

The Conning Tower

HONEYCOMB

I'm goin' back a-lookin' for the honeycomb,
Back to the jungle, 'way back home—

The honeycomb that's growin' in the holes o' trees
An' you reach it by a-scrabblin' up with both your knees
While you whistle 'bout yo' baby to keep away the bees.

I'm goin' where the honey crackles in the mouth,
Back to the jungle, 'way back South—

For Southern comb is sweeter'n Northern chewin'-gum
An' when you call the yaller-birds, they always come,
An' if they see the honey, they ask you for some.

Back there in the jungle, 'way back home,
I'm goin' to spend my old age eatin' honeycomb—

Bananas an' watermelons, pineapples an' fruit
An' all the birds o' paradise a livin' man can shoot,
An' I'll eat 'em while a-leanin' on a mangrove-root.

An' when I've had a plenty 'way back South,
There's goin' to come a angel an' kiss me on the mouth—

A angel with a big wing both sides her head,
The front feathers white an' the hind feathers red,
It'll be the kiss o' heaven that'll make me glad I'm dead.

An' I won't have to hunt no mo' back home,
With a angel on each side o' me—bringin' honeycomb.

PASSERS-BY

O there's nobody counts for less than I.

Then why so high a lighted eye

And why so spry a tread?

Notice how these passers-by

Sigh and shake a head?—

Once they fancied well of you,

Propheesied what you would do,

Coveted the ways you knew;

Now these self-same passers-by

Laugh at you instead.

So why forsake your worthy ways

And why defeat your early days?

Answer, I beg of you, tell me why!

Because nobody counts for more than I.

CHANGE

Little white hearse
Gone down the street,
If on his bright and unbruised feet
He should come back
With life still sweet,
Only to change to a different hack,
The little white hearse
Grown big and black—
Would it be worse?

POPLARS

Poplars against a mountain
Seem frequently to me
To be little-windowed cities
And sun-waves on the sea.

Perhaps dead men remember
Those beckonings of fire,
Waves that have often crumbled
And windows of desire.

Another year and some one,
Standing where I now stand,
Shall watch my tree rekindle,
From ancient sea and land,

The beckoning of an ocean,
The beckoning of a town,
Till the sun's behind the mountain
And the wind dies down.

A PLAYMATE

His little arms are out,
He runs to us.
We open ours.

He laughs, he is not there.

We hold a candle by his bed
To look at him asleep,
And when we move it near his lips—
Out it goes!

MERCY

He took your coat away?
Then go and fold.
Your cloak around him, too—
Lest he be cold.

And if he took from you
Your daily bread,
Offer your heart to him—
That he be fed.

And if you gave him all
Your life could give,
Give him your death as well—
That he may live.

THE DEATHBED OF A CERTAIN RICH MAN

"Where they have left me cold upon the bed,
I am not breathing, but I am not dead—
Blind, I see the thorns upon a head,
Motionless, I travel, inward bound,
Deaf, I hear a penetrating sound
Of voices risen from the silent ground.
His voice, the Nazarene's, in theirs renewed,
Speaks and encircles me, a multitude,
'We are the Christ you never understood.
We gave you all the love there is, to do
Our work with, but you hoarded it and knew
Only yourself, not us, and lived untrue
To your great privilege. Now when you lie
So still that you can hear us—tell us why?—
O Christ, I thought you were only one. I die."

NO MAN'S CLERK

Perhaps tomorrow he will work
Listlessly again—
This evening he was no man's clerk,
He was a king of men.

An unheroic, homely boy,
Sallow and under size,
He passed me, bearing all the joy
Of history in his eyes.

I saw him then, I see him yet.
The funny little churl,
In his mouth a cigarette,
In his eyes—a girl.

WRITER BYNNER.

The Battlefield—By Jeffery Farnol

TO ALL who sit immune, far removed from war and all its horrors, to those to whom when Death comes he comes in shape as gentle as he may—to all such I dedicate these tales of the front.

How many stories of battlefields have been written of late, written to be scanned hastily over the breakfast table or comfortably lounged over in an easy chair, stories warranted not to shock or disgust, wherein the reader may learn of the glorious achievements of our armies, of heroic deeds and noble self-sacrifice, so that frequently I have heard it said that war, since it produces heroes, is a goodly thing, a necessary thing.

