

shut and the windows shut and their eyes and ears and minds shut up tight, trying to keep the war out. They're old men, doctor, and they must cling to yesterday, and to to-morrow. They must n't see to-day. They must ignore to-day. To-day is the tragic interruption. They too ask nothing but to wake up and find it is n't so. All their lives they've been straining forward to see the ineffable dawn of the Day of Man, calling for the Commune and the red barricades of revolution. The barricades! Yesterday, it seems to them now, they were almost in sight of the splendid dawn—the dawn of the Day of Barricades. And then this war, this thing they call a "rich man's plot" to confound them, hold them up, turn to ashes all the fire of their lives. All they can do is sit in a closed room with their eyes shut and wait till this meaningless brawl is done. And then, to-morrow — to-morrow — some safely distant to-morrow (for they're old men), — to-morrow, the barricades! And that's queer. That's queer.'

'Queer?'

'It seems to me that for days now,

for weeks and months now, there's been no sound to be heard in all the length and breadth of the world but the sound of barricades.'

The voice trailed off into nothing.

To the doctor, charging slowly back and forth along the near deck, his hands locked behind him and his face bent slightly over his breast, there came a queer sense of separation, from Hallett, from himself, his own everyday acts, his own familiar aspirations, from the ship which held him up in the dark void between two continents.

What was it all about, he asked himself over and over. Each time he passed the shadow in the companion-way he turned his head, painfully, and as if against his will. Once he stopped squarely at the foot of the cot and stood staring down at the figure there, faintly outlined, motionless and mute. Sweat stood for a moment on his brow, and was gone in the steady onrush of the wind. And he was used to death.

But Hallett had fooled him. He heard Hallett's whisper creeping to him out of the shadow: —

'That's a bright star, doctor.'

HIGH ADVENTURE. V

BY JAMES NORMAN HALL

I

WE got down from the train late in the afternoon, at a village which reminded us, at first glance, of a boom town in the Far West. Crude shelters of corrugated iron and rough pine boards faced each other down the length of one long street. They looked

sadly out of place in that landscape. They did not have the cheery, buoyant ugliness of pioneer homes in an unsettled country, for behind them were the ruins of the old village, fragments of blackened wall, stone chimneys filled with accumulations of rubbish, garden-plots choked with weeds, reminding us that here was no outpost of a new civ-

ilization, but the desolation of an old one, fallen upon evil days.

A large crowd of *permissionnaires* had left the train with us. We were not at ease among these men, many of them well along in middle life, bent and streaming with perspiration under their heavy packs. We were much better able than most of them to carry our belongings, to endure the fatigue of a long night march to billets or trenches; and we were waiting for the motor in which we would ride comfortably to our aerodrome. There we would sleep in beds, well housed from the weather, and far out of the range of shell-fire.

'It is n't fair,' said J. B. 'It is going to war *de luxe*. These old poilus ought to be the aviators. But, hang it all! of course they could n't be. Aviation is a young man's business. It has to be that way. And you can't have aerodromes along the front-line trenches.'

Nevertheless, it did seem very unfair, and we were uncomfortable among all those infantrymen. The feeling increased when attention was directed to our branch of the service by the distant booming of anti-aircraft guns. There were shouts in the street, 'A Boche!' We hurried to the door of the café where we had been hiding. Officers were ordering the crowds off the street. 'Hurry along there! Get under cover! Oh, I know that you're brave enough, mon enfant. It is n't that. He's not to see all these soldiers here. That's the reason. Allez! Vite!'

Soldiers were going into dug-outs and cellars among the ruined houses. Some of them, seeing us at the door of the café, made pointed remarks, grumbling at the laxity of the air-service.

'It's up there you ought to be, mon vieux, not here,' one of them said, pointing to the white *éclatements*.

'You see that?' said another. 'He's a Boche, not French, I can tell you that. Where are your comrades?'

