

How Nugent Emulated Maeterlinck

By KEITH GORDON

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

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

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

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



MISS DINSMORE APPROACHED HER LATEST POSSESSION.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Miss Dinsmore had no answer for this pertinent question, and seeing her advantage, her stalwart admirer continued: "What would you think of me, if I employed symbols instead of plain, everyday English?"

His listener laughed outright at this simple way of disposing of a great modern writer and his cult. "If I'm afraid I should think you were off your head, Nugent," she replied with the frankness of long acquaintance. "That's just what I think of Maeterlinck," replied her companion dryly, feeling that the writer must either be conquered or crushed and leaning toward the latter alternative.

ADAM AND EVE

By Otto B. Senga

[Copyright, 1904, by Otto B. Senga.]
Adam—Adam Peyton Randolph lay stretched at full length under a dwarf pine tree. He was on big and blond and good to look at. He sang "Oh, Maryland, My Maryland!" in a heavy bass which was not at all musical and then laughed at his own fall.

"I reckon I wasn't around when singing voices were being distributed," he said aloud, "but this certainly is paradise—an Evesless paradise! And that's what makes it paradise! How a woman would spoil all this! I hope the new owner of Sunny Slope doesn't intend to live there."

He turned over lazily and lay on his chest, supporting his chin in his hand and gazing off toward the blue Chesapeake, from which the breeze brought the bracing saltiness of the inland sea.

His Eve was coming, but of this he was blissfully unaware. She sauntered up the avenue of pines, looking delightfully about her.

"A perfect paradise!" she murmured. "I wonder if my land ends to my driveway, or does it extend to that one over there?"

She pushed her way between the rosebushes and entered the debated territory, wandering aimlessly along, singing softly and crooning the rose she had plucked in passing.

At an unexpected turn she almost stumbled over the long, sprawling legs of Adam Peyton Randolph.

"Oh, pardon me!" she gasped in confusion. "I did not know." And then, summoning the courage of possible possession, she demanded, "Doesn't this strip of land belong to Sunny Slope?"

"No, madam," replied the recumbent one gravely. "It belongs to Peyton's paradise."

She laughed gaily and looked about her. "So this really is paradise, is it? And where are Adam and Eve?"

"There is no Eve, madam. Adam is the owner of the place—Adam Peyton Randolph."

"Oh, yes, I know. He is the horrid, cantankerous old thing who so determined I should not buy Sunny Slope. My agent told me how this old miser kept bidding and bidding until I had to pay twice what the place is worth."

The "old miser" sat up with sudden interest.

"Oh, then you are Miss Endicott? I am so glad! I feared I was a northerner who had bought the dear old place."

"What possible difference could that make?" curiously.

"Oh, a great deal," vaguely. "I do not want them here."

"May I ask, with sudden hauteur, 'why it should interest you?'—because—well, rising and holding out a big hand cordially, "because, Miss Endicott, I am the horrid, cantankerous old thing, Adam Peyton Randolph, at your service, and I confess to a decided preference for southern women. I hope we shall be friends."

OLD AND NEW COINS.

Interesting Facts About Coins at the Different Mints.

The director of the mint is called on to answer such a wide range of questions concerning the values of old and new coins and medals that he has found it necessary to issue circulars covering matters of this sort. It appears that the mint does not buy old coins or paper money except some rare colonial coins in the condition, which are desired for the mint cabinet. Minted or uncurrent United States gold and silver coin is purchased as bullion. The mint has no pattern pieces for sale.

The government pays no premium for the return of any of its coins or paper money. New coins cannot be struck until authorized by an act of congress. The mint supplies United States coins only and not of any past date. The fifty dollar gold piece and the half dollar and quarter dollar pieces in gold were struck by private parties on the California coast during the 1849 period and not by the United States government.

The coinage of the following coins closed in the year 1900: 1 cent, copper, in 1857; 1 cent, nickel, in 1864; half dime and 3 cents, silver, and 2 cents, bronze, in 1873; 20 cents, silver, 1878; trade dollars, 1883; \$1 and \$5, gold, and 3 cents, nickel, 1880. The Columbian half dollar was coined in 1892 and the Isabella quarter in 1893. The Lafayette dollar was struck in 1890, the date on the coin (1890) being that of the unveiling of the memorial.

There are certain markings on every United States coin that enable the place of its coinage to be located. Those struck at the Philadelphia mint have no mint mark, but those struck at all other mints are distinguished by a small letter on the reverse, near the bottom. These letters are C for Charlotte, N. C., discontinued in 1861; CC for Carson City, Nev., discontinued in 1863; D for Dahlonega, Ga., discontinued in 1861; O for New Orleans and S for San Francisco. The coins of the United States now authorized by law are: in gold, double eagle, eagle, half eagle, quarter eagle; in silver, half dollar, quarter dollar and dime; minor, 5 cent, nickel, and 1 cent, bronze. A person may buy a proof set of gold coins from the mint for \$38.50 and a proof set of silver and minor coins for \$150.

When the business of the mints is slack medals may be struck from dies furnished by individuals, public institutions and incorporated societies at a charge sufficient to cover the cost of the operation and the value of the metal.—Brooklyn Eagle.

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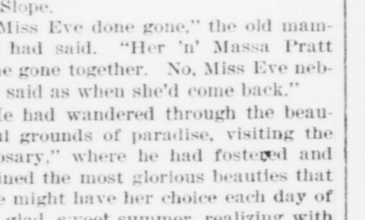
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