

She Meant Well

By F. Morton Howard

Aunt Lucy is putting in her annual week with us, and, as usual, she is endeavouring to be as self-effacing as she possibly can. Dear old Aunt Lucy just hates to cause us the slightest trouble as a guest.

"Now, please, don't let me being here make the very least difference to you," is invariably among the first remarks she makes when she arrives.

Well, last evening, Thornton and his wife dropped in. We hadn't been chatting round the fire for long before Aunt Lucy said:—

"Now, if I wasn't here, I expect you four would have been playing bridge by now, wouldn't you?"

"Well, we usually do get down to auction," I admitted.

"Oh, then, do please start at once," begged Aunt Lucy. "I shall be quite all right."

"But won't you play, dear?" my wife urged her.

"No, thank you, my dear," replied Aunt Lucy. "I'm not very fond of cards. I shall be quite happy. Now, sit down and begin your game, and please don't bother in the slightest about me."

Of course we demurred, but Aunt Lucy was quite determined. She assured us that it would make her quite uncomfortable if we didn't start playing at once. Indeed, she was manifestly so perturbed by the idea that her presence was affecting our customs and amusements that, in the end, we consented to make up our game.

"That's right!" sighed Aunt Lucy, with satisfaction. "You know I do detest being a hindrance in any way."

"Well, what will you do?" I asked her. "What about listening in to the wireless for a bit? I'll tune in for you, shall I?"

"Oh, please don't bother. It really doesn't matter about me. Start your game, and I'll sit here enjoying the fire."

However, knowing that Aunt Lucy had a fondness for the wireless, I disregarded her protests and insisted that the radio should be turned on for her.

"Well, it's very kind of you, my dear," she surrendered. "But I don't like giving you the trouble. If only I knew anything at all about the wireless, I could start it for myself, without troubling you, could I? But I won't have the loud-speaker on. That would be far too disturbing to you."

So I looked up a good programme for her, tuned it in, and handed her the 'phones. She adjusted them, nodded her pleasure in the clear reception she was getting, and disposed herself to enjoy the programme.

My wife, the Thorntons, and myself sat down to our cards. I always believe in concentrating thoroughly on every point. I hold that a good player should consider, with the closest deliberation, all the while. Thornton, too, takes his time, but then he's one of those unnecessarily slow players. So we four usually play a pretty tense game.

For perhaps twenty minutes the room was hushed, save during the bidding. Then, just as I was pondering whether I ought to make up my mind to go for another heart, Aunt Lucy spoke up. "Most interesting!" she brightly observed.

The atmosphere was so intense with concentration that the remark quite startled us. We all looked at Aunt Lucy, almost as though we were wondering how she got there.

"Such an admirable talk has just finished," she stated, nodding appreciably. "I'm enjoying myself very nicely, so there's no need to bother about me, you see."

We resumed our game. Three minutes later Thornton was scowling in deep thought over some trivial little problem when Aunt Lucy spoke.

"Charming!" she averred. "Very charming indeed!"

"Eh, what?" exclaimed Thornton, blinking at her. "Oh, I beg your pardon. You were saying—?"

"I've just been listening to a most delightful song," replied Aunt Lucy.

We murmured vaguely to the effect that we were glad, and returned our attention to our cards. A minute later Aunt Lucy began to chuckle very softly.

"Really, most amusing," she murmured.

She continued to emit a chuckle at irregular intervals for some while. Distinctly, it was disturbing to us. One kept waiting for the next chuckle, so to speak.

I saw that Thornton, good fellow as he is, was beginning to get a bit restive. He takes his bridge so seriously, you see.

"Can't be helped," I whispered to him. "She doesn't mean to upset our game."

"No, of course not," he whispered back. "I wouldn't interfere with her enjoyment for worlds. But—"

He shook his head and frowned at his cards as if he didn't quite recognize the hand as his.

In due course Aunt Lucy was silent again. The room brooded once more under the strain of close concentration. But not for long.

"I always like bands, and this is such a good one," announced Aunt Lucy.

None of us four spoke. Ten seconds later it apparently occurred simultaneously to all four of us that it was hardly polite to let Aunt Lucy's observations pass unnoticed. So we all spoke together to Aunt Lucy.

"So glad it's a good programme, dear," said my wife.

"I like bands, too," said Mrs. Thornton.

"Nothing like a good band," said Thornton.

"So glad it's a good band," I said.

We waited for a few moments, but Aunt Lucy made no response to our broadcast.

"Let's see, whose lead is it?" asked Thornton.

"The cornet is beautiful," stated Aunt Lucy.

Again we began by letting the assertion go unnoticed. Again we simultaneously remembered that politeness was due. Again the four of us fired a salvo at Aunt Lucy.

"Now, who was it who took that last trick?" inquired Thornton.

"We weren't sure. We debated the matter. We decided that it was my wife's turn to lead.

"I rather forget," she mused. "When we played that second round of hearts—"

"Well, that was really very enjoyable," declared Aunt Lucy.

We turned to her.

"The band?" we asked, together.

"The band," said Aunt Lucy.

"I'm very glad," we chorused.