There was much good-natured chaffing as well, but through it all I could detect a note of resentment. I sympathized with their point of view then as I do now, although I know that there is no ground for the complaint of laxity. Here is a German over French territory. Where are the French aviators? Soldiers forget that aerial frontiers must be guarded in two dimensions, and that it is always possible for an airman to penetrate far into enemy country. They do not see their own pilots on their long raids into German territory. Furthermore, while the outward journey is often accomplished easily enough, the return home is a different matter. Telephones are busy from the moment the lines are crossed, and a hostile patrol, to say nothing of a lone *avion*, will be fortunate if it returns safely.

But infantrymen are readily to be forgiven for their outbursts against the aviation service. They have far more than their share of danger and death while in the trenches. To have their brief periods of rest behind the lines broken into by enemy aircraft — who would blame them for complaining? And they are often generous enough with their praise.

On this occasion there was no bombing. The German remained at a great height and quickly turned northward again.

Dunham and Miller came to meet us. We had all four been in the schools together, they preceding us on active service only a couple of months. Seeing them after this lapse of time, I was conscious of a change. They were keen about life at the front, but they talked of their experiences in a way which gave one a feeling of tension, a tautness of muscles, a kind of ache in the throat. It set me to thinking of a conversation I had had with an old French pilot, several months before. It came

apropos of nothing. Perhaps he thought that I was sizing him up, wondering how he could be content with an instructor's job while the war is in progress. He said, 'I've had five hundred hours over the lines. You don't know what that means, — not yet. I'm no good any more. It's strain. Let me give you some advice. Save your nervous energy. You will need all you have and more. Above everything else, don't think at the front. The best pilot is the best machine.'

Dunham was talking about patrols.

'Two a day of two hours each. Occasionally you will have six hours flying, but almost never more than that.'

'What about voluntary patrols?' Drew asked. 'I don't suppose there is any objection, is there?'

Miller slapped Dunham on the back, singing, '*Hi-doo-dedoo-dumdi*. What did I tell you! Do I win?' Then he explained. 'We asked the same question when we came out, and every other new pilot before us. This voluntary-patrol business is a kind of standing joke. You think, now, that four hours a day over the lines is a light programme. For the first month or so you will go out on your own between times. After that, no. Of course, when they call for a voluntary patrol for some necessary piece of work, you will volunteer out of a sense of duty. As I say, you may do as much flying as you like. But wait. After a month — or we'll give you six weeks — that will be no more than you have to do.'

We were not at all convinced.

'What do you do with the rest of your time?'

'Sleep,' said Dunham. 'Read a good deal. Play some poker or bridge. Walk. But sleep is the chief amusement. Eight hours used to be enough for me. Now I can do with ten or twelve.'

Drew said, 'That's all rot. You fel-

lows are having it too soft. They ought to put you on the school régime again.'

'Let 'em talk, Dunham. They know. J. B. says it's laziness. Let it go at that. Well, take it from me, it's contagious. You'll soon be victims.'

I dropped out of the conversation in order to look around me. Drew did all of the questioning, and, thanks to his interest, I got many hints about our work which came back opportunely afterward.

'Take my tip, J. B., don't be too anxious to mix it with the first German you see, because very likely he will be a Frenchman; and if he is n't, if he is a good Hun pilot, you'll simply be meat for him — at first, I mean.'

'They say that all the Boche aviators on this front have had several months experience in Russia or the Balkans. They train them there before they send them to the Western front.'

'Your best chance of being brought down will come in the first two weeks.'

'That's comforting.'

'No, *sans blague*. Honestly, you'll be almost helpless. You don't see anything, and you don't know what it is that you do see. Here's an example. On one of my first sorties, I happened to look over my shoulder and I saw five or six Germans in the most beautiful alignment. And they were all slanting up to dive on me. I was scared out of my life. Went down full motor, then cut and fell into a *vrille*. Came out of that and had another look. There they were in the same position, only farther away. I did n't even tumble then, except farther down. Next time I looked, the five Boches, or six, whichever it was, had all been raveled out by the wind. *Éclats d'obus*.'

'You may have heard about Franklin's Boche. He got it during his first combat. He did n't know that there was a German in the sky, until he saw the tracer bullets. Then the machine

passed him about thirty metres away. And he kept going down. May have had motor-trouble. Franklin said that he had never had such a shock in his life. He dove after him, spraying all space with his Vickers, and he got him!’

