DARK LIGHTNING

By **HELEN TOPPING MILLER**

CHAPTER XIX

"All right, you call up the right people."

So the next day the Schlumberger test went down, and tautly they all watched the pointing hand, the cable paying out as the magical cylinder went seeking down. The roughnecks relaxed and went to sleep on the derrick floor. The shaft of the kelly joint rested, inactive, in the rat hole. Gary saw Mona Lee's face tighten and when as the indicator moved and cable fell, and still there was no sign of oil.

Then the test runner straightened up briskly.

"No indications. Looks like you'll have to go on down. Anyway, you haven't hit it yet."

"All right, Hickey," Gary said. "Go on down."

Adelaide wandered around the place, being very polite and aloof, and Mona Lee, after two or three telegrams from Virginia, went around stony-faced and with agony in her eyes.

Obviously, Harvey Senior had wired his banker for more money, for Mr. Bradley came out, grayer and more disapproving than ever, if that were possible, bringing papers for Mona Lee to sign.

She smiled, white-faced and stricken, at Gary when the banker had driven away. "We may not have anything left when we get through with this," she said. "But we'll be back where we started from. And we got along then, and we weren't afraid." But she asked in a hopeful tone, "Do you think we might get oil, Gary? I'd be so glad—on account of Harvey. I hate to have him disappointed so badly."

Gary tried to be optimistic. "We're down almost five thousand feet, Mrs. Mason. If it were my well I couldn't give up—because I'm convinced this is deep structure. And the fact that Grice-Morgan are going ahead makes me think it might be hopeful. But Mr. Mason told me to stop drilling at five thousand. Unless he changes his mind—"

"Maybe he'll change his mind—if he can," Mona Lee said.

* * *

At ten o'clock Hickey came back, and the men began swabbing, and even Mona Lee came out to watch. Adelaide stood with her fingers locked so tensely that her knuckles were white.

"You ain't got no oil down there, Hickey," said the swabber. "You ain't even got you a good water well. Well, that's the way she goes."

Adelaide began to cry. "We've got to tell Dad," she said.

"We could wait till morning," said Mona Lee.

"We can go on down," Gary said. "But Mr. Mason's orders were very definite. We've drilled to fifty-three hundred feet now—three hundred farther than he instructed us to go."

Mona Lee turned to the crew on the derrick floor. "You've all worked so hard—and I know you're disappointed, too. I want you all to come up to the house. Maria's frying chickens and I want to give you a good lunch."

"Mis' Mason, I sure wish I could go on down there a ways further," Hickey argued. "I hate to give up on a well."

"I know. We hate to give up, too, but there's just nothing else to do. I guess the Masons will be starting in again now—starting in with nothing much, the way we did twenty-five years ago."

* * *

Gary stayed at the well all day, watching the drill pipe being hauled up, disconnected, and piled in an orderly stack. Hickey sat on the ground with a bucket of yellow paint, and every joint was dried and scoured clean and treated to a coat of paint to keep the threads from rusting.

"Well, we did our best, Hickey," Gary said. "And now I guess I'll be on my way—Mexico or some other place. So I may as well say good-by now."

Hickey held out a paint-smeared hand. "If you ever get broke and ain't got nowhere to go, you know where I live."

"Much obliged, Hickey. I won't forget. But I think I'll drift along—farther."

He saw Bill Grant coming up the slope from the Grice-Morgan lease. The three derricks were up down there now, and Bill would be moving on presently, too.

"Heard about a job over in the Pecos country," Bill said. "Nice, lonesome country over there. So everything's bust, is it? I thought maybe—"

"Well, what do you think? Me with no job and sixteen dollars in my jeans. The lady likes money, she doesn't like oil men."

* * *

"M'm," mused Bill. "Say, I forgot to tell you what I came up here for. Grice is on the job. I got my orders to bring you on down."

"I can listen. But it won't do him any good."

Grice was a red-faced man with a cold gray eye.

"Hear you're abandoning your well," he said. "Money run out?" Mr. Mason's orders," Gary said. "If you want detailed information, you'll have to talk to him."

(To Be Continued)

Sunday School Lesson

February 24

Home Foundations For National Greatness

Deuteronomy 6: 4—12

Golden Text:— Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise Thy name forever and ever. —Psalm 145:2.

Man's First Duty

Every man's first duty is to love Jehovah, the only true God, with all his affections, all his intellect and all his strength. It is his duty to put God first in everything; first in business, first in home life, first in social life, first in pleasure; first in everything. These "Words" which Moses commanded the children of Israel were God's Words and God's Words laid up in the heart will keep us from sin in our lives.

Teaching God's Word

We must teach God's Word to others, especially to those for whom we are directly responsible, our own children. We must teach it to them diligently, talk of God's Word in the home life, as we walk with our children, or with others.

When the Word is taught in a loving interesting way in the home, and is backed up by the life, it has a very deep and enduring influence upon the life.

