

The Luck of the Pearl That Lost Her Oyster Shell

And the Surprising Evolution of Tearful Little Miss Hurley Into a Star at Just the Very Moment That She Was Estimating Her Damages and Sufferings at Ten Thousand Dollars in Cash.



This is Marian Hurley as she appeared at the ball minus her lost oyster shell.

BY FRANK DALLAM

CONSIDERING the somewhat humble station that was hers, professionally, before the mad revels of the artists' colony on New Year's eve, and the heights to which she suddenly has soared since then, it would not be at all amiss to refer henceforth to little Marian Hurley as "the Cinderella of the cinema."

The original Cinderella had two sisters who were esteemed more beautiful than she. Only the opportunity was wanting to show how much more beautiful Cinderella really was than the others.

Then, too, the original Cinderella went to the ball and lost her slipper, but it turned out not the catastrophe she feared. It made her a princess.

Little Miss Hurley had hundreds of sisters—sisters in art, that is to say—who were considered far more beautiful than she. When the wanting opportunity came along it showed just how much more beautiful was Marian.

Little Miss Hurley went to the ball and lost her oyster shell, which was a much more important part of her attire than was Cinderella's slipper. It looked to be very much of a disaster at first, but as affairs have turned out it has made Miss Hurley a star, a princess of the films, who can give orders to oregional directors and who can tell fussy producers precisely what she will or will not do.

Better to understand just how important was the oyster shell in little Miss Hurley's ball costume, it should be set forth that he was to wear it and little else. Not only that, but at certain periods in the revels she was to discard it. She was to step right out of it, as though it were a cloak. Then she was to stand revealed as "the daughter of Aphrodite," impressing upon the other revelers that she had undoubtedly inherited all her famous mother's insolence in the matter of drapery. What happened was—but that is the story.

Up to the evening of December 31, 1920, little Marian Hurley was merely a model. She wanted to be a motion picture actress, but somehow or other she could not find the magical password to the office of that personage of awe and influence known in the film studios as the casting director. She told her ambitions and her disappointments to no one, not even to her family. Just buckled down to the point in hand, did little Marian Hurley, and waited for a break in her fortunes, meantime improving the hour by practicing some fancy steps in dancing when she found herself unwatched at her home in New Rochelle, that suburb of New York



ture director ever woke up to Marian Hurley's attractions for screen purposes. The New York artists and magazine illustrators did the moment they saw her. Howard Chandler Christy found work for her when she applied to him. So did Clarence Underwood. Likewise Frank Godwin, who draws girls' heads in a way to recall Gibson when that famous artist was at his height as a black and white creator. They, and as many more, equally as prominent in their fields, kept Miss Hurley fairly busy. Still, when she had the spare time she used it in making the rounds of the film studios over and over again, seeking that engagement which it seemed never would come.

Each morning she left her home in New Rochelle to go to the city to work as a model, saying little to her mother about the job she most wanted and still less to her father. While posing one morning early in December for Jack Casey, the San Francisco artist, who has only recently returned to this country after a residence of 12 years in Paris, she heard

for the first time of the wonderful costume ball the artists were going to give New Year's eve at the exclusive Hotel Des Artistes in Sixty-seventh street, just off Central Park West.

An idea came to Miss Hurley. She listened on until in conversation was mentioned the name of a professional motion picture director who was to supply the spectacular climax to the fantastic evening. The climax was a great secret. The producer had not even told the managers of the ball the nature of the masterpiece.

When she left the Casey studio that day Miss Hurley had the name and address of this wizard who was to invent and produce the high spot in the carnival. He was Albert Korten, who has an office in Broadway. Miss Hurley presented herself before Mr. Korten and demanded to know if he could use her in his plans. The director gave her careful optical ap-

praisal. He studied her dimensions up and down and across. He could use her, he finally decided, provided—

"Provided what?" snapped the determined little Miss Hurley.

"Well, provided two things," replied Mr. Korten. "The first is that you don't mind being brought into the ballroom in an oyster shell—not a real oyster shell, you understand, but a papier mache shell, which will be built exactly to fit you, when you have made yourself as small as possible by the omission of clothes. Of course, you will wear silk and gauze fleshings. You may also let your long dark hair hang down your back, and a bracelet or two, and maybe a necklace won't burden you with too much wardrobe."

