

PREFACE

WHEN a young man whom I had not seen until that day came to see me in Edmonton, and told me he had a story which he thought was worth writing, and which he wanted me to write for him, I told him I could not undertake to do it for I was writing a story of my own, but that I could no doubt find some one who would do it for him.

Then he mentioned that he was a returned soldier, and had been for sixteen months a prisoner in Germany, and had made his escape —

That changed everything!

I asked him to come right in and tell me all about it — for like every one else I have friends in the prison-camps of Germany, boys whom I remember as little chaps in knickers playing with my children, boys I taught in country schools in Manitoba, boys whose parents are my friends. There are many of these whom we know to be prisoners, and there are some who have been listed as “missing,” who we are still hoping against long odds may be prisoners!

I asked him many questions. How were they treated? Did they get enough to eat? Did they get their parcels? Were they very lonely? Did he by any chance know a boy from Vancouver called Wallen Gordon, who had been “Missing” since the 2d of June, 1916? Or Reg