

ECHOES OF THE WAR

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Echoes of the War by James Matthew Barrie

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JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

**ECHOES
OF THE WAR**

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ECHOES OF THE WAR

BY

J. M. BARRIE

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1918

G.S.

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**THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER
MEDALS**



THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS*

THREE nice old ladies and a criminal, who is even nicer, are discussing the war over a cup of tea. The criminal, who is the hostess, calls it a dish of tea, which shows that she comes from Caledonia; but that is not her crime.

They are all London charwomen, but three of them, including the hostess, are what are called professionally 'charwomen *and*' or simply 'ands.' An 'and' is also a caretaker when required; her name is entered as such in ink in a registry book, financial transactions take place across a counter between her and the registrar, and altogether she is of a very different social status from one who, like Mrs. Haggerty, is a charwoman but nothing else. Mrs. Haggerty, though present, is not at the party by invitation; having seen Mrs. Dowey buying the winkles, she followed her down-

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stairs, and so has shuffled into the play and sat down in it against our wish. We would remove her by force, or at least print her name in small letters, were it not that she takes offence very readily and says that nobody respects her. So, as you have slipped in, you can sit there, Mrs. Haggerty; but keep quiet.

There is nothing doing at present in the caretaking way for Mrs. Dowey, our hostess; but this does not damp her, caretaking being only to such as she an extra financially and a halo socially. If she had the honour of being served with an income-tax paper she would probably fill in one of the nasty little compartments with the words, 'Trade—charring; Profession (if any)—caretaking.' This home of hers (from which, to look after your house, she makes occasionally temporary departures in great style, escorting a barrow) is in one of those what-care-I streets that you discover only when you have lost your way; on discovering them, your duty is to report them to