

Old Stories Revised by George Ade



GEORGE ADE

Maud Muller Who Raked the Hay

A Shopworn Specimen of Sentimental Narrative Done Over, Retrimmed and Made Into a 1907 Model. What Might Happen to the Judge if He Went Trifling With a Wise Maud of the Present Day. By GEORGE ADE

for you and beat the barrier." The Maud Muller kind of Poem has gone into the Discard with the Melodeon, the Lap-Supper and the Kissing Game.

What the Fly Public wants nowadays is Plot and Something Doing.

What is there in the whole Maud Muller business when you come to sift it right down and analyze it according to the methods of Modern Criticism?

It seems that Maud Muller was out in the field trying to be a full hand and save her father some

the present day, accounts for the large supply of Manicures.

At this point the Judge comes by on horseback. He is supposed to be a very rich man. At the time the poem was written Judges were getting as high as twelve hundred dollars a year, and the query immediately suggests itself to the reader of the present day—did he have some side line of graft?

And any rate he was rich—therefore disreputable.

He pulled up in the shade of the old apple tree and asked the girl to bring him a drink of water. It

from a fairer hand was never quaffed."

This was going some right off the reel. He went on to talk about the flowers and the birds and the bees, and finally got around to the weather. A man, dealing in this line of conversation could not stay in the game for any great length of time at the present day, but nevertheless it seems that the Judge made a ten-strike with Mand.

After he rode away she watched him and said to herself, as nearly as her remarks can be translated into the sweet Vernacular of the

of the dime-throber, who knows just what the flat-headed public is looking for, except any such childish and pointless narrative as this? Not on your 300,000 circulation!

He would return the Ms. to the Author and suggest a few changes in order to make the story more Snappy and give the Artist a chance at some cracking good Pictures. By the time he got through doctoring up the Romance, it would run about as follows:

Maud, with an "e," as a type of the Progressive New Woman, is in the hayfield directing the operations of a large gang of workmen, when the Judge comes by in a 60-H. P. motor car.

The Judge has become immensely wealthy while acting as a tool of the Corporate Interests that are slowly but surely sucking the life-blood of the Republic. The Judge



"A SWEETER DRAUGHT FROM FAIRER HAND WAS NEVER QUAFFED."

THE STORY of Maud Muller was a Corker in its day. It is now what President Eliot, of Hovvad, would call a Lime. If it were larger it would be called a Lemon.

Some forty Summers ago every sentimental Sarah in the whole country kept in her room a Gift-Book containing the verses about Maud in the hayfield and the Judge riding by on his crestnut horse. It was a simple yarn, but sadly sweet withal.

When a Belle of the sixties retired to her yappy little Boudoir with the cardboard Mottoes, the kerosene lamp and the hand-worked Shams, she always had to read about Maud and her hard Finish before she could sink back into the Feathers.

First she would remove the stingy little Hat that usually had one rooster feather in it and was worn tilted over the right eye.

Then she would remove the Net, and the Chignon and the Waterfall, and carefully put away the Cameo Brooch, weighing one-half pound.

Then she would take off the queer Gaiters that had Elastics on the side. Also the Bead Bracelets.

She would back out of the Velvet Basque and climb over the Hoops and divest herself of various Garments made famous by Godey's Lady's Magazine, after which she would be ready for her evening dose of Maud Muller.

If a war time Belle, made up in the Freak costume that was in vogue when Pa and Ma were young, should walk along Alimony Alley in the Waldorf-Astoria they would sick the House Detective on to her.

And by the same rule, when you try to hand a Maud Muller poem to Mabelle, of the class of '07, who has a Track Record of 1:56 1/2, she simply chirps a couple of times and says, "Twice ten plus three

money. We find accurate pictures of her in the old Gift-Book. She was barefooted and her hair was let out to dry. Evidently she had been washing it. She had a round, shiny face and the fine, large belladonna eyes of the Anna Held variety.

She sang as she worked until she happened to glance at the far-off town, when she experienced a vague longing to discontinue manual labor and move into the city. This same symptom, prevailing to

might occur to some that a strong, husky man who had been riding all morning would go and get a drink for himself instead of asking some poor working girl to do it for him.

The story has it that she filled the cup from the spring and brought it to him, and as he took it she blushed, for she realized that she was not rigged out to receive swell company.

