

A STORY OF THE AMBITION OF A POPULAR ACTRESS

A Dramatic Episode

By HERBERT MONTGOMERY

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SHE'S talented to the end of her nose," asserted Jancey. "If you will, but there is one note she does not strike, with all her temperament or art or heart or whatever you like to call it—the note of tragedy."

"Who wants tragedy in Paris?" retorted Brevai. "Not pleasure seekers, certainly. Go to the morgue for it. You'll find it there. Tragedy in a comedian! You're crazy."

"I don't want tragedy," continued Jancey as though he had not been interrupted. "What I require, what I desire from Mile. Serpolette is an undercurrent to her mirth. It's too frothy. It won't last. We Parisians are all artists at bottom. We bear probing when it comes to criticism. You can't probe anything Serpolette does. She is radiant, healthy, pretty and soulless, light and bright, but she lacks finish because there is no undercurrent which brings the tears to your eyes when she laughs—the way Chartrain did in her day. Why, I have seen a butcher boy lift his dingy apron with his grimy hand and wipe his eyes when Chartrain sang that song about the 'Gamin de Paris.' How his tongue is brightest when despair lies closest to his heart! She struck the keynote, I tell you, always because of her undercurrent of sympathy. We Parisians love to laugh, but we only recognize real genius when it plays upon all our emotions, like fingers along piano keys. We want to be aroused to merriment. But merriment alone is colorless. Give us at the same time the consciousness of life, the belief that the woman who acts or sings is a sympathetic soul attuned to life's uncertainties. Then we fall, down and worship her. Serpolette has not lived. She has skimmed it, if you will. She has not felt. I'd be glad to go to sleep for ten years and wake to find her as obscure as last year's dancer if only to prove to you that if she continues as she has her light will be quenched in another six months at any rate. It's too bad. A bright soul. A butterfly existence. Nothing more. I had hoped much from her. I am disappointed."

"And I attest her lightness is assumed with malice aforethought," insisted Brevai. "I contend she studies her world and that she has the tact to see that life is sufficiently a tragedy

without her assistance. I am sure she knows her business, and she has in a clean cut fashion resolved to make the public laugh, rollick—anything you will. But behind it all Serpolette understands life. She is a gamin, a walt



"I'LL RECITE YOU A THING OF MY OWN."

from the streets. Why, twenty years ago, when her mother trod the boards of the Palais Royal, Serpolette, then a baby, used to amuse her mother's comrades at the wings with her little ways and her wise, bright eyes and her crow of unmitigated mirth. I have seen Grosbois double up his fat sides over her comic gestures. He predicted a great career for her always. She set the tune to every joke afloat. She is hummed from the Boulevard Montmartre to the Chatelet. There are Serpolette hats and Serpolette fashions, and a horse named after Serpolette, and one of the oldest imperialistic families has

sent its dearest offspring to South Africa to avoid her wiles. She's hung with jewels, and she's young and pretty and convincing. All the managers are after her. All the jeunesse doree is at her feet. There is a song dedicated to her. There is a Serpolette march. That is success—ultimate failure, if you must. Why endeavor to teach her to know all things and wisely? She knows life well. She's tasted it. Why torment out of her the tragic note?"

Old Jancey frowned. "I like the child," he confessed. "There is something vastly better than wantonness in her. She is uncommon. I would have her make her art so great a thing that she would command recognition from the great as well as the small. Her mother had good stuff in her. Serpolette has twice her mother's talent and four times her beauty."

"I'll recite you a thing of my own," cried Serpolette. "She had sprung into the room noiselessly. There was a whiff of perfume a la Serpolette. There was a whiff of lilken skirts. She stood there as if risen from the floor, like a stage fairy, holding in her hand a marvelously tinted umbrella. She had a laughing face, as pert and saucy and up to date as her costume."

The room was the empty office of a theatrical manager—that is, empty of everything but a table, a chair, the two managers, Brevai and Jancey, and Serpolette.

Jancey had turned as she came forward, his shrewd face reddening with astonishment. Brevai puckered his lips together and whistled.

