

Who Were They?

A Case That Puzzled a Detective.

By EUNICE BLAKE

In important social centers where persons congregate who are interested in passing themselves off for more than they are worth there are establishments where jewelry, fine clothes and other articles intended for display may be hired. There is no better location for such a business than a gambling center where crowned heads, nobles, capitalists and such like are to be found in large numbers.

At Monte Carlo there was ten years ago the firm of Dorel & Co., whose stock of jewels was worth several million francs. They would loan these gems, charging therefor an amount equal to 5 per cent a month on the money invested in them. Their intention was to loan only to persons in good standing, but since they took a risk on any one they let have their jewels they hired detectives to keep all their debtors in sight and if possible forestall any loss.

A great many Americans visit Monte Carlo, and occasionally one of them would apply to Messrs. Dorel & Co. for the wherewithal to make a display. Since an American knows more about America and Americans than Europeans know about them the firm concluded to send to New York for a detective to occupy this special field. Harry Havens was sent by a prominent detective agency and straight-away entered upon his duties.

Havens for the purpose of trial was set to watch a man who purported to have descended from one of the old Dutch settlers of New York. He was known as Helliger Van Zant. He told Mr. Dorel, head of the loan firm, that his family, though impoverished, still held a high social position in New York society. He had followed a Russian heiress to Monte Carlo whom he was desirous of marrying. He needed clothes and a moderate amount of jewelry that he might make a suitable appearance. As for money, he had enough of that to enable him to make necessary expenditures.

He was furnished with what he asked, and Havens was set to look after him, though his story was believed and the property loaned him was not very valuable. As I have said, the detective was given an unimportant case that he might prove his worth.

Havens was not long in getting a view of the Russian heiress, Maria Nicholevna. She was about twenty-five years old and a fine looking woman. She stopped at one of the principal hotels with her mother, an aristocratic looking old lady, with two iron gray curls on either temple. She was known as "the Countess." The two ladies drove out a good deal and sometimes played at the gaming tables.

Havens had doubts as to Mr. Van Zant's being a genuine member of the old Dutch aristocracy of New York. He secured an introduction to Van Zant and asked him a few questions about life in New York, and the replies were hardly satisfactory. But the gentleman excused his ignorance on the ground that he had been educated abroad and had not been at home since he was sixteen years old. His accent was decidedly English, and this he accounted for from the fact that he had studied at Eton college.

Dorel & Co. knew nothing about the relationships between persons who were constantly coming to and going from Monte Carlo, relying entirely on those they employed to watch their clients. Havens was one day about to enter the office of his employers when he met Maria Nicholevna coming out. The detective was a close mouthed man and made no mention of the fact, but he jotted it down in his mental memorandum book.

The next evening the lady appeared in the gaming pavilion in company with Van Zant, wearing a coral necklace, the carving of which was so delicate that Havens knew it must be of considerable value.

Inquiry at the office of Dorel & Co. brought out the fact that it had been loaned by them; that it had been made in Rome and was worth \$1,000. Havens was also told that the lady was laying her nets to catch a British earl, who was in Monte Carlo incognito.

Dorel & Co. went on lending articles of display, and Havens continued to perform his duties, which were to keep track of the supposed New Yorker. But he was equally interested in the Russian heiress.

Why she should borrow jewelry if she were rich he could not tell unless her own gems were in Russia, locked in the family vaults.

If she were really trying to catch an English earl, borrowing the stones might be in order. Havens did not set it down as convincing evidence against her.

Van Zant was intimate with an Englishman named Perkins, whom Havens thought it might be advantageous to pump. He sought Perkins and soon found an opportunity to lend him 100 francs (\$20).

This put Perkins under obligations, and he told Havens as a great secret that Van Zant was an American at all, but Lord Herbert Hinchelwood, eldest son and heir of the Earl of Abbingward. Lord Herbert was inclined to be wild and had come to Monte Carlo un-

known to his father, the earl, to take a flier at the gaming tables.

"The plot thickens," muttered Havens to himself.

