

## CHAPTER XXII

### ROMANCE

The young recruit is apt to think  
Of war as a romance;  
But he'll find its boots and bayonets  
When he's somewhere out in France.

**W**HEN the young soldier takes the long, poplar-lined road from — his heart is stirred with the romance of his mission. It is morning and he is bound for the trenches; the early sunshine is tangled in the branches, and silvery gossamer, beaded with iridescent jewels of dew, hang fairylike from the green leaves. Birds are singing, crickets are thridding in the grass and the air is full of the minute clamouring, murmuring and infinitesimal shouting of little living things. Cool, mysterious shadows are cast like intricate black lace upon the roadway, light is reflected from the cobbles in the open spaces, and on, on, ever so far on, the white road runs straight as an arrow into the land of mystery, the Unknown.