

MISS MUCH-AFRAID

The Fifth of a New Series of "Anne" Stories

By L. M. Montgomery, Author of "Anne of Green Gables"

"I'M SO TIRED," said Cousin Ernestine Bugle dropping with a sigh into her chair at the supper table of Anne Shirley's boarding house. Cousin Ernestine always sat down to a meal with a sigh.

Cousin Ernestine had walked in from Lowvale that afternoon for a visit to Mrs. Captain MacComber and Mrs. Lincoln MacLean . . . more commonly known as Aunt Kate and Aunt Chatty . . . who kept the boarding house. It cannot be said that either of the aunts welcomed her very heartily in spite of the sacred ties of relationship. Cousin Ernestine was not an exhilarating person, being one of those unfortunate who are constantly worrying, not only about their own affairs but everybody else's as well, and will not give themselves or others any rest at all. The very look of her, Rebecca Dew declared, made you feel that life was a vale of tears. Certainly Cousin Ernestine was not beautiful and it was very doubtful if she ever had been. She had a dry pinched little face, faded watery blue eyes, several badly placed moles, and a whining voice. She wore a rusty black dress and a decrepit neck-piece of Hudson seal which she would not remove at the supper-table because she was afraid of draughts.

Rebecca Dew, household factotum at the boarding house, generally sat at table with the family. But not when Cousin Ernestine was there. Rebecca always declared she couldn't "savour her vittles" when "that old kill-joy" was there. She preferred to "eat her bite" in the kitchen but that did not prevent her from "saying her say" while she waited on the table.

"Likely it's the spring getting in your bones," she remarked unsympathetically.

"I hope it's only that, Miss Dew. But I'm afraid I'm like poor Mrs. Oliver Gage. She ate mushrooms last summer but I'm afraid there musta been a toadstool among them. The poison went all through her system. She's never felt the same since."

"But you haven't been eating mushrooms as early as this?" said Aunt Chatty.

"No, but I'm afraid I've got something else. Don't try to cheer me up, Charlotte. You mean well but it ain't no use. I've been through too much. Are you sure there ain't a spider in that cream-jug, Katherine? I'm afraid I saw one when you poured my cup."

"We never have spiders in our cream-jugs," said Rebecca Dew ominously, and slammed the kitchen door.

"Mebbee it was only a shadder," said Cousin Ernestine. "My eyes ain't what they were. I'm afraid I'll soon be blind. That reminds me . . . I dropped in to see Martha MacKay this afternoon and she was feeling feverish and all out in some kind of a rash. Looks to me as though you had the measles." I told her. "Likely they'll leave you almost blind. Your family all had weak eyes." I thought she ought to be prepared. Her mother isn't well either. I'm afraid it's a growth. "And if you have to have an operation and take chloroform," I told her, "I'm afraid you'll never come out of it. Remember you're a Hillis and the Hillises all had weak hearts. Your father died of heart failure you know."

"At eighty-seven," said Rebecca whisking away a plate.

"And you know five score and ten is the Bible limit," said Aunt Chatty cheerfully.

Cousin Ernestine helped herself to a third spoonful of sugar and stirred her tea sadly.

"So King David said, Charlotte, but I'm

afraid David wasn't a very nice man in some respects."

Anne Shirley caught Aunt Chatty's eye and laughed before she could prevent herself. Cousin Ernestine looked at her disapprovingly.

"I've heard you were a great girl to laugh. Well, I hope it'll last but I'm afraid it won't. I'm afraid you'll find out life is a melancholy business. Ah well, I was young once myself."

"Were you really now?" queried Rebecca Dew sarcastically, bringing in the muffins. "Seems to me you must always have been afraid to be young. It takes courage, I can tell you that, Miss Bugle."

"Rebecca Dew has such an odd way of saying things," complained Cousin

Ernestine. He preaches pretty fair sermons but I'm afraid what he said of Elijah the Tiddit last Sunday that he's far too liberal in his views of the Bible."

