(Synopsis of Preceding Chapters)

James Adams, West Point Graduate, and European representative of American manufacturers, is in Paris at the breaking out of the great war between France and Germany. He undertakes for the French a war-balloon reconnoissance in Lorraine. The balloon is discovered by the German troops, who pierce the gas bag with a shell from a field gun. The basket is shot away and Adams' companions fall; but Adams climbs into the rigging and is borne away on the wind into northeastern France. The balloon comes down in the trees of the Chateau Lagunay. Adams is rescued, and is nursed by Aimee, daughter of Count Lagunay, with whom he falls in love. The Germans advance and take possession of the Chateau for use as headquarters. A Colonel of cavalry insults Aimee; Adams runs him through with a sword, and is immediately seized from behind by the Kaiser, who has come in unnoticed, and thrown to the floor. Adams is well acquainted with the Kaiser. Recognition is mutual. The Kaiser calls for explanations.

Chapter III.

(Continued from last week.

It was evident that I had not seriously wounded the Colonel, for he stood at attention without difficulty, supported by his aide, who explained briefly that they had entered the Chateau to demand accommodation for the Emperor and his staff; that I had opposed entrance; and that without provocation had viciously attacked the Colonel. To this version the Colonel weakly agreed. The Kaiser turned to me.

"You say my Colonel insulted the lady?" including in his glance Aimee, who stood on the stairway, overcome with the embarrassment of her position and the presence of the German ruler.

"He put his arm about her," I replied, my anger rising again, "and endeavored to kiss her. Ask the lady herself."

"Is it true, Mademoiselle?"

Aimee bowed her head in assent, the color sweeping over her beautiful face and neck.

The Kaiser's features became set in contempt. "I doubt not your punishment is just," he said sternly, addressing the Colonel, who cringed before this rebuke.

"I have issued specific orders to avoid just such improprieties. You are under arrest sir. You will retire to your quarters and await further orders." Then to the aide—"See that he is attended by the surgeon. You may go."

As they passed through the great doorway the Kaiser addressed Aimee, bowing gracefully. "I apologize to you Mademoiselle, for the affront of my officer. I also applaud the gallantry of your—your—defender, Mr Adams, whom I have met under various circumstances. It will be neccessary for me and my staff to occupy a portion of your Chateau during the next few days. You may rest assured, however, that the upper floors shall be reserved entirely for your own use, and that there will be no unseemly or unnecessary interference with your personal comfort. I shall see that you are protected day and night. But while you will not be regarded as under restraint, I ask that you make no attempt to leave without permission. He bowed again to Aimee and strode out into the sunlight, followed by his orderly, who had been standing at the door.

I ran to Aimee and took her in my arms, comforting her in the way of a lover. But she seemed not to be afraid. On the contrary she was quite serene, expressing her confidence in the Kaiser's assurances.

"Is he not a grand man?" she asked. "Such dignity; such magnificent bearing; what fire shone in his eyes! And oh, my brave sweetheart," patting my cheeks lovingly, "how like a lion you were. I shall never be afraid with you near me." So we went on for a delicious half hour, when a detachment of the Emperor's bodyguard, under command of a sergeant of magnificent proportions, entered the dooryard and took up their positions around the house. Then Aimee retired to her rooms on the second floor, and I sallied forth to learn something of the military situation.

I have said that I was well acquainted in Berlin, so it was not surprising, that I should run across friends. Hardly had I left the Chateau when I came face to face with a portly, red-bearded officer, leaning against a tree and contentedly smoking a long-stemmed pipe. I held out my hand, smiling my recognition.

"Lowenberg!" I exclaimed in delight. "It is really you." He was a Colonel of Hussars, and I had beaten him at chess many and many a time.

For full a minute he stared me in the face. Gradually his features relaxed. Then a roar of laughter shook his paunch. He snatched my outstretched hand and clasped it in both his own. Tears ran down his cheeks.

"Oh, my dear Adams, my dear Adams," he cried between peals of laughter. "What manner of fancy doll is this? I see you in Berlin, attired *en vigeur*, gravely discussing tariffs and values. I hurry to the front to fight, and find you strutting about the grounds of a French Chateau, clad in velvet and lace, like a medieval fachion plate. Oh, you changeable Americans. What next, what next?"

Ah, my brave Lowenberg! he was ever a fine friend. How my heart ached when, a few weeks later, I saw him stretched upon a heap of straw, both legs shot away in that descent into the hell of Montepellier, and dying as a German warrior can die, with a prayer for his country and a smile for his friends.

