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Finding Out the Truth

An Engaged Couple Try to Impose on Each Other's Relatives

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

When Edith Lambert and I became engaged, on comparing notes we found that Edith had an uncle whose fortune she expected to inherit, while I had an aunt whose heir I was to be. Edith gave me the impression that her uncle was a very dignified old gentleman, whose ideas concerning the man she should marry were that he should walk a chalk line. This did not indicate that my chances for pleasing the old man were very good, for, if ever a youngster was full of Old Nick, I was that youngster.

Per contra, my aunt had been in her youth a society girl, a flirt, fond of horse racing, yachting, and had even been so vicious as to play cards for money. Edith was just the reverse of this; a young woman of reserve and dignity, and, withal, very religious.

Naturally it was essential that I should be acceptable to Edith's uncle and that Edith should please my aunt, for neither Edith nor I had any fortune and had both been brought up in luxury. Edith's uncle was worth \$500,000 in 6 per cent bonds, while my aunt had something more than this in well rented real estate. The problem before me and my fiancée was to make her uncle believe that I was a very steady and well behaved young man, and to make my aunt think that Edith was a woman of the world.

After a long conference in which various plans were discussed we decided that we would begin with my aunt. I was to introduce Edith to her, and Edith was to put on as much sportiveness as she could, though I had misgivings as to her deceiving my aunt, for it was born in Edith to be dignified, and she had no sympathy whatever with that license which pertains to people of the gay world. However, it was arranged that my aunt was to call on my fiancée, after which we three were to pass an evening together at my aunt's house.

The evening after this call I went to see Edith and found her in a very distressed state of mind.

"Why did you tell me that Miss Martindale was a woman of the world?" she said. "I commenced soon after she appeared to talk freely and kept it up, while she listened to me without betraying any sympathy with the ideas I expressed, and she finally arose, evidently very much disgusted with me, and took her departure."

"What did you say?"
"Why, I began by cracking jokes about our forthcoming marriage, saying that I hoped when you were out late at poker parties your companions wouldn't have to set you up against the front door and ring the bell."

"What did she say to that?"
"Why, she scowled."

"What else did you say?"
"I said I had lost \$500 on the last races and expected to make it up at the meet next week. Then I said I hoped you wouldn't feel that you must be tied down to me all the while. You were welcome to flirt with other women and get yourself talked about all you liked, provided there was nothing criminal in it. As for me, while I could get on with one husband, I must have attention from other men."

She looked at me as if she would bite my head off and whisked away without even saying goodbye.

"Perhaps it was because you said it all instead of doing it. Aunt Kate was probably shocked at the bare statement, while she would not have minded the acts mentioned."

"I am afraid you don't understand your aunt. At any rate, I have antagonized her, and I think you'll find that if you marry me she will not leave you a cent of her money."

I went straight to my aunt to hear what she had to say about the matter, but she locked her tongue and would give me no satisfaction. I judged, however, that she had not been over-pleased with my fiancée. Doubtless Edith had overdone the matter.

The next thing to be done was for me to make the acquaintance of Mr. Springer, Edith's wealthy uncle. He wrote Edith that I was to stay with him at his house and desired her to inform him what train I would come on, that he might send his car to the station for me. She gave him the desired information, and one bright morning I boarded the train, resolved to make a better impression on Edith's uncle than she had made on my aunt. One thing I determined to guard against—that was, overdoing it.

I had not been long on the train when a gentleman asked me if I would

make one of four to play whist. Glad to while away the time, I consented. I was the partner of the gentleman who invited me to play, and the stake, beginning at a quarter a corner, was gradually increased to a dollar. But our antagonists got the idea that I and my partner were a pair of professional gamblers who were intending to "do" them and soon retired from the game.

This threw my partner and myself together, he assuming considerable bonhomie. He had a flask with him and invited me to join him in emptying it. I hesitated, fearing that when I met Mr. Springer in the evening he would smell my breath. But my new

found friend was so urgent that I at last consented. Then he brought out some fine Havana cigars and proposed that we go into the smoking compartment of the car for a smoke. Again I objected, for if a whisky breath is bad a whisky and tobacco breath is worse. But a smoke after a drink is especially enjoyable, so again I yielded.

After our smoke my companion proposed a game of vingt et un, to which I assented, and the luck, being on my side, when the train rolled into the station where we were to alight I had taken \$76 from my antagonist. He didn't complain, nor did he ask me to meet him again for his revenge, being just as cheery at the parting as he had been at the meeting.

I found Mr. Springer's car at the station and, getting in, was whisked to his home. When I arrived I was told that he was not at home, but was expected soon. I was shown to a room, where I made a toilet, taking care to use some aromatic tooth powder I had with me to destroy the odor of whisky and tobacco on my breath. I also divested myself of my traveling suit, which was saturated with tobacco smoke. Having got as well rid as possible of these taints, I went down into the library, where I found an evening paper.

