

race is utterly defeated. To accomplish this, as I have said, we have to consider conditions, duties, prospects. The conditions, as might be expected in such a titanic struggle, are of the most trying character that it is possible for human nature to endure. Guns and munitions, in number, size, power, and cost, almost incredible, are employed on both sides and on all fronts. Destruction and death reign supreme: towns and villages are razed to the ground; miles of country present the spectacle of being literally pulverised. To know the meaning of modern warfare one has only to witness the sites where Ypres, Courcellette, Pozières, and Verdun once stood. Miss Emily Hobhouse, who visited Germany recently, and found friends there, returned to give us an entirely new version of the Hun terrorism of "our friend the enemy." She found herself agreeably surprised at the conditions which prevail in the parts of France and Belgium held by the Germans; she saw no such signs of vandalism as she had been led to expect. One is apt to wonder what localities were visited by the lady. Did she linger at the now world-famous places where churches and libraries were wrecked, children crucified, and maidens torn from their homes? Possibly her impressions were gained within the city of Berlin.

Winter is here, and with it all the wet, cold, and mud with which our splendid men have grown familiar in the present trench warfare. Our noble comrades who have made the great sacrifice were heroes, the men who wear upon their breasts the decorations of their country are heroes, but so are the men who are enduring the privations and discomforts of the winter campaign. This, let me say, is where true manhood is found. Someone has said that the closer you come to the firing-line the nearer you are to true nobility, and that is true. War creates myriads of parasites; creatures for whom the misery, suffering, and death of others is transformed into the very sunshine of their existence. But it is at the front, on the firing-line, that life is stripped of selfishness and self-interest, and true manhood is revealed. Here men reckon nothing of danger as they bravely "go over the top." Here life itself is not considered as they stop to stanch the wound of a comrade, or calmly carry him to safety through a storm of shot and shell.

On all hands our own Battalion is spoken of in the highest terms, and we are modestly inclined to believe that what everybody says in praise of our gallant boys must be true. We now have a V.C. of our own, and we no longer sing the glories of "Private Michael Cassidy, V.C.," but substitute the name of Private Johnny Kerr, V.C. Let no men suppose that these heroic souls are oblivious to danger of their surroundings. They know full well that their turn may come at any instant. But to my own certain knowledge many of these careless, cheerful lads are consciously reliant upon a higher Power, and like Lord Kitchener, who said "Prayer means victory," they believe in the presence and power of the Living God. Since the day when this devastating conflict began, the enemies of Christianity—the religion of truth, purity, and goodness—have never ceased to point out what they are pleased to call the failure of Christianity. If such critics could spend a while in the front line trenches, and participate in some of the deeds there performed, they would, I believe, learn not to blaspheme.

The lesson of the war is not that Christianity has failed, but that we have failed miserably in our application of it to the problems of life. In time, please God, we shall learn, even though it be through hard and bitter experience, that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and that the only remedy for war and all other ills of human society is to accept the principles and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Into the midst of all this turmoil and bloodshed there comes for the third time the message of Christmas, with its angelic song, "Peace on Earth, goodwill towards men." What a strange song, and how seemingly out of keeping with this sad time and place. What a contrast is brought to mind as we think of God's love and man's hatred; of God's peace, and man's conflict; of life eternal beyond the present time of discipline and death. Notwithstanding the character of the conflict in which we are engaged, and the conditions under which we are striving to perform our duty, the writer ventures cordially to wish the readers of the Battalion Magazine the true joys and blessings of Christmas. After all, we fight and serve, not merely to achieve a present victory, but to ensure a happy future, a future in which a man shall be to his brother man