

# EXCUSE ME!

## RUPERT HUGHES

NOVELIZED FROM THE COMEDY OF THE SAME NAME.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PLAY AS PRODUCED BY HENRY W. SAVAGE.

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(Continued from Last Week)

"Oh, no! My heart has only known one real love." He threw this over her head at Marjorie, but Kathleen seized it, to his greater confusion: "Oh, Harry, how sweet of you to say it. It makes me feel positively faint," and she swooned his way, but he shoved a chair forward and let her collapse into that. Thinking and hoping that she was unconscious, he made ready to escape, but she caught him by the coat, and moaned: "Where am I?" and he growled back: "In the observation car!"

Kathleen's life and enthusiasm returned without delay. "Fancy meeting you again! I could just scream." "So could I!"

"You must come up in our car and see mamma!"

"Is mamma with you?" Marjorie demanded, on the verge of impatience.

"Oh, yes, indeed, we're going around the world."

"Don't let me detain you."

"Papa is going round the world also."

"Is papa on this train, too?"

"At last something seemed to embarrass her a trifle. 'No, papa went on ahead. Mamma hopes to overtake him. But papa is a very good traveler.'"

Then she changed the subject. "Do come and meet mamma. It would cheer her up so. She is so fond of you. Only this morning she was saying, 'Of all the boys you ever engaged to, Kathleen, the one I like most of all was Edgar—I mean Clarence—er—Harry Mallory.'"

"Awfully kind of her."

"You must come and see her—she's some stouter now!"

"Oh, is she? Well, that's good." Marjorie was too angry to be sane, and too helpless to be edgy. But she smiled. He wondered how he could ever have cared for this molasses and mullage girl. He remembered now that she had always had these same cloying ways. She had always gazed him and, like everybody but the pavers, he had been gazing.

It would have had enough at any time to have Kathleen hanging so close, straightening his tie, leaning close, smiling up in his eyes, kissing him, his balance, recapturing him every time he edged away. But with Marjorie as the grim witness it was maddening.

She leathed and abominated Kathleen Lively, and if she had only known a man, he could cheerfully have beaten her to a pulp and chucked her out of the window. But because she was a helpless little baggage he had to be as polite as he could while she sat and tore his plans to pieces, emittened Marjorie's beat against him, and either ended all hopes of their marriage, or furnished an everlasting reminder to be recalled in every quarrel to their dying day. Oh, etiquette, what injustices are endured in thy name!

So there he sat, sweating his soul's blood, and able only to gear for time and wonder when the song would ring. And now she was off on a new tack.

"And where are you bound for, Harry, dear?"

"The Philippines," he said, and for the first time there was something beautiful in their remoteness.

"Perhaps we shall cross the Pacific on the same boat."

The first sincere smile he had experienced came to him: "I go on an emergency transport, fortunately."

"Oh, I just love soldiers. Couldn't mamma and I go on the transport? Mamma is very fond of soldiers, too."

"I'm afraid it couldn't be arranged."

"Too bad, but perhaps we can stop off and pay you a visit. I just love sunny spots. So does mamma."

"Oh, do!"

"What will be your address?"

"Just the Philippines—just the Philippines."

"But aren't there quite a few of them?"

"Only about two thousand."

"Which one will you be on?"

"I'll be on the third from the left," said Mallory, who neither knew nor cared what he was saying. Marjorie had endured all that she could stand. She rose in a tightly leashed fury.

"I'm afraid I'm in the way."

Kathleen turned in surprise. She had not noticed that anyone was near. Mallory went out of his head completely. "Oh, don't go—for heaven's sake don't go," he appealed to Marjorie.

"A friend of yours?" said Kathleen, twisting.

"No, not a friend, in a chaotic tangle. 'Mrs. — Miss—Miss—Er—er—"

Kathleen smiled. "Delighted to meet you, Miss Ererer."

"The pleasure is all mine," Marjorie said, with an acid smile.

"Have you known Harry long?" said Kathleen, jealously, "or are you just acquaintances on the train?"

"We're just acquaintances on the train!"

"I used to know Harry very well—very well indeed."

"So I should judge. You won't mind if I leave you to talk over old times together?"

"How very sweet of you."

"Oh, don't mention it."

