

A MAKER OF HISTORY

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM,
Author of "The Master Mummer," "A Prince of Sinners," "Mysterious Mr. Sabot," "Anna the Adventuress," Etc.

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(Continued from Page Three.)

"The idea," Pelham said quietly, "is absurd."

"While we are on the subject," Spencer remarked, drawing the cigarettes toward him, "may I ask you a few questions, Mr. Pelham? For instance, had Miss Poynton any relations in France?"

"Not to my knowledge," Pelham answered. "I have known both her and her brother for a great many years, and I never heard either of them mention any."

"Why did she go to Paris, then?"

"To meet her brother."

"And why did he go abroad?"

"It was a whim, I think—just a desire to see a few foreign countries before he settled down to live the life of a country gentleman."

"You believe that he had no other reason?"

"I think I may go so far as to say that I am sure of it," Pelham answered.

"One more question," Spencer added, intervening. But the question remained unasked. The butler had opened the dining room door and was announcing Lord Runtun.

Duncombe rose to his feet in surprise. For the moment a sudden fear drew the color from his cheeks. He looked apprehensively toward his unexpected visitor. Lord Runtun, however, showed no signs of any great discomposure. He was wearing his ordinary dinner clothes and in reply to Duncombe's first question assured him that he had dined.

"I will try a glass of your port, if I may, George," he declared. "Thanks!"

The butler had wheeled a chair up to the table for him and left the room. Lord Runtun filled his glass and sent the decaunter round. Then he turned toward Spencer, to whom he had just been introduced.

"Mr. Spencer," he said, "my visit to-night was mainly to you. I dare say you are aware that a somewhat unpleasant thing has happened at my house. My people tell me that you called there this morning and inquired for Mr. Fielding."

Spencer nodded.

"Quite true," he answered. "I called, but did not see him. He appears to have left somewhat hurriedly while I was waiting."

"You did not even catch a glimpse of him?"

"No."

"You know Mr. Fielding by sight, I presume?"

"I have seen him in Paris once or twice," Spencer answered.

"You will not think me impertinent for asking you these questions, I am sure," Lord Runtun continued apologetically. "but could you describe Mr. Fielding to me?"

"Certainly," Spencer answered. "He is tall and thin, wears glasses, was clean shaven, bald and limped a little."

Lord Runtun nodded.

"Thank you," he said. "I presume that your visit this morning was one of courtesy. You are acquainted with Mr. Fielding?"

"I have not that pleasure," Spencer answered. "I am afraid I must confess that my visit was purely one of curiosity."

"Curiosity?" Lord Runtun repeated.

"Exactly. Do you mind passing those excellent cigarettes of yours, Duncombe?"

Lord Runtun hesitated for a moment. He was conscious of a certain restraint in Spencer's answers. Suddenly he turned toward him.

"Mr. Spencer," he said, "may I ask if you are Mr. Jarvis Spencer of the Daily Messenger, the Mr. Spencer who was mentioned in connection with the investigations into the Lawson estates?"

Spencer nodded.

"Yes," he said; "I am that person."

"Then," Lord Runtun continued, "I want to tell you exactly what happened today in my house and to ask your advice. May I?"

"If our host has no objection," Spencer answered, glancing toward Pelham.

"None whatever," Duncombe answered, also glancing toward Pelham.

There was a moment's silence. Pelham raised his head.

"If Lord Runtun desires it, I will withdraw," he said slowly. "At the same time I must confess that I, too, am interested in this matter. If Lord Runtun has no objection to my presence I should like to remain. My discretion goes without saying."

Duncombe moved uneasily in his chair. His eyes sought Spencer's for guidance, but found his head averted. Lord Runtun raised his eyebrows

slightly at what he considered a somewhat vulgar curiosity, but his reply was prompt.

"You are a friend of Duncombe's, Mr. Pelham," he said, "and that is enough. I have to ask not only you, but all three of you, to consider what I am going to tell you as absolutely confidential."

