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THE DAY THE FRENCH REACHED LOMBAERTZYDE.

An Expedition to the Front.

The morning the French troops secured their first permanent foothold in Lombaertzyde, on the Belgian coast, the morning the slow eastward movement of the Allies across the low countries began, Pierre, "The Cossack," and I drove in an open Flemish cart through the lines of French and Belgian trenches on the Yser, and, before we knew it, were within a few yards of the German outposts.

The Cossack was a sharpshooter and a scout, and, though a cannoneer by enlistment, he always went out along the enemy's lines alone and came back with accurate information of the enemy's movements.

The road between La Panne and Coxyde was full of people going both ways. Pierre offered a ride to three women, the eldest at least fifty, but with cheeks as hard and red as apples. They laughed and joked with Pierre and paid no more attention to the bursting shells towards which we were driving than to the cutting ice blowing into their faces. They had arrived at the point of view of soldiers toward shell-fire: There is no use paying any attention to it. The shells you hear do you no harm. If you are killed by one you never know it.

Directly ahead of us, as we passed through Coxyde's mud-splashed buildings into the road beyond, swimming with dirty slush, lay Oost-Dunkerke, and the area under fire. The country was open except for the bare clusters of buildings and the scrub brush in the dunes, but, scattered through the country over which we were passing, there were whole batteries of French guns, mostly General Joffre's favorite "seventy-fives." We could hear their sharp "ping" all about us, but we knew no more of their whereabouts than did the German aviators who passed through a bombardment of shrapnel every day trying to locate them.

I am running no danger of giving away a military secret in saying they were buried and the only way the German shells could reach them was to drop directly on them. The chances of their doing this were not much better than those of an expert golf player dropping the ball directly into the hole with a drive from the tee. Even the numerous and each year marketing the cockerels of the hatch as broilers.

Others combine egg farming with meat growing—selling the eggs at a season of the year when they bring the highest prices, and turning them into table poultry when the price falls below a certain figure.

The sale of eggs for hatching and fowls for breeding is very profitable but it calls for expert service. Beginners are advised to keep away from that end of the business until they have had a general experience of at least three years.

The selection of breeds is a matter that must be governed by the object in view. If it is intended to have an exclusive egg farm, the shipments to be made to a market that prefers white eggs, then such breeds as the Leghorns, Minorcas, or any of the white egg-layers should be chosen.

Where it is intended to combine eggs, broilers and roasters, such breeds as the American class should be kept, with possibly a white-egg breed if there is a call for white eggs in the market.

The matter of location is worthy of consideration. One hundred miles from a city like Toronto is not too far, providing there are good shipping facilities. Private family trade is very profitable, but it may take some time to build up a good retail custom. The market in the vicinity of the location of the farm should be carefully looked up before the investment and start is made.

It is a good plan to have an extra acre or two which can be devoted to tree fruits and growing vegetables. What cannot be consumed by the family may be sold to nearby residents. The garden will help considerably to pay the household expenses.

Other Means of Income.

On one poultry farm five acres are used. Two of these are devoted to poultry, one to a vegetable garden, and one to peach trees. The living expenses in summer are virtually paid by the vegetables consumed and sold, so that out of the profits from the poultry only the winter household expenses must be drawn. When the peach crop comes in there is a sufficient profit to pay the heavy bills, like taxes, insurance, repairs, etc. This farm is not only making a good living for spies—one with an American passport that belonged to some one else—had not been able to give the German gunners any information that helped them get the range. So they were dropping shells over the whole area, where they believed the batteries to be, in the hope of silencing an occasional gun.

Between Oost-Dunkerke and Nieuport there are a few patches of wood, offering cover. The hidden French guns were thicker here. The Germans, knowing this, were giving it the most severe shelling. In every shelled area in which I had been before it was possible to pick a comparatively safe course by watching the exploding shells and seeing whether they were breaking any nearer. Here they were dropped here and there, as if by the caprice of the gunners, and you were about as unsafe in one place as another. When I expressed my apprehensions Pierre replied, "Never mind, we shall soon be in too close for shell-fire."

