

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE.

Dew of dawn on hills of dream. Beaten eggs and bits of cream. Breath of bloom from vales of sweet; Taste of flavor while you eat. Layers of snow and bars of gold. In between them, crushed or rolled. Berries from the vines that run To the residing of the sun. Gods, upon Olympus' height. Cross your hands and take a bite

MADAM BLUEBEARD.

She came to be known on the boat as Madam Bluebeard before we were two days out from Calcutta. No doubt this was largely due to the fact, spread by some busybody, that she had married three husbands and survived them. I do not think that this past zeal for marriage would in itself have procured her the title. After all, some people with the best intentions in the world have a run of ill luck, and Mrs. Mandaford might have been one of these.

It was her appearance that made the name so suitable. Not only was she enormous, a colossal figure of a woman who dwarfed the biggest man on board and suggested that she could pick up a couple of us in either hand, but she wore at times a most terrific frown. Seeing it, we felt that if she did pick a couple of us up and were feeling annoyed at the time she would not hesitate to drop us overboard.

Personally I thought her smile even more alarming, and I know that Colonel Gregory, once she had beamed at him in return for some small piece of civility—placing her deck-chair for her in some sheltered spot—fled in haste to the smoking-room.

"I call you people to witness," she said as she sank into a seat, "that I'm stopping here for the rest of the voyage."

"Why so, Colonel?" asked one of the men present.

"Because she's looking for a fourth and, by Jove! she'll have him too."

He rang for a peg and cut into a bridge four with trembling fingers. Yet he was an elderly bachelor, marriage-proof, you would have said, and not devoid of courage. He had seen service on the frontiers and also in Somaliland, where, by the way, the dervishes run large.

His example was followed by most of the bachelors who could stand an equal amount of smoke and heat, but there were times, especially in the Indian Ocean, when the women were so kind as the Colonel said—run the blockade. Married men like myself did not so greatly fear Mrs. Mandaford's awe-inspiring affability. We felt that we had in front of us, as a screen and protection against forcible remarriage, all the authority of the Church and State. Besides, she sort of us out into the married and unmarried, the goats and the sheep, with an infallible accuracy. Several of us were traveling single, but she left us alone. I suppose there is something about a married man that distinguishes him. A joyous tranquility, is it? A look of having passed the worst and emerged? The appearance of a miner who has found gold, or of one that knows that for him there is no gold to find?

Anyhow, she knew. Gradually, but in a very obvious way, she began a wedding process among the bachelors. The skill with which she set aside the undesirable! The knowing ones were rejected first, then the reckless. She had brought them down to a half dozen within a few days. Then to three—to two—to one. I think we all had a presentiment who the one would be.

He was a Mr. Luptons, a little man, of course. He had been in the Salt Revenue in India and was retiring on a pension. He intended, he told me, to do a little fruit-growing in England, to keep him occupied; and because he had few friends there, and no relations to speak of, he was bringing with him his native bearer, Peter. I think Peter gave his master away as much as anything. To begin with, Peter was a Bengal and a Christian, and strict sabbiths in India do not have such bearers. They are too apt to steal, they say. Also they are almost invariably of the lowest caste, and bearers are best when they belong to a high caste. You do not want a sweeper about your person, do you? I think a dog and a Bluebeard's expansive shoulders, she coyly wondering which of the flimsy things most became her, Mr. Luptons dully smiling a fixed smile at each and all.

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"Are there sharks in the Mediterranean as well as in the Red Sea?"

He did not speak after I had reassured him, and lay with his eyes fixed vacantly on the porthole while I undressed. We had a bit of a tossing that night, and in the morning Mr. Luptons was ill. He was worried about this for my sake, but still more, evidently, because he feared that Mrs. Mandaford would think he was malingering if he did not get up. I strongly advised him not to, and he promised to remain in his berth.

"If you will be kind enough to let Mrs. Mandaford know that I am not quite the thing?"

"Mrs. Mandaford?" I affected surprise, but he was not to be pumped. "If you please. I was to read to her today."

"Perhaps she is ill too," I suggested. "I am afraid—I mean I think she is an excellent sailor," said Mr. Luptons. I found that she was, and stoutly immobile in her usual place after her usual breakfast.

