

## REMINISCENCES OF "GUNNERS" FARM.

I see Tom Harris, of Messrs J. E. Watson and Co. was successful in bagging a number of prizes at the recent Poultry Show. Tom has some good birds and is a keen poultry fancier. The last time I saw him was in a dug-out in France. He was cook to the 4th Machine Gun Company while we were in La Bizet Sector, with headquarters around "Gunner's" Farm. I had no idea that Tom was a poultry fancier at that time. In fact his modesty would not let him display his taste for poultry and no doubt feared it would give the boys a pain under the tunic. Give 'em Jimmy Maconachie and bully beef, that's the stuff, and give 'em it he did. Tom went to Hazebrouck on one occasion, accompanied by a number of other cooks and quartermasters, the object being to learn cookery according to army methods. "This is a field kitchen," explained the officer, as if cooks had time to worry about field kitchens. How to do this and how to do that was explained. In fact everything was explained except how to get a quick trip to Blighty. Even the army incinerator was not neglected and seemed to impress Tom very much because, at no distant date I remember him whispering in my lug that the whole thing was a damned insinuator instead. When Tom came back to the line we were in expectation of treacle puddings and all sorts of tempting things. Next day he dug up a mincer and we were to try some new feeds. The mincer was to break up the biscuits, after which they are mixed in water and some "bully" added. You then take a sandbag and firmly grasping both ends between the forefinger and thumb of the right and left hand respectively, you place it on the ground and dump the mixture on it. Then proceed to flatten it out, cut it into squares, fry in not fat, and then you have rissoles. These ground biscuits could also be made into porridge. I remember the first pudding Tom made. The only difference between the recipe for rissoles and puddings is that you put jam instead of "bully" into the dope. I don't know to this day what we did to deserve it, but there it is. Nevertheless, Tom made some good feeds, especially when we pinched the Froggies' potatoes and peas, a thing no one over did, but it was done all the same. There was another Digger I remember well, who was associated with Tom in those good old days, Dobby, who had not long come down from the line. Dobby was one of those men who is so handy and always do the right thing at the right time, that the captain thought it a pity to lose a man having these qualifications, and as Fritz was no respecter of persons, Dobby was sent down to Tom Harris as assistant cook. Dobby's job was to clean the potatoes when we had them, and when this was done to sleep and read. As time went on Dobby's duties were extended, and he was placed in charge of the barrel of beer which was kept at the doorway of Tom's cookhouse. We had all put in a few francs to purchase it and a small quantity would be dished out every day. The only man who was not on rations was Dobby, and I have a suspicion that Tom was not far behind. But such are the misfortunes of war.

It was a peaceful evening, one of those evenings when the boys would say, "The old — is up to something," and so he was, for not long afterwards a whizz was heard travelling through the air. It got nearer and nearer and, alas, the barrel of beer was the victim. It was a fresh one too, and was being allowed to settle before being used, but Dobby had experience with the Salvage Dump and put it into good use on this occasion. A little was saved, but owing to Dobby frequently stopping to taste it, much more was lost than should have been.

Some big guns with red on their caps came floating around Tom's kitchen one day. They were very suspicious looking characters, but closer examination revealed them to be artillery officers. "What the hell do they want here? If they put a gun here it will be the end of the chapter" (and incidentally Tom's cookhouse). However, nothing came of it but somehow or other Fritz got a bee in his bonnet about a supposed 18-pounder hidden behind a few trees at the cemetery, which was just across the road. He made things merry and bright and in the morning bones were lying everywhere and the wooden crosses were blown out. I placed these crosses where I thought they should be, out of respect to the gallant boys who had crossed the "Great Divide."

There was another Digger who used to knock about Tom's kitchen. Whitey we called him. He was a runner and had frequently to go from Gunner's Farm to Port Nippie, where Divy Headquarters were. I never met a man who always came back with tales of such hair-breadth escapes.

On one occasion the Artillery had a 9-in howitzer planted along the road. It used to find its mark and Fritz decided to get rid of it. In order that the gun would not be discovered a dummy was made and nicely covered up with a log sticking out to represent the barrel. Fritz opened fire on the dummy and for about three days shook things up. I estimated that in that time about seven acres of land was turned up by shell fire. One big shell had landed on the road and made a hole about eight feet deep and about 15 feet across the top, which soon filled with water. Whitey blew along as usual during this heavy fire and on nearing the shell-hole heard a shell coming, got the wind up and fell into the shell-hole and was missing for a day. On his return we were told that he had been blown into the hole and on the same day a shell passed through the spokes of his bicycle. However, they were days to remember, days when the bond of comradeship was of greater significance than in the camouflage and hypocrisy of our civilian activities.

