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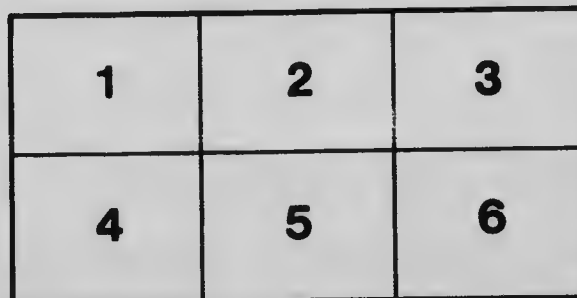
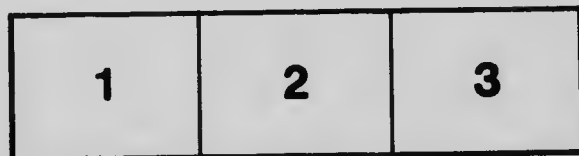
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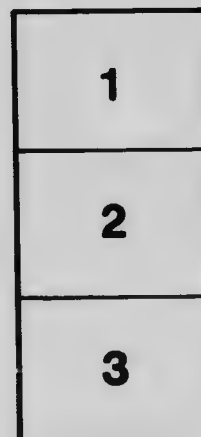
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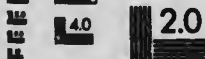
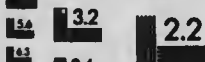
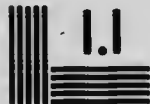
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# The World War

(Poems)



**F. D. Buschlen**

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L18  
W67  
1914

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## DID YOU SEE THE CROSS?



DID you read an early "extra" at your breakfast, Mr. Brown?

And your coffee—did you like it: did it pleasantly go down?  
Did you think, above your bacon, of your peaceful, happy lot;  
Ay, and joke about the figures on your china coffee-pot?  
When your children came around you and your wife beside  
you sat  
Did you throw away the "extra," saying: "Foolish business  
that!"?

When the women called upon you for the wounded and their  
wives,  
Wearing crosses on their bosoms, asking aid for shattered  
lives,  
Did you think about YOUR children, safe at home in luxury,  
Or the children of the heroes who are dying hourly?  
Did you think about YOUR business and that treasured  
bit of gold,  
Or the business of the Empire and its duties manifold?

To the Crimson Cross before you were your eyes awake or  
blind?  
Did you bless the cause it symbolized, or poor excuses find!  
Did you make a lying promise and put on a sorry face,  
Or fulfill your obligations—like the Anglo-Saxon race?





## THE HEROINE

THE soldier goes away to fight ;  
His wife goes home, and in the night  
Sits gazing through the white moonlight.

The soldier joins his comrades bold,  
And laughs with them ; and tales are told  
To prove man's courage manifold.

To keep his fighting spirit up,  
He tips the ever-joyful cup  
And rails against the curse of Krupp.

In battle-line he leaps ahead  
By masculine fight-fever led,  
Excited—e'en among the dead

And then he falls, his colors by,  
The way a soldier wants to die.  
Ah ! there in glory let him lie !

But what of her at home in tears,  
Who must rise up and face the years  
And rear her sons to future fears ?

While marking out the hero's grave  
Shall we not honor, love and save  
The heroine, whose all she gave ?

No comrades cheer her on her way,  
No band leads her to passing fray :  
Alone, alone she wins the day—

A day that sunset cannot close,  
A weary day no soldier knows  
Who takes his speedy leave of foes.



## KRUPPS AND KAISERS



"Come Wilhelm," said the Krupps,  
"Now loose the dogs of war,  
And also loose the pups—  
What do we breed them for?"

So Wilhelm, flatt'ry full,  
Succumbed to Krupp the Gun  
And gave a foreign bull  
A heap of awful fun ;

So Wilhelm scratched his head  
And drank a stein of beer ;  
Then, thoughtful, went to bed—  
But wakened feeling queer.

And dogs from everywhere  
Came running to the spot  
Where little bits of hair  
Announced the dogs were not . . .

"An awful dream I had,"  
He told the senior Krupp:  
"I dreamt a bull went mad  
And ate my doggies up I—

O foolish bits of bone  
Inside your ticklish skin,  
Let foolish fights alone  
And pride and things akin I

"A burly British bull  
With legs a yard apart."  
"Tut tut I King Wonderful,"  
Said Krupp; "My Lord take heart I

And ah I ye Krupps of ours  
Abandon flattery ;  
Be slow to stir the powers  
That thrive on battery.

