# THE HEIR OF SANTLEIGH

OR

## THE STEWARD'S SON

CHAPTER XIII.

Becca, looking round swiftly, took the watch from his pocket and looked at it. It was a handsome one, with a monogram which puzzled her and which few persons could have disentangled. She put the watch to her ear, turned the key—Cyril wondered the next day what on earth had come to his first-class lever!—and then put it back in its place. As she did so she caught sight of an envelope in the breast pocket of his coat. She put her hand in and took it out, and, looking round again warily, read it by the light of the moon. There was not much in it to satisfy her burning curiosity.

"Dear Cyril," it ran, "I found on getting to town that your picture, 'The Reapers,' was making a stir. I always told you that it was just bad and tricky enough to catch the public taste. Moses, the picture dealer, has offered £80 for it, and I've made bold to ask £100, and will take that sum if I can screw him up to it. Have you recovered from your madness, or is the dogstar still burning? I don't ask you what you are doing, for I know. You are just loafing about, smoking, dreaming, mooning, anything but working. Oh, the brief madness which men call love! Adieu, insane youth. Jack.

Of course, Becca could not understand the latter part of the bote, but the earlier made her prick up her ears. The handsome gentleman was not only amusing himself by painting pictures, but getting a hundred pounds for one!

She looked for more letters, but could not find any; in fact, there was nothing else to reward her search but a faded and dusty rose, which she found between his waistcoat and his shirt, lying upon his heart, indeed.

She looked at this with a puzzled frown on her warm, classical brow, then with a little smile put it back.

In doing so she touched his arm, and the pain caused him to come to.

His eyes opened and his lips moved, and Becca, bending down her head, heard him murmur a name:

"Norah!"

Her eyes lighted and her face flushed. She had discovered something, at any rate. This handsome young stranger was in love with her beautiful mistress.

She raised his head and fanned him with her hat, and presently he came round completely and eyed her at first with a passionate look which changed to one of surprise.

"Why, you are not——" he said. "I thought it was—— It's Becca South, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir," said Becca.

"Where am I?" he asked confusedly.

"In the Court drive, sir," she replied. "I found you lying here, just as you are. Have you been ill?"

"I don't know. Oh, yes, I do," he said, wincing as he felt his arm. "Yes, I must have fainted, like a woman," he added, with disgust. "I've hurt my arm, Becca."

He struggled to his feet and leaned against her arm slightly, sighing a little; for you see he had been half dreaming that Norah stood beside him, and the disappointment was keen.

"Lor', sir," said Becca, "how did it happen?"

"Too long a story, Becca. But I'm all right now."

"That you're not, sir; you're all of a tremble."

"Yes, and my head feels like lead. Becca, you need not tell any one that you found me like this," he went on; "they might think that I'd been taking too much to drink."

"For certain and sure they would. 'Lor', sir, how sorry my mistress would be to hear of it!"

"Your mistress?"

"Yes, the Lady Norah."

"Lady Norah your mistress?" he said. "Wait a minute," and he sank down on the bank again.

Becca, perfectly content to remain for many minutes if she could glean any further information, seated herself beside him.

As she did so a stealthy footstep came over the grass behind them and Guildford Berton approached.

There was no particular reason why he should choose the grass of the path, but it was his habit to move about as noiselessly as possible and as he walked with his head hung low and in deep thought, he did not see them until he was close upon them.

Then he pulled up and stepped behind a tree.

"Yes, sir, Lady Norah has took me to be a kind of companion," said Becca, with a touch of pride.

"I see. Well, Lady Norah will have a very pretty companion," he said mechanically. He was thinking whether he could trust this girl with a message for Norah. He must see her again—must lay his heart bare to her. "Do you think you can take a message to Lady Norah for me, Becca?" he said.

"You trust me, sir," she said, concisely.

"Yes," said Cyril, "I think I will. Will you tell Lady Norah that I shall be in the glade where I painted Casper, and say that I beg her to meet me there to-morrow at five o'clock."

