

At the Court of Rex

By FANNIE HEASLIP LEA

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"I am lost!" said the pretty maiden with a quality tragic air.

She stood back against the window of a big department store on Canal street and scanned the surging crowd before her. It was Mardi Gras day in New Orleans, and the pretty maiden had been in town only three hours, two of which had been spent in a hotel.

"I have lost my mother," she said again as if to impress the fact upon herself—and my father!—then she added as an afterthought, "and my purse."

In the street the people crowded each other for more room, and there was a constant stream of maskers, gay dominoed fellows with tinkling bells and snapping whips, and the pretty maiden watched them from the entrance to the department store, and her ideas quite lost their balance and toppled over into the mad whirl of carnival.

"I'm glad I'm here," she said to herself, "they'll know I was separated from them by the crowd and they'll be fearfully worried, but after awhile they'll find me, and meantime I feel as if something were going to happen—a wild adventure perhaps. Oh, I love carnival. I'm glad I came."

A drum thrummed softly in the distance, the crowd surged to the edge of the balcony, then surged back again with easy laughter, for no parade appeared.

"Ah," said some one at the pretty maiden's elbow. "I beg your pardon, but I thought I was never going to find you. The crowd is so thick."

The pretty maiden stared. A young man, clean shaven and eminently presentable, was regarding her, hat in hand.

"I'm afraid you don't remember me," he suggested, a trifle crossfallen. "Isn't this Miss Preston?"

The pretty maiden's eyes widened. To herself she cried, "The adventure!" but aloud she said quite coolly:

"I'm afraid the advantage is yours."

"I'm sorry," he answered stiffly. "But please don't think me an impertinent stranger. My cousin wrote me to meet you here, you and your sister. She asked me to show you around for the parade. I—my name is Robert Randolph. I finished awkwardly."

The pretty maiden hesitated a bare moment, but the carnival spirit was strong within her, and the trick that in her natural environment would have been impossible unfolded itself like magic in this atmosphere.

The moment was a bare one—then—"Oh!" she said, with the friendliest smile imaginable, "you are Robert Randolph?"

"Of course," he agreed cheerfully. "It's been a great while since we saw each other, but still—"

"So it has," said the pretty maiden cunningly. "Let me see, just how long exactly?"

"Just ten years," said Mr. Randolph; "ten years, three months, seven days, two hours and, I think, twenty-seven minutes."

"Dear me," she murmured breathlessly.

"And, by the way, where's your sister?"

"My sister?" said the pretty maiden, quite astonished. "My sister? Oh—er—yes, of course she came. But she had a fearful headache, and she decided to stay at the hotel, and I hate to miss the parade, you see."

"Of course, too bad she won't see it," said Mr. Randolph regretfully. "The trip was so long and tiresome," said the pretty maiden innocently.

"Two hours' long! I like that. Why, it's only forty-eight miles between here and Pass Christian!"

"Distance," said the pretty maiden sentimentally, "is not a matter of miles with me, at least," she added proudly.

"Well, we can have a jolly time by ourselves, anyhow," Mr. Randolph assured her.

The pretty maiden hesitated—that is, she would have hesitated, but Mr. Randolph's cheerful confidence left her no room to do so.

They walked on rather slowly, for the crowd was dense, and Mr. Randolph's shoulders acted as a buffer more than once.

"We'll have time to go and get some hot chocolate before Rex gets here," he calculated cheerfully. "Look out there, will you?" This last to a line of college boys who were going through the crowd like an animated wedge.

The pretty maiden laughed deliciously.

"You looked so angry," she explained between gasps, then stopped suddenly because a small red devil, with battered mask, aimed a shower of confetti at her laughing face.

There was a blare of trumpets down the street and the long roll of a drum. A wave of excitement submerged the people. Randolph used shoulders and elbows with a skill that bespoke long experience on the football field, and the pretty maiden found herself in the front of the crowd. Mounted policemen passed slowly past her, a band shrilling forth "If Ever I Cease to Love," and then Rex and his cohorts.

