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It only afterwards dawned on me that we were still in the month of August. He thought that was fine (I didn't) and copied it was. That very letter contained a considerable number of kisses, allusions to heavenly eyes, a warm beating heart, sun-kissed locks and dainty hands. Nightingales were singing and chirping throughout the letter; it was simply an orgy of loving and tender thoughts, and if dear Rösli would have been near me that evening, I would have forgotten myself, Sergeant or no Sergeant. Röstli, on copying it, actually had a tear in his eye, and dropped it, but I made him use the blotter. Rösli must never, never know that tears disgraced this martial face, the weeping must be left to women.

That letter did it. I was convinced beforehand that it would. I poured into it the feeling of my own lonely heart; it would have softened even a heart of stone. For the first time since our mutual conspiracy, the Sergeant showed me the reply. There it was, in simple, affectionate language. She told him that she loved him, and that she had told her mother all about it, and that he may *call*. Needless to say that I dined that evening at the canteen, in full view of my comrades, with the Sergeant, and more than one bottle was carried away from the table; and if it would have lasted much longer, I too, would have been carried from the table. Owing to the fact that the Sergeant was now allowed to call, my job as writer came to an end, but many a pleasant evening I spent with Röstli, and what was the subject of our conversation I need hardly mention. When the day of our parting dawned, he told me that I would get that very day my calling up papers for the non-commissioned officer's course, and so it happened. Now to this day, I do not know whether I achieved this with my pen or through the merits of my military achievements. "Good luck!" I shouted to Sergeant Röstli, when he left the barracks; "and when is the wedding to be?"

\* \* \*

*Four years later. November 1914.*

*On the Route Porrentruy — Bonfol, 11 p.m.*

Tramp — tramp — tramp — through nearly two feet of snow a long column of tired soldiers wended their way towards the frontier. It was bitter cold night and snowing hard; not a sound could be heard, only in the distance the muffled roar of heavy guns in action. Over there too, columns were marching, marching towards death and destruction, over there war, war to the bitter end. Here — still peace — still

hope to see those from whom one parted only a few months ago; but for how long? Perhaps to-morrow the furies of war would be let loose . . . . .

Tramp — tramp — tramp — onward with heavy loads, and heavy hearts. Here and there a groan, a cough, perhaps even a half-uttered oath, suppressed in order not to break the awful stillness of the night. An icy cold wind lashed the snow into reddened faces, frozen fingers convulsively gripped the snow-covered rifles. To-morrow perhaps, that weapon might stand in good stead. Suddenly a loud challenge, "Who goes there?"; some sharp commands, our column has come to a standstill. There was some conversation going on in front. Nobody cared — sleep, sleep — is all that is wanted, and yet it must not be. Snow-clad soldiers are passing us now from the opposite direction. No words are exchanged, it looks like a long procession of ghosts. Suddenly they stop, too. I enquire to which unit they belong, and am told that they were the 2nd company of the Battalion 3, being relieved from the frontier outward posts. This was the battalion and company to which my old Sergeant Röstli belonged. "Is Sergeant Röstli with you?" I enquired of one of the men. "Not Sergeant," he replies, "but Sergeant-Major now;" and down the line went a tired whisper of the name of my former Sergeant. Out of the darkness his countenance suddenly appeared. "Here Corporal St." A glance, a handshake, "How is Rösli?" I enquire, half fearing that it might awaken unpleasant memories. "Fine she is, and so are the two boys." "Glad to hear it," I answered. Then a command. Onwards — tramp — tramp — tramp — a parting handshake, a glance, and he was gone; but now a feeling of gladness and of joy overcame me. The darkness of the night seemed to me less apparent. There was just a glimmer of light piercing through the wall of heavy snow-flakes. The thought that I had given Rösli to the Sergeant and consequently two strapping boys to my country, made me feel happy. Surely, I reasoned with myself, never before had I taken up my pen for a nobler cause. That day, on snatching a few hours sleep, I dreamed again of Rösli and her bonny boys.

#### SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL.

A report of the Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Economic Council, which took place on Friday, June 18th, will appear in our next issue.

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