

A Messenger

The narrow shop front was painted green. The interior was all filled with plants in pots and with flowers in vases. Since the sun shone from the front, the little shop took the aspect of a sheltered spring time nook, enjoying a mildness which was as premature as it was charming.

A soldier who came from the direction of Montparnasse, had stopped and was gazing at a big tuft of anemones.

"Well, soldier, are you looking for a bouquet?"

The soldier raised his eyes. It was the proprietress, a young woman with brown hair and grayish eyes, which sparkled with candor and confidence.

"A bouquet? No," he answered in a voice composed and almost drawing. "But, you see, I am a gardener by trade. And I love flowers."

"Are you Mme. Bertha Maret?" he added, glancing at the name written across the glass door.

"Yes, I am. But why do you ask?"

"My name is Antoine Lavaud and I had last year in my section a comrade whose name was Maret."

"Ah! Won't you come inside?" said the young woman, with a little start.

He followed her into the shop, fresh and fragrant, smelling of earth and flowers. He took off his coat but remained standing. He was short in body, thick-set, with a round head set on rounded shoulders, and a countenance extraordinarily pock marked in his little eyes there was an expression abroad, peaceable and winning.

"What was your comrade's first name?" the young woman asked brusquely.

"Louis, I believe. Yes, that was it. Louis Maret—a big blonde, a very good-looking fellow. Do you know him?"

"Is it a long time since you saw him last?" she said, ignoring his question.

"Oh, it must be several months. You see, I was wounded."

After a pause she declared:

"I am not acquainted with the person you mention. If that is what you wish to know, now you know it."

She turned away to arrange a bunch of flowers. Her fingers trembled as she touched its fragile leaves. The soldier went away.

Some days afterwards he returned. Very quietly he entered the little shop.

"Excuse me if I disturb you," he said to the young woman. "But the other day, when I spoke to you about this Louis Maret, I believed I annoyed you. I didn't mean to do so."

She fixed her gray eyes squarely on him. He had the air of an honest well-meaning man, and, after all, she could not suppress her desire for news.

"I was quick the other day," she said. "But you see—Louis Maret was my husband. For five years he made me very unhappy. I endured everything, you know, I understand. When he left me, four years and a half ago, I felt almost like an old woman. I had suffered so much. He went away three times, and three times I pardoned him. We had a fine establishment and a business which was doing well. He squandered all that I had and left me on the street with three children, the youngest only two months old. Since then nothing—not a word. The money—that I didn't care about—but the other things. I believe that it amused him to torment me. He saw to it that I should know all about his misconduct. When I was delivered of him for good I succeeded in forgetting him. Now, for me, it is finished. That is why I told you the other day that I didn't know him."

"Yes, I understand," said Antoine Lavaud, as placidly as ever. "When we were together he told me, with put going into details, that he had behaved very badly toward his family. Probably he was sorry. Down there one reflects—one changes, you see."

"Nonsense," she answered, shrugging her shoulders. "Why would he have changed? Yes, when the war began, I believed that he would come to see me before going to the front. That he would write me a line, at least. But no. And when he came back on leave he looked up the woman for whom he left me the last time. I know him. But it is all the same to me now. It is finished. I have my children to raise, and my occupation is a hard one. There are times, in the busy season, that I go three or four nights without sleeping."

She went off to serve a customer.

"Tell me," she asked sharply, when she returned, "would you have done that? Would you have deserted your wife and your children?"

"Certainly not. But, you see, I have no wife and no children," he answered softly.

From that day on he reappeared regularly. His visits to the shop seemed to please him immensely. He listened on sweeping the floor; he watered the flowers. Most frequently he sat down and talked with the young woman. They discussed horticulture or exchanged views in general, and they always agreed perfectly. From time to time Lavaud dropped some phrases, evidently prepared in advance, about repentance and forgiveness, in connection with which he mentioned the name of Louis Maret.

One day he arrived early in the afternoon, seated himself opposite the young woman, who was preparing a sheaf of leaves, and said with the greatest calmness:

"I am a liar!"

She raised her eyes in astonishment. He continued:

"Listen to me. Maret was wounded the same day I was, and was brought here to the same hospital. Only he was more seriously wounded than I was, and he is—"

"Dead? He is dead! And I never saw him again! And I have never had a chance to take care of him!"

She sprang up very pale.

"No, no. He is not dead. He is getting along all right. One can see that you love him," said Antoine Lavaud, watching her closely.

"What I have said I agree with him to say. We are intimate friends, and he has told me everything. He thought that you would never pardon him, and he sent me to try to arrange things little by little. He has repented, and has been very wretched, you know."

"Where is he?" she cried. "Take me to him."

"He is at the door. He is waiting there. It is the first time he has been allowed to go out."

