

# NEWS FROM THE FRONT

BY RAYMOND S. TOMPKINS

TEN years ago this June one of the biggest news stories that ever broke for American newspapers was breaking not far from Paris. A last tremendous German thrust had halted barely forty-five miles from the city. American troops, brigaded with the French, had helped to block it. Now the Americans were slicing into the German line. Inch by inch, with no sleep and little food, they were hacking their way through storms of machine-gun bullets to the rocky caverns of Belleau Wood.

What a story! At Field Press Headquarters in Paris a little group of curiously assorted men, in regulation and near-regulation uniforms, fidgeted and fumed. They wore the Sam Browne belts of officers, and their jaunty peaked caps were piped with colored braid like the caps of officers. The piping was of two colors, red and green, a combination strange to the doughboy. There was no uniformity about their breeches. What sort of discipline had this outfit, that its members could wear at will whipcord riding breeches or O. D. serge, or ordinary issue pants? And how did they get away—three or four of them—with those British-type blouses with lapels?

In vain one scanned their shoulders and collars for insignia of rank or emblems of service. Yet something still marked them out from the general run of A. W. O. L. officers, Red Cross "colonels" and Y. M. C. A. song-birds who were finding frightened Paris so amusing—something beside a certain queer combination of indifference, studied or natural, and alertness, veiled but undeniable. This something was sewed around the left sleeve of each just above the

elbow—a green brassard bearing a red C. On the sleeves of a couple of them the brassards were white.

These were the American war correspondents of the ruddy days of 1918.

Amongst them, obviously unhappy, his fatigue cap pushed back on his head, his hair stringing down his forehead like that of a harassed city editor with a murder busting in the mountains five minutes before press time, stood the Press Censor in full major's uniform, with an army to protect in France and a public to inform in the United States. Sweat fairly popped out upon him, as, indeed, who wouldn't it have popped out upon with such burdens to bear?

"For God's sake!" implored the war correspondents, "let us use *some* designation! This is the kind of story the Army needs. It's the kind of story the people back home need. You can't keep up this damned anonymity forever. It's a crime on a story like this!"

"Units will not be mentioned by name," chanted the pale censor, like a swami in a trance. "Information that may be of value to the enemy—"

"How about saying 'Marines?' " interrupted one correspondent. "That won't help the enemy."

"Yes," chimed another, "can't we say 'Marines?'"

The censor's vacant eyes focussed again. He shot a telegram off to G. H. Q. In a short while the answer came back. The censor read it to himself. Joy chased sorrow from his face.

"G. H. Q. says you may use 'Marines'!" he announced.

This was why the cables to America, in June, 1918, hummed with the story of the Marines in Belleau Woods. Next morning 100,000,000 people, 3,000 miles away, read about them over the wheat cakes and whooped to learn that Americans were the best fighters in the world—especially Marines. But they never read a word about the Ninth and the Twenty-third Infantry—never dreamed there was any such infantry, never knew until long afterward that they had fought just as hard, bled just as fast, and died just as thoroughly as the Marines, and in exactly the same division in precisely the same operation!

So the Marines went on to an eternity of glory and publicity, and the Ninth and Twenty-third Infantry went down, temporarily and perhaps permanently, to oblivion. That was one of the mistakes in the censorship of war news long since admitted by the censors themselves. But never, so far as the record shows, has any share of the guilt been admitted by the newspapers whose men hounded the censors into making it.

## II

In this, the tenth year since the wind-up of the war, on the flood of reminiscence that surges over us, come such memories of the aging war correspondents. In 1914 everybody thought the day of the war correspondent had ended with the Russo-Japanese struggle. The Japs had virtually put foreign reporters into jail and kept them there for the duration of the war. But with the start of the Great War and Richard Harding Davis' gray-green tide story from Belgium, American newspaper readers began again to gobble up signed yarns from the front, and to picture the writers thereof in their minds. The war correspondent assumed once more the aspect of adventure and high romance—tall, lean, bronzed by the suns of all the tropics, uniformed and booted, his breast covered with service and campaign ribbons, with horse after horse shot under him as he galloped

his way to the nearest telegraph office, waving generals and marshals off the road, and sending his vivid two-column dispatches full of hell-fire and personal pronouns.

