

# Beasley's Christmas Party

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

## "QUEER?"

SYNOPSIS—Newcomer in a small town, a young newspaper man, who tells the story, is amazed by the unaccountable actions of a man who, from the window of a fine house, apparently has converse with invisible personages, particularly mentioning one "Simpledoria."

II—Continued.

"One twenty-five," I answered, and felt my ears growling red with mortification. Too late, I remembered that the new-comer in a community should guard his tongue among the natives until he has unraveled the skein of their relationships, alliances, feuds and private wars—a precept not unlike the classic injunction:

Yes, my darling daughter, Hang your clothes on the hickory limb, But don't go near the water.

However, in my confusion I warmly regretted my failure to follow it, and resolved not to blunder again.

Mr. Dowden thanked me for the information for which he had no real desire, and the elderly ladies again taking up (with all too evident relief) their various mild debates, he inquired if I played bridge. "But I forget," he added. "Of course you'll be at the Despatch office in the evenings, and can't be here." After which he immediately began to question me about my work, making his determination to give me no opportunity again to mention the Honorable David Beasley unnecessarily conspicuous, as I thought.

I could only conclude that some unpleasantness had arisen between himself and Beasley, probably of political origin, since they were both in politics, and of personal (and consequently bitter) development; and that Mr. Dowden found the mention of Beasley not only unpleasant to himself but a possible embarrassment to the ladies (who, I supposed, were aware of the quarrel) on his account.

After lunch, not having to report at the office immediately, I took unto myself the solace of a cigar, which kept me company during a stroll about Mrs. Apperthwaite's capacious yard. In the rear I found an old-fashioned rose-garden—the bushes long since bloomless and now brown with autumn—and I paced its gravelled paths up and down, at the same time favoring Mr. Beasley's house with a covert study that would have done credit to a porch-climber, for the sting of my blunder at the table was quiescent, or at least neutralized, under the itch of curiosity far from satisfied concerning the interesting premises next door. The gentleman in the dressing-gown, I was sure, could have been no other than the Honorable David Beasley himself. He came not in eyeshot neither he nor any other; there was no sign of life about the place. That portion of his yard which lay behind the house was not within my vision. It is true, his property being here separated from Mrs. Apperthwaite's by a board fence higher than a tall man could reach; but there was no sound from the other side of this partition, save that caused by the quiet movement of rusty leaves in the breeze.

My cigar was at half-length when the green lattice door of Mrs. Apperthwaite's back porch was opened and Miss Apperthwaite, bearing a saucer of milk, issued therefrom, followed hastily, by a very white, fat cat, with a pink ribbon round its neck, a vibrant nose, and fixed, voracious eyes up lifted to the saucer. The lady and her cat offered to view a group as pretty as a popular painting; it was even improved when, stooping, Miss Apperthwaite set the saucer upon the ground, and, continuing in that posture, stroked the cat. To bend so far is a test of a woman's grace, I have observed.

She turned her face toward me and smiled. "I'm almost at the age, you see."

"What age?" I asked, stupidly enough.

"When we take to cats," she said rising. "Spinstershood" we like to call it. "Single-blessedness!"

"That is your kind heart. You decline to make one of us happy to the despair of all the rest."

She laughed at this, though with no very genuine mirth, I marked, and led my 1830 attempt at gallantry pass without return.

the subject was embarrassing or unpleasant to Mr. Dowden.  
"What made you think that?"  
"Surely," I said, "you saw how pointedly he cut me off."

"Yes," she returned thoughtfully. "He rather did, it's true. At least, I see how you got that impression." She seemed to muse upon this, letting her eyes fall; then, raising them, allowed her far-away gaze to rest upon the house beyond the fence, and said, "It is an interesting old place."

"And Mr. Beasley himself—" I began.

"Oh," she said, "he isn't interesting. That's his trouble!"  
"You mean his trouble not to—"  
She interrupted me, speaking with sudden, surprising energy, "I mean he's a man of no imagination."

