

Sayings of Private Solomon

Now, my son, hast thou reached the promised land where thy brothers have fought for two long years and more. Long hast thou tarried by the way. Thou hast eaten of the fat of the land of thy forefathers. Thou hast made merry in the Great City. Thy bed hast been in easy places. Thou hast seen many strange things, but many things more strange await thee in this wonderful land. Hear now, my son, the words I have to say to thee, so that thy days may be long in the land. For, verily, this is a land of many dangers and full of pitfalls for the unwary. Therefore, I say unto thee, mark well the things I will tell you of, for a man knoweth not how long he may dwell in this land of diluted beer and wine like unto the raspberry vinegar of the days of thy childhood. Thou art now a soldier in this vast army and it would become thee to make the manners and customs thereof thy customs and manners. So harken well and pay tribute unto the Great Rulers, with their tokens of Red and their halos of Gold. For, verily, they are the Chosen of the many and their words are as law unto thee. Mark well the sayings also of thy Colonel, thy Adjutant, thy Captain, thy Sergeant-Major, thy Sergeant, yea, even unto the sayings of thy Corporal. For thou art but a soldier, while they knoweth many things and are learned in the customs of war. Verily it shall come to pass that thy Colonel shall command thy Adjutant that a certain task shall be done. Thy Adjutant shall make known to thy Captain the wishes of thy Colonel. Thy Captain shall converse with thy Sergeant-Major concerning this; thy Sergeant-Major will call thy Sergeant who will speak unto thy Corporal. And, verily, it will come to pass that thy Corporal will say unto thee: "Thy Colonel desires that this task shall be done forthwith.

Go thou, therefore, and do this thing." Then, my son, thou shalt obey the commands of thy leaders so that their wrath may not fall upon thee. For woe unto him who obeys not their commands. Many shall be his troubles and few his joys. Therefore, weep not, my son, but be of good cheer even if many

small portion thereof. For it is well that a soldier have good spirits within him; then thou shalt feel content with thy lot; but do not look then with contempt upon Fritz thine enemy across the way. For he hath an eye like an eagle and will ding thee in the dome and thinketh nothing of it. Be like unto the creeping things of the earth. Yea, even like unto the serpent that moveth on its belly. Be not like unto the gopher of thine own country which hath an abundance of curiosity, and loveth to sit upon his hind legs. Therefore, I say unto thee, my son, be not curious of the things in front of thy parapet. But keep thy head down so that thou shalt not be cut off in the flower of thy manhood. For what shall it profit a man if he enter into the deepest shell hole and hath not any cover for his head. Go now, my son, to thy many duties. Be of good cheer. I will speak again with thee concerning these things.

A Thought for Christmas

By The Rev. F. J. Moore, B.A., Brigade Chaplain

THE old time Christmas—ushered in by hymns and carols and celebrated with mirth and the re-union of friends—seems as far away to us now as the days when we hung our stockings at the foot of the bed and lay restless, with one eye open to catch a glimpse of the mysterious Old Man who brought the gifts. But memory is a wonderful faculty, and we shall find the "atmosphere" of Christmas with us just the same. We shall be telling each other of the old times, shall be feeling the warmth of the old fires and musing on the faded joys. And, in sadness, too, we shall think of those who were with us then, but who have spent their last Christmas here on earth. It is at such times as this that we miss them most, and we quietly stand and salute their spirits now. May their souls rest in peace and God's perpetual Light shine upon them.

Yes, the old-time Christmas does seem far away. But I wonder if the *essential meaning* of Christmas is not nearer to us now than it was when we had so many Christmas joys? We all feel—we cannot help feeling—that there is something very inconsistent between Christmas and War. Christmas speaks of Peace on Earth, Goodwill to men; of God expressing Himself in human form, in human acts and speech. It takes us to a Cradle where a Child is lying and tells us that unto us this Child is born, to be the Saviour of mankind? And all this, we feel, is inconsistent with War. War at Christmas time, the festival of the birth of the Prince of Peace! War round the Cradle of the Holy Babe God manifest in the flesh? Most of us, I think, will be having thoughts (more or less of that kind) passing through our minds this Christmas. And many of us, perhaps, who had never thought so seriously of Christmas before. It is so easy to forget God in His gifts and we sometimes need to be deprived of them, or at least pass through an experience that makes us realize how much they really meant to us before we ever discovered their true value and inner meaning. And to so many of us Christmas had become a custom, and a custom only, although outwardly religious. But in this bitter experience of War there is nothing merely outward—we have come to grips with realities—with stark, naked truth. Happy is the man who can let the forms and the customs fall away, retaining unimpaired the kernel of truth within.

So though, and perhaps because, Christmas comes to us this year shorn of all its old and hallowed customs, we go in the spirit of faith and worship to the Cradle in Bethlehem, thanking God for His Unspeakable Gift.

bags require to be filled. For, verily, when thy task is done, thy Sergeant-Major shall call thee into his tent in the ground and say unto thee these words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." And from a vessel of earthenware, which he carries after the manner of a mother her first-born, shall he pour for thee a

delight in getting a bayonet, ours of course, entangled in the fifth rib of an angry German. Personally, I find it makes a horrible mess of a bayonet and if there's one thing I'm specially keen on it's keeping my arms clean. Still, tastes differ, so, to get back to our muttons, as the

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Grouses

By the Grouser

There is nothing Tommy likes better than a mild grouse at everything in general and everything else in particular—with the exception of charging Fritz with the bayonet, which little pastime, according to a writer in the Daily Mail, is Tommy's favorite sport. (Funny how these writers for the daily press get to find things out, isn't it?) We scarcely know ourselves when we read, in the daily papers, accounts of our habits and hobbies. According to them we take a huge