Cupid's Kuklux

By
EWAN MACPHERSON

Once more Charlton enjoyed a jubilant laugh, ending in a kind of war-whoop. "But I thought you were going to tell me about her."

"Oh, no, I take it back. Nobody in this world knows Mab as well as I do. I ought to have known it was all over. I did know. If you had ever written she would have told me, even if she didn't tell any one else."

"Did she seem to mind?"

Mella sniffed scorn that was beyond articulate utterance.

"To be candid, she never seemed to care a row of pins." She stopped a moment and then went on: "Only Mab isn't like some girls—somehow. She has her lovely, delicate tea rose notions about sacredness and all that—hates all those silly love jokes—more like your ideas of delicacy."

"Thank you. I didn't know I had any ideas of delicacy. By the way, it's time for you to make up your mind who is to drive you back to Yellowbanks. I must send Chapultepec to hitch up and go in and dress. It won't take me more than ten minutes."

"And ride horseback in your dress clothes?"

"Unless you choose to change your mind and let me drive you."

She turned her head aside as she said timidly, "Of course you must drive me, please."

"How many quarts of buttermilk have you two had?" the voice of Cale Quinn asked from the ghostly group under the osage orange hedge. "It's close on to 11 o'clock, and we've all got to dress when we get back."

"Well, I've got to dress before we start," said Charlton. "You fellows can wait ten minutes, can't you?"

"Hurry up, then," said another ex-White Cap. And as Charlton picked up his rifle and ran off toward the house the same speaker added, "Mella, that must be a wonderful man—a great man."

"Ought to have been a general in the United States army," said Ralph Desmond.

"If he'll quit painting pictures, we'll make him governor of Kentucky," another voice chimed in. And they all laughed.

"I'm afraid I don't quite know what you're all talking about," said Mella haughtily. "How many juleps have you had? Buttermilk would have been much better for you."

"Oh, you needn't tell us you like buttermilk, Mella!" said Cale Quinn. "But if you want to know what we're talking about this is the first time we ever saw anybody stand up to you, that's all."

"Except Queen Mab," Ralph Desmond put in.

"Oh, I mean any man. Mella, honey, you've lost your grip. You can't boss us any more now."

"I'm sure I don't want to," said Mella, with an alarmingly distant air. "I may as well say at once that I'm very sorry about all this."

"Whew!" from Ralph, the extremely juvenile.

"Don't be vulgar, little boy. I see now that the whole thing was in horrid bad taste. And—and look what a position I"— She stopped there, something in her throat apparently interrupting her speech.

"Yes," Cale Quinn took her up, humanely and adroitly, "look what a position we all would have been in if the thing had gone through and Mabel Price had heard of it. She surely would too. As it is, we're at Charlton Garrard's mercy—if you've let it out to him, Mella, that this business has anything to do with Mab. You'll have to make him promise, or we'll all be struck out of Queen Mab's visiting list."

"He won't have any chance to tell her," said the young man who had wanted to make Charlton governor. "I don't suppose she'll speak to him."

"Why not?" Mella snapped angrily. "Don't you know Mab any better than to think she's going to act like a schoolgirl? She'll talk to him just like Jamie Sinclair or any of you all. You don't suppose she cares, do you?"

"Look here, Mella," said Quinn. "Now that this comedy of yours is about through I'm going to tell you something. Johnny, here, can bear me witness I told him week before last. Don't you think perhaps we've all got hold of the wrong end of it? My own belief is it was Mab gave Charlton Garrard the kibitz years ago. Just like her to say nothing to anybody about it, even you."

Mella looked at him quickly, as if about to speak. Then she seemed to change her mind. She turned and looked down the wagon road in silence for a moment and said, with much quiet dignity, "I'd rather not gossip about that if it's all the same to you."

Quinn, making a queer grimace under cover of the darkness, sat suppressed, after which the few minutes of waiting that yet remained were passed by all the posse in strained silence.

