

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER V.

In the prison of the 'tween-decks reigned a darkness pregnant with murmurs. The sentry at the entrance to the hatchway was supposed to "prevent the prisoners from making a noise," but he put a very liberal interpretation upon the clause, and so long as the prisoners refrained from shouting, yelling and fighting he did not disturb them.

To one coming in from the upper air, the place would have seemed in pitchy darkness; but the convict eye, accustomed to the sinister twilight, was enabled to discern surrounding objects with tolerable distinctness. The prison was about fifty feet long and fifty feet wide, and ran the full height of the 'tween-decks. The barricade was loop-holed here and there, and the planks were in some places wide enough to admit a musket barrel. On the aft side, next the soldiers' berths, was a trap door, like the stove-hole of a furnace.

At first sight this appeared to be contrived for the humane purpose of ventilation, but a second glance dispelled this weak conclusion. The opening was just large enough to admit the muzzle of a small howitzer, secured on the deck below. In case of a riot, the soldiers could sweep the prison from end to end with grape-shot. Such fresh air as there was, filtered through the loop-holes, and came, in somewhat larger quantity, through a wind-sail passed into the prison from the hatchway. But the wind-sail being necessarily at one end only of the place, the air it brought was pretty well absorbed by the twenty or thirty lucky fellows near it, and the other hundred and fifty did not come so well off. The scuttles were open, but as the row of bunks had been built against them, the air they brought was the peculiar property of such men as occupied the berths into which they penetrated. These berths were twenty-eight in number, each containing six men. They ran in a double tier round three sides of the prison, twenty at each side, and eight affixed to that portion of the forward barricade opposite the door. Each berth was presumed to be five feet six inches square, but the necessities of stowage had deprived them of six inches, and even under that pressure twelve men were compelled to sleep on deck.

When Frere had come down, an hour before, the prisoners were all snugly between their blankets. They were not so now; though, at the first clink of the bolts, they would be back again in their old positions, to all appearances sound asleep. Groups of men, in all imaginable attitudes, were lying, standing, sitting or pacing up and down.

Old men, young men and boys, stalwart burglars and highway robbers, slept side by side with wizened pickpockets or cunning-featured area sneaks. The forger occupied the same berth with the body snatcher. The man of education learned strange secrets of house breakers' craft, and the vulgar ruffian took lessons of self-control from the keener intellect of the professional swindler. The fraudulent clerk and the flash "cracksmen" interchanged experiences. The smuggler's stories of lucky adventures and successful runs were capped by the footpad's reminiscences of foggy nights and stolen watches. The poacher, grimly thinking of his sick wife and orphaned children, would start as the night-house ruffian clasped him on the shoulder and bid him to take good heart and "be a man." The shop boy, whose love of fine company and high living had brought him to this pass, had shaken off the first shame that was on him, and listened eagerly to the narratives of successful vice that fell so glibly from the lips of his older companions. To be transported seemed no such uncommon fate. The old fellows laughed, and wagged their gray heads with all the glee of past experience, and listening youth longed for the time when it might do likewise. Society was the common foe, and magistrates, jailers and parsons were the natural prey of all noteworthy mankind. Only fools were honest, only cowards kissed the rod, and failed to meditate revenge on that world of respectability which had wronged them. Each newcomer was one more recruit to the ranks of ruffianism, and not a man penned in that reeking den of infamy but became a sworn hater of law, order and "freemen." What he might have been before mattered not. He was now a prisoner, and he lost his self-respect, and became what his jailers took him to be—a wild beast to be locked under bolts and bars, lest he should break out and tear them. The conversation ran upon the sudden departure of the four. What could they want with that at that hour?

"I tell you there's something up on deck," says one to the groan nearest him. "Don't you hear all that rumbling and rolling?"

"What did they lower boats for? I heard the dip o' the oars."

"Ain't a cove to get no sleep?" cried a gruff voice. "My blood, if I have to turn out, I'll knock some of your empty heads together."

It seemed that the speaker was a man of mark, for the noise ceased instantly.

"What's the matter?" roared the silence of the riot, jumping from his berth and scattering the crew and his companions right and left.

