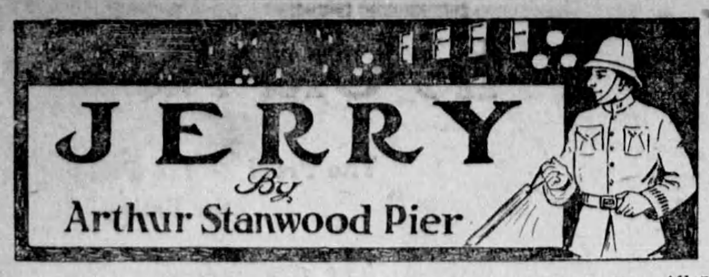

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CHAPTER IV.—(Cont'd.)

"If he'd just do something so that I could smash him!" Jerry often thought while he marched and countermarched with his company in the Y. M. C. A. Hall; and the desire made him shout out his orders with an extraordinary ferocity. Roger Trask, the drillmaster, colonel of the third militia regiment, watched him and thought, "There's a fellow that would make a good soldier—a good officer."

Trask had a special interest in Jerry, a special feeling for him. It had been Jerry who had induced Trask to undertake the training of this company; one evening in the preceding September, at the invitation of the superintendetnt of the local branch of the Y.M.C.A., the officer had given a talk on the discipline and service of the militia. He often recalled his satisfaction when after the talk a stalwart, eager-faced, blue-eyed young man came up to him and said, "That's fine, what you've been telling us. And it would be the making of a lot of us if you'd only come out now and then and give us some real lessons about drilling and soldiering." The company which at first had numbered only about thirty men had doubled in size. It was still a varied assortment of old firearms that the privates bore; Trask had wanted them to dispense with weapons, but Jerry had pleaded so hard for them that he had conceded the point.

Jerry's feeling for Trask was nothing less than heroworship, qualified only by the secret sense of kinship that humble appreciation claims. Trask was exactly the kind of man that Jerry aspired to be—straight, vigorous, commanding, yet genial, too, with a geniality that never compromised his dignity; contemplating him Jerry felt in himself all sorts of similar potentialities, and at the same time more than ever despaired of outgrowing his coltishness.

A circumstance chronicled on the first page of the Daily Press, the favorite newspaper of the workingman, confirmed and emphasized Jerry's secret sense of kinship with the drillmaster. The engagement of Colonel Roger Trask and Miss Claire Desmond was announced in an article richly biographical and illustrated by photographs of the pair. Miss Desmond was not only very beautiful, as appeared from her picture; she was the daughter of Benjamin Desmond; and locally that name was as significant as that of Vanderbilt or Astor.

It was not long after this that the figure of Benjamin Desmond began to loom portentiously alive to persons for whom his existence had hitherto been as mythical as that of Croesus. For the rumor that had been disturbing the community there proved to have been a solid foundation; one morning early in January the announcement was made that the banking house of Desmond and Company had purchased the Purroy Steel Works.

Grim speculation at the Works, foreboding and panic in the homes of of the workmen, followed promptly upon this disclosure. That evening, on going home, Jerry found his mother in a completely pessimistic yet despairingly resourceful frame of mind. She was waiting for him in the hall; she clung round him and he felt the trembling of her arms, the nervous clutch of her fingers.

"Now don't you feel blue and cast down in your mind, Jerry," she entreated him. "It's just when you least expect it of them that things have a way of coming out all right in the end. I've been thinking what a blessing it is that I have my health and strength. If things come to the worst, we can maybe sell or rent the house, and we've still got your father's life insurance money. Then in the city I can find washing to do, and that will keep us till you get a new job. Of course if we can't sell or rent the house and there's the mortgage to pay and you don't get something to do right off well, then I suppose we'll lose pretty much everything we own. At least we can keep body and soul together through my washing; it's a mercy I learned to wash well when I was young, and that I've kept my health and strength."

"It's a mercy to you to let you run on until you run down," said Jerry. "A fine sight you'd be, taking in washing and the like of that, and a fine sight me for letting you. Sit you down, you excited old body, and get possession of your five senses. And now mind what I'm telling you. Divil a doubt but I could get a better job any day if I chose to quit the Steel Works and go into the city. Divil a doubt now, I'm telling you."

"Oh, Jerry, is that the truth? Indeed, if it is, you're taking a great load off my shoulders."

"Of course it's the truth. A great strong lad like myself! In half an hour I could land any job that I wanted. Divil a doubt now."

"It does me good to hear you say it. But I wish you wouldn't say that word 'divil,' Jerry dear. Your father never used it."

"All right, mother. I'll do my best. And now don't be pulling that long face any more; it don't look right on you. Your face ought to be broad and good-natured like a Dutchman's."

