

# THE SEARCH

By Grace Livingston Hill-Lutz

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Ruth caught her breath, thanked her and hastened back to her companion. Salvation Army! That was eccentric, queer, but it would be perfectly respectable! Or would it? Would Aunt Rhoda disapprove very much? Somehow the Salvation Army was associated in her mind with slums and drunkards. But, at least, they might be able to direct her to a respectable place.

Mrs. Cameron, too, looked dubious. This having a society girl to chaperone was new business for her. She had never thought much about it, but somehow she would hardly have associated the Salvation Army with the Macdonald family in any way. She paused and looked doubtfully at the unpretentious little one-story building that stretched away capriciously and unostentatiously from the grassy roadside.

"Salvation Army" arose in bold inviting letters from the roof, and "Ice Cold Lemonade" beckoned from a sign on the neat screen door. Ruth was a bit excited.

"I'm going in!" she declared and stepped within the door, Mrs. Cameron following half fearfully.

The room which they entered was long and clean and pleasant. Simple white curtains draped the windows, many rush-bottomed big rocking chairs were scattered about, a long desk or table ran along one side of the room with writing materials, a piano stood open with music on its rack, and shelves of books and magazines filled the front wall.

Beyond the piano were half a dozen little tables, white topped and ready for a hungry guest. At the back a counter ran the width of the room, with sandwiches and pies under glass covers, and a bright coffee urn steaming suggestively at one end. Behind it through an open door was a view of the kitchen, neat, handy, crude, but all quite clean, and through this door stepped a sweet-faced woman, wiping her hands on her gingham apron and coming toward them with a smile of welcome as if they were expected guests. It was all so primitive, and yet there was something about it that bore the dignity of refinement, and puzzled this girl from her sheltered home. She was almost embarrassed to make her enquiry, but the hearty response put her quite at her ease, as if she had asked a great favor of another lady in a time of stress.

"I'm so sorry, but our rooms are all taken," the woman waved a slender hand toward the long side of the room and Ruth noticed for the first time that a low partition ran the length of the room at one side with doors. Mechanically she counted them, eight of them, neat, gray-painted doors. Could these be rooms? How interesting! She had a wild desire to see inside them. Rooms! They were more like little stalls, for the partitions did not reach all the way to the ceiling. A vision of her own spacious apartment at home came floating in vague contrast. Then one of the doors opposite her opened as its occupant, a quiet little elderly woman, came out, and she had a brief glimpse of the white curtained window, the white draped comfortable looking bed, a row of calico curtained hooks on the wall, and a speck of a wash stand with tin pitcher and basin in the corner, all as clean and new as the rest of the place. She swiftly decided to stay here if there was any chance. Another look at the sweet face of the presiding woman who was trying to make them understand how crowded everything was, and how many mothers there were with sons who were going that night or the next, and who wanted to be near them, determined her. She was saying there was just a chance in case a certain mother from Boston who had written her did not arrive at 5 o'clock.

"But we ought not to take a chance," said Cameron's mother, looking at the eager faced girl with a cautious wistfulness. "What could we do if night came and we had no place to stay?"

Ruth cast her eyes about. "Couldn't we sit in a couple of those rocking chairs all night?" she asked eagerly.

The Salvation Army woman laughed affectionately as if she had found a kindred spirit:

"Why, dearie, I could give you a couple of cots out here in the dining room if you didn't mind. I wouldn't have pillows, but I think I could get you some blankets."

"Then we'll stay," said Ruth triumphantly before Mrs. Cameron could protest, and went away feeling that she had a new friend in the wise sweet Salvation Army woman. In five minutes more they were seated in the trolley on their way into the camp.

"I'm afraid your people would not like you to stay in such a place," began Mrs. Cameron dubiously, though her eyes shone with a light that belied her words.

"Nonsense!" said Ruth with a bewildering smile, "it is as clean as a pin and I'm very much excited about staying there. It will be an adventure. I've never known much about the Salvation Army before, except that they are supposed to be very good people."

"There might be some rough characters—"

"Well, I guess they can't hurt us with that good woman around, and anyhow, you're going to stay till your son goes!" laughingly declared Ruth.

