

Ramsey Milholland

by Booth Tarkington

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

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THE FIRST KISS.

Synopsis.—With his grandfather, small Ramsey Milholland is watching the "Decorated Day Parade" in the home town. The old gentleman, a veteran of the Civil war, endeavors to impress the youngster with the significance of the great conflict, and many years afterward the boy was to remember his words with startling vividness. In the schoolroom, a few years afterward, Ramsey is not distinguished for remarkable ability, though his pronounced dislike for arithmetic, "Recitations" and German. In sharp contrast to Ramsey's backwardness is the precocity of little Dora Yocum, a young lady whom in his bitterness he denominated "Teacher's Pet." In high school, where he and Dora are classmates, Ramsey continues to feel that the girl delights to manifest her superiority, and the victimization he generates becomes alarming, culminating in the resolution that some day he will "show" her. At a class picnic Ramsey is captured bag and baggage by Dora Yocum, the class beauty, and endures the agonies of his first love. Ramsey's parents object to Dora Yocum.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

Milla hung weightily upon his arm, and they dawdled, drifting from one side of the pavement to the other as they slowly advanced. Albert and Sadie, ahead of them, called "good night" from a corner, before turning down the side street where Sadie lived; and then, presently, Ramsey and Milla were at the latter's gate. He went in with her, halting at the front steps.

"Well, good night," he said. "Want to go out walking tomorrow night? Albert and Sadie are."

"I can't tomorrow night," she told him with obvious regret. "Isn't it the worst luck! I got an aunt comin' to visit from Chicago, and she's crazy about playing 'Five Hundred', and mama and papa said I had to stay in to make four to play it. She's liable to be here three or four days, and I guess I got to be around home pretty much all the time she's here. It's the worst luck!"

He was doleful, but ventured to be literary. "Well, what can't be helped must be endured. I'll come around when she's gone."

He moved as if to depart, but she still retained his arm and did not prepare to relinquish it.

"Well—" he said.

"Well—good night," she said.

She glanced up at the dark front of the house. "I guess the family's gone to bed," she said absently.

"I suppose so."

"Well, good night, Ramsey." She said this, but still did not release his arm, and suddenly, in a flutter, he felt that the time he dreaded had come. Somehow, without knowing where, except that it was somewhere upon what seemed to be a blurred face too full of obstructing features, he kissed her.

She turned instantly away in the darkness, her hands over her cheeks; and in a panic Ramsey wondered if he hadn't made a dreadful mistake.

"Scuse me!" he said, stumbling toward the gate. "Well, I guess I got to be gettin' along back home."

He woke in the morning to a great self-loathing; he had kissed a girl. Mingled with the loathing was a curious pride in the very fact that caused the loathing, but the pride did not last long. He came downstairs morbid to breakfast, and continued this mood afterward. At noon Albert Paxton brought him a note which Milla had asked Sadie to ask Albert to give him.

"Dearie: I am just wondering if you thought as much about something so sweet that happened last night as I did you know what. I think it was the sweetest thing. I send you one with this note and I hope you will think it is a sweet one. I would give you a real one if you were here now and I hope you would think it was sweeter still than the one I put in this note. It is the sweetest thing now you are mine and I am yours forever kiddo. If you come around about Friday eve it will be all right. Aunt Jess will be gone back home by then so come early and we will get Sade and Alb to go to the band concert. Don't forget what I said about my putting something sweet in this note, and I hope you will think it is a sweet one but not as sweet as the real sweet one I would like to—"

At this point Ramsey impulsively tore the note into small pieces. He turned cold as his imagination projected a sketch of his mother in the act of reading this missive, and of her expression as she read the sentence: "It is the sweetest thing now you are mine and I am yours forever kiddo." He wished that Milla hadn't written "kiddo." She called him that, sometimes, but in her warm little voice he word seemed not at all what it did

in ink. He wished, too, that she hadn't said she was his forever.

Suddenly he was seized with a horror of her.

Moisture broke out heavily upon him; he felt a definite sickness, and, wishing for death, went forth upon the streets to walk and walk. He cared not whether, so that his feet took him in any direction away from Milla, since they were unable to take him away from himself—of whom he had as great a horror. Her loving face was continually before him, and its sweetness made his flesh creep. Milla had been too sweet.

