

THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI.

A
Christmas
Message.

By
**ALLAN P.
SNATFORD,**

*Chaplain to
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OXFORD:

THE CHURCH ARMY PRESS, COWLEY,
1918.

DEDICATED
TO
ALL THE FAITHFUL FRIENDS
OF
THE MEN AT THE FRONT,
AND
ESPECIALLY TO MY OWN
LOYAL GENEROUS CONGREGATION.

N.B.—This brochure was written early in October 1918.

"They presented unto Him gifts:
Gold and frankincense and myrrh."

St. Matt. ii. 11.

THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI.

I.—GOLD.



HIS is the story of three little wise men who brought their offering unto the King. It happened during the Victory Loan Campaign, when the nation undertook the serious task of raising half a billion dollars for war purposes. The whole scheme had been splendidly organized. For months now the people had been well informed as to the needs. Eloquent statesmen, skilled financiers, experienced soldiers, had gone throughout the land and thrilled the people with the story of the War's progress, and fired their enthusiasm to carry the cause to complete victory. All classes and conditions were swept into the canvass. High and low, rich and poor, old and young, were to be given an opportunity to express their patriotism. This was to be a national subscrip-

tion in the best sense of the word. Not only was the Government to be provided with funds for the prosecution of the War, but a "War chest" was to be established, into which all contributions for the soldiers' welfare were to be poured. People had become bewildered by the multitude of appeals, so it was deemed wise to pool the funds. The Red Cross, the Patriotic League, the Y.M.C.A., and a host of other organizations, were included in the "War chest." One could still ear-mark his subscription, but the administration of the money would be in the hands of a Committee appointed by the Government. The pennies of the children would be as welcome as the cheques of the millionaire. So high were the hopes of those in authority, and so great was the enthusiasm of the people, that it was expected the sum would far exceed the amount asked for.

At length the day appointed for initiating the canvass arrived. High Heaven smiled upon the project and sent a flawless day. Monster processions paraded the streets, exhibiting all the paraphernalia of war. Battalions of soldiers marched along the thoroughfares amid the deafening shouts of the crowd. Scores of motors, bearing their laughing burden of boys in blue, received a royal acclaim. Thousands of white-robed children, carrying national flags and singing national songs,

took gleeful part in the proceedings. And when the excitement and glamour of the advertisement died down, the people flocked to the centres with their money. Mighty sacrifices were made that day! Rivers of wealth poured into the National Treasury. Rivulets also trickled into the main stream. And the tide seemed to swell with the passing hours!

There were three little boys in the home of the Rector of the High School—Leo, Bobbie, and Arthur. They were the proud possessors of little banks, into which they dropped their pennies against the needs of Christmas-time. Each had his heart set upon a definite object when the hour came for the purchase of those gifts which mean so much to others as well as to ourselves. The boys had heard much in school concerning the Victory Loan Campaign and how it was possible for the children to help. Their brains were busy with plans for their own share in the Day.

They rose early in the morning and gathered their tin banks together. It was a solemn moment, for they were yielding up much of the gladness of Christmas-time. Then they opened their treasures, and with trembling fingers counted over their little store.

"I have just ten dollars!" cried Leo joyfully, "and I am going to invest them in two War

Bonds." He swaggered a bit with the importance of his position.

"Mine is not quite so much," humbly answered Bobbie. "I have only seven-fifty, so I'll mark mine for the Red Cross. It may help some lonely soldier."

"How much have you?" cried the two elder lads, as they watched Arthur painfully count up his pile.

"A few cents over five dollars," answered the youngest as he rose to his feet. "And I think I'll give mine to the Patriotic League for some little lad whose daddy is at the Front."

They dressed hurriedly and went down to breakfast, where they imparted their intentions to the Rector. And this is what came of their offering :

The Canadians were engaged in the biggest fight of their experience. They were given the difficult task of breaking through a strong line of enemy defences. The position had been held secure for nearly four years, and was considered well-nigh impregnable. But the victors of Vimy Ridge were confident of success! They swept up the ridge and across the plain in an irresistible assault, and punctured the line at many points. The enemy was overwhelmed, and surrendered in thousands. It was a magnificent triumph, and all the world thundered its applause!