"But, Marjorie," Mallory cried, as she turned away. Kathleen started at the ardor of his tone, and gasped: "Marjorie! Then he—you—"

## WERE CANADA BELGIUM

(From the Montreal Star Oct. 21, 1916.)

An Englishman said to me the other day: "Even yet, you in Canada do not realize this war."

We think we do realize it when we see our always mounting list of casualties; when we see our men going off to France to fight for us; when we read the deathless tales of Canadian heroism, and yet I am beginning to think that the Englishman was right. We make our little moan because sugar is twice as dear and all our food necessities are mounting; we grumble because we have so many little hardships to which we have been unaccustomed but we would have to go to France and Belgium to really realize that war means.

It would be a good thing for us all, I think, if we could do that; if we could really get the knowledge of war conditions inside our brains and inside our hearts, for were we able to do so, there would be no necessity of a recruiting campaign. Every Canadian would dedicate his or her life to the cause of the Allies, if for no other reason than to save Canada from the fate of Belgium.

Today I have read a book by Pierre Nothomb, a Belgian writer, which is really a masterpiece. It is a history of Belgium, written by a Belgian Minister of Justice, who has written a preface for it, and which is sponsored in Canada by the Belgian Consulate, so that there can be no doubt of its authenticity. Mr. Nothomb's book, "The Barbarians in Belgium," gives a plain, simple and unvarnished story of the German invasion of Belgium and the atrocities which marked it, a story which, by reason of its very simplicity and lack of "fine writing," leaves you quivering with horror and rage.

One passage over the German carelessness of property rights, their insane and senseless destruction of churches, libraries, universities and art-galleries, their burning of whole towns and villages, their confiscation of bank accounts, jewels and personal property, disgusting as all this is, but one cannot pass over the frightful crimes which Germany has committed against the civil population of Belgium, the account of which you must read and then again, wondering if it can possibly be that these things are true and then convinced that they are so because every instance in the book is sworn to by competent and reliable witnesses, and you are repeatedly told that the book is an under-estimate of what actually happened, that an over-estimate because many of the atrocities committed are too terrible to be put on paper for civilized people to read.

Catholic Canadians especially should read the chapter entitled "Their Defence of the Almighty." A priest is quoted as describing the Germans descending like a swarm on the village of P. on Tuesday, April 20th. They set fire to 190 houses, and 1,000 of the inhabitants are homeless. Twenty-two persons at least have been killed without any reason. "The name of Mackee and Loads, were buried alive together with their wives' eyes. The Germans seized me in my garden, bound my hands behind me and ill-treated me by every means in their power. They erected a gallows for me, and they were going to hang me. One of them pointed to my head and my ears, and went through a pantomime of cutting them off. They forced me to stare at the sun for a long time. They broke the arms of the blacksmith who was a prisoner with me, and they killed him. At a given signal they forced me to enter the Burgomaster's house, which was burning, and then they took me out again. Then went on like this all day long. Towards the evening, they led me enter the church, saying that it was the last time I should see it. At a quarter to seven they released me, the cavalrymen striking me with their whips as I passed. I was bleeding and had fallen unconscious. I remember an officer raising me to my feet and ordering me to go away. A few yards off they fired at me. I dropped to the ground and lay there as if dead. That was my salvation."

The priests in all districts were used as examples. If hostages were used, they were first to be seized. After crossing the frontier of the Belgian Luxembourg, the Prussian commander shouted: "At a given signal all priests. We have already shot five." The cure of Hacourt was bound to a horse which was set off at a gallop. When a church was reached, this priest, a limp human rag, half dead, was propped against a wall and shot.

The chaplain of Bouze was bound back to back with a neighbor, and both were pierced with bayonets. The cure of Spontin was suspended alternately by his feet and hands, stabbed with lances and then shot. The Abbés Zentler and Jacques and M. Glouden, cure of Letours, were acting under the orders of the German commander, by helping to bring in the wounded near Teth. When all the wounded had been put into the motor ambulance, the German commanding officer ordered the three priests to line up on the road and they were shot to death. At Villers-en-Fagne, a French Jesuit was officiating temporarily in the parish. They shot him in the presbytery and then set fire to it. German officers amused themselves by dressing up in priests' robes and then committing all sorts of crimes in these costumes. The cure of Gellede was commanded, if he wished to be spared, to renounce the Catholic faith; he chose, rather, to die and he died in agony.