Just then there came a groan from the man in the opposite bunk.

"Well, I'm blessed!" said the giant. "Here's a pretty go! All the blessed chickens ha' got the croup! Seaty, here's a man sick."

But the prudent sentry answered never a word, until the ship's bell warned him of the approach of the relief guard; and then honest old Pine, coming with anxious face to inquire after his charge, received the intelligence that there was another prisoner sick. He had the door unlocked and the man outside in an instant. One look at the flushed, anxious face was enough.

"Who's that moaning in there?" he asked.

It was the man who had tried to call for the sentry an hour back, and Pine had him out also, conviction beginning to wonder a little.

"Take 'em both aft to the hospital,"

he said; "and, Jenkins, if there are any more men taken sick, let them pass the word for me at once. I shall be on deck."

The guards stared in each other's faces with some alarm, but said nothing, thinking more of the burning ship, which now flamed furiously across the placid water, than of peril nearer home; but as Pine went up the hatchway he met Blunt.

"We've got the fever aboard! Head like a fire-ball, and tongue like a strip of leather. Don't I know it?" and Pine grinned, mournfully. "I've got him moved into the hospital. Hospital! As dark as a wolf's mouth. I've seen dog-kennels I liked better."

Blunt nodded toward the volume of lurid smoke that rolled up out of the glow. "Suppose there is a shipload there? I can't refuse to take 'em in."

"No," says Pine, gloomily. "I suppose you can't. If they come, I must stow 'em somewhere. We'll have to run for the Cape, with the first breeze, if they do come; that is all I can see for it." And he turned away to watch the burning vessel.

In the meanwhile the two boats made straight for the red column that uprose like a gigantic torch over the silent sea. The pull was a long and a weary one. Once fairly away from the protecting sides of the vessel that had borne them thus far on their dismal journey, the adventurers seemed to have come into a new atmosphere. The immensity of the ocean over which they slowly moved revealed itself for the first time.

The great sky uprose from this silent sea without a cloud. The stars hung low in its expanse, burning in a violet mist of lower ether. The heavens were emptied of sound, and each dip of the oars was re-echoed in space by a succession of subtle harmonies. As the blades struck the dark water, it flashed fire, and the tracks of the boats resembled two sea snakes writhing with silent undulations through a lake of quicksilver. At last the foremost boat came to a sudden pause. Best gave a cheery shout and passed her, steering straight into the broad track of crimson that already reeked on the sea ahead.

"What is it?" he cried.

But he heard only a smothered growl from Frere. It was, in fact, nothing of consequence—only a prisoner "giving in."

"What's the matter with you?" says Frere. "Oh, you, is it?—Dawes! Of course, Dawes. I never expected anything better from such a skulking hound. Come, this sort of nonsense won't do with me. It isn't as nice as lolloping about the hatchways, I dare say, but you'll have to go on, my fine fellow."

"He seems sick, sir," said a compassionate bow.

"Sick! Not he. Shamming. Come, give way, now! Put your backs into it!" And the convict having picked up his oar, the boat shot forward again. But, for all Mr. Frere's urging, he could not recover the way he had lost, and Best was the first to run in under the black cloud that hung over the crimsoned water.

"Keep wide," he said. "If there are many fellows yet aboard, they'll swamp us; and I think there must be, as we haven't met the boats," and then raising his voice, as the exhausted crew lay on their oars, he hailed the burning ship.

She was a huge, clumsily built vessel, with great breadth of beam, and a lofty deck. Strangely enough, though they had so lately seen the fire, she was already a wreck, and appeared to be completely deserted. The chief hold of the fire was amidships, and the lower deck was a mass of flame. The fire roared like a cataract, and huge volumes of flame-flecked smoke poured up out of the hold, and rolled away in a low-lying black cloud over the sea.

As Frere's boat pulled slowly round her stern, he hailed the deck again and again. Still there was no answer; and though the flood of light that dyed the water blood-red struck out every rope and spar distinct and clear, his straining eyes could see no living soul aboard. As they came nearer, they could distinguish the gilded letters of her name.

"What is it, men?" cried Frere, his voice almost drowned amidst the roar of the flames. "Can you see?"

