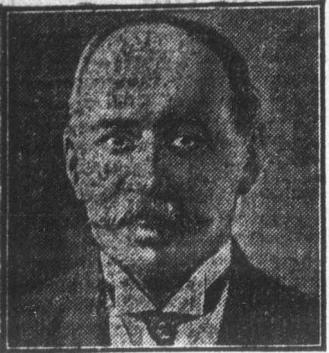


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Keeping the Chaperon

By OSBORN JONES

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William Rogers had been promised a "land army" of eight girls to help pick his peach crop, and he was considerably disgruntled when the pompous Mrs. Van Deusen arrived before his farmhouse in her spotless dove-gray limousine with its spotless gray-liveried chauffeur and spotless gray-liveried footman to tell him that the supply of labor was not forthcoming.

"Well, I can't say that I was especially stuck on the idea of having a bunch of girls working in the orchards from the first," he commented. "But you ladies who are boosting this idea talked us farmers into the idea—and besides the peach crop is bulky this year and there just isn't a man to be had now." He cast a look all but contemptuous at the two spotless gray-liveried ones and would have suggested to Mrs. Van Deusen that by way of showing her much-vaunted patriotism she might dispense with at least one of these able-bodied retainers, but Mrs. Van Deusen was not interested enough in any one's point of view but her own to be at all likely to suspect his sentiments.

She explained patiently for the second time just wherein lay the hitch. The army of eight girls had been secured. They came from the other end of the state—they were "good, strong, willing girls," Mrs. Van Deusen was sure—and the chaperon had been secured and the cook on the horizon and an order for the first week's supplies made out by the chaperon had already been delivered to Mrs. Van Deusen's provision dealers. The trouble all lay with the absence of an available house in which to shelter the girls. Mrs. Van Deusen had really worn herself quite out, and had used gallons of gasoline scouring the neighboring country for some sort of empty house in which to lodge the girls. She had thought even of setting up cots and other temporary furnishings in one of the nearby school houses but one was positively falling to pieces and the other was already occupied by a gang of Polack's who were keeping the roads in condition for the army trucks. It must have been quite apparent to Mr. Rogers that Mrs. Van Deusen had done her best and that if his peach crop went to waste and the country was thereby deprived of that contribution to the general food supply, it would not be in the least her fault.

"Worrt of it is, I counted on those girls," commented the persistent agriculturist leveling his brown eyes on Mrs. Van Deusen's flabby face. "I had a chance to get some Polacks that I could have housed in the sheds, but you'd asked me to save the work for the girls, so I let the chance slip."

"Well, you can't in the least blame me," Mrs. Van Deusen drawled.

"I wasn't blaming you—I was just wondering whether you had thought of putting up the girls yourself. You are a little down on the folks around here because they won't move out and let young girls take their houses—well, there are no more than three in your family and I guess there are twenty rooms in your house."

"Twenty-eight," corrected Mrs. Van Deusen automatically.

"I'd fetch the girls every morning and carry them back at night—"

Mrs. Van Deusen began to grow crimson at the suggestion. Perhaps it had troubled her before but she assured Mr. Rogers that it was "obviously out of the question."

"I'll let them have my own house," declared Rogers, more in defiance than as a result of a calm decision.

"Quite impossible—we are responsible for the girls and obviously we can't board them around promiscuously among the farmers."

But Mr. Rogers explained that he would set up a portable shack for himself quite at the remote end of his large farm and would surrender his entire large old farmhouse to the girls and their chaperon.

So Mrs. Van Deusen went away feeling that she had scored a triumph. As a last great gesture in this, she associates in the patriotic work now she had argued Farmer Rogers into taking the step he had taken. By the next day at nine the portable shack was on its way from the nearest city.

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The girls were learning their task in the orchard under the guidance of Mr. Rogers' one and only "hired man," and the chaperon, Miss Phoebe Ferris, by profession if not by natural inclination a public school teacher, was working miracles in the old farm house. Incidentally she was making mental comments on the domestic arrangements of bachelors, but these thoughts were not unkind you could tell from the amused smile that played around her mouth as she put up white swiss curtains at the upstairs windows, rearranged heavy old pieces of furniture and added a hundred and one touches to the place that were to transform it to an Adamless Eden from a place that had surely been Eveless but not surely an Eden. And the cook was pottering over kettles and pans in the old-fashioned kitchen, crooning to herself the satisfaction she felt in doing this, her share, in bringing comfort to the eight girls now in the orchard.

