

# SNARLS FROM AN OLD-TIMER

By H. B.—DEML

On the last night of the World's fair in New York a veteran of World War No. 1 stood just inside the exquisite little theatre in the French pavilion, for the final showing of motion pictures of a land that he loved second only to his own.

He looked, as long as he could bear it, at pictures of village and countryside, of the grand old roads with their poplars, and Paris with our troops marching down the Champ Elysees along with the French and British, and then he suddenly cried "Vive la France" and stumbled down the stairs to the great open space still called, so ironically, the Court of Peace.

Today that veteran has a letter from Henri Laussueq, president of the Free French War Veterans, 587 Fifth avenue, New York City.

"It is a comforting feeling," he says, "for a fighting French war veteran to realize how strong still are the ties dating from the old war, uniting the great republics of the world, and to know that they will endure. There are many of us wishing we were younger and envious of the others and even now waiting to be called. Most of us think there is a campaign left in us yet, and I, for one, am sure there is...."

"For us, your job isn't just soldiering. Even more, it is liaison between two generations. Young men in our army must understand that generations do not change and that a man is a man whatever his age. Only men older than they may be able to tell them why they fight, and establish the confidence which makes the son the friend of his old man. Yes, you have a good job, besides soldiering."

Although I appreciate that letter, I disagree with M. Laussueq when he says that only men older than they are may be able to tell young men why they fight. Possibly that was true the other time. It can't be true today. The reasons for our part in the war must be plain to all.

Everybody knows that we fought back because we were attacked, and because other nations declared war on us. Everybody knows that long before that our sympathies were with the weaker victims of nations playing the role of a bully and that we fervently desired the victory of those nations which were already opposing the bullies.

But it is difficult to be mindful, at all times, of the gravity of this war, because none of us has ever known anything like it, none of us could have imagined it, and it is new in the history of our country.

Not that it isn't brought to our attention. Daily radio and newspaper tell us how serious the situation is. Already a library of books has been written about it, books of warning and suggestion, and the war almost fills our periodicals.

"These are the darkest days our nation has seen since the Civil War," says The New Republic, in holding that so far the United States has failed to live up to what had been expected, in this war. "We have need of the spirit of our revolutionary forefathers."

"Our peacetime plans for a big war, if it came," remarks The Infantry Journal, "envisaged an army of as many as 4,000,000 men, and more if they proved to be needed. Here in this War for the World we are passing that figure now, and it may be doubled or even trebled in the years of bloody fighting that probably lie ahead. The best way to say it is simply, 'We shall have to have enough to finish the biggest, most desperate, meaningful task the world has known.' Every man and woman in uniform and every non-uniformed helper of

the armed forces is directly engaged in the work of this war."

"America is at war," says Army Ordnance, "the deadliest and most devastating war in all history. Victory, as of yore, depends upon arms and the men."

That periodical also quotes from an address from Secretary of War Stimson:

"To conform to our historic standards, our American Army must be magnificently brave without becoming brutal; it must be supremely self-confident without becoming arrogant; and it must carry the momentum of irresistible might without losing faith in individual liberty. They will win, but for that victory will be needed all that they can give."

"All that they can give."

That means that everyone of us has today, in this gigantic scheme of things, a kind of importance to the nation which far exceeds his station, whether it be high or low. It's a good time to remember an old saying:

"If you can't attain your ideals, then idealize your attainments."

Because of the times, every simple act has significance and can be idealized. If we are ever conscious of what our war allies are doing without in China, in Russia, and elsewhere, and of how our human brothers starve in Poland and in Greece, we won't be wasting food here.

If we understand how desperately our comrades in arms are fighting, on various fronts, to hold the line, we won't goldbrick on the job around here, whatever it is.

If we see clearly that this war can easily go on right through our generation and then end in a stalemate, unless we use our time well and do our part in getting it over with, we certainly won't waste our training hours in camp.

The time is so solemn that even recreation, which we have come to take for granted, can't be enjoyed as carelessly as heretofore. Recreation is right today only in the proper sense of that word. If it rests us, gives us fresh vigor, then it is good. Otherwise, not. And Monday is a testing day. If soldiers are all tired out on Monday, not up to standard, then they may be having too much free time instead of too little.

The foregoing is not preaching. It is plain horse sense in a time of crisis.

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## Camp Kitten Has No Dog Tag, But Puts Tag On Veteran Army Dog

The transfer of a cat, from one kitchen to another, in different outfits, is one of the few camp changes that can be effected without a lot of paper work. Dogs have some status, as mascots, but a cat has to shift for itself, through all nine lives.

Still Charles F. Brunner, in a civilian life a linotype operator, did pick up the little black and white cat with a stub tail and carry it by truck from the tents to barracks. It's now attached to a QM kitchen.

On arrival the cat was approached by Brownie, a Chesapeake Bay retriever that's been in the army, but without a dog tag, for about all of his 13 years. Age, sheer weight of years, must be the dog's alibi, too, because the cat, not much more than a kitten, attacked the dog and a soldier soon was wiping blood from the dog's face. Brownie belongs to Joseph C. Surdak, 21 years in the army, and the dog has been a mascot in several camps and has been on hikes and maneuvers. His first soldier master took him home in his overcoat pocket. Nowadays Brownie lies around and drowns most of the time. He has the rheumatism.

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