Soon, however, the French and British interned the correspondents, and for about three years after 1914, except for an occasional bright yarn, the American newspapers had to be content with dreary official communiques, all anonymous, all rather obviously full of propaganda, and nearly all unintelligible. But in 1917, when the United States soldiery began arriving in France, stories obviously written by reporters actually on the scene began to be seen again on the front pages. The war correspondent appeared to have returned to his thrilling and romantic place in the theatre of war. And so he had.

But what a return! Hamstrung, hog-tied, lashed to the mast of censorship, he was about as happy as a toothless guest at a peanut-brittle party. He and his colleagues, to be sure, were gallant enough figures, their pockets stuffed with passes, dashing about the landscape in large automobiles chauffeured by sergeants or privates; their uniforms expressing more individuality than was permitted the enlisted soldier or officer; welcomed, fed, regaled with anecdote and loaded down with news wherever they went, from a corps headquarters to an infantry battalion dugout. There was no army rule against giving them the news. But the rules about *writing* it scarcely more than permitted them to put down the date, the weather, their best regards, and their names. Their chapter in the history of the Great War is full of frustration and bitterness. It found frequent expression during the struggle, boiled up often in its wake, and will not, even now, be exorcised.

The code of censorship rules grew like the knowledge a blind man acquires of his way to the cigar-store. It started out with an expression of almost pathetic trust and confidence in the patriotism and military discretion of the press of the United States and its representatives in France. Here is

the first actual censorship regulation issued there for the guidance of the correspondents:

The American Expeditionary Force depends more upon the correspondents' patriotism and discretion than upon censorship in the safeguarding of military secrets. Information given confidentially to their friends by persons, official or civilian, who have had opportunities at first-hand observation, is one of the most dependable sources of the enemy spy system. Therefore correspondents are asked to make it a rule never to relate to any person, however intimate, any fact or impression which is not conveyed in their copy as censored.

Correspondents will not be permitted to mention:

1. Name of any port of disembarkation, nor any description of it.
2. Names of any officers except the Commander-in-Chief, or the commanders of divisions; nor the names of any units.
3. Anything that will indicate to the enemy the routes of our transports or the methods used by the Navy to protect these routes.

Here were but three rules. The rest was left to the "correspondents' patriotism and discretion." The date of this high-minded bull was June 25, 1917.

At about that time an event of the very first historic importance was about to take place. The first groups of the American Expeditionary Forces were about to set foot on French soil. Lieutenant-Colonel (then Major) Frederick Palmer, an old war correspondent who had quit the business and gone into the Army to see that the right news got out correctly, was hurrying from Paris to the landing docks with three of the first war correspondents. They represented the Associated Press, the United Press and the International News Service.

They reached the spot in plenty of time, got the story at first hand, wrote it, had it censored, and put it on the cables. All America, next day, read with thrills of pride, splendid dispatches beginning with the following date line:

St. Nazaire, France, June 26.

In twelve hours cables of protest were swarming over the trans-Atlantic wires from official Washington. What a beginning! On June 25 the Army had expressed trust and confidence in the War correspondents, and on the very next day they

had broadcast for the entire world, friendly and unfriendly, the fact that St. Nazaire was the American army's landing place!

No one knows today with what glee, if any, the enemy received this information. No one knows, indeed, whether he received it at all, or if so, whether he was interested in it. But from that moment trust in the war correspondents' "discretion and patriotism" was flung out of the window, and reporters and censors prepared to fight.