All day long the ambulances were busy bringing in the wounded. Every one worked with a will, and the utmost care was exercised with all casualties. Far into the night doctors and orderlies kept at their tasks, until the advanced dressing-stations were reported clear. So great had been the advance of the conquering host, that long, weary distances stretched between the front line and the main dressing-station. The drivers of the ambulances were on the edge of nervous collapse, as they had been at their posts for twenty-four consecutive hours, driving over roads that had been pitted by shells and were still subjected to harassing fire. It was a welcome relief to learn that rest and refreshment could now be taken!

Just as the dawn of another day was streaking the sky, a report came in that the Germans had counter-attacked. They had been beaten off with heavy losses, but many brave Canadians were wounded. An urgent call came for the ambulances to go up again; but, on investigation, the drivers reported that they had not enough petrol for the journey. A hurry despatch was sent to the Supply Dump, and soon a petrol lorry roared along the road to meet the need. The emergency was great, as there were many serious cases to be attended. In an incredibly short time the ambulances returned with their moaning burdens, and

the wounded were tenderly and skilfully cared for. It was one of those not infrequent cases when lives depended upon a few gallons of gasoline. And in this instance the amount required was just covered by Leo's war investment! Perhaps the King whispered to his loyal little heart: "I was sick and you ministered unto Me."

Corporal Brown was a prisoner of war. He had been captured a few weeks ago, when the enemy made a raid upon his trench. It was largely due to his own recklessness. He had suffered a terrible loss just previous to the raid. In an air attack upon Folkestone, his wife and two children were bombed to death. Before he had time to recover from this tragedy, he received a letter telling him that his father, mother and sister were killed in a London air raid! He was left absolutely alone—there was little for him to live for. He prayed for an opportunity to wreak vengeance upon the destroyer of his home and happiness. It mattered little to him about his own life—gladly would he surrender it in a final effort to square accounts.

He was watching with strained eyes, when he saw the Hun party crossing No Man's Land towards his position. Here was his chance, and by all the Gods of Justice he would make good use of it!

With a yell of warning to his comrades, he leaped upon the parapet and threw his bombs into the teeth of the advancing Huns. Then he grasped his rifle and, with fixed bayonet, charged against the foe. With sure and swift thrust he drove home his weapon, and went madly on. The blood-lust was blinding his eyes, but he tore steadily through the attacking party, slaying as he went. By his fierce and unexpected action he had stayed the raid, but his fury carried him too far from his own lines. A second wave of Germans gathered him in and threw him headlong into their trench. There was in his heart, however, a sweet content—he had avenged his loved ones!

The Christmas season was drawing near. A great wave of loneliness swept over the soul of Corporal Brown. He did not much mind the horror and brutality of the camp. His soul was numbed, and utterly indifferent to the coarseness and filth of his surroundings. But the dear past Christmasses! His sweet wife and bonnie babes—dear God! he was lonely!

Just then the Padre of the camp blew in! He was himself a prisoner of war, and knew Brown's tragic story. With wise tact and infinite tenderness he had been able to help his bereaved comrade.

"The Christmas parcels have just come in," he cried cheerfully, "and I have one for you."

"For me!"—replied Brown in surprise. "There is no one to send *me* parcels."

"Oh, yes, there is!" assured the Padre. "At all events, this one is addressed to you." He did not tell the Corporal that he had forwarded his name to the Red Cross in London some weeks before.

The Padre quietly withdrew, and left Brown holding the package in his hands. The mere contact of the parcel seemed to soothe him. He wondered who could have sent it? Well, he would open it and see! When the little card tumbled out and he read its simple message, the fountain of his grief was unsealed. He sobbed out all the ache and pain, and washed his soul free of bitterness. Lovingly he handled each item of the parcel. A new hope dawned before him—a fresh vision illumined his mind. On Christmas morning he wrote the following letter of thanks:—

MY DEAR BOBBIE,

I cannot thank you in words for your sweet Xmas gift. It came indeed to a "lonely soldier!" It brought him a new heart, a bright hope. Some day I may be able to tell you what it has done for me. In the meanwhile accept my loving gratitude in the Name of Him Who said, "I was in prison and ye visited Me."

Yours, D. J. BROWN, Cpl.

The Patriotic League was planning their Christmas work. Huge piles of parcels were ready to be taken to the various homes of the men at the Front. It required much tact and wisdom to allocate the subscriptions and contributions. A Committee of wise women—all of them married and with children of their own—had undertaken the distribution. Their lists were completed, and they set out in motors, provided for the occasion, to visit the homes.