"Query: Is Van Zant a New Yorker or Lord Herbert Hinchelwood, or is he neither?"

"Is Maria Nicholevna the daughter of a Russian countess or an adventuress?"

"Are these two deceived in each other, or are they working in a common plot?"

"Is Perkins a stool pigeon for Van Zant or what he pretends to be, a London stockbroker?"

Havens leaned toward the opinion that Van Zant and Marie Nicholevna were both adventurers laying a trap for some person or persons unknown to him. But he was very uncertain. Both were either high bred persons or capable of imitating such. There is illimitable chicanery constantly going on among the nobility of Europe, who are of many grades.

Most of them are constantly scheming to gain something from some one else. Some are honorable; some are swindlers. The fact that Van Zant had borrowed the clothes he wore and Maria Nicholevna the coral necklace did not necessarily prove that they were impostors.

One evening Havens missed both Van Zant and Maria Nicholevna from the gaming tables, where they usually spent an hour or two tossing coins on to the table, sometimes winning, sometimes losing.

The detective had noticed that they were not especially interested, but were simply betting to pass the time. He believed they were absorbed in a bigger game, or at least a game of another kind. Their disappearance did not worry him so much as to his responsibility for Van Zant, since the value of his borrowings from Dorel & Co. was small.

He leaned to the opinion that they had gone after some one for whom they were laying a trap. On inquiring he learned that Maria Nicholevna, or "the countess," had gone to Nice and Van Zant had followed her there.

Havens went at once to the office of Dorel & Co. for information. What was his surprise to learn that Van Zant had been there and had returned all the articles he had borrowed, stating that his baggage, which he had left in England, had been forwarded to him. Maria Nicholevna had returned the coral necklace.

The detective was puzzled. The conditions would fit almost any theory. He formed no theory, for he had learned by experience that theories are misleading. He departed for Nice. After a search he learned that both his quarries were there at different hotels.

Soon after his arrival he saw Maria Nicholevna driving with her mother. She was returning to her hotel, and the detective followed the two into the house. He dined there at table d'hote and saw the Russian ladies in company with some persons who he felt sure were Americans.

Scraping an acquaintance with one of them, a young man from Philadelphia, he put on the pumping process, but only learned that his informant believed Maria Nicholevna was what she pretended to be.

One morning Havens was passing the little church used for worship principally by foreigners sojourning in Nice, when a carriage drove up, and who should alight but Van Zant. He went into the church, and the detective followed him. At the other end of the building were Maria Nicholevna, her mother and a few friends. No sooner had Van Zant joined the others than he and Maria Nicholevna stood before a clergyman who was waiting for them and were married.

Havens had gone over to Nice from sheer curiosity, for when Van Zant had disappeared from Monte Carlo, having returned what he had borrowed, the detective's official duties were ended. He remained in Nice a few days, scanning the marriage notices in such newspapers as he could get in order to see under what names the parties had married.

It was not long before he saw an announcement of a marriage between Lord Herbert Hinchelwood, younger son of the Earl of Abbingward, to Maria Nicholevna, daughter of Countess Warevski of Warsaw.

Havens was not satisfied, but there was nothing for him to do but go back to Monte Carlo and ask to be assigned to another case. Nevertheless, having been told that Hinchelwood was heir to the title, he believed something was wrong.

One day, a month later, he read in a Paris newspaper that the wife of Lord Herbert Hinchelwood had applied to have her marriage with him annulled. The couple had met in Monte Carlo, where Lord Herbert had passed himself off as an American, but had given out as a secret his real identity. The lady had married him supposing him to be the oldest son of his father and heir to the title, and he had married her supposing her to be immensely wealthy.

Lord Herbert already had several wives living, or such was supposed to be the case. At any rate, he had a bad reputation and had been disowned by his father. The lady was the daughter of a Polish count whose fortune had disappeared, and he had become a music teacher in Paris.

