

(Continued from page 2)

How It Began

[Written for the Morning Astorian.]

Martha Cumbuton was in the mountains during the summer under a pseudonym. When one morning she tore the wrapper from her newspaper she noticed this announcement:

Edward Elliott, whose books on birds are selling thousands, is pursuing his studies in the mountains.

Martha Cumbuton was one whom Mr. Elliott's books had delighted, and she had dreamed of meeting him. She was accustomed to take long walks, accompanied only by a big dog, and one day while in a gorge, through which flowed a mountain torrent, she suddenly came upon a man sitting on a log looking up into a tree. As she approached a bird flew out of the tree, the man rose and stood uncovered and she passed.

"I believe," she said to herself, "that is Bradford Elliott. I'd know him anywhere by his printed pictures." "I'm sure as my name is Stevenson," she said to herself, "that's the man, that's Evangeline Gray, the vaudeville queen. I've seen her on posters many a time."

Martha Cumbuton had no mind to let an opportunity pass. Turning, she called in her sweetest voice:

"When you tell me how I will know the road leading up to the Mountain when I reach it?"

"Very well," said Mr. Stevenson, in a low, most modulated tones, "but I'm happy to show it to you if you permit me. It's not far."

Martha Cumbuton knew very well that the man was more than a mile away, but it would give her quite a chance with the great bird fancier, so she accepted the offer. She at once started the conversation on birds.

"You're looking at a bird in a tree," she remarked, "as I approached, you made out its genus?"

"What bird? I was looking at a flag upon the ledge. It indicated a bear trap."

"I suppose you don't know anything about birds?" she said archly.

"Certainly not."

"Sometimes it is convenient to be an Incoq."

Stevenson stopped and looked at the lady full in the face. "How in the world did you know that?" he asked.

"Oh, a little bird told me."

"A little bird up in a tree?"

"Yes."

"That I'm up a tree?"

Miss Cumbuton chuckled.

"Are you doing the mountains incoq?" she asked.

"It was Miss Cumbuton's turn to look at Stevenson. "Why, I suppose I am," he said hesitatingly.

"For what purpose?"

"To tell me your purpose and I'll tell you mine."

"Oh, I'm a big gun, and if all these people about here should know who I am they'd overrun me with attention. Now for your reason?"

"Oh, I'm—I'm trying to escape an engagement."

She chuckled again, and so did her companion.

"I supposed," said Stevenson, "that people of your profession sought engagements."

"My profession! What is my profession?"

"Teaching boards."

"Teaching boards! What's that?"

"What do you think my occupation is?"

"Yours? Why, you are an ornithologist."

Mr. Stevenson looked at her inquiringly. "Would you mind giving me that word again?"

"Ornithologist," she repeated, delighted with his pretense of ignorance. He had never heard the word in his life.

"Oh, I know—ornithorhynchus, a kind of monkey. I saw one in a menagerie once."

Miss Cumbuton laughed and said to herself, "Isn't he delightful!"

At that moment the tete-a-tete was interrupted by a party from Miss Cumbuton's hotel, who dragged her away with them—against her will—for a walk to the falls.

That evening Stevenson sought her at her hotel, and they passed much of the evening together, continuing their banter. Neither of them kept the secret of the other's prominence, and the next day Stevenson was requested to give a lecture on birds, while Miss Cumbuton was urged to give a reading. Both declined, and both simultaneously left the mountains. They were astonished to meet at the station.

"Why did you tell people I was an actress?" asked the lady indignantly.

"They won't believe I'm not and have given me no end of trouble."

"Why did you tell them that I was an—ornithorhynchus?"

"I didn't." She laughed in spite of herself.

"Come," she said when they were seated in the train, "let's confess. Why are you here incoq?"

"That's a woman's way of confessing. What are you here for?"

"As I said, to escape an engagement. A certain person wants me to marry him. I don't want to do it."

"That's funny. A certain woman wants me to marry her. I came to the mountains to get rid of her."

"What a blunder!"

"A double blunder!"

"This was the beginning of it. The new acquaintances, each of whom was trying to get rid of a lover, seemed to seek protection in each other's company. After awhile a newspaper printed an item that a breach of promise case against a prominent clubman had been settled out of court. Then a religious paper published another item stating that Miss Cumbuton had given up the mission field to reform a prominent clubman."