G. H. Q. at once put to work a tireless machine for the uttering of bigger and better censorship regulations. Scarcely a month passed thereafter without the issuance of at least two new sets of gags and blinders. Only July 4, 1917, the sweetly trusting order of June 25, was augmented by five more rules, full of teeth, including one that revoked permission to mention division commanders and permitted personal references only to General Pershing, General Sibert and Admiral Gleaves. On July 11 another set of rules came out; on July 28, a fourth, this time from Washington; on August 4, a fifth; on August 25, a sixth; on September 13, a seventh, adding five generals to the list whose names might be printed; on October 12, a general revision and codification of all the others.

### III

What madness this succession of tyrannies produced in the breasts of America's—shall we say?—leading reporters (although some of them, including the present writer, were not long past their police court days), readers with old-fashioned conceptions of a free press may well imagine. In the edict of August 25, was this historic utterance from the Chief of Military Intelligence:

My attention has been called to the fact that there is considerable adverse comment by various papers in the States on dispatches from here which indicate that the French people have shown their cordiality and hospitality by bestowing gifts of wine on our soldiers. These episodes have been only limited and will be officially discouraged. With the French law prohibiting the sale of alcoholic drinks to officers and soldiers in uni-

forms, and our own rigid laws on the subject which will be rigidly enforced, we should have very little trouble controlling the liquor problem of our troops in France, and the people at home need have no worry on that score. All references to this subject will be eliminated from dispatches hereafter.

It was easy enough by rules to cover such things as the names of men and units, and those of places, sectors and the like, but it was not so easy to shackle picturesque writing men to whom mere facts were a drag and a nuisance anyway—who had rather cable a column description of the sough of a gas shell than an important list of casualties. However, the Fourth Sub-section of the Intelligence Section of the General Staff of the A. E. F., G-2-D, G. H. Q.—to give the Field Censorship its full name—undertook to shackle them. As witness:

Descriptions of details in Army life, and particularly incidents which may falsely characterize the whole, should not be permitted. While cheer and healthy humor ease the strain of war, flippant and vulgar accounts prejudicial to morale, or profane and obscene quotations should not be permitted. Equally unwarrantable is the exaggeration of the grievance of the type of soldier who expects the comforts of home in time of war. War means sacrifice and hardship. Men must submit to inconveniences; and language which has not proper respect for the dignity of the cause and the responsibility of the men who fight and their leaders should be avoided.

To plague and confound reportorial ingenuity, there were rules forbidding describing soldiers who could not be named. Thus not only could you not write "young Teddy Roosevelt," but you could not write "the son of an ex-President." You could not describe features of landscapes for fear some other writer would describe other features and the enemy, piecing the descriptions together, would discover an exact locality, or the censor would fear he might. If one correspondent, for example, mentioned a lake, another a forest, and another a road, the enemy, fitting these three together, would find the very place where we were training 25,000 men in hand-grenade throwing and drop bombs upon them. That was the censorship theory.

In those front line reserved seats in the

theatre of war, seeing and hearing everything, but permitted to tell very little and to criticise nothing, there were thirty-one "accredited" correspondents, twelve who "served as accredited correspondents," and about a dozen "visiting correspondents." The newspapers of the "accredited" ones had sent them over fairly early, before the General Staff decided upon a limit, and had posted bonds for their good behavior and contributed \$257 a month each for their automobile hire. The "visiting correspondents" were those whose newspapers had been unable to get them accredited, but had been able to have them stuffed down the Army's throat by George Creel's Committee on Public Information.

