

# SIR JASPER'S ADVENTURE.

Sir Jasper Peters was the fortunate son of a man who had made a large fortune in trade, and who had then devoted himself to one of the great political parties to such doggedness that he had been rewarded by a baronetcy without ever having had to expose the defects of his early education by making a long speech in the house.

Whatever his party did was right; that was his motto, and he had lived up to it with a simplicity which had brought its inevitable reward.

The consequence was that his only son was able to give up any active share in the business, and to play at being a country gentleman of patriarchal descent, while his wife could assume the airs of a Lady Bountiful on the one hand, and outshine all the great ladies of the neighborhood by her diamonds, on the other.

Peterscourt, the country seat of the distinguished pair, was of course an old place where many generations of ancestors—of somebody else—had lived their little day.

It was a large, rambling, two-storied building, dating from some far away period, and altered in the castellated style in the early years of Victoria's reign.

Beautifully situated in the southern part of the county of Dorsetshire, it was a little too far away from London to be quite to the taste of Lady Peters, who was ambitious of playing a great part in society, and who would often run up to town for a few days at a time, while her husband was enjoying his dignified seclusion within the well wooded grounds and park of Peterscourt.

It was on one of these occasions, when the baronet was sitting in solitary state in his great library after dinner, his little electric lamp on the table behind him and a pile of literature suitable to a country gentleman by his side, that he was disturbed in his leisurely perusal of his paper by the sound of a footstep on the gravel outside.

He had scarcely raised his head, when, to his surprise and alarm, a man in the unmistakable dress of a convict, panting, breathless, with starting eyes and hanging jaw, leaped upon the window ledge from outside, and then fell, exhausted, upon the carpet.

"By Jove!" cried Sir Jasper as he sprang up and made for the bell.

But the man was too quick for him. Panting still, indeed, but recovering himself sufficiently to stagger to his feet and across the floor, the unwelcome visitor threw himself upon the terror-stricken baronet, and stooping at the same moment for the poker, which he was near enough to reach, he growled out between his set teeth a threat to "do for" that unhappy gentleman if he so much as uttered a call for help.

Sir Jasper gurgled out a promise to refrain, which he did not mean keep, and the man thereupon let him down again into the arm-chair from which he had risen, and suddenly uttered his threatening tone for one of abject entreaty.

"Look 'ere, guv'nor," said he, in a thick, hoarse whisper, moistening his mouth as he spoke, still standing near and holding the poker in his hand, but no longer menacing his unwilling host. "I don't want for to do yer no 'arm. I'm not so bad as what you'd think for to look at the dress I've got on."

"You're a c—convict!" stammered Sir Jasper, half timorous and half surly. "You've escaped from Portland!"

The man frowned uneasily. "Well, so's a many more than me been convicts, and a many as deserve it a precious sight was nor what I do," said the man. And as he spoke he threw from time to time an anxious glance toward the window by which he had entered. "But this ain't no time for to throw my fallings in my face. I'm a 'unted man, that's what I am. The warders is after me."

"What!" cried Sir Jasper, with something so like relief in his face that his guest scowled him promptly into silence.

"Surely, guv'nor, you wouldn't go for to betray a 'unted man, a noble gentleman like you, with everything 'andsome and comfortable about him! You wouldn't go for to give up a poor wretch that begs you to give him a change of clothes, would you? Ah—h—h!"

The sound he uttered was an indescribable one, as he suddenly straightened himself and listened with straining ears to the unmistakable sound of a rapid footstep on the gravel.

"They're coming! They've traced me 'ere! For mercy's sake, sir, don't give me up!"

The baronet looked at the close-cropped head, with the ugly ears standing out on each side, and the coarse features distorted with fear, with a disgust he found it hard to hide. He, too, heard the approaching footsteps, and secretly congratulated himself upon his prospective deliverance from his tormentor.

Before he had time to answer the man's entreaties the noise of footsteps ceased; the convict threw one glance at the window, a second glance round the room, and then he made for the door with all speed. Sir Jasper jumped up from his chair and ran to the window.

