

A SURGEON IN ARMS

of us when he said with a hearty laugh—

“You know, Doc, the main objection I have to death is that it is so d—— permanent.”

The following day “Old Pop” was no more. His jolly laugh and his voice with its pleasant burr were to be heard no longer in our ranks. He had met death while bravely leading his men across No Man’s Land like the gallant Scotch gentleman that he was.

Something which struck me then, and which still impresses me as extraordinary in looking back at it, was the buoyant, cheerful, optimistic spirit in which our army of citizen-soldiers looked forward to the day when we were to take part in one of the greatest battles in history. We knew it was to be a fearful and magnificent trial of strength out of which many of us would never return to the people and the lands we loved. And yet all awaited it with a gay, hopeful, undaunted optimism, asking naught but the opportunity, anticipating nothing but victory. It is unbelievable that the blind obedience of a militaristic kaiserism can ever subdue a soldiery who so freely offer their all on the altar of liberty.