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The Acton Free Press

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MIDSUMMER

The year dreams idly on her blossom bed
Beside a glimmering pool; her smiling mouth
With spoil of sun-ripe berries is made red;
And over her, from meadows in the south,
Breathe winds, so long the rifters of wild bloom,
That they are verily drunken with perfume.

In the warm garden-ways the lilies lift
Their pearly chalices, where plundering bees
Are drowned in sweetness; great cloud-galleons drift
Over the sky, becalmed argosies;
Even the echoes, haunters of the hills
Have fallen asleep beside the hidden rills.

The pale, wild poppies by the eastern sea
Nod to each other in the calm hours of the afternoon,
And the blue ocean drowses languorously
To the low lullaby its wavelets croon;
Earth's beating heart seems for the moment stilled,
With every young spring wish and hope fulfilled.

—L. M. Montgomery in the Canadian Magazine for July.

How Dillman Macklin Served His Country

By Charles Moreau Harger

DILLMAN sat far back in the centre aisle, when the principal pulled a cord and brought floating down the big service flag of the school. Cheers rang all through the room and every boy and girl quickly counted the blue stars—fifteen of them—representing former pupils enlisted.

The principal named the young men for whom they stood. Dillman knew most of them—the cashier of the big white bank on the corner, the grocer's son, the driver of the express wagon. And the principal's voice took on a touch of pride when he finished:

"The fifteenth is for my son, Captain Deane Harmon."

Dillman looked around over the audience. He could pick out the families that had been honored—almost every boy in his class had a personal interest in one of the stars. But there was no star for the Macklins. Nobody looked with pride at him; nobody thought of his family. Yet there were two big brothers: Frank and Jim. One was in the city and the other had simply disappeared.

"We might have had two stars," thought the boy far back in the centre aisle."

While the last song was being sung, he slipped to the door and out under the elms of the street. His eyes were misty—somehow he felt that he was out of it. He dreaded to go back to the unkempt little house at the edge of town where there was only poverty and loneliness. Indeed he lingered long after school was dismissed, wandering aimlessly around the streets.

"Out of the way there," came a quick order and as he was pushed aside, around the corner came young men in khaki, marching four abreast; the new company of guards on their way to the public square. Eagerly he hurried up alongside, gazing in admiration on the well-set-up soldiers.

They drew up in a long line and stood at salute while the bugle played and a big flag was lowered for the night. Instinctively Dillman's hand went to his head and he pulled off his cap and stood uncovered as the Union Jack came slowly down the staff.

"That's right"

He looked up and saw the principal beside him.

"It is not every boy that takes off his cap to the flag," went on Mr. Harmon. "I am glad to see you do that."

"Fours. Right—march!" The company was moving, and Dillman followed the swaying line down the street and out to the west end of the town where it turned to its camping place, a beautiful meadow in the bend of the river.

White tents were everywhere and scores of townspeople were visiting with the men. Dillman stood bashfully on the edge of the crowd, unnoticed and alone. Finally, he went to the shade of a great elm and sat on the grass watching the beautiful scene. Evening came, the visitors departed, the guards were posted, and regretfully he turned homeward.

Along the river bank he went. The spring rains had swollen the stream and it was angrily pouring its flood down the broad channel. Farther up was the dam and beyond that the Macklin home. Passing the sagging gate and unkempt yard, he entered the kitchen. His father was lying on a couch smoking.

"Where you been all this time?" growled Mr. Macklin. "You are just loafing forever."

Macklin himself had put in the day fishing upstream.

"Seeing the soldiers," replied Dillman quietly.

"Well, the soldiers will get along without you; better attend to business at home."

"But, father, we can't get along just now without soldiers, can we?"

"Oh, I don't know. I ain't worrying none about this war business."

"Neither are Frank and Jim," said the boy a little bitterly, "but I would if I were old enough."

"Don't you say nothin' about your brothers—they'll take care of themselves. Get your supper and go to bed."

Silently the boy ate his supper, scarcely looking at his tired mother who had kept his supper warm for him. She laid her hand gently on his shoulder as she stood near him.