The Germans forced the priests to be present at revolting crimes. They used the sacred linen in the churches for the most profane purposes. They profaned the churches and forced open the receptacles in which the consecrated vessels were kept. They stabled horses in the sanctuaries whose tombs and altars they had broken, and scattered and trod under foot the relics of the saints, and their treatment of the nuns is a subject not fit for discussion on this page.

I cannot bring myself to discuss the chapter on the treatment of women. It is too terrible to be written about calmly. Every newspaper reader is familiar with the Bryce report of the Belgian atrocities and it is unnecessary to go further into this phase of them.

"As a rule," says Mr. Nothomb, "those upon whom they inflict suffering for the pleasure of seeing them die slowly, are old men, women, young boys, and little children. Women and children were locked into houses and then the houses were set on fire and all the inhabitants left to burn to death. General Deruette, aide-de-camp to King Albert, saw, at Hofstade, the dead body of an old woman pierced by ten bayonet wounds. She was still holding in her hand the needle and thread with which she had been sewing. They came into houses to ask for food, and as they were being served, cut off the hands of the woman feeding them. After an old peasant had given them all the food and feed in his stable for their horses, they kicked him against the wall and shot him. An old man, aged seventy, brought them buckets of water for their horses and was killed outright by way of thanks."

An Ans a little boy of six was playing with a toy pistol. A German soldier shot him dead because he was playing at soldiers. A child three years old was burned on his nose and the thumb of his right hand by German officers with their lighted cigars. An Ans a little boy of four years old were assassinated. I cannot give some of the horrible details of the crimes against children. No woman can read the book without being moved to tears.

Mr. Nothomb gives authenticated proof of the fact that all these crimes were planned beforehand, and were committed, for the most part in cold blood. Occasionally, he says, the German private soldier showed some sympathy, but the officers were never seen to express the faintest sign of reason. "The barbarians in Belgium," one feels like saying, "There, but for the grace of God and the power of the British navy, is the fate of Canada."

We are told and one can have but little doubt, that it is true that plans for the rearrangement of all the Canadian cities, according to German ideas, are on file in Berlin. Thinking Canadians do not doubt that the Germans had the riches of Canada, as one of their objective points in contemplating the results of "The Day."

And yet there are people in Canada who say: "This war does not concern Canada. Let Great Britain pull her own chestnuts out of the fire."

Suppose we all agreed to that, and then the day should come when Canada should meet the fate of Belgium, death, and yet few seek to avoid me. I destroy, crush or maim. I give nothing but take all.

I am your worst enemy.

I AM CARELESSNESS—C. N. R. News.

## Letters From The Front

Mrs. James L. Macdonald of Coughlan has received the following letters: France, Sept. 29, 1916.

Dear Mother,

I must write you a few lines to let you know I was wounded on Sept. 26th, while in a charge, about 10 o'clock forenoon. I am in hospital now and getting along very well. I have had the shrapnel taken out of my hip and I guess it is doing as well as can be expected. Fritzja wasn't satisfied with the shrapnel but, immediately after, I got a bullet right through the nose. It isn't very sore as I just went through the zot part and didn't hit any bones. I walked to the dressing station and wasn't long getting fixed up. I sent you a field card the day I got hit.

You don't need to worry about me as neither of my wounds are serious. I haven't heard from Stanley yet, quite a while. I suppose he is quite well again now.

The Germans got their share of it that day, and they don't appear to have much fight left in them. I was at his 2nd line of trenches when I got hit, and they were still going when I left.

Your loving son,  
WALTER.

Canadian Red Cross Society,  
14-16 Cockspur St., London, S. W.,  
October 5th, 1916.

Dear Madam,

I beg to inform you that Pte. W. Macdonald, No. 222605, 10th Canadian, is now at 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge. Our authorized visitor called to see him and found he has a gunshot wound in the nose and cheek, but that he was getting on very well and is very cheerful. She will continue to visit him as long as he is in the hospital, and if there is anything he would like, such as cigarettes, chocolates, Canadian papers, etc., we should be pleased to send them to him.

We shall let you know regularly how he is getting along.

Yours truly,  
BEATRICE CAVERHILL,  
per M. L. F.

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