

other desk.

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I.—With his grandfather small Ramsey Milholiand is watching the "Decoration Day Parade" in the hom town. The old gentleman, a veteran other Civil war, endeavors to impress the youngster with the significance of the great conflict and manufacture. great conflict, and many years after the boy was to remember his words startling vividness.

CHAPTER II.—In the schoolroom, a few years afterward, Ramsey was not distinguished for remarkable ability, though his two pronounced dislikes were arithmetic and "Recitations." In sharp contrast to Ramsey's backwardness is the precocity of little Dora Yocum, a young lady whom in his bitterness he denominates "Teacher's Pet."

CHAPTER III.—In high school, where he and Dora are classmates, Ramsey continues to feel that the girl delights to manifest her superiority, and the vindictiveness he generates becomes alarming, culminating in the resolution that some day he would "show" her.

CHAPTER IV .- At a class picnic Ram-CHAPTER IV.—At a class picnic Ramsey, to his intense surprise, appears to attract the favorable attention or Miss Maila Rust, a young lady of about his own age and the acknowledged belie of the class. Milla has the misfortune to fall into a creek while talking with Ramsey, and that youth promptly plunges to the reacue. The water is only some three feet deep, but Milla's gratitude for his heroic act is embarrassing. He is in fact taken captive by the fair one, to his great consternation.

CHAPTER V.—The acquaintance ripens, Ramsey and Milla openly "keeping com-pany," while the former's parents won-der. His mother indeed goes so far as to express some disapproval of his choice, even hinting that Dora Yocum would be more suitable companion, a suggest hich the youth receives with horror

CHAPTER VI.—At this period our hero gets the thrill of his "first kiss," Milla being a very willing partner in the act. Her flippancy over the matter disconcerts Ramsey immensely, but shortly afterward the girl departs for a visit to Chicago. She leaves an endearing missive for Ramsey, which adds to his feeling of melancholy.

CHAPTER VII.—Shortly after Milla's departure, her friend, Sadie Clews, informs Ramsey that his inamorata has been married to her cousin and is not coming back, so that little romance is ended. Within a few months Ramsey and his closest friend, Fred Mitchell, go to the state university, Ramsey's chief feeling being one of relief-that he has got away from the detested Dora. To his horror he finds she is also a student at the university. Induced to join a debating society, Ramsey is chosen as Dora's opponent in a debate dealing with the matter of Germany's right to invade Belgium, Dora being assigned the negative side of the argumen. Partly on account of his feelings toward Dora, and his natural nervousness, he makes a miserable showing and Dora carries off the honors. A brash youngster named Linski objects to the showing made by Ramsey and becomes personal in his remarks. The matter ends with Ramsey, in the university vernacular, giving Linski a "peach of a punch on the snoot."

Four other "twelve-minute debates preceded his and the sound of these, in Ramsey's ears, was the sound of Gabriel practising on his horn in the early morning of Judgment day. The members of the society sat, three rows deep, along the walls of the room, leaving a clear oblong of green carpet in the center, where were two small desks, twenty feet apart, the rostrums of the debaters. Upon a platform at the head of the room sat dreadful seniors, the officers of the society, and, upon benches near the platform, the debaters of the evening were aligned. One of the fraternal seniors sat with sweltering Ramsey; and the latter, as his time relentlessly came nearer, made a last miserable squirm.

"Look here, Brother Colburn, I got to get out o' here."

"No. you don't, young fellow." "Yes, I do!" Ramsey whispered, passionately. "Honest, I do. Honest, Brother Colburn, I got to get a drink of water. I got to!"

"No. You can't." "Honest, Colburn, I got--" "Hush!"