She listened no longer. She rushed to the door and was now sobbing as she embraced a man who had just entered and whom she could not in the bottom of her heart help feeling glad to find so aged and so changed, since thus, she thought, he would be perhaps more safely here.

Antoine Lavaud slipped away without being noticed.

"I have succeeded; I am happy," he said to himself, out in the street. But suddenly he felt a bitter pang, and he comprehended that in that little shop, fresh and fragrant, smelling of earth and flowers, he had passed the moments which were the sweetest in all his life—in the company of an unforgettable woman with gray eyes who loved another whom he had brought back to her.—Frederic Boutel, in National Star.

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PROVIDING FOR THE FUTURE

War is Expected to Draw More Heavily on Students in Colleges Than Was Anticipated.

Educational experts in Washington fear that the war is to draw more heavily upon students in colleges than has been anticipated, says the Springfield Republican. One of them puts the matter in this way:

"Of course we must win the war, and make sacrifices to that end, but if we stop the onward march of education we are headed for trouble. The problem is all the more serious because people are not generally aware of it. It is hard to get folks excited about education and trained leaders for the future, when they can be thrilled by airplanes and submarines. But mark my word, this is a problem of problems."

It is well known how heavily the volunteer system in Canada has drawn upon the colleges, and educators there congratulate the United States on the adoption of the selective draft principle in preference to complete reliance upon volunteering, which experience there has shown debilitates the colleges first. That young men who are old enough and were ready to leave college in June should have enlisted for military service was to have been expected, and we are likely to have a repetition of this next year. What is needed, therefore, is to fill the incoming class as full as possible at all the colleges. Everything possible must be done to keep education going all along the line. War makes necessary chemists and physicians, quite as much as soldiers. This is shown by the fact that the best specialists of this country are at work under government supervision, and the race of them must not be permitted to run out. Physicians and engineers must be in the process of making. In a word this country must be made to think in terms of the future as well as of the present.

Salmon Loaf.

One can of red salmon. Remove the oil and pick up fine; half a cupful bread crumbs, yolks of four eggs well beaten; a quarter level teaspoonful salt, one level teaspoonful poultry dressing, one level teaspoonful finely chopped parsley, white of four eggs beaten stiff. Mix in order given and steam in mold one hour. Serve hot or cold. If eaten hot, serve with fish sauce, made as follows: One cupful milk, one egg, one level tablespoonful of cornstarch, two level tablespoonfuls butter, one teaspoonful catchup and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Cook over hot water, stirring constantly until it thickens.

AROUND THE WORLD

Germany's cheapest drink is who.

United States army is to be protected against tuberculosis by latest scientific measures.

One state in Brazil has an area of 91,325 square miles—Rio Grande do Sul.

Madrid has 67 miles of street railway.

Spain is projecting suburban electric railways around Madrid.

Trebilcock now has a bank.

Denmark's crop prospects are poor.

United States in last fiscal year exported dyes and dyestuffs valued at \$11,710,887, nearly double export values of preceding year.

Corned Beef Salad.

Occasionally in any weather one turns with pleasure from cooked hot food to a cold salad, which is a possibility even in camp. Have all the ingredients as cold as possible. Remove the contents from a small tin of corned beef, rinse in very hot water and chill thoroughly. Then cut into very small dice, add double the quantity of cooked diced potatoes, and sprinkle with grated horseradish and chopped onion. Blend with a French dressing, add a minced cucumber pickle and, if lettuce is available, toss the salad in lettuce cups. It is very good, however, without the addition of an edible green.

Modern Prairie Schooner.

The prairie schooner, which carried so many American pioneers westward, has come back on rubber tires, with a gasoline engine in place of the mules. Many auto trucks and other cars have been fitted with long canvas hoods and used for long overland journeys just as the old-time prairie schooner was. The modern camp wagons, however, in addition to their speed and easy riding qualities have the advantages of spring beds and electric lights. It is typical of the change that has come over the country that the modern prairie schooner is as luxurious as the old one was rough.

ABOUT PERSONS

Dr. Frank Johnson of Chicago grafts lilacs on shade trees.

George Colby has lived for five years in New York city in an old piano box.

Dr. W. J. Brickley of Boston says alcohol causes a majority of accidents.

John Dill of Kansas City, father of 19 children, has been sued for divorce.

Dr. H. W. Benedict quits pastorate in Bloomfield, Conn., to preach in French trenches.

David Jones, fifty years champion speller in Macon, Mo., has retired, and will enter no more contests.

Dr. I. H. Magill of Seneca, N. Y., has reduced from 316 to 200 pounds by daily brisk walks for six weeks.

URGED TO CONSERVE LINEN

Housewives Are Advised to Exercise Care in Laundering and Ironing—Avoid Powders.

