

IDAHO, SUNDAY, JAN. 26, 1919

"My Scrub-Brush Is More Joy Than the Great Hope Diamond I Once Wore; My \$12 Wage Is a Greater Happiness Than the \$1,000 a Week I Once Was Paid; There Is More Heart Thrill in My Beloved Husband's Smile Than in All the Pomp and Prestige I Had As Lady Francis Hope."



The Ill-Fortuned Famous Hope Diamond.

MAY YOHE, the little Pennsylvania girl who married an earl, wore for a time the notorious "unlucky" Hope diamond, eloped with the son of one of New York's former Mayors, was a stage favorite of the late King Edward VII, and whose career of romance and adventure extended from one end of the world to another, is scrubbing floors in the offices of the Seattle North Pacific Shipbuilding Company.

Her chief worry is the selection of the right sort of feed for her small flock of chickens on her tiny ten-dollar-and-pay-the-balance-like-rent ranch just north of the city limits. And the once famous actress made her first payment on her present home for herself and her husband, Captain John Addy Smuts, cousin to General Jan Smuts, former commander of the Boer army, with the money she earned by wielding the brush and pail.

She gets for her labor \$12 a week—\$2 a day.

And she is happy! This does not mean that she is happy because she earns only \$12 a week. For while it is true that many people with great incomes are unhappy, there is no proof that they would be happy without them. Conversely, there are any number of millions who are earning \$2 a day, or thereabouts, who are quite miserable. It is not always a blue bird, even if Maeterlinck does say so, which brings that indefinable, nebulous commodity we call happiness. Not at all. The birds are every color under the sun—each one a separate color for every separate individual—and alas!—so few whose colors are fast, warranted not to run.

"Real happiness," May Yohe told a representative from this magazine, after her night's scrubbing was done, "comes when one is given the privilege of working for the one she loves. Love is far more precious than diamonds."

Still another light on the sources of her contentment is given by her recital of a meeting, while scrubbing, with John Considine, the widely known theatrical magnate and one of the owners of the Sullivan & Considine circuit.

Considine once hired May Yohe for an engagement in Seattle at \$1,000 a week. He was in the shipyard recently, and when May looked up from behind her pair of soap-suds Considine recognized her instantly.

"My Gawd, Mayse, what's the idea?" he asked.

"Go away," she laughed. "I'm scrubbing for my dinner."

"No, but tell me!"

"John—listen!" she said with fervent earnestness: "You paid me \$1,000 a week to sing right here in this city of Seattle. You are thinking of me with my big tiara



"You paid me \$1,000 a week to sing right here in this city of Seattle. You are thinking of me with my big tiara I wore when I was Lady Francis Hope, and that \$3,000 evening gown and the big Hope diamond, and into the picture comes the pail and scrub-brush. You can't understand."

I wore when I was Lady Francis Hope and that \$3,000 evening gown and the big Hope diamond, and into the picture comes this pail and scrub brush. You can't understand.

"John, let me tell you my scrub brush is more joy than the great Hope diamond I once wore; my twelve-dollar wage is a greater happiness than the \$1,000 a week you once paid me; there is more heart thrill in my beloved husband's smile than in all the pomp and prestige I had as Lady Francis Hope."

When May Yohe met Captain Smuts in London the woman who earned fortunes on the vaudeville stage, who had been the mistress of the lordly Hope estate, "Deepdene," and who entertained royalty in her London house, had been having a hard time making both ends meet. Rumor had it that she was seeking a reconciliation with her husband from whom she had fled for no other reason than that "she could not stand the correctness of his chilly English friends and family." It is said that Lord Hope's love for his erratic ex-wife never really died, and that she knew what she was about.

But if May Yohe had any such intentions they were banished when she met the gallant soldier. They were married and sailed to South Africa, there to begin life anew.

And they were there when the war broke out in 1914. Captain Smuts applied for a commission with the British army and received sufficient encouragement to cause him to make a trip to the Orient, where he had expected to be assigned. Every cent that the two had or could get together was spent on this voyage, and when, arriving at Yokohama, Captain Smuts received notice that he could never be accepted for military duty because of physical disabilities they were absolutely penniless.

"It was in Yokohama, too, that I learned of my mother's death," said Mrs. Captain Smuts. "It seemed then that my cup of grief was filled to the brim. But we managed to come back to Seattle and my husband easily found work in the steel shed at the Seattle North Pacific Shipbuilding plant."

All went well and May Yohe was happy for a time. She found real pleasure in planning surprises for her husband's lunch basket. They managed to live on the \$3.96 a day paid for that branch of labor performed by Captain Smuts.

"My last engagement in Seattle," said May Yohe, "netted me \$1,000 a week, but the thousand failed to bring the pleasure that my husband's hard-earned weekly pay check did."

