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DICKING A PRESENT FOR PLATT

By DOUGLAS MALLOCH

WHEN Harry Platt and that girl friend of the Greens (I forget her name) were married, it was one of those my goodness-gracious-just-think-of-that affairs, with no one in the secret except the suburban minister who tied the knot, the cabman who drove them out there and the girl from the minister's kitchen, who was a witness, and left a thumb-print of grease on the certificate (she was frying doughnuts at the time) and the minister's wife (at least the name was the same). Let's see, where was I? Oh, yes, when the Platts were married, it being that kind of a wedding, there was no chance to send them a wedding gift as I would have liked to do or to have done, (whichever is proper, or grammatical, though I'm sure I can never tell which). But Mr. Platt is one of the nicest men in the office, that is, he was before this happened. So I felt we ought to do something for him, just to show our good will—and, anyhow, we've dug down for others we thought much less of, so why shouldn't we for him? But the wedding was over, without invitations, or even a reception, and they were housekeeping before we knew it. So what could we do?

Well, just then Christmas came along not just then but two months after the wedding. They were married October 29, so it wasn't quite two months, but that's close enough. When Christmas came along, that is, just before it came along, I suggested that we make up a purse and give them a sort of delayed wedding present, just to show our good will. Everybody thought it was a splendid idea, that is, of course, except Mr. Platt, whom, of course, I didn't consult. So I got up a subscription paper and went to everybody in the office (except Mr. Platt, of course). I got \$26.60, including ten cents from the



janitor, who wasn't expected to give anything but wanted to give something, which shows just how popular Mr. Platt was with everyone in the building, when a janitor even would chip in.

Christmas shopping is hard enough, goodness knows, when you do it for yourself; but when you do it for a stock company capitalized at \$26.60, with 28 stockholders, with 28 different kinds of ideas and tastes, then Christmas shopping rises above a mere annoyance to the dignity of a real trouble. And that's what I was up against. I thought it would be nice to get an expression of opinion. So I went around one morning and asked for ideas. But I couldn't get a word. Nobody could think of anything. I couldn't myself. At noon I went out and looked. I walked miles. I priced, then I went back to the office. You should have seen my desk. Honest, you would have thought some one had turned in a general alarm. They couldn't wait for me to get back. There they were—28 of them, (that is, 27, or 28 with me). They all had suggestions, and they were all different.



The next day I looked again. But either a thing was too expensive or I would have money left. It is remarkable how few things there are in the world you can buy for \$26.60, no more, no less.

And then I saw it. It was in a department store, and marked down from \$50 to \$26.60! There it was, a cent! A great, big, glittering, magnificent Punch Bowl! Nobody had thought of that!

But, to make sure, I sent the sales ticket with it and told the Platts they could exchange the punch bowl, if they wished, for something they liked better.

And what do you suppose those Platts did?

In January they traded in that magnificent punch bowl for three tons of coal!

(Copyright, 1923)

Night Life of Berlin.

Berlin, the city which never sleeps, has long since outdistanced all its European rivals as a city of night life. In addition to its all-night cafes, day-break restaurants, and theaters which only open their doors at midnight, Berlin has now a magnificent bathing establishment which is open every hour in the 24. The newly-built "Admirals-Bad" in the Friedrichstrasse, which has recently been opened, is one of the finest bathing establishments in all Germany. Its swimming baths, both women's and men's, are resplendent in the finest majolica marble and beveled glass, while the Roman and Turkish baths are more than Oriental in their luxury. A small army of masseurs and attendants is constantly on duty, and the great doors of the establishment are never closed. Attached to the baths is a large and up-to-date restaurant, where Berlin night revellers, after enjoying a swim at three o'clock in the morning, may be seen eating an early breakfast in their bathing dress.

The Angel Doctor's Christmas

By Carl Jenkins

OPPOSITE each other in the cosy morning room sat a young woman and a girl of twelve.

"Now, Cousin Hilda," said the latter, as she smoothed down her dress and settled herself in her chair, "I'm going to begin at the beginning and tell you all about it, and then we are to go out and buy a Santa Claus present for him."

"Yes, Polly," answered the young woman.

"You had gone to Europe. You had just packed up and skated as if the police were after you. Mother said she didn't believe you wanted to go the least little bit, but that your mother made you."

"Don't talk nonsense, Polly."

"Well, you skated anyhow."

"And don't talk slang."

"Skated isn't slang. It means that you just glided off like a streak of lightning. You had skated, and I was lonesome, and I was out walking with poor Flora, when a boy came along with a big dog. He was tough. So was his dog. He shouted at me."

"Take care of your dog!"

"Why?" I answered.

"'Cause my dog will chew him up!"

"I was just going to tell him that if his dog did there would be trouble in the camp, when it sprang upon poor Flora and ended her life. I can't describe my feelings as I saw her breathing her last."

"Well, don't try to—not if there's any slang in it."

"Why, Hilda, I haven't said a slang word. You know how very, very particular mother is with me. No, I can't describe my feelings, but I remember that I went for that boy, tooth and toe-nail. I hit and scratched and kicked and bit, and I was doing him up when—"

"Polly Sewell!" exclaimed Miss Hilda in horror.