"You're a good boy," she whispered and the words sent a thrill through his heart.

Over his bed he had pinned a small flag, picked up in the park after a recent celebration—but he was too tired to do more than glance at it.

For a long time he lay, thinking over the events of the day. He half dozed into sleep, when suddenly there broke on his ears a rasping sound. "Boom!" followed by a queer cracking as of timbers breaking. He leaped to the floor and looked out of the low window. The river was rushing past as before, but again came the unusual noise. In a moment he had dressed, and slipped down stairs through the ragged yard and across the grassy stretch between the road and the stream. Great logs were coming down and the river was unquestionably higher than before.

Following the bank, he approached the old mill with its ancient dam almost buried beneath flood. As the great logs struck the coping of the structure, it gave again the sound he had heard earlier. It dawned on him what was happening. Like a hare he flew on down the slope and, with one frightened upward glance at the pouring waters, he raced on toward the lowlands. He disdained the pathway, but pushed through the bushes, regardless of the brambles.

Suddenly he was brought to a stop by a sharp "Halt!" A soldier was faintly outlined a few feet away. He had forgotten the sentries.

"Halt!" The boy did not know what to answer. But he cried anxiously, "Let me through—I must see the colonel."

"There's no colonel—do you mean Captain Harmon?" The sentry lowered his gun, for he recognized the lad.

"Yes—quick—danger!" It was all he could gasp.

Running side by side they crossed the parade ground and hurried between long lines of tents, the sentry giving passwords when he met his fellows. The captain came from his cot, somewhat annoyed. "What do you want this time of night?"

"The dam—sir, it is breaking," cried Dillman. "Get the men out—you'll be drowned."

It took a moment for the officer to get the story straight, but when he did, an alarm was sent out and the streets of the camp filled with wondering young soldiers. Instantly they set to work struggling with the tents and loading equipments, but in the midst of this came the order: "March!" Scarcely had they started, when there was a moving wall of foam-topped water showing on the farther side and at double quick the column raced up the slope and away from the danger.

Only by putting forth the utmost effort did Captain Harmon keep his feet, but at last he stood where he dared to look back. He turned, expecting to see by his side the boy who had given the warning. But he was alone. A slender figure was making its way back along the edge of the water.

Already the plain where had been the camp was awhirl with muddy water. Tents were floating here and there; others tugged at their ropes, the brown canvas bulging from the incoming tide. The river was taking a wide swing over the campground, then out again to its channel and on toward the sea.

Making a long detour around the flooded ground and camp, Dillman an hour later groped into his own home, and taking off his wet shoes, made his way upstairs to his bedroom. He had barely touched the bed, when he heard a soft footstep, and his mother came in.

"Where have you been?" she asked quietly.

"Just over to the town, mother—I thought the soldier boys ought to know the dam was breaking. They all got out, off the camp ground, before the water rushed in. My! it was a close call for them."

"You always think of the things to do to help folks, Dillie. I don't know what mother would do without you," said Mrs. Macklin, wrapping her arms about her boy.

"There, it's all right, mother. It wasn't much to do." Dillman drew a long breath. "I'm glad I got there in time. Do you know, mother, there is a big flag in the school-room, with a red band around a white space, and on the white fifteen blue stars.

"Won't you come over to school with me to-morrow? I will slick up so you will be proud of me. Sometimes maybe I don't think of it."

"Well, you might be a little more careful. But, Dillie, I have a surprise for you. I have been working hard and I have not told you why. But I have a new coat for you. What do you think of that?"

"Oh," cried Dillman. "You shouldn't have done it, mother." But she was already out of the room, and a moment later came back with a strong, well-made tweed coat.

Dillman's eyes opened. "I never had a coat like that, mother."

"No, but it is going to make a man of you," she said.

"I don't like to feel, mother, that a coat will make a man of me, but I will try to be a man in the coat, and you will go to school with me and see the flag?"

"Yes, I'll go with you and see it. I was going to town, anyway, with some eggs," she said.

