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CHRONICLES of GINGER FARM

By Gwendoline P. Clarke

At this minute I am sitting in a railway coach waiting for the train to pull out and take me back to Ginger Farm—back to the great open spaces where one can be free of the suffocating heat and closeness of the city. Yes, I shall be glad to be back, although even travelling has its interesting moments. For instance across the aisle from me there is a woman and a girl. The woman is reading the girl's palm and apparently the young lady has an interesting future ahead of her. They don't know me and I don't know them but I have a hunch that one, or both of them, may be a reader of this column.

These glimpses of "ships that pass in the night" are always interesting to me. Take this morning: I sat in a restaurant having breakfast when a young fellow got up to use the telephone. His conversation was free for all to hear but I wasn't paying much attention until he started telling "Jack" at the other end of the wire that he thought a certain writer's magazine was just fine; that he had been pretty busy at the writing just lately—and that if he could sell three to six thousand words a week it would be a pretty nice way to make a living. It would indeed, but there is always that "if" to consider.

Well, my goodness, now it sounds as if the fortune-telling lady near me in the train is also a writer. I shall soon be thinking they come a dime a dozen. Wouldn't it be fun to lean across the aisle and say "Hullo, suppose we get together — I believe we both speak the same language."

But maybe I had better attend to my own business and tell you that we have survived our first week at Ginger Farm without Partner at the helm. Needless to say it hasn't been an easy week—but it has certainly been a busy one what with putting up furnace pipes, re-bricking the kitchen stove, cleaning flues and pipes and speeding our parting guest who had been with us nearly a month and was still so loath to go that, although she came to Toronto with us last Thursday when we went to see Partner, she also came back with us again to spend one more night at Ginger Farm. But on Friday away she went. She had no other choice because she was due to begin her studies at McGill University in a few days. I don't know why it is — visitors around here nearly always stay longer than they originally intended to—despite the fact I always look upon myself as the world's worst hostess. But maybe lack of ceremony on my part provides greater freedom for them — and that perhaps is the best kind of holiday to have. Visitors come down to breakfast any time they feel like it. They are made acquainted with where all the dishes and things are kept and what food there is to eat, so they get their own breakfast — and midnight snacks — and I get on with my work, with many offers of help when they get around to it. And you know one gets a lot of satisfaction from seeing people go away rested and refreshed after having seen them arrive tired and weary from whatever arduous duties had been their lot.

Oh—oh, and now the train has stopped. . . I wonder why? Here come some men who have been out to investigate. Apparently the train hit a truck. No one was injured but from all accounts the truck is a wreck. The man jumped clear. I see some of the trainmen out cutting wire from a fence. Do they even fix up trains with fence wire? I thought it was only farmers who were guilty of fixing things that way.

Now we are on our way. . . the train is pulling out. It will certainly be very late getting in, and that I imagine, will mean that Bob is waiting, patiently or impatiently, for my arrival at the station.

Back home again. . . the farm is still here. . . the boys have survived two days of batching but they both want to know when Partner is coming home—and that is something I can't tell. In the meantime Partner is having a good rest and more contented than I expected to find him.

Canada has sold 3500 horses to Holland. Several hundred Dutch have been appointed to call for them in Canada.

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ISSUE 40—1945

Smart Girls always carry PARADOL in their handbags!
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CLEAN-UP TIME IN TOKYO

The Japanese woman, above, with baby strapped in curious contentment to her back, cleans windows at Azubi Barracks, Tokyo, where troops of the First Cavalry Division occupation force are quartered. Jap soldiers formerly occupied the building.

TABLE TALKS

Save Late Garden Crop From Frost

Busy days these—days for making the last relishes to brighten winter meals, days for storing away the remaining garden produce before the frost arrives.

To save the last green tomatoes from frost, the home economists of the Dominion Department of Agriculture suggest pulling the plants up by the roots, discarding any imperfect tomatoes and hanging them root-end up in the cellar or back shed. If a temperature around 50°F can be maintained, the tomatoes will ripen gradually and provide a supply for several weeks.

For a change from raw sliced cucumbers try them cut in thick fingers dipped in seasoned flour and then sauteed in a little hot fat until crisp and brown. Cut half-inch slices of green tomato and saute them this way also.

