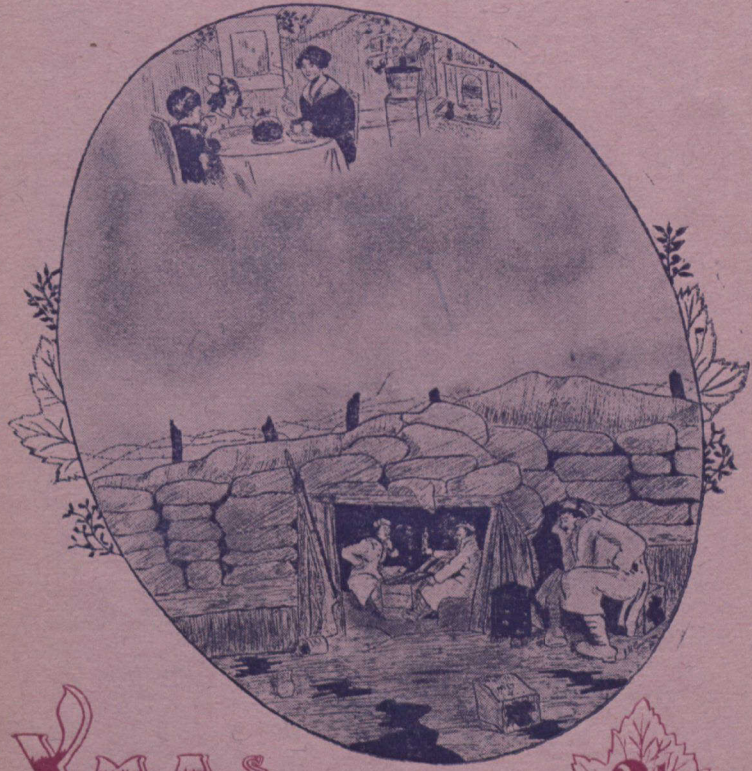


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RAMSGATE, ENGLAND.



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CANADIAN HOSPITAL

NEWS

Vol. III

DECEMBER 16 1916

No. 9

Christmas Morning

What is it to my heart
This Christmas morn conveys ? What glad'ning thing
Is ev'ry rustling breeze soft whispering ?
What glowing secrets do their songs impart ?
Of Canada—God's Canada
They gently sing !

They tell it to me low ;
The longing in my heart men may not see,
But aye, fast bound in stoic armoury,
I hear the Christmas bells across the snow,
Loved faces smile through misty wreaths
Of memory.

In Canada they wait ;
No speech can tell—not e'en a pond'rous tome—
What million prayers rise to the vaulted dome
Of Heav'n, for glorious Peace, Love's bruised mate.
God ! Heal her soon ; her golden voice
Shall call me home.

DOROTHY L. WARNE,
G.C.S.H., Ramsgate.

Yuletide

DOWN from the starry dome long, long ago wafted the angels'
song wondrously sweet. The heavenly messengers heralded
the advent of the Prince of Peace.

For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given ;
And the Government shall be
Upon his shoulders :
And his name shall be called
Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Strange sentiment, surely, as introduction to a Christmas message
in Nineteen-Sixteen ; in the third year of a world war ; in the
din and clamour of nations in mortal conflict. After nineteen

centuries we seem to be drifting farther and farther from the ideals of the Prince of Peace. Instead of Peace and Goodwill we have the bomb and the bullet, the shrapnel and the steel. Instead of the angels' song the air is filled with the shrieking of the shells, with the groans of the wounded and dying.

Let us be serious this Christmas season, but let us not be discouraged. The first Christmas dawned in the midst of the blackest hour in the world's history. No other epoch can be quite so dark. To-day we fight to relieve the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to vindicate the principles of a glorious democracy. We struggle to rid the world of the incarnation of evil in the shape of an insatiable monster bent on world power. Because of the leaven of the precepts of the Prince of Peace we enter into solemn compact with our sister nations to rest not until the tyrant shall have been overthrown. The foundations of the world are being shaken these awful days. Many institutions will crumble and fall. There must be a readjustment of all our living. We are thoughtful this Yuletide as never before; we need not on that account be gloomful. The Christmas spirit can never die; it has been too firmly implanted for that. And so we may, in spite of the sorrow and the tears, wish you all a Merry Christmas. God bless us every one!

O.C.J.W.

The Granville Patients' Alphabet.