When they set out for Yellowbanks, the prisoner alone was cheerful, and he seemed in even higher spirits than before. He swung Mella into the road wagon, sprang in after her and gave his last orders to Chapultepec with the joyous vigor of a big schoolboy starting for a picnic.

"What on earth has come over you all?" he asked as the blue grass team settled into their stride on the dirt road. "Lucky we have a little moon, isn't it? These beauties are new and don't know the road a little bit. Did you have a row with your deputies while I was dressing?"

Mella seemed to be shrinking as far back as possible into her corner, twisting tight in her hands the perforated pillow slip. "I can only speak for myself, Mr. Garrard," she said, and it was a strangely meek voice for the Mella Harrison that Yellowbanks knew. "Have you ever felt ashamed of yourself?"

Charlton awakened the night echoes of the country road and set the neighborhood dogs a-barking with one of his salvos of laughter.

"Why, bless you, no! They say my impudence is my worst fault. But you won't tell anybody that, will you, Mella? I suppose I have as much right to call you Mella as all these little Kids Junior, haven't I?" He got no answer to this inquiry, so went on without one. "If I could only have felt thoroughly ashamed of myself once or twice in my life, there might be some hope for me. Never mind; I believe there is hope for me anyway." He stopped to laugh again and then, as she remained silent, ran on: "I'm superstitious, and I feel that my star—don't know which it is—is in the ascendant tonight—wherever the ascendant may be—the very night I wanted it to be there. The first sign was when I happened to see your posse just as they were riding into the yard; the second was when I got the drop on you all; the third is my being in this rig with you going lickity-clip to the Bartons. Hold up there, beauties! Steady!"

"Mr. Garrard."

"Yes, Miss Harrison."

"I feel that I have shown myself to you in a bad light."

"Bad night! H'm! You surely could have stood it a good deal stronger. Still, when you consented to pull off that old pillow slip, and the moon—you remember what I said about the chrysalis? I won't forget that effect in a hurry. And in another hour I shall see you at the party, you know."

"Don't jest. When you see me there will you promise not to let any one know you have met me before, Mab above all?"

"Must I promise that?"

"Do you very much want to see me there?"

"Do I? What a question!"

"Then you must promise."

"And you'll give me two dances, no matter who else is on your list? All right; I promise."

"Not to give the least little sign?"

"Not the least little sign. I can act a bit, you know."

She was silent for more than a mile of the way after that, while Charlton

She was silent for more than a mile of the way.

sang snatches of Wagner, talked to his team and pointed out recondite beauties of moonlight and shadow. At last she said, "Mr. Garrard." And the timidity of her tone would have astonished the Kids Junior.

"Yes, Miss Harrison."

"Tell me what you thought—think of all this affair."

"Your expedition?" Thinking of it made him laugh again. "Well, I should call it a 'note.'"

"A what?"

"What they call a note in art. A thing that marks a picture so that it is itself—makes it dear old Shellbark all over—couldn't be found outside of old Kentucky anyway."

"Provincial."

"M'm'm'n'n'no. That isn't the word. I'm a slouch at finding words. You see, you took such a lot for granted—first, that I had fallen in love with a girl that had been sitting to me for her portrait."

"And you're not?"

"Bless you, no! Fan Garnett is the nicest kind of a girl, with a swell picture of a face. But an artist doesn't fall in love with his model. How could he paint her if he did? What he wants is a sweetheart—real, true sweetheart." He spoke with feeling, almost vehemence.

"Oh, does he?" Mella seemed a little frightened.

"Eh? Oh, well, I mean—of course—if he does." And his laugh seemed to be in mockery of his own unguarded outburst.

"And what is—a sweetheart?" Mella asked in a very subdued voice.

"A sweetheart? Don't you know? Then I'm afraid I can't tell you—not yet." He flicked at the team and sang a bar of the "Valkyries' Ride" as if he were happy about the ascendency of his star.

