

the grim task. It was, as I have said, the German line—now it is ours; the change is not brought about without a price. Turn around, away from that line now almost invisible in front, and look behind. There, over a mass of broken pickets and twisted wire, gleams another white line—our original front trenches. Between you and it lies the no man's land of ten months—and there on that strip of land is part of the price. It lies elsewhere as well, but a patch of fifty yards will serve. There was one, I remember, where the German line had swung out at right angles—a switch—going nearer to ours. In this bit of the line the wire had run perpendicular to the rest of their trench for a few score yards. And in the re-entrant a machine gun had been placed, so that it fired along the wire. The steel casing we found still standing, though the ground around was torn to pieces. That machine gun paid for its construction. . . .

There was one group of four outside, a subaltern and three men. They were lying on the ground, in one close-packed jumble, and the subaltern had his arm around a man's neck. Just in the torn up wire they lay—