"Well, we'll see what John says," said his mother with a sigh, "I can't let you do anything—questionable."

"Please, Mrs. Cameron," pleaded Ruth, "let us forget things like that this trip and just have a happy time."

The mother smiled, sadly, wistfully, through a mist of tears. She could not help thinking how wonderful it would have been if there had been no war and her dear boy could have had this sweet wholesome girl for a friend.

## CHAPTER XIV.

The sun was shining gloriously when the two stepped from the trolley at the little camp station and looked bewildered about them at the swarms of uniforms and boyish faces, searching for their one. They walked through the long lane lined with soldiers, held back by the great rope and guarded by military police. Each crowding eager soldier had an air of expectancy upon him, a silence upon him that showed the realization of the parting that was soon to be. In many faces deep disappointment was growing as the expected ones did not arrive. Ruth's throat was filled with oppression and tears as she looked about and suddenly felt the grip of war, and realized that all these thousands were bearing this bitterness of parting, perhaps forever. Death stalking up and down a battlefield, waiting to take his pick of them! This was the picture that flashed before her shrinking eyes.

It was almost like a solemn ceremony, this walking down the lane of silent waiting soldiers, to be claimed by their one. It seemed to bring the two young people nearer in heart than they had ever been before when at the end of the line Cameron met them with a salute, kissed his mother, and then turned to Ruth and took her hand with an earnest grave look of deep pleasure in his eyes.

He led them up under the big trees in front of the Hostess' House while all around were hushed voices, and teary eyes. That first moment of meeting was the saddest and the quietest of the day with everybody, except the last parting hour when mute grief sat unchecked upon every face, and no one stopped to notice if any man were watching, but just lived out his real heart self, and showed his mother or his sister or his sweetheart how much he loved and suffered.

That was a day which all the little painted butterflies of temptation should have been made to witness. There were no painted ladies coming through the gates that day. This was no time for friendships like that. Death was calling, and the deep realities of life stood out and demanded attention.

The whole thing was unlike anything Ruth had ever witnessed before. It was a new world. It was as if the old conventions which had heretofore hedged her life were dropped like a garment revealing life as it really was, and every one

walked unashamed, because the great sorrow and need of all had obliterated the little petty rules of life, and small passions were laid aside, while hearts throbbled in a common cause.

He waited on them like a prince, seeming to anticipate every need and smooth every annoyance. He led them away from the throng to the quiet hillside above the camp where spring had set her dainty footprint. He spread down his thick army blanket for them to sit upon and they held sweet converse for an hour or two. He told them of camp life and what was expected to be when they started over, and when they reached the other side.

His mother was brave and sensible. Sometimes the tears would brim over at some suggestion of what her boy was soon to bear or do, but she wore a smile as courageous and sweet as any saint could wear. The boy saw and grew tender over it. A bird came and sang over their heads and the moment was sweet with springing things and quiet with the brooding tenderness of parting that hung over the busy camp. Ruth had one awful moment of adjustment when she tried to think how her aunt Rhoda would look if she could see her now; then threw the whole thing to the winds and resolved to enjoy the day. She saw that while the conventions by which she had been reared were a good thing in general, perhaps, they certainly were not meant to hamper or hinder the true and natural life of the heart, or, if they were, they were not good things; and she entered into the moment with her full sympathy. Perhaps Aunt Rhoda would not understand, but the girl she had brought up knew that it was good to be here. Her aunt was away from home with an invalid friend on a short trip so there had been no one to question Ruth's movements when she decided to run down to Washington with a "friend from the Red Cross" and incidentally visit the camp a little while.

He had them over the camp by and by, to the trenches and dummies, and all the paraphernalia of war preparation. Then they went back to the Hostess' House and fell into line to get dinner. As Cameron stood looking down at Ruth in the crowded line in the democratic way which was the only way there was, it came over them both how strange and wonderful it was that they two who had seen each other so little in their lives and who had come from such widely separated social circles should be there together in that beautiful intimacy. It came to them both at once and flashed its thought from one pair of eyes to the other and back again. Cameron looked deep into her thoughts then for a moment to find out if there was a shadow of mortification or dismay in her face; but though she flushed consciously her sweet true eyes gave back only the pleasure she was feeling, and her real enjoyment of the day. Then instantly each of them felt that another crisis had been passed in their friendship, another something unseen and beautiful had happened that made this moment most precious—one never to be forgotten no matter what happened in the future, something they would not have missed for any other experience.

