

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

An hour after sunrise next morning the frail boat, which was the last hope of these four human beings, drifted with the outgoing current toward the mouth of the harbor. When first launched she had come nigh swamping, being overloaded, and it was found necessary to eave behind a great portion of the dried meat. They made tedious way with their rude oars; a light breeze from the northwest sprung up with the dawn, and, isolating the goat-skin sail, they crept along the coast. It was resolved that the two men should keep watch and watch; and Frere, for the second time, enforced his authority by giving the first watch to Rufus Dawes. "I am tired," said, "and shall sleep for a little while."

That night the wind fell, and they ad to take their oars. Rowing all night, they made but little progress, and Rufus Dawes suggested that they should put to the shore, and wait until the breeze sprang up. But, upon getting under the of a long line of basaltic rocks which rose abruptly out of the sea, they found the waves breaking furiously upon horseshoe reef, six or seven miles in length. There was nothing for it but to coast again.

They coasted for two days, without a sign of a sail, and on the third day a east wind broke upon them from the northeast and drove them back thirty miles. The coracle began to leak, and required constant bailing. What was almost as bad, the best part of their water had leaked away also.

The position of the four poor creatures was now almost desperate. Mrs. Vickers, indeed, seemed completely prostrated, and it was evident that, unless some alp came, she could not long survive continued exposure to the weather. The child was in somewhat better case. Rufus Dawes had wrapped her in his coat, and, unknown to Frere, divided with her daily his allowance meat. She lay in his arms at night, in the day crept by his side for shelter and protection. As long as she was near him she felt safe. They spoke little to each other, but when Rufus Dawes let the pressure of her tiny hand in his, or sustained the weight of her head on his shoulder, he almost forgot the ill that frosed him and the hunger that saved him.

So two more days passed, and yet no ill! On the tenth day after their departure from Macquarie Harbor they met to the end of their provisions. To add to their distress, the child was seized with fever. She was hot and cold by turns, and in the intervals of moaning like delirious. Rufus Dawes, holding her in his arms, watched the suffering he was unable to alleviate, with savage despair at his heart. Was she die, after all?

So another day and night passed, and on the eleventh morning saw the boat yet live, rolling in the trough of the same sullen sea. The four exiles lay in almost without breath. All at once awes uttered a cry, and seizing the oar, put the clumsy craft about. "A ill! a sail!" he cried. "Do you not see her?"

"There is no sail," said Frere. "You look us!"

The boat, no longer following the line the coast, was running nearly due south, straight into the great southern sun. Frere tried to wrest the oar from the hand of the convict, and bring the boat back to her course. "Are you id?" he asked, in fretful terror, "to us out to sea?"

"Sit down," returned the other, with menacing gesture, and staring across a gray water. "I tell you I see a ill!"

The day had broken, and the dawn, one long pale streak of sickly saffron, low on the left hand. Between this seal of saffron-colored light and the ws of the boat gleamed for an instant white speck.

Frere, utterly confounded, looked at his heart in his mouth, and again the white speck glimmer.

"Sylvia!" cried Rufus Dawes, "Sylvia! My darling! You are saved!"

She opened her blue eyes and looked him, but gave no sign of recognition. Saffron had hold of her, and in the of safety the child had forgotten preserver. Rufus Dawes, overcome this last cruel stroke of fortune, sat in the stern of the boat, with the ill in his arms speechless.

Frere sought that the chance he had so long for had come. With the mother at a point of death, and the child delirious, who could testify to this hated uvict's skillfulness? No one but Mr. Maurice Frere, and Mr. Maurice Frere, commandant of convicts, could not but be up as "absconder" to justice.

The ship—a brig, with American colors flying—came within half of them. There could almost distinguish figures her deck. He made his way aft to her. Dawes was sitting, unconscious, in the child in his arms, and stirred m roughly with his foot.

"Go forward," he said, in tones of command, "and give the child to me."

Rufus Dawes raised his head, and, in the approaching vessel, awoke to consciousness of his duty. With a w laugh, full of unutterable bitterness, placed the burden he had borne so deeply in the arms of the lieutenant. The brig was close upon them. Her was loomed large and dusky, shadowing the sea. Her wet decks shone in morning sunlight. From her bulk peered bearded and eager faces, looking with astonishment at this boat ad its haggard company, alone on that iron and stormy ocean.

