

should be done. They go the length of saying that if the matter is neglected the republic will perish. Of course, the West doesn't want the republic to perish; it honestly believes itself preordained of all time to preserve the republic. It sits up o' nights to consider ways and means of insuring its preservation. It is very serious and doesn't at all like being chaffed about its hatred of Wall Street and its anxiety to pin annoying tick-tacks on the windows of ruthless corporations. It is going to get everything for the Folks that it can, and it sees nothing improper in the idea of State-owned elevators or of fixing by law the height of the heels on the slippers of its emancipated women. It is in keeping with the cheery contentment of the West that it believes that it has "at home" or can summon to its R. F. D. box everything essential to human happiness.

[Mr. Nicholson's second article, "Chicago," will appear in the February number.]

## WHITE MOMENTS

By Katharine Lee Bates

THE best of life, what is it but white moments?

Those swift illuminations when we see  
The flying shadows on the fragrant meadows  
As God beholds them from eternity.

White moments, when the bliss of being worships,  
And fear and shame are heretics that burn  
In the holy fire of exquisite desire  
For love's surrender and for love's return.

White moments, when a Power above the artist  
Catches his plodding chisel, sets it free,  
And from each urgent stroke there springs emergent  
The wayward grace that laughs at industry.

White moments, when the drowsing soul, sense-muffled,  
Is stung awake by some keen arrow-flight,  
And rends the bestial, claiming its celestial  
Succession in the lineage of light.

White moments, when the spirit, long confronted  
By all the bitter formulæ of fate,  
Inveterate romancer, finds its answer  
In some mysterious faith inviolate.

White moments, when the silence steals on sorrow,  
And in that hush the heart becomes aware  
Of wings that brood it, visions that seclude it  
Forevermore from folly, fear, and care.

The best of life, what is it but white moments?  
Freedoms that break the chain and fling the load,  
Irradiations, ardors, consecrations,  
—The starry shrines along our pilgrim road.

# "CAFARD"

BY JOHN GALSWORTHY



THE soldier Jean Liotard lay face to the earth by the bank of the River Drôme. He lay where the grass and trees ended, and between him and the shrunken greenish current was much sandy foreshore; for summer was at height, and the snows had long finished melting and passing down. The burning sun had sucked up all moisture, the earth was parched; but to-day a cool breeze blew. Willow and aspen leaves were fluttering and hissing as if millions of tiny kisses were being given up there; and a few swathes of white cloud were—it seemed—drawn, not driven, along the blue. The soldier Jean Liotard had fixed his eyes on the ground, where was nothing to see but the dried grasses. He had "*cafard*," for he was due to leave the hospital to-morrow and go up before the military authorities for "*prolongation*." There he would answer perfunctory questions and be told at once: "*Au dépôt*"; or have to lie naked before them that some "*major*" might prod his ribs to find out whether his heart, displaced by shell-shock, had gone back sufficiently to normal position. He had received one "*prolongation*," and so, wherever his heart might be now, he felt sure he would not get another. "*Au dépôt*" was the fate before him, fixed as that river flowing down to its death in the sea. He had "*cafard*"—the little black beetle in the brain which gnaws and eats and destroys all hope and heaven in a man. It had been working at him all last week, and now was at its monstrous depth of evil and despair. To begin again the cursed barrack-round, the driven life, until in a month perhaps, packed like bleating sheep in the troop-train, he made that journey once more to the fighting line.—"*A la hachette—à la hachette!*"

He had stripped off his red flannel jacket, and lay with shirt opened to the waist, to get the breeze against his heart.

In his brown, good-looking face the hazel eyes, which in these three God-deserted years had acquired a sort of startled gloom, stared out like a dog's, rather prominent, seeing only the thoughts within him—thoughts and images swirling round and round in a dark whirlpool, drawing his whole being deeper and deeper. He was unconscious of the summer hum and rustle, the cooing of the dove up in that willow tree, the winged enamelled fairies floating past, the chirr of the cicadas, that little brown lizard among the pebbles, almost within reach, seeming to listen to the beating of summer's heart, so motionless it lay; unconscious, as though in verity he were again deep in some stifling trench, with German shells whining over him, and the smell of muck and death making fetid the air. He was in the mood to curse God and die; for he was devout—a Catholic, and still went to Mass. And God, it seemed, had betrayed the earth, and Jean Liotard. All the enormities he had seen in his two years at the Front—the mouthless, mangled faces, the human ribs whence rats would steal; the frenzied, tortured horses, with leg or quarter rent away, still living; the rotted farms, the dazed and hopeless peasants; his innumerable suffering comrades; the desert of no man's land; and all the thunder and moaning of war, and the reek and the freezing of war; and the driving—the callous, perpetual driving—by some great Force which shovelled warm human hearts and bodies, warm human hopes and loves by the million into the furnace; and over all, dark sky without a break, without a gleam of blue, or lift, anywhere—all this enclosed him, lying in the golden heat, so that not a glimmer of life or hope could get at him. Back into it all again! Back into it, he who had been through forty times the hell that the "*majors*" ever endured, five hundred times the hell ever glimpsed at by those journalists safe on their chairs with their ink-pots full of