The Smuts lived in a small apartment on Second avenue, Seattle, and May Yohe found that by careful management she could save two or three dollars each week from her husband's earnings. That was before Captain Smuts became ill with the Spanish influenza.

Funds ran out and May Yohe demanded the services of the company's fifty-cent-a-month doctor. Medicines were needed, and also food. It was then that May Yohe decided to work.

"My husband is ill and I want work," she told the employment manager at the shipyard.

"What do you do?" he asked the woman who had been known to him as the band

their feet with "Honey, Ma Honey."

"That's what puzzled me," said May Yohe. "I knew I could sing, but singing doesn't build ships. I couldn't typewrite. Then I realized that I was a woman and could scrub floors. All women can do that if they are forced to it. None like it."

So May Yohe went to work on the "graveyard shift" from midnight until 7 o'clock in the morning, scrubbing floors, dumping out waste baskets and various other things expected of janitresses. During the day she nursed her husband, cooking little delicacies that she had earned herself by scrubbing floors.

Then one day the sun shone again for May Yohe. Her husband was pronounced out of danger by the physicians and was able to return to his work in the shipyard. In two weeks' time, by their combined efforts, Captain Smuts and his wife paid \$10 as their first installment on their little chicken ranch. By this time May Yohe thinks she has solved the science of chicken-raising. She knows just how many eggs one hen is supposed to lay during the year, and she has decided that each one of her feathered possessions must produce \$3 profit yearly or go into the pot. Her ambition is to have 1,000 of the three-dollar-a-year earners and her little home paid for. By her calculations a year's hard work will yield the price she often paid for one gown.

"But my clothes don't cost much now," she said, calling attention to her neat house dress. "By watching the bargain-counters a woman can dress on a few dollars."

May Yohe in her new happiness expresses sympathy for those she has left behind in her former world of pomp and vanities.

"It isn't worth the price one pays," she said. "Titles, diamonds, so-called honor and world applause. What are these things? Titles cause envy and hatred. Diamonds are not worth while. The applause of the whole world is not worth half as much as a husband's praise of his wife's biscuits."

"I have probably had my share of worldly things. People say I made a tremendous hit on the stage. It is true that I once wore the Hope blue diamond. But, believe me, I was happier when I was scrubbing floors in the shipyard than I was as Lady Francis Hope. I wouldn't trade my present life for a thousand Hope Diamonds."

This confession of the happiness she finds in the life of a scrubwoman is hardly more surprising than many other incidents in the extraordinary career of May Yohe. From the day when the pretty American dancer started the world by marrying Lord Francis Hope, of one of England's proudest families, and becoming the owner of the world's most superb collections of jewels her life has been just one surprise after another.

The vicissitudes of the wedded life of Lord and Lady Hope are familiar to all readers of this page. How she redeemed herself temporarily by a period of perfect decorum; how this was followed by relapses into the gaieties of her old theatrical life; how she suddenly renounced all her frivolities and sternly devoted herself to charity; how Lord Hope's family became reconciled and took her up only to become discouraged and drop her again—these are well-known history.

For her visit with her husband to America where she met Putnam Bradlee Strong, a distinguished army officer, son of a great New York merchant prince and former mayor. Major Strong became infatuated with Lady Hope and for him she left her husband. From city to city, across oceans and continents the two fled in a vain search for the happiness that was forever eluding them.

During this period a Western hotel proprietor objected to the notoriety which May Yohe was bringing to his restaurant and ordered her to leave. She flew into a rage and unsnapped the leash from the jeweled collar of a huge ribbon-winning bull dog which was her invariable companion.

At a word from her the beast sprang at the hotel man's throat and would have done him serious harm but for the timely interference of several strong waiters.

May Yohe screamed and fainted. When she was revived she promptly brought suit against the hotel for heavy damages. The case was finally settled out of court.

The visit of the infatuated pair to Havana will not be soon forgotten. They lunched and dined together in the various fashionable restaurants and the attentions which he lavished on her were so bold and so affectionate as to attract the widest attention.

The amount of wine and highballs which May Yohe consumed in an afternoon or evening is still considered the record in Havana's cafes.

Just before the pair sailed from San Francisco for Japan, May Yohe appeared on the steamer's deck with her colored maid and for five minutes joked and laughed.

But as the steamer moved away from the dock she leaned against the rail and her laughter ceased.

"Oh, Marie," she cried, turning to her maid, "it's awful to be leaving America like this!"

Then she hid her face in her hands and sobbed like a woman whose heart was broken.

What will this extraordinary woman do next? Even those who know her best would hardly dare venture a guess.

May Yohe, \$2-a-Day Janitress, Is Happy at Last

May Yohe, at the Height of Her Fame and Prosperity, Literally Encrusted with Jewels

—and—

May Yohe To-day As Mistress of a Little Chicken Farm Which She Is Paying For At the Rate of \$10 a Month From Her Wages As Janitress.

BURR MCINTOSH

