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Fred. G. Usilton. - - Wm. B. Usilton, Jr

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A Room For Pictures.

The best background for pictures is plain terra cotta or brown paper. A woman who is the proud possessor of many old prints and engravings has them in her dining-room. The walls are covered with wrapping paper, or something that looks very like it, and above is a frieze of orange distemper. The picture rails and woodwork are white. The hangings are of orange-colored velveteen. All the furniture is mahogany.

Homemade Violet Powder.

The safest and best violet scented toilet powder is that made at home. Crush six parts of ordinary laundry starch by pounding it fine in a cloth and sifting it with two parts of powdered orris root through a sieve several degrees finer than a flour sieve. Perfume the powder by adding a drop each of oil of cloves and of bergamot and two drops of oil of lemon to four ounces of powder. Sift the powder repeatedly, in order to mix the perfumery through it. This is a very simple powder, and one that is perfectly harmless to the skin of an infant. It should be thoroughly washed out of the skin when it is removed, leaving no excess of powder to clog up the pores.

To Sterilize the Family Preserves.

Parlor-kitchen appliances, so dainty and free from soil or disagreeable labor that one may so designate them, are growing apace. Fancy the ease with which the modern mater may do up her preserves by purchasing an iron base, holding an alcohol lamp of sufficient force and heat power to keep two upright block tin cylinders of water boiling. In these one dips a glass jar with whatever fruit we choose for two minutes. That sterilizes the fruit and completes the process. Milk may be treated in like manner for the whole family. The cost of cylinders adds a trifling expense, for one of the simplest, cleanest, quickest contrivances the household has ever had offered to it.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

The Treatment of Burns.

If a person's burns are serious, send for a physician. It is not always possible, however, to secure one immediately, and you should be prepared to take his place rather than let the victim suffer. For the treatment of serious burns, nothing is superior to varnish. It is very soothing and promotes rapid healing by excluding all air from the burn. Apply liberally and bandage lightly. Should a burn need cleansing, use nothing but cold water. Add half a dozen drops of carbolic acid if you have any. If no varnish is handy, use the whites of eggs made into a thin paste with flour, sweet oil, raw (not boiled) linseed oil or glycerine. Never apply a preparation which will produce a smarting sensation, no matter how good it may be for other purposes. In dressing a burn, be sure that the entire surface affected is thoroughly covered. Steam and hot water burns are treated the same as those produced by fire.—Good Housekeeping.

HOUSEHOLD RECIPES

Dried Beef in Brown Sauce—Pull into small pieces half a box of canned dried beef, make a coffee cupful of white sauce and color it with a teaspoon of kitchen bouquet; add the beef, stir till well heated and serve with border of parsley on edge of platter.

Orange Cookies—Three-fourths of a cup of butter, one cup of sugar, one and one-half heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder, three eggs, well beaten—whites and yolks separately—grated rind of two oranges, one and one-half cups of pastry flour, measured before sifting. Drop on wax paper with a teaspoon. Bake in rather a quick oven.

Corn Meal Mush Bread—Put one pint of milk in a saucepan over the fire; stir in slowly two-thirds of a cupful of white corn meal; stir constantly until it forms a moderately thick mush. Remove, drop in the yolks of four eggs; beat and stir in carefully the whites. Turn into a baking dish, and bake in a quick oven for twenty minutes. One of the most delicious of all corn meal dishes.

Chocolate Charlotte—Cover an ounce of gelatine with cold water and let stand until soft. Mix three ounces grated chocolate with a pint of rich cream; add the gelatine, place over a slow fire, and cook until the whole is thoroughly mixed and smooth; then set away to get cold. Beat the whites of four eggs and the yolks of eight together until very light; stir them gradually into the chocolate mixture, in turn with half a pound of the best granulated sugar. Simmer for a few minutes over the fire, then with a chocolate-mill whip to a froth. Turn into molds lined with sponge cake, and stand on ice.

One horse power, as established among engine makers, is the capacity to raise 32,000 pounds one foot per minute. As this estimate was based upon the capacity of the huge draft horses of London, it is about twice the average power of a horse.

WHEN IDY HAD A BEAU.