Before the war ended 411 of these well-meaning publicists, eager to help win the war with their pens, pencils, and typewriters, had descended upon Press Headquarters. I myself was of a group that Military Intelligence had not expected—men charged with the job of attaching themselves to divisions of boys from their papers' home-towns, and sticking to them until the end. Officially, we were "visiting correspondents," and as such were supposed merely to take a swing around France with a "conducting officer," submit our stuff to the censor, and then beat it. But we refused to be swung around the circuit and out again, with "war correspondents" like Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Judge Ben B. Lindsey; we wanted to stay and live with the men whose fighting we were to report. So we burned with indignation over the order respecting uniforms, issued June 15, 1918:

Accredited correspondents will wear the American Officers' uniform without any insignia of rank or arm of service. They will wear U. S. on the collar of the uniform, a Sam Browne belt and a green brassard bearing the letter C in red. Overseas cap piping will be of green and red braid. Visiting correspondents may wear such clothing as they see fit, but will NOT wear the American officers' uniform, the letters U. S. on collar, or the Sam Browne belt.

What an outrage! But they did not get away with it. No, no! Not with us who bore the burden and heat and drank the

lister-bag drinking water out along the line, while the "accredited" guys lolled around and drank wine and criticised the touring car service back at Bar-le-Duc and Meaux and such places, said we. We vowed we were *not* "visiting correspondents." The phrase, we declared, constituted a term of reproach. But, said the censors, neither are you "accredited correspondents." It was a nice point. Finally everybody agreed that we were "divisional correspondents," and it went at that, and we wore what uniforms we pleased, including the American.

#### IV

All this frightfulness had started with the unfortunate advent of the first "divisional correspondent." A star staff writer on a New England newspaper, he had gone to Washington to get his credentials. This was just about the time G. H. Q. in France had become fed up on war correspondents of all sorts, and had cabled Washington to send no more, accredited or not. But it was also before the Creel Committee, in its frenzy to get the country solid behind the administration's war policies, began shooting across sob-sisters and public-relations experts faster than G-2-D could stop them. The New England journalist found the War Department at its coldest. He was rebuffed at every turn. The division he was to cover had sailed or was about to sail. He was desperate.

Finally, to get rid of him, some official told him to see the Secretary of War, saying, "If Secretary Baker says you can go, we'll give you an authorization." So he went in to see Mr. Baker. Mr. Baker was grave.

"I am sorry," said the Secretary. "It is absolutely impossible."

The New Englander turned away, and between the Secretary's desk and the door he managed, being a man of some histrionic ability, to rid his face of its cloud of chagrin and to make it appear to shine with joy by the time he got outside.

"The Secretary," he blithely told the gullible official who had advised him, "says it will be absolutely all right!" This official believed him and wrote him an authorization that was sufficient to get him on a boat bound for France. The fellow's duplicity was discovered, but too late to stop him, so a sketch of the facts was cabled to G. H. Q. in France. But G. H. Q. was busy and took him on as a "visitor." Once on, he stayed to found the cult of the divisional correspondent.

While the divisional correspondent lived with his division, sending back his mail and cable stuff by courier to be censored and forwarded to America, and occasionally coming back to Press Headquarters for a scraping, a bath and a bout with Bacchus, the accredited correspondents lived at Field Press Headquarters, constituting, with the press officers and censors, a band of brothers dedicated to winning the war by means of the written word. This, at least, was the idea.

Usually the Press officers on duty at Field Press Headquarters numbered six or seven. There were three censors, one acting as Chief Censor, to whom a correspondent could appeal and from whom he could appeal to the Chief Press Officer, usually at G. H. Q. There was an Information Officer, to collect and coördinate information received from the Front, and to maintain files and a bulletin-board. There was a Transportation Officer, having charge of the fleet of high-powered touring-cars for rushing up to the front 'midst shot and shell and bringing back hot news that the Information Officer didn't get and the Chief Censor wouldn't pass. And there was a Conducting Officer to take out parties of the reprehensible "visiting correspondents."

Certainly this would seem to have been a staff sufficiently large to make every accredited correspondent feel that he had been flung into the lap of luxury. But there was always trouble.

