

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

"Well, you see, that is the reason why I am angry with myself for not loving you as I ought. I want you to like the things I like, and to love the books and the music and the pictures and the world I love; and I forget that you are a man, you know, and that I am only a girl; and I forget how nobly you behaved, Maurice, and how unselfishly you risked your life for mine. Why, what is the matter, dear?"

He had put her away from him suddenly, and gone to the window, gazing across the sloping garden at the bay below, sleeping in the soft evening light. The schooner which had brought the witnesses from Port Arthur lay off the shore, and the yellow flag at her mast fluttered gently in the cool evening breeze. The sight of this flag appeared to anger him, for, as his eyes fell on it he uttered an impatient exclamation, and turned round again. Some sudden, desperate whim caused him to exclaim, "Suppose I had not done all you think, would you not love me still?"

Her eyes, raised to his face with anxious tenderness for the pain she had believed herself to have inflicted, fell at this speech.

"What a question! I don't know. I suppose I should; yet—but what is the use, Maurice, of supposing? I know you have done it, and that is enough. How can I say what I might have done if something else had happened? Why, you might not have loved me."

If there had been for a moment any sentiment of remorse in his selfish heart, the hesitation of her answer went far to dispel it. With the hypocrisy of selfishness which deceives even itself, he hid the little head upon his heart with a sensible glow of virtue.

"God bless you, darling! You are my good angel."

The girl sighed. "I will be your good angel, dear, if you will let me."

CHAPTER XX.

Rex told Mr. Meekin, who, the next day, did him the honor to visit him, that, under Providence, he owed his escape from death to the kind manner in which Captain Frere had spoken of him.

"I hope your escape will be a warning to you, my man," said Mr. Meekin, "and that you will endeavor to make the rest of your life an atonement for your early errors."

"Indeed I will, sir," said John Rex, who had taken Mr. Meekin's measure very accurately, "and it is very kind of you to condescend to speak so to a wretch like me. Ah! sir, I wish I had attended to the gospel's teachings when I was younger. I might have been saved from all this."

"You might, indeed, poor man; but the Divine Mercy is infinite—quite infinite, and will be extended to all of us—to you as well as to me." (This with the air of saying, "What do you think of that?") "Remember the penitent thief, Rex—the penitent thief."

"Indeed I do, sir."

"I will speak to the authorities about a change in your dietary scale," returned Meekin, patronizingly. "In the meantime, just collect together in your mind those particulars of your adventures of which you spoke. Such a remarkable history ought not to be lost."

"Thank you kindly, sir. I will, sir. Ah! I little thought, when I occupied the position of a gentleman, Mr. Meekin, that I should be reduced to this. But it is only just, sir. Good morning, and heaven bless you, sir!" said Rex, with his tongue in his cheek for the benefit of his yard mates; and so Mr. Meekin tripped gracefully away, convinced that he was laboring most successfully in the vineyard, and that the convict Rex was really a superior person.

"I will send his narrative to the bishop," said he to himself. "It will amuse him. There must be many strange histories here, if one could but find them out."

As the thought passed through his brain his eye fell upon the "notorious Dawes," who, while waiting for the schooner to take him back to Port Arthur, had been permitted to amuse himself by breaking stones.

A fanciful visitor, seeing the irregularly rising hammers along the line, might have likened the shed to the interior of some vast piano, whose notes an unseen hand was erratically fingering. Rufus Dawes was seated last of the line. This was the place nearest the watching constable, and was allotted on that account to the most ill-favored.

"Well, Dawes," says Mr. Meekin, measuring with his eye the distance between the prisoner and himself, as one might measure the chain of some ferocious dog. "How are you this morning, Dawes?"

Dawes, scowling in a parenthesis between the cracking of two stones, was understood to say that he was very well.

"I am afraid, Dawes," says Mr. Meekin, reproachfully, "that you have done yourself no good by your outburst, in court on Monday. I understand that public opinion is quite incensed against you."

Dawes, slowly arranging one large fragment of bluestone in a comfortable basin of smaller fragments, made no reply.

"I am afraid you lack patience, Dawes. You do not repent of your offenses against the law, I fear."

