

Two Viewpoints

By Amelia Josephine Burr

A German soldier in his journal wrote:

HE was a French Boy Scout—a little lad
No bigger than my Hansel. He refused
To tell if any of his countrymen
Were hidden thereabout. Fifty yards on
We ran into an ambush. Well, of course
We shot him—little fool! Poor little fool!
Thinking himself a hero as he stood
Facing our guns, so little and so young
Against the sunny vineyard green, I thought
What wasted courage! for the child was brave,
Fool as he was. The pity ...

Here there came
A sudden shrapnel, and the writing stopped....

Did I write that? O God—did I write that?
Mine—they were mine, the folly and the waste.
Now the keen edge of death has cut away
The eyelids of my soul and I must bear
The perfect understanding of the dead.
Now that I know myself as I am known,
How shall my soul endure Eternity?
God, God, if there be pity left for me,
Send to my son the child that I despised
A messenger to burn into his soul
While still he lives, the truth I died to learn!