The pretty maiden dimpled and blushed from sheer delight at the gorgeous spectacle, and the capering maskers on the fantastic floats repaid her interest. One threw her a great fragrant bunch of violets, which she clasped with both hands like an excited child; another tossed an armful of roses; a third a box of French sweets; until young Randolph was hardly proud of her. Then when the last silver tower and shimmering veil had passed down the street, he swung her into the crowd again, her cheeks pink with excitement and the great purple violets nestling in the furs under her pretty chin.

"Now let's have that chocolate," said Mr. Randolph. They found a corner in a pretty tea room, and he dispatched a waiter for their order, while the room tilted steadily.

"Do you know," he said, "you've changed somehow?"

The pretty maiden came back with a start to the fact that Mr. Randolph was not a lifelong friend.

"Have I?" she asked softly.

"Yes," he repeated, "now, how you've changed. You always were pretty, you know, and I always was your object slave, but now—"

"I've changed?" asked the pretty maiden merrily.

"You're so—so much more so," he explained lucidly.

"You remember," asked Mr. Randolph presently, "how we used to love each other when you were ten and I was fourteen?"

"We didn't," she said, with a start.

"Oh, nonsense! You cried your eyes out when I left for school. And you said you'd marry me when you grew up and when we said goodbye—you kissed me!"

"I did nothing of the sort," cried the pretty maiden, very pink and furious.

"You've forgotten," said Mr. Randolph. "There's no reason why you should be ashamed of it. A childish affection is the most sincere—and you certainly were fond of me," he finished tamely.

"I've changed very much," said the pretty maiden, thoughtfully selecting a macaroon from the plate of cakes.

"I'm sorry," said Mr. Randolph simply. "Because you're even nicer than you used to be."

"I want to tell you something," she said. "I'm not Miss Preston—I never saw you before. I'm here for the carnival, and I lost my people in the crowd this morning; and then you came and I know it was horrid of me."

"Well," said Mr. Randolph stiffly. "Well, it was just a lark," she pleaded defiantly, "and won't you please go—now hurry, please!"

The pretty maiden had seen her mother and father across the room.

"If you wish it, of course," said Mr. Randolph with most unreasonable dignity.

"I think you better," she said, and fairly pushed him away, and in a moment she turned to her father and mother with indignation in her eye.

"Well, you lost me," she said with hypocritical anger, "for two whole hours, and I'm nearly starved!"

The pretty maiden and her parents dined with friends that night, and the pretty maiden went in to dinner with Mr. Randolph, to her unbounded surprise.

Mr. Randolph looked a similar feeling. Then they both laughed.

"The world isn't so large after all," she said.

"My world," said Mr. Randolph, "comes only just up to my shoulder."

A Malny Water Slide.

In Perak, a state in the Straits Settlements, the Malays have one form of amusement which is probably not to be enjoyed anywhere else in the wide world.

There is a huge granite slope in the course of a mountain river, down which the water trickles about two inches deep, the main stream having carved out a bed by the side of the boulder.

This rock, the face of which has been rendered as smooth as glass by the constant flow of water during hundreds of years, the Malays—men, women and children—have turned into a toboggan.

Sliding to the top of the rock, they sit in the shallow water with their feet straight out and a hand on each side for steering and then slide down the sixty feet into a pool of water.

This is a favorite sport on sunny mornings, as many as 200 folks being engaged at a time and sliding so quickly by one another or forming rows of two, four or even eight persons that they tumble into the pool a confused mass of screaming creatures. There is little danger in the game, and, though some choose to sit on a piece of plank, most of the tobogganers are content to squat on their haunches.

When Lightning Kills.

"As a rule," says a meteorological expert, "those killed by lightning maintain an appearance of life, staying in the attitude which they had when struck. An English master named Butler witnessed the following: In the town of Everdon ten harvesters had sought refuge under a hedge during a storm. Lightning struck and killed four, who were left as if petrified. One was found holding in his fingers the snuff which he was about to take. Another had a little dead dog on his knees and had one hand on the animal's head, while holding in the other hand some bread with which he had been feeding it. A third was sitting with his eyes open and his head turned toward the storm."—Chicago Tribune.

