DARK LIGHTNING

By HELEN TOPPING MILLER

CHAPTER IX

The Gimballs arrived and immediately Harvey brought out the map and the geophysicts' report and began expansively to tell everything that had happened.

Adelaide slipped out and clutched at Gary, in the hall. "Oh, dear! He's telling Oliver! And I wanted him not to."

"They'll have to know, sooner or later."

"I suppose so," she sighed. "Go on in, Gary—keep Oliver from ruining everything if you can."

But Oliver had already taken command of the situation, abetted and prompted by Grace. He was advancing arguments against wild-catting an oil well, dilating upon the advantages of selling leases, and or once Gary found himself agreeing with Oliver.

"I think Kimball's right, Mr. Mason," he said.

"O course he's right," Grace put in. "Oliver knows the oil business—at it ever since he left school."

Adelaide stood in the door, her eyes blazing. "Why don't you all let Daddy alone?" she demanded. "He knows what he's doing."

"I wonder!" Grace was sarcastic.

"Well, you can all come and eat dinner, anyway," sighed Mona

* * *

Adelaide edged Gary into a corner as the family trooped into the dining room. "That was shabby—agreeing with Oliver," she snapped. "I thought you'd stick with Dad and me."

"I agreed with him because he happens to be right," Gary said quietly.

At the table, Grace looked across at Gary. "When are you leaving, Mexico, isn't it?" she asked coolly.

"I hope to get away tomorrow," Gary replied as casually and coolly.

"What?" Harvey lifted his voice so that Maria jumped. "You're not going, I hired you. You found this oil. You won't like Mexico anyway, not in summer."

"Dad, if Mr. Tallman has a job down there—" Grace was acid.

"A man with a job in sight had better hang on to it," stated Oliver.

Mona Lee looked at them all calmly. "Gary's not going" she announced with a serene kind of finality. "He knows we need him, and Gary wouldn't go and leave me when I need him. Would you, Gary?"

He was on the spot. There was nothing to do but to agree.

Later, when Harvey had gone off to the canyon, dragging Oliver with him, Mona Lee came upstairs and tapped on Gary's open door. "Gary," she said as he turned, "I do want you to stay! I'm worried—about Harvey—he's so impulsive."

"I'll stay, Mrs. Mason." Gary turned from the window. "If you ask me . . .I can't refuse very well after all you've done for me."

* * *

Gary sat in the living room that night and played double solitaire with Mona Lee. Harvey was out, he was always out now, roaring around somewhere in his noisy old roadster.

In the middle of the game,Mo na Lee laid her cards down and folded her hands.

"Gary," she said. "You like Adelaide pretty well, don't you?"

Gary felt the hot blood flare over his face and neck. He smiled wandly. "There's not much use trying to hide anything from you, is there, Mrs. Mason? But—what can I do? I haven't a thing to offer a girl like Adelaide—not a thing but love."

"You think love is unimportant? It isn't—not to a girl. Harvey Mason had nothing to offer me but love, either—and a few hundred acres of washed-out prairie land. We made the rest together."

"I haven't even a piece of washed-out land. There—" he threw a few crumpled bills on the table "—lies my fortune!"

"You need another shirt, Gary. You buy one tomorrow. And don't you give up. Addie's a little crazy right now—it's the thought of all this money. She'll calm down pretty soon."

* * *

Harvey came in late and tossed a telegram into Mona Lee's lap. She looked frightened and picked it up gingerly with her fingers.

"Oh, mercy!" she gasped when she read it. "It's from Junior. He says 'Hear we've struck oil. Stop. Swell. Stop. Just went out and bought myself a new roadster.' Harvey Mason, you get a wire off to him right straight and tell him you haven't struck oil yet, and to send that car right back."

"He had a new car last year," growled Harvey. "That's the way with kids. They think you're made of money."

But he did not write or wire to Harvey Junior. He forgot about it. He had to get ready to go to Austin to get his drilling permit so he rushed around, shouting orders all over the house.

