THE HEIR OF SANTLEIGH

OR

THE STEWARD'S SON

CHAPTER XXXIX.—Con.

Norah found her old room ready for her, and Harman waiting to attend upon her as of old; and in condition of wonderment beyond description, she changed her travelling dress for an evening one.

The sight of Harman awakened all the painful memories connected with Becca South. She asked gently if Harman had heard any tidings of the lost girl and Harman, with a sigh, shook her head.

"No, my lady—no, ma'am—not a word, and——" She was going to add, "I shall never hear of her again," but did not want to sadden her beloved mistress, and changed the subject.

Presently the big gong resounded through the house, and Norah went down to the drawing-room.

The Ferndales were there and Jack, but not Cyril nor Mr. Petherick.

Norah looked around.

"He is not here yet!" said Lady Ferndale, taking her hand and drawing her to her almost protectingly. "Are you very anxious to see the new earl, Norah?"

Norah smiled. A kind of presentiment of some approaching surprise and climax suddenly flashed upon her, but it was vague and indefinite.

"Are not you?" she said. "What does it all mean, and why does he come in this mysterious manner? Where is Cyril?"

"He will be here directly; he is in the library with Mr. Pet herick," said Lord Ferndale, crossing over to her, and taking his place beside her, also with an air of supporting and encouraging her. "He has something of importance 'o communicate to Mr. Petherick——"

"About the earl?" she asked, her brows coming together with a puzzled expression.

Before Lord Ferndale could answer, the door opened, and the butler, with a look baffling description, said:

"Lord Arrowdale."

Norah started, and held Lady Ferndale's hand tightly, and looked toward the door, but she saw no one beside Cyril and the old lawyer.

Then suddenly she caught a glimmering of the truth from a certain expression in Cyril's face. The next instant he was by her side, and had got both her hands in his.

"Are you so surprised, dearest?" he murmured.

"Am I? Cyril!" broke from her, as she clung to him, her lovely eyes searching his face. "Are you——?"

"Yes, countess!" said Mr. Petherick, with a slight emphasis on the title. "The Earl of Arrowdale, for whom we have been looking so long, is none other than your husband, Mr. Cyril Burne!"

Norah uttered a faint cry, and trembled a little; and then, as they gathered round her, and, all talking at once, began to explain the mystery, the tears rose in her eyes, and, half laughing and half crying, she hid her face on Cyril's breast.

They were all excited, and the old lawyer certainly not the least.

"Of course. I have been a blind old idiot," he exclaimed to Lord Ferndale, "or I should have guessed the truth long ago. But, you see, we lawyers are not accustomed to romance, and—and it never occurred to me that Mr. Burne could be other than he represented himself. If I were to try and tell you how glad I am that things are as they are I couldn't do it!" And he laughed, and coughed, and nodded to one and the other. "No need to trouble about that money now, you know, Lord Ferndale," and he chuckled.

"The money the late earl left to Norah?" said Lord Ferndale.

"Yes, yes!" assented the old man. "We sha'n't dispute the will now. Lord Arrowdale won't be troubled by us. He may keep it and welcome."

Cyril heard and looked round.

"It is not Lord Arrowdale's to keep, Mr. Petherick," he said, with a laugh. "Will you take charge of this for Lady Arrowdale, please?" And he handed him the long blue packet in which he had inclosed the marriage certificate. "Open it, please."

Mr. Petherick opened it, and hastily read the paped inclosed. Then he held out his hand with an impulse of satisfaction and approval.

"It is a deed of gift to Lady Norah of all that the will gave her!" he exclaimed. "My lord," and he bowed to Cyril with an almost solemn formality, "permit me to express my conviction that in the present holder of your ancient and honorable title your house has a worthy and noble representative."

There was more handshaking and talking, but at last Lord Ferndale reminded the rest that dinner was waiting—and spoiling—and Cyril, relinquishing Norah to him, gave his arm to Lady Ferndale.

As the door opened they saw that the hall was full of servants. The butler had borne the startling news of Cyril's identity to the servants' hall, and, in a flutter of intense excitement, they had gathered together to give him and his beautiful wife a welcome.

Not for many years had the vaulted roof rung with such cheers as rose when the party came out from the drawing-room into the hall, and it was not until Cyril had led Norah forward, and spoken a few heartfelt words of greeting and thanks that the party were permitted to go in to dinner.

