

BETSY'S THANKSGIVING GUEST

By BLANCHE TANNER DILLIN



SHOULD think people would know enough to stay at home on Thanksgiving! Any one of sense would know families like to be alone one day in the year." Elizabeth threw down the letter she had been reading.

"Why, Elizabeth, what's this all about?" asked her husband.

"I suppose you won't think it is anything, but it just spoils our day together. We weren't going to have any one here tomorrow except the family, and now Gertrude Allison has written that she will be out in the afternoon."

"Elizabeth, you ain't going back on your old school friends that way, are you? She won't be here for dinner, so I don't see why you should object to her coming for a little while, even if it is Thanksgiving."

"O, Tom, I didn't think you would lose all your sentiment so soon. You seem to have forgotten altogether that this is our first Thanksgiving in our new home." And Elizabeth pettishly wiped away a few tears.

"Here comes Don. Perhaps he can suggest a way out of your troubles," said her husband with evident relief.

"Hello, sis, what's the matter? You look as black as a thunder cloud. I see, had a quarrel with Tom, and the first year, too. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Mr. Leonard."

"Don't be silly, Don," his sister pouted. "I suppose you will disagree with me just as Tom did. Here's a letter from Gertrude saying she will be here on Thanksgiving."

"Well, sister mine, may I ask the cause of your displeasure?"

"The cause! That's just like a man. Can't you see, either, that we want to be alone on that day?"

"Poor Betsy! Shall I telegraph, 'Only the family wanted. Others will please stay at home and—?'"

"Do stop your nonsense, Don. I suppose I am foolish, but I thought we'd have such a good time together." Elizabeth sighed.

About an hour before dinner time the telephone rang and was answered by Elizabeth.

"Hello! Who is it? O, Gertrude! Well, well, old girl, are you actually there? Glad? I guess I am. Just wait until I get you at arms' length. Coming out to dinner? Oh, that's lovely. And stay all night, can't you? Good! You needn't think I'll let you go tomorrow. You've got to give me a week at least. Won't we have a



good time talking over old times? But you must stay. Don't be a minute late. Goodby."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, what'll I do?" asked Elizabeth, as she hung up the receiver with a nervous bang and faced her husband.

"Where am I going to put her, I'd like to know. There's nothing to do but make Don give up his room and go to the hotel. And, oh—I'll have to clean that room at once! It's the worst looking place I ever saw."

Half an hour later as Don mounted the stairs he was surprised to find his special sanctum undergoing an unusual process.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed.

"Don't you dare to come in here!" his sister commanded.

"Certainly not if you don't wish."

"Go down and tell Nora to put on an extra plate. Gertrude is coming to

Games for Thanksgiving

Here are two Thanksgiving games that have come down to us from the old days, but they are just as full of fun as ever, and may be played by both young and old.

The first is "hot cockles." Any number of persons may take part in it—the more the merrier. Let one of the party put a pillow on a sofa or chair and kneel in front of it, with his face buried in the pillow so that he cannot see.

While thus kneeling he puts one of his hands on his back, palm upward, and each member of the party comes up in turn, and slaps his hand, not too hard, but just hard enough to make it interesting. Then the kneeper has to guess who it is that is slapping, and when he guesses correctly the slapper takes his place, and so the game goes on.

The other game, says the People's Home Journal, is called "the passport." Seat the company in the form of a hollow square, leaving one person out. The party may occupy chairs in the middle of the room, or around

dinner," Elizabeth added in a tone that left no room for comments. And Don obeyed, speechless for once.

Dinner was ready, but there was no sign of Gertrude.

"Let's sit down and eat," suggested Don.

"Yes, very likely!" his sister retorted, appealing to the little family gathering.

The bell rang. "There she is now, sis," said Don. "Go and give her a sister's welcome."

"I can't understand it," said Elizabeth, as she returned in a few minutes with an open letter in her hand.

"Can't understand what?" she was asked.

"Why, here's a special delivery from Gertrude saying she will not be in the city until tomorrow. What does it mean? She just telephoned me an hour ago that she would be here to dinner."

Don threw up both hands and laughed.

"Ha! Ha! Betsy, Betsy! I'll bet on Betsy every time!" He threw himself on the lounge and smothered his face in the pillows.

"Stop rolling round that way and tell me what the matter is!" Elizabeth commanded.

"You're a great girl! But then women are all alike."

"Tell me this instant what you mean."

Don rose from the couch, and dropping upon one knee before the offended mistress of the house he said:

"Sister, mine, forgive me if you can, but I couldn't resist the temptation."

