

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

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

"Well, what is it?" She looked from one to the other. "I came for Doctor Pine."

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

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

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

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

"Were you with the child last night?" went on Pine.

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

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

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

"Poor soul!" thought honest Blunt, "how she feels for the child! That lubberly surgeon, he's hurt her! Never mind, my lass," he said, aloud. "It is broad daylight, and he had not as much courage in love making as at night. 'Don't be afraid. I've been in ships with fever before now.'"

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

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

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

"Take some laudanum," says Blunt, with dim recollections of his old mother's treatment of such ailments. "Old Pine'll give you some. No, I'll get it for you. You shan't ask that bear for it. Come into my cabin."

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

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

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

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

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

And then she threw herself on her bed and buried her hot head in the pillow.

The intelligence of the fever seemed to have terrified her. Had the news discharged some well-concocted plan of hers? Being near the accomplishment of some cherished scheme, long kept in view, had the sudden and unexpected presence of disease falsified her carefully made calculations, and cast an almost insurmountable obstacle in her path?

"She died and through me? How did you know that he had a fever? Perhaps I have taken it myself, I feel ill." She turned over on the bed, as if in pain, and then started to a sitting position, stung by a sudden thought. "Perhaps she might die! The fever spreads quickly, and if so, all this plotting will have been useless. It must be done at once, and I will never do to break down now."

And taking the phial from her pocket, she held it up, to see how much it contained. It was three parts full. "Enough for both," she said, between her set teeth. The action of holding up the bottle reminded her of Blunt, and she smiled. "I'll go through with it, and the worse comes to the worst, I can fall back on Maurice." She loosened the cork of the phial, so that it would come out with a little noise as possible, and then placed it carefully in her bosom.

"I will get a little sleep if I can," she said. "They have got the note, and shall be done to-night."

CHAPTER VI.

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

As yet there had been no alarm of war. The three seizers had excited some comment, however, and had it not

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Where did yer get that?" asked Gabbett.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(To be continued.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

But Remus protested.

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

Not the Proper Contents. Newitt—It certainly is a great establishment. They're sticklers for system there; everything in its right place."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Clever at Handling Men. "How did that young stripling get that diplomatic position? Has he ever shown any diplomatic ability?"

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



Horse Blanket. A horse blanket particularly adapted to draft animals is the invention of a Seattle man. This blanket is so ventilated that undue accumulation of animal heat under the blanket is prevented. This is accomplished by having openings in that portion of the horse. The openings being at the highest point occupied by the blanket when arranged on the animal, the rising animal heat passes off freely. To



prevent water or snow from gaining access through these openings there is used a shield, which is supported above the openings by a skeleton wire frame. The reins for guiding the horse are held in place in the frame. The shield, which is made of fabric, is of greater width than the openings, thoroughly protecting the animal. Such a blanket would be suitable for livestock of any kind.

Building Up a Beef Herd. It is important to have cattle of good individual quality and to have this backed up by good pedigrees. But it is equally important that their environment be right, writes a New York farmer in American Agriculturist. A farm that is naturally poor and grows poor crops can only develop stock of poor quality. I am positive of this. The farm on which my cattle are kept is considered one of the best in the county and is not getting any poorer with the large amount of manure my stock make. It is not what could be called high ground, but almost level and well drained. This soil is underlain with limestone, similar to the limestone and blue grass lands of Kentucky, that have long been famous for the stock that came from them.

The Honey Muskmelon. One of the astonishing things in vegetable growing or rather in growing vegetables for the express purpose of supplying the consumer, is the utter indifference shown by the grower to the matter of quality. The same thing applies to fruit. It would be excusable if there were no other sorts, but when there are a dozen more or less far better than the varieties offered it is strange, indeed, they are not grown. A family well known to the writer was especially fond of muskmelons and bought them in large quantities until all that were offered them were so poor in quality they stopped using them and the producer lost valuable trade. The Honey melon, which has been tested for three years past, is one of the promising new sorts. It is a nicely formed melon, the skin green and the flesh a yellowish green. The flesh is firm and deep and of a

strap, which fastened so as to form a loop, will enable one to get a firmer grip on the handle. Then take the rope and make a slip noose in one end, hang it from the hook on the end of the small pole and, with a quick movement, place the loop over and around the upper jaw, when the mouth is forced open. Take hold of the rope with one hand just above the noose and with the help of the ringer insert the ring or rings on the snout. The animal will be unable to fight much with this appliance around its jaw. The illustration shows the details of the pole with strap and hook and also the method of having the loop over the jaw.

