DARK LIGHTNING

By HELEN TOPPING MILLER

CHAPTER XIV

Under the flaring lights, the great behemoth labored and grunted on. "Make a swell mural, wouldn't it? If some artist could catch those lights and the glow from the boilers." He jumped as the rumbling machinery was suddenly silenced, and a yell came from the man on the derrick floor.

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Gary ran swiftly and Adelaide followed, jumping lightly over planks and puddles. "What is it?" she gasped as she climbed up and looked at the grim-faced group of men surrounding Gary.

"No water. Somebody has cut our line. Get your car, quick," Gary ordered. "We'll have to find the break and fix it."

The rumble of the boilers died as the fire was extinguished. Men hammered in the slabs of wood that held the heavy joint steady in the casing. Hickey lit his pipe and sat down on the tool box, but Gary and Adelaide ran, stumbling and panting in the dark, to the garage.

"Maybe we can get it fixed without telling Dad," Adelaide said breathlessly, as they dragged the doors open. "He's had so much trouble already."

"Take it easy," cautioned Gary, as she backed out with a roar and he jumped aboard.

"Shut up and quit grabbing things. I'll get you there."

They found the break a mile down the road. The pipe had parted clean, as from an ax blow, and one end of it stuck up, threshing around wildly, spouting water like a fire hose. An irate man with a hoe was dancing around it, trying to lead the water off into little ditches before it flooded his yard.

* * *

"And I worked hard on those pansies—"

"Every pansy will be replaced,' Gary insisted. "You haven't a phone here, have you, mister?"

"No. But there's one down at Ripley's filling station."

"Go there, Adelaide. Telephone the water company and ask them to send out somebody to turn the water off on this line; and then call your father and tell them to send Hickey down with a couple of men and some wrenches and two-inch pipe—one length of it. Can you remember all that?"

Gary squatted on his heels in the dark, hearing the precious water wasting away in the gutter, knowing that that was Harvey Mason's money running away down there. Then after about twenty minutes, the flow of water stopped. He drew a deep breath of relief, went down to straighten the pipe nd wait for Hickey. An old truck vith two men in it had slowed to a stop, dimly visible in the dusk, and one man got out and lifted the hood and stood fiddling with something about the motor. Gary sensed that this was a stall, that the man who still sat in the truck was watching him, and not his partner. He was certain of this when a car whirred by, honking, and the flare of the headlights showed, briefly, a brand new ax lying in the back of the truck. He walked boldly out to he ruck.

"You fellows want something?" he asked

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The man at the hood let it down with a bump. Ain't hitting right," he mumbled. "What's up? Got trouble on your water line?"

"You knew about that, did you?"

"No, we didn't know nothing about it. Just seen you standing there—"

"You saw me standing there and you knew that something was wrong with our ine. You'd better get going—the sheriff's on his way out here now."

They swore at him, and the truck tore away, but not before Gary had noted the license number.

At one in the morning the break had been repaired, the boilers and pump were going again, and in a short time the drill was turning. But Gary and Harvey still sat on the tool box, and Adelaide insisted on staying with them.

"Well, maybe nothing more will blow up before morning. Son," Harvey scrutinized a piece of paper in his hand, by the light of a match, "I've seen this license number you got off that truck before. "I'm trying to remember where."

"You can find out from the tax records who owns that car," Gary said "But we can't prove that they actually cut the line. The thing we have to do now is to see that it isn't tampered with again."

"Could put it underground—but we won't need long enough for that," Harvey said. 'How far down is she now?"

Twelve hundred feet. But this is going to be a deep well, Mr. Mason. Hickey says so, too."

I don't care how deep she goes, if we hit oil. But time is what we need."

"And time, unless I'm very much mistaken, is exactly what they're not going to give you."

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With morning, a carload of dull-faced men arrived very promptly, and though Harvey went into a rage he had to accept service on the documents.

"But let me tell you something, Chad Wingate," he fumed at the deputy. "Just as soon as I get my well going, I'm going to see we get some honest officers in this county. I have influence enough and I pay taxes enough to do it."

"Look here, Harvey, I'm just a hired hand of this county, and when they hand me them things, I'm sworn to see they get into the hands of the men whose names are writ on 'em."

"We gotta leave a man here to see that you obey this here order of the court," Chad Wingate reminded Harvey. "And if you want to go to town, Harvey, you can ride in along with me."

"I don't want to ride with you!" roared Harvey. "I'm fighting mad, and before I'm through, somebody is going to get busted wide open."

