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PLEASE WRITE!

Mary Roberts Rhinehart recently made a first-hand study of the "Letters from Home" matter, and here is part of what she had to say:—

"In one great army camp 50,000 letters are received each day, nearly all written by women. A careful investigation has shown that one in five, or 10,000 letters a day in that one camp, are of the sort to take the very soul out of a man. And the investigation showed that on the day a man received a discouraged and peevish letter from home he was far below his normal efficiency."

She adds that if a like proportion of this type of depressing letters is being sent to France, the writers are helping to sap the strength and courage out of one-fifth of our forces.

If you and I were soldier lads or sailor boys in blue,

In training camp or land remote, where all was strangely new,

I wonder in the lonely hours, the time when thoughts will roam,

How much we'd give for just a note, a friendly word from home—

A message bright, a jolly joke, a bit of news to cheer,

With not a hint of anything to make a moment drear.

I wonder if from a gloomy trench or battleship at night,

We wouldn't long to telegraph this one request, "Please write!"

If you and I were sailor lads or soldier boys in brown,

On ship of war, in training camp or some queer foreign town,

I wonder if there'd come to us in moments dark with fear

A message from some one at home—a message fraught with cheer—

No gloomy word, but glad some, brave, no hint of worried mind,

A glimpse of friends about the hearth, a bit of gossip kind,

Or would we wait with aching hearts the stern command to fight.

And vainly long to telegraph this one request, "Please write!"

If you and I were soldier lads and home was far away,

If you and I were sailor boys afloat both night and day,

I wonder in the hours of pain if we would miss the touch

Of hands that long had toiled for us, if we would miss it much.

A tender word, a soothing stroke, a look on some loved face,

What treasures there to think about away in strange, lone place.

I wonder if somewhere a lad in camp or trench to-night

Is wishing he could telegraph this one request, "Please write!"

—Alice Annette Larkin.

"My dad's a scrapper," said Willie as he contemptuously regarded Tommy as they played in a back alley. "That's nuthin," retorted Tommy, "my dad's too. I heard him tell mother he was goin' to scrap everythin' about the old place to buy Victory Bonds!"

ALL SAINTS' DAY, 1918.

By Ben-Zion.

Pain is in itself a hard thing, even as the Cross is in itself hard. But pain, touched with the spirit of sacrifice, becomes divine. What more brutal than the actual details of martyrdom? But when Latimer speaks from his stake of the "candle lighted that day in England, which, by the grace of God, shall never be put out," all the brutal elements in the scene are transfigured by a glory of faith and sacrifice. What more brutal than the actual facts of war? But when we realize that these torn and battered men endure their fearful sufferings for the sake of a cause, for a high ideal of liberty and justice, the battlefield is illumined by the light of Calvary. The pain they endure is ransoming pain, the price paid to buy back something precious which the nations have cast away or lost through folly and neglect.

When Lord Roberts was carried through the grim streets of a tragic Paris to his burial, it was noted as a kind of spiritual omen, that the heavy gray sky opened, and a rainbow arched itself above the funeral cortege. Even so St. John saw a throne on which was a lamb slain, but he also saw that "round the throne was a rainbow." There was a rainbow, a divine light that turned tragedy into splendour, even as the sunbeam turns the gray rain-drops, which are nature's tears, into strings of diamonds. What if the sorrows you endure are the disciplines by which your own soul is ransomed into a new knowledge of God? What if the patience and fortitude with which you endure them are the ransom you pay for the soul of a beloved son or daughter, who shall turn to God through the spectacle of your patience? We have seen the Lamb slain, through blinding tears, but faith turns our tears to splendour. What George Matheson, who suffered so much and overcame his sufferings, wrote, is profoundly true:—

"I trace the rainbow thro' the rain,
 And feel the promise is not vain
 That morn shall tearless be."

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