A long pause. Then:—

"Yes," said Aunt Lucy, simply.

Another pause.

"Yes, what?" Thornton whispered to me, with just a trace of testiness.

"Yes, what, what?" I inquired, in 'She said 'Yes.'"

"Yes," I agreed.

"Well, what was she saying 'yes' to?"

"Yes, it was a good band," I explained.

"Well, what about it?" he snapped at me, a little unreasonably. "Besides, you didn't hear it, so how do you know? Anyway, what are trumps?"

Very soon after, we had just finished bidding, when Aunt Lucy remarked:

"Oh, now it's that funny man again. I am glad. He's so good."

Almost immediately there came another of those gentle little chuckles of hers.

Thornton sighed resignedly, and laid down his cards.

Again, at irregular intervals, Aunt Lucy registered amusement.

We four just sat and waited. She did not notice our inaction. She leaned confidently back in her chair, pressing the headphones a little closer to her ears with her finger-tips, and smiling at the fire.

"Well, really, that was most amusing," she said, anon.

We all picked up our cards again.

"Ah, now the band is starting again," mentioned Aunt Lucy.

I replaced my cards on the table. So did Thornton.

"I think so, don't you?" I asked him.

"Yes, may as well," he agreed. "I wouldn't interfere with your aunt's enjoyment one little bit, but really it is rather hopeless for us to try—"

We put away the cards and returned to the fireside. Aunt Lucy removed the headphones and smiled at us.

"Rather a short game, wasn't it?" she said. "I do hope it wasn't my fault?"

"Oh, no," I assured her. "We thought—er—we'd like to stop and listen to the wireless."

I switched over from the 'phones to the loudspeaker. Not a sound was audible from it.

I investigated.

"Of course," I said. "The accumulator has run right out. I ought to have remembered."

"I could just manage to hear when you first started it for me," remarked Aunt Lucy. "Then it faded away altogether very soon after. But I didn't want to bother you by asking you to see it, and I knew you'd be worrying if I left off listening. So I just pretended I was hearing a programme, rather than disturb your game. Do you know"—her smile was quite proud—"I think I managed very cleverly not to interfere with your cards, don't you?"—Tit-Bits.

CHARACTER

Nobility of character manifests itself at loop-holes when it is not provided with large doors.

—Mary E. Wilkins.

A man may put all his savings under his pillow every night, but that doesn't mean that he has money enough to retire on.

Unused So Far



Recent attempt to moor a dirigible on the mooring mast of the Empire State building, New York, proved a failure due to strong headwinds.

Photography In Color Is Developed Cheaply

Vienna papers are exploiting with illustrations the invention of a local expert, Alfred von Bariss, who says he has perfected a camera and a process which makes color photography simple and cheap.

The camera he manipulated recently before a gathering of reporters is described as "an ordinary press camera with a good, but ordinary, lens." By the aid of mirrors the light coming through the lens is diverted evenly on three plates inside the box—a yellow plate at the top, a red plate at the back and a blue plate at the bottom. The operation took three minutes, during which Herr von Bariss said:

"You may use ordinary panchromatic roll film, film packs, or plates. I am using ordinary films."

He went on to say that the picture could be taken either by snapshot or by time exposure, but that the three negatives must be exposed simultaneously. He then took the negatives to a dark room and developed them, transferring each to specially prepared gelatine sheets, which, he said, could be had for 5 cents apiece.

Next, he placed the gelatine sheets on top of each other over a chemically prepared paper and said:

"It is this paper which is my secret, and on which I have worked for seven years. With it you are able to do away with washing and fixing and can print your colored photographs in ordinary light in three minutes."

He then showed how toning and other artistic effects could be produced on his paper by placing the colored plates at right angles or in different sequence. He added that any number of colored prints could be made from the colored negatives on his paper, which, he said, cost only a cent a sheet.

Vegetable Poison As Fish Bait

In its search for insecticides to control pests that are becoming increasingly resistant to the action of lead arsenate, lime sulphur, hydrogen cyanide and other long-relied-upon poisons, the United States Department of Agriculture has gone far afield—even to the study of methods by which the natives of tropical countries capture their fish. Plants, the essence of which, thrown into a stream, will stupefy fish so that they may be easily taken or speared, have yielded particularly good results when tested upon insects, according to R. C. Roark of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. Incidentally his report throws light on how a great deal of food reaches the table in lands south of the Temperate Zone.

In Costa Rica, for example, in the district about Turrialba, fish are usually killed by the Indians with bows and arrows, and it is a common sight to see huntsmen standing waist-deep in the streams waiting for their prey. At times, however, they use a shrub known locally as "barbasco." Their method is to erect a wild-cane barrier from bank to bank, and then, half a mile above it, to throw the plant into the water. Blinded by the poison which the water extracts from the leaves, the fish come to the surface, are carried down to the barrier and there presented as easy victims to the hunters.

In Ethiopia two fish poisons or intoxicants have been in use for many years, the more common of which is prepared from the seeds of a tree called barberra, which grows in high altitudes along the banks of streams. The powder of the seeds is spread on the surface of the water in the midst of the dry season when the current is slow and free of torrential mud. Sometimes the fish succumb quietly; at other times they are excited to intense activity.

