

The IDYL of TWIN FIRES

WALTER PRICHARD EATON

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SYNOPSIS.

I grow tired of my work as a college instructor and buy a New England farm on sight. I inspect my farm and go to board at Bert Temple's. Bert helps me to hire a carpenter and a farmer. Hard Cider, the carpenter, estimates the repairs and changes necessary on the house. Mike commences plowing. I start to prune the orchard tree. Hard Cider builds bookcases around the twin fireplaces. Mrs. Temple hires Mrs. Pillip for me as a housekeeper, and announces the coming of a new boarder from New York.

When a bachelor, who believes himself impervious to lovely woman's wiles, reaches the age when he begins to think that marriage is the better state of life for man—and then meets one of those lovely women—he performs in a manner highly amusing to folks already married.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

"Sure," said Mike, "you'll get it right yet. But I was going to put me cauliflower there."

I paid "frind Morissy"—for the town—as the far-off noon whistle at Slab City blew, and took my lunch down to the brook while the scraper rattled off down the road.

The brook reminded me of the pool I was going to build, and the pool of a vague dream, last night of the new boarder, and then, with the patness of a "well-made" play the boarder herself entered, as it were. That is, I heard the buggy coming, and the voice of Bert. I lay down flat behind the tall weeds and grasses, and remained hidden till the buggy had passed.

Then I finished my lunch, and lay for a quarter of an hour lazily regarding the sky, a great blue sky with cloud ships floating at anchor in its depths, while the indescribable fragrance of May in moist places filled my nostrils and a song sparrow practiced in the alders. As I got up to return to my work, I saw suddenly that the old apple trees in my orchard were showing pink—just a frail hint of it in the vell of young green. A great cumulus cloud piled up like a Himalayan peak in the west beyond my mouse-gray dwelling. To the left, the new lawn was shiny brown, and as I climbed the slopes the smell of it came to me. Out still farther to the left my land was already staked in rows of packed earth, neatly. The scene was beautiful to my eyes, and the imagined beauty of tomorrow made me almost run through the orchard and get my tools for the afternoon's work. At five o'clock, as Joe was leaving the garden, and Mike had gone to the barn to milk the cows, I, too, put up my tools, resolved to enjoy an hour's loaf—my first since I bought the farm!

I scrubbed my hands and face at the kitchen sink in a tin basin which recalled my childhood, took a long draft from the tin dipper, filled my pipe, and strolled down through the budding orchard toward the brook. The song sparrow was still singing. The cloud ships were still riding at anchor. Even with my pipe in my mouth I could smell the odor of moist places in May. Walking beside the brook, I suddenly found the green spears of an iris plant amid the grasses.

I had scarcely gone six paces when I heard the crackle of footsteps on dead twigs somewhere ahead of me, and a moment later the vague form of a woman was visible making her way amid the impeding dead branches. I stood still. She did not see me till she was close up. Then she gave a slight start and said, "I beg your pardon. I trust I am not trespassing."

I looked at her, while my pipe bowl was hot in my calloused hand. She was scarce more than a girl, I fancied, pale and unmistakably not of this country world. I cannot say how she was dressed, save that she wore no hat and looked white and cool. But I saw that she had very blue eyes on each side of a decidedly tilted nose, and these eyes were unmistakably the kind which twinkle.

"Trespassing is a relative term," said I, after this, I fear, rather rudely prolonged scrutiny.

"You talk like 'Hill's Rhetoric,'" she smiled, with a quick glance at the incongruity of my clothes.

"Naturally," I replied. "It was the textbook I formerly used with my classes."

There was a little upward gurgle of laughter from the girl. "Clearness, force and elegance, wasn't that the great triumvirate?" she said.

"Something like that, I believe," said I. "I am trying to forget."

"And are these pines yours to forget in? It should be easy. I was walking out there in the road, and I spied the brook over the wall and climbed through the briars to walk beside it, because it was trying so hard to talk to me. That was wrong of me, perhaps, but I never could resist a brook—nor pine trees. They are such nice old men."

"Why, then," I asked, "are the little virgin birches always running away from them?"

Her eyes contracted a second, and then twinkled. "The birches plague them," she replied.

