

him, and he looked up to see a letter fall into it from outside. He rose mechanically to fetch it and return to his seat.

It was from Merriman.

"Dear Gilmour—(it ran)—

"I much regret that I have found it quite impossible to come round to the studio today, even for five minutes. I have to go abroad suddenly on business, and am off now to catch the Dover express.

Yours,

P. Merriman.

As he finished the letter with a sigh of

disappointment his eye caught sight of something lying on the floor, partly concealed by a heavy bearskin rug.

He started and looked at it closer, and re-read slowly the letter in his hand.

Then he looked at the single word in his wife's handwriting, and stared again blankly at the thing lying on the floor.

It was Merriman's cigarette case, that he never let out of his own keeping, and he had seen him place it carefully in the breast pocket of his coat the previous evening.



Petee hovering over the battlefield