The only answer vouchsafed by the bronzed man was a savage blow, which split the stone into sudden fragments,

and made the clergyman skip a step backward.

"You are a hardened ruffian, sir! Do you not hear me speak to you? I came to console you, man. I wanted to give you some good advice!"

"I beg your pardon, sir. Pray go on."

"I was going to say, my good fellow, that you have done yourself a great deal of injury by your ill-advised accusation of Captain Frere, and the use you made of Miss Vickers' name."

A frown, as of pain, contracted the prisoner's brows, and he seemed with difficulty to put a restraint upon his speech. "Is there to be no inquiry, Mr. Meekin?" he asked, at length. "What I stated was the truth. Are they not going to ask her for her story? They told me that she was to be asked. Surely they will ask her."

"I am not, perhaps, at liberty," said Meekin, placidly, unconscious of the agony of despair and rage that made the voice of the strong man before him quiver, "to state the intentions of the authorities, but I can tell you that Miss Vickers will not be asked anything about you. You are to go back to Port Arthur on the 24th, and to remain there."

A groan burst from Rufus Dawes; a groan so full of torture that even the comfortable Meekin was thrilled by it.

"Come," says Meekin, "you can't complain. You have broken the law, and you must suffer. Civilized society says you shan't do certain things, and if you do them you must suffer the penalty civilized society imposes. You are not wanting in intelligence, Dawes, more's the pity—and you can't deny the justice of that."

Rufus Dawes, as if disdaining to answer in words, cast his eyes round the yard with a glance that seemed to ask, grimly, if civilized society was progressing quite in accordance with justice, when its civilization created such places as that stone-walled, carbine-guarded prison shed, and filled it with such creatures as those forty human beasts, doomed to spend the best years of their manhood cracking pebbles in it.

Meditating that night in the solitude of his cell, he almost wept to think of the cruel deception that had doubtless been practiced on her. "They have told her that I was dead, in order that she might learn to forget me; but she could not do that. I have thought of her so often during these weary years that she must sometimes have thought of me. Five years! She must be a woman now. My little child a woman! Yet, she is sure to be child-like, sweet and gentle. How she will grieve when she hears of my sufferings! Oh! my darling, my darling, you are not dead!" And then, looking hastily about him in the darkness, as though fearful even there of being seen, he pulled from out his breast a little packet, and felt it lovingly with his coarse, toll-worn fingers, reverently raising it to his lips, and dreaming over it, with a smile on his face, as though it were a sacred talisman that should open to him the doors of freedom.

The usual clanking and hammering were prevalent upon the stone jetty at Port Arthur when the schooner bearing the returned convict, Rufus Dawes, ran alongside. He sat with his head bowed down and his hands clasped about his knees, disdaining to look until they roused him.

"Hallo, Dawes!" says Warder Troke, halting his train of ironed yellow-jackets. "So you've come back again! Glad to see yer, Dawes! It seems an age since we had the pleasure of your company, Dawes!" At this pleasurable train laughed, so that their irons clanked more than ever. They found it often inconvenient not to laugh at Mr. Troke's humor. "Step down here, Dawes, and let me introduce yer to your hold friends. They'll be glad to see yer, won't yer, boys? Why, bless me, Dawes, we thort we'd lost yer! We thort yer'd given us the slip altogether, Dawes. They didn't take care of yer in Hobart Town, I expect, eh, boys? We'll look after yer here, Dawes, though. You won't bolt any more."

"Take care, Mr. Troke," said a warning voice, "you're at it again! Let the man alone!"

By virtue of an order transmitted from Hobart Town, they had begun to attach the dangerous prisoner to the last man of the gang, riveting the leg irons of the pair by means of an extra link, which could be removed when necessary; but Dawes had given no sign of consciousness. At the sound of the friendly tones, however, he looked up, and saw a tall, gaunt man, dressed in a shabby pepper and salt raiment, and wearing a black handkerchief knotted round his throat. He was a stranger to him.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. North," said Troke, sinking at once the bully in the sneak. "I didn't see yer reverence."

"A parson!" thought Dawes, with disappointment, and dropped his eyes.