Yes, there, at the distance of but a dozen steps, was one of the prison warders, with a carbine in his hand. He was standing still and looking about him. It was evident that for

the moment he had lost the track of his quarry.

Sir Jasper beckoned to him quickly. "Warder!" cried he. "Warder! This way!"

The man turned and came rapidly toward him. He was a tall, strong, fine looking man, with shrewd eyes and clear cut features; and, even as Sir Jasper called him, he was smitten by a sense of the inequality of the contest between this stalwart, well-fed, handsome pursuer and the undersized, lean, grizzled rascal of whom he was in pursuit.

Saluting as he came, the warder was under the window in a moment. "You are looking for a convict who has escaped?" said the baronet.

"Yes, Sir Jasper."

"You know me, then?"

"Why, yes, to be sure, we all know Sir Jasper Peters," said the warder with a smile. "Have you seen anything of the man, sir?"

"Yes, yes; he's in my house at this moment," answered Sir Jasper, instinctively lowering his voice with a sort of fear of retribution at the hands of the hunted man if he were to learn he was betrayed.

"Where, sir, where?"

Even before the baronet had finished the sentence the warder had put his hand on the window sill and sprang into the room. Sir Jasper pointed to the door.

"He got away through there the moment he heard you coming."

The warder looked at him in consternation as he crossed the room.

"Then I'll be bound he's rifling your strong room, sir," said he. "The man's one of the cleverest safe thieves in England, and he's got some sort of tools with him he's managed to make; and as you have got plenty of stuff to steal, I'll be sworn he's having a shot at it."

"W—w—what!" stammered the startled baronet. "How can he know?"

Already he was leading the warder out of the room and across the hall, in the direction of the strong room.

"These chaps know 'most everything. Goodness only knows how. Else why should he come straight here? It's miles from the prison, your house is, and there's many a place he might have took in on his way, instead of making straight for here! It was my guess to come this way, the only one of the lot to believe he'd got so far."

The baronet was hunting for his keys. They were standing together at the door which led into the basement, and as Sir Jasper turned the handle he said—

"We'd better have the butler with us, had we not?"

The warder smiled, and raised his carbine.

"I think this will be protection enough for us both, Sir Jasper; and I wouldn't call the man if I was you. You're never quite sure, with men servants, whether they'll be a help or a hindrance."

So the two descended together into the basement, looking and listening, but without coming upon any trace of the escaped convict until they reached the strong room door.

Sir Jasper turned up the electric light in the opposite wall, and heaved a sigh of relief as he saw that there was no sign of any attempt having been made to tamper with the lock. The warder, however, was stooping to listen at the tiny keyhole and making a sign to the baronet to keep quiet. Then he nodded and came toward him.

"Will you listen at that door, sir, and tell me if you hear anything?" he asked.

Trembling, and sick with alarm, Sir Jasper took his place at the keyhole.

"I—I fancy I hear a kind of scratching," whispered he at last.

The warder nodded.

"That's it, sir. That's our man at work!"

Sir Jasper stood up.

"But how did he get in?" said he, with white lips.

The warder shook his head.

The baronet took his little key from his watch chain and proceeded to fit it in the lock.

"Have a care, sir!"

Sir Jasper, thus warned, opened the door most cautiously, and flung it wide. Then, hastily pressing the button just inside, he flooded the small apartment at once with light. He drew a long sigh of relief—there was no one there.

"And the jewelry—is that all right, Sir Jasper?"

The baronet advanced into the room and opened a safe at the father end. Lady Peters' emeralds and diamonds were almost world famous, and a sudden momentary doubt flashed through the baronet's mind as to the wisdom of letting even the prison warder know the exact place where they were kept when her ladyship had them for use in the country.

But a glance at the warder reassured him. The stalwart guardian had his watchful eye, not on the safe where the baronet was busy, but on the dark corners inside and outside the room, and even as he looked about him he held his carbine ready in case of a surprise from unseen enemies.

"It's all right!" cried Sir Jasper, with relief, as he came to the snug velvet nest where the jewels were sparkling.

But even as he uttered the words the warder's cry broke upon his ear—

"Ah, would you!"

