

Cecilia's Dreams of Career
By EDGAR T. MONFORT

"THE performance at the high school auditorium last night was a brilliant success. The outstanding artist on the program was Miss Cecilia Gray, whose bell-like soprano voice was at its best and loveliest. We forecast a great future for this talented young lady and only regret that her career may take her away from us to some metropolitan center, Chicago or New York, where she can get a position worthy of her great talent. We feel sure in predicting that grand opera goes will some day know the name of Cec—"

Cecilia simply could not read any further. Her sweet girlish face was suffused with color as she let the paper fall on the table and clasped her hands in ecstasy. The broom with which she had been sweeping the dining room when the paper came, leaped against the table beside her—forgetting even her surroundings seemed to recede and in her imagination she gazed out over a sea of upturned worshipping faces. Her lead roared with the sound of the applause and she felt herself moving slowly, regally to the front and graciously acknowledging it. Then as she started to sing a silence settled over the audience that was almost deathlike.

From the minute she read the newspaper notice she had a different attitude toward herself. She felt the responsibility of her talent and the necessity for her to sacrifice home and loved ones to pursue her career. "It's a gift," she told Joe Watson, her beau, "a gift that was given me by the Creator. I am destined to have a career."

Her young face looked so pathetically serious and Joe's so pathetically tragic as they sat side by side on the shabby old sofa. "Where do I come in?" he asked, suddenly frightened as a new idea dawned on him. "But don't you see, dear, this is something I'm not responsible for. It's a call I must answer like a soldier's call to war or a minister's to preach. Don't you understand?"

"No!" said Joe savagely. "I'm darned if I do. There's no call greater than the call to marry a degen man when you've already pledged yourself!" "You wouldn't hold me to that?" she asked in surprise. "Oh, no, not at all. A little matter like that is nothing when it comes to a career," he answered, but his sarcasm was completely lost on Cecilia who threw her arms around his neck.

"Ah, I knew you'd see it. And I do love you, Joe; it means a lot to me to give you up." She was sincere in what she said, but all the time that she was looking at Joe she was seeing herself holding her thousands spellbound. Of course, when Clearview heard of her intended and approaching trip to New York the town went wild. Parties, entertainments of all sorts, more newspaper writeups of her wonderful talent, her great future. Mrs. Gray, at first sad at the idea of losing her daughter, soon began to swell with pride and cut down on expenses to save the fare to New York. Naturally as soon as Cecilia arrived she'd have wonderful openings offered her, but even the greatest talent must have railroad fare.

Within less than a month's time Cecilia had attended her last party, received her last gift and bade her last farewell. Reaching New York one cold winter evening she went straight to a Y. W. C. A. and after much pulling of wires she got a hearing with Signor Musanti, a teacher of moderate reputation but of great honesty. With confidence she started to sing a dramatic aria that had brought the house down at Clearview. For a second Musanti listened, then raised his hand.

"Stop!" he commanded, jumping up and pacing the floor angrily. "My God, why do you sing E when it should be F sharp? Why do you no car? Why did you come here? Who sent you here to me? Why don't you try to be an acrobat? And that tremolo. . . My God, you sound like a nanny goat. Go home—go home quick and wash dishes—anything but sing."

At first Cecilia was too dazed to speak, she merely gaped at the little man, then after a moment the tears rushed into her eyes and she dropped into a chair and wept. "There, there," he said in quick sympathy, patting her heaving shoulders. "It happens all the time. I know. A girl sings at some church festival at home. The local papers datter her, she swallows it, friend's praise. She leave home for a CA-REEER! Every week I get them. Now, buy a ticket and go home, back to your mamma and your sweetheart; he'll take you back. I haf another lesson."

Cecilia felt herself being gently put out the front door, but there, was heaping in his kindness. With a gulp she swallowed her pride, took his advice and went back home, but on the train a plan of action came to her. Just out of New York she sent a telegram to Joe Watson: "I'm coming back tomorrow on Number Sixteen. So home-sick for you, Cecy."

And to this day Joe worships her for her devotion and she worships him for saving her pride. Only a few caty old malds sniff and doubt and there is just one word Cecilia avoids as if it were contaminated—Career.

What the Dam Meant
By GREGORY GRAY

IN ONE of the tarred-paper shacks which housed the gangs and engineers of the Nesbit Construction company a man bent over a pile of blueprints. A spectator would have thought him too absorbed to be aware of the beating rain on the unsubstantial roof.

As a matter of fact, Paul Bassett was so dominated by the rain that everything else was driven from his mind. It even made him forget the party on the hill whose forego he believed had cost him the heart and hand of his hostess, Claire Hendricks.

"This downpour, unprecedented at this season of the year, was threatening his uncompleted dam and with it the labor of four hard years.

