

A CHILD LOVE

It Was More Than That Later

By ETHEL HOLMES

I am an old maid. I have never had a love affair and never expect to have one. Perhaps this is why I take an interest in the loves of other people. Nothing is so attractive to me as to watch a young couple drifting into that current which at first moves so imperceptibly that they are not aware they are in it. Indeed, so unconscious are they of being incipient lovers that it does not occur to them to conceal the fact from any one else.

And to me there is something especially touching about the loves of children. Some deny that there is such a thing as a pair of children lovers. I deny their negation, and I do so on a very sound basis. When I was ten years old I was in love with a boy of fifteen. This is the nearest I ever came to love.

I remember one day sitting at my window sewing when a boy and a girl passed on the other side of the road. The boy's straw hat was dingy, and there was plenty of ventilation in its crown. His only other clothing was a shirt and trousers—no shoes or stockings, nothing around his throat, his collar being open and displaying the tanned skin. The girl's clothing was neither better nor worse, and there was about as much of it.

The two were evidently absorbed in each other. What they were talking about I was too far from them to hear, but it was of vital importance. It may be that the boy had been "kept in" after school and they were indignant over time thus lost in play. It may be that some urchin had smashed the china head of the girl's doll. Whatever it was it was being discussed with animation.

And I maintain that these childish interests are of more real importance for the time being than those which come later. No addition to an adult's stock of wealth gives the same zest as a new toy to one of these little people.

Often afterward I saw these two and always together. In this they were different from other children who play, boys with boys and girls with girls. I learned that they were Henry Morse and Lila Bunker, a farmer's boy and farmer's girl. Indeed, we were all farmer folk, all knew one another, everybody being interested in some degree at least in every one else, a simple community and more than usually free from the petty jealousies common to mankind.

Henry Morse's father was determined that his son should have a good education, and the boy was sent away to school. After this I used to see Lila going by our house, but no companion supplied Henry's place. She was always alone, and I fancied her thinking of her other self. But this was simply fancy on my part. As I have said in the beginning, not having had any love affairs of my own, I conjure up love affairs for others. In this case of Henry and Lila I knew nothing of what was passing between them except from observation, so I may be excused for filling in occasionally that the story may not seem too disconnected. At the last I was present and shall not have to draw on my imagination.

When Henry came back from school there was a more modish appearance to his clothes and to his manners. Poor Lila, who had remained on the farm, had only an unadorned beauty, freshened by pure air and sunshine. They were now about sixteen years old, though Henry was half a head taller, and I could not see that their interest in each other had waned, though the childish unconsciousness that they were of different sex had disappeared. I used to see them go by the house together as formerly, but the prattle of childhood had given place to the more sober conversation of youth. I often wished I could hear what they were saying to each other.

Henry did so well at school that his father decided to send him to college. I wondered what effect his four years' association with young men and women of the world would have on my pet love affair. I feared that Henry, having become used to the polished girls he would meet, would return to see in Lila a country girl lacking the airs and graces of her sisters of the city. Would this alienate him? It was to be expected that it would. And, though country born and bred myself, I don't know that those of us who go to the city and acquire city ways are to be blamed when we return and yield to dissatisfaction with country ways.

Henry remained away a year at college before he came back to the farm. Then one July morning, when sitting at my window darning socks, I looked up, and, there on the opposite side of the road were the couple I had first noticed eight or nine years ago as children. Though Henry was plainly dressed, his clothes were not country clothes. It seemed to me that he might pass anywhere as a city bred young man. And Lila—how my heart went out to the poor child in her effort to dress in a fashion more in keeping with the apparel of those girls to whom Henry had been accustomed. It was all inference with me, but it was plain to see that she had prepared herself against his return to modify the difference between her and their habiliments.

