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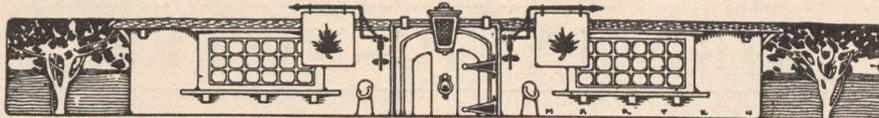


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AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

AT FIVE O'CLOCK.



At the Woodbine.

Hostess. "I asked him to a progressive euchre party last winter and he did not even answer the invitation. Of course I won't ask him again."
 "Some men think it's smart to be rude," said the Girl in Grey. "My cousin, Jack Benson, says that women like to be bullied and that the cave-dweller who knocked the pre-historic woman down and dragged her by the hair to his happy home is really the man whom woman adores and would simply do anything for."

"Much Jack Benson knows about it!" said the Hostess contemptuously. "That sort of man can frighten a nervous sort of creature into cleaning his shoes and mending his clothes. But she doesn't really care a cent for him and, when he dies, she blooms with such a radiance that you'd hardly recognise her. But that has nothing to do with the Canadian, who is hardly ever a bully. Is he impolite?"

"Harold Maltby is," insisted the Debutante once more. "I saw him smoking on the street the other day as he was walking with Mabel Bentley."
 "Then Mabel ought to have been ashamed," said the Hostess promptly. "She had no business to allow him to do such a thing. I have no patience with some of these girls who complain about men's manners. They just encourage the boys in all kinds of boorishness. But for goodness' sake let us get away from Harry Maltby. We have all been away from home a good deal. How do Canadian men, so far as manners are concerned, compare with those we have met abroad?"

"They're ever so much nicer than the French," exclaimed the Girl in Grey. "Frenchmen stare at you so."
 "Perhaps because they're not accustomed to the frank, not to say bold ways of Canadian women. There's no use in comparing European and American standards. They are wider than the Atlantic apart. In Europe it is assumed that a young woman is an abject idiot, who will fall in love with any man if she is allowed to talk to him for five minutes," said the Merry Widow.

"What a silly idea," said the Debutante indignantly.
 "I don't know," remarked the Merry Widow reflectively, "there's something to be said for it. Then you forget the exclusiveness of the best French people. Their homes are most carefully guarded against the foreigner and the tourist Canadian forms his or her conclusions from 'gay Paree.'"

"Germans are the rudest men I ever saw," said the Debutante, with a shudder. "I don't believe the best of them know how to eat."
 "Englishmen can be rude, too," said the Hostess reminiscently, "but when an Englishman is nice, it is hard to find his equal."

"He doesn't come up to an Irishman," said the Girl in Grey with a sigh of regret. "There was the most delightful man from Dublin on the boat last month. But the worst of it is that an Irishman is charming to everybody." There was a general smile at the "to-one-thing-constant-never" qualities of Paddy.

"What does that matter, so long as you happen to be the everybody for the moment?" said the Merry Widow, with an easy disregard of the less pleasing side of a charming nature.

"I think the Canadian provinces differ. The average man in Ontario or Manitoba may be kind enough, but he does not take time to be polite. In the Maritime Provinces, the people seem to have a gentleness and courtesy which are called 'old-fashioned' by the would-be smart young man." And the Hostess put another lump of sugar in her cup.

"The Western man is a dear," said the Girl in Grey. "He is the most generous creature you can imagine. I had the time of my life in British Columbia."

"The Canadian woman hasn't a great deal to complain of," said the Hostess placidly. "I'd hate to have been a pioneer, though. Think of doing all the washing, scrubbing and baking! Give me the complex life! Simplicity is something I can do without."

"Dear me, it's nearly six o'clock," said the Debutante, "and I'm going to the theatre with Mrs. Bridge's party. I'm sure we haven't talked a word of scandal and yet men all believe that women can't have a cup of tea without more gossip than cream."

THEY were discussing men and manners in the cheerful and inconsequent style in which women "who have just dropped in for a cup of tea" frequently adopt.

"I wonder if Canadian men are impolite," said the Hostess thoughtfully. "Of course I don't mean my husband or any man related to us but just Canadian men in general."

"But you can't talk about men in general," said the Merry Widow with conviction in her plaintive tones. "You always mean a particular he."

"There's Harry Maltby," said the Debutante. "He ought to be polite, for his mother is just lovely and his father is a perfect gentleman; but Harry is a boor who never seems to think it necessary to thank a girl for a dance and who talks in a voice that could be heard across Lake Ontario."

"He is a trial," admitted the

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