The next morning, dressed in the new coat, Dillman carried himself better than he ever had before, as he walked to town with his mother.

She left the eggs at the grocery and they made their way to the school building. The journey had been long, for they had rounded the river's bend, and the camp ground, now a bedraggled sea of mud, showed where the force of the flood had passed.

"Maybe they won't want me to go in?" suggested Mrs. Macklin, slightly nervous at her unaccustomed undertaking.

"Yes, they will, mother! Lots of parents come to visit the school," urged Dillman, tugging at her hand. "Just come right along with me," and he proudly led the way, feeling quite like a protector to the shrinking, little woman who followed.

The service flag made a brave appearance, Mrs. Macklin, from a seat beside her boy's desk looked at it with beaming eyes. Just as she was seated, the heads of the children turned, and looking in that direction, Mrs. Macklin saw that Captain Harmon was walking up the aisle. After he had greeted the teacher, he said:

"I would like to see Dillman Macklin." He turned and looked over the scholars, and, not seeming to see the one he wanted, he added: "I have something to say to Dillman Macklin, and I wish to shake hands with him."

The teacher beckoned for Dillman to come forward.

Dillman flushed with confusion, made his way to the ones on the rostrum. The Captain stepped to meet him, and, grasping his hand firmly, turned to the students looking upon the scene in wide-eyed wonder, and said:

"Do you know why there was not havoc and ruin and death on our river bank last night? Do you know that down by the old mill the dam broke and the waters threatened the lives of hundreds of our men? Who warned us of that danger? Have you any idea? It was this lad here—Dillman Macklin. He outran the sentry, and brought me the cry: 'The dam—the dam is breaking. Get the men out—you'll all be drowned.' That is what saved us, for the men were aroused and marched to a place of safety."

Captain Harmon stepped back to where the flag with the blue stars hung, and, touching the lower folds of the flag, he said:

"You have here a flag of honor, with its fifteen stars, telling that your brothers are in war. But let me say, here is another brother who has been tested and not found wanting." Laying his hand on the lad's shoulder, he continued: "My boy, there may never be a star placed here on this banner, in honor of your joining the ranks, but this very minute there is a star placed on God's banner, that proclaims you a hero."

The tears were running down Mrs. Macklin's face, when her boy, subdued but glad, again took his seat beside her. She reached and laid her hand over his, saying in a low tone:

"Dillie, I'm proud of you!"

To which the boy made reply:

"Yes, but it wasn't anything."

MEASURE YOUR POSSIBILITIES

Some one has said that to be as good as our fathers we must be better. We have the benefit of their example, the advantage of the work they did before us. They led the way, and we should not be satisfied to stop where they did. All that has been makes possible broader faith, more generous charity, loftier aspirations, greater achievements. We are called on not to measure up to their possibilities, but to our own.

DISCIPLINE AND CASTE IN GERMANY

From the time when he is four years old, says former Ambassador Gerard, in "My Four Years in Germany," the German is disciplined and taught that his government is the only good and effective form. The teachers in the schools are all paid by the government and they teach the children only the principles that the rulers of the German people desire. There are no Saturday holidays in the German schools, and the summer holidays last only three to five weeks.

You never see groups of small boys playing alone in Germany. Their games and their walks are superintended by their teachers, who are always inculcating in them reverence and awe for the military heroes of the past and the present. On Saturday night the German boy is turned over by the state-paid school teacher to the state-paid pastor, who adds divine authority to the principles of reverence for the German system.

There is a real system of caste in Germany. For example, I was playing tennis one day with a man and, while dressing afterwards, I asked him what he was. He answered that he was a kaufmann, or merchant. For the German this answer was enough. It placed him in the merchant class. I asked him what sort of a kaufmann he was. He then told me that we was president of a large electrical company, but, being a German, he merely disclosed his caste without going into details.

