

WIT HUMOR AND SARCASM FROM THE CARTOONISTS AND FUNNY MEN



A LEAP YEAR ROMANCE. Philadelphia Nor-American.



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A SHORT WAY TO DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT. The Shah (with his gun trained on the Parliament buildings, reading from Omar Khayyam local poet):

MISS BASBLEU GETS RATHER A SHOCK

HER HERO TURNS OUT TO BE NO LADY'S MAN.

His Ideas About Woman's Status Seem Decidedly Crude to a College Graduate.

Miss Basbleu, just graduated from Bryn Mawr college, stood leaning against the rail of the ocean steamer, examining her fellow passengers. Visitors had just been chased off the decks, though it would still be a half hour before the boat moved, and Miss Basbleu, having bade farewell to her best friends, had turned her attention to what people remained aboard.

It was the average June shipload—a deck full of lively tourists, waving American flags and bunches of flowers at large bodies of howling admirers on the pier, interspersed with tactless, single foreigners on business trips and well-to-do German-American families taking their numerous progeny for exhibition in the Fatherland.

There were brides and bridegrooms getting the deck steward to put their chairs in some exclusive spot, where they need speak to no one, and children worming their excited way between the legs of their elders. There were college boys and college professors, and young women with that undulating walk that shows so well on shipboard. Already the man who searches the names of desirable acquaintances on the backs of steamer chairs was making his furtive rounds, and the stout Wall Street broker was trying to look intensely nautical with rubber soled shoes and a telescope. Everybody seemed unusually happy and unusually foolish, but there was not much in their appearance to suggest "the beauty and mystery of the ships, and the magic of the sea."

Miss Basbleu sighed heavily. "They don't look very interesting, do they?" she remarked to the friends with whom she was travelling, a gray-haired man and his comfortable wife.

"They're a nice, quiet, respectable lot, if that's what you mean," granted the gray-haired one (named Hearn). "A few flashy characters is what you want, eh? Something to make you think you are really seeing 'the world.'"

"I suppose that's it," acknowledged the college graduate, but a deeper shade of wistfulness spread over her face.

If Miss Basbleu did not find her fellow passengers interesting, several persons found her worth looking at. A nondescript, single gentleman, out for a holiday, shot a glance at her slim elegance. She happened, just then, to be looking at some-thing which pleased her—the infinitely scornful Dutch captain just descending from his cabin—and a smile lit up the whole delicate structure of her face with such a flash of intense life that

all other faces looked expressionless beside it. "That's a nice girl," said nondescript to the friend walking with him. The friend looked at Miss Basbleu.

"Too clever," he warned.

A LATE ARRIVAL.

The gangplank was up now; the steamer was really moving, and a final hush of genuine emotion, quite different from the former showy good-bies, had fallen upon every one. Each was so intent upon the narrow strip of water now between the wharf and the Volendam that they did not at first perceive a red-bearded man, wearing a white linen suit and a very broad-brimmed Panama hat, who was making a leisurely approach toward the steamer. So nonchalant was his appearance, so casual his gait, that of all those through whom he was elbowing his way only a small new-boy perceived in him an exciting figure. With wonderful intuitive grins the new-boy yelled shrilly, "Gee whizz, Boss! You ain't trying to catch that boat!"

At these words, calculated to thrill every hustling American, the crowd turned, and the new-boy prancing round the legs of the red-bearded man, any every one in a different shade of exhortation and excitement yelled "Hurry up!"

The man looked swiftly around him and then at the steamer. With a sudden catlike activity he leaped to the edge of the wharf.

"Here, steward, give me a hand," he called emphorically to one of the Dutch stewards leaning over the rail of the Volendam. The steward hesitated, and called out something about "get a boat," but a sturdy sailor jumped forward, braced himself on the extreme outside edge of the rail, and extended a long, tattooed arm. With great agility the latecomer made a leap from the wharf, landed one foot on the steamer's side and one hand on the tattooed wrist, and before the crowd could gasp or an officer could forbid him was pulled in by the wily sailor.

He stood placidly indifferent to the stewards who pressed round him, and was chuckling softly to himself, when a man from the dock called out:

"Is your baggage on board?"

The latecomer went to the rail and for the first time seemed perturbed. "Baggage?" he called.

"What?" yelled the man on the dock.

"I haf forgotten it," he said, a little impatiently, and turned his back to go upstairs.

"Well, I'll be damned," said the man on the dock to his neighbors, while the crowd laughed, and craned their necks to see the last of the eccentric passenger.

On the upper deck Miss Basbleu had watched all this incident with sparkling eyes. Even before the stranger had jumped for the boat she had noted his approach. Now she laid her hand on her guardian's arm and said, impressively:

"Hearney, that is the only man on the boat I care to meet."