In the first place, there were the almost irreconcilable objectives of the corre-

spondents on the one hand and of the censors on the other. The A. E. F. actually had started out with the curious idea that the American public could be kept informed about operations in France through three or four newspaper men, one, say, for each of four sections of the country. They quickly learned that American newspapers do not permit their public to be informed in that way; that there is no single great American public, but a number of them, one for each metropolitan daily, and, indeed, others for dailies that are not metropolitan.

One after another, therefore, big newspapers, powerful in their localities, had to be permitted to send men. These men went prepared to write the story of the A. E. F., for the folks back home, as they would write the story of a court battle to save a fair slayer from the noose. They had never covered a war; to them it was just the world's biggest shooting story, and the big thing was to get details. On the other hand the censors' purpose, as laid down by the Army Field Regulations governing the protection of military information, was to prevent the enemy from obtaining intelligence about our forces which would help him. This, as you may imagine, covered a multitude of hot stuff in the news line.

In the second place, some of these Press Officers, and most of the censors were old newspaper men with Reserve commissions. You might have thought old newspaper men would have let the news take its course, so long as it was truthful and accurate, but you would have been wrong. Just as a civilian in a new uniform becomes the hardboiledest of soldiers, so many of the old newspaper men dolled up in O. D.'s and Sam Browne belts became perhaps the toughest censors ever known in military history. Some of them—right high officers, too—got to making visitors take their hats off and bawling out enlisted men in public for not saluting. This was all right with the correspondents, but when they began cutting real features out of their

stories—and truthful ones, too—it was too much. They would have taken this treatment more kindly from soldiers born and bred, but they looked upon it, coming from old newspaper men in soldiers' duds, as the work of traitors.

And, in the third place, some of the earlier of the war correspondents were neither lilies in the purity of their motives, nor stars in the quality of their journalism. That, at least, was the opinion of some of the military men ten years ago, and it is still their opinion today.

The Chief of the Press Section of the General Staff was Col. Walter C. Sweeney, who incorporated this opinion candidly in his book, "Military Intelligence, A New Weapon in War," several years later. He said:

Correspondents who played the game in the interest of their paper and their country were the most efficient ones, while those who were unreasonable, impatient and critical of censorship were the least efficient. The former, as a rule, would write their complaints, get a decision and abide by it without further trouble. The latter, however, never were satisfied. No matter what decision was made, it was wrong. The trouble with such a correspondent was that the idea of any censorship at all was hateful to him and nothing connected with it could be right.

Of course, Colonel Sweeney's idea that any reporter to whom "any censorship at all was hateful" was, therefore "unreasonable" and "inefficient," while familiar enough in the Army, is, in the newspaper world, a quaint piece of foolishness. Newspaper standards of efficiency are not so hidebound as the Army's. Many a managing editor's idea of a most efficient war correspondent was one who told, or tried to tell, the censors to go to Hell. So unbending a disciple of a free press regarded any compromise with a censor as stultification. Equally hard-headed censors regarded any compromise with a correspondent in the same light, and, indeed, compromise was more often a mistake for the censor than for the correspondent. It was in a compromising spirit that the censor yielded to the clamor in Paris on the Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood stories, and per-

mitted the use of the word Marines. The trouble that bit of censorial diplomacy cooked up for our military establishments will not be ended for years to come.

## V

More often there was no compromise. One day a visiting correspondent from a Washington paper turned in a rip-roaring story, calculated to rock the Capitol dome back home and topple some bureaucrats out of their swivel chairs. It was one of these "Must-this-be!" stories. It said the A. E. F. was in horrible shape in France. American horses and mules had no oats or hay. American soldiers had no shoes. And, as to some horses and mules, and some soldiers, the story was true.

But the censor recoiled from it in horror, and covering his eyes with his hand, passed it on to the Chief Censor who sent it to the Chief Press Officer, who sent it to the Chief of G-2-D. That officer sent for the war correspondent, who came clanking in, wearing spurs.

"This, of course, can't go," he said. "It won't help us any and will just create a lot of unnecessary excitement back home. We can't pass it."

