The Observer.

MORO, OREGON

FRIDAY..... Nov. 17, 1905

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The Captain's Plight

By Martha McCulloch - Williams

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If Anne Maria Jones had been born a beauty or even moderately pretty this story would not have to be written. With a snub nose, hair, eyes and complexion of the same piece and no figure to speak of, even a robust vanity cannot deceive. Anne Maria's vanity was not robust. How should it be when she had a beautiful sister, upon whom the family hopes and the family expenditures equally centered? But Anne Maria had understanding. Since she could not be ornamental, she resolved to be useful. Moreover, she had a palate rare in womenkind and a deft way in the kitchen that was worth a lot of looks.

You begin to perceive the relation of things. If she had been a beauty she wouldn't have been a cook. And then Captain Josephus Marshall—but stories should be told as they happen. Captain Josephus was a bachelor, rich and

"DRIED PEACH PIES!" THE CAPTAIN MUMBLED.

cranky, who had two cares in life—keeping his indigestion and his freedom. To say that he was nice over his eating is putting it quite too mildly. It was the same regarding his single estate. He thought every girl who was even civil to him had visions of dower or alimony floating through her head. And he was firmly resolved never to marry; also quite as firmly resolved that his nephew, Alonzo, should not live a bachelor nor marry any wife save one of the captain's choosing.

Judge Jones, Anne Maria's father, had been at college with the captain. Naturally when a business deal brought the captain to the judge's town he was made very welcome in the Jones home. Naturally also Alonzo, who came along, went down before Louella, the beauty. Then the captain called him names and sent him packing, saying gruffly, "If you want my money to go to charity just marry anything named Jones."

When Louella heard that she tossed her head and went on a long visit to her city aunt. Anne Maria stayed at home, keeping very much out of the captain's way, but getting up such dishes for him as he had not tasted since his mother died. Good feeding is held to breed good temper, but the captain must have been born to set rule and proverbs at defiance. The fatter he got the crankier he showed himself to be. Indeed, Judge Jones gave Anne Maria a caution at the end of the third fortnight, saying: "If you feed up that old wretch much more there'll be no doing business with him. As matters stand this whole thing hinges on his consent, and yesterday he let us know in full board that unless he has his own way in everything, from the weight of the rails to the names of the stations, the railroad will never be built. The final meeting when all must be decided comes off two days hence. If only you could make the captain ill—too ill to be in his seat—but really I don't believe it is possible. He has the stomach of an ostrich, although he talks dyspepsia half the time.

Anne Maria sighed, then smiled, but said nothing. She studied half the night and next morning said privately to the judge: "Don't come home to lunch, father. I shall send something to the office. And be sure you keep the captain to eat with you." Then she disappeared in the direction of the kitchen, smiling oddly, and also sighing the least bit in the world.

"What have we here? As I live, fried pies! Jerusalem, how my mouth waters! I can eat an acre of 'em any day!" the captain cried as toward 1 o'clock that day Judge Jones threw back the damask cover of the laden tray that had just been set on top of his big desk. "And I'm hungry as a wolf! This is luck!" the captain went on, seizing one of the rich brown greasy half moons and popping the end of it into his mouth. It came away with a clean semicircular cut something less than four inches across. "Dried peach pies!" the captain mumbled ecstatically, chewing hard. "Sun dried peaches too! Where, where did you find 'em, Jones? Never tasted anything so good in all my life!"

"You must ask the women," the judge said, chuckling behind his hand. He began to see the method of Anne Maria's madness. Hospitably he pressed the other things on the captain, but without avail. The first pie disappeared in exactly a minute. The second required a minute and a half. Then the judge lost count, though his interest was still keen. He smiled affably when the captain said in a conscience stricken voice:

"God bless me! Jones, I've eaten every pie! Such a pile of them too! But you'll forgive me. I don't get 'em only once in a blue moon. Besides, after this tuck out I shan't want anything for at least two days."

"You're more than welcome," the judge said hospitably, lighting a cigar. The captain waved aside a proffered pipe. "Wouldn't spoil the after taste of my pies for a fortune," he said. "I'm going right now to sleep away the afternoon. Indeed, I feel like sleeping till tomorrow morning."

Man proposes—sometimes. The captain slept for three hours, to awake in agony. Not for naught had he coddled and cosseted a stomach all these years. It resented angrily the burden he had put upon it. Fried pastry had been nothing to a boy's digestion, but to eat it with a boy's appetite in late middle age made it quite another thing. The peaches had been as sweet and spiced as the pastry was greasy. Together they kept the poor captain ill all night long. In the morning he was weak and wan—so weak the bare thought of food revolted him. He got up and staggered about the room, but found it idle to think of going out. Then came the judge to whisk him away to his house in spite of the captain's weak and wavering protests.

