

**TOM.**

**The Letter He Got When He Left His Mother for "France."**

It has been something of a grip to your mother and me, my dear boy; these last days. But I hope we have kept our feeling in our pockets. We have tried to look Right in the face. We wouldn't have you do otherwise. I would have hung my head in shame if my son had not wanted to go when his country called. God knows I would go with you, shoulder to shoulder, if I could.

It's going to be very hard on your mother. She has been very fine so far, don't you think? But mothers have a way that children don't know about; of lying awake in the darkness and talking to the God of their boys at such times. She has. And she will. She is giving all she has; all she can give; and she does it, thank God, with a brave heart. But you are her all. So it isn't easy; it's no use to say it is.

But you have a wonderful chance to repay her. You are going into a big thing; a big war; a big army; standing for a big idea. But don't forget that the biggest thing about a principle or a battle or an army is a man! And the biggest thing a war can do is to bring out that man. That's really what you and the other chaps have gone over for: to demonstrate the right kind of manhood, for it is that which weighs in a fight and wins it. The measure of any successful result is the men who made that success.

You neither want nor need maxims. I think you inherit my distaste of them. There is only one thing that counts in this life, and it beats all the maxims ever penned—that is, for a man's spirit to be all right. If that is what it should be all the little details of his life will fall into their proper places. I think your spirit is all right, my boy. It should be, for it came to you from your mother. Live that spirit.

And as that spirit came to you from a woman, do you play the game and show that you have it to other women. It is the finest thing you can do with it, and you can't very well do less, because it is why your mother gave it to you: that you should stand foursquare before men and in this case, means women. For when you get "Somewhere in France" you will meet women; all kinds. Some of one kind in particular. Many of them will have their men-folks at the front. They will be alone—alone for other men to respect and honor and show the right consideration.

These women will make much of you, for an American in khaki in France is very welcome, and will be made so. But don't let that welcome for your coming to save their homes and honor mean an approach or opening for you for anything but the highest consideration. Don't forget that when you are invited somewhere to hang up your hat it doesn't mean to hang up your conduct also. You will hear that in France they have "let the bars down." But there is no such thing anywhere as letting the bars down to a man's conduct toward a woman. To be a gentleman in a French home is no different from being a gentleman in your mother's home. Think of every woman you meet as a member of your mother's sex, and treat her accordingly. Think of every girl you meet as you would Nell, and treat her as you hope every chap in the camp near us will treat her. It is a tremendously big "bit" that every chap who goes to France now does, who upholds his own honor at the same time that he upholds the honor of the United States when it comes to his considerate treatment of the women of France. It will be the finest tribute in the world to our great country if, when our boys leave France, it can be said of them that they were Spartans of personal honor. Nothing—no results in battles—will count for so much as that one record. These French women have suffered much. Let us, as men of America, not ask them to suffer more.

When you are called to get into the game, get into it good and strong. There's no fun in going through life spoon-fed: in finding the soft seat. That makes a man soft, and a soft man is an abomination before God and men. Find your place and hold it: find your work and do it. And put everything you've got into it. Take hold and carry the biggest load your shoulders can carry, and then carry it right. Set the pace for others: don't let them set it for you.

Then when the hour comes for fun and recreation have it also "full up;" only get clean fun. You have the good manners that your mother taught you. Be true to your teacher, for as a son acts so does he reflect upon his mother and father. And in no relation in life can you so truly know a man as in his play. See how a man plays and you can tell every time whether he is a quitter or if he is a standpatter. It is in his play time that a man meets with the things that test him.

I would be mighty wary, in those

play hours, of the wines of France. A man never needs alcohol in his being, and he never needs it so little as when he is up against the "trick" that you and your fellows are going to "put over" in France. You will need every bit of real vitality: of strength: of clear-eyed vision that you can muster, and not one of these comes from alcohol, which, after all, has been said of it for and against, is the chief mantrap in the world. You want and have your convivial intervals. They will be welcome from the tension of camp and trench life. But convivial times can be had without playing mischief with your head and body.

Let me say this to you too: attend service; "If not invariably, then variably." A lot of the fellows won't, and you won't have to if you don't want to. But, take it from an older man who has been over all the way, you can't afford not to go. Get the true understanding of this one fact: this war will, in its finality, have to be settled on one basis, and only one: the spirit of Christ. Why, because any civilization that is worth the name is based on that, and only on that can it survive. Christianity may seem to have a black eye just now: it may seem almost not to be in the world. But that is only in the seeming, for when the time comes for men to get together you will see that peace will come out of that Great Fountain of sanity, tolerance and political and social wisdom that is the Gateway to all kinds of truth and the only sure basis on which the world can rest. So keep a bit close to it in your fighting days, and learn to know the Greatest Lessons that a man can know and by which every decent man lives and is measured.

So, go to it, my boy! Do your duty and do it strong. If it be God's will that you come back to us a silent tribute to your sense of right, so be it. We will bear and live it, as thousands of others will be called upon to do. But I have a strong feeling that you are going to come back to us a bigger, finer man than you are leaving us today. I cannot help feeling that this is God's will. And when you come back, more than any honor that may come to you for duty done, I want to feel that, clean-blooded and clear-eyed, you can look your mother straight in the eye and that she will feel that most glorious and satisfying of all exaltations that comes to a mother, that tremendous inner satisfaction, when her mother-heart says within her: "Thank God, my boy has kept the faith." Keep you that faith with your mother. Nothing can count so big.

Until then, dear boy, remember me as thinking of you throughout each of the long days and the nights to come. DAD.—Ladies' Home Journal.