They all signified their assent. Lord Runtun continued:

"Mr. and Miss Fielding came to me with letters from my brother and with many convincing proofs of their identity. We none of us had the slightest suspicion concerning them. Their behavior was exactly what it should have been. Nothing about them excited remark in any way, except the unusual number of telegrams and telephone messages which Mr. Fielding was always receiving. That, however, was quite in accord with our ideas of an American business man and didn't seem to us in the least remarkable."

"The telegrams were delivered through a neighboring office?" Spencer asked of Jetty.

Into her blouse as he entered. A rush of night air struck him from a wide open window.

"What has happened?" he called out.

"I have been terrified," she answered. "I am sorry I called out. I could not help it. A man came here—through the window. He talked so fast that I could scarcely hear what he said, but he wanted that paper. I tried to make him understand that I had not got it, but he did not believe me—and he was rude."

Duncombe shut down the window, swearing softly to himself.

"I cannot stay with you," he said, "just now. The whole house is alarmed at your cry. Listen!"

There was a loud knocking at the library door. Duncombe turned hastily away.

"I must let them in," he said. "I will come back to you."

She pointed to the window.

"He is coming back," she said, "at 12 o'clock."

"Do you wish me to give up the paper?" he asked.

"No."

"Very well, I will be with you when he comes—before then. I must get rid of these men first."

He closed the door softly and drew the curtain which concealed it. Then he opened the library window and a moment afterward the door.

"Come in, you fellows," he said. "I scarcely knew what I was doing when



With a little gasp of relief he realized that she was there still.

I locked the door. I fancy one of the housemaids has been seeing ghosts in the garden. I saw something white among the shrubs, but I could find nothing. Come on out with me."

Spencer followed with a perfectly grave face. Lord Runtun looked puzzled. Pelham did not attempt to leave the library. Spencer drew his host a little on one side.

"What a rotten liar you are, George," he said. "I don't think that even Runtun was taken in."

"I suppose it sounded a little thin," Duncombe answered coolly. "Put it this way, then, so far as you are concerned: The shriek occurred in my house. I've no explanation to offer to anybody."

"I like the sound of that better, Duncombe," he remarked. "Hello! What's the matter with Runtun?"

Lord Runtun was calling to them.

"You've had a visitor who was in a hurry, old chap!" he remarked. "Send for a lantern."

Duncombe concealed his annoyance.

"I don't want to alarm the whole household," he said. "I've a little electric torch in my study. I'll fetch that."

He brought it out. The progress of a man from the road to the small window, toward which Duncombe glanced every now and then apprehensively, was marked by much destruction. The intruder had effected his exit either in great haste or in a singularly unfortunate manner. He had apparently missed the gate, which at this point was only a small hand one, and in clambering over the fence he had broken

the topmost strand of wire. He had blundered into a bed of wallflowers, which were all crushed and downtrodden, and snipped off a rose tree in the middle. Below the window were distinct traces of footmarks. Lord Runtun, who held the torch, was becoming excited.

"Duncombe," he said, "there is something which I have not told you yet. I have had numerous reports in about the car and was able to trace it as far as Lynn, but they all agreed in saying that it contained only two persons—the driver and the man who called himself Fielding. What became of the girl?"

"I have no idea," Duncombe answered steadily.

"Of course not," Lord Runtun continued. "But don't you think it possible that—without your knowledge, of course—she may be hidden somewhere about here? That cry was not like the cry of a housemaid. Let us have the whole place searched."

Duncombe shrugged his shoulders.

"As you will," he answered. "I am certain, however, that it will be useless. There is no place here where any one could hide."

"Your servants may know something," Runtun suggested.

"I have already questioned them," Duncombe answered.

"Come along, Mr. Spencer," Lord Runtun exclaimed. "Let us search the grounds."

Spencer shook his head.

"Waste of time, Lord Runtun," he answered. "If you really want to discover the whereabouts of this missing young lady and she should by any

"Yes," Lord Runtun answered, "but they were all in code. I happen to know that, because the postmaster brought the first one up himself and explained that he was afraid that he must have made some mistake, as the message was incomprehensible. Fielding only laughed and gave the man a sovereign. The message was absolutely correct, he declared. He told me afterward that whenever he was speculating he always coded his messages, and it seemed perfectly reasonable."