When they returned, much pleased with their work, they found the Secretary of the League with a few additional names. One particularly claimed their attention and sympathy. It was the case of a young mother, whose little lad was nigh unto death. Hurriedly they drove to the tiny room of a tenement building, and found a distracted and weary woman kneeling by the cot of a child. They soon learned the story of a proud mother who had hesitated to send her name to the League. She had hoped to get along without assistance. But the plight of her first-born had driven away her false pride, and she now begged them to help her. A doctor was quickly summoned, who at once discovered that the whole matter was explained in a word—improper nourishment. That was very shortly remedied. Delicacies were secured, food of the right sort obtained, instructions to the

mother given, and in a few days there was happiness and content in the little home.

Sergeant Bates was moping in his dug-out. He was greatly worried about his wife and kiddie. Each letter seemed more depressed than its predecessor. For some reason the bairn was wasting away, yet the mother vowed that she was giving him lots of food. Could it be that the little chap was going to be taken from him? And here was Christmas coming on! Well, it would be a dismal sort of day for him, eating his heart out with anxiety.

Just then the mail corporal thrust his head into the dug-out and yelled, "Letter for Sergeant Bates!"

It was a very official-looking document, stamped with some sort of monogram. The Sergeant took it over to his sputtering candle and inspected it closely. "Patriotic League!" he muttered. "What the devil are they writing me for? Has the wife gone to them after all?" With trembling fingers he tore open the envelope and read the contents:—

"DEAR SERGT. BATES,

"This is to tell you that your little boy is quite all right. We found out about your wife and went to see her, and after a little chat dis-

covered what the trouble was. All the child needed was certain kinds of nourishment, and we at once secured them. It will interest you to know that the delicacies were bought by a sum of money donated by a young lad whose Christian name is Arthur. He wanted to help a boy 'Whose Daddy was at the Front.' If you were to see your rosy urchin and his smiling mother, I am sure that you would banish all worry and enjoy a Happy Xmas, if such a thing can be done out there."

Bates did not worry about the signature—he was too much engrossed with the good news of the letter.

"Bill," he cried to his comrade, "give me a cigarette." He sat on his rude pallet and drew in long draughts of smoke—then blew it out in widening rings. He was thinking hard. At length he reached for his tunic and pulled out his pocket Testament. The occasion seemed to demand something of the kind. The little book fell open at the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew—"I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink."

II.—FRANKINCENSE.

THIS is the story of a prayer offered by three wise persons on the Great Day of National Intercession. A special service was held in the Cathedral of the city. Care was taken to make it particularly solemn and devotional. There was no sermon, and all the pomp and ceremony of public worship were excluded. People flocked from every quarter, until the spacious edifice was thronged with a hushed and expectant crowd. In place of the processional hymn, the choir filed slowly in, chanting a psalm of penitence. A litany of intercession was said, and the suffrages of the congregation were like unto the deep thunder of distant seas. Selected passages of Scripture were read and familiar hymns were sung. The entire service was arranged so that it represented the profound longing of a people for Pardon and Peace. Any suggestion of the spectacular or operatic was rigidly forbidden. The thought was centred upon the God of Humanity, and the soul's desire for reconciliation. A deep reverence pervaded the assembly, and the hearts of men were touched into finer issues. The only burst of human glory was in the singing of the National Anthem, and even here the prayer element was strongly marked. It

was followed by the verse for the soldiers, and never surely did a congregation sing it with fuller meaning :—

“ God save our men-at-arms,
Shield them 'mid war's alarms,
God save our men.
Strong may they stand in Thee,
Valiant for liberty ;
Crown them with victory,
God save our men.”

The waves of sound floated out through the open windows, and were lost among the trees and buildings.

High up in an apartment house a crippled girl was reclining on her couch near the window. She could look directly down upon the Cathedral grounds, and watch the congregation pass in and out of the church. The day was soft and warm, and a gentle breeze stirred the leaves on the trees. A sweet languor pervaded the atmosphere and brought healing to jangled nerves. For years she had been troubled with an affected spine. On such days as this her brother carried her in his arms to her couch by the window, where she waited and dreamed until, on his return from work, he bore her back again to her bedroom. To-day her soul cried out to be with the worshippers

in the Temple. When the music welled up to her, a stab of pain responded to its appeal. Why should she be barred out of all this adoration and petition ? Was it not enough that her poor body was racked and tormented ? Must her soul, too, be tortured ? She yearned to add *her* plea for the brave lads overseas !

When her mother and brother joined her in the late afternoon, they found her fretful and feverish. But all their anxious questions received evasive answers. She would not try their patience with complaints. As the hour of retirement drew near, however, she could no longer restrain her desires, so she cried out all her trouble.

