

THE HIGHEST GOOD.

How blest is he that can but love and do,
And has no skill of speech nor trick of art
Wherewith to tell what faith approveth true,
And show for fame the treasures of his heart!
When, wisely weak, upon the path of duty
Divine accord has made his footing sure,
With humble deeds he builds his life to beauty,
Strong to achieve, and patient to endure,
But they that in the market-place we meet,
Each with his trumpet and his noisy faction,
Are leaky vessels, pouring on the street
The truth they know ere it has known its action,
And which, think ye, in His benign regard,
Or words or deeds, shall merit the reward?

—Peter McArthur, in the Atlantic.

THE CALL OF THE FLAG

IF it please the court, I shall now read the charges against the accused."

The prisoner, a young soldier with a haggard face and tired eyes, rose mechanically, and stood razing at the judge-advocate, who read in clear, emotionless tones the charges setting forth that Private John Walters, Company M, 4th United States Infantry, had been guilty of conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline, in that he had been drunk and disorderly in his company quarters, and had disobeyed a lawful order given him by his superior officer.

"You have heard the charges and specifications preferred against you," continued the officer representing the government as prosecuting attorney. "How do you plead?"

The prisoner looked hopelessly at his counsel, a tall, bronzed man in the uniform of a first lieutenant, who responded: "Guilty, to the specifications and to the charge."

"The prosecution here rests," announced the judge advocate.

"Has the accused any evidence to offer in his own behalf?" questioned the president of the court.

The accused had none. His counsel, in a few words, begged the court to consider that the prisoner had been, at the time of his offense, under the influence of the poisonous Filipino bino, which had deprived him of his sense of responsibility; he called attention to the excellent service the accused had, at various times, rendered under fire, as set forth in his record, and requested that such clemency as was possible be shown him.

As Walters, followed by his counsel, left the room, he let his eyes pass for the first time over the group of grave, khaki-clad officers forming the court-martial.

"Will the lieutenant tell me what he thinks I will get?" he asked, when the door had closed behind them for the verdict.

"Well, this is your sixth conviction within the year, Walters; I'm afraid you can't hope for less than a discharge and twelve months."

That night as Walters lay on his hard bunk by the barred window of the rude stone building used as a guard-house, he tried to analyze his position. "Dishonorable discharge and twelve months"—the thought kept flinging in his head. A year in Billbid—no bino and no fighting. Then he would be sent back to the States—he never wanted to see the States again; the battle of life there had been too strong for him; defeat had seemed to pursue him in every renewed effort, and his repeated failures to conquer his insatiable thirst for liquor had only brought disgrace upon his family. In his army service his reckless courage under fire had atoned for much of his recklessness in drink. For long, drink and battle had been the only sedatives to quiet the fire in his brain; only when drugged with the one or wild with the passion of the other, had he been able to forget the pangs of acknowledged failure. But five years in the tropics had begun to take away the sting. There was forgetfulness in this land; it emanated from the indolent rustling of the palm trees—from the golden, dreamy glow of the twilights—from the languorous perfume of the Ylang Ylang. He was slowly and surely imbibing the lotus flower's potion of content. The East was dropping its spell over his soul, and he was grateful for its mercy.

A faint rustling without the window attracted his attention; he peered through the bars, and saw in the dim light a form crouching close to the prison wall.

"Isabella," he whispered.

A small brown hand came through the iron uprights and pressed his fingers as they rested on the sill. It was a Filipino girl whom Walters had once protected from the insults of a drunken brute, and who had thereafter secretly lavished upon this reckless, gloomy young American all the affection of which she was capable. Unconscious of the deeper feelings which animated her, Walters had not been insensible to the unfailing friendship she had shown him, and between the two a sort of comradeship had arisen.

She came to him for advice and sympathy in the small affairs of her life, and Walters had found her hospitable home an agreeable asylum when he wanted to escape from the rougher companionship of his associates. Her appearances below his window, however, filled him with surprise.

"What are you doing here, Isabella?" he demanded.

"No habia," she murmured in her quaint mixture of Spanish and English. "No habia, I get you out."

Walters' heart leaped at the hope. The girl began working with some instrument at the soft rocks forming the window sill into which the bars were mortised. If she could remove one he could escape. Freedom seemed to him then the most glorious thing on earth—something he must have at any cost.

He tiptoed up to the heavy bamboo partition separating the long room occupied by the prisoners from the smaller space in front where the guard slept. Through the cracks he could see lying on their cots the members of the guard who were off duty; at the door sat the sergeant dozing in his chair; in front the sentinel was pacing up and down.

