



## HUMOUR IN TRAGEDY



lounging about a street corner, or applies to you for employment, it may be difficult to connect him with the glorious heroes of the battle-field, but look twice for an old cap-badge pinned to his coat, or a gold stripe upon his arm, and, if you see either of these, remember that he marched bravely away one morning, prepared to die, that you, at home, might live. Where would your bank notes, your stocks, your securities be, where would *you* be, if it were not for him? Remember that he has once been a combatant such as Charlie, who, fortunately, was missed by a shell, and let your actions efface a part of the stupendous debt that you owe him.

It was strange to be back again near the western front. The stations were filled with bustling crowds, men, returning or departing, and many who bore sad proof that they had departed and returned.

One mother held a baby out to its daddy and, as it semaphored with its little arms, she told him that it was happy for it knew that he would soon be back. It was sad to watch them waiting through the minutes, those minutes which drag so slowly as they pass, yet seem as nothing when regarded from before or behind. Each was smiling

and trying tenderly to mislead the other, when one could see that both hearts were breaking. At last the time came for departure, and the woman gathered strength for a final separation. The man bit his lip, and there was a last earnest farewell. The train began to creep out of the station. "Au revoir, mes petites," called the soldier, with affected cheerfulness—and he was gone. Thus many pass for ever.

Some have joined the noble Army of the Dead who will ever guard the fields of Flanders, others have poured out their blood upon Gallipoli hills or in the desert sands, and many lie far out beside the ancient rivers of Mesopotamia.

Is it much to ask of a people that they should contemplate the misery and devastation of the world and turn, with an unshaken faith, to a future which, they are told, will be the more glorious for what has been? We stand with Nathaniel, and ask "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and the answer will come, when, from the fields of death, there spring fair flowers, which free-born children will gather with joy. Then those who have passed will smile and answer "Come and see." "

