

THE MEANING OF "OLD GLORY,"

"My country 'tis of thee," Ralph hummed in the pause that followed his announcement.

"My country 'tisn't," interrupted Edith hotly. "Oh Ralph, what have you to do with this silly old war! I can't let you go."

"But my dear girl, it's—"

"It isn't a crusade. It's hysteria. It's jingoism. It's a play to the gallery."

"Those are phrases. When a man's country calls for him, and there is no reason he shouldn't go—"

"There is a reason, when he is engaged to be married to such a nice girl." Her tone had grown pathetic. "I suppose I'm horrid, but I don't love my country one thousandth part as much as I love you. In the civil war, the women always said, 'Go, my boy! I'd be the last to keep you,' with a smile on their lips, and were dreadfully noble about it. Maybe we've degenerated, or maybe it's just me. I don't love honor more, or anything else. I love you."

"Well, I've been good to you, too, and one's country is such a far off, abstract thing. Oh, I know I am not appearing well! The way to be truly admirable is to wish you had three sweethearts, so that you could give them all for your country. I am small and selfish, and I don't blame you if you are disgusted with me. I deserve it. You can break with me altogether, and I won't make a move to keep you." And in proof of this, she clasped both arms tightly around his neck. Ralph looked troubled, but his affection evidently survived the confession.

"I'll tell you," he said presently. "Walk down to the recruiting office with me, any way. Then, if you still feel this way, I will put off enlisting until the next call for volunteers. Will that do?"

Edith reflected that the government might not need a second supply, and agreed.

"I know how I ought to feel about it," she said later, a little wistfully. "I can't appreciate patriotism, I know how beautiful and splendid it is. Only I just can't feel it, and I've got to be honest."

The street in front of the recruiting office was solid with men, while women and children fringed the edges of the crowd. Every one who went in the door and everyone who came out was cheered, and commented on with the jovial irony in which the American clothes his enthusiasm.

"Wear your colors, lady—only ten cents, all silk!" shrieked a small vendor crowding his tray of badges under Edith's eyes.

"No, no," she exclaimed impatiently.

"Sorry I ain't got no Spanish colors to sell ye, if ye don't like these," he said with cheerful impertinence.

Edith pretended not to hear, but she winced more than she would have confessed at the thrust. You may deny your patriotism yourself, but you don't care to have street boys deny it for you.

A double cheer went up for a young six-footer who passed, blushing through the door that led to glory, and a woman turned to Edith with a beaming smile.

"Ain't it just beautiful?" she cried. "Uncle Sam don't have to speak more'n once when he wants his boys. They just fall over themselves to help him out."

"But war is so dreadful," returned Edith, with a sudden longing to have some one else on her side. Ralph was talking with a knot of men.

"Well, I'd as soon end by a bullet as a bacteria," said the woman stoutly. "Dying this way, you've done something anyhow. It's marching down the front

steps a little early; instead of sneaking out by the back stoop later."

"Oh, but if you had, people belonging to you going, you wouldn't feel that way!" Edith spoke half-impudently. Every one seemed to be against her.

"Lord love you!—two sons and a brother," was the brisk answer.

The girl turned away, metaphorically pressing her fingers in her ears.

"She can't care as I do," she said to herself.

"Any way, I might let my sons go. But Ralph!" Her eyes filled with sudden tears, and she caught her breath sharply as a roar of "Good boy, Billy!" saluted a fresh recruit. The young fellow, flushed and triumphant, made his way through the crowd to an older man, who was watching him sourly.

"They took you, did they?" was his greeting. The younger nodded. "Well, you know what I think of you—going off to fight for a lot of measly niggers. What do you get for it—thirteen dollars a month and yellow fever?" The boy's face darkened, but he made no answer as they walked away.

Edith laid her fingers on Ralph's arm.

"Wouldn't you like to hit him?" she said. "How could he wet blanket the poor fellow so. No one has a right—" She checked herself guiltily, with a quick glance at Ralph's face. If he saw any inconsistency in her words, he was too wise to betray it.

"Well, well, Edith! Down here to enlist!" said a voice behind her.

"Oh, captain, don't," she exclaimed, turning to an elderly man of military outlines. "I'm all against it. I think it's wicked! Everybody is patriotic but me, yet surely some of them must feel as I do. I'm all at sea. I can't let Ralph go."

