

A MAKER OF HISTORY

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM,

Author of "The Master Mummer," "A Prince of Sinners," "Mysterious Mr. Sabin," "Anna the Adventuress," Etc.

Copyright, 1905, 1906, by LITTLE, BROWN, and COMPANY.

[CONTINUED.]

"What was stolen?" Spencer asked. "Money?"

"No; a letter," Lord Runtun answered. "De Rothe says very little, but I never saw a man so broken up. He has left for London tonight."

"The matter is in the hands of the police, of course?" Spencer asked.

Lord Runtun shook his head.

"De Rothe took me into his room and locked the door a few minutes after we had discovered what had happened. He implored me to keep the whole affair from the press and from publicity in any form. His whole career was at stake, he said, and very much more than his career. All that we could do was to follow Mr. Fielding and drag him back by force if we could. Even then he had little hope of recovering the letter. We did our best, but of course we had no chance. Mr. Fielding and his daughter simply drove off. De Rothe is dealing with the affair in his own way."

"It is a most extraordinary story," Spencer said quietly.

Lord Runtun turned toward him.

"I have treated you with confidence, Mr. Spencer," he said. "Will you tell me now why you called at my house to see Mr. Fielding today?"

Spencer hesitated, but only for a moment.

"Certainly," he said. "I came because I knew that Mr. Fielding was halfway to America and his daughter in Russia. Some friends of mine were curious to know whom your guests could be."

Pelham raised his head.

"You lied to me, then!" he exclaimed.

"I had as much right to lie to you," Spencer answered calmly, "as you had to ask me questions. I had"—

He stopped short in the middle of his sentence. The faces of the three men were a study in varying expressions. From some other part of the house there came to them the sound of a woman's sudden cry of terror—the cry of a woman who had awakened suddenly to look into the face of death. Duncombe's uplifted glass fell with a crash upon the table. The red wine trickled across the tablecloth.

CHAPTER XXII.

DUNCOMBE was out of the room in a very few seconds. The others hesitated for a moment whether to follow him or not. Spencer was the first to rise to his feet and move toward the door. Lord Runtun and Pelham followed a moment or two later. Outside in the hall the house was perfectly silent.

Duncombe reached the library door just in time to find himself confronted by half a dozen of the men and women servants coming from the back of the house. With his hand upon the door knob he waved them back.

"Be so good, Mrs. Wooton," he said to the housekeeper, "to keep better order in the servants' hall. We could hear some girls calling or laughing in the dining room."

"Indeed, sir," Mrs. Wooton answered, with some dignity, "the noise, whatever it was, did not come from the servants' quarters. We fancied that it came from your library."

"Quite impossible," Duncombe answered coolly. "If I require any one, I will ring."

He passed through the door and locked it on the inside. In half a dozen hasty strides he was across the room and inside the smaller apartment where he had left the girl. With a little gasp of relief he realized that she was there still. She was pale, and a spot of color was blazing in her cheeks. Her hair and dress were a little disordered. With trembling fingers she was fastening a little brooch chance be close at hand, I should recommend you to induce Sir George to let you search the room to which those footsteps lead."

"The library," Duncombe interrupted quickly. "Search it by all means, if you like. I have done so myself already."

Spencer was facing the house. "The library?" he remarked reflectively. "Ah!"

He stooped down to light a cigarette. Suddenly he felt Duncombe's hot breath upon his cheek. In the momentary glow of the match he caught a silhouette of a pale, angry face whose eyes were flashing upon him.

"This isn't your affair, Spencer. Shut up!" Spencer blew out the match deliberately. They both followed Lord Runtun to the library. Pelham was standing in the middle of the room. He had the appearance of a man listening intently.

"George," he asked sharply, "what is on the north side of this room?"

"The wall!" Duncombe answered.

"And beyond?"

"A passage and the billiard room."

Spencer seemed dissatisfied.

"I fancied," he muttered—"but I suppose it must have been fancy. Do the women servants use that passage?"

"Of course! Upon my word," Duncombe added, with a nervous little laugh, "you all seem to be trying to make my house into a Maskeyne and Cooke's home of mystery. Let us go into the dining room and have a whisky and soda."

"Not for me, thanks," Lord Runtun declared. "I must go back. The real object of my coming here, Duncombe, was to see if the Mr. Spencer who called at Runtun House today was really Mr. Jarvis Spencer, and if so to ask him whether he would help me."

"To what extent, Lord Runtun?" Spencer asked quietly.

