

Cavanagh, Forest Ranger

The Great Conservation
Novel

By HAMLIN GARLAND

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CHAPTER XVI.

CAVANAGH FOLLOWS HIS CHIEF.

AT breakfast next morning Cavanagh said: "I must ride back and take some bread to the dog. I can't go away and leave him there without saying hello."

"Let me do that," suggested Wetherford. "I'm afraid to go down to the Fork. I reckon I'd better go back and tend the sheep till Gregg sends some one up to take my place."

"That might be too late to see Lee. Lee's voice showed great anxiety. She may be on her deathbed. No; you'd better go down with me today," he urged. And at last the old man consented.

Putting some bread in his pockets, Ross rode off up the trail to see how the dog and his flock were faring. He had not gone far when he heard the tinkle of the bells and the murmur of the lambs, and a few moments later the colts came toward him with the air of a boy who, having assumed to disregard the orders of his master, expects a scolding. He plainly said: "I've brought my sheep to you because I was lonesome. Please forgive me."

Cavanagh called to him cheerily and tossed him a piece of bread, which he caught in his teeth, but did not swallow. On the contrary, he held it while leaping for joy of the praise he heard in his new found master's voice.

Turning the flock upward toward the higher peaks, the ranger commanded the colts to their heels and so, having redeemed his promise, rode back to the cabin, where he found Wetherford saddled and ready for his momentous trip to the valley. He had shaved away his gray beard, and had Ross been unprepared for these changes he would have been puzzled to account for this decidedly military figure sitting stately on his pony before the door.

"You can prove an alibi," he called as he drew near. "Gregg himself would never recognize you now."

Wetherford was in no mood for joking. "Lize will. I wore a moustache in the old days, and there's a scar on my chin."

As he rode he confided this strange thing to Cavanagh. "I know," said he, "that Lize is old and wrinkled, for I've seen her, but all the same I can't realize it. That heavy set woman down there is not Lize. My Lize is slim and straight. This woman whom you know has stolen her name and face, that's all. I can't explain exactly what I feel, but Lee Virginia means more to me now than Lize."

"I think I understand you," said Cavanagh, with sympathy in his voice.

The nearer Wetherford came to the actual meeting with his wife the more he shook. At last he stopped in the road. "I don't believe I can do it," he declared. "I'll be like a ghost to her. What's the use of it? She'll only be worried by my story. I reckon I'd better keep dark to everybody. Let me go back. I'm plum scared cold."

While still he argued two men on horseback rounded a sharp turn in the trail and came face to face with the ranger. Wetherford's face went suddenly gray. "There's the deputy!"

"Keep quiet. I'll do the talking," commanded Cavanagh, who was instant in his determination to shield the man. "Good morning, gentlemen," he called cheerily. "You're abroad early?"

The man in front was the deputy sheriff of the county; his companion was a stranger.

"That was a horrible mess you stumbled on over on Deer creek," the deputy remarked.

"It certainly was. Have any arrests been made?"

"Not yet, but we're on a clew. This is Marshal Haines of Dallas. Mr. Cavanagh," pursued the deputy. The two men nodded in token of the introduction, and the deputy went on, "You remember that old cuss that used to work for Gregg?"

Azula Cavanagh nodded.

"Well, that chap is wanted by the Texas authorities. Mr. Haines here wants to see him mighty bad. He's an escaped convict with a bad record."

"Is that so?" exclaimed Cavanagh. "I thought he seemed a bit gun shy."

range," suggested the ranger. "Anyhow, it's a long way up there, and you'll probably have to camp at my place tonight. You'll find the key hanging over the door. Go in and make yourself comfortable."

The deputy thanked him and was about to ride on when Cavanagh added: "I burned that Basque's tent and bedding for fear of contagion. His outfit was worthless anyhow. You'll find the sheep just above my cabin and the horse in my corral."

"The old man didn't take the horse, eh? Well, that settles it; he's sure at one of the camps. Much obliged. Good day."

As the two officers rode away Wetherford leaned heavily on his pommel and stared at the ranger with wide eyes. His face was drawn and his lips dry. "They'll get me! They'll get me!" he said.

"Oh, no, they won't," rejoined Cavanagh. "You're all right yet. They suspect nothing. How could they, with you in uniform and in my company?"

"All the same, I'm scared. That man Haines had his eyes on me every minute. He saw right through me. They'll get me, and they'll charge me up with that killing."