"You can't help it, my child. A man's country is a rival that will cut out his sweetheart every time, if he's worth his salt. You'll catch the fire, and then you'll be glad of it. Didn't I go through it all in '61?"

"But I don't want the fire. I don't believe in the war," said Edith desperately.

"Neither do I, but I'm going if they'll take me, I've just about one fight left in me, and I want to have it out." The words, spoken with a laugh, thrilled Edith in spite of herself. She took her fingers out of her ears, for the first time since Ralph had made his announcement.

"I don't see how you can fight for a cause unless your heart is in it," she said, but there was no conviction in her voice.

"If your country wants you, never mind why. Don't sit at home and tell her she ought not to have run herself into that fix. Pitch in and pull her out—and then scold her, if you like. You've a right to your opinion, but she has a right to your fist!" The elderly soldier glowed with enthusiasm, and the men around clapped their approval. Edith lifted her head and drew a deep breath. Her heart was beating excitedly.

A movement in the crowd made her look up. A window high above them had been opened, and from it was thrust a flag—not the brand new, glaring Stars and Stripes, such as decorated the office below, but a soiled and faded emblem, ragged on the edges, darkly stained and slit with black edged wounds. As it shook itself out above their heads, the harsh reality of war against the brilliant ideal of its untried fellow below, a momentary hush fell on the crowd. Then the hats came off, and the feeling that had welled up broke out in the shout that thrills as no other human sound can, the shout that means "our country!" The significant odor of powder and the call of fife seemed to vibrate from the torn folds as Old Glory swung itself free and streamed above their heads in its tattered magnificence. Edith caught

Ralph by the arm, her face uplifted, and knew that something had been born within her which nothing could conquer or kill.

Up went the voices as the hats had gone—"Glory, glory, hallelujah!" echoing down the city street, Ralph and Edith shouting with the rest. The song left them looking straight into each other's eyes.

A flippant voice jarred against their ears:

"What a lot of fuss over an old rag!" It was, foolish, girl bravado, but Edith wheeled upon the speaker like an insulted goddess of liberty.

"You don't deserve to have a country," she said, with blazing eyes. "That rag' is worth a million human beings; it's greater than any city, or all of them put together. It means the nation!" Then she turned to the man beside her. "Go and enlist, Ralph. I want you to be among the first," she said.

"BE GENTLEMEN AND PATRIOTS."

Laramie Boomerang: A big demonstration was made in honor of the Torrey cavalry yesterday at Cheyenne preparatory to leaving tomorrow for Jacksonville, Fla. The regiment marched, mounted, to Cheyenne, where it passed in review through the principal streets, which were crowded with people. The route was by the camp of the Alger Light artillery, which was formed in front of its quarters to salute the regiment as it passed. The review ended at the state capital, the regiment returning from there to the post. The precision in march and the fine appearance of the regiment excited enthusiastic applause throughout the review. At the post the men were dismounted and formed on foot in a hollow square, in the center of which all the commissioned officers of the regiment were assembled. Major Thomas Wilhelm, U. S. A., then presented Colonel Torrey with his shoulder straps as colonel of the regiment. Col. Torrey, in turn, presented each officer of the regiment with the straps of his grade, making brief speech of presentation. As each officer was present with his straps the men of his troop cheered vigorously. At the close of the ceremony, Colonel Torrey said to his men:

"A certain class of misguided people expect to see us reach the east with long hair and riding spotted horses. They will be surprised to see one of the finest regiments that any army can boast. We are going across the entire country and then to Porto Rico. On the journey don't let one incident occur of which you will be ashamed. Be gentlemen and patriots. I have confidence in every man, and want you to justify it."

Those who failed to witness the march through the city of Col. Torrey and 600 of his officers and men Tuesday afternoon certainly missed a treat, for the affair was one of the most eventful in the history of the city. The sight of 600 handsome men, well uniformed and mounted upon spirited horses, is one not often witnessed in this country.

About 3 o'clock Col. Torrey, riding at the head of one of the bravest and most gallant military organizations ever brought together in the West, marched down Ferguson street and through the principal streets of the city. Large crowds of people lined the streets and the boys in blue were loudly cheered all along the line. The faithful Alger were drawn up in line at the armory and saluted the cavalrymen as they passed by on their own well-groomed horses.

The line of horsemen was over a mile in length and it required fully forty-five minutes for the command to pass through the city. On every corner cheer after cheer was given for Col. Torrey and his rough riders.