“ Mother dear, I seem so shut out of everything. I want so much to do something for our soldiers. It hurt me dreadfully to listen to the beautiful service in the Cathedral this morning and to realize that I cannot even join in the prayers and hymns.”

“ But you can, dearest,” immediately answered the mother. “ You don't have to be present in order to share in the Church's prayers. God will hear you just as well up here as down there.”

That seemed to comfort her immensely, and a wan smile of content passed over her face.

“ What would you like to sing or say, dear ? ” asked the anxious mother. “ Perhaps we could sing the hymn together now, or offer our little prayer ! ”

"Oh! could we, darling mother?" joyfully cried her daughter. She lifted her arms towards her mother's neck, but in a spasm of pain let them fall again. "Will you sing the soldiers' verse in the National Anthem for me? I loved it this morning. And, Eric, won't you help mother, please?" looking towards her brother.

The mother had a rich contralto voice, and forthwith she started the hymn:

"God save our men-at-arms."

Eric's voice was a bit uncertain, but he followed loyally on. And then the thin, quivering treble of the crippled child mingled with the other voices:

"Strong may they stand in Thee,
Valiant for liberty;
Crown them with victory,
God save our men."

A great silence filled the room. Eric sat with his face between his hands, his thoughts rioting through his mind. He had long wanted to enlist, but the need of him at home and the pain it would give these two loved and dependent ones held him back. He had been exempted from service because he was the sole support of his mother and sister. Yet all these months he had been uneasy about it, and longed to broach the subject to one or both

of them. But how could he inflict unhappiness upon those who were already carrying so heavy a burden? The deepest sacrifice we can ever make is the sacrifice of another's happiness. It is incomparably more difficult than the surrender of our own ease and comfort.

His sister must have divined his thought, for her next utterance broke down the barrier.

"Mother, sweet," she said, as she slipped her hand into her mother's, "don't you think we could manage if Eric went overseas? Don't be hurt, darling," as she noticed the involuntary shudder; "but I know how brother feels, and I am sure that you and I would feel exactly the same if we were in his place."

The mother was a long time silent as she knelt by the bedside with closed eyes and lips firmly set.

"What do *you* say, my son?" she asked with even voice. There was in her question a resignation which Eric was quick to detect.

"Oh! mother, mother!" answered the son, as he rose and came over to kneel by her side. "My manhood cries to go, but my heart rebels against leaving you two all alone. Often a sense of shame sweeps over me, and I seem to be losing my self-respect. But when I remember your need, I say it is impossible."

"It is *not* impossible, laddie," bravely replied

the mother. "You must go as soon as we can arrange it. God will take care of us here. Your sister and I will be proud of you, and gladly carry the extra cross."

She put her arms about him and laid her cheek against his. Then she stooped over her daughter and kissed her on the forehead, saying very gently: "And now, sweetheart, what little prayer would you like to say? Just speak out your heart to-night, and Eric and I will claim it as our own when we say 'Amen.'"

The frail, delicate girl looked tenderly upon the kneeling figures, then closed her eyes and breathed her soul's desire so softly that only the ears of love could hear:—

"Dear Master of Gethsemane:

Make all our men brave and chivalrous.

Give them a clear vision of duty,

And grace to follow in its way.

Strengthen those who are left to bear their burdens.

Bring a righteous peace to the troubled earth,

And bind the Nations together in love."

"Amen," whispered the mother and brother, with tears and sighs

The incense of that prayer curled heavenward and found a welcome in the heart of God. And this is how the answer came:

In a room adjoining the one occupied by the invalid daughter lived a young man named Gideon Barker. He was clever, capable and in robust health. When the War broke out he was a foreman in a large factory where cinema engines and bioscopes were manufactured. The building was immediately taken over by the Government as a munitions plant. He was given the position of superintendent of one of the departments. As the War progressed he exhibited such skill and leadership as justified his promotion to the position of manager. His salary was very large. There was no one immediately dependent upon him, and people wondered why he did not offer for overseas service. To all gibes and queries he gave answer that he was serving his country more efficiently where he was. The truth, however, was that he hated war and dreaded its discomforts and dangers. When conscription became law, he passed many uneasy hours until the Board exempted him on the grounds of his knowledge and administration in the department of munitions. Most of his friends had enlisted, and were now on active service. Some of them had made the supreme sacrifice, and when their names appeared in the Roll of Honour, he was at first a bit ashamed, and then he salved his conscience with plausible arguments until his surroundings seemed more and more desirable.

