

Back Again to the Horrors of Devil's Island

Eddie Guerin, Who Once Escaped from the Pestilential Spot Where Capt. Dreyfus Was Confined, Lured to London by a Chicago Woman and Captured, Will Soon Resume His Former Sufferings, This Time Securely Riveted In An Iron Shirt, With Ingenious Tortures Added.



Ada Mitchell, Whom Guerin Followed to London.

"With great and savage relish, the Paris police will hustle Eddie Guerin back to his awful punishment."

London, May 20. It is settled that Eddie Guerin must go back to the horrors of Devil's Island. From Devil's Island there is no escape, the French prison authorities are fond of saying. As this American criminal and all-round adventurer is the only Devil's Island prisoner who ever disproved that boast, it is with great and savage relish that the Paris police are preparing to take him off the hands of the Scotland Yard authorities, and will hustle Eddie Guerin back to his awful punishment. Guerin is at the moment a prisoner in a London jail.

There will be no difficulties in the way of extradition, and while the papers are being made out the French prison officials in charge of such matters are planning a future for Eddie Guerin on the most pestilential, vermin-infested island in all the oceans that will make the idea of escape one long despair.

There were times when Captain Dreyfus was chained to his bed in the miserable hut he occupied on that sun-baked rock. That was pleasant treatment compared with what Guerin now faces. The same ship that transports him again to Cayenne, the nearest port to that most dreaded French penal settlement on the South American coast, will carry the wrought iron truss-work costume which will be riveted upon Eddie Guerin, in which, strong as he is, he can move only a few steps at a time, and of which only death will relieve him.

For this dreadful prospect Eddie Guerin can blame no one but himself. No criminal ever had so many able friends, including Pat Sheedy, "the honest gambler." Through them he found the means of his extraordinary escape of last year. They nursed him back to health in New York, sent him to his old home in Chicago and set him up in business there. But he could not forget boasting of his exploit in outwitting the Devil's Island officials, nor following to London the first woman to again capture his fancy.

Can Blame Only Himself. Just as it was "Chicago May" Churchill who lured him to Paris, to become the chief conspirator in dynamiting the American Express office there and robbing it of \$20,000, it was a mysterious woman, called Ada Mitchell—who promptly disappeared after his arrest—who was the woman he recklessly rushed to London, whose detective force is hand in glove with the Leccocis and Dupuis of Paris.

Scotland Yard men found Guerin living under an assumed name in a small hotel in Soho, and pounced upon him, immediately notifying their Paris comrades. Guerin was very cool. He is a wonderful man, big and handsome, with fine features and a really refined and gracious manner. He did not look a day older than when he passed through London shortly before the Paris robbery.

"Eddie Guerin" he laughed easily. "Do I look like a man who had been grilled for two years on Devil's Island, who got away a mere bag of bones crammed full of misery?"

Even yet he stoutly denies that he is the man for whom the French years so maliciously; but there is no possibility of mistake. He is Eddie Guerin all right, and a few more days will see him secure in French clutches.

The Scotland Yard men find it difficult to suppress all sympathy for Guerin. They are of Pat Sheedy's confessed belief that Guerin is a talented and worthy fellow who went wrong through force of circumstances, after he had shot a Chicago policeman, and needs only a fair chance to reform himself into a good citizen. But they were bound to reciprocate favors from their Paris comrades.

The same Paris trial that condemned Eddie Guerin to Devil's Island five years ago sent "Chicago May," who loved and tried to shield him, and her jealous husband, George Miller, to prisons in France, where they died. Guerin himself has told of his imprisonment and his escape. "Dreyfus," he said, "has not exaggerated the horrors of convict life on Devil's Island. Everybody has read the published letters he wrote to his wife from that accursed spot, where France berds the most despised victims of her courts—till they die."



General view of Devil's Island, the sun-baked, pestilential rock off the east coast of South America, where Dreyfus was confined and from which Eddie Guerin miraculously escaped.



His robust shoulders will hardly bear the weight of the iron truss-work, sleeveless garment into which he will be riveted.

