THE FIRST KISS.

Synopsis.—With his grandfather, small Ramsey Milholland is watching the "Decoration Day Parade" in the home town. The old gentleman, a veteran of the Civil war, endeavors to impress the youngster with the significance of the great conflict, and many years afterward the boy was to remember his words with startling vividness. In the schoolroom, a few years afterward, Ramsey is not distinguished for remarkable ability, though his pronounced dislikes are arithmetic, "Recitations" and German. In sharp contrast to Ramsey's backwardness is the precocity of little Dora Yocum, a young lady whom in his bitterness he denominates "Teacher's Pet." In high school, where he and Dora are classmates, Ramsey continues to feel that the girl delights to manifest her superiority, and the vindictiveness he generates becomes alarming, culminating in the resolution that some day he will "show" her. At a class picnic Ramsey is captured bag and baggage by Milla Rust, the class beauty, and endures the agonies of his first love. Ramsey's parents object to Milla and wish he'd taken up with Dora Yocum.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

—6—

Milla hung weightily upon his arm, and they dawdled, drifting from one side of the pavement to the other as they slowly advanced. Albert and Sadie, ahead of them, called "good night" at a corner, before turning down the street where Sadie lived; and presently, Ramsey and Milla were at the latter's gate. He went in with her, halting at the front steps.

"Well, g'night, Milla," he said. "Want to go out walking tomorrow night? Albert and Sadie are."

"I can't tomorrow night," she told him with obvious regret. "Isn't it the worst luck! I got an aunt comin' to visit from Chicago, and she's crazy about playing 'Five Hundred,' and mamma and papa said I haf to stay in and make four to play it. She's liable to be here three or four days, and I guess I got to be around home pretty near all the time she's here. It's the worst luck!"

He was doleful, but ventured to be manly. "Well, what can't be helped must be endured. I'll come around when she's gone."

He moved as if to depart, but she retained his arm and did not pretend to relinquish it.

"Well—" he said.

"Well what, Ramsey?"

"Well—g'night."

She glanced up at the dark front of the house. "I guess the family's gone to bed," she said absently.

"I s'pose so."

"Well, good night, Ramsey." She said this, but still did not release his arm, and suddenly, in a fluster, he felt that the time he dreaded had come. Somehow, without knowing where, except that it was somewhere upon what seemed to be a blurred face too full of obstructing features, he kissed her.

She turned instantly away in the darkness, her hands over her cheeks; and in a panic Ramsey wondered if he had make a dreadful mistake.

"Excuse me!" he said, stumbling toward the gate. "Well, I guess I got to be gettin' along back home."

He woke in the morning to a great loathing; he had kissed a girl. Mixed with the loathing was a curious pride in the very fact that caused the loathing, but the pride did not last long. He came downstairs morbid to breakfast, and continued this mood afterward. At noon Albert Paxton brought him a note which Milla had given Sadie to ask Albert to give him.

"Dearie: I am just wondering if you thought as much about something that happened last night as I do, you know what. I think it was the sweetest thing. I send you one X in this note and I hope you will think it is a sweet one. I would give you a real one if you were here now and I hope you would think it was sweeter still than the one I put in this note. It is the sweetest thing now you are mine and I am yours forever kiddo. You come around about friday eve it will be all right. aunt Jess will be back home by then so come early and we will get Sade and Alb to go to the Band Concert. Don't forget what I said about my putting something in this note, and I hope you will think it is a sweet one but not as sweet as the real sweet one I would—"

At this point Ramsey impulsively tore the note into small pieces. He felt cold as his imagination produced a sketch of his mother in the act of reading this missive, and of her expression as she read the sentence: "It is the sweetest thing now you are mine and I am yours forever kiddo." He wished that Milla hadn't called him "kiddo." She called him that often, but in her warm little voice the word seemed not at all what it did in ink. He wished, too, that she hadn't said she was his forever.

Suddenly he was seized with a horror of her.

