

Ramsey Milholland

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

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CHAPTER XVI.

—18—

That thunder in the soil, at first too deep within it to be audible, had come to the surface now and gradually became heard as the thunder of a million feet upon the training grounds. The bugles rang; sharper; the drums and fifes of town and village and countryside were the drums and fifes of a war that came closer and closer to every hearth between the two oceans.

All the old symbols became symbols bright and new, as if no one had ever seen them before. "America" was like a new word, and the song "America" was like a new song. All the dusty blankets of orating candidates, seeking to rouse bored auditors with "the old flag"; all the mechanical patriotics of school and church and club; all these time-worn, flaccid things leaped suddenly into living color. The flag became brilliant and strange to see—strange with a meaning that seemed new, a meaning long known, yet never known till now.

And so hearts that thought they knew themselves came upon ambushes of emotion and hidden indwellings of spirit not guessed before. Dora Youem, listening to the "Star-Spangled Banner," sung by children of immigrants to an out-of-tune old piano in a mission clubroom, in Chicago, found herself crying with a soul-shaking heartiness in a way different from other ways that she had cried. Among the many things she thought of then was this: That the banner the children were studying about was in danger. The great country, almost a continent, had always seemed so untouchable, so safe and sure; she had never been able to conceive of a hostile power mighty enough to shake or even jar it. And since so great and fundamental a thing could not be injured, a war for its defense had appeared to be, in her eyes, not only wicked but ridiculous. At last, less and less vaguely, she had come to comprehend something of the colossal German threat, and the shadow that touched this bright banner of which the immigrants' children piped so briskly in the mission clubroom.

She began to understand, though she could not have told just why, or how, or at what moment understanding reached her. She began to understand that her country, threatened to the life, had flung its line those thousands of miles across the sea to stand and hold Hindenburg and Ludendorff and all their kaisers, kings, dukes and crown princes, their Krupp and Skoda monstrous engines, and their monstrous other engines of men made into armies. Through the long haze of misted sea-miles and the smoke of land-miles she perceived that brown line of ours, and knew it stood there that Freedom, and the Nation itself, might not perish from the earth.

And so, a week later, she went home and came nervously to Ramsey's mother and found how to direct the letter she wanted to write. He was in France.

As the old phrase went, she poured out her heart. It seems to apply to her letter.

She wrote: "Don't misunderstand me. I felt that my bitter speech to you had driven you to take the step you did. I felt that I had sent you to be killed, and that I ought to be killed for doing it, but I knew that you had other motives, too. I know, of course, that you thought of the country more than you did of me, or of any mad thing I could say—but I thought that what I said might have been the prompting thing, the word that threw you into it so hastily and before you were ready, perhaps. I dreaded to hear that terrible responsibility. I hope you understand."

"My great mistake has been—I thought I was so 'foolish'—it's been in my starting everything with a thought I'd never proven; that war is the worst thing, and all other evils were lesser. I was wrong. I was wrong, because war isn't the worst evil. Slavery is a worse evil, and now I want to tell you I have come to see that you are making war on those that make slavery. Yes, you are fighting those that make both war and slavery, and you are right, and I humbly reverence and honor all of you who are in this right war. I have come home to work in the Red Cross here; I work there all day, and all day I keep saying to myself—but I really mean to you—it's what I pray, and oh, how I pray it: 'God be with you and grant you the victory!' For you must win and you will win."

"Forgive me, oh, please—and if you will, could you write to me? I know you have things to do more important than 'girls'—but oh, couldn't you, please?"

