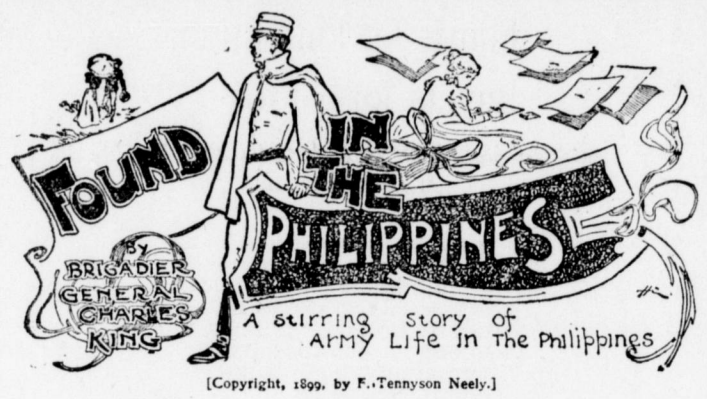

CHAPTER I.

Something unusual was going on at division headquarters and the men in the nearest regimental camps, regular and volunteer, were "lined up" along the sentry posts and silently, eagerly watching and waiting. For a week rumor had been rife that orders for a move were coming, and the brigades hailed it with delight. For a month shivering at night in dripping, drenching fogs drifting in from the Pacific, or drilling for hours each day on the bleak slopes of the Presidio heights, they had been praying for something to break the monotony of the routine. They were envious of the comrades who had been shipped to Manila, emulous of those who had stormed Santiago, and would have welcomed with unreasoning enthusiasm any mandate that bore promise of change of scene—or duty. The afternoon was raw and chilly; the wet wind blew salt and strong from the westward sea, and the mist rolled in, thick and fleecy, hiding from view the familiar landmarks of the neighborhood and forcing a display of lamplights in the row of gaudy saloons across the street that bounded the camp ground toward the setting sun, though that invisible luminary was still an hour high and afternoon drill only just over.

Company after company in their campaign hats and flannel shirts, in worn blue trousers and brown canvas leggings, the men had come swinging in from the broad driveways of the beautiful park to the south and, as they passed the tents of the commanding general, even though they kept their heads erect and noses to the front, their wary eyes glanced quickly at the unusual array of saddled horses, of carriages and Concord wagons halted along the curbstone, and noted the number of officers grouped about the gate. Ponchos and overcoat capes were much in evidence on every side as the men broke ranks, scattered to their tents to stow away their dripping arms and belts, and then came streaming out to stare, unrebuked, at headquarters. It was still early in the war days, and, among the volunteers and, indeed, among regiments of the regulars whose ranks were sprinkled with college men who had rubbed shoulders but a few months earlier with certain subalterns, the military line of demarcation was a dead letter when "the boys" were out of sight and hearing of their seniors, and so it happened that when a young officer came hurrying down the pathway that led from the tents of the general to those of the field officers of the Tenth California, he was hailed by more than one group of regulars along whose lines he passed, and, as a rule, the query took the terse, soldierly form of "What's up, Billy?"

The lieutenant nodded affably to several of his fellows of the football field, but his hand crept out from underneath the shrouding cape, palm down, signaling caution. "Orders—some kind," he answered in tones just loud enough to be heard by those nearest him. "Seen the old man anywhere? The general wants him," and, never halting for reply, the youngster hurried on.

