

HER RIVAL IN MARBLE

By CLINTON DANGERFIELD

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"I know I'd oughtn't to mind it," whispered Lucinda repentantly to herself as she pushed another pie into the oven. "John an' me done been married six months now, an' 'cept for one thing I ain't got a sorrow."

She shut the door resolutely on the pie, as though to inclose her secret care in the oven also, and then went deftly around the sunny kitchen putting house-wifely touches here and there.

No prettier girl than Lucinda was ever born in quiet little Greenville. She was so pretty indeed that when John Logan, a widower of thirty-eight, married her and bore her away to his home in a Georgia village there were many to predict that Lucinda would spend most of her time "trimping."

But no girl was ever more anxious to win her husband's praise, and it was the qualifications attending that praise that troubled her sorely.

Out in the daisied Lafayette cemetery slept all that was left of Martha



"I HATE YOU!" SHE CRIED. "I HATE YOU!" Logan, his first wife. Her tombstone was almost a monument. Clearly cut on its chaste surface was the following epitaph:

To the Memory of MARTHA LOGAN. In Remembrance of Her Unexampled Virtues as a Wife.

Merely the word "virtues" was a crown of praise indeed. But "unexampled" before it gave crushing weight to John Logan's constant recital of his dead partner's perfections.

No matter how flaky Lucinda's pies and biscuits, the utmost she could win from John was a gentle—

"Nearly as good as Martha's, dear. Jest keep on—you'll get there."

Once when Lucinda, provoked over some little thing, raised her sweet voice a trifle shrilly John said slowly:

"Martha used to get fretted sometimes, I guess, but she had a motto she kept pasted up on the wall. Took it from a play actor's book, but 'twas good. Ran about like this: 'Her voice was low and soft allers—an excellent thing in woman.'"

And Lucinda had blushed scarlet and lowered hers. A hatred which she felt to be inexplicably wicked swelled at last in the girl's heart. Often when she passed the cemetery on her way from the village store she felt an urgent desire to go in and defy the sleeper with scornful words.

She put away the thought again and again, but at last it overcame her. One dusky summer evening, John not being due till late, she found herself standing beside Martha's stately tomb in the cold moonlight.

"I hate you!" she cried. "I hate you—you detestable woman!"

The sound of her voice echoed through the pale little epigram of the dead and terrified her, but she relished.

"Yes; I mean it! I want you to hear! I don't believe you are in heaven. You're under that stone, putting ideas in John's head every day!"

"Ahem," said a voice dryly.

"Why, Uncle Lemuel?" gasped Lucinda, recognizing a village patriarch universally called by that name. "Was you listening?"

"Don't have to do much listenin' when folks is shoutin' like you was," returned Uncle Lemuel, still more dryly.

Lucinda hung her pretty head, then burst into a flood of tears.

"She takes it all—ah!" she wailed. "No matter how patient I am, I kahn't be as patient as she was nor so low voiced nor such a c-c-cook."

Uncle Lemuel seated himself on a convenient corner of the tombstone.

"S that so?" he remarked, with a curious infection in his voice. "Waal, I kin tell you somethin' of her cookin'."

Lucinda sat upright, with blazing eyes.

"Be quiet," she said, beside herself. "Was she to hear Martha's praises even now?"

"Her cakes," went on Uncle Lemuel, untroubled, "would have made excellent military fortifications; her pie crust was a cross between injer rubber an' glue, an' 'er her biscuits"— He paused and shuddered.

"Uncle Lemuel," stammered Lucinda, "do you know what you're sayin'?"

"Heckon so," returned Lemuel calmly. "I boarded with Martha an' John a month. Took myself off arter that. She scolded from mornin' to night. She pecked on John till of he hadn't been the kindest hearted feller in the world he'd 'a' beat her. 'Unexampled virtues,' indeed!" chuckled the old man.

"But why, then—why," gasped Lucinda, now on her feet and pointing tragically to the elegant inscription—"why did he leave that dedication wrote there?"

The old man chuckled again.

"He done the whole thing on your account."

"On mine—on mine?"

"Jest so. He come to me an' he says, 'Uncle,' he says, 'I'm goin' to marry the prettiest girl in the world, an' of so he she don't make a good wife 'twill break my heart. I laid awake for weeks, God knows,' he says, 'thinkin' how to guide her right. I kahn't heeter a woman. An' so,' he says, 'I'm goin' to let Martha do me one good turn. I'm goin' to let her be a shinin' ensample of the way Lucinda shall walk.'"

"And she really?"

"Was the crufest cross a man ever stood. Sence you kept his house you've made it like heaven to him. He tells me so every day. But it's time you should know the truth, Lucinda. I see you're gettin' kinder angry at the trick, Lucinda, specially as you never did need no such guidance. But of you'd 'a' known his former spierences, Lord—Lord!"