This letter, which she had taken care not to dampen, as she wrote, went in slow course to the "American Expeditionary Forces in France," and finally found him whom it patiently sought. He delayed not long to answer, and in time she held in a shuddering hand the penciled missive he had sent her: "You forget all that comic talk about me enlisting because of your telling me to. I'd written my father I was going at the first chance a month and a half before that day when you said it. My mind was made up the first

time there was any talk of war, and you had about as much responsibility for my going as some little sparrow or something. Of course I don't mean I didn't pay any attention to the different things you said, because I always did, and I used to worry over it because I was afraid some day it would get you into trouble, and I'm mighty glad you've cut it out. That's right; you be a regular girl now. You always were one, and I knew that all right. I'm not as scared to write to you as I was to talk to you, so I guess you know I was mighty tickled to get your letter. It sounded blue, but I was glad to get it. You bet I'll write to you! I don't suppose you could have any idea how glad I was to get your letter. I could sit here and write to you all day if they'd let me, but I'm a corporal now. When you answer this, I wish you'd say how the old town looks and if the grass in the front yards is as green as it usually is, and everything. And tell me some more about everything you think of when you are working down at the Red Cross like you said. I guess I've read your letter five million times, and that part ten million. I mean where you underlined that 'you' and what you said to yourself at the Red Cross. Oh, murder, but I was glad to read that! Don't forget about writing anything else you think of like that.

"Well, I was interrupted then and this is the next day. Of course I can't tell you where we are, because that darned censor will read this letter, but



They Were Soldiers.

I guess he will let this much by. Who do you think I ran across in a village yesterday? Two boys from the old school days, and we certainly did, shake hands a few times! It was that old foolish Dutch Krusemeyer and Albert Paxton, both of them lieutenants. I heard Fred Mitchell is still training in the States and about crazy because they won't send him over yet.

"If you have any idea how glad I was to get your letter, you wouldn't lose any time answering this one. Anyhow, I'm going to write to you again every few days if I get the chance, because maybe you'll answer more than one of 'em."

"But see here, cut out that 'sent you to be killed' stuff. You've got the wrong idea altogether. We've got the big job of our lives, we know that, but we're going to do it. There'll be mistakes and bad times, but we won't fall down. Now, you'll excuse me for saying it this way, Dora, but I don't know just how to express myself except saying of course we know everybody isn't going to get back home—but listen, we didn't come over here to get killed particularly, we came over to give these Dutchmen h—!

"Perhaps you can excuse language if I write it with a blank like that, but before we get back we're going to do what we came for. They may not all of them be as bad as some of them—it's a good thing you don't know what we do, because some of it would make you sick. As I say, there may be quite a lot of good ones among them; but we know what they've done to this

THOUGHT IS NOT REALLY RAPID

Mind Moves Comparatively Slowly, Notwithstanding Expression That Has Become Common.

"As quick as thought" is an expression much used to denote the acme of speed in action, but like so many popular expressions, this one is misleading. Thought, or at least the mental registering of a sensation, is not an exceedingly speedy process, the thought impulse moving at the comparatively slow speed of 110 feet a second, or 75 miles an hour. Light travels nearly nine million times as swiftly. Thought would be hopelessly beaten in a race with a motorcar. Perhaps a good illustration of the

country, and we know what they mean to do to ours. So we're going to attend to them. Of course that's why I'm here. It wasn't you.

"Don't forget to write pretty soon, Dora. You say in your letter—I certainly was glad to get that letter—well, you say I have things to do more important than 'girls.' Dora, I think you probably know without my saying so that of course while I have got important things to do, just as every man over here has, and everybody at home, for that matter, well, the thing that is most important in the world to me, next to helping win this war, it's reading the next letter from you.

"Don't forget how glad I'll be to get it, and don't forget you didn't have anything to do with my being over here. That was—it was something else. And you bet, whatever happens I'm glad I came! Don't ever forget that!"

Dora knew it was "something else." Her memory went back to her first recollection of him in school: from that time on he had been just an ordinary, everyday boy, floundering somehow through his lessons in school and through his sweethearts with Milla, as the millions of other boys floundered along with their own lessons and their own Millas. She saw him swinging his books and romping homeward from the schoolhouse, or going whistling by her father's front yard, rattling a stick on the fence as he went, care-free and masterful, but shy as a deer if strangers looked at him, and always "not much of a talker."

