



The Making of a Soldier.

“Poor boy!” said the old farmer, as he climbed into the wagon beside his wife to drive homeward, “I’ve got a letter, and it’s from William. You take the lines and I’ll read it.”

As they drove out of the village and over the bridge and up the long hill the husband and father slowly read aloud the words written by the soldier son—now at the front. It was a gloomy letter. It told of hardships and sufferings and privations, and not one brave word was to be found from beginning to end.

“Poor boy!” sighed the mother, as the reading was finished and she relinquished the lines.

“Wall, I don’t like it!” replied the father. “He was bound to go in spite of everything, and now he ought to put up with things and not be a baby. Them Spicer boys don’t send home no such letters as this.”

“I—I wish he hadn’t gone!”

“But he did go, and now he’s got to grin and bear it, same as the rest. Don’t you let on to nobody that he’s homesick and ready to cry. If the neighbors got hold of it they’d poke all manner of fun at him and be sneering at us.”

“But we can sympathize with him,” said the wife.

“A little, mebbe, but we ain’t goin’ to say very much. I’m going to write him that he wants to take things as they come and be a man. There’s them Spicer boys and Tom Johnson and Henry Doolittle and Ben Smith, and nobody ever hears a whine from them.”

“It’s ‘cause William is homesick to see us.”

“Wall, he must get over it then. I didn’t want him to go, but bein’ he’s down there he mustn’t play baby and make us ashamed. I’d feel like hangin’ myself if our William flunked out of a fight or deserted his colors. You’ve bin doin’ the writin’, and I guess you’ve writ too softly.”

Down on the Rapidan, in the old Sixteenth, Private William Hopkins wasn’t making a good record for himself. For the first four weeks of army life he was cheerful and enthusiastic, but after that a change had come. Homesickness is worse than a fever or a wound for a soldier. Every man with a home had had a touch of it, but most of them had thrown it off. Perhaps he tried to, but if so he didn’t succeed. The boys got onto him, and though they felt to pity him, they did not spare him their gibes and taunts. He was the booby of Company G, and even his tent-mate had a feeling of contempt for him. One day the orderly sergeant dropped in on him to say:

“Look here, Bill Hopkins, this thing has gone far enough! You are making a first-class fool of yourself, and if you don’t brace up the boys will give you away at home. Get out and chase yourself and fling this homesickness off. A boy 10 years old would be ashamed to moan around as you do!”

Private Hopkins was hurt by these remarks, instead of being braced up, and turning his face away from the sergeant he then and there resolved on a desperate deed. He would desert at the first opportunity. He wouldn’t admit that homesickness had anything to do with it. He had been ill-used.

They had given him extra guard duty—extra work around camp—had bullied and jeered him in place of giving him a fair show. He could figure out that the captain and both lieutenants were down on him, and of the ninety men of the company he was the martyr. He had given no cause for this, and he wouldn’t submit to such indignities. He was certain of sympathy from father and mother, and once more back at home he would stay there, even if he had to hide in the garret. Every soldier who lets the feeling of homesickness get the better of him follows the same train of thought and arrives at the same conclusions.

An opportunity to carry out his plan came to Private Hopkins much sooner than he had hoped for. Company G was ordered out on a night reconnaissance and, pale-faced and weak-kneed, the homesick boy took his place in the lines. No one expected any fighting, but it so happened that a small force of the enemy was in the neighborhood and there was a skirmish and the company was driven back. At roll call it was found that five men were missing. Two of those had been left dead in the road and two others were believed to have been wounded and crawled into the bushes. The fifth man was Private Hopkins, and it was altogether likely that he had been taken prisoner. At any rate, he was thus recorded on the

company roll until something more could be learned.

As a matter of fact, the homesick boy had a narrow escape from capture, but the danger had no sooner passed than he found his opportunity to desert. Throwing away his gun and accouterments, he headed for the Federal lines, and, having reached them, he set to work to dodge pickets and sentries. When morning came he was clear of those who would have halted him. With three months’ pay in his pocket he stood a good chance, and two weeks later, dressed as a citizen, and after a dozen close shaves, he found himself within a mile of home. Up to that moment, when a turn of the highway gave him a view of the old homestead, he had been consumed with impatience to reach the farmhouse. Of a sudden he felt dissatisfied and began to wonder and reflect. He had departed amid the waving of flags and the cheers of hundreds. He was sneaking home as a deserter, almost dodging the cows and sheep in the fields. A loss of self-respect came to him and he heartily wished himself back at the front. He would go on, though.

He was penniless and way-worn and he wanted sympathy. Perhaps, after a stay of a week he would go back to the army. When he told father and mother how he had been abused they would not blame him—would not call it a case of desertion. It was sundown when the boy approached the barn across the fields. He caught sight of his mother at the kitchen door and he heard the father in the barn. From the hour he deserted up to this he had pictured to himself how he would rush into the house and take the old folks by surprise, but now he changed the program. He went skulking along the fence until he reached the barn, and there was shame in his face as he entered and stood before his father.