And long before the meal was over was heard the buzz and murmur of an excited crowd gathered on the terrace outside, for the news had spread through the village like wildfire, and the excited people had hurried to the Court to ascertain for themselves whether the story were true; whether, indeed, Mr. Cyril Burne were the real Earl of Arrowdale, and beautiful Lady Norah, whom they had learned to love, the countess; and it was not until Cyril had taken Norah out onto the terrace and presented himself and her to the cheering crowd that it would consent to betake itself to the merrymaking for which the household had made hasty preparations.

It was a night of wild excitement. Some ready-witted individuals rushed off to the church and set the bells ringing, and others hurriedly built up a huge bonfire on the green, and soon the flames were spreading sky high, and helping the bells to proclaim the home-coming of the young earl and his bride.

With her arm within her husband's, and surrounded by their friends, Norah watched the red reflection of the great fire and listened to the pealing of the bells with feelings of profound joy and gratitude; joy so perfect and absorbing that it is little wonder she forgot for the moment the existence of such a person as Guildford Berton, of the mystery attending the disappearance of Becca South.

Indeed, not one of them, excepting Jack, gave a thought to the man whose base scheming had so nearly wrecked the life of the beautiful girl whom they all loved. It was only he who remembered that Guildford Berton had still to be reckoned with.

CHAPTER XL.

That evening, an hour before the romantic arrival of the Earl and Countess of Arrowdale, Guildford Berton had wandered up the avenue and gazed up at the great house. He had accepted Lady Ferndale's promise, and had waited as she had advised him. What could she have intended to imply, he asked himself, but that Norah would come round to his terms, and was only asking for a few days' grace? What could she do but accept them? With all his passion for her, he understood her as little as the swine wallowing in its sty understands the mystery of the stars. To his base mind it seemed just impossible that any woman should choose obscurity and poverty before rank and wealth. Yes, he told himself in his solitary musings in the grim, desolate cottage, she would come round in time. Any day, any hour, he might receive a message from her. She would come back and send for him, and accept his terms. He should be the husband of Lady Norah Arrowdale, and, if not lord of Santleigh, the owner of the vast wealth left by the late earl. And so he waited—waited with a restless, feverish impatience, intensified into an agony far past description by the hideous secret which haunted him.

All day he spent shut up in the house in which his crime had been committed, and which seemed a torture house and a tomb to him. It was only at night that he emerged from the gloomy silence of the haunted cottage, and then he avoided his fellow-men, and prowled about the dark lanes and round the Court.

He heard of Mr. Petherick's arrival, and knew that he was staying at the Court, but he did not go near him. He would wait, he told himself, until Norah returned and sent for him. Then—well, he called up a vision of victory and triumph which almost made him giddy, and for the moment dispelled the dark shadow which hovered about him.

This evening he had sauntered up the avenue with his head resting upon his breast, and, suddenly raising his eyes, saw that the windows of the vast mansion were full of light.

He stood still and gazed, and his heart beat expectantly, and he drew nearer and waited, his hands clasped tightly and feverishly behind his back.

Presently a servant came hurrying down the drive, and he stopped him.

'Beg your pardon, Mr. Berton. You gave me a fright, sir."

"What—why is the place lit up to-night?" asked Guildford Berton, controlling his voice, and speaking as calmly and composedly as he could.

The man touched his hat.

"The new earl's coming, sir."

Guildford Berton's hands gripped each other still more tightly, and he bit his lip as he choked back the exclamation which nearly burst from him.

"The earl!" he said, wonderingly.

"Yes, sir; quite sudden and unexpected like. Mr. Petherick only heard this morning. There's Lord and Lady Ferndale and another gentleman there to meet him. Beggin' your pardon, sir, I must be goin' on," and he hurried off.

Guildford Berton drew back among the trees. The news had startled and bewildered him. He had been so absorbed with his one idea—waiting for Norah's return and decision—that he had scarcely given a thought to the young earl, for whom he had been looking so long and fruitlessly.

He paced slowly down the avenue, hurying back.

"Do you know when the earl is coming?" he asked.

No, the man said, nobody knew for certain; but it was supposed that he would arrive to dinner.

Guildford Berton hesitated a moment, then said:

"And is Lady Norah—it is not known when she returns?"

The man shook his head, doubtless wondering why Mr. Berton did not go up to the Court and ask the question of Mr. Petherick.

