

THE FAMILY JAMMINS PAPERS

BY CAROLYN WELLS



XVII
The Game of Going On

I mean the reception, not the house, though the statement really applies to both. The host, beside being an Englishman of the most charming type, and a clever writer, was of a genial, happy nature, which seemed to imbue the whole affair with a cozy gaiety. Though not a large tea, many literary celebrities were present, and each gave willingly of his best mentality to grace the occasion.

Now, nothing is more truly delightful than the informal chatter of good-natured, quick-witted literary people. Their true sense of values, their quick sense of humor, their receptiveness, their responsiveness, and their instantaneous perception, combine to bring forth conversation like the words of which Beaumont wrote:

So simple, and so full of subtle flame, As if that every one from whom they came Had meant to put his wit in a jest, And had resolved to live a fool the rest of his dull life. . . . Wit that might be for the whole city to talk foolishly, That were wasted.

Now, that is of this sort rare or exceptional.

Given the entree to London's literary circles, occasions abound for meeting with these companions who do converse and waste the time together.

To my great regret, this is not to be said of America. A literary tea in New York means a lot of people, some perhaps, bookishly inclined, invited to meet a celebrity of letters.

The celebrity comes late, sometimes not at all, and he or she is often enveloped in a sort of bell-shaped shyness which does not make for coherent conversation of any sort. Moreover, Americans do not know how to give an added charm to what is in itself a stupendously beautiful affair.

Dorchester House, one of the finest residences in London, is now the home of our own Ambassador, and is thrown open for a great reception on the afternoon of every Fourth of July.

As my hansom took its place in the long line of waiting carriages I glanced up at the noble old stone mansion, and was thrilled with a new sort of patriotism when I saw our own Stars and Stripes wave grandly out against the blue English sky. Our flag at home is a blessed, matter-of-fact affair; but our flag proudly topping our Embassy in another land is a thrilling proposition, and I suddenly realized the gallantry of the homely old phrase "so gallantly streaming."

Chiding myself for what I called purely emotional patriotism (but still quivering with it), I entered the marble halls of Dorchester House. A compact, slowly-moving mass of people exactly fitted the broad and truly magnificent marble staircase.

Adjusting myself as part of this ambulatory throng, we moved on, mechanically, a step at a time, toward the top. On each landing, at the great staircase turned twice, were footmen in pink satin and silver lace, who looked like valentines. They are very wonderful, those English footmen, and sometimes I think I'd rather have one than a Teddy boy.

At the top of the staircase our Ambassador and his reception party greeted a guest with a cordial perfunctoriness, that exactly suited the occasion, and then an invisible force, assisted here and there by a very visible footman, gently urged us on.

Although the thought seems inappropriate to the splendor of the occasion, yet to me the marvel of the affair was the "neatness and dispatch" with which it was managed. No crowding, no herding, no audible directions, yet the shifting thousands moved as one, and the route through

the mansion, and down another staircase, was followed leisurely, by all. One might pause in any apartment to view the pictures or the decorations, or to chat with chance-met friends. By the admirable magic of the management, this made no difference in the manipulation of the throng. Eventually one came into a great marquee, built on terraces, and exquisitely draped inside with white and pale green. Here a sumptuous feast was served with the iron hand of neatness and dispatch hidden in the velvet-glove of suavity and elegant leisure. Here, again, one met hundreds of acquaintances, and made hundreds of new ones, the orchestra played National airs under two flags, and the scene was one of the brightest phases of kaleidoscopic London.

Then on, out into the great garden, full of delightful walks, seats, flowers, music and rainbow-garbed humanity. More meetings of friends and strangers; more invitations for future going-on; more introductions to kindly celebrities; more pleasant exchange of international compliment, and above it

"American enterprise," I responded, but I learned that it had been an extraordinary and reprehensible act on the part of the official who had guided me. I was sorry to learn this, but glad that I had persevered to success.

