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THE PERFECT HOUSEKEEPER

By JANE OSBORN

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Three times within the two blocks that Doctor Andover had walked down College street from his house had he been greeted with the smiling congratulations of some neighbor or other. If he had not already been sure of his blessing in having secured the services of Mrs. Hildegarde Taylor as housekeeper he could not but have been after these felicitations.

"She is such a perfect housekeeper," Professor Ogden's wife had cooed. "Up to the day he died old Mr. Morgan had her tea biscuits every day of his life. He couldn't get along without them—and such pies!"

"Yes, indeed," agreed Doctor Andover, somewhat embarrassed but duly grateful to providence for having showered such abundant blessings on his shoulders.

"And she's so economical, too," Mrs. Partridge had said after offering the young bachelor president of the college her felicitations on the advent of Mrs. Taylor in his home. "No cause for your complaining now over the high cost of living."

"No, indeed," smiled Doctor Andover and, as he neared the corner where dwelt old Doctor Forbes, dean of his faculty, the fragrance of juicy beefsteak broiling in the Forbes kitchen came to him. He had had supper that night from tea biscuits, tea, sardines in jelly and prune whip. That as nearly as he could remember was all there had been to it.

Helen Forbes, not extraordinarily young or extraordinarily slender, but radiant and magnetic, only daughter and housewife for Doctor Forbes, opened the door for the young professor. The rest of the college town had got used to Helen. Of course, she was quite a beauty—but, then, she was only Helen Forbes.

Nice girl, too, and a few years before freshmen every year had gone quite silly over her; but she was a little too old for students now. But Doctor Andover had not quite got used to the radiance of her, and there were times when he would have more eagerly gone to spend an evening with old Doctor Forbes in discussing college plans and policies had it not been for Helen. She was a little disturbing. She didn't quite seem to belong to the little old college town.

On this occasion, however, it was necessary that he consult with Doctor Forbes. The tempting aroma of beefsteak grew even more tempting as Helen Forbes opened the door for him.

An apron protected her light summer frock, and she led Doctor Andover rather breathily into the dining room. "We are having dinner late," she said. "Dad's been working on examination books and didn't want to be disturbed until seven. Now, it's planked steak supper. Dad's so fond of it. You don't mind coming right out, do you? And perhaps we can tempt you to have some."

Doctor Forbes had appeared and Helen had disappeared, to return presently with the plank on which was laid the smoking steak with the tempting border of mashed potatoes and various vegetables.

"We must congratulate you," said Helen, as she laid the plank on the rather informally set table. "I don't suppose anyone can tempt you to meals, now that you have got the wonderful Mrs. Taylor. You certainly were lucky in these days, to get a perfect housekeeper like that. And you know she was with old Mr. Morgan twenty years—stayed till he died—and she was saying today that she expected to do the same for you."

"Why, that's very kind, I'm sure." It was then that there leaped before Doctor Andover an image of Mrs. Hildegarde Taylor, with her thin-lipped and rather acrid smile, as she sat behind the coffee things at breakfast and the tea things at supper, for she was one of these housekeepers who never fall to take their places at meals with their employers.

She had sat like that before Mr. Morgan twenty years, and then he had died. How would it be to see that face for twenty years? Her coffee was clear and doubtless good, but she was sipping of the coffee, and she regarded cream as an extravagance.

Doctor Andover was wondering whether he would have to drink coffee every morning for twenty years, just like that, or whether he would have courage to ask to have it stronger—and with cream.

"She really is wonderful," Helen Forbes was going on. "I only wish I could manage the way she does. I don't suppose you could be tempted to take a little of this planked steak?" She had put quite a generous piece on the warmed plate and was passing it to him.

"But, daughter," suggested Doctor Forbes, kindly. "If Doctor Andover has had dinner, it will only be doing him an unkindness in forcing more upon him."

But Doctor Andover mumbled something about "rather light supper," and for the next few minutes joined the Forbes household in the delectable task of eating a perfectly broiled planked steak.

After that, though it was sometimes a little difficult for Doctor Andover to walk right up to the front door of the Forbes house when he knew he would be met there by the disconcerting Helen Forbes, it was even more difficult to stay away. Sometimes he would definitely decide not to call. His own evening repast was early and this seemed to add to the desirability of a short after-dinner walk down College street.

But despite his decision not to stop at the Forbes house, he would stop. Sometimes he was tempted even further by the tantalizing aroma of

dinner, huckleberry pie or roasted lamb or fresh aromatic coffee. Mrs. Taylor's coffee could never be smelted that way when it cooked. Doctor Andover remembered that she had once told him that the way she made it she kept all the flavor in the coffee pot and that was what made it taste so good.

It was the test of good coffee, she said, not having the smell of it escape from the pot. But Helen Forbes' coffee always smelled all the way round to the front of the house, and to Doctor Andover it was perfection in the cup.

So it happened that quite often, without exactly intending to do so, the young college president shared some of the good things that Helen had prepared for her father's dinner and always when he did there was the evidence of the greatest pleasure on the part of the hospitable old professor, who, though he may have worn his coats until they were shabby, certainly did not curtail himself on the good things of the table.