"How do they plague them?" I demanded.

"Pull their pine needles when they are asleep, of course," she answered. "Thank you for letting me walk here."

"Not at all," said I, "it is always a pleasure to entertain a true naturalist."

She smiled and made to pass on. I stood a little aside, in silence. And in that moment of silence suddenly, from near at hand, from somewhere in these very pines, there rang out the golden throb of a hermit thrush so close that the grace notes of his song were audible, cool and liquid and lovely.

The suddenness, the nearness, the wildness of this song made it indescribably thrilling, and the girl and I both stood rigid, breathless, peering into the gloom of the pines. Again the call rang out, but a little farther away this time, more plaintive, more fairy-like with distance. She took a step as if to follow, and instinctively I put out my hand, grasping her arm to restrain her. So we stood and waited, while from farther still, evidently from



I Put Out My Hand to Restrain Her.

the tamaracks in the corner of my lot, came the elfin clarion. The singer was a good one; his attack was flawless, and he scattered his triplets with Mozartian ease and precision. Still we waited, in silence, but he did not sing again. Then in a kind of wonder the girl turned her face to mine, and in a kind of wonder I realized that I was still holding her arm. She appeared as unconscious of it as I, till I let my hand fall. Then she colored a little, smiled a little, and said, "What was it? I never heard anything so beautiful."

"A hermit thrush," I answered. "Thoreau once described his song as 'cool bars of melody from the everlasting morning or evening.' I think that expresses it as well as words can."

"I have always wanted to hear a hermit," she said wistfully. "And, oh, it is lovelier than I dreamed! I am going now before I get too jealous of you for having one all your own."

"Don't go!" I said impulsively. "The hermit has never sung for me. That song must have been in your honor."

The moment when I stood holding her arm, the moment when she had turned her wondering, eager face to mine, had been very pleasant. It was dusk now in the pines, and, looking westward, the low sun was making daggers of light between the trees. My ghost that I had brought up from the pump suddenly walked again, but walked in flesh and blood, with blue eyes and tilted nose. I was undeniably affected. My voice must have betrayed it as I repeated, "Don't go!"

"But I fear it is time for my supper," she said, with a little nervous laugh. "The thrush has evidently gone for his."

"Birds eat early," said I. "They have to, because they get up so early, after that worm."

Her laugh was once more an up-gushing gurgle. The tenseness was broken. I found myself walking by her side through the maples, and pointing out my house.

She clapped her hands ecstatically. "Oh," she cried, "they made the front door out of a highboy! How jolly! Is it as nice inside?"

"It's going to be nicer," said I. "I'll peep through the windows," she smiled.

I led her to my new south door, proudly showing my new lawn and the terrace, and telling her where the roses were to be, and the sundial, and dilating on the work my own hands had done. With a silly, boyish enthusiasm, I even displayed the calluses and invited her to feel of them, which she did as one humors a child, while I thrilled quite as childishly at the touch of her finger tips. Then we peeped

through the glass doors. The low sun was streaming in through the west window and disclosed the old oak beam across the ceiling. Hard Cider had erected the frame of the bookcase and double settle, which would perfectly match the mantels as soon as the molding was on. One side of the settle faced toward one smoky old fireplace, the other toward the second.

"Two fireplaces! What luxury!"

"You see," said I, "when I get tired of reading philosophy at the east fireplace, I'll just come around the corner and read 'Alice in Wonderland' at the west chimney nook."

"Double fireplaces—twin fireplaces—twin fires! That's it, Twin Fires! That ought to be the name of your house."

"You're right!" I cried, delighted. "I've never been able to think of a name. That's the inevitable one—that's Flaubert's one right word. You must come to my christening party and break a bottle of wine on the hearth."

She smiled wistfully, as she turned away from the window. "I must surely go to supper," she said. "Goodbye, and thank you for your wonderful concert."

We walked to the road, but to my surprise she did not turn toward the village but toward Bert's. A sudden light came.

"Are you the broken-down boarder?" I cried.

The gurgle welled up, and the blue eyes twinkled, but she made no reply. "Just for that," said I, "I won't carry back Mrs. Bert's basket."

