

TURNING A NEW LEAF A NEW YEAR'S STORY

By MANDA L. CROCKER.

MRS. MARCIA BERRIE had been mistress of the Shelly Farms for only a few short months; but long enough, after all, for every one in the neighborhood to have an opinion of John Berrie's second wife.

She dressed finer than his first wife did—most second wives do—she spent more hours at the piano, and seemed several degrees more aristocratic than the first Mrs. Berrie.

It was an honored custom, reaching back to the stouter branches of the ancestral tree, for the owner of the Farms to give a New Year's dinner to the countryside; and each guest was invited to come and "turn a new leaf for yearly luck."

Of course, it was the "firsts," and not the "seconds" or "thirds," as the shippers say, who enjoyed these annual feasts and, usually, they began several weeks before to plan "what to wear." This year it seemed a necessity to be a little more particular about the cut of gowns and width of trimmings, for the new Mrs. Berrie was a lady of means in her own right, and dressed elaborately.

"We must make an impression," said Mrs. Wilton, decisively, "and she must feel that our presence is an honor to the Farms. I intend to have a new silk; a regular dinner party dress."

And so the "firsts" planned to surpass all former efforts, for the sake of profound impression; therefore, by the middle of December a score of lovely new gowns were the pride of as many ambitious feminine owners.

The mistress of Shelly Farms was affable and gracious to all, and the tony "firsts" were just dying to display their new costumes in her honor. But for some unaccountable reason the invitations were tardy.

Could it be possible that the second wife was one of those new women, who would, at one fell swoop, eliminate the annual dinner? And would John Berrie stand that?

In sheer desperation of suspense, Mrs. Goldwaite was delegated to call at the Farms, ostensibly to speak of a philanthropic movement, but really to scent the New Year festivities and overdue cards.

Mrs. Berrie received her visitor very courteously and pleasantly, and supported the philanthropic idea enthusiastically, even graciously accepting the presidency of the society when they should organize. But when the conversation drifted into holiday news the caller could not, by any tact, draw out the bride's plans concerning New Year's day. Exasperated, Mrs. Goldwaite suddenly let go skimming and asked her, point blank, "if the Farms would give annual dinner this year?"

"O, certainly," answered the new wife, her face lighting up with pleasure, "husband and I have been planning for that some time. The invitations are late, but Mr. Berrie could not help me until to-day, and I am not well enough to send them this week, however, and



"How About Your Annual Dinner?"

"I shall enjoy the 'new leaf turning' with my neighbors exceedingly." This information was what Mrs. Goldwaite had talked philanthropy for two full hours for, and she took her leave, feeling that she was a heroine of the first water. But Mrs. Berrie accompanied her caller to the front gate in her eagerness to talk more about the "movement." "It is to elevate the toilers, I understand," she said, "and to get in touch with our poorer neighbors?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Goldwaite, hesitating to break up her luxurious New Year's dream by bumping against the intrusive fact that washwomen and ditch diggers occupied the same planet together with the "firsts."

"Yes," she repeated, "and when we organize you will accept the presidency?" and she got up an interested look, almost as good as the genuine.

"Certainly," was the reply. "I thank you for the honor," and Mrs. John Berrie grasped the caller's hand fervently. The delegate was not very favorably influenced by the young wife's enthusiasm over the question, and the pressure of her hand chilled, rather than thrilled, her sensitive heart.

But one consoling thought ran through all: they never would "organize." It was only a subterfuge to nose out something more substantial.

Mrs. Goldwaite tripped along to the turning, where she met Mrs. Wilton, who seemed in her pines to ask breathlessly: "Did you find out?"

"To be sure; it takes me to find out," and she tossed her head in triumph. "They will have the dinner as usual. But Mrs. Berrie, not being acquainted, could not write the invitations alone; and Mr. Berrie could not help her until to-day."

"O, yes!" cried Mrs. Wilton, "that accounts for it all. Well, we are ready and will be delighted to help turn the new leaf this year, because of the sweet

beginning." She was wonderfully elated, though, over the philanthropic work," and Mrs. Goldwaite rolled up her eyes in mock seriousness. Both ladies giggled and clapped their hands, immensely amused

at the adroitness of their "feint" and its success.

