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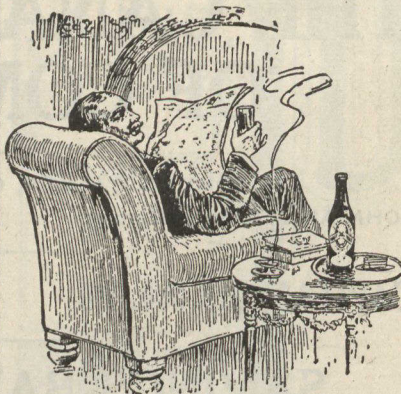
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## Elizabeth Dore and Others

(Concluded from page 6.)

farther back, and I can cook as fine a dish of eggs as anyone—even in Paris, M'amselle," with a glance of triumph at the actress.

"And who are you?" demanded Elizabeth of the Greek.

"Patnik."

"Soldier?"

"No."

"What then?"

"I come to sell things to the soldiers," he said. "I clean boots once in Vancouver. I work in Hastings' mill. Then I pack up for Europe when the trade got bad in Vancouver. I say to myself there will be cigarettes and candies and post-cards wanted by the soldiers. I bought a big pack in London. I carry it on my back. I get within a mile of the lines of the soldiers—and I am arrested. My pack is taken away from me. I am put here. I am a ruined man. I have nothing," and he settled into melancholy.

"Whereabout did you shine shoes in Vancouver?" I asked.

He brightened. "On Granville Street above Pender. I had a shop of my own and three boys. I take in so much as thirty dollars on a Saturday there."

"But the good times in your trade didn't last."

"No."

We talked for half the night. Elizabeth Dore produced a package of cigarettes from her basket and a frayed copy of a London illustrated paper which was passed around the fireside. Lebaude, a bachelor with hairy face and arms, had told his story: how he had been forced to run away from his farm in the valley of the Meuse and had come finally to this deserted farm. With the permission of the local commandant he had remained in the vicinity and was now trying to redeem the farm, living meanwhile with Jabot in one of the straw stacks. There was nothing but the white turnip crop left this year, he said, but there would be other things by spring, for he had succeeded in finding a store of seed in a hiding place in what had once been the farmhouse, now a heap of ruins save where the chimney still stood staunchly against the sky. He was a strange, brooding sort of man.

The old woman in her turn would tell only that she had come from a village nearby where she had lived, married, borne children and seen them married and dead all in the space of sixty-five years.

"Were you there when it happened before?" asked Elizabeth Dore with wide eyes. "Did you see the Germans in 1870?"

"I did," answered the old woman with a grim snarling manner of speech. "And they came then as victors. Twice now I have seen them and this time," she began to chant the words, "by all the signs of fire and water and earth and sky—it is as dead men!"

"Mother!" whispered Jabot suddenly crossing himself, "I know now who you are, Old Woman! I know! You are the old crone of the next village. You are Erlane!"

"And if so?" asked the old woman fixing her young eyes on his and making him quake with fear. "And if you think so?"

"I think——" he stammered.

"You think rightly. But what harm? What is a witch but a wise woman? Or are you afraid of a wise woman?"

"No. No," he hastened to say. "The dog fawned on you. He knows good people and evil. He barks savagely at the evil ones."

\* \* \*

Saturday.

A CHAPLAIN from some headquarters has just been here with two messages. One was for me and the other, the more important one, for Elizabeth Dore. His message for me contains permission to visit certain points and only certain points very much in the rear of the front line of the allied armies. The message for Elizabeth Dore is that she is to accompany him and the old woman—on this side of the war zone women are treated with the utmost precision and punctilious respect—to see that which

she came to see. The chaplain has just told me the story while waiting in the lee of one straw-stack for the old woman to find a bit of a lace shawl which she claims to have brought with her the day we were arrested here. She wants to cover her head.

"You see," the chaplain explained, "Elizabeth Dore is half English and half French, born and brought up in Paris. At ten she is an orphan. At fifteen a milliner's assistant—and a very proper one. At eighteen she tries for the stage and is taken on—for soubrette parts or roles where she has to say nothing. She studies furiously. She is diligent and works very intelligently to become an actress. She has the French passion, Monsieur, for gaining fame—even if it is only for a moment. At all events no one would have her for the parts she wanted to play. She was not even a good soubrette until Chambertin, the owner of a poor music hall, fell in love with her, married her and mortgaged himself to the hilt to produce a little sketch—for her. All promises to go well. There is even a mention of her name and the name of the coming sketch in the Paris papers. She is on the verge of her opportunity—when the war comes. Chambertin is hard hit. He is called for the reserve. His theatre is closed—it was only a shabby little place at best—and he goes to war. He has killed two months ago at —. She has come to see the grave. I take her this morning."

"And she never played in the piece?"

"No."

"The army takes pains to be kind sometimes?" I ventured.

"Sometimes."

"But how does the army know all these things. How has it time?"

"That is how the permit came to be issued. Because the Bureau of Intelligence had occasion to investigate the repeated applications of this young woman to get to the zone of the armies. It was arranged finally."

The mud had dried on her skirt and on the suede slippers. She had restored the rouge and improved her eye-brows with a pencil. She and the witch and the chaplain went off together down the road to see one of the many little new graveyards that cover France on the north and the east sides. Jabot is digging another sleeping hole in the biggest straw stack, in anticipation of more trade. The Greek has trudged on toward the port whence he shall sail for England. Lebaude is breaking ground with a rusty spade. The dog Pegoud is looking for rabbits.

Two soldiers went limping by this morning with shining faces. They say there was a great victory yesterday. We are free to walk on the roads now at least for a little way.

**Described Them.**—Life in the new Army teaches a man to look after himself. This is especially true of the larger camps, and the rule appears to be that "they shall take who have the power and they shall keep who can."

A story illustrative of this is told of one of the Yorkshire regiments now in training. The cold weather had led some of the men to forage for extra blankets one night, and when next morning they were warned that the colonel was coming round for kit inspection they were too busy cleaning and preparing to put matters right again. The result was that when the men paraded some of them had three or four blankets while others had no blankets at all.

The colonel noticed this in his inspection but said no word until he had been wholly round. Then, drawing himself up in front of the men, he thundered:—

"Ahem, major, one half the regiment are simple fools and the other half are bloomin' thieves."

\* \* \*

**Already Armed.**—A professor suggests that women be trained to carry weapons. He must be blind. Have they not all got hatpins?

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