DARK LIGHTNING

By HELEN TOPPING MILLER

CHAPTER XI

At dusk Gary and Adelaide returned from another trip over into the oil fields, and Mona Lee noted how sober Gary's face was. He handed her a sheaf of papers. "Will you put these away carefully, Mrs. Mason, till Mr. Mason comes back?"

Mona Lee looked at the figures. "My gracious, Gary, does an oil well cost as much as that? That's more than Harvey makes in a year!"

"Think how much he'll make when we get oil, Mother," Adelaide said.

"If he gets oil," Gary added.

"Still croaking, are you?" remarked Adelaide coldly. "But I can't blame any oil man for having a nasty disposition. If you'd see the way they have to live, Mother—even the ones that have fairly nice houses—and most of them don't. They have little, dreadful places, stuck around under derricks . . ."

"That's where we'll be stuck I suppose," sighed Mona Lee.

Harvey Mason came back, very jubilant, with his drilling permit in his pocket.

"Had to finagle some of those guys," he admitted. "Railroad Commission thinks there are too many wells down now—but I got around 'em."

"I'll bet you paid somebody plenty." Mona Lee dashed his exuberance.

"Just paid my lawyer. Permit didn't cost anything."

"Hadn't we better see about the water before we go any further?" Gary asked. "There's no use moving drillers on to this job, till we're sure about the water."

"Ought not to have any trouble about that." Harvey was bland. "I've loaned old man Harper plenty—got a chattel mortgage on all his stock and tools now. Mortgage ain't due till August—but he can't pay it and he knows it."

* * *

Old man Harper lived in a long, unpainted house with a kind of open hallway through the middle of it. The porch sagged in sad scallops, each depression occupied by a languid, long-tailed dog.

Every dog's tail thumped like a signal drum on the wooden floor as they drove up to the gate, and from within the house a woman's voice called nasally, "Pa, here comes somebody!"

Harvey and Gary waited on the porch, surveyed with weary indifference by the flat eyes of the dogs. Then old man Harper came to the door.

"Howdy, Harvey."

"Hello, Harper." Mason pulled up a chair and sat down between two dogs. "Thought I'd come over to talk over a little piece of business with you."

"If it's about that note," Harper said, "I'm fixing to pay it. When it's due."

"It's not about the note. If you ain't able to pay it—or maybe pay all of it, we can fix that up. What I want to talk about is me running a pipe down here through your pasture and pumping a little water out of that creek. What you figure you'll charge me for running the pipe line, and the water?"

* * *

Old Harper did not look up, but there was about his mouth a sly and contemptuous twist. "Don't figure to charge ye nothing. Harvey."

"Well, I'll pay whatever the damages come to."

"Don't figure to charge you nothing," Harper went on in a maddening drawl, "because I don't figure to let you have any water, because I've leased every doggone acre of this place to some fellers down in Corpus Christi. And if there's any more water in that creek than what my cattle can drink, I reckon they'll want it theirselves. They're paying me twenty dollars an acre for ten years, and that's more than I can make off'n a bunch of cows."

Harvey's neck was red and his eyes glared. "Harper," he said, I sure wish that note was due right now. I'd foreclose and sell you out!"

"Well, it ain't due. And when it comes due I'll have the maney to pay it. So looks like there ain't very much you can do. Anyway you got it all right in your own family. It was your son-in-law, Ol Kimball, fixed up the leases for me."

"Who'd you lease to, if it's any of my business?"

"It ain't, but I don't mind telling for I reckon you'll find out anyhow. I leased to Grice-Morgan—and if you can get any water out of that outfit, you're a good one."

* * *

"Well, I'll get it—if I have to run a pipe plumb to the Gulf of Mexico after it!"

Harvey stamped away. He trod viciously on the starter and raced the engine till it roared. "What do you know?" he demanded wrathfully. "That dirty little heel! He comes to my house Sundays and eats my chicken and drinks my liquor, and then he sells me out—like this. Son, if it wasn't for Grace, I'd sure drive into town and give Mr. Oliver Kimball a good poke in the jaw!"

"I'm afraid you won't get any concessions out of that Grice-Morgan outfit." Gary was dubious.