Ramsey cast his dilating eyes along the rows of faces. Most of them were but as blurs, swimming, yet he was aware (he thought) of a formidable and horrible impassive scrutiny of himself, a glare seeming to pierce through him to the back of the belt round his waist, so that he began to have fearful doubts about that belt, about every fastening and adjustment of his garments, about the expression of his countenance, and many other things jumbling together in his consclousness. Over and over he whispered gaspingly to himself the opening words of the sentence with which a senior had advised him to begin his argument. And as the moment of supreme agony drew close, this whispering became continuous: "In making my first apearance before this honor' ble membership I feel constrained to say in making my first appearance before this honor'ble membership I feel constrained to say in making my first appearance before this honor'ble mem

It had come. The chairman announced the subject of the fourth freshman twelve-minute debate; and Dora Yocum, hitherto unperceived by Ramsey, rose and went forward to one of the small desks in the open space. where she stood composedly, a slim.

pretty figure in white. Members in Ramsey's neighborhood were aware of a brief and hushed commotion, and a flerce whisper, "You can't! You get up there!" And the blanched Ramsey came forth and placed himself at the

He stood before the silent populace of that morgue, and it seemed to him that his features had forgotten that he was supposed to be their owner and in control of them; he felt that they were slipping all over his face, regardless of his wishes. His head. as a whole, was subject to an agitation not before known by him; it desired to move rustily in eccentric ways of its own devising; his legs alternatelimbered and straightened under no direction but their own; and his hands clutched each other fiercely behind his back; he was not one cohesive person, evidently, but an assembled collection of parts which had relapsed each into its own individuality. In spite of them, he somehow contrived the semblance of a bow toward the chairman and the semblance of another toward Dora, of whom he was but hazily conscious. Then he opened his mouth and, not knowing how he had started his voice

going, heard it as if from a distance. "In making my first appearance before this honor'ble membership I feel restrained to say—" He stopped short, and thenceforward shook visi-After a long pause, he managed to repeat his opening, stopped again. swallowed many times, produced a handkerchief and wiped his face, an act of necessity-then had an inspira-

tion. "The subject assigned to me," he said, "is resolved that Germany is mor'ly and legally justified in Bel gians-Belgiums! This subject was assigned to me to be the subject of this debate." He interrupted himself to gasp piteously. found breathing difficult, but faltered on again: "This subject is the subject. It is the subject that was assigned to me on a postal card." Then, for a moment or so, he had a miraculous spurt of confidence, and continued, rather rapidly "I feel constrained to say that the country of Belgian-Belgium, I meanthis country has been constrained by the-invaded I mean-invaded by the Imperial German Impire and my subject in this debate is whether it ought to or not, my being the infernative affirmative I mean-that I got to prove that Germany is mor'ly and legally justified. I wish to state that-"

He paused again, lengthily, then struggled on. "I have been requested to state that the German Imp-Empire -that it certainly isn't right for those Dutch-Germans, I mean-they haven't got any more business in Belgium than I have myself, but I-I feel constrained to say that I had to accept whatever side of this debate I got on the postal card, and so I am constrained to take the side of the Dutch. I mean the Germans. The Dutch are sometimes called-I mean the Germans are some times called the Dutch in this country. but they aren't Dutch, though some times called Dutch in this country. Well, and so-so, well, the war began last August or about then, anyway, and the German army invaded the Belgian army. After they got there, the invasion began. First, they came around there and then they commenced invading. Well, what I feel constrained-"

He came to the longest of all his



He Came to the Longest of All His Pauses Here, and the Awful Gravity of the Audience Almost Suffocated

the audience almost suffocated him. right to me."

"Four minutes!" the chairman announced, for Ramsey's pauses had worn away a great deal more of this terrible interval than had his elo- i those in favor of the-" quence. "Opening statement for the negative: Miss D. Yocum, Four min-

As Dora began to speak, Ramsey experienced a little relief, but only a little-about the same amount of relief as that felt by a bridegroom when it is the bride's turn to ""respond," not really relief at all, but merely the slight relaxation of a continuing strain. The audience now looked at Ramsey no more than people look at a bridegroom, but he failed to perceive any substantial mitigation of his frightful conspicuousness. He had not the remotest idea of what he had said in setting forth his case for Germany, and he knew that it was his duty to listen closely to Dora, in order to be able to refute her argument when his two-minute closing speech fell due; but he was conscious of little more than his own condition. His legs had now gone wild beyond all devilry, and he had to keep shifting his weight from one to the other in order even to hope that their frenzy might escape gen-

He realized that Dora was speaking rapidly and confidently, and that somewhere in his ill-assembled parts lurked a familiar bit of him that objected to her even more than usual; but she had used half of her time, at least, before he was able to gather any coherent meaning from what she was saying. Even then he caught only a fragment, here and there, and for the rest-so far as Ramsey was concerned-she might as well have been reciting the Swedish alphabet.