Today, with linen as scarce and as expensive as it is, every housewife should do her bit in conserving what she has. It is urged, it should be washed very carefully with warm water and good laundry soap. Avoid all washing powders, and do not rub on the board. Use very little, if any starch, as it makes the threads brittle.

A great many women are using dyes and runners for two meals, at least, some are using them for all, except company meals. If you do this, be sure the linen is kept in a cool, dry place, and do not let it lie with any starch, as this not only rots it, but turns it yellow in a very little time. Blue covers are excellent for table linen when it is not in use, and it prevents it from turning yellow from discoloration.

Do not crease table linen with the iron when ironing it; fold it with the fingers and it will last much longer. Some women, after using a tablecloth for some time, cut a tiny bit from one side and hem it over, and in this way the creases will be in a different place.

Movable Scenery.

Out at Stop Blanket on the Gates Mill line, we saw a brewer, says a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer. There was a small plantation of saplings in a field by the wayside; a man strode among them tearing them up by the roots. He did it as easily as you or we could have pulled up so many weeds; he swung seven or eight of these trees over his shoulder and walked down the road with them. It reminded us of the labors of Hercules, or of one of the Giants of Grimm.

Overcome by awe and curiosity, we asked a native of those parts concerning the nature and purpose of this man's occupation. He grinned and enlightened us.

"Them's shade trees. Tain't no trick to pull 'em up—they ain't been there long enough to take root. You see, that feller's got some buildin' lots for sale along this road. They show off better when they got some shade trees started around 'em. Well, this feller ain't got but a dozen of them saplings. When somebody sends word he's comin' to look at a lot, the owner hustles up and plants 'em trees around that lot. Then when the customer goes away, he takes the trees and puts 'em around the next lot he's goin' to show. He's been movin' that same bunch o' trees around here an' there, all summer."—Cleveland Plain Dealer

DEFINED

"Say, dad, what's morbid curiosity?"

"That's what the fellow has who butts in ahead of you and keeps you from seeing anything."

Zinc Top on Table.

A kitchen table covered with zinc is a great labor saver. It is easily cleaned and saucers can be stood and vegetables, etc., cut up upon it without injuring it. The zinc costs little, will last practically a lifetime, and can easily be nailed to the table by any home carpenter.

THIS DOG BIT LION'S TAIL

Humorist Permits the Canine to Relate His Own Experience on Circus Day.

Don Marquis, the famous humorist, has written a story about a dog and a boy for the American Magazine. The dog tells the story and he says:

"One circus day, after Freckles and I and all the other dogs and boys and humans in town had followed the grand parade to the lot where the show was and there wasn't anything else free to see, I went and lay down in Doc's drug store under the soda water counter. I was asleep there, and was dreaming I was chasing a rabbit, when a big, heavy, yellow dog came bulging into the store and bounced over the counter and lit right on top of me with a growl—at least, at the time I thought he was a dog. I bit him, and he gave another growl that shook the medicine bottles on the shelves and bulged out of the store again. And as he bounced into Main street I bit him again. And after I bit him the second time I saw he wasn't another dog at all, but the circus lion that had got loose somehow. He was a kind of a moth-eaten old lion, and he was just as frightened at the town people as they were at him—but he was a lion, all right, and my brave act in biting him was seen and noted by everyone in town who had not crawled into cellars or under beds when he let out those roars. And I became a hero right there; or, as Doc Watson said, a public character."

A BULL'S TIP



Bloodgood—I'll tell you something to buy for a rise.
Biddle—Well?
Bloodgood—Balloons.

Better Late Than Never.

Some persons, on certain dire occasions in the small hours of the morning, find it rather difficult to locate the keyhole of a door—of their own door. An Ohio inventor has come forward with a device for luring the latchkey to the proper place. He accomplishes this with an arrangement which provides for the placing of an electric light pointing geographically toward the keyhole. Attached to the light is a reflector which further intensifies the illumination.

Connections to the light are made through a push-button which has been thoroughly fitted directly into the door-knob. From the push-button the wires lead to the batteries through contacts between the door and the door-sill. When the button is pushed the circuit is closed and the lamp lighted.

Worn Blankets.

Lay smoothly upon the thin place a piece of used Merino underwear and pin armpit and securely. Then begin at the lowest edge and stitch with the sewing machine, row after row successively, a quarter of an inch apart, until the extent of the patch is reached, withdrawing the pins as you proceed. This is quickly done, and is a most satisfactory method. Do not work around and around, as the goods will bulge in the middle, and half the design of the patch, that of neatness, will be a failure. Should the selvage be frayed, turn the merino over it, including it, and stitch as directed. It is not necessary to break the machine thread for each row. Stitch the way of the stripes.

What's in a Name?