Rufus Dawes, impelled, it would seem, by some strong impulse of curiosity, stood erect, and shaded his eyes with his hand.

"The Hydaspes!"

Frere gasped. The Hydaspes! The ship in which his cousin Richard Devine had sailed! The ship for which those in England might now look in vain! The Hydaspes, which—Something he had heard during the speculations as to this missing cousin flashed across him.

"Back water, men! Round with her! Pull for your lives. The Hydaspes! I know her. She is bound for Calcutta, and she has five tons of powder aboard!"

There was no need for more words. The single sentence explained the whole mystery of her desertion. The crew had taken to the boats on the first alarm, and had left their death-fraught vessel to her fate. They were miles off by this time.

The boats tore through the water. Eager as the men had been to come, they were more eager to depart. For ten minutes or more not a word was spoken. With straining arms and laboring chests, the rowers tugged at the oars, their eyes fixed on the lurid mass they were leaving. Frere and Best, with their faces turned back to the terror they fled from, urged the men to greater efforts.

Already the flames had lapped the flag; already the outlines of the stern-carrings were blurred by the fire. Another moment and all would be over. Ah! it had come at last!

A dull rumbling sound; the burning ship parted asunder; a pillar of fire, flecked with black masses that were beams and planks, rose up out of the ocean; there was a terrific crash, as though sea and sky were coming together; and then a mighty mountain of water rose, advanced, caught, and passed them, and they were alone—defenseless, stunned and breathless, in a sudden horror of thickest darkness, and a silence like that of the tomb. The splashing of the

falling fragments awoke them from their stupor, and then the blue light of the Malabar struck out a bright pathway across the sea, and they knew that they were safe.

On board the Malabar two men paced the deck, waiting for the dawn. It came at last. The sky lightened, the mist melted away, and then a long, low, far-off streak of pale yellow light floated on the eastern horizon. By and by the water sparkled, and the sea changed color, turning from black to yellow, and from yellow to lucid green. The man at the mainmast hailed the deck. The boats were in sight, and as they came toward the ship, the bright water flashing from the laboring oars, a crowd of spectators hanging over the bulwarks cheered and waved their hats.

"Not a soul!" cried Blunt. "No one but themselves. Well, I'm glad they're safe anyway."

The boats drew alongside, and in a few seconds Frere was upon deck.

"No use," cried Frere, shivering. "We only just had time to get away. The nearest thing in the world, sir. They must have taken to the boats."

"Then they can't be far off," cried Blunt, sweeping the horizon with his glass. "They must have pulled all the way, for there hasn't been enough wind to fill a hollow tooth with."

"Perhaps they pulled in the wrong direction," said Frere. "They had a good four hours' start of us, you know."

Then Best came up and told the story to a crowd of eager listeners. The sailors having hoisted and secured the boats were hurried off to the fore-castle, and the four convicts were taken in charge and locked below again.

"You had better go and turn in, Frere," said Pine, gruffly. "It's no use whistling for a wind here all day."

Pine took a couple of turns up and down the deck, and then, catching Blunt's eye, stopped in front of Vickers.

"You may think it a hard thing to say, Captain Vickers, but it's just as well if we don't find these poor fellows. We have quite enough on our hands as it is. The fever has broken out."

Vickers raised his brows. He had no experience of such things; and though the intelligence was startling, the crowded condition of the prison rendered it easy to be understood, and he apprehended no danger to himself.

"It is only in the prison, as yet," says Pine, with a grim emphasis on the word; "but there is no saying how long it may stop there. I have got three men down as it is."

"Well, sir, all authority in the matter is in your hands. Any suggestions you make I will, of course, do my best to carry out."

"Thank you. I must have more room in the hospital, to begin with. The soldiers must lie a little closer. And you had better keep your wife and the little girl as much on deck as possible."

Vickers turned pale at the mention of his child. "Do you think there is any danger?"

"There is, of course, danger to all of us; but with care we may escape it. There's that maid, too. Tell her to keep to herself a little more. She has a trick of roaming about the ship I don't like. Infection is easily spread, and children always sicken sooner than grown-up people."