The other night down at our house when Idy had a beau,
Me an' Mandy heerd a stompin' at the parlor door, you know,
An' when th' door was opened up I hollered: "Idy Winn,
This is a purty time o' night to come a-trompin' in!"
An' Mandy ketched me by the arm, an' whispered tense an' low;
"Fer heaven's sake, quit hollerin,! Fer Idy's got a beau!"

My face turned red's a comet trailin' through the skies at night,
An' I heerd Idy whisper: "Wait until I git a light!"
An' out she comes an' says: "Pa, that jist shamed me nearly dead;
It's cold as ice in there an' you folks pile right into bed,
So's we kin have this room," she says, an' we picked up to go,
For that's the first time in her life that Idy had a beau!

Well, talk about a flustered girl! The likes I never saw—
She called her father mother and she called her mother paw!
"An' help me straighten up this room, fer gracious sakes!" says she;
An' here I let my brogans drop an' then she scowled at me;
I says: "We're goin' right to bed as fast as we kin go!"
For that's the first time in her life that Idy had a beau!

We got into the bed at last an' heerd him take a seat;
We listened to the pleasant laugh that Idy rippled sweet,
Says I, a kind o' whisperin': "Well, that's a sweeter sound
Than we have been accustomed to with jist ourselves around."
Says Mandy, sort o' sighin' like: "Girls will be girls, you know,
That's jist the way I fetched you in, back thirty years ago!"

—Edward Singer, in Indianapolis Sun.

CRUSHED STRAWBERRIES.

I AM not beautiful—not pretty even. I have a strong suspicion that Emmie, my sister, considers me absolutely plain, and I know for a fact that Jack and Tom, my brothers, regard me as downright ugly. When people want to be good to me, they call me "interesting-looking" and wink at the shape of my nose. My hair is a bright red, and I have a temper to correspond. In short, my personal appearance and character leave much to be desired, and, as Jack says, what Rob could see in me to—but I am coming to that later on.

Emmie is a remarkably handsome girl, and, though she has never told me so, I believe she has always felt intensely sorry for me on account of my want of beauty. She is very sweet and good, and I am sure she would willingly have given me a share of her good looks if that had been possible. However, as it was not possible, Emmie was reluctantly obliged to agree with me that nature intended me for an old maid. I had long ago made up my mind to that; and, money not being particularly plentiful at home, I knew I should be obliged to earn my own living at some time or other. I might not have begun quite as soon as I did, if it hadn't been for mother.

When the problem of Emmie's prospects in life had been satisfactorily settled by her engagement to Charlie Bourchier, mother began to worry about me. I fancy she considered my matrimonial chances dubious, but not desperate. Anyhow, as soon as Emmie was provided for, mother began to make heroic efforts on my behalf. That sort of thing gets on your nerves. At least, it got on mine. My temper, as I said before, is not angelic, and in those days I lost it half a dozen times a day.

At last I informed poor mother, with quite unnecessary violence, that I would perish sooner than marry any one of the nice young men whom she regarded, with wonderful optimism, as suitors in embryo. I added, moreover, that I reveled in the prospect of becoming a bachelor girl; and to prove my point, I launched forthwith upon a course of lessons in shorthand and typewriting, calculated to fit me for that exalted position in life.

That is how, some months later, I came to be traveling twice a day between King's Cross and Chancery lane on the top of a Waterloo omnibus. The family considered that I had demeaned myself by becoming a typewriter, but I gloried in my position of proud independence and didn't particularly dislike the work.

Now, when one has traveled on top of the same omnibus for any length of time, one begins to regard one's fellow passengers as quite old friends. At least, that was my experience. I traveled in their company so often that their faces became perfectly familiar to me, and if, as sometimes happened, I came across one of them elsewhere, my first impulse was to shake them warmly by the hand, until I remembered that they were not the intimate friends I took them for—that we had never even been introduced.

There was one passenger in whom I took an abnormal interest. I make this shameless confession with due humility, and in the hope that I shall not be misunderstood. It is quite possible that he would never have occupied my thoughts to any appreciable extent, if he had not trodden upon my toes—accidentally, of course.

He said, "Oh, I beg your pardon!" and I murmured, "Don't mention it."

