

# "WAR"

## Our New Serial Story

THE MOST FAMOUS WAR NOVEL OF MODERN TIMES, SHOWING GERMANY'S RUTHLESS HAND IN FRANCE, AUSTRIA AND DENMARK



Under the title "Disarm" this novel won for its author, Baroness Bertha Von Suttner, the Nobel Peace Prize.

The story contains some passages strangely prophetic of the present world struggle, although the final scene of the story is the Franco-Prussian War of 44 years ago. The hypocrisy of a nation adopting conscription and a policy of huge armaments and pretending to hope for peace is proven to the hilt.

IT IS A WOMAN'S PROTEST AGAINST WAR

START WITH THE FIRST INSTALLMENT

the mysterious "reason of State." The gentlemen around the green diplomatic table are all wise, and they know how to bring about the greatest security of national supremacy. Of course, the London Protocol of 1852 must be upheld and the constitutional decree of Copenhagen of 1868 must be revoked within twenty-four hours. Yes, Austria's honor and welfare depended upon that. The dogma was a bit hard to believe, but in politics, even more than in religion, the most allows itself to be led by the rule of quibbles—reason about it is forbidden. With the sword once unsheathed, they shout the unquestioning "hurrah" and struggle for victory. Oh what a foolish, cruel, and misguided world, still in the leading strings of infancy! Thus my historical studies left me quite as confused as they found me.

### CHAPTER II.

Encouraging tidings from the seat of war. The allies won battle after battle. The Danes were forced from the entire field, which was occupied by our troops, the enemy barely maintaining the lines. With pins and flags followed the campaign on the map. Only the butchery might end before Frederick's regiment was ordered into the field! This fear hung over me like the sword of Damocles. I dreaded the night lest the morning would bring the marching order. Frederick was calm, but he saw what was coming.

"Accustom yourself to face the events, my dear, and cease protesting. I believe the war will continue for force was sent to the front in the beginning, so my regiment will have to join."

Two months and yet no results! Oh, why could not the cruel game be settled in one fight like a duel? But no, if one battle is lost, another is offered; if one position is given up, another is taken, and so on till one side or the other is annihilated, or both exhausted.

On April 14 the last stronghold was taken, and immediately a peace conference assembled in London. Every one was overjoyed and relieved, save, perhaps, some of my husband's comrades, who had hoped to share the glory. Their wives thought it had luck. But I received the news of "suspension of hostilities" with great joy, and wrote in my diary "Disarm! Disarm! Forever." I added desponding, and in brackets, "Utopia."

The London conference dragged on two months without agreement, and then came the orders to Frederick's regiment to march, with twenty-four hours for leave-taking. The birth of our little child was hourly expected, and it was as if we both awaited death upon our farewell.

We were overwhelmed with the magnitude of the approaching evils. To us it was neither patriotic nor heroic to help hew down the Danes, and in case our parting was for ever, what excuse of state could reconcile us to this terrible sacrifice? To defend the common cause of humanity might be justified, but to rush into battle with a distant country, throwing away life, and home, and family, because of the mere pledge of princes—that was too infamous! Why must Christian soldiers leave home to help seclude this petty prince on his petty throne? Why? Why? How treasonable and blasphemous to ask such a question of Emperor and Pope! Neither would or could answer.

The regiment was to march at ten. We had not slept for hours lest we should waste a moment. We strove vainly to comfort each other. In the rays of morning light I realized that my hour had come, and with tears of uncertainty we tore ourselves apart. Frederick desperate lest the next moment might rob him of both wife and child.

The next morning the Olmutz papers contained the following account:

Yesterday the 4th Regiment left town with flying colors to gain fresh laurels in the sea-girt brotherland. The joy of battle inspired every heart, etc., etc.

I lost my child, and for weeks lay between life and death, dreaming all the agonies of war and torture. In my delirium I cried, "Disarm! Disarm! Help! Help us for the sake of justice and peace!"

When I regained consciousness, my father and Aunt Marie stood at my bedside.

"Is he alive? Have letters come?" were my first questions. Yes, quite a heap of letters had accumulated. One was marked: "Not to be opened till all danger is past." From this I take extracts:

To-day we met the enemy for the first time, having marched through conquered territory until now, with the Danes retreating fast. Everywhere are the ruins and remnants of battle. The landscape is torn with shell and piled with graves. So the victors march on to new victories. To-day we took the enemy's position and, saving a burning village behind us, while friend and foe were absorbed in the tumult, I could only

think of you, and that, perhaps you were lost. The enemy withstood us but two hours, and we did not pursue. We collected our wounded and cared for them as well as we could. The dead, some among them still possibly alive, we buried, but the wounded and injured we must leave behind to bleed slowly to death and starve. And we, hurrah, we must push on into the jolly dashing war.

Our next will probably be a great battle, for two great army corps are about to clash. Then the loss will run into thousands and the artillery will mow them down. What a strange way of doing things! It would be better if the two enemies each had a weapon, which with one blow would wipe out either side. Perhaps such blasts would lead to putting a stop to war. If both sides were equally deadly, their force could no longer be employed to settle disputes, for both sides would be wiped out.

Why do I write thus to you, when I ought to be writing of triumphs and laurels? Because like you, I long for the ruthless truth, and hate the usages of this world where death is near. With the odds being the opposite, I must speak out before I fall a sacrifice to war—that I hate it. If every man who feels it would say so Heaven would hear our cry, and even the thundering cannon-roar would be drowned out by the new battle-cry of panting, exhausted humanity: Let us make war on war!

