

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XXIX.—(Continued.)
"Well," said John Rex, "we are in private. What have you to say?"

"I want to tell you that I forbid you to carry out the plan you have for breaking up Sir Richard's property."

"Forbid me?" cried Rex, much relieved. "Why, I only want to do what my father's will enables me to do."

"Your father's will enables you to do nothing of the sort, and you know it." She spoke, as though rehearsing a series of set speeches, and Sarah watched her with growing alarm.

"Oh, nonsense!" cries John Rex, in sheer amazement. "I have a lawyer's opinion on it."

"Do you remember what took place at Hempstead this day nineteen years?" "At Hempstead?" said Rex, growing suddenly pale. "This day nineteen years ago? No! What do you mean?"

"Do you not remember?" she continued, leaning forward eagerly, and speaking almost fiercely. "Do you not remember the reason why you left the house where you were born, and which you wish now to sell to strangers?"

John Rex stood dumfounded, the blood suffusing his temples. He knew that among the secrets of the man whose inheritance he had stolen was one which he had never gained—and he felt that this secret was to be revealed to crush him now.

Sarah, trembling also, but more with rage than terror, swept toward Lady Devine. "Speak out," she said, "if you have anything to say! Of what do you accuse my husband?"

"Of imposture!" cried Lady Devine, all her outraged maternity nerveing her to abash her enemy. "This man may be your husband, but he is not my son! You have not stood the test, for you cannot recall the day of your quarrel and mine over my cousin, Armigell Esme Wade, Lord Bellasis."

John Rex gasped for breath; his hand tugging at his neck-cloth, rent away the linen that covered his choking throat. The whole horizon of his past was lighted up by a lightning flash which stunned him. His brain, already enfeebled by excess, was unable to withstand this last shock. He staggered, and, but for the cabinet against which he leaned, would have fallen. The secret thoughts of his heart rose to his lips, and were uttered unconsciously. "Lord Bellasis! He was my father, and—I killed him!"

A dreadful silence fell; and then Lady Devine, stretching out her hands toward the self-confessed murderer, with a sort of frightful respect, said in a whisper, in which horror and supplication were strangely mingled, "What did you do with my son? Did you kill him also?"

But John Rex, wagging his head from side to side, like a beast in the shambles that has received a mortal stroke, made no reply. Sarah Purfoy, awed as she was by the dramatic force of the situation, nevertheless remembered that Francis Wade might arrive at any moment, and saw her last opportunity for safety. She advanced and touched the mother on the shoulder.

"Your son is alive!"

"Where?"

"Will you promise not to hinder us leaving this house if I tell you?"

"Yes, yes."

"Will you promise to keep the confession which you have heard secret until we have left England?"

"I promise anything. In heaven's name, woman, if you have a woman's heart, speak! Where is my son?"

Sarah Purfoy rose over the enemy who had defeated her, and said, in level, deliberate accents, "They call him Rufus Dawes. He is a convict at Norfolk Island, transported for life for the murder which you heard my husband confess to having committed—Ah!"

Lady Devine had fainted.

Sarah flew to Rex. "Rouse yourself, John! We have not a moment!"

John Rex passed his hand over his forehead wearily.

"I cannot think. I am broken down. I am ill. My brain seems dead."

Nervously watching the prostrate figure on the floor, she hurried on bonnet, cloak and veil, and in a twinkling had him outside the house and into a cab.

"You won't give me up?" said Rex, turning dull eyes upon her.

"Give you up! No! But the police will be after us so soon as that woman can speak, and her brother summon his lawyer. I know what her promise is worth. We have got about fifteen hours."

"I can't go far, Sarah," said he; "I am sleepy, and stupid."

She repressed the terrible fear that tugged at her heart, and strove to rally him.

"Now, sit still and be good, while I go and get some money for you."

She hurried into the bank, and her name secured her an interview with the manager at once.

"That's a rich woman," said one of the clerks to his friend.

"A widow, too! Chance for you, Tom," returned the other; and, presently, from out the sacred presence came another clerk with a request for "a draft on Sydney for three thousand, less premium," and bearing a check signed "Sarah Carr," for two hundred pounds, which he "took" in notes, and so returned again. From the bank she was taken to a shipping office.

"I want a cabin in the first ship for Sydney, please. When does the Dido sail?"

"To-morrow morning. She is at Plymouth, waiting for the mails. If you go down to-night by the mail train, which

leaves at 9:30, you will be in plenty of time, and we will telegraph."

"I will take the cabin."

John Rex was gnawing his nails in sullen apathy. She displayed the passage ticket. "You are saved. By the time Mr. Devine gets his wits together, and his sister recovers her speech, we shall be past pursuit."

"To Sydney?" cried Rex, angrily, looking at the warrant. "Why there?"