In a few minutes I told Lowenberg of the events of the past few days, hinting, however, that I had started from Amiens in an air-ship, bent on a pleasure trip.

I learned that the German forces were forming to the west of us, and that a collision was certain to take place within a week. He insisted that I remain with them. "It will be a great fight," he said, his blue eyes sparkling with enthusiasm.

I protested that I had no clothes.

"Tut. What of that? You shall have a uniform. You shall ride with me. Ho! Grossman." He called to a subordinate officer, gave him brief instructions, and sent him away. An hour later, at the Chateau, after a seance with the regimental tailor, I was remade, converted at once into a German Lieutenant of Hussars; but to Aimee's great disgust.

"Oh, shame, shame," she cried, making a wry face. You are now my enemy. I do not know you at all." And so I had to begin all over again with my love making, in which delightful proceeding I was eminently successful, though it took me a full hour, and required, in addition to many, many kisses, a solemn promise that I would dispense with the odious uniform at the earliest possible moment.

Early in the evening the Emperor and his staff came to the Chateau and made arrangement for their accommodation. Every precaution was taken to avoid injury to the building and its contents. I was deeply impressed with his Majesty's consideration in this matter. Canvas paulins were spread over the carpets and draped around the marble mantles. Such furniture as remained was drawn to one side and covered. Small cots were brought in, with tables, map cases, and other necessary impediments, and through the night a council of war was held, plans being laid for the disposition of the troops. There being nothing for me to do there, I saw that Aimee was well cared for, and spent the evening with Lowenberg and a group of fellow officers, in their quarters, discussing the military situation and speculating as to the outcome of the war.

During the evening Lowenberg referred casually to my trip from Amiens and my wreck in the trees, which subject produced immediate interest.

"Lucky for you—that accident," said Meschner, Captain of Lancers, who fell a fews days later in the Argonne valley. "There were two others in an air-ship who fared not so well, eh, Lowenberg?"

Lowenberg nodded, musing over his pipe. My heart leaped. Was it possible that they had seen me clinging to la Jaune as she bounded, like an affrighted deer, from the German guns in Lorraine? With tense nerves and an appearance of unconcern I waited for the next remark.

"By God," broke out a heavy voice, "that was a terrible end for the French general." It was Fleischmann speaking,—the gigantic sergeant of the Emperor's bodyguard, whose strength and courage later saved me at Montepelier. He rose suddenly to his feet and pointed upward dramatically.

"I saw him falling for miles," he said. "At first a tiny speck, then coming nearer, arms and legs beating the air. Ah, heaven! What a smash it was. He fell upon a stack of rifles, you remember," turning to the others, who sat open-mouthed, for Fleischmann was a born actor, and in his gestures and facial expressions brought out clearly the horror of Martini's descent into the midst of the encamped troops. "He was torn apart; he was split into

WHEN THEY CAME TO SEARCH LATOUR I KNEW HE WAS DOOMED.

fragments; his brains splattered twenty feet away." Then, with a French shrug of his great shoulders,—"Bah, what of it? Death is death, come as it may."

"There was another," observed Lowenberg, speaking deliberately as he refilled his pipe. "He fell in the midst of Wasserman's kitchen." He shook with laughter as the picture came back to him, and throwing back his head blew the smoke from his mouth in great rings.. "I shall remember it always. The man was already dead, shot through the head; but down he came like a cartload of fresh beef, right into the huge cauldron of soup that was cooking for Wasserman's bearded darlings. Ha, ha, ha. They fed on bread and cheese that night. There was soup spread over an acre of ground.

I dared not break the period of silence that followed, though my anxiety was benumbing. Then Fleischmann spoke, answering the question that was uppermost in my mind.

"Fine shooting," he broke out suddenly. "It was Gerstner's battery that brought them down—he sighted the guns himself. He tells me—oh, the liar—that he aimed for the cables supporting the basket, and cut them, by God. It was an unlucky trip for the two Frenchmen."

The TWO Frenchmen! Then they did not suspect a third member of the party. I ventured an inquiry.

"And what became of the bag?"

"Oh, it blew away to the northeast. I suppose it fell in some Prussian field."

God be thanked! Then they did not know. For had these excitable Germans guessed that I was with Martini and Rechere, reconnoitering the German advance, they would have branded me for a spy and my life would not have been worth a pfenig.

