

December  
**Cha**ropolitan



**IN  
THIS  
ISSUE!**

Robert W. Shameless  
Harrison Christy Flagg  
Dr. Herbert Crane  
John Phlox, Jr.  
Haggard Writer  
Nelle Weedles Pillbox  
Mrs. Wilson Van de Water Glynn

# *The Nassau Literary Magazine*

## PAYMENT

BY DR. HERBERT CRANE

The saddest commentary on human existence is payment.

It is the longest pin in the seat of humanity; it will rip the breeches of the world.

It is the fly in the ointment, the hole in the bathtub, the blow-out in the inner-tube, of all men.

There are but two free things in all the world, the salvation of the soul and free-lunch: the first is unedible; the second, unfashionable.

Many a brave idealist, overcome by the grossness of it all, has committed suicide on the first of every month. I once had the privilege of knowing a worthy and simple—very simple, woman. Her spirit had been crucified by the awfulness of payment. Her life is now being eked out in that sanctuary of the individualist, Sing-Sing, and even in this, her hundred and eightieth year, she is paying, paying,—still paying, for a calabash pipe bought in her youth for a dollar down and a dollar a month.

Regard the dead idealists, Caligula, The Marquis de Sade, and William Jennings Bryan. They gave their lives for an idea. You, too, young man, if would desire to reach the Height, must be prepared to PAY.

*Fitzgerald*

## JEMINA

A STORY OF THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

BY JOHN PHLOX, JR.

It was night in the mountains of Kentucky.

Wild hills rose on all sides. Swift mountain streams flowed rapidly up and down the mountains.

Jemina Tantrum was down at the stream brewing whiskey at the family still.

She was a typical mountain girl.

Her feet were bare. Her hands, large and powerful, hung down below her knees. Her face showed the ravages of work. Although but sixteen, she had for over a dozen years been supporting her aged pappy and mappy by brewing mountain whiskey.

From time to time she would pause in her task, and filling a dipper full of the pure invigorating liquid, would drain it off—then pursue her work with renewed vigor.

She would place the rye in the vat, thresh it out with her feet, and in twenty minutes the completed product would be turned out.

A sudden cry made her pause in the act of draining a dipper and look up.

"Hello," said a voice. It came from a man in hunting costume who had emerged from the wood.

"Hi, thar," she answered sullenly.

"Can you tell me the way to the Tantrums' cabin?"

"Are you uns from the settlements down thar?"

She pointed her hand down to the bottom of the hill where Louisville lay. She had never been there, but once, before she was born, her great-grandfather, old Gore Tantrum, had gone into the settlements in the company of two marshalls, and had

never come back. So the Tantrums from generation to generation had learned to dread civilization.

The man was amused. He laughed a light tinkling laugh, the laugh of a Philadelphian. Something in the ring of it thrilled her. She drank off a dipper of whiskey.

"Where is Mr. Tantrum, little girl?" he asked kindly.

She raised her foot and pointed her big toe toward the woods.

"Thar in the cabing behind those thar pines. Old Tantrum air my ole man."

The man from the settlements thanked her and strode off. He was fairly vibrant with youth and personality. As he walked along he whistled and sang and turned handsprings and flapjacks, breathing in the fresh, cool air of the mountains.

The air around the still was like wine.

Jemina Tantrum watched him fascinated. No one like him had ever come into her life before.

She sat down on the grass and counted her toes. She counted eleven. She had learned arithmetic in the mountain school.

Ten years before, a lady from the settlements had opened a school on the mountain. Jemina had no money, but she had paid her way in whiskey, bringing a pail full to school every morning and leaving it on Miss Lafarge's desk. Miss Lafarge had died of delerium tremens after a year's teaching, and so Jemina's education had stopped.

Across the still stream still another still was standing. It was that of the Doldrums. The Doldrums and the Tantrums never spoke.

They hated each other.

Fifty years before old Jem Doldrum and old Jem Tantrum had quarrelled in the Tantrum cabin over a game of slapjack. Jem Doldrum had thrown the king of hearts in Jem Tantrum's face, and the old Doldrum, enraged, had felled the old Tantrum

with the nine of diamonds. Other Doldrums and Tantrums had joined in and the little cabin was soon filled with flying cards. Hartsrum Doldrum lay stretched on the floor writhing in agony, the ace of hearts crammed down his throat. Jem Tantrum, standing in the doorway, ran through suit after suit, his face lit with fiendish hatred. Old Mappy Tantrum stood on the table wetting down the Doldrums with hot whiskey. Old Heck Doldrum, having finally run out of trumps, was backed out of the cabin, striking left and right with his tobacco pouch, and, gathering around him the rest of his clan, they mounted their cows and galloped furiously home.

That night old man Doldrum and his sons, vowing vengeance, had returned, put a tick-tock on the Tantrum window, stuck a pin in the doorbell and beaten a retreat.

A week later the Tantrums had put Cod Liver Oil in the Doldrum's still, and so, from year to year, the feud had continued, first one family being entirely wiped out and then the other.

Every day Jemina worked the still on her side of the stream, and Boscoe Doldrum worked the still on his side.

Sometimes, with unborn hatred, the feudists would throw whiskey at each other, and Jemina would come home smelling like a Bowery saloon on election night.

But now Jemina was too thoughtful to look across. How wonderful this stranger had been and how oddly he was dressed! In her innocent way she had never believed that there were any settlements at all, and she had put it down to the credulity of the mountain people.

She turned to go up to the cabin, and as she turned something struck her in the neck. It was a sponge soaked in whiskey, and thrown by Boscoe Doldrum—a sponge soaked in whiskey from his still on the other side.

"Hi thar, Boscoe Doldrum," she shouted in her deep base voice.

"Yo', Jemina Tantrum. Gosh ding yo'!" he returned.

She continued up to the cabin.

The stranger was talking to her father. Gold had been discovered on the Tantrum land, and the stranger, Edgar Edison, was trying to buy the land for a song.

She sat upon her hands and watched him.

He was wonderful. When he talked his lips moved.

She sat upon the stove and watched him.

Suddenly there came a blood-curdling scream. The Tantrums rushed to the windows.

It was the Doldrums.