When he met or passed people, it seemed to him that perhaps they were able to recognize upon him somewhere the marks of his low quality. "Softy! Ole sloppy fool!" he muttered, addressing himself. "Slushy ole mush! . . . Spooner!" And he added, "Yours forever, kiddo!"

Convulsions seemed about to seize him.

Turning a corner with his head down, he almost charged into Dora Yocum. She was homeward bound from a piano lesson, and carried a rolled leather case of sheet music—something he couldn't imagine Milla carrying—and in her young girl's dress, which attempted to be nothing else, she looked as wholesome as cold spring water. Ramsey had always felt that she despised him and now, all at once, he thought that she was justified. Lerner that he had become, he was unworthy to be even touching his cap to her! And as she nodded and went briskly on, he would have given anything to turn and walk a little way with her, for it seemed to him that this might fumigate his morals. But he lacked the courage, and, besides, he



Pausing in an Alley, He Read Her Note.

considered himself unfit to be seen walking with her.

He had a long afternoon of angusties, these becoming most violent when he tried to face the problem of his future course toward Milla. He did not face it at all, in fact, but merely writhed, and had evolved nothing when Friday evening was upon him and Milla waiting for him to take her to the "band concert" with "Alb and Sade." He made shift to seek a short interview with Albert, just before dinner.

"I got a pretty rotten headache, and my stomach's upset, too," he said, drooping upon the Paxtons' fence. "I been gettin' worse every minute. You and Sadie go by Milla's, Albert, and tell her if I'm not there by half-past-seven, tell her not to wait for me any longer."

"How do you mean 'wait'?" Albert inquired. "You don't expect her to come pokin' along with Sadie and me, do you? She'll keep on sittin' there at home just the same, because she wouldn't have anything else to do, if you don't come like she expects you to. She hasn't got any way to stop waitin'!"

At this, Ramsey moaned, without affectation. "I don't expect I can, Albert," he said. "I'd like to if I could, but the way it looks now, you tell her I wouldn't be much surprised maybe I was startin' in with typhoid fever or pretty near anything at all." He moved away, concluding feebly: "I guess I better crawl on home, Albert, while I'm still able to walk some. You tell her the way it looks now I'm liable to be right sick."

And the next morning he woke to the chafings of remorse, picturing a Milla somewhat restored in charm, waiting hopefully at the gate, even after the half-past seven, and then, as time passed and the sound of the distant horns came faintly through the darkness, going sadly to her room—perhaps weeping there. It was a pic-

ture to wring him with shame and pity, but was followed by another which electrified him, for out of school he did not lack imagination. What if Albert had reported his illness too vividly to Milla? Milla was so fond! What if, in her alarm, she should come here to the house to inquire of his mother about him? What if she told Mrs. Milholland they were "engaged"? The next moment Ramsey was projecting a conversation between his mother and Milla in which the latter stated that she and Ramsey were soon to be married, that she regarded him as already virtually her husband, and demanded to nurse him.

In a panic he fled from the house before breakfast, going out by way of a side door, and he crossed back yards and climbed back fences to reach Albert Paxton the more swiftly. This creature, a ladies' man almost professionally, was found exercising with an electric iron and a pair of flannel trousers in a basement laundry, by way of stirring his appetite for the morning meal.

"See here, Albert," his friend said breathlessly. "I got a favor. I want you to go over to Milla's—"

"I'm goin' to finish pressin' these trousers," Albert interrupted. "Then I've got my breakfast to eat."

"Well, you could do this first," said Ramsey, hurriedly. "It wouldn't hurt you to do me this little favor first. You just slip over and see Milla for me, if she's up yet, and if she isn't, you better wait around till she is, because I want you to tell her I'm a whole lot better this morning. Tell her I'm pretty near practickly all right again, Albert, and I'll probly write her a note or something right soon—or in a week or so, anyhow. You tell her—"

"Well, you act pretty funny!" Albert exclaimed, fumbling in the pockets of his coat. "Why can't you go on over and tell her yourself? But just as it happens there wouldn't be any use your goin' over there, or me, either."

"Why not?"

"Milla ain't there," said Albert, still searching the pockets of his coat. "When we went by her house last night to tell her about your headache and stomach and all, why, her mother told us Milla'd gone up to Chicago yesterday afternoon with her aunt, and said she left a note for you, and she said if you were sick I better take it and give it to you. I was goin' to bring it over to your house after breakfast."