‘That all depends on the man. In *chasse*, unless you happen to be sent on a definite mission, protecting photographic machines or *avions de bombardement*, you are absolutely on your own. Your job is to patrol the lines. If a man is built that way, he can loaf on the job. He need never have a fight. At two hundred kilometres an hour, it won’t take him very long to get out of danger. He stays out his two hours and comes in with some framed-up tale to account for his disappearances. Got lost. Went off by himself into Germany. Had motor-trouble. Gun jammed, and went back to arm it. He may even spray a few bullets toward Germany and call it a combat. Oh, he can find plenty of excuses, and he can get away with them.’

This conversation continued during the rest of the journey. The life of a military pilot offers exceptional opportunities for research in the matter of personal bravery. Dunham and Miller agreed that it is a varying quality. Sometimes one is really without fear; at others only a sense of shame prevents one from making a sad display.

Our fellow pilots of the Lafayette Corps were lounging outside the barracks on our arrival. They gave us a welcome which did much to remove our feelings of strangeness; but we knew that they were only mildly interested in the news from the schools, and were glad when they let us drop into the background of conversation. By a happy chance, mention was made of a recent newspaper article of some of the exploits of the Escadrille, written evidently by a very imaginative journalist; and from this, the talk passed to

the reputation of the squadron in America, and the almost fabulous deeds credited to it by some newspaper correspondents. One pilot said that he had kept a record of the number of German machines actually reported as having been brought down by members of the corps. I don’t remember the number he gave, but it was an astonishing total. The daily average was so high, that, granting it to be correct, America might safely have abandoned her far-reaching aerial programme. Long before her first pursuit squadron could be ready for service, the last of the imperial German air-fleet would, to quote from the article, have ‘crashed in smouldering ruin on the war-devastated plains of northern France.’

In this connection, I can’t forbear quoting from another, one of the brightest pages in the journalistic history of the legendary Escadrille Lafayette. It is an account of a sortie said to have taken place on the receipt of news of America’s declaration of war.

“‘Uncle Sam is with us, boys! Come on! Let’s get those fellows!’ These were the stirring words of Captain Georges Thénault, the valiant leader of the Escadrille Lafayette, upon the morning when news was received that the United States of America had declared war upon the rulers of Potsdam. For the first time in history, the Stars and Bars of Old Glory were flung to the breeze over the camp, in France, of American fighting men. Inspired by the sight, and spurred to instant action by the ringing call of their French captain, this band of aviators from the U.S.A. sprang into their trim little biplanes. There was a deafening roar of motors, and soon the last airman had disappeared in the smoky haze which hung over the distant battle-lines.

‘We cannot follow them on that journey. We cannot see them as they mount

higher and higher into the morning sky, on their way to meet their prey. But we may await their return. We may watch them as they descend to their flying field, dropping down to earth, one by one. We may learn, then, of their adventures on that flight of death: how, far back of the German lines, they encountered a formidable battle-squadron of the enemy, vastly superior to their own in numbers. Heedless of the risk, they swooped down upon their foe. Lieutenant A—— was attacked by four enemy planes at the same time. One he sent hurtling to the ground fifteen thousand feet below. He caused a second to retire disabled. Sergeant B—— accounted for another in a running fight which lasted for more than a quarter of an hour. Adjutant C——, although his biplane was riddled with bullets, succeeded, by a clever ruse, in decoying two pursuers, bent on his destruction, to the vicinity of a cloud where several of his comrades were lying in wait for further victims. A moment later, both Germans were seen to fall earthward, spinning like leaves in that last terrible dive of death.

‘These boys are Yankee aviators. They form the vanguard of America’s aerial forces. We need thousands of others just like them,’ and so forth.

Many of the questions which had long been accumulating in our minds got themselves answered during the next few days, while we were waiting for machines. We knew, in a general way, what the nature of our work would be. We knew that the Escadrille Lafayette was one of four pursuit squadrons occupying hangars on the same field, and that, together, they formed what is called a *groupe de combat*, with a definite sector of front to cover. We had been told that combat pilots are ‘the police of the air,’ whose

duty it is to patrol the lines, harass the enemy, attacking whenever possible, thus giving protection to their own *corps d’armée* aircraft — which are only incidentally fighting machines — in their work of reconnaissance, photography, artillery direction, and the like.