"I see by the papers that he married Peter Ellis and Fanny Bugle last week," said Aunt Chatty.

"Ah, yes. I'm afraid that'll be a case of marrying in haste and repenting at leisure. They've only known each other three years. I'm afraid Peter'll find out the fine feathers don't make fine birds. I'm afraid Fanny's very shiftless. She ironed her table napkins on the right side first and only. There was Fanny's aunt Ellie now . . . she was a thorough woman. When she was in mourning she always wore black nightgowns. Said she felt as bad

Rebecca Dew, bringing in the pear preserves and the layer cake.

"Where is Mrs. Lily Hunter this winter?" asked Aunt Chatty.

"She's been spending it with her son in San Francisco and I'm awful afraid there'll be another earthquake afore she gets out of it. If she does she'll likely try to smuggle and have trouble at the border. If it ain't one thing it's another when you're travelling. My cousin Jim Bugle spent the winter in Florida. I'm afraid he's getting rich and worldy. I said to him before he went, sez I . . . I remember it was the night the Coleman's dog died . . . or was it now? . . . yes, it was . . . 'Pride go with before destruction and a haughty spirit over in the Bugle Road school and she can't make up her mind which of her beaux to take. There's one thing I can assure you of, Mary Annetta,' sez I, 'and that is you'll never get the one you love best. No you'd better take the one as loves you . . . if you can be sure he does.' I hope she'll make a better choice than Jessle Chipman did. I'm afraid she's just going to marry Lorne Weston because he was always round. 'Is that what you've picked out?' I sez to her. 'His brother died of galloping consumption and he looks as if he would, too.'"

"How encouraging you always are," said Rebecca Dew, bringing in a plateful of macaroons.

"Can you tell me," said Cousin Ernestine, taking a second helping of pears, "if a calceolaria is a flower or a disease?"

"A flower," said Aunt Chatty. Cousin Ernestine looked a little disappointed.

LORD AND LADY WILLINGDON RETURN HOME



Marquess and Marchioness of Willingdon and their son, Lord Ratendone, on their return to London from India, at the end of Lord Willingdon's term as Viceroy. At the right is Captain Harrison of the S.S. Strathmore, the vessel on which they made the voyage.

Ernestine. "Not that I mind her, of course. And it's well to laugh if you can, Miss Shirley, but I'm afraid you're tempting Providence by being so happy. You're awful like our last minister's wife's aunt . . . she was always laughing but she died of a paralytic stroke. The third one kills you. I'm afraid our new minister out at Lowvale is inclined to be frivolous. The minute I saw him I sez to Louby, 'I'm afraid a man with legs like that must be addicted to dancing.' I s'pose he's give it up since he turned minister but I'm afraid the strain will come out in his family. He's got a young wife and they say she's scandalously in love with him. I can't seem to get over the thought of anyone marrying a minister for love. It seems so

in the night as in the day. Ah, there ain't many like her. I was down at Andy Bugle's helping them with the cooking for the wedding and when I come downstairs on the wedding morning if there wasn't Fanny eating an egg for her breakfast . . . and her getting married that day! My poor dead sister never et a thing for three days before she was married. And after her husband died we was afraid she was never going to eat again. There are times when I feel I can't understand the Bugles any longer."

"Is it true that Jean Young is going to be married again?" asked Aunt Kate.

"I'm afraid so. Of course Fred Young is supposed to be dead but I'm dreadful afraid he'll turn up yet. You could never trust that man. She's going to marry Ira Roberts. I'm afraid he's only marrying her to make her happy. His uncle Philip once wanted to marry me, but I sez to him, sez I, 'Bugle I was born and Bugle I will die. Marriage is a leap in the dark,' sez I, 'and I ain't going to be drug into it.' There has been an awful lot of weddings in Lowvale this winter. I'm afraid there'll be funerals all summer to make up for it. It often runs that way if you've noticed. Annie Edwards and Chris Hunter were one of the couples. I'm afraid they won't be as fond of each other in a few years as they are now. I'm afraid she was just swept off her feet by his dashing ways. His Uncle Hiram was crazy . . . he belit her was a dog for years."

