

Sunday, July 22, 1917.—Lovely, clear, warm day. General Nicholson, Colonel Gosset and Captain Bathhurst of the English army came to luncheon with us. All walked to the cliffs. They were all anxious about the push; Gosset says the next two weeks will be the decisive weeks of the war.¹ Pétain and Sir Douglas Haig have great faith in their ability to turn the German right flank; Pétain has the Iron Division at Ypres. "If we can push them back, the war is over. If not, it means that the war must go on until the Americans can get here, and they will have to finish it in the air." As we were talking, we could hear the guns. "But they're not the big ones," said Bathhurst.

At four we drove to Etretât, Nell to see Raymond, who filled a

¹ The spring of 1917 had been discouraging for the Allies in the Western theatre. Nivelle's attack on the Soissons-Rheims front in April had resulted in an appalling butchery without gains, and had severely shaken the French morale. The British, fighting the battle of Arras, had done somewhat better—the Canadian victory at Vimy was a brilliant stroke; but no decisive gain had been made. In June, the British had won another victory at Messines. Now, at the end of July, they were opening the battle of Passchendaele, where in three months of dogged fighting masses of brave Englishmen were destined to be choked in mud and blood. Pétain was meanwhile fighting near Rheims and Verdun.

tooth for her. Tea there. Back, and painted awhile at the farm of Monteuil, then after dinner, a walk down to the coast guard, and a lovely new moon in the evening sky.

Reading *The Blade* I see that the President asked Congress—three weeks ago—to permit me to accept the Order of Léopold, and that a Congressman, one Emerson, has declared his intention of blocking it. Who is Emerson? It is sufficient, however, for me, it would be for any one, to have the King offer it, and the President approve, but I knew, of course, that Congress would hardly acquiesce, because in a body where there are so many contemptibly cheap little politicians, no such easy chance for buncombe and shirt-sleeve democracy could be allowed to escape....I sent the decoration to Washington weeks ago! Let it be forgotten, and the sweating stump speakers in Congress spare themselves their pains!