As we entered the Temple's yard, Mrs. Bert stood in the kitchen door.

"Well, you two seem to have got acquainted," she remarked in a matter-of-fact tone. "Miss Goodwin, this is Mr. Upton. I told you about Mr. Upton, this is Miss Goodwin I told you about."

"Mrs. Temple," said I, "you are another. You didn't tell me."

"Young man," she retorted, "where's my basket?"

"I left it behind—on purpose," said I. "Then you'll never come home to yer dinner tomorrow," she said.

"Well, I'm willing," I answered. "I guess you be," said she.

At supper she returned to the theme, which appeared to amuse her endlessly. "Miss Goodwin," she said, "I want to warn you that Mr. Upton's terrible afraid somebody's goin' to advise him how to build his garden. He's a regular man."

I replied quickly: "Your warning is too late," said I; "Miss Goodwin has already begun by naming my place."

"You can change the name, you know," the girl smiled.

"How can I?" I answered, with great sternness. "It's the right one."

Whereupon I went up to my work, and listened to the sounds of soft singing in the room across the hall.

CHAPTER VI.

The Ghost of Rome.

"Stella Goodwin." "It's rather a pretty name," I thought, as I read it on the flyleaf of a volume she had left in Mrs. Bert's sitting room. The volume itself amused me—Chamberlain's "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." Fancy coming to the country for a rest, and reading Chamberlain, most restless because most provocative of books! I was idly turning the leaves when there was a rustle on the stairs, and Miss Stella Goodwin entered with a cheerful "Good morning."

"See here," said I, "what are you doing with this book, if you are off for a rest? This is no book for a nervous wreck to be reading."

"Who said I was a nervous wreck?" she answered. "I'm just tired, that's all. I guess it's really spring fever. I saw a spear of real grass in Central park, and ran away."

"From what?" I asked.

"From the dictionary," she replied.

"The which?" said I.

"The dictionary. Would you like me to sing you a song of the things that begin with 'hy'?"

She laughed again, and began to chant in burlesque Gregorian, "Hypocritae, hyocapular, hyoscine, Hyoscymae, hyoscymine, Hyoscymus—"

"Stop!" I cried. "You will have me hypnotized. See, I'm on the 'hy's' myself! Please explain—not sing!"

"Well," she laughed, "you see it's this way. I have to eat, drink, and try to be merry, or tomorrow I die, so to postpone tomorrow I am working on a new dictionary. Somebody has to work on dictionaries, you know, and justify the pronunciation of America to man. I'm sort of learned, in a mild, harmless, anti-militant way. It isn't fair to keep the truth from you—I have a degree in philology! My doctor's thesis was published by the press of my kind university, at \$150 per copy, of which as many as seventeen

were sold, and I'm still paying up the money I borrowed while preparing it. I stood the dictionary pretty well down to the 'hy's,' and then one day something snapped inside of me, and I began to cry. That wouldn't have been so bad, if I hadn't made the mistake of crying on a sheet of manuscript by a learned professor, about Hyoscymus (which is a genus of dicotyledonous gamopetalous plants), and the ink ran. Then I knew I should have to take a rest in the cause of English, pure and well defined. So here I am. The doctor tells me I must live out of doors and saw wood."

"Do you think Miss Stella Goodwin is too much of a highbrow to make a first rate wife? Or are highbrows just as human as the rest of us once they've tasted real life?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MERCY WORKERS IN WAR DOING GREAT SERVICES

All Countries Striving to Improve
Conditions Surrounding
Wounded.

WORK OF AMERICANS LAUDED

Motor Ambulance Service Does Invaluable Work in Transporting Wounded Soldiers—French People Touched by Volunteer Work of Americans.

London.—To no one race in this war belongs exclusively the work of mercy. France, Russia, England, Germany and Austria have each striven hard to improve the conditions surrounding the wounded in their armies.

In the Ottoman Red Crescent, a Mohammedan equivalent of the Red Cross, even the Turks have a corps of mercy workers, to render aid to those injured in battle. But not only the belligerent nations are occupied in the field of mercy toward fallen fighters. America, with all the cheerful optimism which characterizes her people, has worked vigorously to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded soldiers in France.