He put his hand in his pocket and found half-a-crown and gave it to her and Becca's brown little paw closed over it eagerly.

"I'll be careful and tell her the very words," she said, "and now I'll go and get something for you from the lodge!"

"No, no!" said Cyril. "I will wait another minute till my head feels less leady. You run home, Becca."

"I'll stay till you're all right. You might faint again."

Guildford Berton waited only till he had heard the message given, then he glided on quickly and still in the shadow of the lodge. As he did so the door opened and Jobson, the lodge keeper, came out. He was in his shirt sleeves, and was smoking a long clay pipe, with which he touched his forehead as he recognized Mr. Berton.

"Good evening, sir," he said. "I thought I heard voices and just slipped out to see who it was. Them darned tramps be about a sight lately."

An inspiration flashed into Berton's mind.

He stole up to the man and, laying a hand on his shirt sleeve, drew him forward.

"Hush!" he said, with an amused smile, "you did hear voices, but it isn't tramps," and he pointed to the two figures seated on the bank.

"Why, who is it?" he said in a subdued voice to match Guildford Berton's. "Ah, it's that young Becca—"

"Yes, it's pretty little Becca and her sweetheart, I suppose," was the answer, good-naturedly spoken. "Just the night for lovers, eh, Jobson?"

"Ay, sir," he assented. "Lor', what a flirt that girl be! She have turned the heads of all the young fellows in the village, and there'll be mischief among 'em presently, I do think. That's the worst of a pretty girl, Mr. Berton."

"She appears to be able to turn a London head as well as a country one," said Guildford Berton, with almost a paternal smile. "The young fellow who is with her is the artist, Mr. Burne, who is stopping at the inn."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Jobson, under his breath. "Why, he's a gentleman, bean't he, sir?"

"Oh, well, gentlemen admire pretty girls, you know, Jobson. We won't disturb them; we've all been young once, eh?"

"You're young yet, sir. But that Becca's a flirt, she be!"

"Good night," said Guildford Berton.

"Good night, Becca!" said the old man, slyly, as she flitted past, a moment later.

She returned his greeting in a voice of the sweetest innocence and sped on; but Jobson waited, and presently Cyril walked past.

Jobson was too respectful to address him, but took a good look at him as he passed, then went down and locked the gate.

Guildford Berton had drawn back into the shadow of the trees beside the horse pond and waited until Cyril came slowly up to him, then he stepped into the light.

"Oh, it's you."

"Yes," was the quiet answer. "I thought you would pass and I waited to ask you whether you were hurt."

Cyril looked rather surprised at the friendly tone of the speech. The man had maintained a sombre silence at the hall door.

"How did you pass me? I came down the drive."

"And I was tempted by the fineness of the night to walk round by the bridle path," said Guildford Berton. "But you haven't answered my question. Are you hurt? Can I help you?"

"Well, I don't know," said Cyril wearily. He was worn out with the pain and excitement. "I've done something to my arm," and he touched it.

"I thought you looked rather pale and done up," said Guildford Berton. "You'd better come to my place and let me see what's the matter with it. I'm a bit of a doctor, you know,"

"Ah, yes, so you said. Very well. It's very kind of you."

Guildford Berton led the way down the gloomy lane and unlocked the door in the wall and motioned Cyril to enter. A lantern stood behind the door and he lit it, and holding it above his head unlocked the door of the house.

If it had seemed cold and dark and grim to Cyril on his first visit, it appeared doubly so now, and a faint shudder ran through him as he thought if he ever wanted a scene for a murder this cheerful residence would supply it in all its details.

His host lit the lamp and motioned Cyril into the chair. As he sat down he noticed again the faint smell of chemicals, and it struck upon his jaded senses with an intense repugnance.

"Now, then, stand up," said Berton.

Cyril did so and the amateur doctor took the injured arm. Cyril drew a sharp breath and a gleam of malignant enjoyment glowed in Guildford Berton's eyes.

"Take your coat off," he said.

"You might as well ask me to take off the roof of the house."