Moisture broke out heavily upon him; he felt a definite sickness, and, wishing for death, went forth upon the streets to walk and walk. He cared not whither, so that his feet took him in any direction away from Milla, since they were unable to take him away from himself—of whom he had as great a horror. Her loving face was continually before him, and its sweetness made his flesh creep. Milla had been too sweet.

When he met or passed people, it seemed to him that perhaps they were able to recognize upon him somewhere the marks of his low quality. "Softy! Ole sloppy fool!" he muttered, addresing himself. "Slushy ole mush! . . . Spooner!" And he added, "Yours forever, kiddo!"

Convulsions seemed about to seize him.

Turning a corner with his head down, he almost charged into Dora Yocum. She was homeward bound from a piano lesson, and carried a rolled leather case of sheet music—something he couldn't imagine Milla carrying—and in her young girl's dress, which attempted to be nothing else, she looked as wholesome as cold spring water. Ramsey had always felt that she despised him and now, all at once, he thought that she was justified. Leper that he had become, he was unworthy to be even touching his cap to her! And as she nodded and went briskly on, he would have given anything to turn and walk a little way with her, for it seemed to him that this might fumigate his morals. But he lacked the courage, and, besides, he

Pausing in an Alley, He Read Her Note.

considered himself unfit to be seen walking with her.

He had a long afternoon of anguishes, these becoming most violent when he tried to face the problem of his future course toward Milla. He did not face it at all, in fact, but merely writhed, and had evolved nothing when Friday evening was upon him and Milla waiting for him to take her to the "band concert" with "Alb and Sade." He made shift to seek a short interview with Albert, just before dinner.

"I got a pretty rotten headache, and my stomach's upset, too," he said, drooping upon the Paxtons' fence. "I been gettin' worse every minute. You and Sadie go by Milla's, Albert, and tell her if I'm not there by ha'-pas'-seven, tell her not to wait for me any longer."

"How do you mean 'wait'?" Albert inquired. "You don't expect her to come pokin' along with Sadie and me, do you? She'll keep on sittin' there at home just the same, because she wouldn't have anything else to do, if you don't come like she expects you to. She hasn't got any way to stop waitin'!"

At this, Ramsey moaned, without affectation. "I don't expect I can, Albert," he said. "I'd like to if I could, but the way it looks now, you tell her I wouldn't be much suprised maybe I was startin' in with typhoid fever or pretty near anything at all." He moved away, concluding feebly: "I guess I better crawl on home, Albert, while I'm still able to walk some. You tell her the way it looks now I'm liable to be right sick."

And the next morning he woke to the chafings of remorse, picturing a Milla somewhat restored in charm waiting hopefully at the gate, even after the half-past seven, and then, as time passed and the sound of the distant horns came faintly through the darkness, going sadly to her room—perhaps weeping there. It was a picture to wring him with shame and pity, but was followed by another which electrified him, for out of school he did not lack imagination. What if Albert had reported his illness too vividly to Milla? Milla was so fond! What if, in her alarm, she should come here to the house to inquire of his mother about him? What if she told Mrs. Milholland they were "engaged"? The next moment Ramsey was projecting a conversation between his mother and Milla in which the latter stated that she and Ramsey were soon to be married, that she regarded him as already virtually her husband, and demanded to nurse him.

In a panic he fled from the house before breakfast, going out by way of a side door, and he crossed back yards and climbed back fences to reach Albert Paxton the more swiftly. This creature, a ladies' man almost professionally, was found exercising with an electric iron and a pair of flannel trousers in a basement laundry, by way of stirring his appetite for the morning meal.

"See here, Albert," his friend said breathlessly. "I got a favor. I want you to go over to Milla's—"

"I'm goin' to finish pressin' these trousers," Albert interrupted. "Then I've got my breakfast to eat."