Along with two excellent relish recipes, the Consumer Section gives a recipe for Cucumbers au Gratin that is really worth trying.

Raw Carrot Relish

3 cups chopped carrots, (8 large)
2 cups chopped sweet red peppers, (4 medium)
2 cups chopped green peppers, (3 large)
4 cups chopped cabbage, (1 small head)
2 cups chopped onion
1 cup sugar
1 quart vinegar
2 tablespoons salt
2 tablespoons mustard seed
2 tablespoons celery seed

Mix all vegetables. Combine remaining ingredients and heat to boiling point. Pack vegetables into hot sterlized jars and cover with hot vinegar mixture. Seal. Yield: about 5 pints.

Ripe Cucumber Relish

3 large ripe cucumbers, about 3 qts. cubed
2 large onions, 1½ cups chopped
3 tablespoons salt
1 teaspoon turmeric
¼ cup dry mustard
2 cups vinegar
¼ cup flour
½ cup sugar

Peel and remove seeds from ripe cucumbers. Cut into pieces (about ¾ inch cubes). Peel and chop onions and add to cucumbers; sprinkle with salt, let stand one hour; drain thoroughly. Mix turmeric and mustard with 1 cup vinegar, add drained vegetables and cook slowly 15 minutes. Combine flour and sugar with remaining cup of vinegar. Drain vegetables, combining drained liquid with flour and sugar paste. Heat this sauce slowly to boiling point and cook, stirring constantly 10 minutes. Add vegetables and reheat to boiling point. Pack in hot sterilized jars. Seal. Yield: about 3 pints.

Cucumbers au Gratin

1½ cups soft stale bread crumbs
6 cups peeled, diced ripe cucumbers
½ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon pepper
½ cup grated cheese
2 cups thick cream sauce

Reserve ½ cup of crumbs. Place alternate layers of cucumbers sprinkled with salt and pepper, and remaining bread crumbs in a greased baking dish. Add cheese to cream sauce and pour over the last layer, sprinkle with remaining bread crumbs. Cover and bake in a moderate oven, 350°F. for 30 minutes. Remove cover and continue baking until crumbs are browned, about 10 minutes. Six servings.

Modern Etiquette

By Roberta Lee

1. What is the correct way for a married woman to sign her name in social correspondence?
2. If it is raining, should a man carry the umbrella for a girl, or let her carry it?
3. What is the correct way to wear the engagement and the wedding rings?
4. Should a banana be skinned and eaten with the fingers when it is served whole?
5. Is it necessary for a woman to say "please" and "thank you" to her servants?
6. Is it proper to seat a husband and his wife side by side at the dinner table?

ANSWERS

1. She should use her full name. If Jane Smith has married Henry Brown, she should sign her social correspondence Jane Smith Brown. In writing to a stranger she should write below her signature, Mrs. Henry Brown. 2. The man should carry it. 3. Both should be worn on the third finger of the left hand, with the wedding ring below. 4. No; the banana is not a finger food. Strip off the skin, place the banana on the dessert plate and cut, one bite at a time, with the side of the fork. 5. It is not exactly necessary, but this courtesy should not be omitted when speaking to persons who are working for her comfort. 6. No; it is customary to separate them.

Bring Your Own

A Berlin woman who wants a hairdo must take to the beauty shop her own hot water or a brick of pressed coal. Gas is so scarce that beauty shops are not permitted to keep a flame burning all day. They have a fire on the hearth, but customers must help provide fuel.

by Laura Wheeler

A gay apron adds glamour to your role as hostess. These aprons take little material. Colorful embroidery that a youngster would love to do.

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LOUIS ARTHUR CUNNINGHAM

CHAPTER XXI

"I cannot. I tell you I cannot." She was crying a little, but if he felt any pity for her, he showed none.

"But in a little while, in a few days, you intend to become my wife."

"You know that I accepted that long ago. Why do we have to talk about it now?"

"Because it is so near the time, and I have waited and waited and hoped constantly that I would find in you the answer to my love. The answer hasn't come."

"But in time — oh, Roger, why must we talk like this?"

"We must," he said doggedly, "before it is too late. We must have this thing settled."

"I do not see how it ever can be settled. What would you have me do?"

"Michel is still in your heart, isn't he? You haven't given up your dream that you told me of long ago?"

