An American Baby Abroad

How He Played Cupid to a Kentucky Beauty

I. A Question of Nationality

A GLOBE trotting stork left the American Baby in a London pension. Grosvenor House was an appropriate place to leave a cosmopolitan infant; for in this spacious old boarding house—one time the town mansion of a rich peer—people from all over the world met.

While the American Baby lay asleep up stairs in his blue lined bassinet, the guests below at the late dinner were joking in many languages over his sudden arrival.

Said the dapper Frenchman to the Baby's father, "Eh, *Monsieur le Père*, have I it not true when I affirm that your leetle son can nayvair be Prasidont of the Great Uneeted States?"

"Alas! so iss it," interposed the fat German. "I haf heardt that efery American egspects to be President; but dis liddle feller iss deprived of dis great privilege, whereas he iss born an English citizen, *nicht?*" turning to the Americans at the table.

"Yes, that is our law, I believe," replied an American merchant. "No one born out of America, even if he afterward becomes an American citizen, is eligible for the presidency. If he was my boy, I should not have him born an alien for the world."

"Faith," replied the rosy cheeked young Irishman from the foot of the table, "and can he not thin start a rebillion and become King of England instid?"

"You may all be right," said the father ruefully, after the laughing at the Irishman's sally had ceased; "yet I'm not sure that the little chap is barred. It doesn't seem to me a fair ruling. I'll look up that law before I give up."

In the midst of the discussion, the tall, frock coated historian, an American, grubbing in the British Museum for material on the life of Aaron Burr, came in. Appealed to, he gravely delivered his verdict. "The young gentleman up stairs is of the same citizenship as his parents, wherever he is born," he said with a bow to the happy father. "He is, I'm sure, a promising candidate for the presidential chair of the United States."

THUS was the American Boy's first foreign entanglement adjudicated. The historian's verdict soon found its way up stairs. Baby's young mother straightway began to lisp baby talk to the candidate for future greatness. "He shall always be his mother's angel love, and no old President to be abused in the newspapers!"

But the Devonshire housemaid joyfully dandled him to a cockney accompaniment of, "Yes, you will be President some day, and you'll not forget your hold 'ousemaid,—will you now?—but send for 'er to look after the W'ite 'Ouse for you."

IF the historian had the law on his side—which has been disputed—when he announced that the foreign born infant was of the same citizenship as his parents, then the American Baby was a Southerner. His young mother had come abroad little more than a year before as Miss Elizabeth Lawrence. After the usual three months of hurried traveling with a personally conducted party, Elizabeth had agreed with her friend, Mary Marshall, that they had had their cake—but not time to eat it in these flying glimpses of the Old World.

By Mrs. Charles N. Crewdson

Drawings by Modest Stein

Elizabeth was the spoiled child of a prosperous banker in the beautiful little town of Bowling Green, Kentucky. Mary, an orphan "with money in her own name," as they say in Kentucky, lived with an aunt who had never been able to thwart a wish of her only sister's child. So, when Elizabeth and Mary's whims took the unexpected shape of letters begging for a much longer stay in Europe, their parents and relatives at home had met and protested; but the conference had ended by the banker filling out two generous letters of credit which he sent to Germany. The runaway travelers had planned to spend the winter in Munich, filling in their time with music and painting.

THE two girls found a real home in Munich, with charming, cultured Fräulein Lechner. They had been recommended to her by a college professor of their town, who, in his studies abroad, had enjoyed her friendship and hospitality. She spoke "American" instead of "English," she was wont to say; and was always happy when she had American girls under her roof. For the benefit of her American friends she even introduced herself to them as Fräulein "Lekner," thus kindly absolving them from bungling attempts to pronounce the German "ch."

Elizabeth and Mary, with their good looks, soft Southern speech, and Southern spontaneity, quickly took a front place in Fräulein Lechner's much crowded heart. For the ardent Germanwoman, Elizabeth had a special interest, because she wore a significant sparkling stone on her third finger. Although middle age had blown a whitish drift upon her brown hair, Fräulein Lechner's heart was full of most unelderly fancies. She adored love and lovers. She herself loved the whole world, the sunshine, and Bumi, her Maltese cat, with equal extravagance. She did not waste her affections, for she poured them forth from a heart as incapable of being exhausted as the ever filling pitcher of the Danaides.

EVERYTHING would have gone as the two girls had planned, if Elizabeth had not reckoned without her fiancé when she decided to finish the year abroad. After Elizabeth had been but a short while in Munich, Jack Clay, a young architect of Chicago, found that he had to go to London to enter bids for his American firm. From London he came over to Munich in that characteristic rush of Chicagoans. He blamed the slowness of the foreign train service because he lost several hours on the journey; but he kept busy by sending Elizabeth telegrams from every place where he considered himself unlawfully detained.

Arrived in Munich, he took part of a day to make his matrimonial arrangements with the American Consul and the American clergyman, and the remainder of the time till midnight to persuade Elizabeth that she should marry him in the morning, without pomp or trousseau, and be off by the first train to the Mediterranean for a honeymoon in Egypt.

Jack had dabbled in Egyptology in his university studies, and later had made Egyptian lore a hobby; hence his choice of the land of the Nile for his honeymoon travels. To the American clergyman and the Consul, Jack's insistence upon being married on a day's notice in a country where three months was the shortest legal limit for procuring a license, seemed more than wildly American.

They said at first that it could not be done. Jack replied to the Consul, who, having been several years in Munich, had become acclimated, "This three months' business may be well enough for the Germans; but it doesn't suit Americans. I'm not marrying one of its fräuleins; so I don't intend to have my wedding run by the German Government. I'm going to start to Egypt to-morrow, and I'm going to take my sweetheart with me! Great Scott! Do they think here that a man wants to put in his whole life getting married?"

Even from Fräulein Lechner, Jack and Elizabeth met only disapproval of the hasty wedding they were planning. Though she was a-quiver with excitement at the unexpected closeness of such weighty matters of sentiment, she could not, even for romance, overcome her inbred notions of the deliberation and preparation that should attend a wedding. "No church! No trousseau! And, oh! no rose wreath!"—this last seemed to be the climax of her disapproval,—she exclaimed with uplifted hands. "But, anyhow, it can never be done under our German laws!" she ended confidently.

JACK was by birth a Kentuckian; but for doing as he pleased and being in a hurry about it, he could out-Chicago a born Chicagoan. So, despite the ob-