

## INTERESTING LETTER FROM FRANCE

Former Long-Bell Man Discusses Lumber, Champagne, Retailers and Other Things.

Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 22.—The following letter was recently sent to the Long-Bell Lumber Company, of Kansas City, by W. H. Icenogel, of that company, who is now seeing service "somewhere in France" with the Forestry Division of the Tenth Engineers, U. S. A. The company has distributed copies of the letter to its salesmen and branch managers all over the country.

Says Mr. Icenogel:

"Have contemplated a letter to you for some time, but, believe me, time for correspondence has been indeed limited. Thought they knew how to get the most out of a man at the sawmill—that is, how to get him to put in the greatest possible number of hours a day—but they are either lenient or need an army training.

"Had a very pleasant trip across, but I am looking forward to my next crossing as a much more pleasant one. Feel something like the Irishman who said if the Statue of Liberty ever saw him again, as he entered the New York harbor, she would have to turn around. I don't mean that either, for I expect to make another trip, in line with our conversation in Washington.

"Am able to tell you no details of our operations or locations, or, in fact, anything else of interest. All mail is carefully censored, and rightfully so, but I wish they would take the lid off for just one or two letters. Can say, however, that I am located in a very fair city at this time. Do not know how long this arrangement will last. Were I able to tell you the price of two commodities, the handling of which you are familiar with in the states, think you would feel sad; this for the reason that on one of them, in the sale of which you are engaged—lumber—would make you feel like a piker as a sales manager; the other, you are on the purchasing end—champagne—and as a buyer you would feel like a sucker. However, neither of those items are playing any important part in my young life, and I mention them only because of your familiarity with your market conditions thereof.

"As yet I have had but little time to locate a source of information; i. e., as you suggested, concerning French. Have a teacher in mind, however, who I am sure would meet with your entire approval. Petite, snappy and speaks a little English.

"Received some mail today, in which I had advice of C. W. Green's death, and am mighty sorry to hear this. Know he will be missed by the company and his territory. Everyone around that part of the country always had a good word for Charley Green.

"Guess maybe I told you I have one of Fred Berger's customers as a partner in the 10th. In fact, he is now working under my direction in the quartermaster work, and we stopped long enough this afternoon to have an argument about Long-Bell's discount system. He, as is customary for the retailer, admitted that it was correct but that he didn't like to buy lumber from you on that account. I asked him if he would let that discount stand in his way when he could make money on our lumber, and he admitted that he wouldn't, but insisted that on an even break he would give the business to another equally good concern. That was one of the things I thought I would miss in the army—an argument over collections every now and then—but fate has been good to me; won't let me get lonesome; sends a retailer right along to France with me. The only trouble with this fellow is that he is a mighty fine fellow and not one of several retailers with whom I have done business that I would enjoy having work for me in the army; for, believe me, that is one place that there is no argument about an order. From the time the khaki goes on until it comes off and we wear human clothes again, what the man higher up says goes, regardless of whether it is the right thing or not.

"Would be glad if you would put me on your mailing list for any circular letters issued from time to time out of the ordinary; that is, concerning any new policies or anything you might think would be of interest. Think I'd even be glad to get punched up in the daily report again. Miss Halligan doubtless finds her work somewhat less since I left, for that was one job that George Houston and I agreed upon thoroughly.

"My two-candle power light is getting the best of my eyes here, and I'll put on the lid for the present. When I say two-candle power that is what I mean. There is some advantage to being a touch operator.

"Will be mighty glad to hear from you any time, and remember me kindly to everyone. Will be back Christmas, 1918, or earlier. With kind personal regards, I am,

Very sincerely,

(Signed) "WM. H. ICENOGEL,

"Regimental Supply Sergeant, 2nd Detachment, 10th Engineers (Forestry), A. E. F., via New York City."