The Lady of Lancaster;

Or, Leonora West's Love.

CHAPTER XI. (Continued).

"No; her mother was an American, you know. They—the Americans—all claim to be nobly born, I believe. They recognize no such caste distinctions as we do. Miss West bears a patent of nobility in her face," said Lancaster, kindly.

"Does she not, the little darling? What a sweet good nature beams in her little face. And, after all, it is our own poet laureate who says:

'Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good:
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.'

"Yet I think you will find it hard to bring the rest of the De Veres to subscribe to Tennyson's verse," Lancaster said, anxiously.

"They will c'en have to. I shall please myself if I can marry that lad. So you needn't scold any more, old fellow, for I am in dead earnest to make Leonora Mrs. De Vere," laughed the young soldier.

"You are the arbiter of your own destiny. Enviable fellow," grumbled Lancaster.

"I never know what a lucky fellow I was until now," agreed De Vere. "It was fortunate for me that I had a bachelor uncle in trade, and he left me his fortune when he died. I can snap my fingers at my family if they cut up about my choice."

"Yes," Lancaster said, dryly.

"Ah, you are just thinking to yourself what a dude I am!" exclaimed De Vere, suddenly. "Here I am talking so confidently about my choice, when I do not even know if she will look at me. What do you think about it, eh? Do I stand any chance with her?"

"If she were a society girl, I should say you stood no chance of being refused. No girl who had been properly educated by Madame Fashion would say no to ten thousand a year and title in prospective," Lancaster replied, with conviction.

"You are putting my personal attractions quite out of the question," said De Vere, sharply.

"Because they are quite secondary to your more solid recommendations, sorrowfully."

"And, after all, you have not said what you think about my chances with Miss West."

"I do not know what to say, because I do not understand her. Yet if she be a true woman, she must be, and be born, as we know, she could not be false to her if she is worldly enough to be swayed by advantages of birth and position. Do you not think so? I am going to plead for myself." Mused De Vere, pulling at his dark moustache, and wondering if he dare let himself to be the hero of a love-story in the world.

"Of course, I think so. You have the shadiest love in the world, you say, and the whitest hand and your moustache is superb," he replied, laughing, for from his good-humoured, manly beauty he rather despised small dandies, and De Vere, being small, he scarcely knew why, disliked rather himself after the disgusted fashion in which you, Captain Lancaster, are looking for such weak

CHAPTER XII.

[illegible] the corner hand, [illegible] and the rose with [illegible] and [illegible] herself a [illegible] that was [illegible] a heavy [illegible] and the blue [illegible] of the ship, [illegible] fingers, [illegible] moved tears on them. The young [illegible] looked very sad in the soft evening light.

"She is almost alone in the world, poor child," he thought.

"I want to ask you something," he said, impulsively.

"Yes," she said, listlessly.

"Was it because of those things we talked of that now those aristocratic prejudices that you have so severely ignored De Vere and me?"

"Not exactly," she replied, hesitatingly.

"Then, why?" he asked, gravely.

She looked up into the handsome, blue eyes. They were regarding her very kindly. Something like a sob swelled her throat, but she said, as calmly as she could:

"I'll tell you the reason, Captain Lancaster. Do you remember the day we sailed, and what you and Lieutenant De Vere talked of that night over your cigars?"

"I remember," he replied, with an embarrassment it was impossible to hide.

The clear eyes looked up straight into his face.

"Well, then," she said, "I heard every word you said to each other there in the moonlight."

CHAPTER XIV.

For the second time since he had met Leonora West, Captain Lancaster devoutly wished that the earth would open up and hide him from the sight of those grave blue eyes.

"I heard every word," she repeated, and his memory flew back anxiously to that night.

"Oh, miss she!" he cried. "You had relented. We were alone."

The fair cheek flushed warmly.

"I shall have to confess, then, that I was not asleep. But you must not judge me too hardly, Captain Lancaster."

He said at her expense.