- A is for AMPUTATION, a matter of pain,
But sure warrant for Canada again.
- B is for BLUES we fain would lose:
They're meant to keep us from getting the booze.
- C is for CONCERTS that liven our stay:
We owe the artists a debt hard to pay.
- D is for DRILL, only Swedish it's true;
But cripples don't find it easy to do.
- E is for EYE. A glad one, I'm sure,
Is often a help towards finding a cure.
- F is the FUSS that is bound to be made,
If your bed has a crease, or bulges a shade.
- G is for GRUB that they give us to eat:
It's mostly fish, as they're short of good meat.
- H is for HOME, a faraway cry:
Only to get back, and there find it "dry."
- I is for INSPECTION, a trouble to us,
Who've got to clear up and straighten the muss.
- J is for "JERKS", a prospect in view,
Designed to fit us for service anew.

- K is for KIT-BAG, a dirty old sack,
In which you're told all your troubles to pack.
- L is the LANGUAGE which often commences
When you've been "gassed," and return to your senses.
- M is for MUSIC that we have to face,
When MASSAGE we get, to help on our case.
- N is for NURSE, gently holding your hand,
"But only for the pulse"—else 'twould be grand!
- O is for "ORDLYOFFZER" with his "any complaint":
He don't care a d—, if there is or there ain't.
- P is for PASS that we wait to come through:
We always claim that it's long overdue.
- Q are the QUESTIONS Examiners spread
When they think a patient's "swinging the lead."
- R is for REASON friends seems to lack,
When this they ask: "Do you want to go back?"
- S is for SURGEON with his ready knife:
He cuts off your leg to save your life.
- T is for TROUBLE which makes one grieve,
For being away on a little French leave.
- U is for "UNCLE" to whom you must go,
When you've only five bob a week to blow.
- V is the VERDICT which the doctors give:
If it's "tails" you die, if it's "heads" you live.
- W is the WONDERFUL WORK that is done
In mending the damage wrought by the Hun.
- X is for X-RAY that searches the spot,
And shows up what happen'd when you were shot.
- Y is for YPRES where many were hit:
If they never go back, they won't mind a bit.
- Z is for ZEPPELS that leave us no lights,
And give a grand chance for spooning at night.

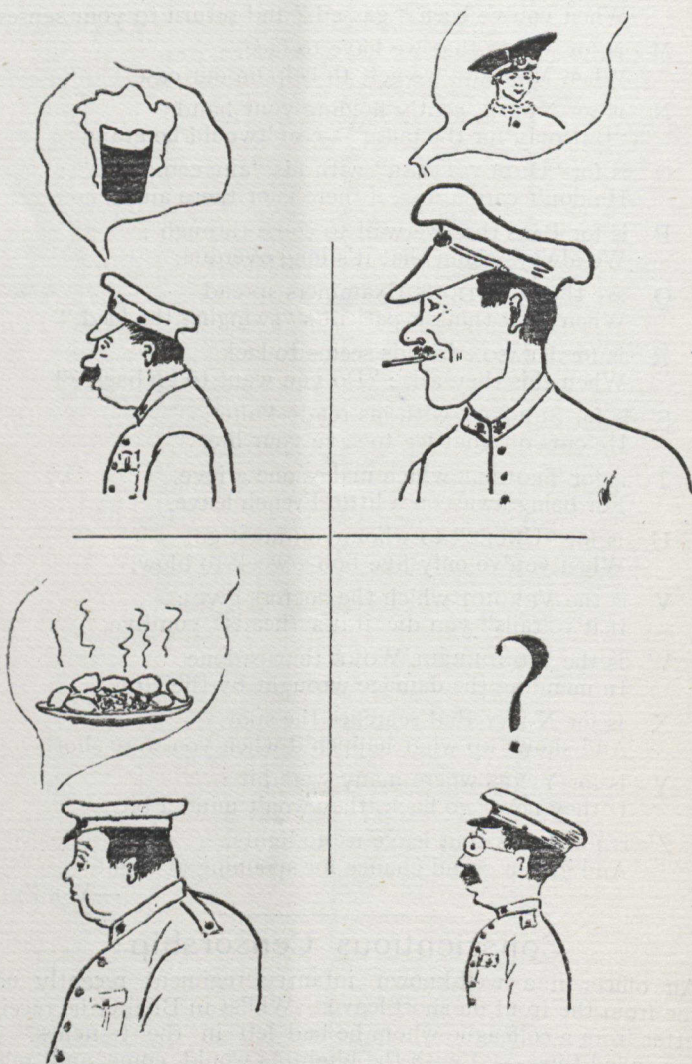
—YSE ZED.

