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Woman's Sphere

A BARMECIDE FEAST.

In the Arabian Nights a prince amused himself by giving an imaginary feast to a beggar. You can amuse your party guests by giving them a feast that like the one in the story stimulates the imagination without appeasing the appetite.

Set a table with plates and in the centre place a covered dish that contains slips of paper on which you have written the names of good things to eat.

All the players who can find seats may sit; the others stand behind the chairs. The cover is lifted from the dish and each player draws a slip of paper and tries to guess what article of food the words on his slip represent. He writes his guess on the back, and if right he may draw another slip and so on until he makes a mistake. Then he gives up his seat to the person who stands behind his chair.

Each player keeps all the slips that he has guessed correctly, and the winner is he who has the most when the dish is empty. Of course no one except the host or hostess has a list of the correct answers. Here are a few examples of inscriptions for the slips:

Fish—1, low spirited; 2, high-colored; 3, cash on delivery; 4, warlike weapon.

Roast—1, an essayist; 2, a woman's glory.

Fowl—1, Roman saviors.

Vegetables—1, Hansom and old; 2, shout for blossom; 3, a kettle, an article, and a preposition; 4, a city begins to grow.

Entrees—1, what we did at the School of Philosophy; 2, fear on an after-dinner speech; 3, biscuit soaked in molasses; 4, measures from the pen; 5, woman's chief weapon.

Pies—1, spring's first offering; 2, the burial of a fool; 3, a negro's funeral.

Puddings—1, Jack's prize; 2, 60 in an hour; 3, baseball hitter.

Fruits—1, an interjection and large stoves; 2, two of a kind; 3, things hard to remember.

ANSWERS.

Fish—1, blue; 2, salmon; 3, cod; 4, sword.

Roast—1, Lamb; 2, hare.

Fowl—1, geese.

Vegetables—1, cabbage; 2, cauliflower; 3, potato; 4, Brussels sprouts.

Entrees—1, sausages; 2 quail on toast; 3, sweetbreads; 4, pigs' feet; 5, tongue.

Pies—1, rhubarb; 2, gooseberry; 3, blackberry.

Puddings—1, plum; 2, minute; 3, batter.

Fruits—1, oranges; 2, pears; 3, dates.

WHEN YOU ASK A FAVOR.

If you want to borrow something from a neighbor, or wish to ask a favor of some sort, state the purpose of your errand immediately upon entering the house. Avoid putting it off and putting it off until you are on the point of leaving. To do so will only spoil your visit. All the time the thought uppermost in your mind will be: "Now, I must ask her about that matter right away." The longer you put off broaching the purpose of your call, the longer your call assumes the nature of a friendly little visit and the harder it becomes for you to state your errand. And your neighbor, for her part, is very likely to have the keen edge of the pleasure she felt because you came to see her, dulled by the knowledge that you came only to borrow something or ask a favor of some member of the family. Had your request been stated at first, and you remained to visit, mutual pleasure would have resulted.

The same is true if you use the telephone or write a letter. If you are calling a friend for some particular reason, state that reason as soon as possible after she answers you! Then have a pleasant conversation. Or if you are writing a letter which is not induced by friendliness, state "the reason why" in your first paragraph.

It is, perhaps, a queer little kink of human nature that we do not in the least object to being asked to do a favor if the favor is frankly asked of us, but that we feel resentment if an endeavor is made to veil the request so that it is not at first realized as such.

The call or the letter which until its close has had all the earmarks of being purely friendly and social, seems, of a sudden, hollow, insincere, false, when a selfish purpose is at length revealed. A person who continually puts off her errand until she rises to leave—or until some one becomes impatient for the use of the wire or until she is nearing the end of her sheet of writing paper—soon becomes known for her habit. If she makes a call her neighbor begins to think at once: "Now, what did Mrs. A. come over for, anyway?" She will hardly be credited with having come just to make a call. If she uses the telephone, the person whom she calls will be continually saying to herself: "Now, what will she say next? She must have called up for some purpose: what can it be?"

We all require information at times, desire favors done, may need to borrow occasionally. We like to do things for others; we expect them to be pleased to do things for us. Then why, why try to conceal the purpose of your mission? Out with it! Right from the start! Then both you and "the other party" can enjoy to the full your call, your telephone conversation or your letter.

A UNIQUE BUT SIMPLE STYLE.

4615. This portrays a one-piece straight line model, with a sleeveless overblouse in tunic style. It is a good model for combining two different materials. Velvet and figured crepe, or lace would be a good contrast. Or satin with brocaded silk or chiffon.

The Pattern is cut in 5 Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure. A 38-inch size requires yards of one material 40 inches wide. To make as illustrated requires 2⅝ yards for the tunic and 3⅝ yards for the dress and facings on the tunic. The width of the dress at the foot is 1½ yards.

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Makes the next cigar taste better.

ISSUE No. 44—'24.

PENNY PLAIN

BY O. DOUGLAS

Shopman—"You may have your choice—penny plain or two-pence colored."