They had hitched their cows to trees and concealed themselves behind the bushes and flowers and soon a perfect rattle of stones and bricks beat against the windows, bending them inward.

"Father, father," shrieked Jemina.

Her father took down his slingshot from his slingshot rack on the wall and ran his hand lovingly over the elastic band. He stepped to a loophole. Old Mappy Tantrum stepped to the coal-hole.

The stranger was aroused at last. Furious to get at the Doldrums, he tried to get out of the house by crawling up the chimney. Then he thought there might be a door under the bed, but Jemina told him there was not one. He hunted for doors under the beds and sofas, but each time Jemina pulled him out and told him there were no doors there. Furious with anger, he beat upon the door and hollered at the Doldrums, but cowed, they could not answer him, but kept up their fusillade of bricks and stones against the window. Old Pappy Tantrum knew that as soon as they were able to effect an aperture they would pour in and the fight would be over.

Old Heck Doldrum, foaming at the mouth and spitting on the ground left and right, led the attack.

The terrific slingshots of old Pappy Tantrum had not been without their effect. A master shot had disabled one Doldrum, and another, shot three times through the abdomen and once through the stomach, fought feebly on.

Nearer and nearer they approached the house.

"We must fly," shouted the stranger to Jemina. "I will sacrifice myself and bear us both away."

"No," shouted Pappy Tantom, his face begrimed with cold cream and grease paint. "You stay here and fit on. I will bar Jemina away. I will bar Mappy away. I will bar myself away."

The man from the settlements, pale and trembling with anger, turned to Ham Tantrum, who stood at the door throwing loop-hole after loop-hole at the advancing Doldrums.

"Will you cover the retreat?"

But Ham said that he too had Tantrums to bear away, but that he would leave himself here to help the stranger cover the retreat if he could think of a way of doing it.

Soon smoke began to filter through the floor and ceiling. Shem Doldrum had come up and touched a match to old Japhet Tantrum's breath as he leaned from a loop-hole and the alcoholic flames shot up on all sides.

The whiskey in the bathtub caught fire. The walls began to fall in.

Jemina and the man from the settlements looked at each other.

"Jemina," he whispered.

"Stranger," she answered in an answering answer.

"We will die together," he said. "If we had lived I would have taken you to the settlements and married you. With your ability to hold liquor, your social success was assured."

She caressed him idly for a moment, counting her toes softly to herself. The smoke grew thicker. Her left leg was on fire. She was a human alcohol lamp.

Their lips met in one long kiss, and then a wall fell on them and blotted them out.

When the Doldrums burst through the ring of flame ten minutes later, they found them dead where they had fallen, their arms around each other.

Old Jem Doldrum was moved.

He took off his hat.

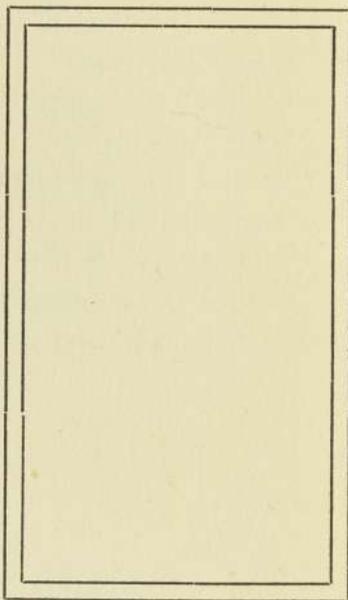
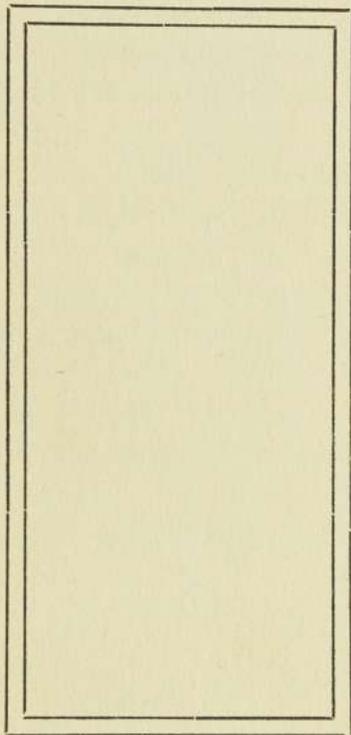
He filled it with whiskey and drank it off.

"They air daid," he said slowly. "They hankered after each other. The fit is over now. We must not separate them."

So they threw them together into the stream and the two splashes they made were as one.

## THE VAMPIEST OF THE VAMPIRES

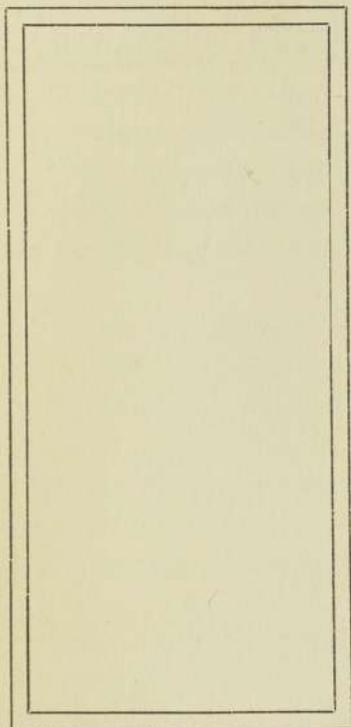
Kneeda Baral in the new screen version of Marie Odile. An absolutely new interpetation of a much discussed part.



At the age of five. This precocious actress passed from the nursery to such parts as Carmen, Polyanna, Sapho and Queen Elizabeth. Her first part was that of the Chicken in Chantecler.

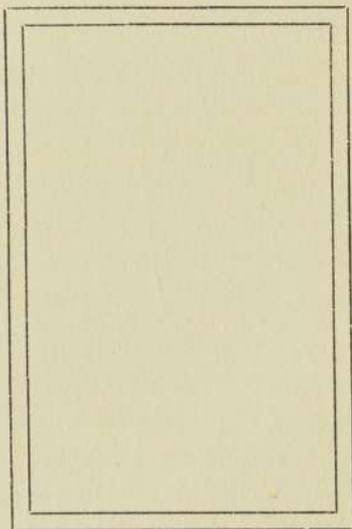
EDITOR'S NOTE:—We have written for photographs but as yet Miss Baral has sent us none that we can possibly print.

## THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE AMATEUR



Miss Oxford designs and paints all her own scenery. She has just completed a set for the ship-wreck scene of *The Tempest*, using only a rouge-stick and a powder puff.

Cecily Oxford since joining the Hatbox players has managed to do violence to more living dramatists than any other actress in America. She has shown that the combination of the dilettante amateur and the famous foreign dramatist still draws the tired Columbia professor and the intellectual spinster.



EDITOR'S NOTE:—Miss Oxford has become so etherealized that no photographic plates are sensitive enough to catch her physical essence. She has sent us several negatives from which our photographic editor has been as yet unable to obtain prints.

## THE WIFE

BY MRS. WILSON-VANDERWATER-GLYN

(If you are a long-suffering wife or a long-offending husband, or if you know any such person, you will be interested in this story. It suggests a way-out even when the law cannot help.)

Having received Turgen's message, Richard Reeves strode towards the library. He entered. She stood before him, the long lines of her slender body, elongated, drawn out, and stretching towards the ceiling. She looked as if her parents had trained her on a trellis.

With swift brutal strokes he went straight to the point.

"What is this I hear of you, Heloise?" he said.

She wrapped herself around a chair. This sorrow was too keen, too poignant.

"I love him!" she whispered; "Love him, love-him, lovehim, lovhim, lovim, lo——!"

"Enough," he said sternly; "I have my fingers crossed. You love him, him, your husband!"

She threw herself at his feet in one long gesture. With the coarseness of the man-in-the-street, he drew out a cigarette, scratched a match on her neck, and blew a smoke ring. For an instant, he watched it. The woman kneeled upon her feet. When she spoke it was so softly as to make the words just inaudible.

"I have committed the social crime," she said; "I have done the unpardonable thing. Upon my name will fall the blackest opprobrium of outraged public morals . . . . and yet I confess to my guilt with pride. I do love my husband !!!"

The man shot his cuffs, imbuing the gesture with a certain smugness of superiority. A bitter smile wreathed the woman's lips. She recognized the first individual weight of a public opinion that would later crush her to earth.

"Richard," she said; "You are my lover. Why do you desert me in my hour of need. Fly with me, flee with me, flow with me,

before the world learns of my love for him. They will taunt him with the bitterest thing that can be said of any man—that his own wife loved him. Take me, Dick; take me, take me . . . . . !” So intense was her emotion that she bit him in the ankle.

Richard Reese looked at her in disgust. He was a particular man, and she had torn a hole in his sock.

“What about the child?” he said.

“I have no child,” she answered, fear now stamped upon her face. The man lifted his eye-brows; really she was quite impossible.

“No child!” he reiterated; “I thought they always had a child in these stories. You must have at least one child?”

“I think not,” the woman said, her fear was fast becoming desperation. Why had she not thought of this draw-back before.

“You must have a child, or I won’t play.” His voice had the tones of finality.

With a cry of fright, the woman spoke.

“Dick, Dick,” she sobbed; “Think of him, think of him!” and throwing herself forward she wound around him. Coldly he started to unwind her. She was half unwound, when the door was flung open; her husband stood before them. Anger was upon his face.

“You are a cad sir,” he said; “How dare you unwind my wife, when she feels like winding? Why do you not run away with her? Have you thought of the ignominy that would fall upon my name were she found here? Take her and go!” He pointed towards the window.

Reeves drew himself up. No man should override him. He would strive to the end. The husband should pay, the woman should pay; he himself would charge it. Violent methods were necessary; he would resort to them. He slapped the husband on the wrist.

The fight which followed was beastly, nauseating. Heloise, in sheer terror, shrank against the wall, coming forward only from time to time to hit Richard with a fire-dog. From the first the fight was in favor of the husband. All the mad instincts of barbarism welled up within him. He bit; he scratched; he pulled Reeves' hair. At last Reeves, his finger-nails broken, his hair mussed, sank down upon the floor. The husband dashed forward and threw him from the window. They heard him splash upon the pavement fifty feet below.

The husband turned to Heloise, and dragged her to the window. He dashed her on the floor. She bounced. He tried her again; she bounced higher. Then with a single back hand stroke he lobbed her from the window. There was another splash. The husband turned away, smiling softly.

"Thus," he said; "I keep my honor clean."

## MAKE YOUR CHILDREN GOOD

Bailey

BY NELLIE WHEEDLES PILLBOX

### A SON SPEAKS:

Mother, in our long last sweet talk,  
You told me of the dangers of the world.  
You shocked me with your tales and warnings  
Of sudden, subtle, wild temptations.  
In strong, clean-limbed strength, I left the city,  
And went out to the farm,  
Full of great resolutions, lost in praise of you  
Who dared to warn.  
I knew the lure that tempts young men  
When they, innocent and fresh from town,  
Come first into the naked silence of the fields.  
You told me of the dogs and cows,  
Who live among the others of their kind  
In calm and cold defiance of the rules  
Mankind has made for his protection.  
The blatant-crowning cock, parading with his paramours,  
In open pride of his lascivious power,  
Revolted me, although I was prepared.  
You told me how a chicken lays an egg.  
You told me of insidious moonlight,  
Stealing the senses; of the glint of wan, pale white,  
Which leads a man to drink milk.

Yes, Mother, of all these things you warned and told me,  
And I listened.

But, Mother, there are things you did not tell.  
Men are men and great temptation,

Unprepared for, conquers all.  
The farmers, Mother; of these you never told me.  
You let me go out, high-idealed,  
But not prepared to meet these fiendish things in life.  
Now—ruined, broken, irreparably scorched—  
I have come back to you, Mother,  
To confess my sin.

    The sweet sensual temptation,  
In the face of what I saw and soon grew calloused to,  
Snatched decency from out my life  
Till I had sunk so low that one day,  
Throwing prudence to the wind, I went  
In to dinner in a flannel shirt.  
Yes, I admit, a flannel shirt with open neck,  
And sleeves rolled up, exposing naked flesh.  
I do not blame you, Mother,  
But I say that if no others in the world  
Are to commit this sin,  
It must be because the mothers, strong  
In their sweet purity, shall warn and fully tell—  
And not but half—

    This must you do,  
If you would make your children good.

