BRIDE OF BATTLE

A Romance of the American Army Fighting on the Battlefields of France

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU

(Copyright, by W. G. Chapman.)

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

—9—

Ada Kenson turned and ran toward Mark with a scream. She did not recognize him, Mark could see that.

The discipline of a lifetime held Mark steady. He stood confronting Kellerman, but did not raise a hand even to guard himself. Kellerman glared at him in speechless fury. And even then it seemed a little singular to Mark that Hartley disappeared, so swiftly and silently that neither the man nor the woman knew he had been there.

Then Kellerman burst into hysterical laughter.

"It's the spy from the war department," he cried. "The fellow we pitched out of the army for treachery, masquerading here in uniform. A blank wall and a firing squad for you tomorrow, my man!"

Ada Kenson sprang between them. "He doesn't mean that!" she cried, peering into Mark's face dubiously. She recognized Mark now, but Mark could see that the recognition meant little to her; probably he had been only a trivial incident in her career. "Listen to me!" she whispered in Mark's ear. "He has been drinking. It will be all right. Just go back and keep this to yourself. You'll get a fifty-dollar bill by the next post, and ten every month afterward, so long as you don't see anything. Understand? He isn't responsible—"

Mark turned away in disgust, but he imagined the warped mind that caught at this hope of secrecy.

He went back into the kitchen. The soldiers were still there, one or two hailed him; the incident had occupied only ten minutes. Annette made a little mouth at him from the doorway. But Mark was searching in the room for Hartley.

"Your friend went home, I think, monsieur le soldat," said Annette in banter.

Mark strode out of the inn without a word. Hartley's disappearance did not disturb him. Hartley was strange; but he felt that he had relied too much on Hartley. It was for him to act. He would go to the Major in charge of the hospital, tell his story, and do the only thing possible. He had no doubt any longer that Kellerman and the Kenson woman were partners in a far-reaching conspiracy against his country, though he had never before allowed himself to accept the obvious deductions from the Washington episode. His mind moved slowly. His purpose had been to redeem himself, he had thought Hartley obsessed; now he meant to reveal everything.

And suddenly, out of the mist of years, he recalled Colonel Howard's story of Hampton. Kellerman had been the chief agent in Hampton's tragic fall. Suppose Hampton had been innocent! Suppose that Eleanor's father had been a brave and loyal man, whose hideous ruin and abominable death might be posthumously vindicated?

The blood rushed to his head at the thought of it. The burden of the knowledge of her father's shame, and of its probable effect on her if ever she learned had weighed heavily upon Mark's heart since that night in the tent in Cuba.

Then the blood receded, leaving him as cold as a stone. For he recalled Ada Kenson's words to Kellerman. So the hunter was hard upon the quarry—perhaps he had already snared her. Eleanor had liked Kellerman. He forced back his thoughts, strode straight to barracks and turned in.

CHAPTER XII.

And he slept, though he had not expected to close his eyes that night. He slept as soundly as his comrades, awakening, as was his habit, a few minutes before reveille, with a mind singularly clarified by sleep. He would ask to parade before his commanding officer in the morning and state the facts, leaving the rest to fate.

He was not destined to, for the same corporal who had put him on duty during his previous afternoon "off" called him five minutes before parade.

"You can leave them buttons, Weston," he said with a grin. "You won't need to polish 'em where you're going. The sergeant major wants you at once."

Mark hurried to the office, to find the sergeant major in company with one of the senior captains; then he remembered that rumors of the preceding evening had sent the Major away with the inspecting General. His interview must be postponed, then.

"Weston, you'd better get your breakfast at once," said the sergeant major. "And have your kit packed in twenty minutes. You and Hartley are going up to the front."

The senior captain temporarily commanding the detachment unbent from the official air which he was trying terribly hard to assume.

"You were specially asked for from headquarters," he said, "with another man; and I'm sending Hartley because he's your friend. They want two more men for the stretcher bearers' company. We'll be sorry to lose you, Weston."

Mark saluted and went out just as Hartley appeared at the door. The sergeant major enlightened Hartley briefly.

