

zone. As you approach the Front you commence to see the signs of destruction, increasing in intensity. You see the amazing activity incident to these huge bodies of men and their requirements. There is a fascination about it that so commands you and absorbs you that you feel as though you would want to live twice as fast if you could, for the purpose of taking it all in. You see the men marching out who have been on duty in the trenches for forty-eight or seventy-two hours, and there is not one square inch that you can see from the top of the helmet to their heels, that is not plastered and covered with mud—the horses that are with them, from the back of their ears to their fetlocks, covered with mud, and they themselves presenting that drawn appearance of men that are overwrought, and many of them walking in the ranks while still they sleep from weariness; for these men fighting at the Somme when they are in the front line, ever exposed to danger, have no provision for sleep except that which they can secure by leaning up against the side of the trench. The only reason why they do not break down is because they are in magnificent physical condition. You see these men come out, platoon after platoon, and platoon after platoon of men marching crisply in to take the place of some who will come out at night, or come out in the morning, as we saw this group coming out in the morning when we were there; or you visit a dressing station and you see the conditions, as I did,—for 250 wounded men came in the night before from Beaumont Hamel, just in the valley below and up the hillside,—where because of the mud and the holes and the trenches and the barbed wire, matted and tangled, and the darkness, as many as forty men were used to bring in one wounded man; and you think of their suffering and their heroism, you think of the conditions under which they live without question—wet to the skin, no opportunity to change, three or four inches of snow on the ground, cold winds that would bite you through and through, or the next day teeming rain; and as I looked at them, tens of thousands of them, guns booming on every side and shells whistling over my head as they went on their dread message to the other side, this one thing came back to me again and again and again: My God! What have these men done? What have these men