Sarah surveyed him with an expression of contempt. "Because your scheme had failed. Now, this is mine. You have deserted me once; you will not do so again in any other country. You are a murderer, a villain and a coward; but you suit me. I save you, but I mean to keep you. I will bring you to Australia, where the first trooper will arrest you at my bidding as an escaped convict. If you don't like to come, stay behind. I don't care. I am rich. I have done no wrong. The law cannot touch me. Do you agree?"

Having housed him at last—all gloomy and despondent—in a quiet tavern near the railway station, she tried to get some information as to this last-revealed crime.

"How came you to kill Lord Bellasis?" she asked him, quietly.

"I had found out from my mother that she was his deserted wife, and one day riding home from a pigeon match I told him so. He taunted me, and I struck him. I did not mean to kill him, but he was an old man, and in my passion I struck hard. As he fell, I thought I saw a horseman among the trees, and I galloped off. My ill luck began then, for the same night I was arrested at the corner."

"But I thought there was robbery?" said she.

"Not by me. But talk no more about it! I am sick—my brain is going round. I want to sleep."

"Be careful, please! Lift him gently!" said Mrs. Carr, as the boat ranged alongside the Dido, gaunt and grim, in the early dawn of a bleak May morning.

"Gentleman seems to have had a stroke," said a boatman.

It was so. There was no fear that John Rex would escape again from the woman he had deceived. The infernal genius of Sarah Purfoy had saved her lover at last—but saved him only that she might nurse him till he died—died, ignorant even of her tenderness, a mere animal, lacking the intellect he had in his selfish wickedness abused.

CHAPTER XXX.

"This is my story. Let it plead with you."

It had grown dark in the prison, and as he ceased speaking, Rufus Dawes felt a trembling hand seize his own. It was that of the chaplain.

"Let me hold your hand! Sir Richard Devine did not murder your father. He was murdered by a horseman who, riding with him, struck him and fled."

"How do you know this?"

"Because I saw the murder committed, because—don't let go my hand—I robbed the body."

"You?"

"In my youth I was a gambler. Lord Bellasis won money from me, and to pay him I forged two bills of exchange. Unscrupulous and cruel, he threatened to expose me if I did not give him double the sum. Forgery was death in those days, and I strained every nerve to buy back the proofs of my folly. I succeeded. I was to meet Lord Bellasis near his own house at Hempstead on the night of which you speak, to pay the money and receive the bills. When I saw him fall I galloped up, but instead of pursuing his murderer I rifled his pocketbook of my forgeries. I was afraid to give evidence at the trial, or I might have saved you. Ah! you have let go my hand!"

"God forgive you!" said Rufus Dawes, and then was silent.

"Speak!" cried North. "Speak, or you will make me mad. Reproach me! Spurn me! Spit upon me! You cannot think worse of me than I do myself."

But the other, his head buried in his hands, did not answer, and, with a wild gesture, North staggered out of the cell.

Nearly an hour had passed since the chaplain had placed the rum flask in his hand, and Gimblett observed, with semi-drunken astonishment, that it was not yet empty. If he didn't finish the flask, he would be oppressed with an everlasting regret. If he did finish it, he would be drunk; and to be drunk on duty was the one unpardonable sin. He looked across the darkness of the sea, to where the rising and falling light marked the schooner. The commandant was a long way off! A faint breeze which had arisen with the night, brought up to him the voices of the boat's crew when the jetty below him. His friend Jack Mannix was coxswain of her. He would give Jack a drink. Leaving the gate, he advanced to the edge of the embankment, and, putting his head over, called out to his friend. The breeze, however, which was momentarily freshening, carried his voice away; and Jack Mannix, hearing nothing, continued his conversation. Gimblett was just drunk enough to be virtuously indignant at this incivility, and seating himself on the edge of the bank, swallowed the remainder of the rum at a draught. The effect upon his enfeebled temperate stomach was very touching. He made one feeble attempt to get upon his legs, cast a reproachful glance at the rum bottle, essayed to drink out of its spirituous emptiness, and then, with a smile of

reckless contentment, fell fast asleep.

North, coming out of the prison, did not notice the absence of the jailer; indeed, he was not in a condition to notice anything. Bare-headed, without his cloak, with staring eyes and clinched hands, he rushed through the gates into the night as one who flies headlong from some fearful vision. It seemed that, absorbed in his own thoughts, he took no heed to his steps, for instead of taking the path which led to the sea, he kept along the more familiar one that led to his own cottage on the hill. "This man a convict!" he cried. "He is a hero—a martyr! What a life! Love! Yes, that is love indeed! Oh, James North, how base art thou in the eyes of God beside this despised outcast!" And so muttering, tearing his gray hair, and beating his throbbing temples with clinched hands, he reached his own room. Already he fancied he could see the speck that was the schooner move slowly away from the prison shore. He must not linger; they would be waiting for him at the jetty. As he turned, the moonbeams—as yet unobscured by the rapidly gathering clouds—flung a silver streak across the sea, and across that streak North saw a boat pass. Was his distracted brain playing him false?—In the stern sat, wrapped in a cloak, the figure of a man! A fierce gust of wind drove the sea-rack over the moon, and the boat disappeared, as though swallowed up by the gathering storm. North staggered back as the truth struck him.

