

FINDING HIS MATE

By LAWRENCE ALFRED CLAY.

Caleb Andrews was a man of fifty. He was also a widower, and had decided to marry again, although his fourteen-year-old daughter was running the house very well.

Caleb wasn't a rich man, but in deciding to marry again the question of property had no influence. He was one widower in a hundred about that.

The widower had an appetite. He was born with it. It was an appetite that would have done credit to one of his work horses. He shoveled down the boiled dinners—the pork and beans—the fried pork and potatoes—the bread puddings, and two hours later he could eat just as much as if he had been all day without a meal.

When Caleb got ready to look up a wife it was almost a question of "Can she cook?" There might not be much love to start on, but as she cooked and cooked the love would grow and bloom and blossom until he would finally have to squint twice to make out whether she had wings or arms.

Caleb didn't put up any surprise party on his three children when he had come to the conclusion to marry again. He sat down with his pipe after a hard day's work and a supper that would have made an ox groan with contentment and said:

"Mary, I'm a hearty eater."

"Yes, father."

"Keeps you cooking most of the time."

"Yes."

"You order have more schooling."

"I think so."

"But my appetite keeps you home and keeps you over the hot stove."

"Yes, father."

"Therefore, Mary—therefore—"

"But you must have all you want to eat," said the girl as he hesitated.

"Seems that way, but I've been thinking of late that if I could change fadder I wouldn't eat so much. You cook first rate, but it's all the same things over and over. Now if a new hand was to come in there'd be a change in the dishes, eh?"

"I guess they would, but whom can you hire?"

"Nobody. Don't want to hire nobody 'tall."

"Then how—"

"Get married ag'in. Get a wife to do the cooking. Get a wife who's got a twist of the wrist about bilin' and bakin' and gettin' up new dishes. What ye think of it?"

"It's for you to decide, father."

"You children won't raise any row?"

"No."

"That's mighty nice of you, and you can count on getting some Santa Claus in your Christmas stockings."

"Have you picked her out?" was timidly asked.

"Only just kinder picked her out. I thought I'd tackle the widder Bliss first."

"She's nice."

"Yes, but can she cook? She's got to be nice and a mighty good cook besides. After I've eaten one meal in her house I can tell whether she'll fill the bill or not."

The Widder Bliss lived in the village three miles away. She was forty-five years old, and was weary of facing the troubles of life alone—some real good man—some man that would appreciate her many good qualities—why, why—

No one must blame her or sneer at her. As we are told in Holy Writ, husbands shall not know their wives in heaven, and wives shall not know their husbands. Therefore, it is better to get plenty of husbands and wives on earth.

Caleb, the widower, loaded up five bushels of potatoes and hid him down to the Widder Bliss with them. They were a gift to her, and she made it plain that his generosity was duly appreciated. They became so interested in each other, and he had timed the hour so accurately, that she invited him to stay to supper.

"That's it! Now I'll get a line on her cooking!" he said to himself after accepting the invitation. "Mighty nice little woman, but can she cook? Can she serve up taters in a new way? Are her pie-crusts short and flaky, or heavy and soggy? Can she make a cup of tea to curl the hair, or is there a taste of dishwasher about it?"

The widower won the gold medal with a bread pudding. It was baked in a dish half the size of a milk pan. Caleb's wife used to make what she called bread puddings, but they didn't hold a candle to this one. A still, small voice whispered to the widower that her visitor would eat that pudding to a standstill if given a chance, and she made the chance. It touched the spot. For the first time in years he shoved back from the table with his appetite perfectly satisfied. When ready to go he said:

"Widder, you are a nice little woman!"

"I'm glad you think so," she replied with a laugh.

"I shall probably come around this way again."

"And I shall always be glad to see you."

The father went home and told his daughter what took place, and added, "Mighty nice widder and mighty nice bread pudding, but of course that don't settle it."

"No!"

"There's the Widder Bliss. I've been told that she took a prize at the county fair for her preserves."