At a turn in the muddy road we came upon a one-roomed Flemish farmhouse which was serving as a field hospital. All about it in a widening circle were the graves of the men who had died there, each grave marked with a wooden cross bearing the soldier's name.

"We get very few wounded here," a young surgeon told me. "The men from the trenches are usually carried past. We have mostly gunners, and they are so well protected in their underground shelters that they get hurt only when a shell breaks through their shelter. If it breaks ten feet to one side, they are untouched. If it breaks right on them they are torn all to pieces. The four men with this gunner," said the surgeon, pointing to a huddled mass, "**were all killed outright.**"

Our road into Nieuport ran parallel with the railroad and the canal. Here was the second line of trenches, and, as soon as we reached it, we could see Lombaertzyde, scarcely a mile away in a direct line. Though I looked carefully I could not see a sign of life. For that matter the trenches, past which we were driving, might have been empty, except for one soldier who showed his head. I offered him some little French cigars out of a fairly large box, and, within ten seconds, heads, then bodies and legs, began to appear from the whole line. All were wearing sabots, into which many had stuffed straw for warmth. All were plastered with mud.

Gouged with Machine-gun Fire.

Nieuport itself, ripped and gouged with machine-gun fire, where it had not been crumpled by bursting shells, did not even offer us a passable street. Finally we rumbled across the bridge over the canal-locks, the turning of which had flooded all the territory between the Yser Canal and the Yser River, and, twisting among the holes in the pavement, drove at a nangle to the northeast on the elevated road to Lombaertzyde. The open fields on both sides were flooded, and the only building of importance between the two towns was a pretentious house which had been blown into a grotesque shape. Its grotesqueness was in keeping with its surroundings. The country lay dead, with no one in sight. Even the trenches we had just passed were hidden behind the railroad tracks. Over on the edge of the sand dunes to the left, we knew there must be thousands of French soldiers "dug in" against the rain and protected from attack by barbed wire entanglements concealed in the rolling dunes, and behind the low-lying road to the right, a half-mile across the flooded fields, was the first line of German trenches. But all we could see was the highway to St. Georges.

Just before we reached Lombaertzyde we passed the forward French trenches, shallower and less protected than the others. Over toward the sand dunes we could see they were occupied by crouching, alert figures, but the trenches under the shelter of the town itself were empty. The companies that had occupied them the night before were in the town around fires in the houses. As they heard the crunch of the cart wheels and the pounding of the horse's hoofs they came to the doors and windows. They were the most unkempt-looking soldiers I have ever seen. Their beards were straggly and uncombed, and they were covered with a muddy paste. Their knees and elbows were crusted deep with it, and it was even in their hair and on their caps. But that had not kept them from entering Lombaertzyde and beginning one of the first consistent aggressive movements of the Allies.

They were so astonished to see us there, as they told us afterward, they did not attempt to warn us from driving on. We were well into the town and about to make a turn into the street when a French soldier began frantically waving us back. But the hard-mouthed horse went another twenty feet before he stopped, and by this time we were partly around the corner. There was no one in sight in the stretch to the next turn, but I could see a ragged hole in the blank wall of a projecting building on the near side of the street, which gave me a sickly feeling. Through it the muzzle of a machine-gun was pointed. Though there was not a gray uniform or helmet in sight, I gathered the Germans were still holding the other end of the street. The gunners could evidently see only me, but if we had gone forward another two feet, Pierre would have been in sight, and the machine-gun would have opened fire. His Belgian uniform would have drawn fire where my civilian clothes did not.