I was heartily glad when the conversation changed and the incident of the balloon was forgotten. Moreover I was eager to learn something of the military situation. The French were known to be far to the southwest—forty miles or more away—

ALL THAT DAY THE GERMANS CONTINUED TO CROSS THE MEUSE.

their right resting on Bar-le-Duc, their left at the camp at Chalons. This gave them the support of an extensive area of wooded hills to the left, and right, and the Marne river, with its high banks, at the rear. In front extended the great Catalunian plain. It was an admirable position, and one of great natural strength. Therefore they showed no disposition to advance, preferring, apparently, to await attack by their opponent, though all northern France lay open to the invaders.

All that day and the next the Germans continued to arrive, crossing the Meuse, ascending the heights, and moving westward. Some two hundred thousand of the flower of the army were there, actually treading French soil, ready for whatever might come. Infantry, artillery, cavalry; all splendidly equipped and accoutered. It seemed to me that they must prove unconquerable; that they would advance with irresistible determination; that France would inevitably be compelled to sue for peace.

I saw the Emperor seldom. He was engaged much of the time in council, and my acquaintance with him was not of such a nature as to permit interruption. When I met him he merely acknowledged my salute. I doubt that at first he remembered me. I spoke of the bitterness of war, of the loss of men and property, of the inevitable severance of personal and commercial ties. "It seems to me to be so futile a war," I said. "What is to be gained? why resort to violence and bloodshed? think of the enormous expense and the resulting increase of taxes. Why not arbitrate, your Majesty?"

The Kaiser's expression hardened. "It is sometimes necessary in life to assert one's dignity by force," he said, after a period of silence. "I represent a great nation. We have been mocked, trampled, spit upon. We have borne insults to the point of madness. It is time to strike back. This very day messages came to me from your great President Roosevelt, whose influence in the affairs of the world is undeniable, and from the King of England, my Uncle. They suggested arbitration. I replied that I proposed first to administer punishment, using what, in your country, you are pleased to term 'the big stick,' the club, the hand of castigation. Is this not their own policy in the last stages of disagreements? Remember Cuba, and the Transvaal. No, it is too early for arbitration. There will be two great battles. One, on land, is before us; the other on the sea, will occur within a fortnight. Then, and not until then, will the Emperor of Germany listen to intervention."

I could make no reply. The argument was conclusive.

Then Latour, the spy, came into my mind. "Your Majesty," I said, "a French spy was captured today after the skirmish at Meniguy."

He waved his hand impatiently. "I know. He was caught red-handed. He had notes—maps. He dies at sunrise.

"He is my friend," I said simply. "I have known him for years—a splendid man."

"Is he any less a spy?" The words came suddenly, like bullets from a gun. "Yet you would have me set aside the rules of war because he is your friend. Understand, young man, that your own position is none too secure." He leaned toward me with uplifted, warning finger. "There is room for explanation, for instance, as to how it happens that you start from Amiens on a pleasure trip, in a French war-balloon, la Jaune by designation, and coming from the west are wrecked in yonder tree;" he pointed to the white case of the balloon, that fluttered in the night wind high in the great oak behind the Chateau, "when the basket of that same balloon, containing a French General of Staff and a wireless telegraph, drops within the German lines far to the east, in Lorraine. Were it not for your nationality, tomorrow's sun might look down upon your own body as well as that of Latour's lying dead before a squad of infantry."

"Then Latour must die?" I asked. I was pleading without hope. For myself I feared not.

"Latour must die. It is the rule of war—a rule not to be broken."

He turned away to speak to an approaching officer, and I climbed the steps to my room. My dear friend—my poor Latour.

In the night I was awakened by my valet. Before I could arise Lowenberg burst into the room. "We are to advance immediately," he said. "A surprise party, with probable sharp fighting. I want you with me, Compe at once."

I dressed with all haste. Aimee was asleep and I would not waken her. I wrote her a hasty note, explaining the arrangements for her departure, giving it to her maid. Hurrying down to the courtyard I found my horse stamping with impatience to be off. Five minutes later Lowenberg and I were galloping along the main road to the west. In the moonlight we could see the glitter of helmets and sabres. The earth trembled with the tramp of men and horses. The very air quivered with impending violence. We were in the midst of war.

(To be Continued Next Week.)

The Smoking Habit.

Granger—"How did he make all his money?"

Kimmins—"Smoking; he was the greatest smoker in America."

Granger—"Dry up, Kimmins, you can't make money by smoking."

