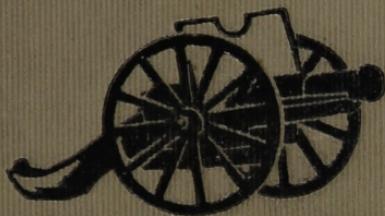


THE NURSE'S
+ STORY +
ADELE BLENEAU



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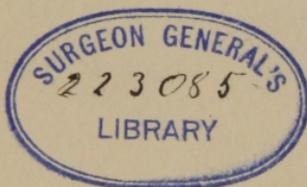


THE NURSE'S STORY

IN WHICH REALITY MEETS ROMANCE

By
ADELE BLENEAU

ILLUSTRATED BY
M. LEONE BRACKER



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TO
THE RED CROSS NURSES
OF THE WORLD

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THE NURSE'S STORY

THE NURSE'S STORY

CHAPTER I

COME AT ONCE

ONE May evening after sunset, father, Mademoiselle and I were having supper out-of-doors under a great magnolia tree, when a motor-car came racing up the drive. Major Howell, our neighbor who owned one of the most beautiful places in Louisiana, drove the car himself and was obviously much excited. He explained immediately that a party of guests from the North was staying with him, and among them was a celebrated surgeon who had suddenly been taken ill. By rare good fortune father was at home, so that a moment later the two men disappeared down the drive. It is strange how, for no apparent reason, certain scenes remain vividly in the memory, and I distinctly recall the feeling of expectancy with which I watched my father's departure.

Twenty minutes later, for the place was only a mile away, the car came dashing back and the driver handed me a hastily scrawled note from father asking me to bring his operating case and come immediately. Without losing a moment, and hastily gathering up the instruments, I was off. As we sped up the drive, father came running down the broad stone steps to meet me. Taking both my hands in his, he said gravely:

“Adele, my patient, Doctor Curtis, is a very distinguished surgeon. His loss would be a great one to humanity. He has an attack of acute appendicitis, and must be operated at once. Do you feel equal to helping me?”

Perhaps I felt father's reputation was at stake, perhaps there was no time for an attack of nerves. In any event, I said to him, in a tone which must have carried conviction:

“Don't be afraid, father, I'll try not to fail you.”

As we entered Doctor Curtis' room a moment later, he called out: “Doctor, it has just occurred to me that you must have at your house an operating room——”

"I have, of course," father interrupted, divining his thoughts, "but, Doctor Curtis, you know as well as I how dangerous it is to move a patient under such circumstances."

"Oh, yes, I know all about that," he broke in, with an attempt at a laugh. "But I am the patient in this case, and I prefer to take my chances in an antiseptic operating room, even though I have to be shaken up a bit to get there."

Seeing no approving response in father's face, Doctor Curtis went on with the rare smile which many people say is half his assets, "Unless you mind the nuisance of an impromptu guest for the next week or two, I insist on going to your house."

Time was too valuable to waste in an argument, and Doctor Curtis was soon ready for the very short journey to La-Bas. In exactly forty-five minutes from the time Major Howell first came up the drive, Doctor Curtis was on the operating table. At his own request father gave him the new method of anesthesia—scopolamine.

The operation was a simple one, with only

slight adhesions and no complications, and was, as such things go, speedily over.

The next day two nurses came up from New Orleans. Except for changing the dressings and a perfunctory taking of temperature there was very little for them to do.

At Doctor Curtis' request I passed many hours of the day in his room. He seemingly never tired of hearing my "Cajun" stories, as the peasant tales of Louisiana are called, and laughed at my little anecdotes of how Jean Baptiste would say: "*Voisin*, you see my sow, push him home slow for me, yes." A little song which ran like this, he made me sing time and again, as showing the peasants' love for *café noir*:

"I like les crevisses,
I love la Suisse,
I adore papier jaune cigarettes,
Mais je quitte café noir le matin ou le soir,
For one kees from my sweet Mignonette!"

On other days we read French or German. He found constant amusement in my South German accent, for that was the kind Made-

moiselle had taught me, though it served well enough for reading articles in the German medical journals by which both grandfather and father set so much store.

Doctor Curtis' wife and family were not until his convalescence notified of his operation. But a sister—a gaunt, severe-looking but kindly woman—had come a few days after his illness. However, we had seen very little of her, as she had taken on herself the task of hurriedly converting the blacks to a higher state of civilization, and for days she scoured the country with the greatest zeal in her self-imposed task.

Doctor Curtis had not been curious as to who or what we were, but his sister was the type that knows the genealogy of all the people in her particular circle, and soon evinced a desire to add to her knowledge the history of the whole country round about—beginning, of course, with ourselves. She had asked often, rather veiled questions as to how we, especially father, happened to be living in such an out-of-the-way place. Evidently not being satisfied with the replies, she said quite frankly to

him one day when Mademoiselle and I were present:

“Doctor Bleneau, how is it that I find a man of your superior attainments buried alive in a place like this?”

Father hesitated a moment, and then suddenly remembering an urgent engagement, smilingly excused himself, saying that Mademoiselle, who had been, not only his governess and mine, but was a distant relative as well, would gladly tell her the family history. Mademoiselle, like many older persons, lived largely in the past, and was delighted to re-live it all again. I had never heard her begin, as it were, from the beginning, so I settled myself to listen with almost as great eagerness as did Miss Curtis. Mademoiselle began:

“Doctor Bleneau’s father was an officer in the Army of Napoleon III. He entered the service against the wishes of his entire family, who were the staunchest of Royalists. By way of explanation and to give it circulation, his mother told her dearest friend, in *confidence*, of course, that the wiles and smiles of a woman were the cause of his ‘disloyalty.’

“The ‘Woman’ was one of the lovely ladies-in-waiting of the thrice lovely Empress Eugenie herself, and for her, the young officer sacrificed family, position and friends. He fought brilliantly on many fields and received due honor and promotion, but when the war was over and the Emperor’s cause lost, he found himself with little else than the devotion of the woman for whom he had sacrificed so much. But he always felt this devotion ample reward, and well he might,” she mused, “considering the happiness of their after lives. They were married at once, and he took up with characteristic energy the study of medicine at L’Ecole de Médecine in Paris. His family refusing to be reconciled to his marriage, led them to come to Louisiana. The young wife had brought him an unusually large *dot* for those days, and as they both loved the country, it came about that they bought this plantation.

“The young people were happy here, but not even their absorbing affection could entirely safeguard their paradise from sorrow, for their first two children died soon after birth, and

when a third was expected, our Doctor Bleneau's father, whether from sentiment or a superstitious dread of a third loss—determined that the next child should be born at home, for France to them was still home.

“It was there, in the Yonne district, that their son was born. A year later we came back to Louisiana. When the boy was old enough for school he was sent to France, where he proved himself not only a brilliant pupil but the possessor of many innate noble qualities. His father had elaborate plans for his future, but at twenty-two, a few days after finishing his studies, the boy startled his family by marrying a beautiful Creole, the daughter of a well-known French banker of New Orleans. They had met on a steamer when he was returning from France from his last vacation, and she, being young and romantic, and he young and passionate, they eloped a few days after his graduation and were married by special license in London. They had known there would be great obstacles to their marriage, for her family were of Huguenot stock, and his devout Roman Catholics. And indeed

neither her father nor any of her people ever forgave her.

“The young people came home to Louisiana where they were welcomed by his family with the warmest affection. But the father, with new-world ideas, insisted that his son take up some profession, and after due consideration, the young man decided to pursue in his turn the profession of medicine.

“To this end the young couple returned to Paris. A year later in an apartment overlooking the park in the Boulevard St. Germain, Adele was born. But in giving Adele life, the young mother paid for it with her own.” Here Mademoiselle hurried on, and I knew the tears were very near. “It is the regret of my life and Adele’s that she never knew her beautiful mother, but in looking at Adele I am often startled, the resemblance is so strong. She has the same limpid brown eyes, and masses of waving coppery hair and the peculiar jasmine-like whiteness of skin, but her mouth is more sensitive, pr——” Mademoiselle stopped short and looked at Miss Curtis in a peculiar way for an instant.

Miss Curtis, nodding her head, after a moment said, meaningly: "I quite understand, my dear; go on."

"Doctor Bleneau was beside himself with grief at his young wife's death. She was the absorbing passion of his life, and I believe she is as much a real presence to him to-day as she was on the day she died so many years ago. In these circumstances he was, of course, unable to settle down to the monotonous life here, and cleverly realized that his only salvation lay in work. Even several years later, when his course was finished, he was still in no condition mentally or physically to take up the grind here, and when he was urged by a former schoolmate to join an exploring expedition in Africa for the French government, he did so, and continued that kind of work for many years.

"However, unless he were in the wilds of Tibet or on the heights of the Andes, Christmas time always found him with us. Both his parents were secretly very proud of their brilliant daring son. Adele had always worshiped

him. Life for her between his visits was a gray expanse of waiting.

“Two years ago the health of Adele’s grandfather began to fail, and realizing his approaching end, he sent for his son. He came at once. Doctor Bleneau had been planning a trip to India and into Afghanistan with the Duke of ——, but he immediately canceled all his arrangements and devoted himself to making the last days of his father as peaceful as possible.” After a pause she added, “And that is how Doctor Bleneau came to live with us. Since then he has carried on, with Adele’s constant assistance, the large charity work among the blacks for which his father had been so beloved.

“It was natural, in our seclusion, that our lives should center around the work done by the men of the house—during the years when other girls learned golf, tennis, dancing and such things, Adele has been measuring out medicines, taking temperatures and acting generally as office nurse to her grandfather, and later to her father.

"I can well understand your surprise at finding here in the lonely woods of Louisiana a man of such wide culture and varied experience as Doctor Bleneau!" There was a little silence and then Mademoiselle smiled sadly and said, with a sigh, "That is our history."

Without a word Miss Curtis came over and kissed me, and as she did so, I felt two hot tears on my cheek.

One day, nearly three weeks after the operation, I was delighted to find Doctor Curtis in the drawing-room. He slowly rose as I came in, and seeing my look of astonishment, said laughingly:

"As a matter of fact, my dear, I might have been down a day or two earlier, only I didn't half try. I was having an ideal rest, lying there in your pretty fresh-chintzed room, looking out on the broad Mississippi, and thoroughly enjoying the company of yourself and your father—you especially, Bleneau," and he turned to father, laughing, "you who have lived more stories than most people could invent."

A few days later as I put my hand out to

open the door of father's office, I heard my name and, without thinking, paused to listen. Doctor Curtis was speaking:

"Bleneau, old man, whether you realize it or not, you are deucedly selfish to keep that charming girl buried alive here." He paused, and then as father did not answer, went on: "I don't believe you appreciate what a jewel the girl is. In my whole experience, which is a pretty wide one, I have never known a girl with more real culture than Adele—and physically—why, man alive, she's a beauty!"

At this I suddenly became conscious of the fact that I was listening to a conversation not intended for my ears. With the blood burning my cheeks I turned away for a moment or two to regain my self-possession, then I knocked and entered. Father came at once to me and took me gently in his arms. He looked down into my eyes for a moment before he spoke:

"Adele, dear, Doctor Curtis has been telling me that I am selfish brute to keep you buried alive in this out-of-the-way place, and has asked me to let you go North with them for a visit."

“But father——” I interrupted.

“My dear, I have felt what he says for a long time, but partly because I have been dis-trait, occupied, partly, too, because I have not cared to face it, I have put the thing off, hoping always that we would soon visit France together, and so we shall in the autumn. I will come for you and we'll go on that long-cherished journey. But now I should be far more unhappy to have you stay than I should be, dear, to have you go.” Here he broke off and more in his usual tone added: “The main thing is for you and Mademoiselle to be packed and ready to leave with Doctor Curtis and his sister on Saturday.”

So I went to New York and enjoyed it as only a young girl from the country can enjoy her first sight of a big fascinating city. Nothing was left undone that could give me pleasure, and I shall never forget those days. But the visit was a short one. I had been there scarcely two weeks when Doctor Curtis called me into his office. I went to him, a little anxious at the gravity of his tone and still more

anxious when he put me in his big easy chair and took my hands tenderly in his.

“If you were not a brave girl,” he said, “I should scarcely know how to tell you, Adele, but tell you I must, dear. Your father is very ill with fever and you must go to him at once.”

The rest of the day I spent in wondering why I had ever left him. This was in July, 1914, and on my way from New York to New Orleans Germany declared war on France. I had hoped that father might not hear of it, but this I suppose was too much to expect, and I reached his side only to find that his whole heart and soul were bound up in the hope of being well again that he might volunteer for field work in the service of his beloved country. During the weeks that followed both in his delirious and lucid moments, his constant cry was that he might be permitted to help France, and for all my anxiety the fervor of his burning love for his country fired my blood. In the end his poor fever-racked soul went to join the fighting men of older generations—I can not write of it even now.

My grandmother had died some years before and I had never known my mother's family. All her near relatives had been dead many years, and so my father's death left me practically alone in the world and as purposeless as a rudderless ship.

After his death I sat day after day in a kind of torpor, bereft of power to think or act. It was my first deep sorrow and it found me unprepared and defenseless.

Then one night I was sitting alone in his study, for Mademoiselle had gone to bed, going over again in a kind of helpless self-torture the thousand little kindnesses and tricks of personality that made my father so dear to me. I buried my face in my hands for a moment, and as I did so my father spoke to me. I heard his words as clearly as though he stood beside me——

“Although you are only a woman,” he said, “and can not fight with the brave men who are giving their lives for France, there is still something you can do.”

I sat silent for a long time, filled with awe and yet with a kind of comfort, puzzling over

what he meant. Then after a time I understood and I went to bed that night happier than I had been since his death, for at last I had a purpose.

The next day I wrote to Doctor Curtis, who had gone out among the first Americans to establish a hospital near the fighting line. It was a poor little letter, but I knew it carried an appeal that would bring me my desire.

The letter must have caught one of the few fast boats crossing at that time, for within two weeks I received a cable from Doctor Curtis, telling me that he could not have me with him, but that, as a *nurse* and a *French woman*, I should have a place in one of the military hospitals.

The cable ended with the words: "Come at once, you are needed." So it was that I in my turn set out in search of the unknown, to do my part in the great struggle that is still, as I write, staggering humanity, and in which I found so much tragedy and so much happiness.

CHAPTER II

CAPTAIN FRAZER

THE boat was crowded and there were many interesting persons on board—at least, interesting to me, as, for the most part, they were people with a mission. Some were on diplomatic errands, others were crossing because of contracts arising out of the war. There were also many nurses and doctors, but far the greater number of the men were reservists, both of the ranks and officers, hurrying to rejoin their colors.

Every morning at ten o'clock a Doctor T——, who was taking out a full hospital corps and equipment, gave lectures to his staff. As soon as I heard this, I explained to him my situation and my desire to fit myself to be of better use, and he cordially invited me to attend the lectures.

Miss Curtis had placed me in the care of a

charming American woman who had lived for twenty years in England, but in spite of a very calm trip, she managed somehow to be sick most of the way over, and I saw very little of her.

Naturally I was in no mood for forming new acquaintances, so that these talks each morning helped me greatly to banish the past and to keep my mind fixed on the future.

I spent the afternoons reading or dozing in my chair, lulled by the glinting sunlit waves and the soft swish of the water against the steamer's sides.

Doctor T—— and his wife were unfailingly kind and often sat with me for hours. One day we were together on deck when a tall athletic young man passed.

"That's an Indian officer," said the doctor, as he strode by.

"Who is it?" asked his wife.

"Oh, I don't know which particular one he is," he replied, smiling. "It's just the type; I would know it anywhere. Tall, lean, bronzed, good-looking, a certain unconscious air of command, and a military bearing!"

"He does look an Englishman, but I am not prepared to grant all the rest," she replied.

The subject dropped, and a day or so passed with no further allusion to it. And then late one afternoon, as we were walking we met this same Englishman again.

"Oh, by the way," Mrs. T—— said, speaking to her husband, "you were right, dear. He is an English officer—Captain Ian Frazer—coming home from India—he was out of the harbor from Yokohama when war was declared, and had to come on this way."

"You seem to know his history pretty thoroughly," he laughed.

"Oh—Celeste, of course," and turning to me, she said:

"My maid is a perfect ferret. I sometimes think as a maid she's a waste of good timber—that the Secret Service should have."

"Oh, they are all like that," the doctor said. "Most of the gossip of a ship comes first and last through such sources." After a moment's reflection he exclaimed, "Oh, that's the chap they were telling me about in the smoking-room

this morning. He has just been on duty at the Kyber Pass——”

“Kyber Pass”—that was the last outpost of civilization that father and his party would have passed through before going into Afghanistan. Poor father—he had to give up that long-dreamed-of trip—to come to us.

He had told me so many stories of that picturesque spot, I began to be keenly interested in the conversation. “You know, Myrtice,” the doctor said—I was always so glad to hear him use her quaint name—“the Kyber Pass Rifles is one of the crack regiments of India, and its officers are chosen from the unmarried fellows of all the Indian army. It takes courage and initiative plus to make good there, and it is considered a great honor to be given that post. It was of that regiment that the present Crown Prince of Germany when in India, several years ago, wished to be made Honorable Colonel.”

“And was he?” I asked quickly.

“No; I believe Sir George Ruse Keppel was elected.”

"Why, I wonder, was he not given it?" asked his wife.

"Well, my dear, you will have to ask Captain Frazer. I am sure he *could* tell you. It does not follow that he *will*—still you could ask," he added good-humoredly.

"Nonsense," she laughed, and stopped suddenly, as at that moment we met the man of whom we had been speaking.

I was interested in seeing him after hearing the story, especially in thinking that it would have been his men who would have picketed the Pass for them had father gone there. I looked at him. He was all Doctor T—— had said—only his big violet-blue eyes were soft, even wistful. How could he be the daring soldier they had described, I wondered, when suddenly I noticed the firm chin, the determined mouth. After all, the government that had chosen him for the lonely and dangerous duty at the Kyber Pass had doubtless chosen well. For with his evident strength of body and will—his eyes indicated humanity, understanding, sympathy—qualities essential to a leader of men.

It was not until two days before the voyage ended that I made his acquaintance, and then under very peculiar and unpleasant circumstances. I was sitting in my steamer chair, rather late, in fact, very late—it was nearly midnight. There was little light on deck—the windows were painted a deep green for fear of attacks from one of the enemy's cruisers—and the deck was deserted except for myself and two men, who appeared to be strangers to each other.

One of these, I noticed idly, seemed to be frightfully nervous. He kept pacing up and down with the short jerky tread of a man under intense strain. The other man I observed because of the striking contrast. He was a tall, soldierly-looking man, of that particular type and figure which, I was to learn later, belongs to no other nation than England. He moved with an easy grace that betokened assurance and bore an unmistakable air of command. After he had passed once or twice I suddenly recognized him—it was Captain Frazer.

The two men were moving up and down on

my side of the deck, so that when the Englishman was at the turn nearest the bow, the other was at the stern end of the deck, while I was between them.

I was speculating idly on the past lives and future destinies of two such contrasting types, when the smaller man reached the turn, and instead of facing me again, suddenly flung one arm into the air, gave a half-stifled cry, and then sprang to the rail.

Perhaps my experience in nursing helped me to understand, for his gesture and cry brought me to my feet, and when an instant later he began rather clumsily to climb the rail, I found myself, without stopping to think, racing down the deck toward him. Behind me, I heard the Englishman call out and then his fleet steps overtaking me, but there was no time to pause and I raced on, nearer and nearer to the unhappy man, who now stood trembling on the summit of the rail, clinging to the stanchion.

Just as I reached him he released his hold and swayed outward, but I was in time to fling my arms round his legs, and though his weight

almost pulled me over the rail, I managed to retain my hold for an instant; the next moment brought the Englishman to my side, and he, clutching the man's clothes in a vise-like grip, dragged him back to safety.

He lay on the deck between us, where the Englishman had dropped him. A moment later he sat up and begged us piteously not to tell of what had happened. We promised, on condition that he would see the ship's doctor immediately. This he consented to do, and together we helped him, white-faced and trembling, below.

I was rather shaken by this revelation of misery, and after thanking the Englishman for his presence of mind, and being congratulated by him in turn, I went at once to my cabin.

Next morning Captain Frazer told me the man's story. He was an Austrian nobleman who had had an unfortunate love affair in the United States, and had determined to return to his native land. Then the war had come, and with it knowledge of the misfortunes of his own country and more particularly of his own family. Hardly knowing what he did, the

man had taken the steamer, without realizing until after the boat sailed that he must inevitably be interned when he reached England. This last misfortune had temporarily unbalanced his reason, and the scene on the deck in which I had assisted was the result. Captain Frazer assured me that he was much calmer now, and that the doctor felt certain he would not repeat his attempt of the night before.

His story finished, he bowed courteously and left me. I did not see him again until we had landed at Liverpool.

While we sat waiting for the examiner I heard Captain Frazer, who not far away, speak a few words to his valet—a man who looked as if he might be prematurely old, but who to-day was so beaming with happiness that he seemed rejuvenated.

At something he said Captain Frazer laughed and replied, "Oh, you are generally right, Shipman," in a tone of such friendliness that I felt he must be an old family servant.

Then Captain Frazer turned around suddenly, came over to me and said pleasantly:

"Can I do anything for you?"

"No; but thanks," I answered warmly, for I was sincerely grateful for this little friendliness; we felt rather alone and lonely, Mademoiselle and I. He paused a second, and said:

"Good-by! Perhaps we shall meet again. 'The world is small.' I think it must have been Adam who said that," he added, with a subtle twinkle lighting up his eyes.

I replied, smiling, "Anyway, Cain knew better."

He laughed, lifted his hat and was gone.

My eyes were still following him when I heard a voice say, "Good-by, milord, good-by, milady!" I turned and saw the old valet, bare-headed, bowing and smiling in reply to a friendly nod from a lady in a waiting limousine. He seemed suddenly to remember himself, and as he did, spoke with a little chuckle to a maid standing near:

"I said to my gentleman last night as he was dressing, 'I look to see your mother at the dock to-morrow, sir.' 'Nonsense, Shipman,' he said, but I saw all the same that he was hoping it himself—it's been four years since we went

out to India—four years is a long while, especially in war times,” he added soberly.

We had brought over with us, by Doctor Curtis' advice, numerous trunks containing all kinds of things necessary for a field hospital, so our stay at the customs was rather long. Shipman insisted on remaining and closing the last trunk. “It's the captain's orders, miss,” and Shipman had served too long with a soldier to allow anything to swerve him.

CHAPTER III

COUNT NOT THE LOSS

WE left the station at nine o'clock and rode down to London in the lovely misty sunshine, going through the soft rolling hills—wet with dew and overhung with violet shadows. I found myself drawn with a peculiar indescribable affection for this emerald world. Had my ancestors been English I might have explained the pull at my heartstrings in that way, but being French I gave it up and abandoned myself to watching the hills, the black-faced sheep and the picturesque cottages until we reached London.

Some one has said, "After all, since life is a figment of the brain, built up notions of things are far more impressive often than the actuality." London to the uninitiated means a fanfare of names, a swirl of memories, vast repu-

tations—history—poetry—noble ideals—recollections of great deeds.

But when I arrived the thing that impressed me more than all else was not any of these. It was not the London of Queen Elizabeth, Shakespeare, of Henry the Eighth, Anne Boleyn, but the London of Soldiers. Everywhere I saw khaki. The impression was so strong as to obliterate all else, and I feel that I shall always think of that great gray city, with here and there dramatically white-spotted piles, as the outpost of a military camp.

We were leaving for Paris the next morning, so Mademoiselle and I spent the afternoon buying various articles that Doctor T—— had suggested, as his report from France was that most hospital supplies were failing. We returned to our hotel, late and tired, but Mademoiselle insisted we go down to dine. I think she thought I needed the change. But it wasn't a gay experience. The dining-room was almost deserted. There were not more than a half dozen tables occupied.

Sitting next to us was a party of four, a mother, father and son; the fourth was a young

English girl who, I felt instinctively, was not of the same family. She was tall and slender, with a lovely white and pink coloring, such as I had never seen before. It made her appear to me as unreal as Undine, and as beautiful. Masses of shining blonde hair framed her face. She fascinated me and unconsciously my eyes turned again and again to that table. The young man was a soldier. I was beginning already to know the type—tall, clean-cut—he looked the scion of a long race.

Their conversation had the familiarity of a devoted family, and was uninteresting to the outsider. We soon knew that the young soldier was going on the morrow to the front, and that the lovely girl was his fiancée. The others talked a good deal, but the young girl said little—it was as if she did not trust herself—her great wide blue eyes were scarcely ever, even for a moment, taken from the young officer. Once I heard her say something about “the great danger,” at which the young man leaned toward her, and there was in his voice a note I had never heard. He spoke with deep conviction. I shall never forget his words:

“You must remember, dear, individuals can not count. We are writing a new page of history. Future generations can not be allowed to read of the decline of the British Empire and attribute it to us. We live our little lives and die, and to some are given the chance of proving themselves men, and to others no chance comes. Whatever our individual faults, virtues or qualities may be, it matters not; but when we are up against big things we must forget individuals and act as one great British unit, united and fearless. Some will live and many will die, but count not the loss. It is better far to go out with honor than survive with shame.”

As he was speaking I watched the faces of his hearers. There came into the eyes of his mother an expression almost exalted—it even flickered in the great soft eyes of the girl, but only a moment, and then there fell over them a heavy dull curtain of pain. Her expression hurt me, and I looked away, for I had a premonition of happiness foredoomed to sorrow—that this hopeless expression had come to stay.

The mother probably felt just as deeply, but

she had—fortitude—a mask that was never raised. Only the eyes of God, I was to learn, are permitted to see naked an Englishwoman's soul.

I was oppressed—this was the beginning of war—I was beginning to see its face—and its face was ominous. Mademoiselle, who knew my every mood, sometimes before I was conscious of it myself, realized the shadow on my spirit and suggested we have coffee upstairs.

