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**ALEXA**  
By DOROTHY O. GRAVES.

(© 1918, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)  
Theodore, aged twenty-three, college graduate, six feet two, his near-sighted blue eyes heavily spectacled, and sur-named Thayer, accepted the instructorship in botany in an Illinois university. He arrived, a sun-baked, dust-caked young man in the town of La Salle on a torrid day with an arid prairie sirocco blowing as Theodore had never dreamed a wind could blow.

He was met with a boisterous welcome by his old college chum, Dick Haskell. "Ted, such good luck for you to come! When I heard I nearly split my sides. Boston Teddy in Illinois was too much for me! But come on, there's a bath and lunch ready at home."  
After his bath, Theodore sat down to the bountiful lunch and chat with Dick and Mrs. Dick. Dick kept the conversational ball bounding. "Friday night's the faculty reception, Ted. Each man takes a girl, so Molly and I chose Alexa for you."  
"Dick did," laughed Molly.  
"And we're having her over to tea this evening, so you can meet her," continued Dick. "Then all you have to do is to say something about the faculty reception and when her eyes brighten-up you'll say, 'Won't you come as my guest?' That's easy, and Alexa is the prettiest girl in La Salle."  
"I really do not care for young ladies, Richard. I have—er fully out-grown the sex, and my entire concentration I put into flowers and my work upon them."  
"Never mind, Teddy, you'll get over all of that. We'll make a man of you yet."

At tea Theodore fumbled considerably and finally upset the sugar bowl. Mrs. Molly, however, tactfully turned attention away from all his blundering.

Alexa, charming as well as beautiful, fingered the teacup daintily and asked Theodore about flowers generally. Theodore answered brusquely and finally ended the conversation with the comment that he never could get anything out of talking to a girl, anyhow. Alexa was uncertain whether to be amused or miserable.

Happily Mrs. Molly came to the rescue. "Alexa, we are going to expect you to help get Ted acquainted here."  
"I really must go, dear," Alexa said to Mrs. Molly, "and I've enjoyed the tea so much, but isn't Mr. Thayer rather—well—er—different?" she added in an undertone.

"You musn't mind him, dear. He's really very nice and lots of fun when you know him. Dick and he were roommates at college. Let's you and I help Dick make a man of him."  
Alexa responded with an affectionate hug as she left, but called back, "He is different, though, Molly."  
Friday came. Theodore broke a lens to his microscope and left his work early because he could not work without it. On his way homeward he passed the Drew residence. Alexa was on the lawn.

Theodore's footsteps on the cement walk ceased so suddenly that the silence fairly shrieked and the girl looked up.  
"Is it you, Mr. Thayer?" she called gaily. "How are the flowers?"  
Theodore, the botanist, suddenly became Teddy the young man. He vaulted the picket fence with an assurance of himself and a real boyhood.  
"Alexa," he said. "I am so glad to see you."  
"You have pretty hair, Alexa," said Teddy.  
"You have beautiful flowers, Mr. Thayer," said Alexa.  
"Oh, but the flowers, they are, er—"  
Theodore had come again into his own. "The flowers, my dear Miss Drew are very beautiful. Beside them, a man is but an—er, imperfect—er, attempt at—"  
"But I learned at the university that flowers are but one form of evolution. Yes, yes, true. Some do teach that, but in life nothing is beautiful but nature, and plants are nature, flowers are plants; nothing is more beautiful than the simple little flowers."  
"Yes, of course," Alexa agreed, and she tossed her pretty head. She drew her long fingers through her flowing hair, so the sun might penetrate the mass to the remotest curl. "I washed my hair," she stated.  
And Teddy was ready. It was the hair that did it. He stammered: "H—honestly, Miss Alexa, I do want you to go to the reception tonight."  
"It's beautiful, isn't it?" Ted asked, his eyes on the hollyhocks.  
"The hollyhocks, yes," answered Alexa. "Grandmother is so fond of them."  
Alexa watched him quizzically. "Your hair," blurted out Teddy.  
"My hair!" exclaimed Alexa, "what of it?"  
"I mean something else, something fairer than—er, flowers," Ted stammered, looking at his feet.  
Alexa followed his gaze, and doubtfully asked, "I don't understand, just what do you mean?"  
Teddy blushed now, and repeated parrot-like, "Fairer than flowers, fairer than flowers."  
"And you?" Teddy grew brazen.  
"And me! What—!"  
"Fairer than flowers," Teddy called as he vaulted the fence. On the other side his courage returned. He called back, quite like any full-blooded youth, "I'll call for you at eight," and to himself added: "She's so natural." Alexa laughed to herself, "Ted is so different."

**MILDRED HARRIS CHAPLIN**



Mildred Harris was well known as a "movie" actress before she became the wife of Charlie Chaplin, the film comedian. They were married in the fall of 1918. Mildred Harris is still in the limelight in the silent drama and is well liked by the millions who see her on the screen.