In spite of the rather startling feebleness of her opponent's statement, Dora went at her task as earnestly as if it were to confute some monster of casulstry. "Thus, having demonstrated that all war is wrong," she said, approaching her conclusion, "It is scarce ly necessary to point out that what ever the actual circumstances of the invasion, and whatever the status of the case in international law, or by reason of treaty, or the German oath to respect the neutrality of Belgium, which of course was grossly and dishonorably violated-all this, I say, ladies and gentlemen of the Lumen soclety, all this is beside the point of morals. Since, as I have shown, all war is wrong, the case may be simplified as follows: All war is morally wrong. Quod erat demonstrandum. Germany invaded Belgium. Invasion is war. Germany, therefore, did moral wrong. Upon the legal side, as I began by pointing out, Germany confessed in reichstag the violation of law. Therefore, Germany was justified in the invasion neither morally nor legally; but was both morally and legally wrong and evil. Ladies and gentlemen of the Lumen society, I await the

refutation of my opponent!" Her opponent appeared to be having nough trouble with his legs, without taking any added cares upon himself in the way of refutations. But the marvelous Dora had calculated the length of her statement with such nicety that the chairman announced Four minutes," almost upon the instant of her final syllable; and all faces turned once more to the upholder of the affirmative. "Refutation and conclusion by the affirmative," said the chairman. "Mr. R. Milholland. Two minutes."

Therewith, Ramsey coughed as long as he could cough, and when he felt that no more should be done in this way, he wiped his face-again an act of necessity-and quaveringly began:

"Gentlemen and ladles, or ladles and gentlemen, in making the refutation of my opponent, I feel that-I feel that hardly anything more ought to be

He paused, looked helplessly at his uncontrollable legs, and resumed: "I am supposed to make the reputa-the refutation of my opponent, and I feel that I ought to say quite a deal more. In the first place, I feel that the invasion has taken place. I am supposed -anyhow I got a postal card that I am supposed to be here tonight. Well, in talking over this matter with a couple of seniors, they told me I was supposed to claim this invasion was mor'ly and legally all right. Well-" Here, by some chance, the recollection of a word of Dora's flickered into his chaotic mind, and he had a brighter moment. "My opponent said she proved all war is wrong-or something like that, anyhow. She said she proved it was wrong to fight, no matter what. Well, if she wasn't a girl, anybody that wanted to get her to fight could prob'ly do it." He did not add that he would be the person to make the experiment (if Dora weren't a girl), nor did the thought enter his mind until an hour or so later. "Well," he added, "I suppose there is little more to be

He was so right, in regard to his own performance, at least, that, thereupon drying up utterly, he proceeded to stand, a speechless figure in the midst of a multitudinous silence, for an eteralty lasting forty-five seconds. He made a racking effort, and at the end of this epoch found words again. "In making my argument in this debate, I would state that-"

"Two minutes!" said the chairman. "Refutation by the negative. Miss D. Yocum. Two minutes.

"I waive them," said Dora, primly. "I submit that the affirmative has not refuted the argument of the negative."

"Very well," With his gavel the chalrman sharply tapped the desk be fore him. "The que fore the house. 'Resolved, that Germany is both morally and legally justifled in her invasion of Belgium,' All

But here there was an interruption of a kind never before witnessed during any proceedings of the Lumen so clety. It came from neither of the debaters, who still remained standing at their desks until the vote settling their comparative merits in argument should be taken. The interruption was from the rear row of seats along the wall, where sat new members of the society, freshmen not upon the program of the evening. A loud nasal voice was heard from this quarter, a loud but nasal voice, shrill as well as nasal, and full of a strange hot passion. "Mr. Chairman!" it cried. "Looka-here, Mr. Chairman! Mr. Chairman, I demand to be heard! You gotta gimme my say, Mr. Chairman! I'm agunna have my say! You look-a-here Mr. Chairman!" Shocked by such a breach of order

and by the unseemly violence of the speaker, not only the chairman but everyone else looked there. A short, strong figure was on its feet, gesticulating fiercely; and the head belonging to it was a large one with too much curly black hair, a flat swarthy face shiny and not immaculately shaven there was an impression of ill-chosen clothes, too much fat red lip, too much tooth, too much eyeball. Fred Mitchell recognized this violent interrupter as one Linski, a fellow freshman who sar next him in one of his classes. "What' that cuss up to?" Fred wondered, anso did others. Linski showed them.