But we did not know how this general theory of combat is given practical application. When I think of the depths of our ignorance, to be filled in, day by day, with a little additional experience; of our self-confidence, despite warnings; of our willingness to leave so much for our godfather Chance to decide, it is with feelings nearly akin to awe. We awaited our first patrol almost ready to believe that it would be our first victorious combat. We had no realization of the conditions under which aerial battles are fought. Given good will, average ability, and the opportunity, we believed that the results must be decisive, one way or the other.

Much of our enforced leisure was spent at the bureau of the group, where the pilots gathered after each sortie to make out their reports.

On one wall of the bureau hung a large-scale map of the sector, which we examined square by square, with that delight which only the study of maps can give. Trench-systems, both French and German, were outlined upon it in minute detail. It contained other features of a very interesting nature. On another wall there was a yet larger map, made of aeroplane photographs taken at a uniform altitude and so pieced together that the whole was a complete picture of our sector of front. We spent hours over this one. Every trench, every shell-hole, every splintered tree or fragment of farmhouse wall stood out clearly. We could identify machine-gun posts and battery positions. We could see at a glance

the result of months of fighting: how terribly men had suffered under a rain of high explosives at this point, how lightly they had escaped at another, and so could follow, with a certain degree of accuracy, what must have been the infantry actions at various parts of the line.

II

Tiffin, the messroom steward, was standing by my cot with a lighted candle in his hand. The furrows in his kindly old face were outlined in shadow. His bald head gleamed like the bottom of a yellow bowl. He said, 'Beau temps, monsieur,' put the candle on my table, and went out, closing the door softly. I looked at the window square, which was covered with oiled cloth for want of glass. It was a black patch, showing not a glimmer of light.

The other pilots were gathering in the messroom, where a fire was burning. Some one started the phonograph. Fritz Kreisler was playing the 'Chanson sans Parole.' This was followed by a song, 'O movin' man, don't take ma baby grand!' It was a strange combination, and to hear them, at that hour of the morning, before going out for a first sortie over the lines, gave me a 'mixed-up' feeling which it was impossible to analyze.

Two patrols were to leave the field at the same time, one to cover the sector at an altitude of from 2000 to 3000 metres, the other, 3500 to 5000 metres. J.B. and I were on high patrol. Owing to our inexperience, it was to be a purely defensive one between our observation balloons and the lines. We had still many questions to ask, but having been so persistently inquisitive for three days running, we thought it best to wait for Talbott, who was leading our patrol, to volunteer his instructions.

He went to the door to look at the

weather. There were clouds at about 3000 metres, but the stars were shining through gaps in them. On the horizon, in the direction of the lines, there was a broad belt of blue sky. The wind was blowing into Germany.

He came back yawning. 'We'll go up — Ho, hum!' — a tremendous yawn — 'through a hole before we reach the river. It's going to be clear presently, so the higher we go the better.'

The others yawned sympathetically.

'I don't feel very pugnastic this morning.'

'It's a crime to send men out at this time of day — night, rather.'

More yawns of assent, of protest. J. B. and I were the only ones fully awake. We had finished our chocolate and were watching the clock uneasily, afraid that we would be late getting started. Ten minutes before patrol time we went out to the field. The canvas hangars billowed and flapped, and the wooden supports creaked with the quiet sound made by ships at sea. And there was almost the peace of the sea there, intensified, if anything, by the distant rumble of heavy cannonading.

Our Spad biplanes were drawn up in two long rows, outside the hangars. They were in exact alignment, wing to wing. Some of them were clean and new, others discolored with smoke and oil; among these latter were the ones which J. B. and I were to fly. Being new pilots, we were given used machines to begin with, and ours had already seen much service. Fuselage and wings had many patches over the scars of old battles; but new motors had been installed and the bodies overhauled, and they were ready for further adventures.

