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"THE MARINES HAVE LANDED — — The Situation is in Hand"

MANY of us have been greeting every American bluejacket as a Marine, and making wild guesses about the men inside those khaki-green uniforms with trim leather belts (whom we saw in picture magazines!). Now that the United States Marine Corps has so strikingly put itself on the map (this time of the Pacific) we are not quite so dumb. Nor are we likely to forget what they have done in the Solomons. But we are asking more questions than ever. Fortunately information is not hard to get, if you know where to look for it, for a lot has been written about the Marines. And no wonder, when you realise that the Corps is a pigmy only 16,000 strong in normal times (about ten times that figure to-day) and has to hold its publicity end up somehow between the Army and Navy giants. On board a navy ship the few Marines, hand-picked men each one, were originally supposed to set a standard of spruceness and alertness for the slouchy sea-lubbers. In those harsh old days, too, they performed the unpopular duties of ship's police. Because Marines berthed in separate quarters and were not required to haul ropes or work the ship, the sailors read the Corps' initials as "Useless Sons Made Comfortable." The Marines in turn sang how "Ten Thousand gobs laid down their swabs to lick one sick Marine. . . ."

In Many Tight Corners

The Marine assumption of superiority was self-defence against all this. They do their job without waste words in really tight corners. When the Maine blew up in Havana harbour Private Bill Anthony formally informed his Captain, "Sir, I have to report in course of duty that the ship is blown up and sinking." When the 385 Marines on Wake Island's 2,000-acre sandbank, 2,000 miles from Hawaii, had twelve times prevented Japanese landings backed by 200 planes and a fleet

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by A.M.R.



with long-range naval guns; when, after a fortnight of this, hardly a man was left effective and had nothing larger than a 30-calibre machine-gun, Major Devaux radioed "Issue still in doubt."

Questions And Answers

But now for those questions of yours. "What are they—soldiers or sailors?" Answer: They are an integral part of the U.S. Navy, but specially organised and trained on military lines for landing duties—the taking or spiking of enemy naval bases, the construction of temporary U.S. bases in enemy territory, "commando" raids, or what in peace-time is euphemistically called "international police work," and "restoring order."

Question: "Why do they have so many badges and uniforms?" Answer: The badges represent proficiency in various weapons. Because they may be sent anywhere in the world, and because they are professionals, each unit has not only winter "greens" but also summer (or tropical) "khakis" and parade-deck

resplendents—"dress blues" for sea duty and ceremonial purposes.

Question: Do they receive different types of training? Answer: They are divided into highly specialised units—infantry, artillery, aviation, anti-aircraft batteries, chemical warfare, engineers, tanks.

Pay And Allotments

"What are they paid?" Privates get 50 dollars a month, with 20 per cent. extra if overseas. Other ranks get correspondingly higher. No part of their pay is compulsorily held back till the expiration of enlistment (four years).

"Why are they called 'leather-necks' and 'boots'?" The former from the stiff leather collar that used to keep their 'eyes level' during ship-board drill. It is the raw trainees who are 'boots.' Any Marine will tell you why.

"Are they 'suicide troops'?" No, although the Marine Brigade in France, 1917-18, suffered casualties of 108 per cent. (made up by replacements).

"Is that new film *To the Shores of Tripoli* really an 'authentic' account of the Marines?" Yes, insofar as training, uniforms and esprit de corps are concerned. By and large the story is improbable, though of course the purpose is to furnish entertainment.

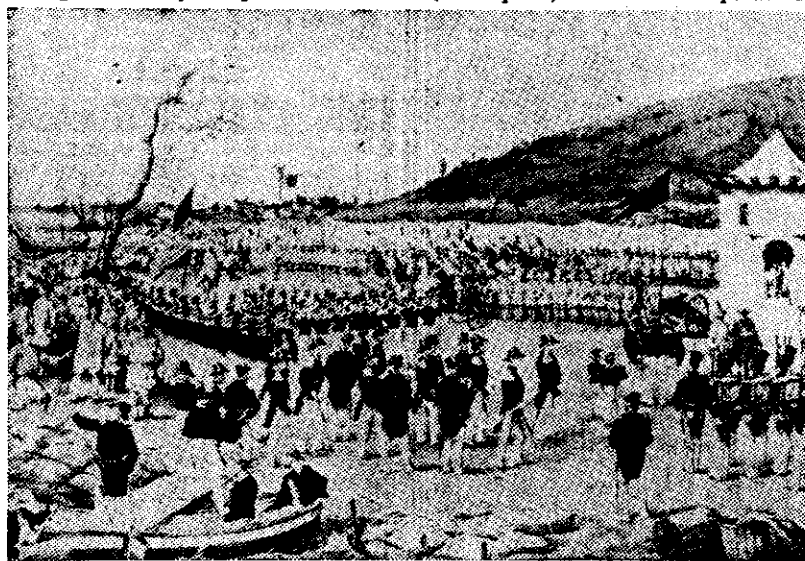
"And why the title and the song (the so-called 'Marines' Hymn)—*To the Shores of Tripoli*?"

A Glance At History

To answer that last question demands a new paragraph, with some account of, not sailors on horseback, but Marines on camel-back. The scene was Derna, of all places. And the date 1802 A.D. But first we need to explain who the Marines are when they are at home.

When the American colonists refused to drink George III's tea, they made permanent and official a small force of about 800 men who previously had been occasionally recruited *ad hoc* to do particular jobs of the sort now called "commando." Thus this force, the Marines, are older than either the U.S. Army or Navy. The British (and German, Hes-

(Continued on next page)



IN JAPAN IN 1853, Marines escorted Commodore Perry when he "opened up" the island empire. "To the humiliation of that day some of Japanese history since may be traced"