It was Ruth who announced suddenly, late in the afternoon, during a silence in which each one was thinking how fast the day was going:

"Did you know that we were going to stay over Sunday?"

Cameron's face blazed with joyful light:

"Wonderful!" he said softly, "do you mean it? I've been trying to get courage all day to suggest it, only I don't know of any place this side of Washington or Baltimore where you can be comfortable, and I hate to think of you hunting around a strange city late at night for accommodations. If I could only get out to go with you—"

"It isn't necessary," said Ruth quickly, "we have our accommodations all arranged for. Your mother and I planned it all out before we came. But are you sure we can get into camp tomorrow?"

"Yes, I'm almost certain we can get you passes by going up to officers' headquarters and applying. A fellow in our company told me this morning he had permission for his mother and sister to come in tomorrow. And we are not likely to leave before Monday now, for this morning our lieutenant went away and I heard him say he had a three days' leave. They

wouldn't have given him that if they expected to send us before he got back, at least not unless they recalled him—they might do that."

"Is that the lieutenant that you called a 'mess' the other day?" asked Ruth with twinkling eyes.

"Yes," said Cameron turning a keen, startled glance at her, and wondering what she would say if she knew it was Wainwright he meant.

But she answered demurely: "So he's away, is he? I'm glad. I was hoping he would be."

"Why?" asked Cameron.

"Oh, I thought he might be in the way," she smiled, and changed the subject, calling attention to the meadow lark who was thrilling out his little ecstasy in the tall tree over their head.

Cameron gave one glance at the bird and then brought his gaze back to the sweet upturned face beside him, his soul thrilling with the wonder of it that she should be there with him!

"But you haven't told me where you have arranged to stay. Is it Baltimore or Washington? I must look up your trains. I hope you will be able to stay as late as possible. They're not putting people out of camp until 8 o'clock tonight."

"Lovely!" said Ruth with the eagerness of a child. "Then we'll stay till the very last trolley. We're not going to either Baltimore or Washington. We're staying right near the camp entrance in that little town at the station where we landed, I don't remember what you call it. We got accommodations this morning before we came into camp."

"But where?" asked Cameron anxiously. "Are you sure it's respectable? I'm afraid there isn't any place there that would do at all."

"Oh, yes there is," said Ruth. "It's the Salvation Army 'hut,' they called it, but it looks more like a barracks, and there's the dearest little woman in charge!"

"John, I'm afraid it isn't the right thing to let her do it!" put in his mother anxiously. "I'm afraid her aunt wouldn't like it at all, and I'm sure she won't be comfortable."

"I shall love it!" said Ruth happily, "and my aunt will never know anything about it. As for comfort, I'll be as comfortable as you are, my dear lady, and I'm sure you wouldn't let comfort stand in the way of being with your boy." She smiled her sweet little triumph that brought tears to the eyes of the mother; and Cameron gave her a blinding look of gratitude and adoration. So she carried her way.

Cameron protested no more, but quietly enquired at the Hostess' House if the place was all right, and when he put them on the car at 8 o'clock he gave Ruth's hand a lingering pressure, and said in a low tone that only she could hear, with a look that carried its meaning to her heart:

"I shall never forget that you did this for my mother—and me!"

The two felt almost light-hearted in comparison to their fellow travellers, because they had a short reprieve before they would have to say good-bye. But Ruth sat looking about her, at the sad-eyed girls and women who had just parted from their husbands and sons and sweethearts, and who were most of them weeping, and felt anew the great burden of the universal sorrow upon her. She wondered how God could stand it. The old human question that wonders how God can stand the great agonies of life that have to come to cure the world of its sin, and never wonders how God can stand the sin! She felt as if she must somehow find God and plead with Him not to do it, and again there came that longing to her soul, if she only knew God intimately! Cameron's question recurred to her thoughts, "Could anyone on this earth know Him? Had anyone ever known Him? Would the Bible say anything about it?" She resolved to read it through and find out.