A Translator's Blunder.

Jacob Boehme, the "mystic shoemaker," once wrote a pamphlet which he called "Reflections on the Treatise of Isaiah Stiefel." One of Boehme's biographers had never heard of the theologian. But he knew enough German to be aware that "Stiefel" meant "boot," and he was further misled by the fact that Boehme was a cobbler as well as a philosopher, so he made a brilliant shot and spoke of the pamphlet in question as Boehme's "Reflections on the Boots of Isaiah." In this guise it passed into several catalogues.

A Good Thing to Know.

A writer, discussing the lost art of early rising, says, "The proper time to rise is when sleep ends." That's a good thing to learn. Do you know, if we hadn't seen that in a paper we should have gone on believing that the proper time to rise was when you were right in the midst of your soundest sleep.

What a blessed thing it is for this blind old world that there are some men in it who know nearly everything!

Wisdom.

The wise man when he contemplates a journey lets his wife pack and then takes her along to repack. If not, he will need a dry goods case to hold the overflow when he turns homeward.—New York Times.

Old Enough to Notice.

"Are your papa and mamma at home?" asked the caller.

"No," replied little Marguerite; "one of them may be here, but they never are both at home at the same time!"—Chicago Record-Herald.

Faulty Theory.

Gus de Smythe—Those new boots of yours squeak awfully. Perhaps they're not paid for yet. Johnny—That's all nonsense. If there is anything in that, why don't my coat and vest and my trousers and my hat squeak too?

More to the Point.

"I want a business suit now," said Sloppy. "I was thinking of something in the way of a small plaid."

"And I," replied the tailor, "can't help thinking of something in the way of a small check."—Philadelphia Press.

WOMEN AND FASHION

Suitable For All Figures.

Just now it must be granted that the wash waist holds first place in popularity. In shape the model here shown leaves nothing to be desired for thin girls or fat girls, and its style has none of the earmarks of the shop made.



SHORT WAIST.

which otherwise good in fabric and make yet always lack that originality and individuality of style to woman's attire. All figures can wear a waist that is full over the bust, and to secure this fullness puffs are laid upon the shoulder. The simulated box plait, which is finished by a tab across the front, is both unique and pretty in its construction. If one desires a dressy touch such an effect is given by the use of a silk tie, as illustrated. The above is the new short waist let a mutton and may be finished at the lower edge by stripes, buttons or in any preferred manner.

Concerning Ribbons.

Pleat edged ribbons are coming into use again, and their employment is marked by many fanciful conceits. In the narrower widths they are plaited into somewhat stiff quillings, and these are made to stand up to edge cuffs, revers, tucks, folds and other trimming devices. Flowers, too, are often edged with them, and about as often as the pleat edged ribbon is shirred on as a foundation to some of the sheer blond laces that are used so lavishly to trim the summer frocks.

Spread of the Matching End.

The matching end has been extended to gloves. The latest glove is lined at the top with colored kid in all shades. This gamut is supposed to be turned back over the wrist. Veils match, as a matter of course. It takes a very pretentious woman to look well under a mutton or a green gauze, but veils must match hats. A few white lace veils are seen and many lace edged net and gauze veils. About the only part of the costume that does not have to match are the shoes.

Elbow Sleeves.

The elbow sleeve gains daily in popularity, but it is not very large in outline, says the Washington Star. Narrow and high stands the cuff, and from the elbow to the wrist it is usual to supply this with a tightly fitting undersleeve of lace or of lawn and lace, the latter being the more favored fashion.

For Schoolgirls.

Mohair is one of the popular materials and was selected to develop the accompanying design on account of its good wear and desirability. Dust, rain and wear have small effect on this fabric, so it is especially suitable for a school suit or one that is expected to give a great amount of service. Blue in a cadet or navy shade, gray, brown or red are all good colors to select. A circular flounce trims the skirt, and the box Eton jacket fits trimly over the shoulders, fastening with frogs or buttons, as one prefers. A blouse of silk to match would be a pretty addition to this costume. The material required for medium size is four and a quarter yards forty-four inches wide.



