

BEAVERTON ENTERPRISE

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THREE--AND ONLY THREE

Most of us have heard of the superiority of "standard" fire engines as compared to those which are produced by "assembling," or as a by-product of the manufacture of trucks, but we do not know the distinction between these types.

It's simple enough. There are a good many makes of "assembled" apparatus. There are three, and only three, makers of old line "standard" apparatus. These three concerns were in the fire apparatus business long before the advent of the motorized fire engine. They build nothing but fire engines and fire equipment. They maintain extensive research laboratories and testing departments which are constantly occupied in finding out how to make good fire engines better. Every part that goes into the finished product is judged from a single standpoint—whether it is the best part, so far as a fire-fighting unit is concerned, that can be built.

These three concerns do not build to simply meet a "low price." Their constant endeavor is to offer quality, service and dependability. The "assembler," on the other hand, may have no laboratory or technical organization. He can buy truck chassis here, a pump there and other equipment somewhere else, and build down to a "price" in an endeavor to compete with "quality" and balanced engineering.

It is not unusual to see the standard apparatus produced by the three old pioneer makers, in operation after twenty years of service, protecting life and property and maintaining a remarkably high degree of efficiency. Time tests all claims.

PENNSYLVANIA TAKES FARMER OUT OF MUD

In a recent issue of the New Republic, Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania wrote on "Lifting the Farmer out of the Mud."

Not so many years ago, Pennsylvania's road situation was like that of most other states—it had a certain mileage of superhighways costing \$50,000 to \$70,000 a mile, and thousands of miles of unimproved or half-improved roads which became a sequence of mud-holes in bad weather.

Then it adopted a new policy. The state took over 20,000 miles of inferior roads with the purpose of transforming them into dustless, mudless hardsurfaced thoroughfares, good every day in the year. It studied the construction of cheaper roads for lighter traffic and found that where old road-beds had good bases, a satisfactory bituminous surface could be laid for from \$1,500 to \$2,500 a mile. It found that in other cases hardsurfaced roads could be constructed cheaply with bituminous binders.

Whenever possible local materials were utilized in building the road. A type was gradually evolved—not the cheapest type, but that which really combined economy with service and long wear—and as a result first-class rural roads were and are built for less than \$6,000 a mile.

Governor Pinchot describes one of these \$6,000 roads. First a 20-foot roadbed is provided, necessitating cleaning out widening and easing of curves and grades. Drainage follows. Then a road 14 to 16 feet wide is built in the center of the bed. The base course is usually stone and average five inches in thickness. Over this comes an application of three to four inches of finer stone. A bituminous binder is applied. And a typical Pennsylvania rural road has been completed.

Pennsylvania is to be congratulated—and, more important than that, emulated. Every state must, if it is to prepare for the future, take the farmer out of the mud.

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LADY BLANCHE FARM

A Romance of the Commonplace

by Frances Parkinson Keyes

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THE STORY

CHAPTER I.—Motoring through Vermont, near the village of Hamstead, Philip Starr, young Boston architect, makes the acquaintance, in unconventional fashion, of Blanche Manning, girl of seventeen, with whom he is immediately enamored. From her, in conversation, he learns something of her family history, dating from Revolutionary times. Starr is convalescing from a serious illness, and it being a long distance to Burlington, his destination, Blanche suggests, the small village not boasting a hotel, that he become, for the night, a guest of her cousin, Mary Manning.

CHAPTER II.—Mary receives Philip with true Vermont hospitality, and he makes the acquaintance of her two interesting small brothers, Moses and Algy, to whom she is "mother," the mother being dead, and of Mary's cousin Paul, her fiance. Mary, Starr finds, is acquainted with Gale Hamlin, noted Boston architect, in whose office Paul is employed. Recognizing in Mary a friendly spirit, he informs her of his desire to win Blanche for his wife. She is sympathetic, and tells him of the family superstition concerning the "Blanches" of the Manning family.

CHAPTER III.—Violet Manning, mother of Blanche and of Paul, with her sister, Jane, spinster, are dubious concerning Philip's worldly and spiritual standing, but await developments.