"If he did his own barking nobody need have grudged him the fun of it," said

"Well, whatever it is, Sandy Hughes' widow has got it. I heard her telling her sister in church last Sunday she had a calceolaria at last. Your geraniums are dreadful scraggy, Charlotte. I'm afraid you don't fertilize them properly. Mrs. Sandy's gone out of mourning and poor Sandy only dead four years. Ah well, the dead are soon forgotten. My sister wore crepe for her husband twenty-five years."

"Did you know your placket was open," said Rebecca, setting a coconut pie before Aunt Kate.

"I haven't time to be always staring at myself in the glass," said Cousin Ernestine acidly. "I s'pose you saw old Alec Crowdy's death last week in the paper? His wife died two years ago it'll rally hurried to death, poor creature. They say he was awful lonely after she died but I'm afraid that's too good to be true. And I'm afraid they're not through with their troubles with him yet even if he is buried. I hear he didn't make a will and I'm afraid there'll be awful ructions over the estate."

"What is Jane Goldwin doing with herself this winter?" asked Aunt Kate. "She hasn't been in town for a long time."

"Ah, poor Jane! She's just pling away mysteriously. Something's the matter with her. I'm afraid it'll turn out to be an ailment. What's Rebecca Dew laughing like a hyenus out in the kitchen for? I'm afraid you'll have her on your hands yet. There's an awful lot of weak minds among the Dewes."

"I hear Thyra Cooper has a baby," said Aunt Chatty.

"Ah, yes, poor little soul. Only one, thank merry. I was afraid it would be twins. Twins run in the Coopers."

"Thyra and Ned are such a nice young couple," said Aunt Kate, as if determined to salvage something from the wreck of the universe. But Cousin Ernestine would not admit that there was any harm in talent, much less in Lowvale.

"She was real thankful to get him at last. There was a time she was afraid he wouldn't come back from the west," I warned her. "You may be sure he'll disappoint you," I told her. "He's always disappointed people. Everyone expected him to die afore he was a year old but you see he's alive yet." When he bought the old Holly place I warned her again. "I'm afraid that well is full of typhoid," I told her. "The Holly hired man died of typhoid there five years ago." They can't blame me if anything happens. Joseph Holly has some misery in his back. He thinks it's lumbago but I'm afraid it's the beginning of spinal meningitis."

"Old Uncle Joe Holly is one of the best

(Continued on Next Page.)

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PURITY FLOUR
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WORLD-WIDE GATHERING OF RURAL WOMEN

At the Triennial Conference of the Associated Countrywomen of the World, now meeting in Washington, D.C., Mrs. Alfred Wait, the Canadian woman responsible for starting the Women's Institutes in Britain, is presiding.

The honorary president of the organization is the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, and there are vice-presidents and officers from the United States, Wales, Australia, Germany, France, Norway, South Africa, Ceylon, East Africa. Practically every country in the world has affiliated organizations in the Associated Countrywomen of the World, including three international associations, the International Institute of Agriculture, Rome, Italy; the International Labor Office, Geneva; the League of Nations, Geneva.

Organizations of rural women from twenty-nine different countries are now affiliated with the Associated Country Women of the World.

England has fourteen member organizations, Australia six, Ceylon one, Czechoslovakia three, Denmark two, East Africa one, The Netherlands one, New Zealand two, Norway one, Nyassaland one, Palestine one, Poland one, Roumania one, Scotland one, South Africa six, Southern Rhodesia one, Estonia one, Finland two, France one, Germany one, India one, Ireland two, Latvia one, Sweden one, Switzerland four, United States ten, Wales two, Yugo-Slavia one. Canada has ten, including the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, the Alberta Women's Institutes, the Federated Women's Institutes of British Columbia, Women's Institute of Manitoba, New Brunswick Federation of Women's Institutes, Nova Scotia Women's Institutes, Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, Women's Institutes of Quebec, Cercles Fermieres, Quebec, Saskatchewan Homemakers' Clubs.