Conscientious Censorship.

An officer in a well-known infantry regiment recently came home from the front on short leave. Whilst in Blighty he received a letter from a colleague whom he had left in the trenches. The letter ended thus:—"I wish the blighters would come and relieve this monotony; we'd chase them to hell."

The last word was deleted by the censor, who appended this foot note:—"I understand that all reference to future movements of the troops is strictly forbidden.

Pay Day Expressions



AS SEEN ON RAMSGATE HIGH

(Drawn for the Canadian Hospital News by H. Gardiner.)

LE P'TIT SOLEIL

BY REBE MILLS.

This little story, founded on fact, is dedicated to the Women and Children of the Allies, who have given of their Dearest and Best, and in many cases have laid down their own lives for their Country during THE GREAT WAR.

IT was such a happy home ! Babette was positive there was not another like it, and still more positive that there was not another husband in the world like her clever, steady Pierre, strong as Hercules, yet gentle as a woman. Pierre would smile when she gave these opinions, and, taking her rose-like face with its soft brown eyes between his toil-hardened palms, say :

‘ *Mais si, n'a mie !* There are many happy homes and many good husbands in the world—ah ! And many good little wives also : but there is only one good little wife who can make a happy home for me. ’

And strange to relate, upon this last point also, Babette was equally positive. It is true, Madame Bougon had said :

“ Wait a little. Troubles will come fast enough, and then we shall see whether turtle-doves have claws. ”

But who paid attention to the croaking of Madame Bougon ? Did not all the world know that her husband was a *mauvais sujet*, and that her sons were the plague of her life ? The poor woman ! Babette could well afford to be generous with her pity.

How quickly the days and weeks sped by ! They always do when folk are busy like Pierre and Babette. Pierre's work took him out of doors nearly all day, whilst Babette took her here, there, and everywhere. It was wonderful, the amount of work that tiny house entailed on its little mistress. Of course everything had to be as spotless and dainty as—well, as Babette herself. As for the cooking, Babette was not contented unless the *bouillon* was fit to set before M. le Président himself. So, in and out, and round-about she tripped, smiles in her eyes and on her lips ; sometimes the smiles would break into a merry laugh as she fed her chickens, chiding them for ill-mannered fowls, as she watched them grab, and peck, and scuffle. When at last, all was really finished to her satisfaction, there was her own pretty person to be arranged, and then, she would settle herself in the cosy kitchen if the wind was fresh, or, if the spring sunshine was warm enough, in the porch where the tender green of a climbing vine was unfolding, and there her needle would fly in and out to the accompaniment of some lively *chans mnette* sung in a soft cooing voice. This might suddenly be broken off with :

“ *He, mon gars !* here is a rent as big as a *marmite* ! Now, how

canst thou have done it? Well, well, it is to be expected that big husbands must make big rents in their *blouses*."

And then the sewing and the singing would be resumed.

Pierre's cottage, amidst its sheltering trees, stood away from the village street, but, no matter how busy Babette might be, her listening ear was quick to catch her husband's footfall, and up she would spring to meet him. For these two the day had now reached its goal: and what pleasant evenings they had! There was so much to say, and plan, and do, and not for themselves alone, for Pierre and Babette literally radiated happiness. The neighbours began instinctively to turn to Pierre for help and advice.

"He is so reliable, *le sage Pierre*," they would say; and Babette was known throughout the village as "*le P'tit Soleil*."

The months passed and spring merged into summer.

Then came one hot, drowsy day, when not a breeze stirred the leaves of the trees, nor demanded homage from the rushes at the water's edge. The rivulet itself, which usually danced along through village and meadows, looked inert and listless; the birds seemed to have fallen asleep over their chirping; the cattle lay either in the shade, almost too indolent to chew the cud, or they sought the water, and there, wading knee-deep, stood motionless, save that now and again a lazy whisk of the tail intimated a desire to be rid of the tiresome flies, the sole active living things under that summer sun.