"Then I must cut it," he said, and he took a knife from his pocket and opened a long, sharp blade. He held it for a moment, his eyes downcast and his lips twitching, and if Cyril could have read the thought that flashed through his companion's mind he would have seized the knife and forced the weapon from its owner's grip.

But, after a moment's pause, Guildford Berton cut out decterously the sleeve of the coat and rolled up the shirt sleeve.

"You've put your arm out!" he said, and Cyril almost fancied that a note of satisfaction sounded in the tone.

"That's not so bad, is it?" he said cheerfully.

"No. It might have been worse," responded Guildford Berton, as he eyed the well-formed limb, "but it will be painful to get back. I'll try, if you like."

"Of course!" said Cyril, holding out his arm.

Guildford Berton took hold of it and performed the operation, which, simple as it looks, requires a skillful hand and some nerve. His hand was skillful, and as to his nerve, he would have inflicted any amount of pain upon a fellow-creature—especially upon Cyril Burne—as coolly as he would have worked a pump handle.

Cyril set his teeth, but a groan escaped him and he sat down upon the table.

"Thank you, thank you," he said. "By Jove! you ought to have been a surgeon!"

He put his hand to his forehead; it was wet with perspiration.

"Faint?" said Guildford. "Wait, I'll give you something."

He went to the cupboard and unlocked it, and his hand went to one of the bottles containing sal volatile; then he paused, and, casting a quick glance, full of hate, over his shoulder at the weary figure on the table, his hand went gliding to the small bottle hidden in his breast pocket.

His fingers closed round the vial like so many serpents, and his heart beat quickly.

He had drawn it almost out of its hiding place when Cyril suddenly stood upright.

"Don't trouble, Mr. Berton," he said with a laugh. "I'm as right as ninepence now, and I've got all a child's horror of medicine."

The fingers unclosed from round the bottle, and allowed it to slip to its place, and locking the cupboard swiftly, Guildford Berton came back to the table.

"Very well," he said. "Oh, yes, you are all right now."

His face was so pale, so white, indeed, and there was so sudden and strange a hoarseness in his voice, that Cyril looked at him with surprise.

"Hallo!" he said. "Do you feel queer?"

"No, no," replied Guildford. "The—the putting your arm in its place—it's rather a ticklish operation, and it upset my nerves a little, that's all."

Cyril looked at him with a feeling rather akin to remorse. After all, this sullen-browed individual, with the strange repelling manner, must be a better sort of fellow than he, Cyril, had thought him.

"I've all the more reason to be grateful to you," he said. "And I am. Good-night. I'll come over and report progress to-morrow; but, anyhow, you ought to have been a doctor, you know."

Berton forced a smile, and taking a lantern, lighted his patient to the gate, and with another good-night and repeated thanks Cyril stepped outside.

The gate dropped to with a dull clang, and Guildford Berton fell against the wall, and, shaking and shuddering, wiped the thick drops of cold sweat from his brow.

"Heaven, it—it was a temptation!" he muttered brokenly. "Another moment and I should have done it!"

