

Prince Charlie.

By BURFORD DELANNOY.

(Continued.)
CHAPTER XXXIII.
A Tangled Trinity.

An observer might have imagined Dick possessed of a just grievance against his tailor; it took him such a while to get into his coat. He was doing so to the accompaniment of his fashioning it. The difficulty with his coat was one of his own creation; he was thoroughly enjoying the situation, and prolonging it as long as possible. The whistling served as a sort of slow music to his little drama.

There was not even a whisper of "Rule, Britannia." Indeed, it was pretty certain that had he been going abroad, Dick would have been on hand as his travelling companion. He was, as he termed it, "rubbing it in." Brothers are awful brutes at times.

"Dick! Dear Dick!"

She had come to him affectionately, had put her arms round his neck. "Hold on there! Don't go slobbering on my coat again; it is all limp and wet now. I don't want to get inflammation of the lungs through wearing a damp shirt! You are too liberal with your grief, Sis; keep some of it for your handkerchief!"

"I'm not crying! Dick-Dick-dear, dear old Dick." She was whispering in his ear in an artful way that she had never known him able to resist. "You know you would not like to make me miserable—your own loving sister."

He was grinning from ear to ear. The humour of the situation appealed to him as he interrupted—

"None of your blarney; none of your soft sawder! What's the meaning of this sudden, overflowing, spring-up-in-a-moment affection? I was an idiot, I look, stupid, a few minutes ago."

"Yes, that's all very well. But what is it? This sudden discovery of my value means you want something she put her mouth close to his ear and whispered again. A very low whisper, he only just caught it—

"Don't let him go, Dick!"

"Let who go?"

She knew that to be an evasion; that he was willfully misunderstanding her. Just shook him and whispered earnestly—

"Please!"

Dick was magnanimous; he could afford to be. His deep-laid scheme had proved successful.

"Well, I'll see what I can do. But what are you going to do about the Chantrelles?"

A change came over her face; every scrap of softness seemed to fade out of it. In a voice full of determination she said—

"The Chantrelles? Leave them here before the day is over!"

"Rule, Britannia!" once more thrilled the air as the whistler caught his sister in his arms.

"You're a brick, old girl!" He kissed her. "Things will pan out all right after all. Now, shall I stay and bear a hand, or would you rather have the precious couple yourself?"

There was a steady glitter in her eye; it boded ill for the absent ones as she answered—

"I think I can manage alone!"

"I think you can, old girl!"

Do you know," he added with mock severity, "when you look a little demon like that, I don't somehow fancy trusting my friend into your keeping. One good turn, you know the rest. I believe I should be carrying that out by preventing his marrying you."

She spoke saucily with sparkling eyes; yet with a rosy blush on her face.

"That's true; perhaps he won't! There's hope for the poor beggar after all! He came all the way from the Mediterranean framing words how he should ask you to marry him, and he had a narrow escape on the dinner party night. Perhaps you killed him then by your nice behaviour; killed any desire he might have had to marry you." Then he added maliciously, "Let's hope so, for his sake."

"Dick! You are a perfect horror!"

"It was 'dear Dick' a minute ago! But there you're as uncertain as the weather."

The shot went home; told in the flushed, shamefaced look; Dick inquired—

"What are you going to say to the Chantrelles?"

"That is my business. They will travel up by the afternoon train. Your business is to go to Prince Charlie, and see that he comes here to-night to dinner."

He sobered down in a moment at that; answered seriously—

"No, old girl, that is out of the question. Nothing I could say would induce him to that. He simply hates the Chantrelles."

"I have told you—they won't be here."

"Even the knowledge of their absence wouldn't make him come to your house, after the way in which you behaved to him last time."

"All the same," she said defiantly, "place shall be set for him at table."

"Look here, old girl, I'm willing to help you, but don't make a peck at idiot of yourself. I tell you nothing I could say would induce him to—"

"Well, you can get him to go for a walk, I suppose, can't you?"

"You know we always go for a walk late every afternoon—weather permitting or otherwise."

"Very well; this afternoon walk eastward. You know the seat at the end of the Parade?"

"You mean, that one by the wall,

which Gracie calls 'Our Seat'?"

"Yes. Make your way there; walk to that, sit down and wait—till I come."

It dawned on him then: her intent. Admiration of her diplomacy, found voice in the strains of "Rule, Britannia."