"You must have some pull at headquarters, Weston," he said. "Do you know Major Kellerman?"

"A little, sir," answered Mark grimly.

"Well, he seems to know all about you, and he told the O. C. over the telephone that he must have you. He'll be your O. C. now for a while, so things ought to run smoothly for you."

"He's not a doctor, sir."

"No, but the stretcher bearers aren't a medical corps; they're attached to the —th."

Mark hurried away. In the barrack room, at breakfast, the two were the subject of mingled jests and congratulations. The stretcher bearers, forming, as it were, the last supports of the infantry, shared with them the great proportion of casualties. Kellerman's scheme was perfectly clear to Mark.

He was in a wretched state of mind when the car steamed into the depot at the end of the narrow-gauge line. He descended into a city, a mushroom city of the supply and transportation department.

A sergeant and corporal, with nine or ten men of the stretcher bearers' company, were waiting for the two. The little troop was returning to the trenches after five days of relief at a rest camp.

"You're the two men from the base hospital?" asked the sergeant. "All right! Fall in. Right turn! Quick march!"

They moved away down a slope and began to pick their way along the beginning of a maze of trenches.

The roar of guns, which had never ceased by night or day, and had long ceased to be noticeable, was louder now.

Suddenly the sergeant stopped.

"There was ten of you," he said to the corporal.

"All here," responded the corporal.

The sergeant turned to Mark. "Where's your mate?" he asked.

Mark, who had been plodding along under the impression that Hartley was following, turned round, to find that he was the last of the party. Hartley was nowhere to be seen.

The sergeant ran back a few paces, to return breathless and red in the face. "He's gone, the silly fool!" he spluttered. "Must have taken the wrong turn at the bend. Go back and get him!"

But Hartley was not at the bend. The sergeant joined Mark, incredulous. They scrambled up the bank and scanned the level road. There was no pedestrian in sight.

"He's taken the wrong turn somewhere," insisted the sergeant. "Come along with me! We've got to find him!"

They began doubling back, shouting, until they reached the end of the trench system. Still Hartley could not be found.

"If he ain't on hand," the sergeant grumbled, "I'll be broke."

"I've No Doubt You Misunderstood Me," Said Kellerman.

his head for him. You medical corps chaps are like a bunch of babies. Ought to have a nurse and baby carriage for each of you."

Reluctantly he abandoned the search and they rejoined the others. The sergeant, in an ugly mood, ordered them sharply onward, but could not resist casting occasional looks back to see if the missing man was coming. However, at last he resigned himself to what seemed inevitable. The trench widened into a deep, wide, parallel one extending in zigzags to right and left of them.

A large dugout, made shell-proof, or as nearly as possible so, by a roof of heavy beams, sandbags and corrugated steel, bore the Red Cross upon the door. Inside a number of stretcher bearers were lounging.

The sergeant halted his men and stepped into a smaller dugout beside it. In a minute he came out and beckoned to Mark to follow him. Mark entered, to find himself in the presence of the captain commanding the stretcher bearers' company, and—Kellerman. He saluted and stood to attention, watching Kellerman's eyes wander over him appraisingly.

"Orderly, where's the man who came with you?" inquired the Captain briskly.

"He disappeared on the way up, sir," answered Mark.

"What do you mean by disappeared? Did you see him go back? Or was he with you one minute and gone the next?"

"I thought he was behind me, sir. I didn't see him go, or know anything about it."

The Captain, who had been holding the receiver of his telephone, and evidently waiting for his connection, got it. Mark heard him sending out a general notice of the absent man. He gave his number, and the name "Hartley."

No doubt he had mistaken it as he received it by telephone from the hospital that morning.

"You'll parade before me tomorrow morning," said Captain Keyes to the sergeant. "Till then you are under open arrest."

The sergeant saluted. "Right turn!" he said to Mark.

"Wait a minute," interposed Kellerman. "I'd like to have a few words with this man, Captain Keyes."

"By all means, sir," replied the Captain, rising.

He strolled, humming, to the door of the dugout, leaving Kellerman and Mark together.

"So you're enlisted under the name Weston?" inquired Kellerman.

