

Papa Hostetter's Bitter Disillusionment

How His Theory That Boys Must Be Kept Away from Girls—and Girls Fenced Off from Boys—Resulted in the Secret Romance and Elopements of Two of His Children

MILLIONAIRE D. HERBERT HOSTETTER, of Pittsburgh, held as clear and definite ideas about the bringing up of children as he did about the bringing up of full efficiency of those famous bitters from which the wealth of the family is mainly derived. Mr. Hostetter knew that with just so much of this and so much of that, prepared in just this way and in just that way, and put in at exactly the proper time, the bitters—once besides their purely medicinal aspect, an incidental part of the court of the late John Barleycorn—would always be just so. But if one put in another ingredient, or put in an ingredient too soon, one did not know what reactions might follow.

Mr. Hostetter was much concerned over the future of his children. He felt that a great deal of the trouble in the world came from too early or wilful romances. Romance was the chemical—emotional reaction of a youth and a girl. Therefore, if one kept a boy always with boys and away from the girls, and if one kept a girl always with girls and away from the boys, love's disturbing element could not enter into their lives any more than a disturbing influence could enter into the bitters. For instance, if Adam had had a brother and had always been kept with him away from Eve, and if Eve had had a sister and had always been kept with her away from Adam, manifestly there would have been no scandal in the Garden of Eden!

It was all very simple. Mr. Hostetter determined to keep, together with another son and daughter, his older son, D. Herbert, Jr., away from the girls. He determined similarly to keep his older daughter Miriam away from the boys.

Yet, alas for Papa Hostetter's precautions, and doubly alas for his logic. He has had a bitter disillusionment!

The news that Miss Miriam had eloped with an entirely unknown young man named Smith, flying with him from an exclusive girls' seminary and its safeguards, has just leaked out.

And most extraordinarily, son D. Herbert, Jr., as thoroughly warned, guarded and instructed by his careful father as daughter, did that very same thing a few years ago!

What is wrong with Papa Hostetter's theory? Students of psychological science will unquestionably deduce that while love is, as the poets sing, a tonic; made up—as science has determined—of fixed ingredients, it cannot be handled in exactly the same way as a more material tonic can be; cannot certainly be watched with that meticulous care necessary to produce the standardized result.

The Hostetters of Pittsburgh belong to one of the earliest of that spectacular city's wealthiest families. The original founder, David, was the son of a distinguished physician of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where he was born back in 1819. Adventurous, ambitious, he was one of the Argonauts who sought for gold in California in the rush of '49. But he was unsuccessful. Returning to Pennsylvania, he devoted some years and much labor to the development of a formula for stomach bitters bequeathed to him by his father. By him the financial foundations of the family were laid, and by him they were amplified by banking, railroad enterprises and oil and natural gas developments.

From this sturdy and indomitable sire the sons inherited forceful and determined characters and the strongest tendency to aggression both in the forming of ideas and in carrying them out. It is interesting to note that with Mr. D. Herbert Hostetter this temperamental inheritance took the form of conservatism—the same conservatism that caused him to prescribe the isolation for his children until they had reached a certain age. But with his brother, Theodore Rickey Hostetter—the original David Hostetter had married a Miss Rosetta Rickey—it took the reverse of what may be called conservative. Among those early Pittsburgh multi-millionaires who cut such a wide swathe along Broadway in its hey-day, or, perhaps, better still, hey-night, he was a leader. A million dollars a year for amusement was his minimum record, and this included flipping pennies for thousand-dollar bills in the Waldorf bar with various sporting lights of the time.

T. R. Hostetter's somewhat lurid career ended in 1902—and there was in it no factor calculated to turn his sober brother from his conservatism.

It may be also that the strictness with which he insisted upon his children being brought up was a revolt against the extravagance for which, in the first days of the great steel merger, Pittsburgh became notorious.

But despite all precautions, one November morning in 1912 Mr. Hostetter, Sr., awoke to find that he had a daughter-in-law! His son, D. Herbert, Jr., had run

away with a girl the family had never met—Miss Margaret Brown, the sister-in-law and ward of Edward F. Goltra, the National Democratic Committeeman from Missouri. Miss Brown was only nineteen years old. Young Mr. Hostetter was the same age. He was a junior at Princeton University and never had he given evidence that he had not been following his father's precepts in having nothing to do with the petticoats!