In a prominent city the other day Sin and Hell lost two captives, but only one of them asked for a change back to her maiden name. Mrs. Albert Sinn was willing to cling to her name, if the Judge would compel her husband to divide his wages with her. But Mrs. Alfred B. Hell said she married Hell, but got enough of Hell in one month and wanted her freedom and her former name. She got both.

Cheese Balls.

To make cheese balls mix cream cheese with sufficient cream to form balls. Season with salt and paprika. Roll each in chopped nut meats. Blue fish walnuts preferred.

His Invention

Mr. Obed Gunney contemplated a strange assembly of cords, weights and pulleys that clustered about the door of his woodshed with artless satisfaction. Mr. Caleb Peaslee looked on dispassionately.

"There!" remarked Obed contentedly. "I don't believe I can better that much; I don't see where it's lackin' anything."

"Just what is this contraption posed to be, anyway?" asked Mr. Peaslee.

"It's a rig to keep my shed door closed tight against them hens," explained Obed, with an inventor's eagerness. "I can work it with this cord 'bout goin' out into the shed."

"I d'know's I ever give much thought to machines to shut doors," remarked Mr. Peaslee musingly. "Solon Gage did, though, one time. His machine worked, too—mebbe as well as you're hopin' yourn will."

"Who was Solon Gage?" demanded Obed, "and was his rig anything like this?"

"Solon Gage," said Mr. Peaslee slowly, "was a man that lived over in Amherst a long time ago."

"Solon's trouble," Mr. Peaslee went on, "started with a hired man he had that wouldn't try to learn nor do as he was told. This man was a gre't two-fisted lummox, and Solon didn't quite dare to undertake to thrash him, so he rigged up a machine to kind of help out."

"The trouble was, the hired man was bound to use the front door, that bein' the handiest when he come in from plowin' and field work; and he'd traipse through there with his feet all mud, and his Gage got so out of patience that she made Solon's life nothin' but a time of quarrel."

"Solon went to the man with what she said and the feller jest grinned at him. So finally he sot himself to work to see if he couldn't better things."

"I ain't goin' to try to give you all the workin's of the thing he rigged up, for I don't know 'em. But I do know that he rigged a spring behind the front door that would let anybody open it mebbe halfway, and then the door'd shoot so hard that it would drive a middlin'-sized puseon halfway to the front gate. That spring was so stiff and smart that Solon had to rig a windlass to set the thing."

"Workin' quiet, so that the hired man wouldn't mistrust what he was doin', Solon finally got the thing fixed to suit him, and then he sot it and waited for the hired man to come into the door again. But it so fell out that just then the feller was called home for a day or so and Solon didn't have any chance to see how 'twas goin' to work."

"Mebbe havin' all the extra work throwed onto him like that made Solon forget 'bout his invention; anyway, the whole thing must have sort of dropped out of his mind, or else the thing would never have happened that did happen."

"In them days," Mr. Peaslee digressed to explain, "there was a good deal of juniper knees-dug—for ship-bulldin', you know; and Solon dug a lot of 'em himself—dug 'em out on his own land and bought the right to dig 'em on other folks' land, when they'd sell 'em. Old Mr. Brewer had a swag of the timber, and time and time again Solon'd tried to dicker with him for it, but the old man was kind of pudgicky and national and wouldn't."

"Well, jest at this time it happened that Solon had a big order for juniper knees and they were gettin' scarce, so he went down one night and made a resolute set at the old feller, to see if he couldn't buy 'em. The old man hemmed and hawed 'cussable, but finally he told Solon that he'd let him know within twenty-four hours."

"So the next day the old man come up to Solon's house. He was a kind of dignified old goat—he'd never think of such a thing as goin' to the back door—so when he got to the front door and rapped, and didn't get any answer—Solon and Mrs. Gage bein' out in the back yard at the time—he opened the door and started to go inside; and when he did, things happened."

"Cordin' to what I could find out the door got a waitin' at him that switched him off'n his feet and broke every pane of glass in the side lights of the door. Mrs. Gage and Solon heard the crash and heard the old gentleman groan, and they put sound to see what the matter was; and there he laid, with the wind 'bout all knocked out of him, and hurt some, but not hurt half as much as he was madded. They say he talked to Solon something dreadful, 'cussin' him; they were both church members. He said he'd let them juniper knees rot in the ground 'fore he'd see Solon lay an ax to 'any one of 'em, no matter if he offered him three times what they were worth. And then he stubbed off home, the saddest man in Amherst."

"And to cap the whole thing, the hired man, that was only goin' to be gone a day or so, found a better job and never come back at all. So, while Solon's rig for shuttin' the door worked all right, I don't s'pose he got any real satisfaction out of it—I never heard him claim he did, anyway."—Youth's Companion.