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CHAPTER XXIII.
Letters
Letter from Peter Noyes to Monte Covington, received by the latter at the Hotel Normandie, Paris, France:—
Nice, France, July 22.
Dear Covington:—

I don't know whether you can make out this scribble, because I have to feel my way across the paper; but I'm sitting alone in my room, aching to talk with you as we used to talk. If you were here I could give you my name, glad to listen, because—suddenly all I told you about has come true.

Riding to Cannes the very next day after you left I spoke to her and—she listened. It was all rather vague and she made no promises, but she listened. In a few weeks or months or years, now, she'll be mine for all time. She doesn't want me to tell Beatrice, and there is no one else to tell except you—so forgive me, old man, if I let myself loose.

Besides, in a way, you're responsible. We were talking of you, because we missed you. You have a mighty good friend in her, Covington. She knows you—the real you that I thought of. I had glimpsed. She sees the man in the game—not the man in the grand-stand. Her Covington is the man they used to give mine long Harvard for. I never heard that in my name. When I think was a grind—a "greasy grind," they used to call me. It didn't hurt, for I smiled in rather a superior sort of way at the men I thought were wasting their energy on a griddle. But, after all, you fellows got something out of it that the rest of us didn't get. A Varsity man remains a Varsity man all his life. I think she always thinks of you as in a red sweater with a black tie. Any time that you feel you're up against anything hard, that ought to help you.

We talked a great deal of you, as I said, and I find myself now thinking more of you than of myself in connection with her. I don't understand it. Perhaps it's because she seems so alone in the world, and you are the most intimate friend she has. Perhaps it's because you've seen so much more of her than I in these last few months. Anyway, I have a feeling that somehow you are an integral part of her. I've tried to puzzle out the relationship, and I can't. "Brother" does not define it; neither does "comrade." If you were not already married, I'd almost suspect her of being in love with you.

I know that sounds absurd. I know it is absurd. She isn't the kind to allow her emotions to get away from her like that. But I'll say this much, Covington: that if we three were to start fresh, I'd stand a mighty poor chance with her.

This is strange talk from a man who less than six hours ago became officially engaged. I told her that I had had her once, and that now I had found her again I wanted her to stay. And she said, "I'll try." That wasn't very much, Covington, was it? But I seized the promise as if it were a drowning man does a straw. It was so much more than anything I have hoped for.

I should have kept her that time I found her on the little farm in Connecticut. If I had been a little more insistent then, I think she would have come with me. But I was afraid of her money. It was rumored that her aunt left her a vast fortune, and— you know the mongrels that hound a girl in that position, Covington? I was afraid she might think I was one of the pack. She was frightened—bewildered. I should have snatched her away from them all and gone off with her. I was cunning enough to support her decently, and I should have thought of nothing else. Instead of that I held back a little, and so lost her, as I thought. I don't mind away, and I returned to my work like a madman—and I nearly died.

Now I feel alive clear to my fingertips. I'm going to get my eyes back. I haven't the slightest doubt in the world about that. Already I feel the magic of the new film that has been applied. They don't take any more. Sitting here to-night without my shade, I can hold them open and catch the feeble light that filters in from the street lamps at a distance. It is only a question of a few months, perhaps weeks, perhaps days. The next time we meet I shall be able to see you.

You won't object to hearing a man rave a little, Covington? If you do, you can tear up this right here. But I know I can't say anything good about Marjory that you won't agree with. Maybe, however, you'd call my present condition abnormal. Perhaps every normal man's life has been abnormal to this extent at least once to see, for once, this staid old world through the eyes of a prince of the ancient city of Bagdad; to thrill with the magic and gorgeous beauty of it?

WAR'S INSISTENT CALL TO THE WOMEN OF CANADA

Canada Appeals to Her Daughters to Rally to Her Aid in This the Greatest Crisis in History—Enlist for Food Saving and Food Production.

With the insistent note of a clarion call to service, the message has gone forth: "To the farms!"

For months past it has wavered across the country, and the echo has been caught up and thrown back from time to time. But now it comes with a direct challenge that is irresistible as the soldier's bugle call.

It sounds from end to end of the country. Men and women are hearkening. They are thinking about it; talking about it. But there is no time to play battles and shuttlecock with such an issue. There must be action—immediate, clear-cut, whole-hearted action.

The challenge is to men and women alike. Equality of service is demanded of them. Employer and employee are asked to help; the rich and the poor; the busy and the idle. There is no intention that any industry be put out of joint or business disorganized. There is every intention that all the resources of the country be judiciously used in making the most of her harvest this year. The need is imperative. Nothing can offset this fact.

What the women of Europe have done to save the crops is an old tale; yet ever new in the wonder of it. What the women of Canada have done in this line is negligible yet, although there has been some brave pioneering in Eastern Ontario, and for years past in the West, when no other labor was obtainable, the farmer in desperation enlisted his wife's help in the outdoors. Not even the deeds of the thousands of men who are daily sacrificing



Men Must Fight—and Women Must Reap.

themselves on the battlefields of Europe have eclipsed the heroism, the endurance, the patience of the women of France, Belgium and Great Britain. They have known the extremity of suffering. They have tasted the dregs of war. They have lacked the stimulus of the excitement of war. Yet they have nobly "carried on." Even as their men have fought, they have worked.

