

# A HANDSOME TIP.

Visit of an American Girl to an English Ancestral Home.

By DOROTHEA HALE.

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Miss Mildred Van Tromp, an American multimillionaire in London, cared nothing for marrying a title, but she did care for the castles of old England. Miss Van Tromp's cousin, Miss Adele Sherman, was with her.

One morning the two tourists took a train at a London railway station, intending to visit Hallowen castle, the residence of the Duke of Elliston. On the journey they chatted about the castle they were going to see, referring occasionally to their guidebook. A gentleman in the same compartment sitting opposite them, who had been buried in his paper, spoke up:

"If you ladies are going to visit Hallowen castle I fear you will be disappointed. It will not be open today to visitors."

The girls looked much crestfallen. The gentleman continued:

"The castle is only shown during the duke's absence. He returns today."

Miss Sherman, who usually acted as spokesman, thanked the gentleman for his information and asked if there was



"HOW MUCH WOULD HE TAKE FOR IT?"

any one in service at the castle who for a handsome tip would make an exception in their case. To this he replied:

"I am going to the castle myself and shall see the duke. I think it probable that I can secure his permission to show you through his ancestral abode. If you will be there"—he took out his watch—"at, say, 2 o'clock I will let you know what I can do for you. Ask for Mr. Comyns."

The ladies thanked the man for his courtesy and when the train reached the station went to an inn, where they partook of a luncheon, then strolled up to the castle. They were stopped at the postern by a lackey, but on mentioning the name of Comyns they were conducted to a reception room in the living apartments of the castle. After a wait of ten minutes Mr. Comyns entered and said that he had obtained the necessary permission.

Mr. Comyns was between thirty and thirty-five years old. It was seldom that he smiled, but when he did his face changed from the serious to the genial. He was apparently a gentleman, but there are many grades of gentlemen in England, and the girls could not make out to which grade he belonged. They fancied that he might attend to some business for the duke or was his solicitor or was there to sell him something. One point troubled them from the first—they feared he might not be so respectable, though he had avoided the subject of tips, as to decline a crown or two if offered to him. They had often received favors or what they supposed were favors from men just as genteel looking whose palm they had crossed. Miss Van Tromp determined to watch his English. If he were not a gentleman he would surely make a blunder, perhaps in an unguarded moment drop an "h."

All this they talked and thought over while waiting. Mr. Comyns led them out into the courtyard and thence to one of the towers. He began in that clear, well modulated voice with which the two girls had heard the gentlemanly guides in Westminster abbey show that old pile for the modest sum of sixpence. This confirmed their opinion that he would expect a tip. He spoke fluently and as if he had often before reeled off the identical words.

"This tower," he said, "was built in the reign of William II, and is, of course, Norman. The upper part was put on later and is Gothic. A breach was made here where you see a difference in the stonework by the Roundheads during the close of the war by which Charles I. lost his rascally head."

Surprised at this, Miss Van Tromp asked:

"Does the duke consider King Charles I. rascally?"

"It doesn't matter to me what the duke thinks. Everybody knows that Charles I. was treacherous, mean, untrue to his friends and altogether unworthy of sovereignty."

"Does your British nobility usually

take that ground?" asked Miss Sherman.

"I don't know. The opinions of most of them are worth nothing anyway."

The girls were puzzled. How dare this man within the ancestral home of one of the British aristocrats speak so disrespectfully of them? Presently their guide led them into the gallery of family portraits.

"That old fellow up there was the Earl of Habersham and became the first Duke of Elliston. He got rich by robbery and was made a duke for stabbing in the back a man the king wished put out of the way."

The girls looked at each other, astonished at this frankness with regard to the present duke's ancestors.

"That red faced man," continued Mr. Comyns, "was the first duke's brother. He was a pirate."

"A pirate!" exclaimed both the girls at once.

"Certainly. That was once considered a very respectable calling. That one with scars on his face was a robber. He kept up this place by descending into the valley, looting travelers and returning with his booty."

"Were all the duke's ancestors bad?" asked Miss Van Tromp.

"Most of them. I know all about the family. Scarcely a good one in it."

"But the present duke is a fine man, I am told."

"I should like to know in what way. He sits in the house of lords—a useless institution—with his hat down over his eyes, most of the time asleep. When he is here he is bored to death. When I told him that two American girls wished to see his castle he proposed to show you about himself, just to have something to do. I told him it was my job and he shouldn't take it away from me."

There was more wonder in the faces of the young women, and the last words decided them that they must offer a tip.

"The castle is a dilapidated old place," continued the guide, "not worth preserving. I think the duke would like to sell it to some of your American millionaires."

"How could he bear to part with that which has descended to him through centuries?"

"He likes London pretty well. With the money he could get for this rattle-trap place he could enjoy himself very well in London."