Can the average reader know or even faintly imagine the other side of the picture? Surely not, for no clean human mind can compass all the horror, all the brutal, grotesque obscenity of a modern battlefield. Therefore, I propose to write plainly, briefly, of that which I saw on my last visit to the British front; for since in blood-soaked France men are dying even as I pen these lines it seems only just that those of us for whom they are giving their lives should at least know something of the manner of their dying. To this end I visited four great battlefields on the Aisne, and I would that all such as cry up war, its necessity, its inevitability, might have gone beside me.

Would Set World Against Future War

Though I have sometimes written of war, yet I am one that hates war, one to whom the sight of suffering and bloodshed causes physical pain; yet I forced myself to tread those awful fields of death and agony, to look upon the ghastly aftermath of modern battle, that, if it be possible, I might, by my testimony, in some small way help those who know as little of war as I did once to realize the horror of it; that, loathing it for the hellish thing it is, they may, one and all, set their faces against war henceforth, with an unshakable determination that never again shall it be permitted to maim, to destroy and blast out of being the noblest works of God.

What I write here I set down deliberately, with no idea of phrase-making, of literary values or rounded periods; this is and shall be a plain, trite statement of fact.

And now, one and all, come with me

in spirit, lend me your mind's eyes and see for yourselves something of what modern war really is.

Behold, then, a stretch of country—a sea of mud far as the eye can reach; a grim, desolate expanse, its surface ploughed and churned by thousands of high-explosive shells into ugly holes and tortured heaps, like muddy waves struck motionless upon this muddy sea. The guns are silent, the cheers and frenzied shouts, the screams and groans, have long since died away and no sound is heard save the noise of my own going.

Stumbles Among Wreckage of Battle

The sun shone palely and a stifling wind swept across the waste, a noxious wind, cold and dank, that chilled me with a sudden dread even while the sweat ran from me. I walked amid shell craters sometimes knee deep in mud, and I stumbled over rifles half buried in the slime, on muddy knapsacks, over muddy bags half full of rusty bombs, and so upon the body of a dead German soldier. With arms wide flung and written legs grotesquely twisted he lay there beneath my boot, his head half buried in the mud. So there he lay, this dead Boche, skull gleaming under shrunken scalp, an awful, eyeless thing that seemed to start, to stir and shiver as the cold wind stirred his muddy clothing. Then nausea and a deadly faintness seized me, but I shook it off, and shivering, sweating, forced myself to stoop and touch that awful thing, and with the touch, horror and faintness passed and in their place I felt a deep and passionate pity, for he was a Boche, and with pity in my heart I turned and went away.

But now, wherever I looked were other shapes that lay in attitudes frightfully contorted, grotesque and awful. Here the battle had raged desperately. I stood in a very charnel house of dead. From a mound of earth uplifting by a bursting shell a clenched fist, weather bleached and pallid, seemed to threaten me; from another emerged a pair of crossed legs with knees updrawn, very like the legs of one who dozes gently on a hot day. Hard by a pair of German knee boots topped a shell crater, and drawing near I saw the gray-green breeches belt and pouches and beyond—nothing but unspeakable corruption. I started back in horror and stepped on something that yielded underfoot—

glanced down and saw a bloated, discolored face that, even as I looked, vanished beneath my boot and left a bare and grinning skull.

Once again faintness seized me, and lifting my head I stared around about me and across the desolation of this hellish waste. Far in the distance was the road where men moved to and fro, busy with picks and shovels, and some sang and some whistled and never was sound more welcome. Here and there across these innumerable shell holes solitary figures moved, men, these, who walked heedfully and with heads down. And presently I moved on, but now, like these distant figures, I kept my gaze upon that awful mud lest again I should trample heedlessly on something that had once lived and loved and laughed.

And they lay everywhere, here stark and stiff, with no pitiful earth to hide their awful corruption—here, again, half-buried in slimy mud; more than once my nailed boot uncovered mould-er-er craters or things more awful. And as I trod this grisly place my pity grew and with pity a profound wonder that the world with its so many millions of reasoning minds should permit such things to be, until I remembered that few, even the most imaginative, could realize the true frightfulness of modern men-butcherer machinery, and my wonder changed to a passionate desire that such things should be recorded and known, if only in some small measure; wherefore it is I write these things.

Death All About In Horrible Shape

I wandered on past shell holes, some deep in slime that held nameless ghastly messes, some a-brim with bloody water, until I came where three men lay side by side, their hands upon their levelled rifles. For a moment I had the foolish thought that these men were weary and slept, until, coming nearer, I saw that these had died by the same shell-burst. Near them lay yet another shape, a mangled heap, one muddy hand yet grasping muddy rifle, while beneath the other lay the fragment of a sudden letter—probably the last thing those dying eyes had looked upon.