"No, they won't, I tell you," insisted the ranger. "Haines suspected nothing. I had his eye. He never saw you before and has nothing but a description to go by, so cheer up. Your uniform and your position with me will make you safe—perfectly safe. They'll find the Basque's camp burned and the sheep in charge of the dog, and they'll fancy that you have skipped across the range. But see here, old man," and he turned on him sharply, "you didn't tell me the whole truth. You said you were out on parole."

"I couldn't tell you the whole truth," replied the fugitive. "But I will now. I was in for a life sentence. I was desperate for the open air and home-sick for the mountains, and I struck down one of the guards. I was willing to do anything to get out. I thought if I could get back to this country and my wife and child I'd be safe. I said I'd be willing to go back to the pen if necessary, but I'm not. I can't do it. I'd die there. You must save me for my girl's sake."

His voice and eyes were wild with a kind of desperate fury of fear, and Cavanagh, moved to pity, assured him of his aid. "Now, listen," he said. "I'm going to shield you on account of your work for that poor shepherd and for your daughter's sake. It's my duty to apprehend you, of course, but I'm going to protect you. The safest thing for you to do is to go back to my cabin. Ride slow, so as not to get there till they're gone. They'll ride over to the sawmill without doubt. If they come back this way remember that the deputy saw you only as a ragged old man with a long beard and that Haines has nothing but a printed description to go by. There's no use trying to flee. You are a marked man in that uniform, and you are safer right here with me than anywhere else this side of Chicago. Haines is likely to cross the divide in the belief that you have gone that way, and if he does you have no one but the deputy to deal with."

He succeeded at last in completely rousing the older man's courage.

Wetherford rose to meet his opportunity. "I'll do it," he said firmly.

"That's the talk!" exclaimed Cavanagh to encourage him. "You can throw them off the track this time, and when I come back tomorrow I'll bring some other clothing for you, and then we'll plan some kind of scheme that will get you out of the country. I'll not let them make a scapegoat of you."

The ranger watched the fugitive as he started back over the trail in this desperate defiance of his pursuers with far less confidence in the outcome than he had put into words.

"All depends on Wetherford himself. If his nerve does not fail him, if they take the uniform for granted and do not carry the matter to the supervisor, we will pull the plan through." And in this hope he rode away down the trail with bent head, for all this bore heavily upon his relationship to the girl waiting for him in the valley. He had thought Lize a burden, a social disability, but a convict father now made the mother's faults of small account.

The nearer he drew to the meeting with Lee Virginia the more important that meeting became. Cavanagh had seen Virginia hardly more than a score of times, and yet she filled his thought, confused his plans, making of his brain a place of doubt and hesitation. For her sake he had entered upon a plan to shield a criminal, to harbor an escaped convict. It was of no avail to argue that he was moved to shield Wetherford because of his heroic action on the peak. He knew perfectly well that it was because he could not see that fair, brave girl further disgraced by the discovery of her father's identity, for in the searching inquiry which would surely follow his secret would develop.

To marry her, knowing the character of her father and her mother, was madness, and the voice within him warned him of his folly. "Pure war cannot be drawn from corrupt sources," it is said. Nevertheless the thought of having the girl with him in the wilderness filled him with divine recklessness. While still he debated, alternately flushed with resolve to be happy and chilled by some strange dejection, he met Swenson, the young guard who guarded the forest on the South Fork.

As he rode up Cavanagh perceived in the other man's face something profoundly serious. He did not smile in greeting, as was usual with him, and, taking some letters from his pocket, passed them over in ominous silence. He had a face of such bitterness that

it broke through even the absorbed and selfish meditation into which Cavanagh had been thrown.

"What's the matter, Swenson? You look as if you had lost a friend."

"I have," answered the guard shortly, "and so have you. The chief is out."

"What?"

"They've got him!" he exclaimed. "He's out."

Cavanagh sprang up. "I don't believe it! For what reason? Why?"

"Don't that letter tell you? The whole town is chuckling. Every criminal and plug ugly in the country is spitting in our faces this morning. Yes, sir, the president has fired the chief—the man that built up this forestry service. The whole works is going to h—, that's what it is. We'll have all the coal thieves, water power thieves, poachers and free grass pirates piling in on us in mobs. They'll eat up the forest. I see the finish of the whole business. They'll put some western man in—somebody they can work. Then where will we be?"

Cavanagh's young heart burned with indignation, but he tried to check the other man's torrent of protest.

"I can't believe it. There's some mistake. Maybe they've made him the secretary of the department or something."

"No, they haven't. They've thrown him out. They've downed him because he tried to head off some thievery of coal mines in Alaska." The man was ready to weep with chagrin and indignant sorrow. His voice choked, and he turned away to conceal his emotion.