I was engrossed in the paper when, hearing a footstep, I looked up, and great was my astonishment. A man stood before me with a benign smile on his face, and who should be but the person who had sought my acquaintance on the train and whom I had relieved of \$76. He offered his hand and said:

"I'm glad to see you, my dear boy. I can tell you at once that I heartily approve of you. We can't trust one another in this world when we are warned, so I concluded to take you un-awares."

"B-b-but I thought you were—"

"So I am in business and among women and children, but I know what a young man is, for I've been one myself. So I concluded to go back to the days of my wild oats and see you as you are, not as you would pretend to be. I'm very fond of my niece and wish her to marry a man, not a sneaking, driving fellow who pretends to goodness while his inclinations are otherwise. I have found you perfectly honorable and you played a fair game. I'll say this, even if you did relieve me of my money. Come in to dinner."

Mr. Springer did not let me go for several days. He was not the man he had been on the train, but was no prude. He was much engrossed in business, and this did not give him time for dissipation even if he was inclined that way, and he was not so inclined. I went back to Edith with a far better report of my status with her uncle than she had given me of her status with my aunt.

I found that Aunt Kate had been called away for a few days, and I was obliged to go to Edith to be informed as to the situation. She told me that my aunt had written her a brief note, saying that on her return and mine she would be pleased to see us at her house to spend an evening. I gave Edith an account of my meeting with her uncle, at which she was much surprised.

"You men are very queer," she said. A few days after my return I received a telephone message from Aunt Kate that I was to fetch Edith to her house for dinner and to spend the evening. On the evening in question I called for Edith, and she said that she would try to undo the impression she had made upon my aunt. I told her that she would better act herself and not try to appear to be any one else. Aunt Kate was very shrewd and not to be fooled.

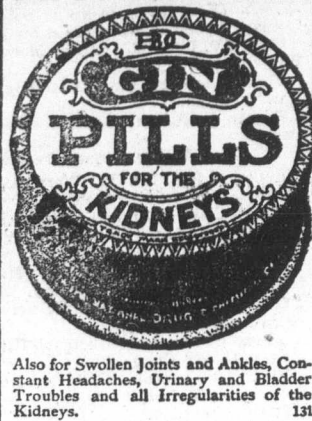
We found our hostess got up in her finest costume, extremely décolletée and with plenty of adornment. She gave Edith a smack and warmly pressed my hand. Curious to know why she had been so different with Edith during her call, I entered upon the subject at once.

"Edith told me she had shocked you, Aunt Kate," I said.

"Shocked me! She was trying to fool me. Do you suppose I don't know a woman of the world? Why, my dear, you could never be bad even if you tried ever so hard. Come in to dinner."

What a relief, both to me and to Edith! And how happy we were at having so successfully passed the ordeal required. We had done nothing

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ing to further the issue. Edith's uncle and my aunt had taken pains to prevent our imposing on them to see us as we were and not as we would have pretended.

Our dinner was a most enjoyable one, but Edith and I agreed that it would have been far more delightful if we could have had her uncle with us. My aunt, who had the faculty of adapting herself to the person she was with, behaved herself remarkably well. Indeed, so circumspect was she that Edith conceived the idea that we were trying to impose upon her; that Aunt Kate had maligned herself and I had borne her out in the deception.

Another dinner we enjoyed quite as well—that was with Edith's uncle. We threatened to make a match between the two, but they had passed too far into bachelorhood and spinsterhood, so we were obliged to be content with the match between ourselves.

It appeared later that Mr. Springer had a double motive for taking the trouble to travel with me incognito. He was getting old and wished to retire. Since he had no son to succeed him and Edith was like a daughter to him he conceived the idea of working me into the management of his business. The result was that in time I became his heir.

Miller's Worm Powders are par excellence the medicine for children who are suffering from ravages of worms. They immediately alter the stomachic conditions under which the worms subsist, and drive them from the system, and, at the same time, they are tonic in their efforts upon the digestive organs, restoring them to healthful operation and ensuring immunity from further disorders from such a cause.

MONEY RUNNING SHORT.

Foe's Income Will Not Meet Interest on Debt.

The German announcement that the seventh German war loan had brought in a total of 12,430,000,000 marks, or nominally \$3,107,500,000, raised some familiar questions. A total war debt of 74,416,300,000 marks, or \$18,104,000,000, has now been created in the seven war loans. On this amount, which excludes Treasury bills outstanding or discounted at the Reichsbank, the annual interest charge is, roughly, \$900,000,000. Early in 1916, when Germany was still refusing to impose any heavy war taxation on its people (being still obsessed with the idea of making France and England pay the German war expenses through a stupendous indemnity), it was estimated that about one-sixth of the proceeds of its war loans had to be used to meet interest on the existing war debt.