"Get up! Get up, I say! Do you mean to tell me that you played that trick on me?"

"Betsy, you made such a fuss about Gertrude's coming that I thought I'd like to see how you would act if the lady herself should happen to announce such a mad possibility, so I went to the corner telephone—and found out!"

"Donald Warner, you are a mean thing—the meanest thing on earth!" His sister dropped into a chair and covered her face with her hands.

"Poor dear, it was a shame—a base trick!" Don admitted contritely as he patted her head and deferred to the faces of the smiling group. "But just think, sister, my room is cleaned," he whispered for her ear alone.



Gallant?

"Now, Mr. Blunt," says one of the ladies of uncertain age but positive looks, "I know just what you are thinking of as you sit here between us. You are thinking 'How happy could I be with either were 't'other dear charmer away.' Truly, now, aren't you?"

"Honestly, I am not," declares the brutal man.

Lost its Charms.

"Hello," we say to our friend.

"Aren't you living in Blinkville any more?"

"No. I led the reform movement there and put the lid on."

"Ah, made you unpopular?"

"No. Made the town to slow to appeal to me."

Just So.

"Every man has his price," remarked the moralizer.

"Perhaps he has," rejoined the demoralizer, "but it isn't every man who has his market."

Written Statement.

His Sister—And did she say she loved you in so many words?

Her Brother—That's what. Her words filled twenty-seven pages.

a table, but they must be arranged in the form of a square.

Then give them a sheet and direct them to hold it up in such a way that it will be close under their chins and be stretched out as a level between them. In the middle of the sheet put a fluffy white feather, to represent the "passport"—a snowflake—and the players around the sheet, who represent the winds, begin to blow it about in every direction.

One player stands outside the square and tries to catch the feather, either on one of the players or in front of one of them. He takes advantage of the laughter of the player, who cannot blow the feather away, and having thus caught it, it becomes his "passport" to the player's place, who then, in his turn, tries his hand at feather catching.

If the feather is blown off the sheet it must be placed back in the middle

His Favorite.

"I hear the champion prize fighter is a great lover of dogs. What is his favorite?"

"Naturally, it is a pug."

SCIENCE IN FENCE POSTS

New England Farmer Has Bright Idea About Cutting Tops of Posts.

"I had to take a little railway journey up into New England the other day," said the man who once lived in the country, "and as usual I wanted to stop the train along the road and get out and find somebody that could answer a few questions.

"I always want to do that, but of course I never can, so there are many things about which I am forced to keep on wondering. This time it's about fence posts. I saw something new to me in that line, and it struck me that at least one farmer was applying a bit of science to his job.

"The fence posts were nothing uncommon. Looked as if they might have been cut and set a good while ago around just an ordinary hillside pasture fifteen or twenty miles the other side of New Haven. They were pretty gray and weather worn and that made the contrast to their freshly sawed tops the more conspicuous.

"These tops had been so recently cut that they were still quite bright and yellow. And to my surprise I noticed that instead of being cut straight across the post, making a flat top, they had been sawed at an angle, so that the top of each post was like one side of a roof.

"Now that's sensible, isn't it? A flat topped post doesn't shed water. Moisture just stays there and slowly seeps down into the wood until the whole thing gets rotten. This farmer was clever enough to cut his posts so they would shed water and last—I don't know, maybe twice as long.

"But maybe it wasn't the farmer who had the happy thought. Maybe you can buy scientifically sawed fence posts at the lumber yards now. Or maybe some city man who doesn't care a hang for rural tradition has bought the place and has gone around and sawed off the tops of all the old posts.

"Or maybe one of these women you read about in who are making a living and \$249.80 profit in the first year, with hopes of increasing it to at least \$500 in the second, out of some old down-trodden, squeezed out, used up relic of two centuries of New England farming is responsible for those watershed posts, I wonder."

Coloring Woods.

The use of colored woods in the construction of furniture has long been known, the material being stained after the necessary seasoning process. Within the last few years, however, a method of Austrian origin has been employed whereby the wood is colored when in a green state.

By means of heavy pressure in a closed vessel the sap is driven out of the wood and is replaced by the coloring fluid, which may consist of a solution of the more permanent aniline dyes. The best kinds of wood for treatment are found to be birch, beech, alder, pine, elm and lime; oak, fir and pine being unsuitable because they do not stain uniformly.

The colored wood is used for furniture making and for the manufacture of doors and window frames. It can also be employed for outdoor purposes, in which case no painting is necessary, although a coating of varnish would seem to be a necessity. For the fitting of ships, railway cars and similar purposes this stained wood appears to be eminently fitted.—Harper's Weekly.