Cavanagh put the letter back into his pocket and mounted his horse. "Well, go on back to your work, Swenson. I'm going to town to get the supervisor on the wire and find out what it all means."

He was almost as badly stunned by the significance of Swenson's news as Swenson himself. Could it be possible that the man who had built up the field service of the bureau—the man whose clean handed patriotism had held the boys together, making them every year more clearly a unit, a little army of enthusiasts—could it be possible that the originator, the organizer of this great plan, had been stricken down just when his influence was of most account? He refused to believe it of an administration pledged to the cause of conservation.

As he entered the town he was struck instantly by the change in the faces turned toward him, in the jocular greetings hurled at him. "Hello, Mr. Cossack! What do you think of your chief now?"

"This will put an end to your infernal nonsense," said another. "We'll

have a man in there now who knows the western ways and who's willing to boom things along. The cork is out of your forest bottle."

Gregg was most offensive of all. "This means throwing open the forest to anybody that wants to use it—means an entire reversal of this fool policy."

"Wait and see," replied Cavanagh. But his face was rigid with the expression of the fear and anger he felt. With hands that trembled he opened the door to the telephone booth, closed it carefully behind him and called for the supervisor's office. As soon as Redfield replied he burst forth in question, "Is it true that the chief is out?"

Redfield's voice was husky as he replied, "Yes, lad; they've got him."

"Good Lord, what a blow to the service!" exclaimed Cavanagh with a groan of sorrow and rage. "What is the president thinking of to throw out the only man who stood for the future—the man who had built up this corps, who was its inspiration?" Then after a pause he added, with bitter resolution: "This ends it for me. Here's where I get off."

"Don't say that, boy. We need you now more than ever."

"I'm through. I'm done with America—with the States. I shall write my resignation at once. Send down another man to take my place."

Redfield's pleadings were of no avail. Cavanagh went directly from the booth to the postoffice, and there, surrounded by jeering and exultant citizens, he penned his resignation and mailed it. Then, with stern and contemptuous face, he left the place, making no reply to the jeers of his enemies, and, mounting his horse, mechanically rode away out upon the plains, seeking the quiet, open places in order to regain calmness and decision. He did not deliberately ride away from Lee Virginia, but as he entered upon the open country he knew that he was leaving her as he was leaving the forests. He had cut himself off from her as he had cut himself off from the work he loved. His

heart was swollen big within his breast. He longed for the return of "the colonel" to the White House. "What manner of ruler is this who is ready to strike down the man whose very name means conservation and who in a few years would have made this body of forest rangers the most effective corps of its size in the world?" He groaned again, and his throat ached with the fury of his indignation.

"Dismissed for insubordination," the report said. "In what way? Only in making war on greed, in checking graft, in preserving the heritage of the people."

The lash that cut deepest was the open exultation of the very men whose persistent attempt to appropriate public property the chief had helped to thwart. "Redfield will go next. The influence that got the chief will get Hugh. He's too good a man to escape. Then, as Swenson says, the thieves will roll in upon us to slash and burn and corrupt. What a country! What a country!"

As he reached the end of this line of despairing thought he came back to the question of his remaining personal obligations. Wetherford must be cared for, and then—and then—there was Virginia waiting for him at this moment. "For her sake, to save her from humiliation, I will help her father to freedom."

This brought him back to the hideous tragedy of the heights, and with that thought the last shred of faith in the sense of justice in the state vanished.

"They will never discover those murderers. They will permit this outrage to pass unpunished, like the others. It will be merely another 'dramatic incident' in the history of the range."

His pony of its own accord turned and by a circuitous route headed at last for the home canyon as if it knew its master's wavering mind. Cavanagh observed what he was doing, but his lax hand did not intervene. Helpless to make the decision himself, he welcomed the intervention of the homing instinct of his horse. With bent head and brooding face he returned to the silence of the trail and the loneliness of the hills.

(To Be Continued.)

LOCAL NEWS

From Friday's Daily.

Miss Henrietta Martin returned from Omaha last evening, where she has visited friends for a few days.

Mrs. Holschuh was a passenger to Omaha on the morning train today, where she visited friends for a time.

Mrs. Harris of Omaha arrived this morning and will be a guest of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Fricke, for a time.

Harry Green of Elmwood came in last evening and visited over night with friends, returning home this morning.

Clay Rosencrans was a passenger to the metropolis on the morning train today, where he was called on business.

Mrs. Cowles, who has been spending two months in Madison, Wisconsin, and nearby cities, returned to her home in this city today.