"Yeah; I've heard about them—

"You might figure on running a pipe line and tapping the city supply—that is, if they'd let you."

"I'll go talk to 'em. They've got water to sell—they can sell it to me."

"Do you want me to see about the concrete job? We can't put a derrick up without concrete corners and we have to concrete the surface casing in."

"You said you knew a good outfit."

"Powers is the best. All new equipment, and they work fast and save you money."

"Well, you get Addie to take you over to see them."

(To Be Continued)

Wonderful way to build up your wardrobe at low cost. Pattern 4623 shows you how easily you can remake a man's discarded suit into a smart jacket and skirt for year round use!

Pattern 4623 comes in sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20. Size 16 suit, takes 2½ yards 54-inch material.

Send TWENTY CENTS (20c) in coins (stamps cannot be accepted) for this pattern to Room 421, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto. Print plainly SIZE, NAME, ADDRESS, STYLE NUMBER.

The British government is urging British farmers to raise 1,500,000 more pigs next year.

FOUR OF A KIND

It was a long step toward easing the beef shortage when that biological rarity—quadruplet calves—were born on the farm of Chas. Lucas and Sons at Dyer, Ky., last April 18. They are shown on exhibition at the Chicago Market Fat Stock Show, wartime replacement of the International Stock Show.

Christmas Suggestions

The outburst of Christmas cheer, the chiming of the bells, the worship, the fun and all that goes to make a Merry Chrismas, are customs inherited from a long line of ancestors and from many countries. Warm hospitality at this season is a tradition of long standing, so we gather our families, our friends, and those for whom we are making Chrismas, to share the happiness of the day.

The home economists of the Consumer Section, Dominion Department of Agriculture, offer a few suggestions to simplify some of the homemakers' problems.

In keeping with the Christmas colour scheme the salad should be red. The choice is between cranberries, tomato juice and beets. A jellied salad will be the easiest to prepare and serve, since it requires only garnishing with greens and dressing at the last minute.

Dessert will probably be plum pudding or mince pie, but it is wise to have an alternative dessert for the children and those who may have already indulged rather heartily in the first course. An old-time homemade vanilla custard ice cream served with a red fruit sauce is just right.

Jellied Beet Ring

1 tablespoon gelatine
¼ cup cold water
1 cup juice from canned beets, or water
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
3 tablespoons prepared horseradish
1 teaspoon salt
⅓ cup vinegar
1 cup diced celery
1 cup diced cooked beets

Soak gelatine in cold water for 5 minutes. Bring beet juice or water to boiling point. Add soaked gelatine and stir until dissolved. Add corn syrup, salt, horseradish and vinegar. Chill. When mixture begins to thicken, stir in celery and beets. Pour into a moistened ring mould and chill until firm. Unmould on salad greens and fill centre with cabbage salad. Six servings.

Mincemeat Upside-Down Pudding

This pudding requires more mincemeat than pie, therefore is luscious and juicy but easy on the shortening.

1½ cups sifted pastry flour OR
1⅓ cups sifted all-purpose flour
2½ teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons shortening
¼ cup granulated sugar
1 egg, well beaten
½ cup milk
Mincemeat

Sift together the dry ingredients. Cream the shortening slightly, add sugar and egg. Blend well. Add dry ingredients alternately with milk, to make a rather thin drop batter. Decorate the bottom of a well-greased pudding mould with a few toasted almonds. Spread with a generous layer of mincemeat. Fill mould no more than two-thirds full with batter. Cover and steam over rapidly boiling water, about 1¾ hours. Turn out and serve hot with hard sauce or a hot pudding sauce. Six servings.

Sunday School Lesson

December 23
The Message of Christmas to the World
Lesson: Luke 2:1—14.

Golden Text

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke 2:14.

Journey to Bethlehem

Luke 2:1—4.—In taking a Jewish census, all families went to the tribe to which they belonged and to the place where their family had resided. Joseph in fulfilling this demand of the Roman authorities was fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy respecting the birthplace of the Lord.