He was a bright, cheery, brave-eyed lad of 20 who six months earlier was stumbling through the sciences at the great university on the heights beyond the glorious bay, never dreaming of deadlier battle than that in which his pet eleven grappled with the striped team of a rival college. All on a sudden, to the amaze of the elders of the great republic, the tenets and traditions of the past were thrown to the winds and the "Hermit Nation" leaped the seas and flew at the strongholds of the Spanish colonies. Volunteers sprang up by the hundred thousand and a reluctant congress accorded a meager addition to the regular army. Many a college athlete joined the ranks, while a limited few, gifted with relatives who had both push and "pull," were permitted to pass a not very exacting examination and join the permanent establishment as second lieutenants forthwith. Counting those commissioned in the regular artillery and infantry, there must have been a dozen in the thronging camps back of the great city, and of these dozen, Billy Gray—"Belligerent Billy," as a tutor dubbed him when the war and Billy broke out together, the latter to the extent of a four-days' absence from all collegiate duty—was easily the gem of the lot. One of the "brightest minds" in his class, he was one of the laziest; one of the quickest and most agile when aroused, he was one of the torpids as a rule. One of the kind who should have "gone in for honors," as the faculty said, he came nearer going out for devilment. The only son of a retired colonel of the army who had made California his home, Billy had spent years in camp and field and saddle and knew the west as he could never hope to know Haswell. The only natural soldier of his class when, sorely against the will of most, they entered the student battalion, he promptly won the highest chevrons that could be given in the sophomore year, and, almost as promptly, lost them for "lates" and absences. When the 'varsity was challenged by a neighboring institute to a competitive drill the "scouts" of the former reported that the crack company of the San Pedros had the snappiest captain they ever saw, and that, with far better material to choose from, and more of it, the 'varsity wouldn't stand a ghost of a show in the eyes of the professional judges unless Billy would "brace up" and "take hold." Billy was willing as Barkis, but the faculty said it would put a premium on laxity to make Billy a 'varsity captain, even though the present incumbents were ready, any of them, to resign in his favor. "Prex" said no in no uncertain terms; the challenge was declined, whereat the rival institute crowed lustily and the thing got into the papers. As a result a select company of student volunteers was formed; its members agreed to drill an hour daily in addition to the prescribed work, provided Billy would "take hold" in earnest, and this was the company that, under his command, swept the boards six weeks later and left San Pedro's contingent an amazed and disgusted crowd. Then Billy went to metaphorical pieces again until the war clouds overspread the land; then like his father's son he girded up his loins, went in for a commission and won. And here he was a "sub" in Uncle Sam's stalwart infantry with three classmates serving under him in the ranks and half a dozen more, either as junior officers or enlisted men, in the camps of the volunteers. He was a handsome boy, a healthy, hearty boy, and, as boys go, rather a good boy—a boy in whom his mother would have found, had she not long since been lifted above the cares of this world, much of comfort and more to condone, but a boy, nevertheless, who had given his old dragoon of a dad many an anxious hour. Now, just as he neared the legal dividing line between youth and years of discretion, Billy Gray had joined the third battalion of his regiment, full of pluck, hope and health, full of ambition to make a name for himself in a profession he loved as, except his father, he certainly loved nothing else, and utterly scoffing the idea that there might come into his life a being for the sake of whose smile he could almost lay down his sword, for he had yet to meet Amy Lawrence.

"Who are the women folks up at headquarters, Billy?" asked a youth of his own years and rank, peering eagerly through the drifting mist at the dim, ghostly outlines of the general's camp.

"Didn't get to see 'em. Where's the old man—the colonel?" was the reply. "Chief wants him toot de sweet!"

"What's wanted?" called a voice from the biggest of the neighboring tents, and a close-cropped head was thrust out between the front tent flaps. "That you, Billy? Who wants the colonel? He and the "brig" rode over to the Presidio an hour ago—ain't got back. Come in; I've started a fire in our oil stove." A puff of warm air blew from the interior and confirmed the statement. It was well along in summer, and not a dozen miles away to the east men were strolling about with palm-leaf fans and wilted collars. Here, close to the gray shores of the mighty sea, blankets and overcoats were in demand. Hospitably the older officer tugged at the lacings of the military front door, swore between his set teeth when the knots, swollen by the wet, withstood his efforts, and then shouted:

"Sergeant major, send somebody here to open this."

A light footstep sounded on the springy board floor, nimble fingers worked a moment at the cords, then the flap was thrown open and the adjutant's office stood partially revealed. It was a big wall tent backed up against another of the same size and pattern. Half a dozen plain chairs, two rough board tables littered with books, papers and smoking tobacco, an oil stove and a cheap clothes rack on which were hanging raincoats, ponchos and a cape or two, comprised all the furniture. In a stout frame of unplaned wood, cased in their oilskins and tightly rolled, stood the national and state colors of the famous regiment; and back of them, well within the second tent, where one clerk was just lighting a camp lantern, were perched on rough tables a brace of field desks with the regimental books. The sergeant major, a veteran of years of service in the regulars, sat at one of them. A young soldier, he who had unfastened the tent flap to admit Lieut. Gray, was just returning to his seat at the other. Two orderlies lounged on a bench well beyond and back of the sergeant major's seat, and a bugler, with his hands in his pockets, was smoking a briar-root pipe at the opposite back doorway. Woe to the enlisted men who sought the presence of the colonel or adjutant through any other channel. The sergeant major would drop on him with the force of a baseball bat.

"Who all are over yonder at the chief's?" asked the adjutant, as soon as he had his visitors well inside, and the soft accent as well as the quaint phraseology told that in the colonel's confidential staff officer a southerner spoke.