"No dog can down our own,  
So full of wurst are they ;  
They're solid as the throne,  
And haven't had their day."

If men and kings will drink  
And drinking dream of fame,  
Be wise ; sit down and think  
Before you laud the same.

A foolish thought, a dream,  
A word, a crazy yell :  
The Krupps and Kaisers scream  
And earth is dogs and hell.



## THE RED CROSS



WHERE men were facing death,  
Defeat and earthly loss,  
I saw a glowing image rise,  
The image of a cross.

Upon it hung a Man,  
Made perfect, for the race :  
And lo ! I saw a woman kneel  
In sorrow at the base.

Before me as I gazed  
Another cross appeared—  
A cross on which a million men  
Had died, beloved, revered.

And here she knelt again,  
The woman, as before—  
E'er faithful to the cause of man,  
The love, the sons she bore.

One other cross of woe  
The vision showed to me—  
Made red with blood of woman's heart,  
And there, alone, was she !



## THIS FLESH



OUR hearts are sick, our tongues are tied,  
Our blood is cold as facts unfold  
To prove that man has crucified  
His brotherhood, and honor sold.

That they, whom earth has favored most  
Should love the least; should mock the beast,  
And lying 'mid their slaughter boast  
About the vileness of the feast!

O God Almighty, Heaven's King,  
And keeper of our fate, above,  
Is this accursed fleshly thing  
Thy greatest work of love?

Or was it only made to rot  
And mould away to cleaner clay,  
That other life, in love begot,  
Should hold eternal, lawful sway?





## THOR TO A BELGIAN



“**A**RISE, my son,” said Thor,  
“And face the battle’s light;  
“I call you out to fight,  
“To agonies of war.

“No promise of a feast  
“And none, I make, of loot;  
“’Tis not a gay pursuit  
“Or one to sate the beast.

“I call you out to death,  
“I offer you a grave;  
“But, dying, you will save  
“Your soul’s eternal breath.

“That breath of liberty,  
“Without the which you die,  
“And, dead, forgotten lie;  
“Arise, my son, be free!”



## LACK OF BROTHERHOOD

WE say that grief has touched our Canada,  
We whimper when a merchant locks his door;  
The vision of a winter of distress,  
Of inconvenience, opens every pore  
To chilly waves that circulate about;  
And pessimists are breeding by the score.

We whine about the pinch of poverty;  
Reluctantly reduce our store of bread,  
Our cellar-store and pantry full of sweets—  
Although we're ill from being overfed;  
And warmly clad and smoking good cigars  
We cynically review the list of dead.

A few of us have sent a son away  
To fight behind a mighty, winning host;  
A few of us have lost a little gold—  
But here we're compensated with a boast;  
A few of us, but very few indeed,  
Have lost a friend, or relative at most.

But where is he or she in all our land  
Who sees the vanishing of liberty,  
The torture of the soul, the blood of hearts,  
The crucifixion of humanity?  
Oh, Belgians, Frenchmen, Allies—Germans, too!  
If we could see what you are forced to see;

If we could feel the imprint of the steel,  
The knuckles that have crushed the soul of man,  
And come through hell for bare existence sake,  
As you have done, our selfish minds would span  
The gulf that separates us from that brotherhood  
In lack of which this state of things began.



## JOHNNY GREY



**A**MONG the heroes large and small  
That our old town can claim  
Was Johnny Grey: he went away  
And raised himself to fame.  
And though he beat his wife (they say)  
I understand that in the fray  
He brought his courage into play,  
And killed a Prussian every day.

A funny card our Johnny was,  
A figure in the town,  
When off he went without a cent  
And won his proud renown.  
The fund we raised, for drink he spent,  
And left his wife to pay the rent;  
But still we knew 'twas well he meant—  
He pitched so well an army tent.

At home he worked around the inn  
At walking in and out,  
And that with fright the girls at night  
He filled, we cannot doubt;  
But when he went away to fight  
For family, country and the right,  
Our town forgave his follies, quite—  
His trousers fit so nice and tight.



## THE MAN TO COME

A SHOUT went up the wide world o'er,  
And I in spirit sitting high  
Demanded what the noise was for.  
"For this," there came a man's reply:  
"That men have bravely gone to war  
"To fight and die and honor Thor."