On the registers of guests in a German summer resort you will see Mrs. Manufactory-Proprietor Schultze registered with Mrs. Landrat Schwartz and Mrs. Second Lieutenant von Hing. Of course, there is no doubt as to the relative social positions of Mrs. Manufactory-Proprietor Schultze and Mrs. Second Lieutenant von Hing. Mrs. Manufactory-Proprietor Schultze may have a steam yacht and a tiara, an opera box and ten million marks. She may be an old lady noted for her works of charity. Her husband may have made discoveries of enormous value to the human race. But she will always be compelled to take her place behind Mrs. Second Lieutenant von Hing, even if the officer's wife is only seventeen years old.

WHY THE SETTING SUN LOOKS OVAL

As the sun nears the horizon in the evening, it appears enlarged and usually becomes oval, or longer in breadth than in height. This enlargement is generally an optical illusion owing to the disk of the sun appearing close to the horizon which we know to be far distant. When the atmosphere is dusty and hot, it acts as a magnifying glass or a kind of aerial lens, the effect being increased about sixteen times by the increased depth of air looked through. To the inhabitants of the earth and other planets, if they have inhabitants, the sun is the most important of heavenly bodies. It is over eight-hundred thousand miles in diameter and its mean distance from the earth is ninety-three million miles. It not only sends forth heat and light sufficient to sustain life, but because of its great size exerts a power of attraction that holds the planets in their orbits.

Astronomers divide the sun into three parts: The central photosphere, or disk, the luminous chromosphere and the corona or outer atmosphere seen only during a total eclipse. When it is viewed through a telescope, the surface of the sun is not equally bright in all parts, but presents a mottled appearance, compared by some to a surface thickly covered with leaves. The spectroscope shows the sun to contain at least thirty-six elements, all of which are found in the earth's crust; the most important of these are iron, calcium, manganese, copper, hydrogen, sulphur and potassium.

HOW TWO TEMPERAMENTALS QUARREL

The famous Russian novelists, Tolstoy and Turgenev, were contemporaries and friends, but on one occasion they had a serious falling out. This is the story of their quarrel, as told in a recent biography:

They had met at a friend's house. Turgenev spoke enthusiastically of his daughter's English governess, and said that she required the child to mend old ragged clothes to give to the poor.

"Do you think that a good thing to do?" demanded Tolstoy.

"I certainly do," replied Turgenev. "It makes charity workers recognize everyday needs."

"And I think that a well-dressed girl, with filthy, malodorous rags in her hands, is acting an inalicere farce," commented Tolstoy.

"I ask you not to say that!" exclaimed Turgenev, hotly.

"Why should I not say what I am convinced is true?" retorted Tolstoy.

"If you say that again, I'll box your ears!" Turgenev cried, white with rage, and rushed from the room. A duel was narrowly averted.

Afterwards these famous men became reconciled, and on his deathbed Turgenev wrote an affecting note to Tolstoy, addressing him as "the greatest writer of our Russian land."

TWENTY YEARS AGO

From the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, July 21, 1898

The farmers are all busy with their wheat harvest.

Owing to the dry weather the raspberry crop is considerably reduced.

The masons have just completed a very fine freestone foundation for a new bank barn for Mr. William Plank, of the first line.

In the report of the recent High School Entrance Examinations in this county, the names of Clara Cobban, Thomas Henderson and Hattie Oram appear among the successful ones who wrote at Georgetown.

Mrs. S. A. Secord, who has been a resident of Acton for the last forty-one years has removed to Orillia, where she will reside with her son, Mr. John Secord.

A bulletin from the Post Office Department at Ottawa requests that the name and address of the writer or sender of any letter, book-packet, legal or commercial paper, sample or parcel should be printed or written on the upper left hand corner of the envelope or wrapper.

Dr. J. P. Uren left last week to enjoy a well-earned rest for a month or so. During his absence Dr. J. M. Macdonald, of Toronto, who won such favorable opinions for his treatment of the anthrax cases here last summer, while supplying for Dr. Uren, has charge of the Dr's practice again.

BORN

SECORD—In Acton, on July 15, to Mr. and Mrs. T. E. M. Secord, a daughter

POTATO FLOUR

Everyone doesn't know it but the fact remains that delicious white bread may be made simply and solely from potato flour. This is not a war discovery. Long before August, 1914, and the beginning of the reign of bloodshed potato flour was in use and bakers liked it particularly for making sponge cake.

