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SOCIAL REFORM.

The necessities of the common people are of more importance than the luxuries and vanities of the great.

M. B.

"Bagged Forty-Two."

BY CHARLES F. RAYMOND.

Bagged forty-two.

What? Pheasants?

No, men.

Bagged them?

Yes, shot them, captured them, maimed them, made them prisoners of war, bagged forty-two men.

And I read this heading in a newspaper, displayed with a levity as if the King had gone a'hunting, when feathers flew upwards instead of souls.

Bagged 42.

We read it without a shudder, for all we saw was that forty-two of the enemy were gone, bagged, helpless. Some dead? Yes. Some wounded? Yes, a few. And the prisoners? Oh, they will have to be fed.

Has war hardened us have our hearts become calloused, are we less human than we were two years ago? Has the fountain of our tears dried, can we not mourn for the slain? We turn aside to the history of the past and read of the Picts and Scots, and the hardy Vikings, who loved war for war's sake, and we close the book of history, thanking God that we are not as they were.

And so we should be thankful, for are not the pangs of death less keen from a bursting, mutilating shell from the foe unseen, than from the brutal blow of a broadaxe from a hand in the open? And is death not more happily sudden—a rifle ball, darkness, peace? For we give death in a way approved by the onrolling civilization of the 20th century, and should we not be thankful for the improved methods of quick and scientific killing?

But we bagged forty-two.

Fifteen of them were killed, and somewhere across the blood-streaked veldt, perchance a wife is mourning the man whose name she bears. He was bagged. Somewhere to-night, perhaps a sweetheart awaits the message of constancy from the swain. But it is a vain wait, for they have bagged him also.

"Mother, where is father?"

"Oh, father was bagged; he was

one of the forty-two."

And about the wounded ones of this gigantic hunter's pot?

"My back! I'm shot clean through the back, doctor; will I live?"

"My leg, where is my leg? Cut off! My God! am I a cripple?"

Yes, you wounded, crippled, and maimed, you are part of the bag.

Why the levity of the press when men are blotted out, maimed, and crippled, and hearts forever lost to hope? Why? Because we, whom the press so truly reflect, have lost our finer sensibility of the the horrors of war.

Take the heartaches, throb upon throb; take the anguished prayers, prayer upon prayer; take the sleepless nights, night upon night; take the doctor of uncertainty, horror upon horror; take the blood spilled, drop upon drop; take the scars, scar upon scar, take the tears, tear upon tear; the cripples, cripple upon cripple; the groans and moans, groan upon groan, moan upon moan; the graves, grave upon grave; the vacant chair, the widow, the orphans, the one-time sweethearts, the hopes long dead, hope upon hope, the despair, the homes wrecked; take them all, and build them before you, a monument inconceivable. A monument to what? To liberty, we say.

But we bagged forty-two.

To Write of Birds as People

Neltje Blanchan, whose delightful nature-books have been so successful, will begin in the March issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, a series of articles dealing with the personal side of the birds. This clever woman has made a close study of bird-life, and her discoveries and observations are most interesting. She has found among the feathered songsters many striking resemblances to men and women, and in this series of articles she will tell of these. In some instances the almost human actions of birds, as she tells of them are astonishing.

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