The brief ride brought them suddenly into a new and to Ruth somewhat startling environment.

(To Be Continued Next Week)

Life Bud and his wife had quite an argument last night. She said it seemed like ages since they wuz married and he stoutly maintained it wuz longer.

Th' mayor o' Youngstown, Ohio, made such a hit by resignin' that ther's talk o' runnin' him fer gov'nor.

—Abe Martin.

## A STORY FOR SUNDAY.

IT IS sweltering in Robertsdale these days. Dust clogs the throat, and goes floating away toward the scorched forests that cluster about the town when a vagrant breeze with hot breath wanders through the unkempt streets. Robertsdale is a coal town, one of many ugly gashes that mar the landscape in the rich bituminous fields of Pennsylvania.

The calm of the Sabbath hovers over Robertsdale. Since April 1 the creak of the mine tippie has been silenced. The streets, lined with "company houses," weather beaten shacks that lean toward each other like a row of lame beggars, are deserted.

At the edge of the Robertsdale in a little grove, where house flies bite and dragon flies hover over the brackish water of sluggish streams turned copper in color, one finds the male citizens of the village. Here they while away the monotonous hours by pitching horseshoes, or sitting about on stumps playing with trayed back cards. So the long days have passed since April 1.

But at 10 o'clock each morning there is a strange site in Robertsdale, a queer happening indeed in a nation so rich as America. Outside the doors of the Miners' Hall on the outskirts of the town owned by the mining corporation, a line of children forms. They carry bowls and spoons, these undernourished victims of the industrial warfare. Dirty they are. Evicted from the company houses with their rude bathing facilities, with the surface of the nearby creeks matted green, these boys and girls might well be little Belgians and their country invaded.

Their faces, pinched, brighten as the big ladle is dipped into the tubs of gruel prepared by the kindly hands of Quakers; for about a month ago the American Friends announced that henceforth they would help the innocent victims of industrial as well as international strife.

The scientific war conducted in the industry of this country has brought on conditions in isolated areas such as the Friends found in Belgium, in Austria, in northern France, in Germany, during and immediately after the war. It is an indictment of our business brains that this is so, a crushing proof of the inefficiency of our leaders, both governmental and industrial. But it is of the Quakers and their new work that this story is written.

The Quakers go into a mining town with their rolling kitchens when they learn that a union's relief funds are so low there is danger of acute suffering among the youngsters. Then a local emergency committee is created, including the minister and priest of the town, a doctor, and a merchant. The doctor examines the children and substantial meals are prescribed by a dietitian from the Friends' organization. Bean soup, rice pudding, and cocoa replace the sour bread and molasses on which boys, girls, and infants have been existing since last April.

That's about all there is to tell about the Robertsdales. Maybe this is an editorial; and maybe it is not. The story is told merely to let the public know what the religious body popularly known as Quakers is doing now. Maybe what the Quakers are doing as best they can with their meager funds is the "practical Christianity" one hears so much about, and sees so little of. Maybe it is not. The Quakers think it is.

## Lost Mark fwaIn Stories.

Autobiographical notes in Harper's Magazine. There is another unfinished book, which I should probably entitle "The Refuge of the Derelicts." It is half finished and will remain so. There is yet another one, entitled "The Adventure of a Microbe During Three Thousand Years; or a Microbe." It is half finished and will remain so. There is yet another, "The Mysterious Stranger." It is more than half finished. I would dearly like to finish it, and it causes me a real pang to reflect that it is not to be. These several tanks are full now, and those books would go gayly along and complete themselves if I would hold the pen, but I am tired of the pen. There was another of these half finished stories. I carried it as far as \$8,000 words four years ago, then destroyed it for fear I might some day finish it. Huck Finn was the teller of the story, and of course Tom Sawyer and Jim were the heroes of it. But I believed that that trio had done work enough in this world and were entitled to a permanent rest.

If there is one lesson taught by history, it is that the permanent greatness of any state must ultimately depend more upon the character of its country population than upon anything else. No growth of cities, no growth of wealth, can make up for loss in either the number or character of the farming population.—Theodore Roosevelt.

## Hardly Ever.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer. A square man is seldom a rounder.

But What Did the 1,000 Wives Say?