"Mr. Luptons ought to pull himself together," she said, severely, after I had given my message. "He seems far too depressed," I said. At that she looked me up and down most suspiciously. "I think you are mistaken," she said. "All that Mr. Luptons needs is a female society. Luckily, in future, he will get it. . . . we are engaged to be married."

gan upon the subject that was to be close to his heart.

"That Mrs. Mandaford . . ." he said. "You'll forgive me talking at this time of night?"

"I'm not a bit sleepy," I assured him. "What about Mrs. Mandaford?"

"A splendid figure of a woman," he said. "If I may be excused for mentioning a lady's figure. You are a friend of hers?"

"No," I said. "But you've spoken to her, of course?"

"Very little."

"Really? You surprise me. She is so very affable—and to me of all people. It is very kind of her."

"Perhaps you have tastes in common," I suggested mischievously.

"Oh no," he said, very quickly. "I mean—I am really a person without any tastes. Mrs. Mandaford sustains the greater part of the conversation."

"Interestingly?" I asked.

"He put down the brushes with which he was smoothing his thin fluff and sighed."

"I hardly know what to say," he said. "I am such a poor hand at it myself that I don't like to see critical. If I might venture, I should describe Mrs. Mandaford's conversation as a trifle too sentimental."

"Sentimental!" I repeated. "That colossal of a widow!"

"My dear sir," he said, deprecatingly. "Scarcely a kind description, is it? And perhaps I am wrong about her. I am so devoid of sentiment myself that perhaps that is why I am afraid of it."

"Oh, you're afraid of it, are you?" I said, hardly able to keep from laughing. He gave me an appealing look.

"It is so difficult with ladies, or so it seems to me. I am afraid of not responding in the proper key—of jarring."

"I see," I said.

"Or what would be worse," he went on, anxiously, "of seeming to agree with things which I do not and cannot agree. It is so extremely difficult with ladies."

"But what on earth," I inquired, "are these topics that require so much discretion from you?"

He had some difficulty in explaining, but I gathered that she had begun to oggle him quite obviously.

"She seems to feel that voyages are apt to be so romantic. She says that one meets twin souls on board. More than once she has spoken of the curious way in which people who have never met before become engaged in quite a few days."

He shivered slightly as she stressed the last words.

"I suppose they do," I said.

"Yes—but I am not myself a marrying man. I shall never marry. I once thought—"

He paused and I thought he was going to reveal one of those stories which people think are romances, but which are, as a rule, only most pathetic fallacies. He didn't, and I liked the little man the more for it, though I failed to see how he was to be helped out of his dilemma. The few efforts that I did make to intervene between him and Madam Bluebeard's sentiments were unavailing.

He used to go up to them and point out the mirages that were to be seen across the desert as we moved up the canal. Or I would dilate on the utility of the camels that have into view among the sand dunes, carrying bright-colored riders, or heavy bags of sand to strengthen the embankments. But one man cannot do all the talking for more than a few minutes at a time even to save his brother's soul, and neither Mrs. Mandaford nor Mr. Luptons supported me. By the time we had reached Port Said he appeared to belong to her.

You know that dull white city on the edge of the drab desert, with its wide shops overhung by latticed balconies and its unwinding drinking-taverns and arid boulevards haunted by all the half-bred scum of a half-way country. Too tardy to be Western and too dull to seem like the East, it lacks interest except for those who like to buy gorgeous Oriental wares imported straight from Birmingham. When a boat anchors, the big impudent Arabs come climbing on deck with bales full of every kind of bargain from nougat to carpets. There is also a conjuring boy who comes—a glib dusky boy with a Western patter and an Eastern insouciance that usually brings a crowd round him. The crowd on this occasion, however, was biggest, I think, round the group consisting of Mrs. Mandaford, Mr. Luptons, and a one-eyed Mohammedan who was trying to make Mr. Luptons buy some of his Egyptian scarfs—all net and beaten silver—evidently for Mrs. Mandaford's use. It was a rich scene, the copper-colored merchant drawing his glittering wares round Madam Bluebeard's expansive shoulders, she coyly wondering which of the flimsy things most became her, Mr. Luptons dully smiling a fixed smile at each and all.

