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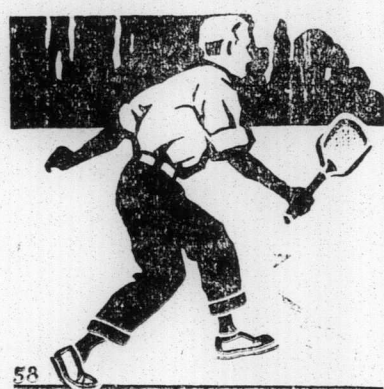
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HESTER, AND A LEGACY

Then came tea, during which she did her best to talk and eat and laugh and forget the load of trouble that was lying heavily at her feet. But notwithstanding her best efforts, her face betrayed her, and both mother and sister noticed a change since they had seen her last. It was Nancy who announced the fact in words.

"You have grown thinner, Hester," she remarked, "and diffident altogether. Perhaps it is partly the way you do your hair now, though I like it better on the whole. She has improved, hasn't she, mother? And yet she doesn't look well."

"That is not to be wondered at considering all the trouble she has been going through lately," said Mrs. Phillips, who was also anxiously eyeing her daughter a little anxiously. "Poor Lady Lynmouth's death must have upset you terribly, my dear. But what a relief it must have been when doctors discovered that it was quite natural after all! Your first letter made us very anxious."

Hester felt her face turn paler as certain memories pressed upon her, but she jumped up from the tea-table and, sitting down on the hearth-rug—the old threadbare hearth-rug—she remembered ever since her babyhood—with her elbow on Nancy's sofa, she told the tale of Lady Lynmouth's extraordinary will, which up to the present she had for motives not divulged. Her audience listened to it breathlessly, and Nancy's love of romance was more than satisfied.

"Oh, Hester," she exclaimed, gazing at her sister with admiring eyes, "how delightful! Just like a book! Wasn't it exciting? What did you do?"

"I spurned it as they do on the stage," replied Hester, entering into the spirit of the situation. "I placed myself in a heroic attitude and threw out my arms exclaiming, 'Never, never, will I touch one penny of it!'"

"Did you really?" cried Nancy, with still greater admiration. "How delightful! And what did Lord Lynmouth say?"

"Poor Lord Lynmouth! Wasn't he very pleased with you?"

"Not particularly, I think," replied Hester. "But her voice changed indescribably, and a tell-tale blush rose to her face. She hastily screened it with her hand, and Nancy, unsuspecting, continued—

"Wasn't he? That was horrid of him! If it had been in a book, I would have fallen in love with you and married you. I wish he would. It would be so lovely to go and live in that nice place and be able to drive every day in the park. You don't know how I long for a sight of the country."

"Do you, dear?" Hester took her sister's thin hand and stroked it carefully. "Well, wait a little while till I get a new post, and then we will see if it can't be managed."

"What was Lord Lynmouth like?" asked Nancy, evidently harping on her new idea. "Couldn't you possibly like him well enough to marry him, Hester?"

Again that burning blush rose to Hester's face, and she poked the fire indignantly. If she was going to turn beetroot-colour like this every time Lord Lynmouth was mentioned, she might as well give up her secret at once. But she said steadily enough—

"A man in Lord Lynmouth's position does not marry his mother's companion, my dear Nancy."

"They do in books," rejoined Nancy, with decision.

"But I am not in a book," said Hester, with equal decision.

"Well," observed the younger sister after a pause, during which she had lain quietly thinking the matter over, "I don't despair of its coming to that in the end. It would be such a good way out of the difficulty. He may walk in upon us any minute. Dear me, how frightened I should be! And how Sally would snort while bringing him up the stairs! She always snorts when she is nervous. Hester, laughing involuntarily through the picture drawn was not reassuring. "I can imagine nothing more improbable than Lord Lynmouth's coming to see me here."

"Wait a little while and see," said Nancy, nodding her head impressively.

"I felt sure he likes you better than all the great ladies he meets—nasty, stuck-up creatures, thinking only of their fine clothes. I dare say! You are dear old-fashioned Hester, you are bracing her again. Of course he loves you—that is to say, if he is nice at all!"

"Mother," said Hester, emerging from the embrace with a third flush on her face, but a smile in her eyes, "you must regulate Nancy's reading, or her imagination will be making a member of the Royal Family fall in love with me next!"

"I think my first duty will be to send you to bed, my dear," said Mrs. Phillips, stroking the tumbled head close at her knee. "You have been going through many strange experiences lately and you look to me as if you were tired out in body and mind."

Her daughter rose obediently. She was indeed tired, dead tired, and would be thankful to be in bed. There was a pain at her heart that no amount of lively talking could deaden or drive away.

While Hester was undressing in the draughty, shabby little bedroom, by the light of one candle her mother came in to wish her good night over again in the way that mothers have. Hester sat down on her lap, as she had done when a child, and put her arms round her neck.

"You are a haven of rest to me mother darling!" she whispered. "I feel as if I had been tossed on a stormy sea for months and months, and I'm so tired of it all!"

Mrs. Phillips raised the hidden face with infinitely gentleness and looked deeply into Hester's eyes.