"It was for her pickled peaches, fa-

ther. We have no peaches, and so I never tried my hand at it."

"Seems to be now that it's pickled peaches I sigh for. Seems as if I had a couple of dozen all at once I would take the edge off my appetite. Guess I'll load up with some green stuff in a day or two and drive down and see her."

The Widder Bliss must not be sneered at, either. She was nearly fifty years old, and had split her own wood, milked her own cows and built her own fires on hundreds of winter mornings since her good husband departed this life. She knew Mr. Andrews very well, and if she had wondered why he didn't take a second wife that was no crime on her part. She simply blushed and picked up things and straightened the chairs back when she caught sight of him driving up, and had time to say to herself before he came in:

"My stars, it's the Widder An-drews, and lands only knows why he has come!"

"I've brung you some beets and squashes and onions, widder," said Caleb as he came in.

"Then you are a dear, good man. You know I've no garden."

"Can't no lone woman do much with a garden."

"You are right they can't."

Caleb was not invited to stay to supper, but what was just as good he was asked to sit down to bread and butter and pickled peaches. A still, small voice whispered to the Widder Bliss as she was down collar getting the peaches that she had better get an abundance of them while about it, and she lifted 23 big, rare-ripes out of their bath before she halted.

"Same as you took the prize with?" asked the widower as his mouth watered at sight of the peaches.

"Pickled after the same recipe. I hope you will like them."

He did. When he was through there were 23 peach pits lying on his plate as living proofs that he liked pickled peaches. The edge had been quite taken off his appetite.

"Widder Bliss, I think of gettin' married ag'in," he said, as he shoved back.

"Dear me, but I don't blame you on single bit," she replied, as she twisted her apron in delightful embarrassment.

"I may call again."

"I'd be happy to have you."

Before Caleb got home the "influence" of those pickled peaches had quite worn off, and he said to his daughter:

"Mary, the Widder Bliss is a nice woman, and them pickled peaches would make a man kiss his grand mother for awhile. I'm a heap hungrier now than before I ate 'em. I've got to try another widder."

"Whom, father?"

"Wall, there's the Widder Ransom. They say she makes a cup of tea that's about as good as a drink of whisky for a man. Mebbe that's what I need to take the edge off my appetite. I reckon I'll drop in on her!"

He dropped. He didn't get supper but he got a cup of that celebrated tea, not one cup, but four! Then he was ready to say:

"Widder, I can't see how you have remained a widder, makin' such tea as you do."

"They do say I know how to make tea better than I know how to make soft soap," she replied.

"Yum! Yum! Widder, I may call again."

But he never called again on any one of the three widows. He had the misfortune to break his leg, and to help his daughter nurse him they secured the services of an old maid. On the first morning she came he complained of a goneness, and she made him a platter of hash. An hour after he had downed it he said:

"That hash was what I had been looking for for ten long years. It has made a new man of me. I want you for my wife!"

"Just on account of the hash?" she asked.

"Nay: The hash has just happened to come first, but love will follow."

It did, and they have made a very happy couple.

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NO MYSTERY ABOUT THAT

Comedian Found It Easy to Recognize the "Handwriting" of His Manager.

Mr. S—, the theatrical manager, though in other respects a thorough business man, could neither read nor write, but kept a private secretary, who had strict injunctions not to betray the secret.

One day the manager was dining at his hotel, when a gold watch was raffled for. Each of the guests staked two shillings, wrote his name on a scrap of paper and threw it into a hat. Our manager was dreadfully perplexed when his turn came to sign his name. However, in order not to expose himself, he pretended to write, rolled up the blank piece of paper and threw it into the hat along with the rest.

As chance would have it, this very paper was drawn. Great was the astonishment when it was found to be blank. But B—, the low comedian, who was present, asked to have it shown to him, and when he had examined it carefully, he gravely exclaimed: "That is our manager's handwriting! I should know it among a thousand!"—London Mail.

Making It Strong.

Bacon—I'm building an ice-box. Egbert—Oh, are you? Yes; what do they put in an ice-box to make it strong? Onions, I believe."