"I will tell you the truth," she said, "as my stateroom was close, because I was tired of Lieutenant De Vere, I wanted to be alone. But it was so warm in my room, I could not bear it. So I threw a dark shawl over me and went out on deck again. There was no one there. I slipped around in the shadow of the wheelhouse and sat down."

"And then we came—De Vere and I," said Lancaster.

"Yes," she replied. "I was frightened at first, and shrunk closer into the darkness. I did not want to be found out. I thought you would smoke your cigars and go away in a little while."

There was a minute's silence.

"I wish I had been a thousand miles away," the captain thought, ruefully, to himself.

"So then you commenced to talk about me," continued Leonora. "I ought not to have listened, I know, but I could not make up my mind to interrupt you; it would have been so embarrassing, you know. So I kept still, hoping you would stop every minute, and thus I heard all."

"You heard nothing but kindness," you must grant that, at least," he said.

The red lips curled at the corners, whether with anger or feeling he could not tell.

"You were very condescending," she said, in a quiet, very demure little voice.

"Now, you wrong us—you do, indeed, Miss West," he cried, hotly. "We said the kindest things of you. You must own that Lieutenant De Vere paid you the highest compliment man can pay to woman."

A beautiful blush rose into the fair face and her eyes drooped a moment.

"While we are upon the subject," he continued, hastily, "let me speak a word for my friend, Miss West. He is quite in earnest in his love for you, and you would do well to listen to his suit. He is in every way an unexceptionable suitor. There is everything in favor of him, personally, and he is of good birth, is the heir to a title, and last, but not least, has ten thousand a year of his own."

"Enough to buy him a more fitting bride than Mrs. West's niece," she said, with some bitterness, but more mirth, in her voice.

"Who could be more fitting than the one he has chosen?" asked Lancaster.

"It would be a mesalliance," she said, with her eyes full on his face as she quoted his words.

"In the world's eyes—yes," he answered, quietly. "But if you love him and he loves you, you need not care for the world," he said; and he felt the whole force of the words as he spoke them. He said to himself that any man who could afford to snap his fingers at fortune and marry Leonora West would be blessed.

She listened to his words calmly, and with an air of thoughtfulness, as if she were weighing them in her mind.

"And so," she said, when he had ceased speaking, "you advise me, Captain Lancaster, to follow up the good impression I have made on your friend, and to—to fall into his arms as soon as he asks me?"

He gave a gasp as if she had thrown cold water over him.

"Pray do not understand me as advising anything!" he cried, hastily. "I merely showed you the advantages of such a marriage; but, of course, I have no personal interest in the matter. I am no match-maker."

"No, of course not," curtly; then, with a sudden total change of the subject, she said: "Aren't we very near the end of our trip, Captain Lancaster?"

"You are tired?" he asked.

"Yes. It grows monotonous after the first day or two out," she replied.

"You might have had a better time if you had let De Vere and me amuse you," he said.

"Oh, I have been amused," she replied, frankly; and he wondered within himself what had amused her, but did not ask. She had a trick of saying things that chagrined him, because he did not understand them, and had a lingering suspicion that she was laughing at him.

"We shall see the end of our journey to-morrow, if we have good luck," he said, and she uttered an exclamation of pleasure.

"So soon? Ah, how glad I am! I wonder," reflectively, "what my aunt will think about me."

"She will be astonished for one thing," he replied.

"Why?"

"Because I think she is expecting a child. She will be surprised to see a young lady."

"Poor papa!" a sigh; "he always called me his little girl. That is how the mistake has been made. Ah, Captain Lancaster, I can not tell you how much I miss my father!"

There was a tremor in the young voice. His heart thrilled with pity for her loneliness.

"I hope your aunt will be so kind to you that she will make up to you for his loss," he said.

"I'll me something about her," said Leonora.

"I am afraid I can not tell you much," he answered, with some embarrassment. "She is a good woman. I have heard Lady Lancaster say that much."

"Of course, you can not be expected to know much about a mere housekeeper," with a distinct inflection of bitterness in her voice. "Well, then, tell me about Lady Lancaster. Who is she?"

"She is the mistress of Lancaster Park."

"Is she nice?"