Kimmins—"He did. He smoked hams."

Some men has de reppertashun of bein' mighty smah't jes' 'case dey can wrap de plaines' fac's in sech highfalutin language dat nobody kin tell

WOMAN DIPLOMAT IN JAPAN.

Wife of First Russian Ambassador to Japan is Daughter of American General.

Russia has resumed diplomatic relations with Japan and the first woman diplomat there, from the court of the Czar, is the daughter of a prominent

MME. BAKHMETEFF.

American General. She is Mme. Bakhmeteff, wife of the first Russian ambassador to Japan, and has accompanied her husband to his distant post. She is a daughter of the late General Beale, with a wide acquaintance in Washington, both in the resident and diplomatic circles. During her stay in several of the capitals of Europe she has done much for charity in whatever way it was presented. Her manner is bright and animated, and she is thoroughly representative of her native America wherever she happens to be.

Mrs. Senator Knox Makes Butter.

Far out of the common run of presents is the kind of gift Mrs. P. C. Knox makes now and then to certain of her closest friends. Books? No. Pictures? Pshaw. Jewels? Never? Just dainty little cases, holding each five pounds of butter.

No grocery stuff this, but from the Knox dairy, and immensely proud of it is the wife of the Senator from Pennsylvania. About three years ago her eldest son, Reed Knox, elected to be a farmer, and his parents established him on a rich stretch of land near the famous Valley Forge. The Senator and Mrs. Knox are delighted with rustic life and spend much time on the farm.

Last winter Mrs. Knox suffered from nervous trouble, so she canceled her social engagements and retired to Valley Forge. She spent the summer and autumn in the dairy, superintending the milking and churning, and at odd times she read advanced works on the subject.

She is as proud of her butter as any model farmers' wives in old-fashioned English novels, and during the fall and winter she has been distributing the proofs of her proficiency in the butter-making line.

Unique Music Box.

The charming daughter of Mr. Patrick Mulhooly was within a few weeks of her twenty-first birthday, and her proud father decided that he would buy her a music stool, one of those that can be lowered or raised by twisting the seat around. A few hours after he had brought his purchase home his wife discovered him with his coat off and great drops of perspiration pouring from his face, diligently screwing the seat up and down. "Arrah, Pat," said she, "what have ye got there?"

"It's a little present for Kathleen," he explained between his gasps. "Ye know she has a liking for music. Sorra a bit of good this will be to her at all, at all. Shure I've been winding the blissid machine up for the last two hours and niver a tune has it played yet. The thing won't even squake."

Singers Who Diet.

Nearly all singers have some curious fads about their voices and what aids or injures them. Melba alone being free. She eats whatever she pleases, talks the day of the evening she is to sing, and says her voice is not affected. But she has an uncommonly strong physique. Mme. Alboni never touches tea, which is supposed to harden the vocal cords, and avoids nuts and rich foods. Between the acts she sips a glass of claret.

Patti eats only the simplest things and little of them. The day before she sings she dines at 3:30 on roast beef with potatoes and baked apples. She eats nothing more, and between the acts takes tiny doses of phosphorus and capsicum. If she is much fatigued she sips a cup of bouillon.

Jean de Reszke cycles a great deal and diets sedulously. Sims Reeves sucks a lozenge of home-made manufacture before singing. It contains lemon juice, gum arabic, and glycerine.

Bank Stocks Valuable.

A recent list of New York City's eighty-one commercial banks, with the latest prices bid for the $100 shares of each, shows that only one stock is offered at par. All the other eighty stocks are bid for at a premium, the prices offered ranging from $110 for three or four, to $4,200 for one stock. Other very high prices are $3,600, $1,650, $1,600 and $1,500, one of each. Only twenty-one of the eighty-one stocks are bid for at prices below $200. Forty-one range from $209 to $300 and twelve from $500 to $1,000.

This is striking testimony to American banking success and also to the rapidly growing importance of New York as a world money-center.

The Pie Belt Broadening.

New England is losing her lead in one of her most time honored industries. A fiber factory down in Maine shipped 4,000,000 pie plates last week. Two million of these went to Providence, R. I., which is within the old-time pie belt, but of the rest, 1,000,000 went to Baltimore and the fourth million

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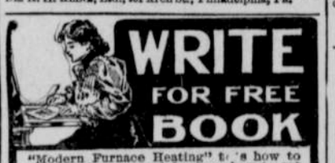

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