

THE COMEDY OF WAR

I

ON THE UNION SIDE

PRIVATE O'HALLORAN, detailed for special duty in advance of the picket line, sat reclining against a huge red oak. Within reach lay a rifle of beautiful workmanship. In one hand he held a blackened brier-root pipe, gazing on it with an air of mock regret. It had been his companion on many a weary march and on many a lonely day, when, as now, he was doing duty as a sharpshooter. But it was not much of a companion now. It held the flavor, but not the fragrance, of other days. It was empty, and so was O'Halloran's tobacco-pouch. It was nothing to grumble about, but the big, laughing Irishman liked his pipe, especially when it was full of tobacco. The words of an old song came to him, and he hummed them to himself: —