

CUPID'S DAYDREAM

By MARY J. HAYES.

"What right has this man to upset my home and induce my wife into a public life, when her duty is with her husband and baby?" thundered Mr. Merrill as he threw his paper aside and jumped up from the Morris chair.

"But, Alec," his wife pleaded, "I'm just tired of this dingy little place, and baby is whining all the time. Mr. Cardl has made arrangements for my first appearance on next Tuesday evening. Mother is coming over in the morning to take baby, and I shall manage to get into the city before dinner and rehearse with Mr. Cardl in the afternoon."

"My dear girl, you are making a blind mistake in heeding this man's advice. You will be sorry."

"It is useless," interrupted Marie, "for you to try to alter my plans, for when my mind is set I mean to carry it out."

Alec crossed the room and stood in front of the French window. The moon lit up his face as he glanced out upon his acres of golden wheat and corn.

"So Mr. Cardl has succeeded at last," he was thinking. "Yes, his own little innocent Marie had been persuaded by this miserable wretch. All his happiness was to be ruined, his little cottage, all his newly found joys and comforts of farm life, and baby—what was to become of him? He would grow up without a mother's love and care."

At length he turned toward where his wife had been standing, but she was not there. Shutting off the light, he went upstairs. As he passed her door he stopped. Perhaps at this very moment she was packing. Would he knock? No, he mustn't. He would let her carry out her plans, as she said, and perhaps some day she would realize her fault and come back to him.

The next evening found Marie in a handsome chamber in one of the most fashionable hotels of the city. She was thinking over the events of the day. She had met and rehearsed with Professor Cardl as had been arranged, and he had told her of the remarkable talent she possessed. Never before had she realized it. As she sat gazing at all the luxuries about her she acknowledged to herself how wrong she had been in partaking of such things that were all so unnatural to her; but her heart, swelling with pride, rebelled against these thoughts.

Every morning for nearly a week she spent with a dressmaker. Her afternoons were given for rehearsals, and in the evenings she joined Mr. Cardl in theater parties and dances. The night before her performance she retired early. These new excitements were all too much for her, and she lay awake thinking of baby and Alec, and how she longed to be with them now.

The next morning she arose earlier than usual, having spent a restless night. As she stood before the long mirror, and the dressmaker's skilled fingers worked busily with her costume, she longed for her bungalow apron and heaved a sigh of relief when the garment was finished and carefully tucked in her wardrobe. That afternoon she spent rehearsing, and at 8 o'clock she had a dinner with Mr. Cardl. Seven o'clock found her very much excited and nervous. Later in the evening Mr. Cardl called to accompany her to the theater.

She came upon the stage, her eyes beaming with success, but with an aching pain tugging at her heart. "If Alec could only see now, how proud he would be of her," she consoled herself.

The orchestra sounded the chord, and Marie, forgetting her troubles, began her selection. Her loud voice rang out clearly and sweetly and won the hearts of her audience. The applause with which her first selection was greeted delighted Marie, and in the height of her success, she reached for a telegram, which a messenger boy slipped into her hand, and in an audible whisper, she read, "baby died this morning, Alec." The audience looked from one to another in amazement, and Marie fell back in a dead faint.

Grandma Merrill, hearing the loud noise on the piazza, dropped the saucy of potatoes that she was paring, and rushed out to the front door, only to find Marie rubbing her eyes with one hand, and shielding the bump on her forehead with the other.

"... and it was only a dream after all," Marie was saying, as Alec appeared on the scene a few minutes later. Just then baby began to cry and Marie was spared the humiliation of explaining the dream, while all attention was turned to Alec, Jr. (Copyright, 1918, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

Matter of Gender.

The bell of a Scottish church was giving out a very poor tone, and a committee was appointed to inquire as to what was wrong and to report on the best means of putting it right. After an examination the members were divided in their opinion, and the kirk officer, who was in attendance with the keys, was asked his view. "Fine. A ken what's wrang wi' the bell," he remarked. "It's a shee-yin"—meaning that it was of the feminine gender. Pressed to explain, he added: "It's tongue's owre lang—it's needin' to be clipped!" And this turned out to be really the fault. The tongue had become loosened to the extent of an inch or so, and was overlapping the curve at the rim, and therefore not striking truly.

The Succulent Plectant.
The plectant has a recorded history of over four centuries. It was first cultivated in the white-walled gardens of Morocco and Algiers, amid fruits and flowers and fountains and was brought thence by the Moors to Spain. Not until 200 years later did rhubarb really become known to English gardens, whence in due time it was brought to those of America to be employed first as a tincture, then as a sauce and to attain a final apotheosis in pie.

Penn's Desk and Long's Sword.
A desk originally owned by William Penn and a sword carried by Major Long, United States engineers, while he was a member of the first official government survey of the Rocky Mountains were among the articles bequeathed in the will of the late William Foulke Johns of New York. Mr. Johns left the old desk to his widow, with the provision that on her death it is to go to Independence Hall, Philadelphia. The sword was given to the Smithsonian Institution.

Holmes Caught Napping.
Referring to our recent note about the English reporter giving the baseball score as "Two-love," a correspondent reminds us that no less a writer than Conan Doyle once made a curious blunder in describing our national game. "The catching," he wrote, "seemed to me extraordinarily good, especially the long catches by the bleachers."—Boston Transcript.

Printing in China.
The Chinese follow the primitive way of printing from engraved wooden blocks. The matter to be printed is first written by means of ink, upon paper which is pasted face downward upon a block of a pear or plum tree. After the paper becomes dry it is rubbed until an inverted impression of the characters is left. Then the blank spaces are cut away and the block is turned over to the printer, who works by hand. He takes care to ink the characters equally and to avoid tearing the impression.

Forests of the Caucasus.
The forests of the Caucasus in Russia are estimated at 12,000,000 acres, chiefly in the Black Sea territory, which is at the rate of nearly 20 acres to each inhabitant. The forests of western Siberia have been scarcely explored, but they are stated to be 200,000,000 acres in extent, more than half being in an absolute state of nature.

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12.96% Expenses Labor, Freight, Etc.
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85% To Stock Raisers

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To Ward Off Frosts.
Dr. C. G. Abbott of the Smithsonian Institution, suggested that if it were possible to charge the lower air above citrus fruit orchards, with a heavy dose of ozone its absorption of outgoing nocturnal radiation might help ward off destructive frosts. While the amount of ozone in the lower layers of the earth's atmosphere is now known to be negligibly small, this substance is abundant in the upper atmosphere, where it plays an important role in regulating territorial temperatures by its absorption of radiation.

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