

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Author of "Mysterious Mr. Sabin," "The Secret," "The Traitors," "Conspirators," etc.

## CHAPTER 1.

Mistress and Agent.

have been adjusted. The tenants of the home lands have been most carefully chosen, and Thorpe itself is spoken of everywhere as a model village.

"It is very charming to look at," its mistress admitted. "The flowers and thatched roofs are so picturesque. Quite a different scene from the one where most people one sees about contented and respectful, too."

"You are right, madam," Mr. Hurd answered drily. "The villagers have had a good many privileges from your family for generations."

The lady turned her head thoughtfully.

"You think, then," she remarked, "if anything should happen in England, like the French Revolution, I should not be able to get away, and be smouldering among them? Do you believe that they are really contented?"

Mr. Hurd kept thinking about revolution, and he was utterly unable to follow the trend of her thoughts.

"If they were not, madam," he declared, "I should not be able to get away from this house—and I should feel it my duty to assist them in getting there."

The lady of Thorpe laughed softly to herself.

"You, too, then, Mr. Hurd," she said, "you are content with your life? You do not mind my being personal do you? I have been married to a man of quite different existence . . . and I like to understand everything."

Mr. Hurd the almost pathetic significance of those last words was wholly wasted. They were words of a language which he could not comprehend.

"I am content, madam," he answered, and the woman to him seemed like a child.

"I was not content, madam," he said. "I took pleasure in my place. If I should deserve to lose it," he added after a moment's pause, "notwithstanding the fact that I have done my duty faithfully and honestly, I should not mind it."

She smiled upon him brilliantly. They were so far apart that she feared lest she might have been misunderstood.

"I have always felt myself a very fortunate woman, Mr. Hurd," she said, "in having possessed your services."

"I am glad to have been useful, madam," he answered, "and I am glad it was her wish, however, to detain him."

"You lost your wife some years ago, did you not, Mr. Hurd?" she began tentatively, and he answered, "I am not quite sure of her ground."

"Seven years back, madam," he answered, "with an immovable face, she was, unfortunately, a young woman."

"And your son?" she asked more confidentially. "Is he back from South America?"

"A year ago, madam," he answered. "He is engaged at present in the estate office. He knows the work well."

"I am looking forward to him," she interrupted. "We ought to do all we can for our young men who went out to the war. I should like to see your son, Mr. Hurd. Will you tell him to come up to-day?"

"Certainly, madam," he answered.

"I am afraid I shall not be able to see my son on Thursday," she suggested graciously.

Mr. Hurd did not seem altogether pleased.

"It has never been the custom, madam," he remarked, "for either my son or myself to be associated with the Thorpes."

"Some customs," she remarked pleasantly, "are well changed, even in Thorpe. We shall expect them."

"I am glad," he reminded her for the moment of a steel trap. She could see that he disapproved, but she had no intention of giving way. He began to tell her of a significant episode of the letters which he had somehow contrived to excite in her. She listened with interest, and he was methodically forcing her to catch her attention.

"What a strange name," she remarked.

"I am not sure about it," he answered.

Mr. Hurd unfolded the letter. The ghost of a smile flickered upon his lips.

"A preacher, apparently," he answered.

"Give a series of what he terms religious lectures in Harrison's large barn?"

"The very words," he answered.

"What, in Thorpe?" she demanded.

"In Thorpe," Mr. Hurd acquiesced.

"I am not sure," he said, "that His perplexity was in no manner diminished."

"The man seems in earnest," she remarked. "He must either be a stranger or a very impertinent person. I presume, Mr. Hurd, that nothing has been going on in the place with which I am acquainted."

"Of no account," he answered.

"There has been no drunkenness?" she remarked.

"The young people have, I presume, been conducting their love-making discreetly."

The lines of Mr. Hurd's mouth were a trifle severe. He could imagine that he had been a modern directness of speech in delicate.

"There have been no scandals of any sort connected with the village, madam," he answered.

"I believe," she said, "that I believe, all our people are industrious, sober and pious. They attend church regularly. As you know, we have not a public-house in this interesting place of worship in the village."

"The man must be a fool," she said, "and I am not sure that he is not a very impertinent person to hold these services."

"Certainly not," the agent answered.

"I refused it absolutely."

"I am not sure," Mr. Hurd understood that he was dismissed.

"You will tell your son about Thursday?" she reminded him.

"I will deliver your message, madam," he answered.

She nodded her farewell as the footman opened the door.

"The thing seems to be most satisfactory, Mr. Hurd," she said. "I shall probably be here for several weeks, so I can stop again, there is nothing you want me to sign."

"I am much obliged, madam," the agent answered.

"I will place by a side entrance, and rode slowly down the private road fringed by a magnificent row of elm trees to the village. The latch of the iron gate was rusty, and he had to try it, and he failed to open it with his hunting crop at the first attempt. Just as he was preparing to try to again, a man in a dark suit, and a top hat, in a sombre black, came swiftly across the road and opened the gate. Mr. Hurd thanked him curtly, and rode on.