"You know you are the first regular artist I ever met," she said, as if apologizing for something. "Go on about your note."

"Well, then, second place, that idea of a leading man, all tar and feather, to—to the altar."

"Nobody dreamed of such a thing, Mr. Garrard!"

"Of course I know that. Why do you keep calling me Mr. Garrard? If you get cross with me I'll shut up. What I mean is, well, public opinion in love affairs—'Cupid awakened by public sentiment'—think of that for one of those allegorical charts!"

"I told you it was all a joke, didn't I?"

"Joke! Don't I know a joke when I meet one in the road? I tell you, the Latin quarter couldn't equal it in a century. You're not angry with me, are you?"

She turned her head away. "No—I wish we were at the bend of the road. The moonlight's right in my eyes. What else?"

"Only one thing more—funniest of all, though—you all took it for granted that I was to blame. You forgot she was only sixteen at the time. 'She's a grownup young woman now. How do you all'—he checked himself and began again—'how did you all know she hadn't changed her mind since she grew up?'"

"Isn't sixteen grown up?" Mella asked very quietly, smiling, but Charlton did not see the smile.

"Well, hardly. How did you all know she hadn't turned me down without getting out any handbills? Of course I'm not telling anything; I'm only asking. How did you know?"

"We didn't know. We were—I was just a silly country girl. They all call me a tomboy—except Mab."

"And except me, Mella."

Mella gave a little sigh. "And so all that's a note?" And she smiled to herself, nestling back in the shadow. And from then on Charlton had to carry the conversation until they entered Yellowbanks and saw the bright golden glow from the windows of the Bartons, away down Augusta street, and could hear the chorus of last winter's Yellowbanks opera singing:

"Never, oh never our hearts shall range
From that old, old love again."

Then Mella said, "I'll have to burn this pillow slip or grandma will find me out."

"Burn that? Never! I'm going to take it and keep it among my most precious souvenirs."

She answered him with a decisive shake of the head, though smiling. "We're just in time. The electric light goes out at 12, you know. Next turning on the left. And—Mr. Garrard, you don't think me—vulgar, do you?"

"You vulgar! I couldn't if I tried ever so hard."

As he was leaving her, standing in the side entrance of her home, shrinking into the shadow lest any one might see her in that ugly white gown, he asked her once more, "Do let me take the pillow slip!"

She shook her head. "Au revoir!"

"Au plaisir! Two dances, remember!"

When she nodded and smiled and vanished through the side door Mella Harrison, leader of the Kuklux, vanished from Charlton forever. Her promise of two dances was redeemed by another Miss Harrison, to whom he was introduced at the Barton party, a splendid young woman in pink satin and lace, with dark hair in immense light coils that glowed like old mahogany wherever the gaslight touched them, a stately and self possessed young woman, too, who sang "Nobil Signor" with great applause, but yet managed to murmur parenthetically to Charlton, "You see, I can act a bit myself."

This Miss Harrison he saw many times after that night.

WISDOM OF CHILDREN.

Bright Comments That Drop From the Lips of Juveniles.

What could be more simple or more splendidly direct as a compliment to a pretty girl than the small boy's admiring question, "Are your eyes new ones?" No "grownup" person could have thought of that. "A ruminating animal is one that chews her cubs"—there might surely be less thoughtful definitions. As for definitions, no dictionary has ever given anything better than "a movable feast—a picnic."

There is a delightful note of the night nursery in the beginning of a girl's essay on boys, "The boy is not an animal, but they can be heard to a considerable distance," equaled perhaps in its splendid simplicity by the boy's written criticism to the effect that "most girls are very shy and angry." It is the directness of the description which compels attention in vivid comments such as, "Just before it killed me the tooth came out," and nothing surely could be more Johnsonian in its absolute truth than the answer given to the painstaking schoolmaster trying to make the class understand what might be meant by the subversive word "antipodes." "If I bored a hole right through the earth till I came out at the other side where should I be?" "Off yer 'ead! You can't do it!"—London Spectator.

