

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XXI.

Rufus Dawes had been a fortnight at the settlement when a newcomer appeared on the chain gang. This was a young man of about twenty years of age, thin, fair and delicate. His name was Kirkland, and he belonged to what were known as the "educated" prisoners. He had been a clerk in a banking house, and was transported for embezzlement, though, by some, grave doubts as to his guilt were entertained. The commandant, Captain Burgess, had employed him as butler in his own house, and his fate was considered a "lucky" one. So, doubtless, it was, and might have been, had not an untoward accident occurred. Captain Burgess, who was a bachelor of the "old school," confessed an amiable weakness for swearing. Kirkland belonged to a Methodist family, and owned a piety utterly out of place in that region. The language of Burgess made him shudder, and one day he so far forgot himself and his place as to raise his hands to his ears. "I'll soon cure you of that!" cried Burgess, and forthwith ordered him to the chain gang for "insubordination."

He was received with suspicion by the gang, who did not like white-handed prisoners. Troke, by way of experiment in human nature, perhaps, placed him next to Gabbett. When the muster bell rang, and the gang broke up, Rufus Dawes, on his silent way to his separate cell, observed a notable change of custom in the disposition of the new convict. Instead of placing him in a cell by himself, Troke was turning him into the yard with the others.

"I'm not to go in there?" says the ex-bank clerk, drawing back in dismay from the cloud of foul faces which lowered upon him.

"But you are, then?" says Troke. "The governor says a night in there'll take the starch out of yer. Come, in yer go."

"Let him out, watchman!" said North, who happened by.

"Can't, sir, without an order from the commandant."

"I order you, sir!" North cried, indignantly.

"Very sorry, your reverence; but your reverence knows that I daren't do such a thing."

North rushed away to the commandant, and the instant his back was turned, Halles, the watchman, flung open the door and darted into the dormitory.

"Take that!" he cried, dealing Kirkland a blow on the head with his keys, that stretched him senseless. "There's more trouble with you aristocrats than enough. Lie quiet!"

The commandant, roused from his slumber, told Mr. North that Kirkland might stop where he was, and that he'd thank the chaplain not to wake him up because a prisoner set up a howling.

North returned to the prison disconsolately, found the dutiful Halles at his post, and all quiet. "What's become of Kirkland?" he asked.

"Fretted himself to sleep, yer reverence," said Halles, in accents of parental concern. "Poor chap! It's hard for such young 'uns as he, sir."

In the morning Rufus Dawes, coming to his place on the chain gang, was struck by the altered appearance of Kirkland. His face was of a greenish tint, and wore an expression of bewildered horror.

"Cheer up, man!" said Dawes, touched with momentary pity. "It's no good being in the mop, you know."

"What do you do if you try to bolt?" whispered Kirkland.

"Kill you," returned Dawes, in a tone of surprise at so preposterous a question.

"Thank God!" said Kirkland.

The work of the gang that afternoon was the carrying of some heavy logs to the water-side, and Rufus Dawes observed that Kirkland was exhausted long before the task was accomplished. "They'll kill you, you little beggar!" said he, not unkindly.

He had hardly uttered the words when the boy flung himself beneath the log. In another instant the train would have been scrambling over his crushed body, had not Gabbett stretched out an iron hand and plucked the would-be suicide from death.

"Hold on to me," said the giant. "I'm big enough to carry double."

Kirkland uttered a cry, and then, holding up his iron with his hands, he started to run for the water.

"Halt, you young fool!" roared Troke, raising his carbine. But Kirkland kept steadily on for the river. Just as he reached it, however, the figure of Mr. North rose from behind a pile of stones. Kirkland jumped for the jetty, missed his footing and fell into the arms of the chaplain.

"You young vermin—you shall pay for this!" cries Troke. "You'll see if you won't remember this day."

"Oh, Mr. North," says Kirkland, "why did you stop me! I'd rather be dead than stay another night in that place."

"You'll get it, my lad!" said Gabbett, when the runaway was brought back. "Your blessed hide'll feel for this, see if it don't!"

Kirkland only breathed harder, and looked round for Mr. North; but Mr. North had gone. The new chaplain was to arrive that afternoon, and it was incumbent on the old one to be present at the reception.