"That is my name, sir."

"It was a shock to me yesterday, Wallace. I never expected it. Your disappearance stirred Washington a good deal. The war office would have exonerated you."

In spite of his loathing of the man, Mark felt his heart begin to hammer with hope. He looked at Kellerman with pathos in his eyes; he could not hide his feelings; he was groping amid the ruins of his world and trying to reconstruct them.

"I've no doubt you misunderstood me," said Kellerman. "My association with the Kenson woman was a part of my official duties—the most distasteful part, but one that had to be carried out. You and I were the victims of an acute piece of trickery. That fan was wired."

"From your room, sir," said Mark.

"From my room," answered Kellerman. "And, no doubt, by the Kenson woman's agent, that spy who called to see you at the war office the same morning. Colonel Howard knows all about it. He means to stand by you. He heard you had enlisted, but he did not know you were in the medical corps, nor under an alias. He is at the base now, Wallace. When he comes up next week I shall make it my business to see him about you."

"No, sir," gasped Mark. "It doesn't matter now."

"It matters to me, if not to yourself, Wallace. I cannot rid myself of the sense of partial responsibility. And as for what happened last night, you took me off my guard. I'll be frank with you. It was my duty to interest the Kenson woman. I succeeded too well. She followed me here. I couldn't bring myself to denounce her. For that I have placed my own position in jeopardy. When you appeared I did not know what to do or say."

"You found a course of action," answered Mark, torn between the desire to return blow for blow and to do justice to Kellerman, whose story left him doubtful and wondering.

"Will you accept my frank apology?" asked Kellerman, extending his hand.

Mark took it. "I will, Major Kellerman," he answered.

And he made his way to the door of the dugout, with a feeling of warmth in his heart such as he had not known for many a month. He believed Kellerman—and yet . . . but he fought down his instinct and still believed him.

CHAPTER XIII.

No word had come of any project of attack on the morrow morning. In this the sergeant's prediction had probably proved false; yet the feeling in the air of something impending seemed to have communicated itself to the enemy's lines.

A wiring party and a listening post party were out from the American trenches, and Mark was on duty with three others of the stretcher bearers' company, ready for a call.

A corporal was at the dugout door. "Stretcher bearers!" he whispered.

The four men were on their feet immediately, two stretchers ready.

"A man hit between the lines," said the corporal. "You've got to bring him in. You can see him from this loophole."

Mark stepped upon the sentry's platform and saw, indistinct in the darkness, a huddled form about half-way to the German trenches.

Then he heard Kellerman's voice at his side.

"A man of the —th got hit," he said. "Bring him in, Weston. Make a quick job of it. Corporal Baines, you'll take charge. You two will be ready to take out your stretcher in case anything happens," he added to the two others.

The corporal led the way, crouching, toward the gap in the wires. They passed two lines, traversed a diagonal lane, and emerged beyond the third into the open. The body of the wounded man, which had disappeared, came into sight, a black patch under the stars.

"Get down!" whispered the corporal.

They flung themselves to the ground, and proceeded to wriggle forward, under his directions, pushing the stretcher as noiselessly as possible across the rough ground. Suddenly the man with Mark uttered an exclamation.

"What the devil's he sent us on this job for?" he demanded truculently.

"Shut up, you fool!" whispered the corporal hoarsely.

"That ain't the man. He's been there these past three days. Dutchman he is; every listening post party knows him. What's the good of bringing him in? He ain't got no head to him."

"What you talking about?" snarled the corporal. "That's the man the Major said, and there ain't no other in sight. Tcht!"

Fought Amid a Hailstorm of Bullets.

They flattened themselves as a rocket burst into the air above the German lines.

Then the machine guns burst forth. "Rat-tat-tat-tat!" sang the bullets overhead.

They swished through the grass and pattered on the ground. No answer came from the section of the American line immediately behind the defenders, but on each side there came answering volleys, making the air an inferno of crackling death. Then, gradually, the alarm subsided. The rocket showers died down.

"Now, boys!" whispered the corporal.