FRIENDSHIPS.

Differences Between Those of Men and Those of Women.

One difference between men and women in their relation to friendship is that a man's friends like him in spite of himself; a woman's friends or acquaintances care for her because of herself, because of her powers of agreeability, her tact or her charm.

A man may be as grouchy as he likes on occasion. He may swear at his best friend and treat him as cavalierly as he pleases, yet that friend will wait in patience for "the old man to come round," knowing well that beneath the surface are a kindly heart and a willingness to share a last crust with him.

With her friends a woman may take no such liberty. The kind heart and the good intentions count for nothing beside a woman's bad manners and lack of taste in the treatment of her nearest and dearest, and condemnation is swift and sure. Nothing excuses her, and she is rarely forgiven. Nor would she expect to be forgiven. Not possessing that large patience undeniably necessary to friendship or the power of forgiving and waiting for the "grouch" to blow over, she does not look for forgiveness when she has sinned against these laws of a woman's making.

Rather she gives up her friend and contents herself quite placidly with another. But then, as we said before, a woman has no genius for friendship.

Vindictive.

"Ah," sighed the young rhymester, "you care nothing for the trials of us poets."

"Probably not," replied the crusty editor, "but I'd like to be on the jury in just one trial."—Philadelphia Ledger.

How Nugent Emulated Maeterlinck

By KEITH GORDON

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NUGENT was in despair. For three weeks he had been trying to ask Virginia Dinsmore that pointed and personal question that should decide matters between them, and for three weeks he had been held back by an invisible but impassable barrier.

Ralph Merton, of course, was always hanging about her, but that gentleman, Nugent assured himself, was neither invincible nor insuperable. The thing that he was afraid of was less Merton than the long, mystical discussions that the two held concerning the meaning of certain modern writers whose very names were strange to himself. So, procuring a few volumes of Maeterlinck, he determined to prepare himself to "trot in the same class" with her, as his horsy friend, Michaels, would have termed it.

Clad in an old coat whose pockets sagged delightfully, his feet thrust into slippers whose original shape and color could only be guessed at and fortified by his beloved pipe, he settled down one evening and solemnly opened the first volume of Maeterlinck that his hand fell upon.

But, though he made an honest effort, the atmosphere of his comfortable bachelor quarters, whose golf clubs,

MISS DINSMORE APPROACHED HER LATEST POSSESSION.

pipes, swords, riding crops, etc., displayed themselves with masculine variety and confusion, did not seem conducive to the study of the modern mystic. Horse and dog pictures looked down on him, and pictures that were neither of these noble animals testified somewhat frivolously to the existence of the eternal feminine. Rows of smartly bound volumes filled the low bookcases decorously, bearing witness to their owner's aspirations, while his actual achievement was evidenced by the litter of magazines and several dog eared Kipling books upon his library table. Obviously it was not a Maeterlinck room.

"Good Lord!" he groaned at last. "Good Lord! And to think that she can read such slush as this when there are horses to ride, good golf to play and men to talk to!" For one passing moment a doubt of Virginia's common sense assailed him, but only for a moment. Not even Maeterlinck could make him disloyal to her.

Besides, it must mean something—all this endless dialogue in which fear whitened men and women echoed each other's words to the accompaniment of shrieking winds and ghostly moans in a greenish gray light that never existed outside a melodrama. Surely no man would write all this stuff without meaning something. But that was just it—what?

"You may search me!" growled Nugent, throwing aside the second volume with a disgusted air and refilling his pipe. "If I've got to stand above ninety in Maeterlinck before I can win Virginia—well, I might just as well give up right now!"

Then Virginia's face, her eyes alight with interest, rose before him. That, he remembered perfectly, was the way she looked as she listened to Merton's conversation, and for the first time he felt a sharp pang of jealousy of the man.