I had seen him a good many times before, but it was not until that moment that my interest began to be aroused. I think it must have been his voice, though I am bound to admit that his face was attractive, too. Then I liked the way he lifted his hat when he stammered that apology. In short, I don't mind owning that he inspired me with very friendly feelings. I caught myself wondering how old he was, and I tried to steal a glance at him unobserved—only to find that he was doing exactly the same thing. Of course, it is only natural that a man should feel slightly interested in a girl upon whose toes he has just stepped unawares.

Our acquaintance, thus inauspiciously begun, would possibly have stopped at this point but for an incident, small and insignificant in itself maybe, but fraught with tremendous consequences to myself.

It happened on a glorious day in mid June, in the height of the strawberry season. I had purchased a couple of pounds of the luscious fruit from a barrow man in High Holborn, to be deposited, according to custom, in the bosom of my family.

Mother secretly regarded this habit of mine as slightly vulgar, and Emmie shared her views; but neither ever ventured upon open remonstrance.

On this day the fruit had looked particularly tempting, and, though I was burdened with various other parcels of considerable bulk, I could not refrain from investing the customary sixpence.

With some difficulty I managed to convey myself and parcels up the steps of my usual 'bus, and to sink into the nearest vacant seat—I ought to have said the nearest apparently vacant seat. For if I had not had so many parcels and things to distract my attention I might have noticed that a bag of strawberries—the exact counterpart of the one I was carrying—was reposing upon the seat I was about to occupy. I might have saved myself the humiliation of sitting down upon a perishable article which did not belong to me. But fate willed otherwise. My mind was distraught. My thoughts were bent upon the parcels in my embrace. In fact, I sat down, fairly and squarely, upon those strawberries, and, realizing their presence, became covered with confusion, so much so that it was fully thirty seconds before I dared to look at the owner of the injured fruit seated by my side.

It certainly did not add to my composure to discover that this was none other than my interesting fellow passenger with the attractive voice.

I stammered a confused apology, feeling I had made myself thoroughly ridiculous, but grateful for the fact that the incident had apparently escaped the general notice.

Then, all in a flash, the funny side of my misfortune became revealed to me. I would have given all my wordly goods and chattels to stifle the demon of mirth that took possession of me at that moment. As it was, the effort to hide my merriment nearly killed me. I glanced at my neighbor, hoping I had not been observed—only to discover that he also was shaking with silent laughter. The sight was too much for my self-control. My sense of propriety suddenly deserted me, and I joined quite unrestrainedly in the series of low chuckles to which the owner of the crushed strawberries was giving vent.

"It was frightfully awkward of me." I gasped at last, feeling I had not sufficiently expressed my sense of the enormity of my offense.

"On the contrary," he returned, promptly, "it was entirely my fault. I had no business to put that bag down on a seat which I might have known would be occupied."

"But I ought to have looked where I was going to sit."

"And I ought to have seen you coming. But please don't distress yourself any more about such a trifle."

"Then you must put an end to my distress by taking my strawberries and giving me the crushed ones. It's a fair exchange."

"I can't allow that. I am bound to tell you that, in sitting on those strawberries, you have really done me a good turn that I can never repay."

My curiosity would have demanded an explanation of this mysterious utterance forthwith, but just then the 'bus arrived at its destination.

From that day I felt as if my new acquaintance and I had been intimate friends for years; and it seemed the most natural thing in the world that, at our next meeting, we should resume the conversation of the previous day.

"What did you mean by saying I had done you a good turn in crushing those strawberries?" I asked. "Don't you think me inquisitive," I added hastily, seeing the look of embarrassment on his face. "It would ease my conscience if you told me, that's all."

"Well, then, at the risk of being thought impertinent, I will tell you. Those strawberries gave me an opportunity of making your acquaintance, which I should have otherwise despaired of."

That was an answer I had not expected. The idea that any one, particularly a young man, should go out of his way to wish to make my acquaintance was so novel to me that every other feeling gave way to one of astonishment.

"What on earth did you want to make my acquaintance for?" I exclaimed.

"If I gave a truthful answer to that question," he said, "you would have a right to be very angry with me."

Whereupon I discreetly held my tongue.

"That reminds me," he continued presently. "We have made one another's acquaintance in such an unconventional manner that we haven't even introduced ourselves. My name is Robert Armstrong."

"And mine is Jessie Poell."

