

priests, our priests, watching over your boys. Her churches were ever open to them; her sacraments followed them to the most dangerous fields. And when death came, be it suddenly or after long suffering, it found them utterly fearless and uncowed, because, through the ministry of her priests, they had already found the peace of God. Of those angels of mercy, two, Fathers McMenamin and Dore, gladly, willingly, cheerfully laid down their lives for your boys, and I trust they will be specially remembered in your prayers to-day. For was it not due to them, and their confrères, that our boys died such consoling deaths? With their beads were they found, twined around fingers twitching with pain; with the crucifix pressed to their dying lips, and through their pain they smiled at death. For them it held no terror. Through their torn and mangled bodies their exultant souls shone forth, their duty nobly done, and their consciences at peace.

Buried in Consecrated Ground.

And they were buried, if I might say so, in consecrated ground. They sleep—most of them—in the bosom of her who was rightly called "the Eldest Daughter of the Church." France can boast of many noble heroes that lie buried in her soil. But never was her lovely bosom opened to receive such a tragic and varied harvest as during this war. "There in that rich earth was a richer dust concealed"—the best and bravest of many lands sleep beneath her sun-kissed soil.

In this place and on this day the oft-repeated scene seems strangely present to us: the small cortege, the drooping volleys, the lingering sounds of the "Last Post"; we can see the poor French peasants, bare-headed in the silence, their eyes full of pity, and we can almost hear the voice of the Angel of Death: "Pass, soldier of New Zealand!" as the gates of eternity open on our dearest. Yet to most of them even this scant ritual was denied: they were, perforce, buried as they fell. And so the khaki uniform, so strangely symbolic, by its very hue, of the thought of death—"dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return"—became the shroud in which they were buried.

The Roses and Lilies of France.

But wherever they fell, and however they were buried, to you who mourn for them I can safely promise that their graves will be tended with all the care that love and gratitude can summon up. The French people have adopted your dead, who died for them as well as for you. The roses and lilies of France will bloom above their graves, typifying the purity of their purpose, and the noble ardor of their gallant young souls. But above all else, thousands of prayers will rise to Heaven from French hearts for those noble sons of a far-off race, who traversed 12,000 miles of ocean to stand by France in her hour of need.

The Greatest Sufferers.

For these we mourn—for the dead who will never more return. But not for these alone. As we saw them go forth, clean-limbed, exquisite in their pride of life, for many of us the sting of parting was forgotten in the enthusiasm evoked by that gallant youth, marching forth to fight for justice. We covered them with flowers, and acclaimed them as worthy sons of a gallant race. But beyond the pageantry and the show there were those who saw the fields of death and the shattered bodies of men, made hideous with pain. By their sides walked their mothers and sisters, bravely smiling, bravely stifling their tears. But to them the flowers we had offered their soldier boys seemed like funeral wreaths offered to men who were doomed to die—seemed like the garlands of death. And when the pageantry was over, and the long line of ships, crossing the bar of the outer searchlights, had glided into darkness: when night had cast her kindly mantle over the scene, oh! it was then that the proud heads drooped, as the women cried in the bitterness of their hearts for the men who had gone far from them! They had given more than their lives: they had given the lives of those who were their all, of sons, of brothers, of husbands, of lovers. Theirs is the heaviest of the many heavy burdens of these five fateful years. For them, too, would I be-

speak your prayers this morning. To them I would say in the words of Abraham Lincoln, spoken in circumstances not unlike our own: "We pray that Our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

"Take Up Our Quarrel With the Foe."

Shall all these sacrifices be in vain? The sacrifice of those who died, and the greater sacrifice of those for whom life now holds hope no longer? Surely not! But if we are to profit by them, we must walk in the footsteps of the brave men who died. From Flanders fields their voices call on us to take up the burden, which they carried so bravely:—

"We are the dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.  
Take up our quarrel with the foe."

That is the call that comes to us. A new battle has to be fought now. The evils that brought forth this war have not ended with it. The evil of greed, the curse of unrestrained ambition, the deadly blight of rank materialism: in short, the pagan outlook of to-day—there is your enemy! And that enemy is within your own citadel. Yesterday you were fighting a foe outside the gates of your Empire: now is it yours to fight a deadlier foe on your own hearthstones!

A Twofold Lesson.

To overcome that foe, the first lesson taught us by the dead is that of unity. Let us have peace here, now at last, as they have peace in their foreign graves! "Their blood flowed in the same stream, in the same deep pit their bodies lie cold and stark together." By their union in danger and in death they created us a nation. But four score years ago, and this country was a remote little island, lying within the confines of an unknown sea. To-day we are a nation, as such recognised and honored at the greatest gatherings of nations held in human history. The story of the colonial time is now behind us, and the story of the great war is behind us, and Time waits with uplifted pen before the white scroll of the unwritten page of the future. What will stand on that new page? Will it be a story of honor—or of dishonor? Of honor, surely; else we were unworthy of the price of our redemption! But of honor on one condition only: that we learn the twofold lesson the dead have taught us, brotherly charity and justice for all. Fail to heed that lesson, and your shame will ring down the everlasting ages! Fail to heed that lesson, and you break faith with your dead, and their sacrifice will have been in vain!

"To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch: be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die,  
We shall not sleep, though poppies blow  
In Flanders fields."

Tried in a Furnace of Fire.

Who could have foretold five years ago, when, as a nation, we were yet in our infancy, and had scarcely attained a sure foothold in the world, that such a great crisis would suddenly arise and not overwhelm us? But it came, and it was nobly faced. We have been tried in the furnace in our youth, and, as a result, we stand now, a small but honored unit in the comity of nations. Your name and your fame are household words, far beyond the confines of our Empire. With scarce 1,000,000 people—not the population of many a city in Europe and America—New Zealand can sadly claim that her children are buried all over the earth. The traveller of the future will find in 10 separate nations little crosses bearing this inscription: "Here lies a gallant New Zealand soldier." What sad memories they will evoke! But what a glow of pride, as he bends down to read the mouldering inscription!

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