"I could never give it up. I tried, Roger, believe me. But there was no use trying. It is part of me. It will be always there. Need it make a difference—for us?"

"Only a shadowy thing," he said. "A few hours against all my love; a few words—and they echo forever."

"He will not come back — not ever now."

"He does not need to, he never went away. I know what love is, Meridel, because I love. I saw you cry and the tears fell on your wedding dress—and I knew."

* * *

They had come to the Chamberland house. Pol Martin and Rosine, with Gerard and the two Chamberland girls and tiny David, came down the yard to meet them. Roger called to them, "Hola! It is late for infants to be abroad. You must run all the way home."

On the way back, he tried to talk; so did Meridel, but everything they said fell flat. It had no zest, no savor. There was a coldness, a heaviness in their hearts. Something that should have been splendid and shining had failed for them, and both felt that in some way the blame lay between them. He thought I should not have always been questioning her love. I should not have been so exacting, so greedy. I should have taken the wondrous gift she offered me and thanked God for it. But I could not, I could not.

And Meridel thought, What is wrong with me that I cannot love him? Respect, liking, loyalty, admiration—all these things I have for him. But not love. Perhaps in time it will come, but God help us if it does not. And Roger is wise enough to know that it is a grave risk we run. Why did I shed those foolish tears tonight? The dress is so lovely; it is made for one who gives herself to love—Roger.

* * *

Even the children, after chattering for a while about the games they had played and the good time of the afternoon, noticed the silence of their elders, and gradually they ceased to talk and plodded along with Roger leading the way, Meridel close beside him. All about them was the vast stillness of the forests. Far off an owl hooted and from a farmyard over the hill a fox barked sharply. Those sounds died and then in that great stillness they heard a deep voice singing, coming toward them around a bend in the path. They froze in their tracks and the little ones clutched Meridel's hands.

"Bonsoir, Nigaud! Bonsoir, Fricot!"

"It is he!" whispered Pol Martin. "It is Bonhomme Fricot!"

"What folly!" said Meridel, but a strange shiver, not of fear, moved over her body. "How could it be?"

"Listen!" said Rosine. "Yes, Yes. It is he! It is he!"

"Eh! Bonhomme Fricot!" called Pol Martin in his shrill soprano. "Bonhomme Fricot, what are you doing here?"

The song perished. They saw only a shadowy figure in the path before them, the glimmer of white at his throat. After a moment he spoke, reluctantly it seemed, yet with laughter in his voice: "Are you sure, Pol Martin and Rosine, that it is Bonhomme Fricot you have here?"

* * *

"Yes, yes, we are sure indeed!"

"It could not be the laughing soldier then?"

"The laughing soldier would not know our names," pointed out Rosine. "Why do you play this farce, Bonhomme Fricot? We know you."

"I was the laughing soldier," said he. "I gave the real soldier my old clothes and shaved off my beard and cut off my hair and now you know why I laughed—because the soldier tried to kill instead. You see, I work for the king of England and I must sometimes do strange things."

"But it is brave!" cried Pol Martin. "It is grand. Did you come here to vist us?"

"It's no use, Mike," said Roger stepping forward, finding his brother's hand in the starlight. You were going the wrong way. You don't need to run, do you "

"I talked with Tante Mimi, I—"

"You were not going because of me?" Meridel came forward now and reached for the hand Roger held, so that three hands were clasped together, hers so small between the two strong ones of those men who loved her.

* * *

"We can talk when we get home," said Roger, and he thanked God for the darkness, for the dim stars that let no one see his face. "I'll go on ahead with these two fellows."

"A moment, Roger," said Michel.

"Please—" said Meridel.

He paid no attention to them. He sent Pol Martin and Rosine scampering down the trail and hurried after them. They heard his voice faintly, "You can pretend it's the road on the magic mountain, if you need to."

But he knew, none better, that any road is a magic road if you have the right charm in your heart. And somewhere for him there would be such a road, one that no other foot had trod before and at the end of it someone who waited—for only him.

Behind him, under the stars, Meridel and Michel Fabre had stopped to gaze at each other in that strange light. "I was wrong," he said. "You did not forget our hour."

"You did not mean it when you said, as you left me then, that you would not return?"

"You knew I did not. It was written, all this—long ago. Nothing could ever change it."

THE END

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