

THE HEIR OF SANTLEIGH

OR THE STEWARD'S SON

CHAPTER XXXI.

A quarter of an hour later Guildford Berton was walking towards his cottage. He was burning hot, as if with fever, and he took off his hat and let the cold evening air blow upon his parched forehead.

The love of a bad man, we are told by one of those philosophers who seem to know everything, is very near akin to hate, and at that moment Guildford Berton was not quite sure whether he loved or hated Norah most.

But he meant to make her his wife as firmly as he had ever meant it.

He could scarcely say that he was surprised or disappointed by her refusal. He had not gone so far as to hope that she would accept him, and it was something that he had, so to speak, broken the ground.

"She knows now that I love her," he muttered, as he walked along with feverish steps and restless eyes. "She will grow accustomed to the knowledge presently, and—and in time will discover that it is useless to fight against it. It is a question of will, and mine is stronger than hers. If I had only kept my temper more under control! But that look on her face and that 'Go!' it was worse—he wiped his forehead and laughed a ghastly laugh—"it was worse than the old man's on the night he was taken ill. I wonder if he heard and understood what we were saying?" and he laughed again. "If he did, I have had my revenge already. But I must be careful. My luck has stood by me up till lately, up to the night I showed the old fool my hand. Is it going to turn?"

As he asked himself the question he reached the gate in the wall, and took out his key.

He had not deemed it necessary to acquaint the old woman of his intended return, and as he opened the door and entered the silent and gloomy house she came out with a lamp in her hand, and eyed him with dull and stolid surprise.

"Is it all right?" he motioned on his fingers.

"Yes," she sighed.

"And no one has been here?" he asked.

"No," she answered; "no one."

He nodded and signed to her that she could go to bed, and then, taking the lamp from her, went into the small sitting-room.

He had no sooner done so than back flashed upon his mind the remembrance of—Becca South!

He had been so engrossed of late by his pursuit of Norah that he had almost forgotten the other awful thing which had haunted him, but now here it was back again in all its potent horror.

He set the lamp upon the table and looked around the room with a shiver. It struck cold and damp, and it was full of the terrible scene of the night of his crime. He buttoned his coat across his chest, and going to the sideboard, got out some brandy and mixed himself a drink, but even the powerful spirit could not dispel the chill which had so swiftly taken the place of the feverish heat in which he had left the Court, and he struck a match and lit the fire ready-made in the small and poky grate. But the wood was damp, and presently the tiny, sullen flame died out.

He knew that if he went to bed cold and chilled he should not sleep, and he lit the lantern to light him to the woodshed.

But when he reached the garden he turned to the left instead of the right where the shed lay, and slowly went down the path to the heap of leaves.

Holding the lantern near the ground, he peered at the heap keenly and shudderingly.

It was just as he left it, and he seemed to remember the position of every stone and protuberance.

"It is all right," he muttered between his teeth, but he did not go immediately. Instead he stood and stared down as if overcome with a sudden stupor.

Then, with an oath, he pulled himself together, and, resolutely turning his eyes away from the heap, went to the shed and got some wood.

When he got back to the house he felt in his pocket for his matchbox and found it, but suddenly missed his keys.

This staggered him, and he stood staring at the fire vacantly, then he forced a smile.

"I am a fool," he muttered. "I've left them in the gate!"

With the lantern in his hand he went down the garden, and found that, as he had thought, he had left the key attached to the bunch, sticking in the keyhole of the wall door.

Cursing himself for his stupidity, he locked the door, and, with the keys in his hand, returned to the parlor.

The fire was burning up, and he drew his chair close and sat huddled up over the blaze, and went over the scene with Norah. But every now and then there came a ghastly pause in his reflections, and in that pause the ghost of his crime stalked across his mind, and made the silence of the cold, damp little room truly hideous.

He got some more brandy at intervals, and at last succeeded in producing the exhaustion which is the ghastly imitation of wholesome sleepiness.