Uncle Lemuel broke into a fit of laughter that rang scandalously clear through the graveyard. After a short pause Lucinda, among whose rare gifts was a sense of humor, joined him.

It was 9 o'clock before John Logan came home. As he sat down to the daintiest of suppers and fell to, Lucinda, sitting opposite with dancing eyes and rose pink cheeks, asked smilingly:

"How's your coffee, John?"

"Best I"—he began. Then, true to his formula, he said kindly, "Nigh as good as Martha's used to be."

"John," said Lucinda, with a sudden gravity, yet belied by her still dancing eyes, "John, I've sad news for you." Then, as he held his cup in midair, she added mournfully, "Martha is dead!"

The coffee cup went crashing on the floor as John sprang up.

"Dead! What do you mean, Lucinda? You know she's been dead five years!"

Lucinda smiled serenely.

"No, she hasn't, John, but she died this evening—there in the churchyard—at 7 o'clock!"

The Hero.

He was a thoughtful citizen and kindly withal.

The building upon which his eyes were fastened was in flames.

From a third story window protruded a head.

It was a disheveled head bearing a child's golden curls.

At home a little golden haired girl was awaiting him.

What if that were his own?

The impulse to tear his coat from his manly form and rush up the ladder to seize the child and bear her to safety was strong upon him.

How strong nobody but himself knew.

For another feeling had come over him.

He thought: "Suppose I should rush up to that window and save that child. The papers would be full of it. I should become a hero. Some fireman would thus be cheated out of his just meed of praise. Whatever I am I am not selfish and greedy. Let the other man have the glory. I shall sacrifice my personal interests and remain a humble citizen."

Saying which wise and courageous things within himself, he stood without moving a muscle while a large and brawny fireman carried the little girl down a ladder and placed her in the arms of her frantic mother.

Moral.—True heroism often exists in men who are too modest to let the public even suspect it.—Baltimore American.

Two Ways of Seeing a Picture.

An artist had sold a picture for an exorbitant price, and the purchaser sought to recover. The barrister for the purchaser was making the artist uncomfortable by his questions.

"Now, sir," he said in that pleasant, ingratiating manner of lawyers with a witness, "do you think anybody could see beauty in that picture?"

"Some persons certainly could," replied the artist.

"You think the initiated in technical matters might have no difficulty in understanding your work?"

"I am sure they would not."

"Do you think you could make me see any beauty in that picture?" this most superciliously.

"Probably not now, sir," and the artist was most humble. "But once I

could have done so easily.

"Now, sir, how is that? I don't understand you. Explain if you please."

"That's quite easy, sir. I could have done it simply by employing you as my counsel in this case."—London Times.

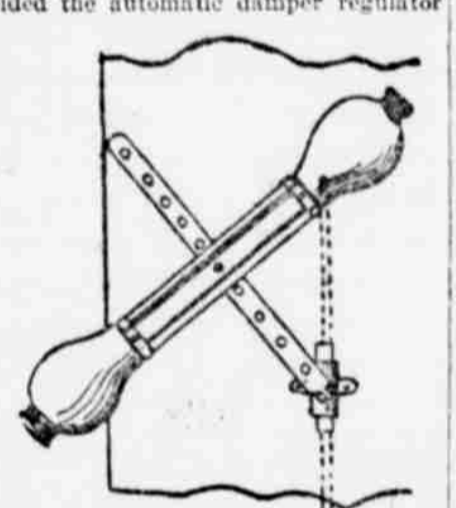
A Mantless Island Colony.

On a small island in the Greek archipelago there is a colony which is composed entirely of women. It is a sort of religious order which considers it a disgrace for one of its members to even look at a man. So when a fisherman approaches the island the women pull the gray cowls of their cassocks over their heads and turn their backs. Provisions are never imported, as the women raise their own products, being strict vegetarians. Only the matron, who is annually elected head of the colony, is ever allowed to leave the island. The others remain on the island all their lives, taking their turn at tilling the soil, washing, housekeeping and fishing.

DAMPER REGULATOR.

Mercury Utilized in Automatically Opening and Closing Drafts.

Shoveling coal into a furnace, opening the drafts and allowing the coal to consume itself rapidly is one thing, and regulating the dampers so as to burn the coal economically and produce a healthful temperature in the rooms is another thing. Probably the former proposition is the easier to handle, as it requires little or no brain work, but it has the disadvantage that it also necessitates a good supply of cold cash. However, the better way need not be any more difficult than the other, provided the automatic damper regulator



EXPANDING MERCURY CLOSURE FLUE.

which we present in the accompanying illustration is utilized to control the combustion in the fire box.