Babette was glad when at last, one could take her work and sit under the trees. In spite of the heat, she was supremely joyous on this day; her face had never ceased to dimple nor her eyes to laugh, and she was looking forward to the delightful moment when she would give her Pierre the pleasantest possible piece of good news. A hundred times did she picture his face of loving pleasure, and hear his words of ardent tenderness. Ah! there was his footstep; but so much slower than usual: it was this intense heat that made him lag. Why was he making straight for the house instead of coming toward her customary seat? Babette ran from under the shelter of the trees to intercept him—and all the laughter faded from her face.

"Thou art ill, my Pierre! Tell me what ails thee."

For answer, Pierre took his little wife in his arms and drew her indoors. He was white to the lips.

"Thou canst be brave, *cherie*. Germany has declared war against us, and I am called to fight for my country and for thee," he said with simple directness.

For a moment, Babette seemed turned to stone; she neither moved nor spoke, then, a look of dread taking possession of her face, with a long, quivering sob she drooped on her husband's breast like a broken flower.

"*Mignonne* thou wilt be a soldier's brave little wife, and the

good God will restore us to each other."

Pierre had struck the right note. She was a soldier's wife and therefore must be brave. She would be no coward, but her Pierre's true help-mate, and was raising her head to tell him so when he said:

"Thou wilt be lonely, little one, but—"

Then it was that Babette broke down. She remembered the delightful secret that had to be disclosed, and for some moments, wept unrestrainedly, whilst Pierre soothed her as tenderly as a mother soothes her child. At last Babette lifted an April face and whispered:

"Not quite so lonely as thou dost suppose, my Pierre, for on thy return thou wilt have two to love and cherish."

The next few days were so fully occupied that sorrow had to be put aside; indeed, Babette made up her mind that she would keep sorrow at arm's length. Of course Pierre must go to defend their country: all the men who were not *poltron*, or crippled like widow Perrier's Henri, must go, and their womenfolk must never keep them back but rather urge them on. Her face crimsoned with shame as she pictured herself holding back Pierre from his duty: such dastardly action would for ever render her unfit to be the mother of his son, that son who would be as brave and true as Pierre himself. Yes, their men must fight, and the women must work—and weep, if it did not interfere with the work; and Babette dashed away tears that blurred her sewing.

"Weep when thy work is done, Babette Massier," she said self-reprovingly.

At last the morning came when all their stalwarts, headed by M. le Baron from the château, must march away. Naturally the whole village turned out to bid them God-speed; and a brave show they made as they strode by. The women's eyes glistened with tears, and their lips quivered, it is true; but their hearts beat proudly, for they knew that they were giving their very best to their country, and that they too, had a share in their glory.

As Pierre passed, he waved his cap to Babette, and someone called out:

"Have no fear, we shall all take care of *le P'tit Soleil*."

"*Merci bien, mes amis. Vive la France: et—au revoir!*"

They were gone: and the village settled down to everyday life under its altered circumstances. There was work to be done: people must eat, so they must cook, and clean, and wash, and earn the little money necessary to keep things going. M. le Baron had left word that constant work was to be found for the men who were compelled to stay behind. Mme. la Baronne was always so good to everyone, and now the tie of mutual suffering would draw them all yet closer to her. Babette found her time as fully occupied as ever, perhaps more so: there was so much to do for other people. Her fingers were rarely idle, and as she went about

the village, her knitting-needles would glint and glitter in the sun. Her step grew a trifle less joyous; the brown eyes assumed a look of habitual wistfulness: otherwise, *le P'tit Soleil* gave out just as much light and warmth as before. Even Madame Bougon would become genial under Babette's influence, and find less to grumble over and more to praise in her men-folk, now that they had all gone to the front.

But perhaps it was to Henri Perrier that Babette was the greatest comfort. Poor crippled Henri! who badly wanted to be of service and who was almost heartbroken because he could not march away beside his stalwart brother. In an out-of-the-way lane Babette had one day come upon the lad prostrate and sobbing, and the answer her gentle enquiries drew from him was:

"Oh, Madame Massier, why was I born? I am no good to my country, and no good to anybody."

"*Ailons donc!* It is true thou canst not fight, Henri, but thinkest thou our country needs only fighters? *Non, non*, she needs both thee and me, *mon brave*. If we do the little things that come to hand, who knows but the good God may give us something great to do for our country? Thou knowest it is rumoured that the Germans are getting nearer: they may come even here, Henri, and then, from what we have read and heard, we shall need to be very brave."

Henri's eyes kindled.

