The American

He Entered London Society, as He Had Made a Fortune

By BEATRICE GARDINER

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"Mother," said Gladys Poindexter, daughter of Sir John and Lady Poindexter, "this effort to 'keep up' is wearing me out. The estate has so dwindled that we should be living on $500 a year and we are spending $1,000."

"But, my dear, if we retrench we shall lose a social position that has been the family right for 300 years."

At that moment Lord Toppington's card came up.

Lord Toppington was a typical London swell. As he entered, seeing Gladys, he frowned. Her mother saw his displeasure at her daughter's presence and made an excuse to send her from the room. Lord Toppington seated himself and said:

"Lady Poindexter, I come in the interest of a young American who has recently arrived in London with a desire to enter the social circle. He has applied to me to secure an entrance for him, and I have consented to do what I can in the matter. He gives a dinner on Wednesday evening next under my management. I have put the names of yourself, Sir John and your daughter on the list of guests. I trust you will accept."

"The Poindexters have never known any Americans," said my lady with reserve.

"And I would not suggest your doing so now," replied his lordship, "except—he lowered his voice—"this fellow Springer is enormously rich."

"You mean that he will buy shares in Sir John's"—

"I have tried him on that, and he would not bite. He says he prefers to put out the cash," sinking to a whisper: "He has deposited a sum to my credit with my bankers, which I am to place where I like. I have £200 put down against your name on the list."

Lady Poindexter's expression changed. She looked down upon the carpet meditatively.

"Can you assure me that this will not be known?"

"I can."

"Not for fifty times the amount would I consent to Gladys hearing of it. She has great family pride and would scorn such a transaction."

Lord Toppington took a bit of paper from his pocketbook and, rising, offered his hand to Lady Poindexter. The paper was in his palm, and when he left it was in hers. It was a check for £200.

George Springer was a very singular young man. He had a genius for finance that few men even understand. When he began his career ten years before his appearance in London he startled old financial heads by the apparent recklessness of his plunges, and they predicted a brief career for him, the end being his burial under an enormous debt. Instead he emerged with millions to his credit. Being still a bachelor, he concluded to see the world, not on the outside, but on the inside. With a keen insight into human nature he knew that there are but few things in the world money will not buy. He had gone practically to work to gain an admission to British society, selecting Toppington, an impecunious nobleman of excellent lineage whatever that means, and one of the best social engineers in London.

He advised with Toppington as to what lady he should reserve for himself to take into dinner, and Toppington told him that Gladys Poindexter would be as well worth cultivating as any one. Toppington also explained that Gladys was ignorant of the fact that her presence had been purchased and if she got an inkling of it the Poindexters from that moment must be counted out from their calculations.

Springer was especially attentive to this information. He had a keen appreciation of values and values of different kinds. Moreover, he appreciated the difference between moral and money values. He had no permanent use for these people whom he had bought and was interested in meeting one whom he could not buy. He was a bright fellow and a good conversationalist. He devoted his exclusive attention to Gladys Poindexter, refraining from being diverted from her at any time by others. There are three stages of refinement—viz., not enough, a sufficiency and too much. Springer belonged to the middle of these three classes. He had not become effeminate. Indeed, he was a fine specimen of physical and intellectual vigor not yet undermined by possession of abnormal wealth. Such a man was likely to be agreeable to such a girl as Gladys Poindexter.

The American succeeded in making as quick an introduction into London society as he had into the coterie of multimillionaires. He was more often met in the Poindexters' company than others, and his attentions to Miss Gladys were noticed. But one day there came a terrible break in this intimacy. Gladys was relied upon by her father and mother to guide the family down the dangerous current of family finance, and many a rock had avoided by her management. One day when she was trying to make the balance in her check book and pass book agree she came upon an item of £200 to the family credit that she could not account for. Her mother should have provided some means of concealing Toppington's check, but had failed to do so. Gladys demanded to know what the check was for. There was a family jar, at the end of which Lady Poindexter confessed that the money had come indirectly from the American.