From the Ohio State Journal. We have sometimes wondered what the neighbor women said when the Queen of Sheba came loping up on her camel, slipped lightly from his hump and went into Solomon's house in broad daylight, but we really suppose they were so used to Solomon that they were about talked-of and merely remarked in a matter-of-fact way: "Well, girls, here's another."

## FLOCK TO CANADA

Immigrants of High Order Settling on Western Plains.

Removal of Restrictions Necessary During the War Has Shown World's Faith in Dominion's Future.

For a period during the late war, and for a while after its close, there was put into operation by the Canadian government legislation restricting certain classes and people of the countries which were not lined up with the allied nations from being admitted to Canada. This was quite necessary, and the reasons for it will be so apparent that they need not be given. However, the time came, in the early summer of this year, when it was deemed possible to remove some of these restrictions. It was found that there were many who came under their ruling that were of a class that Canada needed and who needed Canada. The restrictions, doubtless, were drastic, but were useful. The news of their removal, sent broadcast, has met with such a response as to give ample evidence that they had not killed interest in Canada, and that faith in the Dominion as a country where a new existence, happy and fruitful, was as complete as ever. As has been stated by one writer dealing with this subject, "the opening of the doors a little wider has but disclosed the dammed-up state of the stream, which, given freer release, is pouring in fuller force over the Dominion."

As to the moral effect of the legislation that enabled these restrictions to be carried out, it showed that while Canada was seeking settlers, its lands and its homes were not intended as a shelter for those unable to meet the standard set as Canada's laws of civilization, the concessions which have removed these restrictions still have in view the maintenance of this standard, and those who are still allowed in are subject to the same requirements that have prevailed for years. As pointed out by the writer previously quoted, "Canada has successfully impressed on those countries from which she draws her people that her prime and crying need is for those who will go on land, and of those entering the country the bulk is composed of agriculturists. Every country which has formerly contributed to Canada's population has resumed its mission to its shores."

The lowering of the barriers has had a farther-reaching effect than the entry into the country of many formerly debarred by reasons of financial stringency. It has had a moral effect. The restriction was rightly regarded as an indication of Canada's internal economic condition, and many persons and families of comfortable means contemplating Canadian settlement were discouraged from doing so. In the removal is seen the first blush of the dawn of better days, and consequently many of those arriving are in a condition to establish rapidly and securely.

Though Canadian immigration falls broadly into the two classes, British and American, many European peoples have contributed in a large measure to the agricultural development of the Western provinces, and it is gratifying to note the same healthy interest in Canada evinced by the most desirable of these.

"Amongst those from the European countries are Serbians, Poles, Swiss, Roumanians, Dutch, Jugo-Slavs, French, Danish, Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Lithuanians. All have constituted fine, desirable citizen-building material, as the few detentions and lesser deportations bear testimony. Furthermore, the disturbed industrial conditions of the New England states have resulted in the commencement of an exodus of French-Canadian families back to their old homes, which may reach an appreciable size.

"On all sides this awakening of interest is evident. It is a new faith borne on the crest of the wave of brighter prospects, the dawn of a fuller realization, in the continued inability of many other countries to emerge from the economic slough into which the war plunged them, of the desirability of Canada as a country more rapidly throwing off its post-bellum depression, and its great place in the world's immediate future.

"British migration is of a healthy and desirable order, of sturdy composition, and frequently heavily capitalized. Many Scottish farmers have already arrived this year."

Every state in the Union is contributing its quota, and joining with those who have been in Canada for a number of years in the work of reclaiming the virgin prairie of the great plains of the West and converting them into immense fields of golden grain, or its grasses into fodder for the dairy cow or the fattening steer.—Advertisement.

## His Waterloo.

"Great guns of Iron, Gap!" astoundedly ejaculated an acquaintance. "Your clothes are mighty high to the top. You been fightin' with a catamount?"

"None!" replied Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge. "Been whipping thunder out of some of my kids for being sassy to me."—Kansas City Star.

## Explains Decline of Oratory.

"One reason why we don't hab no greater oratory," said Uncle Eben, "is dat so many of our best talkers is turnin' deir attention to salesmanship."

History may not be accurate, but what other chart have we for mapping the future?