## THE USUAL THING

BY ROBERT W. SHAMELESS

### SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

John Brabant, adopted son of Jules Brabant, the South American Peccadillo Merchant, reaches New York penniless. He has, however, six letters of introduction, one of them unsigned, unsealed, and in fact unwritten. He presents all five of them, including the sixth, to John Brabant. John Brabant, a young South American, is in love with pretty Babette Lefleur, the daughter of Jules Lefleur, a merchant from South America. Upon Jules presenting four of the six letters of introduction which Babette Brabant has written to Jules Lefleur, John begins to realize that Jules, John, and Babette are in league against Brabant and Lefleur for some sinister purpose. Upon presenting the unwritten letter, he realizes that of the five letters Jules or possibly Babette has given Brabant, the only clue to the case of Lefleur and his connection with Babette. At this point Jules and Lefleur meet in Central Park, and Jules presenting the sixth or fifth letter, finds that Babette has given Brabant the letter that Jules presents to John. Confused by this, and in fact, not realizing the importance of the third or fourth letter, he takes tea in his boudoir one day with Brabant. Brabant believes that some sinister connection with Lefleur has driven Babette from South America, where John had been employed in Lefleur's peccadillo factory. He takes boat to South America and on board, sees Brabant also bound South on some secret mission. They decide to combine forces and destroy the second letter. Meanwhile, on the same ship, unknown to the other two, Brabant is disguised as a steward with the first, third and part of the fifth letters of introduction in his possession. As they pass through the Suez Canal a boat rows out from Cairo, and Brabant boards the ship. The other four notice his arrival, but fearful for the safety of the fourth and part of the sixth letter, decide among themselves not to mention peccadillo's or South America in general. Meanwhile, Babette and Lefleur, still in Newport, are falling more and more deeply in love. Lefleur hears of this, and unwilling that Babette should become involved in an affair with this man, leaves his peccadillo factory in the charge of an employee named Brabant and comes North. George meets him in Troy at the business firm of Dulong and Petit, and boarding the train, they rush to Tuxedo Park to join the others, and incidentally to seize the sixth letter, if the Countess has not already written it. Arriving in New York, they take rooms at the Ritz, and begin the search for Brabant. Babette, in her boudoir, is sorting towels when the door suddenly bursts open and Genevieve comes in.

### CHAPTER XXXI

Tea was being served at the VanTynes. On the long lawn, the pear trees cast their shadows over the parties of three and four scattered about. Babette and Lefleur had secured a table in a secluded nook, and as the sun glimmered and danced on the burnished silver tea set, she told him the whole story. When she had finished neither spoke for a minute, while he reached into the little mother-of-pearl satchel that hung at his side for cigarettes.

He selected one; he lit a match.

She held it for him.

The cigarette instantly lighted.

"Well?" She smiled up at him, her eyes ringed with those long eyelashes that had evoked Rembrant's enthusiastic praise in Holland the previous summer.

"Well?" He equivocated, shifting his foot from one knee to the other; the foot that had so often booted Harvard to victory on the gridiron.

"You see I am nothing but a toy after all," she sighed, "and I've wanted to be so much more—for you." Her voice sank to a whisper.

"That night," he exclaimed impetuously. "You did, didn't you?"

She blushed.

"Perhaps."

"And that other time in the Chauncy Widdecombs limousine when you——."

"Hush," she breathed, "the servants, one is never alone. Oh! I'm tired of it all, the life I lead. I go to breakfast, what do I eat—grapefruit. I ride—where—the same old places. Do I see life? No!"

"Poor girl," he sympathized.

"It's horrible," she went on, "nothing to eat but food, nothing to wear but clothes, nowhere to live but here and in the city. She flung her hand in a graceful gesture towards the city.

There was a silence. An orange rolled from the table down to the grass, then up again on to a chair where it lay orange and yellow in the sun. They watched it without speaking.

"Why can't you marry me," he began.

She interrupted.

"Don't, don't let's go over that again. Do you think I could ever live on your income? I—live over a stable, with the smelly horses smelling of horses. No—I'm selfish!"

"Not selfish, dear," he interrupted.

"Yes, selfish," she went on. "Do you think I could go around and bear the covert sneers of those who call themselves my friends. Yes, they would sneer at me riding around in your Saxon. No, Gordon—this morning I went down town in sections in two Pierce Arrows. I've got to have it."

"But dear," he broke in again, "I——."

"No, don't apologize. You say we do not need a box at the opera. We can sit in the stalls. But I can't sleep except in a box. I should be kept awake the whole time to bear the covert sneers of those who call themselves my friends. Yes, they would sneer at me."

He mused a moment, making the old clanging noise by snapping his lips together, that he used to make, when, as two little friends, they played together in Central Park, then his family home.

He took her hand in his, his hand that had won so many baseball games for Yale, when known as Beau Brabant, he had been the pitcher. He thought of the hot languorous days of the previous summer, when they had read Gibbon's history of Rome to each other, and had thrilled over the tender love passages.

Mrs. VanTyne came tripping down the lawn, tripped over the grass, and tripped over the tea table.

"What are you two dears doing here?" she asked kindly, but suspiciously. "The others are waiting." She turned to Jules, "They think you have hidden the polo balls for a joke, and they are furious at you."

He smiled wearily. What had he to do with polo balls and other gilded ornaments of the world he had renounced forever.

"They are in the kitchen," he said slowly, "in the drawer with the soap." He ran slowly toward the walk with the famous dog-trot that had made him Captain of the running team at Princeton.

Babette turned angrily to her mother.

"You have hurt him," she cried. "You are cold and cruel, mercenary and heartless, big and fat." She pushed her mother into the tea table.

The sun slowly sank out of sight, and long after the others were dressing and undressing for dinner Babette sat and watched the orange roll up and down from the lawn to the table, and wondered if, in its own dumb way, it had solved the secret of things.