"How much would he take for it?"

"Oh, a matter of £100,000."

"Please tell him that I'll give him that for it."

It was now Mr. Comyns' turn to look surprised. He made no reply at first, then said:

"From whom shall I tell him the offer comes?"

Miss Van Tromp took out a card, wrote her London address on it and handed it to Mr. Comyns. They had by this time gone the rounds and were at the postern. And now the terrible question of the tip came up. Miss Van Tromp decided that she would give one so large that even should their guide be a gentleman he might not feel insulted. She put five sovereigns into his hand. He took them unwillingly and thrust them into his pocket.

Two days later an invitation came from the dowager Duchess of Hallowen to Miss Van Tromp and Miss Sherman to dine with her at her London residence. The invitation closed with these words: "You can then talk over the sale of Hallowen castle with my son, the duke."

Miss Van Tromp, whose income for one year was more than the price she had offered for the property, was not at all frightened. At first she thought she would adhere to her resolution not to mingle with the English nobility and decline the invitation, but Miss Sherman persuaded her to accept. They were to sail for America the next week, and Miss Van Tromp was not averse to dining with a duchess so long as it could be done without the preliminary presentation at court.

On the evening appointed they drove to the duke's home. They were received by the dowager duchess, a pleasant old lady, and after a time who should enter the room but Mr. Comyns in evening dress. He advanced, smiling, to welcome the guests.

"My son," said the duchess.

"A younger son?" asked Miss Van Tromp.

"No; I'm Ralph Comyns and Duke of Elliston," said the gentleman. "As I told you, I'm a bored man when at Hallowen, and I passed a delightful hour in showing you my pile. But I shall not hold you to the offer, and here," taking five sovereigns from his vest pocket, "is the fee you gave me. I really don't think I should have accepted it."

There was a twinkle in his eye as he spoke.

"I am ready to give you a check for the castle," said Miss Van Tromp, a trifle ruffled at having been deceived.

"That's just like you Americans," replied the duke, smiling. "There's nothing so old, so new, so valuable or so worthless but that you are ready to buy it."

"I might hold you by law to the bargain. I can prove by my cousin, Miss Sherman, who was present, that you offered the property for a specified sum and I accepted the offer."

"I should rather be bound by it than go to law with such a charming opponent," replied the duke gallantly.

There was nothing more said about the sale, and after Miss Van Tromp had recovered from her chagrin at having tipped a duke the dinner proved a very enjoyable one. Miss Van Tromp and her cousin did not sail on the steamer on which they had engaged passage. Indeed, they remained in London for some time. Miss Van Tromp fell into the same matrimonial conditions as most American heiresses abroad. She married the Duke of Hallowen.

## The Benedict's "America,"

Nevada, 'tis of thee,  
Sweet state of liberty,  
Of thee I sing!  
State where our fathers flee,  
State that lets mothers free—  
Marriage, because of thee,  
Hath lost its sting.

My state, which holds the key  
That sets the shackled free,  
I love thy name.  
I love thy lawyers' ways,  
Thy dazzling divorces,  
The briefness of their stays,  
Their little game.

Reno, it is to thee,  
Daughter of liberty,  
To thee we flee.  
Long may thy streets resound  
With freedom's joyful sound—  
Scatter thy light around  
From sea to sea!  
—New York Times.

## Gone, but Not Forgotten.

The portly old gentleman had just finished a sumptuous feast. Lighting a huge Havana, he arose to go.

"Haven't you forgotten something?" began the waiter in an insinuating manner.

"Why, so I have!" was the reply. "I declare my memory becomes more treacherous every day!"

Lifting the ash tray, he pocketed the dollar bill lying beneath it and calmly strode out past the crestfallen knight of the tray.—Judge's Library.

## The Funeral Trust.

(An alleged "funeral trust" is the latest sensation in Cincinnati.—News.)

Oh, this is a merry footstool  
Where we linger day by day!  
And the things that daily happen  
Make us want to always stay.  
How we love the trusts and mergers  
Raising oil and bread and beef!  
How we love the ones who promise  
They will soon bring us relief!

We had hoped some time to shuffle  
Off this choking mortal coil  
And be freed from slow starvation  
And be freed from daily toil.  
But the undertakers' merger  
Knocks our fondest hopes sky high.  
For we'll find when comes the challenge  
It will cost too much to die.  
—Boston Herald.

## By the Card.

"Will Brother Jones kindly lend?" was asked by the pastor at the beginning of the prayer service.

Waking with a start at the mention of his name, the deacon almost broke up the service by replying: "I led last time. It's your turn. What's trumps?" —Philadelphia Record.

## The New Romance.

Kiss me, but do not muss my hair,  
Nor be so much in haste  
Your arm—my frock, if touched, will tear!  
To put about my waist.