NEAT SCHOOL SUIT.

War Relics For the President.

Minister Griseon, at Tokyo, has sent a letter to the state department saying that he has forwarded to the department for the president and Secretary Taft arms that were picked up on the battlefields of Manchuria.

These arms are both Japanese and Russian and include rifles, shotguns, revolvers and bayonets. Two rifles and bayonets are from Port Arthur and were used in the siege and defense of that stronghold.

The Captain's Sky Line.

A strong effort has been made lately to induce the authorities to allow a bank to put up a high building. It failed, as all such efforts do. No building, no matter what its purpose, is permitted to rise higher than the treasury department building. Sky-scraper buildings are barred by law.

Apartment houses, banks, office buildings, all can rise just so high, and then they run up against the law, which says, "Thou shalt not go farther."

The reason? It is "to protect the sky line." That is the motive of the law. It may seem a queer thing to towns given over to commercialism and even a laughable thing; but, after all, there is a sense of relief about getting into a town that protects its sky line by law.

CARL SCHOFER.

WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special Correspondence.)

Ambassador George von L. Meyer is making a splendid record as United States ambassador at St. Petersburg and has already justified the confidence entertained in him by President Roosevelt.

Mr. Meyer was picked for this particular post because the president believed that he possessed the qualities of quickly sizing up an important situation and of successfully dealing with delicate diplomatic matters.

Mr. Meyer has won a number of laurels during the brief period in which he has represented the government at the Russian capital. He has kept the Washington authorities thoroughly and accurately informed of the progress of diplomatic affairs at St. Petersburg, and has also dealt fully with the internal disorders of the empire. His dispatches are clear and concise and have enabled the president correctly to gauge the feelings of the czar so that no mistake was made in the bold offer of mediation.

Diplomats to Form a Club.

Members of the diplomatic corps, who are debarred by the rules of the Metropolitan club from indulging in bacarat, poker, roulette, etc., have completed plans for the establishment of a clubhouse of their own. Another cause of dissatisfaction is that since the fire, which compelled the club to make temporary quarters elsewhere, the restaurant has been suspended.

A fine old mansion in the outskirts of the city has been secured, and within a short time the club will be incorporated and organized. It is understood that it will be of the most exclusive character.

Under the rules of the Metropolitan the most rigid scrutiny is given to applicants, but any attaché of a legation or embassy is entitled to admission by virtue of his office.

Mrs. Roosevelt's Virginia Farm.

During President Roosevelt's recent trip to Virginia he paid his first visit to the Albemarle farm which Mrs. Roosevelt purchased from William N. Wilmer, the New York banker. The farm comprises a fifteen acre tract of land on which is a modest little two-story dwelling which Mrs. Roosevelt intends to use as a sort of summer camping ground for herself and the children of the household. This farm is situated one and a half miles east of Keene postoffice, in the southern part of Albemarle county, and six or eight miles north of Scottsville.

The residence, which has recently been improved to suit the needs and tastes of Mrs. Roosevelt, is deep in the heart of the woods. Its color is ochre, with brown trimmings and green blinds. A broad porch extends across the front, and at the end, where an oak tree grows, the roof of the porch has been neatly built around it.

Wants President's Salary.

Every quarter a letter is received at the treasury department from a man in central New York demanding a check for his salary as president of the United States. The amount of the salary is closely figured, being exactly one-fourth of \$50,000. It was a coincidence that the last letter was received just after the warrant for the president's salary had been signed.

Chairman Shouts Desk.

One glance at the office of Chairman Shouts of the isthmian canal commission is all that is necessary to show that a railroad man is in charge. There is nothing in the way of unnecessary furniture that room, but it is observed that Mr. Shouts sits at a large table upon which are spread the papers and documents of the commission. Behind is a roll top desk. No other official has a similar equipment in the departments at Washington, but it is the kind of an outfit that a railroad man wants. The common flat top desk is the official desk of Washington. Every man who has any position of prominence has his flat top desk nearly in the center of the room, but there is no other desk or table for his exclusive use. The flat top desk in the middle of a room means that the occupant is a person of consequence. The roll top belongs to the lesser employees. Mr. Shouts does not have the flat top desk, but the table, and he wheels around in his chair and is at his roll top desk. His method is the difference between the railroad man and the ordinary official.