Angel of the Lord

5-7.—The word manger means simply the stable or place where the cattle or camels lodged. There was no room at the inn and Mary and Joseph were obliged to lodge in the stable. It was not necessarily a proof of poverty—under such conditions even the rich with the poor had to suffer inconveniences.

8-11.—The angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds suddenly. It is not surprising that the appearance of the angel, enveloped in Heavenly glory, filled these simple shepherds with fear because the presence of an angel was associated with disaster or death to the Jewish mind.

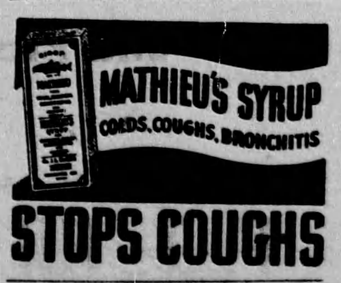
But the Divine messenger came not to speak of disaster, but of deliverance; not of death but of life. The great joy of believers in their darkest hour is a striking fulfillment of the angel's message.

The Gospel is first a personal message. The angel spoke as though Christ was born especially for their sakes—"Unto you is born."

The Angels' Joy

12-14.—The sign given to these simple hearted shepherds was so simple that they could not fail to find the child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

The angels gave praise to God in the Highest, that is, in the highest Heavens. They praised God for the great plan of redemption, whereby sinful man was to be saved through the Babe whose birth the messenger announced.



ISSUE 51—1945

Thanks for a 'Nice' Christmas Present

With Christmas close at hand the young man is likely to solve the "gift problem" in an orthodox way by visiting the florist or candy shop. Exhibits in the Royal Ontario Museum, however, show that in the 18th century his lady love likely would have received a far more varied selection of presents. for instance, she might have been given a stay busk, which was a long flat piece of wood that women wore at that time tucked down inside the front of their bodices to add to the rigidity of the prison-like corsets. There is a stay busk in the costume gallery of the Museum that is carved with two sets of initials and the date 1793.

An even more significant gift was a wooden spoon. There are some of these love spoons in the Museum that are beautifully carved and seem to suggest that in days gone by you had to be quite handy with a pocket knife before you could be a successful lover. The expression "spooning" comes from the way spoons fit closely together and this curious custom of giving a spoon grew out of that use of the word.

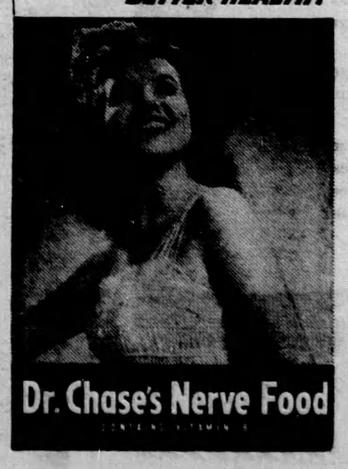
Christmas Bells

I heard the bells on
Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols
play,

And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth,
good will to men.

H. W. Longfellow.

for BETTER SLEEP... BETTER DIGESTION.. BETTER HEALTH!



Dr. Chase's Nerve Food

Chronicles of Ginger Farm

By Gwendoline P. Clarke

Dear friends and patient readers everywhere: You are busy and I am busy but I think we can just take time out for a few minutes to exchange Christmas greetings, don't you? Naturally I want to wish everyone of you a very Happy Christmas and since this is a season of goodwill I am going to take it for granted that that is also your wish for us at Ginger Farm. Am I right?

"A Happy Christmas!" As I wrote the words I wondered in my own mind what we generally consider constitutes a happy Christmas. A lot depends upon one's sense of values doesn't it? Fundamentally, the conditions are very simple.

* * *

Tradition makes us expect there will be a certan amount of giving and getting, but in that I often feel we have lost sight of the original idea behind this exchange of gifts. We seem to be leaning towards a tendancy to spend more and more each year on the presents we buy for our friends. I am afraid we too often forget that gifts are meant as an expression of our thought for one another—not as a blatant display of spending power. Haven't we all had the experience some time or other of being cheered and touched by a simple and inexpensive present from an unexpected quarter? If that be so, then isn't it safe to assume that we also can give pleasure in the same way? We can no more buy a happy Christmas by extravagent giving than we can buy our way into the Kingdom of Heaven. Happiness at Christmas or at any other time, for that matter, is reflected in our own hearts in proportion to our will to bring happiness to the lives of others.