Twelve people were at table, and that tea is among my fairest London recollections.

The very atmosphere of the Terrace is parliamentary, though of course, not in a literal sense, and vague, unmeaning visions of woolstack and wig seem to mingle with the visible realities. On one side the Thames, trombling with traffic; on the other the silent attitude of stone, that seems to grow hospitable and coo-oo-oo-oo as you stand at its feet. And between these, the tea-table with its merry group, laughing at each other's jests, and carelessly throwing about these precious invitations which keep one going on.

My rich-though neighbor proved to be a large-minded editor of delightful personality.

We talked of books, and he said quite casually: "Yes, I fancy Henry James' works. And, moreover, he's a charming man, personally. Would you care to go motoring down to Rye tomorrow, and spend the day at his place?"

While almost simultaneously on my other side a lady was saying, "Yes, indeed, I'll be glad to send you a card to the annual dinner of the women authors of Great Britain."

Truly, hospitality is the keynote of the leaders of London society. An apparent lack of warmth may sometimes be noticeable in their manner, but they deal out delightful invitations with a free and willing hand, and the quantity of which keeps one forever going on.

And, after all, one is to prove to generalize.

Hostesses are human beings, and, therefore, there are no two alike.

One may classify, and the types fall easily into classes, but one may not make sweeping assertions. And, too, in society, which the world over is a sham and purveyor of shams, are kind hearts always more than coronets?

And what one is really, perhaps flippantly, going on, one wants to see all sorts, and I went from my Terrace tea to a private view of some paintings.

Then, after a suitable robbery to a dinner; then to the opera, where the delicious incongruity of Madame Butterfly set to Italian grand opera music, was heightened by the deafening whoop and holler on the stage and waved the American flag into the very faces of the boxes full of English royalty.

And so, as Popsy would say, home, and to bed, feeling that there was certainly a fascinating exhilaration in London's game of "going on."

The appetite for the social life of London grows with what it feeds on. Although at first indisposed to be lured into the Social Vortex, I found it possessed a centripetal force which drew me steadily toward its whirling center.

Nor was it long before I became as avid as any Londoner to pursue the bewildering course known as "going on."

There is a cumulative delight in whisking from tea to tea, and no two teas are ever alike.

It pleased me greatly to classify and note the difference in London teas.

In New York all teas are alike in quality—the only difference being in quantity. But in London one tea differs from another, not only in glory, but in size, shape and color.

Yet all are enjoyable to one who understands going on. If the tea be of the Glacial Period, there is no occasion to exert your entertaining power. Simply assume an expression of bored superiority, and move about with a few murmured incoherent, and not necessarily rational words.

There is a very amusing story, which I used to think an impossible exaggeration, but which I now believe to be true.

Thus runs the tale: A guest at an afternoon tea, when spoken to by any one, invariably replied, "I was found dead in my bed this morning." As the responses to her were always, "Really?" or "Charmed, I'm sure," or "Only fancy," it is safe to assume that the remark was unheard or unheeded. But this state of things is not certainly unpleasant, or to be condemned. One does not go to a tea to improve one's mind, or to acquire valuable information. The remarks that are made are quite as satisfactory unheeded as heard. We are not pining to be told the state of the weather; we deduce our friend's good health from the fact of his presence; and it is therefore delightful to be left, unhampered, to pursue our own thoughts and, if so minded, to make to ourselves our own analytic observations on the scene before us.

Again, if the tea be of the responsive variety, and you are supposed to chat with your host, then, is he indeed in store for you—for when Londoners do talk, they talk wonderfully well.

I went one afternoon to a tea given

When Rossiter Cut Loose BY SEWELL FORD

PROFESSOR SHORTY Mc CABE'S ADVENTURE WITH TWO PRIVATE DETECTIVES AND AN ELOPEMENT

As a general thing I don't go much on looks, but I will say that I've seen handsomer specimens than Rossiter. He's got good height and plenty of reach, with legs branched out just under his armpits—you know how when clothespin fellaers are built—but when you finish out the combination with pop eyes and a couple of overhanging front teeth—well, what's the use? Rossy don't travel on his shape. He don't have to, with popper bosin' a couple of trunk lines.