"She is old and ugly and cross and very rich. Is all that nice as you define it?"

"No; only the last. It is nice to be rich, of course. That goes without saying. Well, then, is there a master?"

"A master?" vaguely.

"Of Lancaster Park, I mean.

"Oh, yes."

"And is he old and ugly and cross and rich?" pursued Miss West, curiously.

"He is all but the last," declared Lancaster, unblushingly. "He is as poor as Job's turkey. That is not nice, is it?"

(To be continued.)

A Doubtful Compliment.

"I can't just make out what he meant," said the conceited man.

"What do you mean?"

"Whether he was praising me or not."

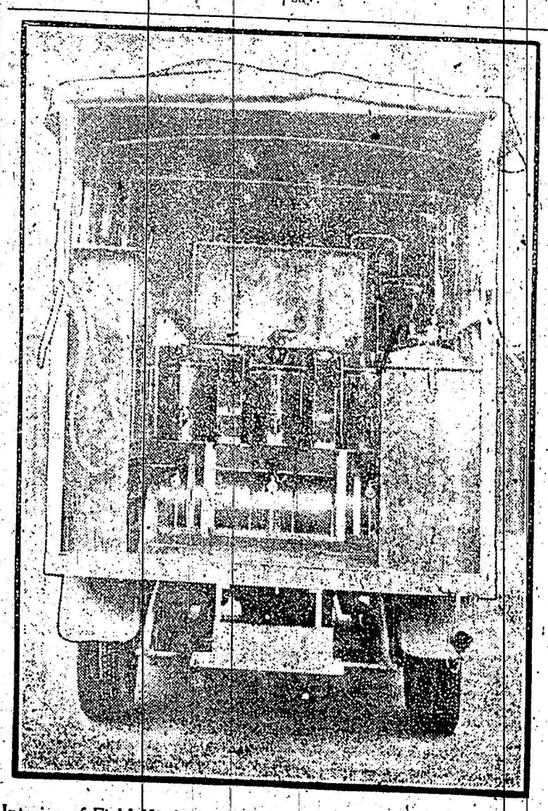
"What did he say?"

"He was agreeing with something I had just said, and he added, 'Nobody in this city knows as much as you think you know.'"

A woman mounted the step of a car carrying an umbrella like a reversed sabre. The conductor touched her lightly, saying: "Excuse me, madam, but you are likely to put out the eye of the man behind you."

"He's my husband," she snapped, with the tone of full proprietorship.

A negro preacher addressed his flock with great earnestness on the subject of "Miracles" as follows:—"My beloved friends, de greatest ob all miracles was 'bout de loaves and fishes. Dey was 5,000 loaves and 2,000 fishes, and de twelve apostles had to eat 'em all. De miracle is, dey didn't bust."



Interior of Field Kitchen Presented to Canadian Red Cross Association by Major R. W. Leonard of St. Catharines

EDUCATION COMING TO THE FARMER.

New Life Has Come Into the Old Counties of Ontario—Agricultural Education is More than a Name Now.

Away back in pioneer days the leaders in affairs, educational, laid the foundation of our public school system. The first schools weren't very ornate, and the teachers had little training, judged by the present standard of qualifications. The three R's were considered to be quite sufficient—mental decoration wasn't at a premium—but the pupils were taught obedience and thoroughness, and many of our greatest men arose from those little, obscure backwoods schools.

As villages grew into towns and towns into cities, the ambition of educational leaders grew with them, however. Teachers became better qualified, new subjects were added, and higher institutions were established until the present complicated and complex system was evolved. And the citizens, generally, were very pleased thereat, and prided themselves that they were wearing the latest in educational fashions.

Now, as the system developed a paradox developed with it. The average farmer while respecting education and agreeing that it was a very attractive decoration to have when it wasn't too expensive, did not care to invest very heavily in it himself. A feeling that farming couldn't be learned from books grew so strongly that it became a trait of rural character. The system might have been at fault, but the educated preferred to blame the farmer himself for these conditions.

