

The Hidden Embezzler

The Mystery of a Man and His Daughter.

By AGNES G. BROGAN

The hotel keeper's wife rocked to and fro in her chair upon the veranda.

"It's my opinion that there's something very mysterious about the whole affair," she confided to her friend, who kept the village grocery. "Fancy a stylish young lady with an invalid mother moving into that leaky, crumbling old house, though no one has seen the mother yet, far as I can find out."

"I ought not to mention this," said the other, "but it's been troubling me a great deal. The girl came down to the store a few days ago, and when I made out the little bill they've been owing she looked it over carefully, then drew off one of her diamond rings and laid it upon the counter and asked me to take it as security."

The hotel keeper's wife leaned forward. "I believe they are stolen goods," she said excitedly.

A soft, rustling sound at the farther end of the veranda caused the women to start suddenly and peer through a screen of vines where the brightly lighted end of a cigar glowed in the darkness.

"Who is it?" Mrs. Briggs asked in a whisper.

"It's a young man from the city," her friend answered; "came just before supper. I forgot he was there."

The person referred to came leisurely toward them.

"Pardon me," he said in a pleasing voice. "Could you direct me to the home of Robert Reynolds? I have been told he moved here lately."

"Never heard of the name," the hotel keeper's wife said thoughtfully, while Mrs. Briggs volunteered the information that the only new arrivals in the village were the residents of the dilapidated old house upon the hill, who were known as Mrs. May and her daughter, Miss Miriam.

The stranger thanked them and proceeded down the roadway.

It was difficult to distinguish the old house through the dense growth of trees which surrounded it, while the wooden gate at the entrance to the grounds was bridged across with shrubs and overhanging branches. The man, reaching over to examine the interior of the garden, was met by a low, threatening growl.

"What is it, Don?" called a clear young voice, and a girl's face appeared above the brambles. It was rather disconcerting to be thus looking directly into a pair of questioning blue eyes, but he managed to stammer out his desire to locate a certain Robert Reynolds.

"We are strangers here," the girl told him. "I am afraid I cannot help you."

"My name is Madden," he said confidentially. "I am the bearer of an important message for a Mr. Robert Reynolds."

The girl looked steadily into his face. Her own had grown very white. "I repeat," she said emphatically, "that I cannot help you." Then down through the sleepy garden there came a querulous cry, growing more imperative as she waited with sudden terror in her eyes.

"Miriam!" wailed the voice.

"Miriam!"

"Go, please," she whispered breathlessly, then ran swiftly toward the house.

As Madden fastened the gate behind him he closed his mouth determinedly. If Robert Reynolds was concealed there, as he had reason to suppose, he must not again allow a sense of chivalry to deter him from seeking him out, forcibly if it need be. One could not openly doubt a lady's word, but when another opportunity presented itself he would be resolute.

The opportunity arrived when he met the owner of the much discussed house one day at the hotel. "If it's for sale," Madden remarked casually, "I might go up with you and look it over."

The girl whose face haunted him continually, whose blue eyes moved him so quickly from baffled anger to pity, looked up, startled, from the flowers she was clipping as they approached.

"This gentleman wants to go over the house, Miss May. He is thinking of buying," the landlord explained.

As they neared the doorway with its quaint white pillars she turned suddenly and looked up at Madden. Pleadingly, entreatingly, her eyes sought his as she stood hesitating.

"Are you coming?" the owner asked.

"It is not necessary to go inside," Madden said unexpectedly. "I can form a pretty good opinion out here."

Then the girl flashed at him a smile of gratitude. "I thank you," she murmured softly. "My patient dislikes to be disturbed."

Miriam, as in thought he called her, was quite friendly after that and would often linger at the gate to talk when he passed the house upon one pretense or another, though the tangled branches seemed to bar him out as completely as an iron door might have done. But he had been sent upon an important commission and still deliberated long how best to accomplish his purpose. So when upon a moonlight night he had been irresistibly drawn toward the house upon the hill he passed noiselessly through the gateway, then on through the deserted gardens to where a light shone from beneath a half drawn curtain. Stooping, he peered under the blind.

"Perhaps," said a low mocking voice, "you will be kind enough to tell me what you expect to find in my house."

Madden straightened suddenly and looked in the direction of a shadowy corner where a girl's white clad figure was dimly outlined. "I—I beg your pardon for having frightened you," he said in confusion. "It is time I should be frank with you. The man whom I hoped to find in that room is Robert Reynolds, of whom you have heard."

The girl arose. Her face shone very white in the moonlight, and her eyes were wide with hurt surprise. "He is not in that house," she said slowly. "Have I not told you so?"

"You have," he answered doggedly, "and you will think me worse than impertinent now when I confess that I thought you might be concealing this man's identity out of a mistaken idea of benefit to him."

She interrupted him angrily. "I will listen to you no longer," she said. "There is no reason why I should trouble to prove my truthfulness. Nevertheless," she waved her hand toward the great, silent house—"you are at liberty to convince yourself. I will remain here."

