

# The Battalion

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## MORE PROGRESS

Somewhere back in the days of our lost youth we remember hearing someone voice the popular platitude to the effect that inaction is the genesis of idleness, which is sin surely. To be busy is to be good—that is another platitude. Keep working, sweat, keep everlastingly busy and the soul will be remade and recast into something better. Keep going, my lads, and if you live, the world and all its works will be yours.

This is the religion of an industrial age as preached by the brawny high priests of Lucre. This is the doctrine of Maximum Output and the gospel of The Gods of Machinery. But—platitudes are at best only platitudes, and what shall a man profit, we wonder, if he fills his eyes with sweat so that he is intellectually blind?

To a few it is given to look clearly beyond the horizons of thought. How with these if they bow to the popular credo and become dizzied by the rush and swirl of things, if gears and little cogged wheels mesh out the frail essences of thought?

Now this college is and most others are peopled largely by the sons of industry who have taken the place of the robed and solemn scholars of other days. In place of robes we are not unpleasantly regaled by the sight of radiant sweaters, and libraries are constructed after stadiums are built. Stadiums are places of pleasure, certainly, but libraries . . . What will wiser men of later years have to say of all this sweat-blinded, money-seeking, militant swarming of intellectual ants on their little mound of industry?

Illusion—that mistaken perception of life that makes it a happy melodrama, and without which this existence of ours would seem a dull and drab affair. Old Bill Shakespeare once compared life to a stage, with men and women as merely players, each going and coming in his turn. Is it little more or less than that now?

For those who think that the world is becoming more practical every day, it would be well for them also to discover that it is also becoming more illusioned and deluded. Although it is a necessity for man to be practical eight hours out of every twenty-four, he constantly rebels against it, and in the long evenings after work the mind still seeks peace in the happy illusions of far away air castles and dream boats. Such happy unrealities indeed are not only for youth; they are for every age of man. In childhood there is the yearning to be strong and big like papa. In youth there are the romantic fallacies of the ideal dream-girl and Prince Charming that surely captivates and carries away the heart of every adolescent. In middle age there is ever the burning desire to have the mastery of eighty-seven Napoleons and to conquer the world. In old age there are the recollections of life and how perfectly grand it must seem to them to live again all the experiences of their lifetime.

The practical things of life only serve to make illusions sweeter and every age regardless must have its romanticists and be fed on illusions, lest man should realize the cold certainties and thus bring the race to a tragic end.

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