CHAPTER IV.—Paul Manning, pampered in his home life, is inclined to be dissipated, not realizing Mary's true worth, and taking their future relationship as husband and wife as a matter of course. There is no formal agreement. Mary's reproaches for his unbecoming conduct are badly received, and the girl begins to have misgivings as to the wisdom of the alliance. Starr's disclosure of the fact that he is the son of a Congregational minister, and of his financial standing, establishes him in the Manning family.

CHAPTER V.—Gale Hamlin, long a suitor for Mary's hand, having known her since her college days in Boston, visits Hamstead but makes no progress in his love-making. Philip's wedding, in the immediate future, is understood.

CHAPTER VI.

Philip Starr would never have dreamed of considering his comfortable income a fortune. But it loomed large in the eyes of Lady Blanche farm, and soon in those of all the country side, for in the general rejoicing at the good luck which had befallen Blanche, it was augmented—consciously or unconsciously—by many persons. Violet herself was largely responsible for this. She went about among her neighbors scattering her good news as she went.

"Of course, Blanche is very young, and it breaks my heart to think of parting with her," she said, sighing and wiping away a few tears. "But I couldn't bring myself to stand in the way of the true happiness of one of my children for selfish reasons. That's never been my way. Of course Blanche is too innocent about worldly things and too much in love to think of the material side at all, but we older ones know that can't be overlooked altogether. Philip can do everything for her. Yes, her ring is lovely, isn't it? You seldom see such pure, white diamonds. And he's given her a pendant, too—a diamond star! Wasn't that a pretty thought, and so clever! Philip is clever, unusually so. He says the name she's going to have, Blanche Starr, is a poem just in itself. No, Philip won't hear of a long engagement, so I'm going to take Blanche to Boston right away, to buy her trousseau, and see caterers and stationers and so on. I guess I can show his fashionable friends that I know how things should be done, even if I do live in the country!—They're going to California on their wedding trip—of course Philip would have taken Blanche to Europe if this trousseau war hadn't been going on. Blanche is going to keep a maid, and have a motor, right from the beginning. Of course, all Philip's friends—and he has thousands of them—will entertain for her and give her a beautiful time. Philip is charming, and that's so rare in a man! He is so thoughtful and pleasant always. I simply adore him myself. . . ."

There was not a single flaw in the crystal. Violet could purr on for hours. In fact Hamstead grew a little tired of so much perfection and so much purring.

Nevertheless, in spite of some expressions of disparagement, Mrs. Elliott and all Hamstead with her, flocked to see the trousseau, and then the presents, and, in early August, to the wedding. During the two months and a half that had elapsed since his first appearance there, Philip had spent every Sunday and holiday at Lady Blanche farm, and, as Mrs. Elliott said, had been so "pleasant-spoken" that he had become cordially liked in the village; and, in turn, he had come to have a very warm and real affection for many of his new friends and relatives. Only twice had his dream of perfect happiness been shaken; and he tried to dismiss both of these episodes from his mind as trivial.

Left alone for a time one rainy morning, he had decided to explore the little, abandoned law office. He had

been thinking what fun it would be to restore it, and put it in order for Blanche and himself to occupy when they came to Hamstead to visit. It contained a cellar and two large, semicircular rooms, one above the other, and a small one with a little attic over it in the rear. He sat in one of the dilapidated chairs, pulled up a shaky table, and drew plans and sketches. Under his swift pencil, the tiny place became transformed. There was the living room, bright with white paint and a landscape paper, and shining brasses, with Lady Blanche's portrait over the mantel, her desk in one corner, her harpsichord in another, and her gate-legged mahogany table in the center of the room; there was the chamber, with her four-posted bed—of her hand-woven linen sheets serving for a counterpane—her bureau with its crystal lusters for Blanche, her low-boy for his own dressing table, her long gilt-framed mirror, and the sampler she had stitched, on the flowered walls instead of pictures.

He spent a long time over his pleasant task. Then, finding that Blanche, who had promised to join him there, was still nowhere in sight, he picked up some of the musty books lying on the table, and began to look through them.

