

The Bassett Will

By ALICE E. IVES

The will had been read, and the disappointed nephew and niece, who had received much smaller legacies than they expected, rose to take their departure, each trying to assume a decent air of friendliness to Richard and Esther Stone, the more fortunate heirs, but inwardly raving at the injustice of Uncle Charles, the testator.

Charles Bassett had not been possessed of a large fortune to leave. The home where he died had for several years been occupied by his niece Esther, and her husband Richard Stone, his board being considered an equivalent for rent. Richard earned a small salary as a bookkeeper, and they had not been able to save much. He was steady and reliable, but with the small confidence in himself, and the lack of initiative which keeps a man traveling in a rut to the end of his days. He, as well as Esther had had high hopes once of getting on in the world, but they were now both over forty, and their financial progress was scarcely perceptible. They had settled down to the conviction that any greater degree of prosperity was not for them, their very attitude of mind helping to keep them there. But if they were ignorant of this, they were to be pitied rather than blamed; such a large share of humanity are in the same boat.

They had made a comfortable home for Uncle Charles Bassett, and had cared for him in his last illness, and certainly had some right to hope he might leave them the house. It was a two-story brick building, in good repair, and with pretty grounds in one of the best neighborhoods of the small, western town.

The will gave them this house and all the furniture that had belonged to Charles Bassett, the residue, after funeral expenses to be divided equally between the other two heirs. This amounted to only about fifteen hundred dollars apiece, and was deposited in a city bank.

All the heirs were surprised that so small an amount had comprised the old man's fortune. The lawyer who had drawn up the will some five years before, when Mr. Bassett had first gone to live with the Stones, also wondered, because he inferred the old gentleman had considerably more; still it was known that he told nobody about his affairs, and was considered eccentric. But what was still stranger was the



Was Just About to Hold a Paper to the Flame.

lawyer's statement that he had always understood a later will had been made, having been drawn up by another attorney who was shortly after killed in a railway accident. The probating of the will had been delayed some time in the effort to find the later one, but as all search proved fruitless, it was thought Bassett had destroyed the missing document, and wished the other to stand.

Melvin Bassett, the nephew, was for contesting the will, but Jennie Marvin, the cousin, opposed it.

"That property wouldn't fetch five thousand, if it had to be sold," she reasoned. "And the most of that would go to the lawyers, so we wouldn't be much better off, after all."

Bassett saw the logic of this statement, though neither of them were possessed of much, they being poorer if anything than the Stones, and the money looked large to them.

Esther Stone wondered also about this other will. She had not had any knowledge of it, and she knew her husband had not. She had never in her life had cause to doubt the honesty of Richard. His fine integrity had been the rock upon which her respect for him was built. If that should ever fall?

"No," she said to herself, "that would be impossible. Richard could never do a dishonorable thing."

Then she thought of the saying that there is some point of temptation at which every human soul will yield.

"No," she said to herself, "Not Richard! He would not yield."

Now that they were alone in the house, which had more room than they needed, Esther conceived the idea of adding to their income by taking some boarders. She began to overhaul, and renovate the bedrooms. In the room where the old man had died was an old-fashioned secretary, a desk and bookcase combined. It had been thoroughly ransacked in the search for the missing will, and Esther with a touch of tenderness began removing the contents of the drawers and pigeon holes. She found nothing she had not seen before. Last of all she took off the sheet of soiled blotting paper fastened with thumb tacks to the writing desk. At one side, as though shoved in hastily, she saw a folded paper. She opened it.

It was the missing will. In it the house and lot, and all money in bank were to be divided equally between the three heirs. A codicil disposed of some small articles of personal property which she scarcely noticed, so stunned was she with the benumbing blow of the discovery. The pleasant home she had learned to think of as her own, the plans she had laid for adding to their income with boarders all suddenly melted into nothing. It was too horrible to consider with reason and calmness. She had only removed two of the tacks, and putting the will back, she replaced them. She felt she must have time to gather her wits, to be able to think.