Demand for Trotters. The breeding of hackneys may answer for men of great wealth and large incomes, but the average American farmer will find it much more profitable to breed from the best of trotting stock, says American Cultivator. He should aim to produce animals of good size, high intelligence, pleasant disposition, a pure trotting gait and high, all round action. There is always a good demand for such animals and at prices that will insure a profit to the man who breeds and raises them, provided they are properly educated to harness and well fitted for the market.

Wheat the Best Sheep Food. Some of the experiment stations find that a pound of wheat in feeding has more nutriment than a pound of any other grain. In corn there is 8 per cent of digestible protein, barley 8.69 per cent, oats 9.25 per cent, rye 9.12, while wheat has 10.23 per cent. An English authority estimates wheat fed to lambs is worth about 76 cents per bushel. The Indiana station realized 77 cents a bushel for wheat fed to sheep.

Roots Good for Poultry. Roots of all kinds can be fed to poultry with advantage in the winter time to supply green food. It is a good practice to split the roots and allow the hens to pick out the contents. Where the roots are small drive a nail through one end and into a board or the side of the house to prevent them from being dragged around and soiled.

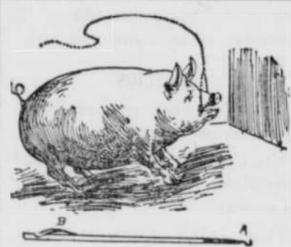
Cure for Limberneck. For limberneck in fowls try one tablespoonful of copperas dissolved in each two gallons of drinking water. Maggots from decaying animal matter are said to produce limberneck in fowls. This is doubtful, but as a matter of precaution would suggest that any carcass that may be around be buried.

Fat in Milk. The percentage of fat in milk from a single cow may vary, one day giving different results from the next. In an experiment with a choice Jersey cow the milk was found to range from 4.45 per cent to 5.83 per cent. A single test with a cow may, therefore, be of no value, as in the one case more milk would be required to make a pound of butter than in the other, as was shown in the variation in fat with the above experiment.

To Fight Boll Weevil. Secretary Wilson, of the Department of Agriculture, asks in his report to Congress that \$105,500 be appropriated for the following year. It is proposed that the Secretary be authorized to expend the appropriation in such manner as he shall deem best, in co-operation with the State experiment stations and practical cotton growers. Of the special appropriation of \$195,000 which was made for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1906, \$105,000 has been used by the Bureau of Plant Industry in the study of cotton diseases, diversification and co-operation with the various experiment stations in extending the improved cultural methods. It is recommended that this appropriation be continued, not as a separate item, but as a part of the regular bureau funds. It is highly important, the Secretary of Agriculture adds, that the investigation on breeding of new cottons, the general propaganda work on improved cultural methods, the study of the diseases and diversification of crops, be continued and extended into other Southern States likely to be invaded by the weevil. The object of this appropriation is to enable the department to continue this work.

Milk Pays More than Butter. The following, with reference to the decline of butter manufacture in England, is from Hon. Frank W. Mahlin, United States consul at Nottingham, England: "One plausible explanation of the manifest decline in dairying in England is that it is more profitable to sell the milk, the drinking of which is increasing, than to convert it into butter. Consequently the average British farmer is making no butter to sell, but is even buying what he needs for his own use. Furthermore, it is asserted that some English dairies buy foreign butter and sell it as their own product—the domestic article, though inferior, in the judgment of many consumers, commanding a higher price than the foreign."

Ringed Unruly Hogs. When the sows get unruly and inclined to make trouble of various kinds they can be readily controlled by an arrangement made of ropes and placed around the jaws of the animal. Such a rope is not easy to put in position with an angry hog, so a little device made of an old broom handle is used. Insert a small hook in one end of the handle and near the other end nail a



FOR RINGING THE HOGS.

strap, which fastened so as to form a loop, will enable one to get a firmer grip on the handle. Then take the rope and make a slip noose in one end, hang it from the hook on the end of the small pole and, with a quick movement, place the loop over and around the upper jaw, when the mouth is forced open. Take hold of the rope with one hand just above the noose and with the help of the ringer insert the ring or rings on the snout. The animal will be unable to fight much with this appliance around its jaw. The illustration shows the details of the pole with strap and hook and also the method of having the loop over the jaw.