The certainty that Merton understood and even found interesting what he could not read, much less comprehend, goaded him. In a meeker spirit than was usually his he tried tentatively to get some points on the maddening Maeterlinck from Virginia.

"It's symbolical, you know," she explained a trifle vaguely, regarding him with a lazy question in her eyes. It was so unlike Peter Nugent to be yearning for book talk that she was curious. "Everything stands for something," she added, as if that made the matter entirely clear.

"But tell me," retorted Peter, "what is the use of having everything stand for something? Why doesn't the man say what he means and be done with it?"

Miss Dinsmore had no answer for this pertinent question, and, seeing his advantage, her stalwart admirer continued:

"What would you think of me if I employed symbols instead of plain, everyday English?"

His listener laughed outright at this simple way of disposing of a great modern writer and his cult.

"I'm afraid I should think you were off your head, Mr. Nugent," she replied with the frankness of long acquaintance.

"That's just what I think of Maeterlinck," replied her companion dryly, feeling that the writer must either be conquered or crushed and leaning toward the last named alternative.

Still, he could not give up. It seemed to him preposterous that a fellow like Merton should understand things which he, Nugent, could not, especially when Merton's diabolical keenness gave him the advantage of Virginia's evident interest and appreciation. It was not a thing to be borne quietly.

"Perhaps we understand it more clearly than you do," she acknowledged. And that "we" that put her and Merton together on one side of the question as opposed to him on the other shook Nugent strangely.

Something of the dismay that he felt showed in his face, and, seeing it, Miss Dinsmore attempted once more to explain the methods of the new school of writers. And her efforts were rewarded, for at last a light seemed to break upon him.

"I see!" he ejaculated slowly. "I see at last! The gentlemen write in cipher, just as we send secret messages in business, and it doesn't mean a thing unless you understand the cipher. 'Dog pigment chair' doesn't sound very intelligible to you, does it?"

He waited a moment; then as Miss Dinsmore shook her head he went on:

"And yet I sent that very message to a firm yesterday in a matter involving the investment of thousands of dollars. And they understood, just as you and Merton understand your Maeterlinck code!" he concluded airily, while Miss Dinsmore studied him with a new interest. After all, she reflected, these practical minds were keen enough once they got the point of view.

Meanwhile Peter Nugent went his way with a curious exhilaration. At last, he felt, he was catching up with Merton. Since he had the important question to ask, why not heap coals of fire on Virginia's head by asking it symbolically? But how?

* * * * * * *

It was the Saturday before Easter. All the afternoon the bell of the Dinsmore mansion had been ringing with monotonous regularity, which kept the Buttons at the door at work like an automaton.

"Gee whiz!" he soliloquized as he took in an azalea almost as large as himself. "Miss Virginia must be de whole t'ing, judgin' by dese Easter greetin's."

The very last offering to arrive came about 9 o'clock in the evening, when the Buttons, wearied out, was dozing at his post and dreaming that he sent Sadie Flaherty a bunch of American Beauties with stems as long as telegraph poles. It was therefore with a somewhat bored and chastened air that he carried the package that was handed in up to Miss Virginia's room, where in a low chair she sat reading "Monna Vanna."

"Open it, Thomas," she commanded languidly, laying her book face downward in her lap and watching him idly as he removed the enwrapping tissue paper. But at sight of the object he lifted out of the box a moment later all her languor disappeared, and she uttered an exclamation of amazement.

It was a huge nest, upon which a bantam hen—soft, white and with matronly, alert yellow eyes—sat with nonchalant grace. Tucked under the edge of one wing was an envelope.

Buttons did his best, but it was poor. With a guffaw as involuntary as it was hearty he deposited the nest and its occupant upon a table and, holding his hand over his mouth, fled from the room. Miss Dinsmore approached her latest possession and removed the note, saying, "Who under the sun"—

Having read it, she sank into a chair, tears of merriment streaming from her eyes, for this was what she read:

Dear Virginia—I call you that because I know instinctively that symbolists have no use for formality. The Easter gift that I am sending may at the first flash seem bizarre, but when I explain that it is a symbolic offering you will understand. It is as symbolic as anything Maeterlinck ever dared to do, and I interpret it to you because in this particular case I fancy that I can do better than Merton himself.

