

Information Room

Hut 107 has been in existence as an "Information Room" for some little time now but very few people have made the use of it that was hoped for.

As we are in the Army for the duration we might just as well learn as much as possible about our job—when all is said and done ours is an interesting job—and the Information Room can and does afford the opportunity to improve our knowledge.

The Regiment has been presented with a number of really interesting Artillery war photographs, also a number of pamphlets and books dealing with various phases of war. These will be added to the collection in the Information Room early next week, and it is hoped that everyone will make a point of looking them over.

There must be a number of people within the Regiment who have data dealing with this or other wars which would be of interest and educational value to all of us. If this is so and they can be spared, the Regiment would be very grateful for their inclusion in the collection.

Now that wing training is over there should be more time for study and self development—here is one way of helping oneself. Anyone who has the impression that with the cessation of wing training he can forget what he has been taught or even do nothing towards continuing his studies is worse than a fool. It is essential to every man's safety that he be conversant with all branches of soldiering and keep himself up-to-date otherwise he stands a good chance of featuring in the casualty lists when he goes into action.

So information from the "Information Room."!!!

Answers To Questions

Lucky 6th

TWO WINNERS

Congratulations, Miss Peggy G. Palmerston North, and Gnr. G. Wood, of 6th, who tied for first place when answering "The Gaddy's" questions. As you will both see, you didn't get them all right but you made a good attempt. If Miss Peggy will write in giving her address we will be posted (or delivered) immediately, and if Gnr. Wood will contact 2/Lt. M. Kemp he will collect a similar amount.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

With some comments, where necessary.

(By "The Gaddy.")

Question 1: The soldier who commanded a British Fleet was Robert Blake (1599-1657), Parliamentarian and Admiral. He was elected to the "Short Parliament," and in the clash between King and Parliament, declared for Parliament, and served under Sir John Horner. He had many brilliant military successes, and with Colonels Dean and Popham, was, in 1649, appointed to the command of the fleet, with the title "General of the Sea."

Questions No. 2: The insignificant lawyer who was the father of four kings was Charles Marie de Bonaparte (father of Napoleon). When Napoleon conquered the various kingdoms of Europe, he placed his brothers on the thrones of the vanquished territories. A king-maker, I should say!

Question No. 3: You surely guessed this one. There has only been one woman who "became a wife the first day of her life." It was Mother Eve. Being created, she was never born, and therefore "died before she was born." Simple, isn't it?

Question No. 4: The nearest city to London is Westminster! There's no argument about it! A ten minute walk from the City of London will take you there!

Question No. 5: Khaki is so called because it is derived from an Urdu word, meaning dust. It was originally a dust coloured fabric, of the character of canvas, drill or holland and was used by the British and native troops in India. It was first used by the Guides, a mixed regiment of frontier troops, in 1848. Some of the British troops had khaki uniforms during the Mutiny.

Question No. 6: Surely it would be out of place for a civilian to tell a soldier what every soldier ought to know, but here it is:—Unless otherwise ordered, a soldier should ALWAYS carry his rifle UNLOADED. D'you remember what the instructor told you?

Question No. 7: It was the right arm that Nelson lost at Santa Cruz.

Question No. 8: It's quite true Napoleon was NOT a Frenchman, he was a CORSICAN. At the time when his father decided to send him into the army Napoleon was almost entirely ignorant of the French language!

Question No. 9: The charge of the Light Brigade took place during the Battle of Balaclava, which, of course, was a phase of the Crimean War. Responsibility for the "blunder" remains obscure. Lord Lucian received orders to prevent the withdrawal of certain guns taken by the enemy, but the aide carrying the message was killed by the first shell. Lord Cardigan led the charge.

Question No. 10: It is generally agreed that the first use of cannon occurred at the siege of Constantinople by the Turks. On May 29, 1453 they stormed the walls and entered with the aid of their gunpowder.

France

NOVEMBER, 1942

A weakly boy that once was strong Fell on the king's highway: A giant plucked him from the back And set him forward in his track Donner und blitzen, run along, This road you take is wholly wrong, Your feet have gone astray.