Death in horrible shape was all about me. I saw the work wrought by shrapnel, by gas, and the mangled red havoc of high explosive. I only seemed unreal, like one that walked in a night-

mare. Here and there upon this sea of mud rose the twisted wreckage of aeroplanes, and from where I stood I counted five, but as I tramped on these five grew to nine. One of these lying upon my way I turned aside to glance at, and stared through a tangle of wires into a pallid thing that had been a face once comely and youthful; the leather jacket had been opened at the neck for the identifying disk, as I suppose, and glancing lower, I saw that this leather jacket was discolored, singed, burned; and below this a charred and unrecognizable mass.

Is there a man in the world to-day who, beholding such horrors, would not strive with all his strength to so order things that the hell of war should be made impossible henceforth?

Urges League Against War

So now, all of you who read, I summon you in the name of our common humanity; let us be up and doing! Americans, Anglo-Saxons, let our common blood be a bond of brotherhood between us henceforth, a bond indissoluble. As you have now entered the war, as you are now our allies, in deed as in spirit, let this alliance endure hereafter. Already there is talk of some such league, which in its might and unity shall secure humanity against any recurrence of the evils the world now groans under. Here is a noble purpose, and I conceive it the duty of each one of us, for the sake of those who shall come after, that we should do something to further that which was once looked upon as only a Utopian dream—the Universal Brotherhood of Man.

"The flowers of the forest are a faded away." Far and wide they lie, struck down in the flush of manhood, full of the joyous, unconquerable spirit of youth. I know what noble ambitions were theirs, what splendid works they might not have wrought! Now they lie, each poor, shattered body a mass of loathsome corruption. Yet that diviner part that no bullet may slay, no steel rend or mar, has surely entered into the fuller living, for death is but the gateway into life and infinite possibilities.

But upon all who sit immune, upon all whom as yet this bitter war has left untouched, is the blood of these that died in the cause of humanity, the cause of freedom for us and the generations to come. This blood is upon each one of us—consecrating us to the task they have died to achieve, and it is our solemn duty, therefore, to see that the worlds they suffered for, the deaths they died have not been, and shall not be, in vain.

Stations succeeded one another. Passengers alighted. There was a seat free. Some one motioned to the wounded man. Jean made way for the other to pass. But in doing so he dropped his cane, over which the zouave stumbled. A general murmur of disapprobation arose. The zouave sank into the seat.

The compartment gradually emptied. François, in her turn, was able to get a place beside the wounded man. Jean propped himself against a door, fatigued by his long trip. Another vacant seat. He looked around to see if there was not a poultice, a woman or an old man to whom to offer it. There was none. Discreetly he slipped into it. All the interest of the passengers centred in the wounded soldier. A neighbor ventured to engage him in conversation. And he, in a hoarse voice, told about his double wound—about his arm, which he could no longer use, and his cheek, shattered by a bullet.

Jean lowered his eyes. He thought, during the recital, that he discovered something in the attitude of the listeners which was intended as a reproach to him—even as a challenge. François, an outsider, was vainly attempting to cheer him by his long smiles. Now the poultice grew more excited. He talked of the risks which he had run, of the duty to his country which he had fulfilled. He used one bitter phrase: "Ah, if all the rest had only done what he had done! Jean felt himself crushed.

The Zouave's Idea

Gripped Jean

The zouave stopped talking. Presently, shifting in his seat, he manifested signs of impatience. His idea gripped Jean. His own valise had been shipped by François under the seat. Maybe it inconvenienced the man? He lifted his eyes. The other glared at him insolently. Apparently an outbreak was imminent. He growled. What should he answer if attacked? His tongue already froze to the roof of his mouth.

Jean shuddered. It was coming. The zouave stood up and came toward him. He already addressed him: "Monsieur!" The heavy brows of the man, exposed under his bandage, exaggerated the expression of his face. The scandal which Jean had dreaded so much was about to be precipitated. Mon Dieu, how he regretted having made his voyage to Paris! How he wished himself buried deep under the earth!

And the poultice, bending over him, fairly shouted at him: "In order to accommodate the little lady, I will change places with you, if you wish!"