"I can't say, sir; I haven't heard that she is expected, even."

Guildford Berton walked on and reached the cottage. It was dark and gloomy and forbidding as usual, and he threw himself into the armchair beside the neglected fire, which was smoldering sullenly in the small, pinched grate, and mused.

How long would it be before Norah returned and they could be married? How long would it be before he could leave this place, which he hated with a fear and loathing beyond words, and take her away with him? His wife! His wife! The vision dispelled for a space the gloom which enveloped him, and he sat muttering.

"Lady Ferndale is at the Court; I will go and speak to her. I'll ask her where Norah is, and how long it will be before she comes back. She cannot refuse to tell me. Yes, I'll go to the Court to-night. What does it matter to me that this young fool and vagabond has come? I want nothing of him, I want Norah! Norah! Norah! I will go up to-night—to-night!"

Then he crouched lower over the fire, and warmed his hands at the feeble flame which he had succeeded in rousing, and suddenly he was startled by the crash of bells. He rose, with that look on his face which the man wears whose brain is beginning to soften from constant brooding, and as he looked through the window a tongue of fire shot up and lit up the room.

For a moment he stared, wild-eyed, then he realized what had happened.

"Curse the fools!" he muttered with a snarl. "They'll wish they were tolling for his death or had got him on the top of a fire, before many months have gone," and he flung himself into the chair again.

But presently, as if the voices shouting and cheering drew him in spite of himself, he rose, and, flinging on his coat, took up a soft wideawake hat, and, carefully locking the gate, went out.

By this time the light from the huge bonfire was casting a mellow glow over the village, and its reflection, red and blithe, could be seen in those windows of the Court in which there happened to be no light.

As he entered the village street he found a crowd of people tending toward the Court, as a stream tends to the sea. He joined them half mechanically, and, in their midst, presently found himself on the lawn just beneath the terrace.

A stream of light poured from the dining-room windows onto the broad marble pavement of the terrace, and fell on the upturned faces of the crowd; and the red glow from the bonfire poured from behind them and seemed to mingle with the light from the window.

The crowd was shouting all round him, and in the overstrained condition of his nerves he could not distinguish what they were saying.

"What is it the fools are yelling for?" he demanded of a man who stood beside him, and who was, with the exception of himself, the only silent person in the crowd.

The man started slightly as he heard Guildford Berton's hard, sarcastic voice, and emitted a low whistle of surprise.

"Hullo!" he said, close to his ear, for the noise was almost deafening where they stood, "you here! I should have thought you would have made yourself scarce by this time, now the game's up. Do you mean to say you don't hear what they are shouting for? They are calling for the earl and his wife! Take my advice, and follow my example," and with a grin he moved away sideways and was lost in the crowd, at the moment Guildford Berton recognized him—Furlong.

At another time the man's sudden appearance — and disappearance — and sinister warning would have had some effect upon Guildford Berton; but a strange mood possessed him that night, and it may almost be said that he actually forgot the man the moment he lost sight of him. But the words, "the earl and his wife!" haunted him.

"Is the earl married?" he asked of a woman who had taken Furlong's place at his side.

She stared at him.

"Don't you know that——" she began, then she broke off to exclaim, "Why, it's Mr. Guildford, bean't it, sir?"

He stifled an oath, and got away from her and into the centre of the crowd, pushing nearer and nearer the terrace.

"His lordship's at dinner, and won't come out, bless you!" said a man.

"Oh, yes, he will; at least she will, bless her heart!" was the retort; and Guildford Berton, wondering dully why the new countess, who must be a stranger, should seem so well known and already popular, pulled his soft hat further over his face, and waited.

Presently a roar rose from the crowd; the dining-room windows had been flung wide open by a couple of footmen, and a stalwart man stepped out onto the terrace, with a lady on his arm.

The light from the bonfire fell full upon his face and hers, and Guildford stared and gasped, and then laughed hoarsely. He must be going mad for certain, to imagine that these two must be Cyril Burne and Norah. Yes, that was it; he was losing his reason.

Then, as if in a dream, he heard the gentleman speak. The words fell upon his ears as if they had been spoken by some one a mile off, and yet he caught every one distinctly. What was he saying, this man who looked like that hound Cyril Burne?