"A thing of my own," explained Serpolette earnestly, a slight frown ruffling the smoothness of the soft flesh between her eyes; "a little skit I thought of one night when I slept. I woke and thought it out. I claim it for a niche, though. I want the footlights of the Palais Royal to light it up. None of your open air theaters for this production. The legitimate. May I do it?"

Jancey looked at her steadily, the light springing to his eyes. Brevai yawned.

"What is your project?" demanded Jancey. "First," began Serpolette, "I am satisfied—Oh, as Brevai gave vent to a scoffing laugh, "you think we artists

are never satisfied. But this time it is not my pay I shall find fault with, nor my role or the music of my last song, nor the words. It is with myself. There has been something stirring in me lately I cannot get away from. A feeling that I must give vent to it, or things will go badly with me. It is—"

"Well?" urged Jancey eagerly. "It is," and she threw back her head as though she could breathe longer and fuller with her chin raised—"It is this—"

She spoke very low and rapidly. "I wish to hold the public in the palm of my hand. I'd like to bid the tears course down their cheeks as well as to see those same cheeks wrinkle with laughter. It's silly to laugh always. I want more power. Give me the space to try for it."

Brevai smiled cynically. "A whim," he said. And then he turned and commenced to toss some papers on his desk. Jancey sat silently regarding Serpolette.

"You know how I can laugh," she continued. "Bid some one write me a



"GEORGETTE, FROM SERPOLETTE."

play which contains laughter and tears. I can weep as well."

"You," from Brevai skeptically—"you! You were not made to weep."

A look of pain, as oddly at variance with her saucy face as a cloud across the brightness of a day in June, blotting out for an instant the bloom of Ser-

polette's radiant countenance. It vanished as quickly as it came, but Jancey had seen it.

"Ah, let me try it," she urged. "Surely you will let me play my share of tragedy as well as comedy. Surely you will not deny me the knowledge of tears?"

Brevai rubbed his eyes. "Enough," he said. "Have done. I know your type. At weeping you would fall. You have not suffered."

"I can play at tears."

"You cannot."

"I will."

"You won't. I engage you to laugh."

"You refuse?"

"Absolutely."

"Well, so let it be."

As she laid her hand upon the door-knob Jancey cried suddenly: "I have an idea. Listen," as Brevai commenced a violent protest. "Let Serpolette laugh. Give her soubrette parts. Have another actress to fill the tragic roles. Make the play serio comic. 'Twill be a new venture at the Palais Royal. Serpolette is sure to draw. She has filled our pockets. Give her her head, but in reason."

"I have it!" cried Serpolette. And down went her umbrella again. "I know a girl, a friend of mine from Nimes. She is the personification of grief. All her lines go down as mine go up. Eyelids droop, mouth droops at the corners, unmitigated grief. So."

She stood mournfully, trying to look as grief stricken as she could. But her hat belied her, and her willful hair and her eyes and her dimples.

Brevai smiled reluctantly.

"Is she a novice?"

"She has played two years at Lyons and one at Marseilles."

"Her name?"

"Georgette."

"H'm!" remarked Brevai humorously, his eyes twinkling. "Now, who would imagine that to be the name of an obscure tragedienne?"

Serpolette flashed an annihilating glance in his direction. Then she announced, "I'll have her here within an hour."

"Better send her to the Palais Royal. We will be waiting there for her."

Serpolette was gone.

An hour later a gentle tap came to the door of the greenroom of the Palais Royal. It fell open at Jancey's cry of "Come in," and a woman clothed in the deepest mourning entered. She was young and beautiful, with ebony hair turned off her forehead in a thick roll.

She stood indifferently, listlessly, as the door fell to behind her. Her face, with its drooping lips and eyelids, was so devoid of the knowledge of happiness that it cast a decided gloom across the greenroom. Its anguish was settled and decided.

"You are—"

"Georgette. From Serpolette." The voice was somber, like the eyes. "She told you what role she thought you'd fill?"