But not only in the home was the Word to be kept ever to the front, but always and everywhere, lying down and rising up they were to meditate in the Law of the Lord. We should so love the Word that it will be as natural for us to speak of it as of any other topic.

Obedience to God

Obedience to God would bring prosperity in the land. God would give them great cities but with prosperity would come peril. They were solemnly warned not to forget Jehovah in the days of prosperity. This is a warning that men need today. No man can stand prosperity without watching and prayer and a study of the Word, The reason given for not forgetting Jehovah was because it was He who had brought them forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

One God Only

Absolute separation from the Gods of the surrounding people was commanded. If they should try to serve Jehovah, the only true God, and any of the false Gods of the heathen at the same time, the anger of Jehovah will be kindled against them and He would destroy them from off the face of the earth. And whatsoever professed followers of Christ today try to serve Him and the world at the same time, His holy anger is kindled against them, and unless they repent He will destroy them.

Bomb Site

Oak Ridge, Tenn., the site of the atomic bomb plant, perhaps holds the record as the fastest growing city in America; in a few months it grew from a small country village to the fifth largest city in the State.

Cheeseburgers That Are Tasty and Butter Saving

Mix 1 lb. minced beef, ½ cup milk, ½ cup rolled oats, ½ teaspoon salt, ⅛ teaspoon pepper, form thin hamburgers, pan fry or broil. Place each cake on half toasted hamburger bun (or toast) cover with slice of loaf type cheese, broil till cheese melted.

Serve with "SALADA" TEA

ALL SET FOR RAIN

Pictured above is the newest in Easter bonnets, guaranteed to keep the wearer happy whether it rains, sleets or snows on Easter morning. It's a high-crowned sailor of weatherproof, transparent plastic, designed by Walter Florell. Normally it's decorated with a big rose, but if rain comes, the flower can be put under the transparent crown where it is just as decorative, and safe from harm, as shown in the photo.

CHRONICLES of GINGER FARM

By Gwendoline P. Clarke

Even though we have become used to shortages it still comes as somewhat of a shock when we find one more article is practically unobtainable, and when that happens I am like an inquisitive child—I want to know "why".

Last week it was filter discs—and I didn't know they were in short supply until I tried to buy some. So I inquired the reason. And here is what I was told:

There are two makes of filter discs on the market—one made in Canada, the other in the U.S.—the latter being 10 cents a box dearer. Apparently the Canadian firm didn't think this was right so they raised their price to the U.S. level. But the WPTB got wind of it and they said—"Now look here, you just can't do this—your price has got to stay where it was." And then the filter disc people got kind of uppish and they said "All right - you won't let us bat, then we won't play ball."

* * *

So they stopped making filter discs, and there wasn't anything the Prices Board could do about it. The authority of the Board is limited. They can say, you shall charge this or you shall charge that, but they cannot say, you must make this or you must make that.

Perhaps you townsfolk think this little matter of filter discs doesn't concern you. But it does—very definitely—if you are to continue to enjoy that quality guarded milk which the law demands. Here is what happens: Before Bossie's milk goes into the cooler and pasteurizer it is poured through a special type of milk strainer. The strainer has holes in it like a collander but over these holes we place a filter disc. These discs are made of specially sterilized cotton, with what looks like a filling of very fine cotton batting, which allows the milk to filter through but holds back any undesirable sediment. A farmer, shipping milk, is required by law. to use such a strainer and disc.

* * *

But, ladies, I'll tell what you will be able to get--and it will gladden your wash-day hearts. And that is an aluminum clothesline. Three twisted strands of wire, just like the old galvanized variety—but of aluminum, clean, non-rusting aluminum. Be watching for it, or if your hardware merchant hasn't got it, inquire about it. It can be got.

But to more serious problems. Doubtless. you have heard. as I have, that many British brides, wives of Canadian soldiers, sailors and airmen, are arriving in Canada this week-end. I wonder if you can realise what a frightening experience this can be to these girls. Canada to them is such a vast country. They feel friendless and alone. Routine regulations at the Customs Office bewilder them. In Montreal the number of negroes and French speaking persons adds to their feeling of helplessness. They cannot understand why Dick or Harry could not meet them. They feel everyone is in a hurry and none have time to give them a word of welcome. All this adds up to a feeling of strangeness and homesickness that is almost overpowering. Don't you think that we in Canada should do all we can to give these girls a welcome when we see them, remembering how well our boys were received in that little island across the sea?