"We may not fight them if they come, Madame, but we can die," he said scrambling up and seizing his crutches.

"Yes, we can die," answered Babette softly. Her face had paled a little, and the soft lines of her mouth wore an expression of firm resolve.

Many and various were the reports that reached the quiet frontier village. Some stories made the simple folk weep tears of joy and pride as they realised the heroism by which the few were holding a strong and numerous foe at bay: other tales brought words of scorn and indignant wrath at wanton destruction, relentless demolition and tyrannical spite: others again, told with bated breath and averted eyes, brought the sound of grinding teeth and strong curses from the men, whilst the women shuddered, and went silently about their work with a look of haunting horror in their eyes. Everyone seemed to be on the *qui vive*, for each day brought the enemy nearer. Morning dawned, but who could tell what might happen before night fell? Still, if the foe was coming nearer, their friends and allies were not far off, and sometimes, when the wind blew in the right direction, they could distinguish the distant booming of the guns.

Le P'tit Soleil shone steadily through all: if a dark cloud came over her, it would be in the privacy of her own home, when perhaps her fingers were deftly fashioning the tiniest and daintiest of garments.

There came a day when one of the village children brought tidings. He had been nutting in the woods, and, catching sight of some strange, mounted soldiers, had hidden in the thick bushes. They halted near him, and just then, Henri Perrier came limping into sight. Henri stopped when he saw the soldiers, and seemed on the point of turning back, but it was too late, they had also seen him, and they beckoned. He hobbled up to them, and one said:

"Have you come from the village, youngster?"

"I have."

"Are there any French troops about?"

"That I shall not tell you."

"We shall see about that, Mr. Malapert," said the soldier stooping to box his ear.

Henri flushed, but made no reply; only stood perfectly still and proudly held up his head. The man then levelled his rifle at Henri saying:

"Now, young jackanapes, tell me, or I fire."

Henri took off his cap and shouted as loudly as he could:

"*Gare! Les uhlands! Vive la France!*"

Even as he did so, a report rang out; Henri fell at the horse's feet, and the soldiers rode off.

"In which direction did they go, Gringoire?" asked M. le curé. The child pointed towards the north.

"Lead us to the place, little one," said the old priest. Then, turning to Madame Perrier, who had stood listening with clasped hands and heaving breast, he added:

"Madame, I congratulate you on being the mother of a hero."

Henri Perrier's home-coming was more of the nature of a triumph than a funeral procession. The crippled lad was a general favourite, and everyone knew how keenly he had felt his inability to be a soldier; yet, after all, to him had been accorded the high honour to be the first of the family to give his life for his country. As M. le curé said, it was indeed a case of 'the lame taking the prey'.

And day by day the thunder of the guns grew more distinct.

It was always a very bright time for Babette when the post brought her a line from Pierre telling of his safety. Letters were getting rarer now, but one had come for her this day and she went about her work singing softly to herself. It was a lovely autumn afternoon, warm and sunny; the woods were glorious in their dress of many hues; red, golden, orange, russet, and various shades of green. Babette felt in tune with the day, so, a parcel of work for Mme. la Baronne being ready, she decided to carry it up to the château.

Madame was very gracious, as she always was, and Babette ventured to ask if there were news of M. le Baron. Madame smiled: yes, she had had news that very day, and news that concerned Babette as well as herself. Then, taking Babette's hand,

she told her in a voice that broke now and then, how Pierre had risked his own life to save that of M. le Baron.

Babette's heart sang. Her Pierre would be sure to do brave deeds.

Madame would not hear of Babette's returning till she had rested, and had taken a meal with Suzanne, so the rays of the sun were level as *le Petit Soleil* took her way home. She was happier than she had been since Pierre went. Her noble Pierre! Their son should be a hero also: he should be just like his father, and then *la belle France* would have two sons of whom she could be proud.

Babette went on, absorbed in her happy day-dream, till she was abruptly stopped by a cry of "Halt!"

Five or six uhlans faced her.

"There are French troops hidden near this wood, *ma chère*, and you must tell me where they are," said the officer in command.

Babette lifted truthful eyes to his face as she answered:

"Monsieur, I did not know French troops were near, and I do not know where they are."

There was a smothered exclamation of impatience from one of the men.

"You know that punishment will be meted out to you if it is discovered that you have lied to us? You swear that you have told us the truth?"

"I swear it, Monsieur, by all I hold most sacred."

"Where are you going?"