The war correspondent thundered back, "The people of America want the whole truth. This, sir, is the truth."

"Yes," said the Chief wearily, "it's the truth. But you know why it's the truth, or you should know. It's because a lot of dumb engineers on the docks in the States are loading transports with stuff we won't need for a year and holding back stuff we need right this minute. However, there's no sense in your writing that, either; it won't help matters any. But there's less sense in your blaming it on General Pershing and the A. E. F." And that was the end of it.

One night when Press Headquarters was in the village of Neufchâteau, an accredited correspondent dashed into the house where he roomed with a man from another paper. He was pale with excitement.

"Hell's busted loose!" he whispered. "I've got the greatest story of the war. Thirteen soldiers sick in the hospital from eating canned beef! It's a scandal that will shake the nation. Remember the Spanish-American War and the bad beef outrage? Wow! Let's write it!"

It didn't seem to the other man that thirteen soldiers in hospital with stomach-aches, out of some 600,000, was very startling, and anyway the censor wouldn't pass it.

"The hell with the censor! I'm going to resign and go back to the States and start a Congressional investigation of the packers!"

He did write the story and, of course, the censor held it up. But he did not resign nor start a Congressional investigation. Today he is a contact man for certain American meat-packers.

A visiting correspondent from a New York morning paper—a famous columnist—turned in a story one day that mentioned Boches. Colonel Frederick Palmer—himself in person—crossed out the word. "As President Wilson has said, we are fighting the German autocracy, not the German people," Palmer said smiling helpfully in a spirit of service. "So we can't use Boches."

"I begin to see," roared the outraged columnist, "that this is not merely a military censorship, but a political, a social and a moral censorship," and he went home in a few days and panned the whole outfit in the magazines to a fare-you-well.

Another time, a Chicago correspondent grew retrospective and wrote about Sedan in a reference to the war of 1870, and the censor, invoking the rule that "names of places shall not be used," cut it out, though it had no more to do with any American military operation in France than McKeesport, Pennsylvania. Almost in tears, the correspondent went to the Chief Censor, who put Sedan back.

Delays, bad cable transmission, suspended releases on mail stories, stupid

French telegraphers, the necessity of moving Press Headquarters, censors, rules and everything when theatres of operation shifted, kept the correspondents and censors in a constant sweat. The Frenchmen were particularly aggravating. They had quickly acquired an impatience bordering on disgust with the whole American military establishment, and the flock of bumptious American war correspondents was the last straw. They stationed a liaison captain, a fine fellow, too, with Press Headquarters, but did all they could to stick pins into the literary battalion. We had blamed on the French telegraphers the mistake of the St. Nazaire dateline in June, 1917, and the result of that had been a closer liaison with the French Censor through a Censure Américaine, Bureau de la Presse. The French censored our stuff for its effect in European papers, and were under no agreement with us to show the American censor what they had deleted unless it referred to our own Army. Hence the dispatches of American war correspondents frequently went to America minus large chunks of news that neither the correspondent nor the American Censor would have dreamed of eliminating.

Nevertheless, until about the middle of July, 1918, the French encouraged the publication of high praise of the Americans, of their dash and valor. The morale of the French people was about at rock bottom, and these thrilling stories about *les américaines* who were going to save the world boosted it up again. The French Bureau de la Presse at that time even encouraged news of a repulse by the American First Division of a German attack prior to Cantigny—an attack and repulse which never had occurred at all.

But by July 19 they were beginning to be certain of victory, and it was then that they began to try to kick the American correspondents overboard. Why? Simply in order that the splendor of French military exploits would now stand out in the dispatches of the day, unobscured by tales of the childish Americans. Naturally, this

sort of thing tended to draw American correspondents and censors closer together. But only temporarily. No great and lasting love sprang up between them.