"I've never filled but one. To weep. Life has taught me nothing but sorrow and renunciation from the cradle to the present."

And as she stood there before the two managers, as though the fact of her having given vent in words to her



"SERPOLETTE," LAUGHED SERPOLETTE HERSELF.

hitherto choked up anguish had stirred some forgotten spring in her breast, the crystal drops began to creep one by one from beneath her long eyelids and slowly, like loose diamonds on white velvet, course down the soft pallor of her white cheeks on to the dull surface of her poor black gown.

Her beauty was so perfect, so unusual; the simplicity of her unhidden, unbidden sorrow was so infinitely pathetic, that she seemed to those past artists as to emotions, M. Brevai and Jancey, the embodiment of sorrow. Had she stood thus for the statue of Woe, Paris would have acclaimed her far and wide as the most perfect monument of the century.

"In which role have you had most success?" asked Jancey.

"Adrienne Lacoureur," murmured the girl.

"Will you come on the stage with us and give a brief rehearsal of Adrienne's

grief when she hears her lover has proved unfaithful to her?"

"Willingly, monsieur," she replied.

"Come, then," exclaimed Brevai.

They passed on to the stage. Had rendering of the part of the poor, forsaken Adrienne was perfect. Her tears were real. Both men caught their breath and for a few moments, after the rehearsal sat speechless. Then Brevai cleared his throat and demanded huskily, "Your price?"

"Two hundred francs a scene. I have played for less, but this is Paris. I desire the opportunity to make myself known and heard."

Jancey brought his hand down on his knee with a resounding slap. "We'll have her and Serpolette together!" he shouted triumphantly. "Joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, comedy and tragedy. 'Twill make a living picture all the world will come to see."

They handed her the contract to sign, calling in a witness for that purpose. She asked for ten days' leeway, with a request to take the contract with her and look it over. They granted her request reluctantly. Then she left them spellbound.

Two minutes afterward Brevai and Jancey heard a laugh which was as well known to them as their debts, as their past failures; a laugh so birdlike, so joyous, that they smiled out loud in sympathy and made a rush simultaneously for the greenroom, lifting their ears to the sound of more, the way human nature always does when out of life's tragedy or comedy ripples the music of unadulterated joy.

This laugh was famous. It held an abandon so complete, it meant so much that was good and heartfelt! Pearl after pearl tumbled over each other so merrily that Brevai and Jancey both chuckled.

"It's Serpolette!" gasped Brevai.

"Serpolette," laughed Serpolette herself as she swung in between them.

Over her arm was a black dress. In one hand she held a dark wig, in the other the contract. The painted shadows under her eyes were strangely at variance with her dimples. Her face was gleaming with mirth so intense, with the triumph so hardly won, with the knowledge of a new power felt and practiced for the first time in public, that she was absolutely dazzling to look upon.

The tears were still wet on her cheeks.

"My compliments, mademoiselle," said Brevai shamefacedly. "You have won the day."

But Jancey stood soberly regarding her with a great awe in his face.

"If women can play at tears as well as laughter like that," he was thinking, "what is the use of reality?"

He laid his hand on Serpolette's shoulder.

"You have suffered?" he demanded.

"Who knows?" retorted Serpolette merrily.

Entertainment and Instruction For the Young Folks

BOYS and GIRLS IN OLD SPAIN

By ALBERTA PLATT

THE life of children and young people in Spain is very different from that of the youth in the United States. While they are small both Spanish boys and girls are petted and spoiled in a way that would make American parents half



SPANISH FARMHOUSE.

crazy. In the very highest social rank the Spanish father and mother are devoted to their children. Particularly is this true of the Spanish mother. She never exerts herself physically for them—she never exerts herself physically for anything—but she loves them so fondly that she is foolish over them and lets them have their own way in everything. That perhaps is the boy and girl idea of paradise. But there is one feature of Spanish child life that cannot be too much commended. Even while they are little the Spanish boy manifests toward his sisters a fine politeness and kindness that would amaze young America. All the chivalrousness that the young gentleman of the Spanish nobility shows to his lady fair he is taught in childhood to manifest to his own little sister.