Five Kamerads walking and the sixth borne lightly by two hefty Tommies, they marched out through the boche wire. It was then that somebody who had been overlooked in the trench threw two bombs and knocked Jimmy out of time. Three of our fellows went back to see why he had done it, but he had wisely not waited to make any explanations, so they hauled out one of the Boche trench boards, and Jimmy had that for a stretcher until he got to the wire where he was identified. Fritz put a few rifle grenades after them and followed up with a shell or two and some trench mortars, but he didn't bother them much. The only people who felt the situation at all keenly were the five Kamerads, who were beginning to develop grave fears as to whether their gunners were going to allow them to reach safely the much coveted sanctuary of the divisional cage.

This all happened in the early hours of the morning, and Jimmy was taken to a casualty clearing station on his way to the base and blighty. He should have had much to think about—his wound, his new identification, the six Kamerads added to his record; yet all he thought about was disclosed when he said with very elaborate trimmings: "If I could only get hold of the blighter who did me in I'd brain him!"

Are Women People?

By ALICE DUER MILLER

To Certain Soldiers

"We realize that while we are going forth to fight for democracy, you ladies are going to stay at home and fight against it. . . . If this is a war for democracy, surely no society that works to keep one-half of our citizens disfranchised has any part in it.—Letter from some Pennsylvania National Guardsmen to a Pennsylvania Anti-Suffrage Association which had offered them a flag.)

Soldiers, thank you for that letter,
No one could have put it better;
No one has, to speak sincerely,
Ever put it half as clearly.
Ah, you men who risk your lives,
Know for what your country strives,
That democracy to-day
Is not just a word to say,
But a living issue, more
Than all else worth fighting for,
Fighting for with all our powers,
And you know that fight is ours,
And you know, while life endures,
That our cause is one with yours.

The Trend of the Times

September 9, 1917
"Woman suffrage is for the moment a slight, negligible thing."
Editorial New York Times.

February 7, 1915
"The grant of the suffrage to women is repugnant to instincts that strike their roots deep in the order of nature. It runs counter to human reason, it flouts the teachings of experience, and the admonitions of common sense."
Editorial New York Times.

"The Times" is rather angry at women for asking any one to consider their enfranchisement during a war.
But some years ago "The Times" was much angrier at our asking to have the question considered during the passage of a currency bill.

The Great Majority

Last month in the State of New York (and this month there are more) there were 993,152 women over twenty-one who had said over their signatures that they wanted the vote.

This is more by hundreds of thousands than the enrolment of either the Democratic or Republican party in this state.

It is about 350,000 more than voted for President Wilson in 1912, and about 240,000 more than voted for him in 1916 in this state.

It is about 450,000 more than the number of men who voted in favor of suffrage during the last campaign in New York, and about 250,000 more than voted against suffrage.

It is indisputable evidence:
First, that New York women do want the vote;
Second, that men did not represent women at the polls.

The British army has made the discovery that women can cook; and that they can do it more economically than men. There are more than 6,000 cooks in the army camps in England alone. The Associated Press dispatch describes the idea as "revolutionary."

The New York State Military Census did not even ask women if they knew how to cook.

We must always regret seeing a state Governor under indictment, but if any one has to be, we are glad it is one who made the most conspicuous anti-suffrage speech at his party convention.

The Antis, we notice from an article of their president's, have now given up speaking of women as women; they refer to the hated sex almost entirely as "the female of the species."

Nagging, we notice also, from the same article, is the indirect influence applied by women with whom the antis disagree.

If women voted in New Jersey and did not vote in California what a wonderful lesson the antis would draw from a comparison of the highways of the two states. But as it is, we suppose, to criticize the New Jersey roads or attribute them to a failure in masculine efficiency would be to display the darkest sex-antagonism.

"I have not at any time since my return from Russia expressed to any one any opinion about women voting or fighting in Russia; where it is none of my business." Mr. Root is reported to have written to the National Association Opposed to Suffrage. Presumably Mr. Root thinks it is his business to prevent only the women of his own state from getting what they want.

"I have not changed my opinion at all," he adds. This, if we remember right, makes just 23 years since Mr. Root has reconsidered the suffrage question.

To Dudley Field Malone

Some men believe in suffrage
In a peculiar way,
They think it just and fair and right—
Or so they always say—
They think that it is coming fast
But should not come to-day.

And others work and speak for it,
And yet you'll sometimes find
Behind their little suffrage speech
A little axe to grind.
They put their Party interests first,
And suffrage well behind.

Of men who care supremely
That justice should be shown,
Who do not balk at sacrifice,
And make the cause their own,
I know, I think, of only one,
That's Dudley Field Malone.

