

Letters From the Front

DAUPHIN AVIATOR SAYS SOMETHING IS DOING EVERY MINUTE IN FRANCE

Something is doing every minute is the declaration of Walter Shaffer, the Dauphin aviator, who is now undergoing intensive training "somewhere in France," in a letter to his parents. He classes the aviation training camp to an acrobatic school.

If Food Disagrees Take Bi-nesia

Nearly everybody suffers at times after eating. Many can rarely eat without suffering the most excruciating agony. Some people call this indigestion, some dyspepsia, others gastritis; but no matter what you call it, no matter how many remedies or how many doctors you may have tried—

this fact until he was told by his companions on the ground. His complete letter follows:

Nov. 13, 1917. Paris, France.

Dear Mother: It seems quite a while since I wrote last, at least it seems so, probably, because I am leading such an eventful life. Life here is that something happens every minute, for this is the acrobatic school, you know; but I was in Paris the last time I wrote and I got nearly everything I went after, viz: money, woolen underwear and a hot bath. You're wrong, Esther. There were no girls! Pau, you know, is situated in the south of France and is some ride, taking us a night and a day to get there.

High Price For Meals I did not mind so much, though, having been fortified with a meal at the Paris station. It sure was some meal, even if it did cost seven francs. Don't look so shocked! If you ate at Avord for two weeks you would pay more than \$1.50 for a decent meal. The old reliable war bread was still with us, though, and spread on the table when we arrived, reminding us of a piece of wood, for it was fully a yard long, and my fellow aviator and I fell to wondering what a cord of such wood was worth.

We were hungry enough to make the price pretty high, but after we had eaten several excellent courses of the meal the price went down. Gee! but I was full when I got up. Incidentally, we cleaned up the bread between us. So that made a foot and a half in my tummy. Therefore, the wood is not all situated in my head. We amused ourselves during the meal by remaining quite freely about the actions of the honeymoon couple in one corner. At least, so we judged them to be, he appearing quite foolish and she excited. Did not seem to affect his appetite, though, even if "honey-bunch" ate nothing. She talked and he ate, and our attention was dis-

tracted by a general trying to cut some "wood" of the "yard" with a dull knife. The amusing part of it is that we could talk so freely without hurting anybody's feelings. At least, no one gave any signs of understanding us. Changed cars at Bordeaux and also got some breakfast there, consisting of some more "wood" and hot chocolate, and then it was on the train again and off for Pau.

Scenery Interesting The scenery only interested us inasmuch as it offered such poor landing places for airplanes. Pine trees seemed to make up the most of the forests, and what was not pine was scrub bushes and marshes. They must make a lot of turpentine and rosin here, because nearly every pine tree had its wooden cup with the sap running from a slit in the tree into it. When we got near the city of Pau the scenery became very beautiful, the railroad running along the Pau river (I think that's the name). I stopped figuring on landing places for airplanes then and changed to canoeing, wondering whether it was possible to run the different rapids and jump the several dams. I decided it would be quite possible and even wondered to take a girl along, as cozy nooks were numerous and romantic-looking enough to suit the most exacting girl.

Sometime when I have no war on my hands I'll take you and Ruth on the trip. Why Ruth? Oh, because I'll need ballast to balance the boat. When we arrived at Pau, it was pouring rain. Honestly, I never saw it rain so hard. Seems as if someone was wringing the whole sky out. Anyway, we got our baggage fixed up for the special train which goes to the aviation field and then climbed aboard a baby street car to get to a hotel for something to eat.

Reminded of Home Found a good hotel, but the sad part of it was that we had to hurry through the meal, having only thirty minutes to catch our special train for camp. The fellow that named that a special sure had a sense of humor, for it was sure built on a small section of one of the lumber railroad which runs into Dauphin. At least, it had the same type of engine, only about two sizes smaller. In fact, it was more like these "petite" railroads that give kids joyrides in the parks—and someone called it a "special."