The elopement was a very unusual one. Young Mr. Hostetter had run away first by himself, automobiling up to Maine. Following him in another automobile, less than a day behind, was Miss Brown. Behind her, a few hours only, in pursuit of the separate pair, was her sister, Mrs.



Mrs. D. Herbert Hostetter, Jr., the Charming Heroine of the First Hostetter Elopement.

Goltra. When Miss Brown had attended school in Washington and afterward while at an exclusive seminary in New York she had often gone down to Princeton, danced at the college hops and was the toast of the Cap and Gown Club, of which D. Herbert, Jr., was one of the most popular members. They grew to love each other. D. Herbert knew his father's ideas. Hence the elopement.

At Kittery Point in Maine they were married. Mr. Hostetter, Sr., was, to put it mildly, very angry. Young Mr. Hostetter cancelled his last year at Princeton. Afterward the family's wrath was assuaged when they found that the Browns of St. Louis were leaders in the most fashionable set of that city, belonged, indeed, to the truly elect, and that their son, despite his defiance of Papa Hostetter's theories, had secured a real prize.

This did not, however, change the senior's point of view. Accidents would happen, and one swallow does not make a summer. His confidence was justified by the next marriage, that of son Frederick G., who was conservatively and decorously wedded to a girl that Papa Hostetter and Mamma Hostetter thoroughly approved of, Miss Martha Catherine Gunn.

The score was now one for and one against the elder Hostetter's discipline. Nevertheless, even more rigorously than before he clung to his idea, putting every safeguard about the very attractive and youthful heiress of the Hostetters, his

daughter Miriam. Except for family gatherings she met at the Hostetter mansion in Pittsburgh no young men. Not yet being "out," that is, not a debutante, it was very easy to censor her acquaintanceship. Always she was most carefully chaperoned. Never was she allowed a boy visitor and never could she visit schoolmates or friends who had brothers. Her vacations were spent in Adamless Edens, or, if Adams looked into these paradises, she was not allowed to talk to them.

When the time came she was sent to a seminary at Westover, Conn., which is noted for its seclusion and the unremitting careful sequestration of its pretty students from the masculine half of the world.

Cupid's ingenuity in surmounting obstacles, his williness and his persistence have been the main theme of poets and novelists for ten thousand years. Cupid had a very real grudge to pay against Papa Hostetter. Efficiency at the seminary balked even Cupid.

But, ah, there was a village close by to which, under escort, and sometimes, on rare occasions, without escort, the pretty schoolgirls made their way! Never had Miss Hostetter made her way alone there, but Cupid did not despair. And lo and behold one fair morning this fall down toward the village slipped Miss Miriam with a schoolgirl friend! And who should she meet but one Malcolm Smith, of New Haven, student at a prep school there for



"But alas for theories where Cupid is concerned. While Papa Hostetter thought he had the bars and locks all securely fast—out of the windows, metaphorically speaking, jumped son D. Herbert, Jr., and daughter Miriam right into the arms of their loved ones."



He did. But it was inevitable that they couldn't "get away with it." Papa Hostetter found out about them, and there was, it is reported, an appalling scene. He forbade Miriam from ever seeing or meeting or writing or talking to or telephoning, or in any way having any communication, optical or oral, with Malcolm Smith! She must not even think about him.

Outwardly forced into obedience, but inwardly raging defiant, little Miss Miriam went back this fall to school and under stricter surveillance than ever.

Young Mr. Smith hasn't anything like the money his bride may have. But he is the son of Harry A. Smith, the president of the National Fire Insurance Company of Hartford, and will probably go into that business.

It is reported from Pittsburgh that the determination of the rich and powerful family into which he has wed is to let the young people hoe their own row for a while; make good, and by hard work soften down the handicap of their extreme youth and impulsiveness.

There is still another daughter of the Hostetters—a slip of a girl only sixteen. So the whole interesting situation may at the last break "fifty-fifty" for the seclusion theory after all.