## CHAPTER XXXII

As Babette left the house, followed by a deferential butler carrying her suit cases, she glanced back and saw the Countess Jenavra silhouetted in the doorway.

"Good trip," shouted the Countess.

Lefleur, his Saxon purring with energy, was waiting at the gates. She stepped in the front seat. Muffled in fur robes, blankets, overcoats, old sacking, and cotton batton, she gazed once more back at the house. The brilliant Cedric I exterior was punctuated by flashes denoting early English windows. In the Elizabethian doorway stood the Colonial figure of Babette's mother.

The butler gave the car a deferential push, and they started bowling down the long highway alone. The trees bent as if to intercept them, swooping back, however, as they burst by. Lefleur, his foot upon the cylinder, felt a wild exhilaration sweeping over him as they bobbed madly up and down, to and fro, towards the city.

"John," she began, "I know—" she paused and seemed to breath—"that you think," her voice sank to a whisper, then lower still. Nothing could be heard but the rasping of her teeth against her jaws.

"Unghlt," she said, as they passed Bridgeport. It was not until Greenwich, that she got his answering "Gthliuup."

The town was a mere speck as they sped by. He increased the speed. Leaning back against his shoulder, she felt a deep, perfect content surge through her. Surely this was living or more than living. The cold air surging by turned her senses cold and tense. Sharp as a whip, everything, all her life, stood out against the background of this ride. She wondered if all things could not be solved in this way, with the sting of the fresh night and the rat-tat of the motor.

Up to this time he had been running on two cylinders. He now threw on two more, and the car, careening up for a second on its front wheels, righted itself and continued with its speed redoubled. However, in the confusion of the change, his right arm had become disengaged and thrown around her. She did not move it.

Faster they went. He pressed harder on the steering gear, and in response to his pressure, the car sprang forward like a well-trained steed. They were late, and realizing it, he threw on the last two cylinders. The car seemed to realize what was demanded of it. It stopped, turned around three times, and then bounded off at twice its former speed.

Along they went. Suddenly the car stopped, and with the instinct of a trained mechanic, he realized that something was the matter. After an inspection, he saw that one of the tires was punctured. He looked to see what damage had been done. They had run over a hairpin, and the rubber was torn and splintered to shreds. They looked around for another tire. They looked in the back seat, they looked under the car, they looked behind the bushes on the edge of the road. There was no tire. They must fix the old one. John put his mouth to the puncture and blew it up, sticking his handkerchief into the hole.

They started off, but after several miles, the grueling strain of the road wore through the handkerchief, little by little, and the car stopped again. They tried everything, leaves and gravel, and pieces of the road. Finally Babette sacrificed her gum to stop up the gaping aperture, but after several miles this too wore out.

There was but one thing to do, to take off the tire, run into town on three wheels, and hire a man to run along beside the car and hold up the fourth side. No sooner had they had this thought than they put it into action. Three whistles, and a cry of "buckwheats," brought a crowd of Yokels in a jiffy, and the most intelligent looking one of the lot was engaged for the arduous task.

He took his place by the fender, and they again started off. They increased the speed soon, driving along at the rate of forty miles an hour. The Yokel, running beside with a long easy stride, was panting and seemed to have difficulty in keeping up the pace.

It was growing darker. Sitting up close to John's huge rat-skin coat, Babette felt the old longing to see his eyes close to hers, and feel his lips brush her cheek.

"John," she murmured. He turned. Above the clatter of the motor and the harsh plebian breathing of the peasant, she heard his heart heave with emotion.

"Babette," he said.

She started, sobbing softly, her voice mingling with the roar of the fan belt.

He folded her slowly, dignifiedly, and wilfully, in his arms and ki——.

*The next installment of Mr. Shameless' fascinating story will appear in the July number.*

81995

## THE WILD EGG

BY HAGGARD WRITER

Henriette Oleaqua wrapped herself more tightly in the folds of her thin silk kimona. It was cold—cold with an icy leadness—cold with an awful and presaging claminess—cold with the fearful coldth of the tomb. Briefly it was damn cold.

This was the two-hundred and sixty-third night of her vigil. Through the sombre blackness, the dread opaqueness, of two hundred and sixty-two nights, she had waited, her spirit crucified, her body tied into knots. Softly she would coil and recoil, winding herself into four-in-hands, only to unwind again; and yet through all the terrible period of her watchfulness this had been the one slight visible sign of her interior nervousness. Henriette might well be nervous internally, since for two hundred and sixty-two days, so wrought upon were the nerves in her frail, beautiful body, that she had eaten nothing but pretzels and malted milk glacés.

From the height of her vantage point, on the top of the hundred foot ladder leading to the exit chute, she looked down into the beetling shadows, the awful depths, of the egg refrigerating plant. Dimly she saw, as if parts of some vague, portentous dream, the tombs of the ancient eggs, whose security it had been her family's birthright to guard, to render inviolable even at the expense of their own asphixiation. So distant was she that it was only due to long familiarity that she could read the headstones. Many of the epitaphs were so obliterated by age as to be mere vague scratches on the marble slabs—yet into all of them, Henriette read a message of love and veneration. They were real to her—these ancient and time-hallowed eggs. Each carried to her sensitive spirt an atmosphere of the long dead past. And so she waited, racked and torn, on this the two hundred and sixty-third night of her vigil—waited for something that would make plain all her previous waiting. She was an idealist, was Henriette, and she had need to be a strong one.

In the third tomb of the bottom tier, behind a marble slab more smooth than all the rest and carved in the weird design of a Cellini, a Beardsly, or a Josephus Daniels, floated the chef d'oeuvre of these priceless antiques. Bands of ancient bronze, deeply imbedded in the marble, kept it in check. It was for the salvation of this relic that Henriette's grandfather had laid down his life in the great explosion of 1845—an explosion after which some of the lesser eggs had been found even so far away as Pittsburgh. Henriette knew the title of this master-egg by heart—indeed it was the first conscious thing that had entered her mind as a baby. Softly she repeated the dread words, as though a prayer—"No. 235764, Egg of Timothy, Pet Puddle Duck of Cleopatra—B. C. 1185." This ideal, in truth, had been incorporated in the coat of arms of the Oleaqua family—an egg rampart on a quartered field of toast, and above it the Latin words—"Nemo me impune laccecerit"—or—"no one bites me and gets away with it."