The expectant "firsts" were all agog for a few days, looking for invitations; but, strange to say, not one of them received the familiar square envelope with the Berrie coat-of-arms in the corner, and things were once more fast assuming the mysterious.

But everything was made exceedingly plain, finally, by the buxom Mrs. Meigs, washer-woman for a trio of the immaculate set.

"And it's me and mine who are going to have a fine dinner on New Year's day!"



"Naw, Yer Away Off!"

she boasted to Mrs. Wilton on the next Monday morning, as she ran her broad hand through the steaming suds.

"Some one going to send you a nice basket?" queried Mrs. Wilton, thinking at once of the benevolent president to be. "Naw! yer away off!" laughed the woman of labor. "We've an invitation to the New Year's dinner at Shelly Farms; got it in a fine cover with the Berrie army coat blazed onto the corner of it."

"Why Mrs. Malinda Meigs!" exclaimed the astonished Mrs. Wilton, "you are not joking me?"

"No, ma'am, I'm not," giving the handle of the wringer an emphatic yank; "it's the Bible truth. And I was so tickled at what she writ onto the gold edged card, she sent me."

"What was that?" asked Mrs. Wilton, desperately the awfulness of a philanthropic "movement" gripping her heart-strings.

"Why, she writ that 'she and her husband would invite the worthy poor to dine with them on New Year's day.' I don't know what she meant by that, but I'm sure it's a grand thing. 'where be you going to dine, New Year's, ma'am?' 'I hardly know yet,' answered Mrs. Wilton, truthfully; then she fled to the closet and studied the fine, new dinner dress, with conflicting thoughts.

For a young chit from college to come lording it into their midst and make such unkind of snubbing plans in her endeavor to appear peculiar, was simply outrageous! The Shelly Farms' new leaf was indeed abominable! Something would have to be done to offset this disgusting philanthropy.

By four o'clock that afternoon Mrs. Wilton had made the rounds of the insulted elite of the countryside; and a swell dinner-party had been arranged for, at Mrs. Goldwaite's, for three solid reasons. First, to air their new toilettes; second, to soothe one another in their common grievance, and third, the Goldwaite cottage was so situated that they could easily see the coarse tide of the "seconds"—and possibly the "thirds"—flow to the farms.

Punctually at the appointed time the outraged upper current gathered at the appointed place to see the outrageous under current set toward the philanthropic president.

By three o'clock all the indigent but respectable people of the neighborhood had gone by in their Sunday best.

"Onions and sauerkraut!" drawled Mr. Wilton, as a German family passed on foot.

"Our white necktie brigade," commented another "first," as the pastor of a poor church, a mile away, and the superintendent of its Sunday school, together with a dozen scholars, went by in a double sleigh. And the "firsts" rustled their silks and smiled in aristocratic contempt.

Before the Goldwaite party broke up, however, a messenger from the Farms bowed himself into their midst and out again, leaving the hostess looking suspiciously at a message in her hand, with "the army coat blazed onto the corner," as Mrs. Meigs would have said. She glanced timidly around the expectant circle and finally drew forth a daintily perfumed note and read:

"A very happy New Year to all! It has occurred to us, dear people, that you may not have comprehended our motive in bidding our guests for the day. As we all are interested in philanthropic work, we will be understood when we say, the new leaf we turned is very timely and beautiful, and has made many hearts happy. Husband and I turned the leaf suggested by Luke, the beloved physician. We knew you were all well able to return the compliment, and so we had those who could not recompense us.

"We extend greetings and desire that you all rejoice with us. Mr. and Mrs. John Berrie, Shelly Farms."

"The 'firsts' looked soberly at each other; the spirit of the note touched the good in them and the new dinner dresses were, for the time, forgotten.

"Yes," they said, "the whole neighborhood has enjoyed a Happy New Year to-day. Surely it is a pleasant new leaf!" But the philanthropic society has never been organized, although the prospective president is ready and waiting.