"Of course," he had told Claire over the phone, "my common sense tells me the dam will stand. Even unlikely the factor of safety is ridiculously high."

"Then I should think," said Claire petulantly, "that you could surely come to the party."

"I am afraid not," he said ruefully. "If anything should happen—well, it's like the captain and his ship, 'Duty before pleasure.'"

"Imagined duty" came back Claire's thought. "Thank heaven, Abbott Wayne's bonding business is not so demanding!"

With that unkind last word the conversation ended. Wayne the man Paul had for some time been fearing as a rival.

At midnight there came a sudden lull in both gale and rain and it occurred to Paul that it would be a favorable moment to take a reading of certain gauges down at the dam itself which registered their recordings over wires to special instruments at the surface.

Picking his way by flashlight along the narrow path that skirted the great piles of debris, now being washed and gullied into fantastic patterns, he reached the dam and made his readings.

For a moment he stood watching the turbulent race of clouds over his head. Then, as he turned to go, a glimpse of something moving in the shadow of a derrick caught his eye.

A girl, wrapped in a cape, her hair wind blown, was standing there. For a minute his heart leaped. Had Claire run down for a moment?

Then he saw it was not Claire, but Abbott Wayne's little sister, who had made the dam project her own ever since the first shovel of dirt had been turned.

"What on earth, Dot," he demanded. The girl shrugged her shoulders. "I love the racket of the storm. Besides, haven't I seen this dam grow from the very start? I couldn't help worrying about it. Wanted to see if it was all right."

For the first time in the four years that he had had the run of the place, Paul really saw Dorothy. And she wasn't the mere child that he thought. "Why aren't you at the party?" he said.

"Two reasons," she retorted promptly. "Unimportant one being that I'd rather be here. The other—well, I wasn't asked. I may be eighteen, almost, but Claire thinks me a kid."

Eighteen! Paul would hardly have thought so, but now he saw that it was rather because of her slim little figure and girlish ways than from any real childishness. It flashed across him that she would make an excellent wife for an engineer. She would understand, as Claire never could, that intimate bond between a man and the thing he has created.

She startled him with a little cry. "Look, oh, look! I do believe the old weather bureau was wrong! There is the moon!"

Sure enough, through a rift in the clouds, the whole disk of the moon, just past full, could be seen.

It was true that the crest of the flood might not be reached until noon tomorrow, but the chances were that the dam would hold if the rain was not too heavy. Paul felt like seizing the slender hands of his companion and whirling her around in a dance of celebration. Yesterday he would have done that very thing. But, somehow, not tonight.

"I must go back," she was saying. "I wonder if you would mind walking up to the top of the hill with me where I can see the light in my window. It's really later than I thought. I suppose—" and she threw a glance up at the big house on the hill whence the strains of music were floating down—"everyone must know now of Claire's engagement to my brother."

Paul stopped short. "Claire—your brother?"

"Why, yes. That was what the party was for. Abbott told me before he left. It was to be a grand surprise. Claire loves surprises." By rights, Paul should have felt as if a knife were being turned in his heart. On the contrary, he felt, and he was amazed at the sensation, as if he had just received a reprieve from some dreadful fate. The rain had ceased, the girl who could never understand what the dam meant to him was going to belong to somebody else, and he had discovered a lovely, awakening woman in the girl who had watched him build it.

The SANDMAN STORY
ABOUT THE DINNER

"THE dinner wouldn't amount to much without our presence," said the lamb roast.

"You would burn and you would not be very nice," said the water which had been put into the tin with the lamb to keep it from burning. "If it were not for the water."

"And you could never be cooked if it were not for me," said the stove. "And you would never have been lighted if it had not been for me," said a match which was now what would be called a "used match."

"And you would have gone very queerly if we had not been turned just as we should have been," said the dampers belonging to the stove. "The oven would never have become warm if we had not made the fire burn well," said the members of the coal family. "And we gave everything the first



"And They Do Need a Dessert," Said the Apple Pie.

"You wouldn't be so good if we weren't to go along with you for the dinner," said the potatoes to the lamb. "You wouldn't be a real meal if we didn't come along, too," said the bread.

"And what about butter?" asked the butter. The lamb was cooking and was becoming nice and brown on the outside.

"Every one wants water," said the jug which at that moment was being filled with water. "Every one wants gravy," said the gravy. "And they do need a dessert," said the dessert.

How It Started
By JEAN NEWTON

ONE does not have to be erudite to know the word "peripatetic" as related to a school of philosophy, that of the disciples of Aristotle, the Greek philosopher.

In everyday speech we find the word used in the sense of traveling, moving, wandering. Its modern use in this sense, however, is usually satirical or jocular.