Then he rose, and with a final drink went heavily upstairs.

But, exhausted as he was, he instinctively willed aside the blind and stared

through the window at the heap in the garden, just as he used to do before he left for London; but the night was too dark for him to see anything, and, with an oath, he dropped the blind and began to undress.

"Curse the place and everything in it!" he muttered as he got into bed. "I wish it were burnt down."

Then he succeeded in distracting his mind from the one haunting fear, and forced himself to think of Norah, and so fell into an uneasy, restless doze. He had not been asleep more than an hour when he woke suddenly with the dim consciousness that he had been awakened by some kind of noise.

He sat up and listened, and for a time all was silent, and he was about to throw himself back, when he heard a faint noise, which seemed to come from the room beneath, the room in which Becca had died.

The cold sweat gathered upon his face, and he sat shivering and quaking, with his ears strained painfully, trying to persuade himself that it was only fancy. But as he listened with an agonized acuteness he distinctly heard the noise again. It was the sound of footsteps, muffled and cautious of some one moving in the room below.

He got out of bed, and, slipping on some clothes, stole to the door. Then he smiled a ghastly smile of reassurance; the noise no doubt was made by the old woman, who was paying a visit to the sideboard on the chance of his having left the brandy decanter not locked up.

"I'll give the hag a fright," he muttered, and he went to a drawer and took out an old-fashioned pistol, and, loading it with a blank charge, crept, with it in his hand, to the head of the stairs.

All was silent again now, but he knew that he had heard the noise and not merely dreamed that he had done so, and slowly and cautiously he descended the stairs.

Although he was prepared for it, the sight of a thin streak of light coming through the partly open doorway of the sitting-room gave him a start, and, with a stifled oath, he moved forward on tip-toe, and softly pushed the door more widely open and peered round it.

Then he fell back and clutched the pistol tightly, for it was not the bent, decrepit figure of the old woman he saw within the room, but that of a man.

Now, Guildford Berton was not altogether a coward, and the shock to his over-strained nerves, weakened by the copious draughts of spirits, could not be set down entirely to fear.

After a moment or two he collected himself, and peered around the door again, and this time the start that followed was one of recognition.

A man was kneeling beside the table prying open a desk with a clasp knife, and by the light which fell from an ordinary candle stuck into a piece of wood Guildford Berton saw that the thief was the man with the rugged face and bushy eyebrows who had lain on the bench outside the inn on the day he had been making inquiries into Becca South's disappearance.

Guildford Berton drew back and pondered, clutching the pistol hard and fast, and holding his breath.

That the man was a thief or an ordinary housebreaker he had no doubt, but he was puzzled to account for his presence there. No burglar worthy of his salt, he thought, would break into so mean and unpromising a place as the cottage, unless he were sure of finding valuables, and it was not likely that any burglar would imagine that a sensible man would trust his money or jewels to a crazy old desk.

Why he had broken into the cottage at night of all nights—the night of the owner's return—when he might have done so during that owner's absence?

He could find no solution to the enigma. Suddenly the suspicion swept over him like a breath of ice that the man had come to find out something about—about Becca South, and the sweat broke out upon his forehead.

But he thrust the suspicion from him. Even if he had done so he would not have taken the trouble to break open a desk. What was there in it? He tried to think, but could remember nothing but some papers, of no importance, referring to business of the estates, which he had flung in carelessly from time to time. There was absolutely nothing there which could repay any burglar, however hard up, for his trouble.

By this time—a period of only a few minutes had elapsed—the man Furlong, for it was he, had opened the desk, and was turning over the contents. They were, as has been stated, papers of no interest to any one, least of all to a stranger but suddenly Guildford Berton saw the man start, and, catching up something—a piece of cardboard it looked like—hold it near the candle.

Whatever it was he seemed absorbed in it, and Berton seized the auspicious moment, and quietly slid round the door and presented the pistol at the man's head.