I wondered if he noticed this and if

it pleased or displeased him. Surely her effort was not very successful. In the country one may get city fashions, but it is not every worker who can make them up. But in the few moments they were passing it was impossible for me to tell if there had been any change in Henry's feelings for Lila. So I pieced out the story in this wise: Henry was beginning to see the difference between her and the girls he had met. I mean by "her" her clothes—a certain deficiency in what city people call chic. I am not referring to Lila as a soul, not even as a body, for in bodily beauty she would doubtless far surpass many a city girl. Well, what do I refer to? Why, clothes and manner; that's all.

After this Henry seldom came home during vacations. I heard that he usually went camping with his fellow students. At any rate, I lost track of my lovers. I was reluctantly obliged to consider my story, if not finished, at least passing through a stage of interruption. Henry had become interested in a career which would have nothing to do with farms or farmer people. When he was graduated I learned that he was intending to study medicine. But before he entered a medical college his father, who spared no expense on his education, sent him abroad. When I heard of all these matters, which were taking him farther and farther away from provincialism and his provincial sweetheart, I groaned in spirit, for I saw that my love story was likely to end in nothing.

It was some time before Henry was to leave the medical college that I heard bad news of Lila. They said she had some trouble that was dragging her down, but the doctors could not discover what it was. They could not diagnose it—that is what they said of it. Her father sent to the city and brought a doctor to the farm especially to see if he couldn't tell what was the matter with her. The doctor said he couldn't find any organic trouble, whatever that means, and the only remedy he thought might benefit her was change of scene. He advised her father to take her on a trip. But Farmer Bunker couldn't afford to do that, and Lila didn't care to go.

I considered this merely a part of my love story. It was plain to me that Henry Morse had drifted away from the little girl I had seen him going by our house with when they were children, and the parting was killing her.

They say story writers often fall in love with their imaginary characters. Therefore it's not strange that a story creator like myself should fall in love with a real person of flesh and blood. I had always known the Bunkers, so I went to see Lila. That was in the spring—May, I think. I found her sitting in an easy chair at her window, pale, languid and without interest in anything. It may be that she divined by my bearing toward her that I knew what was the matter with her. At any rate, when I went up to her, took her hand and drew her head down on my shoulder she left it there and seemed to get relief from the tears that came.

While she was weeping on my shoulder I was thinking. Not having any lover to bring back for myself, I wished I could bring back one for this poor girl. And I formed a plan. But it was some time before I carried it out, not till summer came. Then I told Lila's parents that I thought it would do her good to come and make me a visit. Since Lila said she would like to do so, they consented, and within a few days she was in my room, the room from which I had first seen her go by with her child lover. I said nothing about Henry Morse either as boy or man any more than if he didn't exist. But when I put Lila in an easy chair at the very window from which I used to watch her and him, and thought of her as she was then and saw her as she was now I made up my mind that if I was going to make a good, real story of her case I couldn't rely on things to happen themselves. I'd have to bring them about myself.

I was thinking, too, that my love story had been going on long enough, and it was time it was brought to a close. Besides, Lila was so weak that I feared in her condition she'd contract some real disease. So I wrote Dr. Henry Morse, who had just been admitted to practice, that I had a patient in my family who was dying of some disease that none of our country doctors could tell anything about, and I would pay him whatever he asked if he would make a flying trip and diagnose the case.

He wrote back that he remembered me very well and would run down in a few days. Of course I didn't let on to Lila what I had done. Still, poor child, wasn't I dreaming what an influence my seeing her go by my window so many years before would have on her life. I hoped Henry would come as soon as possible, for she was drooping more and more every day.

Well, one morning he came. He said he had answered my call after his arrival even before going home. I was glad of this, for I was fearful he'd hear something that might interfere with my plan. I just led him upstairs, opened the door, and he went in and I closed it behind him.

I reckon he didn't make as long a call as that on a patient for a good many years. I don't know what happened between them—didn't see the surprise of either of them. All I know is that when he came out two or three hours after he went in he looked at me as though he was going to say something, but pressed my hand instead. Then I went in to Lila. She had the happiest smile on her face I ever saw. She put her arms around my neck and cried and laughed. And that's the end of the story.

I don't see why real story writers don't do something themselves to finish their own stories.

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A COLONY OF BEES.