"Don't say anything, Dick. Promise me that. Not a word to Prince Charlie about—anything!"

"But when you turn up at the seat, what am I to do? I suppose it will be a case of two's company, three's none?"

"Oh, you can go and pick shells and seaweed on the beach!"

"What? In the dark? Is thy brother or a dog that he should do these things? I'll find my way back by myself! You think he'll see you home?"

"You can rely on it, he will!"

Mrs. Seton-Carr had confidence in herself. Perhaps it was as well; few things are won without that.

"All right. We shall be there about five o'clock."

"So shall I."

"Right. . . . There are the Chantrelles coming up the road; I'll clear out the back way. If they are going, I'd rather be spared saying farewells. I might introduce some choice expressions of my opinion of them."

"Leave that to me!"

Mabel spoke with bitter sweetness. One glance at her face convinced Dick that he could do so with safety.

"Right!"

He disappeared through the back as the Chantrelles entered by the front door. Mrs. Seton-Carr was waiting for them. She smiled pleasantly, laid a pleasant, and invited them into the drawing-room. Seated, she faced them. There, wasted no time in preliminaries, struck out—

"There is something I want to clear up, Mr. Chantrelle."

She fixed that gentleman with her eyes. On her face was a pleasant smile; it never left her face once during the interview.

"Yes?"

"About Mr. Masters," she continued. "There has been something unpleasant—so far as he is concerned—said of the voyage home you all made from the Mediterranean. Did you ever see him attempt to make love to your sister?"

"Great Scott! No. He seemed to like her about as little as Amy liked him."

From the corner of her eye, Mrs. Seton-Carr could see that her dear friend Amy had grown very white—

Amy had a quicker brain than had her brother—but she never lost her hold on Percy's face; went on—

"Did he bear the reputation of a lady-killer? Of making love to every woman on board?"

"My dear Mrs. Carr!" Percy laughed heartily as he replied. "I never saw him talk to a woman! He had the reputation on board of being a woman-hater. He was a perfect bear!"

Amy glanced at her brother, reproachfully, meaningly—too late. Besides, he was looking at his hostess and not at her; her telegraphic communication was without effect. It was a pity, a thousand pities from Amy's point of view. She had to sit quiet and listen.

"Thanks so much," Mrs. Seton-Carr was saying, sweetly. "You see, I was told all that, and it was not a pleasant thing to be told. You must understand that I am engaged to be married to Mr. Masters shortly—but I think you know that?"

Percy's face fell; all the merriment dropped out of it. A moment's silence ensued; not what could fairly be labelled a dull moment. Then Percy broke it, said slowly—

"No, I hadn't the slightest idea of such a thing."

"Is that possible? Surely your sister told you! She says in this letter that when you heard of my forthcoming marriage to Mr. Masters, you grew white. Although why," she laughed, "you should grow white, I cannot conceive. Our pleasant intercourse has always been quite platonic, hasn't it? That was its charm; one has so few friends. You know that?"

"I—yes. Now I know it."

"I am sorry to say it, Mr. Chantrelle, to you; you always have behaved like a gentleman to me; but this letter," she held it out to him—"written by your sister whilst on the boat, is a tissue of lies from beginning to end. The work of a woman absolutely unfitted in my opinion—for decent society!"

Brother and sister were on their feet in a moment. The atmosphere seemed red-hot to them. They had had unpleasant moments in their somewhat adventurous career, but this was the worst. Their hostess's words were as the lashes of a whip.

Chantrelle muttered something about breaking the laws of hospitality; a weak effort to stand up for his sister. It failed halfway. Then he abandoned her to her fate.

"Take me away, Percy," his sister gasped. "I will not stay to be further insulted."

"Miss Chantrelle has forestalled me," Mrs. Seton-Carr still spoke quietly, still retained her seat. "But is precisely what I was about to ask you to do, Mr. Chantrelle. You can look up from a thief but a liar—a deliberate, scheming, unscrupulous liar—there is no guarding against. Your sister, by her trickery, came near separating me from the man who loves me; the man I love. I should not forgive it in fifty lifetimes."

Miss Chantrelle made an effort to speak. Her lips moved, but for once in her life she was unable to fashion words. She was a woman who trusted to a well-oiled tongue for squeezing out of the tightest

places. It failed her now; the effort ended in a gasp.