Was it possible that a just heaven had thus decided to allow the man whom a coward had condemned to escape, and to punish the coward who remained? Oh, this man deserved freedom; he was honest, noble, truthful! How different from himself—a hateful self-lover, a drunkard! The looking glass stood upon the table, and North, peering into it, started in insane rage at the pale face and bloodshot eyes he saw there. What a hateful wretch he had become!

(To be continued.)

CIGARS WILL COST MORE.

Great Damage Caused to the Cuban Tobacco Crop.

The American charge de affairs at Havana has reported to the State Department that the tobacco crop of the finest regions in Cuba is almost a total loss, says the Washington Star. The destruction is the result of torrential rains, which will reduce the yield from 469,328 bales, the figures of 1905, to less than 100,000 bales for 1906. This amount will in all probability be still further reduced, as the acreage this year is smaller than that of the previous crop.

The effect of the torrential rains has been to blight the seedlings, and the next crop will be almost a flat failure. As it takes at least 110 days from the planting of the seed to the cutting of the mature leaf, there will be a long interval of distress and shortage.

The government has received appeals for aid from many quarters, and proposes a series of public works which will give some relief to the workmen thrown out of employment and will tend to control the rivers in case of future floods and heavy rains.

The shortage in the supply of the tobacco leaf which is now assured will affect prices to a considerable degree. The market already has been strongly influenced, and a corresponding rise in the price of cigars must inevitably follow. The American smoking public will feel the increase in price before the foreigner, owing to the fact that the American consumer prefers the "green" cigar, while the Englishman, German and Frenchman place a higher value on the "seasoned" cigar. In England and Germany it is possible, consequently, to keep on hand large stocks of cigars. The American importer prefers a much smaller stock because of the fact that he has superior and more numerous advantages for obtaining new supplies of the weed in a short time. Furthermore, the enormous import duty on cigars undoubtedly operates strongly in discouraging the American importer of limited capital from laying in a large stock of cigars.

Whipped 524 Pupils.

Alfred Bunker of Boston has become famous, not because he has been a schoolmaster forty-seven years, but because he has whipped 524 pupils of the Quincy school during the last half year of 1905. The school board has declared that it was not necessary to whip a single child, and Bunker is facing a crisis. His pupils are a hard set, being largely Poles, Italians, Syrians, Armenians and Jews, and the district is, of course, illiterate. Consequently, the pupils of the Quincy school were without home influence for betterment. Their educating influences began when they came into the school and ended when they left it. Moreover, it was peculiarly difficult to understand their natures. The duty devolved upon the principal and staff of the Quincy school, first, to get close to these children of foreign birth or foreign parentage; next, to keep them in order; next, to teach them the rudiments of knowledge.

Not Friends.

"Your ready repartee has made you many friends," said the sincere admirer.

"Your mistake is a common one," answered Miss Cayenne. "They are not friends. They are merely an audience."—Washington Star.



NEED OF WORLD.

By Rev. Junius B. Remensnyder.

Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him.—Luke 15: 1.

That the church and the world are drawing further apart is a common remark.

We do not believe that the schism is as wide as many think, nor do we believe that it is growing. The church, beyond all denial, is exerting a profound influence upon the age, and the world is no slower to-day than ever to respect religion that bears the marks of sincerity.

Nevertheless, it is too true that there is far more of such an alienation than there should be. Our text shows that the case was not such with the founder of the Christian religion. There was nothing in His manner or words or life that repelled the multitude. But, says the inspired historian, "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him." And these were the very ones who most needed His divine counsels! Let us ask, then, why it is that the church too often seems to fall in getting into such living touch with the world as to transform it as it should.

First, because of the attempt to secularize its message. This is the device of pulpit charlatans and sensationalists. In order to draw the world they pare off all the distinctive marks of the church. They withdraw the claim of divine authority for its teachings. They repudiate the supernatural in its origin and history. They square all its tenets with a narrow reason, so that there is left no sphere for the larger exercise of faith. If the world wants anything it wants the real gospel, the word of life.

Another reason, no doubt, is the failure of church members to illustrate the religion they profess. Very true, the world is too exacting here. It forgets that church people have many inconsistencies and in many respects show the same weaknesses as others and yet be sincerely pious.

Still, religion must radically change the nature. It must make one a new creature. It must give one a new master motive. And when the church does not show itself a nursing mother of the graces of love and humility and unselfishness and brotherhood the world has a right to question its claims.

