

about her, but she was dressed expensive enough—furs and silks and sparks in her ears. Looked like one of the sort that had been up against a long run of hard luck and had come through without gettin' sour.

While we was arguin', in drifts Mr. Dawes himself. I gets a glimpse of his face when he first spots the old girl, and if ever I see a mouth shut like a safe door and a jaw stiffen as if it had turned to concrete, he did.

"What does this mean, Maria?" he says between his teeth.

"I couldn't help it, Fletcher," says she. "I wanted to see you about little Bertie."

"Huh!" grunts Fletcher. "Well, step in this way, McCabe, you can come along too."

I wa'n't stuck on the way it was said, and didn't hanker for mixin' up with any such reunions; but it didn't look like Maria had any too many friends handy, so I trots along.

When we're shut in, with the draperies pulled, Mr. Dawes plants his feet solid, shoves his hands down into his pockets, and looks Maria over careful.

"Then you have lost the address of my attorneys?" says he, real frosty.

That don't chill Maria at all. She acted like she was used to it. "No," says she; "but I'm tired of talking to lawyers. I couldn't tell them about Bertie, and how lonesome I've been without him these last two years. Can't I have him, Fletcher?"

About then I begins to get a glimmer of what it was all about, and by the time she'd gone on for four or five minutes I had the whole story. Maria was the ex-Mrs. Fletcher Dawes. Little Bertie was a grandson; and grandma wanted Bertie to come and live with her in the big Long Island place that Fletcher had handed her when he swapped her off for one of the sextet, and settled up after the decree was granted.

Hearin' that brought the whole thing back, for the papers printed pages about the Daweses; rakin'



"Fletchy. Who's the Old One?"

up everything, from the time Fletcher run a grocery store and lodgin' house out to Butte, and Maria helped him sell flour and canned goods, besides makin' beds, and jugglin' pans, and takin' in washin' on the side; to the day Fletcher euhched a prospector out of the mine that gave him his start.

"You were satisfied with the terms of the settlement, when it was made," says Mr. Dawes.

"I know," says she; "but I didn't think how badly I should miss Bertie. That is an awful big house over there, and I am getting to be an old woman now, Fletcher."

"Yes, you are," says he, his mouth corners liftin' a little. "But Bertie's in school, where he ought to be, and where he is going to stay. Anything more?"

I looks at Maria. Her upper lip was wabblin' some, but that's all. "No, Fletcher," says she. "I shall go now."

She was just about startin', when there's music on the other side of the draperies. It sounds like Corson was havin' his troubles with another female. Only this one had a voice like a brass cornet, and she was usin' it too.

"Why can't I go in there?" says she. "I'd like to know why! Eh, what's that? A woman in there?"

And in she comes. She was a pippin, all right. As she yanks back the curtain and rushes in she looks about as friendly as a spotted leopard that's been stirred up with an elephant hook, but when she sizes up the comp'ny that's present she cools off and lets go of a laugh that gives us an iv'ry display worth seein'.

"Oh! Fletchy, who's the old one?" says she.

Say, I expect Dawes has run into some mighty worryin' scenes before now, havin' been indicted once or twice and so on, but I'll bet he never bucked up against the equal of this before. He opens his mouth a couple of times, but there don't seem to be any language on tap. The missus was ready, though.

"Maria Dawes is my name, my dear," says she.

"Maria!" says the other one, lookin' some staggered. "Why—why, then you—you're Number One!"

Maria nods her head.

Then Fletcher gets his tongue out of tangle. "Maria," says he, "this is my wife Maizie."

"Yes?" says Maria, as gentle as a summer night.

"I thought this must be Maizie. You're very young and pretty, aren't you? I suppose you go about a lot? But you must be careful of Fletcher. He always was foolish about staying up too late, and eating things that hurt him. I used to have to warn him against black coffee and welsh rabbits. He will eat them, and then he has one of his bad spells. Fletcher is fifty-six now, you know, and—"

"Maria!" says Mr. Dawes, his face the color of a boiled beet, "that's enough of this foolishness! Here, Corson! Show this lady out!"

"Yes, I was just going, Fletcher," says she.

"Good by, Maria!" sings out Maizie, and then lets out another of her soprano ha-ha's, holdin' her

sides like she was tickled to death. Maybe it was funny to her; it wa'n't to Fletcher.

"Come, McCabe," says he; "we'll get to work."

Say, I can hold in about so long, and then I've got to blow off or else bust a cylinder head. I'd had about enough of this "Come, McCabe" business too. "Say, Fletchy," says I, "don't be in any grand rush. I ain't so anxious to take you on as you seem to think."

"What's that?" he spits out.

"You keep your ears open long enough and you'll hear it all," says I; for I was gettin' hotter 'n' hotter under the necktie. "I just want to say that I've worked up a grouch against this job durin' the last few minutes. I guess I'll chuck it up."

That seemed to go in deep. Mr. Dawes, he brings his eyes together until nothin' but the wrinkle keeps 'em apart, and he gets the hectic flush on his cheek bones. "I don't understand," says he.

"This is where I quit," says I. "That's all."

"But," says he, "you must have some reason."

"Sure," says I; "two of 'em. One's just gone out. That's the other," and I jerks my thumb at Maizie.

She'd been rollin' her eyes from me to Dawes, and from Dawes back to me. "What does this fellow mean by that?" says Maizie. "Fletcher, why don't you have him thrown out?"

"Yes, Fletcher," says I, "why don't you? I'd love to be thrown out just now!"

Someway, Fletcher was'n't anxious, although he had lots of bouncers standin' idle within call. He just stands there and looks at his toes, while Maizie tongue lashes first me and then him. When she gets through I picks up my hat.