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"Happy Mr. Luptons!" I murmured, too taken aback by her self-possession to say more. But I finished the tag as soon as I had got to a safe distance. "If only he knew his happiness."

Half-way down the deck I almost knocked into the only other lady who had showed herself. She was a Mrs. Simeon,

a charming person whose slender figure and sympathetic way made her the strongest possible contrast to Madam Bluebeard. I think it was the force of the contrast that gave me the idea of consulting her.

"May I?" I said, as I sat down beside her after handing her to a chair. "I think I am like Mr. Luptons—in need of some female society."

"Mr. Luptons?" she said. "Mrs. Mandaford has just informed me so. Also that he will shortly get it, as they are going to be married."

"Poor little man!" she said, and laughed merrily. Then she saw me looking serious. "But what's the matter with you? You're not jealous, are you? Or is it that you don't think they'll be happy?"

"I think it'll be tragedy," I said. "That's why I've come to you to ask if you can't find a way out of it for him."

"She would not take me seriously at first."

"Talk of a woman meddling!" she said. "You men are much worse. And meddling in a love-affair, of all things."

"It's not," I said, stoutly.

"How do you know?" she insisted. "Love is a very funny thing. I've known men—"

"Oh, I dare say you have," I said. "But this is different. It's a tragedy. For the credit of your sex you ought to help him. Think of that woman. All the men on board call her Madam Bluebeard."

"Men are gossips, she said. But I think she was a little impressed. "I tell you what went on after a little pause and screwing of eyebrows. "If it's a certainty that the little man has been driven into it against his will, I'll try and help him out of it. But we must be sure of that. No guess-work! He'll have to state his unwillingness."

"He will," I prophesied.

"Tell me what he does," she said.

As it turned out, his patience and sense of chivalry staved off the confession for a day or two, nor was it till we had passed through the Straits of Messina that he spoke. Ours was one of the first big boats to go through after the earthquake, and as every one was busy looking through glasses at the strewn heaps of stone and dust that once were lovely Southern cities, the chief officer joined a little group of us.

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was crouched, unspeakably dismal and prepared for his fate, I suspect, with opium. I tapped him on the shoulder. "I must drown now," he said, simply, coming to his feet with a salaam. "The sahib wishes it?"

"The sahib wishes you to go overboard now," I said. "You will not drown. He will save you. There is the boat." I pointed to where it lay dimly visible a few yards from the ship. "Go down to the lower deck, and when no one is looking jump into the water. You will make a loud splash and the sahib will come after you."

I left him, a little doubtfully, but within two minutes the splash of him was distinctly audible. I was leaning conveniently on the rails just above, and I turned my head to see that Mr. Luptons, who had taken my chair, started up nervously, but sat back again.

"It's your bearer, I cried. "You're not going to let the poor fellow drown, are you?"

"No, no," said Mr. Luptons, and I saw Mrs. Simeon whisper to him. At that he came trotting over, and the next moment he, too, was struggling in the black water.

"Good!" I said to myself, throwing a life-belt overboard, and was horrified to see Mrs. Mandaford suddenly appear from the companionway. She came straight at me.

"Who is it?" she cried. Already there were shouts of alarm overboard and people were rushing about. "Mr. Luptons," I said. "He's gone to save Peter."

"And aren't you going to save him? You're his friend? No, you're a coward, I see."

I shrank back dismayed. A man doesn't care to be taxed with his cowardice, even if he knows that it is diplomacy. I shrank back, but before I could gather my wits to make an answer, a miracle had occurred. Madam Bluebeard, with some gymnastic effort of which I should have deemed her incapable, had flung herself over the rails after her betrothed. A great shouting noise showed that the sea had received this brave woman. . . .