He was sitting in a luxurious armchair smoking a good cigar and reading the accounts of the recent fighting, when there came to his ear the soft singing in the next room. He put down his paper, removed his cigar and listened.

"Strong may they stand in Thee,
Valiant for liberty."

The words smote him to the very core of his being. The trembling notes of the afflicted girl, the steady vibrant leadership of the mother, the deep, uncertain tones of the son, gripped his soul and sent a flood of shame sweeping across his face. Was *he* hiding behind a safe job whilst these broken hearts were panting for fuller service? He strained his ears to hear what might follow. There was no thought of eavesdropping—he could not have helped himself had he so desired. He caught the low murmur of their voices, and leaned towards the sound in order that nothing might be lost. Something urged him to the belief that this was intended for him. He heard the cry of the young man and the mother's surrender. Was it possible that this sacrifice could be made, and he left skulking at home, drawing a big income and living in ease and security? A profound hatred of himself choked him—he loathed all the evidences of his safety and immunity from pain. Again he listened intently, but he could only catch the indistinct

murmur of the girl's voice. He knew it was a prayer, although it was too faint to carry the words to him. In the silence that followed he made a great resolution. To-morrow he would resign his position, and go at once to the nearest recruiting office and offer his services. He spent the night in self-scourings! By morning his soul was washed white, he was the captain of his destiny. He was aflame with zeal to go and stand in the very thickest of the struggle.

The recruiting officer realized that he had in Gideon Barker an unusual soldier, so he made him a sergeant and sent him out to gather in more men. At a large meeting Barker told the story of his own conversion. With compelling power he rehearsed the tragedy of the little home adjoining his rooms. He played upon the emotions of his hearers as a musician plays upon his harp. "Boys," he cried, "I do not know exactly what that wonderful girl prayed for, but we are going to help God to answer it. Who will join me in that high Crusade?"

There was a rich response to his appeal. Recruits came in numbers until he had a company ready to present to the authorities. They made him Commander of it, and before long the Company grew into a Battalion. When they were ready to embark for overseas he was made O.C., and his unit was popularly known as "The Gideonites."

A heavy fight was raging along the Canadian front. Great had been the victory gained by the men of the Maple Leaf. Their advance ran into many kilometres, and the capture of villages swelled into several scores. They were now on the outskirts of a famous town. If they could win it for the old Flag, one of the greatest achievements in the history of warfare would be added to the tale of Canadian successes.

The enemy had brought up fresh divisions in order to hold this strategic position. Heavy sacrifices were entailed upon the Canadian divisions, but they held stubbornly on. Reinforcements were coming up to the aid of gallant fighters. An extra thousand men, fresh and eager, might turn the scale and drive the enemy from the town.

"The Gideonites" had reached France after their four months' training in England. They were a fine body of men, each one moved by the conviction that he was fighting the Lord's battles. When the call came for reinforcements they hailed it with a cheer. Proudly and eagerly they marched to the scene of conflict. Several stubborn machine-gun nests had prevented the Canadians from entering the town. The task of cleaning them out fell to the "Gideonites." They were divided into sections and assigned their positions. Carefully they reconnoitred the ground until the method of

attack was chosen. Then they dashed forward with bombs and bayonets to their deadly work. Amid a perfect hail of bullets they raced to the encounter. Many noble lads fell by the way, but the rest halted not until the last enemy was routed and the way into the town made clear. Colonel Barker was thrice wounded, but he seemed indifferent to physical suffering. When the remnant of his battalion marched into the square, he collapsed through loss of blood. He had wiped out the obloquy of the past three years and won back his title to a worthy manhood.

When he regained consciousness at the dressing station they told him how great a victory had been won! The enemy was in full retreat! News had flashed across the world that two of the Central Powers had unconditionally surrendered. And only an hour before a report had come in that Germany was making overtures for Peace. It was the beginning of the end!

Raising himself upon his elbow he put his last ounce of strength into a message for the little crippled girl. "Tell her," he said to the Chaplain, "how God has answered her prayer." Then he quietly slipped away to join the noble Army of Martyrs.

III.—MYRRH.

THIS is the story of a threefold pain, and how it helped to relieve the suffering of the world.