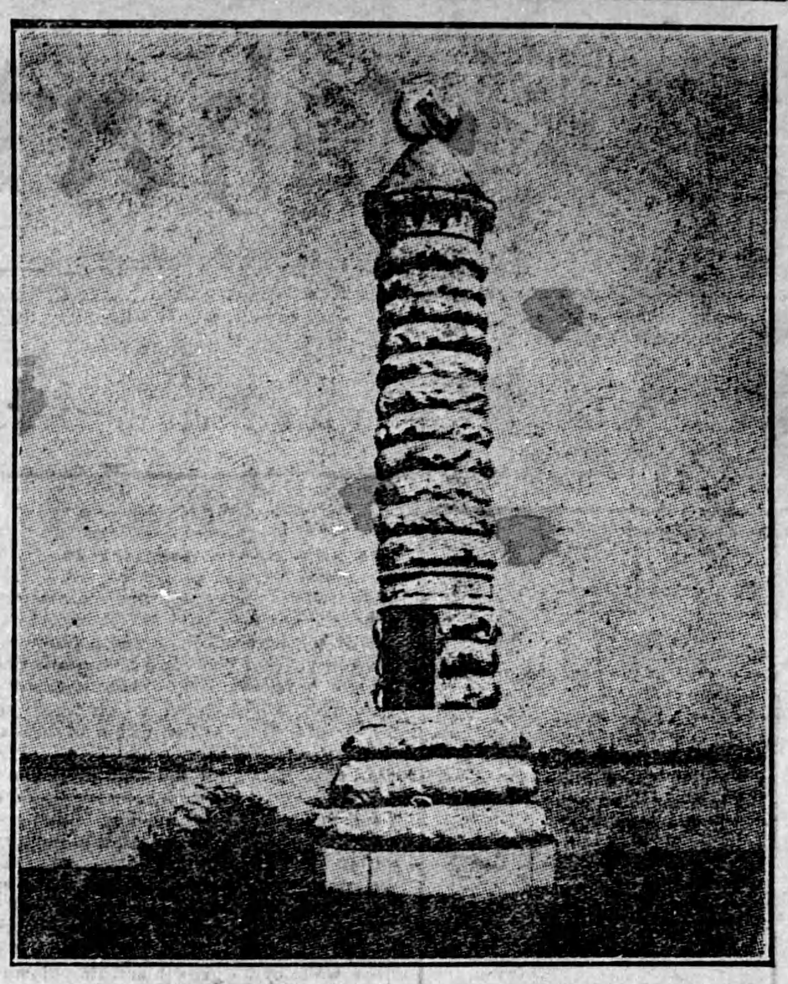
He raised his hand as if it were heavy as lead, and shook his clinched fist after his guest.

"Curse you!" he muttered. "Take care—take care!"

(To be Continued.)

### AMBITIOUS CHINAMEN.

Upon the roll of a business college for the fall term are the names of two ambitious young Chinamen who intend to take a course in illustrative drawing, says the Winnipeg Telegram. Chong Yuen is the name to which one of the Chinamen answered, while the other celestial is known as Sam Won. Chong Yuen is a recent arrival in Winnipeg, though he has been in this country for some time and speaks good English. Chong is apparently quite wealthy. He has adopted the Western style, dresses in the most up-to-date manner, and has even discarded his queue, his hair being cut short. Sam conducts two restaurants in the city. Chong Yuen in addition is very anxious to take a course in drill and military instruction, with the intention of returning to his native land and drilling the Chinese soldiers. He would like to join the 90th Regiment or the Royal Canadian Mounted Rifles. He has mastered horseback riding and would prefer to take a course with the Mounted Rifles.



FORT ERIE MONUMENT TO THE DEAD OF 1812.

# ESCAPE FROM PORTLAND

### MOST DREADED OF ENGLISH PRISONS.

**Unsuccessful Attempts to Get Away From This Penal Institution.**

"Escape from Portland! You could as easily flog back the flooding tide."

The old, graybearded ex-warder shrugged his still broad shoulders contemptuously. "The man who can get clear away from Portland hasn't yet been born," he added.

And so it would seem to the most unobserving visitors, says the London Express. There is no point of vantage upon which a warder, with gun loaded and cocked, is not stationed; there is no single prisoner upon whom is not centred the steel-hued glitter of a score of jealous, untiring official eyes. The favored convict who is privileged to enter an officer's house, there to execute some necessary repairs in masonry or woodwork, carries out his task with an armed warder standing at his elbow.

Should a prisoner, wearied to desperation by the unending round of unwilling service and longing to break the silence to which he is condemned, make a bid for freedom, the black flag is hauled mast high and the boom of cannon rolls down from the heights to the town below. The connections between the Verne Barracks and the prison—telegraphic and telephonic—are utilized so that a cordon of soldiers is at once drawn around the island. Warders, soldiers, townsfolk are at once on the alert, and the chase, in which the wretched human quarry has no ghost of a chance, begins, and is sustained until the too daring convict is again

WITHIN PRISON WALLS.