Directly behind us, as I noticed as soon as we had backed and

Clawed Our Way Out

of that line of fire, the buildings were gouged so deep by the bullets from the machine-gun that the walls were, at points, almost cut away. All night, the French soldiers told us, the German gunners had kept the muzzle swinging in a narrow arc, making the street impassable. It had not taken any French lives, but had prevented a rush. The town had to be captured house by house. Each house in line was rushed by a squad from behind. This, too, had to be done in the dark to prevent the invaders from being seen. As soon as they forced their way through the improvised barricades at windows and doors, they threw a light in each room with a hand searchlight, and killed every one they encountered. Unless a man had his hands in the air there was no time to learn what his intentions might be. They had worked their way to a house less than fifty feet from the machine-gun, and on the street behind held the house in the rear of it. They were waiting for night to make the final dash and clear out that end of the town.

We were standing on the narrow sidewalk talking and Pierre had walked nearly to the turn in the street. Suddenly he waved to us eagerly, his face alight with pleased excitement. "Come here," he said, "I hear some voices in the cellar. W'll either get a drink down there, or some German soldiers."

Without stopping to see if we were followed, he pushed open the door and plunged down a flight of stairs to the left. Before we could get past the door we could hear him shouting menacingly and loud guttural cries in response. He was shouting in Flemish, and the answering cries were in German. At the top of the stairs he had encountered three German soldiers coming up, and now, with his carbine covering the three, he was bullying them into throwing down their arms by bawling into their faces.

The Germans evidently knew they were trapped and preferred to surrender. But the Cossack was enjoying himself making threats. As far as I could make out, he was promising to shoot them out of hand, and I was afraid he meant it. Finally he agreed he would let them go if they had any children. The first two cried loudly they had three apiece. The third said he had two, and produced a photograph to prove it. So Pierre agreed to let them live for the sake of their children.

We found one street by which we could get to the centre of Nieuport, and there encountered some of the mechanics attached to the English naval flying corps. They invited me into a tower, where, they said, we could see the effect of the cannon-fire.

Stumbling up a circular staircase in a tower which, I fancy, had been nearly dark inside, before the German shells let in daylight, we came out on a parapet from which we could

See the German Trenches

behind St. Georges, though we could see no men. We also had a panoramic view of the inundated country. We were on the western boundary which ran in a straight line south from the sea. The railroad line stopped it there. Eastward it bellied out with the curve of the Yser, filling the river itself bank full and spilling it over the fields on both sides. The scattered farm houses, built doubtless on the highest ground available, were in some cases out of water, but they had been torn by shells and had been used only as advance posts for many weeks. As far as I could see to the south there was water, with occasional parties of soldiers picking their way along the raised paths. Across the flooded fields a few miles to the south ran the splendid highway which the "old king," Leopold, had built to give automobiles, his own among the number, a smooth course on the way from Paris to Ostend.

We had not been there five minutes and the men of the flying corps were explaining how the French batteries, scattered over that wide area, could concentrate their fire at particular points behind the enemy's line under the directions of a man on this tower, when we all dodged involuntarily to the sharp whizz of a shell. It stung at my ear like the passing of a thousand bullets at once, and, before I had really had time to duck, broke overhead two hundred feet beyond. The rain of shrapnel on the broken roofs below was drowned by the explosion.

"Come quick," cried one of the Englishmen, diving down the stairs. "They've seen us. They've got the range of this tower and they'll have us, too, in a minute."

I think I slid down most of the way and I was not sorry when Pierre, who was waiting below, said it was getting late and time we made off for the coal. Before we had wound our way out through the debris of the town it began to rain with a fresh violence. We passed a continuous string of covered trenches beside the road and another set along the railroad embankment. The road was six inches deep in soft slush, seeping off into the trenches. Behind were ditches full of water and back of them the sodden fields pitted with shell holes, full also to the brim with water. It was as dreary and depressing a sight as an enemy could ask, and the soldiers gathered together in shelters were dreary, too, if not depressed. These were Belgian trenches here, and it takes a good deal to keep a small group of Belgians glum.