Its Members, Their Product and the Heat of a Sting.

A colony of bees in summer consists of from 50,000 to 100,000 individuals. Each colony contains a queen, several hundred drones and the balance workers. The latter are neuter or undeveloped females, and they do all the work in the hive, gather their food from the flowers, which consists of honey and pollen. They also gather propolis, a resinous substance used to stop cracks and holes in the hive.

It is not generally known that honey is not thick and sirupy when first gathered. It is called nectar by beekeepers and looks like water. When first gathered it can be shaken from the combs easily.

Sometimes it is necessary to shake bees from a brood comb, and the bees as they fall are so deluged by the watery nectar that they look like the proverbial "drowned rats." This, however, does no harm, as they at once proceed to clean each other, and when bees clean up they do a good job. I have put out a dish from the table that was drenched with honey, and in a very short time it was as clean as though washed.

Many persons are very much afraid of the business end of the bee, and those who are not used to being stung suffer pain when stung. The sensation of a bee sting can be compared to the prick of a needle point in the flesh, and then try to imagine that while just under the skin the needle is heated white hot and held there for about five minutes. Beekeepers will agree that this statement is not overdrawn. Beekeepers working about the hives every day are seldom stung, as they know the habits of the bees and avoid their stings. In time one becomes more or less immune to the poison.—George Shiber in New York Sun.

THE SINISTER DRUG MENACE.

How Society Is Facing an Exceedingly Dangerous Human Element.

In rigorous effort to suppress the illegal sale and use of habit forming drugs the New York police are now arresting annually about 900 persons and securing 700 convictions. Of these fully 75 per cent have had previous police records, which include every crime in the statutes. This is an official statement, one of sinister portent. It means that law abiding society is facing a human element new and exceedingly dangerous—so grave, in fact, that one of the most important duties of the police lies in stamping out this traffic.

The danger is by no means confined to large cities like New York; it is probably growing in towns and villages all over the country. Police investigations have revealed an appalling increase of drug addicts. More than one-half of those confined in the city prison, the Tombs, were victims,

Men and women following virtually every business, trade and profession were included. Even school children became addicted to the habit of using these drugs.

It is with full knowledge of such occurrences that the police are doing everything possible to stop illegal traffic in drugs. Criminals of this class present a problem even more difficult than the old time bank robber and general crook. The police may arrest 1,000 offenders annually; but the problem will not be solved until boys and girls are taught the terrible results which follow upon the use of habit forming drugs. It is at this point that teachers of physiology and personal hygiene must lend powerful co-operation.—Century Magazine.

Skating Held 41m.

Of all the sights a Japanese student at Missouri university has seen in this country the one most wonderful to him is skating, and to the list of things he intends learning while in the United States is the art of gliding over real ice. In Japan, he told the Missourian, he never had seen any ice thick enough to skate on, though in the mountain regions there ice does form on the lakes in sufficient strength to afford a chance for skaters.—Kansas City Times.

Coir Profiles.

Where a face is used on a piece of money it is always in profile, because the cameo is more readily struck with the die in that manner, and if a full or three-quarter face were represented the nose of the gentler man or lady would get damaged in circulation and produce a ridiculous effect.

Not Thorough.

"Bliggins affects to be a regular cave man." "Yes," replied Miss Cayenne. "But he doesn't carry out the idea. His clothes are sufficiently out of style to be annoying without being prehistoric."—Washington Star.

Operations and Operations.

"After all, success is merely a matter of environment." "As for example?" "Well, the greatest surgeon might possibly be a dismal failure operating on the Stock Exchange."—Boston Transcript.

Her Sacred Word.

"Not going to Abce's luncheon? But you gave your sacred word!" "So I did, and I'd go in a minute if my dress had come home."—Harper's Bazar.

A Specialist.

"Pa, what's a specialist?" "A man who has discovered which of his talents will bring him the most money, my son."—Boston Transcript.

Sever mind where you work. Let your care be for the work itself.—St.urgeon.

HELPING THE CHILD.