Had Gladys been indifferent to Springer the discovery would have been extremely painful but since she had been, to say the least, much pleased with him the incident plunged her into the depths of mortification. Filial consideration prevented her venting her feelings upon her poor old parents. Toppington was beneath her contempt. Springer was the only one fit to be made to feel her indignation. The next time she met him socially—at a ball given by the Marchioness of Bladesby—she turned her back upon him. He at once divined the cause.

For the first time since his arrival in London Springer felt that he had encountered something that his millions were powerless to smooth away. Here was a girl striving to maintain for her family contrary to her own judgment the social standing they had always enjoyed, maintaining for herself rather the substance than the shadow of that position, for whose acquaintance, unbeknown to her, he had paid out money from his newly acquired millions. It was doubtful to which of the two the situation was more painful, the American or the English girl. His having purchased an entre from the others gave him no qualms of conscience or self contempt in this matter of matrimony. She be his purchase from Gladys Poindexter he regarded a brutal use of his money.

He did not know how to go about making reparation. He had no right to enter her house and had not had any such right from the first, since had she known the terms on which the acquaintance had been made she would not have consented to them. To write an excuse would be only to add to the insult he had offered. It seemed to him that he could do nothing but grin and bear the position he occupied toward her.

Toppington, who was very adroit, very tactful, felt it to his interest to smooth the matter over. The Poindexters were among those whom he considered his stock in trade, and any breach between him and them would be to his injury. After giving Gladys time to cool he went to her and exonerated Springer from all blame, assuring her that he had known nothing of those who were to be approached with a view to buying his way into society. She averred that no man with the instincts of a gentleman would buy his way into any society.

However, the more she thought of the matter the more she blamed every one connected with it more than she blamed the fountainhead. Indeed, she came to feel a secret admiration for this man who had so profound a contempt for the effete social distinction of the old world that he set about its purchase in the same way he would buy a country place. She had always heard America and Americans decried, but the incident had brought out, as she had never felt it before, the practical status of America in contrast with the decay of social grandeur in Europe. The result of all this was that she wrote Springer a note apologizing for cutting him, confining herself to the apology, ignoring any blame or excuse for his own part in the matter of buying his way into society.

This gave him an opportunity which he was not slow to improve. With his usual direct action he invited her to a farewell dinner he was to give before leaving London, mentioning that, though a valuable "favor" would appear on every plate in her case the gift would be worth not over a few shillings. Gladys debated for some time whether to accept or decline the invitation. Her own parents had been bought. On their account would it not be better to ignore openly a matter which she would bury down in her own heart. She wrote an acceptance.

At the dinner where the guests opened packages containing their favors they were found to be very costly. Gladys Poindexter found upon her plate a sealed envelope which contained, judging from its want of pliability, cardboard. Her host admonished her to refrain from opening it before her return home, and she heeded the admonition. A natural curiosity induced her as soon as she had retired to her room to open her favor. She found only a photograph of the host of the evening.

There seemed to be no special aptitude to the gift. The girl was surprised, for she had expected that Springer would by it make some delicate reparation for having paid money for his acquaintance. His photograph meant nothing. Indeed, since cordiality had not been re-established between them, there was a positive indelicacy in the gift.

Then suddenly an idea struck the recipient that brought a color to her cheek. Could he mean by what he had given her to imply that it was himself that was offered?

It was late that night before she slept, and a long day followed, for she surmised that if she had interpreted his favor aright he would be with her before another day had passed to confirm her view. It was 9 o'clock in the evening when a flunkey threw open the drawing room door and announced in a loud voice:

"Mr. Springer!"

Mrs. George Springer nee Poindexter lives with her husband in America most of the time. Neither of them cares for society, and all attempts to keep them in touch with the British hereditary aristocracy or the American moneyed circles have proved failures. They live much by themselves.

Wanted—A Husband

He Was Obtained Through a Singular Courtship

By HARRIET C. BONSALL

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Helen Trevor had the misfortune to be an heiress. Her father, Donald Trevor, had accumulated a large fortune and Helen, being his only child, would at his death possess it all. Heaping up riches becomes a passion. Rather it is a habit, and we all know that a habit once fixed on an individual is hard to break.

Mr. Trevor illustrated this as follows. Since his daughter was to take his place he laid out a course for her. This course involved her marriage, for he not only laid out for her her future concerning the estate, but for her heir or heirs. The man his daughter should marry did not so much concern him as that she should marry. He made a will tying up the property to her and her children, excluding the husband and father entirely. Therefore it made little difference to him whether her Helen married a good man or a "stick."