"No imagination!" I exclaimed.  
"None in the world! Not one ounce of imagination! Not one grain!"  
"Then who," I cried—"or what—is Simpledoria?"

"Simple—what?" she said, plainly mystified.

"Simpledoria," she repeated, and laughed. "What in the world is that?"  
"You never heard of it before?"  
"Never in my life."

"You've lived next door to Mr. Beasley a long time, haven't you?"  
"All my life."

"And I suppose you must know him pretty well."

"What next?" she said, smiling.  
"You said he lived there all alone," I went on, tentatively.  
"Except for an old colored couple, his servants."

"Can you tell me—" I hesitated.  
"Has he ever been thought—well, 'queer'?"

"Never!" she answered, emphatically. "Never anything so exciting! Merely dead and hopelessly commonplace." She picked up the saucer, now exceedingly empty, and set it upon

"One explanation might be just barely possible," I said. "If it is, it is the most remarkable case of somnambulism on record. Did you ever hear of Mr. Beasley's walking in his—"  
She touched me lightly but peremptorily on the arm in warning, and I stopped. On the other side of the board fence a door opened creakily, and there sounded a loud and cheerful voice—that of the gentleman in the dressing-gown.

"Here we come!" It said; "me and big Bill Hammersley. I want to show Bill I can jump anyways three times as far as he can! Come on, Bill!"  
"Is that Mr. Beasley's voice?" I asked, under my breath.

Miss Apperthwaite nodded in affirmation.

"Could he have heard me?"  
"No," she whispered. "He's just come out of the house." And then to herself, "Who under heaven is Bill Hammersley? I never heard of him!"

"Of course, Bill," said the voice beyond the fence, "if you're afraid I'll beat you too badly, you've still got time to back out. I did understand you to kind of hint that you were considerable of a jumper, but if— What? What'd you say, Bill? There ensued a moment's complete silence. "Oh, all right," the voice then continued. "You say you're in this to win, do you? Well, so'm I, Bill Hammersley; so'm I. Who'll go first? Me? All right—from the edge of the walk here. Now then! One—two—three! Ha!"

A sound came to our ears of some one landing heavily—and at full length, it seemed—on the turf, followed by a slight, rusty groan in the same voice. "Ugh! Don't you laugh, Bill Hammersley! I haven't jumped as much as I ought to, these last twenty years; I reckon I've kind of lost the hang of it. Aha!" There were indications that Mr. Beasley was picking himself up and brushing his trousers with his hands. "Now, it's your turn, Bill. What say?" Silence again, followed by, "Yes, I'll make Simpledoria get out of the way. Come here, Simpledoria. Now, Bill, put your foot together on the edge of the walk. That's right. All ready? Now then! One for the money—two for the show—three to make ready—and four for to GO!" Another silence. "By jingo, Bill Hammersley, you've beat me! Ha, ha! That was a jump! What say?" Silence once more. "You say you can do even better than that? Now, Bill, don't brag. Oh! you say that was up in Scotland, where you had a spring-board? Oho! All right; let's see how far you can jump when you really try. There! Heels on the walk again. That's right; swing your arms. One—two—three! There you go!" Another silence. "Zing! Well, sir, I'll be eternally snatched to flinders if you didn't do it that time, Bill Hammersley! I see I never really saw any jumping before in all my born days. It's eleven feet if it's an inch. What? You say you—"

I heard no more, for Miss Apperthwaite, her face flushed and her eyes shining, beckoned me impersonally to follow her, and departed so hurriedly that it might be said she ran.

"I don't know," said I, keeping at her elbow, "whether it's more like 'Allee' or the interlocutor's conversation at a minstrel show."

"Hush!" she warned me, though we were already at a safe distance, and did not speak again until we had reached the front walk. There she paused, and I noted that she was trembling—and, no doubt correctly, judged her emotion to be that of consternation.

"There was no one there!" she exclaimed. "He was all by himself! It was just the same as what you saw last night!"