Some Don'ts For Mothers to Turn Over in Their Minds.

A few don'ts might well be conspicuously posted in many a mother's mind. Don't consider it necessary to systematically underrate your child. Your adult friends will know you do not mean it, but the child will not, and probably more characters are weakened by the lack of self confidence engendered by such a process than by the vanity which follows the silly bragging of overfond parents.

Don't think that the moment you are alone with your boy or girl you must find fault or endeavor to improve the occasion by a little moralizing, no matter in how loving a spirit. This is the hardest of all, for no one is so anxious to help a child toward perfection as his parent, yet it surely leads to an avoidance of the moments alone together, which should be times of happy confidences.

Don't correct the child before others. Never mind if a well meaning relative does say: "My dear, I am surprised that you do not show more force of character. Your children are suffering from a lack of discipline." Pass the matter over until you and the small offender can have it out alone. If the circumstances are such that it cannot be passed over take him out of the room.

Lastly, laugh often with, but never at your child. This takes self denial, but it pays. Make up your mind that whatever others may say he can depend upon you for a quick, sure understanding without quibble or joke at his expense. This does not mean that he must not take his share of harmless fun. It is wholesome, and too much sheltering would make him oversensitive, but the mother who lets her child know that she never makes fun of him will be surprised at the confidence with which he relies upon it.—Mother's Magazine.

STREET CROWDS IN MOVIES.

Strategy Used to Keep People From Spoiling the Effect.

Street crowds are notoriously difficult to handle for the movies. They will never do what you want, and even when you are sneaking them there is always some smart Aleck in the foreground who insists upon looking into the camera and cracking his foolish face.

On one occasion Donlon wished to get a close up picture of a crowd looking skyward. It was to be used as a cut-in for an aeroplane story. To hire a lot of extras might have cost a couple of thousand dollars, so he took a chance of getting what he wanted without paying for it. Knowing the psychology of crowds, Donlon took three cameras downtown, where he set one on the sidewalk for the purpose of taking a close-up profile of the crowd he was to assemble, one in a second story window, shooting straight into the people's faces, and one on top of the building, also shooting down.

When all was ready Donlon stood in the middle of the street with a megaphone and began to call directions to one Ben, who stood on top of the building. The crowd assembled immediately and, seeing the cameras, began, as usual, to rubber right into them. Then Donlon called out:

"Is Ben ready to jump?" And Ben called back: "Just a minute, Ed. I'm a bit nervous. Wait till that yellow car gets by. I think I'll try for the top of that big Pasadena car. It's wider."

Back and forth they called excited warnings and directions, and the crowd was right on tiptoes. They didn't know what was going to happen, but it promised excitement. All this time the camera men clicked that fool crowd into celluloid immortality.—Rob Wagner in Saturday Evening Post.

Decimating an Army.

To say that an army is decimated means, strictly speaking, that it loses a tenth of its men. If, then, an army is decimated ten times, what is left of it? An English publication that raised the question, because war correspondents so frequently misuse the word "decimate," was astonished to find that many of its readers think there would be nothing left of it. In point of fact, an army of 100,000 decimated ten times would still number 34,870 men. Figure it out for yourself.—Youth's Companion.

High Cost of Living.

The researches of Professor Mead of the University of California show that 310 men own 4,000,000 acres of the best land on the continent and that one railroad owns 5,000,000 acres. The report of the secretary of agriculture shows that less than half of the arable land in the United States is under cultivation.

Here is a suggestion for those seeking the cause of the high cost of living.—St. Paul News.

Borrowed Books.

Whenever you lend a book let down in a small blank book kept in a convenient place for that purpose the date, the name of the person to whom the book is lent and the title of the book. This will prove a safeguard against losing books or forgetting where they are to the person who allows many books to be taken from his library.

Tyranny.

There are few minds to which tyranny is not delightful. Power is nothing but as it is felt, and the delight of superiority is proportionate to the resistance overcome.—Johnson.

In the march of life don't heed the order of "Right about!" when you know you are about right.—Holmes.

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