## SCIENCE JOTTINGS.

The distance from the earth to the sun is 93,000,000 miles. If we started out in a flying machine and travelled at the rate of 127,400 miles per day, without stopping for a whiskey and soda, it would take us two years to arrive there.

The sun is over a million times greater than our earth, and 324,000 times heavier.

Each of us carry an average weight of some 16 tons upon our shoulders. Perhaps some one will ask how it is that we are not crushed by this weight, but to which, never-the-less we appear insensible. It is because the aerial fluid enclosed within our bodies exerts a pressure equal and opposite to the external atmospheric pressure, and these pressures counteract each other.

The earth's diameter at the equator is 7,926 miles. From one pole to the other, it is a little less, owing to the flattening of the polar caps. The difference is about 27 miles.

The circumference of the earth is 24,900 miles. It is surrounded by an aerial envelope, the atmosphere, the height of which is generally believed to be about 186 miles.

There are about 7,000 stars visible to the naked eye. The sixth magnitude is the limit of visibility to the human eye.

There are 19 stars of the first magnitude, 59 of the second, 182 of the third, 530 of the fourth, 1,600 of the fifth, and 4,800 of the sixth magnitude.

Seven thousand stars for the whole heavens makes only 3,600 for half the sky. And we can only see one celestial hemisphere at a time.

Celestial space is unlimited, and we must not suppose that these 7,000 stars which fascinate our eyes and enrich our heavens, and without which our nights would be black, dark, and empty, comprise the whole of creation. They only represent the vestibule of the temple.

With the aid of the most powerful telescopes of the day, reinforced by celestial photography, can bring a stream of more than 120 millions of stars into the scope of our vision.

Some time ago a photographic map was being prepared, and is possibly now completed. It comprises the first fourteen magnitudes, and will give the precise position of some 400 million stars.

Examination of star motions reveals the fact that our sun is hurrying with all his system (the earth included) towards the constellation of Hercules. We are changing our position every moment. By the time typists in government offices have morning tea and discussed the merits of paint and powder, the earth is 43,000 miles farther away than we are at present. This is the distance travelled in one hour. The sun and the earth will never again traverse the space they have just left, and which they have deserted for ever.

Who has not noticed the Milky Way? The pale belt that traverses the entire firmament. It is indeed a swarm of stars, each is individually too small to excite our retina, but as a whole, curiously enough, they are clearly visible. Eight million stars were counted there with the gauges of Sir William Herschel.

Hiding his fortune of one thousand pounds in a cellar, a French farmer discovered that rats had eaten the newly-printed notes.

## MOTORING NOTES.

### COLD WEATHER LUBRICATION.

### SAVE OFF PREMATURE WEAR BY SUPPLYING THE PROPER LUBRICANT.

With the coming of cold weather, lubricating oils naturally become heavier. To make provision for this characteristic of all lubricants, and provide for better lubrication during the cold months, it is customary to replace the grease and oil in the car with a lighter lubricant.

Serious damage may befall a car by not giving attention to the quantity of the lubricants used all through, from engine to transmission and back axle, when cold weather sets in. It is more than possible—quite probable—that something may snap, particularly when the steel has become chilled.

During the cold spell of a short time ago a case was noted where the car owner, a most experienced man at that, was compelled to run his engine half an hour to transmit sufficient heat to soften the grease in the transmission before he could engage the gears. An inexperienced driver would likely have attempted to force the gears into mesh and would have had the trouble and expense of having new gears installed.

When a car has been standing for several hours in intensely cold weather every particle of grease or oil congeals and becomes extremely heavy, tending to hang on to anything with which it comes in contact. This heavy grease, in the transmission, for instance, will not pass between the teeth of the gears and naturally must act as a clog and a drag.

### ADD OIL TO LUBRICATING GREASE.

When cup grease is used in the transmission or differential it is well to add ordinary lubricating oil to thin out that which is already in place. Even 600W will become so heavy it is almost impossible to move the parts and cup grease will set still harder. Besides, there is danger in the heavy grease not finding its way to those parts that need lubrication, for the gears merely will cut a path through the grease, and none will be in a state to fall into the teeth and be carried around, whereas the lighter oil will follow the gears readily and also will gradually thin out the grease to permit it to work satisfactorily.

Before cold weather has set in part of the heavy grease should be removed and oil substituted, so it will have opportunity to soften the remaining grease and work its way to all oil holes or bearings that otherwise will be neglected and perhaps ruined for lack of lubrication. The driver, of course, will not understand why his bearings or gears or some other parts have been damaged when he knew there was a sufficient supply of grease.