"Now what's happened?" Polly asked. "I told it to papa just this way, and he patted me on the shoulder and called me good girl. As I was saying, I was putting in my best looks when along came a taxi with a fat woman in it. Maybe she was sloping, and maybe she only wanted to get home to lunch. Maybe the chauffeur yelled 'Hi!' at me, and maybe he just wanted to kill another girl. However it was, he ran me down. Yes, cousin, I was knocked out."

"You mean you lost consciousness?"

"Gracious, but how ignorant you are for a girl of twenty! Nobody can be knocked out without losing their consciousness. That's the whole idea of it. Yes, I was knocked out and counted out, and when I came to I was in the hospital with three broken ribs. That fat woman must have weighed a ton. It was hours and hours before I came to, and then—oh, then—"

"Then what?"

"Then there was the loveliest angel standing beside my cot in the hospital you ever saw. Nobody knew who I was, and they had rung for the ambulance and taken me to the hospital. And, oh, that angel, cousin—that angel!"

"You mean a nurse, of course."

"I don't. I mean a man—a doctor. He had hold of my hand. He was looking down on me with his sad, sad eyes. I saw at once that he had some great sorrow on his mind. Yes, he had the finest eyes—and curly hair, and a handsome nose, and when he spoke to me there was pathos in his voice. And the fun of the whole thing was that I knew him at once, while he didn't know me from a side of sole-leather. Oh, you are interested, are you?"

"Polly, I was just thinking how frightened you must have been to find

yourself in a hospital," said the bustling Hilda.

"Oh, I see! Well, save your sympathy. A hospital with an angel-doctor to fix up your broken ribs isn't a half bad place. In fact, I liked it so well that I lied to stay there."

"Polly Sewell!"

"I sure did. They had gone through my outfit without finding my address and had concluded I was a stranger in the town. When I opened my eyes and sort of winked at the angel—"

"Polly, that's surely slang!"

"No it isn't. I told papa about it, and he said things had come to a pretty pass if a girl with three broken ribs couldn't wink at the angel-doctor who has set them. When I had opened my eyes and winked the doctor said:

"'Little girl, what is your name?'"

"'I'm Hannah Jones.'"

"'And where do you live?'"

"'At far-off Blackberry Corner.'"

"'Polly, you ought to have been sent to jail!'" was the emphatic comment.

"But I had my little scheme to work, and—"

"Papa hunted for five days before he found me, and then it was ten more before the angel would let him take me home. Cousin Hilda, a girl who is the real thing can accomplish a heap in fifteen days, even if she has broken ribs. I wanted to have a chat with that angel on outside matters, and I had three or four of them. You ought to have seen his face when I told him where I had seen him before and asked if he didn't remember me."

"But—but I don't—don't—" protested Hilda in a puzzled way.

"But you will in just a minute. I told him I had seen him in this very house! Now, then!"

"Polly, it wasn't—"

"Oh, it wasn't eh? Want to bet a \$20 hat it wasn't? Of course it was, and I was so mad at you that it set my broken ribs back all of three days. Dr. Charles Mortimer, and because he isn't rich your mother is down on him and she skated you off to Europe. Oh, I got on to the racket right away."

"Polly Sewell, you are a wicked girl! You use slang, and you fib to the doctor, and you meddle with other people's affairs, and—"

"And such dark eyes—and such a deep, pathetic voice! And we had several confidential chats together—very confidential. We didn't even let a trained nurse come within ten feet of us. Hilda, you don't know how confidential a girl becomes when three of her ribs are broken and she is afraid to draw long breaths!"

"And—and you talked about—me?"

"We did. I told him just what I thought of your mother, and I told him I was going to have a plain talk with you, and I told him—"

"Polly Sewell, I'll never speak to you again!" declared Miss Hilda as she rose and tried to look very angry.

"You'll have to, as we are going down town right away to buy Christmas presents for your Sunday school

Miss. I want you to help me pick out something for our angel-doctor."

"You—you can do that by yourself."

"But you can tell me whether the diamonds are all O. K. or not. No rhinestones for the angel with the deep, dark eyes. Dear me, while I can't help but grieve about poor Flora's death, I almost wish I could



"You Mean a Nurse, of Course."

have three ribs broken on the other side!"

It was three days before Christmas, and the streets were crowded and the stores packed like a ward caucus. It was crowd and jam and push. The cousins had to link hands to prevent separation. They had visited two or three stores and were still in the jam when Polly suddenly disengaged her hand and whispered:

"Watch my hike!"

And ten seconds later she was lost in the crowd, and the angel-doctor and Miss Hilda Fitch stood face to face. They were panned in. They had to lean against a show-case and hold their own. They had to talk and say things, and by and by the angel-doctor had to help select the presents for the Sunday school children and to help Miss Hilda through the jam to a taxi, and—"

"Say, now," observed the twelve-year-old Polly when she made a call three days later on her cousin, "I don't claim to know everything, but I do know when to—hike!"

And she wasn't even asked what "hike" meant!