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A Short Sweet Story—

About MILLICENT, Who Was Meat-Minded

A Tale for the Times
by M.B.

IN later life Millicent's mother often reproached herself bitterly for not having called her daughter Dora, Who Was Docile, or even Nancy, Who Was Normal. But there was unfortunately no good fairy present at the christening to warn Millicent's mother of alliterative epithets likely to be current in the year 1944. Instead there was present as godmother only a regrettable great aunt of Pythagorean persuasion, who insisted on conferring her own name upon the infant by way of a christening gift.

But in spite of this handicap little Millicent grew up to be a fine sturdy little girl, her only abnormality being that she consistently refused her bread-and-milk and insisted on having bread-and-bovo instead, and from an early age demanded meat for breakfast, dinner, and tea. Her unfortunate aunt, a lady of strictly vegetarian habit, would watch Millicent demolishing a lamb chop or a succulent veal steak, and murmur reproachfully, didn't she know that lambs and calves were her little brothers and sisters? And Millicent would go on munching unmoved, or perhaps mutter through otherwise-occupied jaws that she couldn't be fonder of them if they were.

WELL, thanks to her meat diet, Millicent grew up into a fine, healthy, full-blooded young woman. A glance at



"... From an early age demanded meat for breakfast, dinner, and tea"

her bedroom might have suggested that the mental side of Millicent's development had lagged slightly behind the physical, for her bookcase was filled with blood-and-thunder, and Art was represented solely by reproductions of Yeomen of the Guard. However, Millicent had sufficient intelligence to get into Training College and to emerge therefrom two years later duly certified capable of teaching at least something about 10 of the subjects demanded by the new secondary syllabus. And all who beheld her murmured in spite of themselves *Mens Sans in Corpore Sano*.

So Millicent had no difficulty at all in finding for herself a suitable post as (among other things) English mistress at the local Girls' High School. Her teaching methods were simple. She divided all English literature into two categories. Everything to which Millicent could not apply her highest term of approval "strong meat" was lumped together and pronounced "utter trips." But the headmistress did not see quite eye-to-eye with Millicent when the latter insisted on having *Captain Blood* as a home reader and was, moreover, somewhat appalled at the frequency with which the great Australian adjective appeared in the Fourth Form essays. The upshot was that Millicent was relieved of her English-teaching duties and was instead assigned complete control of the school's physical education. And night after night passers-by could hear Millicent's full-blooded tones as she urged the basketball or tug-of-war teams to Put More Beef Into It.

BUT a dread blow was to fall. Some months after the introduction of meat rationing the headmistress was appalled to discover that Millicent was making the surrender of meat coupons a pre-requisite of participation in the biggest event of the school year—the Hopscotch Handicap. The good name of the school was at stake. Millicent must go.

Millicent went. Her parents did not exactly welcome her with open arms, as

(Continued on next page)



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