This egg was priceless. All the great museums of the world regarded it covetously—yet none dared, for certain reasons, to bid for it. An audacious thief in the year 1066, had made an attempt upon it, an attempt, some said, inspired by the Duke of Normandy, who desired it as an engine of war in his attack upon England, but the irreverent rogue had been struck blind, deaf, and dumb by divine vengeance at the very moment when his heinous crime was consummated. The egg itself had been found wandering about the plant by one of Henriette's ancestors. Since then none but the Oleaquas had dared approach it.

Many a page of the world's history had been made or unmade by this King of Eggs. Cleopatra had offered it to Antony one morning at breakfast, when it was but little more than three months old. Antony, crushed by the weight of his Roman superstition, refused it. He then went out and lost the battle of Actium. If he had but eaten the Egg, he would have been strong enough to do anything.

There was one tradition, however, which had been the bane of naturalists and antiquarians for generations. When three thousand and one hundred and one years had elapsed, the Egg would hatch. That this was a natural impossibility, made not the slightest difference. The family of Oleaqua believed in it as firmly as the Republicans believed in the infallibility of Mr. Hughes. To them the superstition, loathsome and fearful as it may be to us, was an established fact. And so Henriette Oleaqua waited in the chilling gloom, her thin silk kimona scarfed about her.

The hours sped by. A deep knelling of the bell on a near-by Catholic church told of the passing of eight-thirty o'clock. This was followed by the blowing of a siren from the steeple of the nearer Presbyterian chapel, showing that the awful hour of nine was at hand. The gloom thickened; the shadows deepened, each taking on the shape of some grizzly and grotesque monster. Henriette felt utterly alone, utterly weary. Suddenly she started—what was that! A splitting febrile crash rent the evening air. She sank back in relief; it was only a cannon being fired from the roof of the Jewish Synagogue, announcing the coming hour of quarter to ten. Henriette buried her face in her hands, and meditated on the tremendous gulfs between religions. She wept softly, yet seriously, her tears splashing hollowly on the floor, one hundred and a half feet below her.

Never had she felt like this before. All the girl's inherent nobility of character, her instincts of gentility revolted at thought of her long vigil. She hated the night-shift in the refrigerating plant. Until this year, her brother had taken it, equipped for his task in pink silk pajamas. The wearing of kimonas and pajamas was one of the finer traditions in the Oleaqua family. One ancient Oleaqua had dared to go to work in a fur coat, and had been excommunicated for his irreverence. Even now, Henriette shivered at the blasphemy. One shiver ran into another, until she was a mass of convulsions. She felt she must be getting the croup.

She crept to the edge of the ladder and stared down into the gulf, yawning and stretching away at her feet. She shrank back to the middle of the rung. The moon had risen, a great white-breasted moon, bathing the long shadows of the plant in gleams of glittering light. Each individual egg-tomb, with its marble front, stood out in the blackness like the press of a ghostly hand against the funereal crêpe of a dead hero. From the height of her ladder, she looked down into the depths, a chasm bathed by the moonlight in dimly flowing quicksilver. She felt like some high-goddess surveying the passions of past ages, glories now gone in dust.

Slowly, and by a process of self-hypnotism, she felt herself slipping into haunting dreams. She dreamed of the Egg and the super-duck it would hatch. She felt herself unreal, a phantom of her own imagination. She passed from unreality to vaguity, and almost dispersed herself as a cloud . . . . . Her lithesome body draped itself across the ladder rung. She slept.

In her dreams, one idea was gradually, and with recurrent regularity, increasing. She dreamed of ducks and eggs, or eggs and ducks. Never were the two extraordinary ideas separated in her unconsciousness; never did she dream of omelettes or broiled duckling. No—never! The thought of eggs and ducks, ducks and eggs, beat against her brain shards like drops of water wearing away a stone. She woke with a gasp; she was fighting for breath; a great awesome hand seemed driving some idea with sledge hammer strokes into her delicate brain. She looked down.

Across the tomb of the Egg of Timothy, delicate sprays of phosphorescence were waving, each fine line of fire weaving and recoiling. It was ghastly, like the playing of the tenacles of a grotesque sea-monster, intangible, gripping, loathesome. She screamed aloud . . . . .

Then the long line of illustrious and noble Oleaquas, bred in her blood, came to her rescue. With the grace of a pantheress, she

shot herself down the exit-chute; down the dizzy depths, she swept unhesitatingly. Within fifty feet of the bottom, the chute stopped. Now fearing nothing, Henriette Oleaqua sped on. She landed in a sitting position on a pointed rock. She rushed into the house and threw herself into her father's arms.

"Father," she sobbed; "It's hatching, it's hatching!"

The chaste, priestly beauty of the old man's face, slightly marred in its perfection by being hit in his youth by a trolley-car, soothed the young girl. In his veins beat a compote of all the blood of all the ages. His mother was a Swedish Spaniard; his father, a Moravian German; and he himself was three-fourths Benedictine. He drew himself proudly aloft. The moment of moments, awaited by countless generations of Oleaquas, had at last arriven. The Egg was hatching.

"Get the gas-masks, my daughter," he sibilated cavernously.

The girl went to the tool-box and drew out the masks. One she gave to the old man, who drew it over his head with trembling fingers. The other she gave to herself. She received it graciously. Arm in arm, in squad columns, they marched to the plant . . .

The building stood out in the moonlight, like a great, dark cavern in a hall of silver. Henriette's knees shivered with excitement; her father, drinking deeply of the still evening air, was rapidly becoming seven-eighths Benedictine. Before the entrance, he hesitated for an instant, and then crawled boldly in . . . . .

The scene that met their eyes was like a weird nightmare. On either side, farther than the eye could reach, rose up the tiers of tombs, the gleam of the marble interposed with the stark blackness of the walls. Everything was motionless, noiseless, expectant, as though nature was preparing some hideous and unnatural miracle. Horror shook Henriette; it was like some gigantic force pulling her against her will as the iron is attracted by the magnet. With shivering fingers, she drew a pin from her kimona and tossed it on the

floor. She heard it drop. She tried it again; it still dropped. She sank to her knees; her being vibrating against the awesomness of the thing.