Distant Abyssinia, too, was one of the first neutral countries to establish a place of succor for the injured near the firing line. Indeed, the Anglo-Ethiopian hospital at Frevent, provided with funds supplied by the Abyssinian crown prince, did great service early in the war. Japan, representing the far East, also sent a wonderfully equipped ambulance corps which has since occupied the Hotel Astoria, Paris. Dainty women and intellectual men have given their time and their services eagerly in the cause of humanity.

The ladies of the Russian court, self-sacrificing in the extreme, have been trained for hospital work in the field. They have performed duties at which men might shudder and they have performed them well. So it is in France and England and in the other countries, both in and out of the war. That the majority of the workers have been volunteers is to the credit of civilization. Mercy, so often beaten under in the actual conflict of the belligerents, has survived gloriously among those whose function has been to relieve, where possible, the victims of shot and shell.

Automobile Great Help.

Like the aeroplane, the automobile is a new departure, a very important one, in warfare. Since August, 1914, it has played many parts. Armored cars, transport lorries and other vehicles directly and indirectly contributing to the success of the different armies in the field, have established a fresh reputation for the motor industry. But it is largely owing to the motor ambulance that the noble work of mercy has been possible.

So far as Great Britain is concerned, the motor ambulance service owes its existence and its triumph to Lord Derby's brother, Hon. Arthur Stanley, M. P., chairman of the British Red Cross society, and also to the Royal Automobile club. Soon after the outbreak of war, in September, 1914, Mr. Stanley, quick to see the possibilities of the motor ambulance, was given a permit to send one or two out to the front by the late Lord Kitchener.

"The actual permit," said Mr. Stanley, "was in Lord Kitchener's own handwriting—on half a sheet of notepaper. It is now one of the most treasured possessions if not the most treasured, in the archives of the Red Cross society."

"One of the first things I did on receiving the necessary permission," continued Mr. Stanley, "was to get together half a dozen volunteer motorists, all members of the Royal Automobile club, to drive the ambulance cars which we were sending to France. Our position was curious. The motor ambulance was then practically an unknown quantity so far as actual warfare went, and the military authorities stipulated that our drivers were not to wear uniform, nor, under any circumstances, to go near the firing line. There was to be no Red Cross on the cars. Truly, the mission of the motor ambulance was to be extremely limited. They were simply to go about far behind the firing line and pick up wounded men who could not be carried to the field hospitals; men, for example, who had crawled for safety into abandoned cottages and barns."

Proves Its Worth.

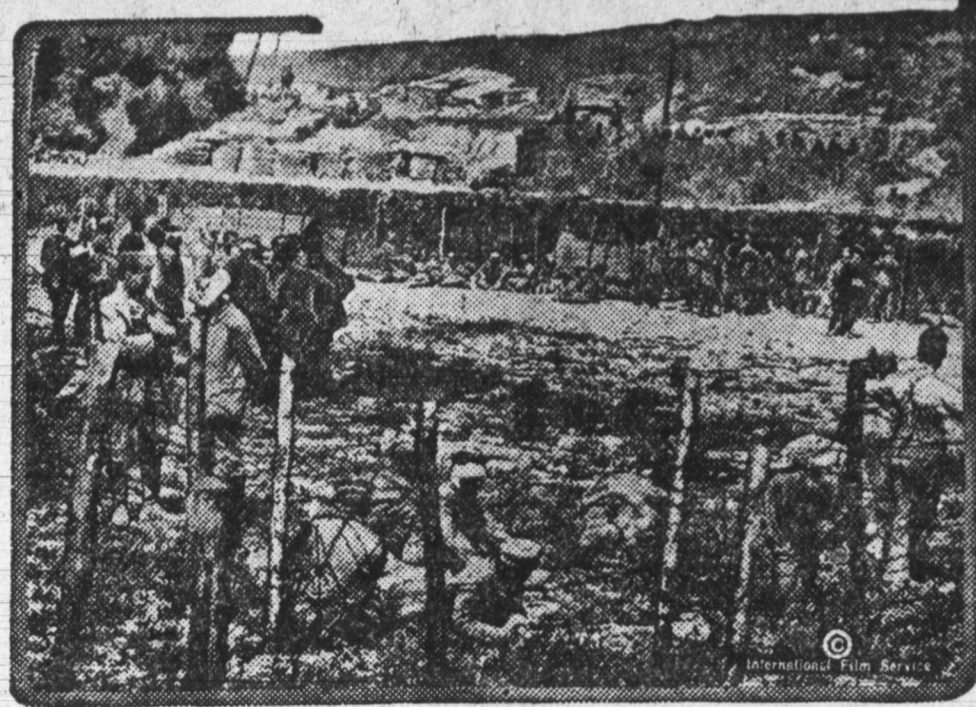
"With the possible exception of the American ambulance cars at Neuilly, ours were the first motor ambulances used in France. But the value of a rapid service for the transport of wounded soldiers was quickly recognized, and now, of course, wherever there is fighting there are motor ambulances."

