

## GAS ATTACK

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### THE MILITARY SALUTE.

#### An Ancient Custom and One Full of Meaning.

(By Dr. John R. Mackay.)

Some soldiers fail to see the significance of the salute in the army. They can not quite see the need for it, nor what it adds of value to their service. Like most things this can best be appraised by knowing the origin of it.

Sometimes it is explained to the men, "Oh, well, you do it out of respect to the uniform—what you really salute is the uniform!" But this is not quite true. It is Uncle Sam's uniform and must therefore be respected, for in respecting it one shows respect to that which it represents, and that is the honor of the country.

But the salute is a little more significant and a little more personal than that. Nothing makes a very hearty appeal to a man unless it is associated with the touch of a personality. And this is just what really gives the salute its value—it is recognition of personality—it is recognition of an acknowledged personal worth.

The salute had its origin in the days when men wore armor. Part of that armor was a visor. As this was closed to protect the face, men could not know each other except by certain marks of distinction placed upon their armor. These marks indicated the positions of trust and responsibility in which these men had been placed. Certain qualifications of leadership, of bravery, of military genius, merited recognition from King or Commander. Such recognition was indicated by marks upon the armor. These marks were, therefore, the proofs of certain outstanding qualifications, which the commander had noticed and which in this way he sought to honor. These distin-

guishing marks gave them rank. But a man of lower rank felt that what the Commander had thus honored he also ought to recognize. He wished to express his appreciation not merely of honors bestowed but of personal qualities which had merited the honors. This he did by raising his own visor when approaching one whose armor emblems indicated his worth and his honors.

But this act of raising the visor was more than the mere recognition of an honor bestowed—it was also a friendly act, in that the man expressed his trust and confidence in thus removing the protection from his face. He put himself at the mercy of the one whom he thus honored. In response to this the man of higher rank raised his visor also, and thus showed the honor was appreciated and the courtesy welcomed. Here was a tribute to personal worth, and a friendly appreciation of it.

The raising of the visor necessitated a sliding upward movement of the right hand. This became the form of the early salute. To-day it has taken on the snap and precision necessary to our times. But there is no reason for eliminating out of it the thought that makes it the recognition of personal worth, a friendly act and the appreciation of a courtesy.

The salute, therefore, belongs rather in the realm of personal worth, and is not a mere tribute to the uniform.

### A QUESTION OF DOLLARS AND CENTS.

"Enlisted men, 50 cents; Officers, \$1.00." This sign is sometimes seen at entertainments in Spartanburg. The supposition is that all officers are plutocrats. This, as the Hunting of the Snark (one of the greatest poems in any language) puts it, "is a sentiment open to doubt."

Take a case very much in point at this time. A large number of good soldiers are on the verge of getting commissions as a result of ability plus hard work at the Officers' Training School. Not a few of them, as the most casual census will show, are up against a stiff financial problem. Stated in its simplest terms, it is this: Where is the money coming from to pay for my outfit?

On page 3 of this issue of the **Gas Attack** a carefully compiled budget shows that the initial outlay for an officer's equipment is close to \$400.00. Of course this doesn't include depreciation and replacements which, in the course of a year will amount around \$200.00, or even more. This means that a second lieutenant must spend about one-third of his first year's salary on equipment. His food costs him nearly another third. Then there are allotments, insurance, Liberty Bonds, etc.

Yes, a second lieutenant can hardly be accused of being a war profiteer. It is safe to say that the average buck private (without a private income) is in better shape financially at the end of a month than the average second lieutenant (without a private income). A private income is a convenient thing, a desirable thing, when it comes from one's own efforts, but it should not be a requisite in the army.

Most of the men getting commissions in the O. T. S. were salaried men. Now, after having been in the ranks for eight or nine months or more they are required to buy some \$400.00 worth of equipment and to live on a more liberal scale than when they were in the ranks, on a salary, which in these high costing times is not by any means princely.

None of these men want to make any money out of the war. They have given much already and are willing to give more, even to the greatest gift in a man's power. It is an undoubted hardship for many of them to buy the equipment their position demands. They should not be subjected to it. We, who have no shoulder bars and no financial problems because of them, in all altruism, believe that the Government should equip its officers as it does its enlisted men.

R. E. C.