Solemn Small Boy—"Penny plain, please. It's better value for the money."

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CHAPTER XV.—(Cont'd.)

One afternoon Lewis Elliott called at The Rigs.

"Sitting alone, Jean? Well, it's nice to find you in. I thought you would be out with your new friends."

"Lord Bidborough has motored Pamela down Tweed to see some people," Jean explained. "They asked me to go with them, but I thought I might perhaps be in the way. Lord Bidborough is frightfully pleased to be able to hire a motor to drive. On Saturday he has promised to take the boys to Dryburgh and to the Eildon Hills. Mhor is very keen to see for himself where King Arthur is buried, and make a search for the horn!"

"I see. It's a pity it isn't a better time of year. December days are short for excursions. . . .Isn't Biddy a delightful fellow?"

"Yes. Jock and Mhor worship him. One word from him is more to them than all the wisdom I'm capable of. It isn't quite fair. After all, I've had them so long, and they've only known him for a day or two. No, I don't think I'm jealous. I'm—I'm hurt!" and to Lewis Elliots great discomfort Jean took out her handkerchief and openly wiped her eyes, and then, putting her head on the table, cried.

He sat in much embarrassment, making what he meant to be comforting ejaculations, until Jean stopped crying and laughed.

"It's wretched of me to make you so uncomfortable. I don't know what's happened to me. I've suddenly got so silly. And I don't think I like charming people. Charm is a merciless sort of gift . . . and I know he will take Pamela away, and she made things so interesting. Every day since he came I seem to have got lonelier and lonelier, and the sight of your familiar face and the sound of your kind voice finished me . . . I'm quite sensible now, so don't go away. Tea will be in in a minute, and the boys. Isn't it fine that Davie will be home tomorrow? D'you think he'll be changed?"

Lewis Elliot stayed to tea, and Jock and Mhor fell on him with acclamation, and told him wonderful tales of their new friend, and never noticed the marks of tears on Jean's face.

"Jean, what is Lord Bidborough's Christian name?" Jock asked.

"Oh, I don't know. Richard Plantagenet, I should think."

"Really, Jean?"

"Why not? But you'd better ask him. Are you going, Cousin Lewis? When will you come and see Davie?"

"Let me see. I'm lunching at Hillview on Friday. May I come in after luncheon? Thanks. You must all come up to Laverlaw one day next week. The puppies are growing up, Mhor, and you're missing all their puppyhood; that's a pity."

Later in the evening, just before Mhor's bedtime, Lord Bidborough came to The Rigs. Pamela was resting, he explained, or writing letters, or doing something else, and he had come in to pass the time of day with them.

"The time of night, you mean," said Mhor ruefully. "In ten minutes I'll have to go to bed."

"Had you a nice time this afternoon?" Jean asked.

"Oh, ripping! Coming up by Tweed in the darkening was heavenly. I wish you had been with us, Miss Jean. Why wouldn't you come?"

"I had things to do," said Jean primly.

"Couldn't the things have waited? Good days in December are precious, Miss Jean—and Pam and I are going away next week. Promise you will go with us next time—on Saturday, to the Eildon Hills."

"What's your Christian name, please?" Jock broke in suddenly, remembering the discussion. "Jean says it's Richard Plantagenet—is it?"

Jean flushed an angry pink, and said sharply:

"Don't be silly, Jock. I was only talking nonsense."

"Well, what is it?" Jock persisted.

"It's not quite Richard Plantagenet, but it's pretty bad. My name given me by my godmother and godfathers is—Quintin Reginald Fuerbras."

"Gosh, Maggie!" ejaculated Jock. "Earls in the streets of Cork!"

"I knew," said Jean, "that it would be something very twopence-colored."

"It's not, I grant, such a jolly name as yours," said Lord Bidborough—"Jean Jardine."

"Oh, mine is penny-plain," said Jean hurriedly.

"Must we always call you Lord?" Mhor asked.

"Of course you must," Jean said. "Really, Mhor, you and Jock are sometimes very stupid.' '

"Indeed you must not," said Lord Bidborough. "Forgive me, Miss Jean, if I am undermining your authority, but, really, one must have some say in what one is to be called. Why not call me Biddy?"

"That might be too familiar," said Jock. "I think I would rather call you Richard Plantagenet."

"Because it isn't my name?"

"It sort of suits you," Jock said.

"I like long names," said Mhor.

"Will you call me Richard Plantagenet, Miss Jean?"

The yellow lights in Jean's eyes sparkled. "If you'll call me penny-plain," she said.

"Then that's a bargain, though I don't think either of us is well suited. However—now that we are really friends, what did you do this afternoon that was so very important?"

"Talked to Lewis Elliot for one thing: he came to tea."

"I see. An excellent fellow, Lewis. He's a relation of yours, isn't he?"

"A very distant one, but we have so few relations we are only too glad to claim him. He has been a very good friend to us always. . . . Mhor, you really must go to bed now."