"Go and pack your things, Amy."

Her brother spoke sternly. The white-faced woman almost staggered out of the room without a word. She was terribly upset; none of us like to be found out in our little lapses.

"Read the letter, Mr. Chantrelle; I request you to. It will convince you that I am not more than necessarily bitter!"

"There is no need. Your word is sufficient."

Mr. Chantrelle bowed; had changed his tactics and was making the best of his position. His sister had led him into this; he would stand by her up to a point, but at the same time he would do what he could to save his own skin. There was no sense in needless sacrifice.

"I know you well enough, know you could only behave as you are doing with good reason," he continued. "I am heartily sorry. Amy is my sister; I am bound to remember that whatever she has done." He held out his hand. "Good-bye. I can only ask you to acquit me personally of any—but there explanations are perhaps better left alone. Good-bye—it will be well for us not to meet again."

A note of feeling vibrated in his voice. A mere listener to the actual words would have detected no false ring in them. Would, perhaps, have admired him for the staunchness he exhibited towards his misguided sister.

But his hostess stood face to face with him, and she saw that in his eye-lack of sincerity—which discounted the ingenuousness of his speech. Still Mrs. Seton-Carr agreed with it—in substance.

"Good-bye. Yes, it is certainly better so. . . . My maid shall go across to the station for a porter and truck. They will be here by the time you have packed."

They were. The Chantrelles left. Journeyed to London by the train Dick had mentioned; the most crestfallen couple travelling in it.

It was the last of them.

(To be continued.)

CATTLEMAN'S HARD PLIGHT.

A stranded cattleman named David Williams, is at the hospital suffering from frozen feet and exposure.

He arrived here on the steamer Sicilian last week, and was anxious to reach Montreal. He was without funds, however, and started to walk there.

He reached Gaspereaux Friday night, and as it was too late to ask for lodging, he sought shelter in a barn, where he was found next morning in an exhausted condition.

He was brought to the city and taken to the Central police station yesterday morning. A permit was obtained from Dr. Addy and the unfortunate man was sent to the hospital.

It was thought that in all probability amputation of the feet will not be necessary.

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THAT SCHOOL CLAUSE.

Dr. Pugsley Talks on the Objectionable Section in the Autonomy Bill.

Attorney General Pugsley returned home from Ottawa, Saturday.

In speaking of the situation at the capital, Dr. Pugsley said, that, among English supporters, of the government, it was generally felt that if the last clause of the section relating to education, in the new provinces—and which provides for appropriation of the government monies, including the proceeds of school lands, for the support of separate schools—were struck out, it would be satisfactory to the western members supporting the government and generally to their English speaking supporters. But it did not seem so clear that the French members would take the same view, their contention being, that if the minority of the ratepayers in a district taxed themselves for support of a separate school, they should also receive a fair proportion of the government monies.

Those who favor changing the bill hold that the apportionment of the public monies, between the public schools and the separate schools, should be left entirely to the provincial governments to deal with the same as at present.

With the exception of the clause which it is now proposed to strike out, the provisions of the section are practically the same as were enacted by the Northwest Territories Act, in 1875, and which have been in force in the Territories.

In referring to the re-adjustment of provincial subsidies, and settlement of the question, relating to the Halifax fishery award, Attorney General Pugsley said that both these matters, which were of great importance to the province of New Brunswick, as well as to other provinces, were making satisfactory progress and he thought it not unlikely that within a few days, an important and satisfactory announcement would be made in regard to them.

FATALLY BURNED.

Newburyport, Mass., Mar. 3.—Three persons were terribly burned; one and it is believed two, fatally, by the overturning of a kerosene lamp at the home of Frank Hudson, tonight. The lamp was upset by Hudson's two year old son, who was enveloped in the flames that followed, sustaining injuries from which he died an hour later. His grandmother attempted to extinguish the flames and her own clothing catching fire, she was herself frightfully burned. It is believed that she will die.

A three months old sister of the dead boy was badly burned, but will recover.

NOTICE.

APPLICATION will be made to the New Brunswick Legislature at its next ensuing session for the passing an Act to incorporate The Maritime Guarantee and Trust Company. The objects of the company will be to carry on the business of giving security for executors administrators, trustees and officials generally and conducting a general trust business itself.

Dated the 25th day of February, 1905.

S. A. M. SKINNER, Solicitor.

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