In another year or two, one-fourth would have to be thus used. Last April the German Government began to put on additional taxes. Those on coal, transportation, and was profits were estimated to bring in \$312,000,000. In the fiscal year ending March 31, 1914, the Empire's revenue from all sources except loans were \$851,000,000, including \$220,000,000 from post and telegraph and \$41,000,000 from railroads. In neither of the two succeeding years did total ordinary revenue, according to the budget estimates, rise above \$830,000,000.

In the budget for the year ended last March the "special war taxes" brought the ordinary revenue up to \$915,000,000; but, as this included \$260,000,000 of gross revenue from railways, post, and telegraph, and printing office, against which there were maintenance charges totalling \$218,000,000, it left barely \$700,000,000 net. But with interest payments now \$900,000,000, this means that even the increased Imperial revenue falls short by about \$200,000,000 annually of meeting interest on the war debt, and meantime Treasury bills and new war loans follow one another on the market. Furthermore, the annual interest on that debt now exceeds by nearly \$50,000,000 the entire Imperial revenue of the year before the war.

Peevish, pale, restless, and sickly children owe their condition to worms. Mother Graves' Worm Exterminators will cure them and restore health.

A CONTRAST IN POLICE

As They Are Seen In Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

In Christiania the policeman is a mild and amiable citizen in a rather shiny coat and none too neat who tries to maintain some semblance of order in the democratic muddle of the city's traffic.

In Stockholm the policeman is a walking arsenal, with sword and pistol and a brass helmet, and the arrest of a disorderly person becomes an act of state. There the policeman represents the high authority of a proud country. He fulfills his duty with a stern severity. He is the symbol of law and established order.

In Copenhagen the policeman is neither the happy-go-lucky citizen who patrols the streets of Norway nor is he a creature of resplendent glory like his colleague in Sweden. He strikes a happy medium. In this he is an excellent representative of a land where the art of sensible and peaceful living seems to have been brought to its highest perfection, where everybody seems well fed, where beggars are as scarce as very rich people and where the women live up to the best traditions of the charming china which is made in the royal residence of Denmark.—Hendrick Willem Van Loon in Century.

DEAD, YET STILL IT LIVES.

A Most Curious Freak of Nature Is the Vegetable Caterpillar.

Among the many strange growths, apparently freaks of nature, which are to be found in New Zealand the vegetable caterpillar readily ranks among the foremost. This caterpillar is several inches in length, is hairless and does not differ essentially in appearance from some of the caterpillars of our own land.

Its claim to distinction lies in the fact that when it gets ready to die it digs a hole for itself in the earth and completely buries itself. Later a slender green shoot springs from the spot. This bears two or more leaves near its top.

Upon investigation it is found that the green shoot springs from the head of the dead caterpillar, and further investigation develops the fact that the body of the caterpillar is filled with roots.

The form is retained without change, and the roots do not pierce through the skin or enter the ground. When dug up this dead yet living freak presents a most odd appearance, for the head and even the eyes of the caterpillar are distinctly seen, yet from the head is growing the green sprout, with its leaves.

Simplicity of Jenny Lind.

Jenny Lind must have been the most simple, unpretending prima donna that ever lived. When she first visited England she was bound to sing only at the Royal Italian Opera House, and when commanded to sing at the queen's concert she was obliged to refuse. Very sorry to be compelled to notify this, she ordered her carriage and drove straight to Buckingham palace. She handed her card to an official, who, not unnaturally, declined to take it. A higher authority happened to pass and took it upon himself to present it. As soon as her majesty saw it she said, "Admit her by all means." Jenny Lind appeared and said simply that she was so very sorry to be unable to sing at her majesty's concert that she thought it better to call herself and explain. The queen was charmed with her natural manner, gave her a cordial reception and promised to be her friend.

Jackals and Crocodile Eggs.

Jackals and hyenas are very fond of crocodile eggs. The former is the more successful poacher of the two. Natives of central Africa say that the jackal has sixteen eyes, with one of which he watches the eggs and with the fifteen others he looks out for the crocodile. The hyena, on the other hand, being very greedy, has all his eyes on the eggs and so often falls a victim to the watchful crocodile in motionless hiding. The natives say, too, that the crocodile sometimes knocks its prey off the bank or off the canoe with its tail and then seizes it with its wide open jaws.

The Earth and Man Compared.

If it were possible for a man to construct a globe 800 feet in height—much less than twice the height of the Washington monument—and to place upon any portion of its surface an atom one four thousand three hundred and eighty-eight of an inch in diameter and one hundred and twentieth of an inch in height, it would correctly denote the proportions man bears to the gigantic globe upon which he stands.

Lazy Larks.

Investigation has ruined the lark's reputation for early rising. That much celebrated bird is quite a sluggard, as it does not rise till long after chaffinches, linnets and a number of hedge-row birds have been up and about for some time.