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The Canadian Post.

LINDSAY, FRIDAY, JAN. 11, 1884.

AN AMBITIOUS WIFE. A STORY OF LIFE IN NEW YORK.

CHAPTER III. (Continued from last week.)

It would be hard to define just how they conveyed this impression. And yet Claire frequently felt its weight like that of some vague tyranny which could neither realize nor estimate the force with which she had been thrown into contact.

But there were a few girls who met Claire on a perfectly equal footing, and left from their intercourse, at all times, the least trace of inferiority.

But the hill seemed a sheer steep, defiant of any foothold. If she was eager to ascend, loath to rest, full of splendid activity, what mattered these favoring conditions when circumstances turned to mockery?

Sophie had several times frankly verified. She had once pulled the ear of her fellow-pupil, and again narrowly escaped expulsion by slapping another's cheek.

But before the summer holidays arrived, Claire had left Mrs. Arcularius's school for good. Twining had awakened having been grossly deceived; the reed on which he had leaned crumpled and snapped beneath him; prompt retrenchment became inevitable; his poor ventured thousands were dissipated, as a last ironical sort of ingredient, in the worthless elixir.

For a long time his affairs stood miserably involved. His innocent share in a matter of imposture and chicanery was misconstrued and sharply censured by his employers.

"I ain't a bit surprised," she would declare, with one of her thin, acid laughs. "Merely, no! Don't mind me. I was prepared for it, I'm afraid. So here we are in Jersey City, and a pretty shabby part of it, too! Oh, why isn't bettern' keeping a peanutt-stand, an' it's bow. You'll bring me there, some day; you're bound to. I ain't eaten a peanutt in ever so long. I'm saving my taste for em'."

Twining secretly writhed under these thrusts. His meagre stock of money was slipping from him daily. But he was still cheerful. The tough texture of his optimism still refused to be rent. A few more years, and the severance must come, warp and woof, but as the sturdy fibres held good against every strain.

He secured another position at last. The salary, smaller than before, was at least regular. But the quarters in Jersey City, though humble and restricted, were too strong an aerial drain upon his limited resources.

Twining's evil genius had again tempted him, and with the usual malign result. He trusted a fellow-man once more, and once more he was confounded. This time it was of necessity a much smaller hazard. Only three hundred dollars had been advanced.

Twining's eyes flashed a little; but she was not specially angered; she was so used to this kind of verbal savagery. "Father never meant anything but good to either of us," she said, "and you know it. I don't want to hear you speak against him when he is away, and can't defend himself. I am able to defend him, if I choose. I think you know that, mother, by this time. I'm going out as I told you. I shall be back rather soon, I suppose."

She left the kitchen, and presently the house as well. She might have stayed to wrangle; but she knew that would be for no purpose. She had stood up for her loved father so often, and always with the same result. Her wit was quicker than her mother's; she could thrust deeper and parry more deftly; but she was very tired of this aimless warfare, where she got wounds that she hid and gave wounds that it cost her only pain to deal.

They could no longer afford to keep a servant; she had to help her mother in all menial domestic offices. She had to bake, to sweep, to wash, to sew. She hated the place; she hated the life. But she saw her father's hidden despair, and so hid her own. More than that, she trembled at certain signs that his health was failing. He would have seizures of sudden weakness at morning or night; she feared to ask him whether they also occurred when he was absent at business, lest he might suspect the acute nature of her anxiety, and so acquire new cause for worry.

She loved him more than ever. In the dread of his loss would steal with ghastly intrusion along her dreams at night. She thought of her grim, acrimonious mother, and said to herself: "If he should die it would be terrible! I should be worse than alone!" Every thing that she gave him took a more clinging fondness.

He never spoke of his future. He never spoke of hers. She understood why. Each always met the other with a smile. There was something beautiful in their reciprocal deceit. They heard the dead leaves crackle under their footsteps, but they strove to talk as if the boughs were in bud.

And so the weeks went on. The bitterness of their second winter in Greenpoint had never yielded to the mildness of a second spring. But the vernal change brought no cheer to Claire. In the little yellowish-drawn wooden house where they dwelt, with lumber-yards and sloop-wharves blocking all view of the river, with stupid, haggling neighbors on either side of them, with ugliness and stagnation and poverty at arm's-reach, she felt herself as much a captive as if she could not have moved a limb without hearing the clank of a chain.

CHAPTER IV.

One afternoon Claire said to her mother: "I intend to take a little holiday. I am going out for a little walk." Mrs. Twining and her daughter were in the kitchen when this very novel announcement was made. The elderly lady just taken her preliminary steps towards the getting of supper. She let her big knife remain imbedded in the side of a large, yellow potato that she was peeling and glanced up at Claire with her quick black eye. A long spiral of skin hung from the half-peeled vegetable. It seemed to denote with peculiar aptness the paralyzing effect of Mrs. Twining's astonishment.

"Going to take a holiday, are you?" she exclaimed, with the favorite jerky, joyless laugh. "And what am I jerking to, if you please? Stay at home, no doubt, and slave over this stove till supper's cooked. Hey?" "I cooked the supper yesterday," said Claire, "and you vowed that everything I had done was bad, and that I should never make myself so smart again. I recollect your exact words—'make yourself so smart,' continued Claire, with cutting fidelity of quotation. "I would readily do the whole cooking every afternoon on father's account. For he likes the food I prepare better than he likes what you prepare. There's no doubt about that."

"Oh, not a bit," returned Mrs. Twining, who could never cow her daughter nowadays, and avoided all open skirmishes with Claire, preferring to fire her volleys under cover of ambiguous sneers, being sure of rest in any fairly-fought engagement. "Not a bit, certainly. When he knows you're pottering away at anything, he'll eat it and smack his lips over it, whether it's roasted to a cinder, or as raw as a fresh clam."

"I'm very glad to hear you say so," returned Claire with a weary little smile. "It's pleasant to think father loves me like that."

Mrs. Twining vigorously resumed work on her potato, speaking at the same time. "Pity about both of 'em, I do declare," she retorted, lapsing into the vernacular with which she loved to accompany her worst gibes. "Pears to me that if he's so fond of you he might n't have made you the poor mean rag at nineteen that he's made of now, why, you might try and catch a decent husband, with a few dollars in his pocket, to raise up the family out of the mud and muck Francis Twining's got it in."

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Treasurer's Sale of Lands. COUNTY OF VICTORIA. IN THE. TREASURER'S SALE OF LANDS. ON WEDNESDAY, 20th FEBRUARY, 1884, AT TEN O'CLOCK, A. M.

Table listing land parcels with columns for Street or Part of Lot, Lot, Con., Area, Arrears, Costs of Advertising and Commission, Total, and Patented or not patented. Includes sections for Townships of Kelley, Hecage, Dalton, Digby, Deape, Eldon, Emily, Fennell, Fennell Falls, Lakton, Macaulay, and others.

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JAMES B. KNOWLSON, Town Treasurer. Miscellaneous. LATEST BLOCK ENVELOPES. A GREAT BARGAIN. MISS MITCHELL.