"So long, Fletchy," says I. "What work I put in on you the other day I'm goin' to make you a present of. If I was you, I'd cash that check and buy somethin' that would please Maizie."

"D'jer annex another five or six hundred up to the Brasstonia this afternoon?" asks Swifty, when I gets back.

"Nix," says I. "All I done was to organize a wife convention and get myself disliked. That ten a minute deal is off. But say, Swifty, just remember I've dodged makin' the bath rubber class, and I'm satisfied at that."

"I Thought You Were Maizie."

THE RED MAN'S USE OF NATURE

By Alice Lounsberry

IT was the dusky tinted women who first taught the Colonists the cultivation of maize, while they themselves used no other implements for its raising than a shell, the shoulder blade of a buffalo, or perhaps a wooden mattock. No greater luxury or one more savory did they know than that of feasting on its roasted ears, while a little of its parched meal with water from the river made usually their midday and evening meal. It was from maize, as well, that the squaws taught the white women the art of making bread. As well as with maize, the Indian women were experts in raising beans. Suetotash is a dish which they contributed to the Colonists' table. The vine which grew lustily about every wigwam is now called squash.

In the uses of plant stimulants and tonics these men were well versed. Undoubtedly they were the first to extract from the bark of dogwood trees a powerful substance, since known as cornin, which they administered for similar ailments as are to-day treated with quinine. The dogwood, moreover, was their almanac, since it bloomed just at the right time for planting their corn. They recognized sassafras as a stimulant, and delighted in a mild sort of drink prepared from its leaves.

For the painting of their faces, the dyeing of their feathers and baskets, the children of the forest used those plants which were abundant in colored juices. Of these, one generally employed was the exquisite bloodroot (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*), which to them was known as red puccoon. It is found in plenty from Florida well northward. The little laurel, called also lambkill (*Kalmia angustifolia*), was renownedly useful to the Indians. Water distilled from its leaves was a drink meted out to enemies; or should one among them be so cowardly as to court death, the drinking of laurel water won it easily.

The Indian tobacco (*Lobelia inflata*) was early appreciated by the red men for smoking. Although its stems and leaves are somewhat poisonous, still the red men dried them to use in their pipes; their flavor being not dissimilar to that of tobacco. The medicinal uses of the New Jersey tea, or redroot (*Ceanothus Americanus*), were directly learned by the white settlers of the mountains from the Cherokee Indians. They reserved

it for those afflicted with diseases of the spleen.

Through the Atlantic States the plant, perhaps, which is most closely associated with the primeval inhabitants is the yapon (*Ilex vomitoria*), called also South Sea tea. It is the species of holly from which the Indians annually made their "black drink." At some place where the shrub was known to grow in abundance, there was held in the spring a gathering of the red men and their families from miles about. A fire was built, a crude kettle hung over the flame, and an immense quantity of the yapon's leaves put therein with water. As the brew became strong, each Indian in turn took a drink, and then shortly, as he expected, became violently sick. For two or three days together the whole company continued drinking of the brew and then being sick. At length, when they thought their systems sufficiently cleansed, each one took, as emblematic of the journey, a sprig of the holly, laid it over his shoulder, and, feeling himself remade, marched off to his wigwam.

Orchids as Papoose Food

THE wild orchids, that is, those which spring from tuberous roots, were assiduously sought by the squaws as productive of a substance highly nourishing for their papooses. Another plant, the blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), was called by the Indian herb doctors papoose root, probably because they employed it for the good of the little ones.

Think of the savage roving the woods; of the imprudent meals he enjoyed of wild strawberries, wild raspberries, wintergreen berries, and all the spicy sorrels and fragrant leaves he knew so well to pull—the sweetness of some acorns flavoring his venison, or laid by for use during the winter, the relish he had from nuts of every kind that grew within his range! Delicacies ever concerned him, as is shown by the habit of prolonging them beyond their natural season. The leaves of the creeping snowberry (*Chiogenes hispida*), having an aromatic flavor, have tickled no doubt many an Indian's palate; yet the true delicacy which the squaws

prepared from this plant was by using its white berries, small and tedious to gather, from which they made an amber colored jelly, a dish reserved for high occasions.

The striking wayside plant, joe-pye weed (*Eupatorium purpuraceum*), throwing out masses of crimson purple flowers in the late autumn, still commemorates an Indian herb doctor calling himself Joe Pye, who in New England settlements went about curing through its potency, typhus fever. The beautiful butterfly weed, or pleurisy root (*Asclepias tuberosa*), is still closely associated with its early Indian companions. From its colored flowers they extracted a sugarlike substance, useful in many ways, while a brew from its roots was deemed excellent for the relief of all sorts of inflammations, especially pleurisy. Although the American Indians have never been lauded as a cleanly race, they still were young in learning that the sap of bouncing bet (*Saponaria officinalis*) would form a lather when mixed with water, and greatly facilitate the removal of dirt.

Usually the workings of the plant world were regarded with awe. It was for this reason that so much superstitious conjuring entered into their otherwise crude but wholesome use of medicinal herbs. Seldom were they content to allow the drug alone to effect a cure, preferring greatly to invoke some spirit to help along the achievement. So also they construed all sorts of legends about every day phenomena.

Should two red clovers spring up where white ones formerly had grown, they became at once indicative of the blood of red men slain in battle. The falling of a leaf, the cracking of a twig at an inauspicious moment, often caused the savage, feeding his mind on wonders, to turn back from his whole day's course. His regard for the gracious plant world through which he passed was great. Of all that administered to his comfort he partook freely, yet he seldom ravished wantonly; and for this reason wild flowers did not vanish when left to the companionship of primitive people. Flowers were never picked by them for their beauty, or to adorn their wigwams, but simply for their known uses. They never transplanted them, nor, through cultivating and trimming the forests, trod them farther into it.