Blunt, hitherto silently listening, put in a word for the defense of the absent woman. "She is right enough, Pine," said he. "What's the matter with her?"

"Yes, she's all right, I've no doubt. She's less likely to take it than any of us. You can see her vitality in her face—as many lives as a cat. But she'd bring infection quicker than anybody."

"I'll—I'll go at once," cried poor Vickers, turning round.

(To be continued.)

CHANCE FOR LION HUNTERS.

Cougars Multiplying Too Rapidly in Yellowstone National Park.

Mountain lions have increased so rapidly in Yellowstone Park of late that they threaten the extinction of deer, elk and other wild animals that live in this great government game preserve. So numerous have the cougars become that the government, through President Roosevelt's recommendation, has given John and Homer Goff, celebrated guides and hunters at Meeker, Col., a contract to clear the lions out of Yellowstone Park. John Goff is the guide who won fame taking President Roosevelt on his successful cougar-hunting trip to Colorado.

The work of hunting lions in Yellowstone Park will, it is estimated, take several seasons, and in the meantime there is a demand for lion hunters in Colorado, Wyoming and other cattle states, where stockmen are suffering great losses from these predatory animals. Cougars are said to be on the increase in the Rocky Mountains.

Owing to the enormous number of mountain lions in Yellowstone Park the government will not have to pay a large bounty to the Goff brothers. The hunters will receive a bounty of \$5 on each mountain lion they kill, in addition to a salary of \$75 a month each for their work. Most of the work will be done between the spring and fall, for the winters are very severe in Yellowstone Park, the climatic conditions being almost arctic, owing to the moisture generated by many geysers. The Goff brothers have the largest and finest pack of cougar hounds in the world.

For some reason the mountain lion prefers the flesh of a colt to that of any other animal, and cougars have become the terror of horse raisers in the Rocky Mountain states. It is estimated that as a result of the ravages of mountain lions in the last year not fifty colts are left alive on the ranges between Phoenix and Prescott.—San Francisco Bulletin.

A Reflection Amplified.

"All the world's a stage," quoted the melancholy man.

"Yes," answered Stomington Barnes, "and the average lifetime isn't long enough to provide a good rehearsal, let alone a first-class performance."—Washington Star.

One German woman in about every twenty-seven works in a factory.

LITTLE MEN AND LITTLE WOMEN

Billy's Luck.

Billy went a-hunting.
A-hunting for a bear;
But the only thing he shot
Was a baby hare.



Billy went a-fishing.
A-fishing for a whale;
But the only thing he caught
Was a wiggle-tail.



Billy went a-riding.
But the horse did kick!
Billy lost his balance,
And in the mud did stick.



Straightway home ran Billy
With a broken head;
And his mamma spanked him
And put him right to bed!



How Tom Made It Up.

One day little Tom played with his ball in the parlor while his mother was out, and he broke a pretty vase. When his mother came home she asked Tom how he came to break the vase. Tom explained to her exactly how he had broken it and said that he was very sorry. His mother said that she would forgive him this time, and he promised that he would not disobey her again.

The next day Tom, who had been thinking all the day before how to replace the vase, thought of a plan. He put on his hat and coat and started to the grocery shop.

"Want a boy to work for you?" he said.

"Yes," replied Mr. Martin. "I was just going to advertise for one."

"All right," said Tom. "I'll start in right now," and in a fortnight Tom had earned enough money to buy a vase exactly like the one he had broken.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Examples in Roman Numeration.

Prefix 500 to greasy and make a small napkin.

Prefix 1,000 to the first man and make a woman.

Prefix 50 to the handwork of Noah and make a bird of which poets love to write.

Prefix 5 to chills and fever and make indefinite.

Prefix 100 to a kind of monkey and get a woman's garment.

Answers—D-olly, m-adam, l-ark, v-ague, c-ape.

Why We Say "Hello."

Long, long ago wolves were numerous in all parts of the world, especially in England. Wolf hunting was a favorite sport with the gentry, and to kill wolves was regarded as the sacred duty of all Englishmen. In fact, an old law reads: "All barons must hunt and chase a wolf four times a year."

