

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

The woman of whom they were speaking met him at the ladder. Her face was paler than usual, and dark circles round her eyes gave evidence of a sleepless night. She opened her red lips to speak, and then, seeing Vickers, stopped abruptly.

"Well, what is it?"

She looked from one to the other. "I came for Doctor Pine."

Vickers, with the quick intelligence of affection, guessed her errand. "Some one is ill?"

"Miss Sylvia, sir. It is nothing to signify, I think. A little feverish and hot, and my mistress—"

Vickers was down the ladder in an instant, with scared face. Pine caught the girl's round, firm arm. "Where have you been?"

Two great flakes of red came out in her white cheeks, and she shot an indignant glance at Blunt.

"Were you with the child last night?"

Went on Pine.

"No; I have not been in the cabin since dinner yesterday. Mrs. Vickers only called me in just now. Let go my arm, sir; you hurt me."

Pine loosened his hold as if satisfied at the reply. "I beg your pardon," he said, gruffly. "I did not mean to hurt you. But the fever has broken out in the prison, and I think the child has caught it. You must be careful where you go."

Sarah Purfoy stood motionless for an instant, in deadly terror. Her lips parted, her eyes glittered, and she made a movement as though to retrace her steps.

"Poor soul!" thought honest Blunt, "how she feels for the child! That lubberly surgeon, he's hurt her! Never mind, my lass," he said, aloud. "It was broad daylight, and he had not as much courage in love making as at night."

"Don't be afraid. I've been in ships with fever before now."

Awaking, as it were, at the sound of his voice, she came closer to him. "But ship fever! I have heard of it! Men have died like rotten sheep in crowded vessels like this."

"Tush! Not they. Don't be frightened; Miss Sylvia won't die, nor you neither." He took her hand. "It may knock off a few dozen prisoners or so. They are pretty close packed down there. What is the matter?"

"Nothing—a pain. I did not sleep last night. I have the toothache," said she, putting her hand to her face.

"Take some laudanum," says Blunt, with dim recollections of his old mother's treatment of such ailments. "Old Pine'll give you some. Na, I'll get it for you. You shan't ask that bear for it. Come into my cabin."

Blunt's cabin was in the starboard side of the ship, just under the awning, and possessed three windows—one looking out over the side, and two upon deck. The corresponding cabin on the other side was occupied by Mr. Maurice Frere. He closed the door and took down a small medicine chest.

"Here," said he, opening it. "I've carried this little box for years, but it ain't often I want to use it. Now, then, put some of this into your mouth, and hold it there."

"Good gracious, Captain Blunt, you'll poison me! Give me the bottle; I'll help myself. You need not fear. I've used it before." And she put the bottle in her pocket.

Her tears were all dry long ago, and had only given increased color to her face. This agreeable woman never wept long enough to make herself distasteful. She raised her dark eyes to his for a moment, with a saucy smile, and gained her cabin. It was next to that of her mistress, and she could hear the sick child feebly moaning. Her eyes filled with tears, real ones this time.

"Poor little thing," she said; "I hope she won't die."

And then she threw herself on her bed and buried her hot head in the pillow. The intelligence of the fever seemed to have terrified her. Had the news disarranged some well-concocted plan of hers? Being near the accomplishment of some cherished scheme, long kept in view, had the sudden and unexpected presence of disease falsified her carefully made calculations, and cast an almost insurmountable obstacle in her path?

"She die! and through me? How did I know that he had a fever? Perhaps I have taken it myself, I feel ill." She turned over on the bed, as if in pain, and then started to a sitting position, stung by a sudden thought. "Perhaps he might die! The fever spreads quickly, and if so, all this plotting will have been useless. It must be done at once. It will never do to break down now," and taking the phial from her pocket, she held it up, to see how much it contained. It was three parts full. "Enough for both," she said, between her set teeth. The action of holding up the bottle reminded her of Blunt, and she smiled. "I'll go through with it, and, if the worse comes to the worst, I can fall back on Maurice." She loosened the cork of the phial, so that it would come out with as little noise as possible, and then placed it carefully in her bosom. "I will get a little sleep if I can," she said. "They have got the note, and it shall be done to-night."