But he found Helen hard to manage in this matter of matrimony. She being twenty and he sixty, the two looked at it from opposite standpoints. He thought he was giving her a great deal of leeway when he told her that he didn't care whether she married Tom, Dick or Harry so long as she chose a husband. A girl who would not be satisfied with that must be very unreasonable. Helen expressed herself as content with the conditions, but since she was either not in love or the man she wanted did not propose to her she did not choose any one.

The old man fretted and fumed and scolded till the poor girl was driven nearly distracted. Feeling obliged to encourage some man, she hit upon Tom Fisher who would not only have been glad to marry her for her money, but for love. After a month's dawdling with Fisher she tired of him and took up with Archie Briggs. A fair trial with Archie convinced her that perhaps, after all, she could stand Fisher better. Fisher was recalled and dismissed, Briggs was reinstated and dismissed, and so the game went on.

The one least injured by it was Miss Trevor. But her suitors were kept on tenterhooks, while her father was made positively ill by her indecision. He was ordered to his bed by his physician, who said that he must not be troubled about anything. He must be given his own way in everything. If this rule were not observed the doctor would not answer for the consequences.

With the perversity of giribood Helen Trevor gave her heart to a man who showed no disposition whatever to return it. Dick Thurston, a young lawyer, bright, attractive and in many respects a scapegrace, was the unconscious recipient of her preference. But unfortunately she as a woman could not plead her cause with him. It was hard that, while she might be satisfied with a husband and her father might be restored to health by this young man, he showed no disposition whatever to marry her.

Mr. Trevor grew worse, and his anxiety to see his daughter married became so serious that she began to fear it would break her down as well as her father. He called her to his bedside and questioned her about her intentions. She told him that she was deliberating whether she should marry Tom Fisher or Archie Briggs and promised him that she would make up her mind as to which she would accept as soon as possible. The look of appeal he gave her went to her heart—that is, it would have gone to her heart had it not gone out of her possession into that of Dick Thurston.

A week passed. She came to no conclusion, and the doctor told her that the subject of her marriage was affecting her father so seriously that if he did not get it off his mind he would die. Something must be done. Perplexed beyond endurance, she was driven to seek a confidant. She went to Thurston, told him of the situation, excepting that part of it which concerned himself, and asked him as a lawyer if there was no way of being married so that after her father should recover she could be unmarried. In other words, could she appear to be married without being married?

Thurston asked her if there was any one with whom she would enter upon such a contract, and she told him that there were two most favored individuals—viz., Thomas Fisher and Archabald Briggs. Thurston with that reserve lawyers are accustomed to put on when interviewing a client made a note of the names, put on a look indicating that his brain was staggering under the weight of the problem and said that it would be necessary to look the matter up. He would do so and give her a reply within a few days. Just before she left his office he asked one more question.

"Is there any one who stands above these two most favored gentlemen?"

"If they are most favored how could any one be more favored?" was her reply. "There is nothing beyond the superlative."

"Very true, very true. That would be impossible." And with a low bow he softly closed the door behind her.

Miss Trevor did not hear anything from her attorney within the promised "few days," and her father grew worse. One morning after the doctor had been visiting Mr. Trevor the medical man said to Helen:

"It is a question between your father's mind being relieved of the subject that is worrying him or his succumbing. He fears he will die, you will never marry and the estate that he has been at so much pains to build up will become dissipated. In my opinion if you will decide upon marrying he will get well."

"I'll come to a decision at once," was the reply.

As soon as the doctor had departed Helen hurried to her attorney. She told him that she must decide between her two suitors immediately and a decision would not avail without a marriage. A vague hope was in her that Thurston would take pity on her and solve the problem by offering to marry her himself. But he did not. He treated the affair professionally.

"I have looked the matter up," she said with the gravity of a judge on the supreme bench, "and I would advise you to marry both your suitors."

"Both?"

"Yes, both."

"But such a marriage would in law be bigamy."

"Not at all. There is no law of the land against marrying two persons at once. There is a law against a married person marrying again during the lifetime of the first consort or without divorce, but your first marriage may be with as many husbands as you like."