"Move a step and I fire," he said.

The man raised his head and did not move, but his hand slid into the pocket of his coat, and remained there as he said, quietly and slowly

"Don't fire, Mr. Berton. I've got

covered by a revolver in my pocket, and I'm a dead shot."

The next instant he had whipped out a revolver and presented it at Guildford Berton.

"Now," he said, deliberately as before, "we are on all fours, and I fancy my weapon is rather a better one than that hore affair of yours. Shake your finger on that trigger, and you are a dead man."

Guildford Berton lowered his pistol, and confronted his adversary with a white face.

"What are you doing here?"

Mr. Furlong kept his revolver pointed with deadly precision.

"Put that thing down and keep quiet, and I'll tell you."

Almost mechanically the pistol was laid on the table.

Still keeping the revolver pointed, Furlong took up the pistol and thrust it into his pocket, then he laid his revolver on the table within reach of his hand, and looked at Guildford Berton steadily.

(To be continued.)

COST OF THE GREAT WAR

THE RUSSIAN BUDGET PLACES IT AT \$1,150,000,000.

Repatriation of Troops in Far East and Reduction of Army Will Cost \$52,500,000.

The Russian budget statement for 1906 shows that it will be necessary to raise \$240,500,000 by credit operations to balance the estimated receipts and expenditures. The latter include \$202,500,000 for the liquidation of the expenses of the Russo-Japanese war, the repatriation of the troops in the far east and the reduction of the army to a peace footing. For the first time the total cost of the war, \$1,150,000,000, is revealed. The credit operations to balance the budget include the recent authorization of \$200,000,000 in treasury bonds, \$75,000,000 of which have already been used to renew the Mendelssohn loan, and the credit, \$160,000,000, which former Finance Minister Kukuoff is now negotiating in Paris. The primary object of the latter, the proceeds of which will be retained in Paris, is understood by the Associated Press to be the maintenance of the stability of the rouble.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The budget for 1906 estimates the ordinary revenue at \$1,013,929,387, and the ordinary expenditure at \$1,009,038,275. The extraordinary revenue is estimated at \$1,000,000, plus \$240,557,000, from impending credit operations, and the extraordinary expenditure at \$246,448,112. The total revenue and expenditure balance at \$1,255,486,387.

The extraordinary expenditure, in round numbers, includes: for the Russo-Japanese war, \$202,500,000; for the building of railroads, \$21,000,000; for the relief of sufferers from the bad harvest, \$10,000,000; in loans for the restoration of naphtha works, \$7,500,000.

In the budget statement it is announced that manifestoes will be issued, giving the nation the right to participate in the examination of future budgets.

The budget statement does not dodge the prevailing conditions in Russia. It is pointed out specifically that the receipts from nearly all sources have been scaled down, and that, moreover, it is stated that if the disorders in the interior do not cease there may be some branches of revenue on which it will be impossible to count.

RECEIPT PRECARIOUS.

The budget also deals frankly with the heavy drain on the gold reserve of the State bank balances abroad, which have fallen \$152,500,000 in the three months preceding January. During the last ten days of the year the gold reserve was reduced by \$30,500,000, while the issue of paper currency was increased by \$40,000,000. The increase of paper issued, the statement says, was made by the bank in an effort to come to the rescue of the business interests which were almost paralyzed, and had been refused loans by private banks, owing to the panicky conditions and to the reduction of the foreign credits of houses with connections abroad.

MEN'S HATS IN CHURCH.

Their Care a Troublesome Question Awaiting Solution.

It is a matter of historical record that our forefathers in the seventeenth century wore their headgear at divine service and also at dinner, but it has remained for an English newspaper to testify that in its opinion gentlemen sometimes refrain from going to church because of their hats, says the London *Halters' Gazette*.

A daily paper has recently suggested that the very irregular attendance of upper class males at church may be due to the respect with which they regard their headgear and the inadequate accommodation provided in sacred edifices for the safe bestowal of the cherished "topper."