Doctor Wiley's Absentmindedness.

Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, the pure food expert, is one of the most absent minded men in the world. The doctor takes his lunch in the cafe of the National Press club in Washington, and when he lunches he misses no bets, overlooks no food. He has a fine appetite—a remarkable appetite, considering all the unpleasant and terrifying things he knows about foodstuffs. One afternoon he finished his meal, walked into the cloakroom and put on his hat. As he was going out he was accosted by a friend, who invited him to lunch with him. Doctor Wiley hesitated. "To tell you the truth," he said whimsically, "I don't know whether I've just had lunch or not." He thought deeply for several moments. "Just to make sure," he concluded seriously, "I'll go in and have another." And he ate as much the second time as he had the first.

Goose and Golden Egg.

The old family physician being away on a much-needed vacation, his practice was intrusted to his son, a recent medical graduate. When the old man returned the youngster told him, among other things, that he had cured Miss Ferguson, an aged and wealthy spinster, of her chronic indigestion. "My son," said the old doctor, "I'm proud of you; but Miss Ferguson's indigestion is what put you through college."—Argonaut.

Not What He Thought.

Blapkler (who has just come from Pittsburg)—Yes, I saw your friend Doolittle, but I should never have known him from your description—you told me his hair was as white as snow. Vattiers—I meant Pittsburg snow.

FINNS ARE ALL SINGERS

When Few of Them Get Together They Burst into Song As by Spontaneous Combustion.

Sometimes, when a brass band plays "My Country 'Tis of Thee," or on an excursion steamer after it gets dark and he is pretty well satisfied no one will recognize him, the American will indulge in what he thinks is singing, but the average citizen would blush himself to death if asked to burst into song in cold blood in a public place.

It is no uncommon thing to see a whole tableful of diners in the magnificent hotel at Helsingfors, the capital of Finland, suddenly put down knives and glasses and burst into a perfectly balanced four part song. They doubtless are happy in their singing, but certainly they sound infinitely sad, the songs being almost invariably the moaning folk songs of the saddest of all lands—the most perfect music of melancholy.

Practically every person in Finland, from the greatest noble to the most humble peasant, from the woman of fashion to she who labors in the fields, belongs to a great singing society, for such the entire nation is. It is no uncommon thing for 5,000 trained singers to gather to serenade some loved or admired public man, and once in Helsingfors 10,000 voices, thoroughly organized into four parts, joined in singing the national anthem as a farewell to an exiled patriot.

The city of Ulenborg is near the arctic circle, and far from a railway, and there may be heard a chorus of 3,000 school children with perfectly blended voices. Every village has its church choir, consisting of fifty or a hundred males, who sing nothing but Lutheran hymns. Even the companies of Finnish guards of the Russian army automatically organize themselves into choruses and sing their national songs, despite the opposition of the Russian officers.

When a few Finns get together they burst into song as by spontaneous combustion. If alone, they sing individually. The farmer sings as he plows, the housewife as she cooks. If a Finn is doing nothing else, he just sings.

A White Chamol.

For the last two years glimpses of a perfectly white chamol, a very rare animal, were obtained at long and irregular intervals in the mountains above the Weistanan valley, in the Canton of St. Gall, and the authorities issued orders to kill it in order not to lose the rare animal.

Every effort on the part of the chamol hunters, both professional and amateur, was unsuccessful on account of the shyness of the white chamol, which, however, succumbed to the hunter's bullet the other day. It is a perfect specimen, and the body will be stuffed and placed in the museum at St. Gall.

The hunt was difficult and long, for against the snow the white chamol could not be seen, and the cunning animal seemed to be aware of this fact, for it rarely left the snow line. Only one other specimen of a white chamol, killed some six years ago, exists in Switzerland.—Geneva correspondence Pall Mall Gazette.

Part of the Game.

The best kind of wit is not the broad joke or quip, but the remark which summarizes the truth of a situation in a striking and, if possible, humorous fashion. President Lowell of Harvard is credited with a reply which meets these conditions. It was at a dinner in England where John Burns, the labor leader, was present.

Mr. Burns was talking about some bygone custom of government.

"That is as obsolete," he said, "as the Constitution of the United States. Am I not right, Mr. Lowell?"

"I am reminded," returned the other, "of a remark which I overheard at a tennis tournament. Two old ladies were watching the game. One of them said, 'How much easier it would be for the players if that net were not in the way!' The constitution is our net."—Youth's Companion.

A Genius.

"That is a pretty though odd dress your little girl is wearing."