The nest—what is it but the home that I would offer you? The egg therein—please notice that it's been made beastly ugly—stands for me, and, as with me, you will have to get beneath the shell to find its real significance. The hen that is sitting upon the egg in the nest—I come now to my liveliest bit of symbolism, a touch that I pride myself upon—typifies my frightened expectation of being "sat upon" when this simple effort of my imagination reaches you! Be merciful, then, to P. N.

Weak with laughter, the recipient of this extraordinary missive approached the table once more and gingerly removed the hen, half expecting an angry, clucking protest. There in the nest, sure enough, was an egg bearing an ugly caricature of Nugent, which crumbled in her fingers as she clutched it, releasing a scrap of paper that fluttered back into the nest.

It contained but a few words, but in them all the poetry of Nugent's strong, sane nature had been compressed, and with a little catch of the breath Miss Dinsmore pressed the slip of paper to her lips.

The book that she had been reading had fallen to the floor. With the tip of her toe she gave it a disdainful little kick as she fluttered across the room to her writing desk.

A Menu For the Easter Dinner.

Oysters on Half Shell.
Salted Almonds. Olives.
Cream of Celery Soup.
Fricassee of Belgian Hare.
Rice Croquettes. Mashed Potatoes.
Fried Eggplant.
Bird's Nest Salad.
Cheese Cake.
Ice Cream. Angel's Food.
Coffee.

Disraeli as a Dandy.

A contemporary of Disraeli in his memoirs records this impression of that famous dandy's personal appearance: Usually he wore a slate colored velvet coat, lined with satin; purple trousers, with a gold braid down the outside seam; a scarlet waistcoat, long lace ruffles falling down to the tips of his fingers; white gloves, with brilliant rings outside them, and long black ringlets rippling down over his shoulders. When he rose in the house he wore a bottle green frock coat, with a white waistcoat, collarless, and a copious supply of gold chains.

Caution Necessary.

The young man moved a little closer. She moved a little farther away.

"Why are you so cold and distant this evening, Miss Pinke?" he asked.

"I am not at all cold, Mr. Spoonamore," she answered, "but I am compelled to be distant. My vaccination is taking."—Chicago Tribune.

Considerate.

"He pretends to love music, but he never asks me to sing."

"Perhaps that's his way of proving it."

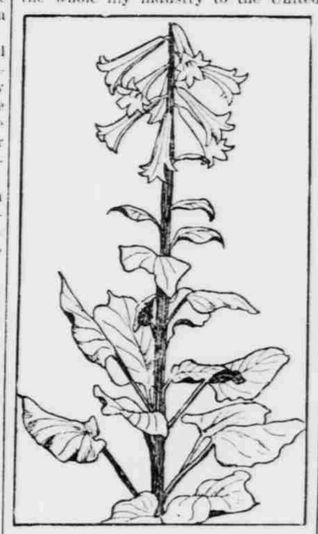
Consider The Lilies, How They Grow

UNTIL the early eighties the favorite Easter lily with Americans, who spend over $1,000,000 a year upon this feature of Easter decoration, was the Madonna or Annunciation lily (Lilium candidum), the common white species of the old world, a native of southern Europe. But in 1882 it was quite eclipsed by the Bermudan lily, which was introduced by William K. Harris, a Philadelphia florist, under the name of Lilium harrisii. The new variety had larger flowers than the Madonna lily and more of them. It was earlier, requiring only thirteen weeks for development under favorable conditions, and, best of all, it took kindly to the hothouse forcing process.