"I have an idea," she said presently, "that you have come back to us changed, my dear. You are not the bright, happy, whole-hearted girl you were when you spent your holiday with us two years ago."

"Why do you think that?" asked Hester in a low voice.

"From a look in your eyes, dear. You are not quite happy, I think."

"Happy?" echoed Hester. "Oh, mother, I am wretched and with a little cry she hid her face on her mother's shoulder and broke into wild sobbing for the second time that day.

Mrs. Phillips caressed her tenderly and waited till she was calmer; then she drew her up as to who it was that had come into her daughter's life and wrecked its happiness. Her face grew very grave when she discovered that it was Lord Lynmouth, although Hester never mentioned the suspicion he had allowed himself to form against her "in a moment of miserable doubt." That had wounded her too deeply for her to be able to speak about it.

"I cannot tell you how relieved I am that you have left the place for ever," said her mother at the end of the tale; "for it could never have come to any good. He probably meant nothing but a passing flirtation; he was merely amusing himself as men of high position sometimes do with girls they have no intention whatever of marrying."

"But he asked me to marry him?" sobbed Hester.

"I cannot help thinking you must have misunderstood him, dear; I have no doubt from what you tell me that he is a thoroughly bad, unprincipled man, and I am more thankful than I can say that you will never see him again."

"You wouldn't say that if you knew him," said Hester, raising her face.

Mrs. Phillips kissed her tenderly and rose to go.

"I have no wish to know him, my dear," she said calmly. "The sooner we both forget all about him the better. When your time comes for marriage I hope it will be a man in your own station of life who will love you honorably and teach you to respect yourself. I can never see how a man like him could have been telling me about."

So much for her mother's view of the matter! But Hester's was naturally quite different, and after the candle was out and she lay in the dark, thinking over all the strange events that had been crowded into the last few days she soaked her pillow with hopeless, miserable tears, because that she felt lost, and that in many ways it had been a waste of time, with her for ever.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Nancy's constant expectation of hearing Lord Lynmouth ushered up the stairs by the snoring Sally was not fulfilled, and it was of little interest to her in comparison that Hester received a letter from him two days later after she reached home.

This letter begged her to reconsider her decision with respect to his mother, who was waiting for him in the impossible for him to accept a deed of gift from her as she had, through Mr Broadbent, suggested, and added that he refused absolutely to take possession of property which was hers by law.

To this Hester replied, by letter, of course, that she felt she had no right to the property, that the will had been made in the full knowledge of Lady Lynmouth had lived a week or two longer she would most certainly have annulled it, and that in any case she, Hester, had no desire to take up a position for which neither she felt fit, nor training had fitted her.

She consulted her mother before writing this letter, and Mrs. Phillips, who was a thoroughly, unworldly-minded woman and as scrupulously conscientious in her views of right and wrong as Hester herself, fully approved of the line she had taken. Although money was badly needed by both herself and her daughters, she felt that honesty so acquired would never bring good in its train, and she preferred their present life of honest poverty to such ill-gotten wealth. She had, besides, a dread of Lord Lynmouth's fascination over Hester, believing that he was not sincere in his protestations of honorable love and advocated any line of action that was most likely to cut the connection for good.

No sooner had this letter been posted than Hester received another from the lawyers, laying the case before her finally, urging her strongly to come to some agreement with Lord Lynmouth, and informing her, that unless one or the other gave way or they agreed to share the property it must, if only to save the lawyers from responsibility, be thrown into Chancery.

Hester had heard enough of the Courts of Chancery to believe that this would mean the loss of everything in legal proceedings and consequently the absolute and final ruin of Lord Lynmouth. This supposition caused her to hesitate and reflect again. She loved him deeply in spite of everything, and she could not endure the thought of causing his ruin.

What was he to do if everything was taken from him? Fitted for no profession, brought up to believe himself secure to a certain position of case, if not wealthy, and then cast upon his own resources, ruined and beggared! She knew enough of him to feel sure that his pride would never allow him to take possession of the property that was legally hers; therefore if compromise there was to be it must come from her. For two days she thought over the matter, and ultimately she wrote to say that if Lord Lynmouth would take over the rest of the property she would agree to accept two hundred pounds a year out of it, to be settled—one hundred pounds each—on her mother and sister. This was a compromise, and further would she go.

While she waited for an answer she

went through had a dozen different feelings with regard to it in as many hours. At one moment it seemed to her that the two hundred pounds a year would be a real blessing—meaning the cottage in the country, fresh air for Nancy, and comparative freedom from worry for her mother; at others she felt it would gall her pride terribly to be forced to accept money that she must in his heart of hearts regard as his own, even though he refused to claim it. And all three of the little home circle awaited the postman's knock with keenest anxiety and impatience.

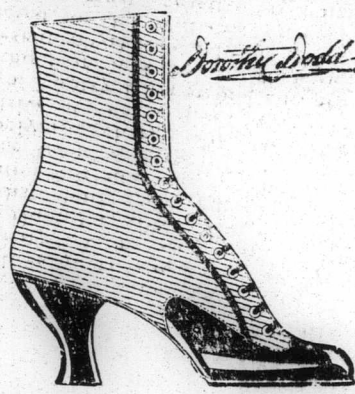
(To be Continued)

AN OPEN LETTER

From a well Known Methodist Clergyman of Interest to All Who are Sick.