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Why She Loved Her.

Mrs. Cummins—So you love your grandmamma, do you, Gracie? And why do you love her? Gracie—Because she used to punish mamma when mamma was a little girl. I hope she used to spank mamma as hard as mamma spanks me.—Boston Transcript.

More Than Bent.

"Are you bent on spending all of your money?"

"No; I'm broke."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

NEW SHORT STORIES

Advice to "Father" Upham.

When the late Dr. Frederic Upham, familiarly known throughout southern New England as "Father" Upham, was pastor of the Matthews Street Episcopal church in Providence, R. I., he preached one Sunday morning on the eternal punishment of the wicked, and as he was known for a rigid orthodox it is safe to say that the sermon was something strong.

As he was about to take a train for Boston the next morning a young man approached him in the station, saying: "I was in your church yesterday morning, Mr. Upham, and heard that hell fire sermon of yours. I want to tell you I don't believe a word of it. I



A YOUNG MAN APPROACHED.

don't take any stock in the idea that a man will go to hades forever for his sins in a short life here."

"So you don't believe in future punishment for sin?" asked "Father" Upham.

"Oh, well," replied his critic, "I wouldn't say just that. There may be punishment for some for a time, but the Great Father will bring all in at last."

"Young man," said "Father" Upham, "I haven't time to argue with you, as my train is about to start, but let me give you just a bit of advice. If you don't expect to stay in hades no more than a fortnight, just keep out."—Boston Herald.

One of Senator Dewey's.

Senator Dewey of New York is one of the best story tellers in the world. The newspaper men who form the membership of the famous Gridiron club at Washington have as their guests at banquets all of the greatest and most famous men in the political world, including the presidents of the United States. Every guest, excepting the presidents, is subjected to all sorts of roasting whenever attempting to respond to toasts. One evening before the fellows could get in any work on him Chauncey Dewey hypnotized them. He began his speech thus:

"It is a matter of modern historic interest that all you have to do is to drop a dinner in the slot and get a speech out of Chauncey Dewey."

He had the boys shouting with laughter from beginning to end of a ten minute speech, and nobody interrupted him, for he told one good story after another as fast as any comedian monologist that ever lived. Here is one of them.

The Senator was stumpin' the state of New York in the campaign of 1900, having big audiences and kindly receptions at all points. In one town the Republican managers had arranged to have a cannon near the stand of the speaker and to have it fired off every time the people gave vent to applause.

Senator Dewey was in one of his happiest vein and kept the people hurrahing almost all of the time. At last, stopping to take breath, he distinctly heard this inquiry come across the field:

"Cap, when is the old galoot going to quit? I've only got four cartridges left."

And Dewey said that he finished his speech in four minutes, so that he got the full benefit of all the ammunition in town.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

The President's "Good Offices."

Representative Livingston of Georgia is telling a good story which illustrates how the seeker after government jobs is sometimes puzzled by diplomatic phraseology. Mr. Livingston has the reputation of being the most successful place finder in congress, and it is said that he has more of his constituents stowed away in soft snap positions at Washington than any other three members of the house.

"I have been pestered to death for the past six weeks," said the Georgia representative, "by a hard luck constituent who wants a job. I told him that nothing was open to him and that the civil service barred everybody now. He came away from me, but came back with a hopeful look on his face."

"I thought you said that all the good offices were gone," he said, holding out a newspaper with an account of the president's endeavors to restore peace between Russia and Japan.

"Why, there are so many jobs lying around that the president is offering some of his good offices to those foreign fellows over in Russia!"—Brooklyn Eagle.

The Flight of Birds.

One of the few men to recover sight after being blind from the birth of recollection was reported to have wondered at nothing so much as the flight of the birds.

"Why do not people make more fuss about them?" he said.—London Outlook.

Encouragement.