Troke reported the ex-bank clerk that night to Burgess, and Burgess, who was about to go to dinner with the new chaplain, disposed of his case out of hand. "Tried to bolt, eh! Must stop that."

Fifty lashes, Troke. Pick out some likely man, will you. That last fellow you had ought to have been tied up yourself. His flogging wouldn't have killed a flea."

"You can't get 'em to warm one another, your honor," says Troke. "They won't do it."

"Oh, yes, they will, though," says Burgess, "or I'll know the reason why. I won't have my men knocked up with flogging these rascals. If the scourger won't do his duty, tie him up and give him five-and-twenty for himself. I'll be down in the morning myself, if I can."

"Very good, your honor," says Troke. Kirkland was put into a separate cell that night; and Troke, by way of assuring him a good night's rest, told him that he was to have "fifty" in the morning. "And Dawes'll lay it on," he added. "He's one of the smartest men I've got, and he won't spare yer."

"You will find this a terrible place, Mr. Meekin," said North to his supplanter, as they walked across to the commandant's to dinner. "It has made me heart sick."

"I thought it was a little paradise," said Meekin. "Captain Frere says that the scenery is delightful."

The dinner went off successfully. Burgess—desirous, perhaps, of favorably impressing the chaplain whom the bishop delighted to honor—was urbane enough. "You'll find us rough, Mr. Meekin," he said, "but you'll find us 'all there' when we're wanted. This is a little kingdom in itself. Pray help yourself to wine."

"Thank you, none," said North, filling a tumbler with water. "I have a headache."

His manner of speech and action was so awkward that a silence fell upon the party, caused by each one wondering why Mr. North should grow confused, and drum his fingers on the table, and stare everywhere but at the decanter. Meekin was the first to speak. "Have you many visitors, Captain Burgess?"

"Very few. Sometimes a party comes over with a recommendation from the governor, and I show them over the place; but, as a rule, we see no one but ourselves."

"I asked," said Meekin, "because some friends of mine were thinking of coming. Do you know Captain Frere?"

"Frere! I should say so!" returned Burgess. "I was quartered with him at Sarah Island. So he's a friend of yours, eh?"

"I had the pleasure of meeting him in society. He is just married, you know. To Miss Vickers, a charming young person. They are going to Sydney, where Captain Frere has some interest, and Frere thinks of taking Port Arthur on his way down."

"A strange fancy for a honeymoon trip," said North.

"Captain Frere takes a deep interest in all relating to convict discipline," went on Meekin, "and is anxious that Mrs. Frere should see this place. A romantic story, Captain Burgess. He saved her life, you know."

"Ah! that was a queer thing, that mutiny," said Burgess. "We've got the fellows here, you know."

"I saw them tried at Hobart Town," said Meekin. "In fact, the ringleader, John Rex, gave me his confession, and I sent it to the bishop. Captain Frere tried to make me think his letters contained a hidden meaning, but I don't believe they did. He seems to me to be truly penitent for his offenses—a misguided but not a hypocritical man, if my knowledge of human nature goes for anything."

"I hope he is," said North. "I wouldn't trust him."

"Oh, there's no fear of him," said Burgess, cheerily; "if he grows uproarious, we'll soon give him a touch of the cat."

Here attention was called by the strange behavior of Mr. North. He had risen and, without apology, flung wide the window, as though he gasped for air. "Hallo, North! What's the matter?"

"Nothing," said North, recovering himself with an effort. "A spasm. I have these attacks at times."

"Have some brandy?" said Burgess.

"No, no, it will pass. No, I say. Well, if you insist." And seizing the tumbler offered to him, he half filled it with raw spirits and swallowed the fiery draught at a gulp. The Reverend Meekin eyed his clerical brother with horror.

"Ha!" said North, looking wildly round upon them. "That's better."

So they went on to the veranda, and looked down upon the lights of the prison, and listened to the sea lapping the shore. The Rev. Mr. North, in this cool atmosphere, seemed to recover himself, and conversation progressed with some sprightliness.

By and by a short figure came up out of the dark, and proved to be Doctor Macklewaln, who had been prevented from attending the dinner by reason of an accident to a constable at Norfolk Bay, which had claimed his professional attention.