"Well, you could do this first," said Ramsey, hurriedly. "It wouldn't hurt you to do me this little favor first. You just slip over and see Milla for me, if she's up yet, and if she isn't, you better wait around till she is, because I want you to tell her I'm a whole lot better this morning. Tell her I'm pretty near practick'ly all right again, Albert, and I'll prob'ly write her a note or something right soon—or in a week or so, anyhow. You tell her—"

"Well, you act pretty funny!" Albert exclaimed, fumbling in the pockets of his coat. "Why can't you go on over and tell her yourself? But just as it happens there wouldn't be any use your goin' over there, or me, either."

"Why not?"

"Milla ain't there," said Albert, still searching the pockets of his coat. "When we went by her house last night to tell her about your headache and stomach and all, why, her mother told us Milla'd gone up to Chicago yesterday afternoon with her aunt, and said she left a note for you, and she said if you were sick I better take it and give it to you. I was goin' to bring it over to your house after breakfast." He found it. "Here!"

Ramsey thanked him feebly, and departed in a state of partial stupefaction, brought on by a glimpse of the instabilities of life. He had also, not relief, but a sense of vacancy and loss; for Milla, out of his reach, once more became mysteriously lovely.

Pausing in an alley, he read her note.

"Dearie: Thought I ought to call you up but over the 'phone is just nix for explanations as Mama and Aunt Jess would hear everything and thought I might seem cold to you not saying anything sweet on account of them listening and you would wonder why I was so cold when telling you good-by for a wile maybe weeks. It is this way Uncle Purv wired Aunt Jess he has just taken in a big touring car on a debt and his vacation starts tomorrow so if they were going to take a trip they better start right way so Aunt Jess invited me. Now dearie I have to pack and write this in a hury so you will not be disappointed when you come by for the B. C. to-night. Do not go get some other girl and take her for I would hate her and nothing in this world would make me false for one second to my kiddo boy. I do not know just when home again as the folks think I better stay up there for a visit at Aunt Jess and Uncle Purvs home in Chicago after the trip is over. But I think of you all the time and you must think of me every minute and believe your own dearie she will never no not for one second be false. So tell Sade and Alb good-by for me and do not be false to me any more than I would be to you and it will not be long till nothing more will interrupt our sweet friendship."

As a measure of domestic prudence, Ramsey tore the note into irreparable fragments, but he did this slowly, and without experiencing any of the revulsion created by Milla's former missive.

He was melancholy, aggrieved that she should treat him so.

> "Yes, s'r; that quiet li'ta Milla's a regular old married woman by th's time, Ramsey."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Arctic Days and Nights.**

The Arctic is a region of snow and ice; for months in the winter the sun is below the horizon, and though for other months in the summer it never sets, its heat is not strong enough in most quarters to reduce the quantity of snow and ice which form in the cold season. The longest day and longest night at latitude 70 degrees are about two months each; 10 degrees farther north they are about three months each; at the pole they divide the year almost equally.

**The Mummified Miner.**

The collection of the Museum of Natural History in New York has been enriched by addition of a mummified miner from Chile, which was presented by the owners of the mines where the body was uncovered. The miner was after copper and had burrowed into the earth a distance of 15 feet when he was caught by a cave-in and buried.

**Doesn't Need Any Help.**

A smart woman may be able to make a fool of any man, but more often she doesn't.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

WOMEN NEED SWAMP-ROOT

Thousands of women have kidney and bladder trouble and never suspect it.

Women's complaints often prove to be nothing else but kidney trouble, or the result of kidney or bladder disease.

If the kidneys are not in a healthy condition, they may cause the other organs to become diseased.

Pain in the back, headache, loss of ambition, nervousness, are often times symptoms of kidney trouble.

Don't delay starting treatment. Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, a physician's prescription, obtained at any drug store, may be just the remedy needed to overcome such conditions.

Get a medium or large size bottle immediately from any drug store.

However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Advertisement.

**Somewhat Contradictory.**

She (tenderly)—"And are mine the only lips you have kissed?" He—"Yes, and they are the sweetest of all."

MOTHER, QUICK! GIVE CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP FOR CHILD'S BOWELS

Even a sick child loves the "fruity" taste of "California Fig Syrup." If the little tongue is coated, or if your child is listless, cross, feverish, full of cold, or has colic, a teaspoonful will never fail to open the bowels. In a few hours you can see for yourself how thoroughly it works all the constipation poison, sour bile and waste from the tender, little bowels and gives you a well, playful child again.