It mattered little to us that they were old. They were to carry us out to our first air battles; they were the first *avions* which we could call our own, and we loved them in an almost personal

way. Each machine had an Indian head, the symbol of the Lafayette Corps, painted on the sides of the fuselage. In addition, it bore the personal mark of its pilot, — triangle, a diamond, a straight band, or an initial, — painted large so that it could be easily seen and recognized in the air.

The mechanics were getting the motors *en route*, arming the machine-guns, and giving a final polish to the glass of the wind-shields. In a moment every machine was turning over *ralenti*, with the purring sound of powerful engines which gives a voice to one's feeling of excitement just before patrol time. There was no more yawning, no languid movements.

Rodman was buttoning himself into a combination suit which appeared to add another six inches to his six feet two. Barry, who was leading the low patrol, wore a woolen helmet which left only his eyes uncovered. I had not before noticed how they blazed and snapped. All his energy seemed to be concentrated in them. Porter wore a leather face-mask, with a lozenge-shaped breathing-hole, and slanted openings covered with yellow glass for eyes. He was the most fiendish-looking demon of them all. I was glad to turn from him to the Duke, who wore a *passe-montagne* of white silk which fitted him like a bonnet. As he sat in his machine, adjusting his goggles, he might have passed for a dear old lady preparing to read a chapter from the book of Daniel. The fur of Dunham's helmet had frayed out, so that it fitted around the sides of his face and under the chin like a beard of the kind worn by old-fashioned sailors.

The strain of waiting patiently for the start was trying. The sudden transformation of a group of typical-looking Americans into monsters and devotional old ladies, gave a moment of diversion which helped to relieve it.

I heard Talbott shouting his parting instructions and remembered that I did not know the rendezvous. I was already strapped in my machine and was about to loosen the fastenings, when he came over and climbed on the step of the car.

'Rendezvous two thousand over field!' he yelled.

I nodded.

'Know me — Big T — wings — fuselage. I'll — turning right. You and others left. When — see me start — lines, fall in behind — left. Remember stick close — patrol. If — get lost, better — home. Compass southwest. Look carefully — landmarks going out. Got — straight?'

I nodded again to show that I understood. Machines of both patrols were rolling across the field, a mechanic running along beside each one. I joined the long line, and taxied over to the starting-point, where the captain was superintending the send-off, and turned into the wind in my turn. As if conscious of his critical eye, my old veteran Spad lifted its tail and gathered flying speed with all the vigor of its youth, and we were soon high above the hangars, climbing to the rendezvous.

When we had all assembled, Talbott headed northeast, the rest of us falling into our places behind him. Then I found that, despite the new motor, my machine was not a rapid climber. Talbott noticed this and kept me well in the group, he and the others losing height in *renversements* and *rentournements*, diving under me and climbing up again. It was fascinating to watch them doing stunts, to observe the constant changing of positions. Sometimes we seemed, all of us, to be hanging motionless, then rising and falling like small boats riding a heavy swell. Another glance would show me one of them suspended bottom up, falling

sidewise, tipped vertically on a wing, standing on its tail, as if being blown about by the wind, out of all control. It is only in the air, and when moving with them, that one can really appreciate the variety and grace of movement of a flock of high-powered *avions de chasse*.

I was close to Talbott as we reached the cloud-bank. I saw him in dim silhouette as the mist, sunlight-filtered, closed around us. Emerging into the clear fine air above it, we might have been looking at early morning from the casement

opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

The sun was just rising, and the floor of cloud glowed with delicate shades of rose and amethyst and gold. I saw the others rising through it at widely scattered points. It was a glorious sight.

Then, forming up and turning northward again, just as we passed over the receding edge of the cloud-bank, I saw the lines. It was still dusk on the ground and my first view was that of thousands of winking lights, the flashes of guns and bursting shells. At that time the Germans were making trials of the French positions along the Chemin des Dames, and the artillery fire was unusually heavy.