"Oh, all right, but I don't think it's very polite to go to bed when a visitor's in. It might make him think he ought to go away."

Lord Bidborough laughed, and assured Mhor that he appreciated his delicacy of feeling.

"There's a thing I want to ask you, anyway," said Mhor.—"Yes, I'm going to bed, Jean. Whether do you think Quentin Durward or Charlie Chaplin would be the better man in a fight?"

Lord Bidborough gave the matter some earnest thought, and decided on Quentin Durward.

"I told you that," said Jock to Mhor. "Now perhaps you'll believe me."

"I don't know,' said Mhor, still doubtful. "Of course Quentin Durward had his sword—but you know that way Charlie has with a stick?"

"Well, anyway, go to bed," said Jean, "and stop talking about that horrible little man. He oughtn't to be mentioned in the same breath as Quentin Durward."

Mhor went out of the room still arguing.

The next day David came home.

The whole family, including Peter, were waiting on the platform to welcome him, but Mhor was too interested in the engine and Jock too afraid of showing sentiment to pay much attention to him, and it was left to Jean and Peter to express joy at his return.

At first it seemed to Jean that it was a different David who had come back. There was an indefinable change even in his appearance. True, he wore the same Priorsford clothes that he had gone away in, but he carried himself better, with more assurance. His round, boyish face had taken on a slightly graver and most responsible look and his accent certainly had an Oxford touch. Enough, anyhow, to send Jock and Mhor out of the room to giggle convulsively in the lobby. To Jean's relief David noticed nothing; he was too busy telling Jean his news to trouble about the eccentric behavior of the two boys.

David would hardly have been human if he had not boasted a little that first night. He had often pictured it to himself just how it would be. Jean would sit by the fire and listen, and he would sit on the old comfortable sofa and recount all the doings of his first term, tell of his friends, his tutors, his rooms, the games, the fun—all the details of the wonderful new life. And it had happened just as he had pictured it—lucky David! The room had looked as he had known it would look, with a fire that sparkled as only Jean's fires ever sparkled, and Jean's eyes—Jean's "doggy" eyes, as Mhor called them—were lit with interest; and Jock and Mhor and Peter crept in after a little and lay on the rug and gazed up at him, a quiet and most satisfactory audience.

Jean felt a little in awe of this younger brother of hers, who had suddenly grown a man and spoke with an air of authority. She had an ache at her heart for the Davie who had been a little boy and content to lean; she seemed hardly to know this new David. But it was only for a little. When Jock and Mhor had gone to bed, the brother and sister sat over the fire talking, and David forgot all his new importance and ceased to "buck," and told Jean all his little devices to save money, and how he had managed just to scrape along.

"If only everyone else were poor as well," said Jean, "then it wouldn't matter."

"That's just it; but it's so difficult doing things with men who have loads of money. It never seems to occur to them that other people haven't got it. Of course I just say I can't afford to do things, but that's awkward too, for they look so surprised and sort of ashamed, and it makes me feel a prig and a fool. I think having a lot of money takes away people's imagination."

"Oh, it does," Jean agreed.

"Anyway," David went on, "it's up to me to make some money. I hate sponging on you, old Jean, and I'm not going to do it. I've been trying my hand at writing lately and—I've had two things accepted."

Jean all but fell into the fire in her surprise and delight.

"Write! You! Oh, Davie, how utterly splendid!"

A torrent of questions followed, which Davie answered as well as he could.

"Yes, they are printed, and paid for, and what's more I've spent the money." He brought out from his pocket a small leather case which he handed to his sister.

"For me? Oh, David!" Her hands shook as she opened the box and disclosed a small brooch, obviously inexpensive but delicately designed.

(To be continued.)

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The Curse of Scotland.

Why is the nine of diamonds called the "Curse of Scotland?"

Probably the most satisfactory explanation is that connected with the massacre of Glencoe. The order for the slaughter was signed by John Dalrymyle, Earl of Stair, the man who was instrumental in bringing about the union between England and Scotlad.

The coat of arms of the Dalrymples bore nine lozenges or diamonds on the shield, and it was because of this, according to many students of heraldry, that the expression arose. It is certain that the phrase goes back to 1745, because on October 21 of that year a caricature appeared showing the young Chevalier attempting to lead a herd of bulls across the river Tweed, with the nine of diamonds lying before them.

Another ingenious explanation is connected with the theft of Queen Mary's crown, which contained nine diamonds. To replace these a heavy tax, referred to as "the curse of the nine diamonds," was levied upon the Scots.

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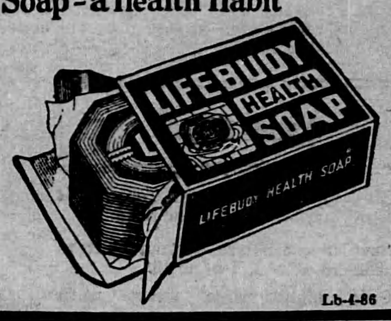

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