He found it. "Here!"

Ramsey thanked him feebly, and departed in a state of partial stupefaction, brought on by a glimpse of the instabilities of life. He had also, not relief, but a sense of vacancy and loss; for Milla, out of his reach, once more became mysteriously lovely.

Pausing in an alley, he read her note.

"Dearie: Thought I ought to call you up but over the 'phone is just nix for explanations as Mama and Aunt Jess would hear everything and thought I might seem cold to you not saying anything sweet on account of them listenin' and you would wonder why I was so cold when telling you good-by for a while maybe weeks. It is this way Uncle Purv wired Aunt Jess he has just taken in a big touring car on a debt and his vacation starts tomorrow so if they were going to take a trip they better start right way so Aunt Jess invited me. Now dearie I have to pack and write this in a hurry so you will not be disappointed when you come by for the B. C. to-night. Do not go get some other girl and take her for I would hate her and nothing in this world would make me false for one second to my kiddo boy. I do not know just when home again as the folks think I better stay up there for a visit at Aunt Jess and Uncle Purv's home in Chicago after the trip is over. But I think of you all the time and you must think of me every minute and believe your own dearie she will never not for one second be false. So tell Sade and Alb good-by for me and do not be false to me any more than I would be to you and it will not be long till nothing more will interrupt our sweet friendship."

As a measure of domestic prudence, Ramsey tore the note into irreparable fragments, but he did this slowly, and without experiencing any of the revulsion created by Milla's former missive.

He was melancholy, aggrieved that she should treat him so.

"Yes, sir; that quiet little Milla's a regular old married woman by this time, Ramsey."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Arctic Days and Nights.

The Arctic is a region of snow and ice; for months in the winter the sun is below the horizon, and though for other months in the summer it never sets, its heat is not strong enough in most quarters to reduce the quantity of snow and ice which form in the cold season. The longest day and longest night at latitude 70 degrees are about two months each; 10 degrees farther north they are about three months each; at the pole they divide the year almost equally.

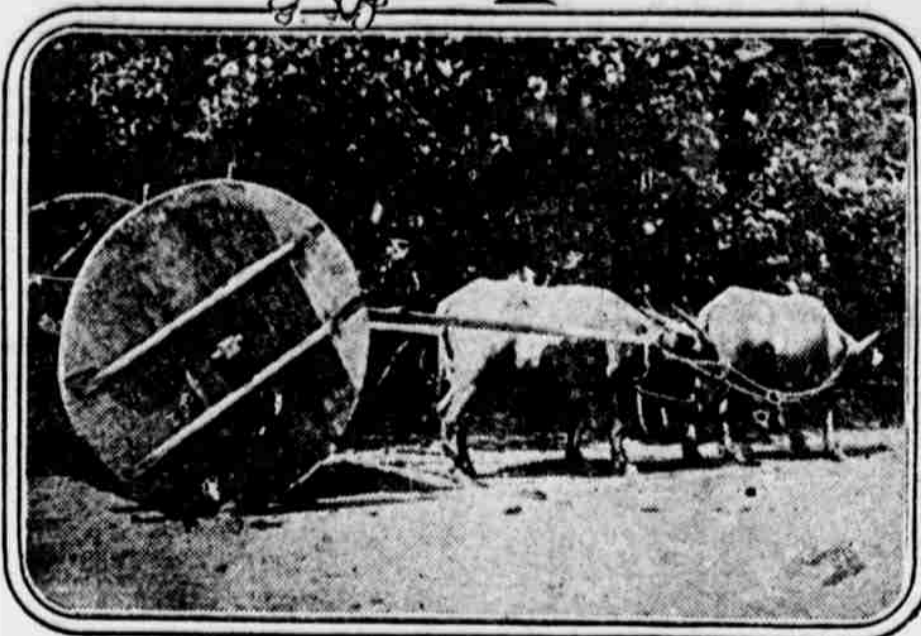
The Mummified Miner.

The collection of the Museum of Natural History in New York has been enriched by addition of a mummified miner from Chile, which was presented by the owners of the mines where the body was uncovered. The miner was after copper and had burrowed into the earth a distance of 15 feet when he was caught by a cave-in and buried.