* * *

And what about Christmas fare—does it contribute towards our enjoyment? At the risk of being thought slightly gluttonous I would say "yes"—particularly with so many of our boys back from overseas. Ask these boys and you will soon find that Christmas dinner according to their own family tradition has, to them, become a symbol. Don't try to change it—don't think to yourself "I won't bother making puddings this year"—or cakes, or whatever it is that has been your custom. If you do so slip up you take something away from Chrismas as your family remembers it. No need to be extravagant—remember the starving millions in Europe—but use your imagination, your ingenuity, and make something that looks lkie the real thing.

* * *

And a tree! What is home without your own personal Christmas tree? Yes, it is quite a bother, I know, but don't let the old custom die. Let your tree be big or small, as you wish, but make it gay and sparkling. Bring out the gaudy baubles, the tinsel, the star and the Christmas angel, even though the one it was your delight to trim the tree for in years gone by is no longer here to share it with you. You naturally feel you no longer have the heart for such pretense. But I urge you, have a tree anyway. Can't you feel that "he" would wish it—and who can say what happiness your tree might bring to some other lonely soul.

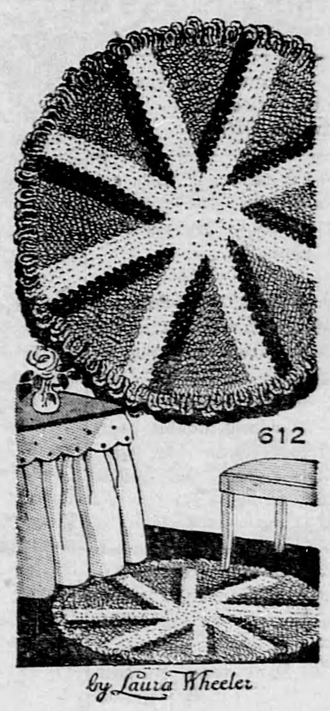
* * *

And then let us remember the children — children everywhere. Children and Christmas belong together. If you have little ones in your home then you are to be envied. Make them happy—it takes so little. Don't spoil them with extravagant giving but make it their day in other ways. Join in their fun; share their laughter, make this a Christmas for them to remember. And if there are no children in your home there are plenty outside of it.

It may be a queer notion on my part but I always have a feeling that there can be little happiness in our own hearts unless we have contributed in some way towards the happiness of at least one little boy or girl at Christmas time, other than those of our own family.

* * *

Last but not least we should surely remember the reason for which Christmas came into being. "For unto us a Child is born". Without that thought to guide us Christmas is meaningless and void. Remember it, and Christmas giving, Christmas fare, thought for the children, our own little personal problems, our joys and our sorrows, fall into their right perspective and we can say in all sincerity —"A Happy Christmas to you all!"



by Laura Wheeler

Just take two needles and three colors to harmonize with bathroom or bedroom and knit this rug. You can do a stool and seat cover, too.

This rug, knitted in one piece, is done on 2 needles in rug cotton or old stockings. A beginner can do it. Pattern 612 has directions.

Send TWENTY CENTS in coins (stamps cannot be accepted) for this pattern to Wilson, Needlecraft Dept., 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto. Print plainly PATTERN NUMBER, your NAME and ADDRESS.

Quality You'll Enjoy

"SALADA" TEA

Here's Quick Relief from

SINUS PAIN

3-Purpose Medicine Helps Clear Out Congested Sinus Areas

ONE best way to get relief from torturing sinus pain is to clear congestion from nasal passages and give sinuses a chance to drain. A few drops of Vicks Va-tro-nol in each nostril is usually enough to bring this comforting relief.

3-Purpose Medicine . . . Va-tro-nol is so successful because it does three important things: (1) shrinks swollen membranes of the nose; (2) helps clear out pain-causing congestion and (3) soothes irritation. Many sinus sufferers say it's best relief they've found. Try it!

VICKS VA-TRO-NOL