Then came the bonanza period for the Bermudan grower, but in his zeal he came near to killing the goose which laid his golden egg. Competition carried the forcing process to such a point that the bulbs were dug before they were ripe in order to get them into the American market by Christmas or earlier, and disease resulted. In the most prosperous days of the Bermudan lily one grower often harvested 20,000 bulbs from a single acre, with gross profits of $2,000 to $2,500. The United States department of agriculture exhaustively investigated the lily disease, but the Bermudans were not bound to follow its advice, and little good was accomplished.

Here was Japan's opportunity, for the Bermudan lily was originally a native of Japan and China. In 1879 Japan sent the United States only $2,000 worth of bulbs. In 1895 the exports amounted to $40,000. By 1899 they had reached $130,000, and they have been increasing ever since, while the Bermudan product is supposed to be a quarter less than it was a decade ago. But the Japanese made the same error as the Bermudans, and the lily disease is now ravaging the white fields of the mikado's empire.

The agricultural department again took up the lily question, and in 1900 an attempt was made to transplant the whole lily industry to the United



THE GIANT LILY OF INDIA.

States. The best stock obtainable was imported and planted in chosen sections of the southeastern states. Every scientific method of propagation and growth was tried, but the experiment proved a failure. The climate was unsuitable. Now the department has conceived the bold idea of growing the bulbs from seed, and experiments along this line have been unexpectedly successful.

The main advantages of the new method of propagation will be the elimination of disease and the fixation of three or four well marked varieties. We need early, midseason and late varieties, the first of which will naturally cost more and the last least.

One of the most beautiful of all white lilies is the Lilium gigenteum, or giant lily of India, but only those who are especially favored may enjoy this Easter emblem. It is seldom grown in America except by scientific horticulturists. It often attains a height of ten to eleven feet, and its large, odorous flowers remain in good condition for nearly three weeks.

The Lilium longiflorum is a tall, late northern variety that sometimes requires thirty weeks for the development of the flower. Its southern form is called by the botanist and the Japanese grower Lilium longiflorum var. eximium and by the Bermudan Lilium harrisii. The intermediate form, Lilium longiflorum var. giganteum, though requiring about eighteen weeks to force, is a most promising variety for the plant breeder. It is taller than eximium, with larger flowers. The bulb stores better than those of the other types and commands the highest price of all because it is said to be a difficult subject to propagate by vegatative methods.—Country Life In America.

Lugubrious Hedda!

It seems, by the way, almost forgotten that it was with a burlesque of Ibsen that Mr. Barrie made his first bow as a dramatist. His travesty of "Hedda Gabler" was one of the most delicious pieces of fooling ever seen at Toole's theater, and in it Mr. Toole (as Ibsen himself), George Shelton as Tesman and Miss Irene Vanbrugh as a blend of Thea and Hedda were delightful. In one scene Tesman was busy writing a review when Hedda entered, and the following dialogue took place:

Tesman (looking up)—Thea—

Hedda (languidly)—I am not Thea. I am Hedda.

Tesman—Then, Hedda, is there a k in "Christianity?"

Hedda (very slowly and intensely)—There—is—nothing—in—Christianity.

Tesman—Fancy that!—London Pall Mall Gazette.

God and Immortality.

After you have assumed God you cannot without doing violence to your reason fail to assume immortality.—Washington Gladden.

EASTER IN JAPAN.

The Cherry Blossom Festival, Resurrection of Fruits and Flowers.

By reaching Japan just at the beginning of spring you will find yourself in the midst of the native Easter season, which in reality is the cherry blossom festival. Because it comes at the time that Easter is celebrated in the western countries it is given that name.

The dawn of Easter in Japan is a dazzling and fascinating sight even to an American, used as he is to the great display of flowers and bright and dainty costumes that come out on that day in all the cities in the United States to welcome the season.

The Japanese are like a lot of happy school children let out to play, happy in their religious flower festival. None of the church ceremonies has any part in their celebration, and, although the cherry festival commemorates the resurrection, it is the resurrection of the fruits and flowers.