Enlightened not, but troubled still,  
I asked of woman. Answer came:  
"They strive a million graves to fill,  
"To make or mar a ruler's name;  
"The hearts they break, the blood they spill,  
"Are naught: . . . y're pleasing Royal will!"

Bewildered yet and sorrow-sore  
I turned to Him to whom they prayed—  
Each counting on an open door—  
When they were beaten or afraid;  
But spirits said: "He is no more;  
"He died—the old-time God of War."

At last, by chance, I sought the cause  
In earth herself, in clay and stone. . . . .  
There, man that is and man that was  
Seemed born to die; and life, alone,  
Was his to come—re-born to laws  
Divine, sufficient, lacking flaws.





## SOMETHING TO DO



**M**Y boss has laid me off from work,  
By Jove it makes me sore!—  
And I was first assistant clerk:  
I guess I'll go to war.

He spoiled the plans that I had laid,  
The fruits of faithful toil;  
Suppose I'd better don the plaid  
And go myself and spoil.

There's nothing doing hereabouts,  
At least there isn't much:  
I think I'll join the army scouts  
And go and shoot some Dutch.



## THE MOTHER'S PART



THE dawn, which all my life has been  
The signal for a smile of joy,  
Is now a messenger of tears;  
My sunlight disappears  
With sunrise: I have lost my boy.

From dreams at night I often wake  
And think I hear him breathing deep  
Across the hall, in calm repose;  
But soon the fancy goes  
And leaves me grief or troubled sleep.

My daylight hours are full of pain;  
I feel a weight upon my breast;  
And oft I lose the wish to live.  
O God, forgive, forgive,  
If war is here at thy behest I

I know not which I crave the most,  
His life, or death for me—and peace.  
I only know my soul is numb,  
My agonies increase,  
And man and Heav'n continue dumb.



## THE GREAT CONFUSION



CHAOS, turmoil, hate,  
A world of fighting men;  
The medieval fate  
On earth again.

Tears, sorrow, woe,  
A world of hearts that bleed,  
With life itself a foe  
And death a creed.

Want, hunger, pain,  
A world submerged in blood,  
Where virtue is a ba'e,  
And sin is good.



## THE YEAR 1914 A.D.

WHEN I went to rest last night an autumn moon  
Was shedding hazy light upon the world;  
There was silence all around and a peace sublime, profound,  
But a sadness penetrating like the night-call of a loon.

At my window I stood gazing through the night  
With a sense of queer foreboding and of awe,  
Till my eyes beheld a change in the moon-haze, passing  
strange,  
And a vision loomed before me in a fearful blaze of light.

Men with murder gleaming fiercely in their eyes  
Rose in hosts, grim apparitions, seeking death;  
They were smeared with gore and grime, and their flags were  
labelled "Crime!"  
O the horror of their faces and the terror of their cries!

In an instant it was gone, this flash of hell,  
But my soul was scorched and blackened with the flame;  
And I fear that autumn nights with their filmy luna-lights  
Will always cast around me now a grimly tragic spell.

And methinks the world will share with me this gloom  
In autumn-times to come, as looking back,  
It strives to penetrate the haze, and see the fate  
That made this year we're living in a time of mortal doom.





## THE CASE OF JIMMY

"I WANT to know," said little Jim,  
"About the Germans over there."  
His father squirmed, evaded him,  
Resumed a dummy air.

"I want to know," said Jim again,  
"The reason Germans fight the Dutch,  
The father sought his smoking-den  
Since Jimmy talked so much.

"I want to know,"—the little lad  
Was hard upon his quarry's trail,—  
"The meaning of the Kaiser, dad,  
"And why he ain't in gaol.

"I want to know the way he twists  
"That hairy whisker on his face."  
His father seized him by the wrists  
And smote the proper place.

In sorrow Jimmy went to bed,  
In humble sorrow and in fear,  
For what his British daddy said  
Can not be mentioned here.



## THE ONE HOPE



RELIGION fails, philosophy  
Is impotent to stay  
The sanguine swarms of men in arms  
Who surge upon their bloody way.

The love and beauty of our world  
Are poor anæmic things;  
And science means but death-machines,  
And progress—manufacturing kings.

If light and knowledge cannot save  
This sorry earth from crime,  
In what shall we, humanity,  
Repose our mortal faith, but Time?