Frere, with Sylvia in his arms, waited her.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Society in Hobart Town, in this year 1838, is, my dear lord, composed of very curious elements." So ran passage in the sparkling letter which the Rev. Mr. Meekin, newly appointed captain, and seven days' resident in Dismen's Land, was carrying to the office. Clad in glossy black, of the most fashionable clerical cut, with dandy stockings, and gloves of lightest lavender

a white silk overcoat hinting that its wearer was not wholly free from sensitiveness to sun and heat—the Reverend Meekin tripped daintily to the postoffice, and deposited his letter. Two ladies met him as he turned.

Mr. Meekin's elegant hat was raised from his intellectual brow and hovered in the air, like some courteous blackbird, for an instant. "Mrs. Jellicoe! Mrs. Protherick! My dear ladies, this is an unexpected pleasure! And where, pray, are you going on this lovely afternoon? To stay in the house is quite sinful. Ah! what a climate; but the trail of the serpent, my dear Mrs. Protherick—the trail of the serpent—" And he sighed.

"Why, you are going our way," said Mrs. Jellicoe. "We can walk together."

"Delighted! I am going to call on Major Vickers."

"And I live within a stone's throw," returned Mrs. Protherick. "What a charming little creature—his daughter. A sad thing. Quite a romance if it were not so bad, you know. His wife, poor Mrs. Vickers!"

"Indeed! What of her?" asked Meekin, bestowing a condescending bow on a passer-by. "Is she an invalid?"

"She is dead, poor soul, returned jolly Mrs. Jellicoe, with a fat sigh. "You don't mean to say that you haven't heard the story, Mr. Meekin?"

"My dear ladies, I have only been in Hobart Town a week, and I have not heard the story."

"It's about the mutiny, you know, the mutiny at Macquarie Harbor. The prisoners took the ship and put Mrs. Vickers and Sylvia ashore somewhere. Captain Frere was with them, too. The poor things had a dreadful time, and nearly died. Captain Frere made a boat at last, and they were picked up by a ship. Poor Mrs. Vickers only lived a few hours, and little Sylvia—she was only twelve years old then—was quite lightheaded. They thought she wouldn't recover. She's quite strong now; but her memory's gone. She doesn't remember anything about the three or four weeks they were ashore—at least not distinctly."

"It's a great mercy," interrupted Mrs. Protherick, determined to keep the post of honor. "Who wants her to remember these horrors? From Captain Frere's account, it was positively awful. A 'Bolter'—that's what we call an escaped prisoner. Mr. Meekin—happened to be left behind, and he found them out, and insisted on sharing the provisions—the wretched! Captain Frere was obliged to watch him constantly for fear he should murder them. Even in the boat he tried to run them out to sea and escape. He was one of the worst men in the Harbor, they say. But you should hear Captain Frere tell the story."

"And where is he now?" asked Mr. Meekin, with interest.

"Captain Frere?"

"No, the prisoner."

"Oh, goodness, I don't know—at Port Arthur, I think. I know that he was tried for bolting, and would have been hanged but for Captain Frere's exertions."

"Dear, dear! a strange story, indeed," said Mr. Meekin. "And so the young lady doesn't know anything about it?"

"Only what she's been told, of course, poor dear. She's engaged to Captain Frere."

"Really! To the man who saved her. How charming—quite a romance! Her girl love clings to her heroic protector. Remarkable and beautiful. Quite the—he—lvy and oak, dear ladies. Ah, in our fallen nature, what sweet spots—I think this is the gait."

"To be continued."

Worth Reading.

There is no index of character so sure as the voice.—Disraeli.

Never say you know a man till you have divided an inheritance with him.—Lavater.

The manuscript of Swinburne's "First Book of Ballads" has been sold for \$1,000.

Newspapers from Denmark to the Russian provinces must in future all go to St. Petersburg to pass the censor.

At Whakarewarewa, New Zealand, there are geysers, hot springs, boiling pools, mud volcanoes and hot waterfalls.

More than one-fourth of the inhabitants of Newfoundland are engaged in catching and curing fish for a livelihood.