Walters noted with satisfaction that the two other soldiers confined with him were sleeping on the side opposite his bunk.

The guard-house was a stone camarine which had been used by its Filipino owner for the storage of sugar and rice. It was by no means considered invincible as a prison, but the vigilance of the guard was intended to counteract its elements of weakness.

However, there was anticipated no effort at escape on the part of the three incarcerated Americans who could hardly find an incentive to risk their lives in the dense, marshy country, filled as it was by hostile Filipinos. The consequent relaxation of the watchfulness maintained over the building permitted the girl to perform her task undetected. It was not a difficult feat for her slowly to loosen and finally to remove one of the crumbling, porous stones. The iron upright was then quickly forced aside, and Walters slipped through the window.

As the two crept away under cover of the darkness, Walters rapidly formulated his plans.

"Isabella," he said, suddenly, "I'm going away from all this—into the mountains. I'm done with America and Americans forever." After a pause, he continued: "You've been very kind to me, Isabella. Will you go with me to the mountains?"

The girl hesitated, while Walters waited breathlessly for her decision.

"Yes, señor—I will go." He pressed the hand that trembled in his. "You won't regret it, Isabella," he said. "You have been the only one that's ever seen much in me to care for, and I will not forget it. We'll find a place where nobody will ever discover us, and we'll build us a home. Now," he continued, "I'm going to slip into the quarters to get my gun and some things; you get what you need from home and wait for me at the church."

After the girl had disappeared in the darkness, Walters stood a few moments looking at the light flickering through the door of the guard-house; he could discern the sentinel on number one. Yes, he was satisfied. He cared not to go back to America where he had learned what life could give of suffering. There was nothing now that could cause him to turn back; he was free; he would forget. Life had still something left to offer.

An hour later, while slipping cautiously across the road near the church on the outskirts of the town, he stumbled over some soft inanimate object on the ground. He put down his hand and touched the face of a man. Instinctively he realized that the man was dead. On his knees beside the figure he explored it with his hands. His fingers traveled over the well-known uniform of an American soldier; at the side his hand was wet, and he felt a rent in the khaki blouse. The warm blood was still flowing. Walters rose to his feet, and stepped quickly into the shadow of some bushes on the roadside.

"Sentry on number three, boded on post," he muttered. "That means an attack—the devils will probably strike just at daybreak." That would be less than an hour he knew. As he crouched in his shelter, he saw dark forms creeping silently along the road—one or two at a time, all moving in the same direction. The Americans would be murdered in their beds.

Walters thought of the girl waiting at the church not fifty yards distant; he could join her and by daylight they would be far away toward the mountains. What affair was this of his? Had he not renounced his race? If he went back to warn the troops, he would probably never reach the quarters alive; and even if he succeeded in saving the garrison and himself, after it was all over he would only get put back in prison for his pains. That would mean an end to his dream of oblivion on the mountain side. He would be taken back to America—"God's Country," as the men called it. At the name there ran through his mind a fragment of the improvisation the soldiers sang when starting on a hike:

"But God's country is behind us—long ago and far away,

And ye're fightin' Filipinos 'round the old Manila Bay,

And we're goin' home in boxes—but this story's what it tells:

When you've heard the flag a-callin', why, you won't heed nothin' else."

"When you've heard the flag a-callin'—"" Yes, the flag was calling now.

"What is wrong," asked Captain Graham, starting up in bed as a man staggered into his room calling his name.

"It is I, captain—Walters. There's an attack to be made in a few minutes. About 300 Filipinos lying in the grass in front of the quarters waiting for daylight—"" The voice died away, and Walters sank into a heap on the floor.

Captain Graham was at his side in an instant.

"Are you hurt, my boy?" he asked, as he lifted the huddled figure.

"Ran into one of them on my way up," murmured Walters. "I knocked him down with my gun, but he got his knife in first."

"They'll pay for it," said the captain, grimly. He laid Walters on the bed, and, passing into the adjoining room, he awoke the surgeon, and whispered in his ear.

"Do your best for that boy," he continued, as he turned toward the stairs. "I don't know what he's doing out of the guard-house, but he's won shoulder straps to-night."

The building occupied as quarters by the American troops had been a Catholic convent. The officers occupied rooms elevated at one end, and the men had their bunks on the stone floor of the large lower room formerly used as a chapel.