"Leave you here? Not much. Hotels are dreary places for sick men," the judge said heartily, meaning quite half he said. And the captain found himself established in state in the Jones' spare room, with Anne Maria flitting noiselessly in and out to fetch him gruel or clam broth or some other thing he needed but did not crave.

Thus skillfully encouraged, indigestion kept him prisoner three full days. When he at last got out it was to find the railway pact made beyond overset-ting. That, however, did not trouble him so much as a nearer personal concern. Alonzo must be told. But how? There lay the rub. Alonzo was still sulking afar off. At least the captain believed so. Desperately he decided on heroic measures. After the decision he took Anne Maria for a quiet drive—Anne Maria in her best frock and her most demure smile. When they came back the captain sent Alonzo a dispatch:

"Come home. I have married a Jones. Help me break it to the old folks."

The answer was delayed, and the captain was fuming when it came. As he tore it open Anne Maria read over his shoulder: "Congratulations! So have I. We will break it to the old folks together."

Her Revenge.

Women are revengeful creatures. In a little town a few miles away in Maryland there lives a man who, as Pennsylvania people say, is so "near" that in ten years he allowed his wife to have only three frocks. It came out in the testimony when she sued for divorce. She won her suit, too, and the man began to speedily realize the error of his ways. It cost him much more to live when he had to pay cook and laundress than when he had a wife to work for him, so he began to make overtures to the lady who had left him.

He wanted her to remarry him, and he promised to be a different man if she would. She had gone to her people in New Jersey, but she wrote that reconciliation was possible. She wanted to be married in style, though, with a trousseau and a wedding trip to Niagara Falls. He would have to send her money for these things before she would set the day. It nearly killed the man to part with his money, but he did it. She was a good manager, and he calculated that the trousseau would last her another ten years at least. He let her buy railway tickets and arrange everything.

Then he started for the scene. He arrived there just an hour after the lady married another man. He was just in time, in fact, to see her start off for Niagara Falls with the trousseau and the tickets he had paid for. He was, as one man says, stung, and by a woman to whom he had given three new gowns in ten years.—Washington Post.

Hard Work For a Horse.

"I don't want a particularly strong horse," said a prospective customer at a horse mart. "He will have nothing to do but travel from my hotel to the railway station five or six times a day to meet trains. The distance is less than a mile."

"You need the strongest horse you can get for that sort of work," replied the expert. "The average cab horse in New York has an easy time of it in comparison with the unfortunate beast that has to back for a village hotel. Nothing tells upon a horse's condition more than going to and from the station, even though the distance is small.

"In the first place, the harness is generally thrown on him carelessly, and he is rattled off in a hurry. If the train is late, as it usually is, he is left to stand around in an overheated condition. When the passing trains do not frighten him half out of his wits, he is beset by flies. In many ways his day's work is not only unpleasant, but absolutely injurious.

"The horse is a nervous animal. It is wear and tear upon his nervous system, not work, that destroys his usefulness. If a horse had any choice in the matter he would rather haul an omnibus in the city than be put between the shafts of a village hack."—New York Press.

Mans' Unreasonableness

Is often great as womans', but T. S. Austin, manager of the Republican, of Leavenworth, Ind., was not unreasonable, when he refused to allow the doctors to operate on his wife for female trouble. "Instead," he says, "we concluded to try Electric Bitters. My wife was then so sick she could hardly leave her bed, and five [5] physicians had failed to relieve her. After taking Electric Bitters she was restored to health, and can now perform all her household duties. Guaranteed by Marsh & Medler Wasco. Price 50c.

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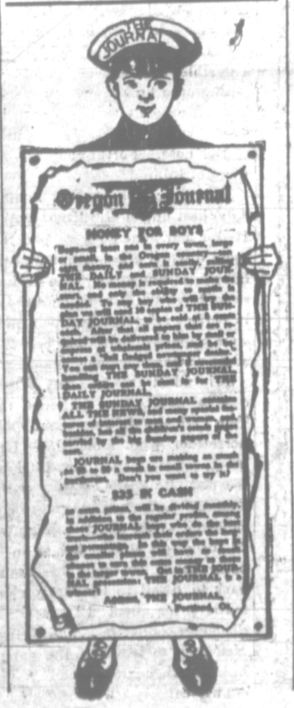

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