be

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liberated harmless into the outside air. A ship built low in the water, with a smokestack only a few feet high, the draft kept strong by force, would escape submarine observation except at short distance. Use of fuel oil and anthracite coal would save the smoke that reveals a vessel's presence. The sides of the ship should be camouflaged with imitation of sea color. Skillful marksmen and effective guns mounted on the deck can make things quite uncomfortable for the U-boat. It is the tendency of ship builders to consider after-war needs. They do not like to load themselves up with ships not economically arranged for modern commerce in peace times. It will be a shortsighted policy to let such consideration move us much. We need every ship we can possibly build to keep our army in France well supplied. It will be poor policy not to build ships with a large measure of independent self-protection, so that they will have some degree of security even if not convoyed by destroyers.

but if I were not a member of the Ashland Commercial Club I would wager a bottle of Butler's pop that oil and gas can be found in the Rogue river valley at a depth of not to exceed 2,500 feet. If any one had ventured fifteen years ago to have suggested the idea of boring for oil in my home county in West Virginia there would have been a commission appointed immediately to have inquired into his sanity, and yet my own relatives walked over this ground for more than one hundred years. It is so easy to believe that there is something of great value somewhere else. The next thing that attracted my attention was the attitude of the people toward the war. It seems as if they are just waking up to the fact that we are having a war. Many sons have been called and this is the second campaign for Liberty bonds. I was so interested in knowing how the city of Charleston would respond to this appeal that I went down to see how they were getting along. Charleston is not a large city—only 30,000 inhabitants—but on the second call they were apportioned the sale of \$3,000,000 of bonds. They not only raised the full amount but actually bought \$5,000,000 of Liberty bonds, nearly doubling their allotment. I inquired how it all happened, and with an alertness that makes even a westerner take notice they explained to me that Charleston, W. Va., has more per capita wealth than any city in the United States. But with all this wealth they are still the most hospitable, social and loving people in all the world. M. C. REED.

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People's Forum

Interesting Letter From M. C. Reed. Preeceville, W. Va., Oct. 26, 1917. Editor Tidings: Landed at last! Here we are in the old state of West Virginia, surrounded by familiar scenes of boyhood days. The autumn leaves, streaked with every color of the rainbow and quivering in the sunshine of this southern clime, are just as beautiful as they ever were. These quiet hills seem to smile a welcome. The wild fox grapes are just as blue as they used to be and the apples just as large and red as ever, but with all this there is something lacking. Things are not as they used to be. I've been trying to figure it out, and have just solved the problem. It is this: Everything else is here but—the boy is gone. I am fully reminded that my boyhood days are gone. I am glad, however, to notice the improved financial condition in this section.

When I left this state twenty years ago I remember distinctly stating to a friend that I would not give ten cents for the whole county of Clay. Only this week I visited the spot where that remark was made, and there stands an oil and gas well that brings a revenue of one thousand dollars per day. And just think of it! When I left Charleston for my old home in Clay county I did not expect to see much change as it is only a distance of forty miles, but what a surprise awaited me! All along the way the scaffolding of the oil wells and the steady working of the pumps told the story of the riches of oil and gas and the great freight trains loaded with great lumps of shining coal told of the great veins that were undiscovered when last I saw those hills. Briefly, this is the whole thing summed up in these words—coal, oil and gas. Forty years ago most of this land could have been bought for 25 cents per acre. Now it can not be had at one thousand dollars per acre. In fact, it can not be purchased where oil and gas or good coal are found. Now I do not wish to excite anybody.

Instruction on the big guns is the latest addition to the comprehensive curriculum outlined for the 1st company. Gunners' ratings will be possible now with the dollar or so extra pay. An idea of the busy days may be gained from the fact that the 1st company has the following varied program of instruction for all or part of the men: Infantry drill, bayonet manual, small arms manual, first aid, semaphore, heliograph, wigwag, buzzer and phone communication, searchlights, power plants, telephone system, grenade throwing, rifle range shooting, instruction on the big guns, and a multitude of other branches. Numerous visitors from home have been welcomed during the past weeks, among them being Mr. and Mrs. Patty, Mr. Tinker, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Porter and Miss Eva Disney, the latter of whom has remained for a visit with Mrs. S. A. Peters, Jr., who is domiciled at Hammond, the little village just outside the reservation. The weekly shipments of eatables from home are arriving with the regularity of clockwork, and now that the mess funds of the other companies are beginning to run low the advantages of the Ashland system of looking after the boys is becoming very apparent. Good things from home help out the army fare to beat the band, and without the home shipments the mess sergeant would have a hard time. Phone job orders to the Tidings.

OUR FLAG.

(By Simpson Wilson, Central Point.) The American flag, the flag of old, The flag that we stand by, She waves over the boys, the boys that's bold; They will defend our flag or die. A stripe of white, and a stripe of red, and a stripe of beautiful blue, She waves over the heroes who fought and bled On the battle ground of Waterloo. Oh! France! are you glad we come to your aid? Do you love our stripes and stars? Our colors are such they never fade, They will stand the test of your wars. In the trenches behold our stars a-glimmering On the flag of red, white and blue, Behold the bayonets and the guns a-shimmering, In the hands of the boys that's true. The flag she is now waving in the breeze of France, On the battlefield of old Verdun, She will gain a victory at every chance And will wave till Germany is done. I know you'll come home, cherished old flag, I know you'll come with honors galore. The Sammies will never give up the rag And you'll wave for ever on America's shore.

1st Co. Quartet Gains Prominence

(By Lynn Mowat.) The new Y. M. C. A. building was recently completed, and the most popular feature of the formal opening was a selection, or rather a number of selections, by the 1st company quartet, consisting of Andy McGee, Reid Harrell, "Doc" Furry and Merrill Throne. From colonel down to the buck privates in the back seats the spectators demanded more until the Ashland boys ran out of repertoire. The 1st company has been asked to put on the first company entertainment at the Y. M. C. A. and is planning a unique minstrel affair. The Y. M. C. A. is a mighty fine thing for the soldiers and has become the recreation center. Every night the building is thronged with fellows, some reading at the well-supplied tables, others writing, stationery being furnished free, and others playing games and listening to Victrola music. The Y. M. C. A. library threatens to make bookworms out of several of our bunch, who spend every minute with their noses in books.

A Matter of Judgment

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WASH THE KIDNEYS!

All the blood in the body passes thru the kidneys every few minutes. This is why the kidneys play such an important role in health or disease. By some mysterious process the kidney selects what ought to come out of the blood and takes it out. If the kidneys are not good-workmen and become congested—poisons accumulate and we suffer from backache, headache, lumbago, rheumatism or gout. The urine is often cloudy, full of sediment; channels often get sore and sleep is disturbed at night. So it is that Dr. Pierce, of the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute in Buffalo, N. Y., advises "Washing the Kidneys," by drinking six to eight glasses of water between meals and then if you want to take a harmless medicine that will clear the channels and cure the annoying symptoms, go to your nearest drug-gist and obtain Anuric (double strength). This "Anuric," which is so many times more potent than lithia—will drive out the uric acid poisons and bathe the kidneys and channels in a soothing liquid. If you desire, write for free medical advice and send sample of water for free examination. Experience has taught Dr. Pierce that "Anuric" is a most powerful agent in dissolving uric acid, as hot water melts sugar. "Anuric" is a life-insurance and life-saver for all.

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