Millions of mothers keep "California Fig Syrup" handy. They know a teaspoonful today saves a sick child tomorrow. Ask your druggist for genuine "California Fig Syrup" which has directions for babies and children of all ages printed on bottle. Mother! You must say "California" or you may get an imitation fig syrup.—Advertisement.

**Proper Place.**

Judge—Where were your supporters in this crime?

Prisoner—I had 'em on, judge.

DYED HER SKIRT, DRESS, SWEATER AND DRAPERIES WITH "DIAMOND DYES"

Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple any woman can dye or tint her worn, shabby dresses, skirts, waists, coats, stockings, sweaters, coverings, draperies, hangings, everything, even if she has never dyed before. Buy "Diamond Dyes"—no other kind—then perfect home dyeing is sure because Diamond Dyes are guaranteed not to spot, fade, streak or run. Tell your druggist whether the material you wish to dye is wool or silk, or whether it is linen, cotton or mixed goods.—advertisement.

**A Mistake.**

There was a commotion in the theater and the usher was seen ejecting a man. The man was sputtering angrily when the manager came into the lobby.

"Why did you eject this man?" asked the manager.

"He was hissing the performance," replied the usher.

"Why did you hiss the performance?" asked the manager.

"I d-d-didn't h-h-hiss," stammered the man. "I m-m-merely s-s-said t-t-to m-my friend beside me: 'S-S-Sammy, is-s-s-n't it s-s-s-superb?'"—Pittsburgh Press.

**Proof.**

"I am a philosopher," admitted the gentlemen whose frontispiece was as elongated and solemn as that of a rare old fiddle.

"What makes you think so?" we skeptically inquired.

"Because," he answered, "although I am aware that I am not appreciated it does not hurt my feelings in the least."—Kansas City Star.

**A Carver.**

The new boarder shyly took his seat at Mrs. Simpkins' table.

"May I ask, sir," said the old boarder, "what your occupation is?"

"Oh, I am a sculptor," replied the newcomer.

"You carve marble, do you?" pursued the veteran.

"I do."

"Then," continued the other, "I see you will be a valuable acquisition in this happy house. Do you mind coming up to this end of tne table and carving the fowl?"

**Not Ever.**

Rastus (to Sambo, in an undertone)—I ain't the man I useter wuz. Time wuz when I could whip the ol' woman in a fair, stan'-up fight.

The Old Woman (overhearing)—You's a black liar, Rastus Johnsing. Time wuzn't, time ain't, an' time ain't gwine to wuz.—Nashville Tennesseean.

NAME "BAYER" IS ON GENUINE ASPIRIN

Take Tablets Without Fear, If You See the Safety "Bayer Cross."

If you want the true, world-famous Aspirin, as prescribed by physicians for over twenty-one years, you must ask for "Bayer Tablets of Aspirin."

The "Bayer Cross" is stamped on each tablet and appears on each package for your protection against imitations.—Advertisement.

**Naturally.**

Artist's Wife—"Anatole, somebody's knocking." Artist—"Don't answer. then they'll think we are on the Riviera."

Sure Relief
FOR INDIGESTION

6 BELL-ANS
Hot water
Sure Relief

BELL-ANS

25¢ and 75¢ Packages, Everywhere

DOGS GIVEN VICTORIA CROSS

Three Have Been Awarded Highest British Decoration for Bravery in Face of the Enemy.

The English in asking that the Victoria Cross be awarded to the cat which so heroically saved her young during the fire of the Printemps only follow an example given by the queen of England herself. To appreciate the value of this reward we must remember that the Victoria Cross is for a soldier, general or private, the highest military order.

In the last war at the utmost fifty have been awarded. However, several dogs belonging to the British army have received this honor. These were: Bob, of the Royal Berkshire, which in the Afghanistan war saved the life of several soldiers; Jack, which accomplished the same feats at the battle of the Alma, and Jerry, a hero of the Crimean war, which received from the city of Dublin a medal and—a dinner. The odds are that the mess made the dog happier than the medal.—New York Tribune.