Mrs. Van Deusen did not forget her responsibility and, though she did not forget that Miss Ferris was all of thirty-five and did not miss an opportunity to tell her associates that she was a "plain little motherly body who would be safe anywhere," still she hovered around the farm with what seemed to Mr. Rogers to be unnecessary frequency. He could see quite clearly that she was going to take full personal credit for the bumper crop of peaches his orchard was yielding, and she did seem to forget entirely that by the arrangements he was making he was paying very full value for the amount of labor he received. She apparently forgot that the rent of his house had been a gift since he paid the girls wages that did not take into consideration their shelter. Apparently Mrs. Van Deusen wanted to make perfectly sure that Mr. Rogers kept entirely at the far end of the farm. She even stipulated to Miss Ferris that he should never take a meal in the house, "and I want to be sure," she told her, "that he shows no signs of attention to any of the girls. It is your responsibility and mine," she said condescendingly. "So please make a point to be with the girls as much as possible when he is with them. You would have a restraining influence, I am sure."

Miss Ferris did not take the trouble to remind Mrs. Van Deusen that as Mr. Rogers was staid and studious and forty and the girls were for the most part uneducated young Polack girls on their vacations from factories it was not likely that he would find much to interest him in their presence. Instead she looked very grave and assured Mrs. Van Deusen that she would keep a motherly eye on everything. And Mrs. Van Deusen made it quite clear to Mr. Rogers himself that he was not even to cross the threshold of his own house; hence arose within Mr. Rogers' breast an insatiable desire to do just that thing. The fact was, from glimpses he had secured from outside, a marvelous transformation had been wrought in the interior of that house. The swiss curtains in the windows swayed back and forth in the breeze, the glimpses of bouquets of flowers on the tables, the airiness and spaciousness of the house as contrasted with the stuffiness and formality of it as it had been handed down to him by his old aunt and uncle five years before fairly staggered him. Apparently it had become the house he vaguely dreamed that it might become, yet Miss Ferris had brought only a few hampers of "fixings" and had made no definite change that he knew about save to move some of the furniture into the attic "to make more room." She had asked his permission to do that.

No doubt Mr. Rogers was sorely tempted; at any rate, he fell and, forgetting his promise to Mrs. Van Deusen, sneaked into that transformed house of his, one day when Miss Ferris was in the orchard with the girls, and looked around. What had been done he could not say, but that the house had been transformed into a home, he knew, and it was only by dint of firm resolve—and fear of being caught by Miss Ferris, or worse still, by Mrs. Van Deusen—that he tore himself from the charming rooms.

The experience left an impress that seemed really out of proportion to the importance of it. It seemed to William Rogers as if seeing that modified interior left him transformed as if he had gone through a great experience. It left him more with a desire to seek out the woman who had wrought the change than with a desire to return to his work. So it was that a message was carried by the solitary hired man through the cook to Miss Ferris that Mr. Rogers had important business to discuss in the orchard after the girls had retired.

In a week more the girls had gone and the peaches had all been sold, and thereby contributed to the national food supply, and Mrs. Van Deusen was telling guests at dinner parties in her spacious house how successful had been her work.

"And you didn't know I was a match-maker, did you?" she would say.

"There was a lonesome old bachelor farmer and I just made up my mind to find a wife for him. So I worked my little plan to get her in there to transform his house and show him how much he needed a wife, and I threw them together as much as I decently could—and well, I have actually made the match. They were married yesterday and they have settled down there in the old house with the proceeds of the peach crop that I got for him."

Japs Erect War Museum.

To commemorate the services of officers and men who have been serving abroad in the Japanese-German war, a building has been erected at Fuki-yama garden, Tokyo, where all war trophies will be assembled, under the care of the naval and military departments. The collection will include soldiers' uniforms, pictures of sea craft, photographs of engagements in which Japanese vessels have taken part, and various weapons used by the enemy. The museum was named the Junmei-fu by the emperor on June 16th, at the request of the minister of the imperial household.

Rockweed Soup.