In respect to politeness toward all girls it is really a pity the American boy couldn't take a lesson from the Spanish boy. But many other things Spanish youth could profitably learn from American young people. The Spanish boy of the higher rank is never taught that working for his living is

honorable and manly. As for the girl of Spain, she does not even always learn to spell and write properly. It is not considered that she needs these accomplishments, which are for girls that must earn their own living. You will see from this that the poor Spanish children have little chance to amount to much, for nothing but work will ever bring out the power in anybody. In Spain the women and girls who are superior to all the others are those of the farms, the ones who learn useful occupations. These useful ones are also the handsomest of the Spanish women and girls. In the farming or peasant families the girls help with the cooking and other labor.

In old Spain a girl is considered a young lady at fifteen. She can sing and play the guitar a little and she can embroider beautifully. She has a smooth, pretty skin, dark, large, shining eyes and heavy black hair. That is thought quite enough for any well born girl—to embroider and to be pretty. She must also know how to move gracefully through the Spanish national dances. But anything more, no. Sometimes she goes awhile to one of the very inferior schools for girls in old Spain. If not



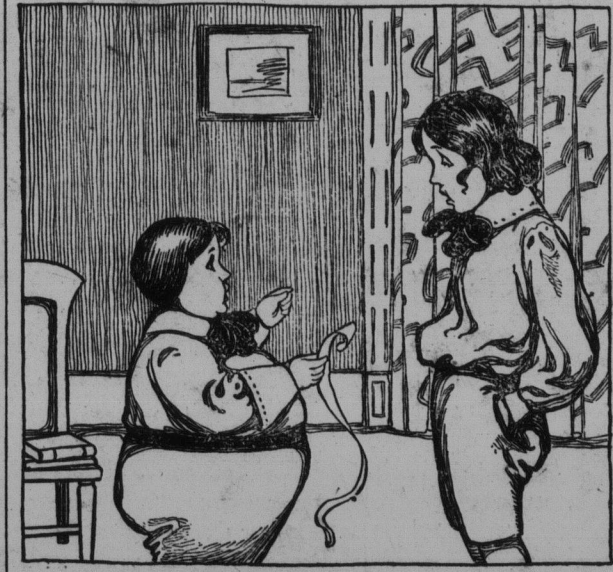
A NATIONAL DANCE.

that, she has a governess at home, and the governess is a French, British or German woman. I do not know whether Spanish women are not sufficiently educated to be teachers, but the

Dickie Dawdle-so In a Poetry-Writing Contest.

By KATE E. JAMIESON.

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Little Dickie Dawdle-so had a fat chum, Rhyming Joe, So called 'cause he said he'd heard, a poet "merely rhymes a word." But Joe's poetry was shocking; rhymed "bread" and "butter," "shoe" and "toe-king."

governess is always a foreigner. The Irish lady teacher is best liked in a Spanish family, maybe because she is lively and witty and so different from the grave, dignified Spaniards. Spanish girls miss nearly all that makes life worth living to the American girl. The fun of going to school with the boys and spelling them down and beating them at arithmetic or being beaten by them, as the case may be, and trying all the harder in consequence, playing at outdoor games with brothers and boy friends and getting strength and self reliance—all this education that helps both the American boy and girl so much the youth of Spain miss altogether. Girls are not even encouraged to read books much. Before the time of Queen Elizabeth many people

even in England thought it was rather a bold, bad thing for a girl to know how to write and wish to read books. In an address at the dedication of an industrial school Charles M. Schwab said: "The object of this school is to teach that work to boy and girl is ennobling, that to be able to do nothing is disgraceful." "It is the trained mechanic, chemist and engineer who will be the true leaders in the future of this great industrial country."

A general diffusion of the social ideal of co-operation and good will in the

people were gathered in a single room, which became very warm. The window sashes were found frozen, and a pane of glass was smashed out. A cold air current rushed in, and at the same instant flakes of snow were seen to fall to the floor in all parts of the room. The atmosphere was so saturated with moisture that the sudden fall in temperature produced a snowfall indoors.