Helen looked at him in astonishment.

"I stake my professional reputation on what I say being true," added the lawyer. "If you can induce both these men to marry you at once you can announce to your father that you have married either one of them you choose to name to him. After his recovery you will have no trouble in getting the courts to annul the double marriage."

"But suppose these men will not consent to such a marriage."

"Try them."

Helen thought hard for awhile, her tormentor regarding her curiously.

"My advice is," he added, "for you to write each one of your suitors announcing that you will marry him at an appointed time and place."

"Will you be present?"

"Certainly. As your attorney I must see that you fall into no legal error."

It is singular how much byplay will pass between a man and a woman before unmasking their feelings, nor is it certain at just what point they come to understand each other. At this juncture an idea shot through Helen's brain. She told Mr. Thurston to be at her house at 4 o'clock the next afternoon, then took her leave.

At the appointed hour Helen, arrayed in becoming costume, awaited the coming event. At any rate, she awaited her attorney, who at the appointed hour rang the doorbell. He found her in the drawing room looking very pretty, but woebegone.

"Where are your suitors?" he asked.

"They have failed me."

"How so?"

"I sent for them and told them that I would marry both of them."

"What did they say?"

"Nothing. They withdrew in high dudgeon."

"How is your father?"

"In a critical condition."

"What do you propose to do?"

"I have no idea what to do. I called upon you for legal advice. You proposed a plan to which I acceded. It has failed and I am at my wits' end."

"Ready to marry any one?"

"Any one." She was looking not at him, but at the floor.

"I presume that, as your attorney, I am bound to help you out."

There was no reply to this.

"If I had not been sensible of my unworthiness to secure such a prize I would have long ago offered to settle this matter for you by offering myself as a means of solving the problem."

The lady sitting mute, the gentleman proceeded.

"Since your father's life depends upon your marriage and there is no more favored man than the two most favored men"—

He paused, but she did not make any remark and he proceeded.

"You might honor me by accepting me as a dummy to serve for the present and to be cast off when not needed."

She looked up at him, a smile broke over her sober, not to say troubled, features, he went to her and, bending down, kissed her.

An hour later word came from the sickroom that Mr. Trevor was sinking, and that he begged of his daughter to give him the satisfaction of seeing her married before he died. A clergyman was called, and as soon as he arrived Thurston and Helen went upstairs to the invalid and Helen, kneeling beside her father, put her arms around him and announced that she had come to a decision. She was to marry Mr. Thurston.

"What! Why, Nell, I thought you were hesitating between two others?"

"So I was, father, but that was because Mr. Thurston didn't ask me."

"So she came to my office and asked me," said Thurston.

"I didn't."

"You did."

"I say I didn't."

"Come, come," interrupted the father, "let well enough alone."

At that moment the clergyman entered and the couple were married.

"And now," said Mr. Thurston, "since it is all settled, I think I'll take a nap."

He turned over, went to sleep and in a few days was in his office attending to business. He lived to see a grandson on whom he settled his fortune.

SMART MOURNING.

Much Crape Used by French Modistes.

AN ELABORATE HOUSE COSTUME.

The Paris dressmakers are using much crape this winter on their very deep mourning costumes. But many American women object to the use of crape, deeming it too somber. French mourning frocks, however, are loaded with it, and the effect is very chic.

An example is presented in this little house frock, which is literally weighted down with crape trimming. The model is made of skilliene, but the deep flounce and panels on the skirt are of crape as well as the band which crosses one side of the bodice. In the decolletage is set a transparent yoke of black net.

Dainty Notions.

Rickrack, the old time serpentine braid that everybody was crazy about a generation ago, has returned, but now it is used for curtain and drapery decoration instead of dress garniture.

In most of the tailored coats of the hour the sleeves are like those of men's trousers, put in without fullness at the top, cut straight and finished off with a small turnback cuff or a few buttons.

Wide lace collars worn on coats and dresses are bordered with soutache worked in a pattern which gives weight to the edge.

All or nearly all of the late summer gowns are showing the high waist line, and the skirts, if not really tunic, are tunic in effect.