I am not weak, the youngling said, But only sad and lone; To earn my bread I had to roam, Leaving my precious toys at home, My guns, my ships, my aeroplanes Upon the Southern sunny plains, But now my strength is gone.

I will be surety for your toys, The youngling giant shouted: Your guns, your aeroplanes and ships, Even the boats upon the slips, I have them all again in my care, To steal them nobody would dare, Or quickly they would be routed.

Just then a stranger hove in view, Another mighty giant; Upon his head a helmet shone, His face was good to look upon; His sword was sharp and bright and new, His banner in the breezes flew, His manner suave and pliant.

Whither away, my little one? And who's that nasty fellow That pushes you along the road, Carrying such a clanking load? He looks a beast of blood and bone, His heart, be sure, is hard as stone, His voice a bullock's bellow.

My aeroplanes! my ships! my guns! The plaintive boy replied, He wants them all, my pretty toys; He does not understand that boys Love that which flies, that sails, that runs

Upon the ground with noise that stuns; They are his very pride!

Nay, come with me, the stranger said, I'll show you something fine; A man shall you become to wield A sword to make the devil yield; A fleet of ships, and overhead More aeroplanes than you could spread A hundred miles in line.

Between the two the boy confused Stood impotent, yet proud, His heart was with the stranger, but His fear-filled eyes he could not shut Against the fiend that reared so loud, Around his head a thunder-cloud, With lightning interfused.

And so to-day we wonder where His faltering steps will lead him; Whether to choose the weaker part And sacrifice his head and heart, Or independently declare His pride to suffer and to share The lot of those that need him.

H. E. GUNTER.

SWITCHED OVER

On visitors' day at the local A.L.F. camp, a woman was telling another in no uncertain tones that her dear son William ("Pinky" to the mob), had given up a good job in the Government to join the A.L.F.

This got under "Pinky's" skin, and he said in a gruff voice:

"I didn't throw it up, mum."

Mother looked at him as if he'd taken leave of his senses.

"No, I just shifted to another department," he said.

THE ONLY OBJECTION

Weary voice from the doorway: "My dear sir, I have no objection to your coming here and sitting up half the night with my daughter, nor even to your standing on the doorstep for two hours saying goodnight. But out of consideration for the rest of the household who wish to get to sleep, will you kindly take your elbow off the bell push?"

The Padre's Column

CHRISTIANITY AND WAR

This week I am writing about a question that is perplexing a number of people. It is one that has caused me a good deal of concern myself, and I do not claim to have found the final answer even yet. So now I am "thinking on paper," as it were in the hope that my thoughts may help others to think the question through for themselves.

Not long ago I heard of a soldier who said that he was convinced that his duty was to take his place in the army. It was the only thing he could do with a clear conscience, but at the same time he could not square the idea of fighting with the teaching of Jesus about love for one's fellow men, even one's enemies. So he had come to the conclusion, very reluctantly, that he would have to let his religion go, for the duration. There are a number of men who feel very much the same way and that is my reason for writing on the subject.

WAR

In the first place it needs to be said that the whole ideal of war is abhorant to anyone who has the slightest understanding of the waste involved, and of the intense misery it causes both to our own people and to our enemies. Think of the waste of money. According to a League of Nations report the last war cost £40,000,000,000 in materials, equipment and wages. This time it is far greater—all used for destruction. What a waste of resources of the world! And what great blessings for all people could have been accomplished had the money been spent on constructive purposes.

But when all is said and done, the waste of material things is insignificant compared with the waste of human lives and with the harvest of suffering and misery reaped by the soldiers destined to endure life-long pain, or blindness, or insanity—to say nothing of the anguish caused to mothers and fathers, to wives and children. When we compare these things with the tender sympathy of Jesus for all who suffered, we must admit that war is a devilish thing, and all for which it stands cuts right across the Master's teaching. Anyone who in these days can glory in the thought of war lacks two things—a heart to feel the intense anguish of those who suffer by it, and an apprecia-

WHERE IS GENERAL FOCH?

G.H.Q., Somewhere in France, The matter is urgent. M. Poincare, President of the Republic waits, and the Generalissimo cannot be found. Officers scatter everywhere—and one turns towards the little village church.