There is one thing they have here, though, that makes the American public envious, and that is two-cent fares on street cars; but the cars are nothing to compare to those at home. Hanging onto a strap while we climbed the long hill and more crowded on made me feel quite at home—New York was my long ride to camp and an airplane racing along overhead made things interesting. We did not envy him up there, for, having down a Caudron through the rain, a Nieuport with its tremendous speed must be rather painful.

We were soon at camp and into red tape up to our necks. I have been through a lot before, but this one takes the cake. They actually took down the address where I wished my body shipped in case of accident four times. That was quite enough to make me wonder, but when one of the fellows comes into the barracks that night with the story that he had discovered a whole hangar full of coffins all tagged and ready, that was too much. After investigation, however, they found the boxes in which propellers are shipped.

Since you will receive this letter long after I finish here—either in the coffin or otherwise—I will write quite freely of the dangers.

Big Aviation Field There are three fields from which we start, incidentally, they are the only fields in the whole country fit to land safely on. Everywhere else is swamp, hedges and trees. Forced landings, or "pannes," as they are called, are quite frequent and almost invariably disastrous to the machine. The pilot generally escapes injury, though. In fact, pilots are advised by officials in charge to pick out a tree and dive into it in case of motor trouble. Yesterday an American went for his altitude and when he got through (6,000 meters) his motor stopped. He came down in a turnip patch, having lost the field on account of a mist when he got that high.

The machine, of course, was smashed completely, and he, crawling out, felt himself over and finding nothing broken began to congratulate himself for a lucky dog, when his tongue discovered two missing front teeth—and now he can't whistle his favorite love song. Another fellow sent up to do a "vrille" (a tail spin, during which

the machine spins like a top) did a beautiful one, but he went to heaven and the machine to the junk pile, for he never came out of it. This "vrille" has been the bugaboo of monitors during our entire training, as they always ended up their instructions by saying impressively, "and if you don't do it that way, you'll go into a 'vrille.'" I discovered the truth of that to-day when I was sent up to do a spiral, a real tight one. Having had the stunt explained through an interpreter, I misunderstood part of it, with the result that I had no sooner started my spiral than I lost my speed and began to spin a "vrille." Believe me, little Walter stuck everything in the middle and pushed on the stick, for that is the way to come out of "most anything"—put all the controls in the center and nose the machine down, then sit tight and pray. If you're religious, I did not say what I did, but when they asked me what service to read at the funeral I told them Presbyterian. Yes, they even put that down with the "coffin address."

But I am wandering from the story, or rather getting ahead of myself, because, after going to a dozen officers, we finally found our beds—and no fire.

Climate Like California This is a climate like California, because as soon as the sun goes down you want to dig up all your blankets and underwear. I only had five woolen blankets on, besides sleeping in my underwear, and still was cold. They waste no time here, however, as we are routed out before daylight, the roll called and out ready to fly before the sun rises over the snow-capped peaks of the Pyrenees mountains, which are quite near, by airplane, and remind me of Mt. Tacoma, in Washington state.

Imagine my surprise after passing such a cold night to see palm trees scattered around the yard. All I have to say is they must be a hardy plant. I'm almost withered, and I'm not very peaked, either. Did not get a ride in the morning, but spent the time walking around and getting our bearings. Looking through these hangars was very interesting, for they contain the fastest planes a wing as well as several captured German planes, which for beauty of line and power are hard to equal.

In the afternoon we reported for class, but did not get up, the class being too full. The next morning, though, I got up, getting three rides in an 18 m. It was during these little tours that I had leisure to observe the awful ground to fly over. Looking down from 300 meters, the whole country seemed laid out in little squares composed of marshes enclosed by hedges of scrub trees. My motor ran fine, though, and I only worried about it in a vague way, but on the fourth trip I had something to worry about, as I got off with the engine missing; kept on going, though, nevertheless, and the doggone thing missed all the way around, while I sat there juggling the levers and wondering how soon I would be hanging on a tree or sunk in a swamp. The way was not to me also, being a biplane, the idea to get the pilot used to driving with a gunner. Instead of a gunner, they placed salvages in the back and placed me in the front seat to drive. That in itself was something new, as I had grown used to the back seat.