Two men, one a soldier in kilts, entered the dining-room, and stopped at our neighbors' table. As we passed I heard the Scot say to the older man with him, "Father, this is Captain —— of the ——." I did not hear the regiment.

Months after, under conditions which had I known at the moment would have frozen the blood in my veins, I was to learn the name of his regiment and all that it stood for.

The next day we started for Boulogne. We arrived in a pouring rain. Finding we had hours to wait for our train, I decided to look up a Miss Russell, a Canadian, who had for

several years been Doctor Curtis' operating and office nurse in New York, and had volunteered at the beginning of the war. When I doubtfully asked a porter at the station if he knew where Base Hospital 13 was, he replied laconically, "It's next door," and so it was.

The shed over the tracks had been hurriedly converted into a great receiving hospital. When I asked for Miss Russell, the orderly at the door looked at me suspiciously, and asked if I had a permit. As I was about to reply in the negative, a tall slender woman with soft pretty gray eyes, dressed in a straight coat and sailor hat, came toward me. Something in her manner made me feel she could help. She asked, smiling:

"Is there something I can do for you?"

I explained who I was and my mission.

"Why, certainly you can see Miss Russell. I'll send for her, and, too, I want you to see our hospital; it's crude but effective. We sometimes handle a thousand men a day—you will be interested, I know."

She waited until Miss Russell came and after showing me "the store," which she ex-

plained was *her* part of the work, she said good-by. It was Lady Algy Lenox, the head of the hospital herself. Miss Russell laughed at "*her* part of the work." "It's all her work," she declared. "Lady Algy hasn't been back to England since the hospital opened, months ago; she is the first one here in the morning, and the last one to leave at night. Dozens of times each day she goes through the wards, and she knows the men's names, wounds and histories."

Later the head surgeon told me that in getting the men straight from the battle-field as they did, treating them there and putting them directly on the Channel boats, undoubtedly saved thousands of lives.

While I was there an ambulance train from the front came in and the surgeon permitted me to see the men brought in. It consisted of car after car of wounded and dying. The mud was caked on their clothes, in their hair and in their wounds, until in some instances they could knock it off in lumps. An aseptic wound did not exist. Many had received first aid—but oftener they came as they had been picked up, straight from the battle-field.

Some of the cars were luxurious—good beds, one row above another; but others were box-cars, hastily arranged with suspended stretchers. There were nurses and doctors aboard this train, but sometimes, often in fact, this was not the case. This particular train created a great deal of excitement, as it had been shelled after it was loaded. Several of the injured had been either killed as they lay, or more desperately wounded. The little English military nurse, Miss Phillips, assured me that this was the only time she had ever experienced such a thing and she had nursed in three wars. I didn't say it, but I thought, "And two of your wars have been with savages."

Sergeant Albro, a Scot, recovering from a frightful chest wound in addition to a broken leg, told us that he had first been shot in the leg; that he and his comrades had lain on the battle-field four days, unable to help themselves, hoping, praying, cursing that the Germans might be thrown back, as reinforcements were hourly expected, but, somewhere, something had gone wrong, and the Germans had

passed over them with a rush, shooting or slashing any wounded they could.

Early in the campaign the men had learned to feign death. But the sergeant said when a big German passed over him and stepped on his breast he groaned. The German looked down at him and then, drawing his revolver, fired the shot that had penetrated his chest.

At that second a small body of French cavalry had appeared and the German, as quick as a flash, threw himself on the ground and burrowed under the near-by dead. The battle lasted for two days longer, and the men had lain there all those hours with no care, no water, no food except the tablets which are in every soldier's first-aid box. At first I could not believe the stories of the Germans shooting the wounded, but as we passed from man to man in the different wards, and heard in detail the same general stories of cruelty, fiendish in its accomplishment, I was convinced of their truth. Many were plain working men of unmistakable honesty; others were simple country lads, who had neither the wit nor

imagination to invent the minute details they gave.

Sergeant Albro had belonged to the famous Scots Greys, and had been in the celebrated charge of that regiment and the Lancers near Landrecies, where five hundred of them rode at about fifteen hundred German infantrymen, who at their approach threw down their rifles, surrendering. As the cavalry passed harmlessly through them, the Germans snatched up their rifles and opened fire. This was one of the first instances of deliberate treachery. "But," he added laconically, "they paid for it, for we charged them and no prisoners were taken."

As I was leaving, Miss Russell came running out and asked if I would go for a moment into a small ward where a German boy was very excited about something, they couldn't make out quite what. I went, to find he was raving about "suffragettes." He had been warned by his mother in a letter that there were suffragettes acting as nurses in the different hospitals, and that when they got the chance they gouged out the wounded prisoners' eyes. He

felt sure he had been put in that small room with another German who happened to be unconscious, for that purpose. He was only a lad, not more than eighteen, from the Polish frontier, simple and ignorant. Happily for his peace, I was able to convince him of the utter absurdity of it all.

Not only all the men in Boulogne were wearing khaki, but women so clad were acting as military chauffeurs. Often I was puzzled to decide whether they were young boys or women. Under the caps and in their smart military coats, they looked like fresh-faced lads. While waiting for the train I saw one of them change a tire. With no help she did it in just seven minutes. True, it was a demountable rim, but that was good work. It interested me particularly, as even with a chauffeur to help me, I had never been able to accomplish it in less than six and a half.

Waiting for the train to pull out, we watched the khaki world about us, for Boulogne was English, not French. Mademoiselle said, when the train began moving, "As splendid and dazzling as the uniforms used to be, I find this

quiet habit has a spell all its own. It suggests efficiency and eternal fitness, and is the badge of a great conviction, and the courage of that conviction."

CHAPTER IV

HE ONLY DID HIS DUTY

OUR train was a long one, pretty well filled with soldiers, mostly French, except for a sprinkling of English officers. We were many hours en route, as at every station we were side-tracked to allow the troop trains to pass. In our compartment, accompanied by her maid, was a pink, slender, lily-like woman of, say twenty-eight or thirty, Dresden-like in color. Mademoiselle afterwards expressed it exactly in saying, "She had a perfection of hauteur as to manner, so well-bred that her voice seemed subtly suggestive of it all."

She was a titled English lady going over to her husband, wounded and in the English military hospital at Versailles. When she knew that I was going for the first time to Paris, she smiled and said:

"It is rather too bad you are having your first impressions of Paris under such circumstances. Still," she added reflectively, "I am not sure that the cleverest intelligence is not very frequently confused or hypnotized by certain situations and scenes, and weaker ones filled with the wildest forms of illusion. My own first impressions of Paris were confusing, disturbing impressions, which were not at all valid." Her blue eyes wandered off into space, as if seeing it all again, while before my own came visions of Napoleon, the Louvre, gay restaurants, wide boulevards, everywhere artistic perfection, enveloped in a wine-like atmosphere.

We were arriving at Amiens. Just outside our windows we saw a little group of women laughing and chattering. It came to me suddenly how little of anything approaching gaiety I had seen lately. Looking at them, with their adorably rounded chins, scarlet lips, dark half almond-shaped eyes, the Englishwoman seemed to take up and put into words my train of thought. She said to Mademoiselle in French, nodding toward the group, with that little

touch of remoteness which a foreign accent lends:

“They may be decadent, as one sometimes hears, but these shapely, piquant, sensitive women, with their eyes showing a subtle awareness of what life has to offer, come to me as a pleasing contrast with the dreary commonplace of the English type. I sometimes think it is the uniformly damp, cold and raw atmosphere that has produced us, an over sober-minded race.” Mademoiselle was silent and she continued: “I always have thought of France as a beautiful, brilliant, fragile child, not made for contests and brutal battles. But in this I sadly wronged her, as the world has found France brave, calm, *poised*, under the fiercest and most brutal invasion history records.”

As we wearily went on I noticed how few trees there were in comparison with England, and I missed the rich green mould which made the English trees so lovely. The houses, too, in the towns, seemed narrow and high, and crowded together, but now and again I got a glimpse of the Gothic architecture, mazes of

slender graceful peaceful pinnacles, soft gray stone carved into fragile lace-like designs, and I thought what an inspiration religion must have been in those days, to have produced such noble designs.

I had always heard that one finds nowhere else in the world the snap and intensity of emotion and romance that one finds everywhere in French streets. But it was all lacking that night. And while I could not put into words what constituted the difference between English and French people, I felt it.

In Paris we went to the Ritz, where we found Doctor Curtis waiting for us. It was so good to see him again, and we sat and talked until midnight and after. He explained something of what my life as a nurse would be, though he felt sure I would not actually be stationed for several weeks. There were always delays and formality. Especially as there were complications due to the three different Red Cross societies in France. However, he understood I was to be with the regular Military Hospital—Les Secours des Blessés. My application had been made by him to that society.

“As nurses go, in England or America, you are,” he said, “not at all up to the standard, but in France you will find you are better equipped than most of the French ones, for you know only English-speaking races have, in our sense of the word, trained nurses.”

The next day I was introduced to the surgeon-in-chief, who had been a friend of father's, an intelligent and agreeable gentleman, who was pleased to find I spoke three languages. He assured me I would be helpful and thanked me for bringing certain equipment. Promising to send me a notice in a few days as to when and where I was to go on post, he bade us good-by.

Doctor Curtis had to return at once to his own hospital, which was twenty-odd miles away, but before doing so took me to call on Mrs. —, one of the ladies of the American Embassy. She had just returned that day from one of her “tours of relief.” We found her not only very kind, but extremely efficient. She seemed to have exact knowledge as to what was needed most, and where. This last trip had been to the hospitals near Dunkirk, where she

had gone, with lorries following her motor, filled with bath-tubs, anesthetics, rubber gloves and all sorts of hospital supplies. She asked me to write her, as I went about, the exact conditions I found. "France, you know," she said, "was not meditating war, and that accounts for the sad lack of proper hospital provision for her wounded soldiers." Nobody gave me such helpful advice, advice that was destined to be of such far-reaching good in so many ways, as did Mrs. —.

After our visit we went to the photographer's, and I had some instantaneous pictures made, for an army nurse's photograph must be carried on her card of identification. Doctor Curtis laughed a good deal at them and said the expression of my face indicated there was no crime I would not commit, even to scuttling a ship!

Back at the hotel, he bade me good-by, promising he would see me again before I left—he felt sure I would be in Paris some days longer.

The next morning dawned clear and crisp, and it chanced I saw the Seine as bright as a

new dollar shimmering against its stone walls. It has been described as a "gay, dashing, quick-tempered stream," and I felt it. It seemed "a river on a holiday." In driving over one of the many beautiful graceful bridges which span it, back through the Tuileries Gardens, I thought, "Only the fancy of a monarch could create a realm like this."

When we returned at luncheon time, I found a soldier waiting for me. He brought me a letter from the médecin major. I opened it with trembling fingers. It read:

"You are ordered to —— Field Hospital 18. Report here to-morrow for further instructions."

With difficulty I remained even moderately calm that afternoon. For my chance had come.

My instructions were brief. I was to leave the next day by automobile for my post. It was two hundred and fifty miles away by the route we had to take, and as we were carrying hospital supplies of various kinds, especially anesthetics, we were told to go through prac-

tically without stopping, and were expected to do it in at least eight hours, for our motor was a powerful one.

The next morning at eight we left Paris. Mademoiselle was brave at parting, no scene, no tears. She had already absorbed some of the patient calm bravery of her people. The driver proved to be a French officer, Lieutenant F——, who had been invalided, and not being able for active duty, was doing good work in the Red Cross. The motor was a sixty-horsepower Renault, equipped as an ambulance. My few personal things and supplies were quickly loaded and I climbed in beside the driver and we were off. The streets were quiet, here and there a tradesman's cart, or a street cleaner, but of real life there was none. It was all new and unreal to me, and I found myself engrossed in every insignificant detail.

At the city gate we were held up by traction trains, carrying men, wagons and provisions to the front. But after a few words of explanation to the guard, we were passed ahead of the long line, and then out over the great, wide magnificent boulevard we sped. At Vincennes

a sentry stepped in front of the car and barred the way with his rifle. We came to a stop and the officer beside me leaned out and whispered "Constantine." It was the first time I had heard a countersign used, and it gave me a thrill. It was the magic word, and again we were off like a streak. I watched the speedometer climb up and up, flicker back a moment, and still mount until it reached one hundred and ten kilometers an hour. I am never nervous in a car, but if I had been so inclined, all traces of it would have disappeared as Lieutenant F—— handled his machine with a skill that amazed me. I learned later he had twice won the —— Amateur Cup for endurance and speed races.

At noon we stopped at what he told me had been an historic abbey. It was now a hospital completely officered by Scotch women. They were orderlies, and even stretcher-bearers. It was a very distinguished hospital, as the administratrix was General French's sister.

These wonderful women were nursing, not their own men, but the French wounded. They were kind and gracious, insisting on giving us

hot luncheon, although their own meal was an hour away. In return we were happy to leave them a few hospital supplies, which they sorely needed.

From there on we began to be told that we probably could not get through, as the Germans were advancing on the run. Along the railways we saw troop trains going to the front, the soldiers singing, and ambulance trains crowded with wounded coming back, generally bound for Calais. Other trains carried in cattle cars, women, wrinkled bent old men, and babies.

An hour later we made a slight detour to take despatches to the *état-major* of the retreating army of the French. Even he felt it doubtful that we could get through to ——.

Soon we saw Taubes above us, but they were following the army, and were soon lost to view.

Speeding along a straight white road, we suddenly came upon a little group of soldiers evidently signaling us. Several of them came limping hastily in our direction. I jumped down and ran to meet them.

They were wounded French, trying to make

their way to the nearest collecting station. With them, however, was an English subaltern, whose strength had given out, and they were not able to carry him. They had found him among the debris of a ruined belfry. He had been on observation duty and had posted himself there only a few hundred yards away from the Germans. For an hour he had regularly telephoned his orders. Then he had told his men that he heard the Germans coming up the stairs, and not to believe anything else they heard. A moment later he had been struck down and left for dead. When we arrived he was begging them to go and leave him, saying France needed all the men she had—one life, even, was too precious to risk for him. Of course they had not dreamed of doing so, but, oh, how glad they were to see us! We hastily ran over to where he was lying under a demolished haystack. He was not seriously wounded provided he had immediate attention, and his face lighted with joy when he found we could take them all. We laid him on top of the boxes, making him as comfortable as possible with rugs. The poor fellows were all so exhausted

from hunger and fatigue that after giving them biscuits and wine they slept, even in the cramped positions in which they were forced to sit. Thirty kilometers away we gave them over to an English hospital and hurried on.

It was growing late; we had lost some time, and Lieutenant F—— began to drive furiously. At the turns I sometimes felt a little anxious. Reading my expression he said, "I didn't like to tell you for fear you might be nervous, but we must reach W—— by five this evening, or we can not cross the river, as at that hour they are going to dynamite the bridge. We would then have to go fifty kilometers up the stream to pass." After a pause he added, "You know they are so anxiously waiting us—our supplies—we simply can't fail them."

It was an hour and a quarter until five, and we had one hundred kilometers to go; the road was good and we were devouring the distance, when, bang! went a tire. He said something very like "damn," then stopped the motor and jumped down.

Without really thinking what I was about, I began loosening the extra tires. He looked at

me for a moment with amazement. Catching his expression, I said:

“Oh, I am used to this. Get your tire off. I will have this ready.”

We worked with a will, and in four minutes we were off. As his eye fell on the clock, he turned to me, laughing.

“You are what you say in America—a girl who goes after my heart.”

We reached the bridge five minutes before five. There was a long line of carts slowly going over; one motor, an ambulance, was pulled up on one side. The driver was talking very eagerly with several sentries. The moment he saw us he jumped down and came running to us in great excitement. He was a Scotchman, and whether he surmised we spoke English or in his haste forgot that our flag was French, I do not know, but he said excitedly: “For God’s sake, what’s the pass-word? I know it ends in ‘ine.’ I’ve been giving Clementine, Hazeltine and everything I could think of.” We laughed a good deal about it, but as they were waiting on the other side to apply the fuse, we hurried across. It was a graceful

bridge, with beautifully proportioned arches, built in the time of Henry IV, and it seemed a crime to demolish it—such wanton waste, but—war and waste are synonymous.

Arriving at the other side, we found a squad of English Royal Field Artillery ready for their work. Lieutenant F—— asked me if I minded waiting a moment; being an engineer, he was interested in watching the English method of operation. And he added, “Perhaps you would like to get out a moment, too.”

The English officer came over and spoke to us. Lieutenant F—— introduced himself and recounted apropos bridge destruction an incident he had heard the night before in Paris, of where the English in retreating had been forced to destroy a bridge. The sappers in attempting to light the fuse were killed. Then one of the engineers made a rush—he was killed the first few steps he made. Another took his place. He dropped dead half-way. A third man started to run the gauntlet of the German fire, but was killed. A fourth attempted it, then others dashed out, until eleven had been shot, and then a twelfth man, a Cap-

tain Beaufort, racing across the open space covered by the bodies of his dead and dying comrades, lighted the fuse that sent the bridge up with a boom—and, by a miracle, escaped.

“I call that marvelous courage,” Lieutenant F—— added enthusiastically as he finished his story.

“Oh, he only did his duty,” the Englishman replied calmly.

Another second and the fuse would be lighted. I dreaded to see it, and either feeling that, or remembering the urgent need of our hurrying on, Lieutenant F—— said: “Well, we must go.”

The men shook hands and Lieutenant F—— said: “Good-by! Is there anything we can do for you en route?”

“Yes, if you will leave this note at the headquarters at C—— I will be obliged.” He wrote a line or two, handed it to Lieutenant F——, and we were off again.

“Those English are fine fellows,” he said. “The Germans at first despised them, and I confess we French didn’t begin to appreciate them at their full value, until, in the retreat

from Mons the small British army, at fearful loss, kept the German hordes off and so enabled our forces to fall back in safety. And you know," he continued after a pause, "their coolness is appalling, unbelievable. They cook, make their eternal tea, wash and even shave under fire. They are queer," he mused.

"Some one has said of their army," I replied, "as the nervous lady said of the mouse, 'small but a horrible nuisance.'"

This amused Lieutenant F—— greatly. He translated it into French and it sounded very funny.

"Speaking of the English," he said, "their most admirable quality is their ability to stand still, or retreat. We French are better at rushing. At the battle of Mons they made the most magnificent retreat that military history records."

"Yes, Kipling tells us, 'Tommy, you are a hero with your masterly retreat,'" I answered.

Half an hour later we were at the headquarters at C——. As the car stopped several English officers came to the door. Lieutenant F—— called out that he had an important message

for the commander. Where was he to be found?

"I am he," the older of the men replied.

Lieutenant F—— handed him the note, and we were about to start when the commander asked one or two questions. Then he apologized for detaining us, and thanked us for bringing Captain Beaufort's message.

Captain Beaufort's message!

It was Captain Beaufort who had lighted the fuse at the bridge. *Lieutenant F—— had told him the story of his own heroism!*

We looked at each other a moment in blank astonishment, and then the Frenchman threw up his hands, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "*Mon Dieu*, and he said, 'Oh, he only did his duty,' while I made a poem about it."

After that every few minutes we were stopped by sentries, and it was growing dusk before we turned into the gate of the hospital court. It had been a monastery before monasteries had been suppressed, and lately the French government had used it for an asylum. It looked a heavenly place, set in trees, and reminiscent of glorious old days, with its archi-

ture of a bygone period, its windows reaching from floor to ceiling, and giving out upon exterior balconies, overhung by drooping branches. Great gnarled trees encircled it, gardens gay still with autumn flowers were about it, and ivy-clad walls blended with the soft gray stone mellowed by years.

As we stopped before the door, the surgeon in command, Colonel S——, and the matron, a crisp bustling woman of forty, came out to meet us.

They were genuinely relieved to see us, and to know we and our precious supplies were safe. "We are so desperately in need of things, and you know," said the colonel, "the Germans are raiding everywhere, and one can never be sure of anything."

"Not even a Red Cross ambulance?" I asked in surprise.

"The flaming Maltese cross only invites danger, for they know such are unarmed and easy prey," he said bitterly.

"But you must be dead with fatigue," he added. "Go to your rooms and rest until dinner, which is at nine. We dine only after the

patients are comfortably settled for the night. That is, if we are lucky," he added, laughing, and I learned that for weeks many of the staff had scarcely known a night's rest, often sleeping with their clothes on, and snatching a bite now and then. But there was a little lull that day.

CHAPTER V

FIELD HOSPITAL 18

WHILE I drank a cup of tea the matron talked to me of the work. I felt instinctively that we would be friends. She was businesslike, kindly and had a quick understanding. She was especially pleased that I could interpret for them. No one in the hospital spoke German, and now and then, she explained, they had rather difficult experiences with their German patients. "Not so much the men," she added. "They are always nice and reasonable, but the officers!" And she threw up her hands.

A few moments later she led the way up the three flights of worn stone stairs to the little room that had been assigned to me.

"I felt you would prefer being alone, even though the room is so tiny, and with all its disadvantages—only," she added, smiling as we

surveyed it, "if we get too crowded you must be prepared to share even this."

I assured her I was happy and grateful to be allowed to serve, no matter what the conditions.

My bath finished, I was leisurely combing my hair, when a message came that I was wanted in Colonel S——'s office at once. Hastily putting on my uniform and cap, I went down. A German officer had just been brought in from the front with an ugly wound in the thigh and his condition was serious. They had already got him warmed, his circulation restored. The examination disclosed a large infected wound, with several inches of the bone torn away. The *médecin major* was endeavoring to persuade the man that an amputation wasn't necessary—that he could replace the bone by a long steel plate screwed to the remaining bone.

The German, not speaking French very well, had been unable to understand the proposed treatment. I explained it to him, but he did not like the idea; he felt sure the plates would break loose, the screws come out, and that in

the end he would die with violent sepsis, brought on by the presence of a foreign substitute in his body.

After much persuasion, however, he consented. The thing that finally seemed to clench the matter was that with two legs he could still ride. The idea of a one-legged man on horseback seemed to horrify him.

He was given spinal anesthesia, and was very interested in being able to read and talk during the operation. When it was all over he thanked the doctor, the operating nurse and myself, and said, as they carried him out: "When I get home, if anybody speaks to me about the glory of war, I am going to be damned rude to them."

I was so tired when I got to bed I was asleep in two minutes, although for the last hour I had heard for the first time in my life the dull booming of artillery.

The next morning while the matron was taking me around the wards, explaining my duties, a message came, asking her to come at once to the colonel's office. She left me to go through the German ward and do whatever I

found necessary. That ward was in a wing of the monastery that had been used for a dining-room. Lighted on three sides, it was admirably adapted for its present purposes. But, because the German officers objected to sharing their quarters with their men, it had been divided about the middle by four huge carved oak doors, and while they were beautiful in themselves, they made the room far less airy.

I went at once to find the patient of the night before. He was resting comfortably; in fact, so much so that he insisted on keeping me to read me an extract from an article written by Maximilian Harden, the famous editor of the *Zukunft*. At least he told me he was famous, or rather notorious ever since 1907, when he had published revelations of the immoral spiritualistic circle which under Prince Eulenberg had captivated the Kaiser. "His style is," he said, "so terse and epigrammatic, that he has been called the German Tacitus." The article explained that there was too much chatter about the shortage of food, potato famine, but said the truth was it simply was a campaign intended to arouse the hatred of

England. The article was headed *Eat Your Pigs or Your Pigs Will Eat You*, and went on:

“In the brains of even the serious people in Germany there has grown a crazy theory that the German standard of living has depreciated. Everywhere lectures, appeals, instructions, warnings, about our food. Eat K-K bread, never scorn dry crusts. Cook your potatoes in their skins. Collect your kitchen refuse. No flour on Sunday. Female busybodies with a craze for notoriety tell us what a delightful mouthful you can make from the eye and tail of a herring.

“Eat your mess yourself, you chatterbox! All this twaddle injures Germany. We are in no danger of famine. This firebrand was merely meant to inflame hatred against England.”

And then Harden proceeds to draw a picture of the real state of things. He says:

“Hundreds of thousands of women live more lavishly than in peace times, for then the husband drank or Palais-de-danced. Now he is with the colors and sends home the pay

he cannot use. Landlords and creditors may wait for their money. Societies, clubs, and private people open their purses. What's for dinner? Roast goose, apple pastry, tinned asparagus, fresh fish, chocolate, and cake. Off goes the woman to the stores, bargain hunting, looks in at the fortune tellers on the way. After this a visit to the kinema, and sees '*Her Last Dance*,' '*The Guardian Spirit of the Submarines*,' '*The Latest War Films*.' This is not an uncommon woman's day."

The officer enjoyed it immensely. Evidently it expressed his own sentiments.

I had attended all the men and was just leaving the ward, when an orderly came to say that Colonel S—— wanted me.

There I found half a dozen of the staff, including an Inspector General of Hospitals, who had just arrived, discussing the inadequacy of the First Aid Stations. The inspector said he found that in our service there was no fire, no brandy, no splints, no morphine, and often very little dressings. That we depended too often on simply getting the wounded to the hospital. If the men died en route—*tampis!*

"Of course, I know that in the last analysis," he said, "the wounded are simply burdens. The fighting men are the main thing, but I personally think this poor economics, apart from any reasons of sentiment. I want our system to be more like that which the British maintain."

I had been sent for to know if I could at least in part furnish the materials for such work immediately, as there was always a certain delay in getting supplies. It was just a question of expediency. I would be paid for them, he hastened to add. France was willing and able to look after her men, the inspector continued; only things moved so swiftly stores were sometimes inadequate.

I hastened to assure them that I quite understood, and was only too happy to put such things as I had in Paris at their disposal. We at once equipped three portable dressing stations along the lines nearest us, and the good results were immediate and surprising.