She felt a hand upon her arm. She looked up. It was her father. He was pointing towards the tomb of the Egg. Across the marble the streams of phosphorescence were glowing brighter and brighter. The old man sank to his knees. With crossed hands he muttered a simple prayer. The simple words—"Come a seven, come a 'leven," struck Henriette to the core. If her father was that brave, she would be braver. She too sank to her knees—"Big Dick, big Dick," she murmured, the syllables coming from her throat. The simple words revived them both.

She picked her father up by the back of the neck, and keeping him in front of her, approached the tomb.

"Father," she shrieked, "Open it, open it!"

"Open it yourself, my daughter," he replied, like one giving a benediction. He had now just a trace of Benedictine.

The brave girl hesitated for an instant, and then springing forward, wrenched open the door of the tomb. For an instant she was erect, taut as a bow-string. Then, without a sound, she sank into a huddled heap upon the floor. Her father staggered forward, looked into the tomb, and with his hands before his eyes, to ward off the dread sight, he seized his daughter and staggered from the building.

Outside, in nature's moonlight, the old man stopped. He drew his daughter erect and looked into her face; she seemed dead, her features as white as the glare about them. With infinite care he tried to revive her.

At length her eye-lids flickered. She closed her mouth. She drew herself to a sitting position, and looked into his face.

"Father, father," she sobbed; "Did you see what I saw?"

The old man seemed infinitely older.

"Yes, my daughter," he said, his face lined and seamed like a crocodile hand-bag with the fearful strain of the last moments.

"Yes, it was not a duck, it was a chicken!" . . . . .

*W. A. T. C.*

## THE POISONED ARSENIC

BY ARTER Y. BLEEDS

Craig Chemistry strode up and down his laboratory buried in deep thought. So deep indeed was his thought, that he knocked over several jars of dynamite in passing, and scarcely noticed the explosion.

I knew the trouble—he had had no mysteries to solve for nearly three hours, and his great brain was churning with no problem to occupy it. At this moment the door opened and a woman palpitated on the threshold.

"I surmise, since you are out of breath, and there is no elevator, that you have walked up the stairs," said Craig.

"No, I live on the floor above," she replied.

"Of course, of course. I should have known this Rinx Re-tort, by changing from ultra-violet to infra-red, clearly indicated that fact."

"I have come to you, Mr. Chemistry," she said, and her voice was soft and soothing like a peacock's, "because I feel that there is a malignant force at work to do me harm."

"What ground have you for this suspicion or premonition?"

"A woman's intuition, perhaps," she replied, voluptuously inhaling the fumes of some chlorine which was escaping from a re-tort she had crushed unconsciously.

"A woman's intuition is indeed to be trusted," said Craig, "but have no actual circumstances aroused your suspicions, tell me please, no matter how trivial they may be?"

"Well, two weeks ago, my father and mother were murdered, last week three uncles and an aunt, and this week all three of my brothers have died violent deaths."

"Dear me, dear me," said Craig with a sigh, "this looks quite serious."

"I have been upset all day about it, and finally I decided to come and see if you could help me."

"Do you suspect anyone?" asked Craig.

"We have two maids and a butler whom I hardly dare suspect, they have such nice faces. They have been in our employ for eighteen years, except for a short interval of twelve years, which they spent in Sing Sing for murdering our cook."

"They will bear watching in spite of their long service," remarked Craig astutely.

"Can I tell you anything else?" asked Miss Runyon (for that was her name, as I afterwards discovered.)

"Just tell me who else frequents the house."

"Well, let me see," she said, gazing reflectively into a wash bottle, "there are, of course, the usual amount of creditors; my fiancée, Cymberline de Larose; Clarisse Parfait, one of my best friends, and of course, lately, a certain amount of undertakers, pall bearers and clergymen who are jealous of the happiness of the defunct."

"Thank you," replied Craig Chemistry, "I begin to see light. You and your family were in the habit of taking a little arsenic before retiring. Am I right?"

"Yes, it was our one dissipation, but even that has been forbidden me for over a month. My doctor stopped me; he said I would lose my teeth if I kept on."

"I begin to think that it was a most fortunate move on your part," said Craig, smiling enigmatically, and I could see by his expression that he had scented something wrong in this commonplace household.

"Is that all?" asked Miss Runyon.

"For the present,—yes," said Craig, and he politely pushed her out the door.

The next few days were indeed busy ones for Craig Chemistry and myself. He inspected the apartment above with a magnifying glass, and missed nothing except the dining-room table, which he detected on his second search. The coffee cups, in which the arsenic had been served to the family, he inspected with great care, though to my less penetrating mind the reason was baffling. In

most of the cups there was a residue of two or three inches of fluid arsenic which he drained off into a test tube and took down stairs with him.

Two days afterwards he emerged from his laboratory haggard and triumphant.

"You have discovered the key to the situation?" I enquired breathlessly.

"Yes, the arsenic was poisoned."

"What!" I exclaimed incredulously, "but how, and who did it?"

"The first question it has taken me two days to discover. I have found that somebody had dropped into the seemingly harmless arsenic a deadly potion, which is composed of milk and the essence of quimqrimx."

"How horrible," I exclaimed involuntarily, and I could not but marvel at the fiendish ingenuity of the murderer.

"As to the identity of the murderer, I am still in doubt," continued Craig, "but my Priscymtrat pills are a sure test for the man who has handled the essence of quimqrimx."

The two maids and the butler, Miss Runyon and her fiancée, Cymerline de Larose; Miss Celise Parfait, and a representative aggregation of creditors, undertakers and clergymen, were on the next day assembled in Craig Chemistry's laboratory. The pills, orange in color, were neatly piled upon the floor and the assembly were prepared for the ordeal.

One by one they gulped the pills down, and each turned a different shade of red, but alas, the fatal color, green, appeared on nobody's face. Suddenly Craig Chemistry gave a hysterical shriek, and sent the vermillion crowd hurtling down the stairs.

"What is the trouble, who is the murderer?" I exclaimed, breathless with excitement.

"Fool that I was, twenty pills wasted."