And, looking around, Sir Jasper saw the convict rush past the warder from some unseen corner outside, and,

jerking up the arm which held the carbine, make a dash for the jewels. The next moment, before the baronet had time to make all safe, he perceived that the warder's weapon had fallen to the ground, and that his right arm hung limp, while he cried out excitedly—

"Seize him, Sir Jasper, seize him!"

The convict, even as these words were uttered, was springing upon the baronet, who, good man, living an easy life, was not in condition to grapple on equal terms with the lithe, spare frame of his assailant. In another moment both were on the floor, the convict on the top.

There was a short, sharp struggle, during which the baronet felt himself for some moments blinded, choking. Then the man was pulled off him by the superior force of the warder, who even with one arm disabled, knew a trick or two which made him more than a match for his man.

"Now sir, up with you and help me with him," cried the warder, while the convict muttered curses on them both and vainly struggled to get free. It was some seconds even then before the warder was able to clap the handcuffs on the desperate prisoner, at the cost of much pain to himself from his wounded arm. But with the baronet's assistance he at last overpowered the wiry rascal and dragged him upstairs, where, with the help of the men servants, who now, hearing the noise of the scuffle, joined their aid to the master's, the convict, still defiant and sullen, was led out of the house and hoisted up into a light cart which happened to be within hail.

"To Portland!" cried the warder, as barely remaining long enough to receive the congratulations of the baronet, he sprang up in the cart and laid a powerful detaining hand on the rascal's shoulder.

Then Sir Jasper, who was somewhat dazed as a result of these unwonted exertions and exclamations, turned back to the mansion with a sigh of relief and a distinct consciousness that he was considerably bruised.

He could not, however, wait to attend to his wounds or even to ascertain the extent of them, as he suddenly remembered that he had left the door of the strong room open, and that even the safe where his wife's jewels were kept was still unlocked.

As the lights were burning both inside and outside the strong room, however, it was a matter of a few seconds only to retrace his steps and to regain the velvet nest where the gems lay.

What was his amazement, his horror, to find, on looking into the case which he had previously opened, that the chief treasure of the collection, his wife's tiara of hung emeralds mounted in brilliants was gone!

The unfortunate baronet stood for a moment petrified by his discovery. He could not remember at what point of the hurried proceedings of the last half hour it was that the convict had had the opportunity of seizing the jewels; yet that he had made good use of some momentary chance was only too plain.

A trembling examination of the other cases showed that a magnificent part of the rest of the collection was safe. Scarcely able to walk, the baronet made all safe and tottered upstairs.

"Order the phaeton round at once," said he to the first servant he met, and then, as he paced up and down the hall, he debated the chances of his ever recovering the property.

He knew well enough that if the rascal were to take the jewels back to Portland with him the search he would undergo would discover the stolen property; but his fear was that the man, whom the warder had done some means of getting rid of them on the way, if they were to be flung into a ditch or into the sea, what was his chance of ever seeing them again?

The minutes seemed hours as he drove alone in the darkness toward the prison, and when he leaped to the ground and addressed the warder who opened the door his voice was cracked and broken as he stammered out—

"I—I want to see the warder who brought the escaped prisoner back."

The man stared at him intently.

"What escaped prisoner, sir? There has been no escape of a prisoner."

"Oh, yes, there has," said Sir Jasper, impatiently. "I tell you he was caught in my house—Peterscourt—not an hour ago."

The warder looked at him, recognized one of the magnates of the neighborhood, and begged him to step inside the lodge.

Sir Jasper, with a terrible sinking of the heart, accepted the invitation, gave a minute account of what had taken place, and was shocked to see a more dubious look come over the warder's face. When he paused, the man said—

"I'm very much afraid, Sir Jasper, that you stand a poor chance of seeing your jewels again. You've been the victim of a very artful robbery, and, by your description of the man, I should think it was the work of Netherby and Fletcher. If it is them, and they've pulled off a big thing like that, I should think they'll be out of the country before tomorrow morning. They've evidently laid their plans very well, down to having the cart in waiting to carry them off. I'm very sorry for you, Sir Jasper, but you'd better drive to the nearest police station and lodge your complaint at once. It's your only chance, and I'm afraid it's a very poor one."