The dining room was crowded and clattering when the Hearn and Ursula Basbleu descended for their first dinner on board, but before the steward had whirled her chair into place Ursula perceived that the man with the red beard was sitting at the foot of their table. He did not look up at the late arrivals, for he was talking very earnestly to a slight, swarthy foreigner sitting next to him. Ursula could understand only enough of the rapid rumbling of German that passed between the two

men to make out that the topic was not at all concerned with loss of baggage or catching steamers, but seemed to be an argument about Oriental languages. The dark young man put in a word of interruption from time to time, but the other was the more aggressive talker. He turned off most of the steward's proffered dishes with an impatient shake of his head, and gave himself up to vehement discourse. Ursula observed that he had a big, bulging forehead and a broad, flat nose, like Socrates; that he had large, boyish blue eyes, and that his hand, which he shook emphatically at his listener, was white and clever looking.

AT THE TABLE.

A good deal of table length was between Ursula and the interesting passenger—a length that was filled on one side by a small, sad Hollander, in natty American clothes, who held with the waiter a solemn conference in Dutch over each article on the menu; an American husband and wife, both thin, nervous and ascetic; a big young German, of great beefiness; a priest with curly, yellow hair and an irrepressible smile; and the nondescript single gentleman, who had commented on Ursula to his friend. At close range he was nondescript only in coloring, for he had a singularly keen pair of queerish gray eyes and a certain alert pose of head that suggested a fencer. "One of our nice, sharp business men," thought Miss Basbleu. "The kind that makes a large fortune in stoves or screw nails or soap, and on a voyage like this hasn't one thought to rub against another."

Certainly the tactfulness of the American was noticeable when compared with the conversational rapids of the red bearded foreigner, who before dessert rose up and left the table, bearing along with him his listener.

That evening, when Mrs. Hearn and Ursula were tucked up in steamer chairs, watching the serious faces of the passengers who felt the first undulations of the sea, Mr. Hearn issued from the smoking room.

"I've been talking to your funny man, Ursula," he said, as he settled himself beside them. "Found out he is a Dutchman and a doctor—just came on from Java. He's been telling yarns in there about the East. He knows it pretty well. Been there ten years without a break."

"Did you hear how he forgot his baggage?" asked Mrs. Hearn.

"Oh, yes. He was lamenting that he ever parted from his black boy. Says he is quite lost without him. Black boy came all over the Pacific with him, but he had to drop him at San Francisco. The boy packed all the things nicely and had them sent across to New York, but not being used to having them on his mind, the doctor forgot them altogether."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Hearn. "He's worse than you are." But Miss Basbleu thought of all the other absent-minded philosophers in history, and like the Dutch doctor more than ever. When he emerged from the smoking room with a dark young man—a Hungarian student of Oriental languages, Hearn said—she looked longingly at the eloquent wagging of his head and hands, and begged Hearn to introduce him to her as soon as possible. Hearn suggested that the nondescript young man, named Taylor, looked like a good sort, and suggested that she should go to the deck with the hope that the doctor would come by.

But the doctor did not come by. The wind came up and the sea grew rougher; the passengers went downstairs one by one, and the deck steward began folding up the chairs before the doctor moved from his place against the rail. Then he and the Hungarian went back into the smoking room.

The morning broke gray, and the sea was turbulent. Miss Basbleu's cabin floor rose and fell so that she had some difficulty in staggering down the corridor to take her bath. It was while trying to do up her hair that she decided she would not go to breakfast. About noon the kindly Hearn dragged her up on deck, where she lay in that pleasant comatose condition that the sea begets. Through half-shut eyes she saw the heaving ocean and the lowering sky; she saw the rolling deck and heard the grunts of the Dutch sailors as they fastened down the awning that flapped loudly. She knew that a few passengers were walking around and stumbling over her extended feet and falling into chairs in line with other chairs containing plumped mummies; but all these things were dull and muffled, like a dream.

In a dream she saw go by the sad Hollander and the stout captain, strutting slowly, and many other figures that she recognized a little. Once there went by a doctor with a red beard, in company with a brown complexioned man. They looked at her, and the red bearded man made some remark to his companion and chuckled. A pang of wounded vanity went through Miss Basbleu. It is very trying to be a ridiculous, plumped mummy.

A TACTFUL ADMIRER.

"How are you?" said a kind, level voice in her ear, and the nondescript very well in gray suit, sat down in the chair next her. "Isn't it great?" he said, waving his steamer cap at the leaping, foaming mounds of water that plunged toward them.

Miss Basbleu was not enthusiastic, but the nondescript Taylor did not seem to notice it. He monopolized pleasantly about the passengers, the day's run, and other impersonal topics, and in a few minutes tactfully let her doze.