A Slacker With a Soul

[Translated from the French by William L. McPherson]

This is a story of a slacker who was not a slacker. It pictures the state of mind of a man who feels himself an "embusqué," in spite of the fact that the military authorities have rejected him on physical grounds. He is tormented by a sensitive imagination. He suffers all the pangs which a real slacker ought to suffer, but which, unfortunately, the real slacker seldom does suffer, because selfishness and apathy have deadened his sense of duty.

In France being an "embusqué" is a much more serious matter than it has yet become with us. French public opinion is extremely intolerant of anything that looks like an evasion of military service. The writer of this story deals with this situation dispassionately—even humorously. But whatever sympathy may be rightly extended to the unwilling exempt, the social boycotting of the real slacker is a problem which may soon acquire a grim meaning even in over-tolerant and easy-going America.

his part down there among the glorious youth of France. But his wish had been denied.

All His Comrades Were at the Front

He suffered a humiliation and a despair which time did not allay. All his comrades were at the front. That was what caused him the keenest pangs. To his fiancée alone he confided that he was not able to write letters without shame or date them from a point so far distant from the scene of action, he had dropped all other correspondence. She assumed a bantering attitude at first. She refused to take his scruples seriously. That was the worst thing she could do. Presently he avowed to her that he doubted whether he would have the courage to show himself again in her house. She being the daughter of an officer and her three brothers having gone to the war (one of them fallen in the first campaign and the other two continually exposed), he felt himself isolated. He was not a slacker, but he was a coward. He offered to release her from her promise, whatever suffering that release might cost him.

Her answer came, prompt and comforting. François told him that she appreciated his delicacy of feeling, and his regrets, which she shared with him. But to condemn him, that would be foolish. He slacker? Nothing of the kind. One must distinguish between those who could not go and those who didn't want to go. In conclusion, she asked him (and her invitation was both urgent and affectionate) to cross the Mediterranean when his next vacation came. They would see each other; they would come to a clearer understanding.

So he had come. "The slacker, the slacker at the rear. It is he who makes you persecute yourself," she scolded him gently. "Forget him!"

He told her again Of His Inquietudes In a low voice he thanked her, pressing her hands. But he began to tell her again of his inquietudes—of the sense of shame which always pursued him. He questioned whether he could risk making some visits during his stay in Paris, for fear of being out of the line. He used one bitter phrase: "Ah, if all the rest had only done what he had done! Jean felt himself crushed.

Jean seemed to shrink and shrivel, and his look indicated fear of the mob or of robust poilus shouldering him off to the manifest delight of the public. "Oh, he died," he repeated. François tried to deny, for his sake, that public opinion was unjust and cruel to that extent. But she did not convince him.

"JIMMY"

By R. F. W. Rees

IN THE early hours of the morning I said good goodby to Jimmy in a sunken road just behind the front line. I shook him heartily by the left hand, for the right was wounded. His left hip, too, was shattered, and there was a lump of ragged iron trespassing in the region of his liver. But Jimmy did not bother overmuch about those little things. As the stretcher-bearers moved off he waved his good hand wildly in farewell, and shouted assurances that we should meet in the Strand within the month. Always, though, woven into his adieux and his assurances, the burden of his song was:

"If I could only get hold of the blighter who did me in I'd brain him!" Jimmy, up to that early hour of that morning, was by way of being our raiding officer. He had more identification to his credit than anybody else in the brigade. He was a fire-eater, proposing little journeys over the top with a score of men as casually as one might propose an excursion to Hampton Court or Henley. His side pockets invariably bulged with bombs as a beav-

erful uncle's does with chocolates for nephews and nieces. Indeed, I often thought of Jimmy as a sort of avuncular surprise packet for Fritz. One could so easily imagine him walking up to the enemy parapet saying, "Come along quickly and see what uncle's got in his pockets for good little Germans." Only what Jimmy said was not exactly that. It was with brilliant variations and a wealth of lurid qualification to the effect that they should "come and get it in the neck."

Jimmy must have been a rather different person before the war. It is not quite easy to picture him peddling it in his school in Lampeter, but I have no doubt he did it very nicely. Only that was before he acquired an avuncular title for Teutonic hunting. Yet perhaps some of the schoolmaster still lingers about him. He "went over" the night I am thinking of to bag a few unsuspecting Hun snails in the manner of a schoolmaster to administer corporal punishment to a refractory pupil. He had no more fear of the boche than the dominie has of the culprit. He was a conquer, they set about getting back.

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