

neath the basket of the balloon, broke away and drifted and wobbled downwards. The 'plane followed it like a hawk. It vanished behind trees. The 'plane swooped upwards again and sent a red stream of bullets into the bag of the deserted balloon. The dark bulk reddened and swayed and sank in crimson defeat.

The rattle of rifle fire, the ripple of machine-guns and the bangs of "Archies" filled the air like the sound of a distant, broken surf. Sparks and jagged splashes of rose and lilac painted the dusk above and about the black form of the raider. Below and behind the darkling hollows, the big guns flashed stolidly, firing on their distant targets, heedless of the little battle in the air.

Suddenly the diminishing form of the aeroplane showed a spark of red—a heart of red—a widening wound of flame. It dipped and settled in its flight, then dropt like a falling star.

I nudged old Billy with my heel and we jogged down the hill into Hersin.

* The author of the above is an "Old Boy."

A Rustic Conversation

—ON—

The Passing of Milk-maids and Aristocratic Cows

THE OLD MAN

"Oh where is merry Mary of the meadow?

She was wont to be about about this time,

Picking hips and hops and dew-drenched eglantine,

Or with slips and slops amilking of the kine.

Looking always like a daisy,

Always singing something crazy,

Always bonneted, beribbon'd and sublime.

Where are all the thoughtful courtly portly cows?

Have they fatty 'generation of the heart?

Oh those Jerseys, Guernseys, Alderneys and Sarks!

Oh those clover-cropping, low-voiced, walking larks!

All their horns were white and crumpled,

All the bees boomed by and bumbled,

All the crickets cracked their legs and walked in jerks.