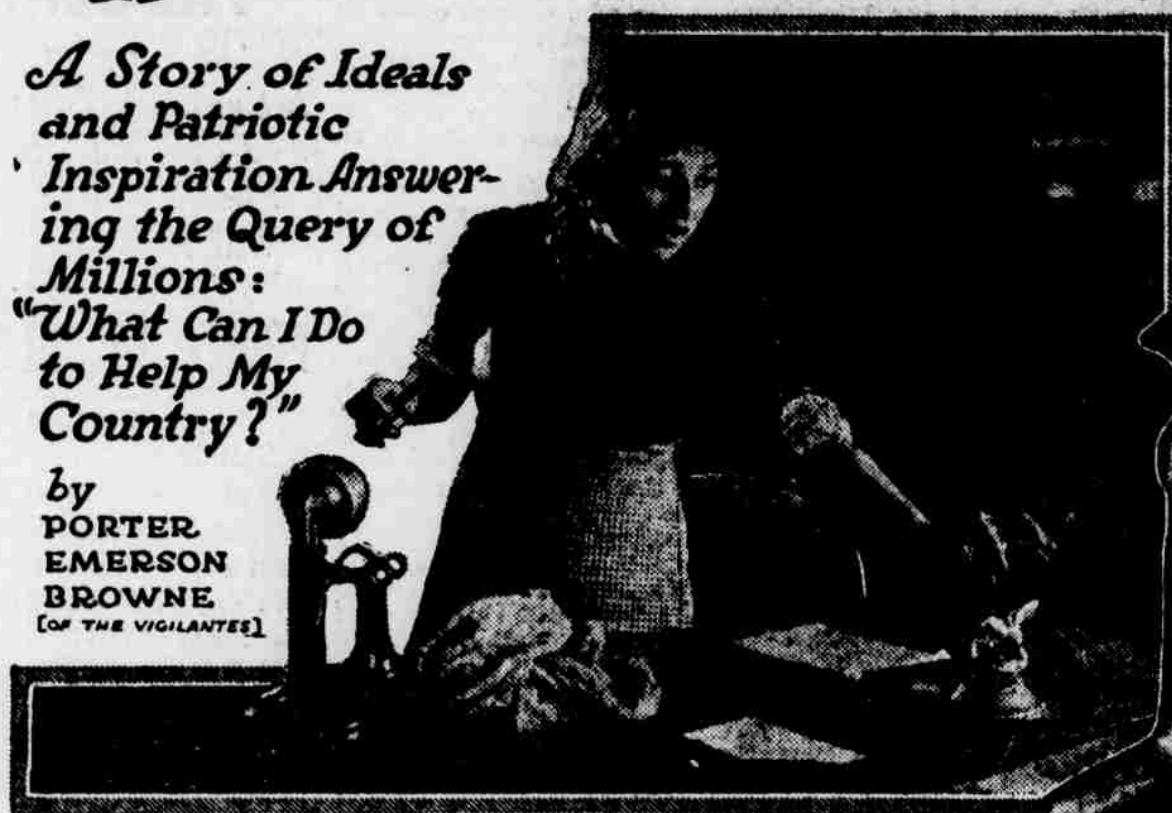


Do You Hear Voices? Every Boy and Girl SHOULD Hear Voices as Did the Historic Maid of Orleans.

JOAN of PLATTSBURG

A Story of Ideals and Patriotic Inspiration Answering the Query of Millions: "What Can I Do to Help My Country?"

by
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Goldwyn Pictures Photos

Mabel Normand

ONE would scarcely expect to find patriotism in an orphan asylum. Yet little Joan felt it. It tingled and surged and swelled through her from the tips of her worn shoes to the crown of her small head. And a lump would come in her throat and tears in her eyes every time she would see the flag and the soldiers.

She saw them often, the soldiers and their flag. For the orphan asylum was near the great camp at Plattsburg, where the boys of America were training to be officers in the big new army that Uncle Sam was getting ready to send to France 'way off across the water, on the other side of Lake Champlain.

Joan loved the soldiers, she loved the camp. And many a beating came to her hungry little body because in her devotion to them she forgot all the many hard and grievous tasks given her in and about the asylum by the superintendent and the housekeeper. For Joan, the oldest orphan of all, had been long at the asylum, and most of the heavier work fell to her bitter lot. So long had she been there that she had forgotten any other home. Only at times in the haven of refuge that she had made for herself in the cellar of the drab, hopeless looking building, right under the superintendent's office, would there come to her faint recollections of a very beautiful lady, and of herself, a little girl (oh, a very little girl!) being taken from that beautiful lady's lifeless arms. Relatives could have told her that the beautiful lady was her mother; that her mother had had money that they coveted. Which was why Joan had been placed in the asylum, leaving them free to take the money for themselves. But relatives don't tell things like that about themselves. And mothers who are dead cannot.

It had always been hard at the

asylum. It is strange that little things like children seem to canker some grown people so. And then, bye and bye, it became worse. That was when the new superintendent came. It was about the time that Joan first heard people talking about the war. Only in those days she didn't even know what a war was. She asked the farmer who brought them skim milk for the children. He told her war was hell. Which shocked and horrified her very much. But another much nicer man, with raggedy shoes and a red nose, told her all about it one day at the back door, while paring of two slices of bread and a glass of the skim milk left by one of the children who didn't feel well. Joan had been washing dishes at the time and no one had been there to interfere.