What they did in the fields of Europe temporarily staved off the wolf of starvation from the doors of the people. What they did in the munition shops kept the guns supplied with shells. What they did in office, in factory, in work-shop, in every phase of industrial life, kept the wheels of commerce turning and staved the fluctuating pulse of an over-wrought nation.

It was in those early days when the men were suddenly called to arms and the crops would have rotted had they not harvested them that the women first showed their mettle and rose to the occasion voluntarily. As Lloyd George said of them:

"They know their country is in the grip of grim tragedy. In Flanders, girls harnessed themselves to heavy barges and plod along the towpath, thanking God they've released—not a man, but a horse to help in the war."

In Russia and Italy the women plow, sow and reap. Even on the beautiful Riviera the shadow of war has fallen, and the young girls in the work of transportation stagger under kegs of wine or water weighing eighty pounds.

In Scotland, girls single turnips, plant potatoes, drive horses and carts.

"Right or wrong, coward that I am or not, whether it is good for you or not, I love you, Monte." I would say. And, if you wished, I would let me, I would kiss you on your dear tousled hair, on your forehead, on your eyes— (I be continued.)

let her do it and add one man to relieve the labor situation.

If she can give up her holidays this year to work on the farm, she will be doing a plucky and patriotic thing.

If she is a girl of leisure, it is up to her to go out on the land or send a man from the city while she fills his shoes.

In short—every woman and every teenage girl can do SOMETHING during July and August towards assuring the country of the full benefit of those crops which Nature so bountifully yields, war or no war. It is one of the biggest things ever asked of a woman. It is for the sake of our Allies. But most of all—for our men "over there." They provide the irresistible argument every woman should turn her hand to food conservation, to food production, or to both.

Food Control Corner

Bolshevik doctrines have brought Russia down from one of the greatest food producing countries on the globe to a condition of starvation. Drunk with liberty, which they did not understand, filled with idealistic notions about the equality of men, and lacking individual initiative, production in Russia has practically ceased, according to the evidences reaching the outside world. Transportation and distribution is so disorganized that even were the peasants of the land producing their usual amount of foodstuffs, the people in the manufacturing population would still be without the necessary food supplies to sustain them in safety and comfort. Unless the people of Russia steady down and organize themselves or allow other authorities to organize them, there is the possibility of one of the most stupendous disasters to a nation and a great people that every occurred in history. Without authority for whom they have fear and respect, the Russian peasant seems to be without motive or initiative. We read of peasants in their anger against the priestly holding class of the late aristocrat regime, destroying not only the personal effects of the nobility and the owning class, but the very crops which they had themselves produced for the nation at large. In their re-acton against property ownership, they have destroyed the goose that laid the golden eggs. We read of peasants in certain villages having gone to such extremes as to seize the cattle of the local land owner, now deposed, flay them alive and turn them loose. Without the old motive of compulsion to cultivate the land for the land-owner, now that the land has reverted to the peasants and they themselves are the owners, they have neglected to work and to produce the necessities of life. To such a pass is the nation drifting that recent dispatches have reported that the so-called Government of present-day Russia are sending plenipotentiaries to China, the formerly despised and so-called decadent neighbor to the east, to make arrangements for provisions to tide them over next winter. It is difficult to imagine China, one of the most densely populated areas in the world, living largely on rice and very meagre fare, having sufficient surplus to feed 150,000,000 people in starving Russia.

Bolshevism is sometimes quoted in this country as an ideal, worthy of imitation. The pass to which Russia has drifted is a warning that Bolshevism and insanity are not very far apart. The nation that will weather the storm of this war the best, is the nation that organizes itself most efficiently and disciplines itself most strictly. Production must be carried on to a limit of our power. Destructive criticism and petty fault-finding are weaknesses and dangers. Unity of purpose and constituted leadership is essential. It is a case of a strong pull, a long pull and a pull altogether. Men must be found for food production, munition making and for food production. Non-essential industries must provide men for essential industries. Women in this country must take the places of men to the limit of their power when called upon. Farmers must recognize the necessities of war and the public in general must unite to save the harvest of 1918.

Garden crops will not give good results unless the soil is kept well cultivated.

Wilmor local of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association has recommended that all poolrooms and bowling alleys be closed during the war.

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UNEASY LIES THE HEAD

The Army Bed is Really a Serious Subject at First Acquaintance.

A mere civilian does not know what a bed is. To him it is something soft and yielding, something the body can snuggle in and the soul can dream in.

What a delusion! I speak from experience when I say that a bed is no such thing. There is only one kind of bed nowadays—one kind, at least, worth reckoning. It consists of three boards, a couple of low tressels, a mattress more or less stuffed with straw, and three blankets.

"No 'ot-water bottles this' trip," says the red-cheeked sergeant.