When he first begun comin' to the studio I stazed him up for a soft boiled, and wondered how he could stray around town alone without havin' his shell cracked. Took me sometime, too, before I felt to the fact that Rossy was wiser'n he looked; but at that he wasn't no knowledge trank.

Just belin' good-natured was Rossy's long suit. Course, he couldn't help grin'n; his mouth is cut that way. There wasn't any mistakin' the look in them wide-set eyes of his, though. That was the real article, the genuine I'll stand for anything kind. Say, you could spring any sort of a Josh on Rossy, and he wouldn't squawl. He was one of those shy violets, too. Mostly he played a thinkin' part, and when he did talk he thinkin' part. After you got to know him real well, though, and was used to the way he looked, you couldn't help likin' Rossiter. I'd had both him and the old man as reg'lar for two or three months, and it's natural I was more or less chummy with them.

So when Rossy shows up here the other mornin', and shows out his proposition to me, I don't think nothin' of it.

"Shorty," says he, kind of fushin' up, "I've got a favor to ask of you."

"You're welcome to use all I've got in the bank," says I.

"I ain't money," says he, growin' pinker.

"Oh!" says I, like I was a lot surprised. "Your usin' the touch preamble made me think it was. What's the go?"

"I—I can't tell you just now," says he; "but I'd like your assistin' in a little affair about 8 o'clock this evening. Where can I find you?"

"Sounds mysterious," says I. "You ain't goin' up against any Canfield game, are you?"

"That's enough," says I, and I names the particular spot I'll be decoratin' at that hour.

"You won't fail?" says he, anxious.

"Not unless an ambulance gets me," says I.

Well, I didn't go around battin' my head all the rest of the day, tryin' to think out what it was Rossiter had on the card. Somehow he ain't the kind you'd look for any hot stunts from. If I'd made a guess, maybe I'd said he wanted me to take him and a college chum down to a chop suey joint for an on-ly-hi nuts an' weak tea.

So I wasn't dignifyin' that eventin', and I holds up the corner of Forty-second street, passin' the time of day with the streets and watchin' the Harlem folks stretch by to the rock gardens. Right on the tick a hansom fetches up at the curb and I sees Rossiter givin' me the wig-wag to jump in.

"You're runnin' on ahead," says I.

"Where to now?" says he.

"I think your studio would be the best place," says he, "if you don't mind."

I said I didn't, and away we goes around the corner. As we does the turn I sees another cab make a wild dash to get in front, and takin' a peek through the back window, I spots a second one followin'.

"Are we a part of a procession?" says I, pointin' 'em out to him.

He only grins and looks kind of sheepish. "That's the regular thing nowadays," says he.

"What! Tin badgers?" says I.

He nods. "They made me rather nervous at first," he says, "but after I'd been shadowed for a week or so I got used to it, and lately I've got so I would



"I SET 'EM FACE TO FACE."

feel lost without them. Tonight, though, they're rather a nuisance. I thought you might help me throw them off the track."

"But who set 'em on?" says I.

"Oh, my father, I suppose," says he, not grouty, either you, but kind of tired. "Why, Rossy?" says I. "I didn't think you was the sort that called for P. D. reports."

He didn't want to visit, not a little bit, but I was babblin' my mind with my knee, and up he sneaks thim business in comin' to see me. I standin' him under the sidewalk light where Rossiter could get a good look at him. He was a shifty-eyed low-brow that you wouldn't trust alone in a room with a hot quarter.

"Even if it wasn't you, you could never prove an alibi with that face," says I.

"If this young gent'll phone to his father," he goes on, "he'll find that I'm all right."