They crawled onward. The huddled form came into clear view. The body seemed to be already blending with the earth, melting into formlessness; and there was no need to wonder whether this was of a dead or wounded man.

The corporal swore.

"I told you so!" mumbled Mark's companion. "I told you so. What's he sent us here for, the fool?"

His words ended in a gurgle. From behind the shelter of the corpse leaped five men. Noiselessly they flung themselves upon the party of three. Mark felt a pistol at his temple.

"Surrender!" hissed a voice in his ear.

In a flash he realized the trap. The three were unarmed, noncombatants; it was a counter-raid—and Kellerman had known that the enemy were abroad that night and suspected their rendezvous.

He saw his two companions being dragged, unresisting, toward the German lines. Three men were with them; besides his immediate antagonist there was only one other figure in the immediate vicinity, and that one had half turned away.

And the thought of the infernal trap goaded Mark to madness. As his captor, never suspecting resistance on his part, let the muzzle of the pistol droop, Mark drew back his hand and struck upward with all his might.

He felt the burn of the powder as the discharged bullet sped under his chin, he heard the startled cry of the Germans; and then a furious outburst of machine-gun fire came from the trenches opposite. Two Very lights went up, revealing the two struggling men to the sentries on either side.

Mark saw a powerful man, a sergeant, he thought, with close-cropped yellow hair and the body of a Hercules. The man dashed at him, striking madly with his bare fists. The two fought amid a hailstorm of bullets.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Pennsylvania's mineral resources yielded an output valued at nearly $2,000,000,000 last year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

(Copyright, 1913, Western Newspaper Union.)

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 8

JOSEPH MADE RULER OF EGYPT.

LESSON TEXT—Genesis 41:33-44.

GOLDEN TEXT—He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.—Luke 16:10.

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalms 42.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL—Genesis 39: 41.

Thirteen long years have passed since his brethren sold him. They have been years of fiery testing for Joseph, but his faith is triumphant. There is a mighty contrast between Joseph in the pit at Dothan and Joseph as prime minister of Egypt.

I. Joseph Made Prime Minister of Egypt (vv. 38-44).

1. The Occasion (vv. 14:32).

It is the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams. In his dreams Pharaoh saw seven fat kine coming out of the river, followed by seven lean ones, which devoured the fat ones. This dream was followed by another in which he saw seven ears of corn come up on one stalk, rank and good, only to be devoured by seven thin ones. These dreams produced uneasiness in Pharaoh's mind. Being thus troubled over them he sent for the magicians and wise men of Egypt to interpret them to him. Upon their failure to interpret them, the chief butler calls to mind the prisoner who had interpreted his dreams two years before. Pharaoh hastily brings Joseph from prison and places his dreams before him. Joseph disclaimed wisdom for himself, but confidently asserted his faith in the wisdom of God. God is pleased with those who will thus lean upon him in the crucial hour, and will never disappoint them (James 1:5). Little did Joseph's brethren, the Ishmaelites who carried him into Egypt, or Potiphar whose slave he became, realize what the future would bring to him. His years of suffering and waiting were part of God's plan for his discipline and education. It is God's law for those who would reign, that they suffer. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12). Joseph's exaltation from the state of humility is a fine illustration of Christ's humility and exaltation (Philippians 2:9, 10).

II. Joseph's Naturalization (v. 45).

As soon as Pharaoh thus exalted him he changed his name to Zapnath-paneah, an Egyptian word having varying designations; as "Salvation of the world," "The prince of life of the world," "The revealer of secrets," "The food of life," etc. No doubt it was Pharaoh's purpose to designate him as the preserver of life, the revealer of secrets, the interpreter of dreams, and the author of the plan by which Egypt was saved from the awful famine. He thus was naturalized, and his civil status rendered compatible with his official rank. Then Asenath, the daughter of the priest, was given him to wife. Intermarriage with this caste completed his naturalization by elevating him to social position. Joseph's elevation was to save the world from famine. Christ's elevation was to save the world from spiritual death. All unknown to his brethren, the Jews, Christ is now at the right hand of the Father, the Savior of the world from its famine of death. As Joseph received a Gentile bride in the time of his rejection and exaltation, so Christ is now receiving a Gentile bride (Romans 11:25).