Spencer nodded.

"Just so!" he murmured.

"This morning," Lord Runtun continued, "Mr. Fielding rather upset our plans. We were all to have spent the day at the duke's and dined there. There was a big shoot for the men, as you know. At breakfast time, however, Mr. Fielding announced that he had a man coming over with a motor car from Norwich for them to try and begged to be excused. So we had to go without them."

"De Rothe was staying with me, as you know, and just before we started he had a telegram that a messenger from the embassy was on his way down. He hesitated for some time as to whether he ought not to stay at home so as to be here when he arrived, but we persuaded him to come with us and promised to send him back after luncheon. When we got to Chestow, however, the wind had become a gale, and it was impossible to shoot decently. De Rothe was a little uneasy all the time, I could see, so he and I and a few of the others returned here, and the rest went up to Chestow. Just as we arrived Fielding passed us in a great motor car, with his daughter behind. When we got to the house De Rothe inquired for the messenger. He was told that he was in Mr. Fielding's sitting room, but when we got there we found the door locked, and through the key hole we could hear a man groaning. We broke the door in and found De Rothe's messenger half unconscious and a rifled dispatch box upon the floor. He has given us no coherent account of what has happened yet, but it is quite certain that he was attacked and robbed by Mr. Fielding."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MANY NEBRASKANS VICTIMS.

Federal Grand Jury to Investigate Colorado Land Company.

Denver, July 29.—The News prints a story to the effect that the federal grand jury will be asked to investigate the methods of a land company which, it is alleged, fraudulently secured a long time lease on coal lands in Routt county, this state, and subsequently sold \$40,000 worth of stock, mostly in Hamilton, York, Seward, Clay, Fillmore and Saline counties, Nebraska, which stock, it is alleged, was disposed of by misrepresentation. According to the News considerable of the money paid by the Nebraskans for the stock has since been returned to the purchasers by persons connected with the land company, who, after discovering the alleged fraudulent character of the company—they themselves being innocent of any wrong-doing—made restitution because they felt that it was their connection with the concern that induced many to buy stock. It is claimed by the News that an ex-president, a former secretary of agriculture, a leading railroad lawyer of Nebraska and a well known banker of that state are involved in the exposure, though innocent of any wrong. In addition to these, two prominent politicians of Colorado, one formerly holding state office, and several others are mixed up in the affair and are said to be respon-

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sible for the alleged fraudulent acts. The lease to the land held by the company was recently cancelled by the state land board of Colorado.

Troops Sent to Belfast.
Belfast, July 31.—That the authorities view seriously the local situation arising from the strike of the dock laborers for increased pay and shorter hours, which has been aggravated by the revolt of the police, who are demanding more pay because of the extra work the strike entails, is evidenced by the arrival here of the First battalion of the Cameron Highlanders, with a Maxim gun, and a detachment of cavalry. In addition the Thirteenth Hussars are now on their way to Belfast. It is expected that a total of 6,000 troops will be in Belfast within a few days. The strikers were very active and a number of dock carts were overturned.

England Faces Railway Strike.
London, July 31.—Lord Hamilton, chairman of the Great Eastern railway, and Henry Bonsor, chairman of the Southwestern railway, speaking at the annual meetings of their respective companies, both emphatically refused to recognize the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the executive committee of which had demanded the right to represent the railroad employes in an effort to settle their alleged grievances. This, it is feared, may result in momentous labor troubles next month.

King Frederick in Iceland.
Reykjavik, Iceland, July 31.—King Frederick of Denmark, accompanied by Prince Harald, Premier Christensen and forty members of the rigsdag, arrived here from the Faro Islands. Great crowds welcomed the party. His majesty has appointed a commission to arrange for legislation to define the constitutional status of Iceland, consisting of members of the Danish rigsdag and the Icelandic thing.

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