"Don't you want us to call up Teddy at Oyster Bay? Or send for your old friend Bishop Potter? Ah, say, don't! I look like I could buy fly paper without gettin' stuck? Sit down there and rest your face and hands."

With that I chuck him into a chair, grab up a hank of window cord that I has for the chest weights, and proceeds to do the bundle-wrappin' act on him. Course, he does a lot of talkin', tellin' me the things that he's managed. No crowdin', no herdin', no audible directions, yet the shifting thousands moved as one, and the route through

until next mornin'. It was from Rossiter, and says as how, by the time she reads that, he'll have gone and done it.

"But how do you figure out that he's picked a snub for his'n?" says I.

"Because they're the kind that would be most likely to trap a chuckle-head like Rossiter," says the old man. "It's what I've been afraid of for a long time. Who else would be likely to marry him? Come! you don't imagine I think he's an Apollo, just because he's my son, do you? And don't you suppose I've found out, in all these years, that he hasn't sense left but just hidin' it? But I can't stay here. I've got to try and stop it, before

"I'll cheerfully pay all the expenses of a damage suit, or fines, Shorty," says Rossiter.

"Forget it!" says I. "There won't be anything of the sort. Lie's lettin' off a little hot air, that's all. Keep your eye on him while I goes after the other one." I colored Shorty's neck with a lightin' on the skylight stairs. For a minute or so he put up a nice little muss, but after I'd handed him a swab on the jaw he forgot all about it.

"Attempted rape of a tarred roof for yours," says I. "Come down till I see you in a tight degree."

"If you didn't have a wron' to say, I'd tell him to his face, where they could see how tattered they looked. Then I'd Rossiter down stairs."

"Now run along and enjoy yourself," says I. "That pair'll do no more harm for the rest of their lives. Sweet pair, an hour, anyway, before I throws 'em out in the street."

"I'm awfully obliged, Shorty," says he. "Does mention it," says I. "It's been a pleasure."

That was no dream, either. Say, it did me most as much good as a trip to Coney, stringin' them trussed-up keyhole saxons.

"Your names'll look nice in the paper," says I. "And when your cases come up at Special Sessions maybe your friends'll all have reserved seats. Sweet pair of pigeon-toed junk collectors, you are!"

"If they wasn't sick of the trailin' business before I turned 'em loose it wasn't my fault. From the remarks they made as they went down the stairs I suspected they was some sore on me. But now and then I runs across folks that I'm kind of proud to have feel' that way. Private detectives is in that class."

I was still on the grin, and thinkin' how real cute I'd been, when I hears heavy steps on the stairs, and in blows Rossiter's old man, short of breath and wall-eyed.

"Where's he gone?" says he.

"Which one?" says I.

"Why, that fool boy, mine!" says the old man. "I've just had words that he was here less than an hour ago."

"You got a straight tip," says I.

"Well, where did he go from here?" says he.

"I'm a poor guesser," says I, "and he didn't leave any word; but if you was to ask my opinion I'd say the most likely he was beavin' himself, wherever his was."

"Huh!" growls the old man. "That shows how little you know about him. He's off being married, probably to some yellow-haired chorus girl; that's where he is!"

"Honest! Rossy?" says I.

"Honest! I thought the old man must have gone batty; but when he tells me the whole yarn I begins to feel like I'd swallowed a foolhead pointer. Seems that Rossiter's mother had been notice'n symptoms in him for some time; but they hadn't nailed anything until that eventin', when the chump butter turns in a note that he shouldn't have let go of

foot to the other, and grin'n foolisher'n I ever saw him grin before. "Why, I just thought I'd get married, that's all."

"That's all, eh?" says the old man, and you could have filed a saw with his voice. "Sort of a happy inspiration of the moment, was it?"

"Well," says Rossy, "not—not exactly that. I'd been thinking of it for some time, sir."

"The deuce you say!" says the old man.