Had Narrow Escape After I came down from this flight the fellows told me how close a call I had had, because another airplane proved to be the same time they did and, getting into the air, nearly cut my tail off. I went sailing along in blissful ignorance of all this. Goodness knows, however, I was able keeping the engine going and looking for a possible landing place. After four circles of the field, we were told not to land too far down the field, as there was a swamp there. This was proved to us fifteen minutes later when a Frenchman landed short and turned upside down in this swamp. Yes, mashed the machine, but only ducked him. Felt sort of sorry for him, because it sure was cold—the air, I mean. I had been up four times and my hands and feet were numb—and someone said this was a warm climate. Did not get up that day for spirals, but that afternoon expected to. Went to the wrong field, however, and was sent, with a dozen others, cross country to the right field. It was there we had a chance to see at close quarters the type of country we flew over. It was nothing but logs, high grass and scrubby trees. And then, after all this walk, which was only five miles or so, we did not get aloft. However, I got my name down near the head of the list and spent the rest of the evening watching acrobatics. This particular field has an historical interest, the Wright brothers having made many of their early experiments here. The field is named "Wright" for that reason. Personally, I think Wilbur or Orville, whichever was responsible for the choice, sure had his nerve with him flying around here. If his motor ever died after he left the field, it was good night and a wreck. Yes, I got my spirals to-day, but only made one good one, going into two "vrilles" and a side slip in the four attempts. I got out of the first one right and I am still wondering how it looked. The fellows said it was a good one. Since I am writing this, you know I got out of the "vrilles" alright. It's time for bed now, and I have to arise at 5 a. m. Will tell you more about my spirals later, since I go to bed with my smaller machine, a 15 m, to-morrow.

WALTER.

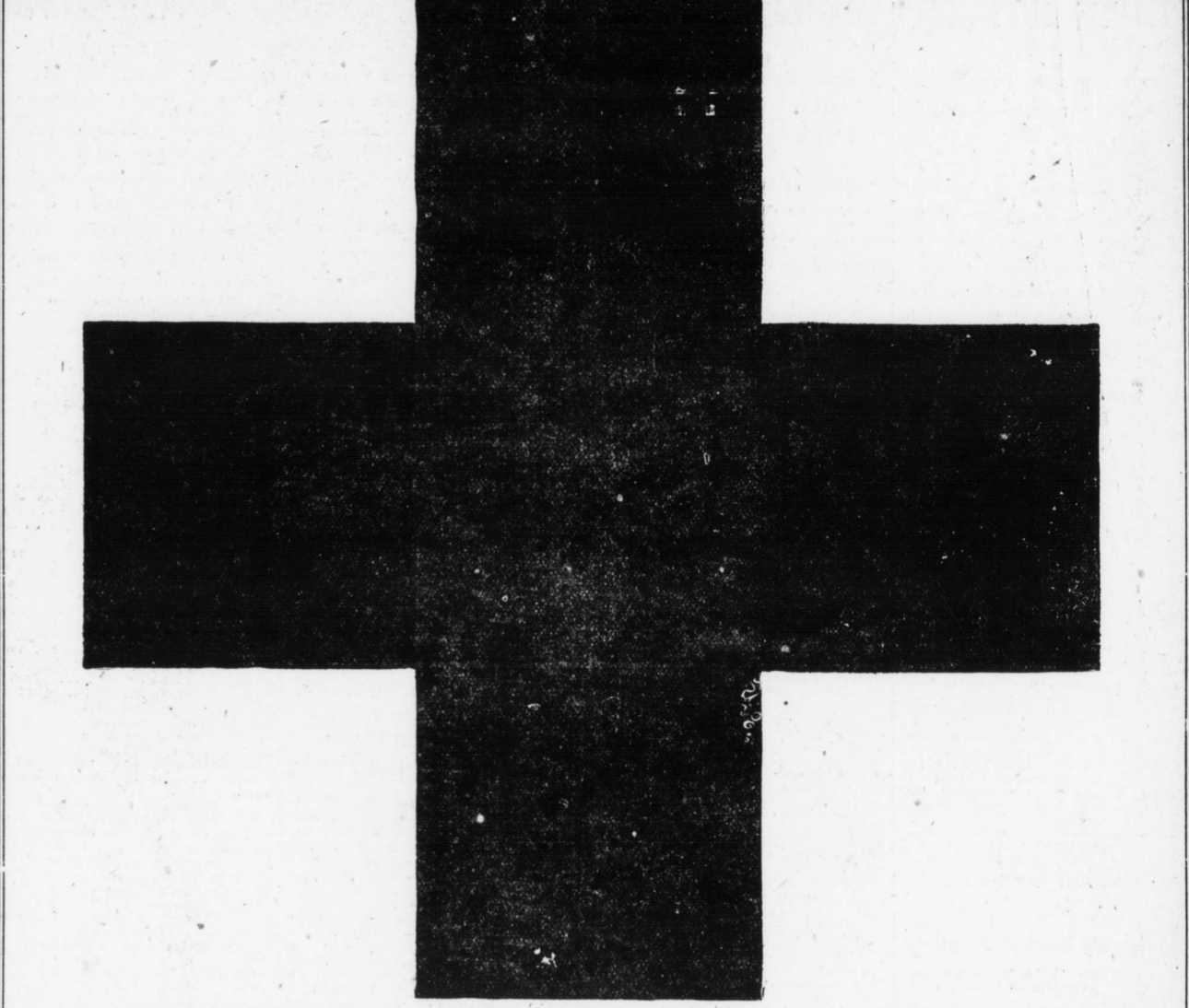
Christmas Cantata and Recital at Bethel A.M.E.