The lights soon faded and the long winding battle-front emerged from the shadow, a broad strip of desert land through a fair green country. We turned westward along the sector, several kilometres within the French lines, for J. B. and I were to have a general view of it all before we crossed to the other side. The fort of Malmaison was a minute square, not as large as a postage-stamp. With thumb and forefinger I could have spanned the distance between Soissons and Laon. Clouds of smoke were rising from Allemant to Craonne, and these were constantly added to by infinitesimal puffs

in black and white. I knew that shells of enormous calibre were wrecking trenches, blasting out huge craters; and yet not a sound, not the faintest reverberation of a gun. Here was a sight almost to make one laugh at man's idea of the importance of his pygmy wars.

But the Olympian mood is a fleeting one. I think of Paradis rising on one elbow out of the slime where he and his comrades were lying, waving his hand toward the wide, unspeakable landscape.

'What are we, we chaps? And what's all this here? Nothing at all. All we can see is only a speck. When one speaks of the whole war, it's as if you said nothing at all — the words are strangled. We're here, and we look at it like blind men.'

To look down from a height of more than two miles on an endless panorama of suffering and horror, is to have the sense of one's littleness even more painfully quickened. The best that the airman can do is to repeat, 'We're here, and we look at it like blind men.'

We passed on to the point where the line bends northward, then turned back. I tried to concentrate my attention on the work of identifying landmarks. It was useless. One might as well attempt to study Latin grammar at his first visit to the Grand Cañon. My thoughts went wool-gathering. Looking up suddenly, I found that I was alone.

To the new pilot the sudden appearance or disappearance of other *avions* is a weird thing. He turns his head for a moment. When he looks again, his patrol has vanished. Combats are matters of a few seconds' duration, rarely of more than two or three minutes. The opportunity for attack comes almost with the swiftness of thought and has passed as quickly. Looking behind me, I was in time to see one

machine tip and dive. Then it too vanished as though it had melted into the air. Shutting my motor, I started down, swiftly, I thought; but I had not yet learned to fall vertically, and the others — I can say almost with truth — were miles below me. I passed long streamers of white smoke, crossing and recrossing in the air. I knew the meaning of these: machine-gun tracer bullets; the delicately penciled lines had not yet frayed out in the wind. I went on down in a steep spiral, guiding myself by them, and seeing nothing. At the point where they ended I redressed and put on my motor. My altimeter registered 2000 metres. By a curious chance, while searching the empty sky, I saw a live shell passing through the air. It was just at the second when it reached the top of its trajectory and started to fall. 'Lord!' I thought, 'I have seen a shell, and yet I can't find my patrol!'

While coming down I had given no attention to my direction. I had lost 2500 metres in height. The trenches were now plainly visible, and the brown strip of sterile country where they lay, vastly broader. Several times I felt the concussion of shell-explosions, my machine being lifted and then dropped gently with an uneasy motion. Constantly searching the air, I gave no thought to my position with reference to the lines, or to the possibility of anti-aircraft fire. Talbott had said, 'Never fly in a straight line for more than fifteen seconds. Keep changing your direction constantly, but be careful not to fly in a regularly irregular fashion. The German gunners may let you alone at first, hoping that you will get careless, or they may be plotting out your style of flight. Then they make their calculations and let you have it. If you've been careless, they'll put 'em so close, there'll be no question as to the kind of a scare you will have.'

There was not in my case. I was looking for my patrol to the exclusion of thought of anything else. The first shell burst so close that I lost control of my machine for a moment. Three others followed, two in front, and one behind which I believed had wrecked my tail. They burst with a terrific rending sound in clouds of coal-black smoke. A few days before, I had been watching without emotion the bombardment of a German plane. I had seen him twisting and turning through the *éclatements*, and had heard the shells popping faintly, with a sound like the bursting of seed-pods in the sun.

My feeling was not that of fear exactly. It was more like despair. Every airman must have known it at one time or another, a sudden overwhelming realization of the pitilessness of the forces which men let loose in war. In that moment one does not remember that men have loosed them. He is alone and he sees the face of an utterly evil thing. Miller's advice was, 'Think down to the gunners'; but this is impossible at first. Once a French captain told me that he talked to the shells. 'I say, "Bonjour, mon vieux! Tiens! Comment ça va, toi! Ah non! je suis pressé!" something like that. It amuses one.'

