RUTH FIELDING HOMEWARD BOUND; OR, A RED CROSS WORKER'S OCEAN PERILS

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Ruth Fielding Homeward Bound; Or, A Red Cross Worker's Ocean Perils by Alice B. Emerson

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ALICE B. EMERSON

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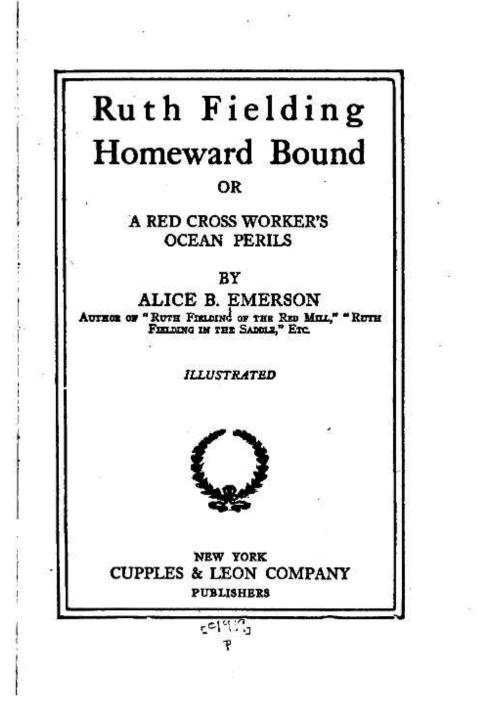
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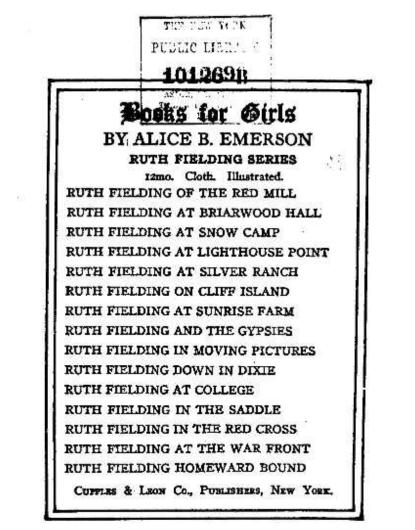


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THERE WAS A GRAY. SWIFTLY STEAMING SHIP BEARING DOWN UPON THE ADMIRAL PEKHARD. Ruth Fielding Homeward Bound. Page 204





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RUTH FIELDING HOMEWARD BOUND

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CONTENTS

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e a

GRAPTE		PAGE			
I.	TEA AND A TOAST RE IN	I			
11.	SUCH A DREAM!	10			
III.	IT'S ALL OVER!	20			
IV.	Two Exciting Things	29			
v .	THE SECRET	38			
VI .	A New Experience	45			
VII.	THE ZEPPELIN	52			
VIII.	AFLOAT	60			
IX.	QUEER FOLKS	68			
Х.	WHAT WILL HAPPEN?	76			
XI.	Developments	84			
XII.	THE MAN IN THE MOTOR				
	BOAT	93			
XIII.	IT COMES TO A HEAD	101			
XIV.	A BATTLE IN THE AIR	111			
XV.	ABANDONED	121			
XVI.	ON THE EDGE OF TRAGEDY	131			
XVII.	BOARDED	140			
XVIII.	THE CONSPIRACY LAID BARE				
XIX.	TOM CAMERON TAKES A HAND	159			
XX.	THE STORM BREAKS	166			
, and	THE DIVAN DREADS ;	100			

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iii

CONTENTS

0.7

1

X

.....

÷

XXI.	THE WRECK	R	7		8	,		¥AGE 172
XXII.								
XXIII.	AT THE MOM	EN	T O	FI	NEI	ZD		186
XXIV.	COUNTERPLOT						• • •	196
XXV.	HOME AS FO	UN	D					205

RUTH FIELDING HOMEWARD BOUND

CHAPTER I

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TEA AND A TOAST

"AND you once said, Heavy Stone, that you did not believe a poilu could love a fat girl!"

Helen said it in something like awe. While Ruth's tea-urn bubbled cozily three pair of very bright eyes were bent above a tiny, iridescent spark which adorned the "heart finger" of the plumper girl's left hand.

There is something about an engagement diamond that makes it sparkle and twinkle more than any other diamond. You do not believe that? Wait until you wear one on the third finger of your left hand yourself!

These three girls, who owned all the rings and other jewelry that was good for them, continued to adore this newest of Jennie Stone's possessions until the tea water boiled over. Ruth Fielding arose with an exclamation of vexation, and corrected the height of the alcohol blaze and dropped in the "pinch" of tea.

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RUTH FIELDING HOMEWARD BOUND

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It was mid-afternoon the hour when a cup of tea comforts the fagged nerves and inspires the waning spirit of womankind almost the world over. These three girls crowded into Ruth Fielding's little cell, even gave up the worship of the ring, to sip the tea which the hostess soon poured into the cups.

"The cups are nicked; no wonder," sighed Ruth. "They have traveled many hundreds of miles with me, girls. Think! I got them at Briarwood......"

"Dear old Briarwood Hall," murmured Jennie Stone.

"You're in a dreadfully sentimental mood, Jennie," declared Helen Cameron with some scorn. "Is that the way a diamond ring affects all engaged girls?"

"Oh, how fat I was in those days, girls! And how I did eat!" groaned the girl who had been known at boarding school as "Heavy Stone," and seldom by any other name among her mates.

"And you still continue to eat!" ejaculated Helen, the slimest of the three, and a very blackeyed girl with blue-black hair and a perfect complexion. She removed the tin wafer box from Jennie's reach.

"Those are not real eats," complained the girl with the diamond ring. "A million would not add a thousandth part of an ounce to my pounds."

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