James Judson was a worldling of the most pronounced type. He held an important position in a large firm, which paid him a princely salary. His hours outside of business were given over to the pursuit of pleasure. He was a familiar figure at all clubs, and an ardent patron of the racecourse. Whilst not offending the moral conscience of the community, he yielded himself up to the sensuous in life. He spent money with a prodigal hand, living always to the full capacity of his income. In a word, he belonged to the Esaus of history, willing to barter his birthright for the passing pleasure. There was, however, one redeeming quality in his character. He loved his daughter with a consuming passion. Her mother had died in giving her to the world, and all the devotion of the father's soul was showered upon the child. Norah was a spoiled girl. She had never felt the touch of pain nor the shadow of disappointment. Her every whim was gratified. She moved like a beautiful butterfly among the crimson flowers, tasting all the sweets of life. There was no sense

of serious obligation to others. Because of her beauty and charm she captured all hearts, and a host of admirers fawned at her feet and turned her pretty head with adulation.

Then the War came and plunged the world in agony and woe. So universal was the misery, that it seemed a disgrace for anyone to be immune. Pleasure became a jarring note, and luxury a scandal. The person who could walk the pathway of ease, wholly indifferent to all the surrounding distress, was looked upon as utterly callous and selfish. Any suggestion of extravagant mirth or indulgent content appeared repulsive to a sympathetic mind. The most detested man in the community was he who fattened upon the War. The most despised woman, no matter what her station or charm, was she who clothed herself in "purple and fine linen," whilst the afflicted cried for compassion.

Judson and his daughter went smiling on their way, untouched by the suffering about them. At first, the empty sycophants of Society pandered to their love of homage, but gradually there grew up an intolerance of idle, selfish people. It was not long before the Judsons felt their isolation. As people dropped away into various groups for war work, their pride was hurt and it irritated them into resentment. They openly professed themselves out of sympathy with the War, and refused

to devote any of their time to the interests of others.

As sometimes happens, adversity halted their mad gallop towards selfish gratification, and awakened within them a sense of altruism. The firm of which the father was managing director collapsed like a house of cards. The War had turned the tides of trade in other directions. A hurried meeting of the Board revealed the fact that German-made goods were no longer marketable. Mr. Judson must proceed at once to England and see if arrangements could be made with English houses for the supply of similar articles. In the meantime, expenses must be greatly reduced, and the manager must be content with a smaller salary.

It hurt the father deeply, because he must deny his daughter her accustomed luxuries. They talked it over together, and he was greatly moved by Norah's generous and glad response to his appeal. The fine apartments would be given up at once, and whilst her father was abroad she would live very quietly at an inexpensive hotel. "Sweet are the uses of adversity!" Scarcely had Mr. Judson sailed, when Norah found herself surrounded by sympathetic friends. She had misjudged people, for she felt that they might reasonably have rejoiced in her downfall. Their tactful

kindness opened up new visions for her, and gradually she discovered the delight and joy of service.

Meanwhile, Judson was nearing the coast of England. They were in the war zone now, and great precaution was taken, especially at night, to avoid the deadly submarine. The ship carried neither troops nor war supplies, so they hoped to reach their destination without mishap. Judson had been thinking hard during the days of the voyage. He still suffered from the sense of material loss, simply because his life had been so long horizoned by worldly things. But slowly his eyes were being opened to the importance of values, and he craved another chance to readjust his life.

He was sitting alone in the friendly shelter of the promenade deck, thinking of Norah and their future together. Darkness had settled upon the sea and blotted out everything. A great silence brooded over the waters, when suddenly there was a terrific crash, and he was thrown violently against the rail. In a second there was great confusion, but immediately the officers were at their stations and order was restored. A torpedo had torn through the centre of the steamer, and little time was given for getting the passengers into the boats. With amazing speed and skill the women

and children were safely launched. Judson threw himself into the work of assistance, and forgot everything else in his desire to be of service. He was almost the last man to seek a place for himself. Not until there was no one to minister to did he think of his own danger. The ship was preparing for a final plunge when he hastily caught hold of a deck chair and slipped into the blackness. When his mind cleared sufficiently to grip the situation, he heard confused noises. There were shots—he remembered a previous case when submarine crews fired upon drowning men. He was filled with a great anger, and pushing away the chair he swam with long strokes towards a dimly-discerned raft. They helped him to crawl upon it. Then he felt something sharp and hot tear through his side, and he lost consciousness.

When he revived again he found himself in a hospital cot, with doctors and nurses in attendance. They told him simply that he had been very severely wounded, and had undergone a rather delicate operation. Everything depended upon his remaining very quiet and rigidly abstaining from worry. To his enquiries they answered that his daughter had been cabled for and would be present as soon as he was able to see her.

