

THE ALLIANCE HERALD

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AMERICAN CAMOUFLEURS

Fighting from cover with the employment of every possible method of concealment both of men and of plans is older than American Indian warfare. It is older than Macbeth who, as the bard of Avon relates, was doomed when Birnamwood came to Dunsinane, the attacking force hiding its approach by means of a green branch held aloft by each soldier, with the effect of a slowly moving forest. The method is even older than the first uncivilized tribes of history. It was long supposed that these primitive arts of deception could not be employed by great modern armies and that they properly belonged only to the savage times which produced them, but this unparalleled war has brought them back, and they have now been developed with a cunning and resource of which the savage of past ages was incapable.

The French call the old method adapted to modern needs camouflage and the man who practices it a camoufleur. The devices reported are many and some of them most ingenious. We read of dummy cannon that recoil and flash a puff of smoke under the eyes of hostile aeroplanes while genuine guns are fired from concealed pits some hundreds of yards away. Counterfeits of dead horses and even of dead men have been employed. Aeroplane sheds have been made to look like wheat fields and railroad trains like workmen's cottages. If the Germans make a bridge impassable by continual shelling, the French build another and keep it covered by day with an innocent river scene painted on canvas which is rolled back at night. Such schemes for throwing dust into the enemy's eyes have long been recognized as necessary on the European battle line, and now the value of all this military "nature faking" is attested by the fact that an American camouflage company is being organized for service in France.

The object is to enlist ingenious young men who "are looking for special entertainment in the way of fooling Germans," and who will be able to "cast a magic veil of invisibility over military works," according to the Official Bulletin, which says: "The Chief of Engineers in the War Department is looking for handy and ingenious men who are ready to fight one minute and practice their trade the next. Wherever a machine is set up, or a trench is taken and reversed, or a battery of artillery goes into action, or a new road is opened, or a sniper climbs an old building, or a new bridge is built, or an officer creeps out into an advanced post to hear and to observe, there must go the camouflage man to spread his best imitation of the magic veil of invisibility. Ironworkers, sheet-metal workers, carpenters, cabinet makers, stage carpenters, property men, plaster molders, photographers, scene painters, and sign painters will make up this force of emergency magicians. There is in store for them plenty of excitement and no end of opportunity to use their wits."

According to the new eastern editorial correspondent of the Kansas City Star, nothing worth mentioning has been accomplished since this country went to war. The dispatch of torpedo boat destroyers to the submarine zone and of troops to France, the mobilization of the National Guard, the drafting of a national army of 687,000 men, the construction of wonderful and costly cantonments wherein to train them, to mention only a few of the great works accomplished or under way—all this is nothing! A record that has astonished and delighted our European allies appears to be invisible to the eye of a disappointed and jaundiced man.

DISTINCTLY FEMININE

The "Legion of Death" has won world-wide praise as well as fame. It has been impossible not to admire, even moss-backed conservatives mingling applause with disapproval as they read of how these brave women faced the enemy in the manliest fashion, each carrying a dose of poison as well as a gun in order to be able to escape a fate worse than death in the event of capture by the Germans. The heroism of this legion of women was the more dramatic by contrast with the frivolity and even childishness of so many of Russia's men soldiers who, literally gone mad over their country's freedom, are represented as stopping in the middle of a battle to step aside and discuss social reform.

But thoughtful observers, remembering that sex difference is more than physical, have been inclined to think that the members of the "Legion" are still women in spite of their trousers, their guns and their bravery, and now a not altogether unexpected element of opera bouffe in the wonderful story has been revealed. It appears that the Petrograd division of the Legion is "in revolt" because its commander, a woman with the hard name of Butchkoreva, is "too rough." She is "too rough," not because she leads her followers into the thick of the fight but because, when they displease her, she slaps their faces! No wonder there is revolt, for a brave girl-soldier must resent a slapping as scarcely less humiliating than a spanking.

HATE IN GERMANY

Reflecting observers foresaw that President Wilson's reply to the Pope eliminating the Hohenzollerns would be employed in Germany as a means of rallying the people in support of the reigning dynasty, but probably no one foresaw an anti-Wilson "mobilization" of German women and children. The "mobilized" are not expected to march on Washington, of course; they are only to love the kaiser and hate and curse the president. The Lokal Anzeiger of Berlin has published an appeal to the women of Germany urging them to "cast their curses and disgust in the face of" the head of the American government. No doubt kaiserdom now rings with "Gott strafe Wilson," for German women who deliberately spat in the faces of helpless prisoners of war may be relied on to curse as much as is desired.

It is difficult for the average American to comprehend all this. We as a people are not wanting in patriotic zeal or in indignation under insolence and wrong, but we value our dignity and shrink from any approximation of the violent, fishwife method. We associate hate with wickedness, we really don't enjoy it, and we insist on keeping it within respectable limits. The Germans, on the other hand, seem to revel in it. "Hate in Germany is cultivated as a noble passion," says ex-Ambassador Gerard in his account of his Berlin experiences, "and during the war divines and generals vied with each other in its praise. Early in 1917 the Prussian general in command at Limburg made a speech in which he extolled the advantages of hate and said that there was nothing like getting up in the morning after having passed a night in thought and dreams of hate." Are such people civilized beings, savages at heart, or just grown-up children?

INTERNATIONAL SLACKERS

There are satisfactory reasons behind the proposition to draft all aliens who have lived in this country one year, except the subjects of Germany and her allies who are exempt by treaty. Under the proposition subjects of the allied and neutral countries may leave the United States within ninety days, but if they elect to remain they must come under the draft law. Russian, Italian and British subjects, for example, who are now living in this country to the number of more than a million, may depart and put themselves under the draft laws of their own lands or remain here and come under ours. They can not shirk the military duty they owe to their governments, remain immune under our protection, and succeed to the jobs which American citizens leave in order to shoulder arms. They can no longer dodge responsibility as aliens and must choose which government they will serve.

Such are the provisions of the senate resolution, and they are just. There is no room for the international slacker who claims protection from two countries and is not willing to serve either. Such a law will solve the problem of a large class of aliens, but will not affect the resident subjects of Germany and her allies. Under treaty these must be left in peace so long as they obey the laws, but they are under surveillance and can actively serve the interests of Germany or her allies only at their peril.

Nearly three hundred millions will be expended by the War department in building training camps, making the average cost of the thirty-two cantonments about nine and a quarter millions. The camp at Spartenburg will cost \$3,234,750, or about \$92 for each of the men within its capacity. Camp Upton at Yaphank, presumably because of the requirements of a colder climate, will cost \$6,390,528, or \$165

for each man. Such vast cost is staggering, but, with the adoption of some form of universal military training a future probability, the outlay may be regarded as in large part permanent investment.

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