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TABLE TALKS.. *Bread*

The home economists of the Consumer Section, Dominion Department of Agriculture, say that today the essentials for good bread are good yeast, right type of flour, the correct temperature for rising, 70-80°F., and thorough baking

White Bread (Overnight Sponge)

1 cake dried yeast
¼ cup lukewarm water
4 cups liquid (water, milk or potato water)
3 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons salt
12 cups all-purpose flour (approximately)
2 tablespoons fat, melted

Crumble yeast cake and soak in lukewarm water for ½ hour. To the lukewarm liquid add the sugar, dissolved yeast and half the flour, beating thoroughly until smooth. Use a container large enough to allow sponge to rise. Cover and leave at room temperature, 65-75°F. overnight or until sponge is very light and porous and more than double in bulk. Stir sponge, add salt, melted (not hot) fat, and enough of the remaining flour to make a stiff dough. Knead about 10 minutes, or until dough is smooth and elastic, with small bubbles on the surface. Form into a ball, place in a greased bowl, and lightly grease the surface to prevent a crust from forming. Cover and let rise in a warm place, 80-86°F. until double in bulk, about 2 hours. Punch in dough, fold edges into centre and turn dough over with smooth side up. Let rise again until dough retains a finger print when pressed lightly or is double in bulk, about 1 hour. Turn out on board and divide into pieces which half-fill baking pans. Allow to stand a few minutes before shaping. Knead pieces slightly, shaping into loaves. Place in greased pan and lightly grease surface of dough. Cover and let rise in a warm place until dough retains a finger print when lightly pressed or is double in bulk, about 1 hour. Bake in a moderately hot oven, 375°F. until done, about 1 hour. Bread is baked when it shrinks from the sides of the pan and gives a hollow sound when tapped. Remove bread from pans immediately and place on racks or set crosswise on top of pans. Do not cover while warm. Yield: 4 loaves, approximately 1½ pounds each.

Whole Wheat Raisin Bread

2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon shortening
2 teaspoons grated orange rind
2 cups water
½ cake compressed yeast
about 3-4 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 tablespoon salt
1 cup seedless raisins

Simmer sugar, shortening and orange rind in the water for 3 minutes. Cool to lukewarm, crumble in yeast and stir until dissolved. Sift in 2 cups all-purpose flour and beat thoroughly. Cover and let rise in a warm place until light, about 1 hour. Add whole wheat flour, salt and raisins. Sift in sufficient of the remaining all-purpose flour to make a soft dough, but not sticky. Knead until smooth and elastic. Place in greased bowl, brush top with fat and let rise until double in bulk, about 1 hour. Shape into loaves, place in greased pan and again let rise until double in bulk. Bake in a moderately hot oven, 375°F. for about 60 minutes. Yield: 2 loaves (7½" x 3½").

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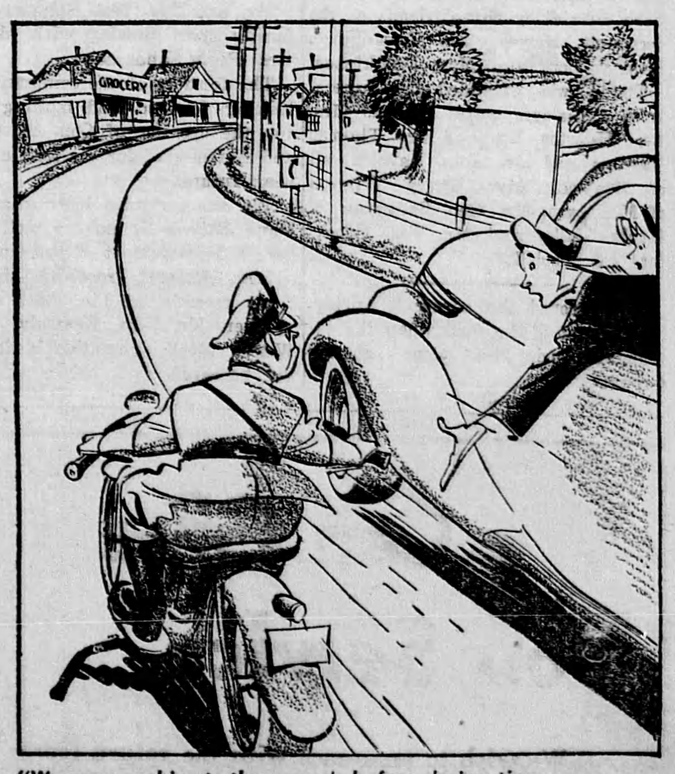

"We were rushing to the grocer's before closing time . . . Imagine a week-end without delicious Grape-Nuts Flakes!"

"I can't imagine it brother! Step on it and I'll provide a police escort down to the store so you'll be sure of getting your malty-rich, sweet-as-a-nut Post's Grape-Nuts Flakes!"

"OK—here we go! Bring on that Grape-Nuts Flakes' good nourishment: carbohydrates for energy, proteins for muscle, phosphorus for teeth and bones, iron for the blood, and other food essentials."

"They're good all right! That's because they're made of two grains—wheat and malted barley. And specially blended, baked and toasted for golden-brown delicious crispness and easy digestion."

"I think I'll get a couple of those giant economy packages."