Then the whole affair dawned upon me and it was so inexpressibly simple that I could not but wonder why I had not seen it from the first.

## MEMORIES—MEMORIES !

(Rosita Smythe, without a doubt the foremost child actress on the moving picture stage to-day, has kindly consented to write for the *Chaopolitan* readers the following interesting memories of her very eventful life. By our special request, she has incorporated at the end of her article some advice for young girls contemplating entering upon a career on the screen, and she has hinted that nearly all of the material contained in this has also been drawn from her own adventures.—*Editor's note.*)

It is to-day that I have celebrated my fifteenth birthday, and now that I have arrived at a position which, I am told, is at the head of my profession, or rather, I ought to say, my ART, for it is my ART, it is perhaps fitting that I should set down a few of my memories incurred during my struggle to my present eminence, and perhaps give some dearly bought, and hence valuable, advice to any young girls who may contemplate following my example.

I owe my temperament to my mother. She was before her marriage, a waitress who passed the soup at one of the Child's Restaurants. She was descended of Irish and Spanish parents, and had a wealth of reddish brown hair, which when unloosed, as it often was, would reach down past her waist and get in the soup; and the exposure thus incurred once led to a severe attack of pneumonia, but after she was well again, she bravely returned to her duty, courageously acting upon the well known adage: "Don't give up the soup." She was very beautiful. They say I take after her in my eyes, nose, mouth, hair, and complexion.

My father was probably the handsomest and most brilliant man that ever lived. He died a few months after I was born, but I remember how he used to delight in pretending that he was an educated man, and talking as such. When asked if he were educated, he would shake his head mournfully, and answer: "No, I'm not educated; I went to college." The latter event was something he regretted to his dying day, as he often remarked: "It is only those who go to college who can realize how little it is worth."

By the time I was four years old, we were very poor; so poor in fact that we had to live below Thirtieth Street. The twelve-

room apartment was not bad in its way, and we could learn to put up with the negro chef instead of having a Jap, but nevertheless, the suffering was considerable. The strain was too much; mother was sinking very fast, much faster, the peevish old doctor said, than the old electric elevator in the hotel. Finally, she fell into the terrible habit of wanting unlimited quantities of chewing gum. She had been very fond of chewing gum all her life; but as this terrible habit, steadily growing stronger and stronger, got her in its inexorable clutches, she had to have a new piece every two minutes, in order to allay the terrible craving. As may be imagined, the expense was tremendous, much too much for our slender means, and so at the tender age of four I had to bestir my little body and use my little brain to raise funds to keep my beloved female parent from untold agony and want.

Accordingly, I secured the position of managing editor on the Chaopolitan, which, as it itself admitted, was the foremost living magazine. I always put in the most suggestive stories I could lay my hands on, and the magazine became a great success. By this means I earned our daily chewing gum, but the strain was awful. After a hard day's work, I would come home tired, but happy in the thought of what I was doing for my dear mother, with six wholesale boxes of the precious stuff under my arm. How her eyes would light up when she saw me coming in the door, with my dearly bought load! However, tired as I was, it was always necessary for me to sit up all night to see that my poor, dear mother did not swallow her chaw, for to a person in her condition that would, have course, have been fatal.

She died one day, when I was five years old, and I was left without a protector in the world.

I immediately saw my way open to following out my long cherished dream, namely, that of going upon the stage. As an opening to this, I secured the position of candy seller at the Vitagraph Moving Picture Palace. I felt that I was really on the stage

at last. Of my promotion to the turning the handle of the machine, my modesty forbids protracted mention, nor how I there attracted the attention of Charles Hoffman, the world's greatest impressario. He saw me once, and realized that I was just the type he needed for his new production: "Who Are The Child's Parents?" Needless to say, I was the child. Some people have to pass through long training as ushers and ticket sellers, but my peculiar type of ability has made this unnecessary for me. Of course, I am young yet, and I hope to go on creating new roles; everyone says that I have a great future before me.

You asked me if I would advise young girls to go on the stage. Well, I have given the matter much deep thought, and I am convinced that it all depends upon the girls. Personally, I think they would be happier if they stayed at home and had dolls, but if they feel the divine fire within them, as I did, why I suppose there is nothing else for it. They will, of course, meet with many perils and temptations. I remember once when I was the candy seller at the Vitagraph Theatre, there was a young boy, very good looking he was too, who used to come every evening, and spend untold sums of money in popcorn, just to be able to talk with me. One time he confided that he wanted some one to darn his socks; but as you may imagine, I repulsed him severely. I shall never darn anyone's socks but my husband's. Then, of course, there is the usual old man of twenty-five (I do not say these adventures have happened to me) who says he is not appreciated at home, and wants to know if you will flee to Brooklyn with him. And then, there are the stage-door Johnnies, who are always waiting and offering to escort you for a walk in the Park or go anywhere if you will only pay them a dollar an hour for their time. I needn't say, however, that it is only girls who can't secure men any other way who have to resort to such escorts.

I feel that I must close now. In one way, I have done nothing; won't you let me wait and write you another article, say at the end of the year, when I shall have done something worth writing about?

## OUR NEXT ISSUE

THE JANUARY CHAOPOLITAN'S TREMENDOUS SCOOP

SEVENTEEN of America's Leading Authors caught with the ink on their fingers.

AMERICA'S GREATEST ENEMY TO LITERATURE.

HARRISON FLAGG'S same old model appears for the first time in red hair.

JACK UNDONE, Author of *Primitive Primordial Primes*, *The Beer-Hound*, etc., etc., continues *The Soul-Struggle of a Passionate Duckling*, a story of the North Dakota Barnyards.

ELINOR GYN, in her own inimitable and suggestive way, will portray the career of a young Count who kisses with a Viennese accent in her new novel, *Experiences of Egbert Ethelred*.

MAURICE MATTERHORN emerges from his mists of mysticism to discuss whether women have souls.

OUT JULY 15TH.

**\$1.50 a year**

**\$1.50 a copy (unexpurgated)**

We cannot begin subscriptions with back numbers. There are no back numbers. In combination with *La Vie Parisienne* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, two dollars a term. Our agent will call every Tuesday and Friday until suppressed.