Love me, but wisely. Tears and sighs  
I loathe and fear to see  
A tortured brow and jealous eyes  
Bent angrily on me.

And I'll give you a love discreet,  
For passion uncontrolled  
With pallor, wrinkles and crow's feet  
Turns pretty women old.  
—Life.

## Just So.

She sidled up to the counter like a rain cloud with white splashes where her big eyes rolled from side to side.

"Is yer gut dat air hymn song dey calls 'Jes' as Yo' Is'?"

"You mean 'Just as I Am'?"

"Dat's it—'Jes as Yo' Is'."—New York American.

## Automobilecourtshipology.

"Come," said Otto, "let us auto!"

"No," said she; "we hadn't ought to."

"But I've got the auto bought to."

"It's too late," said he. "You've got to!"

"Well, you ought first to have sought to. Have me say that I would auto. Now, although your auto's bought to, I'll not auto with you, Otto!"  
—Los Angeles Times.

## No Stranger to Them.

"Did you ever hear of snakes in winter?"

"To be sure," replied the Billyville matron. "My old man sees them the year round. They're a regular performin' circus to him!"—Atlanta Constitution.

## Town Topics.

When his sister discovered young Thos. Arayed in his parent's pajamas.  
And cried in dismay,  
"Oh, what will father say?"  
He replied: "Not a word. These are mos."  
—Puck.

## A Conscientious Declaration.

Drummer—Will you be mine? All my life I will worship you from February until April and from August until December. The rest of the time I am on the road.—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

## If He'd Only Die.

"Deadbeat," we call the scurvy wight  
Who cheats us. "I would be great  
If he were really dead; we might  
Collect from his estate."  
—Catholic Standard and Times.

## Making Him Useful.

"Ask your congressman for any free seeds?"

"Naw, but I've written him to find me two or three good summer boarders."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

## One Case.

"Two's company, three's a crowd"—  
That's a saying I've often heard.  
Yet even three might be allowed  
If Cupid is the third.  
—Cleveland Leader.

## During the Spanking.

"M-m-mamma, y-you'd better stop. I'm makin' s-s-so much a-noise you c-couldn't hear the t-t-telephone if it was to ring."—Harper's Monthly.

## Chums.

Said the boy, "I wonder whether  
You and I could have some fun."  
So they both went off together—  
The boy and the loaded gun.  
—Lippincott's.

## An Easy Angel.

"Any good thing in the new music show?"

"Yes; the backer was a 'good thing.'"—Kansas City Times.

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## DAMES AND DAUGHTERS.

Hannah Huggill, a fifteen-year-old girl of Yorkshire, England, has received a medal for her bravery in saving her mother from an infuriated bull by prodding the animal with a pitchfork.

Mme. Novikoff, who has been called the "M. P. for Russia," is famous the world over for her political articles. It is her custom to live six months in the year in England and six months in Russia.

The first woman to preach in Hungary is Julia Vargha, whose sermons are reported most favorably in the Budapest papers. She is the daughter of a bishop, and her sermons are delivered in Klausenburg.

Mrs. Mary Emery, widow of a millionaire realty dealer of Cincinnati, has purchased a two-acre tract of land in that city to be made into a park solely for birds. Mrs. Emery intends to spend \$250,000 on the little park if necessary.

Mrs. Taft, wife of the president, is a full-fledged baseball "fan." She is an enthusiastic about the national game as is her husband. She knows the game thoroughly. It is reported, and can discuss its fine points with almost the ease of a professional.

Mrs. A. D. Winship of Racine, Wis., is the oldest "freshman" in the United States. She is seventy-nine years old, has taken up a course in psychology and literature at the Ohio State university and plans a course that will keep her intellectually busy for some years.

## Fly Catches.

When Connie Mack let Jimmy Walsh get away from him he lost a live one. This lad is knocking the boards off the fence at Baltimore.

On July 25, 1896, Harry Davis played first base for Pittsburg against the Giants. He's the Harry Davis who is still playing with the Athletics.

Bob Gilks, who is one of the best scouts in the business and one of the best judges of ball players, says that half of the success of Ty Cobb is due to his nerve and confidence in himself.

Daubert, Brooklyn's new first baseman is one of the numerous crop of left handed men who are now taking jobs on first. He is not a Hal Chase in speed, but is a wonder on long foul flies and a whale of a batter.

No professional player wears a mustache now. It's an unwritten rule of the profession to play the game without either beard or mustache. Outfielder Trus of the Phillies was the last National league player to discard his mustache. He had it removed two years ago.

## Interesting.

"Do you enjoy going to banquets?"

"Well, I can't say that I enjoy them particularly, but they are always interesting."

"Always?"

"Yes. I never get tired noticing how well the old stories go if they are cleverly told."—Chicago Record-Herald.

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