French was the language of the court at that time, so the burly old English hunters used the cry of the French wolf hunters, which was "Au loup!" ("To the wolf.") These words, heard at a distance, sounded like "A-loo," but the English, who always put an H on wherever they possibly can, put it on the words "A loo," and when wolf hunting shouted "Ha-loo." This form we use when we call "Hello," as no word has been found that carries so far or so well as hello. For this rea-

son it is the accepted form of the telephone companies the world over.—Washington Star.

The Unreachable Coin.

Place a boy with his back against the wall, his heels standing firmly against it. Lay a half dollar on the floor in front of him, about a foot distant from his toes, and tell him it is his if he can pick it up without moving his heels from against the wall. In vain will he try to get the coin under the conditions prescribed.

Fresh Neckties for Boys.

Don't put up with shabby ties, boys. You are never too young to think a bit about your looks, and though most folks detect the boy whose heart is in his clothes instead of the place it ought to be, it's worth money and a reputation to keep clean and neat. When a tie gets shabby throw it in the waste basket and begin on another.

HE IS THE TALLEST SOLDIER.

Lieutenant in Kaiser's Bodyguard Is Over Seven Feet Tall.

Undoubtedly the tallest soldier in the world is Josef Handel, who has recently been made a lieutenant in the Kaiser's famous bodyguard. During the past year and before he became a soldier he was exhibited under the simple name of "der lange Josef" in the Berlin Panoptikon and other places of interest in the large cities of Germany as the tallest youth on earth, a distinction to which he is easily entitled, says the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Handel is not 22 years old, yet he stands 7 feet 8 inches in his stockings. Though he was earning a big salary he did not hesitate a moment when the Kaiser called him to his bodyguard in Potsdam. He would never have been given the honor if the Kaiser's physicians had not pronounced him perfectly proportioned physically and of sound health. A remarkable fact is that Handel's parents, who live in Leipzig, are people of ordinary size, as are also his brothers and sisters, of whom there are seven. Handel makes a picturesque figure in his guard uniform and the high helmet makes him look a veritable Goliath. Frederick the Great would have given his best pipe to have added such a giant to his guard of tall soldiers.

Proof of Insanity.

We come upon the auto standing upon the brow of the hill.

"Hello," he says to the chauffeur. "Broken down?"

"No, sir," he responds. "Out of gasoline?"

"No, sir. We have plenty." "Tire punctured?"

"No, sir. The tires are in perfect condition."

"Lost your way?" "No, sir. The country hereabouts is very familiar."

"Dropped something from the auto?" "No, sir. Nothing of the sort."

"Then why are you standing here? Why are you not shooting down the hill and across the level at a terrific speed?"

"I do not care to do that," says the owner of the machine, who has been silent until this moment. "I had my auto stopped here so that I might enjoy the magnificent view from this elevation."

With a frightened glance at him, we turn and hasten to the nearest town, to warn the officials that an evidently insane person is at large in an automobile.—Kansas City Independent.

Jefferson Was a Child Actor.

On the death of his father, at Mobile, Ala., young Jefferson and his sister were engaged by the local manager to play children's parts, sing comic duets and appear in fancy dances. In addition to this, he said: "I was to grind colors in the paint room—assistant artist; I was called on the bills—and make myself generally useful, for which services we were each to receive \$6 per week."

At 13 years of age he was the chief support of a widowed mother whom misfortune had reduced "from leading lady to landlady." In reviewing the hardship of his early life, one cannot but feel how much he deserved the success which crowned his later years, nor is it to be wondered that, once achieving success, he never jeopardized it by experimenting with new plays so long as the old ones showed every evidence of popular favor. In this rough school of experience, then, where he indeed made himself "generally useful," Jefferson learned the art of acting, and, as well, the art of painting.—Francis Wilson in Scribner's.

Easy Way to Carve.

Freddy lived in a boarding-house near where they had been excavating for the subway. One day when he saw his mother struggling with a particularly tough steak the boarders were convulsed to hear him pipe up:

"Mamma, why don't you blast it?"—New York Press.

False Proverb.