"He is a kind creature," thought Miss Basbleu drowsily. "And not so dull, either."

For several days Ursula remained in her comatose state, attended by the steward, by Hearn, and by the quiet Mr. Taylor. The last named became the link between her and the little world of shipboard. He gave her little dry point tongue sketches of the people on board; how the nervous American couple at his table were in mortal anxiety about the purity of their bottled water; how the priest got tipsy every evening, and by the time dessert came, was singing little French songs; how the pompous looking German at the second table would have German pancakes for breakfast, and so forth, and so on. Miss Basbleu questioned him about the Dutch doctor. That gen-

tleman, it appeared, was still talking about Buddha to his Hungarian acquaintance.

"I'd so like to meet him," sighed Miss Basbleu.

"Of course. Just because he's been where lions, and wolves, and temples, and other romantic properties are kept, you think he must be no end of a hero," said Taylor.

"Not at all," replied Miss Basbleu, indignantly.

Mr. Taylor narrowed his keen eyes, and smiled a far seeing smile.

On the fourth day out Ursula was sufficiently restored to the world of men and ships to go down to dinner. Greatly to her disappointment the red bearded man did not appear—his friend said he was writing a hospital report in the smoking room, and refused to be disturbed, but every one else was there in all his delightful novelty. The young German, with the intensely black hair and the intensely red cheeks, gave Ursula a great deal of amusement, so much so that after dinner the faithful Taylor presumed, on short acquaintance, to warn her.

"You mustn't be nice to those foreigners," he said. "They don't understand it."

Miss Basbleu was distinctly fluffed, and declined to walk around the deck with Mr. Taylor.

That same evening, when she strolled into the saloon, she found the florid mannered young German making heavenly music at the piano. She lingered a moment to listen to it, and catching sight of her, he expanded several cubic feet and played with greater flourishes. At the end of the piece he asked, "You like a song?" and without waiting to be pressed burst into vocal melody. At the very first fellow, a dozen people thronged into the doorway of the saloon behind Miss Basbleu, and at the second a dozen more, formed in a sort of mob semi-circle around the performer and Ursula, to whom he directly addressed the song. It was a saucy, peculiarly tender and, as it seemed to Miss Basbleu, peculiarly vulgar, both of which qualities were accentuated by the florid young man. Miss Basbleu's cheeks began to burn, and she longed to sink through the floor. To turn her back on him and push her way through the crowd would make her even more conspicuous, so she stood her ground with an expression of haughty indifference, while the insufferable song went on:

"I only know I love you,
Love me, and the world is mine!"

At that instant in the doorway she saw the swart Hungarian and the red bearded Doctor. They were taking in the whole scene, with smiles of undisguised amusement. This was the height of mortification. Ursula was about to force her way out at all costs, when young Taylor elbowed himself into the room, with a very grim look in his steely gray eyes and stepped across to her.

"Miss Basbleu," he said quietly, "Mr. Hearn wants to know if you will come to the coffee room," and he led the way through the crowd.

When they were out on deck Miss Basbleu put her hand on his arm and said, "Thank you."

SHE MEETS THE DOCTOR.

Young Taylor looked down at her hand and smiled his peculiar, far-seeing smile. He seemed about to say something, but forbore. After a minute—"If you will come to the coffee room," he said, "you can meet Dr. Ruysdaal."

Miss Basbleu appeared to hesitate.

"Enough of romantic forebodings for me to-night?" gently suggested the doctor for her companion.

Miss Basbleu dropped her arm and led the way to the coffee room.

Dr. Ruysdaal, the Hungarian, and the Hearn were seated in a cloud of smoke, leaning over their coffee cups. To them came the slim and fine Basbleu, with her escort. Introduced, she sat down opposite the Doctor, who looked at her with mild amusement in his large blue eyes.

"I hear, Miss Basbleu," he said gutturally, "that you are something of a savant."

"Oh, no," said the young lady, shaking her bright head. "I am only a college graduate."

Dr. Ruysdaal said, "So?" and looked vague.

"In America," said the suave Hungarian, leaning forward to interpret for them, "almost all young ladies go to a college."

"A university?" said the Doctor, wrinkling his brows. "Like Berlin? I have seen women at the University of Berlin."

"Not quite like Berlin or Heidelberg," said the Hungarian, with a subtle smile. "Rather more like a nunnery—a large, a beautiful nunnery—where the young ladies wear gowns of Paris and discuss Huysmans, Tolstoy and Nietzsche all day long."

The Doctor threw back his head and laughed uproariously. "Ach! Wunderlich! How funny!" he exclaimed.