There will be a Christmas cantata and organ recital at the Bethel A. M. E. Church, Briggs and Ash streets, Sunday evening at 7:30 o'clock. The cantata will be under the direction of William H. Bond Jr., organist and director of the choir. The organ recital will be given first by Mr. Bond, which will be followed by the cantata. The evening's program follows: "The Holy Night" (Dudley Buck); "The Manger," Pastoral and Adoration, Op. 59, No. 3 (Gounod); "Christmas Pastoral" (Henri D. Aube); "Berceuse," from Jocelyn (Godard); "Marche de Fete" (Edgar A. Barrill); "Oh, the Tiding Springtime" (Stebbins); hymn, "Joy to the World" (No. 79, A. M. E. Hymnal); prayer, the Rev. H. H. Cooper; prelude, Bonvino, Op. 8. Cantata, by choir—"Messiah's Advent." Words by Elsie D. Mason Yale; music by Adam Geibel; Mrs. Julia Johnson and Miss Mary Torgans, soprano; Miss Jessie Torgans alto; William O. Jolly, tenor; Walter Cannon, bass.

HOBSON SCHEDULED TO SPEAK AT STEVENS MEMORIAL CHURCH

The Rev. Dr. Clayton Albert Smith announced this morning that a great crowd is expected to hear Captain Richmond Pearson Hobson, naval expert, orator and statesman, at the Stevens Memorial Methodist Church, Thirtieth and Vernon streets, to-night. The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock. The Sunday school room is to be used in connection with the auditorium and more than twelve hundred people will be able to see and hear the speaker. The subject for the evening will be "The Destiny of America."

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Advertisement for W.B. Elastine-Reduso Corsets. Includes an illustration of a corset and text describing its benefits for reducing waist size and providing comfort.

Advertisement for W.B. NUFORM Corsets. Describes the benefits of the "new-form" corset, including its fit and durability.

Large advertisement for Miller & Kades' Talking Machine Department. Features the Columbia Grafonola and offers a Christmas Club Plan for \$1.00 a week, with a featured price of \$92.50.