"Look here, Gary—you know about this drilling business—you oughtt o know a good rig when you see it. You take Addie's car and she can go along and drive, and you go over east and hunt me up a good crew to get a well down."

"You'll need two crews—riggers to get your derrick up and drillers to get your well down," Gary reminded him. "And what are you going to do about water for the boilers and to run the drill? You wouldn't want to pump your well dry the first day—even if your pump would lift enough to run the drill—which I doubt. You'll have to arrange to pipe some in from somewhere. Any creeks or rivers near here with much water in them?"

* * *

Harvey looked thoughtful. There's a cistern at the barn. And that tank out there holds a hundred barrels."

"Not enough. It will take a week, probably, to get your well down. And you can't run out of water while the drill's turning."

"You get the outfits we need, and I'll see about the water."

"You'll have to arrange for fuel to fire the boilers, too Have oil tanked in on trucks. On a field you'd have the gas from the stripper, but out here you'll have to provide your own fuel. I'll have to find an outfit that's equipped with an oil burner."

"Well, it's a good thing you've got Gary, Harvey, to think of everything," Mona Lee said. Ther-'s that little creek over on the Harper place, Harvey. But you'd have to pay old man Harper—and tell him what you wanted the water for—and then he'd probably stick you."

(To Be Continued)

by Laura Wheeler

Yellow or pink roses with lilacs, in easy stitchery, will give color to your linens. Just one spray would make any towel a handsome gift.

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TEA

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK IN CIVVIES!

It's back to the plumed hats and pikes for the men of Britain's fancy dress units, many of whom served in the armed forces during the war. Picture above was made while pikemen and Yeomen of the Guard waited for the Lord Mayor's procession to start in London.

CHRONICLES of GINGER FARM

By Gwendoline P Clarke

We have had our first week of winter—and I don't suppose you have enjoyed it any more than we have. It has been a little too rough and windy for that. But at least we can be thankful to have a roof over our heads, and, if you ask me, we who live on arms can also be thankful for that fact too. At least we have no union to tell us when to work and when to strike, although I have heard some people say it would be a good thing if farmers did have a union and went on strike once in a while. Well, I don't know . . it is too big to ever think about, especially with industrial strikes getting more terrible with each passing day. Far be it for me to say who is at fault—there are always two sides to every question—and it is difficult for us who live on farms to form an unbiased opinion. But it is by no means difficult, even from a distance, to realize the suffering and hardship that is the inevitable result of a prolonged strike. It might also be well to realize that a strike of such tremendous magnitude as that in Windsor has far reaching results and will ultimately be felt even in the farms. Reduced income, as we all know, means reduced purchasing power and thus the vicious circle widens and widens until farm produce becomes a glut on the market.

* * *

Speaking of buying and selling brings up another problem. We need to be on our toes these days—on guard against the wiles of high pressure salesmen who know there is a little more money on farms these days and that returned service men have gratuity cheques they might be persuaded to part with. We had two such agents around here just recently—and how theycould talk!

* * *

To tell you the truth we rather enjoy matching wits with these fellows. One night a would-be salesman paid us a visit, he wanted to talk to all three of us. His form of attack was a rush order . . he had so much business he couldn't spend much time at any one house . . either we wanted to buy or we didn't. Partner suggested that it might be a good idea to give us time to think the matter over. The salesman said he was sorry but he had no time for a repeat visit. He came over to the table where I was sitting and began filling in his order sheet. "Just a minute," I exclaimed, "we haven't said we would take it yet." He was profuse in his apologies. He finally went away without a sale, expressing regret at his inability to make a return call. But he was back on our doorstep by ten o'clock next morning—a special favour of course!

I was alone when he called. He was very affable and persuasive and persistent. But I had a few things to ask him regarding the validity of what he was offering. When he realized I knew a little more than he expected his affability disappeared, in fact I could see he was so mad it was an effort for him to civil when he bade me goodbye. May I be forgiven if I confess to being amused.

