

Clementine In The Kitchen

By Phineas Beck

Reviewed By Dr. Lucile K. Delano

It has been said that the reason there are so few descriptions of succulent foods in literature is because all writers know that at the repeated mentions of such foods the reader would put down their books to raid the cupboard and ice box. And no writer wants to risk such neglect of his brainchild. There are, of course, notable exceptions to the above statement: Camacho's wedding feast in *Don Quijote* and *Trilmachio's Banquet*, for instance.

Clementine in the Kitchen by Phineas Beck is the gastronomic diary of the Becks, an American family in France. They live in an ancient farmhouse which includes a wine-cellar which is well-stocked with the choicest vintages of France. Their most cherished possession, however, is an amiable, rosy-cheeked Burgundian cook who is truly an "artist of the range," to borrow the words of the *Mystery Chef*. For years she prepared for the family meals that were veritably food for the gods. The narrative of life in a French village is interspersed with menus of the meals served the family and their guests and Clementine's recipes from the preparation of snails (a great French delicacy) to those for meats, vegetables, and plain and fancy desserts.

The outbreak of the present war forced the Becks to abandon their ancient farmhouse and return to America. At the suggestion of their young son, Phinney, Clementine was invited to accompany them to their new home in a charming New England village. The re-adjustment of the Becks to American life, which had changed tremendously during their absence, and Clementine's discovery of sky scrapers, hot dogs, the *sing et dix* stores, movie houses, and the super-super grocery stores make an interesting tale. The French cook not only learns how to go grocery shopping in the American way and to adapt her recipes to our foods, but she even learns how to speak English which she always writes down phonetically

first. Her memorandum contains words like these: Madame Beck is *aoutt* (Madame Beck is out) and *cou ai kerre ootz*, which you would never guess to be Quaker Oats.

There is romance in the little book, too. Clementine at the age of forty-one (imagine that!) falls in love with a Canadian French house painter who came, by chance one day, to paint the house of the Becks. At the prospect of a major tragedy in the family—the loss of a cook whose equal was not to be found on this earth—Mr. Beck thought, if only so fleetingly, of following the precedent of the cynical gourmet and jurist, Didon-Bouffault, who married his cook rather than lose her. However, the whole Beck family finally drink to the health and happiness of Armand and Clementine and resign themselves to remaining content with Clementine's choicest recipes left in their hands at her departure from their home. Those recipes form an appendix to the charming tale.

Clementine in the Kitchen, besides being an amusing little story and an excellent collection of recipes for many savory French dishes, gives much good advice on the choice of wines for cookery and of cheeses found formerly in France and now becoming available in this country. It is beautifully illustrated with etchings of scenes in France and sketches appropriate to the text. But for a francophile it is even more valuable; it gives a nostalgic picture of the pre-war France that has passed away to never return, I am afraid.

Dr. Agnew: "What is the most potent poison?"

Lib: "An airplane. One drop and you're dead."

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Hello, I told you last issue if you'd meet me here again I'd have some more things to talk to you about, and sure enough I'm right here (as if I could go anywhere else). Drawing my conclusions from the fact that I've been having to pose for pictures for several weeks now, I gather the annual is well under way. Oh, I wonder if I was holding my mouth right when he snapped that last picture.

I know one room in North Dormitory that just rocked with merriment during the week-end of the fourth and fifth. Betty Ann Spaug of Winston-Salem, Freddie Hearn of Augusta, Georgia, and Peggy Peerson and Lois Petit of Charleston, S. C., all met there for a big reunion. That was the first time they've all been together since last June at graduation.

Overheard a conversation of a group of day students on the way to the rec room the other day that had been to officer's dance at the Woman's Club one Saturday night.

Promise not to tell a single soul but the whole school and I'll tell you a secret. Listen closely: If you don't go to the teachers' stunt-night on the 25th you're gonna' miss a side show and be a dead duck yourself. From my position on campus, I've overheard and seen quite a few excited and whispered plans among the teachers, and I personally know it's going to be great.

Here let me extend my congratulations to those five smiling girls (the five best pledges, of course). Namely they are Martha Scarborough, Phi Mu; Louise Johnson, K. D.; Jane Carter, A. D. Pi; Sue Anderson, Alpha Gam; and Meredith Bridges, Chi O.

While congratulations are in order, there are three more ladies I'd like to speak to. These are Betty Carter and Dokie Lybrand who have been elected to May Court, and LaRue Allison who is May Day Chairman. And have you heard who the freshman class officers are yet? Shirley Warner was elected president some time ago, but now Peggy Kimmrey is vice-president, and Martha Scarborough is secretary. Lib Young is the representative to S. C. A. I say, and did you know that we had a

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Miss Crumrine Attends Art Convention

Miss Frances Crumrine has returned from New York where she attended two art conventions, the Annual Conference of the Committee on Art in American Education Society which met at the Museum of Modern Art at 11 West 53rd Street and the Wartime Conference and Exhibition for the American Association of School Administrators of the National Education Association at the Hotel Pennsylvania. She was particularly impressed by the address of Superintendent A. C. Flora of Columbia, South Carolina at the National Education Association. In his address, he stressed equalization of educational opportunities for all.

The exhibitions were stimulating and much interest was shown in the discussion on "Art in Therapy" at the Art Conference. Two other discussions were on "Art in Everyday Living" and "How Art Will Function in Postwar Reconstruction."

While in New York she visited in the home of Kennedy Crumrine II, Riverdale, New York.

bunch of ex-Q. Cers for initiation last week end? They were Gladys Hartzell, Yvonne Williams Stone, and Jane Auten, all A. D. Pi's.

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