CHAPTER VI.

The felon, Rufus Dawes, had stretched himself in his bunk and tried to sleep. But though he was tired and sore, and his head felt like lead, he could not but keep broad awake. The long pull through the pure air, if it had tired him, had revived him, and he felt stronger; but for all that the fatal sickness that was on him maintained its hold; his pulse beat thickly, and his brain throbbled with unnatural heat. Lying in his narrow space, in the semi-darkness, he tossed his limbs about and closed his eyes in vain; he could not sleep. His utmost efforts induced only an oppressive stagnation of thought, through which he heard the voices of his fellow-convicts; while before his eyes was the burning Hydaspes—that vessel whose destruction had destroyed forever all trace of the unhappy Richard Devine.

As yet there had been no alarm of fever. The three seizures had excited some comment, however, and had not

been for the counter excitement of the burning ship, it is possible that Pine's precaution would have been thrown away. The "old hands," who had been through the passage before, suspected, but said nothing save among themselves. It is likely that the weak and sickly would go first, and that there would be more room for those remaining. The "old hands" were satisfied.

Three of these old hands were conversing together just behind the partition of Dawes' bunk. The berths were five feet square, and each contained six men. No. 10, the berth occupied by Dawes, was situated in the corner made by the joining of the starboard and center lines, and behind it was a slight recess, in which the scuttle was fixed. His "mates" were at present but three in number, for John Rex and a cockney tailor had been removed to the hospital. The three that remained were now in deep conversation in the shelter of the recess. Of these, a giant seemed to be the chief. His name was Gabbett. He was a returned convict. The other two were a man named Sanders, known as "the Moocher," and Jimmy Vetch, the "Crow." They were talking in whispers, but Rufus Dawes, lying with his head close to the partition, was enabled to catch much of what they said.

At first the conversation turned on the catastrophe of the burning ship. From this it grew to anecdote of wreck and adventure, and at last Gabbett said something which made the listener start from his indifferent efforts to slumber into sudden, broad wakefulness.

It was the mention of his own name, coupled with that of the woman he had met on the quarter-deck.

"I saw her speakin' to Dawes yesterday," said the giant, "we don't want no more than we've got. I ain't goin' to risk my neck for Rex's fancies, and so I'll tell her."

"It was something about the kid," says the Crow, in his elegant slang. "I don't believe she ever saw him before."

"If I thort she was agoin' to throw us over, I'd cut her throat as soon as look at her," snorts Gabbett, savagely.

"Jack ud have a word in that," snuffles the Moocher; "and he's a curious cove to quarrel with."

"Well," grumbled Mr. Gabbett, "and let's have no more chaff. If we're for bizness, let's come to bizness."

"What are we to do now?" asked the Moocher. "Jack's on the sick list, and the gal won't stir a'bout him."

"My dear friends," said the Crow, "my keynd and keristian friends, it is to be regretted that when natur' gave you such tremendously thick skulls, she didn't put something inside of 'em. I say that now's the time. Jack's in the 'ospital; what of that? That don't make it no better for him, does it? Not a bit of it; and, if he drops his knife and fork, why, then it's my opinion that the gal won't stir a peg. It's on his account, not ours, that she's been manoeuvring, ain't it?"

"Well," says Mr. Gabbett, with the air of one who was but partly convinced. "I s'pose it is."

"All the more reason of getting it off quick. Another thing, when the boys know there's fever aboard, you'll see the rumpus there's be. They'll be ready enough to join us then. Once get the snapper-chest, and we're right as nine-penn'orth o'hapence."