"Evidently."

"Did it sound to you"—there was a little awed tremor in her voice that I found very appealing—"did it sound to you like a person who'd lost his mind?"

"I don't know," I said. "I don't know at all what to make of it."

"He couldn't have been"—her eyes grew very wide—"intoxicated!"

"No. I'm sure it wasn't that."

"Then I don't know what to make of it, either. All that wild talk about 'Bill Hammersley' and 'Simpledoria' and spring-boards in Scotland and—"

"And an eleven-foot jump," I suggested.

"Why, there's no more a 'Bill Hammersley,'" she cried, with a gesture of excited emphasis, "than there is a 'Simpledoria!'"

"So it appears," I agreed.

"He's lived there all alone," she said, solemnly, "in that big house, so long, just sitting there evening after evening, all by himself, never going out, never reading anything, not even thinking; but just sitting and sitting— Well," she broke off, suddenly, shook the frown from her forehead, and made me the offer of a dazzling smile, "there's no use bothering one's own head about it."

"I'm glad to have a fellow-witness," I said. "It's so eerie I might have concluded there was something the matter with me."

"You're going to your work?" she asked, as I turned toward the gate. "I'm very glad I don't have to go to mine."

"You're?" I inquired, rather blankly.

"I teach algebra and plane geometry at the High school," said this surprising young woman. "Thank Heaven, it's Saturday! I'm reading 'Les Miserables' for the seventh time, and I'm going to have a real orgy over Geri-vaux and the barricade this afternoon!"

"Because she said he was a man of no imagination."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

# THE AMERICAN LEGION

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## TRIBUTE TO THE LEGION MEN

New Orleans Times-Picayune Praises Conduct of Visitors During the National Convention.

New Orleans is proud and glad to have had the opportunity to entertain the American Legion national convention and heartily congratulates San Francisco upon its capture of the honor for 1923, according to an editorial in the Times-Picayune, a leading New Orleans newspaper, printed several days after the departure of the Legionnaires.

The Legionnaires as a body earned the good opinions even of those few Orleansians who because of rumors of misdoings at Kansas City were slightly prejudiced against the gathering. The editorial states, "Throughout American Legion week good humor and good order prevailed. The rare instances of minor rowdysm or ruffianism served only as exceptions to prove the general rule of splendid behavior—and of these exceptions some, perhaps the majority, were chargeable to local hoodlums who took advantage of the Legion festivities to misbehave in the hope that their offenses would be charged to the visitors' account. In so large an assembly some impostors, crooks and evil-doers are almost invariably found but the careful work of the Legion officials and the local police simply restricted the activities of these undesirable."

"Of harmless 'high jinks' there was, of course, a joyous abundance. New Orleans, with its carnival traditions, shared in the fun of it all and rejoiced in the hilarity which testified that the lads of the Legion were having a good time. Of wanton offense and of malicious mischief, American Legion week was remarkably free. The wish expressed by the Times-Picayune last Saturday morning—that the Legionnaires would carry to their homes recollections of the convention as pleasant as those they leave with us—came straight from the heart."

In a previous editorial the Times-Picayune stated:

"The American Legion convention closed yesterday afternoon will be long and pleasantly remembered by New Orleans. Accommodated as this city is to great conventions and impressive parades, the Legion assembly and the inspiring review staged last Wednesday made a distinctive appeal, an impression of sturdy Americanism and militant patriotism not soon to be effaced, and wholly favorable."

And another editorial in the same newspaper reads:

"Their visit to us will lead, as we hope, to the return of many of these stalwart young Americans, to live and grow with us."

## HEAD OF LEGION AUXILIARY

Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, Virginia Woman, Originator of Idea for World Peace Body.

Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, newly elected president of the American Legion auxiliary, was one of five women sent from the United States to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles.

While she was in Paris, Dr. Barrett developed the idea of an international organization of women relatives of ex-service men to work for world peace.