And so poor Jasper found.

Not only were the police convinced that he had been robbed and that he stood a bad chance of recovering his property, but it even seemed to him that they took a misgiving pleasure in hearing every detail of the affair at great length, in order to express some-

thing very like admiration of the means by which the two artful scoundrels had possessed themselves of the jewels.

"Then—then it must have been the one that pretended to be a warder that took the things!" he stammered, white with rage.

"That's it, sir," said the officer, cheerfully. "While you was on the floor struggling with the convict—I mean the one dressed like a convict—why, the tall chap was helping himself!"

Sir Jasper groaned.

"He never seemed to look at me or the safe either!" sighed he. "He's the most artful rogue I ever heard of, and I'd give the world to see him in the dock!"

Sir Jasper did have that pleasure some six months later, when Netherby and Fletcher, after having expatriated themselves for a time, rashly returned to their native land.

The baronet had the satisfaction of seeing them, forlorn and dejected, receive a sentence of some years penal servitude. But neither he nor Lady Peters ever saw the jewels again.—Black and White.

## QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

You cannot swear at or abuse anybody in the Japanese language. The worst you can say of anybody is that he is a "fellow," and if you want to express your very, very pointed indignation you shout, "There, there!"

A German has arrived in Vienna, Austria, after walking 14,000 miles pushing a perambulator containing his wife and child. On an average he covered 29 miles a day, and often gave lectures in the evening.

Heat from cold water seems fabulous, but it is an established fact. The water is decomposed by electricity into its constituent gases, hydrogen and oxygen. When these gases are reunited the act of combination causes the evolution of intense heat. The well-known theatrical limelight is an example of this.

At the Paris Mont-de-Piete is an Empire clock pawned in 1835 for \$30, an old silver lid pawned 70 years ago and a bit of lace pawned 75 years ago for \$2.50. For all these things the contract has been religiously renewed every year by somebody. But the oddness of these oddities is a common old umbrella in green gingham, in value perhaps worth 50 cents to a connoisseur. The pledge for this has been steadily renewed for 63 years.

The curious custom of marriage by proxy still exists in Holland. A Dutch gentleman residing in Batavia was recently united by proxy to a young lady residing with her parents at Amsterdam, and, incongruous as it seems to our ideas, the bridegroom's sister represented him and took the young lady in his name "for better or worse." It seems that the young man was tired of waiting for his old love any longer, but found that she would not be married unless her mother was present. Her parents would not go to Batavia and he could not go home. A compromise was happily possible, as they were both Dutch subjects, by the lady being married with her relations around her, and she has now sailed for Java.

The British government has lately caused a survey to be made of several islands in the Indian ocean, and in the published account of it mention is made of some peculiar crabs of the "lermit" species that were found there. It is said that they were once inhabitants of the sea, but having abandoned it for the land, they retain their habit of protecting the under part of the body by some hard covering. To do this, they take possession of shells abandoned by other sea animals, and of anything of a similar nature that they can find. One was observed running about with a broken coconut shell as its protection, but the awkwardness of such a "house" did not seem to interfere with either its locomotion or its comfort.

## Shot by an Equino Hunter.

Wild geese and brants are known to travel, during the migratory season, very far south. Recently a large wild goose was killed not far from Spokane City, Wash., which had evidently winged its way from the remote Eskimo lands. When the hunter picked up the bird he was surprised to observe a slender piece of ivory protruding from its breast just below one of its wings. With much difficulty he succeeded in pulling out the piece, for the flesh had grown tightly around it. It proved to be an arrowhead, about eight inches long, which had some queer carvings on the stem where it had been fastened to the shaft. The carvings were delicate, though quite distinct. On a careful inspection by some Klondike miners the carvings were pronounced to be of Eskimo origin. No arrowpoint of that kind was ever known to have been used by the Indians of Washington or British Columbia. The head was of fine ivory, no doubt carved from a walrus tusk. Evidently the goose had been shot by an Eskimo hunter in the Arctic regions, the wound had healed, the flesh had grown around the weapon, and in its long flight the bird had no doubt broken off the arrowshaft.—Scientific American.