On the ordinary damper there is a small handle by which it can be rotated in either direction to open or close the passage leading from the fire box to the chimney. To handle this the inventor proposes to attach a bar having a number of perforations arranged at intervals for the insertion of the connecting bolt of the regulating device. The latter consists of a bulb containing an expansible substance, such as mercury. The damper is supposed to be almost equally balanced with this attachment in position, and it only requires the raising of the temperature to the proper point, which may be predetermined and the gauge adjusted accordingly, to expand the mercury to such a height in the obliquely mounted tube that the displaced weight will tilt the damper into a closed position and maintain it there until the temperature again falls below the degree for which the gauge is set.

Another Name For It.

The veterinary made a critical examination of the ailing steer.

Here and there, wherever the demarcation of a bone was visible, he attempted to pinch the skin.

But it would not work.

"What is the matter with it?" asked the owner of the steer.

"He has what would be called 'conservation' in a man. But as he is only a dumb brute we say he is hidebound."—Baltimore American.

Expert Testimony.

"To settle a bet," said the visitor, "how long can a man go without food?"

"Ask the man over there," said the snake editor.

"Is he the editor who answers questions?"

"No; he's a poet."—Philadelphia Press.

Grin Collection of Pens.

As the prison of St. Paul, at Lyons, France, there is a curious collection of pens. They are the pens with which the executioners have signed the regulation receipts for the prisoners handed over to them to be guillotined. At each execution a fresh pen is used for the purpose, and the ink is left to dry upon it.

Chinese Junk Sails.

There are tens of thousands of junks in China which use sails made of American cotton goods.

THE DEATH CUP.

This Deadly Fungus Resembles Several Edible Mushrooms.

Perhaps the most deadly of the poisonous fungi of our woods and fields is the fairly well known death cup (*Amanita phalloides*), particularly dangerous from its resemblance to several of the edible mushrooms, though gath-

ering fungi for the table should be undertaken by none save those thoroughly acquainted with the different species, as it is altogether too easy for the ignorant enthusiast to make an error which may prove fatal to his friends.

The death cup referred to has a round cap, white, yellowish or greenish in color, and the stem has a swollen base, surrounded by an envelope, or veil, of a white filmy substance, which parts as the stalk extends upward. This stalk is pithy when young, but hollow at maturity, and the gills of the cap, which in the meadow mushrooms are pink or brown, are white in the deadly variety, as are also the spores, which can be plainly seen if the cap is laid, gills downward, on a piece of colored paper for a few hours. The swollen, or bulbous, base is a distinguishing characteristic, and no fungus of that appearance should be gathered for cooking. One of the liabilities is that these caps may be broken off without due observance of its base, which is often covered with earth or dead grasses, hence not distinguished from some of the Lepiota, which, however, are never surrounded with the filmy veil of the death cup.

The poisonous property of this fungus is largely the same as that found in the venom of a rattlesnake and also in cholera and diphtheria, and so far science is unable to produce any satisfactory antidote, atropine, the stomach pump and oil purgatives being about the only resources.—Washington Post.

A KOREAN CINDERELLA.

The Quaint Story of Peach Blossom, the Family Drudge.

In Korea the people tell a Cinderella story that is much more ancient than that familiar to western people. The key of the latter story is the slipper, but not so there. Peach Blossom, the Korean Cinderella's name, was the family drudge. One day as the mother was starting off with the favorite daughter to a picnic she said to Peach Blossom, "You must not leave until you have hulled a bagful of rice and filled the broken crock with water." While sitting there bemoaning her hard lot she heard a twittering and a fluttering of wings. Looking up, she saw a flock of sparrows pecking the hulls off the rice. Before recovering from her surprise a little imp jumped out of the fireplace and so skillfully repaired the crock that but a few minutes of work was required to fill it with water. Then she went to the picnic and had a royal time.

On another occasion the mother said, "You must stay until you have pulled up all the weeds in the field." This time a cow came out of the forest and ate up the weeds in ten mouthfuls. Peach Blossom followed the cow into the woods and was led to where there was an abundance of ripe, luscious fruit. Gathering a large quantity, she went to the fete and was the most welcome guest. Her jealous sister asked about it and, on being told, determined she would get some of this fruit for herself.

When the next gala day came the sister stayed at home and let Peach Blossom go. The cow came out of the woods as before, and the sister followed it through tangled briar and thorn bushes, with the result that her face was much scratched and her skin deep beauty all gone.—Exchange.

A Lazy Man.

On a hot summer's day a gentleman who was waiting for his train at one of our country stations asked a porter who was lying on one of the seats where the station master lived, and the porter, not moving, lazily pointed to the house with his foot.

The gentleman, very much struck at the man's laziness, said, "If you can show me a lazier action than that, my good man, I'll give you two and sixpence."

The porter, not moving an inch, replied, "Put it in my pocket, gov'nor."—London News.

