

VANITY FAIR

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New York's Unceasing Pageantry

*Parades, Marching Music, and Even Opera
in the Public Squares Are Almost Daily Occurrences*

By FREDERICK JAMES GREGG



Fifty men from General Pershing's armies in France, all of whom have had actual experience in fighting the Boche and several of whom have been decorated with the French Croix de Guerre, paraded New York and otherwise assisted in the Third Liberty Loan Drive here and in other cities.



NEW YORK has been a garrison town for over a year, and, what is more, probably the most orderly garrison town that ever existed on the face of the earth. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers have filled the streets over weekends, without a sign of disorder. The alert Military Police, from the surrounding camps, have worn their grim-looking revolvers at their belts, for adornment and not for use. These guardians of the public peace have had as little to do as our ordinary policemen in checking any tendency to exuberance on the part of the men in uniform from North, South, East and West. The latter have owned the city, but with such modesty, that it has been necessary for even the most dubious of Pacifists to admit that the old, accepted theory, as to how a man-at-arms naturally takes his pleasure, must be abandoned, as ancient history, myth or legend.

From all accounts the New York of the Civil War was not that sort of a place. During that stirring period, the presence of countless soldiers—"away uptown on Broadway," in the neighborhood of Union Square, on the Rialto, or near Washington Square—was not supposed to promote either quiet or civic righteousness. And so theatrical

managers, who had the greatest respect for the men who were saving the Union, did not like them nearly so much as patrons of the drama, as they did in a fighting capacity. Plain citizens, too, were in the habit of keeping their families within doors when any number of soldiers were enjoying "Blighty," or whatever corresponded to that modern military process.



PAUL THOMPSON

About one hundred picked veterans from the French Regiments of Chasseurs Alpins, whom the Boche call the Blue Devils, came to New York to assist in the Third Liberty Loan Drive. Every man of the lot wore the Croix de Guerre, and most of them wore service stripes which showed that they had been in the fight against savage aggression from the beginning of the war



The most picturesque visitors from Canada were the men of the 236th Battalion of Canadian Infantry and the McLean Highlanders in their kilted uniforms and with their bagpipe band

Wall Street showed its enthusiasm for the war and for the Third Liberty Loan Drive by holding daily meetings in front of the Sub-treasury Building, where vast crowds listened to speeches by notables from all walks of life and to songs by opera stars, packing Wall Street and Broad Street so thick with humanity that all traffic at noon-day was completely suspended

Of course, the dear Prohibitionists will put the charge down to the recent regulations on the subject of drinking. But it would be easy to press that argument too far. For those men who belong to New York, and go to their own people, when they are in town, with plenty of opportunities to get what was once their customary beer, or what not, are no dif-

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The 367th Infantry Regiment of the National Army, popularly called the Buffaloes, Avenue early in May. They stopped in front of the reviewing stand at the Union League Club, where the entire regiment of three thousand men saluted and sang the national anthem and other songs

ferent in their behavior from their comrades who are strangers in a strange city, and so have no such chances for breaking training for a day or two.

THE fact is that the soldiers of the new armies have been as much of a revelation to New York, as New York has been to them. To such an extent has the presence of plenty of soldiers impressed all the authorities, and increased the sense of security, with regard to the enemy within our gates, that as many as possible of the men who have filled up the depleted local State Guard regiments, are expected to wear their uniforms when they are attending to the ordinary business of life.

The pathos of distance did, of course, mark the war, at the beginning. But not many real New Yorkers sympathized with the view of the eminent statesman who referred to it, with some complacency, as something three thousand miles away. For, long before we were in, the Lusitania affair had brought the matter home to our own harbor, almost as truly as if bombs had been dropped on Trinity Church or St. Patrick's Cathedral, to encourage us in our neutrality. It was a familiar New York ship, full of New Yorkers, and that counted, making us long for the time, happily arrived, when the big Vaterland having been pulled out of the Hoboken mud, and flying a new flag, over a new name, should be carrying thousands of men on every trip, everyone of them bent on settling an old account and wiping out an old score, in the only way that such a process gets through the German mind.

A state of war quickly became habitual to New York. The town, regarded by many who did not know it, as selfish and self-centred, responded to each of its new experiences with "a fine gesture," as Frederick MacMonnies put it finely, in a sculptor's phrase. Joffre and Balfour found a community that was not intent on

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munity that was not intent on "business as usual," but on business of quite an unusual character. From the First Liberty Loan to the Draft, from the Draft to the period of heatless days and meatless days, the place showed the good temper which used to be considered as but an indication of incorrigible lightness of mind. And as the months have gone by New York's interest in herself as a military centre (*Continued on page 80*) has grown and deepened, with the growing consciousness of the high part she was to play in an adventure that has done more for her as a social organism than anything else in her history.