Then came the tempter. Why should she give up that which was really hers? Had she not taken care of this old man as though he were her own, never leaving undone anything she could do for his comfort. Had she not at the last spent days and sleepless nights ministering to him? Yes, clearly it was hers. He had seemed to grow more and more to regard Richard and her as his children, and she had come to love the old man almost as a father.

But why had he made this will? She remembered now that before he had lapsed into unconsciousness, when she had thought him delirious, he had several times asked her to take up the tacks, and she had thought he had meant the carpet as he had intended to have a new one. Perhaps he wanted to destroy the will. Then she would only be carrying out his wish if she did.

She heard her husband coming in, and rose hastily, leaving the room. She did not mean to tell him just then. If she decided to destroy the will, he must never know. She was sure he would never consent to such a thing. But the most unthinkable of all was the idea that he should know she had even thought of doing such an act. His condemnation would be the unbearable thing.

That evening she went to a committee meeting. She could not spend the time alone with him till she had decided what to do.

She came in quietly, thinking he may have gone to bed, but he was not there. She saw a light upstairs. Something prompted her to go to the old man's room. The door was ajar. She looked in. Richard sat at the desk, he had lighted a candle, and was just about to hold a paper to the flame. She rushed into the room, and he quickly thrust the paper into his pocket.

"Richard!" she cried. "Give me that paper! Give it to me!"

"What paper?" he asked, trying to put her off.

"The one you were about to burn! You have no right, unless I see it!"

He looked at her, his face dropped, he sat an instant, not speaking, then he handed her the will.

"God!" he cried. "You came just in time to save me! Suppose I had done it—what an awful thing to carry with you through life!"

"Yes," she answered. "What an awful thing!"

There was to her now no waiting to decide.

"We will go together tomorrow, and hand it to the lawyer," she said.

In the codicil among some little keepsakes was a small box in a safe deposit drawer, the contents of which were willed to Esther.

"Some old jewelry, perhaps," she said to the other heirs at the second reading of the will.

The contents of the little box turned out to be seven thousand dollars in good bonds.

Lived in Cellars Two Years.

Between 7,000 and 8,000 of the inhabitants of Lens, which is in the occupied territory of France, remained there and lived in their cellars for more than two years, says Elie Reumaux, manager of the coal mines there, who recently arrived in Paris. The former population of Lens was 40,000. All the cellars in the town, M. Reumaux says, have been armored with cement by the Germans, so that they constitute so many little fortresses. The entire civilian population is obliged to work at road mending and railroad building, according to M. Reumaux. The coal mines of Lens, which are among the most important of the region of the Pas de Calais and produced 20,000,000 tons a year before the war, have been idle since the invasion and have suffered immense damage, says M. Reumaux.

Corn Belt Pushed Northward.

Securing a gain of a week or ten days in the ripening of corn means a great gain for farmers located near the northern limit of the corn-growing districts of this country. A new variety of corn which has been bred for early maturity by the Wisconsin experiment station is thought to be about ten days earlier in maturing than any other strain of corn that has been produced by this state.—Farm and Fireside.

ARMY DRAFT LAW NOW IN EFFECT

War Department Issues Instructions for the Guidance of Officials Concerned.

GOVERNORS TO HAVE CHARGE

Chief Executive of Each State Made Head of Registration Therein—Mayors and Selected Boards Given Authority in Cities of More Than 30,000.

Washington.—Instructions concerning the methods of carrying into effect the mandates of the army draft law have been issued by the war department. Responsible officials will be governed by the following orders:

The president is authorized to call upon all public officers to assist in the execution of the law. The plan is, however, to rely on the people for the proper execution of the law. It is expected that patriotic citizens will offer their services free as registrars. Such services will be gratefully acknowledged. Volunteers for this service should communicate immediately with the proper official.

There was a time in the country's history when military enumerators, backed by bayonets, went out among the people to take a compulsory service census. Today, under the principle of universal liability to service, the execution of the law is put into the hands of the people.

The approval of the new national army bill and the president's proclamation thereunder have been coincident. All persons within the age limits prescribed are required to present themselves for registration at the customary voting places in the voting precincts in which they have their permanent homes, on a day which the president will announce.