They were mostly law books, with a few interesting marginal notes that the second Moses Manning had made; but Philip knew little or nothing about law, and did not understand them. The third volume that he opened, less bulky than the others, proved to be a county history, written by a local clergyman early in the Nineteenth century. The Connecticut valley had been settled by men of no slight caliber, and their subsequent Revolutionary record was noteworthy. Philip read on with increasing interest, which grew greater still when he reached that portion of the history devoted mainly to the Manning family. Here were Moses Manning's fine war service—the trip to France—and here, too, was the Countess Blanche! The story of the great chests that came over the sea. And, at last, came the date of the twins' birth, and, a few pages farther on, that of Lady Blanche's death. But between these dates was something that Philip had not yet heard.

... And the Lady Blanche, being very weak after her long travail, was sorely spent, for she was a female elegantly formed, but not sturdy, or of sound health. She lay in great pain, and ever and anon she sank into a stupor from which none could rouse her, nor did she regard his exhortation, or the lamentations of her afflicted husband. But suddenly she did speak in a loud voice, saying, "Since I must die, neither shall any other woman in this village who beareth twins survive her cruel labor; and though I perish, there shall be, in every generation, a Blanche Manning on this farm, who shall have not only my name, but in whom my person shall also be seen again. And she shall wed for love, being hotly wooed, even as I was wooed, by a stranger. But because I have suffered, for all my love, in this unfriendly, cold country, and because he who swore to love me best has not saved me from anguish, but hath shown his love to be but selfishness, since he hath failed me when I most did need him—therefore, I say, she shall not love for long. Within five years of her marriage either she or her husband shall die, and die with the bitter knowledge that neither riches nor passion nor high romance, nay, not even all three together, suffice to make that great thing called love unless there be other things, which my lover hath not given me, added unto them. And, in the hour of their death, I will appear unto those who die, and comfort them, for the manner of their passing shall be lonely and grievous altogether."

"And thereat," went on the chronicler, "she lay back upon her bed in peace, and did not speak again. And we marvelled greatly that one so gentle should seek, in her last moments, to lay a curse upon her innocent descendants."

Philip closed the book, shivering, and angry and ashamed because he was shivering. That silly old superstition—what did it amount to! But—had it amounted to anything? He began, involuntarily, to recall the histories of other members of the Manning family. The countess' girl-twin—the second Blanche—had married a Virginian, a classmate of her brother's at Harvard, who was shot, after they had had only a few radiant months together, in a duel with the man who had once been his best friend. The lawyer, Moses, had a daughter named Blanche, who went west in a prairie schooner on her honeymoon, and was never heard of again after she passed the Alleghenies. And the lawyer's eldest son had a daughter who—but that story was too dreadful, and contained shame as well as tragedy. Feeling as if his throat were being clutched, and as if he could not shake himself free of the hand that choked him, Philip sprang to his feet to see an apparition standing in the doorway.

Blanche also had been spending her time that rainy morning by making an excursion into the past. Her mother had felt it a good opportunity for them to go through some of the chests carefully stowed away in the attic in search of treasures to add to her trousseau and they had found a tiny iron-bound trunk, thrust far under the eaves and forgotten, full of the countess' clothes; Blanche had carried them down to her bedroom and tried them on. They fitted her as if they had been made for her.

"Couldn't I keep one of them on, and surprise Philip?"

"I think it would be lovely! And

you can do your hair like hers in the portrait, and wear that white brocade dress that she had it painted in—you'd be the living image of her!"

Accordingly, after a careful study of the famous picture, Blanche did her hair, with Violet's help, high on her head, powdered it, laced herself into the stiff, magnificent gown that had been the countess' wedding dress, and went out to join Philip.

The startled, almost terrified cry that escaped him when he saw her frightened her almost out of her senses. She ran to him, and put her arms around him, trembling, too.

"What is it?" she exclaimed. "Oh, Philip! What's the matter?"

"Nothing—nothing. . . . How lovely you look! . . . Are those some of the first Blanche's clothes?"

"Yes. Don't you think they're pretty?"

"Beautiful, darling. You—you're very like her, aren't you? Like her picture, of course, I mean."