The above was written yesterday. I snatched a few hours of sleep on a sack of straw. In half an hour the field mail is taken. With little rest we are already up for the march—poor fellows. It is indeed little rest after the bloody work to prepare them for still bloodier sights. I have just returned from looking over the wounded, whom we must leave. How gladly I would have put a bullet into some of them, who must drag out a miserable agonized death. My horse is saddled. Farewell, my Martha, if you are still alive.

One or two letters I found of a later date:

The day is ours. I am unhurt. The first is good news for papa and the last for you. I cannot forget that for thousands the same day has brought untellable grief.

Another letter:

Imagine my astonishment. Riding near me at the head of a detachment was Aunt Cornelia's only son, Gottfried. The youngster is beside himself with enthusiasm, but how his poor mother must suffer! That evening I sent for him to come to my tent. "Is it not splendid," he cried, "to be fighting in the same cause? How lucky I am to be called out in my first year of service! I shall win the cross of honor." "And my aunt how does she like it?" "Oh, just as all women—she tried to damp my spirits with tears, but I am enchanted, delighted! Awful, I grant, but magnificent. It is gratifying to feel that I am fulfilling man's highest duty, with God's help, for king and country. To meet death so closely, to challenge him face to face, and yet not be touched, it fills me with the glory of the old epics, as if the muse of history were leading us on to victory. I feel such an indignation at the enemy who dares defy us Germans, and it is a thrilling sensation to gratify this hate, to destroy without being a murderer, this fearless exposure of one's life."

So the boy rattled on, and I let him. Was not my first campaign the same experience? Epic? Yes, that is the very word with which we so carefully train our school boys into soldiers. We throw it into their excitable young brains, which makes quiet domestic bliss seem stupid nonsense, when they are longing for heroics. With me this attitude has so completely vanished, that I could hardly realize Gottfried's state of mind. I had so early realized it all as so inhuman, that it was no longer a revelation from the kingdom of Lucifer but gross barbarity and bestiality. Only he who is drunk with the passion for blood and destruction can triumphantly split open the defenceless head of an enemy. I never knew the "joy of battle," believe me, my dear wife, I never did.

Gottfried is delighted that we are fighting together as brothers in the same just cause (as if every cause were not called right by the powers commanding). "We Germans are brothers!" "Yes, that was proved by the Thirty Years' and the Seven Years' Wars," I suggested ironically. Gottfried paid no attention. "Together we will conquer every enemy." "Yes, until the Prussians declare war against the Austrians." "Not to be thought of! Impossible! What, when we have fought and bled together?" "I warn you, nothing is impossible in political matters. The friendships of dynastical rulers are as changeable as the ephemeral fly."

I write this, not because I imagine you in all your ill condition will be able to read it, but because I have a premonition that I shall not outlive this campaign, and I want to leave my convictions behind me. The sincere reflections of honest, humane soldiers should not be falsified or sink

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SEAL  
BRAND  
COFFEE

Ask your Grocer  
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Seal Brand  
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—Have this  
delicious coffee  
for breakfast to-  
morrow.

CHASE & SANBORN  
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Into the silent grave with them, unspoken and unrevealed. I have here spoken it, this quiets my conscience, I can die in peace.

This latest letter was five days old five unspeakable days of dread. Though Frederick was yet unhurt, my anxieties left me no comfort. My father was obliged to return to Grumitz, and Aunt Marie remained to keep me comforted with her orthodox ideas of destiny, providence, and divine mercy—small comfort with so few letters coming from the seat of war. My father made inquiries, but could get no information, although Frederick was not in the list of the dead. Thus the days dragged on.

One afternoon I lay half dreaming on the sofa; where I had begged to be left alone. My weakness and anxiety had so overpowered my imagination and reasonableness that I was full of fleeting visionary sensations, and springing up in terror at some slight movement in the room, I suddenly thought I saw Frederick in the doorway.

"Oh, my Frederick, my lost one," I groaned.

What? could it be his real voice? then real arms were thrown around me eagerly.

The dream came true, I was enfolded in my husband's loving embrace.

### CHAPTER III.

After our first expressions of joy had subsided, Frederick told us how he had been left wounded in a peasant's hut, the regiment marching on and reporting him "missing." This report had not reached us, and when he was sufficiently recovered he hastened home without waiting to write, for the war was practically at an end. We spent the summer again at father's country seat, where the entire family assembled, including brother Otto, home from the Military Academy, and Cousin Conrad, whose regiment lay not far away.

I was determined to persuade my husband to quit the service, for we had grown so one in our feelings and interests that what was mine was surely his also, and why, if new wars were again to threaten, need we go through such horrors again?

Besides, Rudolf was now eleven years old, and it should be our delight, in our retirement, to educate and train this little man according to our highest ideals. He had never been given over to nurses and tutors, for it was my pride to watch every phase of his development. In his growing appetite for knowledge we had never permitted ourselves to tell him a falsehood, but his questions were not always answered fully enough to suit him. He accompanied us on our daily walks, and often his questions demanded the unknowable, so we answered, "We do not know." This did not satisfy him, and he used to put these questions to others of whom he received quite decided answers. One day he remarked triumphantly, "You do not know how old the moon is, but I do. It is six thousand years old—remember that." Frederick and I looked at each other silently, and a whole volume of protest lay in that glance and that silence.

I seriously objected to the soldier games which his grandfather and

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