



## Collier's

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## LET'S SIT TIGHT

WE'VE just read, somewhat belatedly, William L. Shirer's striking *Berlin Diary* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1941, 605 pp., \$3.00). All the compliments that have been showered on the book are all right with us. We think it's a masterpiece of day-to-day historical reporting.

The sharpest single memory we bring away from the book is of the tragic mistake made by the poor little people in Belgium, Holland and northern France who tried to run from the war. We're not reproaching them with wisdom born of hindsight. Maybe we'd have highballed down the nearest road, too.

But if those people had sat tight, taking their chances on being hit by bombs or plowed under by tanks or machine guns, and thus had left the roads free for their own soldiers, Hitler's soldiers might have had a much tougher

and costlier time stabbing out to the Channel ports and down to the Loire.

That fatal civilian error of May and June, 1940, can't be undone. But the lesson of it can be taken to heart in countries still unconquered. It has been taken to heart in Great Britain, where the key instruction dinned into civilians' heads is not to run in case of invasion, but to stay put, let the soldiers have the roads, take your chances on death and destruction. Those chances will be no greater in your own home, in all likelihood, than out on the broad highway.

It doesn't seem likely that many of us in the United States will soon be challenged to put this plan physically into practice. The worst that appears to threaten us in this war is a possible "token bombing" of New York or Washington or both—in which case we hope

civilians in the attacked areas will use their heads rather than their feet.

We can, however, sit tight mentally as this war roars along. And we believe that is one of the wisest things we can do.

We can, and should, refuse to be stampeded or driven to hysteria by politicians or propagandists, by crazy rumors, by the efforts of either our friends or our enemies to play on mass emotions for their own purposes.

In peace or war, there are few persons more valuable than the citizen who doesn't overheat easily; who holds his fire for the time when it is needed, meanwhile keeping his common sense tuned up and his reasoning powers on the job.

If, as a people, we can hold that frame of mind until this storm is over, we ought to come out of it in reasonably good shape.

## Two Reforms for the Army

AS ALARMING a note as we've read in some time appeared recently in Collier's Our New Army department:

Selectees in some Southern camps are being issued the old, broad-brimmed campaign hat, but most of the rest of the Army wear the overseas field cap—and don't like it. "We're developing crows' feet in the corners of our eyes and a perpetual squint," writes a Camp Edwards private. "As ex-Guardsmen we miss the old headgear, which made a swell sunshade, rain protector, water bucket and a pillow on bivouac."

It's the wear and tear on the men's eyes that worries us the most. Some people can take brilliant sunshine without suffering; others

can't, though they may have normal vision. Some can get used to it, but, again, others can't. Those who can't are bound to incur temporary or permanent eyesight impairment from daily exposure to direct sunlight.

A modern army needs to be utilitarian above all things; so how about issuing both types of headgear throughout the Army, the campaign hat for regular use and the cap for Sunday best, reviews, parades, etc.?

Another Army reform which we thought was long under way now appears to be only under discussion. Col. Ralph C. Tobin, commanding the 207th Coast Artillery Antiaircraft Regiment, the other day told his men at Camp Stewart, Ga.:

It's not beneath your dignity to do all these necessary details [kitchen police, housecleaning, etc.—Ed.], but much time needed for military training is wasted when you could better be learning the technique of fighting and the handling of equipment which necessitates technical training. . . . I don't believe a soldier should have to clean a dish.

Neither do we. What's more, it was freely bandied about when the draft first began to take hold that few soldiers in this Army were going to have to do any housemaiding as soon as things got organized. Labor battalions were going to take over the Army's housekeeping in large part.

When do we get going on this reform? After all, the draft is nearly a year old now.

## Saluting Charles Edison

HEREWITH our first cheer, but we have a hunch not our last, for Governor Charles Edison of New Jersey. Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City has long been that unfortunate burg's nationally famous Lord of Misrule. Hague is an old-time boss of the Charley Murphy, Boies Penrose, Bill Vare school, who makes a loud show of standing up for the Peepul's rights while the Peepul's taxes keep going higher and higher.

Governor Edison recently called Hague on

one phase of this game. Edison claims that Hague-inspired taxes are bankrupting various railroads serving New Jersey, whereas a sound scheme of taxation can easily keep these geese laying their annual golden eggs.

Edison addressed the citizenry of New Jersey with some talk that was loaded with common sense and realism, in brutal contrast to the rabble-rousing malarkey which has always served Hague well up to now. And to the general surprise, Edison got an enthusiastic re-

sponse from those same New Jersey citizens.

The fight is still going on at this writing. What encourages us about it is the fact that Edison got to first base with an appeal to his public's intelligence instead of to its passions. Can it be that a new tide is setting in, in our political life, and that men of the Edison stripe are riding that tide, and will engulf the Hagues in due time?

We don't know; but we expect to follow Governor Edison's career with our best wishes.



## “Pull over to the curb!”

**POLICEMAN:** And now, my perambulating Persian, will you be good enough to tell me just where you were going at such a clip?

**CAMEL:** To the country club, officer, to deliver a speech on—

**POLICEMAN:** Oho! Speeches is it now? And what would a camel like yourself be delivering speeches about, may I ask?

**CAMEL:** About a highly desirable quality in whiskey, gracious sergeant. A quality of which I am the living symbol and chief prophet. A—

**POLICEMAN:** So, my elegant Arabian! We’re a symbol now, are we? And just what is it we’re a symbol of?

**CAMEL:** Of *Dryness*, noble captain. *Dryness* in whiskey . . . the quality of truly great whiskeys which permits their full, rich flavor to come through . . . clear and undistorted. Does the great captain not know that experts *demand* this quality in whiskey?

**POLICEMAN:** And pay a fancy price for it too, I warrant!

**CAMEL:** Ah no, Your Honor. There is, among whiskeys, a rare and wonderful jewel, a whiskey of

benign flavor and magnificent dryness, *Paul Jones*. A whiskey of such superb flavor and so moderate a price that wise men know it as a *great buy*. So magnificent a value that its popularity jumped five times in less than two years!

**POLICEMAN:** And you go about telling folks about this wonderful dry Paul Jones whiskey?

**CAMEL:** Even so, Commissioner.

**POLICEMAN:** It’s sinning I’d be were I to hold you from your work, my fine and noble beast. Get along now, and behave yourself!

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