You grin, to show your appreciation of the point. If the sergeant says so, it is so. And then you examine the structure which is going to turn you from a flabby, namby-pamby, puny molly-coddle (the sergeant's phraseology, this) into a real live man.

The boards, you discover, are really boards. There is nothing yielding or elastic about them. To look at them, you might take them for innocent deal boards in need of a scrubbing. But when you have spent one night on them you have a fairly vivid notion of how the ancient martyrs felt after a course on the rack.

And the mattress! It is a snare and a delusion! It has lumps in it. There are some big lumps and small lumps, and there are also spaces where the top and bottom meet through lack of straw.

Still, with luck, you occasionally fall asleep on the lumps, and dream that your ear is on Mount Everest, and your shoulder in the Thames Valley, and your legs on an escalator.

But you need not worry. The dream won't last for ever. There are various ways of waking up. One is by suddenly striking the ground with your hands, for the tressels raise you only a few inches above it. Another is the collapse of the tressels themselves.

Well, never mind! You have three blankets.

The civilian idea of a blanket is something white and fluffy and soft and warm. The Army blanket was not designed to fulfill these requirements.

A little disinfectant sprinkled on the straw litter in the coop will keep down vermin.

FRANTIC CALL FOR HELP FROM A TORPEDOED VESSEL

No Man Hates Germany More Fiercely Than He Who Has Picked Up An "S O S" At Sea.

I have just stepped ashore from a New York liner, and because of my interest in wireless telegraphy, I was permitted to spend most of my time en route in the wireless cabin, says a newspaper writer.

Three times we were called by German submarines. Apparently they knew just when we had left New York. Apparently they knew just where we should have been—in peace time—on our ocean lane. If we had not been far off our usual course, I have no doubt we would have been sunk.

They called us in the line's own code. All three calls came about midnight. "H B, H B," came the call—seant's phraseology, this) into a real live man.

Each time the operator—a boy of nineteen who has been torpedoed once and shelled twice—answered the call. "Have important message for you. Please give position," the message ran each time.

A Far, Faint Call.

Each time the captain was notified. "Tell them to give their message," he said. "Probably a submarine," he continued, and evinced no surprise.

"Give your message," replied the operator.

"Can't give message unless I know your position. Please give position."

But it was too old a trick to work. On the seventh night out from New York I heard two ships torpedoed.

Neither call was in code, but the first was very short. Poor devils, they must have gone down in a hurry. The latter call, however, I shall never forget. I can put down most of it from memory, for it is fairly burnt into my mind.

"S O S, S O S," it came without warning out of the slow crackle of the night. "Hallo!" said the operator. "Somebody's caught it." "Will we answer?" I asked him. "Pat chance!" he said. "It's too easy to fake an S O S. We generally tell the Old Man—There, somebody's picked her up. No fake about that."

I could hear that answer very faintly, distinctly the voice of some stranger in the night.

"What ship in distress?"
A long pause.
"Who are you? Hurry. Sinking rapidly!"
"What ship in distress?"
"For God's sake, hurry. Who are you?"
"American destroyer. Coming to your assistance, full speed."
"How far off?"
"Sixty miles. Shall we be in time?"
"What speed have you?"
"We are the—, London. Sixty-two all told."
"Will arrive in two hours. Can you keep up in your boats?"
"Two boats fouled already. Hellish sea."
"Hang on. We are hurrying. How long will your wireless last?"
"For God's sake, hurry! All over in a minute."
"How were you sunk?"
"Torpedoed. No warning. Too late! Another boat capsized."
Too late!
"How far have you settled down now?"
"I've got you. Our bows are under."
"Save yourself. We are coming fast."
"What spe—"
"Can't hear you."
Silence.

The of London, had gone down in a hellish sea.

3 VICTORIA CROSSES GIVEN.

British Sergeant Held Six Hundred of Enemy at Bay.

Announcement of the award of three Victoria Crosses, including one to Sergeant Albert Mountain, West Yorks, whose act was an outstanding example of supreme fearlessness and initiative, is made in a recent number of the Official Gazette.

Mountain's company was compelled to fall back before the advancing enemy mass. Volunteers for a counter attack were being called, when Mountain and ten men stepped forward. He advanced on the flank with a Lewis machine gun and annihilated an enemy patrol, of which about 100 were killed.

Mountain rallied and organized the party for defence and covered the retirement of the rest of the company. With one non-commissioned officer and four men he successfully held at bay 600 Germans for half an hour.

Later he took command of a flank post and held on for twenty-seven hours, until finally surrounded. Mountain was one of the few who managed to fight their way back.

We have gathered a bunch of poses from other men's gardens, and only the string that binds them is our own.

Some sugar refineries at Honolulu have installed furnaces that burn heretofore waste molasses as fuel, the ashes being valuable as a fertilizer.

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of any seed, heat, absolutely neces planted in a poor water shuts out a air, and evaporat lowers the tempu Hence, undrained soil tends to hinder i wheat. If the g shallow and is h the tiny rootlets of difficulty in pushi The real test is, low an air the that the crop is by droughts and

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