It Depends. "Prevention is better than cure." "Not if you have a nice young physician."—Detroit Free Press.

The Town Crier. "This town is so antique," remarked the drummer, "perhaps you have a town crier." "Oh, yes," chuckled the oldest inhabitant, "we have a town crier. It is Mrs. Buster's new baby."—Chicago Daily News.

Making Himself Understood. Indignant Artist (to friendly critic)—You say it's a bad picture. What can you know about pictures? You never try to paint them!

Friendly Critic—My dear fellow, I know a bad egg, but I never try to lay them.—Tit-Bits.

Not an Admirer. She was a maiden fair to see. As on the chair she sat; But that cut no ice with me— She was sitting on my hat. —Chicago Daily News.

Two Resolutions That Failed

By ELISA ARMSTRONG BENGOUGH.

YOU were going to give your husband a lovely surprise for New Year's; do tell me how it turned out!" said the bride's friend. "Did you carry out your intention?"

"I did, and I can safely say that I will never give him another surprise as long as I live. You see, he had resolved not to lose his temper or complain about anything about the house for the entire year. I was so pleased that I wanted to do something awfully nice in return. Finally, I decided to become a model housekeeper, and, by way of showing the depth of my resolve, I decided to cook his New Year's dinner myself."

"H'm, perhaps it was as well that he did resolve to keep his temper for an



"I've Resolved Not to Lose My Temper."

entire year. Fudge and angel's food are not very filling for a hungry man."

"Fudge and angel's food—the idea! I decided on a menu of six courses, and spent ten days in looking up the recipes for it and studying them. Unfortunately, the exertion made me so tired that I became mentally upset and was apt to confuse a recipe for Italian cream with one for creamed lobster, and they are very, very different. However, when New Year's day really came and Harry said that he must spend the greater part of it at the office going over his accounts I felt that success was sure."

"By the way, haven't you a good cook? And didn't you let her help and advise you?"

"She wanted to, but I told her that she needed a holiday and must take it while I got the dinner. She then confessed that she didn't want to go and would be beau was coming to see her and would be offended if she was out. I told her that made no difference; that what you did on New Year's day you did the year round and if she did not work on that day she would doubtless be married to a millionaire and living a life of luxurious idleness within six months."

"Humph. Did she go then?" "She did. Then I set to work, and, oh, how I did work, but somehow nothing was—well, quite like the pictures in the household magazines. The odor of things burning, too, became so strong that the man from next door—a perfect stranger—came over to see if the house was on fire and if he could be of any use."

"Well, luckily, you could air the whole place thoroughly before Harry came home."

"I did. By noon I had cooked enough to feed a regiment—dinner was to be at three—but somehow it did not seem very appetizing, so I decided to have only four courses; that was a more economical dinner for a young couple anyhow. When Harry arrived, promptly at three, I was all ready and trying to look as if I felt cool and hide the two burned and one cut finger. I had decided that three courses were enough for anybody save a guttun, by that time."

"Well, I am sure that everything was very nice."

"It—well, it was not quite perfect; I had forgotten to stuff the chickens and I had put salt in the cranberries instead of sugar, but that was mere detail, for the table looked lovely with all my best linen, embroideries, silver, glass and china on it. As I wanted to surprise him thoroughly, I did not tell him that I had cooked it myself—I meant to tell him that at the very last."

"As a sort of postscript to the dessert. How nice!"

"M'h'm. Well, though he had said he was wildly hungry, he did not eat—just played with things. He kept starting to speak, too, and then shutting his mouth tight without saying a word. Something was wrong with the coffee, though I had put in twice as much as the cook book said. As he set down his cup, well, rather more forcefully than was quite necessary, he said: 'Well, dear, it is New Year's day, and I have resolved not to lose my temper for an entire year, but I must say one thing: the girl who cooked that dinner must be dismissed before to-morrow's sun is up. A woman who would give a hungry man underdone chicken, overdone potatoes and asbestos pie, would be capable of murdering us in our beds!'"

