

**THE GREAT PUSH;
AN EPISODE OF THE
GREAT WAR**

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The great push; an episode of the great war by Patrick MacGill

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AN EPISODE OF THE GREAT WAR

BY

PATRICK MACGILL

AUTHOR OF

THE RED HORIZON, THE RAT-PIT,
CHILDREN OF THE DEAD END, ETC.



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TO
MARGARET

If we forget the Fairies,
And tread upon their rings,
God will perchance forget us,
And think of other things.

When we forget you, Fairies,
Who guard our spirits' light:
God will forget the morrow,
And Day forget the Night.

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INTRODUCTION

THE justice of the cause which endeavours to achieve its object by the murdering and maiming of mankind is apt to be doubted by a man who has come through a bayonet charge. The dead lying on the fields seem to ask, "Why has this been done to us? Why have you done it, brothers? What purpose has it served?" The battleline is a secret world, a world of curses. The guilty secrecy of war is shrouded in lies, and shielded by bloodstained swords; to know it you must be one of those who wage it, a party to dark and mysterious orgies of carnage. War is the purge of repleted kingdoms, needing a close place for its operations.

I have tried in this book to give, as far as I am allowed, an account of an attack in which I took part. Practically the whole book was written in the scene of action, and the chapter dealing with our night at Les Brebis, prior to the Big Push, was written in the trench between midnight

and dawn of September 25th; the concluding chapter in the hospital at Versailles two days after I had been wounded at Loos.

PATRICK MACGILL.

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