"Do you like it?"

"Indeed I do; who made it?"

"That is my wife's discarded peach basket hat. She cut holes through it for the head and arms and it was all made."

A Mere Supposition.

"Can you imagine the predicament of a man who is called to a real festival and can't come?"

"Yes, in a way. I guess there's nothing worse, unless it is the chagrin of a woman who buys a hobbie skirt that doesn't really hobbie."

Fine Football.

"Those ancient gladiatorial combats must have been something fierce."

"Oh, I don't know. No system. Now, if they had formed the gladiators into elevens, there might have been some snappy work."

ALL PLAY WITH SNAKES

WHIFFEN FAMILY KEEPS WHOLE ROOMFUL OF REPTILES.

Everybody, From Father Down to the Baby, Seems to Enjoy Society of the Wiggles—Washerwoman is the One Who Gets Scared.

New Rochelle, N. Y.—Most parents are content to see their children have the usual quota of toys for amusement, and a dog and cat for companions, but the four Whiffen youngsters—Edwin, eight years old, Eva six, Helen four, and Robert two—children of Edwin Whiffen of New Rochelle—find their greatest delight in playing with snakes. In the "snake room" on the third floor of their home at 39 Birch street are 30 reptiles. The collection embraces two dozen garter snakes, one green, two king, one black, racer and two milk. But in the good snake season the children have had as many as 200 at a time.

There are Rex, the king snake; Black Joe, a racer, and Matilda and Genevieve of the garter tribe. Daily there is a visit to the snake chamber and a half hour of playing, the children, of course, suggesting the games and the snakes shaking their heads in approval! Daily after dinner Rex or Regina is brought down to the dining room and curls himself before the grate fire.

Black Joe is so thoroughly domesticated that when whistled for he comes to his master, coils on the boy's shoulder and eats from his hand. He even has been trained to perform a real serpentine dance.

Baby Robert's favorite diversion is to creep quietly up to Rex as the snake lies snoozing on the parlor rug and push him with one foot. Rex never resents that.

Mrs. Whiffen does not love to see the household pets crawling over the furniture, but as the children enjoy their society she makes no objection. The one person afraid of the laundress. She insists on shaking out the family garments before she consigns them to the tub. One day soon after she began to work for the Whiffens she started to soap what she took to be a stocking. It wiggled under her hand and she nearly fainted. She has been careful since.

Edwin often takes a couple of his pets to school in a satchel and the teachers and many of the pupils have become accustomed to handling them.

Whiffen, who is an instructor in public school No. 46, Manhattan, twice a year brings down a few of the pets and gives his pupils a lecture on snakes. He and Edwin, Jr., are the family snake collectors. They find their prizes in woods and fields around New Rochelle.

SHOOTS SISTER AS IN SHOW

As "Good Indian" He Fired Bullet into Girl's Head as a "Bad Indian"—Lass May Recover.

Chicago.—Two Chicago children—twins—watched a moving picture in which a "good Indian" shot and killed a "bad Indian." A few hours later the children tried to duplicate the act in the picture at their home. Fifteen minutes later an ambulance took Nettie Johnstone, 18 years old, to the hospital with a bullet in her head. William Johnstone, her brother, had shot her in play.

The children had been spending the day with their grandmother, who took them to the picture show. When the children returned home William proposed they play Indians, and Nettie thought that was a fine idea.

The children were in the midst of their exciting game, in which William was the "good Indian" and Nettie the "bad Indian." William had found an old rifle in a closet and was armed with this weapon, which he did not know was loaded, when his sister marched down the room. William took aim and shot.

There was a loud report, and Nettie shrieked and fell, bleeding from a wound in her head. It was found that the wound was a serious one, but not necessarily fatal, and it is believed the girl may recover.

Rabbit on an Engine Pilot.

Bangor, Pa.—A Bangor clergyman, who was scouring the fields for game near North Bangor, saw a rabbit perched on the pilot of a freight locomotive, but as he was drawing near to shoot, Lester Marsh, fireman on the engine, threw a lump of coal and killed the rabbit.

The railroad men recalled that hounds were running near the railroad at Portland, and thought the rabbit jumped on the pilot there, and rode with them to North Bangor, five miles.

Woman Lives 18 Years as Monk.

St. Petersburg, Russia.—At the Solovetski monastery, known throughout Russia for the extreme piety and austerity of its brotherhood, a woman has just been arrested, who for 18 years has passed as a monk. She had conformed to all the rigorous rules and regulations of the institution, and was regarded as one of the most exemplary of its members.