Here is a typical instance, as told by Mr. Stanley, how the motor ambulance proved its worth in the early days of the war:

"Late one evening one of our ambulances crept up close to the firing line. They met an officer, who turned them back 'because,' as he said, 'it is so dark, it is no use going further.'"

"They went back to a farmhouse and to bed. In the middle of the night they were awakened by the same off-

PRISONERS BACK OF THE ENGLISH LINES



German prisoners taken in the first days of the battle of the Somme and held back of the English lines. The photograph shows the British trenches and dugouts.

cer, who told them that a wounded soldier, shot through both legs, was lying almost in the German lines. It was so dangerous a mission that the officer wouldn't order the ambulance to go! He just told them where the man was, and left them to decide. They went. They crawled, without lights, along an unknown road in the darkness; got almost within the German lines, where they found the man and brought him back to safety. That wounded soldier had lain there for days and would most certainly have died had he not been rescued that night.

"In this modest and voluntary way the motor ambulance came into its own without one penny of cost to the government!"

"Today," went on Mr. Stanley, "there are about 1,000 motor ambulances and cars at the French front alone. Another 1,000 are scattered about with the troops in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Saloniki, Malta, East Africa, etc. We have three ambulance convoys—each one consisting of some sixty cars and a radiographing convoy working in Italy. We have a number of cars in Petrograd and on the western Russian front, while we recently sent a small convoy as a present to Grand Duke Nicholas in the Caucasus."

These motors and ambulances have been provided, and their upkeep maintained, entirely by volunteer subscriptions.

"Up to the present," said Mr. Stanley, "we have collected over \$20,000,000 for the Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance society. The money comes in at the rate of about \$5,000,000 every six months. This shows the public appreciation of the work. Our support comes from all sections of society."

"As an instance of the diversity of our work, it may be interesting to note that we arranged the other day to send motor boats to Mesopotamia and 'Charlie Chaplin' films to Malta, this latter for the amusement of the convalescent soldiers!"

"One of the outstanding features of our organization has been the splendid work done by the women."

Mr. Stanley mentioned, by the way, the excellent artificial limbs for maimed soldiers produced by American manufacturers, both in the United States and especially at a factory established near London, where many disabled men are themselves employed.

While the women of all nations at war have been working courageously in aid of their men, American women also have come out brilliantly in the labor of mercy. At the commencement of the war a group of American women, nearly all married to Englishmen, met together to consider how they might best render assistance to the soldiers of the king. The result was the birth of the American Woman's War Relief fund, of which Lady Paget became president, with Mrs. John Astor as vice-president, the duchess of Marlborough as chairman and Lady Lowther and Mrs. Harcourt as honorary secretary. Other women closely identified with the work were Lady Randolph Churchill, Mrs. Whitelaw Reid and Hon. Mrs. John Ward.

Work of American Women.

The American Women's War Relief fund began by sending a motor ambulance out to the front. "Friends in Boston" subscribed for another—it was actually the seventh—which was duly presented to the war office in London. Down in Devonshire, at Paignton, near Torquay, there is an American woman's war hospital, where thousands of wounded soldiers have been nursed back to health. Not contented with these activities the American women in question have opened workrooms in various parts of the British capital to enable girls thrown out of work to learn other trades, and so to become self-supporting, in spite of the war.