The next few days were desperately busy ones for us. Fighting was heavy around ———

and day and night the ambulances came hurrying in with their burdens of human freight.

The wounds were of all kinds and in every conceivable condition. Those made by shell, often tear whole limbs away, for shells are not intended so much for the destruction of *people* as of things, fortified buildings, trenches, etc. Shrapnel is for human beings, and is a metal case containing dozens of bullets, perhaps a half inch in diameter, packed in by hand, which carries a charge of explosives timed to burst at the moment it reaches its destination. The bullets are smooth and round and if they go through soft tissue do not do great injury, but if they strike a bone they flatten and then the harm they do is incalculable.

Rifle fire at short range is far and away the most murderous. And after I had been at the hospital a week or two I understood the gravity of the oft repeated charge on both sides of dum-dum bullets.

The ordinary bullet is encased in nickel, has a lead core and makes a clean perforation, even piercing the bone with little damage. In dum-

dum bullets, the nickel casing at the tip is cut or removed and consequently when it strikes the casing, "mushrooms" and does fearful damage.

These bullets were forbidden by the *Geneva Conference*.

The German bullet, however, is far more barbaric, for it is short and pointed and when it strikes it turns a somersault and goes in backward. The base of it, being protected, spreads, with fiendish results.

Every wound was poisoned when it came to us. At first I could not believe on seeing them, that any of the men could live. Where every opening was filled with earth, manure, fragments of clothing, there must be immense sepsis. But I did not reckon on the fact that the microbes were not so deadly as those of the crowded city.

One afternoon immediately after lunch, Doctor Souchou asked me to be ready in ten minutes for a rather long ride, in fact, he said, "I have just received a message asking us to go fifty kilometers away and bring in the wounded that the raiding Uhlans have left behind. We

will go with Lieutenant F——, as we may have to pass close to the German lines, and so need a cool firm hand at the wheel. With the lieutenant driving," he said, laughing, "it will take a very superior marksman to hit us."

I was delighted that I had, on account of speaking German, been chosen as the one nurse to go, and we were off in ten minutes.

Our way lay through numerous French outposts, where we were sometimes held up until a higher officer gave us the right of way. We passed many bombarded villages, to some of which the poor dwellers had returned in their ruins. But one, a place that once must have meant home to ten or twelve thousand, was in such a state of devastation that no one had remained, save two nuns. They had stayed that the altar might not be desecrated. At one place there had been a large factory. What was left of the machinery proved it to have been powerful and modern, but even Lieutenant F——, who was an engineer, could not decide what had been manufactured, the ruin was so complete. Only one house in the whole place was left standing. On its door was written in German,

“Do not burn, or pillage this house,” and signed and sealed by one Captain Reuss. It was empty.

We wondered a good deal what special consideration had prompted the captain to lend his august protection to this insignificant dwelling.

And then we were halted and told we could not go farther in that direction. We must retrace our way and make a detour of thirty kilometers; the Germans were shelling a French outpost but a little way on. We did as we were directed, but in some way took a route that led us to the very spot we had tried to avoid. The sound of the guns came nearer and nearer, but we momentarily expected our road would turn suddenly and sharply away. And, too, the firing had ceased during the last fifteen minutes, and speeding as we were, we had gone far in that time. On coming to the top of a hill we were thunderstruck to see less than half a mile away a long line of British soldiers filing at double quick time across a pontoon bridge. As if timing our arrival to a second, the firing began anew. The British line paused a moment, and

we heard an indistinct command. We could plainly see the men getting ready for their sprint under fire, with a space of twenty feet between each. Then came the dash—I grew faint as I saw many of them fall into the river below. Once over the bridge they raced up the hill, and far away on its crest we saw the Germans begin their advance.

The English fell flat on their stomachs and began firing. They worked their guns so quickly that Doctor Souchon said they must be hot in their hands. The Germans came with a rush. I sat there petrified; it seemed as if I could not endure the sight, when all at once the doctor said in a voice he tried to make calm: "What do you make out over there?" pointing to a spot on the horizon. The sun came out brilliantly for a second, and we saw plainly a detachment of French cavalry. At the same moment a French aeroplane swept into view, and there was a glitter, as of tinsel waved in the sun. It was an artillery signal for range, and an instant later we heard the peculiar bark of the French 75. The Germans had heard it too. They began falling back.

The doctor said quietly, "I think we had better go."

The road was empty of troops, so we made up for lost time. Half an hour later we found the place for which we had been searching.

It was a large country house, standing in a little clump of trees. The door was open. On the polished floor were scattered a deck of cards, half a dozen empty champagne bottles and even a few filled ones. A table was overturned, cigars and cigarette ends were all over the place. A tapestry chair lay upside down with its back broken and hanging by the cloth. A china cabinet had evidently been smashed with a chair. Knives, forks and plates were lying in confusion with half eaten food scattered everywhere.

Loot and destruction had gone hand in hand; what couldn't be taken must be destroyed.

The piano, however, was untouched, with a piece of German music open on the rack. But we had no time to reconstruct the scene, we must look for the wounded, said to be there. I was sent up-stairs. There chaos was complete. Beautiful dresses had been trampled on the

floor, an ermine coat was still wet with wine; books, photographs, open drawers, all testified to the orgies that had taken place.

I stopped to listen—surely there were voices. Subconsciously I started toward the sound. It was a woman sobbing. I ran to the door of the adjoining room. It was locked. I tried it, and then cried, "Open! I am a Red Cross nurse."

I waited a breathless moment, then I heard some one come toward me, evidently walking with great difficulty. I could hear the woman sobbing as if her heart would break, and a man's voice endeavoring to comfort her.

A second more, and the door was swung wide. A German officer stood on the threshold. With fine attempt at nonchalance, he said: "Come in; I need a nurse badly."

But I ran to the girl. "Are you hurt?" I asked breathlessly.

She looked up at me with great brown eyes swimming in tears, her face drawn, haggard, old; although she could not have been over twenty.

"No," she answered. "I am not, but I wish to God I were dead."

“Oh, she will be all right,” the man interrupted. “I’ve just been telling her that I would look after her.” There was a certain indescribable something about his speech and manner that convinced me he was of the highest class. Just then he lifted his arm to smooth his hair and I saw the bangle that is worn by the *men of the Emperor’s set*.

I felt helpless. This was something with which I could not grapple. I went in search of the doctor—he would know what to do.

On the stairs I met them. They were coming to find me. I explained the situation as best I could, and went on searching for wounded in other parts of the house.

The doctor had found three French civilians, one an old man, evidently the father of the girl up-stairs, a young boy with wounds too cruel to describe, and an old peasant woman whose worn hardened hands still clutched an iron fire implement she had used in defense. Besides these there were three desperately wounded German soldiers, who had been left behind by their comrades.

With more grace in his heart than I could

have commanded, the doctor took the Germans, too, back in the ambulance, saying, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

The poor broken girl was given over to some French sisters at N——, where we afterward heard she was to become a mother. None of the Germans spent even an hour with us, but were sent, with a history of the case, straight on to the Base Hospital.

The officer, during the moment we stopped on the stairs, burned his plaque and military papers. His name he said was Schmidt, and he refused to give his rank or command.

France and Belgium are filled with cases even more hideous, more brutal, more wanton. Cases, that if seen as the nurses and doctors see them, would not only swamp England's recruiting offices, but would make thousands of American fathers and brothers enlist in the Foreign Legion.

CHAPTER VI

HINGES OF DESTINY

ALL day they had been bringing men in from the front, wounded, dirty and dying; all day I had smelt that peculiar indescribable odor which I had learned so well to know in these last few weeks and which an eternity will not serve to efface from my memory.

Many of the men, although terribly wounded, had been so exhausted that to awaken them was impossible. We had not tried; we had let them sleep. A wound that has been without care for a few hours can go one or two hours longer without attention, for nothing that man has invented or science discovered can take the place of sleep. There had been hundreds brought in during the last twenty-four hours, and one by one they had been washed, their wounds dressed and then put to bed.

I was so tired that I dumbly wondered whether I should succumb, as the men from the front had, to overmastering sleep, when we—the orderly and I—came to the last man. We were surprised to find he was an Englishman. We had started to undress him when he roused up and said:

“Where is my captain? They have left him—I know they have left him—they thought he was dead or dying, and they have left him out in the cold and the dark. Do not touch me. I am going to find him.” And before we could stop him he had jumped up, struggled to his feet and was half-way down the ward. We were after him like a flash and in a moment had overtaken him, but our combined efforts did not serve to stop him, and before we realized what was happening he had dragged us to the outside door. Suddenly a door opposite opened, and Colonel S—— stood silhouetted against the light.

“What is it, my man?” Something in his calm cool manner implied authority, and this is the story the soldier vehemently poured forth:

“I am a lieutenant in the —— Sikh Regi-

ment. This morning at three o'clock we were awakened by a night attack. An incessant artillery fire began, and shells came thick on top of one another—first they were quite close to us, then next to us, then upon us—and with that there came that hideous singing sound of the bullets. Short red flames burst out. The search-light threw its terrible pale gleam across the horizon, and the screaming shrapnel fell like hail on the ground around us. Everywhere was the ceaseless crack of the rifle, the bursting of shells and the roar of high explosives. Far away somewhere up the line came the clatter of the machine guns getting into action. My God! *our* Indians fought like devils, but we were surrounded; those who were able jumped to the parapet and fought on until the end. The last thing I remember during the bayonet charge that followed, was hearing a German officer call out to my captain: 'Englishman, surrender!' Seizing a rifle to encourage his men, I heard above the din of battle his cool reply: 'Surrender, be damned!' As he said this he fell. I reached out to catch him, and then I knew no more until I found myself here. Now

I must go back there to find him. I know just where he is; it can not be far."

I thought, as he was talking, it must have been just the moment that French cavalry appeared on the crest of the hill and the Germans fell back, otherwise he and his beloved captain would be lying on the battle-field in the enemy's lines, or, by rare good luck, in the enemy's hospital. The boy was not badly wounded, and the doctor decided to let him go out with the *brancardiers* and search for his captain.

It was a moonlight night and as this young subaltern, accompanied by the surgeon, went down the graveled walk through the garden, I followed them. The last I saw of him was as he swung himself into a waiting motor with several of the stretcher-bearers and was off toward the battle-field where they had fought so desperately only a few hours before.

I felt wildly excited. Something of that strange thrill, terrible and tragic, that had been ever present within me when I had first begun nursing and that had vanished through the curse, or the blessing, of getting used to things, again seized me. There is something within us,

and stronger than our wills, which adapts us to every change of circumstance so quickly that we sometimes resent the adaptation. I had found that one can not continue to be surprised, or glad, or even sorry, above a certain level. War is like loud and sensational music, the effects of which thrill an audience for *only* about three minutes. I had grown to believe that I had seen so much of the hideous and ghastly that comes into every nurse's life at a receiving hospital, that my capacity for great excitement had been exhausted. But, out there, alone, under the calm bright moon, the air heavy with perfume of garden flowers, something of it all stirred and quickened my heart to its very depths. I forgot that my limbs ached with fatigue, forgot how ardently I had been longing for bed, and stood there wistfully gazing down the road, as if expecting some dear one.

I do not know how long I stood there, but I suddenly became conscious of a fast approaching motor; in a second it was at the gate, and I heard a voice that sounded strangely familiar. It was the little lieutenant, supporting in his

arms, his captain. I remember, dimly, thinking that war revived one's faith again in miracles.

"Quick, nurse!" he said to me; "I won't believe he is dead, although I can't find any pulse."

He was carried into the hospital and immediately into the outer room of the operating theater, where the strong lights were switched on. For a moment I was dazzled, half-blinded by their brilliancy, and it was only after I had unbuttoned his uniform and bared his breast that all might be ready for the hypodermic of ether and camphorated oil that Doctor Souchon generally gave, that, as I leaned over him I recognized the white and finely chiseled face of Captain Frazer, the Englishman who had helped me rescue the Austrian officer that night on the *Lusitania*.

The doctor's quick and businesslike voice brought me abruptly back to earth.

"A serious abdominal wound with internal hemorrhage," he was saying, as he made a hasty examination. "This is the kind of case," he continued, "about which one might say the

person must have a mission to fulfil, as by all the laws of nature this man ought to have been dead hours ago."

In the confusion of the moment we had all forgotten the indomitable courage of the boyish lieutenant, and it was only when we heard a thud and something fall limply to the floor that we remembered him. He had fainted. An orderly and a doctor picked him up and carried him out, while I remained to help Doctor Souchon with the operation.

"He is so nearly done for, nurse," the doctor said, "I think we had better try the new anesthetic, scopolamine, if you feel sure of yourself in giving it."

"I won't fail you, Doctor," I answered. Father had used it for nearly a year before his death and I had often given it for him.

During the next hour, as the doctor performed the intricate operation with the utmost skill, I worked with no thought of weariness and with a prayer on my lips for the patient. When it was all over, the doctor turned to his assistant and said:

"Sew him up. I will see him in the morning. I do not mind telling you I am pretty much all in, but I think we have made a good job of it, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if he pulls through." Then glancing back and speaking to me as he passed through the door, he said: "You'd better look at his plaque and see who that chap is."

"He is Captain Frazer," I said.

"Captain Frazer! Of what regiment?" he asked.

"I do not know that," I answered, suddenly realizing how little I did know.

"Where shall we put him?" said the orderly.

"There is no place," I answered.

"Well, this man must have perfect quiet and good care," the assistant surgeon said, "or—" and he shrugged his shoulders, meaningly.

For several weeks two of the nurses had been sharing my room on the third floor. They were on night duty just then, so I hurriedly sought them, explained the situation and asked if they thought we could manage some way for a night or two.

"Of course," they both said. "We'd do a great deal to save any man's life, but all the more since he is your friend."

"Oh, no," I hastened to explain, "he— he— isn't exactly a friend—"

"Oh, well, never mind," one of them interrupted, "don't keep the poor man on the operating table any longer, no matter whose friend he is or isn't. We are not going to bed to-night at all, at all," she laughed, "and to-morrow we will manage somehow—but—what about you?"

"Oh, I'll find a place," I said, "don't worry about that."

The place I really found was a little cot in my own room—that is—Captain Frazer's room, for the present. Somehow I could not bear to think of leaving him alone. In case of a hemorrhage in his condition, I knew it would be all over with him. Of course, at a time like that, no one person could have a great deal of individual attention, still for to-night, I'll stay with him, I thought. As it turned out, it was a very lucky thing I did; trifles are often the hinges of Destiny.

A little after dawn I heard him moaning. I

was getting up to see if I could make him more comfortable, when the door opened. For some unknown reason I paused; there was a little screen around the cot and I could neither see nor be seen, but I heard and recognized the voice of Nurse Elizabeth.

She was speaking with the accent that had from the first attracted a certain amount of unpleasant notice.

She was saying, "I heard you, and I came to see what I could do for you." I was just on the point of asking her please not to disturb the patient, as he was in no condition to talk, when to my amazement, I heard him answer in a low but quite distinct voice saying that he wanted a glass of water.

"Water, why, of course," she answered; "you shall have it." But I knew she would not dare give it to him without the doctor's knowledge, because, in the nature of things, she would not know the condition of a new patient, and in this particular case, water would probably mean certain death. Perhaps fearing to excite him, perhaps—but I shall never know what kept me silent—and Nurse Elizabeth went on speaking.

“You had a pretty hard day yesterday, didn't you?”

“Yes,” he answered.

I was amazed beyond belief.

“But,” she continued with a little laugh, “what was your general trying to do, for Heaven's sake, anyway, that led you into that cul-de-sac?”

By this time I was torn between two violent emotions—one, my desire to shield my patient; the other—well, a vague suspicion that had existed, unspoken, among all of us, began to assume a new and hideous proportion. But my sympathy triumphed and I rose, thinking I would put her out of the room instantly. Then I suddenly stopped petrified; no, I was a military nurse, with the same obligations to the country I was serving as a soldier; neither sympathy nor any other emotion gave me the right to sacrifice the many perhaps, for the one. Duty, that stern specter, gripped me, and while the blood in my heart ran cold, I stood and listened.

She went on: “It was the sheerest nonsense for General —— to attempt that move.”

“Well, you see, it was like this—” he said; and almost in the grip of death by a supreme effort of will he began the defense of his general. When he had finished Nurse Elizabeth went on:

“Well, now, of course, that reinforcements have already arrived, is it the plan to take —— at all costs?”

As if he suddenly remembered even in his great weakness that orders and plans were sacred, he said:

“I do not know what the move will be. Oh, how I do want some water,” he moaned and in his voice was the plaintive note of a tired child.

Watching through the dotted swiss screen, I saw her read deliberately the card at the foot of the bed, which told what his operation had been. As she finished, she said, “Just a moment, and I will bring you the water.”

Would she—knowing that this man had been operated on for that most dangerous and treacherous of all wounds? I waited breathlessly, like a tigress, ready to spring. If she came with that water,—well—I—. In a moment she had returned, carrying a tall glass

full to the brim of ice water. I waited until she put her hand under his pillow to raise him up to drink—even that she should never have done—and then, with a step I was beside her and before she realized what was happening, I had taken it from her and said in the calmest tone I could command, but which trembled with anger in spite of myself:

“By the doctor’s most emphatic orders, he is not to have any liquid for twenty-four hours.”

“Oh,” she said in a frightened voice, “I am afraid I let my sympathies get the better of me. I am so sorry.” After a moment she continued: “Please do not tell the doctor or the matron,—they would be awfully cross, but I am *so* sympathetic,” she added lamely.

For a moment I did not trust myself to answer her, and then I said, “I think we had better both go,” for I would not have dared to leave her alone in the room after what I had seen.

As I turned to go away my patient attempted to put out his hand. I took it, and his long slender fingers closed over mine tightly. He held it firmly and looked up at me with eyes to which fever gave a burning luster. I remem-

bered with a little pang, the cool calm gaze that was so characteristic of him on shipboard, and then his eyelids closed and in a moment more he was unconscious. I gently disengaged my hand and slipped from the room to find the head surgeon and report to him what had happened. An investigation was begun; Nurse Elizabeth was found, without a possible doubt, to be a German spy—and paid a spy's penalty.

An hour later, when I went back to the room, the sun had come up, and once again, that long monotonous roll of artillery filled the air. From my window, owing to the clearness of the day, I could see the city, with its old square church towers and red roofs. From time to time all this was blotted out in a cloud of smoke and red dust caused by the falling of bricks and tiles.

Turning wearily away from the window, I went slowly over to the bed and gazed long and earnestly at the handsome fine face, and the strong athletic body, gracefully outlined under the course linen sheet. There he lay a splendid specimen of God's handiwork, helpless, finished—perhaps dying—and this was war! He was

so white and still I gently felt for the pulse. It was jerky and intermittent. I decided that the doctor had better see him. I am afraid my touch, although I tried to make it light, must have disturbed him, for he opened his eyes and looked at me, it seemed for minutes, with a quizzical, rather worried expression. Then slowly from his face and his eyes the drawn set look of pain disappeared and he smiled up at me and said with a little of the ring in his voice that I remembered so well:

“Why, you are the little girl from the boat!” and then relapsed into that dark borderland that lies between life and death.

CHAPTER VII

VIGILS OF THE NIGHT

A DISTINGUISHED officer, General M——, had been wounded. Gossip said it was the work of a spy. However it may have been, this gallant soldier had received a very painful and serious injury and there was great anxiety among the staff. But all this was as nothing when the word went round that General Joffre himself was coming to pay his wounded general a visit. There was much speculation among the nurses as to whether we would be able to catch a glimpse of him. I decided that in all probability there would be very little chance of my having even a peep although I had been detailed as one of the nurses on the case. Great was my surprise when an orderly came to fetch me, saying that the doctor wanted to speak to me in General M——'s

room and added in a breathless whisper, "General Joffre himself is there."

When I went in they were discussing some phase of the case and the doctor said, "Here is the nurse; she will be able to tell us." The patient insisted on having General Joffre shown his wound. It was a childish wish, but then fever often plays strange tricks with us. To humor him, the doctor began loosening some of the bandages. As he was doing so I had a minute in which to look at the celebrated general. I saw a man of moderate height, broad of shoulders and wide of girth. His gray mustache and overhanging brows gave his face something of sternness, but somehow I felt that his severe calmness was rather a pose—a masque—he had adopted. I remembered that some one had said of him that he was the "master of his fate and the captain of his soul." He looked it.

"Ah, General," said the wounded man, looking up at him, "if I had been as strict with myself as you have, as moderate in smoking and drinking, and kept those good early hours that

you keep, I should be much more likely to pull through quickly."

"My dear boy," the general replied, "you are all right and it is just a question of a few weeks' care and patience. Patience," he repeated with sincere tenderness in his voice, for the wounded man had been with him during many campaigns in Africa and Madagascar.

It was getting late when he left the room, and he had many kilometers to go, but he insisted on walking through the hospital and saying a word to each of the men there, alluding to them as "*mes braves petits soldats.*" In one of the beds there was a Scotchman. The general spoke to him and said: "You are one of the men that Germans call 'Hollenweiber'" (laddies from hell). Quick as a flash the Scot answered: "That's a great compliment, sir. It shows that they think we fight like devils," at which the general laughed good-humoredly.

For the last few days I had been doing extra work in the German prisoners' ward. Some way they came to know that I was from America which made them eager to chat with

me—in fact, so eager that it was only with difficulty I prevented it interfering with my work. One especially—he was, I should think, about thirty-five years old—a non-commissioned officer of the Landwehr who had risen to a lieutenancy. He did not look at all like a typical German officer nor were his mental processes that of this class. Of course his patriotism did not permit him to harbor any doubt of his country's ultimate success, but neither did he hide his desire for an early peace.

“You know,” he said to us as we changed his dressings and gave him his treatment, “Germany does not aspire to reduce France to vassalage,” and when the orderly said something about Alsace-Lorraine, he answered that there might be some sort of an exchange arranged—France take back Alsace-Lorraine and Germany receive compensation in colonies. “We are so misunderstood,” he repeated constantly. “Germany did not want war now—now or at any time, but realized when she saw France's three years' military service in full swing and when Russia had built her endless system of strategic railroads, with the help of French money, that

Germany would be between the upper and the nether mill stone" And as for German atrocities, he admitted them, but vehemently laid the blame at the door of the Bavarians, who, to quote his own words, "were an obviously inferior people."

At the first moment possible I hurried upstairs to see how Captain Frazer was getting on. For days his temperature had been running high and he was constantly delirious. Now and then he would utter words and disconnected sentences that made no sense at all, but often he talked for hours, relating experience after experience, sometimes with a clearness and sanity that was uncanny. When I entered the room he was in the midst of such a dissertation :

"We all have our pet aversion in action, old man, haven't we?" he said. "Now there is Cecil Loring who hates the thing that makes the least noise. You know we all used to laugh at him as he bobbed every bullet! And then there was Shane-Lister—he was devilishly shaken by high explosives. Just the other day Barry said to me, 'Ian, my boy, you remember that day when we were talking to the observation officer stand-

ing on a haystack, and the moment after we left it, a shell struck it? That was a close call—things like that go to my head!’ And then in action when the bullets are singing and all hell seems let loose, he insists that he feels drunk—as drunk as if he had been at it all night. It may be a form of funk he says, but it’s truth. Why, I am laughing all the time at absolutely nothing, clean lifted out of myself, exhilarated. I feel as if I were treading on air, but—” and here Captain Frazer dropped his voice in a most confidential manner and looked up at me with burning eyes,—“as for me, I do not mind telling you—when it is all over I have that sickening dropping sensation—you know, as if you were made of lead and were sinking down. And then is when I like my tea. Who’s making tea? Give me a cup—no, I mean mugful. My Indians say it is made with the blood of Germans. Well, if you could see that dirty, queer colored stuff that comes from the river, you would think so. Anyway, enough of them have been killed in it to dilute it pretty thoroughly with blood.”

Sitting up suddenly he called out: “Put out

that brazier, you damned fool; the smoke will give the range. Use a candle—" Then he laughed, that peculiar, disagreeable laugh of the delirious, as he said: "By jove! That is an ingenious idea," and he began talking about vaseline and jam-jars. His speech became unintelligible and it was not until long after that I came to know how the men use vaseline tins and empty jam-jars filled with lumps of ham fat and a rifle rag as an improvised stove, on which to make their tea.

When he became unusually excited I had to sit there by the hour, day or night, and hold his hand. The warmth of mine, or something of the electricity that passes from one being to another, seemed to calm him until finally he would drift off to sleep. To-day I sat beside him and speaking in a low voice tried to quiet him. He drifted off to sleep but only for a few minutes, then he began talking about his own regiment—the Ludhiana Sikhs, with one of the finest records, both for bravery and loyalty, of any of the distinguished regiments of the Indian army. This was a dangerous subject for him as he was extremely proud of his men and in-

variably began to fight over some of the fierce battles in which they had been engaged. Taking his temperature and finding it very high, I decided to give him an extra alcohol sponge. An hour later, as the chill purple folds of night shut down, he fell asleep.

This had been going on for some weeks now. He had grown weaker of course every day, and less able to withstand the ravages of fever. When the doctor came to see how he was, he shook his head gravely and said:

“Unless we can keep that fever down for the next twenty-four hours, our man is done for.”

All day I had given him alcohol sponges, as often as I dared, and we had kept the saline solution going every hour, but I was becoming frightened, and when Doctor Souchon came in the evening, I asked him to leave me some nitroglycerine.

“And won't you come as often as possible to-night, Doctor?” I pleaded, for I realized this was the crisis, and that we had only a fighting chance to win.

“I will come as often as I can,” he answered, “but wounded are arriving constantly—I hear

an ambulance now," and he turned to go. Stopping at the door, he said, "And I may be obliged to have you if—"

"Oh, please, Doctor," I interrupted beseechingly, "don't send for me; I must be here to-night!"