Again I have to leave to the imagination the scene that followed. It was confusion twice confounded, full of much rushing up and down, shouting of directions, and sacrificing of life-belts. In the darkness Mrs. Simeon and I sat and quaked. What, if somebody had been drowned? Not till nearly twenty minutes later were we relieved. Then to the side of the ship lined with excited passengers there pulled a boat manned by French sailors and bringing with it Peter, a damp white bundle of shivers and chattering teeth; Mr. Luptons, limp and streaming; and Mrs. Mandaford, wet but undismayed. The two men were put on board first by her orders; afterward she came, Amazonian from the foot of Mrs. Simeon and I exchanged a despairing glance and joined in the cheers and clapping that greeted her.

"Hot blankets for all!" she said and stalked off to her own cabin.

I turned to Mrs. Simeon.

"Well?" I said.

"She's got him," returned that lady, "and I'm not sure that she doesn't deserve him. I only hope and trust that that little man hasn't given us away by telling her the whole conspiracy."

"Good heavens!" I said. "I never thought of that. I think I shall go and see."

I went, inwardly afraid, but I was destined to more surprises than one that day. As I entered our cabin, Mr. Luptons rose in his berth, held out both hands, and said:

"I shall never be grateful enough to you."

"For being the means of showing me the great happiness in store for me. Sir," he went on fervently, "I am a wretched, unimaginative man, and I am ashamed to own that even after I had won her I did not sufficiently appreciate her."

"Mrs. Mandaford?" I interjected to make sure.

"Yes," said Mr. Luptons, ecstatically. "The noblest woman in the world! And the bravest. I told her so in the boat."

"You didn't, I suppose, mention," I began, cautiously, "our little—"

"Plot?" said Mr. Luptons. "No, I shall never do that. It would spoil the romance."

"The romance?" I echoed, and added hastily, "Yes—of course."

But Mr. Luptons was not heeding me. "It is such a romance as I have never dreamt of," he said, thoughtfully. "to have a heroine for my wife. She has promised to marry me as soon as possible after landing."

"Heartiest congratulations," I said, and turned to go, for Mr. Luptons struck me. "About Peter?" I asked.

"My future wife says that she will never willingly allow me to part from Peter. If he can stand our climate. You see, but for him it would never have happened. He is a part of the romance."

"Quite so," I said. There was nothing else to say.—By R. E. Verne, in Harper's Weekly.

Education in Oregon.

ANCHOR, OREGON, APRIL 30, 1910. Special correspondence of the "Watchman."

The educational system of Oregon is fine, resembling in its workings a vast machine in the highest sense in which the term is used. Each part of it comes in contact with the central power. Every pupil who graduates from the common school comes in touch intellectually with the State Board of Education. This body consists of the Governor, Secretary of State and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. One of its duties is to prepare the questions for all examinations above the seventh grade and for all teachers' examinations. The latter are held twice every year, extending over a period of three days. One begins the second Wednesday in February ending the Friday following, the other begins the second Wednesday in August and lasts until the following Friday. All teachers throughout the State who are candidates for teachers' certificates at the same time answer the same questions on the same day, in the same manner, on the same kind of paper—legal cap; and those in each county at the same place, usually the county seat. This, in some instances, means several days travel if the applicant happens to be located in a distant part of the county and far from the railroad.

The members of the examining board—the county superintendent and one or

two assistants—do not know what questions will be asked until the papers containing the questions are ready for distribution. The State superintendent sends the questions in sealed packages to the county superintendents of the several counties who do not open the package until the classes are assembled.

Before the class begins work an envelope containing a numbered card is given to each member, who signs the card and makes a note of the number. The card is then returned to the envelope which is sealed. These envelopes are collected and laid aside until after the examination papers have been graded.

The sealed package containing the questions is now opened and a number of sealed envelopes—one for each branch in the curriculum—are taken out. These are opened as their contents are required in the progress of the work. The questions are distributed; the answers designated by numbers are written with pen and ink, on legal cap and signed with the candidate's number, the same as that on the card. The result of this method is a strictly impartial grading of certificates.

No teacher may teach within the State without first passing an examination in Oregon School Law.