Definite Information.

"How much are these Scotch flannels, please?" asked a woman in one of the large department stores one day last week.

"This lady will show them to you," stily replied the clerk, indicating with an indifferent nod a girl about three feet distant.

"But," persisted the woman, "I don't want to buy now. I simply want to know how much they are."

"Oh, different prices and up," was the nonchalant answer.—New York Times.

A Judge of Human Nature.

"Doctor, tell me honestly whether my health is improving or not."

"My dear sir, you're getting on famously—famously."

"You are not speaking the truth, doctor, but I can tell without your assistance whether I am getting better or not."

"How can you judge?"

"By the behavior of my hairs."—Paris Gaulois.

The Useful Banana.

Immense fortunes have been made out of the banana business. Revenues do not accrue alone from the sale of the fruit, for the leaves are used for packing, the wax found on the underside of the leaves is a valuable article of commerce, Manila hemp is made from the stems, and of this hemp are made mats, plaited work and lace handkerchiefs of the finest texture. Moreover, the banana is ground into banana flour. The island of Jamaica and the West Indies generally yield great crops of this useful fruit.

Never Weary of the Hearing.

"I overheard him telling her a story last night which I know she has heard fifty times before, but she didn't stop him."

"She is long suffering, surely."

"Oh, I don't know. He told her she was the prettiest girl he had ever seen."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Making Chills Useful.

Mrs. Newwood—My husband has the chills and fever, but they come in handy.

Mrs. Oldwood—How so?

Mrs. Newwood—Whenever he has a chill I put a rattle in his hand, and it makes the chills—Chicago Journal.

Russia's Butter.

Russia has more than doubled its butter production within the last ten years. Siberia alone now has over 600 dairies.

THE DESIRE FOR STORIES.

From the "Once Upon a Time" Stage to "That Reminds Me."

Our earliest instinct is to ask for a story, our latest to tell one unasked. Human life is bounded at either end by a phrase; "once upon a time" at one end, "that reminds me" at the other. Above the first instinct we rise gradually, gradually declining to the second. Not that the narrative sense ever dies in us; only that in the plenitude of our powers we are not satisfied with a story that is nothing more than a story, a narrative for narration's sake.

The mind of a child is all agape for facts, for it is empty, and nothing is so quickly filling, so easily assimilable, as a dish of facts. Facts of fiction are preferred by the child to actual facts because they satisfy also its strong imaginative sense. Its moral and intellectual senses are still in abeyance. Deduce from any story "a moral" or an idea, and the child runs away rudely. There lies the difference between us and it. Our moral and intellectual senses are flourishing, and by their strength our imagination is proportionately weakened. Grimm is not enough for us. Our moral sense cries aloud for Hans Andersen. Dumas leaves us cold. Our mind needs Balzac. It is not enough for us that once upon a time there were three princesses or three musketeers who suffered or did some queer things. We want those trials to illustrate, to symbolize, to mean something, to corroborate or upset some theory that we have formed, to quicken our mind and affect our conduct.

Such are the prime needs of our maturity. Comes Time, mowing away with his scythe our intellectual and moral cyclicity; nor does he restore to us our old imagination. He crops us bare of all but experience. Things that have happened—especially, old epigrams that we are, the things that have happened to ourselves—are the only things that rouse us from our lethargy. "Anecdote" is an ugly phrase. "Second childhood," less harsh, is not less exactly descriptive. For our last state, the state where narrative is absolute despot, was our first state too.—Max Beerholm in Saturday Review.

The Soldier's Idle Time.

Military life is necessarily made up largely of loafing. You cannot keep a man continuously at drilling, marching or any other branch of military training for eight hours a day and five or six days a week. You have to invent a great many other jobs for him, even to make a pretense of keeping him occupied. But these jobs are nearly all "loafing" jobs, and when it is all done the soldier has a great many more idle hours on his hands per diem than any other man in the same rank of life. I do not know whether it is possible to arrive at any remedy for this, but, if it is, the direction in which I should look for the remedy would be to make every soldier work at some other trade for a certain number of hours each day. The number of hours might be shorter in the summer, when there is more opportunity for training and military exercise, and longer in the winter. If this were practicable, no doubt it would make an enormous difference to the value of the soldier as a citizen when he leaves the ranks.—London Truth.

Catbirds and Black Snake.

A writer in the Scientific American says: "I witnessed a pair of catbirds making a bold defense against a black snake bent on devouring the contents of their nests. At first the snake was inclined to disregard the distressed birds as they fought to drive it away, but the blows of their wings and bills became so annoying that the thief had to seek refuge in flight. On reaching the roots of the tree, from which the river had washed the dirt, the snake started to climb, only to be driven beneath them and then out to an old stump, under which the baffled and beaten reptile took refuge."

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