"I will do the best I can," he replied, and turned on his heel and ran down the steps.

I tried to take my patient's pulse, but it was so irregular and rapid, it was impossible. In looking at him, his eyes seemed already deeper and hollower, surrounded as they were by great dark shadows, and his hands, which lay flat on the cover, were so white that they were only distinguishable from the linen by the azure of the veins.

I heard the light ticking of a clock on the mantle; I felt that Time—the fugitive—was slipping by, and what its passage might soon bring—I violently put the thought out of my mind, I could not bear it. Through those next hours there wasn't a moment but that I wasn't doing something—everything known to me—to fight off the dreaded end.

From two o'clock on every few moments my

tired eyes sought the clock. I was terrified of those awful hours between four and seven, and in spite of all the stimulation I dared use, his vitality was ebbing. Terror overwhelmed me, left me without the power to combat the imaginings of death.

In the violet darkness my eyes met his; and suddenly into them came a new unfathomable expression. On the drawn white face, I thought I noticed symptoms of the death agonies, symptoms of a dissolution already begun and inevitable. He was whiter than the pillow and as motionless. All night I had been turning it, as it became constantly wet with dripping perspiration. I was overcome with a sensation of weakness—a sensation of the fatality of what had happened, and what was about to happen. An immense weight seemed to bear me down. Driven by that helplessness that often makes suffering humanity turn toward a Supreme Power, I fell on my knees, for science and nursing had failed, there remained only God's supreme intervention. I prayed as I had never prayed in my life. In this hour, how futile all my little knowledge seemed. I rose from my

knees with fresh courage to fight on, and a curious presentiment came to me that far away in England another woman was sharing with me that silent night vigil and that agonized prayer—his mother.

I went to the window and looked up to the starlit heavens. How peaceful the sleeping world lay; in such cruel contrast to the agony with which my soul was wrung.

My eyes were drawn irresistibly back to the bed—I longed to go there, but I could not take a step. Minutes passed. Thoughts and images furrowed my brain. By supreme effort I conquered the terror that held me and quickly went to the bed. I put out my hand to touch his forehead, but the will to do it failed me. Finally I held before his lips a little tuft of cotton, held it there with infinite precaution. The weaving of a thread showed the strength of his respiration. All my soul hung on those parched lips, which between moments might render their last breath. I controlled myself and tremblingly placed my fingers on the pulse—it was firmer, stronger,—there could be no mistake. A little time went by, it seemed incalculable. I took

the pulse again—*without any possibility of a doubt, my patient was better.*

Looking up I caught with joy, the first pale gray nuances of dawn. With the coming of the sunrise, Captain Frazer weakly, oh, so weakly, struggled back to this side of the borderland which men call Life.

Then I leaned half in a collapse against the tall post of the old-fashioned bed and wept, gently, tears of joy, for I knew that God had heard my prayer and given me the victory.

CHAPTER VIII

FATE MEANS YOU

FARTHER over toward Belgium a group of French women were establishing a hospital. They had as their head nurse a young Mademoiselle F——, who had been educated in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Dozens of typhoid patients were arriving daily and she was having some difficulty in making her untrained French assistants understand the cold bath system of treatment for that disease. In some way she had heard there was an American nurse in our hospital and had sent a request that this nurse be detailed to help her demonstrate the method. The colonel sent for me one afternoon and showed me Mademoiselle F——'s letter.

“I think she must mean you, Mademoiselle Bleneau, as you are the nearest approach we

have to an American nurse. I know you would be of inestimable value, but—" and he paused and looked out across the garden. While he had been speaking I had felt like a person who suddenly finds himself at the edge of a precipice—can it be possible that I must leave! My thoughts were interrupted by the doctor speaking again: "The truth is, we can not well spare you; the Allies are expecting heavy fighting in the course of the next ten days. You can go to Mademoiselle F—— to-morrow, but you must be back here at the end of the week."

I do not know why, but his decision gave me the greatest relief; even more, a sense of acute pleasure.

In the natural course of things it would be an hour or two before my duties would call me to Captain Frazer's room. Generally the hours were never long enough to accomplish all that was to be done, but that day time scarcely passed—it fell drop by drop, lazily and heavily. But at last the moment came to go to him.

The afternoon was soft and warm; we could hear the birds singing in the garden; and

through the open window floated the perfume of the last autumn flowers inspiring me with new emotion—a little like that of being afraid of one's self. To counteract this I kept saying over and over, "To be effective your work must be calm and concordant; calm and concordant," I repeated.

Then I turned to him and said: "To-morrow I shall say good-by. I have been ordered to a typhoid hospital at one of the French bases——"

He broke in, with a wistful little smile in his eyes: "Please don't go; what will I do without you? I have thought about it all so much as I have lain here hour after hour. That I am not dead and buried these weeks gone, I owe to you." There was a moment's pause, after which he added simply: "Now," and he emphasized the word, "I can only thank you."

"Nonsense!" I replied. "When all is said and done, it is Nature that does the work."

"Perhaps," he answered, "but in a case like mine, Nature only does so in conjunction with unremitting and skilful care." Into his voice came a note new to my ears. He went on

speaking: "That night—you know the night I mean—when it was just a toss-up whether I lived or died, I think if one could know how much will power has to do with things, it would be found that I lived because in a few lucid intervals I realized the heroic fight you were putting up for me, and subconsciously my will went out to help you. For when one is that near the other side, self, material things and interests count for little. But now," and he looked out across the hills, crowned with purple shadows, "realizing that on my life depends the happiness of my mother, my family, and that the life of any man who has had a certain training in warfare is valuable to his country, I am deeply grateful to Fate that I am living—and Fate in this case, my dear little nurse, means you," he said tensely.

"That's a very pretty speech," I answered lightly, "and I should so like to take it all to myself, but the very disillusioning fact remains—that it was your subaltern——"

Without heeding my words, he interrupted:

"'The disillusioning fact remains' that you are going away," and he looked up at me with

wide distraught eyes, and as he put out his hand and took mine I felt it tremble. "Don't go," he said, with a gesture of entreaty, and I hastened to explain that it was only for a few days, or a week at best, as I thought suddenly he looked not so well to-day and must not be worried by even trifles.

"I must go now," I said; "my other patients are needing me," and I hurried away toward the German ward. I had taken only a few steps when he called me back.

"I only wanted to say that some day you will know—what you—your kindness means to me," he said gravely, looking straight up into my eyes.

A sudden wild desire to say something, I hardly know what, possessed me, and a trembling I could not master overcame me.

"I am so glad I have been able to help a little," I stammered, and ran quickly down the stairs.

It was only when I reached the ground floor that I remembered I had not told him the story of how he came to be at our hospital, but I resolved to do it before I left to-morrow.

To get to the German ward I could go outdoors, through a court, and pass in by a French window. I often did this, as it gave me a breath of air. It was twilight, but the lamps had not yet been lighted; rubber-soled shoes made my approach noiseless, and as I came upon the little group of German prisoners I heard one of them say:

“Russia will want peace in the early summer, and France will seize the first possible opportunity to abandon the struggle, which will leave Germany free to fight it out with her true enemy—England.” At which one of them picked up his glass—he was taking a tonic that was a little like Dubonnet and which gave an excuse for a toast—but instead of the cheery “Prosit” which the German usually uses, he looked solemnly into the faces of his comrades, blinking like an owl, and said with an unmistakable vibration of hate in his voice, “God punish England!” And the others, with equal feeling, responded, “God punish her!”

I was amazed at this. I had never heard it before, and frankly said so. They assured me that in place of the time-honored *Auf Wieder-*

sehen, one often now hears this even as a leave-taking. It originated with the officers and men in the field but now all over Germany it was said with sincerity and earnestness.

I was always interested in their point of view, for the three who had remained with us owing to the condition of their wounds, were educated and representative Germans. Apart from their hatred of England, frankly expressed, they were courteous agreeable gentlemen. One was a Bavarian nobleman whose taste was evidently luxurious, for when he came to us his buttons, cigarette box and wrist-watch, everything except the inevitable plain gold bangle, were literally encrusted with enamel, diamonds and rubies. As I approached he raised his left arm, bending his wrist with a quick motion quite characteristic, and looking at his watch, said sharply—for the desire to command was so innate that to separate him from it would have been to separate his soul from his body—"You are a little late, nurse."

"Did you fear I had forgotten you?" I asked, without really thinking what I was saying.

"The Germans fear God and nothing else," he answered quickly.

His tone was a little aggressive. I stopped for a second and looked at him. There he sat, propped up in bed with pillows, a heavy handsome type of his class, a prisoner of war, and yet—the whole thing struck me as too funny for words, and I began to laugh. He evidently saw the humor of the situation himself, and laughed also.

"*Ach, du bist ein schones madchen!*" he said, using the familiar and friendly "thou." "Forgive me," he added, "and tell me the news." They were forever eagerly asking for news.

"Well," I said, "Kitchener has his extra million men. That ought to please you."

"Well, it doesn't make me sad," he replied, "because we know that for all their drumming and advertisement, Kitchener can not get the men, and the English won't tolerate conscription. In fact, it is too late for that now, as it would be a confession of failure; and besides, what will you do with a million men without officers? *We* know how long it takes to train

an officer—*they* do not. As for the French, I am sorry for them,” he said. “Poor devils! They would like to make peace in time. But you know,” he gravely assured me, “English troops are drawn up behind them all along the line, which is a constant threat if they should attempt to give way. Why,” and he raised up eagerly, “England has even threatened to bombard their ports if they do.”

“A good beating will be England’s salvation,” added one of the others. “Think of the effect on future generations of Englishmen, when they ask why some parts of London are so much more beautiful and better built than the rest! The answer will be that that part is superior because Germany rebuilt it when it was destroyed by the Germans in the great war.”

The seriousness with which this was said proved too much for my risibles. I was sorry, but I could not help it. I simply *had* to laugh. I longed to suggest that as he was an architect perhaps he might put in some of his enforced idleness suggesting improvements in the

architecture of London. But I was a nurse; he was a prisoner, and ill; and what I *did* say was, "Good night."

Later that evening when I went to Captain Frazer's room to get him ready for the night, I told him the story of how it was his little boyish lieutenant, and not myself, who really deserved his thanks for saving his life.

"But you say he was not very badly wounded. What has become of him. Why hasn't he been to see me?"

"For the very reason that his wounds were slight, the doctor sent him that same night to one of the near-by big base hospitals. We have only room here for the badly wounded, you know."

After thinking for a few moments he said, "Well, the first thing I shall do when I get out will be to find Tubby."

"Tubby!" I cried in amazement. "Why Tubby? He is as thin as a match!"

"That is just the idea," he laughed. "But I'll write to him—I'll do it this very minute."

"Please wait until to-morrow," I quickly interrupted, for he was becoming so excited I

began to regret having told him anything about Tubby at all.

Then I suddenly remembered with joy that I had a letter for him, for it gave us a diverting topic of conversation. It proved to be from a brother officer who was in prison at Torgau in Germany. He asked me to read it to him. It ran:

“My dear Ian:

“I thought perhaps you might want to know what a day’s work out here is like. You know I was taken a prisoner at Mons—first we were sent to Cologne and then on to Madgeburg where we were joined by a party of Scots.

“The journey was made in a cattle car, but our keepers were a decent sort and it’s all in a life time anyway. The only thing I really would like to register a kick about is the German Red Cross. The journey lasted seventy hours, we only had one meal, but I did get hot when they refused us water. We got to Torgau about four in the morning and were marched to the Fortress. Our particular building is called the Bruckenkopf. Napoleon the First built it to protect the bridge made over the Elbe for his great Russian exploit.

“Our building is divided into about fifty rooms which are British quarters. Outside in the passages there are crude tables which are used for mess, usually twenty-five or thirty officers mess together.

“We have an exercise ground here which is half a mile in circumference. At first we were a comfortable little party, but the other day eight hundred French came in and all the out-houses, wagonsheds, etc., are used for them. That is, all but one building, in that they manufacture shells. The women do the packing and they must be doing a big business as three or four hundred come every day, in fact, they are now working double shift.

“I mustn't forget to tell you about the International foot-ball match. Those between the French and English always draw good gates in spite of the fact that the English always win. The ground is very hard and rough, so we only play Association. We did try the Eton game once, but as there were not enough Etonians to make up the two sides, we had to fill in with men who, in some cases, had never seen the game played. The French were highly delighted at the formation and maneuvers of the ram.

“Discipline is maintained by the highest ranking officer of each nation. In our case we

have Colonel Gordon of the Gordon Highlanders. The sick are looked after by their own respective medical officers. The Germans gave them the benefit of their superior skill in the beginning, but evidently found it boring, seeing the same old patients day after day, so now we never see them, except on hurried visits for inspection.

“We can get all sorts of medicines made up in the town, but they are very fussy about selling anything with poison in any quantity in it and it is a much mooted question whether they fear we might use it for suicide, or to poison the guard. I hardly think it is the former because if it were, there would be regulations against the daily bath as the Germans often remark to each other that if the English go on bathing in this fashion all the time there won't be a one of them left when winter is over.

“We have been able to buy, in the canteen, bread, cheese, chocolate, apples, jam, sausage and even beer, but the list has dwindled until now only jam, sardines, sausage and ham are left. In another canteen on certain days in the week one may buy clothes, and the like.

“True, our trousers are of khaki corduroy and must have a narrow red band down the outer seam—this against an effort to escape. Trying to escape, I might add, isn't exactly

popular as a means of diversion, as a good many fellows have tried it and paid for the attempt with their life. We are never allowed on the battlements and even if one attempts to peep over 'A great big Hun with a great big gun' brings his rifle instantly to his shoulder with an unmistakable expression of business in his eye. The whole place is surrounded by a moat and in place of water there exists the unpicturesque barbed-wire entanglement, and we are constantly reminded that a high power live wire runs through the whole of it. At some of the prisons, the sentries carry fixed bayonets, but here it is evidently not considered necessary.

"For a long time, as you know, we were not permitted to write letters home and the knowledge that our families were suffering the greatest anxiety on our account, was the most distressing part of the imprisonment. Finally one day it was suggested by the Commandant that we might like to subscribe to the German Red Cross Fund. Nothing could have been received with greater coldness than this suggestion, as the most of us remembered as our most humiliating experiences those which we suffered at the hands of the Red Cross workers. But when he intimated that if the amount was such as to make it worth while to send

the checks to England to be cashed, this would necessarily carry with it to our friends the information that we were at least alive, we all suddenly became very generous in our contributions. As it is illegal to give money in any way whatsoever to the enemy, to get around this the checks were drawn on an Amsterdam Bank and across the face of each was a request that they should notify our families. I am beginning to believe that no moneys ever given in the world brought so much happiness, because these checks were the first intimation that England had that many of the officers were alive; in fact, in some instances they had been reported officially as dead.

"I might mention that one of our diversions has been peeling the potatoes necessary for the day, for the main meal is at half past twelve, which consisted generally of a piece of boiled potato and occasionally mutton floating in vegetable soup. We always have potatoes and the potatoes have to be peeled and, believe me, it takes lots of them. For some reason, I suppose it is inward cussedness, none of us took very kindly to the work, but we hear a rumor that the orderlies are soon going to fall heir to that job.

"English newspapers or books we don't have, but we are able to buy German ones. Often

when there is German reverse they publish it as an unconfirmed rumor from London, Rome, or somewhere, but at other times there seems no attempt to disguise their losses. My own opinion is that the press of Germany is inclined to be creative rather than suppressional. They continually lead their readers on with great expectations, when one plan falls through, to go after another. First it was the move on Paris; then it was Calais, and so it goes.

“For some weeks past now, we have been able to write two post cards or one letter a week. You should feel highly complimented that this week I have chosen to spend my precious letter on you, though it's pretty certain to be cut to pieces by the Censor, even if a decent German officer here has promised me to get it through intact, some way. But there is no use beating about the bush, old chap, behind it all there is a motive—I want to borrow fifty pounds. You see here all the officers of the rank of captain and upward are paid one hundred marks a month by the German government. The junior officers receive from thirty-five to sixty marks. We have to pay thirty-five of this for messing. The money left over—in my case there is none—one spends for food, tobacco, chocolates, etc., but it is never enough

and we piece it out by money from home, obtained through our banks or the American Consul or Embassy. All that might be all right, but the days are long and for pastime, morning, noon and night, we play bridge. I leave you to guess the wherefore of my present predicament and I don't want to tell the Guv'nor—you know how he feels about such things.

"I often think about the good old days at Kyber—but, as the Americans say—what's the use. Good-by and good luck until we meet again.

"Yours,"

After cautioning him repeatedly about his medicine, diet, etc., for the nurse who would look after him was unthinkably busy, I said "good night and good-by," for I was leaving very early on the morrow.

CHAPTER IX

HE WILL FORGIVE

THE next morning I went by train to the town where the fever hospital was located. An hour away the contour of the country changed. Chains of hills rolled away in a peaceful undulating line, and trees in the distance with their thick foliage appeared like a great wave of green fog. Here and there the autumn coloring looked like huge bouquets of red and yellow flowers; while the sky overhead was a beautiful pool of liquid turquoise.

There had been so little time in the last month for self-communion that I enjoyed to the uttermost this chance for quiet and repose. I stretched out on the cushions, oblivious of the heat and dust, thought of approaching events, considered the future possibilities and essayed to penetrate the great darkness that

engulfed us all. The hours passed and I was there before I dreamed it was time to arrive.

I found the hospital not yet systematized, the patients streaming in in such numbers as to prevent almost any attempt at organization. Mademoiselle F——, in showing me around, said when we came to the operating room:

“It is as if Fate meant to have a good laugh at us. We have here a whole service of rare and expensive tools; we have an œsophagoscope and the very latest pattern of stethoscope and a marvelous set of tools for plating fractures, but we have no knives, no artery forceps and not a stitch of catgut.”

We had to laugh. It was a little like having a gold service from which to eat and not a crumb of bread. Hasty telephone messages soon remedied that. The conditions in the hospital were pathetic in the extreme. Hundreds of men, stricken with typhoid and not a single bath-tub in the place, not even a *pot de chambre* and the makeshifts for such were too primitive and awful to speak about. It was not, however, that France was indifferent or unable. It was that an avalanche of wounded

descended on a country totally unprepared; as some one expressed it, "She was not criminally prepared."

One afternoon I was in the matron's office getting some orders for the night when there came to the door a pretty French woman, who would have been slender were it not for her all too obvious condition. She asked permission to see her husband, who was in my ward. The matron directed me to take her to him. As we started, she stopped me, pulling me by the sleeve, and said, "Don't leave me alone with him; stay by me, won't you; and help me beg him to forgive me!" I could not imagine what she meant—in fact, I thought, as sometimes happen with women in that condition, that her mind had become slightly deranged, and I therefore assented quickly. A moment more and we had reached the ward (it was one of the small wards with only three beds in it, and only two were occupied at that time).

As we went in, the sick man—an intelligent clear-eyed peasant, perhaps thirty years of age—said: "Oh, it's no use; I have told you again and again how I feel; it's utterly impossible;

it only tortures us both. Why don't you let me alone?"

The man was well on toward recovery, without fever, so I felt there was no danger for him in the situation, and started to leave them to settle their private affairs alone. She, however, ran to me, clinging with both hands to my arms, and saying: "Don't go; don't go! I want you to hear what I have to say and tell me, afterward, honestly what you think."

The man also urged me to stay and said: "When we went to the front in August, we men of the village knew the Germans were coming, we knew what they had done in Belgium, and we knew what to expect they would do to our women. I begged my wife, I implored her, I besought her on my knees, to go. I could not bear leaving her, knowing what would happen to any young and pretty woman when those devils came. Would she go? No! She would not hear of it. She refused to leave her mother. 'I will stay,' she said, 'and the first German that lays hands on me I will kill him as I would a snake.' I explained to her that all this was nonsense, that

it would be impossible, and demanded that she go to Bordeaux to my people." Then raising himself he fairly shouted: "She stayed; the Germans came—and now look at her!" and he pointed a long trembling bony finger. At this the woman began to weep hysterically and sobbed out that it was no fault of hers; their house had been taken by dozens of Germans; that she had been forced to do what they wished, at the point of a drawn sword.

The other man in the ward who, except for the splint on his broken leg, was well, began talking so loudly and passionately that the very force of his primitive eloquence commanded the other's attention. He said: "You are right, my little brother"—he was much older than the husband—"you are right not to take her back, not one of us but feel the same way. There are three thousand of them down there," he pointed toward the Aisne, "and none of the men will go back to their wives who are going to bring into the world, 'damned German babies!' I'd rather they'd be black!"

They had become so aroused and vehement I had been unable to make myself heard, but I

realized that such scenes were disgraceful—impossible. To catch their attention I stamped my foot and said, in a tone that carried conviction:

“Another word from either of you and I will send for Colonel H——.” He was the head of the hospital and universally respected, even feared. But womanlike I could not resist my little last word, so I said to the husband, “You asked me to stay and hear your story and give you my opinion. I think that this poor woman has suffered a thousand times more than you. Yours has been a torture of sentiment, she has had both the sentiment—which, in a woman, is immeasurably greater than in a man—and the physical hideousness of it all as well—and now she has this pathetic condition to endure. What she needs is tenderness, comforting, protection; not recriminations and scorn.”

I put my arms around the poor crushed thing, and led her from the room. As we passed through the door I heard the man muttering over and over the single word, “*Jamais!*” At the outer door her mother and father, wrinkled but kindly, honest-looking

peasants, were waiting for her. As the daughter threw herself weeping into her mother's arms, the old woman said to me: "There are a thousand of them down there like my girl," and the tears slowly ran down her weather-beaten face. For one brief moment I was blind with rage at the thought of it all. To destroy, burn and pillage the material things of this world is sufficiently horrible, but to start honest women on the road to hell, to break up forever these people's simple sacred homes, was a crime for which there seemed no punishment great enough. If German warfare means "scientific hell" in this world, for a brief moment I hoped it would lead to the same thing in the next.

It was my duty to report the commotion which had just taken place to Colonel H——. I found him alone in his office, and described the incident in a few words. When I finished he said sadly, "Yes, my dear child, I know all about it, that it is the real tragedy of the Aisne. The Germans have in their power several thousand of French women, who are made use of as servants and concubines at the point

of a drawn saber. To order the men to shell the place is to ask them to slaughter their own mothers, wives and children. That is unthinkable!"

I answered, with feeling, that I was perfectly certain, if it could be put to a vote, the women would gladly sacrifice themselves; that their lives, under the present circumstances, must be intolerable.

"As a matter of fact they have appealed time and again to have it done," replied Colonel H——, "but General Joffre says he can not ask the French to shell the place; but—at the proper time the Allies will be asked to do it. You know," he continued, "it was just such conditions as these that moved the government to enact the law which gives children the right to receive education at the hands of the government and register in their birth certificate *neither mother nor father.*"

In the stress of the next few days, with the many fever patients coming in hourly, the incident passed from my mind, until one evening an orderly sent word that some one wanted to see me at the door. On going I found a little girl

with a ragged shawl over her head waiting for me. She handed me an almost illegible note. It was from the mother of the cast-off wife. It told me the daughter was desperately ill, perhaps dying, and begged me to come and see her the first possible moment. At dinner-time that night, without waiting for food, I hurried to the address given me, which fortunately was near by, or I could not have gone. I found the wife burning with fever. She had undergone a criminal operation, crudely performed, and was seriously ill in consequence. Of course she had had no doctor, only the services of a very inferior midwife. The old mother sat sobbing by the bedside, while another woman, evidently a relative, seemed much more interested in the legal aspect of the affair than in the girl's condition, as she repeatedly explained to me the severity of the French laws in such cases.

The little wife's face lighted up on seeing me. She took both my hands in hers, sobbing bitterly and said disconnectedly and with the pathetic reiteration of a child, "You will ask

him to forgive me now, won't you? He will forgive me; don't you think he will?"

"Of course he will," I answered, my own voice unsteady.

"Tell him how ill I have been, how much I have suffered," she continued.

"Yes, yes, I promise if you will only be quiet now," for her condition was very serious.

We soon had some kettles of hot water, and with simple antiseptics and the necessary apparatus, which I managed to get from the hospital, I showed them what must be done if they hoped to save her.

I couldn't stay long as I had to hurry back to my patients, but before I left I promised that if she would try to sleep I would certainly try to bring her good news to-morrow.

I did better—I sent her husband!

CHAPTER X

HERE COMES JANE

ON my return Captain Frazer was greatly interested in the tales that the men had told me down at the fever hospital—as his regiment had been fighting in that locality for some months just before they had been ordered to ———. My stories led him to visualize for me an average twenty-four hours down there in the trenches:

“Personally,” he began, “I believe trench warfare is better suited to Germans than to us. They are so methodical and deliberate that the sitting-still plan is their very best way.

“One of the little ‘diversions’ of our officers is to go forward on observation duty in the foremost trenches. For it is only by making a careful study of the ground that one can be sure which trench is theirs and which is ours —they are so close together.

“Two nights before we came here, I was ordered to be in a sniper’s trench an hour before dawn, and in telephonic communication with the battery. The way led through ‘No Man’s Land’ (the space between the opposing trenches). The night was as dark as pitch and again and again I found myself on the edge of a pit twenty feet wide which ‘Jack Johnson’ or his first cousin ‘Woolly’ had made, and which was deep enough to drown a man or two. ‘A fine bath we’ll get in the warm weather,’ my telephoner said.

“Pretty soon we caught up with an infantry guide, who led us along the path that the trench relief men, sappers and stretcher-bearers use. It was a dangerous bit, and the soldiers, no matter how heavy their kit, or how long the march had been, break into double-quick, for the whiz of bullets and the shriek of shrapnel is not the sort of music that tempts one to linger. We had been warned about a fallen tree by the wayside which seemed an ideal stop for a breather. But it has proved to those who had been tempted, the song of the Lorelei,

as the enemy had marked down the position exactly, and had a rifle 'set' on it."