"You are Mr. Hurd, I believe?" he remarked. "I was going to call upon you this afternoon."

"I am Mr. Hurd, but the pony frowned at me. He had no doubt as to his questioner. "My name is Hurd, sir," he answered stiffly. "What can I do for you?"

"I am Mr. Hurd," he answered.

"I am very glad to see you," he said, "for my services," the other answered, "emphatically."

"The young man caught for a moment at the pony's rein."

"One moment, sir," he begged. "You do not object to my appealing to Miss Thorpe-Hatton herself?"

A grim, mirthless smile parted the agent's lips.

"By no means," he answered, as he cantered off.

Victor Macheson stood for a moment watching the retreating figure. Then he looked across the park to where, through the great iron avenues, he could catch a glimpse of the house. A humorous smile suddenly brightened his face.

"It's got to be done!" he said to himself. "Here goes!"

## CHAPTER II

The Hunter and His Quarry.

### The President's Daughter Coming Out.



MISS ETHEL ROOSEVELT PHOTO COPYRIGHTED  
1907 BY MACK BROTHMAN

Far preceding any event yet scheduled for the forthcoming winter season in society is the "coming out" of the daughter of President Roosevelt. Since the marriage of his eldest daughter, Alice, to Representative Longworth, social functions at the White House have not been so numerous, with the result that society in general has been disappointed. It now comes the debut of the second daughter of the first family in America. More

[illegible]

## CHAPTER III

E. A. D. 1.

of all the various ways he met the hunting of man by man, the brain of the hunter and the brain of the hunted, both of them came with the wiles of the hunted, both of them came with the wiles of the hunter. It was the game's even then, for at any moment they might change places—the hunter and his quarry. It's finer work than slaughtering the beast. It gives you a chance, Lady Peggy."

"It sounds exciting," she admitted.

"It is," he answered.

The hostess looked up at him languidly.

"You speak like one who knows!"

"Why not?" he murmured. "I have been hunting for years."

"You have no love or loss?" I declare heartily!"

Again there was an interval of silence, broken only by the stock pierces of the general conversation.

On the table. Once more the hand was played out and the cards gathered up. Captain Austin delivered his quota to the general conversation.

"After all," he said, "if it wasn't for sport, our country houses would be useless."

"Not at all!" Deyes declared. "Country houses should exist for—"

"For what, Mr. Deyes? Do tell me!"

"For Bridge!" he declared. "For giving weary married people the opportunity for—"

A footman entered the room a few minutes later, respectful, without doubt, to some previously-given command behind his mistress' chair, and handed him to bed. When it was done, he spoke to lady without turning head.

"What is it, Perkins?" she asked him.

"There is a young gentleman, madam, who wishes to see you meticulously. He has no card, but he says his name would not be known to you."

"Tell him that I am engaged," Wmina said. "What business give his name to you? what business give his name to me?"

"Very good, madam!" the man answered and withdrew.

Wmina looked again before the next hand had been played. Once more he was waiting in respectful silence.

"Well, what is his name, said, and?"

"His name," said, "is Mr. V. Macheson. He said that he would wait as long as you liked, but he preferred to tell you his business."

"What a fancy that I know it!" Wilton answered. "You can show him to bed."

"Is it the young man, I wonder?"

These two qualities are always possessed by Scroggie garments—and they wear well and retain these qualities. That's one reason why we guarantee satisfaction with every purchase or refund your money, if you wish it.

*"You'll get it for less at Scroggie's"* is now a by-word in the home—others know—do you? Prove this for yourself. Scroggie's always has changes in full or help you to do so on the money you save. Have you ever stopped to consider what additional saving means to you? Our big catalogue should be in every home. Is it yours? It's a real find for the savings order now while you think of it.



**36390.**—This Coat is the best value for \$6.75. We have ever been able to secure for our small order customers, having the style, fit and workmanship equal to any high-priced Coat. It's a genuine snap at the price and highly recommended for the Fall and Winter season of 1908-9.

This Coat is handsomely made of very fine English Frieze Cloth, in black and navy, and smartly trimmed on cuffs and body with rich military silk braid. It has silk buttons and beautiful velvet collar. Can be had either semi-fitted as shown in the illustration, or loose, double-breasted style, yoke line and cut 43 inches long. Comes in bust sizes 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches. • Special price

**\$6.75**



Write  
to-day  
for  
Copy  
of  
our  
Xmas  
holder

**MM 102.—COAT.**—Child's smart Coat, made of fine quality fancy tweed, finished with shoulder cape—making it a very comfortable garment for children—and beautifully trimmed with fancy braid and buttons, turned cuffs, tailored pockets.—Age 8 to 10 years.—Regular price, \$8.50.

**\$3.98**

Mail  
Order  
Dept.

**W.H. Scroggie**

Montreal  
Que.

[illegible]