Rockweed soup, rockweed omelet and rockweed pie may soon be found on the table of the housewife who is alert to obtain nutritious and inexpensive food, says Popular Science Monthly. A considerable variety of edible seaweeds, of which rockweed is one, can be found along both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of this country. In Maine rockweed is being gathered and prepared for market.

The Terror of Asthma comes like a thief in the night with its dreadful thrilling, robbing its victim of breath. It seems beyond the power of human aid to relieve until one trial is made of that remarkable preparation, Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma remedy. Then relief comes with a rush. Life becomes worth living, and, if the remedy be used persistently, the disease is put permanently to rout. Take no substitute.

Patriotic to Eat Coconuts.

Is coconut pie an essential? The Wall Street Journal wants to know. No, but gas masks are. It is a far cry from coconut pie to gas masks, but we are enabled to indulge our appetites in the one and supply the other through a single operation.

Gas masks contain a certain brand of charcoal which is an absorbent of poison gas, and it has been found that the rind of coconuts, when burned, produces a charcoal superior to all others. For this reason the government has placed the humble coconut on the list of essential products and our friends on the island of Porto Rico are urged to ship as many as they can.

When eating a piece of coconut pie or any other delicacy containing coconut you are enabled to do so with an easy conscience. The charcoal made from the shell of the coconut you eat may be saving the life of an American soldier "somewhere in France."

Where Traveling Is Bad.

The Munchner Neueste Nachrichten publishes a sarcastic letter on the joys of railway traveling in Germany:

The writer wonders how people can complain of railway carriages not being heated, when they remember how important it is not to scorch their costly boots upon hot pipes. He thinks it is a great advantage to travel in a carriage with broken windows, owing to the need for fresh air when so many passengers are smoking beech leaves and hops. And what does it matter if the floor is dirty, seeing that it is clean in comparison with the swamps in Flanders.

Then, again, the absence of foot mats is welcome evidence of official economy, and when people say that the railway carriages are like pigsties they are only comparing themselves to pigs. As regards the state of smoking carriages, the writer can only suggest that it might be well to provide non-smokers with gas masks. People complain that the trains are late—twenty minutes or an hour, or an hour and a half. What folly, since they never before knew the unspeakable joy that they feel when a train does at last arrive!

Again, people complain that the trains are slow, although they often in the past pined for the good old days of the stage coach. Now those days have returned, and passengers can get out and walk when their feet are cold, and get in again when they are warm.

No Discrimination In Japan.

A young Japanese girl has obtained a license as sea captain. Her name is Tatsu Imamizo, and she received her training from her father, with whom she sailed the Inland Sea. When she applied for a license the authorities hesitated, for she was the first woman who ever sought recognition as a skipper. As there was no provision permitting discrimination on account of sex, the license was issued. From a Department of Labor bulletin.

HEALTH TALK

SPANISH INFLUENZA OR GRIP

BY DR. LEE H. SMITH.

An old enemy is with us again, and whether we fight a German or a germ, we must put up a good fight, and not be afraid. The influenza runs a very brief course when the patient is careful, and if we keep the system in good condition and throw off the poisons which tend to accumulate within our bodies, we can escape the disease. Remember these three C's—a clean mouth, a clean skin, and clean bowels. To carry off poisons from the system and keep the bowels loose, daily doses of a pleasant laxative should be taken. Such a one is made of May-apple, leaves of aloes, root of jalap, and called Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. Hot lemonade should be used freely if attacked by a cold, and the patient should be put to bed after a hot mustard foot-bath.

To prevent the attack of bronchitis or pneumonia and to control the pain, Anuric tablets should be obtained at the drug store, and one given every two hours, with lemonade. The Anuric tablets were first discovered by Dr. Pierce, and, as they flush the bladder and cleanse the kidneys, they carry away much of the poisons and the uric acid.

It is important that broths, milk, buttermilk, ice-cream and simple diet be given regularly to strengthen the system and increase the vital resistance. The fever is diminished by the use of the Anuric tablets, but in addition, the forehead, arms and hands may be bathed with water (tepid) in which a tablespoonful of salaratus has been dissolved in a quart. After an attack of grip or pneumonia to build up and strengthen the system, obtain at the drug store a good iron tonic, called "Ironite" Tablets, or that well known herbal tonic, Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery.

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