"I know that," returned Mr. North, coolly. "If you had, you would have been all butter and honey. Don't you trouble yourself to tell a lie; it's quite unnecessary. What's your name, my man?"

Rufus Dawes had intended to scowl, but the tone, sharply authoritative, roused his automatic convict second nature; and he answered, almost despite himself, "Rufus Dawes."

"Oh," said Mr. North, eying him with a curious air of expectation that had something pitying in it. "This is the man, is it? I thought he was to go to the coal mines."

"So he is," said Troke, "but we hain't a-going to send there for a fortnit, and in the meantime I'm to work him on the chain."

"Oh," said Mr. North again. "Lend me your knife, Troke."

And then, before them all, this curious parson took a piece of tobacco out of his ragged pocket, and cut off a "chaw" with Mr. Troke's knife. Rufus Dawes felt what he had not felt for three days—an interest in something. He stared at the parson in unaffected astonishment. Mr. North perhaps mistook the meaning of his fixed stare, for he held out the remnant of tobacco to him.

The chain-line vibrated at this, and bent forward to enjoy the vicarious delight of seeing another man chew tobacco. Troke grinned with a silent mirth that betokened retribution for the favored convict. "Here," said Mr. North, holding out the dainty morsel upon which so many eyes were fixed. Rufus Dawes took the tobacco, looked at it hungrily for an instant, and then—to the astonishment of everybody—flung it away.

From convict mouths went out a respectful roar of amazement, and Mr. Troke's eyes snapped with pride of outraged janitorship. "You ungrateful dog!" he cried, raising his stick.

Mr. North put up a hand. "That will do, Troke," he said; "I know your respect for the cloth. Move the men on again."

"Get on!" and Dawes felt his newly riveted chain tug. It was some time since he had been in a chain gang, and the sudden jerk nearly overbalanced him. He caught at his neighbor, and looking up, met a pair of black eyes which gleamed recognition. His neighbor was John Rex. Mr. North, watching them, was struck by the resemblance the two men bore to each other. Their height, eyes, hair and complexion were similar. Despite the difference in name, they might be related. "They might be brothers," thought he. "Poor fellows! I never knew a prisoner refuse tobacco before." And he looked on the ground for the despised portion. But in vain. John Rex, oppressed by no foolish sentiment, had picked it up and put it in his mouth.

So Rufus Dawes was relegated to his old life again, and came back to his prison with the hatred of his kind, that his prison had bred in him, increased a hundred-fold. It seemed to him that the sudden awakening had dazed him, that the flood of light so suddenly let in upon his slumbering soul had blinded his eyes, so long to the sweetly cheating twilight. He was at first unable to apprehend the details of his misery. He knew only that his dream-child was alive and shuddered at him; that the only thing he loved and trusted had betrayed him; that all hope of justice and mercy had gone from him forever; that the beauty had gone from earth, the brightness from heaven; and that he was doomed still to live. He went about his work, unheeded of the jests of Troke, ungalled by his irons, unmindful of the groans and laughter about him. His magnificent muscles saved him from the lash, for the amiable Troke tried to break him down in vain. He did not complain, he did not laugh, he did not weep. His "mate" Rex tried to converse with him, but did not succeed. In the midst of one of Rex's excellent tales Rufus Dawes would sigh wearily. "There's something on that fellow's mind," thought Rex, prone to watch the signs by which the soul is read. "He has some secret which weighs upon him."

Then Rex came to a conclusion. His mate was plotting an escape. He himself cherished a notion of that kind, as did Gabbett and Vetch, but by common distrust no one ever gave utterance to thoughts of this nature. It would be too dangerous. "He would be a good comrade for a rush," thought Rex, and resolved more firmly than ever to ally himself to this dangerous and silent companion.

One question Dawes had asked which Rex had been able to answer, "Who is that North?"

"A chaplain. He is only here for a week or so. There is a new one coming. North goes to Sidney. He is not in favor with the bishop."

"Silence there!" cries the overseer. "Do you want me to report yer?" Amidst such diversions the days rolled on, and Rufus Dawes almost longed for the coal mines. To be sent from the settlement to the coal mines, and from the coal mines to the settlement, was to these unhappy men a "trip."

(To be continued.)