When she arrived he was still very weak, but the convalescence promised to be fairly rapid. They

were like sweethearts together! Physical suffering had been more redemptive than material, and he was now anxious to do something for those who were bearing the agony of the War. Only those who suffer can really relieve suffering. Father and daughter were learning the atoning quality of pain. Their own affliction would act like myrrh for the healing of the world's distress. Together they planned what they would do when he was ready to sail back home. The daughter's experience in nursing her father decided *her* future. She would offer herself as V.A.D. to any military hospital that would accept her services. And Judson determined that as soon as he could be released he would leave the firm and devote his whole time and energy to helping the wounded soldiers. Thus they completed their plans, and entered upon the highest ministry which men and angels exercise.

Norah Judson developed a passion for her work. It was not always easy or pleasant. In fact, at the outset it was most unpleasant and difficult. She was assigned such menial work as scrubbing floors, washing dishes, preparing the food trays—things she had never done in all her pampered life. But she never murmured nor faltered in her long and often wearing duties. She manifested such strong desire for work, and exhibited such fidelity

and capability in its accomplishment, that she was quickly promoted to more delicate tasks. Her hour of delight was in securing flowers for the wards and arranging them artistically. The Tommies watched her admiringly, and soon she captivated them all. Her fund of cheer and humour seemed inexhaustible—she was like a ray of sunshine on a dark, tempestuous day. When she was at last permitted to help with the patients, her joy was profound. She prepared the dressings, helped with the bandaging, and in a thousand ways ministered to the scarred and broken heroes of the battlefield. There was healing in her touch and comfort in her smile. Hundreds of lads carried out of the hospital with them an inspiring memory of her tenderness and devotion. Those who returned to the trenches were often cheered and strengthened by the recollection of her gracious personality.

On a day never to be forgotten she was given her orders for France. When she reached the Stationary Hospital and heard the distant boom of the guns she felt like singing the Magnificat. How poor a thing her ante-war life seemed! What was there in all the gaiety of society comparable to this rich experience and profound joy? She could only try now to wash out the selfishness of those empty years! So she set about her new life with

bubbling enthusiasm and increased consecration.

She had been there some months when the Hospital became the busiest place of mercy on the Western Front. The German advance had forced the casualty clearing-stations to retire, and consequently this hospital became the evacuating centre for a two-Army Front. Thousands of cases were cared for every day. Although the staff of doctors and nurses was doubled, they could not cope with the situation. Additional help was requisitioned from other hospitals, and even then the work was carried on day and night. It was marvellous how human strength endured the strain put upon it!

One night, when the tide of wounded flowed more thinly than usual, Norah volunteered to help in the operating room, because the sisters there had reached the limit of human endurance. There were a few cases that must be attended to, so she took up her new duties at the midnight hour. Whilst the doctor was performing a rather serious operation, Hun machines were heard, and soon the explosion of bombs shook the building and rattled the windows. The doctor ordered everyone to the dug-outs, saying that he would try and finish the operation alone. But Norah pleaded hard to remain, declaring that she was not in the least alarmed. So consent was given, and the task of

mercy drew to its completion. Suddenly, like a stroke of lightning and crash of thunder, a huge bomb tore down through the operating room, killing all its occupants and rending the building into fragments. The ward for wounded officers was situated in that section of the hospital, and nearly all its members perished. The ruins caught fire, and a double peril faced the men who sprang to the rescue. With almost superhuman strength they pulled broken timbers and tumbled bricks and stone away, and drew out the dead and dying. The flames lit up the tragic scene, and then those fiends of the sky returned and dropped bombs upon the rescuing party.

History does not record a blacker crime than the one perpetrated on that night by the boastful disciples of Kultur! Nor must the future reveal a mistaken clemency for the spirit which inspired it. Let this simple record, however, pay tribute to the high courage and noble sacrifice of those who stood calmly at the post of duty and gave their all whilst ministering to others. And particularly let the name of Norah Judson be a memorial to all generations!