"Thank you, my friends, one and all, for the kind welcome you have given us. I trust none of us will ever forget this night, and that henceforth we are neighbors in every sense of the word. Thank you again and again, not only for myself, but for my dear wife, whom all of you know, and whose heart is full of gratitude for your kind wishes."

A mighty cheer rose, deafening, thrilling. And almost before it had ceased Guildford Berton clutched the arm of the man pressing against him.

"Who—who is that?" he demanded, hoarsely.

The man stared at him, and shook his hand off impatiently.

"That fellow, as you calls him, master, is the young earl, the gentleman as was Mr. Burne, the artist; and that young lady is his wife, Lady Norah as was. Hurrah! Hurrah! One more cheer, boys! Hurrah!"

(To be continued)

DON'T THROW MONEY AWAY

THE SETTING HEN—Her failures have discouraged many a poultry raiser.

You can make money raising chicks in the right way—lots of it.

No one doubts that there is money in raising chickens with a good Incubator and Brooder.

Users of the Chatham Incubator and Brooder have all made money. If you still cling to the old idea that you can successfully run a poultry business using the hen as a hatcher, we would like to reason with you.

In the first place, we can prove to you that your actual cash loss in eggs, which the 20 hens should lay during the time you keep them hatching and brooding, will be enough to pay for a Chatham Incubator and Brooder in five or six hatches, to say nothing whatever of the larger and better results attained by the use of the Chatham Incubator and Brooder.

If you allow a hen to set, you lose at least eight weeks of laying (three weeks hatching and five weeks taking care of the chickens), or say in the eight weeks she would lay at least three dozen eggs. Let the Chatham Incubator on the hatching, while the hen goes on laying eggs.

Our No. 3 Incubator will hatch as many eggs as twenty setting hens, and do it better. Now, here is a question in arithmetic:—

If you keep 20 hens from laying for 8 weeks, how much cash do you lose if each hen would have laid 3 dozen eggs, and eggs are worth 15 cents per dozen? Ans.—$9.00.

Therefore, when the Chatham Incubator is hatching the number of eggs that twenty hens would hatch, it is really earning in cash for you $9.00, besides producing for your profit chicks by the wholesale, and being ready to do the same thing over again the moment each hatch is off.

Don't you think, therefore, that it pays to keep the hens laying and let the Chatham Incubator do the hatching?

There are many other reasons why the Chatham Incubator and Brooder outclasses the setting hen.

The hen sets when she is ready. The Chatham Incubator is always ready. By planning to take off a hatch at the right time, you may have plenty of broilers to sell when broilers are scarce and prices at the top notch. If you depend on the hen, your chicks will grow to broilers just when every other hen's chicks are being marketed, and when the price is not so stiff.

The hen is a careless mother, often leading her chicks amongst wet grass, bushes, and in places where rats can confiscate her young.

The Chatham Brooder behaves itself, is a perfect mother and very rarely loses a chick, and is not infested with lice.

Altogether, there is absolutely no reasonable reason for continuing the use of a hen as a hatcher and every reason why you should have a Chatham Incubator and Brooder.

We are making a very special offer, which it will pay you to investigate.

Small Premises Sufficient For Poultry Raising.

Of course, if you have lots of room, so much the better, but many a man and woman are carrying on a successful and profitable poultry business in a small city or town lot. Anyone with a fair sized stable or shed and a small yard can raise poultry profitably.

But to make money quickly, you must get away from the old idea of trying to do business with setting hens as hatchers. You must get a Chatham Incubator and Brooder.

To enable everybody to get a fair start in the right way in the poultry business, we make a very special offer which it is worth your while to investigate.

The Chatham Incubator and Brooder has created a New Era in Poultry Raising.

The setting Hen as a Hatcher has been proven a Commercial Failure.

The Chatham Incubator and Brooder has always proved a Money Maker.

A Light, Pleasant and Profitable Business for Women

Many women are to-day making an independent living and putting by money every month raising poultry with a Chatham Incubator.

Any woman with a little leisure time at her disposal can, without any previous experience or without a cent of cash, begin the poultry business and make money right from the start.

Perhaps you have a friend who is doing so. If not, we can give you the names of many who started with much misgiving only to be surprised by the ease and rapidity with which the profits came to them.

Of course, success depends on getting a right start. You must begin right. You can never make any considerable money as a poultry raiser with hens as hatchers. You must have a good Incubator and Brooder, but this means in the ordinary way an investment which, perhaps you are not prepared to make just now, and this is just where our special offer comes in.