A third and chief reason for too frequent alienations is an incorrect and unjust presentation of religion. To many spheres of life which the world rightly regards as innocent the church is often made to take a hostile attitude.

A chasm is forced between piety and the ordinary ways of life. Temperance is confounded with abstinence. Liberty is labeled with the tag of license. The spiritual life is divorced from the natural. To come to the church men are asked to deny what is justified by their common sense. One-sided religionists overlook the fact that a man can legitimately love and enjoy life, art, beauty, pleasure, without loving God the less, but only the more.

Nor do these austere notions truly represent the historic church. In her true, world-wide character she has always been characterized by broad, liberal, rational and joyous conceptions of that piety which is pleasing to God, who is love, and who as a Father rejoices in the happiness of His children.

Let, then, "the children of light be wise in their generation" toward the worldly and unsaved. And let the world abandon its misconceptions and prejudices as to genuine piety and, the world and the church meeting together, religion will prove to be that benign power for righteousness, joy and sonship of God which it was meant to be by the eternal Author.

FIRST LAW OF CHRIST.

How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord?—Acts v. 9.

At the outset the Christians of Jerusalem agreed to have all things in common. Those who had fields and houses sold them, and the proceeds were put into the common purse. Only a certain couple, Ananias and Sapphira, decided that they wished to be Christians and get the advantages, whatever they might be, of Christianity without bearing all the burden of it.

They therefore agreed to sell part of their property and put the money in the common purse, but to represent that money to be the proceeds of the sale of the whole property. They did so, and were punished by death, visited upon them miraculously, because they

had tempted the spirit of the Lord. The words of the text are the words of St. Peter, which he addresses to the woman when he accuses her of the conspiracy between herself and her husband to defraud God.

This story of Ananias and Sapphira is, as I take it, an allegory intended to express a profound Christian truth. There can be no more complete unity and community of interest than that which exists among children of one household. But by virtue of its fundamental principles, Christianity is such a brotherhood. All are children of one Father—and brothers each of the other.

This relation is the first thought in the Lord's prayer, "Our Father, Who art in heaven," which is the pattern prayer of Christendom. It underlies the two commandments which our Lord substituted for the ancient ten—namely, (1) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind" and (2) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Expressed in terms of property, it appears in our Lord's teaching that a man should regard himself merely as the steward, not the owner, of his possessions; that is, that his property is not his to enjoy for himself, but only to administer for the greatest good of his brethren.

No man is a true Christian who has not made the fundamental surrender of himself and all that he has to God in and through his fellow men. He who, professing the name of Christianity, still regards worldly goods—his powers, his talents, his knowledge, the wealth which he has inherited or acquired—as his for his own amusement, for his own aggrandizement, for the enrichment of his children and not for the service of his brother men, has tempted the spirit of the Lord, and his punishment is spiritual death. He cannot know God, for God is love, but to know God is to possess eternal life, and not to know God is to be dead eternally.

This is the fundamental truth of Christianity, above all expressions of creeds. A man may believe with his mind and express with his lips belief in all the doctrines of the Christian church; unless he makes the surrender of himself and what he possesses he does not in fact believe in Christ.

True belief in Jesus Christ is the acceptance as the rule of life of the spirit of Christ, the spirit of service and sacrifice. To choose as the standard and the aim of one's life self-advancement or self-pleasing instead of the service of one's fellows—above all, to make one's very profession of religion a means of self-profit—that is the sin against the Holy Spirit which may not be forgiven, neither here nor hereafter. That is the meaning and the lesson of the parable of Ananias and Sapphira, who agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord.

NATION'S MORAL OBLIGATIONS.

By Bishop Fallows.

"Young Timothy Dwight, when chaplain in a continental regiment in 1774, wrote an immortal poem on the destiny of our country, closing with the wonderful lines indicative of her mission: The ensign of union in triumph unfurled, Hush the tumult of war and give peace to the world."

"Without our conscious effort we sprang to the front as one of the great world powers. The concern of humanity is now our concern. Public opinion, potent everywhere, is almost omnipotent in the United States. We can not now mind our own business without minding the business of other peoples, if gross wrong is committed against them, and our public opinion should be focalized upon the perpetrators of the evil deeds. Traditional diplomacy must give way to the coming of the new world into international politics. Men and women and children shall not be ruthlessly slaughtered by any nation on account of race or religion without our indignant popular protest or governmental remonstrance. This is not intermeddling but intermending."

Short Meter Sermons.

Whiners are not winners. Need makes the neighbor. Difficulties are but doors of delight. It is better to right wrongs than to revenge them.

The lazy man always is proud of his patience. No great work ever was done before a mirror. Only a mercerized religion needs to wear a label.

Long public prayers point to short private practices. If your religion is not in everything, it is in nothing. It takes a wide-awake devil to make a sleepy church.

Too many men measure their horse power by their exhaust.