The governor of each state is the chief of registration therein. The machinery of registration in each county is in charge of the sheriff, the county clerk, and the county physician, acting ex officio, unless a different board shall be announced by the governor in cities containing populations of more than 30,000, the registration will be under the control of the mayor and selected boards of registration. In order that the designated county and city officials, and the people generally, can get a clear understanding of the census methods the following brief outline is given:

The sheriffs, or other designated officials, immediately upon receiving notice from the governor, shall appoint registrars for each voting precinct.

Apportionment of Registrars.

The proportion of registrars shall be one for each 170 persons to be registered. Each age to be registered will comprise about 1 per cent of the population.

If, for instance, all men between nineteen and twenty-five years of age, inclusive, are to be registered, the registrar would have to enroll about 7 per cent of the precinct population.

It is desirable to accept the services of competent volunteer registrars to serve without compensation. All registrars must be sworn.

The voting place in each precinct must be prepared for registration. Full printed instructions covering every detail of registration will be in the hands of the sheriffs and mayors on the fifth day after the president's proclamation.

Cities of Over 30,000 Population.

The mayor of a city containing more than 30,000 inhabitants, or the officials designated by the governor therein, shall, with approval of the governor, appoint for each ward or convenient minor subdivision containing about 30,000 people one registration board, and shall designate one officer of each board to perform duties similar to those imposed on the sheriff, as herebefore outlined. If the mayor desires, he may appoint a central board to coordinate the work of minor boards.

Duties of County Clerks, and of Clerks of Cities of Over 30,000 People.

On the fifth day after the president has issued his proclamation, clerks of counties and cities of over 30,000 must secure a supply of blanks and copies of the registration regulations from the sheriff or from the mayor. Absentees and the sick will apply to such clerks to have their registration cards filled out. In no case shall such persons be given registration certificates. They are to be instructed by the clerk that the burden is on them to see to it that the cards reach the registrars to

their home precincts by registration day.

Absentees and the Sick.

Persons absent from their home counties may be registered by mail. If so absent, a man should go to the clerk of the county where he may be staying, on the sixth day after the date of the president's proclamation. If he is in a city of over 30,000 population, the city clerk is the official to whom to apply. The absentee will be told how to register, but he must mail his card in time to reach his precinct by registration day.

Persons too sick to present themselves for registration must send a competent person to the county or city clerk on the sixth day after the issuing of the proclamation. The clerk will give instructions for registration. Colleges, Universities, Homes and Other Institutions.

Officials of educational, charitable and other institutions should apply for instructions to the county or city clerk on the sixth day after the date of the proclamation for instructions as to a convenient method of registration.

The wardens of jails, penitentiaries, and reformatories should apply to the county or city clerk for instructions on the sixth day.

Five days after the date of the president's proclamation complete regulations will be in the hands of all sheriffs and of the officials of cities of over 30,000 population.

BANKS ASKED TO CO-OPERATE

Secretary Authorizes Financial Institutions to Receive Subscriptions for the Bond Offerings.

Washington.—Secretary McAdoo telegraphed the entire list of 27,513 national and state banks and trust companies in the United States, authorizing them to receive subscriptions for the \$2,000,000,000 bond offering, enlisting their co-operation, and requesting them to telegraph a rough estimate of the amount of bonds each would take for itself and its patrons.

"You can render an invaluable service to your country," Mr. McAdoo told the banks, "by receiving subscriptions and co-operating with the federal reserve bank in your district."

Loan Subscriptions Fear In.

To all clearing house associations in the country Mr. McAdoo sent a telegram in which he said:

"The amount of the initial loan has been determined by the needs of the government and not arbitrarily. The enthusiastic and patriotic co-operation of the banks and bankers of the country will guarantee the success of the undertaking."

The result of the first announcement of the loan has been a deluge of subscriptions, aggregating many millions. Most of these came in by wire to the treasury. Virtually every large city and every state in the Union was represented.

Lend \$100,000,000 to Italy.