Nobody could get a scoop. Two press association men tried it when the St. Mihiel drive—the first all-American operation—began on September 12, 1918. Press Headquarters was then at Meaux, having been driven out of Paris, where the war correspondents were commuting daily between the Rue St. Anne, Maxim's and the front, and, in general, sitting pretty while covering the grim work in the Marne salient. French G. H. Q. had frowned upon this business and chased them off to Meaux. They were held at Meaux while plans proceeded for the St. Mihiel drive, and were kept there until the evening before the drive. But the two press association men, having a tip on the plans, got away in a car, and up to the front, where they actually saw the battle begin, and were the only correspondents who did.

Dashing back to Nancy, where a censor had arrived to arrange quarters and telegraphic facilities, they wrote their eye-witness stories, scooping the entire world, presumably, and filed them. The censor handled the stories and sent them off to Paris, where they would be cabled with little delay. But immediately after he sent them off, he got a telephone order from the Press Officer marooned at Meaux with twenty-five other wild war correspondents, to recall the scoops from Paris and not let anything go until he had arrived with the others, and they had had a chance to write their stories from accounts from liaison press officers who had been with the troops. Thus the eye-witnesses were themselves scooped, and were naturally quite sore. One of them prepared a cable message to his chief in the States telling him about this raw deal, but the Press Officer refused to pass the cable until it was substantially altered.

If the war had lasted longer than it did, the job of war correspondent would have settled down to the level of that of a public

relations expert. It was reaching that stage when the end came. The corps was reduced to twenty-five accredited men and a handful of divisional correspondents who, like hermits of the profession, lived out in the woods and foxholes and bothered nobody, writing reams of stuff about the old home-town boys, identifying everything and everybody, with no hope that it would ever see the light of day, since, under the rules such stuff could not be released until the division written about had been relieved and the relieving division had been identified by the Germans!

By the start of the Argonne Drive, near the end of September, the defenders of a free press were quite tamed. They had become what G. H. Q. called "helpful." This was well, because critics of the conduct of the American Expeditionary Forces were sharpening their knives for it, and any longer delay in breaking through the German line might have brought trouble. One official historian of the affairs of the Press Section has said, "Had the United States not broken through before the armistice and silenced detractors that way, they [the war correspondents] would have been the principal witnesses in a not too easy defense."

They told the story of the Argonne in splendid fashion, nobody kicked over the traces, the war came to a speedy conclusion, and the long trek of the Army of Occupation across France and Belgium began. On November 18, 1918, most of the censorship bars were let down, the Armistice having been in effect for a week, and it looked as though the Army Press Section had at last achieved its ideal of a band of brothers—censors and correspondents—united for the right.

Then the Army reached Trier, Germany, and five correspondents broke away from their keepers and escaped, filtering through the German lines and getting to Berlin, whence they proceeded to send out some thrilling and world-beating yarns, under

the curiously mistaken impression that the war was over. Full of sadness and disillusionment, G-2-D requested the German authorities to return the prisoners to Trier, and their stories from Berlin were not released for publication until their papers recalled them. So war correspondents and censors ended the war as they had begun it,—as far apart in principle as the poles.

## VI

What of the next war? I am able to report for future generations of war correspondents that a set of brand new rules for their governance and convenience has been drawn up and awaits only final approval. As is the American custom—it irked the French terribly in 1918 and they fought against it—, the correspondents will be permitted to circulate freely in the lines, seeing everything. Also, as is the American custom, they will be permitted to write little or nothing of what they see.

As a matter of fact the War Department, while prepared to permit this free circulation of reporters, does not expect much of it. Through liaison officers at corps and army headquarters they expect to be able to provide enough handouts to keep the correspondents flocking comfortably around G. H. Q., well out of danger, except from air bombs and bad beef. The habit of taking handouts and not digging for himself is growing stronger with the average American reporter and the War Department knows it. They see plenty of it in Washington, the stamping ground of the Bighorns of journalism. They therefore hope to be able to convince the correspondents in the next war that their Press Section is established "for information" and not to gag the press. Less and less deletion will be required, there being less to delete because the war correspondents will know less to write about. This is the censorship ideal for the next war.