* * *

As I said before, we need to be on our toes. These travelling salesmen are trained to sell their goods. Their product—so they say—is practically a gilt-edged security. They tour the country, many of them with the mistaken idea that farm folk are particularly gullible, an easy mark for their high pressure sales talk. But a lot of farm folk are very far from being slow. Many of them have reason to remember a few deals they made following the first Great War, whereas service men have pretty definite ideas as to what they intend doing with their gratuity—when they get it.

At the same time when an agent comes along offering you a deal on something of which you know little, or perhaps nothing, and makes it sound good, the chances are he has you signing on the dotted line before you have had a chance to figure things out for yourself. And you'll notice there isn't a salesman who spends much time talking once he has persuaded you to put pen to paper.

But please don't think I am knocking all travelling salesmen—there are agents and agents—but it is up to us to be wary, to use a little common sense so that we recognise a genuine business deal from a shady racket.

Dancing Jumbos

A German posed this problem to American military government officials:

What was he to do with four dancing elephants which he could not feed?

Never at a loss for finding ways out of knotty occupation problems the military government managed to sell the prancing pachyderms to a travelling show.

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Sunday School Lesson

December 9

The Christian's Place in the Life of the Nation

Lesson: Matthew 5: 1-16, 43-48; 1 Peter 2: 12-17.

Golden Text

Blessed is the nation whose God is our Lord.—Psalms 33: 12.

Responsibilities of Christians

Mat. 5: 13.—As salt, when it loses its savor cannot be turned to useful agricultural account, so a believer, when he loses his influence for good, is utterly useless to God and man.

14—16.—Our Lord teaches that to attempt to conceal our Christian faith is as foolish as to put a lamp under a bushel. It is by our "good works," by following the example of the Lord, that we shall best shine for Him and glorify our Heavenly Father.

Believer and God's Laws

43-45.—While we are told that we must hate the evil deeds of our enemy weare not to hate the enemy himself. Christ asks us to act just as God acts toward men. In His dealings with mankind He does not treat men as they deserve to be treated. He does not confine His loving kindness and tender mercy to the good. If He did where should we stand? As God blesses all men alike so we are to show love and goodness to all.

46.—To love those who love us shows no great merit, for we are rewarded in their love to us. Even the publicans with all their hateful selfishness loved those who loved them. Love for love is manlike but love for hate is Christlike.

Servants of God

47—48.—In distinction from publicans and heathen whose love and courtesy is imperfect and partial, we are to show a perfect love, even as God's is to the world.

1 Pet. 2: 13—15.—Order and civil power being the great defense against lawless force and violence are to be regarded as an ordnance of God armed with his authority. The foolish men are those who spoke evil of believers, who made false accusations against them to serve their own selfish ends.

15—17.—There was a tendency for some believers to use their Christian liberty in a wrong manner. Though they were free they were the servants of God, and it is in doing his will that the soul enjoys perfect liberty.

Bookshelf . . . .

Gauntlet to Overlord

By Ross Munro

Ross Munro, Canadian Press correspondent with the Canadian forces in Europe, has travelled with the Canadian Army wherever it went. The title of his story is symbolic of the drama of this chronicle of modern warfare. "Gauntlet" was the code word for the first largescale Canadian action, the commando raid on the Arctic island of Spitzbergen. "Overlord" was the code word for the D-Day invasion of western Europe.

In his introduction Munro says: "This is a book about the Canadian soldiers—from Spitzbergen to Dieppe, from Sicily and Italy to Normandy and Germany. . . I have tried to relate in a narrative of events the story of their achievements, their ordeals, their sacrifices and their boundless courage." Munro went with the Canadians onto the beach-heads and into battle. Their story will remain one of the most heroic chapters in the annals of Canada's history.

Gauntlet to Overlord. . . By Ross Munro. . . The Macmillans in Canada. . . Price $3.00.

Pattern 4952 make it one of the smartest fall frocks. Twin shoulder yokes that you can make in contrast, the softening effect of gathers, the pert bow.

Pattern 4952 comes in sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20. Size 16, frock, takes 5 yards 39-inch fabric.

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