

# Ramsey Milholland

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

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## CHAPTER XVI.

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

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

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

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

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

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

She wrote:

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

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

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

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

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

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



They Were Soldiers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"It wasn't you," he said. She nodded gently, agreeing, and knew what it was that sent him. Yet Ramsey had his own secret here, and did not tell it. Sometimes there rose, faint in his memory, a whimsical picture, yet one that had always meant much to him. He would see an old man sitting with a little boy upon a rustic bench under a walnut tree to watch the "Decoration Day Parade" go by—and Ramsey would see a shoot of sunshine that had somehow got through the walnut tree and make a bedazzlement of glinting fine lines over a spot about the size of a saucer, upon the old man's thick white hair. And in Ramsey's memory, the little boy, sitting beside the veteran, would half close his eyes, drowsily, playing that this sunshine spot was a white bird's-nest, until he had a momentary dream of a glittering little bird that dwelt there and wore a blue soldier cap on its head. And Ramsey would bring out of his memory thoughts that the old man had got into the child's head that day.

"We knew that armies fighting for the Freedom of Man had to win, in the long run. . . . We were on the side of God's Plan. . . . Long ago we began to see hints of His Plan. . . . Man has to win his freedom from himself—men in the light have to fight against men in the dark. . . . That light is the answer. . . . We had the light that made us never doubt."

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

At first they were just boys in uniform; then one saw that they were boys no more.

They were soldiers.

[THE END.]

## THOUGHT IS NOT REALLY RAPID

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

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

Perhaps a good illustration of the

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

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

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

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

# Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)  
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## LESSON FOR AUGUST 6

### THE TEMPLE REBUILT AND DEDICATED

LESSON TEXT—Ezra 3:1-6:22.  
GOLDEN TEXT—My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.—Psalm 84:2.  
REFERENCE MATERIAL—Haggai 1:1-2:23; Isaiah 62; Rev. 21:1-22:3.  
PRIMARY TOPIC—Joyfully Building God's House.  
JUNIOR TOPIC—Rebuilding the Temple.  
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Love for God's House.  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—What God's House Should Mean to a Community.

After becoming settled in the towns surrounding Jerusalem the people were called together for the purpose of reestablishing the worship of the Lord God. The leaders in this movement were Jeshua the priest and Zerubbabel the governor. In view of the fact that the clearing away of the debris of the old city and temple and the erection of the new temple would take a long time, an altar was erected where sacrifice might be offered at once unto God.

#### I. The Foundation of the Temple Laid (3:8-13).

This was an auspicious occasion and was celebrated with most impressive ceremonies. It marked an epoch in the history of the nation. It brought most vividly to them their bitter experiences in the dark past, and yet pointed them forward to the time of blessing when God's favor would be upon them again.

1. The priests in their apparel (v. 10). In Exodus 39 the priestly garments are described. These garments symbolized their consecration to the Lord's service.

2. The priests with trumpets (v. 10). These trumpets were of silver and were used in calling the people together.

3. The Levites with cymbals (v. 10). These were to furnish the instrumental music of the sanctuary. This was according to the arrangement made by David (I Chron. 15:16-21).

4. They sang together by course (v. 11). This means that they sang to one another responsively. The one company sang, "The Lord is God"; the other responded, "For His mercy endureth forever."

5. Mingled weeping and shouting (vv. 12-13). Some of the older men who had seen the magnificent and glorious temple of Solomon, which had been destroyed, wept much when they saw how far short the present foundation came of the former temple. Others were glad of the favor of God which had brought them back and that a beginning had been made in the new house of worship.

#### II. The Building of the Temple Hindered (Ch. 4).

The three perils which put back the building of the temple for some fourteen years reveal the persistent methods which the enemy uses to hinder the constructive building programs of God's people in every age.

1. An unintelligent pessimism (3:12). It was no credit to "priests, Levites and chief of the fathers" to mar this glorious occasion with weeping. Under the circumstances this was a glorious beginning and gave promise of great things for the future. God's promises looked to the future when even greater glories should be to the chosen people than ever had been enjoyed in the days of Solomon. Many today, because things are not quite what they should be, do not go forward with a constructive program, and even hinder those who have the hopeful outlook.

2. Worldly compromise (4:2, 3). "Let us build with you, for we seek your God." This is Satan's most common and effective method today. May the courageous Zerubbabels declare anew, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God."

3. Open opposition by the world (4:4-24). When refused a part in the work, open and violent opposition was resorted to. Intimidation and political scheming were used to defeat the building plan of God's people.

III. The Temple Finished (5:1-6:15). Through the ministry of the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, the people were encouraged to resume the work of building the temple. They wrought with energy and enthusiasm. How necessary are God's prophets to encourage and urge on the workers in the Lord's vineyard!

IV. The Temple Dedicated (6:16-22). The people were united in this building and came together upon its completion and solemnly dedicated it to God. It was a joyous occasion and they united in the observance of the passover with gratitude to God that He had strengthened their hands in their work.

The Door of the Work. But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.—James 1:25.

No Disguise Can Conceal Love. No disguise can long conceal love where it is, nor feign it where it is not.—Rochefoucauld.

Don't Forget the Sands. Steer your ships by the stars, but don't forget the sands.—Spurgeon.

Had Your Iron Today?



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Two packages luscious Little Sun-Maid Raisins—one cool glass of milk. Big men don't need more.

290 calories of energizing nutriment in the little raisins. Pure fruit sugar, practically predigested so it acts almost immediately, yet doesn't tax digestion and thus heat the blood.

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## Little Sun-Maids

Between-Meal Raisins  
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—in Little Red Packages

### Funerals by Train for Paris.

Parisian cemeteries are so overcrowded as to threaten public health; cremation has proved unpopular. The municipal commission studying the problem advises the building of four big cemeteries 15 miles out of Paris, with railroad service to and from the city.—Scientific American.

There is nothing more satisfactory after a day of hard work than a line full of snowy white clothes. For such results use Red Cross Ball Blue.—Advertisement.

### A Trifling Matter.

"Is he eligible in every way?"  
"Almost. All he needs is a divorce from his present wife."

The Japanese bride calls upon her neighbors and friends, instead of the neighbors and friends calling upon her.

### Two Viewpoints.

Sim and Sam, who hadn't seen each other since overseas days, met in the street and, after partially strangling each other by way of greeting, began getting personal.

"Married?" asked Sim.  
"Yep," replied Sam. "You?"  
"Nope," answered Sim. "You're a lucky dog. Tain't good for a man to live alone."  
"No-o-o," drawled Sam somewhat dubiously. "Prob'ly not, but sometimes I'd be willing to try it."

### Too Strong for Home Use.

One of the amateur golf champions is being sued for divorce, his wife naming golf as the cause. Perhaps he fell into the habit of using the golf vocabulary around home.

No man can feed his soul who is starving his servants.

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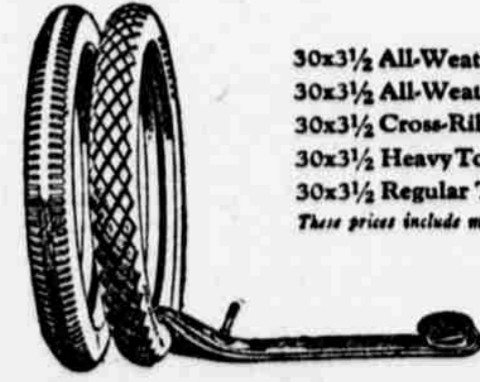
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