Mrs. Wait, the president, has had an interesting career. A graduate of the University of Toronto, she married a doctor and went to British Columbia, where she got her first contact with Women's Institutes. On the death of her husband she went to England with her two sons. During the war officials were perplexed to find a means of contact with the agriculturists for the promotion of production propaganda and it was here that Mrs. Wait stepped into the breach, organizing the first Women's

Institutes. Today there are over 5,000 Institutes in England alone, and Mrs. Wait has been awarded the Gold Medal of Merit by the government of France in appreciation of her work among the rural women of France.

In the beginning the English Institutes were fostered by the government, but later it was decided that more useful work could be accomplished if they were quite independent, and today they have their own headquarters and carry on a responsible work. The Institutes in Scotland are also a power in the land. A national meeting of the British Institutes is held at Albert Hall, London, every year, and this year they will celebrate their twenty-first anniversary. In trying to better life among the rural women they have developed all home-making arts, handicrafts, fur working, furniture making and repairs, drama and musical festivals, etc.

In Norway, the results of their propaganda for the use of more milk has met with splendid success. This has not only applied to schools but to the general public, and in some of the principal cities are very up to date, modernistic "milk bars."

In each country the problems of the rural people have been considered by these women's organizations, with the view to making life better, more wholesome, more livable.

From the one Institute organized in Stony Creek, in 1897, there are now 2,719 Women's Institutes in Canada with a membership of nearly 71,000 women. In England there are 300,000 women in the Institutes, as well as the thousands in other countries.

The organization meeting of the Associated Countrywomen of the World was held in Vienna, and since then triennial meetings have been held in Paris and Stockholm. This is the first time the representatives have gathered in America.

Following the convention in Washington, the delegates will be entertained in Canada.

MISS MUCH-AFRAID

(Continued from Page Twenty.)

men in the world," said Rebecca Dew, bringing in a replenished teapot.

"Oh, he's good," said Cousin Ernestine lugubriously. "Too good. I'm afraid his sons will all go to the bad. It turns out like

that so often. No, thank you, Kate. I won't have any more tea. Well, mebbe a macaroon. They don't lie heavy on the stomach but I'm afraid I've eat far too much. I must be taking French leave for I'm afraid it'll be dark afore I get home. I don't want to get my feet wet. I've had something travelling from my arm to my lower limbs all winter: Night after night I've laid awake with it. Ah, nobody knows what I've been through. I was determined to git up to see you once more for I'm afraid I won't be here another spring. But you've both failed terrible so you may go afore me yet. Ah, well, it's best to go while some of your own's left to lay you out. You look awful washed out, Miss Shirley," she concluded, as Anne helped her on with her coat. "I'm afraid people with red hair never have real strong constitutions."

"I think my constitution is all right," smiled Anne. "I have a touch of sore throat tonight, that's all, Miss Bugle."

"Ah!" Another of Cousin Ernestine's dark forebodings came to her. "You want to watch that. The symptoms of diphtheria and tonsillitis are exactly the same till the third day. But there's one consolation . . . you'll be spared an awful lot of trouble if you die young."

"Dear Gilbert," Anne wrote that night. "I'm afraid I'll end up in the poorhouse . . . I'm afraid none of my pupils will pass their finals . . . Mr. Hamilton's dog barked

at me Saturday night and I'm afraid I'll have hydrophobia . . . I'm afraid my hair isn't auburn after all . . . I'm afraid I'll have a mole on the end of my nose when I'm fifty . . . I'm afraid I'll find a mouse in my bed tonight . . . I'm afraid you got engaged to me just because I was always around."