We came shortly to the farm, where Pierre found the coal as he expected. A small body of infantrymen with a mitrailleuse were resting their dogs there before slipping forward under cover of the approaching night to another deserted farm house. They were muddy and wet and their faces showed the strain of hardship. One gave me his military coat to lift and it weighed, I judged, thirty pounds. He had not been able to get it dried out for days. I commiserated with them on the weariness of their task.

"It is weary, indeed," one of them replied, sadly. "Here we have flooded this country and we cannot get across it ourselves now. We hoped to have the King back in Brussels by Christmas."

Pierre helped himself to a full load of coal, and then we went on. It was almost four o'clock and nearly dark.

At a temporary bridge across the Yser Canal near Ramscappelle, we had to back out of the way to make room for two automobiles. This Pierre did grumbling, and the horse stubbornly. The first automobile had already passed when one of the officers in the tonneau caught sight of me, and stopping it, jumped out. Pierre recognizing a general, gave a short account of how he got the coal, but the general was interested in me. He was willing enough to accept Pierre's explanation of his being responsible for me.

The second automobile came up behind and stopped a moment to give the general time to return to his seat. Two men were sitting in the tonneau, both silent. The nearest I recognized even in the poor light. It was the King, whom I had not seen before on this visit to the Belgian army. But no one could have recognized him from his photograph. He was no longer the spruce young man who walked briskly down the aisle in the Belgian parliament that day last August and threw his gauntets on the desk before him as he declared his defiance to the invading German army. His hair had grown long and hung over his collar. His blond moustache, too, was long and bushy. His face had set into severe lines.

As he passed on, Pierre and I crossed the makeshift bridge and turned west on the broad highway, the beautiful road the "old king" built so his automobile could go faster from Ostend to Paris.

The Lady of Lancaster;

Or, Leonora West's Love.

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued).

"No; her mother was an American, you know. They—the Americans—all claim to be nobly born, I believe. They recognise 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 e'en have to. I shall please myself if I can—mark that, lad. So you needn't scold any more, old fellow, for I am in dead earnest to make Leonora Mrs. H. De Vere," laughed the young soldier.

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

"I never knew 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 a title in prospective," Lancaster replied, with conviction.

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

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

"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 at all understand her. Yet if she is poor, as of course she must be, and being lowly born, as we know, she could not do better than take you, if she is worldly wise."

"You talk about my worldly advantages very cynically, Lancaster. Do you not think that I might be loved for myself?" inquired De Vere, pulling at his dark moustache vexedly, and wondering if he (Lancaster) believed himself to be the only handsome man in the world.

"Why, yes, of course. You're not bad looking. You have the smallest foot in the regiment, they say, and the whitest hand, and your moustache is superb," Lancaster replied, laughing, for from his superb size and manly beauty he rather despised small dandies; and De Vere, feeling snubbed, he scarcely knew why, retired within himself after the dignified reply:

"I humbly thank you, Captain Lancaster; but I was not fishing for such weak compliments."

CHAPTER XIII.

Miss West accepted the steamer-chair, the rugs, the wraps, and the books with unfeigned pleasure, and buried herself in the volumes with a pertinacity that was very discouraging to her ardent wooer. She wearied of the blue sky and the blue ocean, the everlasting roll of the ship, the faces of her fellow-voyagers, of everything, as she averred, but the books. They had a fair and prosperous journey, and every sunny day Leonora might be seen on deck, but whether walking or sitting, she always had a book in her hand, in whose pages she persistently buried herself at the approach of any one with whom she was disinclined to talk. In this discouraging state of things De Vere's wooing sped but slowly, and Lancaster's acquaintanceship progressed no further than a ceremonious "Good-morning," "Good-evening," "Can I be of any service to you?" and similar stilted salutations, to all of which Leonora replied with a quietness and constraint that put a check on further conversation. No one could complain that she gave any trouble; she was quiet, courteous, and gentle, and there were two pairs of eyes that followed the demure, black-robed figure everywhere upon the deck, and the owners of the eyes wished, perhaps, that she would call on them for more attention, more services, so oblivious did she seem of the fact that they waited assiduously upon her lightest command.