**Off Again, On Again**  
STRICKLAND W. GILLILAN  
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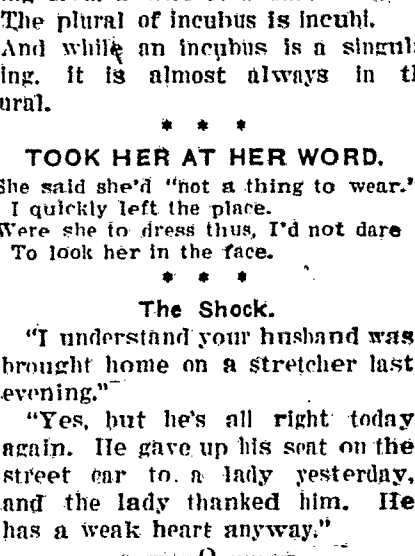
**GREAT STATESMEN.**  
We find, in studying them closely—  
These statesmen that we once called great—  
That they cut up and act morosely  
And pick a quarrel with their fate  
If some one else succeeds in bringing  
About their own long-sought reform.  
That ought, it seems, to set them singing—  
It merely makes them sulk or storm!  
One time we fell for their pretensions,  
And thought their very hearts were set  
On what they preached—now their dis-mutations  
Have shrunken, much to our regret.  
We find that what they really long for  
Is not the righteous thing, per se,  
But that the thing they are so strong for  
Is having great things done "by me."

**FINNIGIN FILOSOFY.**  
Every man goes 'ru a sta-aga  
whin, if some frind don't wurk  
airnisti w' im, he'll have a  
pitcher ta'ken wid 'is head  
la-knin' on 'is hand.  
Buses (U Silent, as in Mud).  
Buses are of three kinds: Omnit,  
Jitney and Incub.  
Sometimes the first two become the  
latter, and then there is a "for sale"  
ad.  
The omnit is perhaps the commonest  
kind, taking the towns by and large,  
especially by.  
The regular village omnibus is a  
cross between a milk-vagon and a  
henrse.  
It is as springless as the Sahara  
desert, and is lighted for the trips to  
the night train with a seventeen-candle-  
power - power - one - sixteenth - candle-  
power kerosene glem, whose chimney  
is in deep mourning.  
The jitney bus is of newer vintage,  
but is already accumulating a charac-  
teristic perfume.  
In fact, it has always been in bad  
odor with street railway companies  
and their stockholders.  
The incub kind may be almost any-  
thing from a wife to a carbuncle.  
The plural of incubus is incubi.  
And while an incubus is a singular  
thing, it is almost always in the  
plural.

**TOOK HER AT HER WORD.**  
She said she'd "not a thing to wear."  
I quickly left the place.  
Were she to dress thus, I'd not dare  
To look her in the face.

**The Shock.**  
"I understand your husband was  
brought home on a stretcher last  
evening."  
"Yes, but he's all right today  
again. He gave up his seat on the  
street car to a lady yesterday,  
and the lady thanked him. He  
has a weak heart anyway."

**CROSBY'S KIDS**

**Practice Hour**  


**Last Night's Dreams**  
—What They Mean

DID YOU DREAM OF FISH?

**ROBERT STRUMPELL**, Hildebrandt and Weed Hallam state that the dream distinctly prefers impressions recently made upon the waking consciousness. Freud, as a result of his personal experience and of the analysis of the great number of dreams which he has considered in the course of his practice lays it down as a law that "some reference to the experiences of the day which has most recently passed is to be found in every dream," that is, anything read, seen, heard, done or thought about. It would seem as if the dream consciousness having taken over from the preceding day some trivial experience as a starter then had unlocked to it vast stores of material; the impressions of our earlier years, later experiences and impressions, some so slight as to have been forgotten long ago or even totally ignored at the time they came into existence, our secret wishes, suppressed desires and psychic characteristics of the possession of which we were, perhaps, unaware in our waking state.

Bridges seem to be thrown out to such of these as the dream consciousness selects to enable them to mingle with the dream from this standpoint, but in order to do so successfully it must be done at once on awakening, for though some dreams are so vivid that they can be remembered for years, as a rule the dream-edifice dissolves rapidly and we can only recover a fragment here and there. The experience of the day which has most recently passed which is brought over into the realm of shadows is frequently disguised or distorted, but can be discovered upon a close analysis. Thus a lady dreamed one night that she had found a fine baby sewed up in a live codfish. The day preceding she had admired one of her neighbor's children and had stopped at the market to buy a fish on her way home. The mystics would go further in interpreting this dream. They say that to see a fish in a dream means good fortune, especially if it be white or red. To see fish swimming about, unless the water is muddy, is an omen that rich and powerful people will do you favors, and to dream of catching fish means you will be successful in love and business. But to dream of dead fish is unfavorable, and if a live fish slip out of your hand you will marry a person of a roaming disposition. Also, with a slippery fish, beware of slippery friends. To go fishing and catch nothing means disappointment in Dreamland, just as it does in the actual world.