De Laye—I'm a mum-mum man who can never say dad-dad die, dad-dad don't you know? Mrs. Good—Well, never mind; you certainly try hard enough to do so.—Life.

Not That Kind of a Server.

Heavy Tragedian—Hurry up with my order. I am used to people serving me in a hurry. Waiter—I don't doubt it, but I am no sheriff.

A Prejudiced Impression.

"What is your idea of a classic?"

"A classic," said Mr. Cumrox, "is something you have to listen to because somebody else said it was good."—Washington Star.

THE VALUE OF OKRA

AN IMPORTANT FOOD PLANT THAT IS MUCH NEGLECTED.

Its Nutritive Properties Are Very High and It Is Particularly Beneficial in Cases of Chronic Indigestion—Some Simple Recipes.

Okra is a very important and useful plant, with numerous uses, the most important being for the table. The green pods without doubt make the finest soup vegetable supplied by the garden. Cooked whole they also furnish a palatable side dish. The nutritive properties of okra are very high, and it has the additional advantage of being an exceedingly wholesome article of food. It is erroneously called gumbo in many cook books and even in some encyclopedias. The name of the plant and its fruit is okra. Gumbo is a general term for various kinds of soup made of it. Okra, in fact, is an excellent food much neglected.

A very important consideration from the alimentary point of view is the unusually high percentage of digestible matter. That fact had been established by common experience long before any analysis of the pod had been thought of, for whenever the vegetable is in use it is well known that the soup is highly beneficial to persons with weak stomachs. Often it will be retained when nothing else can be taken, and it has in many cases restored tone to digestive organs that seemed hopelessly disordered. It is a particularly beneficial food in cases of dysentery and chronic indigestion.

The dried seeds, parched and ground, are said to make an acceptable substitute for coffee. A substitute for arrowroot can be made from the roots. The leaves, green or dry, are used, decocted, for their demulcent properties. The inner bark, soft and white, contains a strong fiber resembling flax. The outer bark is also fibrous and, together with the woody part of the plant, furnishes excellent paper stock. As okra is easily raised, it can be cultivated with profit.

For table use the pods must be cut while tender, generally when about three inches long. They grow rapidly and soon become woody. The plant is very prolific, and it will continue to bear until touched by frost. A small patch will more than meet the requirements of an ordinary family, and the surplus may be preserved for winter use by two convenient methods. The easier is by drying. Slice the pod, crossways, into sections a quarter of an inch thick, spread thin on large dishes or trays and expose to the sun from day to day until thoroughly dried. Put in jars or close cans and keep free from moisture. The other method of preservation is by canning, which will be explained later on. The plant is nutritious and ornamental enough for the flower garden. The leaves are large and palmately lobed, and the blossoms, which in form resemble those of the hollyhock, are at first a brilliant gold, with a purple disk. After the first day the gold also takes a purplish hue.

Here are some of the best recipes for cooking okra: Okra soup—Take a piece of beef or a marrow bone, put on in cold water and boil until cooked. Slice one quart of okra pods crossways into thin sections and add, with enough strained ripe tomatoes to give the soup a rich color. Continue to boil until the okra is thoroughly cooked, which will take about fifteen minutes. A green pepper, from which the seeds have been removed, sliced and added, will improve the flavor. The various gumbos, chicken, fish or crab, are made in the same manner.

An excellent soup can be made without meat by boiling the okra, sliced as above, and adding when cooked a good sized piece of butter. Other vegetables, such as carrots, onions and celery, may also be used, but lovers of okra prefer it straight. Soup made as above will keep in a cool place for several days and improve with age.

A savory dish for lunch or dinner is made in the following manner: Butter a pudding dish, put in a layer of cooked or half cooked rice, a layer of sliced okra, a layer of ripe sliced tomatoes, butter, pepper, salt and a little sugar if the acid of the tomatoes be objectionable; repeat the layers until the dish is filled; grate bread crumbs on top, with pieces of butter; pour in as much boiling water as the dish will hold; bake long enough to cook; serve hot.

Okra also makes a palatable vegetable dish, but in this form it is not