If you are in earnest, we will set you up in the poultry business without a cent of cash down. If we were not sure that the Chatham Incubator and Brooder is the best and that with it and a reasonable amount of effort on your part you are sure to make money, we would not make the special offer below.

WE WILL SHIP NOW

TO YOUR STATION

FREIGHT PREPAID

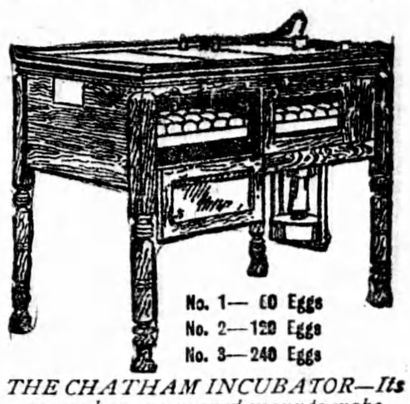
A CHATHAM INCUBATOR and BROODER

You Pay us no Cash Till After 1906 Harvest

"Gentlemen,—Your No. 1 Incubator is all right. I am perfectly satisfied with it. Will get a larger one from you next year. H. M. LOCKWOOD, Lindsay, Ont."

"Gentlemen,—I think both Incubator and Brooder is all right. I got 75 per cent. out of three hatches. R. S. FLEMING, Plattsville, Ont."

Gentlemen,—I had never seen an incubator until I received yours. I was pleased and surprised to get over 80 per cent., and the chickens are all strong and healthy. A child could operate machine successfully. JAS. DAY, Rathwell, Man."



THE CHATHAM INCUBATOR—Its success has encouraged many to make more money than they ever thought possible out of chicks.

Every Farmer Should Raise Poultry

Almost every farmer "keeps hens," but, while he knows that there is a certain amount of profit in the business, even when letting it take care of itself, few farmers are aware of how much they are losing every year by not getting into the poultry business in such a way as to make real money out of it.

The setting hen as a hatcher will never be a commercial success. Her business is to lay eggs and she should be kept at it. The only way to raise chicks for profit is to begin right, by installing a Chatham Incubator and Brooder. With such a machine you can begin hatching on a large scale at any time.

You can only get one crop off your fields in a year, but with a Chatham Incubator and Brooder and ordinary attention, you can raise chickens from early Spring until Winter and have a crop every month. Think of it!

Quite a few farmers have discovered that there is money in the poultry business and have found this branch of farming so profitable that they have installed several Chatham Incubators and Brooders after trying the first.

Perhaps you think that it requires a great deal of time or a great deal of technical knowledge to raise chickens with a Chatham Incubator and Brooder. If so, you are greatly mistaken. Your wife or daughter can attend to the machine and look after the chickens without interfering with their regular household duties.

The market is always good and prices are never low. The demand is always in excess of the supply and at certain times of the year you can practically get any price you care to ask for good broilers. With a Chatham Incubator and Brooder you can start hatching at the right time to bring the chickens to marketable broilers when the supply is very low and the prices accordingly high. This you could never do with hens as hatchers.

We know that there is money in the poultry business for every farmer who will go about it right. All you have to do is to get a Chatham Incubator and Brooder and start it. But perhaps you are not prepared just now to spend the money. This is why we make the special offer.

IS THIS FAIR?

We know there is money in raising chickens.

We know the Chatham Incubator and Brooder has no equal.

We know that with any reasonable effort on your part, you cannot but make money out of the Chatham Incubator and Brooder.

We know that we made a similar offer last year and that in every case the payments were met cheerfully and promptly, and that in many cases money was accompanied by letters expressing satisfaction.

Therefore, we have no hesitation in making this proposition to every honest, earnest man or woman who may wish to add to their yearly profits with a small expenditure of time and money.

This really means that we will set you up in the poultry business so that you can make money right from the start, without asking for a single cent from you until after 1906 harvest.

If we knew of a fairer offer, we would make it.

Write us a post card with your name and address, and we will send you full particulars, as well as our beautifully illustrated book, "How to make money out of chicks." Write to-day to Chatham.

We can supply you quickly from our distributing warehouses at Calgary, Brandon, Regina, Winnipeg, New Westminster, B.C., Montreal, Halifax, Chatham. Factories at CHATHAM, ONT., and DETROIT, MICH. 512

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