This conversation had an intense interest for Rufus Dawes. Plunged into prison, hurriedly tried, and by reason of his surroundings ignorant of the death of his father and his own fortune, he had hitherto held aloof from the scoundrels who surrounded him. He now saw his error. He knew that the name he had once possessed was blotted out, that any shred of his old life which had clung to him hitherto was shriveled in the fire that consumed the Hydaspes. Richard Devine was dead—lost at sea with the crew of the ill-fated vessel in which—deluded by a skillfully sent letter from the prison—his mother believed him to have sailed. Rufus Dawes, alone should live. Rufus Dawes—the convicted felon, the suspected murderer, should live to claim his freedom. With his head swimming, and his brain on fire, he eagerly listened for more.

"But we can't stir without the girl," Gabbett said. "She's got to stall off the sentry."

The Crow produced a dirty scrap of paper, over which his companions eagerly bent their heads.

"Where did yer get that?" asked Gabbett.

"Yesterday afternoon Sarah was standing on the deck throwing bits o' toke to the gulls, and I saw her a-lookin' at me very hard. At last she came down as near the barricade as she dared, and throwed crumbs and such-like up in the air over the side. By and by a pretty big lump, doughed up round, fell close to my foot, and, watching a favorable opportunity, I pouched it. Inside was this bit o' rag-bag."

The writing, though feminine in character, was bold and distinct. Sarah had evidently been mindful of the education of her friends, and had desired to give them as little trouble as possible.

"All is right. Watch me when I come up to-morrow evening at three bells. If I drop my handkerchief, get to work at the time agreed on. The sentry will be safe."

Rufus Dawes, though his eyelids would scarcely keep open, and a terrible lassitude almost paralyzed his limbs, eagerly drank in the whispered sentence. There was a conspiracy to seize the ship. Sarah Purfoy was in league with the convicts. She had come on board armed with a plot, and this plot was about to be put in execution.

True, that the head of this formidable chimeric—John Rex, the forger—was absent, but the two hands, or rather claws—the burglar and the prison breaker—were present, and the slimy made, effeminate Crow, if he had not the brains of his master, yet made up for his feeble muscles and nerveless frame by a cat-like cunning and a spirit of volatility that nothing could subdue. With such a powerful ally outside as the mock maid servant, the chance of success was enormously increased. There were one hundred and eighty convicts and but fifty

soldiers. If the first rush proved successful, the vessel was theirs. Rufus Dawes thought of the little bright-haired child who had run so confidently to meet him, and shuddered.

"There!" said the Crow, with a sneering laugh, "what do you think of that? Does the girl look like disappointing us now?"

There was silence for a minute or two. The giant was plunged in gloomy abstraction, and Vetch and the Moocher interchanged a significant glance. Gabbett had been ten years at the colonial penal settlement of Macquarie Harbor, and he had memories that he did not confide to his companions. When he indulged in one of these fits of recollection, his friends found it best to leave him to himself.

Rufus Dawes was no longer stimulated by outward sounds, his senses appeared to fail him. The blood rushed into his eyes and ears. He made a violent, vain effort to retain his consciousness, but with a faint cry fell back, striking his head against the edge of the bunk.

The noise roused the burglar in an instant. There was some one in the berth! The three looked into each other's eyes, in guilty alarm, and then Gabbett dashed round the partition.

"It's Dawes!" said the Moocher. "We had forgotten him!"

"He'll join us, mate, he'll join us!" cried Vetch, fearful of bloodshed.

Gabbett, flinging himself on to the prostrate figure, dragged it, head foremost, to the floor. The sudden vertigo had saved Rufus Dawes' life. The robber twisted one brawny hand in his shirt, and pressing the knuckles down, prepared to deliver a blow that should forever silence the listener, when Vetch caught his arm. "He's been asleep," he cried. "Don't hit him! See, he's not awake yet."

A crowd gathered round. The giant relaxed his grip, but the convict gave only a deep groan, and allowed his head to fall on his shoulder.

Gabbett took another look at the purpling face and the bedewed forehead, and then sprang erect, rubbing at his right hand, as though he would rub off something sticking there.