"Was there ever such a man!" they cried. "He is so bound to tradition and practice that he doesn't care for education. He will not develop the scientific viewpoint, nor will he allow his children to do so. The majority of those who stay on the farm never attend high school even. He is satisfied with the methods and knowledge that were possessed by his fathers before him."

An Idea That Fell Down.

But the farmer had his own views of these matters, and, like most of his views, they were the result of hard experience. He didn't always advocate them where everyone could hear them, but he realized now, the less clearly certain things that his critics did not. We can imagine a shrewd, intelligent man addressing a lad fresh from school.

"My fine fellow, you have gone through a process of absorption and have acquired considerable mental trimming. You can talk more correctly than I. You are vaguely familiar with a quantity of historical dates and foreign phrases, you can write a graceful essay, you have some aptitude for figures; there are other things that you have that I know little about. So! are you practical? Can you tell me anything about the soil or earth or clouds that will be of practical value to me? What do you know about trees, plants and crops—what will make them thrive, or why they fail? Can you perform the operations of farming even as well as when you left for school? Can you do practical calculations; have you a working knowledge of banking and of the world's business transactions? No! You have not! You were never shown these, only were told about some of them vaguely and some not at all, you say.

"Now, there is my son Henry. He has not had the schooling you have had. He did not even pass the high school entrance; but he was educated in the practical school of life. He is skilled in farm operations, is enthusiastic, aggressive, quick in emergency and strong in action. After all your education he has a better training in those things that make for successful farming than you have.

Of course, the farmer saw the question from only one angle. He didn't appreciate the joy of knowledge for the sake of knowledge, and his ideal may have been too much the money ideal. But he was not far astray about the practical value of the system. It fitted a few for professions, but fitted very poorly, or misfitted, a multitude for commercial or agricultural occupations. So, after all, the system was to blame rather than the farmer. His children wouldn't get much knowledge that would make them better farmers from the schools that had been the product of so much thought and expense.

And this was the situation before the people of the Province became impressed with the fact that agricultural training was necessary. For a long time after the Agricultural College was established at Guelph, very many were doubtful of the value of the course. Some are doubtful of its value still, but the majority of the farmers realize that it is a good thing. They know, of course, that the practice of farming must always be learned upon the farm; but they believe a good deal of theory can be blended to very great advantage with the practice. It all rests with the student himself as to whether he can return to the home farm and apply his knowledge in a sane and practical manner.

But, despite the value of the agricultural course, or rather because of it, the college has its limitations. It could not accommodate the young farmers of Ontario. It did good work, but in a very limited way. Each year less than 2,000 students, all told, attended the institution. So the problem became not how the farmer could go to the college, but how the college could go to the farmer.

The district representative scheme grew from this need. In 1907 six college graduates were sent into as many counties to act as agricultural advisers. For awhile the wisdom of the plan was questioned, as it is of every new thing. But it proved itself. To-day the number has increased to forty-one, and these men have gone to their stations at the request of the farmers themselves. So the problem of the college going to the farmer was partly solved.

It wasn't entirely solved, because one man in a county worked under a great handicap. He hadn't the time to reach a very large proportion of his constituents personally or personally. And in time the greatest value of the work was lost. Unless he did it the college hadn't got to the farm after all, but only to the county.

This need led to the development of the Winter Short Course idea for young farmers. In 1908 the first course was given at Lindsay. It had an attendance of six pupils. In 1915 forty-three courses of from four to six weeks' duration were held with a total regular attendance of 1,075. The special attendance was far greater, one course in Glengarry county having an attendance of 100 at a special meeting. Nothing could illustrate the popularity of the scheme more than that, nor, by the same token, the value of it either, for what is popular with our farmers has usually a practical value.

The idea of the winter school was simply to give the farm lads a training in elementary agricultural science—to bring the work of the college to their very doors. [illegible] subject [illegible] up, [illegible] usually [illegible] A [illegible] of the [illegible] ing [illegible] all [illegible]

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"He has [illegible] earned it."

"That [illegible] was [illegible] he's cured, and I've got a [illegible] butcher.

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