

EUROPE'S MOLOCH CLAIMS OLD MAN'S SON; HE COMES TO AMERICA AND STARVES

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New York Call Thursday, April 19, 1917, page 3

The story of the Good Samaritan was enacted yesterday morning, not on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, but on 19th street between Second and Third avenues.

A man who said his name was John Smith was sitting on one of the doorsteps in the sun, crying softly. There was a sort of dead look on his face, and tears dribbled down his withered cheeks. Every once in a while one could see him gulp spasmodically. He had no collar on, and his shirt was ragged.

First, a well-dressed man stopped. "'Smatter? Yuh sick?"

The old man muttered something about being out of work, and the well-dressed man went on.

Women Don't Even Look

Then a woman and her daughter, dressed in light and colored raiment bought only a week before to celebrate Easter, passed. They turned their heads the other way. Spring always brings so many of these poor fellows out. It seems they were always sitting on the doorsteps in the sun, making people feel uncomfortable.

Next, a ragged derelict, who looked as though some force in the warm spring had led him to wander up to 19th street from Park Row, shuffled past. Seeing the man on the step, he paused. He, too, asked what was the matter.

Three Days' Fast

"I haven't eaten for three days," the old man said. "And I'm just four weeks over from England. I thought that I could get work over here. But I can't. I'm too old, they say. I thought that there would be work here because this country was at peace. And, then, as soon as I get here, war is declared.

"There are no jobs in England now. They won't give the young men work. They have to enlist. And they won't give the old men work, because they can get plenty of young women to do it."

The ragged Bowery habitué dug into his pocket and pulled out a dime. There was no noise of clinking coins as he did so. "Here," he said, "this'll get you a bite to eat and a drink. Cheer

up!” Smith did not want to take the money, but the other slipped it into his pocket and left while Smith rumbled after it.

He was reluctant to tell his story. All he would say at first was that he was out of work, that he was just over from England and that he was hungry.

Son Enlisted Early

Then he told of his son, who had been one of the first to go to the front. He never came back. He was never heard from. And there was a wife and family left for the government to care for. They weren’t doing it, as far as he could see. The wife had to keep right on working, and the children had to be taken care of in a nursery during the day. When she got home at night, she washed their clothes and mended them and cleaned the tiny rooms. Her thoughts were always shooting out through the black, thick city to Somewhere in France where he had been.

The old man couldn’t bear to stay there, bringing not a cent to the support of the family. He couldn’t bear to feel that he was a drag on the brave little woman. She wasn’t his own daughter, anyway. So, between them, they raked together the passage money and nothing else, and John Smith came to the land of the free and the home of the brave.

As he shuffled down the street to the nearest saloon where he could get a bite of free lunch with the drink that was to cheer him up, a hand organ with posters begging men to enlist, to join the navy, jangled out with false joy: “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary.”

“Yes,” said Smith, “it’s a long, long way, indeed.”