When the cable reached Mr. Judson, he was just taking over his duties as chairman of the Hospitals Commission. The terrible news left him broken and speechless! Only that morning he had re-

ceived a letter from Norah just brimming over with pride and joy! They had written each other every day, telling all their plans and work. Their correspondence was more like that of brother and sister than father and daughter. There was a sweet rivalry between them. When Judson returned from England, he immediately arranged his business interests and then enlisted for home service, asking that he be given something to do in connection with hospital work. So he passed from one position to another, until yesterday he received his present appointment. He had told Norah in his letter last night just what it meant, and how splendid were the opportunities to serve the lads in blue. She would rejoice in his promotion and pray for his success. And now she was gone—the apple of his eye, the light of his life! In comparison with this pain his material loss and physical suffering were as nothing. How could he face the barren future without the sweet inspiration of her love and sympathy? And yet he knew that she would have him go steadily and bravely on. The best way to honour her memory would be to consecrate himself to the task for which she gave “the last full measure of devotion.”

So with a gnawing pain at his heart, he lifted up his cross and marched forward. His own grief made him more tender and sympathetic. He

was now linked with the many who had been bereaved by the War. Mothers and wives came to him with greater confidence, and bore away with them the balm of healing. The lines in his face and the grey in his hair, both eloquent of his own agony, made a strong appeal to all upon whom the War had laid its cold hand. He worked hard and zealously at his task. Many were the reforms he wrought in the hospital regime, and numberless were the acts of personal attention to wounded men. He took a special interest in discharged soldiers, and succeeded in establishing trades' schools where these men might be educated to independence. The Pensions Fund absorbed much of his thought and time, and here he was able to bring about improvements for which he had the life-long gratitude of many women and children. His influence was great in high places, and he was eventually successful in securing Government legislation for the protection and aid of returned soldiers. There was no tendency in his work to foster a “soldier class,” and he opposed with all his force the exploitation of returned men by self-seeking politicians. His chief concern was to induce men to live for the ideals which had moved them to fight, and for which so many had died. He had a fine vision for Canada, and he sought eagerly to impress it upon the minds of all soldiers.

The Hospitals Commission gave a dinner and entertainment on Christmas Day to all wounded soldiers. Most elaborate preparations were made. The huge dining hall was wonderfully decorated, and when the boys in khaki and blue sat down at the groaning tables, there was a flash of colour and a steady hum of merriment that pleased both eye and ear. There were representatives there of all the historic battles in which Canada had played a glorious part. Experiences were exchanged, past incidents were re-lived, and pleasing reminiscences were recalled. It was a merry occasion! The men jollied one another, and indulged in friendly rivalries about the various divisions and battalions. Scarred veterans with five chevrons on their sleeves good-humouredly bantered the men who had entered the Service in the latest year of the War. There were men present who carried four gold stripes, and they were much petted by the ladies who waited on the tables. Grey-haired soldiers sat by the side of beardless youths, and here and there a South African veteran manifested an air of simple dignity and superiority.

After the feasting there was a fine programme of songs and choruses. The men demanded all the popular songs of the battlefield, and they sang them with a vigour and eagerness that thrilled the heart. It required little imagination to visual-

ize all the stirring incidents that this war-honoured music called to mind. Each chorus was followed by bursts of laughter as some one related humorous incidents or well-remembered places connected with it. As enthusiasm grew, they began to call for speeches, and many ringing utterances were delivered that night. At length they summoned the Chairman of the Commission to the platform, and when he passed down the long line of guests they rose as one man and cheered him with deafening shouts.

"Boys," he began very quietly, "we commemorate to-day the anniversary of a wonderful Birth. And what I have to say to you will centre about that fact. It was not only the birth of a Person, it was a new birth of humanity. A fresh era began with it, and all the centuries since owe their inspiration and value to the event of the first Christmas Day. Every birth is attended by pain! And the pain gives dignity and value to that which is born. I venture to think that our Nation and Empire will date a new era with the War. All the agony and misery of it will produce higher ideals and nobler consecration. Many of us have been born again during this world-tragedy. Out of all the horror and tumult we have won a new vision and a lofty conception. I am proud to associate myself with you in the dawn of the larger epoch.

It remains now for us to take our rich experience and increased power and apply them to the service of our country. We are going to *live* for the ideals that all of you have fought and suffered for. As proved champions of the Right, bearing in your bodies the scars of honourable service, you will 'carry on' in the bloodless battle for a nobler civilization. The need is urgent, the issues are tremendous, the call is clear! It brings me great happiness to dedicate the remaining years of my life to a worthy response to the summons. And I am profoundly anxious to share in the high task with you, my brothers."

A reverent silence followed the brief speech. The men felt that applause would be out of place. They stood at attention as Col. Judson passed down the hall. Then they sang "God save the King," and filed out of the banqueting room, a new light burning in their eyes and a royal desire throbbing in their souls.