PINS AND PATTERNS

By IZOLA FORRESTER.

The black-and-gold sign read "Gowns," and Beechmount gasped at the intrusion and desecration. If she had placed the sign on the locked gate of the private little park in the center of the circle of houses Beechmount could not have been more perturbed.

Phil liked Pauline's pluck. They had been chums years ago, he remembered. He had always been glad when the little, wide-eyed, sturdy girl from Boston had come to visit across the street. He had thought her wonderfully clever. He smiled now, looking at the little sign "Gowns."

"I shall place it in the hands of Gorbell," said his father testily. "It's absurd that she can't see for herself how it lowers property values. She's twenty-two or three—old enough to know better."

"Perhaps if I saw her personally we could arrange it without going to Gorbell," Phil suggested. "How would it do to train some vines over the sign, dad?"

"Go now," growled Mr. Hubbard. "Get it over with."

So across the street went the emissary, a very courteous, neighborly emissary, with the glint of fun in his blue eyes and a decided longing to renew his old friendship with Polly, as he had called her years before.

He was admitted by a neat, black-clad maid, and waited in the long reception room. A few good rugs lay on the polished floor, a few excellent pieces of mahogany were here and there, and old Mme. Dale's gold and glass cabinets for her treasures.

Evidently the pin-and-pattern establishment was upstairs. He stood looking at a picture on the mantel when Pauline came down the long staircase.

"How do you do, Phil? It's nice of you to call so soon." Her soft contralto voice woke a queer thrill that he had forgotten. He forgot all about the cross old gentleman waiting over the way as he talked with her. She had been abroad two years, mostly in France.

"This is only temporary," she said happily. "I mean my beginning here. I want a really good, exclusive little place somewhere in the Forties in Fifth avenue. But I've come to stay and I'm going to make good. I only design personality gowns, Phil, on special orders. Do you think I'll succeed?"

"I know you will," he assured her heartily. "Mother wants one now."

Pauline half closed her eyes meditatively.

"I can just see her in one. Bring her over, please do."

The little maid came to say the car was waiting.

"I've got a very neat little one that I drive myself," she assured him. "It's a French car and I needed it. Don't you want to come with me, Phil?"

Phil accepted the invitation eagerly, all forgetful of his father.

"Did you speak to her about the infernal sign?" asked Mr. Hubbard after dinner that night. Phil smiled convincingly.

"I don't believe it will stay there very long, dad."

"Well, we'll wait, then. I don't want to take the girl's livelihood from her, but she ought to know better."

"Yes, sir," said Phil. "Exactly."

Mrs. Hubbard smiled from the tea tray end of the table and the following morning the little designer of temperamental gowns received a call from her neighbor and an order for a Maeterlinck gown. It was to be a twilight gray, with underlays of chiffon, old rose and dull topaz and deeper grays. Pauline put her whole heart into the modeling of it, and Phil would drift across the street quite naturally to watch her, or trot around in the gray and silver car seeking temperamental weaves and garnitures.

"You know, Phil," she told him, "your mother is adorably sweet and dear, and I am going to make her a perfect dream of wistful beauty, know it? I think she likes me, too. Your father doesn't, though." She laughed merrily. "I met him on the street and offered a friendly greeting, and he just growled at me."

"He'd better like you," Phil swung back testily.

"Why?"

"Don't you know why, Polly?"

"You'll make me steer wrong. Let go my hand, Phil."

"I'll run the car myself." He took the wheel from her firmly. "I'm going to run it for life for you, Polly, know it?"

"What will Beechmount say?" she flashed back whimsically. "Phil, I think the world of you, but I'm afraid. I can hang out my little gold sign right under their noses and laugh, but do I dare to marry their very nicest bachelor?"

"You haven't anything to say about it," Phil answered. "He's going to marry you."

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German War Croquette.

