

## In which this History is Ended 513

In the library I found Sir Richard, and Mr. Grainger, who greeted me with his precise little bow.

"I have to congratulate you, Sir Peter," he began, "not only on your distinguished marriage, and accession to fortune, but upon the fact that the — ah — unpleasantness connecting a certain Peter Smith with your unfortunate cousin's late decease has been entirely removed by means of the murderer's written confession, placed in my hands some days ago by the Lady Sophia."

"A written confession — and she brought it to you?"

"Galloped all the way from Tonbridge, by Gad!" nodded Sir Richard.

"It seems," pursued Mr. Grainger, "that the — ah — man, John Strickland, by name, lodged with a certain preacher, to whom, in Lady Vibart's presence, he confessed his crime, and willingly wrote out a deposition to that effect. It also appears that the man, sick though he was, wandered from the Preacher's cottage, and was eventually found upon the road, and now lies in Maidstone gaol, in a dying condition."

Chancing, presently, to look from the window, I beheld a groom who led a horse up and down before the door; and the groom was Adam, and the horse —

I opened the window, and, leaning out, called a name. At the sound of my voice the man smiled and touched his hat, and the mare ceased her pawing and chafing, and turned upon me a pair of great, soft eyes, and snuffed the air, and whinnied. So I leapt out of the window, and down the steps, and thus it was that I met "Wings."

"She be in the pink o' condition, sir," said Adam proudly; "Sir Richard bought 'er —"

"For a song!" added the baronet, who, with Mr. Grainger, had followed to bid me good-by. "I really got her remarkably cheap," he explained, thrusting his fists deep into his pockets, and frowning down my thanks. But, when I had swung myself into the saddle, he came and laid his hand upon my knee.

"You are going to — find her, Peter?"