"To the extent of recovering or attempting to recover the papers which were stolen from the Baron de Rothe," Lord Runtun said. "The baron was a guest in my house, and I feel the occurrence very much. He will not let me even mention the matter to the police, but I feel sure that he could not object to Mr. Spencer's taking the matter in hand."

"I think you will find," Spencer said, "that De Rothe has already placed the matter in the hands of his own people. The German secret service is pretty active over here, you know. I have come in contact with them once or twice."

"Nevertheless for my own satisfaction," Lord Runtun continued, "I should like the matter inquired into by you, Mr. Spencer."

"I am not quite sure whether I am free to help you or not," Spencer said slowly. "May I come and see you tomorrow morning?"

"If you prefer it," Lord Runtun said doubtfully. "Come as early as possible. Good night, Duncombe! I should like to know who your nocturnal visitor was."

"If he comes again," Duncombe said, "I may be able to tell you."

He walked to his desk and, taking out a revolver, slipped it into his pocket. Then he rang the bell for Lord Runtun's carriage. It seemed to Duncombe that there was a shade of coolness in his visitor's manner as he took his leave. He drew Spencer a little on one side.

"I want you to promise to come and see me in any case tomorrow morning," he said. "There is something which I should prefer saying to you in my own house to saying here."

Spencer nodded.

"Very well," he said. "I will come. I can promise that much at least."

Lord Runtun departed. Pelham went off to bed. Spencer and his host were left alone in the library.

"Billiards or a whisky and soda in the smoke room?" the latter asked. "I know that you are not a late bird."

"Neither, thanks. Just a word with you here," Spencer answered.

Duncombe paused on his way to the door. Spencer was standing in a reflective attitude, with his hands behind his back, gently balancing himself upon his toes.

"I am very much disposed," he said, "to accept Lord Runtun's offer. Have you any objection?"

"Of course I have," Duncombe answered. "You are working for me."

"Was working for you," Spencer corrected gently. "That is all over, isn't it?"

"What do you mean?" Duncombe exclaimed.

Spencer stood squarely upon his feet. He looked a little tired.

"My engagement from you was to find Miss Phyllis Poynton," he said softly. "You and I are perfectly well aware that the young lady in question is—well, a few yards behind that curtain," he said, motioning with his head toward it. "My task is accomplished, and I consider myself a free man."

Duncombe was silent for a moment. He walked restlessly to the window and back again.

"How did you find out that she was here?" he asked.

Spencer looked a little disgusted.

"My dear fellow," he said, "any one with the brains of a mouse must have discovered that. Why, Lord Runtun, without any of the intimations which I have received, is a little suspicious. That is merely a matter of A, B, C. There were difficulties, I admit, and I am sorry to say that I have never solved them. I cannot tell you at this moment."

(Continued on Page Six.)

Clean-Up Sale

OF

Odds and Ends

Short lengths of

LACES

Some have insertion to match. While they last, at one-half price. You know our reputation for low prices on Laces. This is a bargain you do not often get.

EMBROIDERIES

Embroidery Flouncing, 24 inches wide, per yard...	85c	Embroidery Flouncing, 12 inches wide, per yard...	20c
Embroidery Flouncing, 14 inches wide, per yard...	45c	Embroidery Flouncing, 10 inches wide, per yard...	18c

Full line in matched set, from 10c to 50c yard. Embroidery remnants, 1/4 off

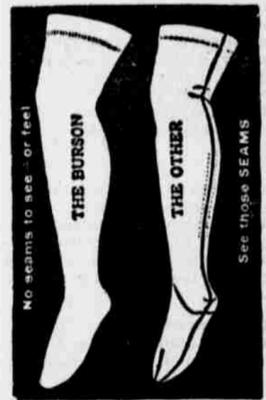
HOSIERY.

Ladies Lace Hose, were 35c and 45c, while they last they go at

25c pair

Children's Lace Hose in odd sizes, were 25c and 35c, at

20c pair



Summer Underwear

Ladies' low-neck sleeveless Vests, tape neck and arm, 10 and 12 1/2 value at 7c; 25c and 35c values at 20c; 50c values at 38c.

Ladies' low-neck sleeveless Union Suits, 25c value at 19c; 50c and 60c values at 39c; \$1.00 values at 75c.

Children's and Misses' Vests at 5c and 7c.

Children's and Misses' Pants at 7c.

Collars

Turnover Collars from 5c to 50c. Plauen lace Collars in small and large sizes, from 25c to \$2.00 each.

Remnants of Wash Goods, Gingham, Dress Goods at 1-4 off

Odd sizes in Corsets at one-fourth off

This month's Butterick Patterns
10c and 15c—none higher.

F. NEWHOUSE, Red Cloud, Nebr.