The German administration announces the introduction of a new war croquette called volkrost, which is to be manufactured under central authority and sold at 2½ cents. It is composed of Indian cornmeal, spaghetti (now called "betrayal noodles" in Germany), various dried vegetables and meat extract.

BAR GIRLS FROM WARSHIPS

British Naval Authorities Have Good Reasons for Drastic Action Recently Taken.

"No more girls on warships." This British admiralty order is the result of a torpedo running amuck. Fortunately the wild torpedo did little damage.

The British destroyers have been putting in at Newport frequently and the officers have become popular with the inhabitants. The evening in question a prominent citizen of Newport, his niece and another young woman were aboard a destroyer, and one of the gunners was explaining the working of a torpedo tube. The charge of high explosive had been removed and placed to one side, when the gunner was temporarily called away. Meanwhile another gunner came along and thinking the explanation had been concluded replaced the charge and went away.

The first gunner returned and, unaware that the charge had been replaced, proceeded with his demonstration, saying: "This is how the torpedo is discharged." With that he pressed the button.

There was a report and the amazed little party saw the deadly torpedo leave its tube and travel under water right across the stretch between the pier where the destroyer was tied up and the next pier. It was making straight for a large Italian steamship.

But for some unexplained reason the torpedo's course was suddenly deflected. Instead of striking the steamship it crashed into the wall of the pier twenty feet from the vessel's stern. Tons of water were thrown into the air, drenching many persons who happened to be near by. The pier suffered considerably. There will be no more little parties.

CAUGHT THE BUSINESS MEN

Italian Organ Grinder Would Seem to Have Knack of Knowing Just How to Please Hearers.

Some of the greatest men of past ages have to thank their knack of doing the right thing at the right time for their prominence in the annals of posterity.

Gutenberg disclosed his newly invented movable type to a handful of men who were in great need of a medium to disseminate royal edicts on a grand scale. Thus the art of printing received a better start than it might otherwise have enjoyed.

Franklin outlined the possibilities of electricity to an organization of men searching for just such a force. Its triumph was of course assured.

Giuseppe Gorolotta—name fictitious—who pilots a barrel organ through Main street has the same knack of doing the right thing at the right time, says the Buffalo News.

When the first reports of the torpedoing of the Lusitania were published, Giuseppe chose as the psychological time to play "The Star Spangled Banner" within hearing of all the office windows on Main street. The unusual appeal depleted half the vacation funds in the business section.

The knack that made other men great will make Giuseppe rich.

Plausible Theory.

Sometimes a bit of unconscious humor survives even the watchful eyes of the Associated Press editors. Recently an account of an unusually bloody fight came into the Atlanta office of the great news-gathering organization. After the ordeal of the blue pencil, it was sent out over the wires to the various newspapers on the "southern division" of the Associated Press.

The item recounted the details of a fight between two persons in a rural community. Their weapons, according to the story, were a scythe, a corn knife, a shovel and a butcher knife.

After enumerating the details of the encounter, the dispatch concluded: "It is thought that the two men had some sort of a misunderstanding."

That was quite as convincing as the comment made by the editor of a rural paper in Maine on the arrest of a young man who was caught climbing out of the cellar window of a certain house with a valise filled with silverware, jewelry and other articles of value.

"It is believed," said the newspaper account of his arrest, "that evidence may be found that will lead to his conviction."—Youth's Companion.

Curious War Coincidences.

A curious coincidence is narrated in a letter from Private S. N. Jones of the Motor Transport A. S. C. to friends at Llangollen, Wales.

He was a driver on the Llangollen-Wrexham motor-bus route, and enlisted soon after the commencement of hostilities. In France, strange to say, he was drafted to the identical chassis of the motor he had been driving on the Denbighshire route, it having been purchased with many others, by the government.

The manager of the road car company has written to Private Jones stating that, if it should be possible, they will repurchase the car after the war, and place upon it a plate recording the circumstances related.

A Simple Part.

Patience, observing what other celebrities were doing, presented herself to a manager of vaudeville. "Hi—what," asked the latter, "can you do of a popular and pleasing character?"