I said something about the "fatal music of shot and shell." Captain Frazer laughed and replied, "Well, really that sort of music is not fatal, because so long as we hear it, it is not for us; the bullet that comes straight is 'the dog that bites before it barks.'"

"At last," the captain continued, "we came to a forward trench, which might be better described as a water-course. In the half-gray light it seemed a dim mysterious background to the mud-gray sand-bag walls against which mud-gray soldiers in full equipment were alternately standing or lying. These latter are supposed to be asleep, and for the most part they are, for with the fatigue and exhaustion of it all it takes more than the fear of death to keep a man awake.

"Among other things, we were told off to put up a wire entanglement. The noise of our equipment disturbed the one-eyed sleep of a subaltern. I heard him say quickly to a sentry, 'Heard anything?' and the reply: 'A rifle shot half an hour ago.' 'Theirs or ours?'

'It was a Mauser, sir!' A second more, and they both heard us. 'Who goes there?' 'A friend,' I answered, giving two taps with the butt of my rifle, and receiving one in return. Each platoon has its own system of signals. The subaltern gave an order to one of his N. C. O. that the men 'Stand to,' for you know every man in the trenches from the commencement of dawn must be awake and ready for the attack which often comes at that hour. This is supposed to be accomplished without noise, but sleepy stiff men are not likely to be light of foot, and the rattle of equipment makes a noise that, to the officers, seems thunderous, but perhaps it isn't so bad as we think, for our nerves are not what they once were.

"We passed on and reached the sniper's hole, which is a little apart from the main trench, and for that reason likely to escape the attention of the enemy. But it has its disadvantages, for one has to sit practically motionless as the place has no parapet, and the only way we could see outside was by using a periscope. That little instrument is a wonderful invention; without it we could see nothing but the

walls of the hole in which we stood. But by applying it without moving an inch we had before us a view of the countryside, trenches and wire entanglements, while the sand-bags and the shell holes showed up as if under a microscope. Fifty yards away was a loophole in the German trenches. Two lively men in a trench very near occupied our attention. We envied them their activity. They seemed to be able to find targets after all the rest of the line was quiet, and we wondered if they took an enemy's life with every one of their carefully fired shots. We saw two soldiers in red and blue uniform lying in the forbidden line between the trenches, one with a whitened skull.

"Then night came on. We had a lot of barbed wire to put up in front of a new trench, a little lower down. About midnight I was joined by my best N. C. O. and four or five other men. We were as silent as possible, but in spite of sand-bags to deaden the sound, we did make rather a row driving in the posts. The Germans heard us, for they sent up two star-shells. The first was on our left, but the

next quite near. We stood motionless. Fortunately we were against a dark background. Then the beggars began sweeping right and left with their machine guns, and we laid flat in the mud for a time. We could hear a German playing a mouth-organ. On the damp still night air the sound came to us very clearly. He was playing *Rip Van Winkle*. Presently we got to work again, but in half an hour the Germans began sniping. I decided it was too risky to go on. Another wait, and then fortunately it began sleeting. We kept wiring until about three A. M. and got our allotment finished. Then we found that the sentries had all been changed while we were out, and two or three duffers had not told their relief that a working party was in front. The N. C. O.'s on duty should have made sure of that point also. As it was, a very much alarmed platoon sergeant crept across to tell us of the unexpected risk we had been running. We had used up four or five rolls of wire and some of the men had their fingers pretty well cut, but they stuck at it like good chaps and made a bully entanglement. The job was an exhilarating one, but

as I am not a liar nor altogether a fool, I frankly confess I was glad when it was over.

“As I went back through the trenches that morning just before dawn I passed a number of men who were muttering something between their teeth and I stopped a moment, curious to hear what it was. They were actually praying that God Almighty would give the Germans sufficient grace to make them come out and attack us, just to warm us up. Both men and officers of that company evidently felt alike, as I heard their colonel saying to them, ‘And if they come, no surrender, lads, as you have your rifles, and then your fists.’ As if in answer to their prayers, rifles began to crack all around.

“Just before I reached the end of the last trench I was surprised to hear the order, ‘Cease firing!’ and when I turned to learn what had occasioned this unusual command, I saw a wounded German lying half-way between our lines and his. An officer who had gone out to pick the man up was struck before the Germans realized what he was doing, and themselves ceased firing. Nothing daunted, the



British officer staggered to the fallen man and half-carried, half-dragged him to the German lines. The officer on duty received him with a salute and the men in the trenches set up a lusty cheer. Then the German officer took off his own Iron Cross and pinned it upon the breast of the man in khaki, and as he staggered back to our trench we could still hear the Germans cheering. Poor devil! He was recommended for the Victoria Cross, but he didn't live to wear it. He died from the wounds he got.

"Nothing but death, however, can quench 'Tommy's' good humor," he laughed. "I heard one of them tell a chap who had lost his way that if he would go down by la Villa de Dug-out, and turn to the left around Piccadilly Circus, he would come to the Hotel Cecil. The chap started on. A little farther down the line a man at one of the loopholes called out, 'Here comes Jane,' and they all dived into their pits, 'Jane' being a twelve-inch shell."

CHAPTER XI

ON THE FIELD

ONE morning about five o'clock the matron came to my room and said that a telephone message from B——, a place some forty kilometers away, reported they were in desperate need of an interpreter. They had asked already three other hospitals for a nurse who spoke German, but none was available and she wished me to be ready in half an hour to go there for the day. The road was in pretty good condition and clear of sentries, so we reached B—— by seven o'clock.

There had been only one thing of unusual interest on the way. From the top of a hill a mile or so across the valley we saw an ambulance train creeping along. Flaming red crosses covered the sides of the coaches. Before our amazed eyes, a few moments later,

light puffs of smoke danced around them. Shells fell before and others behind the train, but still the engine kept moving. Would it reach the next station and get beyond range, we asked each other breathlessly—the chauffeur and I. We followed it for fully ten minutes and then it vanished behind a slope. It was like a cinematograph with its inevitable train and engine, but with the difference—that the train looked small and distant, while the report of the guns was near and very real. We learned later that only one shot had found its mark, but that that one had killed three helpless men as they lay.

When we arrived we met the head surgeon. He was a straight upstanding Englishman, and even under such stress his uniform looked spick and span, his boots polished, and he was wearing a glistening monocle. But above all his clear eyes, looking directly at you, gave an idea of energy, vitality and superiority.

B——— was the station from which the English ambulance trains went down to Boulogne. It seemed as if there must be hundreds of ambulances already there, as well as dozens upon

dozens of ambulance cars. As fast as one train was filled it pulled out and other cars were pushed in to take their place. There was such perfect method and system that by mid-afternoon we saw the last train slowly depart.

The surgeon knew we had been ordered to return by way of the battle front and bring with us a load of wounded, as there had been a perfect shamble the day previous. As he bade us good-by and thanked us for helping, he asked me:

“Have you ever been on the field after a battle?”

I replied in the negative. Shaking his head sadly, he said:

“It is too horrible to attempt to describe, and I advise you to remain in your ambulance.”

I assured him if it were possible I should.

We took a long time getting to the rendezvous, as there were sentries everywhere and we had to pick out roads that were sheltered from shell fire. At last, when as near as we possibly could get, the two men left the car and myself in a shelter behind a little hill among the trees, for I did as the Englishman

had advised, remained in the ambulance, that is, until the médecin major needed a nurse for a particular case and sent for me. Going to him I passed a battery of 75's about a hundred yards away, firing at intervals, and a platoon of men standing motionless, ready for orders. Ammunition wagons drawn by mules were passing to and from the guns, while infantry of all sorts was being hurried on their way to the lines.

The French had captured some trenches and a counter attack was expected. Even then the fire was so heavy it was not possible to move, but about dusk it ceased somewhat. Soon the moon rose and the sight was a fantastic one. We were in a clearing—the moon was full and by its light we could plainly see the ridge against the sky-line a few hundred yards away on which the French had successfully repulsed the onslaught. All about us were officers and soldiers of every kind and condition. Among the trees were several hundred cavalrymen mounted or standing by their horses. Threading their way everywhere were the stretcher-bearers bringing in their pathetic burdens.

The ambulances came up one at a time, were loaded and sent off a little distance to wait until all was ready. Many of the wounded lay still and quiet, others were moaning, shrieking, praying or cursing, and almost all of them begging for water. Some of the wounds were so indescribably horrible that for the poor victims' sake we almost hoped they would not live.

In sharp contrast to this, officers were standing about quietly talking and smoking as though such a thing as war did not exist. The *médecin major* would occasionally, after a brief businesslike examination, give orders for a stretcher to be moved aside under the trees. It was the death warrant for its wretched occupant. Many did not seem to be in great pain and I noticed that this often was a bad sign. One poor fellow smiled up at me, pressed my hand in gratitude for a mouthful of warm wine, and said: "There is no use to pray for the nurses—Heaven is waiting for them," and in an hour he too had joined the little band beneath the pines.

They had been hours in the work, but all the field had still not been searched, and I insisted

on joining a party of stretcher-bearers who were just starting out. It was no time for faint-heartedness, there was too much to be done. The moon was still bright, and objects were visible some distance away. The fight had been a fierce one, and the German dead were nearly three times the number of the French. The bearers moved quickly but silently from body to body, some of the poor fellows were contorted into fantastic attitudes, others apparently asleep; the whole scene in the silence of the forest was inconceivably majestic.

We had covered the ground and were just turning back, when by chance a little farther on we saw a young fellow with his head pillowed on the breast of a German soldier. He was conscious, and his first words were, as so often happens, "How far did we get?" He told us as we carried him back that he and the German had lain there together twenty-four long weary hours, wondering whether the bearers would come, and if so, *would they find them?* That was a story we heard again and again, the anxiety, the torture, hour after hour,

of fearing the persistent fire would prevent the bearers coming in, or that, if they did come, of being overlooked. We hurried back over the corpse-strewn ground, back to the cheerful bustle — officers muffled in blankets — guns, wagons and ambulances creeping along in the half-light—the champing of bits—the occasional glow of a pipe or cigarette—a friendly offer of a swallow of brandy from the doctor's flask—a hurried adjournment to the staff-car for a bite of bread and tinned meat, that are carried for emergencies, and then the slow, bitterly cold crawl in the dense blackness just before the dawn, over the well-nigh demolished roads to the hospitals.

CHAPTER XII

CLOSE QUARTERS

A FEW days after Colonel S——'s decision that I return to them, a decision that proved a momentous one to me, the Germans facing our left wing made a number of determined assaults which our men, reinforced by new troops, were fortunately able to beat off. These assaults resulted, however, in the taking of a number of German officers, for the attacking troops were Landsturm and proved none too eager in the attack, and it was necessary for their officers to lead them. As a result, many were taken prisoners, and among them a number of wounded. We managed to find places in our hospital for all the worst cases—that is, for all except a certain Captain von Schulling.

While Von Schulling's hurt was a serious one—a wound in the heart cavity and a shat-

tered shoulder blade—it was not necessarily fatal, but required time, care and quiet. Under these conditions, he could not with any humanity be sent to a Base. But where to find a place for him, that was the difficulty.

Officers are never put in wards with the men, and besides these were already full and overflowing. After a consultation, the matron and Doctor Souchon decided that he should be put on the cot in Captain Frazer's room, that being absolutely the only available spot.

As soon as I knew this, I asked permission to inform Captain Frazer that he was about to be invaded by "the enemy."

"If he is pretty badly off, I don't mind," he laughed and said, "as then I might do as the Turco did to his wounded German companions. Do you know the story?"

I admitted that I did not, and he went on:

"A Turco was put one night in a ward where there were nine wounded Germans. He religiously, or heathenishly, kept awake until far into the night when the other patients were asleep and the guard relaxed. Then getting

up, stealthily, managed somehow to secure a sharp knife, and murdered the last mother's son of a German as they lay. Naturally the hospital was thrown into the wildest confusion. The colonel in charge violently demanded what in the h— he meant by such a thing. Whereupon the Turco regarded him in considerable amazement, and answered, 'You brought me all this long way to kill Germans, and when I get a chance to kill nine of them without any danger to any of us, you ask me what the h— I mean by it.' ”

We both laughed at the horrible story, and agreed from his point of view, the Turco's logic was irresistible.

A few moments later Von Schulling was comfortably installed on the cot in the little room where Captain Frazer was gradually regaining his grip on life.

He was a Prussian, tall, slender and fair-haired, with a certain youthful charm that might have made an attractive man of him were it not for the insolence of his bearing. He spoke English well, as I discovered when

he was first brought in, though he very seldom did so. I believe he resented using even the speech of the hated and despised English.

During the first few days he suffered severely, and the doctor kept him under the influence of an opiate. As he grew better, however, he grew communicative, and kept me busy attending his many wants. When all else failed, he insisted that I give him lessons in French. The thought that there might be anything personal behind his reiterated demands on my time never occurred to me.

As for Captain Frazer, I had hoped that he and the Prussian officer might become, if not friends, at least tolerant acquaintances, and so help each other beguile the tedious hours of convalescence. We always found that the men in the wards made better progress than the officers, who are isolated.

However, the first few days proved that my hopes for the two men were not to be realized. Captain Frazer and Von Schulling, though they belonged to the same social class in their respective countries, were as far apart in thought as East and West.

The Englishman is essentially an individual, and he remains so even in war, when he is making history. His tendency is to think that things English are badly managed, and he says so in no uncertain terms, though only to his own countrymen. And he is not perpetually nerving himself with thoughts of the glory of his country; of the splendor of his cause, or of the fact that he is a soldier in a famous army. These are things he takes for granted and, to his mind, the less said about being heroic or romantic, the better. As for him, he has work to do which, although he will not say so, he will do as only Englishmen can, but the romance or poetry of his deeds he leaves to others to express.

The German, however, is an absolutely different type. His passion for abstract thought has mastered him so that he sees abstraction even in concrete things. To no German is Germany merely a collection of Germans; to no German is he himself merely a man in a world of other men and things concrete. He is a factor in some far-reaching process; a unit in some great institution, or a cog in some intri-

cate machine. Many nations have tried to imitate the English, but no one has ever tried to imitate the Germans because the German himself is imitative. As an individual he is ill at ease, and prefers always to be typical and representative rather than simply himself.

On the other hand, the English officer, or at least so it seems to me from my observation of the few I have nursed, would rather be anything than a type, and what he says and does is said and done on his own initiative. And perhaps that is why he governs his colonies well and the Prussian does not. The Prussian makes a subject people conscious of his domination in every word and gesture. The Englishman governs because he is conscious of his capacity to govern, and is accepted on his own valuation as a man rather than as the representative of an empire.

However this may be, it was clear to me from the first that any basic sympathy between the two men was impossible.

During his convalescence, Captain von Schulling's attitude toward me often left me— young and unsophisticated as I was—puzzled,

and at a loss to define a vague something back of his manner. Afterward I understood.

On the other hand, I had many delightful talks with Captain Frazer whenever my duties permitted, though I did not realize then how blank the time was between these talks or how I looked forward to them as the brightest moments in my day. Our conversations were simple and ordinary enough, but Von Schulling resented them, and even went as far as to imply that Captain Frazer and myself were in some undefined way leagued against him. Looking back, I realize how foolishly blind I was in those days, but in the light of succeeding events I can only thank Heaven for my blindness.

Captain von Schulling often tried my patience to the utmost, but I made a determined effort to see only the best in him, though Captain Frazer's occasional cool interjections showed me the hopelessness of my efforts. Speaking one day of the Teuton officer, he said, "The man has imbibed intellectual poison with his mother's milk. The teachings of Nietzsche, so misconstrued by the militarist

mind; the selfish, utterly unscrupulous doctrines of the Bismarck-Treitsche school, and even the half-thunderous, half-bleating irresponsibilities of Bernhardt, have all been absorbed by him as very truth. What he wished to think truth, and what those about him in similar self-justification accept, is very gospel to him."

But as I watched him day after day, I grew convinced that in another atmosphere than that in which he had been brought up, Von Schulling would have been a man, not only of the highest intelligence, but a citizen of the world, and the world would have been perhaps the better for his having lived in it. But the insidious fallacies of his upbringing had done their work, and the man was absurdly sentimental or brutally callous by turns; an almost incredible combination of childishness and brutality.

As time passed, rumors of impending danger came to our ears, and with them Von Schulling developed a queer exaltation, as though he felt the approach of the time when he should be in power. With it there crept into his voice and manner an arrogant and assertive tone

which irritated me to the highest degree, though Captain Frazer passed over it in amused silence. Then one morning the enemy's firing grew more distinct; carts began passing the hospital laden with household goods. Drove of cattle—even little boys and girls, each with a bundle done up in a towel or pillow-slip—tiny mites of four and five doing all they could to save the home; mothers with babes at the breast—came in endless streams. Sometimes beside the roadway long rows of fugitives would sit, resting before recommencing their journey. I recall one group of little children alone, unattended. It was a pathetic picture that will live in my memory forever. All this proved only too conclusively that the enemy was advancing and that our lines were hurriedly falling back.

These things seemed to stimulate, to encourage Von Schulling to make himself generally offensive. As I was changing the bandages on his wounded shoulder one morning he put his other arm about me and drew me to him until his lips touched my face. I freed myself at once, but in spite of my natural anger, the in-

stinctive fear of what Captain Frazer would attempt to do if I disclosed the situation held me silent. Nevertheless, I looked anxiously across the room to be sure he had not seen, and Von Schulling, catching my hurried glance, flung himself back on his bed, muttering with an oath something about "your Schweinhund lover."

The situation was an impossible one, and I could see no better course than to leave him. What happened after I left the room, I learned later from Captain Frazer.

Captain von Schulling lay muttering for some time, then gathering his strength he struggled to his feet for the first time in weeks. Clinging to the wall and to the table that was between their cots, he made his way to Captain Frazer and stood for a moment looking down on the despised Englishman. Perhaps some latent decency held him back for a moment, but the cold-blooded indifference engendered by the scenes of suffering and torture through which he had passed choked out all better impulses, and he stooped over his desperately wounded enemy with a look of mur-

derous hate. Captain Frazer felt from the first moment what Von Schulling intended to do, and lay silently collecting all his faculties for a supreme effort when the moment came.

I have tried to persuade myself that Von Schulling was delirious at the time, and that he could not have done what he did in cold blood. But my experience of the Prussians since then has left me little faith in their humanity, on which to base such a belief.

However this may be, Von Schulling marshaled his strength for a second time, and suddenly tore off the bandages about his enemy's wound. Captain Frazer struggled with feeble strength to ward off the attack, but his efforts must have been pitifully weak, for Von Schulling's attempt was almost successful.

Down-stairs something came to me, for the second time in my life, which I can not explain by any human agency. I was busy in one of the wards when, for no apparent reason, it was borne in on me that I must return at once to Captain Frazer's bedside. I have many times thanked the Fates, or whatever guardian angel had me that day in its keeping, for bring-

ing me that compelling message, and for the fact that without stopping to reason I obeyed it, running up the stairs to the little attic room where my charges lay—an insistent premonition of danger knocking at my heart.

I burst into the room without knowing at all why I did so, but I am certain that I grasped the situation sooner for the impulse that had brought me there. Captain von Schulling stood by the Englishman's bedside with an expression on his face that I hope never to see again. Captain Frazer lay with a half-contemptuous curl on his lips, vainly trying to rearrange the bandages.

The next few moments, as I look back on them, seemed to me like some awful nightmare. I know that I sprang forward and flung myself on Von Schulling, forcing him with unwonted strength back toward his bed. Fortunately for me, the man had only one arm that he could use, and fortunately for Captain Frazer, too, for it was this that saved his life. Although the Prussian fought me off like one demented, grinning with a kind of vindictive

triumph that I am sure gave me added strength, it never occurred to me to call for help. With all my power I forced the man back inch by inch until at last I managed to fling him across his bed. I stood over him for a second as he tried to rise, then, with triumphant hate in his face, he fell back on his bed in a dead faint.

I left him and darted across the room to where Captain Frazer lay, drawn and white but unafraid. With trembling fingers I crudely replaced the bandages. Once or twice I paused in the work to run to the door and call for help, but no response came.

While I struggled with the bandages I was utterly absorbed and when at last they were in place and the danger for the moment passed, I looked up to find Von Schulling sitting on the edge of his bed and staring at me with a half-bewildered rage in his eyes that sent a shudder through me.

Suddenly from below, a perfect pandemonium broke out: the sound of motor-cars coming and going and the shouts and screams of

men and women. Coupled with these came the dull thunder of a bursting shell, together with the hideous crash of high explosives.

I ran to the window to see what was happening, and then, hearing a laugh and a curse behind me, turned to find Von Schulling locking the door. The man stood there for a moment, swaying in his weakness, and then with a leer, said:

“Now I’ve got you both!”

And he threw the key out the window.

CHAPTER XIII

RESCUED BY THE ENEMY

I REMEMBER thinking of the situation as merely absurd rather than dramatic; but a moment later I realized that his action was not the result of delirium, but that he had a very definite and pregnant reason for turning the lock at that moment. Just then, the handle of the door rattled, and some one excitedly called my name. I sprang forward to answer, but as I did so the Prussian flung his one good arm about me and crushed me against his breast so tightly that I could not make a sound. I was almost suffocated. By the time that I had struggled free, there came no answer to my scream, though I could hear footsteps racing down the stairs outside. I was alone with Von Schulling and Captain Frazer who, I was thankful, had lost consciousness some moments

before. Von Schulling again caught me by the arm and dragged me to the window, where I could scarcely credit the sight that met my gaze.

Swarming before the chateau and in long lines beyond, were squadron after squadron of advancing cavalry. Von Schulling was beside himself, shouting and screaming like a maniac: "*Welkommen, meine kamaraden! Der Tag!*" Then suddenly he turned to me, his face flushed and eyes wild and staring.

"You lovely devil!" he said, "I have lain there hour after hour, longing for you; and now, by g—, I have got you!" There was absolute madness in the man's voice, his weakness and his approaching rescue by his comrades had momentarily unbalanced him.

At this moment Captain Frazer moaned faintly. I flung Von Schulling's arm from me and ran to him with some incoherent idea of protecting and comforting him. But I was diverted by a violent rattling of the door-knob from without, then the door itself quivered under a succession of heavy blows, while half a dozen voices called, "*Auf machen!*"

"Open it!" I screamed to Von Schulling.

Horrible as I believed the German soldiery to be, I infinitely preferred them at that moment to remaining longer shut up with the half-demented Von Schulling. However, now that he heard the voices of his subordinates again, he changed almost at once into an officer of the German army. Speaking in a tone that carried a note of unquestioned command, he called in German, "Stop! There is no key. Break the lock, but do not batter down the door."

The men on the other side must have recognized and accepted the tone, for they carefully obeyed, and a moment later the door swung open, disclosing half a dozen yellow Uhlans from Stuttgart, gathered on the landing outside. Then they parted and an officer, obviously a Saxon, stepped forward and surveyed us. With cool authority he addressed Von Schulling.

"Who are you, and who are these people?" he asked.

"I am Captain von Schulling of the 18th
———. She, as you see, is a military nurse.

And that fellow there," he added contemptuously, "is, I think, a dead Englishman."

"What rank?"

I answered him quickly.

"He is Captain Frazer of the —— Sikh Indian Army, and is desperately ill. Have I your permission to attend him immediately?"

"Certainly, *fraulein*," he said. "Is there anything my men can do to help you?"

I was amazed at this kindness from a German officer, and my eyes must have betrayed my thoughts, for he added quickly:

"You have nothing to fear, *fraulein*, from either myself or my men," and turning to Von Schulling, he said, "Are you able to come with me and make a report to the colonel?"

"Yes!" And slipping on his long military coat, together they passed out of the door and down the stairs. First, however—after a whispered remark or two from Von Schulling—the captain posted two men on guard outside the door.

With trembling fingers I set to work to re-adjust better the torn bandages, and to bring Captain Frazer back to consciousness. For-

tunately, God had blessed him with a constitution of iron, so it was not long before he opened his eyes. I did not speak. I waited to hear what he would say.

"Well," he said rather sadly, "our men have had to fall back. It must have been a pretty hurried retreat for such a thing as this to have happened, and all the while I have been lying here completely knocked out," and he muttered something that was suspiciously like an oath. "What has happened?"

"The Germans have advanced," I answered, "and are in possession of our hospital, but the officer who was here will treat us well, I am sure. He told me that we have nothing to fear. He asked who you were, and I told him."

"And I only woke up when it was all over," he smiled bitterly. "What's become of Von Schulling?"

CHAPTER XIV

HUSBAND HUNTING

WE were taken, Captain Frazer and I, to the largest German camp in that part of the country. The morning after my arrival, I was escorted through the hospital by one of the officers in command, by way of instructing me in my temporary duties.

The hospital itself was well equipped and well managed in every detail. There were patients of all kinds, wounded English, French and Belgians. Some were Belgian civilians who had been brought to this camp because of insubordination and had been interned promiscuously with the soldiers. It struck me, however, that they were all of age to bear arms.

I had heard many rumors of the great difference made by the Germans in the treatment of their prisoners, the English having always the

worst of it, but candor compels me to state that in this particular hospital no favoritism existed. They all fared rather badly as to food, it seemed to me, for coffee or tea without sugar or milk for breakfast with one small slice of black bread, and a cup of soup for lunch, replaced from time to time by boiled chestnuts; soup and a small piece of bread at tea-time, and no supper, did not seem a very liberal or suitable diet for sick men. However, both the doctors and nurses seemed to me quite conscientious.

A thing quite new and interesting to me was the camp itself, and I was always anxious to see really how the men were treated. My opportunity came one afternoon when I had been there a few days. I happened to be standing at the door at the moment the head surgeon started on his tour of inspection. He was a pleasant kindly man of about thirty-five, who had shown me consideration on several occasions. Noticing me, he stopped and said:

"Fraulein, my interpreter is on sick leave to-day, will you come with me on my tour of inspection?"