"She is not a little flirt, as I thought at first, seeing her with De Vere," the captain said to himself. "She is a clever little girl who is better pleased with the thoughts of clever writers than the society of two great, trifling fellows such as De Vere and myself. I applaud her taste."

All the same, he would have been pleased if the pretty face had lighted sometimes at his coming, if she had seemed to care for talking to him, if she had even asked him any questions about where she was going. But she did not manifest any curiosity on the subject. She was a constrained, chilly little companion always to him. It chagrined him to see that she was more at her ease with De Vere than with him. Once or twice she unbent from her lofty height with the lieutenant, smiled, chatted, even sung to him by moonlight, one night, in a voice as sweet as her face. But she was very shy, very quiet with the man whose business it was to convey her to England. She tried faithfully to be as little of "a bore and nuisance" as possible.

It did not matter; indeed, it was much better so, he told himself, and yet he chafed sometimes under her peculiar manner. He did not like to be treated wholly with indifference, did not like to be entirely ignored, as if she had forgotten him completely.

So one day when De Vere lolled in his state-room, he went and stood behind her chair where she sat reading. It was one of the poets of his own land whose book she held in her hand, and the fact emboldened him to say:

"You like English authors, Miss West. Do you think you shall like England?"

She lifted the blue-gray eyes calmly to his face.

"No," she replied, concisely.

He flushed a little. It was his own native land. He did not like to hear her say she should not like it.

"That is a pity, since you are going to make your home there," he said.

"I am not at all sure of that," she answered, putting her white forefinger between the pages of her book, and turning squarely round to look at him as he talked. "Perhaps if I can not bring myself to like England, I may persuade my aunt to come to America with me."

"Lady Lancaster would die of chagrin if you did," he replied, hastily.

He saw a blush color the smooth cheek, and wished that he had thought before he spoke.

"She is poor and proud. She does not like to be reminded that her aunt is a servant at Lancaster Park," he said, pityingly, to himself.

And he recalled De Vere's intentions with a sensation of generous pleasure. Leonora, with her fair face and her cultured mind, would be lifted by her marriage into the sphere where she rightly belonged. Then she would like England better.

"I have been reading your poet laureate," she said. "I was much struck by these lines:

'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.'

I should not have thought an English poet would write that," she went on. "I thought England was too entirely governed by the laws of caste for one of her people to give free utterance to such a dangerous sentiment."

"You must not judge us too hardly," he said, hastily.

Ignoring his feeble protest, she continued: "My papa was English, but he was not of what you call gentle birth, Captain Lancaster. He was the son of a most unlucky tradesman who died and left him nothing but his blessing. So papa ran away to America at barely twenty-one. He went to California to seek his fortune, and he had some good luck and some bad. When he had been there a year he found a nugget that was quite a fortune to him. So he married then, and when I was born my pretty young mamma died. After that he lived only for me. We had many ups and downs—all miners have—sometimes we were quite rich, sometimes very poor. But I have been what you call well educated. I know Latin and French and German, and I have studied music. In America, I can move in quite good society but in your country—" she paused and fixed her clear, grave eyes on his face.

"Well?" he said.

"In England," she said, "I shall, doubtless, be relegated to the same position in society as my aunt, the housekeeper at Lancaster Park. Is it not so?"

He was obliged to confess that it was true.

"Then is it likely I shall love England?" she said. "No; I am quite too American for that. Oh, I dare say you are disgusted at me, Captain Lancaster. You are proud of your descent from a long line of proud ancestry." She looked down at her book and read on, aloud:

"'I know you're proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I
came.'"

He knew the verse by heart. Some impulse stronger than his will or reason prompted him to repeat the last two lines, meaningly, gazing straight into the sparkling, dark-gray eyes with his proud, blue ones:

"'A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats of arms.'"