The outgrowth of this conception is a proposal to form an auxiliary to the Interallied Veterans' association, which was received enthusiastically by association delegates at their recent meeting in New Orleans.

The international auxiliary is expected to be formed at the same time as the next Legion and auxiliary convention.

Dr. Barrett lives in Alexandria, Va., and has served as president of the auxiliary in that state. Her ancestors came to Virginia with Capt. John Smith. Dr. Barrett is serving her fourth term as state regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution and was president of the first club organized in Virginia whose members were the mothers and wives of soldiers. This club later became the auxiliary unit of the Alexandria Legion post.

Dr. Barrett, U. S. M. C., her son, was chief of staff to General Neville at Coblenz and was afterwards sent to make a survey and relief map of Chateau Thierry and Belleau Woods. This map, which is pronounced to be one of the finest works of its kind in existence, is a permanent exhibit in the rotunda of the National museum in Washington.

Helium in the Air. Helium, the non-explosive gas used in the new United States airships, exists in the air you breathe in the proportion of one part by volume in 185,000.

## ALL PROUD OF HER SUCCESS

Mrs. Joseph Fischer Directed Social Activities of Recent Auxiliary National Meeting.



For excellent services rendered as chairman of the American Legion Auxiliary's recent national convention in New Orleans, Mrs. Joseph L. Fischer was asked to accept a high office in that organization but refused because she felt that the success of the convention was ample reward for her endeavors.

Mrs. Fischer directed the activities of scores of New Orleans society leaders who put their shoulders to the wheel to entertain the thousands of women visitors to the national gathering.

A daughter of the late Judge Frederick Hooker of Minneapolis, Mrs. Fischer spent the early part of her life in that city. She was educated in a private school at Washington and in the University of Minnesota. Following her marriage she went to New Orleans where she became a leader in women's clubs and social activities. She was elected vice president of the Louisiana League of Women Voters. During the war Mrs. Fischer raised a large sum of money in Louisiana for the American Red Cross. Her only son served with the American forces in Italy.

Mrs. Fischer is a lineal descendant of Fighting Joe Hooker, the famous Civil war hero.

## MADE BIG MEET A SUCCESS

T. Semmes Walmsley, New Orleans, Served as General Chairman of the Convention Committee.

To T. Semmes Walmsley of New Orleans goes the credit for the success of the American Legion's fourth annual national convention.

Mr. Walmsley was general chairman of the convention committee. Mr. Walmsley was educated in the public schools of New Orleans and Spring Hill college at Mobile, Ala., and was graduated from the law school at Tulane university. He played on 14 varsity teams, was captain of the football and track teams and hung up a record as Southern Athletic association quarter-mile runner.

Commissioned a captain at the Leon Springs officers' training camp at Leon, Tex., Mr. Walmsley remained there as instructor until December 29, 1917, when he was detailed to take charge of the first training battalion at Kelley field, San Antonio, Tex. In April, 1918, he was placed in command of the Forty-sixth aerial squadron and sent to Ellington field in Houston, Tex., for bombing instruction. From Ellington field he took his squadron to Mineola, L. L., and built the first hangars on President Roosevelt field.

He has been state hospitalization officer since his term of office expired as national committeeman. Nominated for the office of national commander, Mr. Walmsley withdrew his name on the convention floor because he felt that New Orleans had already been honored sufficiently in being the host city to the convention.

## PLANNED THE OLYMPIC MEET

James Murphy, Iowa, Legion's National Athletic Commission Chairman, Arranged Big Program.

As chairman of the American Legion's national athletic commission, James K. Murphy of Iowa planned the recent Olympic meet at New Orleans, in which ex-service athletes from all parts of the country competed in track and field events, amateur boxing and wrestling, aquatic sports, golf and tennis tournaments and marksmanship contest.

Hanford MacNider, past national commander of the Legion, appointed Mr. Murphy chairman of the commission last June when the national executive committee authorized the formation of the athletic body.