He pressed forward, shoving himself through the two rows in front of him till he emerged upon the green carpet of the open space, and as he came, he

was cyclonic with words. "You don't put no such stuff as this over, I tell you!" he shouted in his and makes a pacifis' argument that hot, nasal voice. "This here's a free wins the case agains' the Cholmuns country, and you call yourself a de-like cuttin' through hog lard! But bating society, do you? Lemme tell you ain't a-gunna git away with it. you I belong to a debating society in mister. Lemme tell you right here Chlcago, where I come from, and them and now, I may be a mix blood, but i fellas up there, they'd think they'd got some Cholmun in me with the rest oughta be shot fer a fake like what what I got, and before you vote on you people are tryin' to put over, here, tonight. I come down here to git some few wolds from somebody that can more education, and pay fer it, too, talk! This whole war is a capitalis' in good hard money I've made sweatin' in a machine shop up there in Chi- and the United States is sellin' its soul cago; but if this is the kind of educa- to the capitalis' right now, I tell you, tion I'm a-gunna git, I better go on takin' sides agains' Choimuny. Orders back there. You call this a square defer explosives and ammanition and bate, do you?"

He advanced toward the chairman's if you do, you got another think ready on the blood of the workers of



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Linski Screamed.

comin', my capitalis' frien'! You went and give out the question whether it's right fer Cholmuny to go through Belgium; and what do you do fer the Cholmun side? You pick out this here big stiff"-he waved his passionate hand at the paralyzed Ramsey-"you pick out a boob like that fer the Chomun side, a poor fish that gits stagefright so bad he don't know whether he's talkin' or dead; or else he fakes it; because he's a speaker so bum it looks more to me like he was faking. You git this big stiff to fake the Cholmun side, and then you go and stick up a goil agains' him that's got brains this here question you gotta hear a war, Belgium as much as Choimuny guns and Red Cross supplies is comin' into this country by the millions, and platform, shaking a frantic fist. "Well, the capitalis' United States is fat al-

Europe! Yes, It is, and I'll have my say, you boorjaw faker, and you can hammer your ole gavel to pieces at

He had begun to shriek; moisture fell from his brow and his mouth; the scandalized society was on its feet, moving nervously into groups. Evidently the meeting was about to disintegrate. "I'll have my say!" the frenzied Linski screamed. "You try o put up this capitalis' trick and work fake to carry over this debate agains' Choimuny, but you can't work it on

me, lemme tell you! I'll have my say!" The outraged chairman was wholly at a loss how to deal with the "unprecedented situation"-so he defined it, quite truthfully; and he continued to pound upon the desk, while other damors began to rival Linski's; shouts of "Put him out!" "Order!" "Shut up, Freshman!" "Turn nim over to the sophomores!"

"This meeting is adjourned!" bellowed the chairman, and there was a thronging toward the doors, while the frothing Linski asseverated: -gonna git my say, I tell you! I'll ave my say! I'll have my say!"

He had more than that, before the hour was over. A moment after he emerged from the building and came out, still hot, upon the cool, dark campus, he found himself the center of a group of his own classmates whom he at first mistook for sophomores, such was their manner.

As this group broke up a few minutes later, a youth running to join It, scenting somewhat of interest, deained one of those who were depart-

"What's up? What was that squeal-

"Oh, nothing. We just talked to that Linski. Nobody else touched him, out Ramsey Milholland gave him a peach of a punch on the snoot." "Whoopee!"

Ramsey was laconic in response to nquiries upon this subject. When ome one remarked: "You served him ight for calling you a boob and a poor dsh and so on before all the society, gir's and all," Ramsey only said:

"That wasn't what I hit him for," He declined to explain further.

(To be continued)

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