One of the best known ministers in the Hamilton conference is the Rev. Chas. E. Stafford of Elora, Ont., who freely admits that he owes his present good health to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mr. Stafford writes as follows: "Some years ago I was severely afflicted for a period of nearly four months. The leading physician in the town in which I was then stationed diagnosed my case as one of complete nervous prostration, brought on by intercostal neuralgia and muscular rheumatism, from which I suffered the most excruciating pain night and day for weeks. So weak and helpless did I become that my attendants had to handle me like an infant, raising me up and laying me down with the greatest care, so intense were my sufferings. Acting on the advice of my doctor, and taking his medicine, I did not seem to improve. One afternoon while suffering great pain, the editor of the paper published in the town, and who was a member of the church of which I was then pastor, urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I was sceptical as to the medicinal qualities of all proprietary medicines, but on the strong recommendation of the editor, who had great faith in the medicine, I decided to try them. To my great surprise and delight, I soon found that the pills were giving me relief, and after I had taken seven boxes I was fully restored to health. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, under God, having made me a new man. Ever since I have been better and stronger physically than I had been for a number of years.

Three years ago after an active ministry of forty-six years, I asked the Hamilton conference of the Methodist church to grant me superannuation relation, which it did, but for more than two years I have been supplying a charge which necessitates a drive of twenty miles every Sabbath. To-day I am strong and hearty, without an ache or pain, and for my present physical condition I am indebted to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and can most heartily recommend them to the afflicted."



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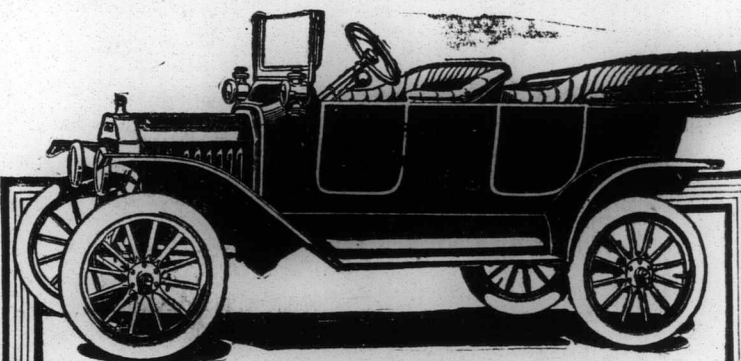
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ARMENIAN

RATHER

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By Special Wire to the Courier
London, Sept. 25.—"The gradually but effectively the Armenian people the Dedeagatch correspondents. The modus to send from each Armenian day by day as many persons can carry. When they arrive or some adjacent station turned out and an escort over the Taurus Mountains. "Once on the other side supplied with enough food days and told to continue to the neighborhood of they will now be in peril. But in point of fact, the nothing but a desert, and by hours marauding bands of Bedouins rob and pillage less men, women and children that those who are not active of hunger or thirst. No reaches the intended destination should any one try to escape other direction, Turkish have orders to shoot them. THROW BABIES INTO "The consequence is that tracted mothers throw their into the Euphrates, rather than suffer. Some even sell what they will bring before on their journey. "A widely known American

(Continued on page

NAVAL CHANGES

Berlin Annou New Chief of Staff and the Program.

By Special Wire to the Courier.
Berlin, via courier to the and London, Sept. 25.—Admiral Holtzendorff, former commander of the German high seas fleet is head of the naval general staff succeeding Admiral von Tirpitz. Rear Admiral Behncke, vice the naval general staff also is it is understood his successor Admiral Von Koch, inspector of the naval general staff, although this appointment is firm.

MADE SOME TIME ago, the changes, which were some time ago, took place in connection with the modification of marine policy signified by Admiral von Bernstorff's death at Washington. The displacement, it is understood, were to the modifications made at that time.

The naval general staff in is supposed to be the all branch of naval administration charge of all operations of the directs its strategic plans positions and issues the orders which all units of the navy—fleet, cruisers, submarines, air craft—operate. In time of war was overshadowed by Admiral Tirpitz and the ministry of owing to the dominant personality of the sea veteran whose name closely associated with the ment of German sea power. The stress of war, or Tirpitz, been able to exercise considerable influence upon the naval policy of the big men of the navy. William gave him command of high seas fleet at the outset of the dreadnought era, and he retained command until just before he began when he was succeeded by Admiral von Ingenohl, who died in Turkey last spring to Admiral Pohl.

NEW SUB POLICY The new chief of the naval the Associated Press correspondent has good reason to believe, committed to the new marine policy in regard to steamers, and is thoroughly ed no more of them will be considered the measures taken adequate to prevent ability of accident or error. Mine commanders have been ed not only not to torpedo steamers without warning passengers and crew an opportunity to escape, unless the liners to fight or run away when also to adopt the safe course there is the slightest doubt the intentions of the ship a torpedo, unless absolutely convinced of a hostile intent.

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