"Yes—but I don't see why you seem so upset, even if I am. I thought it would please you to see me dressed up like this."

Philip forced a laugh. "I'm not upset," he said pleasantly. "You startled me a little, that's all. You're—you're enough to startle any man, you're so lovely. I want a kiss—and I want to consult you about something. . . ."

And then he told her of his scheme for fixing up the little office.

To his surprise, she did not respond to him with enthusiasm. At first she looked a little bored. Then she interrupted him with a petulance which shocked him.

"For Heaven's sake, Philip! Don't you realize that I want to get away from Hamstead and stay away? If we fixed up this place, and put all that money into it, we'd have to keep coming back to it! That's the last thing on earth I want to do! I don't want an old-fashioned house, full of old-fashioned furniture, in an old-fashioned village! I want to live in a big city. I don't want a quiet existence; I want to give parties all the time—except when I am going out to them—little afternoon bridge parties and little evening theater parties—and heaps of dancing. And I simply adore going to the movies and shopping around for lacy nightgowns and getting an ice cream soda in the middle of the morning, and having lunch at a tearoom. That's what I've done the few times I've been to town to visit. Why Philip, I thought you were going to help me to escape from Lady Blanche farm! I thought you wanted me to have a good time and pretty clothes, and heaps of new friends. . . ."

There was something almost grotesque about her, in spite of her loveliness, as she stood before him in her silvery brocade, clamoring for tawdry possessions and trifling pastimes. The sudden dread lest the delicate fabric of his romance might be rent before his eyes, filled Philip with fear. But this fear was engulfed in the terrorized premonition which his research had aroused.

Somehow he steadied himself and managed to speak lightly. "I do want you to have a good time and party clothes and pleasant friends, darling," he said. "And you shall. We won't say anything more about this scheme of mine, since it doesn't appeal to you. It was only a fancy, anyway."

He drew her close to him, drugging himself, for the moment, with the delight of feeling her in his arms. But afterwards he sought out Mary.

Everyone always took stories of trouble to Mary, sure of help and understanding and comfort. The fact that it was ironing day, and that he found her, in the middle of a sultry afternoon, toiling away in a hot kitchen, and not sitting with folded hands in some secluded and restful spot, as comforters are traditionally supposed to be found, made no difference. He could not bring himself to speak of Blanche's outburst, but he did speak of the ominous sense of foreboding which had been awakened by his perusal of Hastings' history and which had persisted ever since. Mary listened to his recital in silence, and without stopping her work. And when Philip had finished, she went to the stove for a hot iron, tested it with her hand, and began to press out Seth's overalls before she answered.

"You don't think we've kept this from you willfully, do you?" she said, at length. "You know I asked you, right off, if there were anything that would make you want Blanche less, and you said no. And I'm sure that the reason she didn't tell you the whole story, that day by the brook, was simply because, as she said, you would think she was 'awfully conceited and fresh' if she inferred that she thought she was beautiful and likely to be loved at first sight by a handsome stranger. She doesn't read much, and she's probably forgotten part of the legend, anyway, even if she ever read it. You—you wouldn't be so cruel as to spoil her lovely happiness by telling her about it now, would you?"

"Good Lord, Mary, you don't think I want to, do you? It would just about kill me to give her up."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I thought you might think—I think myself perhaps I ought to—on her account, you know."

"On her account?" said Mary, stupidly.

"If there is any truth in a thing like that, isn't it my duty to?"

"Why?"

"So—she could do something safer, of course."

Mary folded the overalls carefully. "There isn't anything safer for a girl to do," she said in a low voice, "than to marry the man she loves. If—if he loves her. And if her life is the one that's short, what does that mat-

ter, if it's full and perfect, and—complete?"

"I guess you're right," said Philip huskily. Then, still hesitating—"You don't suppose I think you're right just because I want to, do you?"

"Did you ever think anything was right just for that reason?"

Philip searched his conscience. "I don't believe so," he said at last, smiling at her.

Mary smiled back; and looking at her, but thinking of Blanche, Philip felt that this episode was closed.