Miss Basbleu flushed. A graduate of Bryn Mawr is not used to having the higher education of women called funny. But she took into consideration the fact that the Doctor had been ten years in Java, where, of course, he was rather out of world movements.

"One of our graduates is now in Java," she said, sweetly. "The went out as a missionary. Her name is Constance Rattle. Do you know her?"

"No," said the Doctor firmly. "I do not know any missionaries."

Something in his tone made Miss Basbleu say wistfully: "But you think they do good work, don't you?"

The Doctor gave a long, mischievous chuckle. "Work?" he said. "It'm work. They grow tobacco, they collect Oriental rugs, they get fat."

"But the converts?" interrupted Miss Basbleu.

"Converts? Umph! There is a missionary in my settlement who has been there three years. In that time he has made two converts—his horse boy and his cook. They are poor servants also. No native but the lowest will change his religion. If native but a black boy, I ask him first of all: 'Are you a Christian?' If he says 'yes,' I kick him out, for he is low caste, what you call a pariah, and will be faithless to me also, as he was to his gods."

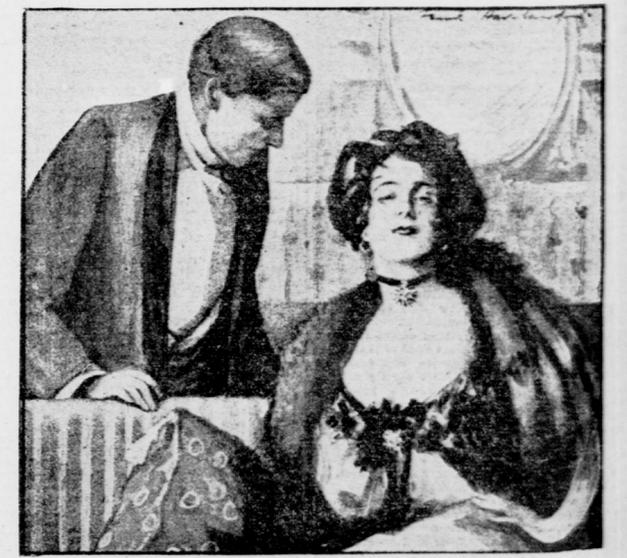
Miss Basbleu began to be glad she had not gone to the East with Miss Constance Rattle, as she had once after chapel thought of doing.

"Mostly they become Christians because they do not want to work. The greatest remarkability of a native is his dislike of work. When he is con-

Could we with fate compare
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would not we scatter it to bits—Ourselves—and then
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire!



BY THE COURT'S DECREE. "Whose little girl are you?" "This month I'm papa's."



A SURE THING. She—Did father say anything about you being too young? He—Well, yes; but he said I'd age pretty rapidly after we were married and I found I had to pay your bills.

young Taylor, "that I will go out on deck now. It is close here."

The Doctor bowed to her with a slightly puzzled air and continued to discuss the Chinese army.

Later that evening, when Mr. and Mrs. Hearn emerged from the coffee room, they beheld their ward and young Taylor, pretty far up toward the bow, the only people still on deck. Miss Basbleu had on his gray ulster, and with her bright head thrown back like an eager boy was talking, apparently with great glee, the very picture of an aspiring, happy American girl. Young Taylor was not talking much. He was leaning against the rail, looking at her with his quizzical, far-seeing smile, understanding her perfectly, biding his time.

"I like that young man," said Hearn.

"Who is he, anyway?" said Mrs. Hearn, looking meditatively at the couple.

"His father is old Taylor, president of the Witchita & Wisconsin Railroad—you know."

"Oh, that Taylor," said Mrs. Hearn respectfully. "Then they both looked again at the couple in the bow."

"I don't think we need be afraid," said Mrs. Hearn, "that Ursula will marry a foreigner."

Every one but Miss Basbleu laughed, and the Doctor continued with his usual fluency and gusto: "That is why the Chinese have prison labor. What does an Oriental care for imprisonment only? Not anything. He will sit crosslegged all day long and be quite happy. So the Chinese, they make their prisoners work. They put them in the army."

"But the women prisoners?" said Miss Basbleu.

The Doctor opened his blue eyes very wide.

"The women prisoners? They do not trouble putting women in a prison. If they offend—a very little, even—if the rice is not well cooked—he made a motion of striking with his teaspoon.

"Oh, horrible!" said Miss Basbleu, recoiling.

"But they are strong women, of course," she added after a moment's reflection. "They can strike back!"

"They can, my lady, but if they do— Here he made a lunge toward her with a paper knife, as if to stab, and gave a short laugh.

"O-o-o-oh!" said Miss Basbleu, with a suffocating sound, and stood up. "I think," she said to



IN THE YEAR 1990. Straphangers. Pick-Me-Up.