"To the village yonder."

"Where have you come from?"

"From the château."

"Your name?"

"Babette Massier, Monsieur."

"You may pass on."

With a muttered curse at what he considered his superior's soft-heartedness, one of the troopers struck his spur into Babette's cloak and rent it as she brushed by his horse.

That night, the rattle of musketry, not a mile off, was heard for a few minutes and then all was still.

The next day red war stepped over their threshold, for a detachment of the enemy entered the village.

The officer in command ordered the villagers to be assembled on the green in front of the church, and there addressed them.

In guttural French he told them that the previous evening, five of his men and a sergeant had been betrayed into an ambush by one of the villagers and that he had come to make the village answer for the deed.

"Seize that man," he ordered, indicating the curé.

Two soldiers roughly collared the old man, and, placing him back to a wall, stood on guard.

A murmur of anger like distant thunder broke out, but, at a word from the officer, the soldiers pointed their rifles at the crowd.

At that moment Babette stepped forward.

"Monsieur," she said in her pleasant voice, "if vengeance must fall, it should fall on me alone, for it was I who met the soldiers in the wood last evening, but I can only repeat to you what I said to them—that I did not know French troops were in the neighbourhood, and therefore could not know where they were."

"*Bien, madame, it shall be as you wish.*"

And the soldiers seizing Babette, placed her by the side of M. le curé.

Even the risk of instant death could not prevent some of the villagers from crying:

"*Grace! M. l'officier. Grace pour notre P'tit Soleil!*"

"Silence you rabble, unless you want a general massacre," he shouted, whilst both M. le curé and Babette made signs to their friends to keep quiet.

A breathless, hopeless stillness followed, broken only by sobs; by a command; and then, the tramping of eight soldiers into line.

Suddenly Babette found herself blindfolded.

"*Mon Pere,*" she whispered, "will you take my hand? I am a little afraid."

"*Courage, mon enfant, with the LORD there is mercy: and with Him is plenteous redemption*" said the old man, continuing aloud the *De Profundis* which he had been reciting to himself.

Eight rifles rang out—again—yet again: and, as the setting sun crimsoned the west with glory, God took *le P'tit Soleil* by the hand.

"The bodies will be left where they fell. Go to your homes and prepare food for my men."

In sullen silence the villagers obeyed, and then little was heard but coarse laughter, tipsy shouting, or the shriek of some terrified woman, till at last night came and threw her mantle of mystery over all.

Just before dawn, there was the sharp crack of a rifle from the south end of the village, and the soldiers came pouring out of the houses to find themselves engaged in a hand to hand conflict with a body of French who had crept up during the night. The surprise and the darkness put the Germans at a disadvantage, but they quickly recovered from the surprise, and they soon remedied the darkness, for first one spear of flame, and then another, shot up into the sky. Soon it seemed as if the whole village was afire; but the French onslaught was so fierce and deadly that by degrees the enemy gave way, leaving ghastly trophies in their wake.

The church was well ablaze by now, and the illumination served to show two soldiers who, in grim silence, were shooting, hacking and hewing their way onward. They showed no quarter, and they asked for none. A nameless dread lurked in their flashing eyes,

for one was thinking of a lonely mother and her crippled son, and the other had a vision of the tender, flower-like face of a little wife.

Jean Perrier and Pierre had cut their way to the end of the main street, and were just approaching the space before the church, when a fleeing German turned and discharged his revolver. With a loud cry Pierre threw up his hands and fell, shot through the heart.

"Poor Babette!" murmured Jean taking steady aim; and the German bit the dust.

The next moment Jean came out upon the village green and found that which made him cry:

"Ah! but the good God is very merciful after all! Pierre and Babette were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

Dawn broke upon a village in possession of its rightful owners, but a village of burning and blackened ruins; a village of desolation and death, upon which the good God looked down and kept silent. But He had taken count of all; He never forgets, and one day He will speak, for though "God's mill grinds slowly," it never fails to grind, and "it grinds exceeding small."

He Is Just Away.

No more beautiful elegy has been written than these lines by the American poet who has just died.

I cannot say, and I will not say
That he is dead. He is just away!
With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand
He has wandered into an unknown land,
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be since he lingers there.
And you,—oh, you, who the wildest yearn
For the old-time step and the glad return—
Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here,
And loyal still, as he gave the blows
Of his warrior's strength to his country's foes—
Mild and gentle, as he was brave,
When the sweetest love of his life he gave
To simple things; where the violets grew,
Pure as the eyes they were likened to,
The touches of his hand have strayed
As reverently as his lips have prayed.
Think of him still as the same, I say;
He is not dead—he is just away.