In five minutes after Captain Graham had left the doctor, the soldiers were stealing silently out of the wide doorway and taking their places in the dark shadow along the front of the building. Not a light had been struck—not a word spoken, save by the officers as they moved softly about waking the men and whispering instructions in their ears. Without a question the trained fighters secured their rifles and ammunition and moved to their posts. When the last man was in place, Captain Graham, the senior officer, stationed himself near the doorway.

There was no moon, and a cloudy sky added to the intense darkness preceding the breaking of dawn. The men had orders to hold their rifles ready, but under no circumstances to shoot until the captain gave the order. Before them stretched the plaza, on the other side of which was a rank growth of grass; at either flank was a village street. Nothing indicated that an enemy was near.

After a seemingly interminable period of waiting, the glow of morning began to appear in the east, and spread with tropical swiftness. The watching soldiers could now make out the dark line marking the opposite side of the plaza. As the light grew, the line on which every eye was strained took a definite form; it seemed to be moving. Yes, it was surely coming slowly forward. The men held their breaths as they lay prone on the stone floor and watched that living wave creeping across the square. They looked at their captain. He was crouching on his knees, his eyes fixed as if fascinated. Did he see that that line was advancing? How long was he going to wait? The Filipinos would rise in another instant for the rush. But not a soldier thought of firing; they would await that word of command.

Nearer and nearer crept the Filipinos. Now the soldiers could distinguish the individuals composing that moving wall. They could see the long murderous knives.

It was the moment the captain had waited for. "Fire!"—his voice rang out like a whip, followed instantly by a flash of flame and the roar of rifles. The black line half way across the

plaza seemed to wilt and crumble. With yells of wild surprise and abject terror the Filipinos fled from that terrible hall of death. Then the trumpets rang out the "Charge," and the avenging Americans dashed after their would-be assassins, who scattered like rabbits, and sought shelter in the thickets. Two-thirds of the bolomen were lying on the plaza, which had been their death-trap.

Returning when further pursuit seemed useless, Captain Graham left a subordinate in charge of the work of gathering up the dead and wounded of the enemy, and, hastening upstairs, he found the doctor bending over Walters.

"How's the deserter that's turned hero?" began Graham in his hearty voice. "He'll get a pardon and a medal of honor for last night."

The doctor held up his hand.

The sun streaming through the window lighted up the pale face of the dying soldier, and seemed to stamp upon his features a wonderful peacefulness. His lips were moving; leaning over him, the two watchers caught the murmur: "When you've heard the flag a-callin', why, you won't heed nothin' else."—San Francisco Argonaut.

SNOWBOUND IN THE ALPS.

Astronomer and Guide Held for Seven Days on Summit of Mt. Blanc.

Albert Senouque, a prominent French astronomer, has had a terrible experience in a thunderstorm on Mont Blanc, on the summit of which he was snowbound for seven days. Accompanied by one guide, M. Senouque started from Chamoix to make observations on the mountain, the summit of which was reached in fine weather. During the night, however, a furious storm came on and the two men were awakened from their sleep by the awful thunder to find the observatory in which they were sheltering completely under snow.

M. Senouque says that when morning came he could not open either door owing to the snow piled up against them, while a thick, icy fog enveloped the mountain.

They had little fuel or food, but in the evening, after dining on a biscuit and a cup of chocolate, they went to bed. During the night the storm recommenced with increased violence, and every moment it seemed as if the observatory must be destroyed.

It was impossible to sleep at all the second night and next day, as the storm had not diminished and the barometer continued to fall, the men remained in bed. They let the fire out to economize the little fuel remaining for the last emergency, eating only a little cheese, dry biscuit and chocolate.

On the third night they fell asleep utterly exhausted, but woke to find themselves covered with snow. The hurricane had broken down the door of the little room, which was almost filled with snowdrift. A few moments more and the two sleepers would have been suffocated under the icy covering.

Forcing their way into a little inner chamber, M. Senouque and his guide attempted, with frozen fingers, to light a fire, but found the stove was blocked with snow. They then ate a little of the bread and cheese that remained, rolled themselves in blankets and waited in patience.

Next day the storm began to abate, but it was impossible to leave the observatory. On the sixth morning, however, the sun was shining and the two frozen and exhausted men started to descend. Hardly had they reached the Tournette rocks when another storm enveloped them, and for four hours they were lost in fog and blinding snow.

Their efforts were directed to regain the shelter of the observatory, which they reached at last, with their hands and feet badly frozen. They slept like logs until daybreak on the morning of the seventh day, when they again started, and in spite of their weakness succeeded in reaching Grands Mulets, where they were met by a rescue party.