The State Text Book Commission, a body consisting of five members appointed by the Governor, decide what text books shall be in use in the State for the ensuing six years. This insures a uniform system of text books and prevents needless changes being made. School boards have nothing to do with the text books. Pupils furnish their own books and school supplies. But the State furnishes free library books to all the schools. These books are selected by the State Library Commission and paid for out of the library fund. The library fund is secured by an additional tax of ten cents per capita to be collected with the school and other taxes. To raise the school tax, the county court levies a tax on all property, sufficient to amount to the sum of seven dollars for every child eligible to school registration, between the ages of four and twenty years. This money is placed in the hands of the county treasurer. It is apportioned by the county superintendent as follows: One hundred dollars is first placed to the credit of every school in the county; the balance is then divided among the schools according to the number of pupils belonging to each school. If these two sums do not amount to three hundred dollars a special tax, not to exceed five mills, is laid on the property of the district which is deficient. If this does not reach the required three hundred dollar amount the deficit is made up by an appropriation from the irreducible school fund.

Public lands that have been set aside for school purposes—two sections in every township—are sometimes held and the money is placed on interest. This with gifts, bequests, etc., form the irreducible school fund. Only the interest of this fund is used.

Every school must be in session not less than six months during the school year, and must cost at least three hundred dollars, eighty-five per cent. of which must be paid to teachers'. But many districts have more than six months school, spend more than three hundred dollars on them and pay more than eighty-five per cent. of it to their teacher.

Some districts have school in the summer because the amount of rainfall in the winter makes traveling to and from school quite difficult west of the Cascade mountains, and east of the mountains the snow gets deep and the weather cold. But town schools and many of the country schools are in progress during the winter.

The course of study is arranged by the state board of education, and is uniform; every school in the State being expected to do a prescribed amount of work in a given period of time.

Through the courtesy of Hon. J. H. Ackerman, state superintendent of public instruction, I am enabled to give the following figures, taken from the biennial report made in the year 1908. When reading the figures given below, it is well to remember the fact that the law making the minimum length of term six months and the minimum amount spent on each school three hundred dollars annually did not go into effect until 1909. Also that the population has greatly increased since 1908.

Pupils enrolled (6 to 21 years)..... 107,483

Pupils registered in estimating school tax (4 to 20 years)..... 160,042

Number of teachers employed..... 4,243

Amount paid to teachers..... \$1,719,044.56

Amount paid for library books..... 14,727.65

Value of school property..... 7,041,416.00

The University of Oregon, school for the blind, and the school for deaf mutes are all state schools and belong to the educational system of the State.

M. V. THOMAS.

The Philadelphia Record

prints every day in the year the undoctored news of the day, only weeding out mere sensation and smut.

The Record prints the actual markets, the record each day of actual transactions. Its market figures are the basis upon which the seller sells and buyer buys on the date of its quotation. It is a recognized authority.

There is no other paper printed in Pennsylvania that takes such painstaking care to keep farmers and merchants thoroughly posted.

There is no other paper that more strongly appeals to the general readers to be informed.

There is no other paper in the State of Pennsylvania of such wide circulation.

—Subscribe for the WATCHMAN.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

As thou sweetest so shalt thou reap. Smile and thou shalt smart.

—Emerson.

Whistling is a very valuable physical exercise when properly employed, and if the children are inclined to whistle they should be encouraged. The habit of whistling develops the skill in breath control. To whistle properly one must take a deep breath through the nostrils and in addition, keep the lungs well inflated. Together with right breathing goes a good circulation and from that follows good digestion.

In suits with any pretense of elaborateness, pockets are a prominent feature. Even in plain suits the pockets are conspicuous for odd shape and finish.

Fancy tailor-mades from Paris show the pockets a mass of out-of-date.

In these coats are only long enough to allow a place for the pockets below the waistline.

Often the edges of the jacket are braided or embroidered in the same way, and the lapels and collars always are.

In these suits collars are of the shawl type in the waistline or near it.

It is rather superfluous to say more about foulard when so much has been said, but it is not quite possible to keep off the subject when it dominates the shops and the dressmakers. The two fabrics one hears most about are chiffon veiling and foulard. Both come in an infinite variety of weave and color and they are used singly or together. The fashion for veiling foulard with the transparent fabric in another color or another tone has gone steadily into popularity. It is possible that the exclusives are a little afraid of it, and individual gowns will not be made up in this way, but its popularity there is no question.