

St. Dunstan's Red and White

Ex eodem fonte fides et scientia

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Distant, random visions tumble down his page:
Irrelevant, unsought-for, solitary grains of past,
They drop from mind tight-packed with morsels of an age
Half-fabulous, half-forgot—these ghosts too rudely cast
Aside, and, fellow-jostled, smothered in the blast.

Nameless friendly faces in an English pub;
A landing barge; an A. T. S. on sentry-go;
Saint Paul's; some rain-diluted stew; the great hub-bub
Of C.-in-C.'s inspection day; pup-tents in snow;
A mine-field taped; a mobile bath; an army show;
The Christmas-comfort hoarding up of daily rum
("The product of the sum and difference—of the sum—"),

A blasted church somewhere in France; a frenzied greeting
In some vague town; two miles of Gerry convoy burned;
Some un-flag-wrapped, un-pretty dead; an evening eating
Eytie food; aircraft recognition learned
The hard way; an eighty-eight; an Indian truck upturned;
And mud—in miles of clinging dough about the knees
("It was in that year his army crossed the Pyrenees.")

A sinking ship; a Naafi dance on pay-day night;
A game of poker—God knows where; the colonel's dog:-
They come—intruding, casual, joy-or-sorrow—bright,
Nostalgic bits of past, dim voices in the fog.
But stern reality and constant elbow-jog
Of term exams keep heartless watch: his classmates see
A patient, studious lad—who is strangely fond of tea.

—A. P. C.