"The second provision is that you be able to do a dance, an interpretative dance in consonance with the allegory to be depicted. I call this number 'The Daughter of Aphrodite.' Aphrodite, you doubtless remember, was never born; she just appeared on top of a wave—hair floating down her back and all that sort of thing. As her daughter, you are not going to be born, either. You are just going to pop as a beautiful pearl out of the oyster shell, which is to be brought into the ballroom on the shoulders of 12 husky sons of Neptune."

"These sons of Neptune will place the oyster shell in the center of the ballroom and will then turn back the top half of the shell. Out you hop, like a brilliant, white, high-polished pearl, the music strikes up and you break into the Greek dance—if you know one."

"I don't know anything about Aphrodite being born on top of a wave," Miss Hurley is said to have replied. "But I do know I can fold into that oyster shell, and as for the dance, why, I'm there! That's all!"

Soon came the big night. The first part of the evening was a bewildering series of scenes of splendor and color. In a studied arrangement of events, the director had placed the arrival of the daughter of Aphrodite as the sheaf, immediately before the signal was given for all to throng upon the ballroom floor. The orchestra had sounded the opening chords of the entrance music for Miss Aphrodite. In a curtained space adjoining the ballroom Miss Hurley, in a stunning costume that weighed all of half a pound, waited for her cue.

"All set, Miss Hurley?" asked the director.

"Ready," she responded. "Where's my shell and the husky sons of Neptune?"

"The huskies are here, all right," he said. "but sufferin' snakes, haven't you got the shell? You were supposed to furnish that. Why, it was part of your costume, quite as much as your bare feet."

"No shell—I thought you were going to supply that," said Miss Hurley. "But a fig-leaf for oyster shells! I'll do the dance without one," referring, to be sure, to shells. "No time to hunt one up now."

Before the director could object, Miss Hurley sped through the velvet curtains and out upon the dancing floor. It was a vision that sent up the temperature of every beholder. The feminine spectators said Miss Hurley was the sweetest little thing they had ever seen. The masculine spectators gasped for air and couldn't say anything. For ten minutes Aphrodite's daughter gyrated and undulated and rotated, until finally she floated out of the picture, as her il-

BANKROLL OF AVARICIOUS BUSINESS BARON AND LAWYERS THREATEN TO RUIN POOR LO

Once It Was Rifle and Knife of Plainsman That Menaced Indian but Now It Is Greed for Land and "Legal Lariat" That Are His Worst Enemy.

BY CHARLES W. DUKE

ONCE it was the rifle and knife of the plainsman that threatened the extinction of the Indian on the North American continent; now it is the bankroll of the avaricious business baron and the "legal lariat" that are driving Poor Lo from pillar to post, robbing him of his rights and threatening to cheat him out of his home sweet home, according to Matthew K. Sniffen, valiant friend of the modernized redskin.

"It used to be a case of the Indian scalping the white man; now we are confronted with a situation where we must exercise vigilance in behalf of the red man or he will be scalped by the white man," says Sniffen. "Lest you forget on the moment the identity of Sniffen, he is secretary of the Indian Rights association, a non-political, nonsectarian national organization of public-spirited American men and women perfected 23 years ago "to take into consideration the best method of producing such public feeling and congressional action as shall secure to our Indian population civil rights and general education . . . and in time bring about the complete civilization of the Indians and their admission to citizenship."

In the expansion of big business in America and the development of economic resources on a new post-war scale, the Indian figuratively is fighting for his own and may be downed unless public opinion intervenes, according to Sniffen. The scheming politician and the ambitious landowner compose an entente of their own. All intent on defrauding the Indian of his rich cattle lands, his oil fields, his cotton and wheat tracts and his fertile waterfront areas. Sniffen knows what he is talking about. For years he has been traveling around among the Indians. As secretary of the Indian Rights association he has stood with others—a little band—between the diminished tribes of the south and west and the modern tribes of mercenaries, who know no law save their own. Now, in the tepees of the reservations, now

on the threshold of congress—these Indian rights champions have fought the good fight for more than three decades.

"Exploiting the Indian—that's what we are doing or trying to do," says Sniffen. "In the early days of this country the schemers sought to depopulate the Indian by force, by inciting outbreaks and causing him to be 'moved on' under the pretext that his presence was a menace to the peace of the border. Now the same ends are often attempted in a more subtle way—'under cover of law,' by act of congress."

In order to get a comprehensive idea of the Indian as he is today, some questions were put to Secretary Sniffen, which he answered in chronological order. They are reproduced, leading up to the points he clinches apropos of the exploitation of the redskin.