**England's Poor in War.**

The effects of war are as fantastic as those of a bolt of lightning. One woman's income includes such incongruous items as 11s 6d on account of her interned husband and 3s 6d from her son, who is in the army. Kate, aged forty, profits from the Zeppelins. Her neighbors are fearful of fetching their own beer when rumors of "trouble over 'ead" are around, and, as she neither drinks nor fears bombs, she earns many a penny by going for beer whenever an air raid is expected.

The tendency to thrift engendered by a regular allowance is checked by the ever mounting cost of living, so that what the war gives with one hand it takes away with the other. The separation allowance is not all roses.

Many women remark that it was their first chance in life, but add that the high prices force them to deny themselves comforts they formerly enjoyed. "When 'e was at 'ome," one of them puts it, "and 'ad done a good week, I could 'ave what I wanted; when he ain't 'ad no work—well, when you ain't got nothing, you goes without; but now—now I 'as to go careful all the time." On the other hand, not a few wives have found in the absence of a compulsorily wage-earning husband, with a compulsory separation allowance, an ideal solution of economic problems.—New York Evening Post.

**The Square Deal.**

Every patriotic American and every loyal member of congress will welcome the president's order prohibiting the faintest suspicion of politics to influence the exemption cases of the national army.

Favor-seeking citizens, it is reported, already had begun to put pressure on congressmen. Requests were being sent to the war department for special consideration for a privileged few. The peremptory command issued by President Wilson will end this budding evil. General Crowder sent to all the members of congress a notice saying that "the president directs the war department to decline to discuss cases pending on appeal or to entertain any communications, suggestions or additional evidence or statements concerning them."

That is the spirit of impersonal

fairness which the American people appreciate. Because of the general belief that the national army has been selected by clean tests of actual fitness this nation has escaped the customary wholesale opposition to the draft. The feeling that the law was

being enforced without favor has done miracles in the development of the national morale. Lacking such a sense of justice we might have been a divided people.—Chicago Herald.

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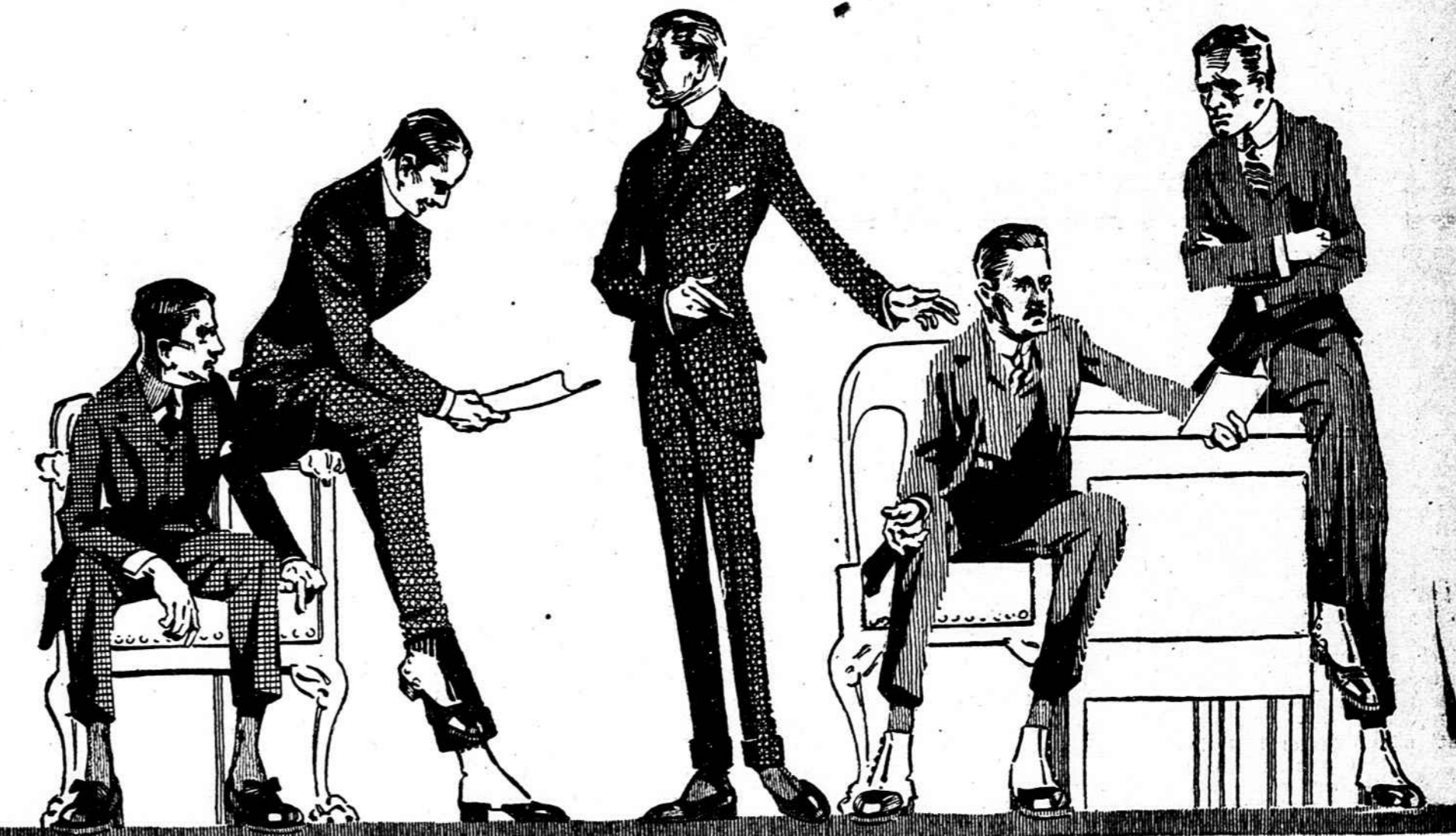
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