

PREFACE

create, like another Marcus Aurelius, a lonely, secluded, cloistered almost secret perfection of the mind, but only that he might bring help and freedom to those that sit in darkness.

Those that love him will not regret that, in the homely phrase of the soldiers he loved, he has "gone over the top" never to return. Though they have lost so much, they cannot deny that there was something natural, almost inevitable, in the end when it came. He had given the message he was charged to deliver, and he wanted to go forward again. Waiting behind the lines at the Somme had become, as he told me, irksome to him, and I think, though he would not have said so himself, for he had all the sensitiveness and perfect good breeding of the soldier-saint, waiting behind the lines of life had also begun to weary him. He was not only ready to go, but was hastening to be gone. It is as selfish to regret him or to wish him back as to try to stop a friend from taking a well-earned holiday merely because we desire to see more of him—we want him to wait while we work, and till we are ready to go ourselves. We had no right to keep him militant below when he had so fully earned not merely his furlough but a full discharge.

THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."