"No, dearest, I'm not crazy . . . not yet . . . It's only that Cousin Ernestine Bugle is catching. I know now why Rebecca Dew has always referred to her as 'Miss Much-Afraid.' The poor soul has borrowed so much trouble that she is hopelessly in debt to fate. Gilbert, darling, don't let's ever be afraid of things. It's such dreadful slavery. Let's be daring and adventurous and expectant. Let's dance to meet life and all it can bring us, even if it brings scads of trouble and typhoid and twins. If you ever see signs of cowardice in me just say 'Cousin Ernestine Bugle' to me and watch me smile."

FLOODS MAKE GIRL TRUANT

Summoned to court in Clogher, Irish Free State, for not complying with a school attendance order concerning his daughter, Robert Fleming, of Mullbaney, said he and his family lived in a house "like Noah's Ark," as they were almost surrounded by floods in the winter. If the child attempted to go to school she would be drowned.

RED ROSE

TEA "is good tea"

— GOOD 40 years ago

GOOD today

Beulah's Burden

10 MINUTES LAYER
AND LOOK! THE GROCER SENT THE WRONG SOAP! THINGS ALWAYS GO WRONG ON WASHDAY!

10 MINUTES LAYER
WAIT! THAT'S THE LATEST KIND OF "NO-SCRUB" GRANULATED SOAP—OXYDOL. TRY IT BY ALL MEANS!

10 MINUTES LAYER
OH, SCRUB! OH—IT'S O'CLOCK ALDY—AND I'VE SCELY BEGUN!

10 MINUTES LAYER
HO! HO! YOU'LL BE TIRED AS A DOG TONIGHT FROM ALL THAT SCRUBBING.

10 MINUTES LAYER
DON'T WORRY ABOUT DIED THINGS, LOOK—I'VE WED THIS PRINT DRESS LEE OF TIMES OYDOL. ISN'T LIGHT AND FRESH?

10 MINUTES LAYER
IMAGINE—THROUGH ALREADY! AND MY HANDS AREN'T RED OR ROUGH AT ALL!

10 MINUTES LAYER
YOU SEE, OXYDOL'S MADE BY THE IVORY SOAP PEOPLE. IT'S A COMPLETELY NEW DISCOVERY!

THAT NIGHT
...AND JUST THINK, BOB, I WAS THROUGH WITH THE WASH BY NOON! YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW MUCH TIME AND WORK OXYDOL SAVES!

THAT NIGHT
SAY, YOU LOOK FRESH AS A DAISY! HOW ABOUT STEPPING OUT WITH YOUR HUSBAND TONIGHT?

NEW FAST-ACTING "NO-SCRUB" SOAP

Changes All Past Ideas of Laundry Soap Performance

The makers of gentle Ivory now bring you this new "no-scrub" soap that *is safe!*

So now millions who fears use old-type harsh "no-scrub" soaps before, finding new freedom from washday drudgery in amazing discovery, OXYDOL.

OXYDOL is the result of aented process which makes mild, gentle soap *faster acting* . . . a formula which makes it *2 times whiter* washing than less modern soaps, *lysal test*.

It soaks clothes clean in *1/2* time . . . *just 15 minutes' soaking to the tul* And white clothes wash so white you'll be ad. Even the grimest spots come snowy white w gentle rub!

Yet OXYDOL is *safe!* So safe that every washable color comes out sparkling, brilliant, fresh! Even sheer cotton prints have been washed 100 consecutive times in Oxydol suds, without showing any perceptible sign of fading. And—your hands stay soft, lovely, smooth!

Thus, OXYDOL comes as a boon to wash-weary housewives, by ending forever the back-breaking scrubbing and boiling, and cutting hours from washing time!

OXYDOL is economical, too. One package often does twice the work—gives twice the suds—lasts twice as long as old-fashioned soaps. Get Oxydol from your dealer today. You'll be glad you did.

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