Doesn't Need Any Help.

A smart woman may be able to make a fool of any man, but more often she doesn't.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

"Beautiful Isle"



Type of Cart Used in Sugar Cane Districts of Formosa.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

One of the most important of the "slices of China" taken by outside nations, but one which there has been no mention of restoring, is the island which the world knows as Formosa, but which the Japanese, since they gained possession of it through the Chino-Japanese war, have named Taiwan.

"Isla Formosa"—Beautiful Isle—the early Portuguese voyagers called it; and never was a more appropriate name given to an Isle of the sea.

If you care to confirm this in one of several pleasant ways, sail along the west coast of Formosa in a tek pal, or bamboo raft, on a clear day, and you will witness a pageant of mountain scenery that will haunt the memory for many a day.

Beyond the fertile plain, with its emerald paddy-fields and its picturesque little villages dotted here and there on the banks of meandering streams, foothills with unending variations of contour silhouette their tree-fringed summits against the paler screen of more distant mountains. Of these, sometimes five and sometimes even six parallel ranges are visible at once, each a separate ribbon of color, shading from the deepest sapphire to the palest azure and extending in an unbroken chain of beauty from north to south.

On the east of the island you can see the highest coastal cliffs known, at some places rising abruptly to an elevation of about 6,000 feet, and affording an impregnable wall of defense to the wild aboriginal tribes living in the mountains back of them.

All Kinds of Vegetation.

Formosan scenery is unusual in its diversity of vegetation within such narrow confines—the greatest length of the island from north to south is about 264 miles and 80 miles is its greatest width.

From the palms and tropical fruit trees of the western plain it is only a short step to the slopes of the lower mountains, with their exuberant jungles of various growths—the bearded banyans, the graceful tree ferns, which in sheltered nooks attain the height of palms, and the ubiquitous bamboo grass.

Here, among moss-strung trees, is found growing the beautiful butterfly orchid, while in exposed spaces, nestling among the rocks, rose-pink azaleas flaunt their gay blooms. A little higher are plateaus covered with camphor laurel, the largest tracts of these valuable trees in the world, while still higher grow the forests of coniferous trees—the giant benui, similar to the redwoods of California, the largest trees in the East and the second largest in the world; the valuable hinoki or Japanese cypress, and the pine cedar and spruce of the New England states; and higher yet the craggy peaks of the tallest mountains, but sparsely covered with vegetation of any sort, where eagles build their nests, and which for the greater part of the year lie beneath a mantle of snow.

The usual approach to the island is the port of Kelung, in the extreme north. Almost any time one arrives in Kelung the rain will be found coming down in sheets, obscuring the hill-crested harbor.

Board a train for Taihoku, the capital city, which on most maps still bears its old Chinese name of Taipei, and in about ten minutes you will pass through a long tunnel, under a mountain ridge on the other side of which you will in all probability find the landscape flooded with sunshine. Rain seems as out of place in this new world as stars in the broad daylight.

Here and there the train passes the low, mud, thatched dwelling of some Chinese homesteader with a pool of water by way of front yard, where huge slate-colored buffaloes take their noonday siesta.

Taihoku is a Fine City.

The distance of 20 miles to Taihoku is covered in a little more than an hour, and there the traveler is sure to be amazed at the westernized appearance of the city—the broad streets, the beautiful parks, and the imposing public buildings. Only the gateways of the old wall, which surrounded the ancient Chinese city, remain, looking as out of place in their rejuvenated setting as the Egyptian obelisk in Central park. Even Daitotet, the Chinese section of Taihoku, is unnaturally

The Japanese insist upon two official house cleanings a year, and as they are executed under a policeman's vigilant eye, there is nothing slipshod in the undertaking. All a man's chattels, his lures and penates, his wives and children, even to his cherished opium pipe, are heaped unceremoniously in front of his dwelling, and the work of scouring begins.

During the summer months Daitotet presents its busiest face, for it is then that the tea season is in full swing. The colonnades of the tea houses, if such an imposing architectural term as colonnades can be fittingly applied to such unimposing structures, are alight with the staccato accents of chattering tea pickers. These are generally young girls, as old hands are too numb for the deft manipulation of the tea leaves.