**Britain's Balmy Climate.**

London Daily Mirror—Her hair is always exquisitely dressed and her shoes in perfect shape. No more in the way of dress is required of any woman.

**Just So.**

"Your heart seems to miss a beat now and then." "Engine trouble, eh, doc?"

A Short Time Ago I Weighed Only 80 Pounds---I Now Weigh 112 Pounds and

TANLAC

is what built me up so wonderfully, says Mrs. Barbara Weber, 315 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco. She is but one of thousands similarly benefited.

If you are under weight, if your digestion is impaired, if you are weak and unable to enjoy life to the fullest measure, you should take Tanlac. At all good druggists.

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instantly opens your head and makes breathing easy. Fine for CATARRH COLDS COUGHS

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DROPSY TREATED ONE WEEK FREE

Short breathing relieved in a few hours swelling reduced in a few days; regulates the liver, kidneys, stomach and heart; purifies the blood, strengthens the entire system. Write for Free Trial Treatment. COLLUM DROPSY REMEDY CO., Dept. S.O., ATLANTA, GA

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TRADE MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Stops Lameness from a Bone Spavin, Ring Bone, Splint, Curb, Side Bone, or similar troubles and gets horse going sound. It acts mildly but quickly and good results are lasting. Does not blister or remove the hair and horse can be worked. Page 17 in pamphlet with each bottle tells how. $2.50 a bottle delivered. Horse Book 9 A free.

W. F. YOUNG, Inc., 310 Temple St., Springfield, Mass.

WHY SOME MEN LEAVE HOME

This Kind of Thing, Served Up Daily, Would Drive Almost Anyone From His Loved Fireside.

"George, dear," cried wifey from the bedroom, "have you shut the dining room window?"

"Yes, love."

"Put the plate basket behind the bookcase?"

"Um!"

"Have you put the dog out?"

"Yes."

"Sure you bolted the scullery door?"

"Sure."

"Turned off the gas in the cellar?"

"Yes, precious."

"Wound the clock?"

"Yes, darling."

"Brought in the mat from the porch?"

"I have, my ownest."

"Have you locked up the wine?"

"Yes, yes, my sweetheart. I have done even that."

"Well, there's no need to get wild about it. Why can't you come to bed at some decent hour? What on earth have you been doing down there all this time?"—London Tit-Bits.

**Idle to Borrow Trouble.**

Sorrow comes soon enough without despondency. It does a man no good to carry around a lightning rod to attract trouble.—Aughey.

In your years of strength prepare for your years of weakness.

*Wishing for sleep is a poor way to get it*

A LITTLE wisdom in the daytime is a better assurance of rest than any amount of anxious wishing when nerves are a-jangle at night.

What you do at noon often has more influence on sleep than what you want and hope for, at midnight.

Coffee's drug element, caffeine, whips up the nerves, and when its use is continued there's usually a penalty which no amount of mental effort can avoid.

The part of wisdom, as so many thousands have found, is to turn away from nerve-stimulation and adopt rich, delicious Postum as the mealtime drink. Postum delights the taste, but brings no disturbance to nerves or digestion. Even the little children can share in the enjoyment of Postum at any meal.

It's better to anticipate warnings than to be driven by them.

It's better to encourage and preserve sound nerves and complete health than to listen to the clock ticks at night and say, "I wish!"

You can get Postum wherever good food or drink is sold and served. An order today may be the beginning, for you, of the great satisfaction and comfort which so many others have found in Postum.

Your grocer has both forms: Instant Postum (in tins) made instantly in the cup by the addition of boiling water. Postum Cereal (in packages of larger bulk, for those who prefer to make the drink while the meal is being prepared) made by boiling for 20 minutes.

Postum *for* Health—"There's a Reason"

Made by Postum Cereal Co., Inc., Battle Creek, Mich.