"He's got the fever!" he roared, with a terror-stricken grimace. "I've seen it before to-day. The typhus is aboard and he's the fourth man down!"

The circle of best-like faces, stretched forward to "see the fight," widened at the half-comprehended, ill-omened word. It was as though a bombshell had fallen into the group. Rufus Dawes lay on the deck motionless, breathing heavily. The savage circle glared at his prostrate body. The alarm ran round, and all the prison crowded down to stare at him. All at once he uttered a groan, and turning, propped his body on his two rigid arms, and made an effort to speak. But no sound issued from his convulsed jaws.

"He's done," said the Moocher, brutally. "He didn't hear nuffin'."

The noise of the heavy bolts shooting back broke the spell. The first detachment were coming down from "exercise." The door was flung back, and the bayonets of the guard gleamed in a ray of sunshine that shot down the hatchway. This glimpse of sunlight—sparkling at the entrance of the fetid and stifling prison—seemed to mock their miseries. It was as though heaven laughed at them. By one of those terrible and strange impulses which animate crowds, the mass, turning from the sick man, leaped toward the doorway. The interior of the prison flashed white with suddenly turned faces. The gloom scintillated with rapidly moving hands. "Air, air! Give us air!"

"That's it!" said Sanders to his companions. "I thought the news would rouse 'em."

Gabbett—all the savage in his blood stirred by the sight of flashing eyes and wrathful faces—would have thrown himself forward with the rest, but Vetch plucked him back.

"It'll be over in a moment," he said. "It's only a fit they've got."

(To be continued.)

Drawn Out.

"That Westerner seemed to be telling you some pretty tall tales."

"Yes, he was telling me that out his way it was nothing unusual to harvest 150 bushels of wheat to the acre."

"Of course, you told him that was a lie."

"Not exactly. I merely remarked that it was a 'cereal story.'"—Philadelphia Press.

His Favorite.

After many years Remus returned to the old folks in the little Dixie cabin. There was much rejoicing.

"See, boy," said the old father, "yo' am de prodigal an Ah am gwine to kill de fatted calf."

But Remus protested.

"Fatted calf?" he echoed. "Huh! Doan kill no fatted calf foh dis child. Kill a fatted 'possum."

Not The Proper Contents.

Newitt—it certainly is a great establishment. They're sticklers for system there; everything in its right place."

Cassidy—Oh, Oi dunno! Whin Oi went through there Oi seen a lot o' red buckets marked 'For Fire Only,' an' faix, there was wather in thim!"—Philadelphia Press.

Wanted.

Tess—May Homley is making just the loveliest hat for herself. Oh, it's simply the sweetest—

Jess—Oh, what's the use? She'll spoil it.

Tess—Not at all. She's got it almost finished and it's perfect.

Jess—Yes, but I mean she's going to wear it.—Philadelphia Press.

Fell Flat.

"Puffson Richly used to have the swelled head terribly, but now he's a very decent sort of a fellow. What changed him?"

"Some one called on him unexpectedly one night at a banquet to respond to a toast. He's never had the nerve to get up on his high horse since!"—Detroit Free Press.

Clever at Handling Men.

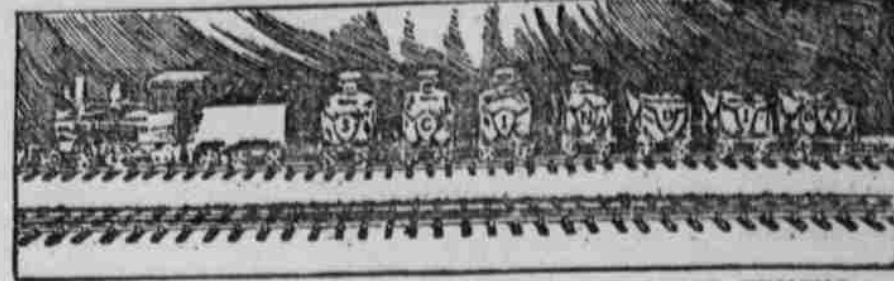
"How did that young stripling get that diplomatic position? Has he ever shown any diplomatic ability?"