Such was the experience derived by Mr. Havens, detective, in his first case in the service of Messrs. Dorel & Co. at Monte Carlo. He remained with them several years, and his notebook will furnish plans for a number of stories, the characters of which were either nobles or connected with noble families. But he says that none of them puzzled him so much as this case of an earl's son and a count's daughter. At any rate, in no other case were two sharpers bitten, each by the other.

SAMOA IS CHANGING.

South Sea Islanders Reaching Out For Up to Date Things.

The natives of Samoa are exhibiting a marked inclination to imitate European manners. The beautiful siapos, hallowed by age long usage, are disappearing more and more, their place being taken by imported cotton cloth. Women and girls like to put on greater quantities of European wearing apparel.

In the vicinity of Apia native Samoan house and kitchen utensils have been replaced by European articles of less worth. New foods are being introduced. Instead of taro, bananas and yams, the natives now eat rice, biscuits and bread and even drink coffee in the morning. The new foods, however, have but a limited number of consumers at present.

The native huts were formerly covered with thatches of sugar cane. Insects have destroyed the sugar cane plantations, and the natives now cover their dwellings with corrugated iron, which gives them much less protection both against the sun during the day and against the cold at night. The Samoan house is disappearing, too, and its place is being taken by square buildings of American pine.

The total native population of the Samoan group is about 42,000. There are 1,500 whites and half castes.—New York Times.

TOOK THE ADVICE.

Then He Gave It a Practical Trial, and It Worked.

Several years ago the president of one of the prominent railway corporations in America was making a stirring address to an audience of young men and dwelt with particular emphasis on the necessity of making a good appearance.

"When you are looking for work," he said, "be careful that you are presentable. If you have only \$24 in the world spend \$20 for a suit of clothes, \$3.50 for a pair of shoes, 50 cents for a hair cut and shave. Then walk up to the job wherever it is and ask for it like a man."

This advice was greeted with great applause, and the railway president sat down amid a storm of cheers. The very next morning a dapper looking young fellow walked into the outer office of the orator and, handing a note to the clerk, said, "Please give this to the president." The note read as follows:

"I have paid \$20 for this suit of clothes, \$3.50 for a pair of shoes and 50 cents for a hair cut and a shave. I have walked from Harlem, and I would like a job as conductor on your road." He got the job.

The Presidential Salute.

One explanation for the reason for adopting twenty-one guns as the presidential salute is that there might be maintained a uniformity in national salutes. Great Britain having in the distant past adopted twenty-one as the number for the royal salute. Of the many surmises as to why the number twenty-one was settled upon we mention two—first, that twenty-one was the number of years fixed by English law as the age of majority; second, that seven was the original salute and three times seven would signify one seven for each of the divisions, England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. It is asserted that the United States adopted this salute to signify to the mother country that her child had reached his majority and was prepared in law to inherit the land and to this end fired the "gun of 1776," the figures of which year, 1+7+7+6, equal 21.—Philadelphia Press.

Goose and Michaelmas.

The English custom of eating goose on Michaelmas, Sept. 29, is said to date from the time of the great Queen Elizabeth.

Elizabeth had gone to call on Sir Neville Umfreyville. A messenger from the royal palace arrived and asked to see her. The queen allowed him to come into the dining room, where she was enjoying a slice of tender goose. The queen had just bitten into a delicious morsel when the messenger announced that the Spanish armada had been defeated. It happened to be Sept. 29, Michaelmas, so future generations of English celebrate by eating goose, although the custom is much older and extends to other countries.—London Mail.

The Grumpy Bachelor.

A wealthy gentleman who owns a country seat on one occasion nearly lost his wife, who fell into a river which flows through his estate. He announced the narrow escape to his friends, expecting their congratulations.

One of them, an old bachelor, wrote as follows: "I always told you that river was too shallow!"—London Telegraph.

He That Loveth a Book.

He that loveth a book will never be without a faithful friend, a wholesome counselor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, so in all fortunes.—Isaac Barrow.

How She Felt.

He (to wife at the piano)—That new piece you are trying is pretty difficult, isn't it? She—Yes; I feel like an aviator. He—How so? She—I'm trying to conquer the air.

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