Here are two shadow pictures clever boys and girls can make on the wall.

THE GAME OF TEN QUESTIONS.

Ten questions is a game that can be played by any number of persons. One leaves the room, and the others choose some celebrated character. The absent person is then admitted and is to address the following questions to each of the others, beginning at the right: "Of what country was he a native?" "For what was he remarkable?"

Suppose George Washington to be chosen, the replies may be: "An American." "For being a great statesman and general." If from ten answers to as many queries the questioner is enabled to guess the character referred to he or she takes the seat of the one questioned, who must then leave the room.

MY JAPANESE DOLL.

Japan is where my doll was made, The one with squinty eyes, Who always seems to look at me And say in odd surprise: "Oh, what a funny girl you are, With cheeks all pink and red, And what an ugly hat you wear Upon your curly head!"

"Why don't you be a Japanese And dress in robes like me? I never wear a thing that's tight; Just look at me and see!"

"Japan, the place where I was born, Is full of flowers too! Some day I hope you'll visit there And take me back with you!"

A House In a Tree. The native Africans live in a tree to be out of the way of three things—their enemies, the insects and the excessive heat. The houses are built in the



queerest way, woven almost like straw baskets of grass, a kind of palm and bamboo. The supports of the house and the floor are of the bamboo laid across in strips held together with long strands of grass. Through this the dust and dirt sift, and the houses are very clean and cool.

What the Teacher Didn't Know. Dot—I know something my teacher doesn't know. Mamma—Indeed! What is that? "I know when the world is coming to an end, and she doesn't. I asked her, and she said she didn't know." "Oh, well, who told you?" "Uncle John. He said the world would come to an end when children stopped asking questions that nobody could answer."

ITEMS FROM NEAR AND FAR.

Professor A. W. Goodspeed of the University of Pennsylvania has exhibited photographs taken by rays of light emanating from his own hand. He says all matter absorbs radio active energy in waves of varying length and emits this same energy in waves of a definite and altered length. The great clock, "Big Ben," on the English parliament house, is to be illuminated by electric lamps. It will

then be no longer necessary for a man to climb the tall clock tower nightly to light the ninety-six gas jets around its face.

Although covering twice the area of the Columbian exposition the world's fair grounds at St. Louis are being found too small by one-half to comply with the applications for exhibit space. Professor Ernst von Halle of the Berlin university says the United States is

beginning to govern the world industrially by supplying the intelligence and organizing capacity, while the world supplies the capital.

The early appearance this season of icebergs in low latitudes is believed to be due to a heat wave in the arctic regions.

Bishop Potter in a recent address said the great trouble with our civic life was the idea prevalent among successful men that they were justified in using money to secure what they believed to

be good ends, even though this meant the bribery of a legislature.

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A general diffusion of the social ideal of co-operation and good will in the

daily life of the public school comprises the next logical move of education, according to Henry Turner Bailey, a President Eliot has endorsed the project of a special school for the study of educational methods and the training of educational experts.

Wisconsin has paid its state debt, which was \$2,500,000.

The Society For the Improvement of Discharged Criminals at Berlin has declared its intention of aiding ex-convicts to emigrate to North or South

America. After six months' trial at home each one is to receive instruction in the language of the country he is to enter, transportation to the seaport and \$150.

Experiments in greenhouses with glass of various colors indicate that nothing is better than plain uncolored glass. With violet colored glass the size of fruit was decreased, the quality injured. Other colors were injurious.

The most thickly populated island in the world is Malta, which has 1,360 peo-

ple to the square mile. Barbados has 1,054 people to the square mile.

There are in New York three life insurance institutions, two of them mutual associations and one an incorporated organization, whose financial operations practically match those of the United States treasury in the amount of money handled.

It has been found that there are 18,454 persons in Glasgow who speak Gaelic as well as English and sixty-three who speak Gaelic only.