Sure enough Foch was there kneeling before the Altar, deep in his devotions. As he made no move the junior officer knelt beside him and endeavoured to worship with his Chief. Time went on and on until at last the liaison officer bent over and whispered, "Mon General, we are making M. Poincare wait." Foch made no reply but continued steadfastly in prayer.

There was a long silence and then at last the Generalissimo of the Allied Armies arose, and turning to the staff officer, said: "What do you mean—'making M. Poincare wait'? Am I expected, then, to say to our Saviour: 'Sorry, there is somebody more important than You outside, I'll finish praying another time when it is more convenient.'"

Thus did General Foch pay supreme homage to God.

tion of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

However we look at it, each one who calls himself a man, must have a deep loathing for the conflict that has brought chaos to the human heart, and to the world at large.

If that is true for us, what must war mean to God? Take all the misery of men and women throughout the world and it is small compared with the bitter anguish that God endures when His children suffer, and when He sees them pouring death and destruction upon each other. Jesus wept for a friend, and a strong man's tears spring from an intensity of love and sympathy. What then must He feel to-day?

THE ALTERNATIVE

Well then, is the Christian Pacifist right? Must a Christian man, if he is to remain a Christian, have nothing to do with this horrible thing called war? For a long time, even after war broke out I thought I could never take up arms without denying my Lord, although I was ready at any time to take up non-combatant service to do what I could to help man in need. But as time went on, I felt more and more that the only alternative to war was something even more horrible to contemplate.

If the system of living against which our nation stands was to dominate the world it would enslave all peoples for generations. Its harvest of misery would far exceed even that of war. The highest and noblest things of our civilisation would all but perish. This enslavement would not last forever—I have too much faith in God even to believe that it would.

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overthrown in the end only at the cost of a far more difficult and bloody conflict than war to-day. The alternative which confronted the nation in 1939 was not war or peace, but war or passive submission to tyranny and to a philosophy of life that denies all that we hold dear and sacred.

One of the great principles of Christ was that in God's sight every human soul was of infinite worth. It mattered not a bit if a man's skin was white or black, brown or yellow, he was precious to the Heavenly Father. The Nazi doctrine of the superiority of the Aryan over the others is diametrically opposed to all that Jesus taught. That any person or nation should have the right to be the final voice of authority over all God's other children would make God's care for all a monstrous lie. That a man's highest loyalty was to the State and not to God, would make the Christian Faith meaningless.

All these evils are basic principles underlying the Nazi Creed; and over and above their inhumanity is their opposition to God and His will for mankind.

Under the circumstances which confront us, we must either fight or let the whole world be given over to tyranny. There is no doubt in my mind as to which of these two great evils is more in accordance with God's purpose for the world. If there were a third alternative the choice may have been different, but we are in a situation where we can do one of only two things, and in such a position the only thing we can do is choose the lesser evil.

It comes to this—and let us say it in all humility, admitting that we ourselves are very far from perfect, acknowledging that we ourselves must share part of the responsibility for the fact that Hitler ever got control of Germany—it comes to this that God has called our Empire and our Allies to be His instruments in preventing the enslavement of the world and in preparing for a new and better world order.

THE GOAL

is, however, one thing that

must be remembered at all times if our action is to measure up to Christian standards. Our purpose in fighting is not to save our own skins, or to preserve our old ways of life. Least of all is it to keep on top ourselves, to dominate others, and to impose our wills on them. If it is Christian in any sense, it is to enable all people, including those of our enemies, to be free from oppression of body, mind and soul; to uphold the principles of truth, and justice for all; to preserve the conditions whereby each man or woman of whatever race or creed may know God and worship Him. All this will not be accomplished when the last shot is fired. That day when it comes, will mark the beginning of a new and extremely difficult phase in the ordering of higher and nobler ways of life for all men.

The job for to-day is only the preliminary to the establishment of truly Christian relationships between people and nations. It is a necessary preliminary, so let us do our part, as far as we are able to in the Spirit of Christ—without bitterness or malice or hatred, but with the ultimate goal of mutual understanding and respect between all nations ever before us, so that when war is over they and we may work together under the guidance and in the strength of our God, to achieve a peace that will endure and in which all may live in harmony and goodwill.

READ

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THE OBSERVATION POST

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