Preacher Was Too Cordial.

A story is told of a shock received by a Duluth pastor after the services the other evening. He makes it a point to welcome any strangers cordially and that evening, after the completion of the service, he hurried down the aisle to station himself at the door.

A Swedish girl was one of the strangers in the congregation. She is employed as a domestic in one of the fashionable east end homes, and the minister, noting that she was a stranger, stretched out his hand.

He welcomed her to the church and expressed the hope that she would be a regular attendant. Finally he said if she would be at home some evening during the week he would call.

"Thank you," she murmured bashfully, "but ay have a fella."

Three of the members of the congregation heard the conversation and in spite of the fact that their pastor swore them to secrecy, one of them "leaked."—Minneapolis Journal.

Women's magazines insist that a girl hasn't her pick in the matrimonial market, delicately avoiding by well chosen terms all illusion to such a thing as chasing.

Science AND INVENTION

A new vegetable for table use is the Crambe tataria, an umbelliferous plant resembling sea kale. The sweet roots, raw and cooked, are eaten by Tartars and Cossacks, and for these and the sprouts also, it is recommended for cultivation by a prominent member of the Academie de Cuisine of Paris, who declares that it is finer in flavor than asparagus and cauliflower, which it suggests. The roots are boiled in salt water and seasoned in butter, a salad of young leaves and slices of roots being another dainty luxury.

Additional particulars about the new species of white potato, which is now cultivated in France from plants found in Uruguay, indicate that its importance as a substitute for the Irish potato has not been exaggerated. Originally a very bitter tuber, the new vegetable becomes, after three or four years of cultivation, an admirable food product. Its yield is enormous, and it is exempt from the maladies that attack the ordinary potato. It grows best in moist soil, its native habitat being the marshy shores of the River Mercedes in Uruguay. Its flowers have a jasmine-like odor, and a delicate perfume has already been extracted from them. After one planting the plant perpetuates itself from the broken roots left in the soil.

Recent advances in the price of shellac, due partly to its use in electrical works and in making gramophone records, have led to the collection of facts about its production. Lac is an incrustation on the branches of certain trees in India caused by insects. It is found throughout India, but is most abundant in the Central Provinces, Bengal and Assam. It is collected by natives, who break off the incrustated branches. The gatherers and local dealers sell it in the form of "stick lac" to manufacturers, who turn it into the shellac, or "button lac," of commerce. Nearly the whole of the shipment takes place from Calcutta, and the chief markets are the United States and Great Britain. In India lac is made into bracelets, rings, beads and other ornaments.

The apparatus by which Dr. Arthur Korn, a German inventor, has succeeded in transmitting photographs about 500 miles over telegraph-and-telephone lines depends for its action upon the changing electric resistance of selenium under the influence of light of varying intensity. A ray of light, caused to pass systematically over the surface of a transparent film containing a photograph, falls upon a selenium cell whose electric resistance varies with the amount of light passing through different parts of the photograph. These variations are transmitted to the electric wire and at the receiving end they vary the illumination of a small vacuum tube, which passes over a sensitized photographic paper synchronically with the ray of light moving over the film at the sending station. Thus a copy of the original photograph is produced.

Although the problem of color photography is still far from solved, progress is being occasionally made. A new German discovery—that of Dr. Koenig—relates to printing from tri-color negatives, and depends upon the use of paper coated with collodion solutions of colorless compounds of greenish blue, cherry-red and yellow dyes that develop the original colors on exposure to light. The set of three negatives is first made under the usual light filters. The printing paper is first coated with the solution of the dye that is changed by light to greenish blue, and, after drying, it is exposed about thirty seconds under the negative taken through the red filter. When the required depth of color is reached, it is fixed in a solution which removes the unaltered dye compound. The paper is then re-coated, this time with the collodion for the red print, and exposed in exact register under the green negative. After this is fixed the third coating is made, and the yellow image is developed under the blue negative.

By Wire and Air.

An accidental experiment in the velocity of sound is recounted by a correspondent. He went to his telephone, and just as he put the receiver to his ear he heard the click of another telephone. Another receiver had been removed and the line was open.

Then he heard through the telephone the shriek of a locomotive whistle, and a few seconds later the sound came through the open window in the usual way. Looking up, he saw a locomotive half a mile away, passing the house of a friend.

The mystery was solved. The telephone that was open was that at the distant house, and the sound of the whistle had come through its transformation into an electric current—quicker than it had traveled through the air.

A widower can start a new story on himself every day in the week, if he wants to.