She smiled doubtfully. "Have you honest the heart to be joking with me, Jerry?"

"Yes, and the heart to be eating a fine supper, if there's such a thing to be had in this house—"

"Well, there is then." And she bustled away, and presently Jerry from his room upstairs heard her singing to herself while she put the dishes on the table.

But her cheerfulness was short-lived; even in the midst of supper forebodings settled again upon her, she was sure that Jerry had just been trying to comfort her, some big and ominous change affecting all the employees of the Works was impending.

She left her supper almost untasted, and Jerry ate without satisfaction or enjoyment. Afterwards while he helped her with the dishes, he tried to turn her thoughts into more pleasant channels, but she would not be diverted; she was for the most part glumly silent and spoke only to lament or to reiterate dismal predictions. Jerry's heart sank lower and lower; he foresaw that what he must soon say would provoke her to despair in a new quarter. His instincts in dealing with his mother were fatally accurate. Yet there was no way of avoiding this disaster.

CHAPTER V.

It was a sunny morning in early March; the wind blew softly from the south, and people opened doors and windows to welcome Spring. Jerry Donohue, starting to his work four minutes ahead of his schedule, strolled and swung his dinner pail blithely. It was just a morning to assure one that all one's doubts and apprehensions had been vaporings as tenuous as the smoke that floated and drifted and broke to let the sun shine through. So long a time had passed since the absorption of the Purroy Works by the American Foundries Company, with no foreshadowing of any change in policy, that anxiety was giving place to confidence throughout the town. And Jerry's sanguine temper was invigorated by more than the fresh sweet air of the morning. The night before he had found Nora in her most responsive, confiding, affectionate mood. Never had she been so completely, so assuredly the girl that he loved—with her hand pressing his arm, her slender self drawing close to him, her eyes upturned to his, her laugh trilling a pleased response to the speech of admiration, to the sudden, impulsive caress. He was as puzzled by this new hospitality of manner as he was elated.

Indeed, had he but known it, the influences that he counted most hostile had advanced his cause; the bitter reproaches which she had that evening undergone at the supper table from her parents, who were exasperated by the failure of the musical education they were bestowing upon her to produce the expected results, had increased her conviction that life at home could not be much longer endurable; and the boldness of Charley Corcoran's behavior that afternoon had somehow revealed to her more glaringly his scorbutic unattractiveness. Jerry's kind and humorous eyes, honest face, and big, stalwart frame had seemed more than usually welcome and likeable—and Nora, while she vaguely, emotionally responded to the admiration in his eyes, had more distinctly and concretely felt that, quite apart from any emotional considerations, she could not do better than marry Jerry Donohue. More than any one else that she could think of, he seemed to her to have a man's full strength, a man's full power to confer security.

Jerry, thrilled by her unaccustomed readiness to let the conversation take a practical turn, had spoken with vigor and decision. He had been patient, he had waited, but it was time now for a definite understanding. Very well—and the promptness and explicitness of her answer had left nothing to be desired; the term at the Conservatory ended on April 9; on the next day she would announce her intentions to her family, and within a month thereafter she would marry him.

So it was in a blithe spirit that Jerry Donohue set forth the next morning to his work. Indeed, his head was so shrouded in the clouds, his nose was so cast upward, happily sniffing the balmy air, that he had got some distance down the slope leading to the Works before he perceived the unusual proceedings at the entrance. Groups of men stood on either side of the mill gates examining large printed notices that were affixed to the fence; those who had finished reading passed inside, walking slowly; as he drew near, Jerry became definitely aware from the behavior of the men that the printed notices were of grave import. Standing on the edge of the crowd, he read the following:—

IMPORTANT

On and after April 1 work in the Purroy Mills will be in two turns of twelve hours each instead of in three of eight hours each. Under this new arrangement the number of employees will necessity be reduced. Those who are not to be retined will be given one week's notice.

J. F. Drayton, Superintendent.

(To be continued.)

Cream Wanted

SWEET OR CHURNING CREAM

We supply cans, pay express charges and remit daily.

Our price next week forty-eight cents

Mutual Dairy and Creamery Co.
743-5 King St. West - Toronto

Keep feed troughs and drinking pans clean and filled.

A new clothes-line should be boiled before being put out. This prevents it from stretching and makes it last much longer.

Grow your own supply of vegetable seeds for next year. The Dominion Department of Agriculture has issued a leaflet to tell you how.

A Grave Question.

Shopkeeper—Now, look here, little girl, I can't spend the whole day showing you penny toys. Do you want the earth with a little red fence round it for a penny?

Little Girl—Let me see it if you please.

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KITCHEN EFFICIENCY.

The busy woman of to-day realizes what efficiency in the kitchen means to her further ability to easily supply to her family nutritious food without waste of time and strength.