"Wow!" says the old man. He'd been holdin' in a long spell for him, but then he just burst out. "See here, you young rascal!" says he. "What do you mean fair?"

den sinkin' fund among his crowd. I've heard a story about the old man Ogden, who's a little, dried up runt of about five feet nothin', has never got over bein' surprised at the size Eunice has grown to. "Sort of a happy inspiration of the moment, was it?"

and weighed only a hundred and ninety odd, he and Mother Ogden figured a lot on marryin' Eunice into the House of Lords. "I'd had my eye on her, but they gave all at up when she tipped the 200 mark."

Standin' there with Rossiter, they looked like a happy young couple; but they was lookin' happy and gainin' at each other in that mushy way—you know how.

"em up," says Rossiter's old man, sizin' up Rossy. "I suppose you'll want you thin, as much of one another as all that?"

"There wasn't any need of their sayin' so, but Rossy speaks up prompt for the only time in his life. He told how they'd been spoons on each other for more'n a year, but hadn't dared let on because they was afraid folks would kidded. It was the same way about gettin' married. Course, their bein' neighbors on the avenue, and all that, he must have known that the folks on either side wouldn't kick, but neither one of 'em had the nerve to stand for a church weddin', so they just made up their minds to get their two freak left-ticks to get them two freak left-ticks over their hands that they almost adopted me into both families, just for the little stunt I did in bilkin' them from P. D.'s. Copyrighted by the Associated Sunday Magazine, Inc.)"

Thankful For All

Lawrence Kyle Donovan in the East. Paddy McShane had no shoes to his feet—And his boughs looked red, as he tramped in the streets

Och, witrathoo! But he ain't sure is shoes that ye'd stick on me toes? How'd me feet feel the ground, soira one And of ye know? Well, ye're furrin' merrin' 'em, do you suppose? Go off wid ye—do!"

Paddy McShane had no red on his head—And the rain it came down on his red across his head.

Och, thin of that! But he said "In it God's blessed sunshine That ye'd shut from me head? Och, would I care for a trifle of rain or wind who would care?"

Shinop botherin' Pat!"

Paddy McShane had just nothing at all—But he thought, "When I'm down, there's no one to care for me."

And he would sing: "Faix, the merciful Master is good to his What is man, whom he made, if he cannot endure? Troth, a little I want, but that little is sure."

For it comes from the King!"

The Girl From Milwaukee, Wis.

Young's Magazine. "Drink to me only with this eye, and I shall count me in with you." "All right," she said, "and make it beer, And serve it in a stein!"



THE OLD MAN ALMOST LOSES HIS BREATH.

it's too late. "If you think you can be of any help, you can come along."

"Well, say, I didn't see how I'd fit into a hunt of that kind; and as for knowin' what to do, I hadn't a thought in my head just then; but seen' as how I'd butted in, it didn't seem no more'n right that I should stay with the game. So I tags along and we climbs into the old man's electric cab."

"We'll go to Dr. Picurat's first and see if he's there," says he. "That being our church."

Well, he wasn't. And they hadn't seen him at another ministers that the old man said, Rossy knew.

"If she was an Antoinette," says I, "she'd be apt to steer him to the place where they has most of their splicin' done. Why not try there?"

"Good idea!" says he, and we lights out hot foot for the Little Church Around the Corner.

And say! Talk about your long shots! As we piles out what should I see but the carry-topped nighthawk that'd had Rossy and me for fares earlier in the evenin'.

"You're a winner," says I to the old man. "It's a case of watin' at a church. Ten to one you'll find Rossiter inside."

It was a cinch. Rossy was the first one we saw as we got into the anteroom. It wasn't what you'd call a real affectionate meetin'. The old man steps up and eyes him for a minute, like a dyspeptic lookin' at a piece of over-done steak in a restaurant, and then he remarks: "What blasted nonsense is this, sir?"

"Why, says Rossy, ahittin' from one