



More of Mrs M's reminiscences



Here is another tale from our landlady - Mrs M's life on the Coffee Plantation in Nyasaland (now Malawi) during her early married life.

The Substitute

Although the cook was told in what to steam the Christmas pudding - check out his hilarious alternative



It was during the Christmas of 1905 or thereabouts, that Mrs M and her husband had invited some ten or so guests to share their festive meal, complete with a large home-grown turkey and all the usual gastronomic accompaniments. The house was tastefully decorated and everything had been well planned and was progressing splendidly.

Mr M had selected all the appropriate wines for the occasion and they were congratulating themselves that the day would be especially impressive; definitely one that would be remembered.

Then, in the form of Julius, their cook, came a question; "Missus, in what should I steam the Christmas pudding?" To which Mrs M replied "In a mutton cloth of course Julius; that always keeps it nice and moist."



Imagine her reaction, on entering the kitchen some time later, to find that he had in fact, stripped off his rather stained and sweaty vest; in which that succulent Christmas pud was happily steaming!



Naturally, she almost exploded, but by then it was much too late. "But Julius" she scolded; "why ever didn't you use a mutton cloth like I told you?" To which came the reply; "But missus, I was in a hurry and my vest is the same like that."

At the telling of this tale she burst into peals of laughter at the picture, which had so vividly sprung into her mind, of that rich fruity Christmas pud nestled, oh so comfortably in that grubby vest.

She had described the scene so lucidly that we joined in with her merry laughter until our insides ached. Somehow; I was sure that the guests would not have been privy to that incident. Would you not agree?

I couldn't help wondering if Mrs M herself had eaten any of the pud, knowing what she knew; but I couldn't bring myself to ask. And so the answer to that will forever remain a mystery.

Now do tell - what would you have done? Would you have left that succulent Christmas pudding off the menu? Or would you have reasoned that *what the eye doesn't see, the heart can't grieve over?*



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