When the old man heard a step he looked up and stood leaning on the pitchfork in his hands. He saw his son William before him. The boy had been heard of last at the front. He was here and in citizens’ attire, and he had no shout of greeting. If it had been a case of furlough he would have been in uniform, and some news would have come in advance. Ideas passed through Farmer Hopkins’ brain like flashes of lightning, and after a long minute his face grew stern, his eyes had a cold look in them, and the watching son realized that the truth was known.

“Well?” hoarsely queried the father, with stern-set face.

“They—they didn’t use me right down there!” almost wailed the boy in reply.

“And so ye ran away?”

“Yes. It wasn’t exactly deserting, but—”

“But ye sneaked off like a cur, never mindin’ the disgrace sure to follow!”

For half a minute they looked into each other’s eyes. The boy’s knees grew weak and his face went white, and the face in front of him was so hard and cold that he wondered if he had ever seen it before. By and by the father sternly said:

“Stranger, I take it from yer bein’ here that ye’d like supper and lodgin’s, but I must tell ye that we can’t accommodate!”

The boy felt a chill pass over him.

“That is,” continued the father, “unless ye was goin’ right back to the army to do yer duty as a soldier, and to stay until honorably discharged. I wouldn’t let a deserter share the pen with my hogs! Better come a leetle further into the barn while we talk and if yer moth—I mean if my old woman comes out ye kin get into the oat bin!”

The deserter instinctively moved forward a few feet, and as he did so he heard his mother’s voice singing a hymn.

“I’ve got a son down at the front,” said the farmer in a voice which trembled a little. “His name’s William Hopkins, and he’s in company G of the Sixteenth. If ye was goin’ down I’d send word to him. I’d send word that he was expected to be a man among men, and to come home with a record as good as the rest. I’d hev ye also say to him that if he deserted his colors he’d never call this place home agin. Did ye say ye was goin’ right back to the front?”

The son nodded his head.

“And to stay there till the end of the war?”

Another nod.

“Wall, then, I shall hev to do sunthin’ fur ye. I’ll go into the house and git ye a bite to eat, and when it comes dark ye kin take the hoss there and ride over to Strongsville. From there

ye kin take the kars, ye know, and I’ll pick up the hoss next day. I’ve jest paid the taxes, and I’m short o’ money, but I’ll bring ye out \$20. I guess that will git ye through. If ye don’t git through, ye—ye—”

“I shall get through,” whispered the deserter.

“If ye was a son o’ mine, I’d expect ye to or die tryin’! Jest wait here ‘till I git the things fur ye.”

Ten minutes later the farmer was back in the barn, having a bite to eat in one hand and a \$20 greenback in the other.

“You are purty sure to see William?” he queried as he handed over the articles.

“Yes.”

“Wall, tell him jest what I said, and tell him his mother won’t know nothin’ about it. Ye—ye didn’t meet anybody what knowed ye as ye came along?”

The deserter blushed and shook his head.

“And ye won’t meet anybody goin’ over to Strongsville? In about ten days I shall be lookin’ fur a letter from William at the front, and he’ll tell me if he’s seen ye yit. There’s the hoss and saddle, and as soon as it’s dark ye’d better be goin’. Good-by to ye, stranger.”

“Good-by.”

One day as Company G had just finished drill the missing private, William Hopkins, walked into camp in charge of the provost guard. He had on a portion of a Federal uniform, and he had approached the pickets from the direction of the enemy.

“And so you were taken prisoner and escaped!” exclaimed the captain.

“Yes. I got away.”

“Well, I’m glad to see you back. I feared you had been wounded and crawled away to die. Better write a letter home this afternoon, as the old folks will be worrying about you. You seem to have had a rough time of it, but you’ll soon pick up.”

The prodigal soldier had finished a page of his letter when the orderly sergeant stuck his head into the tent to say:

“Say, I’m mighty glad it happened. Those rebs have knocked some sand into you somehow. You don’t look like the same man. How’s the homesick business?”

“All gone.”

“Good! All it wanted was a sort of shock to drive it away, and you got one. If you hadn’t gone out with us that night you’d have kept on brooding over things until you’d played the fool and deserted. All right—all right, you’ll make a soldier yet.”

And two months later Farmer Hopkins returned from town one day with a letter in his hand, and as he tossed it to his wife he said:

“Wall, Mary, our William is gittin’ there.”

“What do you mean, Joel?”

“Why, he fit so well in the last big battle that they’ve went and made him corporal, and he says he’s purty sure to git up three or four pegs higher afore the war is over.”

“You don’t say? Wall, I allus told ye he’d do sunthin’ to make us feel proud o’ him, and now ye see I was right.”