Madden ignored the offer. "Will you at least allow me the privilege of explaining," he asked desperately, "tomorrow, if you would be so kind?"

The girl turned from him and slowly ascended the steps. At the doorway she paused. "You may explain tomorrow," she said brokenly, "while I shall confess."

She came to meet him upon the following morning, such a pathetic, drooping little figure that Madden in his anxiety to hasten through the ordeal would have spoken at once, but she put out a protesting hand. "If you please," she asked, "may I tell my story first?"

He silently nodded assent, then stood looking gravely down upon her as she sat before him.

"It is needless to tell you," she began in a low, hopeless tone, "that Robert Reynolds is my father. You are also acquainted with the facts which made it necessary for us to hide away in this isolated village. They were too ready to judge him, I think, those boasted friends of his, and to emblazon his guilt in all the papers." She covered her face with trembling hands. "I seem to see always the glaring headlines, 'Robert Reynolds, Treasurer of the Elite Club, Absconded.' But there are some things you do not know. How this disgrace, following as it did so closely upon the failure of the business which left us penniless, changed my father from a strong, reliant man into a child startled at every sound! And I, who had never been taught to decide for myself, had now to act for us both. So, wisely or unwisely, I brought him here, where I have been doing my best to allay his fears—trying to coax him back to courage."

"I did not come to persecute your father, child," said Madden. "I have been searching for him, that is true, but it was in order to bring him good news, to clear his name of a false imputation."

Miriam gave a little cry. "Oh, how shall I know it is true?" she said. "Whom can I trust?"

He bent over, looking down at her pityingly. "There is one whom you would have to trust always," he said gently. "And when she asked, doubting, who that might be he answered her quietly, 'Your husband.'"

And early that evening Mrs. Briggs hurried down to visit her friend at the hotel. "It beats all," she said by way of greeting. "That mysterious lady of ours was married at the parsonage this afternoon to the very detective who came to arrest her, no doubt, and he has brought back all them stolen rings."

But the other was so overcome by this astonishing news that she could find no words to reply.

RHODES AND THE AFRICANS.

How the Empire Builder Ruled the Savage Native Chiefs.

John Hays Hammond, the noted mining engineer, tells in the American Magazine of the most wonderful man he knows. He names Cecil Rhodes as this man, and he says:

"The influence of Mr. Rhodes on the South African natives was almost uncanny. Once a grave native war let loose against the white settlers. Rhodes undertook to stop the combat single handedly after the British commissioner had been treated with studied contempt by the native chief. His dusky majesty had kept the representatives of the British crown out on the veldt for three days before condescending to fulfill a prearranged meeting. Even then he gave the envoy no satisfaction."

"Rhodes then took the matter up and arranged through messengers for a talk with the native and then kept him waiting—exactly three days."

"Despite the fighting men who surrounded the chief, Mr. Rhodes scorned to carry a single weapon or allow a single soldier to accompany him. He had in his hand only a riding crop."

"The king squatted in state on the only seat available, leaving Rhodes standing. Rhodes ordered him up and took the seat."

"What do you mean by killing my white people?" he demanded.

"At first the native was offended, but the personality and fearlessness of the empire builder soon cowed him. When Rhodes left he carried a solemn pledge that not another shot would be fired. Not only did the chief keep his word, but when 'the great spirit of Africa' died and was laid to rest in the lonely, uninhabited Matopos representatives of the chief fired a royal salute over his grave, an honor never before or since paid to the memory of a white man."

Partial Eclipse of the Honeymoon.

In early American households maternal authority was not lightly to be defied. When Charlotte Fenwick, a southern beauty of the Revolutionary period, was fifteen years old she took advantage of the absence of her mother in England to fall in love with a northerner, Major William Leigh Pierce, and to marry him. On Mrs. Fenwick's return to Savannah, which had been hastened by news of the approach of the English army to Charleston, she was highly indignant to find her daughter married to a stranger.

"And who is this Major Pierce?" she demanded.

"A gentleman, madam!" young Mrs. Pierce haughtily replied. "Go to your room, madam," commanded Mrs. Fenwick severely, "and stay the rest of the day!" And the little bride meekly obeyed.

Pens in the Tropics.

The ordinary steel pens used in temperate climates, particularly those used in the United States, are not adaptable to the tropics on account of rusting. This is especially true during the rainy season and at seaports. Bronze or brass pens or those coated with bronze do not seem to be thus affected. Ink deteriorates very quickly in tropical climates and often has the consistency of gum. On the ordinary steel pens this aids the rust and is hard to wipe off if left for a short time. With the bronze or brass pen or with a pen coated with bronze the coated ink is easily wiped or burned off.—Indianapolis News.

The Value of Education.

Late statistics show that uneducated laborers earn on the average \$500 per annum for forty years, a total of \$20,000; high school graduates earn on the average \$1,000 a year for forty years, a total of \$40,000. This additional education requires twelve years of schooling of 180 days each, a total of 2,160 days of school. If that many days adds \$20,000 to the income of life, then each day at school adds \$9.02. The child that stays out of school to earn less than \$9 per day is losing money, not making money.