"Well, how's Forrest?" cried Burgess. "Mr. Meekin—Dr. Macklewaln."

"Dead," said Macklewaln. "Delighted to see you, Mr. Meekin."

"Confound it—another of my best men," grumbled Burgess. Macklewaln was tired and wanted to get home.

"I must also be thinking of repose," said Meekin; "the journey, though most enjoyable, has fatigued me."

"Come on, then," said North. "Our roads lie together, doctor."

Before the two clergymen had got half way down the steep path that led from the commandant's house to the flat on which the cottages of the doctor and chaplain were built, Macklewaln rejoined them. "Another flogging to-morrow," said he, grumblingly. "Up at daylight, I suppose, again."

"Whom is he going to flag now?"

"That young butler-fellow of his."

"What, Kirkland? You don't mean to say he's going to flag Kirkland? Oh, this must be stopped!" cries North, in great alarm. "He can't stand it. I tell you he'll die, Macklewaln."

Captain Burgess was shutting his veranda window when North hurried up. "Captain Burgess, Macklewaln tells me you are going to flog young Kirkland. I have come to beg you not to do so, sir. The lad has been cruelly punished already. He attempted suicide to-day—unhappy creature!"

"Well, that's just what I'm flogging him for. I'll teach my prisoners to attempt suicide!"

"Captain Burgess," protested North, "I assure you that he does not deserve punishment. I have seen him, and his condition of mind is pitiable."

"Look here, Mr. North, I don't interfere with what you do to the prisoners' souls; don't you interfere with what I do to their bodies."

"Then, Captain Burgess," cried North, his pale face flushing, "I tell you the boy's blood will be on your head. I am a minister of God, sir, and I forbid you to commit this crime."

"You're a dismissed officer of the government, sir. You've no authority here in any way; and if you interfere with my discipline, sir, I'll have you put in irons until you're shipped out of the island."

This, of course, was mere bravado on the part of the commandant. North knew well that he would never dare to attempt any such violence, but the insult stung him like the cut of a whip. He made a stride toward the commandant, as though to seize him by the throat, but checking himself in time, stood still, with clenched hands, flashing eyes and beard that bristled.

North returned home in great agitation. Twice he paused on his way to the sitting room, and twice was he driven on by a power stronger than his will. He reached it at length, and opening the cupboard, pulled out what he sought—a bottle of brandy.

With this in his hand, all moderation vanished. He raised it to his lips and eagerly drank. Then, ashamed of what he had done, he thrust the bottle back, and made for his room. He wept, he prayed, he fought with his desire as with a madman. He told himself that another's life depended on his exertions; that to give way to his fatal passion was unworthy of an educated man and a reasoning being. In vain. In the midst of his arguments he found himself at the cupboard, with the bottle at his lips, in an attitude that was at once ludicrous and horrible.

His disease was a terrible one. The Rev. James North—gentleman, scholar and Christian priest—was what the world calls "a confirmed drunkard."

CHAPTER XXII.

The morning sun, bright and fierce, looked down upon a curious sight. In a stone yard was a little group of persons—Troke, Burgess, Macklewaln, Kirkland and Rufus Dawes.

Three wooden staves, seven feet high, were fastened together in the form of a triangle. The structure looked not unlike that made by gypsies to boil their kettles. To this structure Kirkland was bound. His feet were fastened with thongs to the base of the triangle; his wrists, bound above his head, at the apex. His body was then extended to its fullest length, and his white back shone in the sunlight. During his trying-up he had said nothing.

"Now, prisoner," said Troke to Dawes, "do your duty."

Rufus Dawes looked from the three stern faces to Kirkland's white back, and his face grew purple. In all his experience he had never been asked to flog before. He had been flogged often enough. He picked up the heavy cat, and drew its knotted lashes between his fingers.

"Go on, Dawes," whispered Kirkland, without turning his head. "You are no more than another man."

Rufus Dawes lifted the cat, swung it round his head, and brought its knotted cords down. The white back was instantly striped with six crimson bars. Kirkland stifled a cry. It seemed to him that he had been cut in half.

"Now, then, you scoundrel," roared Burgess; "separate your cats! What do you mean by flogging a man that fashon?"