Negotiations continued today with representatives of the nations to which the United States is extending credit. Count di Celleri, the Italian ambassador, received the full amount of the first \$100,000,000 loan made by this government to Italy.

Subscriptions to the second offering of treasury certificates were received during the day by the federal reserve banks. Indications are that the secretary will call for the proceeds within a week, possibly a few days.

The \$100,000,000 loan to France will be turned over to Ambassador Jusserand, in whole or part, within a day or so.

MAY CENTER IN WASHINGTON

Probability That One Committee Will Purchase All Supplies Needed by the Allied Countries.

Washington.—Creation of a central purchasing committee in Washington for all supplies bought in the United States for the allied governments was forecast here by Sir Harman Lever, financial expert of the British war mission. The committee will supplant J. P. Morgan & Co.

Discussing the world financial situation, the British expert expressed the opinion that Germany will be practically bankrupt in the credit markets after the war.

"Our enemies," he said, "for all their boasted efficiency, have never had the courage to face their financial problems, with the result that when the war is over they will be hard put to it."

The Teutonic governments having pyramidized one internal loan upon another, he explained, their interest charges would be so great that he believed they would either have to repudiate a large part of their debt or face inability to buy the enormous quantities of material they would need for reconstruction.

The allies, he added, had paid their way in the war "by the straightforward and natural means, by pouring out their gold, by selling enormous masses of American securities, by raising loans." As a result, he predicted that the end of the war would find the allies in good shape financially, despite their enormous permanent debts.

concealed damage is discovered. They will add 535,722 tons to America's merchant marine. Some can be made ready in four months for transports if wanted.

Honolulu.—Negotiations have been closed between the Matson Navigation company and the federal shipping board. It is reported here, to tow the interned German vessels in the Hawaiian islands ports to the Pacific coast for repairs, after which it was said the ships would be used for war purposes.

DENIED TITLE TO SHIPPING

Measure Asked For by Administration Blocked in the House, Under the Rules.

Washington.—The administration bill to give title to seizure of German war-bound ships was blocked again in the house. Mr. Mann objected.

Seventy-one German and Austrian merchant ships seized by the government will be repaired and ready for commission within five months unless

FROM NEAR AND FAR

The largest settlement in Greenland has a population under 800.

Of recent invention is a household water heater that can be made to utilize garbage for fuel.

A tree has been discovered in Madagascar that produces coffee which is said to be free from caffeine.

The hills of Palestine are rich in iron and the mines are still worked there, though in a very simple, crude manner.

A high school agricultural experiment and information bureau, believed to be the first ever planned in the United States, will be in operation next spring and summer in Spokane, Wash.

Great fog-penetrating power is claimed for a new French incandescent light with greenish-yellow glass in front and backed by a reflector that reflects enough heat to prevent moisture collecting on the glass.

For persons who are absent when telephone calls are received, a Michigan man has invented a device that enables the unanswered caller to record his own number so that he can be reached when the absent man returns.

Masters of the chess board, like Frank James Marshall and Dr. Emanuel Lasker, have done wonderful things. In Berlin some years ago, O. S. Bernstein carried on 75 games simultaneously with all the boards in sight. Pillsbury has carried on as many as 58 simultaneous games with the boards in sight.

Efforts to raise a fund for the purchase and preservation of the home of John Greenleaf Whittier in Amesbury, Mass., are being made by the Whittier Home association. The house contains many manuscripts and other mementoes of the poet. His grand-nephew, Greenleaf Whittier Pickard, is the present owner.

SUITABLE TASTES

- The invalid asked for weak-fish.
- The judge of good ale, for bass.
- The miser for gold-fish.
- The astronomer for sun-fish.
- The athlete for mussels.
- The old maid for cat-fish.
- The obstinate man for bull-heads.
- The actress for star-fish.
- The flabby woman for jelly-fish.
- The "White Lights" man for lobster.
- The captain of "varsity crew for roe.
- The shoemaker for soles.
- The soldier for sword-fish.
- The sinner for devil-fish.
- The green-goods man for suckers.
- The country traveler for pike.
- The grouch for crabs.
- The close-mouthed woman for clams.
- The dishonest dealer for shark.
- The aeronaut for flying-fish.
- The embroidery merchant for scallops.
- The bird fancier for perch.—The Pisciculturist.