Americans are busy helping in France as well as in England, and the American Relief Clearing house, in Paris, is also an institution of very considerable value and importance. It represents the American Red Cross, and its distributing committee has already apportioned more than 4,000,000 parcels, from bales of cotton, clothes—for men, women and children—shoes, hospital accessories, surgical instruments and countless other useful things. No less than 2,000 hospitals in France have been fitted from the American Relief Clearing house, which has Joseph H. Choate for its president.

Modeled somewhat on the lines of the organization over which Mr. Stanley presides, is the American Volun-

teer Motor Ambulance corps, yet another body of mercy-workers. In September, 1914, Prof. Richard Norton of Harvard university saw for himself the plight of the wounded French soldiers, who suffered additionally through inadequate means of transportation. Consequently, with the co-operation of some of his friends, he started the American Volunteer Ambulance corps, which quickly widened its field from two cars to seventy-five. Originally composed of American and British members, the corps has, while always working in conjunction with the French army, been placed under the British Red Cross—owing to questions of American neutrality.

The volunteers of the American Motor Ambulance corps have given their time and their services uncomplainingly to the attainment of an excellent object. Under the chairmanship of the late Henry James, the novelist, who directed matters from London, many young college graduates freely entered the corps to work strenuously, without pay or preferment. Professor Norton, Ridgely Carter, Sir John Wolfe Berry, Jordan L. Nott, John Dixon Morrison and many other well-known men are members of the London council. Mr. Norton and several of the men have been awarded the Croix de Guerre and the Croix d'Arme, the former ranking high in the honors of war and the latter a republican France. Working close up to the firing line, the American Motor Ambulance men have brought relief to many thousands of wounded and sick soldiers. Sometimes dashing about in country exposed to German artillery fire, the cars have not infrequently come through a hail of bursting shells, but, so far, without the loss of a single life. The only member of the corps to die is A. D. Loney who, while returning from a brief visit to America, was drowned in the sinking of the Lusitania.

The American Motor Ambulance corps has been "mentioned" for its discipline as well as for the high standard of its members generally. Lieut. Col. Leonard Robinson, in the following words narrates in a report to Mr. Stanley, some experiences he has had with the American volunteers: "Immediately after our return from Lizy-sur-Ourcq," states the colonel, "we called from the Service de Sante for an ambulance to proceed to Coulmiers to bring back General Snow, who had been seriously injured. Starting with an ambulance and a pilot car, and accompanied by Dr. du Bouchet and Surgeon Major Langle of the French army, we left Paris at about 5 p. m., reaching Coulmiers toward 8 p. m. The town had been but recently evacuated by the enemy, and, as the general was not in a condition to be moved, we spent the night there. The following morning an early start was made and General Snow was brought safely to Neuilly, where he remained for several weeks."

"With the trip to Coulmiers the period during which the service made expeditions to the front for the purpose of bringing wounded back to the entrenched camp—Paris—came to a close and a new phase of duty was entered upon.

"While the ambulance was absent at Lizy-sur-Ourcq, a call came from the British authorities, asking that ambulances be sent to their clearing station at Villeneuve-Triage to bring wounded, taken from their sanitary trains, to Paris. No ambulance being available at the time, an emergency column of touring cars, headed by Doctor Davenport, was sent out, bringing in a number of cases and inaugurating a service which occupied all our time for several weeks."

"The American Volunteer Motor Ambulance corps has certainly done immense service in creating a very favorable impression on the people of France, people, beyond all others, capable of appreciating kindness and sympathy. But it has not been alone in this respect. The American Ambulance at Neuilly, known before the war as the American hospital, has also acquired the reputation of performing miracles for the wounded."

"I have visited most of the war hospitals in France," said a society woman who has gone through the war as a branchier of the French Red Cross, "and I have never seen such wonderful work—many of the cases are simply terrible, worse than anywhere else—as that performed at the American Ambulance, Neuilly. There they treat daily the most critical surgical cases. Some of the wounded men—poor fellows—seem almost blown away, so little remains for treatment."