Friends of Mr. Hostetter say that he is ardently solicitous about the futures of his children; that he is most eagerly concerned in their welfare. He wants them to be popular and to have every advantage, but he feels, like most wise parents, that they should arrive at years of discretion before they select their life-mates. Pittsburgh, perhaps more than any other city of its size, has had a large share of broken romances, of unhappiness, the result of too hasty matings, and his apparent attitude upon the matter is shared by many other fathers there.

The Hostetter girls have always been beauties. One of the most notable weddings in American fashionable society was that of Miss Greta Hostetter, the cousin of the very Miss Miriam who has just run away and gotten married so much more simply. The daughter of the before mentioned Mr. T. R. Hostetter, Miss Greta's good looks and charm left a trail of wounded hearts in all the capitals of Europe. Dukes and princelings, nobles and plain but distinguished commoners sought to win her. She was presented at the Court of St. James. Some time after her father died, leaving a somewhat shrunken estate of about \$1,500,000, her mother married Anson W. Burchard, of New York. Miss Greta decided at last to fall in love with a man of her own native town. Her marriage to Mr. Glenn Stewart, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Glenn Stewart, of Pittsburgh, occurred in 1914. Little Miss Miriam was at that wedding, and still with her hair in braids and almost still in pinafores.

The career of the elder Hostetter has been, turning aside for the moment from his ideas about his children's romances, a constructive and useful one. The spirit of adventure that took his father to the Golden West broke out in him early. Partly for the adventure in it and partly for his health, he went while still a youth to North Dakota, where he engaged in ranching. These free days in the open were some of his best. The impulsiveness of son and daughter that prompted them to their elopements is simply, perhaps, an outcropping of the same strain.

The Hostetter family is of old American stock. The original founder, Jacob Hostetter, came to Philadelphia from Switzerland back in 1708. The Rickey branch came from Scotland to this country in 1698. Mr. Hostetter, Sr., after studying under private tutors, took a preparatory course in the Western University and in 1877 completed his studies by entering Heidelberg. He is identified with many movements, both local and national, for civic betterment. He was twenty-eight years old when he was married.

It will be seen that the pioneer spirit has run throughout the family upon both sides. The pioneers never did believe in late marriages. They took their mates while youth was strong within them. And in this, it may be, lies still another explanation of the two elopements in this one generation.

Mrs. Malcolm Smith, nee Miss Miriam Hostetter, Heroine of the Recent Second Elopement, and Above, Mr. D. Herbert Hostetter, Jr.



Yale University and a cousin of the very charming girl with whom she was playing truant!

Miss Hostetter, as soon as she was introduced, thought she had never met anyone quite as nice as Malcolm. Malcolm was quite sure he had never met anyone quite like Miss Miriam. The village visit lengthened to the danger point while the two young things were finding out most interesting twin ideals that they held. It was surprising how much they thought alike! For some reason after that Miss Miriam's ingenuity in dodging watchful eyes became almost abnormally sharpened.

When vacation came around the two were head over heels in love with each other. But they were so young, Miss Miriam argued—and, besides, Papa Hostetter would carry on something dreadful if he knew. She knew Papa Hostetter, and what he could do when he was good and angry. It all seemed terribly hopeless. Intrepid young Malcolm arranged to spend his vacation near his little sweetheart—now plighted to him despite all the difficulties and Papa Hostetter's rigorous discipline.

Yet on the morning of Sunday, January 4, Papa Hostetter woke up in Pittsburgh to find that he had a new son-in-law! Miss Miriam Hostetter, the guarded maiden, had become Mrs. Malcolm Smith!

Just how the couple managed it is not as yet quite clear. There are rumors of rope ladders, an awaiting swift automobile, all the scenery of the real old-fashioned elopement with modern invention to aid. There is also a report that Miss Miriam simply calmly walked out, met young Mr. Malcolm and set off Greta Greening. At any rate, they landed safely in Toledo, where they were wed.

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Hostetter, Sr., at Pittsburgh. "We have no hard feelings. Of course, we were surprised and for a time chagrined over Miriam's marriage, but only because of her age. My daughter and her husband are at home and they have been forgiven. We are all happy."

Asked whether the pair would live in Pittsburgh or in Hartford, Mrs. Hostetter said: "It depends upon where my son-in-law finds a position."