It was a command in spite of his way of putting it, but one that I was happy to obey.

First we entered the "quarantine pen" as he described it.

"Here," he said, "we keep all our newly arrived prisoners for a period of four weeks, until we are certain they have no contagious disease."

I do not know how many were there, but certainly hundreds, as the tent covered perhaps two acres of ground. It was separated from an adjoining one by a barbed-wire fence and a roadway eight or ten feet wide.

The head surgeon said to the men in German that any who were ill should come and speak to him, but warned them that he had no time to listen to imaginary complaints. He then had me repeat this in English and in French.

A comparatively small number came forward, and of them only one seemed sufficiently ill to need immediate attention.

He was an Irish youth. I could scarcely believe he was old enough to have been accepted for service. The moment he spoke I knew he was a gentleman. He was so ill, I realized that

the malady must have been developing for several days at least, and I quickly asked him why he had so neglected himself.

He looked up at me rather shyly, and said:

"I would not have come to-day if you hadn't been here. The interpreter browbeats a fellow so. I'd rather have nothing to do with them."

He was sent at once to the hospital.

My idea concerning him proved correct. He was a younger son of one of the best known Irish families, who, not being able to go as an officer, had, as have so many Englishmen of birth, gone as a private.

The surgeon rapidly passed on to the buildings. There were perhaps a dozen of these, low buildings of stained boards standing on brick foundations, each exactly like the other. I learned afterward that each was supposed to hold two hundred to two hundred and twenty-five men. They were heated by stoves and lighted by electricity, and the ventilation, I noticed, was excellent.

The mattresses lying on the floor, were of striped ducking filled with wood shavings about two feet thick. In the center of the room were

long narrow tables at which the men ate, wrote and played games.

“Discipline here is maintained among the men,” the surgeon said to me with a certain pride, “by officers of their own nationality. Of course, if anything goes wrong, we step in.”

I had observed, however, that batteries of artillery were stationed at points of vantage here and there around the camp, and that each building had lookout towers in which sentries mounted guard day and night.

By the time our tour was at end, it was supper-time, and I saw on all sides the prisoners cooking their own food. I remarked to the surgeon that the men were having vegetables as well as bread for supper.

“Yes, to-day,” he replied, “but it is not a regular thing to have both, but at noon they have good soup in which has been cooked meat, and vegetables, and black bread.”

Going out, we passed the store. The printed price list was hung up. I noticed among the articles on sale, soap, brushes, shirts, towels, German dictionaries, and French, English and

German grammars. There was no food on the list.

The surgeon called my attention to the price of the German grammars and dictionaries. They were six cents each.

"You see," he explained, laughing, "how the General Staff encourage the learning of our language," and then he added gravely, "for they hope it will lead to a better understanding of us, and so make for great good."

I could not resist the temptation to ask, "So you feel that to know the Germans is to love them?"

For a moment he did not know whether to be angry or to laugh. Perhaps I looked at him a little apologetically, which threw the balance in favor of the latter, for he smiled and said, "But I am afraid the knowledge of a language doesn't mean knowing the people, as many Germans know English, but—" and he left the sentence unfinished.

"And do the English know German?" I asked.

"Not many," he answered. "And those who

do, have learned it in order to read philosophy, literature, science,—and there it ends. After all," he continued with characteristic German analysis, "my own opinion is that language can not express good will unless it is already there, and if that is lacking, the more closely two peoples come into contact, the more likely they are to discover points of disagreement, and ultimately to quarrel."

"At least," I answered, "their scheme of making your literature and language popular by its cheapness is an improvement on the methods practised by barbarian conquerors of olden times."

Germany undoubtedly made painstaking provision for every possible contingency arising out of a state of war. She even held yearly maneuvers at industrial establishments so that at a moment's notice they might, for example, turn from the manufacture of toys to the making of shrapnel. Yet vast numbers of her wounded found the medical organization unprepared. Perhaps that was due to the fact that the number of wounded far exceeded all

expectations. However well equipped a country may be, it still remains a gigantic task to care for a million wounded, and that is what Germany had to do. Throughout that country, I was told, as in France, private houses, schools, university buildings and amusement halls were being turned into hospitals.

I was surprised to learn that German wolf-hounds are used in helping the orderlies pick up the wounded on the battle-fields. They have been of valuable assistance, as wounded men instinctively seek shelter and, owing to the protective coloring of their uniforms, are very likely to be overlooked by the searchers.

The men brought in from the front were washed, shaved and given fresh clothing. If a patient has received the Iron Cross or has been recommended for such distinction, the fact is stated in large letters on a tablet attached to his bed.

The Germans have made a careful study of the psychology of the sick room. They endeavor to make their hospital wards cheerful and pleasant and the great majority of their trained nurses are trim nice-looking girls,

whose air of coquetry, an austere surgeon seriously informed me, is "deemed helpful to the patient."

I was pleased to find in this hospital that the chief bacteriologist was a *woman* and that the system of surgery was highly conservative. Unbelievable effort was made to save limbs and their method of treating wounds from firmly-embedded bullets was to leave the bullet undisturbed, wherever possible.

Of all projectiles they told me the Russian bullet is the most humane; slim-nosed and speedy it usually disinfects the wound in passing through, so that gangrene and other infections from Russian rifle fire are almost unknown. I was assured also that the American made shrapnel fired from French guns caused the most lacerating wounds.

The ward in the hospital known as the "prison ward," was a dreary sight indeed. The patients seemed to know they were not wanted and were a burden, their faces were drawn and pale, and all the bustling cheerful atmosphere of the other wards was lacking. Though humanely cared for they keenly felt the absence

of a woman's hand, as all the attendants were men, and men, too, who rarely understood the language or the needs of their unhappy charges.

The saddest memory of those days is the burial of a French officer. He had been my patient and I was reluctantly given permission to pay my last respects by attending his funeral. The ceremony, although he was an enemy, was simple and dignified. The pine coffin was borne to the grave by six German soldiers under arms, accompanied by a chaplain. On the coffin was placed a wreath with a broad ribbon, in the colors of the German flag, inscribed with the words "*Dem tapferen Krieger*" ("To the brave warrior.") It was lowered gently into the grave, a brief service read, the grave filled with earth and a wooden cross placed at the head which gave the name, date and rank of the dead soldier. The wreath was laid on the new-made grave. Then the soldiers stood at attention, raised their rifles skyward and fired a last volley. As I was leaving I noticed they were burying a German soldier with exactly the same ceremonies.

One afternoon I was giving massage to one of my patients, a very high German officer, who, except for a slight paralysis, was about well. He had an unusually keen sense of humor, to which nothing was sacred, and truth to tell, I enjoyed hearing him talk immensely.

I had been with him but a few moments, when putting his finger to his lips, he whispered in French—"They're letter writing in the next room,—if we are quiet I think we can hear; it's very funny." I listened; they were talking about matrimony, discussing it as a pure question of market-value. There seemed no shame about it at all. They were reading matrimonial advertisements from a German newspaper. General von T—— said to me: "The war has changed the attitude of young girls and older ones, too, who have means and are seeking suitable mates. They have greatly increased their efforts, while marriageable men have become correspondingly shy. The women are getting less particular in their requirements," he chuckled. "A girl with twenty-five thousand marks would hardly have advertised before the war for anything less than an officer

of the army or navy, now she will gladly accept what is technically described as a 'better gentleman.' ”

At that moment I heard the nurse reading: “I call you who belong to me in the world; you too are seeking, in marriage sanctuary, to find in your wife, as I in my husband, the best thing in life. Here I am—true I am forty-two—but presently I shall have a considerable fortune.” They evidently did not care for this, the young officer seeking a wife, and the nurse, as I heard them both laugh. Then she read another: “I seek you my friend and my husband, I have a simple and sunny nature and hate the ordinary humdrum of life, all that I am and desire will give purpose to your existence. Social and financial position assured.”

“*Nichts für mich,*” the young man laughed.

A moment later she read: “Well born, tall, pleasing in appearance, thirty-two years old, seek suitable companion for life, having in my own right a large fortune, no anonymous communications and no agents.” We fancied *that* one proved interesting to him, as he lowered his voice and seemed to be dictating an answer.

The colonel said, "I suppose all this sort of thing, with your American ideas, shocks you very much; but you know that in our service if an officer desires to marry he must find—love or no love—a girl who can produce the necessary minimum. Because there is a sum fixed by the Admiralty and War Office regulations, which any girl who desires to marry an officer must possess. She may have more, you understand," laughing, "but she can not have less." I looked up, struggling to keep out of my eyes the question whether he was married or not. He must have seen it, however, for he said, "Yes, *fraulein*, I am married and very happily to a charming girl from Cincinnati, Ohio. If I wasn't," he added mischievously, "I would propose to you, because officers of a certain grade and up, I forgot to say, are permitted to marry whom they like,—even if the girl hasn't a pfennig."

CHAPTER XV

WISEST TO OBEY

THE treatment for which I most fervently hoped as a prisoner of war, was to be ignored, and fortunately for me that was the treatment I received, at any rate for a time.

A good many of the prisoners had been sent through to Stuttgart, and I wondered rather anxiously why Captain Frazer had not been sent with them, for it seemed hardly possible that his captors had, in keeping him at the front, been influenced by the danger of such a journey to their prisoner. However, I was not left long in doubt, for one night the officer in command sent for me. When I reached his office, about midnight, I found gathered there three or four other officers and among them Captain Sindhauf, the Saxon officer who had

proved kindly and considerate ever since my first encounter with him the day the Germans had taken possession of our hospital. As I entered the room his eyes met mine with what, in my naturally supersensitive state, seemed to me something of sadness and deprecation in their depths.

However, I had no time to speculate over the meaning of his glance, for the commanding officer at once motioned me to be seated and said:

"*Fraulein*, I believe you will find it the wisest policy to obey implicitly what I direct you to do. You have been chosen to go through to the English lines and do a very valuable piece of work for us. In fact," he said bluntly, "I wish you to place their big guns."

For a moment or two I was utterly unable to grasp the meaning of what was being said to me. Then the absolute barbarousness of it broke on me and I answered in a frenzy of indignation:

"How dare you,—how dare you suppose that I would do such a thing!"

But the man's manner was utterly unruffled and he answered calmly.

"I think, *fraulein*, under the circumstances you will find it wisest to obey my instructions."

I could not answer him and after a moment, looking at me from under his eyebrows in a manner that struck me, even in those circumstances, as being in some way absurdly melodramatic, he added,

"Remember, *fraulein*, your lover is—our prisoner."

I was absolutely dumfounded. And it slowly dawned on me that it was true. He had made me conscious for the first time of the fact that Captain Frazer was more, far more, to me than merely a gallant, brave officer, wounded and under my charge.

I laughed rather hysterically, and the commanding officer went on: "To be explicit, I wish you to return to the enemy's lines; ascertain where their batteries are situated and report to me the strength of their guns in a manner that will be indicated to you. If you do this you will be amply repaid. On the other

hand, if you betray us or fail to carry out our instructions to the minutest detail, your British officer will be marched out to the courtyard yonder and shot," and he pointed threateningly to the gray time-stained court below.

For a moment I could not believe I had understood him correctly; then I sprang forward.

"But you can not, even you," I cried, "would not dare do such a thing!"

He looked at me with a cold unfaltering gaze and said, "So it would appear you are not so deep in his confidence as I supposed. He is a spy. But because I want this information, I am willing to let you win his release."

"He is an English officer," I answered, "who has been desperately ill for weeks, and who has neither the opportunity nor the desire for such work; how could he be a spy?"

"Doubtless you are sincere in your belief, *fraulein*, but—the fact remains, he is." With this he bade one of the officers present bring Captain Frazer.

I sprang forward and in my anxiety took the man's hand in mine.

"The fortunes of war have made me your prisoner," I said, "but surely you will not torture me. In the French lines I attended your sick and wounded as faithfully as our own and now I implore you in return, do not have Captain Frazer brought here."

I stood before him, my very soul in my eyes, but the general turned away, with hardly a glance. I fell back, beaten and helpless. A moment later two men entered, carrying a stretcher on which Captain Frazer lay, his face drawn and white, but his eyes shining with unfaltering courage.

"There he is, *fraulein*," the general said. "And I tell you he is a spy. Now I give you your choice: you will do as I direct, or—the result you already know," and he nodded toward Captain Frazer.

"But you can not," I said, "it is too cruel, too inhuman—you—"

The general cut me short. "I have no time, *fraulein*, to waste words, I have told you my decision and you will do as I say or take the consequences. The mission will be made very

simple, very easy of accomplishment, and by fulfilling it you will win freedom for yourself and for your lover—pardon me,” and the man bowed with mock politeness, “your friend and patient, Captain Frazer. If you refuse, he will pay the penalty he deserves, and you”—and he shrugged his shoulders with an expression which made me shudder—“perhaps Captain von Schulling might wish you as his private nurse.”

For a bitter moment, I stood torn between conflicting emotions, then my eyes sought those of my poor patient. He spoke to me, but his words, curiously enough, influenced me in a way quite other than he intended. “Accept,” he said in French, taking the one chance that they might not understand, and his eyes told me the *rest*. I would be safe, and he—he didn’t need to tell me, he knew how to die like a soldier.

With a despairing gesture, I turned from him and faced the German general, for I could not bear to meet the eyes of the man whom I had so strangely, suddenly come to know I loved.

"I will do what you say," I answered simply.

Captain Frazer started to speak but with a voice so full of ghastly anxiety that it almost tore my heart from my body. A moment later the general waved him away.

After he had gone, the general smiled in a way for which I could have strangled him with my hands if I had not a far more important and subtle part to play.

"Before I go further," he said, "perhaps it might be well to warn you that in the enemy's line there are many of our spies," then his voice became harsh. "Fail us in the smallest particular and your lover dies like the dog he is." Springing to his feet and leaning toward me until his face almost touched mine, he glared into my eyes and thundered out: "Do you understand?"

After a certain point there seems to come a moment when we are beyond fear; perhaps it is the exhilaration that danger brings; perhaps the lure of adventure to come. Whatever this may be, at that moment it seemed to me that fate had done her worst, and from thence for-

ward my nerves were steel and I was ready for whatever might befall me.

“Yes, I understand only too well,” I replied;
“when do I start?”

“At once!”

CHAPTER XVI

THE ORANGE PETTICOAT

“**T**HIS morning at dawn you will be taken by one of our men to a point where, if you go straight ahead, about two miles, you will find a break in the English line.” In that way the German officer in command informed me that the time had come for me to make good my promise to play the spy. Continuing, he said: “It will be guarded, of course, by the patrol. When you are challenged you will call out ‘Friend.’ The sentry will say, ‘Advance, friend, and give the countersign,’—that you will, of course, not know, but he will see you are a woman, a nurse, and will not shoot. He will undoubtedly send you to the nearest headquarters and there you will say that a very high German officer, whom you had nursed, had become so infatuated with you that he had helped you escape.”

“Will they believe such a story?” I asked.

He shrugged his shoulders and replied, “Well, you will be there in the flesh; your papers will prove you to be what you state, and your own ingenuity must do the rest—that is your affair. Once there you can feign illness, or better still, after yesterday’s attack they will need nurses so desperately you can manage at least to stay a few days. Or you can disguise yourself as a peasant—they are such fools, the French peasantry that they continue living in their homes at all hazards; if we shell them out to-day, they return to-morrow. You surely can find some excuse to stay in one of their houses for a day or two; but that I leave to you—you are clever enough to manage a situation far more difficult,” he said with a sneer. “All I demand is that you *place* the big guns for us. There are many, and are carefully concealed. Our aeroplanes have been unable to pick them up. For a month they have harried us and it must cease,” and he pounded the table with his clenched fist. “Every morning between ten and eleven our machines will fly over their lines, and when you have located a battery stand as

near it as possible. Wear this," handing me a coarse linen orange colored petticoat; "and pin up your skirt after the fashion of the peasant woman. This particular color carries extraordinarily well and our men can, with a telescope, distinguish it at a great distance. You will find some pretense for remaining there until our men come over and when they do shade your eyes with your hands—so—" and he gave me an object lesson, "for as many minutes as there are guns in the battery. If you are unable to determine the exact number give it approximately, as best you can. The thing of first importance is *where are the guns*. It is for this you will be answerable, and for this rewarded."

"What assurance have I that you will keep your word, if I succeed?" I asked, all the while crowding back the ideas, the plans, that were teeming in my brain. I was panic-stricken lest some one might read my thoughts, so overwrought were my nerves.

"You must take my word for that," he replied quickly. "And besides you *know* what will happen if you refuse," and he shrugged his shoulders. By declining I knew, of course,

we were lost. By agreeing, there was always the fighting chance.

“Am I free to return to my own work—are we both free if my mission is successfully accomplished?” I asked.

He laughed unpleasantly. “Well, hardly that. Don’t you think you would be better satisfied to return and learn personally what happens to Frazer—he is very ill.” Then quickly changing his tone, he said, “If you have played fair you and Captain Frazer will be sent blindfolded out of our lines and proper precaution taken that you get through to your own. You have saved his life—he will marry you. No one will ever suspect you—you the daughter of a peer of England.

“To return, you will leave there in the morning, go to where the line breaks, pass your own patrol.” He must have seen my look of amazement for he added at once, “It is a thing that is done every day—to say nothing of despatch riders who go through even under fire. Disguised as a pretty peasant it will be easy—they are very lax with the natives. Once safe from the sentry you have nothing to fear, as

our patrols on your return, will be watching for you. On reaching them you will be challenged, you have only to answer in German and give the countersign."

Here I interrupted with: "But the countersign is changed every day—it will be three days—"

"The one I give you will be good until the evening of the third day—it is '*Deutschland Uber Alles.*'"

"I think it a most hazardous task," I said, "and one in which the chances are a hundred to one I shall fail, however earnestly I try, but I accept. Before I go I want to say that I *know* Captain Frazer is not a spy, though appearances may be against him; but I know too that for less, men have been shot. The falsity of the accusation can be proved but it takes time—"

"And time—" he broke in, "is what we none of us have just now."

I took up the orange petticoat, went to my room and twenty minutes later was en route. I begged to see Captain Frazer, but permission either to talk to or write him was denied, and I was blindfolded and led to the waiting motor.

After we had gone an hour—whether in a straight line or in a circle I was unable to decide, we suddenly halted and the officer with me, removing the bandage from my eyes, jumped down and said:

“*Fraulein*, your way is straight ahead to where you see that windmill dimly outlined on the horizon. Good-by and good luck.” He held out his hand. As I took it he added, “This is not to my taste, *fraulein*.”

As horrifying as it all was, I was glad to be free. For while never molested, still I had been a prisoner, with always the sense of oppression, the feeling of being watched. With the fresh sweet smell of the country air, the faint chirp of the birds, I forgot I was hurrying onward, perhaps to death. I said this to myself, but my emotions refused to be aroused. I could not feel a glimmer of fear. I knew all would and *must* go well. In the general's office, I had decided on a course of action. True, the plan if carried out might cost my life and more—much more—the life of Ian! (It came to me suddenly I was thinking of him as Ian.) But, we were soldiers and that was a chance we must

take. After all, as Colonel —— had once said to me, "Who lives if what we stand for, perish from off the earth?"

For the first hour there was nothing to be seen but devastated fields yellow from lyddite—then I came to an empty village. It is a strange and uncanny thing to go through a deserted town. There is some influence that seems to haunt the empty places where men once lived, but it broods in redoubled force over places where men have died. If the object of the Germans had been to clear the town of inhabitants they had succeeded, for as I stopped for a moment to survey the place there was not a man, woman or child to be seen anywhere. Somehow I distrusted those empty houses—one never knew what might be hidden behind their silent walls.

I was stumbling along shortly after, when I suddenly saw before me, gleaming in the first pure rays of sunlight, a brilliantly-hued shell. It was a German 77, and the deep rich blue had been scraped off until the brass, shining like dull gold, showed through. I stopped a moment to look down on it and was thinking of the

havoc the beautiful thing was capable of, when, sharp, a voice called—"Who goes there?"

I looked up hastily to find two fixed bayonets confronting me, and two Highlanders frowning behind them. "Friend," I answered.

"Advance, and give the countersign."

I advanced and so did they. We met and I told them I was a military nurse escaped from the Germans.

They regarded me with mixed suspicion and interest, but after a whispered consultation I was given over to a sergeant who sent me under escort to headquarters. As we marched along they asked me dozens of questions about the strength of the Germans, most of which I was unable to answer. It was breakfast-time when I arrived at headquarters and I had to wait an hour until I could see the commander. When I was at last ushered in I found him a typical English soldier. At the beginning of my story I told him the Germans had assured me there were spies all about him, that I would be watched, and I laughed incredulously.

"I dare say they are right," he answered. "Anyway, we shall take no chances—come out

in the garden—there we can at least *see* who is behind us.”

There was a marble seat by a pool in the center of the lovely old-fashioned garden, and there we sat while I told him the whole story.

“If they suspect you of playing them false, they will shoot both of you, that is certain,” said General ——. “They would not dare give you over to Von Schulling as a private nurse—you are after all an American. If you do not return they might go through with the charge against Frazer.” His voice became sad as he spoke of him.

After some minutes spent in deep thought, he went on: “Well, wear your yellow petticoat, dress like a peasant girl, but—you had better be seen as little as possible,” and he looked at me until I blushed ridiculously. “Your face is patrician, my dear, not peasant—and that’s rather unfortunate, just at this moment. You will place the guns, but only *such* and *where* I see fit. You are pledged to return the morning of the third day, are you not?”

“Yes,” I answered.

“You will return—your safe conduct through

our lines will be arranged—manage to live,” and he laughed, “until noon of that day, and I guarantee you and Frazer will be safe.

“And now to business. Down the road a quarter of a mile, there is a cottage; you will recognize it by two tall trees in the front yard. An old peasant woman lives there, who would sell her soul for money. Have you any?” he asked quickly.

“Yes,” I answered, “before I left the Germans returned one thousand francs of my money, which they had taken.”

“Good! Well, go there, tell her you are released from nursing for a week, and that you want to stay here because, well, because your lover is near here. Subsidize her, and explain that you wish to dress like a peasant, to attract less attention. She will be afraid, nervous and so on, but for ten francs a night she will be persuaded. Some of our men are billeted there and through them you will receive the necessary instructions. To-day you had better keep quiet, get your bearings and learn the directions as well as you can.”

He got up to leave, first asking me to wait.

In a few moments he returned with a tall bronzed officer who eyed me narrowly. Just before they reached me, however, they stopped, took out a field-glass and began carefully scrutinizing the heavens. After a few moments so spent they joined me, the commander saying: "That is one of our liaison officers. A liaison officer is one who takes messages from one line to another. It's an exciting and dangerous job, and requires men of courage and ability. I have chosen him as he goes and comes and no attention is paid to him; going and coming is his job. To-morrow morning at ten—that is about the hour they will be watching—go out of your house and follow this officer, keeping as far behind him as you can and still distinguish his movements. He may take a zig-zag route, but you go straight on, following the general direction of the canal, south. But when he stops, takes out his field-glasses and scrutinizes the heavens, you go on past him for a distance of say two hundred steps, and then, at an angle of forty-five degrees, one hundred paces, when you will stop and occupy yourself with whatever seems feasible, for that is where you

are to locate one battery for 'our friends.' The officer whom you have been following will perhaps disappear but, you had better go on a mile or so farther as if you were searching for other information. Whatever you do, do not stop anywhere near the big bridge across the canal, for there the French will—but never mind. You had better go now. Further instructions you will receive later."

He held out his hand and said, "Good-by, sister," (the English always call their military nurses "Sister"). "You are as brave as I could wish even a son to be," and the interview was ended.

As I left the garden a motor drove up, and a tall soldierly-looking man jumped hurriedly out. I should not have noticed him had he not almost run into me. He bowed and apologized and I was hurrying on when some one called. I looked around. The commander himself motioned me to return. When I reached him he introduced me to the man with whom I had almost collided, saying, "Lord N——, this is the nurse I told you of—the one who has been

looking after Captain Frazer. I thought you might like to speak to her."

In a voice tense with emotion, Lord N—— said, "Captain Frazer is very dear to me,— have you good news, sister?"

"He is much better and although a prisoner he has been treated with consideration," I answered.

His expression betrayed so much anxiety that I refrained from telling him of the greatest danger that threatened Captain Frazer. Here several officers came in and I was hastily dismissed.

CHAPTER XVII

IN THE GARDEN AT EIGHT

TO find the cottage was not difficult, but to persuade the peasant (an old French woman who looked so ancient she might have endured from Roman days) to take me in was another thing. She insisted her house was full and was in fact just turning me out when a young officer whom I recognized from headquarters came in; he interceded for me, even offering me his room. This she would not hear to, but consented at last to my sharing her room. Perhaps she felt she could better watch me in this way. She insisted on being paid in advance for each night, but when she saw the thousand-franc bill she became at once much more friendly. I thought it was because she felt sure of her money, but I was wrong. "Your Englishman must be rich as well as in-

fluential," she said, quite as a matter of fact. I didn't dare to say what I should have liked for fear I might be set adrift.

I went to my room, which was a back one, up a flight of worn stone steps. It was small but beautifully clean. On the bed I noticed, tired as I was, a comforter quilted in the most elaborate design of flowers and leaves, and with stitches so small it would have delighted forever the heart of my grandmama. But I was so fatigued that in spite of the excitement I lay down and slept the heavy sleep of youth and exhaustion. Hours after I was awakened by a boy with big, brown, intelligent eyes, who had come to say that luncheon was ready. Later I made friends with him. He was René my landlady's grandson, and his father was a sergeant in the French artillery corps stationed near by. He had the communicativeness and the acumen of the gamin the world over.

