

intended to be drunk after the expected victory, but not in this fashion!

Shorland understood. This brave young soldier of a dispossessed family wished to show no fear of pain, no lack of outward and physical courage in the approaching and final shock. He must do something that was conventional, natural, habitual, that would take his mind from the thing itself. At heart he was right. The rest was a question of living like a strong-nerved soldier to the last. The tobacco-smoke curled feebly from his lips, and was swallowed up in the clouds of powder-smoke that circled round them. With his head on his native servant's knee he watched Shorland uncork the bottle and pour the wine into the surgeon's medicine-glass. It was put in his fingers; he sipped it once and then drank it all. "Again," he said.

Again it was filled. The cigarette was smoked nearly to the end. Shorland must unburden his mind of one thought, and he said: "You took what was meant for me, my friend."

"Ah, no, no! It was the fortune, we will say the good fortune. *C'est bien!*" Then, "The wine, the wine," he said, and his fingers again clasped those of Shorland tremblingly. He took the glass in his right hand and lifted it. "God guard all at home, God keep France!" he said. He was about to place the glass to his lips, when a tremor seized him, and the glass fell from his hand. He fell back, his breath quick and vanishing, his eyes closing, and a faint smile upon his lips. "It is always the same with France," he said; "always the same." And he was gone.