The quote a Piccadilly hatter as saying, "I receive more hats to block on Monday morning than on any other day of the week, and judging from the observations I hear, I should say that the owners benefit very little by going to church. If they place their hats under the seats they are kicked by the occupants of the pews behind, ladies being almost as careless as mischievous boys in this respect. Then, if they deposit the hats on the seats, some one—probably the owner himself—is sure to sit upon them. Why can't every West End church have a cloak room where gentlemen can leave their hats? This suggestion has often been made. A small sum could be charged and devoted, let us say, to the clothing of the heathen in West Africa."

A West End vicar who was asked if this difficulty explained why men did not go to church gave an unsympathetic answer. "I cannot conceive," he said, "even in these artificial and finicking days, of a man who would avoid going to church out of consideration for his hat. At regular intervals male members of my congregation complain to me about this matter, and I invariably tell them to wear caps."

A verger at a neighboring church who offered as a remedy the suggestion that men should wear opera hats, told the amusing story of an experiment. "One gentleman always used to put his hat outside the door of his pew," he said; "others followed, until the whole aisle showed a row of silk hats. This was all right till one night an old gentleman who was short-sighted and infirm came late. He helped himself forward by resting his hand on each pew. In this way he kicked every hat into the aisle and 'dribbled' his way, so to speak, up to his seat."

HEALTH HINTS.

Apples should be eaten to stimulate the brain.

In cases of poison warm water with salt in large quantities forms a quick emetic.

A headache can often be relieved by rubbing the temples with a slice of lemon.

In extreme prostration, a small quantity of extract of meat in a glass of sherry or claret is a good restorative.

A simple remedy for insomnia is to dip a serviette or handkerchief in cold water, wring it out, and lay it across the eyes. Eating lettuce produces sleep. A cup of cold water, with a teaspoonful of salt, taken upon rising in the morning, will act as an excellent tonic and is far less trying on the system than any drug.

Calcium, so important for children in the formation of bone, may be obtained by the eating of eggs, rice, rhubarb, whole wheat, and the drinking of milk.

An irritating cough is often caused by the uvula (the fleshy, conical body suspended from the palate over the back of the tongue) being enlarged. When this is the case, consult the doctor, as medicines and gargles only temporarily check the annoyance.

After bad food, the next greater cause of disease is lack of exercise. Specific cases require specific treatment always, but it is safe to say that a walk of three miles each day in all weathers is the least amount upon which health can be maintained.

Sugar makes heat, and also gives muscular energy. In times of great exertion, the rapidity with which it is assimilated gives sugar a great advantage over starchy foods. Sugar should be used sparingly by one who has a torpid liver, and not at all by one affected with diabetes.

LEGAL POOR OF LONDON

ALMOST EIGHTY THOUSAND PEOPLE IN HER POORHOUSES.

While Many of Them Are Old, Thousands Are Young and Vigorous.

From a London Times article on the legal poor of London the following extracts are taken:—

In dealing with the question of the legal poor of London this Christmas we have to record the dismal fact that the numbers in receipt of pauper relief in nearly every month of the past year have been greater than in any of the previous forty years comprised in the official statistics, with the exception of the period from 1867 to 1871, and that the ratio of paupers per 1,000 of the population in most months has been higher than in any year since 1874. The highest point reached was in February, when the ratepayers were maintaining as many as 129,529 persons, of whom 77,365 were in the workhouses and 52,164 on the out-relief lists. Of every 1,000 of the population 27 were paupers. The figures have fluctuated during the year, but all through they have remained very high, and until December was reached they showed considerable increases upon the large totals of 1904. Not only has there been

A REMARKABLE INCREASE

in the outdoor relief, but the rise in the numbers entering the workhouses, which has been a great feature of modern pauperism, has continued, and the details given below reveal the fact that in no year in the history of the poor law has the population of the workhouses been greater. The solution of the problem of how this growing and costly mass of permanent indoor pauperism is to be dealt with is becoming a very difficult one in many unions where the institutions are already accommodating more than their certified number; while the lavish distribution of out-relief is a question which requires immediate attention.

