

ONE OF THOSE FUNK STORIES.

(From London Daily Mail.)

"The man's a born coward. Take my word for it, he'll be missing one of these days." So said one officer. The other was of much the same opinion, but he added, "All the same I've seen those nervy fellows turn up trumps."

The man they spoke of was one of the obvious cowards, because he was a self-conscious coward, always thinking of his own cowardice. Unlike many others, he was less afraid at night, when he could not be seen, than by day, when the eyes of critics were upon him. The darkness might have saved him; but one day someone said in his hearing that the worst of having a coward in the trench was the effect on the other men; and in truth fear and courage are just about equally contagious. But the maxim was unfortunate. The coward kept saying to himself, "If I make the others funk I had better be away," and daily, against his will, schemes of escape of the maddest sort waltzed round his brain but brought no decision.

At last this rage of indecisive misery reached a pitch that became intolerable. The night was moonless but clear, and from the pit of the trench the stars seemed to look down with a pitiless scrutiny, which added to his wretchedness more than any sane and solid mind could well understand. Before he knew what he was doing the coward slipped over the parapet and began to make his tremulous way towards the German trenches. Further tears now seized him and he sidled off to the left, afraid to surrender, afraid to return. So for a while he wandered, an insane vagrant, through the purgatory of No Man's Land beneath the accusing stars.

He could not remember afterwards how he came to see so suddenly the thing in front of him, but his belief, from a muddled recollection, was that he had fallen flat on his face upon seeing the explosion of a star shell. At any rate, there within a yard or so of his eyes was the muzzle of a machine gun hidden with devilish cunning in a pit well outside the German lines.

He heard a gruff whisper and the muzzle of the gun moved. With as little reasoned thought as when he fled from his trench he jumped past the muzzle, pulled aside a mud-covered plank over the hole, and when real sanity returned to him he found himself in a spacious enough room with two—he thought two—dead Germans lying in front of him. At any rate, the machine-gunners were dead, and he had killed them.

In his excitement he was conscious, he said, of a sense of being born again. He had meant to call "Kamarade!" to the first Germans he approached. He had rehearsed all sorts of forms of surrender, but somehow instead of obeying reason he had attacked the Germans as a ferret attacks a rabbit and had killed them dead, stone dead. His brain and will were clear.

Quickly and silently he released the machine gun, dragged it out of the hole, took it on his back, and returned to his trench helped by the light of the now kindly stars and a faint hint of dawn.

The next day, much against his will, he was sent into hospital with a very severe strain in the back and a flesh wound in the calf, got somehow in the struggle. While he lay there he longed, as not

one in a hundred longs, to go back to the trenches, that he might exercise this new possession of his, this strange thing called courage. The surgeon saw his name in the honors list a few days after he left the hospital for the convalescent camp.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC CONTROL.

A Salvation Army officer sat in my room the other day. He had come from the Clyde, and told me this story. In a crowded working-class district near Glasgow the Salvation Army were to open a new hall, and he had gone to take part in the ceremony. True to his mission he visited the police station the day before the dedication of the hall, and said to the sergeant, "Tell me the names of ten or twelve of your worst people, and where I can find them." The police officer shook with merriment. "Our worst!" he said. "Why, man, this is a 'control' area, and we have scenery any 'drunks' here now, and hardly any serious crime."

"Control"—that is the wonder-working word. Over nearly the whole of Scotland, and over wide stretches of industrial England and Wales, the "Liquor Traffic Central Control Board" is in command for the term of the war. Its "Orders" have cut down the legal hours for the sale of drink by two-thirds. The time-honored custom of "standing a drink" is declared illegal. To sell liquor on credit is forbidden. In these and other ways the perilsous trade in intoxicants has been severely limited. And, as the Clyde police sergeant said, the result of this stringent "control" is that drunkenness, and the violence and destitution of which it is the common cause, are decreasing. A veritable social revolution has begun in industrial Britain.

Of all vested interests the traffic in liquor has offered the stoutest and most successful resistance to the reformer. How comes it, then, that almost without controversy, almost without observation, such drastic powers over the drink trade have been secured and exercised? What events led up to this dramatic change? What developments may we expect in the near and distant future? It is to set on record the swift social changes and to estimate—as far as one can—their present and their permanent worth that this paper is written.

JOHN L. AS REFORMER.

John L. Sullivan, the noted prize fighter, has given up the ring, and become a total abstainer. After spending some time on a farm, he has now decided to give himself earnestly and continuously to the work of promoting total abstinence in individuals. He will appeal particularly to young men and will put emphasis on the material and physical harm and destruction wrought by drink. He writes the "Outlook": "If I had not quit drinking when I did and gone to farming with my good wife, there would be somewhere in a Boston suburb a modest tombstone with the inscription on it, 'Sacred to the memory of John L. Sullivan.' That is why I am quitting the farm and 'coming back' to have a go with a bigger champion than I ever was—the champion of champions—John Barleycorn. There is only one way to get the best of John Barleycorn, and that is to run away from him. There are men who say about liquor that they can take