"Poell! Surely you're not the Miss Poell—I beg your pardon, but do you know a man called Charlie Bourchier?"

"Charlie Bourchier! Why, of course, I do!" I cried. "I ought to know him, considering he's engaged to——"

I stopped abruptly, catching sight of my companion's face. Never had I seen any one look so utterly crestfallen.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing!" he replied, hurriedly. "It's a curious coincidence. Charlie Bourchier is an old chum of mine. I haven't seen him for years, but he wrote to me not long ago announcing his engagement to a Miss Poell. And now I find that you are the very person. I confess the discovery has taken me by surprise."

"But you didn't let me finish," I interrupted. "I was going to say Charlie Bourchier is engaged to my sister, Emmie."

"Thank the Lord!" ejaculated Mr. Armstrong in a deep voice.

"You seem pleased at Charlie's engagement," I remarked.

"It isn't that!" he cried. "Bourchier might be engaged to fifty girls, and I shouldn't care a rap one way or the other, as long as you weren't one of them."

What could be the meaning of that impetuous speech? Surely not that—I found myself turning scarlet at my own thoughts. They were so preposterous, so far from the truth in all likelihood. I don't know whether I looked more uncomfortable than I felt, or felt more uncomfortable than I looked.

I was glad that my companion relieved me from the necessity of replying to his words by adding hastily:

"I'm very grateful to Bourchier though. Now that we have discovered a friend in common we shall be able to make one another's acquaintance in quite the orthodox fashion—at least, if you don't mind."

"I shall be delighted," I said, and parted from my companion in some confusion as the 'bus pulled up at the bottom of Chancery lane.

Not many days later Robert Armstrong and I came to be introduced on conventional lines, and one day—I don't exactly know how it happened—I found myself engaged to be married. And Emmie wasn't half so astonished as I was myself, for Emmie didn't hear what Bob said to me.

"I shall never understand why you wanted to make my acquaintance," I told him in the early days of our engagement.

"Are you really so morbidly modest as all that, little girl?" he asked. "Don't you know that a man can fall in love at first sight?"

"Not with an ugly girl."

"No, perhaps not. I never said that."

"But you fell in love with me!"

"And you are the most bewitching girl in the world!"

It isn't of the least use arguing with Bob.—Woman's Life.

Skeletons Strike the Hour.

According to the Jewelers' Review the most ingenious and unique production of the horological art is said to be owned by a wealthy Hindu prince. This clock has no dial, a richly-toned gong being suspended in its place. Beneath this gong, on a metal plate, lie a quantity of artificial skulls and bones in a heap, there being enough of these to form twelve complete skeletons.

Precisely at 1 o'clock one skull, together with the number of bones necessary to make one skeleton, flies into position. The skeleton, by some invisible and mechanical force, leaps to its feet, seizes a mallet in its bony hand and strikes the suspended gong a single blow. This being done, the mechanical operations are reversed. The mallet falls back into its former place, the skeleton returns to the heap of skulls and bones, falls prostrate upon them and drops instantly to pieces. Whatever the hour happens to be, a corresponding number of skeletons goes through this remarkable manoeuvre, and at noon or midnight the scene is gruesome in the extreme.

Telephones and Diplomacy.

An interesting subject for speculation is found in the possible effect on the relations of nations, diplomatic as well as commercial, of their unification by the telephone. Long distance lines now connect the capitals of every country of the continent, and while it is not probable that they will be employed to any extent in delicate diplomatic manipulations, the facilities offered for prompt, full and almost informal intercommunication between capitals will certainly make for good understandings by promptly dispelling a good many doubts, uncertainties and misconceptions, which, in formal diplomatic correspondence, are liable to be magnified into "incidents" and to assume even more serious aspects if forced on the attention of a Minister suffering from indigestion or bothered with incipient symptoms of gout. The fact that at last reports Turkey had no telephones may explain why, in everything pertaining to the affairs of that country, diplomatic intrigue and mystery still dominate the course of events and lead, as usual, nowhere.—New York Times.

First Station in America.

A three-story brick structure that now stands at Lexington, Ky., was the first railroad station built in America. The cornerstone was laid seventy years ago. It is still a nice looking, neat, comfortable and fairly commodious building and adequate for its purpose.—Atlanta Constitution.

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