In Malaya the tuba root is employed. By means of rubbing the roots together a toxic secretion is introduced near the source of a stream, and in a short time the fish, "rendered unconscious," begin floating with the current just below the surface. In the meantime, a crowd of Malays—men, women and children—have assembled where the stream widens into a river. Many are in canoes, the older men armed with spears, the women with nets.

Easily Remedied

Some of the best anecdotes take years to circulate. This one, about the Prince of Wales as a child, though dating back some years, is well worth repeating.

The Prince was once talking to King Edward about Roosevelt, who was at that time President of the United States.

"Mr. Roosevelt is a very good man, isn't he?" he queried.

"President Roosevelt is a very clever man," replied King Edward.

For a time the Prince did not speak, but went on turning the leaves of the album through which he was looking, and which contained the President's portrait. The next day he said to the King, "I have changed Mr. Roosevelt's portrait from the Album of Rulers to the album where the clever men are!"—Pearson's Weekly.

FRETTING

It is a great misfortune to have a fretful disposition. It takes the fragrance out of one's life, and leaves only weeds where a cheerful disposition would cause flowers to bloom. The habit of fretting is one that grows rapidly unless it be sternly repressed; and the best way to overcome it is to try always to look on the cheerful side of things.

Curiosity



What's happening asks this deer at South Saskatoon when Miss Phyllis Carpani endeavors to take a snap.

So They Say

"Far better for all of us to go with tight belts into stability than with loose ones into confusion."—J. Ramsay MacDonald.

"Some women were born to sing, to bear children. I was born to make people laugh."—Marie Dressler.

"Chastity is like a bank balance—something marvelous to treasure."—John Barrymore.

"No business man alive has borrowed more money than I."—Charles M. Schwab.

"What the world needs is a leader."—James J. Walker.

"This is the time to co-operate and not to criticize."—Newton D. Baker.

"Art and music are universal."—Nicholas Murray Butler.

"The Americans and the Russians are in many ways the two most similar peoples on earth."—Albert Coates.

"This is no time to be over-cautious. This is the time for action."—Edward A. Filene.

"If I had my life to live over again I would be more patient and kindly."—August Heckscher.

"Soviet Russia is the best-run country on earth."—Lady Astor.

"America unites a powerful idealism with that practical turn of mind that aids the search of solutions."—Premier Laval.

"The belief that man can conquer his environment is the actual benefit Columbus conferred on humanity."—Struthers Burt.

"If a man were drowning to-day he would have to shout for help in German."—Sir Oswald Mosley.

"I have no thought whatever of entering politics."—Owen D. Young.

"We now understand the biological value of play as our fathers did not."—Sir J. Arthur Thomson.

"To understand facts is the best aid to memory."—Walter S. Gifford.

"This is an age of co-operation and no nation can be a law unto itself."—Norman H. Davis.

"Although the details are not the same, American and English mental landscapes are alike in the main."—Andre Maurois.

"A man ought to work as long as he wants to, and he ought to, enjoy his work so much that he wants to work as long as he can."—Henry Ford.

Briefs

Ants have been observed to set broken legs of injured companions in a kind of plaster.

Only one foreign motor-car is now sold in Gt. Britain where nine were sold two years ago.

About one-third of the families, or some 10,000,000 in the United States have wireless sets.

Card-playing is forbidden to Rumanian magistrates under penalties ranging from fines to dismissal.

Of all married couples in Germany 40 per cent. have no children. In Berlin the percentage is higher, being 54.

Water mains measuring 7,200 miles, 7,000 miles of gas-pipes, and 2,500,000 miles of electric wires are placed under London.

Gloves of differing colours are a fashion novelty in Paris, where one black and one white, one green and one beige glove are worn.

In "dumb golf," an innovation from America, every word spoken by a player during the game counts as one stroke against him.

How many people know that the women of to-day use far less powder and rouge on their faces than did their sisters of two centuries ago?

Making traps of all sizes, from one big enough to catch a lion to the small mouse variety, is one of the main industries of Wednesfield, Staffordshire.

Chiffon handkerchiefs, tied to the wrist and long enough to reach almost to the ground, are prophesied as an evening-dress fashion in the coming winter.

About 65,507 vehicles, of which 1,908 were horse-drawn, passed Hyde Park Corner, London, in twelve hours of daylight, at the taking of the last traffic census.

Measuring 5½ feet long and 12½ feet in circumference, a large butt of wine recently landed in London from Jerez, Spain, contains the equivalent of more than 2,000 bottles.

Reversal

When I was child—at least in part,
For never was I wholly child)—
I felt a woman in my heart,
Too little reconciled.
Bred in the flesh, bred in the bone,
Hard on my hope eternally,
Around my neck, like to a stone,
That terrible maturity.

But when I knew a woman's state
And should have ceased to be de-
mure,
Bewildered, lost, it was my fate
To feel a child, and insecure.
Around my neck, like to a stone,
There is reversal meaningless.
Bred in the flesh, bred in the bone,
This terrible ingenuousness.

—Dorothy owles Pinkney.