There are enormous quantities of potatoes in Canada. The farmers know that; their wives know it; city people know it. What are we going to do with them all? Are we going to allow such valuable food material to go to waste?

Senator Colby, loaned by the United States food administration to the Canada food board, and who has just returned from the front, is impressing it on his audiences all over the country that he would not sit down at a table where there was one slice of pure wheat bread after what he saw in Europe. To eat it would seem to him like snatching out his hard and unstinting it from the mouths of starving people. "Eat substitutes," he says. "Eat substitutes" the Canada food board has been preaching for months past. "Eat substitutes" echo all thinking and earnest minded people.

Then why not encourage the manufacture and the free use of potato flour? It is wholesome, makes a delicious bread and does not rob the people of Europe of the thing they most need—wheat and the manufactured product, the staff of life. Bread is the basis of social order. Everything that makes life endurable in times of stress depends upon bread. People have bartered their souls before now for a crust of bread.

Indeed, starvation has reached such a point in certain districts of Russia that members of the impoverished classes are selling their wives and children for bags of flour.

Is it not essential then that we save white flour lest our allies in Europe reach such a pitch as this?

We have the wheat on this continent. The United States and Canada alone are in a position to meet Europe's desperate need for wheat. And still we go on using white flour freely! It is time for potato flour to be given a trial in order that increasing quantities of standard flour may be saved. Healthy men have lived and worked for months on a diet of nothing other than potatoes, oleomargarine and a little fruit. The food material in potatoes is 98 per cent. digestible. Potato flour is very fine in texture and has an agreeable flavor.

PUT IT IN YOUR HAT

When some chaps are setting around assuming to tell every one what they know as to what numbers constitute certain divisions of our army, remove your hat and then read the following to him:

An army corps is 60,000 men.
An infantry division is 10,000 men.
An infantry brigade is 7,000 men.
A regiment of infantry is 3,000 men.
A battalion is 1,000 men.
A company is 250 men.
A platoon is 60 men.
A corporal's squad is 11 men.
A field battery has 195 men.
A firing squad is 20 men.
A supply train has 283 men.
A machine gun battalion has 296 men.
An engineer's regiment has 1,098 men.
An ambulance company has 66 men.
A field hospital has 55 men.
A medicine attachment has 13 men.
A major general heads the field army and also each army corps.
A brigadier general heads each infantry brigade.
A colonel heads each regiment.
A lieutenant colonel is next in rank below a colonel.
A major heads a battalion.
A captain heads a company.
A lieutenant heads a platoon.
A sergeant is next below a lieutenant.
A corporal is a squad officer.

TEN YEARS OLD TO-DAY

I'm ten years old to-day, mamma;
Just see how fast I grow!
I'm 'most as tall as you are now
And know 'most all you know.

I read and write almost as well,
And cook and sweep and sew;
I practice 'most an hour each day.
Now what more can I do?

I want to grow up good and smart,
As good and smart as you.
And folks all love you, dear mamma;
I'm sure they'll love me too.

I want to look just like you too;
Your face to me's the best.
And all that you are I would be—
And, O, you know the rest.

—M. Helen Neff.

EVERY GARDENER HIS OWN SEED GROWER

While rigid selection from year to year is necessary for most kinds of vegetables when grown from seed; and while to keep them pure the different varities have to be grown some distance apart, yet most of the seed grown in the home garden is likely to give almost or quite as satisfactory results or even better than that which is bought, and, as some seed may be difficult to obtain next year, it is recommended for each person who has a garden to let a few plants or specimens ripen, from which seed can be saved.

It is better to mark the best plants and save the seed from them rather than to save the seed which remain after the plants have been cropped.

The seed stalks of lettuce are thrown up after the heads are full grown. The seed ripens rather unevenly, and, in order not to lose any of it, each head should be picked over as it shows white, it being necessary to go over the plants every few days. The plants can, however, be pulled and hung up to dry.