Quite wonderful are new colored silk handkerchiefs from Paris—lavender, blue, even purple—to match the costumes.

Most polo coats for young women are tan, but suddenly has arisen a demand for the blues, especially for steamer wear.

A Christmas Thought.

Now is the time to begin making Christmas gifts, for the holiday season will be upon us before we are half prepared for it if we don't look out, and "the goblins will git us" sure enough.

For the girl who has dainty slippers to care for nothing would please her

THE SLIPPER TREE.

more than to find among her presents on the 25th of December a pair of beribboned slipper trees. Such a device is to be seen in the illustration, and the color of the ribbon used, of course, is a matter of individual choice.

The New Waltz.

The Duchess of Westminster has accepted the dedication of a new dance created by Hervet Egville and has promised that she will do all possible to introduce it at smart dances during the winter season. It is called the valse masurka and opens with a waltz step which changes to a mazurka.

For the Children

Rocking Stone That Looks Ready to Fall.

About 270 miles south of Buenos Aires, in the Sierra Tandil range of mountains, is a 700 ton rock so delicately poised that it can be rocked gently enough to crack a walnut without crushing it. It looks as if every moment it were about to fall. Its surface and that of the surrounding rocks are carved all over with the names of tourists. In the New York zoological park there is a rocking stone of many tons' weight that can be moved by a small child. Unlike the one here pictured, however, it rests on a flat stone, the top of a buried ledge. Geologists say it was deposited there by a glacier many ages ago.

Old Time Toothache Remedies.

A very slight toothache goes a long way, and he who has it is bound to keep mother busy applying every available household remedy. Would you like to hear what the girls and boys of 1713 used to do for a "jumping tooth" and how they kept their teeth clean and white?

Every house mother in those days made the family supply of dentifrice by boiling equal parts of powdered alum, aqua vitae and honey into a thick paste. She also manufactured tooth brushes (?) by binding cotton in a tight wad around the end of a little stick. This primitive implement was dipped into the paste and then rubbed briskly up and down, across and behind the teeth.

For toothache one remedy consisted of rainworms—just think of it—toasted, ground to powder and applied to the sore spot. Another one, of calf's liver, dried in the oven, pulverized and boiled up with honey into a thick salve. A "big green lizard" prepared with all sorts of queer manipulations and mixed with strong brandy would, if smeared upon the tooth and the gums surrounding it, cause the molar to drop out instantaneously and painlessly!—Brooklyn Eagle.

Origin of Certain Names.

Front Royal, a town in Warren county, Va., was first known as Royal Oak, named for an immense tree growing in the common. Front Royal originated from the circumstance of a colonel who, becoming confused in his command, ordered his regiment to "front the royal."

Norwalk, a city in Fairfield county, Conn., said to have been so named because when purchased from the Indians the northern boundary was to extend northward from the sea one day's walk, according to the Indian marking of the distance. According to another authority it is derived from nayang, "point of land."—United States Geological Survey.

Petrified Giants.

Three petrified redwood trees that have been pronounced the very largest in the world that have thus far been discovered have just been uncovered from the debris of the mountain side only a short distance from the famous Bohemian club grove in Sonoma county, Cal. This point is near the little town of Occident.

One of these prehistoric monsters that make the pyramids of Egypt modern by comparison in their ages measures twenty-three feet in diameter and is 350 feet in length. The two other petrified trees are thirteen and twelve feet in diameter.—Scientific American.

Conundrums.

What is the key of good manners? B-natural.

Who is the greatest composer? Sleep.

What is a slur? A mean remark of one musician about another.

What is meant by singing with understanding? Beating time with your feet.

What is a staccato movement? Leaving the orchestra in a huff.

What is a swell? A conceited young music teacher.

Why is an important young person like a music box? She is full of airs.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Her Own Way.

When Polly goes into the parlor to play
She never minds what the little notes say
Nor peeps at a music book.
"I play by ear," says the little dear
When some of us think the music's queer.
"So why should I need to look?"

When Polly goes into the kitchen to cook
She never looks at a cookery book
Nor a sign of a recipe.
It's a dot of this and a dab of that
And a twirl of the wrist and a pinch and a pat.
"I cook by hand," says she.

—Youth's Companion.