VETERAN soldiers of the Allies, sent to New York to help to arouse the city, were surprised by what they found—a spirit that they did not expect. A few scattered survivors of the Princess Pat's gave us our first thrill of reality. Then came the MacLeans and the Gordons. Scots from Canada by way of the trenches, weather-beaten men in weather-beaten uniforms, who were frankly delighted by the welcome of the crowds that they drew wherever they appeared. These were followed by Newfoundlanders, many of them severely injured. The Blue Devils of France, individually decorated and regimentally decorated, with their terribly effective looking weapons, brown faces and sturdy bodies, made it plain at a glance why they were uncomfortable neighbors for the best that the enemy could put up against them. Anzacs, from Australia and New Zealand, gave a significance to the word "Gallipoli" that had been missing, as long as it was only something that we had read about.

These lean miners and bushmen from under the Southern Cross made a particularly strong impression because they suggested, in appearance and gravity of manner, our own Westerners of the cattle ranches. They came from distant countries which, before the war, would have been regarded by any German as distinctly not-military. In fact, the Prussian drill-sergeants might have been expected to refer to them in the same way that they spoke for a while of the "untrained Americans," who, so it was said airily, would not be ready, before Teuton victory came, to fight the goose-steppers of Germany. It is ominous for Berlin that these persons of peaceful pursuits have won for themselves such a name as fighting men.

The American Indians in full feathers have been more prominent around New York of late as drive orators than as potential fighters. The negro infantry, raised in Manhattan, with negroes as company officers, and a fine band, have proved to be among the most popular of our soldiers.

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THE British from Great Britain seen about New York at present, like the Americans wear their uniforms, like their decorations, with a certain air of deprecation. In both cases the tendency is to regard a uniform as something to do work in, and not otherwise. Hence the longing to get into mufti, and the bore of not being able to do so, on account of war conditions. The French and the Italian military men, as the result of old Continental tradition, take their professional togs as a matter of course at all times. It is all a question of whether the individual regards himself as a citizen first and a soldier afterwards, or as a soldier first and a citizen afterwards. Kitchener reviewed the West Point cadets in a tweed suit, and it is significant that the Commander in Chief of the American Army and Navy has not a single uniform to his name.

In spite of the constant presence on Fifth Avenue of soldiers and sailors of all branches of our land and sea services, and of all branches of the services of our Allies, New York shows no sign of a sense of the "monotony of war." On the contrary, a stirring incident like the funeral of the gallant and lamented Italian flyer Resnati, and the spirit in which it was witnessed; the manner in which some of Pershing's invalided veterans were welcomed home, and the way in which we have welcomed the wounded Canadians, as if they belonged to ourselves, show that we are anticipating with growing keenness the time when we shall have striking signs of our losses. These will bring no unworthy depression, but simply a stronger determination to see the thing through. Cheerfulness is not next to courage. It is of the very essence of all sorts of courage.

EVEN Wall Street forgets its usual preoccupations on the slightest excuse, provided it has to do with the war. Facing the statue of Washington at the Sub-Treasury Building, reaching past the office of J. P. Morgan, and the Stock Exchange down Broad Street, and, to the right over to Broadway and Trinity Church, the supposedly stolid denizens of the financial district demonstrate, on countless noon-hour occasions, that they are as much interested as anybody else. There is no reason to apologize because New York refuses to be gloomy over what is bound to come. She has a right to be fascinated by the pageant symbolic of great events, or preliminary to great events, as it is unrolled before her eyes from day to day. She has a new consciousness of force such as she never had before. The war has not hit her as it has hit London, or Paris, or Rome. Here life is still more or less normal, there are still cakes and ale—in spite of Mr. Hoover—and ginger is still hot i' the mouth. In spite of the stoppage of immigration the population has increased steadily during the four years of struggle. The future has trials, but no terrors, and when it is America's turn to hold the line New York flags will have their proper share of the honorable inscriptions.

THE crush of motor cars on the Avenue is as great as ever, but they are at the disposal of the Government, whenever the Government asks for them. The theatres are busy, but a great part of the time they are doing something for the war. Society has been going through the motions, but literally the vast majority of its members are helping the nation in some capacity. Actors

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and actresses, singers and musicians are displaying their usual willingness to give their services to the public, for recruiting or anything else, free, gratis and for nothing. And so it goes through all trades, professions and callings. New York is serious and knows what she is about, and it will go hard with any section of the population that tries, in its folly, to interfere with her high purpose.

When the President came over to review the great Red Cross parade of May 18—the most impressive thing of the sort ever seen—he decided to make in New York the strongest statement that has come from him, since we went into the war. He knew what he was doing. New York showed him where she stood. The result was that he said he was “a tired man having a good time.” There was no levity about that. An overworked Executive might well be heartened by the warm support of a metropolis which is no longer the fault-finding city of other days of national stress and storm, but a very human place full of decent enthusiasm.



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(image added)