III. Joseph's Wise Administration (vv. 46-49).

He first made a careful survey of the land, then organized his forces and looked after the details of the work. He did not use his power and position for himself, but to save others. He did not idle his time away, for he knew that only seven short years remained in which to work.

The Loom of Life.

It is a solemn thought that every one of us carries about with him a mystical loom, and we are always weaving—weave, weave, weave—this robe which we wear, every thought a thread of the warp, every action a thread of the weft. We weave it, and we dye it, and we cut it, and we stitch it, and then we put it on and wear it; and it sticks to us. Like a snail that crawls about your garden patches and makes its shell by a process of secretion from out of its own substance, so you and I are making that mysterious solemn thing, we call character, moment by moment. It is our own self modified by our actions. Character is the precipitate from the stream of conduct which, like the Nile delta, gradually rises solid and firm above the parent river, and confines its flow.—Alexander Maclaren.

Righteousness and Truth.

How can God fill with his own that which is already filled by man? First it must be emptied before it may be filled with the true food of righteousness and truth, of humility and love, of peace and joy.—Howard Pyle.

The Law of Life.

Pleasure, mere pleasure, is animal. God gives that to the butterfly. But progress is the law of life to the immortal. So God has arranged our life as progress, and its working principle is evolution.—Henry Drummond.

THE JOY OF MOTHERHOOD

Came to this Woman after Taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to Restore Her Health

Ellensburg, Wash.—"After I was married I was not well for a long time and a good deal of the time was not able to go about. Our greatest desire was to have a child in our home and one day my husband came back from town with a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and wanted me to try it. It brought relief from my troubles. I improved in health so I could do my housework, we now have a little one, all of which I owe to Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound."—Mrs. O. S. JOHNSON, R. No. 3, Ellensburg, Wash.

There are women everywhere who long for children in their homes yet are denied this happiness on account of some functional disorder which in most cases would readily yield to Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Such women should not give up hope until they have given this wonderful medicine a trial, and for special advice write Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass. The result of 40 years' experience is at your service.

Cuticura Soap Best for Baby

Soap 25c., Ointment 25 & 50c., Talcum 25c. Sample each mailed free by "Cuticura, Dept. E, Boston."

RAT IS FRIEND OF MINERS

Workers Warned of Coming Catastrophe When the Rodents Leave Tunnel—Are Fed by Men.

Investigators of mining conditions and the peculiar dangers to which miners are subjected recently have taken much interest in the practice of Western gold miners to make pets of the rats which commonly infest mines. On the mother lode of California it has been found that the miners invariably feed the rats and take care of them, believing that the rodents are a source of protection against accident, says Our Dumb Animals. This is due, the men say, to the instinct of the rats, which warns them when a tunnel is unsafe. And when the rats leave a tunnel it is almost impossible to get the miners to work there. This recalls the belief among sailors that rats will leave a doomed ship. The miners also have found that rats are much more susceptible than humans to the dangerous gases that so often cause loss of life in the mines. Long before the miners themselves are affected by these gases the rats become sick and show symptoms of distress. So the men keep close watch of the rats' good health.

Up to Date.

Secretary Lane, speaking of the way in which the war has changed our viewpoint of life, tells the following:

They were to be married shortly and now they were sitting in the study meditating on the blissfulness of futurity.

"Alicy," said the girl suddenly, "every morn you bring me violets which at even you have culled, don't you?"

"I do," responded the ever faithful. "let them cost what they will."

"I've been thinking," continued the girl, "that if you would send beefsteaks and mutton chops instead it would make a lot bigger hit with father and mother, and be a lot cheaper for you, too."

Very Odd.

He—Those boats look very shabby.

She—They oughn't to be. Don't they have a painter aboard?

Some people learn of the harmful effects of coffee by reading. Others find it out through experience. In either case it is a good idea to adopt :

INSTANT POSTUM

A delicious drink made : from the finest cereals, harmless and nourishing. Made in the cup, instantly. Saves sugar and fuel. :