# AMERICANA

## ALABAMA

LAW ENFORCEMENT at the University of Alabama, as described by the student paper, the *Crimson-White*:

Last week, Officer Snyder, of the Tuscaloosa Police Department, searched an Alabama fraternity house for liquor. Officer Snyder entered the house about one-thirty o'clock one night. He was met in the hall by a member of the fraternity, Mr. A., who asked him what his business was. Upon being told that the officer was going to search the house, Mr. A. demanded to see the search-warrant. "I don't need no — search-warrant", said the officer, where-with he drew his revolver, jabbed it against Mr. A.'s stomach, and handcuffed him. Meanwhile, a group of students had gathered, whom the officer threatened with his revolver. Incensed at some comment made by a student in the crowd, the officer sprang into the group and physically assaulted one of them. Throughout, no resistance was offered by any student—a marvel of forbearance, under the circumstances.

After having searched the house without finding a drop of liquor, the officer apparently felt that he had been cheated. Not wanting to go empty-handed, he arrested the handcuffed Mr. A., lodged him in jail, and charged him with "interfering with an officer in the performance of his duty". Mr. A.'s sole "interference," consisted in exercising his constitutional right of demanding that a search-warrant be shown. He offered no resistance other than verbal, and at the subsequent trial no evidence was offered to show that he offered any such resistance.

After two hours in jail, Mr. A. was released on \$200 bond. Later, probably realizing that the officer's conduct had better not be aired, the city offered to drop the matter, but Mr. A. insisted on a trial, that he might establish his innocence. He was tried in the recorder's court and found not guilty.

## CALIFORNIA

JUDICIAL news from the Long Beach *Star-Telegram*:

Combining the career of evangelist with that of Municipal Court judge is the successful achievement of Judge Ernest Beam of the Municipal Court of Signal Hill City, who has been granted a three-month leave of absence, beginning today, from his judicial duties to conduct a series of evangelistic meetings in this State and in Arizona, Texas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

A PEEP into the hearts of the men who make the movies, as provided by the advance publicity sheets of the First National Pictures:

Invisible walls of privacy are shielding the filming of the tender and intimate love scenes of "Lilac Time," Colleen Moore's greatest dramatic effort. No "Private—Keep Out!" signs surround the little French farm-yard and its lilac garden that forms an exquisite setting for these scenes. Yet the curious eyes that stare from behind the camera lines of most studio sets are noticeably absent from this one at the First National Studio in Burbank, where, for many weeks, this Colleen Moore-George Fitzmaurice production has been in progress. Director Fitzmaurice, Chief Cameraman Sid Hickox and the chief electrician are the only ones whose eyes follow the making of these scenes in the lilac garden—a purple poem gently nodding in approval as the two young lovers kneel before the shrine in the garden wall. In unspoken agreement, other members of the cast, electricians, carpenters, assistants and others display the subtle courtesy of withdrawing to other portions of the set except when their presence before the camera is requested.

SERMON subject of the Rev. Dr. Stewart P. MacLennan, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood:

ATHENS—THE CULTURED HOLLYWOOD OF GREECE

## COLORADO

LATEST achievement of a Colorado Springs educator, as reported by the *Gazette*:

H. M. Corning, superintendent of schools, is now a member of the Longfellow Club. He gained the honor at a meeting of the superintendents' division of the National Education Association in Boston. The honor is outside the boundaries of academic achievements, but there is strength in the organization. The requirements of the club are that an individual must be over six feet one inch tall. Mr. Corning met the requirement with four inches to spare. The Longfellows have banded themselves together to promote the use of long beds in hotels and to urge that doors be constructed not too low.

## CONNECTICUT

THE HON. CLINTON S. NICHOLS, of Hartford, president of the National Exchange