—James Whitcombe Riley.

The Shirkers.

[*The following verses were found in the pocket-book of a dead Canadian soldier at St. Eloi last August, by a Granville patient*].

I wish to heaven you could see two men in my platoon.
I watched them from my dug-out, working all the afternoon ;
I thought of all the men at home, whose ages come between
This fine old man of fifty-four, this child of seventeen.

The rain came down in sheets ; they didn't seem to mind.
They walked about and searched for any wood that they could find.
They laughed, and joked, and whistled, and each one took a turn
At lighting up their little fire that quite refused to burn.

Their patience and their cheerfulness while working in the mud,—
Well, somehow seemed to drive me mad, and make me thirst for
blood

Of all the middle-aged who still remain at home and shirk,
While fifty-four and seventeen come here to do their work.

The Great Push.

By one who has been pushed.

Hark! The bugle sounds. All and sundry immediately make for the assembly point. Here we are packed in, like hard tack biscuits in a tin case, awaiting the order to advance. Our minds go forward. Will the assault prove successful? Shall we gain our goal? What is that order from the front? Advance by tens. The first ten advance, while the remainder crowd forward "en mob", eager for their turn to advance.

At last, we are with the next ten to move. The order comes, and away we go! With exhilaration we advance towards our goal, but not without a struggle. At last, we have achieved the moment of victory!

What was it that impelled us forward? What was the incentive that carried us through the struggle to our goal? Was it the challenge of a defiant Hun position? Was it the determination to secure a comfortable German dug-out for the winter?

No, kind friends, it was nothing more or less than a seat at the first sitting in the Granville Dining-room.

ARKAY

* * * The net proceeds from the sale of the Christmas Special of the Canadian Hospital News will be given to the Canadian Red Cross.

Un Petit Roman.

Annette was pretty. There was no doubt whatever about that. Even the women in the village had noticed it, and when a woman gives favorable judgment of another woman's beauty, you can be sure that there are exceptional reasons for it.

Annette was also romantic. Many girls are beautiful, but are passed up in the ordinary routine of life; but when a girl is both beautiful and romantic, something is sure to happen, and in this case did happen.

Annette's round face and brown eyes were striking, even though they were framed by a ragged tuft of brown hair, which was not too carefully tied back by a strip of red cloth; and beneath the coarse homespun dress beat a heart that was on fire, ever since, as a girl, she had read about the great heroes of French history.

Ever since completing her education at nine years of age she had helped her mother in the little fish and shrimp shop, or her father to mend his great nets, during his rare intervals at home.

Then came the war. How Annette's heart yearned toward the boys in the blue coats and red trousers. She had never given much thought to them in real life; but now heroes were springing up around her, like Jason's harvest. There was young Jean, who was always a lumbering youth, seeming forever to be attached to the ground by his long heavy sea-boots. There was Pierre who drove the placid old horse that drew the long beer wagon, and who had handled heavy wine casks so long that he was quite as much out of proportion in the shoulders as Jean was in the feet.

These, and dozens of others, who had walked the commonplace way, and done the ordinary things of life, became suddenly transformed into wonderful beings, springing up with surprising rapidity around her, and marching away almost before she could realise it.

Then came the English, and established a camp near the town. Thousands of them, all dressed the same, and swinging along to a tune that was strange to her.

The troops every day passed the shrimp stand, and Annette saw many romantic figures among them. One man in particular did Annette notice. He was a great man, for he wore stripes on his arm, and walked by himself when the men were marching. He was very tall, and all the men seemed to do his bidding. Best of all he frequently visited the little stall, and his blue eyes danced and sparkled as he talked to Annette, in his stumbling French, about herself, her people, and the town.

One night, after a cold day, the family was sitting around the little hearth. At least, all but Poilu, the dog, who scorning such luxury, lay on some boards at the door, and scratched for fleas, his sole occupation for many years back. Annette's father was mending a net, and smoking his long pipe.

Annette sat looking at the fire, and thinking of her hero. What

if he would come to-night? To-day, when she had talked with him over the little counter, he had looked so tenderly at her.