## An Owl's Diet.

Eighty pigeons had their eyes pecked out recently by an owl which entered their loft by night at Nordhansen, Prussia. The same owl the night before pecked out the eyes of a whole litter of kittens which were in the same building.

## MODERN LEBANON CEDARS.

Survivors of the Groves That Are Celebrated in Biblical History.

At an elevation of about 6000 feet above the sea, on the left of the road to Baalbek, is a group of the noblest specimens of the vegetable kingdom in the East, which are believed to be thousands of years old and the remnant of the far-famed cedars of Lebanon, of which David and Solomon sang, and from which came the timbers for the temple.

Djebel-el-Arz (the mountains of the cedars), which rises 7770 feet, is generally covered with snow, and today is draped in a mantle of unusual thickness, which trails way into the forest and the foothills; for there were a heavy rain and a sharp frost last night. As I have explained before, the term Mount Lebanon is misleading. There is no peak of that name, which is applied to a torty range with several conspicuous summits extending about one hundred miles from the neighborhood of Damascus to the sea and being about 25 miles broad from base to base. The most elevated peaks are those that I have just named, Mount Hermon, 9383 feet; Daharel-Kudhib, 10,020 feet; Jebel-Makmal, 10,016; El Miskysch, 10,037; Fum-el-Mizab, 9900; Sannin, 8,200 feet. These peaks are broken by rugged ridges, precipitous cliffs and deep gorges. A parallel range, which does not reach so great a height, is known as the anti-Lebanon.

Of all the mighty forests which formerly covered the slopes of Lebanon only five remain today, and they are limited in area. The loftiest trees and those most celebrated for their antiquity are found near the town of Becherre at an altitude of 6300 feet, and are known as "The Cedars of God"—"The Cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted;" and, according to the botanists who count their age by the circles in their trunks, they are 3000 or 4000 years old. Like the immortal cliffs that tower above them, they have watched the passage of a procession of kings down the centuries led by David, Solomon and Hiram, with a rear-guard commanded by Kaiser William II of Germany.

They are not so large nor so lofty as the great trees of California, but their antiquity and associations make them the most interesting groves in the world, and pilgrims come here to worship them. The best authorities are sure that we make no mistake when we reverence them as the survivors of that forest whence Adam obtained the timber for Solomon's temple. The logs must have been carried down to the coast by hand, conveyed by sea in rafts to Jaffa and thence carried over the mountains to Jerusalem.

It is said that 30,000 men were at work in the forest for 12 years and reaped each other every month in bodies of 10,000 men, who were organized and managed like an army. David obtained here the timber for his palace, and Zerubbabel in constructing the second temple. The timbers in the temple of Diana at Ephesus and in the temples at Baalbek came from the same forests, and we know that the Phoenicians shipped much cedar to Greece, to Egypt, and to other places on the coast of the Mediterranean, not only before but for centuries after the days of Hiram, the mighty King of Tyre.

The remaining forest consists of about 400 trees. The tallest exceeds 100 feet and the largest is 56 feet in circumference.

In the midst of the forest is a small chapel in which the Maronites worship and where they hold great feasts on the anniversary of the Transfiguration and other ecclesiastical holidays. Below the forest is a beautiful lake about half a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile in breadth, fed by innumerable springs that gush from the surrounding rocks. Upon the bank was once a temple to Venus, and according to mythology (and the same story is told of the Egyptian goddess Isis), that amiable lady took refuge here when she fled from the Tphon who had killed Adonis, and transformed herself into a fish. Her daughter, Derectis, was her companion, and suffered a similar fate.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Where Street Bands Come From.

Very few people know how or where German street bands spring from, but they may be interested to know that it is a regular business, carried on by agents who are of the same nationality and who are fairly well established on this side. Most of the men who come over are from the Black Forest and have a little knowledge of brass instruments, and they immediately make for an agent of this description. One of these agents keeps all kinds of brass instruments in his house and could turn out his German bands by the dozen to annoy the poor, suffering ratepayers of the district. There may be many more, we know, who may have commenced in the same way before they appeared as full-blown professionals.—Leslie's Weekly.