FLORENCE NORTON.

aminations are under way to fill several vacancies in the consular corps and two vacancies in the corps of student interpreters in China.

John Ball Osborne, Chief of the Bureau of trade relations of the Department of State, is supervising the examinations in a measure and he will coach the successful aspirants in the intricacies of their adopted careers as soon as their papers have been marked. Mr. Osborne is also lecturer on the consular service in the College of the Political Sciences of the George Washington University. It is due, perhaps, to this fact that two of the winners in the examinations last July were graduates of the University, in spite of the fact that only thirteen men passed and graduates of the leading institutions of learning in the country were in the contest.

The position of student interpreter is said to be especially attractive. Candidates for the office must be between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five, for the Department of State believes these public servants should be caught young and molded emphatically. The candidates for the consular service must not be younger than twenty one or older than fifty years.

But to return to the student interpreters. The two candidates who win the coveted positions will be sent to Peking. There, under the supervision of the American legation, they will study the Chinese language and customs. When proficient, they will be awarded a position in one of the consulates in the Flowery Kingdom, from which they may be promoted to interpreter and consul. It is a nice berth, that of student intern, and accept the statement, judging by the number who are taking the examination.

The time may yet come when it will not be necessary for student interpreters to leave family and friends and practically isolate themselves in far off Peking to acquire a working knowledge of the Chinese language. The language of the Celestial Empire may yet be taught in these schools that are giving special attention to supplying men for the government service. The George Washington University, in its courses in law and diplomacy, instructions in French, German, Spanish and other languages. Why not then, in Chinese?

There is only one drawback to such a plan at the present time. This is found in the multiplicity of dialects found in China. Running from Mandarin, or official tongue, the language undergoes degrees of change through many classes until the speech of the coolie is absolutely unintelligible to the well-bred Chinese. While all the principal diplomatic business is carried on, naturally, with the higher officials a knowledge of all the dialects is desirable, if the American consul is to keep abreast of business rivals. So it will be seen that until there is more universality in the Chinese tongue, a small army of instructors would have to be imported to teach it.

Dancing Proves Fatal.

Many men and women catch colds at dances which terminate in pneumonia and consumption. After exposure, if Foley's Honey and Tar is taken it will break up a cold and no serious results need be feared. Refuse any but the genuine in a yellow package. T. F. Laurin, Owl Drug Store.

WILL WED DUKE.

Theodora Shonts Engaged to French Duke After an Extended Courtship.

CHICAGO, Nov. 20.—A dispatch to the Tribune from Washington, D. C., says:

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore P. Shonts announced the engagement of their daughter Theodora to Duc de Chantnes et de Piquigny of France, the wedding to take place at their New York home in January. The Duc is now in New York, where he has been since the arrival of Mrs. Shonts and her daughter from Europe several months ago, but will sail for France on Thursday.

The persistent courtship of the Duc covers a space of over 18 months and has been most fervent. He met Miss Shonts in Paris and fell in love with her shortly after her presentation at the court of King Edward.

The Duc comes from the oldest of French nobility and is possessed of vast estates, though they are said to be embarrassed with debts.

Miss Shonts is a splendid linguist, pretty, and 29 years old. Her maternal grandfather was the late Governor Drake of Iowa.

Biliousness and Constipation.

For years I was troubled with biliousness and constipation, which made life miserable for me. My appetite failed me. I lost my usual force and vitality. Pepsin preparations and cathartics only made matters worse. I do not know where I should have been today had I not tried Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets. The tablets relieve the ill feeling at once, strengthen the digestive functions, helping the system to do its work naturally.—Mrs. Rosa Potts, Birmingham, Ala. These tablets are for sale by Frank Hart and leading drug-

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City Surveyor Arthur S. Tee left on last night's train for a few days trip to Seattle.

This is Worth Remembering.

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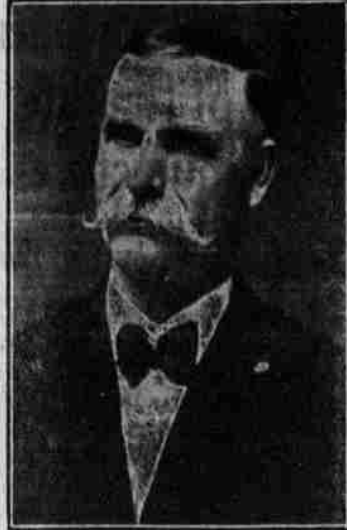
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