All Japan rejoices. The children have a day set apart for their special delectation, and the grown people do little but seek to make the young people happy. Along the roadways, inch deep with fallen cherry petals, the children draw immense movable temples. Sometimes more than a hundred little girls dressed in gorgeous hues are in line, pulling on the ropes attached to these chariots, on which the boys, dressed in blue and white togas, ride and play on their musical instruments, while the cleverest of their number in masked faces render religious dramas on the elevated platform in front of the chariot.

The streets are choked with thousands of grown people, who give up the day to witnessing these processions, and as the chariot and the children pass down a carpeted avenue of cherry trees, and the gentle spring breeze blows, a constant shower of pink perfumed snow falls from the cherry trees and everything becomes hazy in the entrancing mist of a pink snowstorm of soft petals. All nature seems to take part in this Easter festival of the Japanese children.

"Cherry blossom Sunday" at Uyeno park, in Tokyo, is one of the prettiest sights in all Japan. The avenue of cherry trees going up from the town forms an exquisite arch of pink boughs, under which the people throng purely on pleasure bent.

The tea houses have spread their best red blankets on the matted platforms, which serve for seat and table. Carriages and jinrikishas roll by, their occupants dressed in their best, the women in exquisitely delicate crapes, because it is the time of spring and flowers, and the light and dainty colors are most appropriate. Under the trees are light hearted picnic parties seated on their blankets and lunching on rice sandwiches.

Restraint is thrown aside during "cherry time," and at Mukojima, where a double avenue of cherry trees, the most magnificent display of these lovely blossoms in Tokyo, stretches along the far bank of the Sumida river beside the road, the wildest carnival reigns. Mummers in all sorts of fantastic costumes, in which red and white, the colors of spring and happiness, predominate, dance in and out among the tea houses that stand along the bank under the trees. The river is gay with roofed pleasure boats, and the sound of the geisha's samisen is added to the general clamor of rejoicing and merry-making.—Washington Star.

THE EGG DANCE.

A Curious Easter Custom of Ancient France—A Royal Romance.

In very ancient times a most curious Easter custom prevailed in France. Wooing lads and lasses would come forward as applicants for the "egg and matrimonial dance." A hundred eggs were arranged on a level sward spread with sand, and all the young tenantry selected their partners to dance on the green among the eggs.

The story is told by an old chronicler that Philibert, duke of Savoy, was out hunting and, being in the neighborhood of the beautiful palace of Margaret of Flanders, called to pay his respects to her. All the tenantry were dancing on the green, the eggs were laid, and the lovers were treading a measure of the national dance amid them. Few there were who managed to dance through without breaking some of the obstructions. If they succeeded not even the "nay" of the parents prevailed to break up the match. It was an evidence of the intentions of Providence to smile on the union.

While many had tried and been unsuccessful, the duke besought the princess to try the dance with him. Though it was the first time they had met, she agreed, and they executed the national dance without breaking an egg. They were greeted with enthusiastic cheers, and, as it was a sure sign that they were affianced by divine will and their wedded life would be one of great bliss, they bowed to the fates that ordained it so, and in the sentiment of the romance they were "married and lived happily ever after."—Philadelphia Press.

Easter Doll Parties.

Parties where each little girl is invited to bring her favorite doll, or her whole doll family, for that matter, are popular and timely. At one affair of this kind given under the direction of a kindergarten teacher, says the Washington Star, there were dolly songs and a dolly drill, dolly tableaux and dolly recitations, a baby coach parade to music and lastly a photograph taken on the front porch, where the whole bevy of little mothers posed with their babies of bisque, china and wax gathered about them. When refreshments were served there was a special table for the dollies, beautifully set with doll dishes, tiny candles and colored shades, simple refreshments warranted not to disturb the most delicate digestion and a little name card with appropriate souvenirs at each plate.

Didn't Dare.

"Mr. Meekton says he never spoke a harsh word to his wife."

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne, "but I'm not sure whether that is due to kindness or caution."—Washington Star.