IN 1920.

Visitor—I suppose there is a history connected with that spade?

Museum Attendant—There is, sir; it is one of our greatest curiosities. That spade was actually used to dig with at Panama.—Puck.

An Arboreal Observation.

"That supercilious man is always talking about his family tree." "Yes," answered Miss Cayenne, "I have observed in nature that it is always the smallest twig that does the most rustling."—Washington Star.

Everybody Seeing the Error.

Traveler—I hear you have had a great religious revival in this town? Westerner—Yes-siree. Why, even the gamblers had to flee th' church or lose their customers.—New York Weekly.

Logie in the schoolroom.

A Rockland schoolboy's composition on Whittier, handed in the other day, reached the following conclusion: "He was never married. He hated slavery."—Rockland (Me.) Star.

As Long as It's Broad.

A woman is never happy until she made her husband confess all; and then she is miserable.



"Pop, what's an interrogation point?" "A little thing that asks questions."—The Schoolmaster.

Bobble—What are his political convictions? Jobbie—Oh, he's liable to be convicted at any time.—Town Topics.

Knicker—What became of Chauffeur? Bocker—He absent-mindedly crawled under a mule to see why it didn't go.—New York Sun.

Judge—Six months. Cos Cob Con—Ah, wot a relief! Now I kin stop worrying about where I'm going ter spend de summer.—Puck.

"But why do you live in the city if you don't like it?" "I have to live here to make money enough to keep up my country place."—Ex.

Mrs. Knicker—How long will you be away this summer? Mrs. Bocker—I don't know. I shall stay \$1,000 at the seaside and \$500 at the mountains.—New York Sun.

Doctor (to pressing creditor)—If you must bring your bill every day, at least you might come with your head tied up, so that people would think you were a patient!—London Tit-Bits.

A young theologian named Fiddle refused to accept his degree:

"For," said he, "'tis enough to be Fiddle."

Without being Fiddle D. D.

—Puck.

Benham—I have had my life insured for five thousand dollars in your favor. Mrs. Benham—Well, I'll be glad to have the money, but I think you've overestimated your value.—Smart Set.

"Say," asked the first messenger boy, "got any novels to swap?" "I got 'Snake-foot Dan's Revenge,'" replied the other. "Is it a long story?" "Naw! Ye kin finish it easy in two messages."—Philadelphia Press.

"What is your order, sir?" asked the waiter. "Bring me some frenzied eggs," said the man with the napkin tucked under his chin. And presently there was a distinctly audible scramble in the kitchen.—Chicago Tribune.

At the Hub.—A New Yorker was visiting in Boston. Seeing a parrot in a cage, he asked: "Does Polly want a cracker?" "I require no sustenance from you whatever," replied the Back Bay bird, with hauteur.—Exchange.

"That Mrs. Snaggs is too much of an aristocrat for me to mingle with." "How's that?" "She was knocked down by a pushcart and she had it put into the paper dat she was hit by an automobile."—Detroit Free Press.

"Boss," began the beggar, "won't yer help a poor—?" "See here!" interrupted Goodheart. "I gave you some money last week." "Well, gee whiz! ain't yer earned any more since?"—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Mother—Willie, you must stop asking your father questions. Don't you see they annoy him? Willie—No'm; it ain't my questions that annoy him. It's the answers he can't give that make him mad.—Philadelphia Ledger.

"See here," cried the bill collector, "this bill I've been bringing here so often is getting worn out, and so is my patience!" "Gee whiz, man," replied the debtor, "so is your welcome, if you only knew it!"—Philadelphia Press.

Miss Peechie—I want a hammock that will not break down. Polite clerk Can't guarantee any of 'em, miss. Miss Peechie—Why, that's strange! Polite Clerk—Not at all. We'd do it if you were a homely girl, but— Cleveland Leader.

"I think," he said, "that I am now just about even with the world." "Even with the world?" "Yes. I figure that I have now reached a point where I owe just about as many people as I don't owe."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Tramp—It is needless to ask you the question, madame. You know what I want. Lady—Yes, I know what you want badly, but I've only one bar of soap in the house, and the servant is using it. Come again some other time.—Glasgow Times.