"It is the wholesome dread of punishment that accounts for the few attempts that are made to escape," said the ex-warder already referred to. No legal quibble can pull the culprit out of his trouble.

"Lighter diet is one of the penalties of his offense, and that is no mean thing in this appetite reviving locality. Then the convict must don a livery of bright canary yellow and wear ten pound irons day and night. These irons are fastened to the ankles, while chains pass up his legs and are linked to a belt around the waist.

"He may be flogged, too. It is probable that he will be. Thirty-six lashes laid on by a muscular ex-marine are no joke."

The ex-warden is proud of his prison. He exults in its absolute security. "Whatever people may say, there never has been an escape from Portland," said my old friend, who has over a score of years of service to his credit.

"There is a rumor that a Frenchman once crept away in a thick haze clambered down the cliffs to a waiting boat and thence sped over the Channel to his native land. But there is nothing of this in the official records. Another story tells how a prisoner made a dash for liberty, broke into a chaplain's house and stole a suit of broadcloth, which he sent back six months later. Personally I doubt the truth of it.

"There was one fellow who managed to gain the Dorchester road, Weymouth—seven miles away. That was in 1873. His name was Beaumont, and he was really one of the most daredevil men ever consigned to Portland.

"When he first got away he managed to conceal himself in a church. There he stole a surplice, which he somehow rigged into a respectable

IMITATION OF A SMOCK.

Creeping cautiously down the road, he came across a couple of milk cans, which he promptly commandeered. With these he proceeded boldly on his way, passing scores of people, who had not the faintest notion of his identity.

"He did not long enjoy his liberty, however. A superintendent of police was driving along the Dorchester road when he caught a glimpse of a white smocked man running rapidly out of sight. He drew the attention of the constable who accompanied him to the circumstance, and together they gave chase. The issue was never in doubt. The tired, hungry, footsore convict was retaken and suffered severely for his temerity."

The latest recorded attempt occurred on Jan. 16 of the present year. Two men—John Wilkinson and George Vincent—burst through the ceilings of their cells, crawled along the corridor, and by means of a length of rope which had been deftly smuggled, gained the exercise yard. Thence they broke through four gates, all fitted with patent locks. They made the attempt seaward at a spot which was pointed out to me by a courteous officer. Vincent, while trying to descend a precipitous wall face, fell and broke his ankle. Both were then captured.

How fares the prisoner at Portland? Does the system in vogue make a better man of him; is it reformative as well as penal?

I suppose these questions will be asked and asked again with tiresome reiteration. My friend the ex-warder had responses, as ready as emphatic.

"Look here," he said, "criminals don't come here to have their palates tickled with dainty viands, their bodies rested upon beds of down, their ears regaled with racy gossip. They come here for punishment.

"They are not badly treated, and I say this in spite of your opinion. Fellows sodden and debased have quitted Portland with more than some sparks of manliness in them. Besides, I have had the same men through my hands

TWO OR THREE TIMES

over, which doesn't speak badly for the treatment they've received here," he added with unconscious humor.

On the other hand, whatever my friend the ex-warder may say, it cannot but be admitted that the convicts are insufficiently fed, oppressed by the insufferable law of perpetual silence, and used as beasts of burden even on the public highway. "Don't send me back to penal servitude," was the piteous wail of a wrongdoer to the judge on whose mercy his punishment depended the other day. "The life is one I wouldn't give to a dog."

Portland, of course, has held most of the prominent convicts of this and preceding decades. Jabez Balfour; the murderer Ruddiford, whom they decided not to hang owing to a malformation of the throat; Lee of Babbacombe notoriety, Burge and Goudie are all known there. Burge and Goudie are still there.

Portland is as proud of its notorious prisoners as it is of its famous prisoners. From the convenient height of one of the hostelries which face the quarries men infamous in history are pointed out. When their hour of liberation comes, if it ever does come, crowds throng the little local railway station to witness their departure. And this severance is not without its sadness to the prisoner

Happy is the man who is too busy to find fault.