



(C) E. O. Hoppe.
Lady Violet, Who Said Her One Wish Was to
Get Out of the Shrewsbury Family.

The Earl and Girl Scandal That Drove Taft Out of a British Court

*Imagine the Embarrassment
of the Genial ex-President
Who "Dropped in" at the Highly-Flavored
"Shrewsbury Case" at
the Most
Unfortunate
Moment*

LONDON.

THE door to the august British courtroom opened and in walked William Howard Taft, ex-President of the United States, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and distinguished visitor to England.

The presiding judge, in his wig and black robes, greeted him. The solicitor stopped in the middle of his argument, waiting respectfully. With due ceremony Justice Taft was escorted to a place of honor on the bench.

There he flashed the famous Taft smile and settled back to listen. The presiding judge gave a sign to the solicitor to proceed, and the solicitor began to read some letters.

As the reading progressed the famous Taft smile faded. The twinkle vanished from the Taft eyes and little spots of red began to appear in the Taft cheeks. The presiding judge was coughing nervously, but the solicitor plugged on.

Snoring references to "the American" were becoming frequent in the letters. Finally the solicitor read a letter from "the American" to Lady Shrewsbury. When he finished he began to address the court.

"Lord Shrewsbury," he said, "regarded this letter from the American as a great insult to his wife. He also felt that, in view of his daughter-in-law's marriage to an American, the young Earl might become saturated with republican views. It was perfectly obvious."

The solicitor paused, for Justice Taft had risen, his face a fiery red, and was bowing adieu to the presiding judge. The judge himself was distinctly flustered, and across the courtroom welled a low murmur. The next moment this stopped at the rap of the gavel, but Justice Taft was stalking toward the door. It closed behind him emphatically, some hearers thought.

What was it all about? Why did old Lord Shrewsbury feel that an American had insulted his wife? Why did he denounce the American and "republican ideas"? It was most unfortunate, agreed British jurists, that an ex-President of the United States—England's honored visitor, Justice Taft—had chanced into the court where this particular case was being tried, at the particular moment Lord Shrewsbury's letters were being read.

For the answer to those questions the reader must know what recently has been revealed to all England—that a secret romance ruled the last ten years of life of the late Charles Henry John Chetwynd Talbot, twentieth Earl of Shrewsbury, premier Earl of England, Hereditary Great Seneschal of Ireland, sportsman, big game hunter, sometimes known as "the coaching Earl."

When the old Earl died last year members of his family were astounded to learn that he had made a will, leaving the greater part of his \$1,000,000 estate to "a rank outsider," Mrs. Eleanor Whyte Hughes Brownlee, a young widow.

They learned he had met Mrs. Brownlee when he was forty-nine and she was only twenty. That was a few years after he separated from Lady Shrewsbury, giving her \$30,000 a year and the palatial Shrewsbury estate of Alton Towers. The Earl could not marry Mrs. Brownlee because he was not divorced. But they loved one another devotedly.

The Earl built her a home at Goring-on-Thames. Here they lived as man and wife. They rode and hunted together. They cruised on the Earl's yacht. When he was ill she nursed him. To his intimate friends, who were "in" on the secret, the Earl said Mrs. Brownlee was his "best pal."

Attorneys for the Earl said he began to alter his will soon after his affair with



The Late Earl of Shrewsbury at a
Fancy Dress Ball, as an
American Indian.

Lady Violet's Seven-Year-Old Son Who
Gets the Earldom but Not One Cent
of the Late Earl's Money.

Mrs. Brownlee began. He made codicils, bequeathing her jewelry. He made codicils, giving her his fine hunters. He made codicils, by which she was to receive the Shrewsbury family heirlooms. Finally, only a few months before his death, he drew up an entirely new will. This document gave his nurse, his "best pal," his "wife in all but name," practically his entire estate, variously valued from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000.

The reading of the will was a bitter blow to the Earl's aristocratic blood kin. Especially did their inheritance come hard to his daughter-in-law, Lady Violet, and her little son, John George Charles Henry Alton Alexander Chetwynd Talbot, who succeeded to the earldom.

Guardians of the boy, who is only seven, determined to break the will. They sued, and the hearing of the suit brought still more family skeletons to light. The Earl, a bred-in-the-bone Britisher, had quarreled

with his daughter-in-law because she loved an American.

Lady Violet was the daughter of the Marquess of Anglesey. She married Lord Ingestre, only son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1904, and they had one son, the lad who inherited his grandfather's title, but not a cent of his millions. Several daughters also were born to them.

Lord Ingestre was killed early in the World War in 1915. Some time afterward his widow met young Richard Pennoyer, native of Los Angeles and an attaché of the American embassy in London. They fell in love. They were married. And thereby Lady Violet brought down on her head the wrath of her Shrewsbury "in-laws," who had frowned upon her attraction to "the American" from the first.

Hot letters were exchanged. The first was from Lady Shrewsbury to Lady Violet, protesting against the engagement. Lady Violet replied, "I should like to say that, in the first place, the children do not require your pity; they are my children and I am their sole guardian, and I have no wish for them to be with anyone who is unkind to and about me, and as for the American, as you call him, you need have no fear that he will be brought into the Shrewsbury family; my one wish is to get out of it."

After her marriage to "the American" Lady Violet wrote a letter to Lord Shrewsbury, accusing Lady Shrewsbury of "spying on me and putting my children against me." At the same time Mr. Pennoyer

wrote to Lady Shrewsbury, declaring he and Lady Violet intended to put Lady Shrewsbury "completely outside their lives."

Lord Shrewsbury and Lady Shrewsbury were not living together. His lordship was in the midst of his love affair with pretty Mrs. Brownlee. Nevertheless, he decided to take a hand in the squabble on behalf of his wife, the woman who bore his name.

He wrote to Pennoyer, suggesting a conference to patch up the disagreement. Pennoyer wrote back, from the American embassy, declining an interview. Lord Shrewsbury, hot under the collar, penned a scathing note, assuring the young man he was "not a gentleman" and threatening to put all the letters before the American ambassador. To which Pennoyer shot back a brief, "Go ahead!"

Another letter from Lord Shrewsbury to Pennoyer demanded an apology to Lady Shrewsbury. When Pennoyer refused to apologize to the woman who referred so scornfully to "the American," Lord Shrewsbury sent copies of all the letters to Ambassador Page. The ambassador acknowledged them, and there the matter rested.

The rest of the world might never have heard of the tiff between Lady Violet and Lady Shrewsbury and the counter-tiff between Lord Shrewsbury and Lady Violet's American husband if Lord Shrewsbury hadn't been angered by the refusal of his grandson's stepfather to kowtow to him.

The American's attitude caused the old Earl to make a new will, leaving all his money to Mrs. Brownlee. The will caused the guardians of the disinherited grandson to sue. The suit caused the plaintiff's solicitor to read Lord Shrewsbury's slurs



Eleanor Whyte Hughes Brownlee, the Dashing Young
Widow, to Whom the Late Earl Left the Bulk
of His Million-Dollar Estate.

Chief Justice Taft Wearing His
Robes as Doctor of Civil Law,
a Degree Conferred on Him
During His Visit to Oxford
University the Day Before the
Unhappy "Sensation in Court."

On America and Americans to the court. And those remarks caused an ex-President of the United States to quit the courtroom.

London isn't sure whether Justice Taft resented the reference to "republican views" or whether he simply sympathized with a fellow-American who had dared tell the premier Earl of England just "where to get off."

For Justice Taft didn't explain—he merely separated. Yet that, in the eyes of the American colony in London, was as significant as though he had written a twenty-page explanation.