FLASHLIGHTS

If the other fellow is getting more fun out of his little than you are out of your much more he's richer than you are, regardless of what the bank statements show.

It's pretty hard to talk a child out of doing the things that you insist on doing yourself.

Forethought is the best accident insurance.

Everybody is willing to be the friend of the man who doesn't really need one.

NEW THINGS UNDER SUN

In the back of a new stove polishing brush is a reservoir for polish.

A patent has been granted for stick candy having a core made of peanut butter.

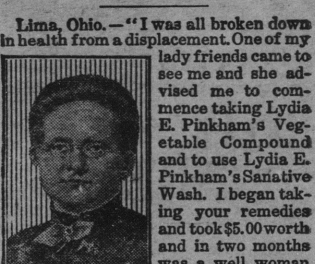
Cushions filled with dried coffee grounds protect needles and pins from rusting.

Hamburg has a restaurant that is housed in a building made of compressed paper.

A Kansas City woman is the patentee of a rocking chair in the arms and seat of which are boxes to hold sewing materials.

BROKEN DOWN IN HEALTH

Woman Tells How \$5 Worth of Pinkham's Compound Made Her Well.



Lima, Ohio.—"I was all broken down in health from a displacement. One of my lady friends came to see me and she advised me to commence taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and to use Lydia E. Pinkham's Sanative Wash. I began taking your remedies and took \$5.00 worth and in two months was a well woman after three doctors said I never would stand up straight again. I was a widow for seven years and I recommended the Vegetable Compound to every woman I take before birth and afterwards, and they all got along so nicely that it surely is a godsend to suffering women. If women wish to write to me I will be delighted to answer them."

—Mrs. JENNIE MOYER, 342 E. North St., Lima, Ohio.

Women who suffer from displacements, weakness, irregularities, nervousness, backache, or bearing-down pains, need the tonic properties of the roots and herbs contained in Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

Mohave County, the richest gold district in Arizona. The County of mines. Send for free map, cuts and literature. Not a stock but a mining proposition, with mill and 1,000 feet of work. Ground floor proposition—Be one of them! Stock selling at 15 cents per share. Write today for full particulars. ARIZONA-EASTERN MINING CO., P. O. Box 1359, Phoenix, Arizona.

NOTABLES ON PRISON LIST

Caesar, Richard Wagner, Bryan, Cleveland and Washington Appear on Registry at Leavenworth.

Did Julius Caesar conceive the plan under which he later ruled Rome while serving a prison sentence at Leavenworth? Did the famous prize fighters, John L. Sullivan and Jack Johnson, prepare for the battles which won them the championship of the world while sojourning within these walls? Did Richard Wagner, the celebrated musician and composer of "Parsifal," and other great operas, find the inspirations for his masterpieces in Uncle Sam's largest prison?

Students of history may not find it recorded so. Neither do their names appear on the visitors' register of this institution, but rather on the prisoners' record of those who have been confined here, says a writer in the New Era, published at the Federal penitentiary at Leavenworth. Among the names appear many former presidents, orators, generals and musicians of note, besides that of the Roman emperor. Whether these names represent merely that many aliases of persons desirous of keeping their real identity secret, or whether the namesakes of these famous men told the truth when first registered into the institutional records, is not known, but the following entries of notable names are recorded here:

Julius Caesar, Richard Wagner, George Washington, Grover Cleveland, Robert Lee, John Adams, John Jay, Carter Harrison, William Jennings Bryan, John L. Sullivan, Jack Johnson and Stonewall Jackson.

No Danger.

"I have a mind of my own."

"Don't worry about anybody laying claim to it."

Duration of Affection.

"Did she love him long?"

"Well, until he was short."—Baltimore American.

Economy! Flavor! Nutrition!

Grape-Nuts FOOD

FOR Breakfast Lunch or Supper