She had always felt so superior to him; she shuddered as she thought of it. His quiet had been so much better than her talk. His intelligence was proven now, when it came to the great test, to be of a stronger sort than hers. He was wise and good and gentle—and a fighting man! "We know what they've done to this country and what they mean to do to ours. So we're going to attend to them." She read this over, and she knew that Ramsey, wise and gentle and good, would fight like an unchained devil, and that he and his comrades would indeed and indeed do what they "came for."

"It wasn't you," he said. She nodded gently, agreeing, and knew what it was that sent him. Yet Ramsey had his own secret here, and did not tell it. Sometimes there rose, faint in his memory, a whimsical picture, yet one that had always meant much to him. He would see an old man sitting with a little boy upon a rustic bench under a walnut tree to watch the "Decoration Day Parade" go by—and Ramsey would see a shoot of sunshine that had somehow got through the walnut tree and make a bedazzlement of glinting fine lines over a spot about the size of a saucer, upon the old man's thick white hair. And in Ramsey's memory, the little boy, sitting beside the veteran, would half close his eyes, drowsily, playing that this sunshine spot was a white bird's-nest, until he had a momentary dream of a glittering little bird that dwelt there and wore a blue soldier cap on its head. And Ramsey would bring out of his memory thoughts that the old man had got into the child's head that day. "We know that armies fighting for the Freedom of Man had to win, in the long run. . . . We were on the side of God's Plan. . . . Long ago we began to see hints of His Plan. . . . Man has to win his freedom from himself—men in the light have to fight against men in the dark. . . . That light is the answer. . . . We had the light that made us never doubt."

A long while Dora sat with the letter in her hand before she answered it and took it upon her heart to wear. That was the place for it, since it was already within her heart, where he would find it when he came home again. And she beheld the revelation sent to her. This ordinary life of Ramsey's was but the outward glinting of a high and splendid spirit, as high and splendid as earth can show. And yet it was only the life of an everyday American boy. The streets of the town were full, now, of boys like Ramsey.

At first they were just boys in uniform; then one saw that they were boys no more. They were soldiers. [THE END.]

comparative slowness of thought waves is to assume that a man had an arm 75 miles long and that, when he was not looking a friend should grasp his hand. Before the owner of that arm became conscious that his hand had been touched, the friend would have released it, and had time to walk four miles or eat a very extensive dinner.—Kansas City Star.

Time and Tide Is the name of a London newspaper which is owned and controlled entirely by women.

Experience teaches people lots of things they would rather not know.



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The inner side of every cloud is bright and shining; I therefore turn my clouds about and always wear them inside out To show the lining.

SEASONABLE FOODS

For those who like a substitute for meat in the warm weather the following dish will be suggestive:



Nut Loaf.—Cook one cupful of rice in boiling salted water until tender; drain, add two cupfuls of bread crumbs, one tablespoonful of chopped parsley, two tablespoonfuls of salt, one and one-half cupfuls of pecans or peanuts; add a dash of pepper, a tablespoonful of butter, one egg well beaten and about one cupful of milk. Cook the rice in boiling water until tender, drain, adding the bread crumbs, toasted, and enough milk to make a loaf which will hold its shape. Place in a baking pan with a little water and bake twenty minutes. Serve hot or cold with tomato or a white sauce with cheese.

The seasoning may be varied for this loaf, adding one tablespoonful of chopped pimento and one cupful of whole seeded raisins, served cold.

Rhubarb and Strawberry Sherbet.—Cut into inch pieces three pounds of rhubarb and let cook in water to cover until soft. Add one and one-half cupfuls of sugar and one quart of strawberries; sift the whole through a colander. Add the juice of a lemon and cook until the mixture is thick.

Strawberries and Angel Food.—Have the cake baked in a square tin and cut in squares. Heap spoonfuls of strawberries crushed with sugar over each piece, top with sweetened whipped cream and serve cold. Another tasty dessert is brick ice cream cut in two-inch slices put together sandwich fashion with slices of angel food. This, if carefully cut and arranged, makes a very pretty dessert.