Whole Hog or None.

"Whole hog or none" refers to the alleged custom of Mohammed to allow his followers to eat all except one portion of a pig, which portion, however, was not specified. The result, therefore, was that if a Mohammedan did not wholly avoid the use of pork he might as well run the risk of consuming the whole hog as to eat any portion thereof.

Zinc.

Zinc is ductile between 212 and 302 degrees F. and can then be shaped as required. But when either above or below these limits it becomes brittle and unpliant and therefore not adapted for treatment. It melts at about 786 degrees F. if volatilization is guarded against.

Flags in England.

The early inhabitants of England, like those of other countries, used emblematic devices of one kind or another. That of the Saxons was a white horse. The introduction of flags into England is ascribed to St. Augustine, the missionary, and his followers, who, after the convention of King Ethelbert, entered Canterbury in procession, chanting and bearing small banners.

Strange Ways of Salmon.

The Chinook salmon as they ascend the streams to the spawning grounds fight and starve themselves, not eating from the time they leave the salt water, so that only the hardiest survive, and these, when the spawning season is over, die. The young swim to the salt water, where they live four years, when they in turn destroy themselves to preserve the species.

Beginning of the Trouble.

"Yes," said Breezem, who happened to be in a repulsive mood, "during my younger days I sowed the wind, but later—"

"Well, what happened later?" queried Mrs. Breezem.

"I married you," continued the alleged head of the matrimonial combine.—Chicago News.

The Oregon Agricultural College

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Administrator's Notice of Final Settlement.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned administrator of the estate of Mary E. Edwards, deceased, has filed his final account as said administrator of said estate in the County Court of Yamhill County, Oregon, and that said Court has appointed Monday, November 19th, 1917, at 11 o'clock A. M. of said day, as the day and hour for the hearing of objections to said final account and settlement thereof.

Now, therefore, all persons interested in the estate of said decedent are hereby notified and required to appear at the County Court room at the Court House at McMinnville, said County and State, at said time, to then and there show cause, if any there be, why said account should not be settled, allowed and approved, and said estate forever and finally settled and said administrator discharged.

Dated October 18th, 1917.
J. S. EDWARDS,
Administrator of the Estate of Mary E. Edwards, deceased.

Clarence Butt, Attorney for Estate.
First pub. October 18. Last pub. November 15.

Executor and Executrix Notice of Final Settlement.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, joint executor and executrix of the last Will and Testament of Henry H. Herrick, deceased, have filed their final account as said joint executor and executrix in the County Court of Yamhill County, Oregon, and that said Court has appointed Monday, November 5th, 1917, at 11 o'clock A. M. of said day, as the day and hour for the hearing of objections to said final account and the settlement thereof.

Now, therefore, all persons interested in the estate of said decedent are hereby notified and required to appear at the County Court room, at the Court House at McMinnville, said County and State, at said time, to then and there show cause, if any there be, why said account should not be settled, allowed and approved, and said estate forever and finally settled and said executor and executrix discharged.

Dated October 4th, 1917.
J. C. MCCREA and
HENRIETTA GREENE,
Joint Executor and Executrix of the Last Will and Testament of Henry H. Herrick, deceased.

Clarence Butt, Attorney for Estate.
First pub. October 4. Last pub. November 1.

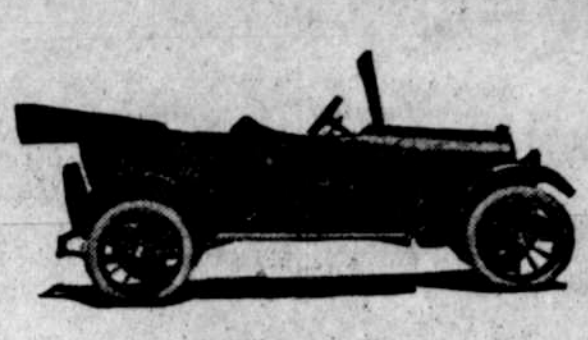
Notice of Final Settlement.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, as executors of the last will and of the estate of Alfred Philo Oliver, late of Yamhill County, deceased, have filed in the County Court of Yamhill County, State of Oregon, their final account of their administration of said estate, asking that said final account be allowed by said Court and that a final order of distribution be made by said Court, and that said Court has duly ordered that said final account and objections thereto be heard by said Court at the usual place of holding said County Court at the Court House at McMinnville, in said County and State, on Monday, the 5th day of November, 1917, at 10 o'clock A. M. of said day, at which time and place any person interested in said estate may appear and file objections to the allowance of said final account.

Dated October 4th, 1917.
R. H. C. BENNETT,
LYNN B. FERGUSON,
A. C. SEELY,
As Executors of said Estate.
Ramsey, Lange & Nott, Attorneys for said Estate.
First pub. October 4. Last pub. November 1.

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