The problem of obtaining help brings to the housewife a thought of the time, strength and energy required to keep the household at par. So that to equip the kitchen with modern tools and to replace the furnishings of the household laboratory in an attractive manner is no longer a fad, but a dire necessity.

Cleanliness is an absolute essential that is based upon fundamental principles. The kitchen should be compact in its arrangements, so that no motion may be lost. Unless one can afford a tiled kitchen, a durable wash paint is the most economical. While the costliest kitchen is not necessarily the best, intelligent and careful planning will count quite as much as money.

Color schemes can easily be followed. But for general utility a Colonial buff is the best color with which to paint the walls. The window trimmings may be ivory and white. A good quality of linoleum for covering the floor will be found satisfactory. A kitchen cabinet, a fireless cooker and a good range, a refrigerator and a table with a sanitary porcelain top would complete the large furniture needed in the kitchen.

Have the man of the house build and attach to the kitchen table a frame that will act as a rack, above the table, to hold dippers, strainers and other utensils that are necessary.

A drawer in this table to hold the knives, measuring spoons, etc., will make for time saving and efficiency. A careful selection of pots and pans is vitally necessary, and right here I wish to tell the housewife my pot and pan story.

Sixty-five out of every hundred persons suffer from some form of intestinal indigestion. That is due to the manner in which the fool is cooked or to the utensil itself. How many women are there who, in cooking food in an enamel saucepan, stir the food while cooking and then tap the spoon on the edge of the pan. Ah! I see you smile, for you all recognize the old trick. Now, do you know that often you chip the enamel off the saucepan, sometimes into the food, and you have to pick it out; then again, oftener you fail to see the damage you have done until, when washing the pots and pans, you find a spot where you have chipped off the enamel. Now, if you have a broken spot in the bottom of your saucepan and you are stirring the food that is cooking in this pot, using a metal spoon to stir with, you are grating off the glass coating on the enamel saucepan into your food. Think about this, and then use wooden spoons for stirring all foods while cooking in all saucepans.

These wooden spoons need not be costly, and any handy man around the house can whittle a couple of paddles for you from any piece of hardwood, preferably maple or ash, in a very few minutes. Learn to use the fireless cooker for cereals and breakfast foods and also for cooking the cheaper cuts of meat. Meat cooked in the fireless cooker loses proportionately less per pound than meat cooked upon the coal, gas or electric ranges.

Use all left-over breakfast cereals in making bread.

A word about the refrigerator. Upon this important household utensil depends the health of the family. The ice compartment should be sufficiently large to keep a piece of ice that will keep the food compartments at a temperature of not less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit constantly. A thorough cleansing three times a week is an absolute necessity. Remove the drain pipe and flush and swab out the trap. This is very important. Do not place the refrigerator in a dark, damp place.

Do not permit the drain to be connected with the sewer. If the waste pipe is attached have it made so that it may be frequently taken apart and flushed with boiling soda water., Drain the waste water from the refrigerator into the garden or yard. To make a drain from the icebox, cut a hole in the floor and place a large funnel in the hole. Now connect sufficient length of pipe used for speaking tubes to this hole and drain into the yard or garden. This pipe can easily be taken apart for frequent flushing.

To Have Clean Windows.

There are few women who really enjoy cleaning windows, and one reason must be that the result is so often disappointing. Soap always seems to smear the glass, and the cloth gets too drippy and countless things happen. But one housewife, has thought about it hard and has decided just what is the best method of cleaning her windows. She sent us her decision, and here it is:

"I have found a way," she says, "to polish windows brilliantly with the least possible work. I can clean them whether the sun is shining or not, so infallible is my method. First wipe off the dust with a dry cloth, or if very dirty, with a damp one, then put a small quantity of water in a basin and make it very strong with household ammonia, using not more than two parts of water to one of ammonia. Dip a small cloth or sponge in this and wring it nearly dry, then go over the glass, rubbing hard but working rapidly. Wipe immediately with a dry, lintless cloth, or the pane will be dry before you can get over it. The sole objection to this method is in the effect of the strong solution on one's fingers. A rubber or leather glove may be used, but even without gloves I find it takes so short a time to clean a number of windows that if one is careful to wash the hands immediately after the task, then rub them with lemon juice or vinegar and rinse again with clear water, there will be no unpleasant effect."

How to Clarify Fats.

Here are three methods of clarifying fat. Method 1. Melt the fat with an equal portion of water in a double boiler. Strain through a cloth. When cold remove the layer of fat from the water. Method 2. Follow directions given under Method 1, using sour milk. Flavors and odors are modified. Method 3. Follow directions given in Method 1, adding several pieces of clean hardwood charcoal. If beef fat is being clarified, the yellow color is removed and a white odorless fat is secured.

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