"Oh, well, you need never tell him that you cooked that dinner."

"I didn't tell him, but he undertook to discharge the cook, and she did!"

As the Old Year Fades. No, you needn't call me early, needn't call me, mother dear. I'll know without your waking me that 'tis the glad New Year. For every whistle in the town will blow from 12 to 1. And boys with dog-dinged horns, mother, will tout a few for me. —Chicago Tribune.

Making Them Comfortable. Cors—Oh, papa, why have you moved the sofa out into the middle of the room? Papa—I thought you would want it there, since you have hung the mistletoe on the chandelier.—Town Topics.

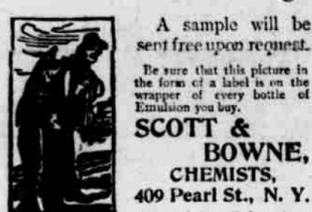
Consumption

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Strictly Business. "Is she a business woman?" "Yes, indeed. She refers to her engagements as options."—Town Topics.

FOR FUTURE CONSUMPTION.



"Judge, I want to swear off to-day. What'll you charge for a pledge?" "Twenty-five cents." "Can't you make it five for a dollar?"

A Genuine Picnic. Johnny Jones—Did you have fun watching the old year out and the new year in? Willie Boorum—Did I? Say! I watched my sister and her beau watch the old year out and the new year in!—Brooklyn Eagle.

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Tough Parishioners. Deacon Blunt—So your congregation gave you no vacation this year? Bominy Dull—Not a week; not a day. Deacon Blunt—Well! well! They are the hardest people to tire out I ever heard of.—N. Y. Weekly.

An Incurable Case. "When a man's unconscious he doesn't know anything, does he, pop?" "No, my son." "Well, pop, are you unconscious? I heard ma say you didn't know anything."—Yonkers Statesman.

Then and Now. Once, long ago, 'twas her delight, To dress up in a handsome gown; But now, when he's out late at night She likes to dress her hubby down. —Chicago Daily News.

DIED INSOLVENT.



"Have you heard—Frau von Specht is dead." "Indeed? It's hard to believe it! Why, she owed me a call."—Unsere Gesellschaft.

True Philosophers. The true philosophers are those Who treat all men as brothers, And while they smile at their own woes Believe the woes of others. —Philadelphia Press.

Earned It. "How did he ever get the title of 'Hon.?'"

"He declined a nomination for alderman once."—Chicago Tribune.

And Allimony. Mrs. Dearborn—And what has she got to show for her marriage? Mrs. Wabash—A divorce.—Yonkers Statesman.

The Surprised Statesman. A mighty speech he paused to frame, And zealously displayed it; And yet the world went on the same As if he'd never made it. —Washington Star.

His Remarkable Power. "Jingle has the most complete confidence in the power of mind over matter."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, I've known him myself to go home loaded and compel the keyhole to remain stationary until he got his key in."—Baltimore News.

A Frequent Invitation. "A minister must find it rather hard to keep temperate."

"I don't see why."

"Well, you know, there are so many couples coming around and saying, 'Will you join us?'"—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Disenchanted. "How did you enjoy your visit to the Bermudas, Uncle Jed?"

"I was a good deal disappointed. The onions didn't come up to my expectations. Why, gosh, I've eat better Bermuda onions right here!"—Chicago Tribune.

For Him to Say. "Bridget," inquired the mistress of the house, "were you entertaining a policeman in the kitchen last night?"

"Sure, mum," replied the cook lady, "'n it's fer him t' say how entertainin' O' was. O' was doin' me bist."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Facetious One. "I notice," remarked the facetious one to the man whose face bore evidences of a poor barber's work, "that you've had a close shave recently."

The victim glared. "Not as close as yours," he finally remarked; "you're the tenth man who's fired the same joke at me, and the rest are in the hospital."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Notice Special Coat Sale

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Hiram Hayseed—All the this here line are limited. Drummer—Limited? Hiram Hayseed—Yes; I'm eight miles an hour.—Londoner-Journal.