Short Personals. John Brisben Walker, the editor, was the pioneer in the steam automobile business in this country.

Benjamin M. Jennings of Casey county, Ky., has been presented with an extremely large diamond stud by King Edward, which is said to be one time to have been the property of Paul Kruger.

In emulation of Benjamin Franklin, Mayor Fitzgerald of Boston has donated \$1,000 to form a fund that is to accumulate interest for 100 years, to be then expended for purposes which will, in the opinion of the board at that time, best serve the interest of humanity.

The most favored man in the Kingdom of Siam is an American named Strobel. He is the king's counsel, and his majesty takes no important step without consulting his attorney general.

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

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



- 1408—Battle of Brannham Moor.
- 1437—James I. of Scotland murdered.
- 1519—Hernando Cortes sailed from Cuba to conquer Mexico.
- 1619—Luclio Vanini burnt as an atheist at Toulouse.
- 1656—Spain declared war against England.
- 1694—Bradford paid for printing the book in New York City.
- 1749—Riot in Haymarket, London, over failure of a man to jump into a quart bottle as promised.
- 1750—French siege of Madras raised.
- 1763—Seven years' war ended.
- 1778—First salute to American flag by a foreign government.
- 1780—British under Gen. Clinton landed South Carolina.
- 1792—American Congress granted a bounty to fishing vessels.
- 1793—British flag raised on the island of Corsica.
- 1803—Ohio admitted as the seventeenth State.
- 1804—U. S. frigate Philadelphia destroyed in harbor of Tripoli.
- 1807—Aaron Burr arrested near Fort Stoddard, Alabama.
- 1812—Florida ceded to the United States by Spain.
- 1815—Frigate Constitution captured British sloops Cyane and Levant.
- 1818—Gen. Jackson took the field against the Florida Indians.
- 1831—Poles defeated Russians at Goshow.
- 1833—Ship Independence lost off Lower California; 140 persons perished.
- 1850—Ship John Rutledge sunk by an iceberg.
- 1860—Ship Hungarian lost off Cape Sable; 205 persons perished.
- 1861—Jefferson Davis inaugurated President of Confederate States... Texas State troops seized U. S. arsenal and barracks at San Antonio.
- 1862—Surrender of Fort Donelson.
- 1864—First war prisoners received at Andersonville prison... First Knights of Pythias lodge organized in Washington, D. C.... Second Confederate Congress met at Richmond.
- 1865—Columbia, S. C., surrendered to Gen. Sherman.
- 1867—First passage of a ship through the Suez canal.
- 1868—Battle between Ruba and Martinez, near Mazatlan, Mexico... American theater burned in San Francisco.
- 1869—Loans of money on United States notes by national banks forbidden.
- 1870—Northern Pacific railroad begun at the Dalles of St. Louis, Minn.
- 1873—Fernando Wood moved in the House for the impeachment of Vice President Colfax.
- 1874—Business section of city of Panama destroyed by fire.
- 1875—Jesse Pomeroy, "boy murderer," sentenced to death in Boston.
- 1876—Congress appropriated \$1,500,000 for Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia.
- 1878—Passage of the Bland silver bill in the U. S. Senate.
- 1879—Women admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court.
- 1882—Congress voted widow of President Garfield a pension of \$5,000 a year... Nihilists convicted of assassinating Alexander II. of Russia.
- 1885—New comet discovered by Prof. Bernard.
- 1887—Congress passed a bill retiring the trade dollar... Woman's suffrage became a law in Kansas... U. S. Senate passed anti-polygamy bill.
- 1892—Edward P. Deacon shot and killed M. Abeille at Cannes, France.
- 1895—Madge York, actress, murdered in Philadelphia by James B. Gettys, an actor.
- 1898—Battleship Maine blown up in Havana harbor.
- 1905—Five killed in mine explosion at Birmingham, Ala.