“Y-e-s,” replied the farmer as he led the horse into the barnyard to be unhitched.

“But ain’t ye tickled about it?”

“Sartinly I am, but I was thinkin’—thinkin’—whoa, there, but can’t ye stand still a minute till I git this tug unhoked?”—Chicago Times-Herald.

Curious Christian Names.

I remember hearing the following story from the late Canon Bardsley, author of “English Names and Surnames.” There was once a woman—a little “cracky,” I think, said the canon, by way of parenthesis—who had a son whom she had christened “What.” Her idea seems to have been that when in after days he was asked his name, and kept saying “What,” amusing scenes would follow, which was likely enough, especially if the boy was careful to pronounce the aspirate. Such a scene did, I believe, occur once when he went to school, and was told, as a newcomer, to stand up and furnish certain particulars. “What is your name?” asked the teacher. “What,” burst out the boy, amid the laughter of the class. “What is your name?” asked the master again, with more emphasis. “What,” replied the boy. “Your name, sir!” roared out the infuriated pedagogue. “What, What!” roared back the terrified urchin. The sequel I forget, but I believe it was one of those cases in which the follies of the parents are visited on the children of the first generation.—Notes and Queries.

Punning on a Famous Line.

The poet Campbell, the author of the far-famed war poem “Hohenlinden,” in which occurs the reference to “Iser rolling rapidly,” attended an evening party on one occasion, and when the gentlemen were securing their hats and coats previous to departure suddenly the lights went out. In the confusion which followed some one pushed vigorously against Campbell, knocking him downstairs. The offending gentleman at once said: “Beg pardon, who’s there?” and a voice replied from the depths below, “It is I, sir, rolling rapidly.”

People who have no sense of humor act very funny at times.

FARM BUILDINGS.

Here’s a Farm or Village Dwelling Costing \$1,800.

A most desirable house is here described. It is cheap, considering its many advantages and its extreme beauty as an adornment of a rural landscape. It is quite large enough for a family of eight without crowding, and on a pinch considerable room may be found in the attic, if it is enclosed and laid out as it may be. But in our study of this plan we have designed that all of the children shall have the whole of the attic for their part of the dwelling, for study or play, and there the toys will be kept and a baby house put together for them, and the little



FRONT VIEW.

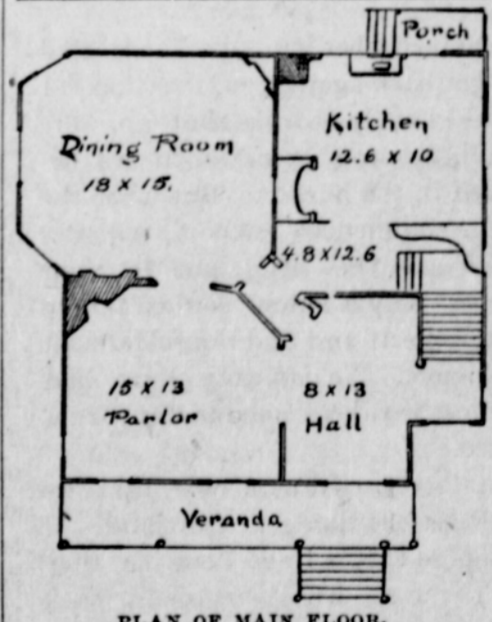
library of lesson and reading books will there be kept. This will be found one of the most valuable means of education for the children, and the mother or the big sister may go up and there make school and amusement for the little ones, where they will be safe, and as happy as the days are long.

The ground plan is 32x29 feet inside, not including the verandah. The sizes of the rooms are given on the floor plan, the verandah not being included. The cellar is 6 feet 6 inches in height, the first story is 9 feet and the second 8 feet 3 inches. The materials are: Cellar, stone below ground, brick or shaped stone above; first story, clapboards; second, square shingles; the hexagonal bottom of the shingle may be preferred by some, but it is really a useless expense. A large pantry is placed between the kitchen and din-



REAR VIEW.

ing-room, and saves many steps, as a slide door in the dining-room side opens into the dining-room. A large working table and sink are on the outside wall of the kitchen. Doors and a passage way lead from the kitchen to every part of the house, and by a wide, low tread stairway to the upper floor. The plan of the upper floor is not given, but it has four good-sized bedrooms, one at each corner of the house, all well lighted and aired, and provided with closets, and between the two on the kitchen side of the house there are a bathroom, water closet, and washstand. The bath is directly over the kitchen range, by which hot water from the cistern over the back porch may be lifted into the bath tub. Every bedroom has its own closet, and a large store-room may be made under the



PLAN OF MAIN FLOOR.

attic stairs which go up from the vestibule of the bathroom. So much in so little can only be crowded together, as in this case, with entire convenience and cheapness, by the most careful thought, great mechanical skill and a thorough architectural ability.