"All the brigade and most regimental commanders 'cept ours, I should say, and they seem to be waiting for them. Can't we send?" was the answer, as the junior whipped off his campaign hat and sprinkled the floor with the vigorous shakes he gave the battered felt.

"Have sent," said his entertainer, briefly, as he filled a pipe from the open tobacco box and struck a safety match. "Orderly galloped after him ten minutes ago. Blow the brigade and battalion commanders! What I asked you was who are the women up there?"

"No, you didn't! You said 'who all are up yonder?' I'm a sub, and s'posed you meant men — soldiers — officers. What have I to do with anybody in petticoats?"

"And I'm a grizzled vet of a dozen years' duty, crows' feet and gray hairs a-comin'," grinned the adjutant, pulling at a long curly mustache and drawing himself up to his full height of six feet, "and when you're as old as I am and half as wise, Billy, you'll know that a pretty girl is worth ten times the thought our old frumps of generals demand. My name ain't Gordon if I haven't a mind to waltz over there through the mist and the wind just to tell them I've sent for Squeers. Then I'll get a look at the girls."

"I've got to go back," said Billy, "and you've no business to—with Mrs. Gordon and an interesting family to consider. What tent'd the ladies go to? I didn't see 'em."

"Mrs. Gordon, suh," said the adjutant, with placid superiority, "considers it a reflection on her sex when I fail to pay it due homage. Of course, you didn't see the ladies. The party was shown into the general's own domicile. Couldn't you see how many young fellows were posing in picturesque attitudes in front of it? Awe, Hank!" he suddenly shouted to an officer striding past the tent in dripping mackintosh. "Goin' up to division headquarters? Just tell the staff or the chief I've sent an orderly galloping after Squeers. He's half way to the Presidio now, but it'll be an hour before they can get back." The silent officer nodded and went on, whereat Gordon made a spring for the entrance and hailed again.

"Say, Hank! Who are the damsels?" The answer came back through the fog:

"People from the east—looking for a runaway. Old gent, pretty daughter, and pretty daughter's pretty cousin. Heard the orders?"

"Damn the orders! They don't touch us. Where do they come from?"

"D'rect from Washington, they say. Three regiments to sail at once, and—"

"Oh, I know all that!" shouted Gordon, impatiently. "It was all over camp an hour ago! Where do they—the girls—come from? What's their name?"

"Wasn't presented," was the sulky reply. "Let a lot of stuffy old women

"What's wanted?"

show up in search of long-lost sons and those fellows at headquarters unload them on us in less than no time, but a brace of pretty girls—! Why, they double the gate guards so that no outsider can so much as see them. Billy, here, knows 'em. Ask him."

By this time the youngster had ranged up alongside the adjutant and was laughingly enjoying the latest arrival's tirade at the expense of the headquarters' staff, but at his closing words Lieut. Billy's grin of amusement sudden left his face, giving way to a look of blank amaze.

"I know 'em! I haven't been east of the Big Muddy since I was a kid."

"They asked for you, just the same, just after you started. 'Least one of 'em did—for What's-his-name?—the chief military legal adviser, came out bareheaded and called after you, but you were out of hearing. He said the cousin, the prettiest one, recognized you as you skipped away from the general's tent, and pointed you out to her friend. Somebody explained you were running an errand for one of those aids too lazy to go himself, and that you'd be back presently."

"Then go at once, young man," said the adjutant, laying a mighty hand on the junior's square shoulder. "Stand not upon the order of your going, but git! Never you mind about the colonel. He won't be here until after he's been there, and he's in for a rasping over this morning's inspection. Just look at the report, Sergeant major send me Col. Colt's report!" he called aloud, tossing his head back as he spoke. "Come in, Parson, come out of the wet." And, eager enough to read a famous inspector's criticisms of the appearance of the regiment, the officer addressed as Parson shoved briskly into the tent.

The young soldier who had opened the tent flap a few minutes before came forward with a folded paper which, in silence, he handed the adjutant and turned back to his desk. Mr. Gordon took the paper, but his eyes followed the soldier. Then he called, somewhat sharply:

"Morton!"

The young fellow stopped at the dividing crack between the two tent floors and slowly faced the three officers. He was slender, well built, erect. His uniform fitted him trimly and was worn with easy grace, his hands and feet were small and slender, his eyes and hair dark and fine, his features delicate and clear cut, his complexion a trifle blistered and beaten by the harsh winds that whistled in every day from the sea, and, as he turned, all three officers were struck by its extreme pallor.