"O.K.," drawled Wingate, "but all this ain't doing you any good, you know."

Harvey stalked away, and Hickey shouted an order. Wheels were turned, water was shut off, the rotary slowed to a rumble and then halted, the crew hauled up the gear and made it fast, then jumped down from the derrick floor and wandered off to a grassy bank where they stretched out and smoked. And presently Harvey came out of the house, bristling all over like an angry mastiff, his Sunday suit on and drove off to consult his lawyer.

(To be continued)

Automat Buffet Car

The Great Western Railway plans to introduce automat buffet cars, believed to be the first of their kind in the world, it was announced in London.

Passengers who insert sixpences or shillings in slots will obtain sandwiches, ice cream, soft drinks, stamps and other supplies.

Post War Service Programme, I.O.D.E.

Mrs. Ryland H. New, National President of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire announces the Post War Service Programme of the I.O.D.E. which will function from January 16th, 1946 and that during this period of transition from war to peace the normal peacetime programme of the Order will still be maintained.

The I.O.D.E. Post War Service Programme will provide: British and European Civilian Relief, including direct Polish Relief. Work for Seamen: (a) adoption of ships; (b) Seamens's comforts. Hospitality: (a) for convalescent Service men and women; (b) continued work in hostels, canteens, clubs or Service Centres as long as the need exists.

Europe is in ruins, Britain hard-pressed and suffering from greater privations than at any time during the war. Canada and the rest of the North American continent is one of the few sources from which help can come to the desperate people of Europe.

The I.O.D.E. Post War Service Programme is designed to point the way to directing our labour and resources on behalf of those so desperately in want. With the shortages of supplies in ready-made clothing. It is the sewing and knitting of our members which is the greatest need of to-day.

Getting Off On The Right Foot

Few booklets of 20 small pages pack more sound advice than a little publication entitled "Getting off on the right foot," just published by the Bank of Monreal. Designed to aid ex-servicemen in getting back into civilian life, it warns against financial pitfalls dug by racketeers and some that may prove just as disastrous, dug by the veteran himself.

While treated briefly, these rackets and dangers are outlined clearly enough for all to recognize. Ten minutes spent in reading this booklet may save many a soldier his gratuity or his future business.

Regular air mail service was inaugurated in 1918 between New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

One of the Most Effective

BLOOD-IRON TONICS YOU CAN BUY

If your blood lacks iron!

You girls and women who suffer so from simple anemia that you're pale, weak, "dragged out"— this may be due to lack of iron in the blood. So try Lydia E. Pinkham's Compound TABLETS with added iron—one of the best home ways to help build up red blood—in such cases. Pinkham's Tablets are one of the most effective iron tonics you can buy!

FRENCH CHILDREN GET SHOES

Girls in Drancy, France, hug shoes happily after they were given new footwear by American Red Cross Civilian War Relief

CHRONICLES of GINGER FARM

By Gwendoline P. Clarke

Officially, this is the last day of the year. But there is a fly around here that thinks it is the first day of Spring. He's a noisy little beast, hopping around under the lamp shade. "You had better look out, young fellow, or first thing you know you'll get a dose of D.D.T." I suppose I should give him a dose anyway but it hardly seems worthwhile hunting the spray-gun for just one fly. Or is it? Supposing I let that one fly live will its progeny run into the hundreds or thousands? Does anyone know? However, I am not really worried —thanks to D.D.T. Come to think of it, one might almost call the release of D.D.T. one of the highlights of 1945.

* * *

1945—what a year! Do you remember the snow last winter . . . and the rain last spring Remember V.E. Day . . . V.J. Day . . . and after that the boys coming home? Do you remember how glad they were to be home, and how confident that a grateful people and government would give them a square deal?

(Thank goodness—Partener has killed that fly Now that's a funny thing—I never even thought of swatting it.)

And now let's take a look at what 1946 has in store for us—or at least what some folk think is in store.

There is the weather, for instance. We are supposed to have a colder winter and more snow than last year. The summer and spring are to be wetter and cooler —all that because we are at the tail end of an eleven year weather cycle.

However, prophets are like doctors—they don't always agree with one another. So I guess we can leave the weather to look after itself, take what comes and make the best of it.

* * *

And then last Sunday we were listening to two religious broadcasts—one right after the other. (It wasn't nearly so slippery listening to the radio as it would have been walking or driving to church). The first speaker said he was sure this country was in for a period of prosperity such as the world had never known. The second reminded us of the fallacy of "crying peace, when there is no peace", that in some quarters there were already rumours of a third great war, that the set-up of a world wide government was doomed to failure and that the Bretton Woods agreement would prove to be a wash-out.