Mrs. Q. K. Parmele returned from Elmwood last evening, where she had been to visit her brother, L. A. Tyson and family, over the Fourth.

Miss Olive Cadwell of Valley was in the city yesterday looking after business matters. Miss Cadwell was formerly a Peru student.

Mrs. George Delong and Mrs. S. A. Delong were passengers to Omaha on the afternoon train today, where they visited friends for a time.

Joe Hadraba of the firm of Weyrich & Hadraba was slightly indisposed today and did not get down to the store until 10 o'clock.

Gale Rhoden went to Omaha this afternoon to accompany Mrs. Rhoden home from St. Joseph's hospital, where she has been for some weeks taking treatment.

Prof. N. C. Abbott and wife, accompanied by Miss Newbranch, Mrs. Abbott's sister, were Omaha passengers on the morning train today, where they spent the day with relatives.

Mrs. Judge J. L. Root of Lincoln, who has been visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Wise, for a few days, departed for her home this morning.

Mr. Joseph Fetzer, the shoe merchant, was called to the metropolis this afternoon, where business matters demanded his attention.

Clifford Moore of Watson, Missouri, who has been a guest of Councilman Dovey's home over the Fourth, departed for his home this morning.

Miss Muriel Johnson of Nebraska City arrived last evening and was an over-night guest of the John Lindemann home, departing for Glenwood this morning, where she will visit friends for a few days.

Mrs. L. B. Egenberger and son, Henry, visited the wholesale houses at Omaha today, going on the morning train.

Mrs. Valley has removed from the property recently sold to the Masonic home, to the F. S. White residence on Sixth street.

H. A. Miner of Lincoln, who has been visiting friends in Plattsmouth for a short time, returned to his home this morning.

Mrs. Fitch and daughter, Mrs. Hadden, of near Bartlett, Iowa, arrived today and will visit Mike Karnes and family for a time.

Mr. J. A. Silence, W. O. W. field man, was an Omaha passenger on the morning train today, where he looked after business matters.

Mr. Critchfield, the United States revenue man, of Omaha, was in the city today. Mr. Critchfield is a distant relative to Bird Critchfield, but which he will not own if Bird is convicted.

Mr. Atwood of Lincoln arrived of No. 4 this morning to look after business matters for a few hours. Mr. Atwood reported a fine rain in Louisville this morning, water standing in the street when the train came through.

Miss Zeta Gilliland of Fremont, who has been a guest of the A. B. Smith home for a time, departed for her home this morning. Mr. Smith and daughter accompanied their guest to Omaha, going on the early train.

Mr. Homer Shrader returned from St. Joseph's hospital at Omaha this afternoon with his wife, Mrs. Shrader having been taking treatment there for some time.

Don C. Rhoden, democratic candidate for sheriff, was up from Murray this morning for a few hours on business and was a caller at the Journal office for a few moments.

Mrs. Adelia Harding of Hebron, Mrs. W. S. Cleaver of Lincoln and Mrs. L. M. Hall of South Omaha, finance committee of the Degree of Honor, were in the city today looking over the business of the order in the grand recorder's office and checking up the books of the grand recorder, Mrs. Teresa Hempel.

JOLLY EIGHT CARD CLUB ENJOY A DAY'S OUTING

Go Out to Swallow Hill, Where They Have a Big Time and a Fine Picnic Dinner.

From Friday's Daily.

The Jolly Eight club chartered a carryall yesterday and about 8 o'clock in the morning, while it was cool, drove out to Swallow Hill for a day's outing. Mr. Andy Kroehler and Jesse Warga acted as property men, Mr. Kroehler taking out a load of tackle, food supplies, hammocks and swings, and Mr. Warga drove the carryall and assisted in swinging the hammocks, putting up the swings, etc. At noon a fine picnic dinner was served, the fish caught by the ladies were fried and a fine noonday meal under the shade of the trees was enjoyed by the club.

More fish were caught in the afternoon and the usual sports and games indulged in on such occasions were enjoyed. Those who were thoughtful enough to take their bathing suits along enjoyed a plunge in the water.

A picnic supper was spread about 6 p. m., where more fish were disposed of and stories of the big fish that got away were told. About 7 p. m. the party returned to the city, getting back in time to hear the band concert. All in all, it was one of the most enjoyable days the club has had this season.

Lost.

Between Manley and Rock Bluffs, an automobile crank. Finder will receive reward by notifying S. O. Cole, Mynard, Neb. 6-15-3td.

Apples.