The gray eyes, brave as they were, could not bear the meaning gaze of the blue ones. They wavered and fell. The long lashes drooped against the cheeks that flushed rosy red. She shut up the book with an impatient sigh, and said, with an effort at self-possession:

"You shall see that I will bring my aunt home to America with me, Captain Lancaster."

"Perhaps so; and yet I think she loves England—as much, I dare say, as you do America."

"I hope not, for what should we do in that case? I have only her, she has only me, and why should we live apart?"

"Do you mean to tell me that you have left behind you no relatives?" he said.

"I told you I had no one but Aunt West," she said, almost curtly.

"And she can scarcely be called your relative. I believe she was only your father's sister-in-law," he said.

"That is true," she replied.

"Then why go to her at all, since the kinship is but in name, and you would be happier in America?" he asked, with something of curiosity.

"Papa wished it," she replied, simply.

Then there was a brief silence. Leonora's lashes drooped, with the dew of unshed tears on them. The young face 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 just 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 gray-blue eyes.

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

"Oh, impossible!" he cried. "You had retired. We were alone."

The fair cheek flushed warmly.

"I shall have to confess," she said. "But you must not judge me too hardly, Captain Lancaster."

He looked at her expectantly.

"I will tell you the truth," she said. "I went early to my state-room, because I was tired of Lieutenant De Vere. I wanted to be alone. But it was so warm and close in my room, I could not breathe freely. 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 time 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 unexceptional 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.

"Tell 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 stitch in time is worth two needles in a haystack.

At an evening party a very elderly lady was dancing with a young partner. A stranger approached Douglas Jerrold, who was looking on, and said: "Pray, sir, can you tell me who is the young gentleman dancing with that elderly lady?" "One of the Humane Society, I should think," replied Jerrold.

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HOME

A little salt dissolved in water is recommended for eyelids reddened in the wind.

When cooking a custard stir slowly and regularly. This is the only way to prevent curdling.

The celery and cheese sandwiches are delicious. A little mayonnaise is mixed in with the cheese, which is finely grated, the celery being put through the mincing machine.

To clean brass that has been exposed to the weather, make a paste of salt and common vinegar; rub the brass with the mixture and leave for ten minutes. Then clean in the usual way.

Prevent a steamed pudding from becoming heavy by putting a cloth over the steamer before placing the lid on. This prevents the moisture from settling and making a pudding heavy.

'When there's company for dinner a man stands at the back of his chair and waits until all the guests are seated; when they're alone he dives into his chair and says: 'Come along with the food.'"

When a brown stew or curry is too greasy, mix a teaspoonful of flour into a smooth paste with a little water, pour it into the stew and let it boil up again, when all fat will have disappeared.

Pin This Up.

One teaspoonful of salt to one quart soup.

One teaspoonful salt to two quarts of flour.

One teaspoonful of soda to one pint of sour milk.

One teaspoonful of extract to one plain loaf cake.

One scant cup of liquid to two full cups of flour for bread.

One scant cupful of liquid to two cups of flour for muffins.

One scant cup of liquid to one cup of flour for batters.

One quart of water to each pound of meat and bone for soup stock.

One-half cup of yeast or one-quarter cake compressed yeast to one pint liquid.

Four peppercorns, four cloves, one teaspoonful of mixed herbs for each quart of water for soup stock.

When darking table linen tack a piece of stiff paper under the rent and make a number of fine stitches backwards and forwards carrying them a good inch over the edges. Then tear the paper away.

Sew snap fasteners on each pair of stockings at the top and have the wearers snap them together when taking them off. They can be laundered this way and save all the bother of trying to match the stockings.

Jewelry can be successfully cleaned by washing it in hot soapsuds in which a little ammonia has been dissolved. Shake off the water and lay the jewelry in a small box of fine sawdust to dry. This method leaves no scratches or marks of any kind.

Still Has It.

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"That's nothing. I know a chap who still has the first dollar he ever borrowed."

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