Rufus Dawes drew his crooked fingers through the entangled cords and struck again. This time the blow was more effective, and the blood beaded on the skin. The boy did not cry; but Macklewaln saw his hands clutch the staves tightly, and the muscles of his naked arms quiver.

The third blow sounded as though it had been struck upon a piece of raw beef, and the crimson turned purple. The flogging proceeded in silence for ten strokes, and then Kirkland gave a screech like a wounded horse.

"Oh!—Captain Burgess!—Dawes!—Mr. Troke!—Oh! oh!—Mercy!—Oh, doctor!—Mr. North!—Oh! oh! oh!"

The lad's back, swollen into a hump, now presented the appearance of a ripe peach which a wilful child has scored with a pin. Dawes turning away from his bloody handiwork, drew the cats through his fingers twice. They were beginning to get clogged a little.

"Go on," said Burgess, with a nod.

It was continued.

Woman is a miracle of divine contradictions.—Michelet.



Indian Curry.

Take one onion, one ounce of butter, six or eight sweet almonds, two eggs, one slice of bread, half a pound of cooked meat, one tablespoonful of curry powder. Slice the onion, fry it a nice brown in butter. Put the slice of bread in milk, and grate the almonds into it. Beat the eggs in half a cup of milk, and mix all together with the meat minced fine, and a small lump of butter and the curry powder. Grease a platter well, and rub it with a little lemon juice. Put in the mixture, and bake in a slow oven. When done turn out and pour some good gravy round, and serve with boiled rice. This is an excellent dish, and one highly to be recommended for a cold winter's day.

Pumpkin Pudding.

Press a pint of dry, cooked pumpkin through a colander; let one-half pint of milk get scalding hot and add to it one-quarter pound each of butter and granulated sugar; when the butter is melted, beat in very gradually eight eggs, which have been whipped until very light, flavor with the juice of a lemon, a grated nutmeg and a large teaspoonful of powdered mace and cinnamon mixed. Line a low pudding dish with good pastry, pour in the pumpkin mixture and bake in a quick oven. This is delicious.

French Beefsteak.

Place in a roasting tin a piece of the best rump steak; dredge with flour, pepper and salt; almost cover with water, roast for twenty minutes; then cover with sliced onions, pepper, salt, roast thirty minutes; cover with sliced tomatoes, roast twenty minutes; then sprinkle over with grated cheese, roast again for ten minutes. Serve on a hot dish, and if basted every ten minutes previous to sprinkling on the cheese it will be very tender and delicious.

Chile Con Carne.

Cut two pounds of steak into small pieces and fry in dripping or butter. Seed six chiles and cover with boiling water, soak until tender, then scrape the pulp into the water. When the steak is done add flour to the fat in the pan and brown it, stirring constantly. Cover with the chile water, add a little garlic and thyme and simmer until the meat is tender and the gravy thick and smooth.

Cream of Oyster Soup.

Scald one quart of oysters in their own liquor; remove them from the liquor; chop them small and rub them through a fine sieve; put two level tablespoonfuls of butter in a pan, when melted add two tablespoonfuls of flour; add one cupful of oyster liquor, the oyster pulp, salt, pepper and paprika; just before serving add one cupful of whipped cream, beating it well into the soup.

Red Pepper Catsup.

Take four dozen red peppers; put on the fire in a quart of vinegar and water each, with two roots of horseradish grated and six sliced onions. Season with salt, pepper, spice and mustard seed; boil ten minutes and strain. Then add a teaspoonful of brown sugar, two ounces of celery seed, one of mace and a pint of strong vinegar. Boil one hour and bottle.

Maple Cream Fudge.

Break a pound of maple sugar into bits and crush. Add to it a pint of cream into which you have dropped a pinch of soda. Put over the fire and stir until the sugar is melted. Boil stirring constantly, until a little dropped into cold water is brittle. Add a tablespoonful of butter, and when this melts, pour into greased pans and mark off into squares.

Chocolate Cake Filling.

Wet a half cake of grated vanilla chocolate with three tablespoonfuls of milk, rubbing them together, a little at a time, that they may be thoroughly blended; heat the mixture into an egg that has been whipped light with a cup of powdered sugar, then cook in a granite-lined saucepan until thick, stirring constantly.