"Of course, though," said Helen once when Doctor Andover had come out with an enthusiastic bit of praise of her cookery, "if I were a perfect housekeeper like your Mrs. Taylor I could set a better table on much less money. She must be quite remarkable. Why, just today she was telling us at the missionary society that she can make a pound of coffee go two weeks and the meat bills aren't \$3 a week. Of course, she said she couldn't manage that way unless she felt a real interest in you. You really were mighty lucky to get her. Really, it was quite amusing."

"Professor Partridge's wife told Mrs. Taylor that if you never married it would be her fault, and then Mrs. Taylor said that at any rate you'd never marry for a good home and a good housekeeper. I thought that was so sweet of her—"

"Yes, I am sure it was," weakly rejoined Doctor Andover. He recalled then that he had fried cornmeal for supper, although he had begged the perfect housekeeper to omit cornmeal for a few weeks. He had never liked it anyway, he said, but he didn't say what he felt, that he had been compelled to do so since her arrival.

Of course it was because of the economy in using cornmeal that she persisted, and Doctor Andover did eat it because he had a healthy young appetite and he had to eat something.

"But, then," continued Doctor Andover, "a man doesn't marry for a home or for a good cook. If the woman he loves happens to be a good housekeeper and all that sort of thing it is just an added blessing, I suppose."

Doctor Andover was preoccupied after that. He tried to discuss the new system of student grading with Dean Forbes, but his thoughts did not seem to collect. At a quarter to nine he rose to leave. Nine was the dean's habitual bedtime.

He bade the dean good night rather hurriedly, and then as he turned to Helen he looked very intently at her, so intently that the radiant Helen dropped her eyes. "I'm coming back at half past nine. See me alone on the veranda."

It was a rather chilly spring night to be phillandering on verandas, but there was a soft, radiant moon and Helen had gazed here and there in a soft woeen scarf and was waiting when Doctor Andover returned.

"I want to talk to you—down here in the garden," he said, ascending only one step of the veranda, and Helen slowly went down to meet him.

"It's about marrying you that I want to talk, Helen," he said when they had reached the dark shelter of an old lilac hedge. "You have always been the kind of woman I'd want—a real woman, magnificent and radiant and beautiful. It's the kind of woman I've always dreamed about. But, hang it all, I don't want you to think I'm asking you because you are such a wonderful cook and housekeeper. I'd feel such a contemptible blackguard to marry a woman for a housekeeper. You know it is you, Helen, that I want? I've feared there wasn't a chance you'd have me."

It's funny how gossip runs in a little college town like that. A week later when Helen and Doctor Andover's engagement was announced there wasn't a professor's wife in town but had known it for weeks.

Helen, they said, had always been setting her cap for the new president. For a time they said it seemed as if he might have preferred Mrs. Hildegarde Taylor, in spite of the slight difference in age. And it was such a pity he didn't, for Mrs. Taylor was such a good cook—such a perfect housekeeper.

Efficiency.

A certain floorwalker in a big department store is likely to lose his place if he does not improve in his manners. "Gracious," exclaimed a fat woman rushing up to him just after losing sight of her husband. "I'm looking for a small man with one eye." "Well, madam," suggested the floorwalker, "if he's a very small man, perhaps you'd better use both eyes."

When Folks Quit Coffee because of cost to health or purse, they naturally drink

INSTANT POSTUM
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A Flying Lochinvar.
The first couple in Canada to elope in an airplane were Charles Henderson and Miss Florence MacKenzie, of Dodsland, Sask. Henderson, who founded the town of Dodsland and is a prominent farmer in the district and proprietor of the weekly paper there, and Miss MacKenzie, Dodsland, school teacher, whose romance has been watched with interest by all the villagers, pulled off the elopement on June 21 during a sports carnival while hundreds of people were assembled in town.

They slipped into the residence of the minister, were married in record time, and raced a mile in an automobile, pursued by scores of other automobiles, to a waiting plane on the prairie. Farmers caught up just as the plane was starting and showered the couple with rice. Piloted by Lieut. H. S. McClelland, of Saskatoon, the plane carried the couple to Winnipeg, after heading west first to give pursuers the impression that they were going to Calgary.

Our Education.

Canada had, 1901, 17,611 elementary schools; 1917, 28,007; 1901, 22,436 teachers; 1917, 42,563; 1901, pupils enrolled, 924,258; 1917, 1,385,722.

Canada has 22 universities, with, in 1917, teaching staff of 2,421, and 16,013 students (since largely increased). Value of endowments, \$21,992,475; of land and buildings, \$25,792,711. Income, \$5,389,886 expenditure, \$3,396,067.

Canada had, 1917, 43 colleges. Teaching staff, 630; students, 8,113. Canada has 1,650 newspapers and magazines.

What He Really Came For.

Tommy had an accident while fishing and had fallen into the pond. Just as he was scrambling out an old lady came along. "Dear, dear me!" she said fustily, "how did you come to fall in the pond?" "I didn't come to fall in the pond," said Tommy. "I came to fish."

Gray hairs make the good dye young.

Asked for His Reasons

for carrying Life Insurance with The Manufacturers Life, one of our large Policyholders cogently replied:

1st.—"In case I do not accumulate a competence, or meet with reverses in business, I know my wife and family will not become objects of charity, as my Life Insurance will supply sufficient funds for their needs."

2nd.—"Life Insurance is always the first asset realized on—so, if at my demise, the time is not opportune to dispose of my other assets, my Executors will not need to sacrifice same to obtain ready money."

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