"Do!" repeated Patience, proudly, "why, I can cease to be a virtue."—Puck.

Adrift with Humor



Figuratively Speaking.

"So they are embarking on the sea of matrimony?"

"Yes."

"I presume they carry a neutral flag?"

"Oh, yes; but I suspect that part of the cargo is contraband."

"Why so?"

"Everybody says the bridegroom has a lot of brass."

Rousing Her Sympathies.

Suffragist—Do you know that children of six and seven years of age are employed in the canning factories?

Society Dame—Isn't it perfectly horrible! I do hope they're made to keep their hands scrupulously clean.—Puck.

Evened Things Up.

Mrs. Wiggs—Poor Mrs. Rounder! Her husband didn't leave her much when he died.

Mrs. Diggs—Oh, well, he made up for it when alive. He left her nearly every night.

Garden Society.

"Why is the lily so haughty?" inquired the mushroom. "She barely nods to the rest of us."

"She is very proud," explained the ivy. "She regards you as an upstart and me as a climber."

Rises.

"When water becomes ice," asked the teacher, "what is the great change which takes place?"

"The greatest change, ma'am," said the little boy, "is the change in price."—Ladies' Home Journal.

JUST LIKE SOME PEOPLE.



"Rowell is a hard worker."

"Yes—he'd make hard work of anything."

The Uncertain Following.

A leader marched along and found himself alone one day.

For his procession had turned round and marched the other way.

That Depends.

Faddest—Don't you think skipping the rope is a highly dangerous practice?

Lawyer—Not always. I'm trying to have it put in practice for a client of mine now.

A Wender.

"Biggins thinks he's a great fisherman."

"He's entitled to think so. He can have more fun not catching any fish than anybody that ever threw out a line or told a story."

Nothing Wasted.

Hobson—My wife never wastes anything.

Dobson—No?

Hobson—No. If it's edible, it goes into the hash, and if it isn't, it will do to trim a hat.—Judge.

Not Mercenary.

Mr. Gottrox—My daughters, young man, are both worth their weight in gold.

Suitor—Then the fact that I am asking you for the smaller one proves at any rate, that I am not mercenary.

Family Skeleton.

Black and Tan (irritably)—Leave me alone—I can't see you now! I'm terribly busy tracing up my family tree!

St. Bernard—Humph! Bet a bone it's mostly all bark!—Puck.

Modern Life.

"Formerly a girl took pride in accumulating linen for her linen chest."

"Well?"

"Now she collects a lot of graphophone records."

UNTRIED.

"What I want in my son-in-law," said the girl's father, "is stability of character."

"Well, sir," replied the suitor, "I don't smoke, drink, swear, gamble or run around at night."

"Have you ever done any of these things?"

"Never, sir."

"Have you ever wanted to do any of these things?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Um! What I'm after is not character that is merely negative, but the sort that will stand the acid test."

Still Cynical.

"Do you believe two can live as cheaply as one?" asked the sentimental person.

"I do," replied the cynic promptly.

"But isn't that contrary to your usual views?"

"Not at all. I was speaking of microbes."

Getting Back.

"My cook left this morning merely because I asked her to get dinner for a few friends of mine."

"I hired her, my dear, and I don't mind giving you a chance to get back at her. Bring your friends over to my house for dinner."

TOO BAD.



Mrs. Kidder—Her husband was getting better, but yesterday he suffered a relapse.

Mr. Kidder—I guess he saw the bill for his wife's new outfit.

Discarded Simile.

He is "as happy as a king!" It was a good old phrase. Alas, it doesn't mean a thing in these eventful days.

Sure Signs.

"Did you ever notice any signs of insanity about the patient?"

"Well, when he got a legacy from his uncle, he paid off the mortgage on his house instead of buying an automobile."

What Started the Trouble.

Mrs. Bacon—I don't suppose you would give up your seat in a car to a woman unless she were good looking?

Mr. Bacon—Why, my dear, when you say that you are forgetting yourself.

Somewhat Different.