Highest market price paid for apples at the Wetenkamp building, Plattsmouth, Neb., commencing July 10th, 1911.

CALL FOR BIDS.

Bids will be received up to Noon on Friday, July 14th, A. D. 1911, at the office of the County Judge of Cass County, in his office at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, for the construction of one concrete culvert to be located one mile east and one-quarter mile north of Murray; also for one fill to be made on section line one and one-half miles section line one-half mile north of Union, Cass County, Nebraska. Work to be done out of inheritance Tax fund.

Plans and specifications on file in the office of the County Clerk in Plattsmouth, Nebraska. County Commissioners reserve the right to reject any or all bids.

Allen J. Beeson, County Judge, Plattsmouth, Neb., June 19th, 1911.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS. In County Court.

State of Nebraska, Cass County, ss.

In the Matter of the Estate of Henry C. Hardnock, Deceased.

Notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased that hearings will be had upon claims filed against said estate, before me, County Judge of Cass County, Nebraska, at the County Court room in Plattsmouth, in said County, on the 15th day of July, 1911, and on the 18th day of January, 1912, at 9 o'clock A. M. each day for examination, adjustment and allowance.

All claims must be filed in said court on or before said last hour of hearing.

Witness my hand and seal of said County Court, at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 19th day of June, 1911.

(Seal) Allen J. Beeson, County Judge.

STOKES TELLS OF SHOOTING

Millionaire Wounded by Two Girls
Testifies at Trial.

SAYS THEY DEMANDED MONEY

He Refused to Pay and Miss Graham Shot Him—He Wrenched Gun From Her and Miss Conrad Then Fired, Hitting Him in Leg.

New York, July 7.—There was a display of summer finery that made the crowd in the Tombs police court forget the heat when Miss Ethel Conrad and Miss Lillian Graham appeared for examination on the charge of attempting to murder W. E. D. Stokes, the millionaire hotel man. In contrast to the blooming defendants, Mr. Stokes looked pale and worn. The girls were accompanied by Mrs. John Singleton, formerly of Los Angeles, Miss Graham's wealthy sister. Mr. Stokes, as the first witness, narrated the events of June 7, when he was shot. He said Miss Conrad called him on the telephone and told him Miss Graham had gone to Europe and asked him to call and get letters Miss Graham had left for him. Miss Conrad "smiled sweetly" when she received him at her apartment, and left him alone a moment, saying she would go for the letters. When she returned, said Stokes, she bolted the door behind her and approached with her hands behind her back.

"At the same time through the door into the hall I saw Miss Graham creeping toward me with a revolver leveled at me. Stepping in front of me, she said: 'Now I have got you.'"

Then, continued Stokes, Miss Graham told him he must pay her for "doing her great moral damage, defaming her mother and sister." They told him, he said, that unless he complied with their demands they would kill him and "would have no difficulty getting rid of his body."

"It's death or \$25,000," said Miss Graham, according to the witness. "I told them," said Stokes, "that if it were a care of death or one cent I'd choose death. The Graham girl said to me, 'You will, will you?' and began firing."

Stokes wrested the revolver from Miss Graham after he had received two wounds. Then he said the girl called: "Ethel, you agreed if I didn't kill him you would."

Then Stokes heard another shot and a bullet hit him in the leg.

WAR ON GRASSHOPPERS

Western Kansas Aroused by Ravages of the Insects.

Topoka, July 7.—A war on grasshoppers has been started in western Kansas.

The ravages of the insects, especially in the alfalfa fields, have caused the Santa Fe railroad to inaugurate a campaign of extermination along its line.

H. O. Marsh of the government bureau of entomology is conducting the extermination work among the farmers and is helping the railroad. A poison composed of bran, white arsenic, salt and molasses is being spread over all the grass and other vegetation along the right of way. The grasshoppers are said to eat the preparation readily and it causes death in a few minutes.

One Scott county ranchman has bought 300 turkeys to war on the grasshoppers.

Higgins Refuses to Play in Des Moines
Omaha, July 7.—John Higgins has made Omaha headquarters for the Des Moines ball team. Hereafter all the Des Moines games will be played in Omaha, unless the citizens of Des Moines give a guaranty that a certain amount will be pledged him.

For Sale.

I have a half section, 320 acres, in Sandborn county, South Dakota, one quarter fenced, artesian well flowing through it, that I will sell at a reasonable price. Terms to suit the purchaser. Address, A. W. Smith, Plattsmouth, Neb.

6-22-11mw.



CAVANAGH PENNED HIS RESIGNATION AND MAILED IT.