The second episode had nothing whatever to do with the past, but a good deal to do with the present. Try as he might—and he certainly did try—Philip could not succeed in liking Paul. What was worse, the more he saw of him, the less he liked him. The dislike, noticed, but carefully hushed up by Violet, seemed to be entirely mutual. And Paul was spending so much of his time, especially since the arrival of the new motor, in the society of Miss Rosalie King, a summer visitor, a worker in a New York department store, that his family was favored less and less by his presence. Philip, who had marveled at the way Mary bore Paul's shortcomings, and not only bore, but forgave them from the beginning, marveled still more at the apparent indifference with which she bore his frank neglect.

But Mary was, as he was eventually to discover, far less indifferent than he had supposed, and knowing a little of the capacity for suffering that many silent and self-contained persons possess, the discovery disturbed him not a little. Next to Blanche, there was no one in the world for whom he cared as much as he already did for Mary, and they were naturally thrown a great deal together. Going into Seth Manning's house one day on an errand, he first encountered Moses.

"Where's Mary?" inquired Philip.

"In her room," said Moses.

"In her room!" Philip echoed. It was so unusual for Mary to be "off duty" even for a few minutes, that the fact was alarming.

"Yes, Lyin' on the bed."

"Is she sick?"

"No, Cryin' Hard," added Moses with emphasis.

"Do you know why?" pursued Philip.

"Paul," said Moses laconically.

Philip turned thoughtfully away. He was sleeping in the room adjoining Paul's on his brief visits at Lady Blanche farm, and he had some idea of the hours his future brother-in-law was keeping. After vacillating for a short time between his reluctance to meddle in other people's affairs and his distress at the thought of Mary's unhappiness, he waited up for Paul that night, and endeavored to have a talk with him.

The attempt was far from successful. Philip tried to put the question fairly and kindly. But Paul was enraged.

"You had better mind your own business," he shouted, so loudly that Philip feared Violet and Blanche might both be aroused. "I don't tell you how to manage things with my sister, do I? You've done just as you d—d pleased about the whole affair, since the day you first struck the farm. And I'll thank you to let mine alone, too. I guess I know what I'm about!"

"I'm afraid you don't. That's just it," said Philip. "And I'm older than you, and have been about a bit more, and—"

"Oh, you're afraid I don't, are you? Well, I should worry," jeered Paul, who was picking up more or less New York slang. "Never hit it up in all our lives! Well, run along to bed, that's the best place for one of your advanced years and experience—you must look out not to keep too late hours, or get your feet wet, or something like that—might be fatal!" Then as Philip hesitated, Paul burst into oaths before which Philip, hitherto unacquainted with certain phrases of rural vocabulary, stood electrified for a moment, and then walked into his own room and closed the door.

And so the second episode, also, came to an abrupt end, and he strove to dismiss both from his mind.

The wedding day, which seemed to the impatient bridegroom so interminably slow in arriving, came at last—warm, clear and cloudless. The little white Congregational church, where all the Mannings had always worshipped, and where the marriage ceremony was performed, was decorated as it never had been before in the hundred and fifty years of its existence. The Wallacetown "orchestra" played at the farm. A wedding supper, more sumptuous than any of which Hamstead had ever partaken, was spread on tables under huge awnings extending over the lawns, and two rooms were filled with presents which any bride might well have been proud to display and possess. Blanche, wearing the countess' pearls, enveloped in a mist of white tulle and soft lace, looked more exquisite and fairy-like than ever. Philip's friends—and they seemed to be legion—were there in full force, nor had Hamstead realized before how many Boston friends Mary had, too. Gale Hamlin was there, with his sister and niece, Mr. Davis, the senior partner of the firm, had come, too, with his wife and sons; and many others. All Hamstead was there, of course, and most of White Water and some of Wallacetown; and all Hamstead included, that summer, pretty, painted Rosalie King, with her cousins, the Westons. . . .

Finally, Blanche and Philip drove off in their own motor, showered with rice and confetti, cheering and waving from their ribbon-bedecked car as they went. The guests remained a little longer to laugh and cry, and "talk it over." Then gradually they went home, motor-horns tooting, aged carry-