He—As soon as we are married, dearest, I will take out an endowment insurance policy, so that you may be protected. She—Don't you think you'd better take out an accident insurance policy now, George? You haven't spoken to father yet, you know.—Philadelphia Press.

A little boy once told his friend, another youngster, that his mother was accustomed to give him a nickel every morning so that he should take his cod-liver oil in peace and quietness. "Well, what do you do with it?" inquired the little friend. "Mother puts it in a money-box until there is a dollar." "And what then?" "Why then mother buys another bottle of cod-liver oil with it."—The Pathfinder.

ESTIMATED AGE OF THE EARTH.

Scientists Declare This World Has Existed 100,000,000 Years.

The best geological estimates of the age of our globe are in close agreement. From the time when the record of the stratified rocks begin to the present the figures are something over 100,000,000 years, says the Review of Reviews. While some of the estimates vary considerably both above and below the period mentioned, the general results are not materially affected. A generation ago calculations of the earth's age were, for the most part, very much less than one-half of the figure given. Dana, for instance, computed the length of the paleozoic time at about 36,000,000 years; of mesozoic time, 9,000,000 years, and of cenozoic time, 3,000,000 years, making in all 48,000,000 years. Recently, however, there has been found beneath the vast paleozoic sequence an assemblage of rocks of enormous extent. All geologists are now agreed in placing the time equivalent of these pre-Cambrian clastics as equal, at least, to the entire time that has elapsed since the beginning of the paleozoic era. Taking into consideration this fact, even Dana's estimate is doubled and reaches very nearly the 100,000,000 mark.

Biologists tell us that at the beginning of Paleozoic time life in general was already nine-tenths differentiated. There must have been a period of time prior to this during which organic forms flourished, and during which sediments were laid down, that was very, very long. This early period, possibly, was not ten times as long as from Cambrian times to the present, as the figures cited might suggest, but it certainly was at least two or three times as long. From all these different sources one can arrive at a comparative scheme. If we consider the ratios, we get for Archeozoic time 23, for Proterozoic time 38, Paleozoic time 28, Mesozoic time 8, Cenozoic time 3, and we obtain for the total number of years something like 150,000,000.



A saturated solution of Epsom salts is an excellent remedy for burns. Apply as soon as possible, and keep wet continually until the pain ceases.

Castor oil and cod-liver oil will not taste so bad if the child first holds a few drops of vinegar or lemon juice in its mouth. The spoon should also be dipped in vinegar or lemon juice before the oil is put in. This will not spoil the effects of the oil.

While hives are usually a disorder of the warm weather, some persons suffer from their effects at different seasons of the year. A good lotion which can be applied to the affected parts several times every day is made of one-quarter ounce of powdered borax, one-half ounce spirits of camphor, three ounces of glycerine.

Offensive breath is sometimes due to bad teeth and sometimes to dyspepsia. When the teeth are decayed, a visit must be paid to the dentist. When dyspepsia is the cause, the inhalation of a few drops of pure terebene from time to time. It is a condition which can be readily cured by a little attention to the general health, and especially by avoiding constipation.

The easiest and most effective way to cure a cold is not to take or contract it. How can you do that, do you ask? This way: Every evening just before retiring give yourself a thorough rubbing from head to foot, including the feet, with a coarse linen towel moderately well dampened. It is a positive sure preventive and cures colds, catarrh and, in most cases, of rheumatism also. This assurance is based on an experience of five years. Try it faithfully for six months.

Exercise is of great importance in the treatment of indigestion. The best forms of exercise are those that secure the most general activity of the muscular system with pleasurable exhilaration and recreation. The best of all exercise is play of various kinds. Outdoor games, such as tennis, golf, hare and hounds, skating, walking and so on are the most beneficial. Exercise taken indoors and as a necessity is less advantageous, but is necessary where the more stimulating outdoor exercise cannot be taken.

Has Sailed 2,000,000 Miles.

Capt. Alexander Simpson, an English master mariner, recently completed his seventy-first voyage from London to Australia and back, having been in that trade for over forty years. Altogether he has covered 2,000,000 miles without serious mishap.

Our idea of a good photograph is one that doesn't look much like the original.