René at once offered to take me—for a consideration—around the country, and show me the abandoned trenches, the battle-fields and graves, and (he lowered his voice) "where the

big guns are." The last offer made my heart jump with joy; the peasants knew this lad, he was one of them. In a way it was a certain protection from inquisitiveness, suspicion.

That afternoon, by way of getting my bearings as well as satisfying my interest in hospitals everywhere, I asked to go to those near by. It was visiting day and almost every man had a friend sitting beside his bed. Those who had not looked somehow lonely and out of it. As we were slowly passing through one of the wards in which were some German prisoners, I noticed just in front of us a French officer. He was hunting a German who was supposed to have news of an aeroplane that he had helped to bring down, and in which one of the Frenchman's best friends had been killed. Passing a bed around which a screen had been placed, the officer suddenly stopped and listened intently to a few words that were being spoken in German by the patient. Without waiting to ask, "By your leave," he pulled the screen away and stepped to the side of the bed. The young private so desperately wounded was the officer's brother. They were

Alsations and one had, early in life, joined the French colors, and when the war began the other brother had been drafted into the German army. In a second the officer was on his knees caressing the boy as tenderly as he might have a child, while the tears streamed down their faces.

As we passed out by an isolated balcony I heard a German trying vainly and impatiently to explain himself to a poor tired-looking nurse, who was writing a letter. I paused, wishing I might help.

The nurse saw me and called out pathetically, "Can you write German?"

"Yes," I answered a little uneasily, for it occurred to me that it might not be wise to enter into any conversations.

But her voice was so plaintive as she said, "Do please come and write for him," that I went.

He was a doctor and had been making a very thorough study of lockjaw. He explained that this was distinctly a lockjaw belt from which most of the tetanus cases came. That the disease has to do with the composition of the soil,

but why and wherefore he did not know, and until he could solve it there would be no rest for him.

"Nor for any of the rest of us," the nurse whispered.

He wanted this written out carefully and technically and sent to the surgeon general of the German army. But I am afraid the solution of the problem at least by him was a long way off, for he had a gangrenous wound. He had been such a bore, the little nurse told me, with his continual dissertations on disease in general, and tetanus in particular, that even his own men were delighted to have him go.

But many of the men did not take life so seriously, and sitting out in the sun under one of the windows I heard them exchanging confidences.

"Oh, yes," said the Irishman, "it is a favorite trick on both sides, mining your own trenches. The day before I got 'caught out' my sergeant and some of the men were tolled off to turn such a trick. We buried the gun cotton, took the leads away to the rear and hid them. When everything was done we got

out of the bit of trench that was mined and crept to the rear. An hour or two later the Germans discovered it. There was great excitement; they thought it was a bona fide retirement. The next morning the Germans were in the trench. My lieutenant pointed to the handle of the exploder and told me to press it down. I took it. If I live a thousand years I will never forget my thoughts. 'Will I let 'em live a minute more?' says I to myself as the first faint streaks of dawn came into the sky. Somehow I thought of my old mother and my family back home. It is cold-blooded business, I tell you. I looked around and the pals near me were watching me with eyes that had the look in them that a snake has when it is charming a bird. All of a sudden I began to laugh, a funny kind of a laugh. And then I cursed a little. Then, tightening my muscles, I forced the handle of the exploder down. . . . There was a great tearing roar—mud and stones and pieces of human beings were flung up toward the sky. . . . And then there was the stillness of death, and all was over."

The next morning I remained in my room as long as possible to avoid being seen and discussed by the peasants. Then, dressed in one of the old lady's dresses, I went down. She was a fat, short little thing, and I am tall and slender, but, by careful manipulation, I had managed to show my orange petticoat and somehow to look rather like the peasants. I explained to René that my dress was being washed. He laughed a good deal at my altered appearance, but suspected nothing. The grandmother thought she knew my secret, so all was well.

We had been in the garden only a short time when I saw the liaison officer hurrying by. Behind him came a company of "Tommies," swinging along to the tune of *Tipperary* played on mouth organs. They looked as fit as could be. Comparing them mentally with the German troops that I had been seeing day after day, it seemed to me that they looked not only quite as well set up and as smart-looking, but happier. They were going out to play football. I was afraid René might want to forsake me

for the game, but he was a French youth and football had no charm for him.

So we set out on our excursion. Our way followed the general direction of the canal. We had wandered along for half an hour, resting a moment here and there, but always keeping in sight of the liaison officer, when all at once I saw him stop, take out his glasses and train them on a spot in the heavens. I knew it must be a Taube. I struggled quickly over the rough ground covered with mounds and uneven with holes made by shells. As the officer had only paused a moment, I had taken the precaution to line up his position with a low bush and a flagpole near by, but on reaching it I found he had marked it by dropping a lighted cigar. I then began counting the steps, as directed, and when I had done all but the last ten René, who had been too occupied by the air craft to pay any attention to me, suddenly cried out: "Don't go any nearer!" and, pointing in the exact direction I had been told to take, said, "There they are—the *big guns*." I was mystified; had I, after all, done

something wrong? I hesitated, and then I put all conjectures aside and did as I had been told.

"There are ten big ones," René whispered, "and lots of small ones buried—you know they dig holes and hide those." With unsteady hands I shaded my eyes for ten minutes. Then I saw an aeroplane dart out in pursuit of the Taube, but as it took the aeroplane many minutes to ascend the Taube sailed off toward its own lines before the aeroplane reached striking distance.

We followed along a mile or two more and saw women washing, almost under fire, piling up the wet clothes in great masses on the edge of a tiny stream. They were pattering and chattering as if such a thing as war did not exist. Then we retraced our steps. The last few minutes we had heard the deep full roar of artillery and as I reached the cottage gate I heard some one say: "They have got the range at last, but it has taken a month to do it."

My heart stopped within me; I was too faint to go farther. I had blundered after all—when—how?

It was luncheon-time, but I couldn't have

swallowed a bite to save my life. I dragged my trembling body up the cold worn steps to my attic room. Hour after hour I lay there, hearing the cannonading, and growing more sick at heart with each dull boom. Finally, about dusk, I could endure it no longer, and hastily putting on my bonnet and shawl, I went down-stairs. The road was full of autos and men who were coming and going continually. I had hardly stepped out when some one bumped into me and whispered in French, but with a peculiar accent, "*Be here at eight,*" and slipped away. I was indignant with myself when I realized that I had not noticed what the person looked like. Recovering myself, I sped in the direction he had gone; there were several men in khaki, and one slouching peasant. It was the peasant who had spoken. What did he wish to tell me. It all seemed so queer. Was he in the German Secret Service? If so, why was he willing to trust me? And then!—I thought how perfectly absurd I was, after all. I was beginning to have "nerves." Of course it was a man from the British headquarters. I said this over and over again,

trying to convince myself by repetition. But still I wanted news of the shelling and was looking around helplessly for some one I might ask, when the liaison officer of the morning came by, stopped and asked me if I knew which room Colonel P—— occupied. Answering in the affirmative he requested me to show him the way.

“Follow me again to-morrow morning. You did good work to-day—take the boy again.” All this was said in snatches.

I was just beginning to be reassured by his words, when my fears of a few moments ago returned. “If this was the message from headquarters, what was the other?” I had no time to ask, for the old lady called me and asked where I was going. I did not answer her, but in desperation hazarded in a whisper: “A spy will meet me in the garden at eight—have some one there.”

“*D'accord,*” and “Thanks,” he said aloud.

I then hastily ran down and explained to my landlady that I had been showing the Englishman the colonel's room. She still thought I

was French. Looking at me a moment over her glasses, she said: "Don't mind me—go back up there if you wish—" When I realized what she meant, I blushingly stammered that the gentleman was not my lover. I was burning with shame, and was only able to compose myself by remembering that solely in her evil opinion of me lay the possible success of my mission. Otherwise she would report my presence to the commanding officer and he would, in self-defense, be obliged to order me sent through to my own service.

I waited with misgivings. The hours seemed interminable. I felt blue and utterly depressed—and to keep my spirits up I kept telling myself how wonderful it would be to help Ian. But it was useless; the gloom remained; I couldn't shake it off. After what seemed an eternity eight o'clock sounded. The old woman was dozing before the fire. René had gone to bed. I got up and slipped out into the garden. From the shadow a figure came forward to meet me—I was too astounded for words. The man was wearing khaki.

"Well," I managed to say in a voice that was cold to my own ears, for khaki and spying got on my nerves.

Speaking with the same doubtful accent I had remarked before, he said: "You spotted the guns all right. How did you do it so quickly?"

"The boy René did it," I answered.

"Now I understand," he said. "I had been wondering who was working with you. It will be more difficult to-morrow, they are moving the guns to-night; you had better get in there," and he motioned to the house, "and get busy. A girl as pretty as you are can certainly find the soft spot in some of them. I am going out stalking to-night and if I find anything
——"

"Why, *you* can signal the Taube yourself to-morrow," I interrupted.

"No, you had better do that; it's safer, and this is too important to take any chance of making a mess of it. No, what I was saying is this, if I locate them, I will pass by about ten in the morning driving a flock of sheep—follow me. I will drive them behind the big



guns and will have as many sheep as there are guns. Get behind the battery and give your signal."

"Sheep," I managed to say, "but you are wearing khaki."

"Yes! A damned dangerous thing to do, coming to a place swarming with English; but as risky as it is, it's the safest."

As he said this my spirits rose. I didn't mind anything now, for after all he wasn't a Tommie! Selling his country and his soul! I couldn't have endured that just then. He was just a German who spoke English *only too well*.

But what was I to do, even knowing what he was. To gain time I asked, "How will you find the guns?"

"Oh, that's my business," he said, and laughed.

"If you can't manage it, will some one else come driving the sheep?" I asked lamely, hoping I might find a confederate.

"Oh, unless I miss my guess, I'll be there," he said dryly. "You had better go in," he added, "or you will be missed."

I looked up at him. I must know what he looked like. His face suggested America, and I suddenly felt I had seen him somewhere.

“Who are you?” I asked helplessly. “Where have I seen you before?”

“You never saw me before,” he answered roughly, “until to-night,” and he turned on his heel and disappeared in a second. I looked after him bewildered, ransacking my brain, for I knew perfectly I had seen him somewhere. In a little it came to me—at the ——— Hotel, in New York, where we had dined almost every night, he had been a captain of waiters—I had often spoken German with him. Poor fellow, when Germany had called for their reservists, he had come. I was still looking after him when I heard a shot, followed instantly by another. I stood still—petrified. At once there was a great commotion in the house; officers hurried out; electric flashes were everywhere. I did not know whether to run in or stand still. Something decided me. I had better go while there was time. I had only been in the room a second, the old lady was still dozing by the fire, when the young lieutenant

who had interceded for me the morning before came hurrying in and said, carefully choosing his words, "Most women know something of nursing—a man has been shot; we are bringing him in here; will you come and see how badly hurt he is?"

"I'll do my best," I answered, my heart thumping like mad, and wondering which man it was, for I never doubted it was one of them. I heard them bring him to the little rear dining-room, but try as I would I couldn't find courage and strength to walk there. Everything turned black before my eyes, for I knew, whoever it was I was indirectly to blame.

Then I heard a voice, "Come, nurse," and with joy I recognized it was the liaison officer speaking. Summoning all my courage but still very much shaken, I went in and faced the man to whom I had just been speaking.

"You damned traitor," he said. "I might have known you'd do it. *I did know it*, but I had my orders."

"He fired at me when I called 'Halt' and then ran," the officer said to me, "and I shot. The only regret I have is that I didn't kill him.

Now he will have to have a trial, and he isn't worth it." All this time I had been leaning over him, making a superficial examination. He had been shot through the chest and the pierced lung was making a frightful noise. I realized he was seriously, if not fatally, wounded, and although he was a spy and an enemy, it was a terrible sensation to think that a human being was *dying*—going to his Maker for judgment, because of me."

CHAPTER XVIII

IAN'S BROTHER

“**I** AM sorry,” I said to the wounded man; and to the others I pleaded that they get a doctor, or better, take him at once to the hospital. They decided the latter was impossible, for fear his confederates would come to know of it. But they did bring a doctor and a nurse. I couldn't have endured his burning eyes.

An hour later the doctor came down and said: “The man wants to see you.” I shrank from going, but it was a dying request, and I went.

As I entered he said, after asking that we be left alone, “You know now who I am, don't you?”

“Yes,” I replied, “you were the captain at the —— Hotel.”

"That's right," he answered, "and because I spoke English and French so well and had a brother living near to take me in, I was sent here on this duty. Well, it's rotten work and I've had rotten luck, but," after a painful pause, "I've done my best for my Kaiser and I'm only sorry I can't do more." Then he smiled and said whimsically, "Well, I won't drive the sheep to-morrow, after all," and added suddenly, eyeing me narrowly, "but you didn't expect this when you asked me that question, did you?"

"No, you know I didn't," I answered sadly.

"Never mind, miss," he said; "it's all a part of the job. And now—this is what I want to tell you. Listen," he said with burning eagerness, "when I don't return they will suspect what has happened; you had better find out where the big guns are and play square or it's all over with you. You did it to-day, but that was a trick of the English; they meant you to do it, but to-morrow, either find out and signal, or go back to America or they will *get you*, and I wouldn't like to think of you being stood up against a wall and shot; that's

all." As I turned to go he said hesitatingly, "Will you pray for me?" and I knelt and prayed with an aching heart.

A moment later the liaison officer came and led me away. He didn't mention the next day's work and I was grateful; it would have jarred me too much just then. I had seen much of death and dying, but this was different.

The next morning I awoke early, but lay still. I was tired, my head ached, and I wondered if anything was worth all this. Finally, about nine, I got up, dressed and went downstairs. The old woman was distinctly in a bad humor—the shooting and having her house upset had naturally disturbed her.

She some way connected me with it, I felt certain; although she wasn't sure just how. I tried to be as little trouble as possible and to slip away quietly, but before I left she said sullenly, "Your dress will be ready to-night and in the morning I think you had better go." I answered that I should be ready, and went out.

René was waiting for me. Even he seemed downcast. It was gray and cold. I wondered

what excuse I could find for waiting around, but it wasn't necessary as my officer came by just then. His long military coat was buttoned up and he walked fast, in fact, so fast I could scarcely keep him in sight. This time he went farther back from the canal and after a mile we came to the top of a little hill. There were guns quite visible to the naked eye which the artillerymen were placing and lowering with great activity. This seemed strange, as their cunning in concealing them up to now had been so perfect that their discovery would have been luck—even the flashes had with great subtlety been screened. We could even hear the commands; then my officer stopped and looked about. I didn't see much necessity for signaling, it was all so apparent, but I did so according to instructions. He was joined, a few minutes later, by two men. They got into a peasant's cart and jolted off. I was uncertain what to do, but I trudged back into the country.

We were now on the battle-field at —— and graves marked almost every footstep. There were English, French and German. The Germans would recognize theirs by a rusty tin

can stuck at one end of the stick that marked the grave. The Allies by crude crosses, with sometimes a tiny flag that fluttered like loose bits of ribbon in the chill gray air; often a last letter pinned to a cap or coat. They had been buried where they fell; a haystack was surrounded by graves. A little farther on we came upon a group of men engaged in exhuming the bodies from a vast grave which René told me had contained forty-five men. They were searching, he said, for a certain English officer whom they believed to have been buried there. René's chatter ran on. "He must have been a grand person, for his mother has been here twice hunting for his body, and has offered thousands of francs to any one who will find where he is buried." We walked on a little farther. The whole thing was too unutterably sad and I was about to retrace my steps when loud exclamations and excited talking from the grave diggers caused René to scamper over to where the men were at work. A moment later he came rushing back fairly screaming:

"Mademoiselle, don't you want to come and

see him? They have found him—they have found Captain ——, the one they were looking for.”

“Captain ——,” I said, dully wondering where I had heard that name. Like a flash it came to me and my heart grew sick at the thought. He was the handsome officer who, with his mother and sweetheart, had dined next to us our first night in London. His words came vividly back to me: “Some will live, but many will die—count not the loss.”

René had grown restive; he wanted to go back near where the guns were being put in position, and to keep him with me a little longer I told him I was expecting to meet a friend. When I had about given up all hope of seeing my officer again, the three men who had ridden away in the cart suddenly appeared. A little distance away they stopped. I saw them all scanning the horizon with field-glasses, but we, René and I, saw nothing. It was a signal I felt sure, and I counted my steps and waited for the Taube. Once or twice we heard aeroplaning, but through the clouds saw nothing. I had no difficulty in persuading René to stay,

as he saw, he assured me, French troops advancing in the distance. Later I found this was true, they were doing it under cover of the fog, but my own eyes were so tired from weeping and sleeplessness I couldn't see them.

That night about midnight I heard a tap at my door, so light as to be almost inaudible, but my ears were supersensitive, and when it came the second time I gently got up and opened the door. A form was outlined in the dim candle-light and I was beckoned to follow. In the next room Lord N—— was waiting for me. He rose at once as I came in and said:

“Sister, I have come to you with a message from headquarters. It has been decided that it will be unwise and perhaps useless for you to return to the German lines. You have given already valuable assistance and it will not go unrecorded—but—to go back would doubtless do little good and perhaps cost the services of a valuable nurse. After last night's happenings undoubtedly you are watched and your every movement known. You have signaled, but the signals have in most instances been ‘blinds.’ When that is known to the enemy,

as it surely will be, you will have to pay," he paused and looked steadily into my eyes, "an unthinkable penalty."

I could hardly wait until he had finished to ask: "Do you mean that I am to go back to my hospital safely and leave Captain Frazer to be shot?"

"That, in all probability, will not happen," he answered, but his tone belied his words.

"Your Lordship," I answered, in a voice that could admit of no further discussion, "I am going back to the German hospital at dawn. I have nothing to fear from the German sentry, and I shall ask you to give me safe conduct through our lines. Surely you would not refuse me that, for go I shall; any instructions and advice I shall be grateful for." He arose and came to me.

"Sister," he said with emotion, "I feel I must tell you that Captain Frazer is my brother. The great difference in our ages makes my sentiment toward him rather like that a father feels for a son—a son within whom are centered all the hopes of a family whose traditions go back to the invasion of Scotland by Agricola. Ian

will be both my father's and my own heir—eventually—for I shall never marry. So you see what he means to us. But no personal reason—hopes of a Frazer mortgage on Eternity—by way of Ian's descendants—or even to secure his life itself, will prevent me warning you how dangerous is your undertaking.”

“I don't feel that I am in any great danger,” I replied, quickly recovering from the shock of knowing this man was Ian's brother. “In the first place the Germans can't prove I didn't do my best—the only person who knew the truth is dead; his confederates may suspect, but can't be sure and I don't believe, without actual proof, they will dare shoot me.”

“The general feels as you do,” he answered. “Your American affiliations stand you in good stead. But the one fact which makes us consent at all to your going is that we are prepared to surround them by noon to-day. If you can get through and escape suspicion for several hours you will be safe. You may tell them the French 75's are being placed to-night by the big bridge; they will recognize the peculiar bark of that gun, and know you

are telling the truth. I need not go further—the less you know the easier your task will be, for you are wholly unsuited to such a despicable rôle,” and he took my hand affectionately in his own.

He then questioned me minutely about Captain Frazer's condition and spirits, and, looking at me long and steadily, said: “You are the fine—” but he broke off abruptly and handed me a khaki overcoat, puttees, shoes and cap.

“Put these things on over your nurse's uniform when you start. Now, get a few hours' rest, and at dawn walk boldly out and down the road. Follow it for three miles—the lines break there—and when you see me showing a map to a sentry by the aid of my electric flash, run quickly by and make for the open. A few shots may be fired—but have no fear, they will be for the benefit of any spies who may be around. The German patrols will be watching for you; however, take no chances; leave your coat and cap and approach their lines with your Red Cross uniform in plain sight. Don't wear even your own uniform coat; it is wiser. Once through you will report to the

officer in command and whatever else you do, keep cool. A favorite method of theirs is to humiliate and insult a prisoner until they wear his nerves down and then trick him into a damaging admission. Tell your story, which is a simple one, and stick to it, and always keep in mind that a few hours at best and our men will be there. I don't believe they can connect you with the movement before that time, and their trumped-up charge against Ian will hardly be considered valid by the officers higher up. After all, it's the hazards of war. God bless you, my brave child, and I feel we shall meet again, that this is not to be a tragedy."

I slipped back into the room—the old woman was awake and had missed me. For a moment I was frightened lest she had heard, but her words, hateful as they were, reassured me. "I have been wondering which of them your man was—now I know." I wondered when before in the world a good woman had been really happy at being accused of having a lover. But my mind was too occupied to dwell long on that subject and I began think-

ing of Ian's brother—he seemed so kindly, yet so detached, as if life were a river and he was sitting on the bank watching it go by. I vaguely began to recall incidents relating to him, only his name hadn't some way remained in my memory. About four I got up, slipped out into the hall and dressed, crept down-stairs and out into the blinding snow. As I trudged along I ate my breakfast, a cake of chocolate which I had bought the day before.

For some time I had gone along seeing no signs of life and then, moving like ghostly shadows, I came upon a squad of bombardiers. They made a strange picture, recalling traditions of medieval fighters. Around their middle they carried some twenty or thirty bombs, little cylinders fastened on a long stick, around which fell streamers of ribbon. This clothing suggested a mixed breed of Scotchmen and red Indians, who had taken to wearing the Indian head-dress as a kilt. I had heard many stories of what their work was like in the trenches. Crouching down among the barbed-wire entanglements, with their sup-

porting infantrymen who carried fixed bayonets, they raised themselves a little from the earth and, seizing one of their rocket-like bombs from their belts, grasped it by the stick and hurled it high above the rampart. It twists and travels uncertainly through the air, and finally by the force of equilibrium supplied by the streamers of ribbon, plunges straight as a plumb line into the trench. There is a noise as though a gigantic Chinese cracker were jumping along the zigzag trench. Clouds of greenish smoke rise up.

The harm comes from lumps of earth, stone and fragments of the outer ring which enclose the bomb, and which constitutes its shrapnel. Their work is most effective in storming trenches.

Not wishing to be observed, I stood motionless, watching them until they had passed quite out of sight.

A little way farther on I was wondering if I might not miss my way in the snow when suddenly from an inn there stepped into the road three khaki figures; one of them fell behind to light a cigarette, and by the flame of

the match I saw it was Lord N——. He didn't appear to see me, and the three went on talking about the best way to drain a trench without clogging.

After an hour's stumbling, for my boots were large and awkward, we came to a clearing, and I felt sure that in a few minutes more I should be alone. For the first time I felt afraid and lonely—their presence had given me a sense of security. Once Lord N—— looked back as if intending to stop and speak, but evidently thinking better of it, had swung on. A second later they turned aside and I heard the sentry's challenge. One of the men strode on to where the next patrol was wearily walking up and down; he stooped, took the sentry's gun and began to examine it. I seized that moment to slip through, taking the pace of soldiers marching at double-quick. I was soon out of sight and the last thing I heard was a laugh and a deep voice saying, "Nonsense, it's a peasant looking for his cow."

They evidently didn't feel the necessity of wasting ammunition on me. I learned later that Lord N—— was afraid something might

miscarry; that I might be shot by one of our own sentries, and he had preferred to chance a suspicious spy.

It was still dark and snowing heavily and I would undoubtedly never have found my way but for the starlike glare of the German rockets. I heard, too, the big guns as they boomed out now and then, but even they would have left me quite confused as to directions. I had walked hours before I saw any traces of the German lines.

CHAPTER XIX

A MAN'S LIFE

REMEMBERING Lord N——'s admonition, I had intended as soon as I felt the sentry was near, to throw aside my khaki coat, but the snow was so cold and wet I was chilled to the bone and shivered at the thought of leaving it, so I was still wearing cap, coat and all when I heard the sentry call out, "Who goes there?"

"A friend," I cried back quickly, and advanced and gave the countersign. Evidently I was expected, as he directed me to go a half-mile farther down where I would find some one waiting for me. Passing a little inn, half dead with cold and fatigue, I went in to ask for a hot drink. The landlady was a French peasant, young and pretty. She eyed me curiously, but did not venture to speak. I

had to wait, as she was getting breakfast ready for some soldiers. They were fresh from the trenches and were covered with mud from head to heel. I thought, idly, they looked like football players at the end of the third quarter.

I had just begun drinking my tea when the door opened and a familiar figure, bundled in a great-coat came in the room. In an instant I recognized him; it was Von Schulling. He came straight over to me and said very gently: "*Fraulein*, I've come for you. I am leaving to-night for home on leave, and I wanted to talk with you, and this seemed a good opportunity. As soon as you are finished, we had better be off; they are anxiously awaiting you down there."

I no longer wanted anything and he tossed a coin across the table and we went out to the waiting motor.

I dreaded the ride; in fact, I shrank from it in a sort of nameless terror, but again I was to find the big black thing that loomed only loomed and nothing more. We were hardly started before he began. Speaking English, he said:

"Miss Bleneau, first I want to ask you to forgive the many unthinkable discourtesies I have inflicted upon you. I think over and over how dear and kind you were to me when I was ill in your hospital; I am afraid you can't forgive what happened there, but I want you to know that I am sorry." He paused, evidently awaiting a reply.

I murmured that it was all forgotten as far as I was concerned.

"You are an angel," he said, with a catch in his voice, "to say that;" and then he began anew. "I came to meet you to-day because you are in danger and I want to help you. I know you far too well to believe for one moment that you placed those guns for us fairly. They," he said contemptuously, nodding in the direction of the headquarters, "may believe you are a Latin and can love to the obliteration of all else, but I *know you*, and I told them so in the beginning."

I parted my lips to speak, but he anticipated my question. "Nobody has told me anything; not one of us has any reason, so far, to suspect you played anything but fair, but I



am as certain of it now as if I had seen your every move. You do love Frazer with all the strength of your soul. I know; but no love, no passion, no personal sentiment, would ever make you sell out your own. How you did it, what happened, I don't know, and," he hastened on, "I don't wish to know, but *whatever* happened we shall know it and that almost at once."