## GROPING

WHEN my day of peaceful labor's at an end  
I journey home: to heaven I ascend.  
There my daily pleasures centre,  
There no foreign worries enter,  
There I'm fain to sit and fill my place  
And love and life defend.

On the workings of the world I sit and dream,  
And its folly by its effort I redeem;  
Yea, I drift upon the ocean  
Of a happy world's emotion,  
Lost to thoughts that are disturbing  
And to woes that threat'ning seem.

But of late my philosophic calm is gone,  
And I cannot happ'ly ponder life upon:  
'T were as though the subtle terror  
Of gigantic, cosmic error  
Were investing me; and trembling  
In the dark I stand alone.

In my brain uncounted problems circulate,  
All unfathomable; and shut is Reason's gate.  
Is the life of man a passion?  
Or do ruling devils fashion,  
Guide and stimulate his folly  
For the humor of his fate?

Is the man we know a fallen son of light,  
And like Lucifer exalted in his might?  
Or is all this madness given  
And forgiven him of heaven  
That through knowing he may hate it  
And return unto the right?



## DAY AND NIGHT

**T**HROUGH hours of day I read the news  
And boast about the men who fight;  
I envy them their strength, the right,  
Their goodness praise, their sin excuse.

I curse the power they seek to slay  
And feel my blood within me boil;  
I find it hard to dully toil  
Back here: I long to join the fray.

But when the solemn, pensive hours  
Of even come, my soul is sad,  
And I forget the vim I had  
At noonday—fierce and manly powers.

No wild desire to kill and damn  
I carry into dreams with me,  
But burning, aching sympathy  
For those who suffer, silent, calm.

For those who die, and those who live  
And face the future, still unsure;  
Who lift their heads go on, endure,  
And man and earth and life forgive.





## "THE NOBLEST WORK OF GOD"

**S**ING not, oh man, your racial songs of war—  
As if it were fit subject for a song!  
Wave not your rag like frenzied matador  
Before the staring eyes of maddened throng;  
But interview your soul in silent thought  
And learn the lesson war has grimly taught.

Curse not the Kaiser and his death-machine:  
Could he alone arouse the world entire?  
Could he inspire the wickedness we've seen  
In men of every nation, under fire?  
Nay, seek the cause of strife within the heart  
Of man—a thing from blood and tongue apart.

Go deeper than the superficial chance  
That makes you native of a certain place;  
Go further than the paltry circumstance  
That gives you caste or color, creed or race;  
Go down into the soul, your own, indeed,  
And find the trouble there, in lust and greed.

Perhaps if you or I were Emperor,  
We'd curse the world as emperors have done;  
And doubtless we would lay at others' door  
The blame, and fix our eyes upon the sun:  
For such is man, the noblest work of God—  
Who needs ennobling yet, by fire and blood.



## THE LABOR DAY VICTORY

**M**Y coddled frame, although it be  
Unsoldierlike and cowardly,  
Is trembling with a vim to-day  
That keeps philosophy at bay.

The latest news has touched in me  
The spark of new vitality;  
I cannot sit and dream of peace:  
My pulses throb and will not cease.

Our troops have beaten, driven back  
The kaiser, in a grim attack!  
I want to yell, and yell I will,  
And revel in the physical.

I see our sturdy fighting sons  
Advancing on the German guns;  
No man afraid, all fire-filled,  
Prepared for aught that Fate has willed.

The burning eye, the bloody cheek,  
The killing thrust, the dying shriek—  
They fascinate, they cry to me:  
"Go on to further victory!"

To-morrow I will sorrow for  
The victims of this brutal war;  
But oh! to-day I want to shout:  
"Exterminate them! Wipe them out!"



## GOD SAVE THE RACE

**G**OD save the human race!  
Guide us to nobler ways  
Through these sad days;  
Whate'er our color be  
Or nationality  
From folly set us free,  
Lead us to peace.

Not for supremacy,  
Kingdom or wealth we pray,  
Saved out of blood;  
But for humanity  
Shorn of its vanity  
Its cruel insanity—  
Every man's God.

Not with a drunken yell  
Seek we the fruits of hell,  
Father above;  
Not with triumphant brass,  
But with bowed heads, alas!  
Sink we upon the grass  
In stricken love.

Thus would we pray for man,  
Whate'er his creed or clan,  
Female and male;  
Pray for our brotherhood,  
For sorrowing motherhood,  
And for the greatest good  
After the flail.

