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THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Dominic Hibberd

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2. *The Merry-Go-Round* by Mark Gertler (1916). '... in this combination of blaze, and violent and mechanised rotation and complete involution, utterly mindless intensity of sensational extremity, you have made a real and ultimate revelation' (D. H. Lawrence to Gertler, 9 October 1916). Photograph © Tate Gallery.
3. *The Signing of the Peace in the Hall of Mirrors, 28 June 1919* by William Orpen. In front of the leaders of the victorious countries, German representatives sign the Treaty of Versailles. The overwhelming architecture and crooked mirrors make a mocking background. One of the reflected silhouettes is Orpen himself, official British artist at the conference. Photograph © The Trustees of the Imperial War Museum.
4. *The Menin Road 1918* by Adrian Hill. British troops pass through the site of the old town gate in the walls of Ypres. Plates 4 and 5 were published together as No 1 in a series 'Ten Years After 1918–1928' in *Answers Magazine* (20 October 1928). Photograph © Bodleian Library, from *John Johnson Collection: Great War. Box 24*.
5. *The Menin Gate 1928* by Adrian Hill. The new gate, completed in 1927, is a memorial to the armies of the

British Empire who held the Ypres Salient; it bears the names of 54 889 soldiers who have no known graves.

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For my Father

Editor's Preface

J. H. Plumb has said that 'the aim of (the historian) is to understand men both as individuals and in their social relationships in time. "Social" embraces all of man's activities – economic, religious, political, artistic, legal, military, scientific – everything, indeed, that affects the life of mankind.' Literature is itself similarly comprehensive. From Terence onwards writers have embraced his dictum that all things human are their concern.

It is the aim of this series to trace the interweavings of history and literature, to show by judicious quotation and commentary how those actually working within the various fields of human activity influenced and were influenced by those who were writing the novels, poems and plays within the several periods. An attempt has been made to show the special contribution that such writers make to the understanding of their times by virtue of their peculiar imaginative 'feel' for their subjects and the intensely personal angle from which they observe the historical phenomena that provide their inspiration and come within their creative vision. In its turn the historical evidence, besides and beyond its intrinsic importance, serves to 'place' the imaginative testimony of the writers.

The authors of the several volumes in this series have sought to intermingle history and literature in the conviction that the study of each is enhanced thereby. They have been free to adopt their own approach within the broad general pattern of the series. The topics themselves have sometimes also a particular slant and emphasis. Commentary, for instance, has had to be more detailed in some cases than in others. All the contributors to the series are at one, however, in the belief (at a time when some critics would not only divorce texts from their periods but even from their authors) that literature is the creation of actual men and women, actually living in an identifiable set of historical circumstances, themselves both the creatures and the creators of their times.

ARTHUR POLLARD