Without waiting for me to speak, he continued: "When the firing begins again, if theirs is not diminished, in fact, not almost annihilated, after our heavy fire day and night, they will know the truth, that their guns and gunners are safe—fresh for an attack while we have been pounding away at dummies and—I don't know what may happen." After a pause, "Perhaps nothing, until they know definitely, have actual proof and then you will be—" He turned to me as white as death. "I can't bear to think of it. I've seen so much—things too awful to repeat—I shudder."

He paused it seemed minutes and then said gently: "Adele, dear, come with me—marry me—I am afraid I am done for as a soldier—we

shall go away out of all sight and sound of war, back to your home in Louisiana, anywhere you say, I am sick of it." I had been so stunned at his words, he had said a great deal too much before I had sufficiently collected my wits to speak.

"Don't, please; it's useless and hopeless. I don't love you, Captain von Schulling, and that is the answer to everything."

"Is it Frazer?" he asked bluntly.

"Yes," I scarcely more than whispered. "Will they shoot him as a spy?"

"Perhaps General S—— might have done so, but since you have left, Prince E—— of H—— has taken command, and he doesn't 'play the game,' as the English say, that way," he replied with an attempt at a laugh. Then, soberly: "You are in grave danger; he is not. If you had only refused to go on this mad wild mission, all would have been well; but that's past now; you did go, you did trick us, and now—what's to be done?"

"I've probably got to pay," I answered.

"Not as my wife," he said. "My father is not only a financial power—which is a very

important consideration now, but one of the Kaiser's nearest advisers. As my wife you will be safe, honored and, more than that, with God's help—happy. We may be Huns, if you like, but no man can truthfully say we are not good husbands." I had tried again and again to stem the torrent of his words, but it was useless. Only by waiting until he had finished could I hope to be heard.

"I am sorry," I said, "sorrier than I can find words to tell you; but my answer is final. But in spite of the pain of it all, I wouldn't exchange what you have told me for much, very much. All my life I shall remember that you are fine and brave and—the man I like to think of you as being." We were before the steps of the hospital.

"Then—in spite of the danger—everything—this is the end?" he asked sadly.

Holding out my hand, I said gently, "Good-by," and he looked into my eyes with an expression that hurt me.

Handing me a card, he said: "If you ever need me, this will find me. I am going, before they question me—good-by, little girl. God

bless you.” His voice broke and he turned, ran down the steps, jumped in the car and was gone. I looked at the card. It read: Prince Hugo von Schulling, Captain ——— Dragoons, Berlin.

As I climbed the steps, breathless, my anxiety as to Ian and my thought of Von Schulling were interrupted by an orderly calling out to me: “*Fraulein*, you are wanted at once by His Excellency.” I followed him. I had no time to get nervous or to think of what to say. Consequently I was calm when I entered. The commander I knew was no longer there, and in his place sat an erect dignified man with gray deep-set eyes and square chin. He would have been handsome had his face been a little less heavy. All his sternness I felt was a mask.

“Is this the girl?” he said to an officer beside him.

“Yes, Your Excellency.”

“What is your name and what was your mission?” he said.

Telling him my name in full, I added: “To place the big guns of the English——”

"Have you succeeded?" he asked.

"Have I?" I questioned in turn; "I thought so."

To the officer beside him he said, "Has she?"

"Yes, Your Excellency, but——"

"Good," he said, interrupting. "What were you to receive in exchange for your—your work, *fraulein*?" and without stopping for an answer, went on: "The stake must have been a rich one to tempt a girl like you," and he looked me over slowly from head to toe and then back again. I was still wearing men's shoes. He smiled as they caught his eye. "Yes, a very high price. What was it?" abruptly.

"A man's life," I answered, looking at him squarely.

"Who is the man and what is he?"

"He is Captain Frazer of the Indian Army, son of Lord L——, and he is my patient."

"Your patient!" and he smiled. "You were a very devoted nurse, I should say," with emphasis. "A life," he repeated; "was his life in danger?"

"He had been accused of being a spy and I was told that unless I brought back the loca-

tion of the battery by to-night, he would be shot."

"What had he done?" he asked, turning to the officer near him. Before the officer could reply to the question, the telephone on his desk rang violently and His Excellency took, or rather snatched, the receiver from the hand of the man near him and began speaking. After a few monosyllables he paused in the midst of his conversation and said: "*Fraulein*, you are free; go to your duties for the present."

Nobody stopped me or molested me, and I literally ran to Ian's room. He was standing at the window and, even laboring under the great excitement that I was, I noticed he was wearing his uniform. I nearly reached his side before he realized my presence—so profoundly lost was he in his thoughts. When he turned and saw me, for one brief moment the hard lines around his mouth softened and over his face there came a fleeting expression of happiness, mixed with almost bewilderment, and I heard him murmur: "Adele!" At that moment there came a sound as if a dozen guns boomed near us, followed by another and an-

other in quick succession. The whole building trembled.

His voice shaking with emotion, he said:

“All day and all night they have been going, the din has been hell itself let loose; at first our guns replied, and then as the enemy's fire grew heavier and more persistent, ours grew fainter and fainter, until now our batteries do not speak at all. Through it all I have sat here and watched their damned Taubes come in, circle around, signal and then sail away. At first it never occurred to me—I couldn't have formulated such a thought, as that you, you—of all beings in the world—were giving the range. Even when I overheard an officer tell another that some one had given it, I wouldn't—couldn't—believe it was you! But as I lay there, tortured like a man on the rack, with my soul torn out of my body, I began to realize that the only reason our Tommies out there were not returning the fire, was because these devils must have been given the range, or they *couldn't have literally annihilated us*. I began to wonder—I could see it all—the trenches pounded to pulp, and those who were not dead

or dying falling back before the deadly fire. *Who* had given it? For certainly somebody had done it thoroughly. Even then my reeling brain fought back the hideous suspicion that haunted me—and now—you're here. By the devil's own luck you were able to escape safely. No, it wasn't luck—it was because you traded on the decency in some man who believed in you—your childlike, wistful expression—your frank innocent beauty! God! That's easy enough—men are like children—fools! I—the biggest fool of them all—for I adored you—in the whitest shrine of my soul I enthroned you. But thank God that has passed. I know you for what you are, and I hate you. Your soft warm arms, your beautiful eyes—my God! How I loathe the night I was carried to that hospital! I would rather have died out there ten thousand times than to live and love you—and be loved by you. I don't want your kind of love. That is the sort courtesans have given since time began—a selfish longing for the pleasures that possession gives. You knew I adored you, worshiped you, and that if I lived you would be my wife. You wanted

that—and to gratify your tawdry passion you bought my life with those of my comrades—my men—perhaps even my own brother! Great God! I am going mad! Leave me before I strangle you! My one prayer to Heaven is that I shall never see you again while I live!”

A dozen times I had been on the point of flying to him and screaming out the truth, but I was held back—not because I feared we might be overheard. That thought never once came to me. Had I been saner I would have known that it was for that very purpose I had been allowed to go to Ian's room. But at that time no thought of any such material thing came to me. I was so absolutely stunned, crushed, that I had no words with which to defend myself. Only one idea came and persisted: *Ian* had thought me capable of this *heinous thing, while even Von Schulling had known better*. And when he had said those last unspeakable words, without thinking, caring, knowing what I did, I turned, more dead than alive, and staggered from the room. A few steps outside I fainted. Sleepless nights,

physical exhaustion, little or no food for days, had done their work.

It was an hour later when the order had been given for the evacuation of the hospital and I was desperately needed that I came back to consciousness and found a little German nurse bending over me. Afterward I learned that Ian's speech, and my failure to defend myself probably saved, if not our lives, certainly for the time being, our liberties, for it never occurred to the listeners that I would have accepted his denunciations unless I had been guilty.

So much had happened, so much that was supremely vital in my life, that it was only when I heard the beginning of the last fierce onslaught that I remembered Lord N—— had assured me there would be an attack in force that morning. Galvanized into life by this recollection, I struggled to my feet with some half-conscious idea of finding Ian. I had staggered only a few steps when the commander of the hospital called to me that all the patients had been sent away in ambulances, motors and carts except half a dozen to whom an order

for evacuation would be their death-warrant. To attend these men he was leaving myself and another nurse, a German sister. As he turned to go, I cried out:

“And Captain Frazer, what have you done with him?”

“Oh,” he answered, with a sneer, “His Highness, Prince E——, says you have paid for his liberty, and that if he escapes the carnage of to-day he is free as far as he was concerned.” He looked steadily at me for a moment and then said hastily: “We have a proverb in Germany: ‘When thieves fall out honest men get their dues.’” He pronounced the word *honest* with biting sarcasm. “A spy who was desperately wounded in getting through the lines reported that you gave false information as to the guns, but several of the flying men maintain that you had not, because they had glimpses, through the snowstorm, of the guns being placed. My personal opinion is that the spy was right and that the men were subsidized by that fool, Von Schulling, who after he met you degenerated into a sentimental weakling.”

“And the prince,” I asked trembling, “what did he say to this?”

“Oh, he thought that as nobody could actually prove anything, his order should stand.”

To my great relief he turned on his heel and disappeared down the stairs. A moment later and his motor flashed out of sight.

The attack was becoming furious, the bullets fell on the tile roofs like hail, and again and again the old chateau trembled when a shell dropped near it. The ceaseless din terrified me. I experienced physical fear for the first time in my life. I longed to fly to Ian, not to comfort him, but to be comforted; but that was impossible—he did not want me—he hated me; he had said it; and besides the thought that he ever could have so misjudged me hurt too deeply.

CHAPTER XX

THE FINAL CHARGE

THE little German nurse who had remained with me came to say that the men were needing us, they were getting into a panic. I tottered down to the big ward, trying to nerve myself to be of some help, some comfort to the men. I am afraid the effort would have been a futile one had I not found the bishop there, dressed in his robes, his figure erect, his bright black eyes flashing; he was at once a comfort and an inspiration. Passing from one man to another, German or French, Protestant or Catholic, he had a ringing word of cheer or a gentle phrase of comfort for all. His own courage was superb. From time to time he went to the window and looked out through the glasses to see how the battle was going. Suddenly he exclaimed:

"The bayonet charge has begun; my children, the danger for us is passed." Saint though he was, he was still human. I ran toward him and asked beseechingly:

"Father, are we winning?"

"Look," he said, in a voice rendered calm by effort, and he pushed me to the window. I adjusted the binoculars and there came before my eyes a picture that for all time is graven on my heart. It was the last terrible attack. The Germans had placed numberless machine-guns behind hundreds of barbed-wire entanglements. As our men advanced, sweeping all before them with a rush, the Germans fell back and allowed them to come on, with hardly a shot, until they were barely a hundred yards away. Then came the rattle of machine-guns and the crack of rifles.

"My God, it's madness," I heard the bishop moan. Above the din the command of an English officer was borne to us on the breeze, one word—"Charge!" The men responded with demon-like fierceness. I covered my face with my hands and prayed, but I was drawn again by an irresistible fascination. On our men

came, but for every one that advanced two fell out. With machine-guns firing seven hundred and fifty volleys a minute, how could anything live? The line wavered—but only for a moment. Once again I heard that terrible command—“Charge!” And the men with quick precision made for the gaps in the barbed wire, where by some miracle some Highlanders had lived for five minutes, cutting it. The snow had ceased and the sun came out, picking up the bayonet tips until they gleamed like burnished silver.

Then came the last supreme effort; shots at close range; a desperate rush, and finally cold steel at close quarters. I had always heard the Germans could not stand against the bayonet charge. Would it prove true to-day? Under the deadly fire of the machine-guns the English line seemed once again to waver, but only for an instant; then, seemingly out of nowhere, came a rush of black-faced, white-turbaned Sikhs. How they yelled! And how they charged! Nothing but death could stop them. They were so close that through the glasses we could see their eyes flashing and their teeth

glistening. As if in a dream, I remember hearing the bishop saying: "It is the —— Sikhs—they are avenging their captain." Involuntarily my eyes turned to the room Ian had occupied. I was dumfounded at what I saw. He was on the balcony, his head bare, his hands folded. As he stood, tall and straight, his face white as chiseled marble, he seemed detached somehow, as one watching the fearful scene from a great height. A sudden clash of sounds recalled me. The men were very close now. I could hear their voices; it was contagious, inspiring. I, too, was a barbarian and longed to join them. We could even hear the men shouting, "That's one for Mons," and as an officer fell I clearly heard his last command: "Come on, you Highlanders!" But high above all else was the terrible yell of the Indians. They were no longer fighting for the mad joy of battle; they were going to the rescue of their captain.

The Germans were outnumbered, beaten, and they knew it, and by dozens threw down their rifles and held up their hands. The officers tried vainly to rally their scattered troops.

Captain Sindhauf rode recklessly here and there. By some strange fate he had escaped. I saw him rein up his horse and heard him call to his men "Surrender," while he himself sat calmly, revolver in hand, awaiting death.

"They may be Huns," said the bishop sadly, "but no man can say they are not brave."

An orderly came hurriedly up and asked the bishop to go down-stairs—he was wanted. I turned back to my charges. A German youth called to me for brandy. He had become hysterical. I was giving it when I heard the tread of heavy steps coming up the stairs, and voices calling my name. I paused to listen, amazed and rather frightened. The next moment the bishop reappeared and behind him a handful of "Tommies."

"Come, my child," he called to me, "the men want to speak to you."

Lost in wonder, I mechanically went toward them. They were outside the ward in a long corridor. I had hardly reached the door before I heard again the shout, "Sister Adele!" I looked up at the bishop questioningly, but he only smiled, patted my hand, and said to the

men, "This is Sister Adele." Two of them caught me up and started down the stairs. I probably would have fainted had not the bishop kept repeating: "They are only big children, humor them—*humor them!*"

They carried me out on the terrace of the chateau, and at a signal gave "Three cheers for Sister Adele." I was dumfounded. Then they told me it was something—about the guns. I was embarrassed, confused, humiliated, for I had really done nothing, as it turned out. When at last they left me and I pulled myself together I saw Ian leaning against a pillar gazing at me. His face was drawn and haggard. I don't remember how I got to him, but in a second I was there. I was no longer angry or even hurt. Self was completely forgotten. I was only frightened at what I saw in his face.

"Ian!" I cried, "are you ill?" He did not answer, but looked at me with the most hopeless expression I had ever seen. "Surely now that you know I didn't—you—you don't hate me?" Drawing me hastily into a little office

near where we were standing, he said passionately:

“Hate you—dearest! The only hate in my heart is for myself. I have known you were innocent ever since I finished that vile tirade and you looked up at me—it was just a moment, but it was enough. I *knew* the truth. I rushed after you, but when half-way across the room the door closed and I heard the key turned. Whoever had been listening had locked me in. I called to you; I pounded on the door. I rang frantically, but it was all useless. When the attack began I feared some awful thing might happen and I should never be able to tell you, to beg your forgiveness, I was beside myself. In desperation I broke through the window and got out on the little balcony in the mad hope of attracting the attention of some one who might find you. I was still there when the final charge began.”

“Weren’t they glorious?—superb?—your Indians——”

“They are as brave as the bravest,” he replied. “I love every brown face of them. But,

oh, Adele! I was too heartsick at that moment to care very much one way or the other. Will you ever be able to forget, dearest, the things I said. Can a lifetime of devotion atone?"

He paused, waiting for an answer. I tried hard to think of the right thing to say, but it was hopeless. Looking up into his eyes all the veils were lifted from my own, and for an instant I felt my very soul was bared to him.

In spite of his long illness, he had strength enough left to crush me in his arms. I felt his heart beating furiously against my own, which sounded in my ears like distant cannonading. He kissed me again and again, while I clung to him as though I feared the next moment was to separate us forever.

CHAPTER XXI

HOME

THE next day we went to Paris, and although the train was an hour late, Ian's father and mother were waiting for us. I was still wearing my Red Cross uniform, which of course was old and worn, and I rather dreaded meeting them.

We were the last to pass through the station gate, but they had been watching us for several seconds. Ian kissed his mother, who said quite calmly, but with a little catch in her voice: "It's so good to see you again, my boy." The father and son shook hands and neither spoke, but their handclasp lasted many seconds. And then Lady L—— stooped and kissed me. The father looked at me searchingly but kindly, then holding both my hands, said: "Well, for at least once in my life I am not disappointed."

We went to the Ritz, where Mademoiselle was waiting for me. She was not down-stairs, for which I was thankful, as I couldn't have behaved with English self-possession. The moment I saw her I rushed into her arms, and we clung together and wept to our hearts' content.

Half an hour later I had a message from Ian, saying his mother wished us to lunch with them. Mademoiselle was naturally all excitement to see Ian and his family. When we went down they were waiting for us. I had on a simple black gown, and when I went in Lord L—— said: "Adele, dear, for you are that to me, you look beautiful, but *triste*, in your little black dress. You need something to—to——"

"I know," quickly interrupted Lady L——, and unclasping her necklace of pearls, put them around my neck, saying:

"They were my mother's, and I have always meant them for Ian's wife at my death. But I prefer to *see* you wear them. Take them as a souvenir from Ian's mother, in deepest gratitude for giving her back her son."

I was so happy that I longed to kiss this dear woman who had given my Ian life, but I was afraid—English women, I had always heard, were so cold. But, yielding to an impulse, I timidly kissed her on the cheek. In a moment her arms were about me—she drew me to her, and kissed me as a real mother might. And I felt her warm tears on my face.

At lunch we discussed our immediate plans. Ian wished to be married at once, and Lord L—— in a very matter-of-fact way said, with men being killed off like flies, he thought the sooner we were married the better.

And so it was settled. We were married in Paris, crossed the Channel and quietly slipped through London—home.

The days that followed were perfect, the weather was lovely, green trees, coming spring and happiness making Ian quite well again.

“Here is a wedding present for you, my children,” said my father-in-law one evening as we sat down to dinner, “together with this letter.” He held it up that we might see the crown on the paper, and then read:

“My dear Lord and Lady L——, will you accept my congratulations on the marriage of your son Ian to Miss Bleneau—and incidentally send a kind thought on to me?”

“Perhaps you have forgotten, my dear L——, the old days together at Bonne. I never shall. Nor shall I forget your admiration for a pretty face.

“I recalled this one day, a few weeks ago when it became my unpleasant duty to decide whether your daughter-in-law had fulfilled her mission or betrayed her trust. I knew of course there was a man in the case, the moment I heard the story, and I soon learned that the man was your son, and that there was every prospect that you would soon have a daughter-in-law. I determined—as it was not a matter of vital consequence—that for old times, I would find her not guilty if there was any possible way to do so. After all she did only what a fine-spirited girl, such as she is, should have done. Certain facts or lack of them made it rather a simple matter; so you must not give me too much credit. I am taking the liberty of sending the young people the enclosed gift—hoping they will accept it with no memories other than pleasant ones. I also send you the portrait of my own daughter-in-law. It may

interest you as it made me realize, when I considered Mrs. Frazer's case, what I should hope from you were the situation reversed.

“Sincerely,

“Eitel -----”

The gift was an old gold snuff-box set round with great uncut diamonds; and the portrait was that of a very plain young woman—I am sorry to say. Her hair was slicked back and done in a hard knot on the top of her head.

A month later—three months since our wedding—my leave was up and after many long discussions I was still undecided whether to go back to the hospital or to stay in “gray old Scotland.” I longed to help, but my husband was not yet strong enough for duty, so it meant leaving him, and that I didn't see how I could do. At about that time, however, General Kitchener made his appeal for more nurses and that decided me. I would go back to my work. Fortunately I succeeded in being assigned for duty at the hospital at ———. Ian was going on the staff, and I should there perhaps be able to see him, at least occasionally.

The time for my departure finally came, and we went as far as Boulogne. There we decided to make the rounds of several hospitals, taking chocolates and cigarettes to the men.

In one of them was a lieutenant in command of a German submarine. Through the courtesy of the colonel in charge, who had known him before the war, we were introduced to him. He said in answer to a question from Ian: "Life in a submarine is frightfully trying on the nerves. Every man can not stand it. When running under the sea there is a deathly silence in the boats, as the electrical machinery is noiseless. We often hear the propeller of a ship passing over or very near us. Of course, we steer entirely by chart and compass. As naturally the air soon becomes heated and mixed with the odor of the machinery, the atmosphere is trying in the extreme. An overpowering sleepiness attacks new men, and it requires almost superhuman will power to remain awake. Often the men do not eat during the first few days out, because they prefer that time for sleeping. In cramped quarters—with no room in which to stretch their legs

—constantly keyed up to the breaking point—these conditions are a frightful strain. When the men are not on active duty they are ordered to lie down and not talk, as even that would use up the oxygen faster. I have sat or stood eight hours on end with my eyes glued to the periscope peering into the brilliant glass until my head ached unthinkably.”

I laughingly asked him what about the supposed secret rendezvous, oil stations, etc., near England. He replied, “Let the English think so. The more torpedo boats they keep seeking for the secret rendezvous, the fewer we will have to dodge.”

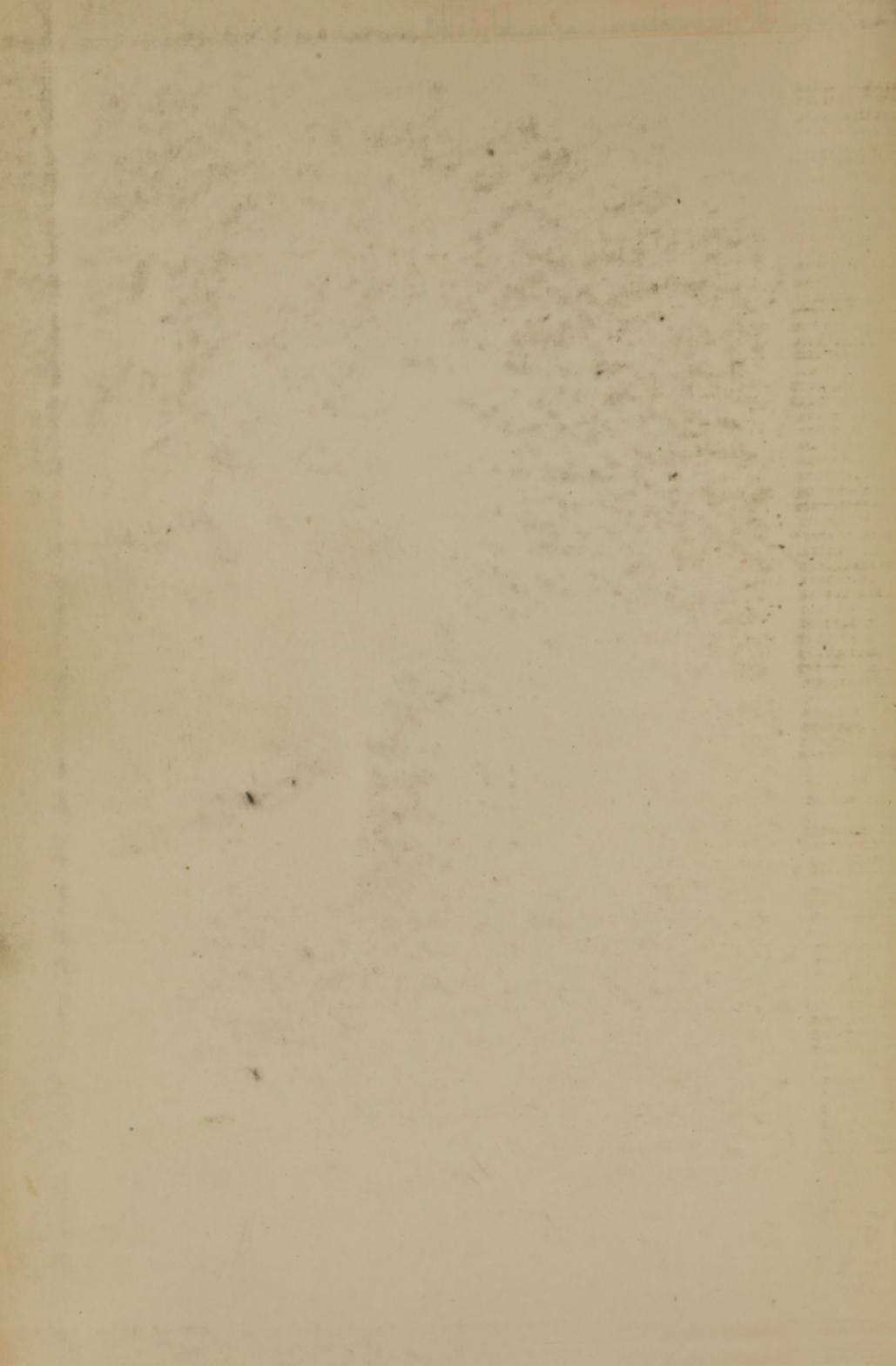
Ian had especially wanted to visit the Meirut Hospital, where several of his Indians were ill, and we had passed through the big wards, and had stopped in one of the smaller ones, to speak to a wounded Sikh, when the nurse lifted the basket arrangement used to cover wounded limbs, and exposed a terribly shattered leg. I had seen a hundred worse cases, but in an instant I felt myself going—everything swam before me, and then all was black.

The nurse instantly put a piece of cotton soaked with alcohol to my nostrils, and Ian carried me out into the air. I was myself again in a few minutes, and after making our adieux we set out in a closed cab for our hotel. Ian was silent for a time, then he said very tenderly:

“Don't you think, dear, you had better see a doctor before we leave Boulogne?”

I felt the color come to my cheeks, but I turned my face to him and we looked into each other's eyes solemnly a moment, and then out of the sheer joy of it all we laughed like two children. He caught me in his arms and kissed me until I lay stilled and quiet against his heart. Outside the rain dripped and splashed against the windows of the stuffy old cab. But then it seems to me it is always raining in Boulogne.

THE END



S. G. L.

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