"You're sick again, Morton," said the adjutant, somewhat sternly. "I thought I told you to see Dr. Heffernan. Have you done so?"

"I—wasn't sick enough," faltered the young soldier. "I was all right a minute or two—or rather this morning, sir. It'll be over presently. Perhaps it was the smell of the oil that did it—the stove is close to my desk."

But Gordon continued to look at him doubtfully.

"Move your desk across the tent for the present, anyhow," said he, "and I'll speak to the doctor myself. With all this newspaper hullabaloo about our neglect of the sick," continued he, turning to his friends, "if a man changes color at sight of a smash-up he must be turned over to the Red Cross at once. What is it, orderly?" he finished, suddenly, as the tent flaps parted and a soldier in complete uniform, girt with his belt of glistening cartridges, stood at salute, some visiting cards in his gloved hand.

"Lieut. Gray here, sir?" was the comprehensive answer. Then, catching sight of the young officer, who stepped quickly forward, he held forth the cards.

"The adjutant general's compliments, sir, and he'd be glad if the lieutenant would come over at once."

Gray took the cards, curiously studied them and then read aloud, one after the other, and placing the topmost underneath the other two as soon as read.

"MR. LISPENARD PRIME."
"MISS PRIME."
"MISS AMY LAWRENCE."

It was the last name that lay uppermost at the end and the Parson noted it.

"That's the pretty cousin, Billy," quoth he. "Case of the last shall be first, don't you see? Scoot now, you lucky boy, and tell us all about it later."

But Gray was still gazing dreamily at the cards.

"I'm sure I never met any of them before in my life," said he. "There must be some mistake. Yet—that name sounds familiar—somehow," and "that" was the only name now in sight. "I'm off," he suddenly announced, and vanished.

There was a sound of light, quick footsteps on the flooring of the rearward tent at the same time. The sergeant major glanced up from his writing; looked at a vacant desk, then at the clock, then, inquiringly, at his regimental deity—the adjutant. It was just the hour of the day at which all manner of papers were coming down from division and brigade headquarters to be duly stamped, noted and stacked up for the colonel's action. This was the young clerk Morton's especial function, but Morton had left the office and was gone.

[To Be Continued.]

WICKED-LOOKING WEAPON.

Description of the Mauser Pistol That Is to Be Used by United States Cavalrymen.

"The new Mauser pistol, with which our cavalry is about to be armed, is a horrible looking piece of machinery," said an esthetic sportsman the other day. "It doesn't resemble a firearm at all, but looks like some strange scientific instrument, such as one might see in a laboratory. Imagine a cigar box, japanned black, with a handle at one end and a short tube at the other, and there you have it. The box contains the mechanism and the tube spouts bullets. The cavalryman of the past was a dashing figure. He wore a steel cuirass and a helmet with nodding plumes, and while he carried a brace of pistols in his holsters, his real weapon was his trusty saber. Do you remember the splendid fellows who are galloping past Napoleon in Meissonier's '1807?' Since then science has gradually sucked all the poetry out of war and the Mauser pistol is the last work of brutal utilitarianism. The cavalryman of the future will carry nothing but a small black walnut box, and will closely resemble a surgeon going out to operate for appendicitis. When he gets to the right spot, designated by the engineer corps, he will dismount, open the box, take out his hideous Mauser machine, hook the case to one end, so as to form a shoulder rest, spray a few quarts of projectiles in a given direction and go home again to rest after the fatigue of the fray. If the calculations of the range finder are all right his bullets perforate somebody a mile away. That will be war a la mode. In some respects it is a great improvement on the old style, but it will inspire no poets. Imagine Tennyson writing the 'Charge of the Light Brigade' about a cavalry regiment armed with Mauser automatics."—Chicago Chronicle.

He Got His Sleep.

Doctor—I see what the matter is. You do not get sleep enough. Take this prescription to a druggist's.

Mr. Blinkers—Thank you. I presume that's what's the matter.

Doctor (next day)—Ah, good-morning! You are looking much better today. Slept last night, didn't you?

Mr. Blinkers—Slept like a top. I feel first rate.

Doctor—How many doses of that opiate did you take?

Mr. Blinkers (in surprise)—I didn't take any. I gave it to the baby.—N. Y. Weekly.

Mystery.

"Got a job?" asked one urchin.

"Yes," answered the other, with superiority. "I'm workin' fur a lawyer."

"I suppose he'll be takin' you into the firm next."

"Not me. The whole thing is a mystery to me. I don't do a thing but sit on a chair by the door all day and try to figure out where he gets the four dollars a week he pays me."—Washington Star.