Identity of Dancing.

A dancing master has propounded a new system of how to dance well. According to his theory, the only perfect waltzer is the poet, the painter, the philosopher, or the man with high ideals.

This is how he expresses himself: "The three elements of grace are gravity, flexibility and force. Physical culture should educate each muscle of the body, and when the body is under the complete control of the will, if the mind have high ideals and ennobling thoughts, the man will be graceful. From this flows the wonderful quality of personal magnetism."

In the business world there is often such a thing as a successful failure.

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This is a fair representation of the class of goods it is selling to its customers.

## SIX SENSES OF FISHES.

All of Them Differ Widely From the Five Given to Land Animals.

The sense organs of fishes have been difficult to understand clearly. The eye is most like that of other vertebrates, and has an iris of brilliant metallic luster, a large lens, and a pupil and a very large iris. It is so sensitive that some fishes find food at depths as great as 200 feet. Proper eyelids are wanting. The nose consists of two holes lined with a corrugated mucous membrane in which the nerves of smell terminate, and its function must be very different from that of land animals. The "scent" of fishes, once much believed in, proves to be very feeble or absent. Taste is very keen, but its seat must be in the softer parts of the mouth, the tongue being very hard. The organ of hearing is simpler than in other vertebrates, though extremely sensitive. The external ear is wanting, and the inner ear consists merely of cavities filled with fluid and with little porcelain-like particles. Of the sense of touch little is known except that it belongs to the whole skin and is very acute in the bristles around the mouth. Fishes are suspected of having a sixth sense, whose organs are the pores of the head and in a row extending over a large nerve.

The population of Abyssinia aggregates 10,000,000 people, whose capacity of consumption is said to merit the consideration of exporting nations. The inhabitants are disposed to adapt themselves to the arts of peace. The products of the country, exclusive of cereals, are ivory, zibeth or civet, wax, hides, coffee and gold.

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## The New Pittsburg Exposition.

In the big buildings of the New Pittsburg Exposition everything is bustle and activity these days in anticipation of the grand opening scheduled for the night of Wednesday, September 3, when the great Sousa and his famous band will be heard in an inaugural concert of popular and novel selections. Mr. Sousa's appearance on this occasion will be doubly interesting to his ever widening circle of admirers, as since his concerts here last year, he has been decorated by King Edward VII. with the Victorian medal, an honor accorded to only four other musicians, and in addition has been fairly deluged with honors of every sort by the enthusiasts of England and Scotland, who early this year fairly went mad over the work of his superb organization.

Music hall is being beautifully redecorated in white and pink for this inaugural concert, and indications are that John Philip Sousa will be given such an ovation as never before was accorded a bandmaster and composer. Let no one be kept away from the opening on Wednesday, September 3, for fear of crowding, as the Exposition buildings and grounds can take care of fully 25,000 people.

In the line of exhibits this season surprise will follow surprise, both in the main building and in Mechanical Hall. So urgent has been the demand for exhibitors' space, that for the first time in the society's history every available foot has been disposed of, the net result being the appearance of forty-two new and highly interesting displays. Notable among these will be the most elaborate showing ever made anywhere of fine cut glassware; a superb electrical exhibit; a complete model of the "Deutschland," the swiftest ocean liner afloat; and that wonder of the engineering world, the steam-turbine-wheel-engine.

The special attractions will be all new, not an old face being seen. Foremost among these will be the "Eruption of Mt. Pelee" and "Destruction of St. Pierre;" next in order, "Darkness and Dawn," then the "Laughing Gallery;" the "Dancing Marionettes;" the puzzling "Haunted Swing," and, of course, those indispensable favorites, the "Toboggan Slide," the "Merry-Goround" and the "Cinematograph."

With the finest of music obtainable anywhere; with displays away beyond anything hitherto attempted; with attractions completely changed, and with the most lavish provision for the comfort and convenience of its clientele, the Exposition management looks forward to a total attendance of not less than 500,000 persons, thus breaking every known record.

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