Seated on low stools before wide wicker trays, these bright-eyed maids, in their peacock-blue smocks, their front hair clipped in bangs, and with a gay posy or two stuck in the braided knots at the backs of their necks, are in animated contrast to their rather drab surroundings.

Everywhere one sees coolies packing the gayly flowered lead-lined boxes that carry their sensitive freight of tea to America. About 90 per cent of Formosa Oolong goes to the United States.

The population of Formosa is mainly agricultural. The cultivation of rice, and more especially sugar cane, is encouraged by the government, and these are grown in great quantities.

Monopoly in Camphor.

However, the most interesting industry is the production of camphor, and it can truly be said to be peculiar to the island, when it is remembered that Formosa holds a practical monopoly in the world's market of this valuable drug.

Shortly after the Japanese came to Formosa, 25 years ago, the camphor industry became a government monopoly. Before that time there had been a great deal of ruthless waste, both in the cutting down of trees and in extracting camphor from them.

At first the Japanese, too, were careless in this respect, for the supply of camphor trees seemed practically limitless, but the great increase in the demand for the product in late years has made scientific afforestation necessary. Now large tracts of land are given over to the cultivation of the camphor laurel. The oldest of these cultivated trees are now some twenty years of age.

In point of view of value, few trees can rival the camphor. An average tree, say with a basal circumference of 12 feet, will yield about 50 piculs of camphor (approximately 6,000 pounds), which, at the present market price, is worth several thousands of dollars.

Native stills are scattered here and there throughout the districts where crude camphor is collected, packed in tins and carried down precipitous mountain paths on coolies' backs to the nearest railway line, whence it goes to the refinery at Taihoku.

Ever since we have any authentic record, Formosa has been peopled with wild tribes of probably Malayan and Polynesian origin. They are nearest in point of resemblance to the Dyaks of Borneo and, although their origin has never been proved beyond a doubt, they are sufficiently like certain of the South Sea tribes to justify us in ascribing to them a common ancestry.

They are found on the island today in all stages of development. The "raw" savages, as the Chinese term them, live much as their ancestors did centuries ago, while the "ripe" savages, living on the borderland between their wild kin and Chinese settlers, have more or less assimilated Chinese ways of life. The savage population of Formosa is estimated at about 150,000.

At present Formosa enjoys greater freedom from savage attacks than ever before in her history. This is due to the fact that the Japanese have installed a live-wire barrier from Karenko, about midway on the east coast, to Pinan, in the south, a distance of about a hundred miles, to serve as a protection against savage raids.

The future of Formosa under its present benevolent paternal government looks bright indeed. Never before has this island, so beautiful, to the eye, enjoyed such a degree of prosperity.

THANKFUL FOR A LITTLE CHILD

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Kutztown, Pa.—"I wish every woman who wants children would try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. It has done so much for me. My baby is almost a year old now and is the picture of health. She walked at eleven months and is trying to use her little tongue. She can say some words real nice. I am sending you her picture. I shall be thankful as long as I live that I found such a wonderful medicine for my troubles."—Mrs. CHARLES A. MERTZ, Kutztown, Pa.

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Spoken and written recommendations from thousands of women who have found health and happiness from its use have come to us. We only tell you what they say and what they believe.

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Not Efficient, However.

"The language you use to that mule is perfectly shocking."

"Yes," replied the driver, "it seems to trouble everybody but the mule."—Edinburgh Scotsman.

Revolver on the hip is always in mind; that's unpleasant.

WHY THAT BAD BACK?

Does spring find you miserable with an aching back? Do you feel lame, stiff, tired, nervous and depressed? Isn't it time then, you found out why you are unable to enjoy these fine spring days? Likely your kidneys have weakened. Winter is hard on the kidneys. Colds and chills and a heavier diet with less exercise tax them heavily. It's little wonder spring finds you with backache, rheumatic pains, headaches, dizziness and bladder irregularities. But don't be discouraged. Use Doan's Kidney Pills. Doan's have helped thousands and should help you. Ask your neighbor!

A Nebraska Case

Mrs. C. E. Clark, Genoa, Neb., says: "I was feeling miserable. My back was lame and I had such severe pains in my hips I could hardly get up after bending. My kidneys acted too often. A friend advised me to use Doan's Kidney Pills and when I had used a couple boxes, I felt like a different woman. Doan's gave me permanent relief."

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