And from this man she gleaned that the Germans were bad men, who were killing women and children in France and Belgium and that war meant that everybody was fighting them to make them stop. That night she couldn't sleep for thinking of the poor women and children that the Germans were killing in Belgium and France. She almost cried because at the time she was so excited that she forgot to

ask where Belgium and France were. . . . But, after all, what difference did it make where they were? Women and children are the same all the world over.

She wondered why none of the men in the neighborhood were going to stop the Germans from killing women and children. The very next afternoon she went out to the highway and stopped several to ask them. But they only laughed. Why did they laugh? There was nothing funny about the killing of women and children!

How she wished that she were a man! She would go! Nothing on earth could stop her!

But she was only a little girl, who had no money—who didn't even know where Belgium and France were. . . . And there was so much work to be done, washing and cooking and scrubbing and dusting. And always one or more of the children had something the matter with it and wanted fairy stories told to it nights when it couldn't sleep. Of course, she was punished when she was caught.

But it did please the children so!

And then the soldiers came! Great trains brought loads of them, laughing, bright, eager, boyish men, in trim brown uniforms. They moved into the long, low, unpainted houses that had been built. And from then on it was like a never ending circus—fascinating, wonderful. Marching men, drilling men, men exercising,

men waving little flags, men on horseback, men drilling with huge cannon. And always The Flag flying above them. . . . Perhaps here at last were men who were going over there to stop the Germans from killing the poor women, the little children!

Before she thought, eagerly she asked the superintendent. Little pig-like eyes flashed from his fat face. Muttering some strange sounding words he struck her cruelly in the face.

But later meeting a group of soldiers she asked them. They told her that she could bet her sweet life they were! In her happiness she quite forgot the pain of the blow.

And evenings after all the work was done and the children all asleep, tired though she was she would go through the woods to the edge of the camp and sit watching the thousand blinking eyes of its windows. . . . Then in her haven of refuge in the cellar under the superintendent's office she would say a little prayer that the

soldiers might get there quickly before all the women and children had been killed. . . .

Several times she almost bumped into a strange man coming out from the side door of the superintendent's office.

Like all children, Joan's soul was entirely above doors when open windows were handier. It was through the window that she went one day to clean the superintendent's office. As she dusted her cloth caught on a little metal ornament on the top of the superintendent's ink stand. It came off. And at that the top of the ink stand began to bob uncannily.

Frightened, she drew away, upsetting her bucket. And then, from where she hadn't the faintest idea, as he certainly hadn't been in the room when she entered, the superintendent

with flashing eyes descended upon her. Terrified, she leaped through the window and fled. And he in hot pursuit.

Down the drive they tore. Out upon the road. Joan fled blindly.

Of a sudden there were frightened cries; the screeching of brakes. She had no time to look ere the superintendent's hand closed upon her arm, crushing it. She buried her head in the crook of her other elbow. . . .

Suddenly she was free. And in place of the superintendent was standing the most splendid officer she had ever seen. And a kindly old man was looking down at her from the tonneau of a great automobile. It was that that had almost hit her. The superintendent, softly caressing his jaw, stood at the roadside. . . . This was her meeting with Major

Lane. That he lost a pin which she found, and which, of course, she had to return to him, brought her to him again. He was seated before his tent with a book upon his knees. It was a most beautiful book, with the most wonderful pictures! Joan's quick eyes saw that at a glance.

He, smiling, watched her as she looked. He saw quickly how much it seemed to mean to her—this story of Joan of Arc. So solemnly he showed her the pictures. Hungrily she looked. Hungrily she listened as he told her the wondrous, simple story of the Maid of Orleans and of the voices that she heard—voices from God. . . .

That night, more poignantly than ever, did Joan long in her heart to do something for her country—her country that was getting its soldiers ready to save the women and children of Belgium and of the France of the very Joan herself. If she, too, could but hear voices!

Suddenly from above her head—as she knelt there in her haven, in the cellar she heard a strange sound. . . . And then—What was that? She started. A crackling crash resounded from above her. And then—voices!

Dazed she was at first. Awed, frightened, bewildered. What did it all mean? She tried to collect her scattered senses. . . . Suddenly—But not! It could not be! It was too wonderful!

Voices! She, too, like that other Joan, was hearing voices.

She listened, tensely, fearfully, every nerve, every muscle fixed and rigid.

And the words, even though she did not understand them, fell upon her mind as upon a sensitive film.

And in her soul the white flames the fine fires of faith and of service. To her, at last, it had been given to help her country!

. . . .

HERE is a story that will put the brakes on insidious German propaganda in America. It is a faith and courage builder; an answer to those sly and secret tongues that are striking at the morale of the American people. The spirit of "Joan of Plattsburg" is for the women of America. Men may react to false rumors; their efficiency may be reduced through enemy propaganda, but the faith of women is enduring and constitutes an impregnable fortress in times of national trial. Every girl, as well as every boy and every man and woman, has asked herself or will ask herself: "What can I do for my country?" The answer is provided in "Joan of Plattsburg": that the girls and women of America can uphold, by glorious spiritual service, the faith of their men; that their country love and belief in the invincibility of the nation will confound the enemies within who are striking at its heart.