Scones.

Sift one quart of flour; add half a teaspoonful of salt, a teaspoon of sugar, a tablespoon of lard, one beaten egg, two teaspoons of cream tartar, one of soda and a pint of sweet milk. Mix to a thick batter, drop in squares on a very hot, greased griddle, and bake brown on both sides. Serve with butter and honey.

Hickory Nut Kisses.

Whites of six eggs beaten to a stiff froth, on pound and one cup of powdered sugar, one cup of hickory nut meats chopped and a piece of citric acid the size of a pea. Drop in teaspoonfuls on buttered pans and bake.

WASP OF THE SENATE.

Chandler of "Rube-like" Appearance, but Sharp as Whipcord.

Former Senator Chandler has not a very prepossessing personality and he would never be picked out in a crowd



W. E. CHANDLER.

of men as one possessed of either strong mentality or great physical endurance. He wears a scraggy chin whisker something like Uncle Sam is pictured as wearing, except that it has the appearance of being neglected.

He is hardly more than five feet high and wears eyeglasses with a black silk string that ties them to his coat lapel. In summer time he is much given to the wearing of ill-fitting, baggy linen suits and "Rube-like" straw hats.

Let no one think that his stature indicates intellectual dry rot. He is as sharp as a whipcord and few men ever sat in the Senate who had the gift at repartee that he possesses. Only Ingalls of Kansas ever successfully coped with him, and Ingalls never relished a passage-at-arms with the New Hampshire man. Most people call him the "Wasp of the Senate," and Senator Vest of Missouri, who was not wanting in picturesque language when the occasion demanded it, once referred to him as the "Mosquito of the Senate."

Chandler has been in public life so long that he has a hardened exterior for the ordinary sensations in which his name becomes involved. He loves a fight and is always looking for it. He fought with Senator Foraker about the railroad rates and Ohio politics when it was no more his business than it was to regulate the affairs of the man in the moon. As far back as the Hayes administration he had prominent administrative connections, and, after long and close association with President Hayes, broke with him in a series of letters and acrimonious correspondence that equals anything that has developed in connection with the Tillman-Roosevelt row.

The other day he said that he had first come to Washington in the Pierce administration and had known every President more or less intimately since that time. He is engaged in governmental work.—Utica Globe.



Felons.

A felon or whitlow is an inflammation of the hand or finger, usually of the last joint of the finger. Its importance varies with the seat of it; that is to say, with the portion of the finger involved. It may affect the skin only, the tendons or sinews, or the fibrous coverings of the bone—the periosteum.

A superficial whitlow, where the inflammation is confined to the skin, may be extremely painful, but otherwise it is not a very serious matter; but this cannot be said of the other two forms.

In the tendinous whitlow pus forms in the fibrous sheath surrounding the tendon; and unless the inflammation quickly subsides, or the matter is let out by the surgeon's knife, the pus may burrow down through the sheath into the palm of the hand, and result in a permanent crippling of the member.

The third variety—called by physicians the sub-periosteal—is that in which matter forms beneath the membrane which covers the bone. As this membrane is tough and inelastic, the tension due to the increasing volume of matter becomes very great, and gives rise to a throbbing, maddening pain. The relief afforded by a deep cut into this inflamed finger, right down to the bone, is magical, although the cut hurts. This is the only treatment for this form of felon, and the incision should be made early, for if it is too long delayed the bone will be killed, and a discharging sore will remain which will later necessitate a surgical operation, even if it does not result in the loss of the last joint of the finger.

The superficial whitlow does not usually call for such radical treatment. A clay poultice often affords great relief. This may be made by making a paste of clay—previously sterilized by baking in a very hot oven—and adding glycerin to prevent too rapid drying; or the clay may be obtained ready prepared in the drug store. This protects the finger from injury, keeps it cool, and if applied early enough, may prevent the formation of matter. When once pus has formed, however, no matter what the variety of the felon, the safest plan of treatment is to cut into the inflamed finger, and give exit to the confined matter and relieve the tension of the parts.—Youth's Companion.

Our lightest pain—the window pane.