The pipes in the house are all collected together near the kitchen chimney, and freezing is thus avoided. A heater in the kitchen range will supply the heat for the bath room, and a cheap one in the parlor or dining-room, or both, if any Klondike family want to keep a nice warm climate in the house. Any carpenter will be able to make a bill of materials, such as will suit the farmer, who has but six hundred dollars to spend, but in time hopes to be able to finish his house as he may wish. The price mentioned includes everything for a complete house, except the heating apparatus mentioned, which itself will cost about two hundred dollars, in addition to the \$1,800 estimated.

Fig. 1 shows the front and side of the house, Fig. 2 shows the rear view of it,

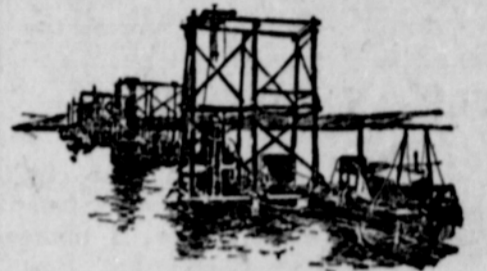
with that part of it on the right hand side of the kitchen. The large window is that in the kitchen. The smaller ones are those shown in the floor plan, at the top and foot of the stairway, which is thus well lighted. The stairs have low easy treads and are amply wide.

DEVELOPING THE SOUDAN.

The First American Bridge to Span Egyptian Waters.

Naturally English engineers are jealous of the success that has been scored by an American firm in securing the contract for a work that is destined to become historical as an important link in the long chain of communication between Cairo and the Cape. It is, indeed, the only engineering work of magnitude on a railway that stretches 700 miles from Wady Halfa to Khartoum.

The idea of giving it a special and appropriate Egyptian design had to be abandoned when English firms wanted months to complete such a structure, while American firms offered to turn out one of their own pattern in as many weeks. Celerity was of the first importance in order that considerable portions of the bridge might be in place before the Atbara floods come down at the beginning of July. Long before this the piers will be ready to receive the superstructure, which has been turned out so rapidly that seven spans,



CONSTRUCTING THE PIERS.

each 150 feet long, have already been landed in Egypt and sent up the Nile. The American firm not being bound down to any special design, has been able to use rollings of a stock pattern which only needed adaption to the particular purpose of this bridge. Sections of the required length could thus be turned out by the yard, and all that remained to be done was to fit them lightly together for approval before shipment in parts. The riveting together will be done on the banks of the Atbara.

Egyptian soldiers and natives have meanwhile been preparing the piers, which are huge cylinders of iron bedded on solid rock, and filled with concrete. This had to be finished while the river was at its lowest, and the rocks showing just above or only a little below its surface. When the waters come down in their rage at flood time even these substantial piers might be carried away without some spanning girders to give them mutual support. Hence the need for haste. Work on the railway extension beyond Atbara river goes on all the while at the rate of 2,000 yards a day, and it will be carried to the Nile banks opposite Khartoum by November. Before then the great bridge with its seven spans stretching across 1,100 feet of water will be completed, so that the whole Soudan railway may be opened for traffic within fourteen months of the final overthrow of Dervish power.

A Black Turning White.

Two years ago an Austrian merchant who had been on a business trip to Africa, brought back with him from Egypt Ibul Lacho, a Soudanese negro, aged nineteen years. Speedily acclimated, the black immigrant soon learned the German dialect of the Viennese and surprised them by his clever manners and the elegant dress he displayed in the cafes and upon the “promenade.” During the last autumn he became affected by nervous troubles, which a famous neuropathist of Vienna subjected to electrical treatment. Ibul Lacho’s condition began to improve from day to day, and, strange to relate, in the same proportion as the disease seemed to leave him there disappeared the black dye of his skin. Paler and paler he grew, until, through the stages of Peruvian and Egyptian mummy coloration and the pallid tinge of embalmed beef, he blanched into gaining the true Caucasian complexion.

Ibul’s doctor explains the discoloration of his patient from a process by which the black pigment in his skin was disintegrated and finally eliminated through electricity. This chief coloring matter, melanin, of pigmentum nigrum, found in the eye, the hair and the skin, contains iron, and strongly reacts upon electric application.—Vienna Fremdenblatt.

Lighting Up the Sea.

A new method of illumination on the ocean consists of using a hollow cylinder of steel tubing, charged with calcium carbide. This shell is to be shot from a gun to a distance of two miles. When it strikes the water it generates acetylene gas and gives 1,000-candle power, which burns from the end which floats. This light cannot be extinguished by water.

Havana Clerks’ Pay.

Clerks in Havana receive from \$31 to \$65 per month, according to their value, those speaking English commanding the best wages. A suit of clothes costs from \$25 to \$50, a dress suit anywhere from \$60 to \$100.