



If you are unhappy, it is probably because you have so many thoughts of yourself and so few about the happiness of others.—Mary L. Coon

## Winning the Wilderness

(Continued from last week.)

THE last shot was ready, when a wild yell burst from the darkness behind them, the shouts to "remember the Mater," mingled with the old university yell of "Rock Chalk, K. U.!" and reinforcements charged to the relief of the invincible sixteen.

What disaster might have followed the capture of the Tondo road and the attack upon the bridge is only conjecture. What did happen is history—type beneficent of the Twentieth century every company of the Twentieth Kansas was to help build. When daylight came, Thaine Aydelot saw the frontier line that he had proudly felt himself called upon to push back, and the reality of it was awful. He had pictured captured trenches, but he had not put in their decoration—the prone forms of dead Filipinos with staring eyes, with nothing earthly any more forever.

Beyond that line, however, lay the new wildness that the Anglo-American must conquer, and he flung himself upon the firing line, as the safety and honor of the American nation rested on his shoulders alone; while all his dreams of glorious warfare where Greek meets Greek in splendid gallantry, faded out before the actual warfare of the days and nights that followed.

Thaine's regiment, not the "Kansas Scarcrows," but the "Fighting Twentieth," now, was one of the regiments on which rested the brunt of driving back and subduing the rebellious Filipinos. Swiftly the Kansas boys pushed into the unknown country north of Manila. They rushed across the rice fields, whose low dykes gave little protection from the enemy. They plunged through marshes they waded in water. They lay for hours behind their earthworks, half buried in muddy slime.

They slept in holes, drenched to the skin. With the first early yell for their battle cry of freedom, they tore through tropical jungles with the bullets of the enemy cutting the branches overhead or spattering the dirt about their feet.

The American regiments were six days in reaching Caloccan, a prosperous town only six miles north of Manila; a mile a day, every foot stubbornly contested.

On Sabbath morning in the first day's struggle, Thaine was running in a line of soldiers toward the Filipino fortification, when he was halted beside a ditch that stood between the runs of both armies and was riddled with bullets.

"Help the corporal here," Aydelot, then double quick it ahead," Lieutenant Kruse commanded.

Thaine followed the corporal inside the hut where, shot to pieces, lay the mangled forms of women and children who had caught the storm of bullets from both firing lines. Through a gaping hole in the wall beyond, he

saw a shallow pit where wounded and dead men and women were huddled together.

"Help me get out the live ones and send them back to Manila, and we'll cover the others right here," the corporal declared.

It was the neighborhood custom of the Great River Valley for young men to assist at every funeral. Thaine had jokingly dubbed himself "official neighborhood pallbearer," and had served at so many funerals that the service had become merely one of silent dignity which he



Hay-making on the Farm of Mr. T. Graham, Peterboro Co., Ont.

forgot the next hour. He knew just how to place the flowers effectively, when to step aside and wait, and when to come forward and take hold. And these were the only kinds of services he had known for the dead.

As he bent over the blood-smeared bodies to take up the wounded and dying, now, the horror of war, burst upon him, and no dead face could be more ashy gray than the young soldier's face as he lifted it above a dying Filipino woman whom he stretched tenderly beside the hut.

The next victim was a boy, a deserter from Manila, whom Thaine recognized by a scar across his cheek, as the young Filipino whose wound Doctor Carey had dressed.

"You poor fellow!" Thaine said softly.

The boy's eyes opened in recognition. "For liberty," he murmured in Spanish, with a scowling face. Then the scowl faded to a smile, and in a moment more he had entered eternal liberty.

A detachment of the Red Cross with a white-haired surgeon just then relieved the corporal of the wounded,

and Thaine saw Dr. Horace Carey coming toward him.

"I know what you are thinking. Maybe your gun did a good deal of it. This is war, Thaine."

The young man's dark eyes burned with agony at the thought.

"Forget it," Carey added hurriedly. "It is the lost cause here. I worked that line myself for four years long ago. I know the feeling. But this is the only medicine to give the hands here. They can't manage liberty for themselves. You are giving them more freedom with your rifle to-day than they could get for themselves a century. Don't get your powder with your tears. You may need it for the devil that's after you now. Wait till you see a Kansas boy brought in and count the cost again. Good-by."

The doctor hastened away with the wounded, and Thaine helped to straighten out the forms about him and to fill the pit where they were placed in one common grave.

"Wait till you see a Kansas boy brought in and then count the cost."

Somehow, the words, ringing again and again down his mind, could not take away the picture of the thing he had just witnessed. And the dying gasp, "For liberty!" seemed to stab his soul, as he ran forward.

Two days later his company had orders to hold the trenches before a jungle filled with sharpshooters. All day the sun had blazed down upon them and the humid atmosphere had scalded them. All day the murderous

Clarke. As he spied Thaine and his comrades, he gave an instant's glance of kindly recognition to the admiring young privates, and was gone. The three involuntarily raised their feet, as if to follow him, and from three lusty throats they sent after him the beloved battle yell of the regiment, "Rock Chalk! K. U.!" "Haw! K. U.!" then dropped to their places, again and hugged the earth as the rifle balls whizzed about them.

"I'm glad I'm alive and I'm glad I know that man," Thaine said to his neighbors.

"Alford's a prince. I'll bet he'll clean that woods before he's through. His work is always well done. Would you listen to that?" his comrade replied.

A tremendous crash of rifle shots seemed to split the jungle as the Kansas troops charged into it. The men in the trenches lay flat to the earth while the balls fell about them or sang a long whining note through the air over them. Pierce were the fray, and lauder roared the bullets wider the bullets flew, as the fighting lines swept over the enemy's earthworks and struck with deadly force into the heart of its wooded cover.

Then came a lull for shifting the fighting grip. A relief force was hurried to the front and the first companies retired for a brief rest. They fell back in order, while the aids came trooping out of the brush in groups, bearing the wounded to places of shelter. Thaine Aydelot and his comrades lifted their heads above the earthworks for an instant. Captain Clarke sat near on a little knoll staring hard at a stretcher borne toward him by the aids. The manner of covering indicated a dead body on it.

"How different the captain's face is from what it was before the attack," Thaine thought, as he recalled the moment when Clarke had talked with Lieutenant Alford. And then the image of the young lieutenant's face, so full of life and hope and power and gentleness, swept vividly across his mind.

"Who is it, boys?" Clarke called to the soldiers with the stretcher. "Lieutenant Alford," they answered.

Something black dropped before Thaine Aydelot's eyes and Doctor Carey's words stung like powder-burns in his memory.

"Wait till you see a Kansas boy brought in, and count the cost again."

In civil life character builds slowly up to higher levels. In war, it leaps high in an instant. Thaine sprang to his feet and stood up to his full height in the blaze of the tropical sunshine. He did not see his captain, who had descended to the ground like a wounded thing, stabbed to the soul with an agony of sorrow. He did not see the still form of the young lieutenant outlined under the cover of the stretcher. He did not see the trenches nor the lines of khaki-clad, sun-browned soldiery plunging forward to rid the jungle of its deadly peril. In that one moment he looked down the years with clear vision, as his father, Asher Aydelot, had looked to look before him, and he saw manhood and a new worth in human desire. He did not see a sentimental dreamer, ambitious for honors fairly earned, and eager for adventure. The first shots in the high attack on the Tondo road made him a soldier. The martyrdom of Lieutenant Alford made him a patriot. Human nature is so worth much, it seemed to him, in the providence of God, such blood must be spilled to redeem it to nobler civilization.

Six weeks after the death of Alford before Caloccan, Dr. Horace Carey came up from the hospital in Manila to the American line to see Thaine

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