This need of some means of humanizing shell-fire is common. Aviators know little of modern warfare as it touches the infantryman; but in one respect, at least, they are less fortunate. They miss the human companionship which helps a little to mask its ugliness.

However, it is seldom that one is quite alone, without the sight of friendly planes near at hand, and there is a language of signs which, in a way, fills this need. One may 'waggle his flippers,' or 'flap his wings,' to use the common expressions, and thus com-

municate with his comrades. Unfortunately for my ease of mind, there were no comrades present with whom I could have conversed in this way. Miller was within 500 metres and saw me all the time, although I did not know this until later.

Talbott's instructions were, 'If you get lost, go home' — somewhat ambiguous. I knew that my course to the aerodrome was southwest. At any rate, by flying in that direction I was certain to land in France. But with German gunners so keen on the baptism-of-fire business, I had been turning in every direction, and the floating disc of my compass was revolving first to the right, then to the left. In order to let it settle, I should have to fly straight for some fixed point for at least half a minute. Under the circumstances I was not willing to do this. A compass which would point north immediately and always would be a heaven-sent blessing to the inexperienced pilot during his first few weeks at the front. Mine was saying north — northwest — west — southwest — south — southeast — east — and after a moment of hesitation reading off the points in the reverse order. The wind was blowing into Germany, and unconsciously, in trying to find a way out of the *éclatements*, I was getting farther and farther away from home and coming within range of additional batteries of hostile anti-aircraft guns.

I might have landed at Karlsruhe or Cologne, had it not been for Miller. My love for concentric circles of red, white, and blue dates from the moment when I saw the French *cocarde* on his Spad.

'And if I had been a Hun!' he said, when we landed at the aerodrome. 'O man! you were fruit salad! fruit salad, I tell you! I could have speared you with my eyes shut.'

I resented the implication of defense-

lessness. I said that I was keeping my eye open, and if he had been a Hun, the fruit salad might not have been so palatable as it looked.

'Tell me this. Did you see me?'

I thought for a moment, and then said, 'Yes.'

'When?'

'When you passed over my head.'

'And twenty seconds before that you would have been a sieve if either of us had been a Boche.'

I yielded the point to save further argument.

He had come swooping down fairly suddenly. When I saw him making his way so saucily among the *éclatements* I felt my confidence returning in increasing waves. I began to use my head, and found that it was possible to make the German gunners guess badly. There was no menace in the sound of shells barking at a distance, and we were soon clear of all of them.

J. B. took me aside the moment I had landed. He had one of his fur boots in his hand and was wearing the other. He had also lighted the cork end of his cigarette. To one acquainted with his magisterial orderliness of mind and habit, these signs were eloquent.

'Now keep this quiet!' he said. 'I don't want the others to know it, but I've just had the adventure of my life. I attacked a German. Great Scott! what an opportunity! and I bungled it through being too eager!'

'When was this?'

'Just after the others dove. You remember —'

I told him, briefly, of my experience, adding, 'And I did n't know there was a German in sight until I saw the smoke of the tracer bullets.'

'Neither did I, only I did n't see even the smoke.'

This cheered me immensely. 'What! you did n't!'

'No. I saw nothing but sky where

the others had disappeared. I was looking for them when I saw the German. He was about four hundred metres below me. He could n't have seen me, I think, because he kept straight on. I dove, but did n't open fire until I could have a nearer view of his black crosses. I wanted to be sure. I had no idea that I was going so much faster. The first thing I knew I was right on him. Had to pull back on my stick to keep from crashing into him. Up I went and fell into a nose-dive. When I came out of it there was no sign of the German, and I had n't fired a shot!

'Did you come home alone?'

'No, I had the luck to meet the others just afterward. Now not a word of this to any one!'

But there was no need for secrecy. The near combat had been seen by both Talbott and Porter. At luncheon we came in for our share of ragging.

'You should have seen them following us down!' said Porter; 'like two old rheumatics going into the subway. We saw them both when we were taking height again. The scrap was all over hours before, and they were still a thousand metres away.'

'You want to dive vertically. Need n't worry about your old 'bus. She'll stand it.'

'Well, the Lord has certainly protected the innocent to-day!'