"Yes, indeed! He landed the job."—Detroit Free Press.

INGENIOUS ENTERTAINMENT IN INDIA.



CENTERPIECE THAT CONCEALED THE MAHARAJAH'S DINING TABLE RAILWAY.



THE MODEL TRAIN WITH DECANTER AND CIGAR TRUCKS.

At the Maharajah of Gwalior's banquet to the Prince of Wales the center of the table was occupied by a sort of temple. It was decorated with flowers and electric lamps. Towards the close of the banquet this ornament was raised to the roof by pulleys, revealing a perfect model railway in the center of the table. The engine was an exact copy of the Gwalior light-railway locomotive of the table. The train, eight feet long, carried decanters, cigars, cigarettes, and matches. The Maharajah started the train by completing an electric circuit, and any guest could stop the train by lifting the decanter. By an ingenious system of compensating bogeys the train could turn a four-foot curve. Each truck bore one of the letters of the Maharajah's name, Scindia.

ALFONSO AND HIS BRIDE.

The King of Spain to Be Married to a British Maiden.

While the people of the United States have been taking a deep interest in the courtship and marriage of Alice Roosevelt, daughter of our chief magistrate, to Representative Nicholas Longworth of Ohio, the nations of Europe, more especially Spain and Great Britain, have been watching a royal courtship which is soon to result in an international marriage.

After casting his eyes over Europe and disappointing several match-making mamas of royal families, the young King of Spain has finally fallen as deeply in love as wearers of crowns ever do. His choice is Princess Ena

sea level. The new scheme consists of a combination of the fundamental principles of the ordinary aerial cableway, now so much used in constructive engineering for the transport of materials, and of the elevated mono-railway, best exemplified in the line between Barren and Elberfeld, in Germany. In the latter a car is suspended from a single rail supported by a system of girders, while in the new Swiss railway, instead of a rail, a stout steel cable will be stretched from station to station, and from this will be suspended by its running gear a car or cage for the passengers. Each car will contain ten passengers, and be of the lightest possible construction. The line will run from the Grindel-



KING ALFONSO OF SPAIN AND HIS BRITISH BRIDE-ELECT.

of Battenberg, niece of King Edward of Great Britain.

Alfonso XIII. will be 20 years old next May. He was born six months after the death of his father. With his first breath he was a King, but his mother ruled in his name till he was 17. Since then he has been a really, truly King.

Princess Ena's full name is Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena. She is 19 years of age and is the daughter of Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, Beatrice. Beatrice was 23 years of age when she married and her aged mother had hoped to keep her as a constant companion. When she married Henry of Battenberg her husband took up his residence in England and lived on an income provided by the British government. Their children have been reared as Britons. Prince Henry died a victim to the Asbanti expedition to Africa in 1896. The Princess Beatrice, or Batty as the English affectionately call her, is a plump and healthy matron in middle life.

In the picture, which we present, the King of Spain and his future bride are shown side by side, while the mother of the bride-elect stands in the background.

ELECTRIC AERIAL RAILWAY.

A New Departure in Plan to Descend the Wetterhorn.

There is apparently no more attractive field for engineering than the mountains of Switzerland, and the greatest skill and ingenuity have been exercised in the various railways designed to carry tourists to the summits. Recently, says Harper's Weekly, there has been an entirely new departure from existing practice in a plan proposed for ascending the northwestern side of the Wetterhorn, which rises precipitously to an altitude of 7,700 feet above the

In an uptown school the teacher in one of the lower grades endeavored to instill a little information into her pupils on the subject of horses and their gait, and then asked each of them to prepare a brief essay embodying some of the facts they had just learned. One of the boys thereupon prepared and turned in the following lucid offering:

"Some horses is called paceters. They can run faster 'cause they are bowlegged."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

It has been decided by the chaperons that the right place for the napkin is across the lap. But how about the men who are so fat they have no lap? Shouldn't there be a special dispensation for them?