"How many Indians are there in the United States today?"

"About 336,000 Indians in this country, exclusive of Alaska. They are distributed among some 130 reservations. About 180,000 of them are full-blooded citizens of the United States."

"Are Indians as a race becoming extinct?"

"In point of population the Indian today is about holding his own. In 1888 there were about 750,000 Navajos; now there are about 35,000 of them. This is an exceptional case; the average would not so hold in many other cases. I should say, however, the great tendency is toward the absorption of the Indian race by the white man."

"Is the Indian a good citizen?"

"No better answer is available than the record of the Indians during the world war. There were approximately 10,000 of them in our army and navy, mostly volunteers. Back of the firing line, thousands of them showed their patriotism in various ways. Their subscriptions to the Liberty loans were about \$25,000,000; they were industrious in Red Cross work and other war activities and responded splendidly along agricultural and stockraising lines. And, strange as

it may seem, the majority of these Indians do not enjoy the privileges of that democracy for which they worked and fought."

"As an economic factor, is the Indian generally a good workman? Can he produce and make good when given the opportunity?"

"If the Indian gets the right kind of encouragement he would be prosperous as a race rather than in individual cases. It is impossible to pit all the red men at the same kind of work and expect them to make good. Their tastes are different; their qualifications different. The Hopi Indian is a natural agriculturist. The Pimas of Arizona are self-supporting farmers. Others follow mechanical pursuits."

"The Navajos are good at sheep cattle."

"Take the Osage tribe: They are the richest of all the tribes. They have the largest per capita income of any race of people on the face of the earth. Of 229 enrolled Osages, each one possesses 650 acres. Out of a total of 1,465,000 acres of Osage land, fully one-quarter is given over to the production of oil. These people do an average of \$25,000,000 business in a year. Every one of the tribe draws down an average of \$5000 in royalties on oil. They are industrious and thrifty."

"Your modern Indian, however, is no different from his white brother. Once possessed of wealth and affluence, the tendency is to sit down and let the white man work for him. In this respect he is no different from any other person."

"Then the Indians as a whole have made the best of their opportunities?"

"In spite of defects in administration and environments, the Indian has made rapid progress in the last three decades. He is now in a transition stage, and it should be noted that he was asked to do more than was ever expected of the white man, namely, to take a step in a generation or two that required centuries for the Anglo-Saxon race. He has advanced more speedily than the regulations under which he is governed."



A studio photo of Marian Hurley, who is now proclaimed as "the most perfectly formed model on earth."

lustrious mother, on a wave of applause spumous with cheers of delight.

After she had got out of her deep-sea clothes and into land togs more suitable for a midwinter night, Miss Hurley avers, she went to Mr. Korten to collect the \$125 which she says she was promised for her one-dry imitation of an aquatic gambol. He refused to pay, but offered her \$25 for her troubles, so she asserts. When she insisted that she had carried out her agreement and was entitled to the full amount, she declares, he grew impatient and gave her a rude and violent shove against a table.

She nailed him into court on a charge of disorderly conduct. Magistrate Nolan in the west side police court heard the charge. Korten's defense was a complete denial as to the assault. He said he had not paid her the full sum promised because the young woman had not lived up to her contract. "How could I stage a living pearl when she had lost her oyster shell?" he asked the judge.

The stern magistrate, with an appreciative glance at small Miss Hurley and an added something about the pearl that was cast before people who did not know how to value one, suggested a civil court. Miss Hurley acted on the tip at once. She has

announced that she has instituted suit against Korten in the New York supreme court for \$10,000 damages growing out of a breach of contract. "But, as the poet says, clouds have silver linings often. Miss Hurley's cloud was one of that kind. If Korten really did shove, he shoved her into fame at once. Directly the story of the Aphrodite dance and the sensation it caused at the Hotel Des Artistes ball got into the newspapers, Miss Hurley began to receive offers of engagements from every motion picture producer of prominence in New York. Vaudeville booking agents also bid high for her act. All named figures beside which the \$125 she didn't get from Korten looked like the contents of a nursery savings bank.

No more weary days of standing before the artist's easel for little Miss Hurley. She's a star now, or can be whenever she wants. Some say finding a pearl in an oyster shell prognosticates good luck. Now, who will deny that a pearl who loses her oyster shell isn't the luckiest one of all?"

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