The Lost Road

Davis Richard Harding
THE LOST ROAD
Richard Sandford Davis

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WITH DAVIS IN VERA CRUZ, BRUSSELS, AND SALONIKA

In common with many others who have been with Richard Harding Davis as correspondents, I find it difficult to realize that he has covered his last story and that he will not be seen again with the men who follow the war game, rushing to distant places upon which the spotlight of news interest suddenly centres.

It seems a sort of bitter irony that he who had covered so many big events of world importance in the past twenty years should be abruptly torn away in the midst of the greatest event of them all, while the story is still unfinished and its outcome undetermined. If there is a compensating thought, it lies in the reflection that he had a life of almost unparalleled fulness, crowded to the brim, up to the last moment, with those experiences and achievements which he particularly aspired to have. He left while the tide was at its flood, and while he still held supreme his place as the best reporter in his country. He escaped the bitterness of seeing the ebb set in, when the youth to which he clung had slipped away, and when he would have to sit im-
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patient in the audience, while younger men were in the thick of great, world-stirring dramas on the stage.

This would have been a real tragedy in "Dick" Davis's case, for, while his body would have aged, it is doubtful if his spirit ever would have lost its youthful freshness or boyish enthusiasm.

It was my privilege to see a good deal of Davis in the last two years.

He arrived in Vera Cruz among the first of the sixty or seventy correspondents who flocked to that news centre when the situation was so full of sensational possibilities. It was a time when the American newspaper-reading public was eager for thrills, and the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the correspondents in Vera Cruz were tried to the uttermost to supply the demand.

In the face of the fiercest competition it fell to Davis's lot to land the biggest story of those days of marking time.

The story "broke" when it became known that Davis, Medill McCormick, and Frederick Palmer had gone through the Mexican lines in an effort to reach Mexico City. Davis and McCormick, with letters to the Brazilian and British ministers, got through and reached the capital on the strength of those letters, but Palmer, having only an American passport, was turned back.

After an ominous silence which furnished Ameri-