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Farm and industrial reports are also contradictory. We have been told there will be a steady market for farm products for the next five years; but then it is also rumoured that there is bound to be a revision of the present subsidy system. I expect a lot of people have forgotten that the government is paying a subsidy of two cents a quart on every quart of milk that is sold. How long will that be continued, and if it is removed what will happen—will the milk go up in price or will farmers have to take the loss? I don't know the answer—only the powers that be in Ottawa can tell us that—and I doubt very much if they know either.

* * *

In trade circles various controls have been lifted but ceilings still remain in effect which means manufacturers will not bother making a cheap line of goods because there is too little profit. It pays them better to make higher priced articles—and because, when people have the money and want to buy, they will buy, no matter what the cost. And that brings us back again to that old bogey 'inflation".

As for instance in the case of sugar. We have been told that sugar can be bought in countries other than Cuba—that there is no need for sugar rationing in Canada But there is just one snag—it would cost twice as much Now do you suppose that little matter of price would bother some people. There are a fair percentage I am sure who would say "To the dickens with inflation—we have the money so let's have the sugar."

The pity of it! If only we, as a people, could be less selfish, if only the Golden Rule were more generally applied there would be no need for world government or conferences regarding atomic energy. Surely we can wait for sugar and other things until some order has emerged from the present chaotic conditions.

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TABLE TALKS..

Save the Fat

One role which busy homemakers play is that of "kitchen police," constantly on guard to reduce all waste to a minimum. This is particularly true in the case of fats.

Fat is a necessary ingredient in the preparation of many foods. Fat is a precious commodity. None must be wasted.

Pie shells made from cookie dough are new and interesting. If you do serve pies make them open face and save the top crust.

Toast croutons in a dry pan in the oven. Use biscuit dough to cover meat or chicken pie.

Never let the fat smoke. Smoke means burning or breaking down which results in waste. Keep all fat cool. If left in a warm pace, it will become rancid or sour. Use dripping from roasts, broiled meat or poultry in making sauces for scalloped dishes, cheese dishes or in creamed soups.

A few suggestions for saving fat come from the kitchen of the Consumer Section, Dominion Department of Agriculture.

Butterscotch Slices

⅓ cup chicken fat
½ cup brown sugar
1 egg
¼ teaspoon vanilla
1½ cups pastry flour OR
1⅓ cups all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt

Cream fat and sugar, then add vanilla and egg. Beat well. Mix in flour sifted with baking powder and salt. Shape in roll about 2-inches in diameter. Wrap in wax paper. Chill thoroughly. Cut in ⅛-inch slices. Place cookies on lightly greased baking sheet and bake in moderately hot oven, 375 deg. F, for 8 to 10 minutes. Makes 3½ to 4 dozen cookies.

Molasses Cup Cakes

2 cups pastry flour
¼ teaspoon soda
½ teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
1½ teaspoons cinnamon
⅓ cup mild-flavoured fat
1 egg
½ cup molasses
½ cup milk

Sift together the dry ingredients. Cream shortening and molasses, add unbeaten egg and beat well. Add milk alternately with dry ingredients to first mixture. Bake in greased muffin pans, in a moderately hot oven, 375 deg. F, for 30 minutes. Yield, 1 dozen cakes.

Fruit Roll

2 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons mild-flavoured fat
⅔ cup milk

Filling:
2 tablespoons mild-flavoured fat
3 tablespoons brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¾ cup raisins

Mix and sift together the dry ingredients. Cut in shortening, using finger tips or a pastry blender, until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add milk slowly and mix to a soft dough. Roll to ¼-inch thickness in rectangular shape. Spread with mild-flavoured fat and sprinkle with brown sugar, cinnamon and raisins. Roll up like a jelly roll and place in a greased loaf pan. Bake in a hot oven, 425 deg. F, for 15 minutes. Serve hot with pudding sauce. Six servings.

by Laura Wheeler

Add fine touches to your home with this square, crocheted in pineapple design! Use it singly, in threes, or join for larger pieces

This square is quick crochet; a cloth in string (64 x 40 in.) needs only 20 squares; one makes a doily. Pattern 617 has directions.

Send TWENTY CENTS in coins (stamps cannot be accepted) for this pattern to Wilson Needlecraft Dept., Room 421, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto. Print plainly PATERN NUMBER, your NAME and ADDRESS.

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