

There was a long silence, for on that morning, the ninth of January, 1916, England knew that the last inch of that blood-stained peninsula had been abandoned. Sir Hugh felt the remoteness of this gritty, dusty, arid rock on which, beyond his sight, almost beyond his knowledge, so many young Australians, R. N. V. R's, so many of his own Sussex Coast Regiment had fallen. Through the windows, flowered with frost, he saw the English sun fall like silver on the sodden downs which rolled away from Udimore to Rye marsh in its midday veil of opaline haze, to the tree-tufted knoll of Winchelsea, to little red and yellow Rye, to the still, wintry sea, grey as the wing of a cygnet. He sighed, and repeated: "Ah, yes, Gallipoli!"

"They say we paid the Turks five millions to let us off," said Lady Oakley. She pondered for a moment, and as there was in the Cawston stock from which she sprang a lurking coarseness, added: "They'd have come in on our side for half that if we'd played our cards properly. However, I suppose we must make the best of it. Now we've got compulsion at last, we shall be all right."

"I suppose so," said Sir Hugh. "Still it seems a pity. I thought the Derby scheme would pull us through without our having to come to this. I'd have liked to think — but what's the good? War's not cricket. At least, not the way it's played nowadays."

"Of course it's not cricket," cried Lady Oakley. "We've got to win. And though we've got all sorts of people trying to set class against class, people like that man Simon, who resigns because he's against compulsion instead of sticking to his guns like a decent man — Monica, I won't be interrupted."

"But, Mother, I didn't say anything."