The Judge thanked her and remarked that "a sweeter draught

20th century: "Oh, if I could only land some man like that! Our family would certainly put a crimp in his Bank Account. He could buy all father's clothes and lend money to brother and pay mother's traveling expenses."

It was evident that Maud really loved the Judge.

As for the Judge, he looked back from a hill and saw her still soldiering and gazing at him and said: "She looks all right to me. If I could get some girl like that, me for a quiet place in the country. But I don't think my family would stand for her."

So the Judge rode on into the town and back to the Courthouse, while Maud stood around, thinking of him, until she was caught in the rain.

He married a rich wife who traveled with the highrollers, and often at night when he was waiting for her to come home he would gaze into the fire and wish that he could get out of it without having his picture in the papers.

Sometimes he wondered why he hadn't played a few return dates with the good-looker that brought him the water.

As for Maud, she married a poor man, but what the couple lacked in Furniture they made up in Family.

Very often she would sit around during the long, lonesome evenings, with nothing to read but the agricultural papers, and try to imagine what might have been if she had made a little stronger play for the Judge.

That is the end of the story. There is nothing more to it.

Suppose that some Whittier of today should write this kind of a story and send it to the editor of a brisk little magazine that guarantees you many a tingle for your ten-cent piece.

Would the wise man in charge



THIS INCIDENT IS TO GIVE THE ARTIST AN OPENING.



THEY WOULD SICK THE HOUSE DETECTIVE ONTO HER.

They were simply Stung and that settled it.

Nowadays when Folks find that they have misused the matrimonial venture they turn their troubles over to a lawyer.

In the revised version Maud goes into court and proves that her husband invariably wears a red necktie, thereby giving her many hours of acute suffering, and that she can no longer remain under the same roof. So the Court sets her free and enters an order that she shall not be permitted to marry again for two weeks.

In the meantime, the Judge proves that his wife has been excessively cruel in that she does not always agree with him, and of course he gets his decree.

Then the Judge and Maud get together and take the tall Hurdle hand in hand.

In the antiquated romance, when Mrs. E. D. N. Southworth was the Real Thing, the marriage of the two would be the Final Chapter.

It will be recalled that the Hero, after four-flushing and backing up and walking sideways through 300 pages of long conversations and weather reports, finally came to Taw.

He found her in the Conservatory or else at the rustic bench beneath the hawthorn tree with a distant view of the Manor House—the very spot on which they first met, the morning after Sir Guy was found murdered in the library.

Usually he would sneak from behind and lean over—then she, the startled little Cry—then he, "Agnes, I love you, I love you, I love you"—business of Clinching—quick curtain.

Such was the Happy Wind-Up. But it will no longer do.

It was once supposed that after the two went strolling back under the elms, holding hands, there was nothing more to be told. But the modern problem novel usually begins with the wedding march.

The Judge, following the example of the average Central Character in the absorbing Story of To-

day, permits his lust for gold and power to lead him into the sinuous byways of financial crookedness. In other words, he becomes the Director of an Industrial Corporation, and about the same time both of the great political parties begin building a gallows for him.

Maud is tempted by the glitter of High Life. She learns to dally with Bridge Whist at ten dollars a throw. She gets in with the Set that plays tag with the Ten Commandments and eats a light breakfast, consisting of grape fruit and a couple of Martinis about 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

In fact, Maud begins hitting the most elevated spots.

There is no reason why she shouldn't calm down and behave herself, but for some reason the plain \$14 a week mortals who live in suburban flats like to have their Fiction served with paprika dressing, and so the poor Society Leader has to govern herself accordingly.

Maud gets to be an Awful Thing.

She is a night owl, and becomes well acquainted with nearly all of the club rowdies in the world except her own husband.

At last, in order to keep up the Pace, she begins to flirt with the Dope. Whenever anything happens to worry her, she simply gets out her Light Artillery and gives herself a Shot that blows the ribbons out of her hair. Then in a few minutes she is picking grapes and watching the Northern Lights.

Things go on from bad to worse until Maud, fooling with the Hypo one day, gets an overdose, and the Judge, threatened with Exposure, jumps off of Brooklyn Bridge.

The moral of the whole complicated story of Maud and the Judge is that all self-respecting Souls should remain Poor and keep away from Drawing-Rooms where the Best Families are wont to congregate.

It is a good thing for Maud Muller that she wandered into the field of Romantic Fiction at a time when all she had to do was rake the hay.

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IN THE REVISED VERSION THE COURT SETS HER FREE.