It is gratifying, however, to be able to state that this month the official returns record a decrease of pauperism compared with the corresponding period of 1904. The reduction began in the week ended December 2, and it has continued up to the 16th inst., the date of the last weekly return. There were then 127,072 persons in receipt of relief—77,622 in the workhouses, and 49,450 outside. This is a welcome reduction of 551 on the total for the corresponding week of last year.

Although the large majority of the inmates of the London Workhouses are old-age paupers—the latest official return, that for 1903, puts them at 48,000 over sixty years of age—there is a considerable sprinkling of the able-bodied. It is an unfortunate fact that these are on the increase. As many as 9,932 received relief last year, which was 984 more than the total for the previous year, and it is, indeed, the

HIGHEST NUMBER ON RECORD;

while the ratio per 1,000 of the population (2.1) is not exceeded in any previous year, although it was equalled in the years 1894-96. The outdoor relief lists contained 8,164 able-bodied, which was higher by 1,689 than the total for 1903-04, and greater than any previous number, the ratio per 1,000 inhabitants being 1.8, a rise of .4 on the preceding year.

It is a deplorable fact that the poor law establishments of London contain nearly 20,000 children. Of these 7,805 are being educated and trained in district or separate schools, 3,871 in cottage and other homes, 2,968 are in workhouses and infirmaries, 1,748 are in institutions belonging to the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, 2,976 are in training and industrial homes, 180 are in institutions for the blind, deaf and dumb, epileptics, etc., and 125 in hospitals and convalescent homes for the sick. During last year the guardians of London had 37,747 children on the outdoor relief lists, and this Christmas there are 17,227 children under the age of 16 receiving help, as against 18,000 in December, 1904.

Even the man who denounces capital as a curse never objects if the curse comes home to roost.

LOST EYESIGHT

Through Coffee Drinking.

Some people question the statements that coffee hurts the delicate nerves of the body. Personal experience with thousands prove the general statement true and physicians have records of great numbers of cases that add to the testimony.

The following is from the *Rockford, Ill., Register-Gazette*:

Dr. William Langhorst of Aurora has been treating one of the queerest cases of lost eyesight ever in history. The patient is O. A. Leach, of Beach County, and in the last four months he has consulted with all of the specialists about the country and has at last returned home with the fact impressed on his mind that his case is incurable.

A portion of the optic nerve has been ruined, rendering his sight so limited

that he is unable to see anything before him, but he can see plainly anything at the side of him. There have been but few cases of this kind before and they have been caused by whiskey or tobacco. Leach has never used either, but has been a great coffee drinker and the specialists have decided that the case has been caused by this. Leach stated himself that for several years he had drunk three cups of coffee for breakfast, two at noon and one at night. According to the records of the specialists of this country this is the first case ever caused by the use of coffee.

The nerve is ruined beyond aid and case is incurable. The fact that the case is a queer one is that the sight forward has been lost and the side sight has been retained. According to the doctor's statement the young man will have to give up coffee or the rest of his sight will follow and the entire nerve be ruined.—*Register-Gazette*

Let it be remembered that the eyes may be attacked in one case and the stomach in the other, while in others it may be the kidneys, heart, bowels or general nervous prostration. The remedy is obvious and should be adopted before too late.

Quit coffee, if you show incipient disease.

It is easy if one can have well-boiled Postum Food Coffee to serve for the hot morning beverage. The withdrawal of the old kind of coffee that is doing the harm and the supply of the elements in the Postum which Nature uses to rebuild the broken down nerve cells, insures a quick return to the old joy of strength and health, and it's well worth while to be able again to "do things" and feel well. There's a reason for

POSTUM