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"NOEL"

The festive season approaches once again, and this year we can enter with zest into the merrymaking, because the grim tragedy that was being enacted on the world stage is making its final bow.

Since 1914 the Spirits of the people have been depressed, alternating between hope and fear, hope that the coming Year would see the end of the world war, and the final triumph of right over might, and fear that each mail would bring news of the passing of some loved one to the Great Beyond. A retrospect of the events that have passed since 1914 makes grim reading. We look around for faces and forms beloved, listening for the merry quip, and hearty laugh that will come no more, and are now only sweet memories of the past. We try to count the cost. The teachings of Holy-Writ rings clearly in our ears. "Through much tribulation ye shall come through" and truly through much tribulation and sorrow we have come through in the past four years, many times and oft the days appeared dark, and the road often unending, as we plodded along. The capacious maw of the insatiate God of War seemed never to be satisfied, ship load, after ship load of our gallant boys went overseas, with the light of battle in their eyes, and gladness in their hearts; glad of the opportunity of showing their devotion to their Country, and the principles their Country stood for, Freedom and Liberty, ready to battle and lay down their lives if need be in the cause that their Country had espoused.

They were gallant Sons of gallant Sires, that spirit of liberty that our fathers admired, and so jealously guarded, was and is valued just as highly by their Sons, and when the gage of battle was flung down by the unspeakable Hun, they did not hesitate to accept the Challenge, and shoulder the burden. To those who have passed beyond we say "Hail and farewell", to those who mourn their loss let us say "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." And those of us who had the privilege of serving over there with the great host of those who have gone before can certify to the cheerful manner in which they endured suffering, disappointment, and discomfort, knowing full well that sacrifices had to be made, and making the sacrifice cheerfully for the sake of those whom they loved, and had left behind in the home land.

It was a privilege and honour to know them, and to serve with them, and we commend their memory to those they left behind, may

it ever be kept green and enshrined in their hearts. And for those who have survived the hell-storm of Flanders, let us ask that they be treated as the heirs of those who have passed, that this season of peace and good will may be a memorable one for them, let us bespeak a hearty welcome for every one of them wherever they may be, or wherever they go.

Remember that since 1914 they have been upholding the honour of our Country and the Empire overseas. They need your help and sympathy. Surely, during the season of rejoicing over the birth of Him who gave His all, His life, for the emancipation of Mankind, those who gave of their life-blood, and dared all to protect you and yours, will not be treated as the "Stranger within thy gates". Let them enter fully with you into the joys and pleasures of the season, shed a ray of sunshine in their lives that shall brighten their footsteps in the days that are to be. May this Christmas be the forerunner of the days that Prophets have dreamed of and Poets have sung about when,

"Universal Peace lies like a shaft of light across the land
And like a lane of beams athwart the seas.
Through all the circle of the Golden Years."

JUST IN PASSING.

There's a little slip of paper that I've tried darned hard to get,
It has caused me nights of worry, and has caused my brow to sweat.

And I've lain awake and wondered, while I've had to laugh
in glee,

As I thought about my title, designated by R.E.

Now the ordinary meaning, "Regimentally Employed",
Is a damn sight from the meaning that I've hitherto enjoyed
In ascribing to the letters, and I'll tell you, what to me
Is the one and **only** meaning of the much-loved (?) term, R.E.

It just means that you're entitled to the best that can be had.
And the favors all extend to you will surely make you glad
That your guiding star has led you to such worthy company
When your name appears on roll-call, followed by the term,
R. E.

In a little while you wonder if you're such a wise old duck,
And gradually the knowledge comes that you are "out of
luck"

When you put in for a furlough, you are told "It cannot be,
That every man is needed now, and especially R.E."

And when war and strife are over, and when peace once
more's supreme,
You will find we lonely devils are the last ones on the scene.
The drafted men, and single men are leaving merrily,
And the "clink man" and the sick man, **every** man but the
R.E.

And when this life is over, and we gaze on Heaven's bright
streets,

Where there are no petty policies, nor danger of "deletes",
And just before the high O.C. St. Peter's face I see,
I'll go to Hell if he says to me, "Come in and be R.E."

Saphead G. E. COYLE,

A Company.