Psmlth—You can't eat your cake and have it, too, you know.

Kjones—The dickens I can't! You ought to try some of my wife's cake—you can eat it and it'll stay with you for four days.—Cleveland Leader.

That'll Do.

Stage Manager—That carrot-haired "supe" is a perfect pumpkin head!

Low Comedian—Yes, he's a vegetable supe.—Cleveland Leader.

TRUMPET CALLS.

Ram's Horn Sounds a Warning to the Unreformed.



If some keep on blowing their own horns they will have hard time hearing Gabriel.

It is better to have a clean all fair and serious than most glorious church fair.

Law is love's method. Meekness is self-mastery. Love answers only to love. Softness is not saintliness. Friends never come in flocks. Sloth is a short-cut to sorrow. Meditation is the soul's mealtime. Ideals are reached through ordeal. The supercilious are simply expensive.

If you cannot serve your employer fire him.

Conscience will be tender where the first worn.

He has power to move men who is immovable on God.

It is not the dollarless but the dollarous who are dolorous.

Where the shepherd is hungry his souls the sheep do not go hungry.

The Bible has dominion nowhere in the life if it is not dominant everywhere.

A good many think that religion is a scheme for getting God to obey them instead of their obeying God.

It's a poor kind of religion that makes a man pay a big price for cigars and then beat his preacher at the sermon.

There must be some punishment to the people who are drawing checks on the bank of piety when they have no deposit there.

There's a lot of people too lazy even to try to climb up some other way when they are coming on, crawling under the edge of the canvas at last.

If some preachers spent as much energy getting something to say as they do denouncing those who stay away they would soon have someone to say it to.

SYMPATHETIC LISTENERS.

The Help They May Afford to the and Indifferent Talkers.

At no time more than when a thought is struggling toward expression should a friend bend with a friend's infirmities. A deep sympathy should be poured out with lavish affection about the one who is seriously striving to get some real thing. In this atmosphere of patient, sympathetic intelligence the inept word, the crude phrase, the wholly inadequate expression will be enabled to do their work and the thought transference will be effected; the thought will be safely lodged in the mind of the other, slightly bruised in transit, but intact and intelligible.

With an "I know what you mean" "Exactly," or "Go on, I understand" much help may be rendered, and at least the thinker of the thought has placed his friend in possession and by reason of this effort has entered into fuller possession of it himself, the conversation is in a way to begin. The lavish upon the elaboration of the thought all the beauties that can be woven out of words—precision, language, music—but let us, dear lovers of language, remember to be discreetly gentle and listen with averted glance while the thought is still in negligence.

One Way of Proposing.

Martin J. Littleton, of Brooklyn, who won national fame as an orator in the Democratic National Convention of 1902, was seriously considered as a fusion candidate for Mayor of New York, but he refused to allow his name to go before the convention.

Tammany's strength made it certain that Mayor McClellan would be elected. "The situation reminds me of the manner in which a Scotch belle proposed marriage," explained Mr. Littleton to a friend. "He led the maiden of his choice to a churchyard, and pointing to the various headstones, said: 'My folks are all buried there, Jennie. Wad ye like to be buried there, too?'"—Everybody's Magazine.

Many Indian Names.

In the United States we find "Indian" names in profusion from ocean to ocean. All the great lakes except Superior, the largest rivers—Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Arkansas—and countless other natural features, such as rivers, lakes, mountains and valleys, bear names of Indian origin. So do a majority of our forty-five states, as well as of striking beauty—as, for instance, Tippecanoe, Minnehaha, Susquehanna, Alabama—and while some are harsh, they seem somehow to "fit" remarkably well.—St. Nicholas.

Heterodox.

"I cannot afford to have my daughter take music lessons on my small salary," lamented Mr. Straightcloth.

Then he preached a series of sermons on "The Whale Did Not Swallow Jonah," "The Lions in Daniel's Den Were Stuffed" and "The Fiery Furnace Was Only Like a Steam Radiator in a Flat."

The collection basket was full.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Church Friends.

Church—Are you acquainted with Flatbush?

Gotham—Oh, yes; why, we sleep in adjoining pews!—Yonkers Statesman.