**Mother's Cook Book**  
To keep a household running smoothly provisioned, cleaned, made sweet and cheerful always, and to do it incidentally as it were, with a hundred other activities filling her thoughts, is an accomplishment not sufficiently appreciated in this world.—David Grayson.

**Today's Food.**  
For a meal which is a meal in itself be sure to try  
**Spaghetti Par Excellence.**  
Take one package of spaghetti, break into small pieces and cover with boiling salted water; stir lightly until all is boiling. When tender pour off the water, drain in a colander, pour over cold water to make the spaghetti firm. Take one can of tomatoes, strained to remove the seeds, add a can of tomato soup, two large onions cut in bits, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper and a teaspoonful of chili powder, four tablespoonfuls of sugar, three teaspoonfuls of salt, six slices of bacon diced and fried. Mix all together and add the bacon fat. Put in layers in a baking dish with the spaghetti. Bake two hours.

**Cranberry Salad.**  
Soak one package of gelatine in a pint of cold water until well softened, then pour over this two quarts of boiling cranberry juice, add the juice of one lemon and sugar to taste. When cool add one cupful of shredded blanched almonds and one cupful of celery. When cold slice and serve with mayonnaise dressing.

**Head Lettuce With Sherry's Dressing**  
Prepare the lettuce, draining well and dry carefully to remove all water. Take one cupful of olive oil—corn oil will answer—two tablespoonfuls each of minced green and red peppers, one small Spanish onion chopped, one tablespoonful each of minced parsley and powdered sugar, and one-fourth of a cupful of vinegar. Shake in a mason jar for five minutes. Place on ice for an hour and do not serve on the lettuce until the last minute as it wilts the lettuce.

**Salmon Rarebit.**  
Heat one-fourth of a cup of butter or butter substitute; when bubbling hot add two tablespoonfuls of flour, rub and mix until perfectly smooth, then add a pint of milk and when thickened add a can of salmon, with all bones and skin removed; one egg beaten with a pinch of salt and a dash of cayenne. Serve on toasted crackers or thin slices of toasted bread.

**Nellie Maxwell**  
(Copyright, 1918, Western Newspaper Union.)



**MR. MOUSE & MR. FROG**

**ONE** day Mr. Mouse, who had been driven from the barn where he lived by Mrs. Tabby and her family, ran across the road to the meadow and wandered down by the pond.

"May as well jump in and drown myself," said Mr. Mouse, feeling very sad and discouraged. "There is no place I go where that cat does not follow me."  
"What is the matter, my friend, that you seem so sad?" asked Mr. Frog, who sat on a log not far away, and heard all that Mr. Mouse had said. "Why need you drown just because you jump into the water? I live in this pond, and I do not drown."  
Mr. Mouse, now that he had a willing listener, told Mr. Frog all his troubles.

"I just eat grain and meal and things in the barn—just a little; and so I just let him keep on coming to myself and stay here as long as I like. Why don't you come and live? I feel quite sure that you live on bugs and water, and such things no one would ever think of."  
"But suppose I can't get a jump in your pond," said Mr. Mouse, and maybe I should not go home. I do not rest at all, and could live on the things you speak of."  
"Come with me for a visit," Mr. Frog. "I'll take you down, you don't like it, I will bring you right back."  
"How will you manage that?" asked Mr. Mouse.

"You get on my back and sit tightly, and if you don't like it, I go under the water, you just hang a little and I'll come right up," Mr. Frog.  
It wasn't a second before he was back again, and Mr. Mouse, relying on the ground, choking and gasping for breath.

"Why, you did not even get to the bottom of the pond. You pinched me most as soon as we started," said Mr. Frog.  
"I know I did, I knew at once that I should never like the water for my home."  
"I can't see why," said Mr. Mouse, blinking. "There are no cats here, plenty to eat."  
"There may be no cats, but there are worse things than cats. I have found," said Mr. Mouse. "Why the water would kill me. I can run away from puss if I look sharp, but I can not run away from the water, and for feeling, how can I see with eyes full of water?"  
"No, thank you, Mr. Frog; I guess will run back to the barn and then other chance with Mrs. Tabby."  
"What funny folks there are in the world," said Mr. Frog, as he watched Mr. Mouse out of sight. "He'd just live in a barn than in the water—well."

**SCHOOL DAYS**

No Nellie, I can't do it.  
It's like to let you find a  
little bit but my mother  
wants particular to have  
this done in just a certain  
way and I can't do a girl  
couldn't do it.  
If it was just a plain  
kitchen chair, why, I might  
let you find some on it,  
but this is one of our best  
best room chairs.  
Set or stand-back chairs.  
I might accidentally splash  
some paint on your dress



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