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



Short Personal.

John Brisben Walker, the editor of the pioneer in the steam automobile industry in this country.

Benjamin M. Jennings of Casey, Ky., has been presented with a \$1,000,000 large diamond stud by King Edward, which is said to have been the property of Paul Kruger.

In emulation of Benjamin Franklin Mayor Fitzgerald of Boston has offered \$1,000 to form a fund that is to be expended for purposes which will serve the interest of humanity.

The most favored man in the kingdom of Siam is an American named Smith. He is the king's counsel, and his opinion takes on important step without consulting his attorney general.

Dr. William R. Brooks, director of the Smithsonian observatory at Geneva, N. Y., discovered the first comet of the year, which has now twenty-five discoveries to his credit.

Israel Zangwill has now taken up his abode in London and is said to be fast becoming an expert. He was advised to do so by his physician, who thought he needed exercise.

1408—Battle of Brannham Moor.

1437—James I. of Scotland married.

1510—Hernando Cortes sailed from Cuba to conquer Mexico.

1610—Luclio Vanini burnt as an atheist at Toulouse.

1656—Spain declared war against England.

1694—Bradford paid for printing book in New York City.

1740—Riot in Haymarket, London, over failure of a man to jump into a quart bottle as promised.

1750—French siege of Madras raised.

1763—Seven years' war ended.

1778—First salute to American flag by foreign government.

1780—British under Gen. Clinton landed South Carolina.

1792—American Congress granted bounty to fishing vessels.

1793—British flag raised on the island of Corsica.

1803—Ohio admitted as the twenty-first State.

1804—U. S. frigate Philadelphia destroyed in harbor of Tripoli.

1807—Aaron Burr arrested near Stoddard, Alabama.

1812—Florida ceded to the United States by Spain.

1815—Frigate Constitution captured British sloop Cyane and Leander.

1818—Gen. Jackson took the field against the Florida Indians.

1831—Poles defeated Russians at Chow.

1853—Ship Independence lost off California; 140 persons perished.

1856—Ship John Rutledge sunk by iceberg.

1860—Ship Hungarian lost off Cape Sable; 205 persons perished.

1861—Jefferson Davis inaugurated President of Confederate States. U. S. State troops seized U. S. arsenal barracks at San Antonio.

1862—Surrender of Fort Donelson.

1864—First war prisoners received at Andersonville prison. First King of Pythias lodge organized in Wilmington, D. C. Second Outside Congress met at Richmond.

1865—Columbia, S. C., surrendered to Gen. Sherman.

1867—First passage of a ship through the Suez canal.

1868—Battle between Roba and Meza, near Mazatlan, Mexico. Mexican theater burned in San Francisco.

1869—Loans of money on United States notes by national banks forbidden.

1870—Northern Pacific railroad beyond the Dalles of St. Louis, Minn.

1873—Fernando Wood moved in House for the impeachment of President Colfax.

1874—Business section of city of Chicago destroyed by fire.

1875—Jesse Pomeroy, "boy member," sentenced to death in Boston.

1876—Congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia.

1878—Passage of the Blaine amendment to the U. S. Senate.

1879—Women admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court.

1882—Congress voted widow of President Garfield a pension of \$5,000 a year. Nihilists convicted of assassinating Alexander II. of Russia.

1885—New comet discovered by Professor Bernard.

1887—Congress passed a bill relating to the trade dollar. Woman's suffrage became a law in Kansas. U. S. Senate passed anti-polygamy law.

1892—Edward P. DeLeon shot and killed M. Abelle at Cannes, France.

1895—Madge York, actress, murdered in Philadelphia by James R. Galt, an actor.

1898—Battleship Maine blown up in Havana harbor.

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