

Cross. He had only done his duty, he repeated over and over, and all the men at the Front were doing that.

And so he lay back among the cushions, surrounded by flowers, his one hand in Auntie Elspie's, and looked with shining eyes, not at the beautiful familiar bits of landscape which were passing, and to which the Aunties were calling his attention, but at the gleam of a golden-brown head that was occasionally visible from Jolin Lindsay's buggy. Marmaduke pointed out this and that historical landmark; the hill where they used to go coasting in winter; the old burnt stump up which Gavin had climbed to get the hawk's nest one day at recess; the hole below the mill where the teacher forbade them to swim and into which they all plunged at noon quite regularly, and Gavin smiled and nodded, and saw nothing but the gleam of gold ahead.

Whatever had been wrong with the reception and the procession, no fault could be found with the supper. It had been set outdoors on the church lawn, and the tables were so laden with chicken and ham and jellies and salads and cake and pie, that instinctively the men took off their coats before sitting down to the attack. And after everything was eaten nobody seemed able either to hear or make a speech. And there was no music and no programme, for the juvenile choir, after gorging itself in a truly dangerous fashion, went out into the dust of the village street, and played tag and hide-and-seek, and not even the Pied Piper, himself, could have collected them again. And the other choir was either waiting on the tables, or eating so much that they couldn't sing either.

The address was read, but there was so much noise and joyous running to and fro that not even Gavin heard it. And his speech was as short as a speech could possibly be, just a word of thanks for himself and his Aunts and his oft reiterated statement, he had only done his