'One of them was wandering off into Germany. Bill had to waggle Miller to page him.'

'And there was Drew, going down on that biplane we were chasing. I've been trying to think of one wrong thing he might have done which he did n't do. First he dove with the sun in his face, when he might have had it at his back. Then he came all the way in full view, instead of getting under his tail. Good thing the mitrailleur was firing at us. After that, when he had the

chance of a lifetime, he fell into a *vrille* and scared the life out of the rest of us. I thought the gunner had turned on him. And while we were following him down to see where he was going to splash, the Boche got away.'

All this happened months ago, but every trifling incident connected with our first patrol is still fresh in mind. And twenty years from now, if I chance to hear the '*Chanson sans Parole*,' or if I hum to myself a few bars of a ballad, then sure to be long forgotten by the world at large, 'O movin' man, don't take ma baby grand!' I shall have only to close my eyes, and wait passively. First Tiffin will come with the lighted candle: '*Beau temps, monsieur*.' I shall hear Talbott shouting, '*Rendezvous two thousand over field. If — get lost — better — home.*' J.B. will rush up smoking the cork end of a cigarette. 'I've just had the adventure of my life!' And Miller, sitting on an essence-case, will have lost none of his old conviction. 'O man! you were fruit salad! fruit salad, I tell you! I could have speared you with my eyes shut!'

And in those days, happily, still far off, there will be many another old graybeard with such memories; unless they are all to wear out their days uselessly regretting that they are no longer young, there must be clubs where they may exchange reminiscences. These need not be pretentious affairs. Let there be a strong odor of burnt castor oil and gasoline as you enter the door; a wide view from the verandahs of earth and sky; maps on the walls; and on the roof a canvas 'pantaloon-leg' to catch the wind. Nothing else very much matters. There they will be as happy as any old airman can expect to be, arguing about the winds and disputing each other's judgment about the height of the clouds.

If you say to one of them, 'Tell us

something about the great war,' as likely as not he will tell you a pleasant story enough. And the pity of it will be that, hearing the tale, a young man will long for another war. Then you must say to him, 'But what about the

shell-fire? Tell us something of machines falling in flames.' Then, if he is an honest old airman whose memory is still unimpaired, the young one who has been listening will have sober second thoughts.

(To be continued)

PRUSSIAN MANNERS

BY C. JOURNELLE

LIFE in the invaded provinces of France, during the years 1914 and 1915, remained under a pall of mystery and silence; one would have said that that strip of our territory had fallen into an abyss, so rigorously did the Germans keep our compatriots in secret durance. It was not until after a year of this seclusion that some repatriated persons began to emerge — at first, at rare intervals, then in frequent batches; but in what a state of pallid exhaustion! Let this one physical fact suffice: all of them without exception, even in 1916, had lost a fifth, a fourth, or a third of their weight. They all looked as if they had escaped from a torture chamber. Morally they are unconquered, all quivering alike with indignation and contempt for the barbarians; or, if there are some who prefer to hold their peace, they do it only from excess of inward horror, and in this way give voice, perhaps, to an even more tragic protest.

Indeed, as we shall see, the German tyranny does not consist simply in an exorbitant application of the dogma of might. It has special mortifications, peculiar to the race, which make it even more painful, if that is possible. It is not inspired solely by the systematic

despotism and immorality cynically adopted by Germany; it is not a pure, unadulterated application of any doctrine: it springs from a genuine lack of morality, and from a well-spring of vicious animalism, which psychologists have so often detected in the German blood.

Not that I am so foolish as to hold that all Germans are low, malignant, and brutal; but it can be said without hesitation that such is, generally speaking, their psychical type, more or less emphasized; that such are their racial characteristics, as appears from innumerable facts gathered from the lips of our repatriates of every locality.

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One of the most amazing manifestations of the Germanic spirit, in invaded France, is the compulsory salutation which the officers impose upon all males, and, by a refinement of tyranny, upon the women and girls. Even in ancient Latium, at the Caudine Forks, only the men were made to pass under the yoke, and that but once. But the Teuton, in his insensibility to human dignity, is never weary of trampling