It may seem a far cry from the philosophy of Aristotle to a modern itinerant, yet it is precisely in that connection that we have the interesting story of the word's origin.

"Peripatetic" is of Greek derivation and means literally "to walk." It was used in the sense of traveling, wandering, moving, in its original sense of moving from place to place.

There is an important difference between necessities and luxuries. This distinction is often forgotten. Luxuries are the things we want but can do without and they demand about three times as much money as do the necessities. Saving does not mean that the necessities must be discarded but it does mean that less money be spent upon mere luxuries.

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"The price which economy demands is courage and sacrifice, but the reward is worth the cost. More real satisfaction is obtained from saving money than from spending it; especially when with saved funds we purchase an acre and call it HOME."

Popularized by these ancient scholars, the term has survived in common speech where today it is used more or less lightly in its original sense of moving from place to place.

"A lot of good people mean the passing of the corset," says Corrupt Cora, "and I know myself it's a great aid to uprightness."

Severe Sentence
Judge—What's your occupation?
Prisoner—I'm a coal dealer, your honor.
Judge—Thirty days on one of your rock piles!

Starting Richard Right
By AD SCHUSTER

THE big office building poured clerks, executives and office boys into the street to be caught up in the swirl from other structures and drift, eddy and millling, into the restaurants. Noon hour shuffles the human contents of the business houses and is responsible for the making of friends.

Richard White met Clara in one of those restaurants where customers forage for themselves and eat off the arms of chairs.

"Just listen a minute. What do you hear? Money, that's it. They all talk big and pretend they are not little men. Great game, isn't it?"

"I don't know," Clara spoke slowly. "It seems to me there is something rather tin in it. Of course what they say amounts to little, but they are planning. Who can tell what these men will be doing a few years hence? And a few years ago the ones who were talking in the restaurants at noon hour—how many of them are the leaders today? We may be listening to the voice of the future. No, I think it is rather big, something to be treasured."

"I did," said Richard shortly and he tried to look worldly wise and disillusioned. "I was one of the most enthusiastic of the planners, but I learned my lesson." He did not catch her look of surprise and disappointment. Some day, he was thinking, he might tell this girl his troubles.

When he met her again at noon and in another restaurant the subject was renewed.

"Are you still disillusioned or has the enthusiasm returned?" he returned, "but listen. I have been with my firm for seven years and have been moved up a notch each year until this. Maybe that is why I was full of pep and hope. Well, this year they sent outside for a man to fill the place above me instead of giving me the chance."

"And the man? Does he fill the place well, as well as you could or better? What is his name?" "Guess he fills it all right. I never see him. Name's Nathan and must be an exclusive sort for he never mixed with the boys."

Clara drummed on the table with her fingers. She liked this young man and could read the symptoms of a disorder common to the ambitious and one which might stand in the way of his happiness and advance.

"Don't you think the company knows best? Maybe this newcomer was brought in to fill a special niche, one in which he will stay while you are being prepared for a large step forward. It seems to me, if you will excuse me, that if you lose your hope and let resentment affect your work, you will be risking the chance for promotion which may be planned for you."

Richard was startled, even afraid. Suppose the man had been notified and suppose the girl was right? Suddenly he saw himself as the others must have seen him during the past month.

"I am grateful," he said humbly, "for a timely hint and I think you are right, whether there was a promotion planned for me or not." And he returned to the job to take up the duties in the way that was his in the old days of big planning.

"The name of the man he was wanted in the office of Nathan, the new man. Well, he would see what the fellow looked like and what was wanted."

When he opened the door he stopped, too startled to close it behind him. "You!" It was the girl of the restaurant.

"Nathan," she answered in a businesslike tone, "C. Nathan, in charge of this department. Sit down."

Richard sat down. He wondered how much of this seriousness was put on, just what this girl was going to do.

Mr. Malcolm has informed me he is moving you up to the place to be vacated by Mr. Nichols." She held up her hand to check his joyful exclamation.

"He has asked me to show you the work which you are to do. You accept, I suppose?" Still the level look of the business woman. Richard nodded.

"Well, then, that is settled. I'm glad," and she held out her hand, a smiling girl. "See, but you were impressive," Richard clung to her hand. And I have you to thank for the tip when you are going to break me in on the new job. Well, we'll have a chance to get acquainted."

"Yes," said the business woman, to herself, "that was what I was thinking."

Cutting Into the Depths
"Didn't I tell you not to say a word?" asked the campaign manager, "I tried to obey your instructions," answered Senator Sorghum. "All I said to the boss was 'I hope you are well' and it started a line of talk about whether he was afflicted with a psychosis, a neurosis or a Napoleonic complex."—Washington Star.



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