### ELECTRIC MACHINE IS EASY TO OIL.

Oiling the parts of the electrical machines is not a difficult task, because these parts generally need oil once a month. The chief difficulty encountered when oiling generator parts and starting motor parts is that too much oil may be applied which would cause the commutator to become flooded and the machine consequently inoperative. With a magneto, for example, the oiling holes are covered with caps. These should be lifted and filled only. The oil-can spout must not be forced into the oil hole in the belief that since oil does good wherever it is applied, the oil hole of the magneto should be forcibly flooded.

A battery system should have slightly more attention than a simple magneto installation. The Delco system, for example, has five places which should be lubricated. They are: the grease cup for lubricating the motor clutch, the oiler for lubricating the generator clutch and the forward armature bearing, the oil hole for lubricating the bearings on the rear of the armature shaft, the oil hole in the distributor for lubricating the top bearing of the distributor shaft (this should receive lubrication once a week), and the inside of the distributor head, which should be lubricated with a small amount of vaseline, carefully applied.

When a car is new the distributor should be lubricated two or three times in the first thousand miles. After this no attention need be given the distributor for a burnished surface will have been formed for the rotor brush on the distributor head. After applying the vaseline carefully wipe the head clean with a soft cloth.

The poll for liquor or no liquor in Bellamy's (says the "Daily Times") Wellington correspondent closes on Tuesday. It is generally understood that Bellamy's will not go dry.

## BLIGHTY NEWS.

Owing to the strike of Dublin dockers on the question of handling Army stores the London and North-Western Railway cargo steamboat service to Ireland was stopped. Passenger sailings were as usual.

A "Guild of Builders for London," consisting of members of the operatives' trade unions, is to be formed, its first duty being described as the mobilization of labour for the erection of houses.

The Ulster Unionist Council decided by a large majority in favour of the six-county area for the Northern Parliament.

It is stated in official quarters that notices sent out by landlords in anticipation of the passing of the Increase of Rent Bill have no legal force.

A scheme of primary and secondary health centres is proposed in an interim report by the Medical Consultative Committee, of which Lord Dawson of Penn is chairman.

The International Law Association Conference at Portsmouth discussed the laws of war at sea. The American Ambassador said the differences of opinion among Americans must not be taken as evidence of unwillingness to join in establishing just rules for international conduct.

Motor-omnibuses with pneumatic tyres and capable of higher speeds are projected by the London General Omnibus Company.

News messages were sent by wireless telephone from Chelmsford to the London office of the "Daily Mail," and were distinctly heard also at Devonport, Liverpool, Halifax, and elsewhere.

At Louth, Lincolnshire, a sudden flood swept through the town causing considerable loss of life and great damage to property, many houses being demolished.

Floods occurred in towns in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Wales, and on the London and North-Western Railway near Lancaster a bridge was swept away.

The report of the World Hydrographic Conference held in London last year recommends an international standard for charts and the establishment of an International Hydrographic Bureau.

Two of the King's horses from the Windsor stables will compete at the Richmond Royal Horse Show, for which a record number of entries has been received.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has written to Dr F. B. Meyer inviting the prayers of Free Churchmen on behalf of the Lambeth Conference's deliberations. Dr Meyer has replied thanking him for his "courteous and cordial invitation."

The number of undefended suits to be heard during the next sittings of the Divorce Court is about 1,275, as compared with 662 a year ago, and 238 in 1914.

Sir Richard Glazebrook, lecturing to the Royal Aeronautical Society, described experiments which are taking place with a view to the prevention of fire on aircraft.

Dr. Inge delivered the Romances Lecture at Oxford, his subject being "The Idea of Progress." He said that while the accumulated experience of mankind was of great value it did not constitute real progress in human nature itself.

The 29th conference of the International Law Association opened at Portsmouth.

The executive of the N.U.R. considered the refusal of their Irish members to handle munitions. The matter is to be submitted to a full meeting of the Triple Alliance immediately.

Two sections are being organised to conduct negotiations with M. Krassin, one political, the other financial and commercial. The Soviet delegate, it is now stated, is to meet Ministers representing the Cabinet as a whole.

At the Conference of the International Law Association at Portsmouth Lord Justice Younger, in an address on the treatment of prisoners of war, urged the importance of seeing that nations were not committed in advance to proposals which their people or high command would renounce in time of war.

The Irish Labour Party executive has decided to support the railwaymen and dockers in their refusal to handle munitions.

There are 256 railway stations within a six-mile radius of St. Paul's Cathedral, while within a 20-mile radius there are nearly 400.

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