Mr. Murphy was a distinguished all-around athlete during the years 1911-1913, while attending the University of Iowa. He was captain of Iowa's football team. After leaving college he continued athletic activities until the beginning of the World war, when he was made a captain in the Fourth division and served overseas with that organization.

The Legion's attention was first drawn to athletics when Provost Marshal Crowder's report on the physical condition of the men who were drafted for the service was made public. The report indicated that less than one-third of the men drafted were actually fit for military service.

## DOCTOR ORDERED WOMAN OBEYED

Took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and is Now Well



Chicago, Illinois.—"You surely gave women one good medicine when you put Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound on the market. After I had my baby I was all run down and so nervous it kept me from gaining. My doctor did everything he could to build me up, then he ordered me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound with his medicine and I am now a new woman. I have had three children and they are all Lydia E. Pinkham babies. I have recommended your medicine to several friends and they speak highly of it. You are certainly doing good work in this world."

—Mrs. ADRIEN TOMSHECK, 10557 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Illinois. There is nothing very strange about the doctor directing Mrs. Tomscheck to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. There are many physicians who do recommend it and highly appreciate its value.

Women who are nervous, run down, and suffering from women's ailments should give this well-known root and herb medicine a trial. Mrs. Tomscheck's experience should guide you towards health.

## WATCH THE BIG 4

Stomach-Kidneys-Heart-Liver. Keep the vital organs healthy by regularly taking the world's standard remedy for kidney, liver, bladder and uric acid troubles—

LATHROP'S GOLD MEDAL HARLEM OIL CAPSULES  
The National Remedy of Holland for centuries. At all druggists in three sizes. Guaranteed as represented. Look for the name Gold Medal on every box and accept no imitation.



CURES COLDS in 24 HOURS  
AT ALL CASARA'S QUININE PRICES  
DIRECT FROM HESSIG, ELLIS, CHEMIST, MEMPHIS, TENN.

## Your Hair

Do not let this or streaked with gray—Q-B-A-N HAIR-COLOR RESTORER will quickly revive it and bring back all its original color and luxuriance. At all good druggists. See or direct from HESSIG, ELLIS, Chemist, MEMPHIS, TENN.

## DYED HER SKIRT, DRESS, SWEATER AND DRAPERIES WITH "DIAMOND DYES"

Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple any woman can dye or tint her worn, shabby dresses, skirts, waists, coats, stockings, sweaters, coverings, draperies, hangings, everything, even if she has never dyed before. Buy "Diamond Dyes"—no other kind—then perfect home dyeing is sure because Diamond Dyes are guaranteed not to spot, fade, streak, or run. Tell your druggist whether the material you wish to dye is wool or silk, or whether it is linen, cotton or mixed goods.—Advertisement.

Proving the Proverb. "Distance lends enchantment to the view," some poet says. "That's right. At any rate, it's easier to admire a girl when she's well off."—Boston Evening Transcript.

Freshen a Heavy Skin With the antiseptic, fascinating Cuticura Talcum Powder, an exquisitely scented, economical face, skin, baby and dusting powder and perfume. Renders other perfumes superfluous. One of the Cuticura Toilet Trio (Soap, Ointment, Talcum).—Advertisement.

Not That Kind of a Suit. Hardly Upton (trying on a new suit)—Ah, Isaacs, this suit looks very creditable—very creditable indeed. Isaacs, the tailor (excitedly)—Dot suit naffer lens der shop except for ready money!

For true blue, use Red Cross Ball Blue. Snowy-white clothes will always to result. Try it and you will always use it. All good grocers have it.—Advertisement.

An old bachelor is a man who has never met the one woman he couldn't live without. MURINE Night and Morning. Have Strong, Healthy Eyes. If they Tire, Itch, Smart or Burn, if Red, Irritated, Inflamed or Granulated, use Murine often. Soothes, Refreshes. Safe for Infant or Adult. At All Druggists. Write for Free Eye Book. Harte Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.