

THE THREAD OF FLAME

that we've got peace we've got to go on fighting, only fighting in a better way and for better things. Now, you're a little army, with Mr. Harrowby as your commander-in-chief, like Marshal Foch. But under him you're all officers, according to your ages. Patsy is the general, and you're the colonel," she continued to the elder Finn boy.

"Aw, no, he's not, miss," one of the other lads declared, tearfully. "I'm older 'n him. He's only twelve goin' on thirteen, and I'm thirteen goin' on fourteen."

This, too, was adjusted, and with a dollar from Vio for ice-cream sodas, the general traped out, followed by colonel, major, captain, and lieutenants, each keeping to his rank by marching in Indian file. I had never before seen Vio in this light, and something new and human that had not entered into our previous relations suddenly was there.

Left alone with her, I was in too great a tumult of excitement to find words for the opportunity.

"How did you know where to find me?" was the question I asked, stupidly.

"Miss Averill told me. She said you'd be here with your boys, and she thought you'd told her you'd be doing this particular subject. I went through some of the other rooms first."

"I didn't know you knew her."

"I didn't till—till lately. I was interested in making her acquaintance because of things Alice Mountney said, and you said."

"What did I say?"