Merrittin Eggs.—Butter thickly as many earthen baking cups or tinbal cases as needed; sprinkle the butter with finely-chopped parsley and chives and break into each cup an egg. Set the cups in a pan of hot water and bake in the oven until set. Invert carefully on rounds of delicately toasted bread, well buttered. Pour around them a rich tomato sauce, to which has been added one tablespoonful of chopped green pepper.

"The frugal housewife must learn to plan economical and properly balanced meals, which will nourish each member of the family properly and not encourage over-eating or other excessive and wasteful variety."

GOOD EATING

Dip slices of bread into beaten egg thinned with a little milk to which a teaspoonful of sugar and sufficient salt has been added to season. Fry in a little hot bacon fat and serve with a sirup if liked.



Hard Sauce With Dates.—Take one-half cupful of stoned and chopped dates. Cream two tablespoonfuls of butter, add one and one-half cupfuls of powdered sugar gradually with one-third of a cupful of cream and one-half teaspoonful of vanilla and one-half speck of salt; fold in the dates, adding more cream, if needed. A dash of lemon juice adds variety to this sauce. This may be used as cake filling.

Celery Stuffing for Meats.—Take two cupfuls of bread crumbs, one cupful of diced celery, one-half cupful of walnut meats, one teaspoonful of poultry dressing, one teaspoonful of salt, cayenne to taste, one teaspoonful of grated onion, one teaspoonful of baking powder and two tablespoonfuls of butter. Soak the bread crumbs and squeeze dry, add other ingredients. Put hamburger steak and this stuffing in layers in a baking pan, cover the top with stuffing. Bake 40 minutes.

Date Loaf Cake.—Take one pound of dates, one pound of walnut meats, one cupful of flour, one cupful of sugar, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, four eggs, one teaspoonful of vanilla, salt to taste. Use the dates and nutmeats whole, sift over the flour, which has been sifted with the baking powder and again with the sugar. Beat in the egg yolks, add vanilla and salt and fold in the stiffly beaten whites; bake one hour.

Cucumber Rings.—Peel and slice the cucumbers, then with a vegetable cutter take out the centers, leaving a ring. Put them on ice for an hour, dry and then fry in deep fat. Serve with timbales of chicken.

French Pudding.—Bake a pastry shell and fill with nicely seasoned apple sauce. Cover with a meringue, using two egg whites and bake until the meringue is a delicate brown.

Fig Cookies.—Take one cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of shortening one cupful of figs, one-fourth cupful of milk, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, two eggs, one teaspoonful of grated nutmeg, one teaspoonful of salt and flour to roll. Mix as usual, roll and cut and bake fifteen minutes in a moderate oven.

Nellie Maxwell

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Excellent Advice. "Never refuse to see what you do not want to see or which might go against your own cherished hypothesis or against the views of authorities. These are just the clues to follow up, as is also and emphatically so, the thing you have never seen or heard of before. The thing you cannot get a pigeonhole for is the finger point showing the way to discovery."

This advice to scientists and others was given in a lecture by Sir Patrick Manson, the celebrated British physician who discovered that malaria is caused by mosquitoes. Sir Patrick died a few weeks ago.—Exchange.

Dr. Peery's "Dead Shot" is the only vermifuge which operates thoroughly after one dose, and removes Worms and Tapeworm as well as the mucus in which they lodge and breed, without the need of castor oil. One cost, one dose, one effect. 372 Pearl St., New York City.—Advertisement.

Dogs in Conversation. Robert heard his mother say she had had a long conversation with Mrs. Brown, when they both were hanging clothes from their back porches. Robert asked what conversation meant. His mother replied, "We were talking with each other."

When Robert heard his dog, Topsy, and Mrs. Brown's dog exchanging backs from their porches, he said, "Mamma, just listen at Topsy and Snowball having conversation with each other."

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