Months passed, when, one day, she slipped into his hands a sum of money sent to him through her. Discreet use of part of this fund acted like magic. As he had planned, he and two fellow convicts were ordered under guard to the outermost of the penal isles, upon which was a wooded swamp. The next day friendly guards solemnly buried a dead convict in the prison potter's field, and over the grave set a headboard bearing the name, "Eddie Guerin."

Clothed in rags, Guerin, and a host of prisoners toiled in rain and sunshine, and at night slept under guard in hovels which were alive with vermin. Venomous reptiles abounded and had always to be looked out for.

"When I arrived," says Guerin, "I was an unusually robust man. I weighed 220 pounds, and was fat, stouter. But soon the fever got into my blood and I felt myself going. There was no time to lose in perfecting my plans of escape."

Guerin had always found it easy to gain the friendship of women. He labored first to make himself agreeable to his guards. Then he

looked about him for the woman whom he could make an intermediary between himself and his American friends. He found her in the pretty young wife of one of his guards. In a few brief conversations he won her to his purpose.

The man whom he had helped out of prison had made up their minds that he had a lot of money left. They were conspiring to slit his throat as he slept, rob his body and feed him to the sharks. The men lost no time in putting this enterprise into operation. But as they crept upon him, knives in hand, they found themselves looking into the muzzle of his revolver.

"For three days and nights," Guerin has told, "I could hardly lower the muzzle of my revolver, and for them to stop paddling would mean only prolongation of the agony."

When at last they all landed all were half crazy with fatigue and loss of sleep. Guerin left the accomplices snoring in the bottom of the dugout and started on his long tramp northward. The tramp occupied

more than a week. When Guerin stumbled more dead than alive into Paramaribo, where correspondents of his American friends were watching for him to put him aboard a tramp ship for New York, he could remember vaguely that his tramp had been a series of captures by and escapes from bands of Indians. In New York, although tenderly cared for, it was weeks before he was able to journey on to Chicago.

But after a month in his old home, he felt none the worse for his incredible hardships, and it was then that he told his story and made the boasts that have been talking together in Spanish, which they had no reason to believe he understood.

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He will not have to labor, because that would enable him to conspire with other convicts. His guards will be forbidden to speak or listen to him, and will be watched to see that they obey. Least of all will he be permitted to set his magnetic eyes on any member of the fair sex, or her to sympathize with him through viewing his misery.

Will Die by Inches in an Iron Shirt. When Guerin lands on Devil's Island he will have changed his garments for the last time. This is because there will be immediately riveted upon him that other garment of wrought iron which will accompany him on the ship, the model for which these French prison officials found in China. The Chinese model is of wood. It is like a basket nearly the height of the criminal, without any bottom, and through the top of which the man's head protrudes, his neck being firmly clasped by a yoke fixed to the basket's top. The criminal can touch the ground only with the tips of his toes.

When his toes become tired he must swing with his head in the yoke.

Although in Guerin's case he will have some freedom of arms and legs, his robust shoulders will hardly bear the weight of the iron truss-work, sleeveless garment into which he will be riveted. He can hobble

about a few steps at a time, and feed himself; but it will be impossible for him to rest easy in any position. Neither can he use his hands to fight away vermin from any part of his body but his head.

This horrible garment is of open trellis iron-work, which, as his garments rot away, will offer no impediment to the approach of insects and reptiles, will not protect him against the drenching rains nor the scorching sun. How long he lives will be merely a matter of endurance.

As he grows weaker from the inevitable fever penitence, the burden of his iron shirt will become greater. When he can no longer stand he can lie down only to be twisted and racked by the cruel iron-work.

Throughout he will be a prey to absolute despair—only a madman could have the slightest hope of escape.

So, in a year or two—perhaps in a few months or weeks—the prisoner who had the impertinence to escape from Devil's Island—and boast about it—will be put under ground to redeem from satire the head-twisted and racked by the cruel iron-work.



EDDIE GUERIN.