If radishes are left unpulled, after being ready for use, they will soon throw up stalks, and good seed will develop. For best results the plants should be at least six inches apart.

Spinach, if thinned to six inches, will produce an abundance of seed.

In saving home-grown seeds, it is important to dry them as soon as possible after they are ripe, then clean them, and keep them dry until needed the following spring.

Peas and beans will soon be spoiled for seed if they do not dry rapidly in the pod after being harvested.

As corn sometimes has to be pulled before it is quite hard, it is desirable to see that there is a good circulation of air around each ear. A good plan is to husk the ears and then stick each one separately on nails driven into a board and far enough apart so that the ears will not touch.

The seed of tomatoes for home use should be saved from the plant bearing the largest crop of early and best fruit. Where a quantity of seed is saved, the tomatoes may be cut in half and the pulp pressed out into some vessel, adding about one-third its volume of water. Put in a dark room until fermentation sets in, which will be in about two days, when the seed will separate readily from the pulp. Wash out and dry where the sun does not shine on it.

Following are the quantities of seed which one might expect: Beans, 1 or more oz. per plant; corn, 300 to 600 kernals per ear; cucumbers, 1-8 to 1-4 oz. per specimen; lettuce, ¼ oz. per plant; onion, ⅛ oz. per plant; pea, 4 oz. per 3 ft. or row; pepper, 1-10 to 1-8 oz. per specimen; radish, 1 oz. per plant; spinach, 1½ oz. per plant; squash, 2½ oz. to 3 oz. each; tomato, 50 to 300 each.—Experimental Farm Notes.

A HERO OF FOURTEEN YEARS

Perhaps the most dramatic and heroic act of this world war was the noble self-sacrifice of a mere child of fourteen years. An Alsatian Boy Scout whose father had been killed in Alsace offered his services to the colonel of a regiment near Altkirch. Knowing every path, mountain trail, and road, brave and intelligent, he was accepted.

During many weeks he rendered valuable services, bringing information enabling French progress and the capture of prisoners. One day the colonel asked him to make a longer and more perilous quest than usual. Our young hero started, full of zeal and hope, and was allowed to take his dog Fidele. Having to sleep out two nights, he knew his dog would not betray him.

All went well for a long while, although the journey was full of perils. Suddenly two burly Prussians barred his path, and he was taken before the enemy officers in charge of the nearest post.

Asked his name, "Karl Webler," he replied. "Where do you live?" "With my mother at Altkirch." "Your father?" "Killed." "You bear a German name and speak German. Why are you helping the enemy?" "I am Alsatian and love France, my mother land." "Stupid young fool," said the officer, "do you know your fate—a spy?" "Yes, sir." "Do you love your mother?" "With all my heart." "Very well. You love your mother, and you would like to live. I will let you go and give you one hundred francs if you will tell me how many regiments and how many batteries are defending Altkirch." "No, sir, I cannot." "Why?" "Because I promised never to betray my country." "Idiot!" The officer then said: "I will give you five minutes. Accept my generous offer, or you die." The fateful minutes finished. "Well?" "Sir, I cannot and will not betray my country."

A few minutes later the little hero and his faithful dog were dead. The story was related by a prisoner who witnessed the scene.

The widowed mother, now childless, broken-hearted, but proud, points to visitors the two medals sent her by the French government—"La Medaille Militaire" and "La Croix de Guerre."—Edward Fox Sainsbury.

THE WORKERS

Here's to the man who labors and does it with a song! He stimulates his neighbors and helps the world along!

I like the men who do things, who saw and glue things, and split and dig and weave.

Man groans beneath his burden, beneath the chain he wears; and still the toiler's guerdon is worth the pain he bears.

For there's no satisfaction beneath the bending sky like that the man of action enjoys when right is nigh.

To look back o'er the winding and dark and rocky road, and know you bore your grinding and soul-fatiguing load—

An strong men ought to bear it, through all the stress and strife—that's the reward of merit—that is the balm of life!

I like the men who do things, who plough and saw and reap, who build and delve and how things while the dreamers are asleep.