WIT AND WISDOM.

The man who has never made a fool of himself doesn't appreciate sympathy.—Chicago Daily News.

She—"Do you believe that man sprang from the ape?" He—"No. But I believe all women spring from the mouse."—N. Y. Press.

Coroner—"Was the victim conscious when you reached him?" Pat—"Yis, sor; he wor. But bechune us, I don't belave he knew ut."—Judy.

The hungry man should keep out of society; less attention is paid every year to what is served to eat, and more to decorations.—Atchison Globe.

Voice from the Inside—"Is my hat on straight?" "Ha, ha! evidently a woman." That is where he made a mistake. It was only Toppledon, the drum major of the Steenty-steenth.—Boston Transcript.

Mrs. Bragg—"We gave our daughter a piano for her eighteenth birthday. She was playing on it this afternoon. Did you hear her?" Mrs. Nexdore—"Yes, poor girl; she stubbed her toes on the keys several times, didn't she?"—Philadelphia Press.

Jones—"That policeman is a new man on the force." Smith—"How do you know?" Jones—"Some one told him this morning there was a fight around the corner and he hurried around in time to arrest both belligerents."—Ohio State Journal.

"I was at Bilinger's this morning and there didn't appear to be anybody home. Have they gone away?" "No, the cook struck." "And they have broken up housekeeping?" "No. She struck the second girl and the whole blessed family had to go to court."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

INK ROLLERS USED IN 1041.

Not Until a Few Years Ago, However, Were They Made of Glue and Molasses.

As long ago as the year 1041, so history tells us, a Chinese blacksmith, Pi-Ching by name, made a paste of glutinous earth upon which he engraved separate characters. These he baked, making movable type of earthenware.

Even to this day in China the impression is made by inking the type with a brush; a thin absorbent paper is then laid upon the face of the type and pressed lightly with a dry brush. We have now the first way by which ink was transmitted to type.

This way of taking an impression continued until about 1474, when pelt balls were introduced. If in "perfect" order these would do good work. They were made in the following way:

A piece of strong grain pelt or skin was selected, and from this the grease had to be entirely removed. It was then soaked 14 or 15 hours and afterward "curried" by drawing it across a post until every particle of the dampness had gone. Then long treading by the feet followed.

Wool was wrapped under the skin and the pelt was tightly placed over, but the great difficulty of the operation led to the introduction, about 1807, by Mr. Maxwell, of Philadelphia, of the dressed sheepskins or "skin rollers," as they were called. But they, too, were abandoned, being found too heavy for the hand.

About 1815 Mr. Fanshaw, of New York, introduced an improved roller made by wrapping a blanket some eight times around a piece of wood 3½ inches in diameter, turned true, and with an iron spindle on each end. The skin was then tightly wound around the blanket and afterwards nailed to the wooden end.

It was in 1817, by the merest chance, in one of the potteries in Staffordshire, England, that the composition of glue and molasses first saw the light. This composition was used in the potteries for what are commonly called "dabbers."

Mr. B. Foster, of Weybridge, England, was the first printer to apply this composition to letterpress printing; but even he did not understand its great usefulness. He merely spread it, when in a liquid state, upon a piece of canvas and then made a ball of it. This is the only way in which it differed from the pelt ball.

The inventors of printing machinery were not quite so slow, however. About 1830 the composition was used as a coating on wooden cylinders; and here we have the first application for printing presses worthy the name of a "roller," without which printing machinery could never have reached the state of perfection it has attained to-day.—Inland Printer.

"Bobs" Afraid of Cats.

Lord Roberts, commander of 200,000 British soldiers in South Africa, possessor of the Victoria Cross and all sorts of medals, is about paralyzed with fear at the sight of a cat. No cat has been admitted to the Roberts house for years. During one of the actions outside Cabul, when bullets and gunshot were freely falling around the general and his staff, he was, as usual, coolly indifferent, but all at once he was seen to tremble and pale with fright. The hero of a hundred fights pointed helplessly over his shoulder to a neighboring wagon, and the staff saw a half-starved black cat perched on top of it. His strange fear of the cat was so great as to completely distract Gen. Roberts' attention from the field of battle, and it was not until a subaltern drove the animal away that the English general was able to bring his thoughts back to the conflict.—N. Y. Herald.

A Varying Population.

New Jersey has a sliding population. Of the 2,000,000 (estimated) souls there are that many within the borders at night; at noon there are 1,800,000. The other 200,000 are at work or are engaged in shopping in New York and Philadelphia. —N. Y. Sun.