Then came a very gentle tapping at the door. Her father and mother did not seem to heed it, but Annette knew what it was. She quietly rose and went out. As she expected, there stood her hero, looking more wonderful and handsome than ever. He put his arm around her, and whispered words of love that were dear to any romantic girl such as Annette. He told her that he was going back to his own country to train more men. He was too good a man for his country to waste on useless war; and before he went, he wanted to call, and take his one and only love with him.

Annette had read of his wonderful country, and had fearful mis-giving. But love would conquer all. She would go with her gallant soldier at once. He told her that in his country he was rich beyond all her dreams, and had power almost as great as the greatest of men.

Annette felt radiantly happy, and the two were soon in smoky, fishy, old Boulogne. Her gallant soldier told her that she would have the finest of clothes as soon as they got to his country, which would not be long, for there was a great ship waiting for them.

Soon they were going aboard, and as she started up the steep ladder, someone put his hand on Annette's shoulder, and in a gruff voice said: "Annette! Wake up! It's time you were going upstairs to bed, it is getting late."

Annette opened her eyes. It was almost nine o'clock, which was late for a little girl to be up, and Annette was only twelve years old.

Again came a gentle tapping at the door; but Annette knew this time that it was made by the contact of old Poilu's leg with the boards as he searched out a flea on the back of his neck.

W. W. P.

Hints to Hospital Visitors.

Kindly refrain in visiting war hospital patients, from asking the following questions;—

Have you been wounded?

How did the shell hit you?

Did it hurt you much?

Do you like being in hospital?

Did you see many Germans?

How many did you kill before you were wounded?

When do you think the war will be over?

I suppose you are very anxious to get back.

Are you saved?

And in leaving, do not be too emphatic in wishing the patient "a very speedy recovery". He may find the effort at acknowledgment rather a strain.

"Do you know the first duty of a good soldier?"

"Yes, sir—He must never miss his rum ration."

Told In The Dressing Station

A wounded soldier in a crowded omnibus rose to give up his seat to a lady.

"No thank you" she replied, "I should not take your seat if you have been wounded."

"Madame," he answered, "I have been wounded three times, and would be wounded a fourth if you didn't take it."

Somewhere in Flanders a young soldier had been on the sick-list for some time, and now, after a few day's rest, looked very fit for service.

However, he was once more on the sick-list the day his battalion was to go into the trenches.

"Can you write, my lad?" asked the medical officer.

Suddenly the bright prospect of a nice clerical job in a "cushy" place seemed to open before him, so he answered emphatically:

"Yes sir, I can. I was a clerk before I enlisted."

"Very well, now you just write a nice letter to your best girl, and tell her you are going into the trenches to-night."

In a London hospital a wounded Irish soldier was relating his extraordinary adventures to a party of lady visitors. After a vivid reconstruction of the fight in which he knocked out seventeen Huns and one machine gun "wid me wan hand alone begob," he concluded, "and that's the end of the story. The surgeons took me and laid me for all as though I was dead in an ammunition wagon." "Oh, but you don't mean an ammunition wagon, my good man, you mean an ambulance wagon," interrupted one of the fair visitors. "Sorra a bit," he replied. "Shure, I was so filled with bullets they decided I ought to go in the ammunition wagon."

As an instance of the appalling mistakes which telegraphists sometimes make the following story is an excellent example:—A young officer, who wrote to his wife daily from France, was suddenly given a few days' leave. There was no time to wire from Calais, so he hurried on board the transport and determined to telegraph his home-coming to his wife immediately he reached Dover. He had a dreadful passage, and to make matters worse, was compelled by decency to give up his berth to an elderly lady who had just returned from the base hospital, where she had, by special permission, been to visit her badly wounded son. Four hours later his wife received the following telegram from Dover:—

"Expect home immediately. Dreadful passage; awfully sick. Gave birth to old lady on leaving Calais."

G. G.

The publishers of this paper are indebted to The Canadian Red Cross Society for the type, press, etc., used in printing, and to the services of the patients in composing, setting, and issuing the paper.

S. B. WOOD

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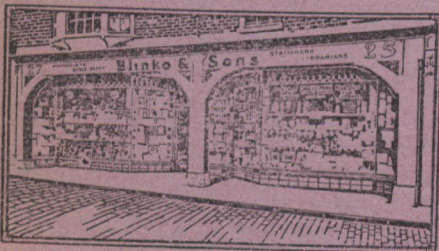
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