The population of Russia, 120,000,000, is increasing 1,500,000 annually.

The center of the country's cotton-growing is near Jackson, Miss.

The growth of the nails is more rapid in children than in adults, and slowest in the aged. It goes on more rapidly in summer than in winter.

"You have not been here long, Mr. Meekin," said Sylvia, after pause.

"No, only a week; and I confess I am surprised. A lovely climate, but, as I said just now to Mrs. Jellicoe, the trail of the serpent—the trail of the serpent—my dear young lady."

"If you send all these wretches here, you must expect the trail of the serpent," said Sylvia. "It isn't the fault of the colony. But don't let us talk about this, Mr. Meekin," she added, pushing back a stray curl of golden hair. "Papa says that I am not to talk about these things, because they are all done according to the rules of the service, as he calls it."

"An admirable notion of papa's," said Meekin, much relieved as the door opened, and Vickers and Frere entered.

Vickers' hair had grown white, but Frere carried his thirty years as easily as some men carry two-and-twenty.

"My dear Sylvia," began Vickers, "here's an extraordinary thing!" And then, becoming conscious of the presence of the agitated Meekin, he paused.

"You know Mr. Meekin, papa?" said Sylvia. "Mr. Meekin, Captain Frere."

"I have that pleasure," said Vickers. "Glad to see you, sir. Pray sit down." Upon which Mr. Meekin beheld Sylvia unaffectedly kiss both gentlemen; but became strangely aware that the kiss bestowed upon her father was warmer than that which greeted her affianced husband.

"Warm weather, Mr. Meekin," said Frere. "Sylvia, my darling, I hope you have not been out in the heat. You have! My dear, I've begged you—"

"It's not hot at all," said Sylvia, pettishly. "Nonsense! I'm not made of butter—I sha'n't melt. Thank you, dear; you needn't pull the blind down." And then, as though angry with herself for her anger, she added, "You are always thinking of me, Maurice," and gave him her hand affectionately.

"It's very oppressive, Captain Frere," said Meekin; "and, to a stranger, quite enervating."

"Ay, to be sure," repeated Vickers. "I hope Sylvia has not been attacking you with her strange theories, Mr. Meekin?"

"Oh, dear, no; not at all," returned Meekin, feeling that this charming young lady was regarded as a creature who was not to be judged by ordinary rules. "We got on famously, my dear major—quite famously."

"That's right," said Vickers. "She is very plain-spoken, in my little girl, and strangers can't understand her sometimes. Can they, Poppet?"

Poppet tossed her head saucily. "I don't know," she said. "Why shouldn't they? But you were going to say something extraordinary when you came in. What is it, dear?"

"Ah," said Vickers, with grave face. "Yes, a most extraordinary thing. They've caught those villains."

"What, you don't mean—No, papa!" said Sylvia, turning round with alarmed face.

In that little family there were, for conversational purposes, but one set of villains in the world—the mutineers of the Osprey.

"They've got four of them in the bay at this moment—Rev. Barker, Shiers and Lesly. They are on board the Lady Jane. The most extraordinary story I ever heard in my life. The fellows got to China, and passed themselves off as shipwrecked sailors. The merchants in Canton got up a subscription and sent them to London. They were recognized there by old Pine, who had been surgeon on board the ship they came out in."

Sylvia sat down on the nearest chair, with heightened color. "And where are the others?"

"Two were executed in England; the other six have not been taken. These fellows have been sent out for trial."

"To what are you alluding, dear sir?" asked Meekin.

"The piracy of a convict brig five years ago," replied Vickers. "The scoundrels put my poor wife and child ashore and left them to starve. If it hadn't been for Frere—God bless him—they would have died. They shot the pilot to run them out to sea and escape. He was one of the worst men in the Harbor, they say. But you should hear Captain Frere tell the story."

"To be continued."

Green Food for Small Chicks.

As soon as the little chick begins to grow feathers, that is, after the down age is past, green food is quite necessary to its happiness. If there is no danger of the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be

dangerous to the bird being chilled or getting wet, then let it have the grassy run to pick over; even if the weather is cool, it will do no harm to let the chicks onto the grass in the warm part of the day, but they must be watched, so that they do not stay too long and become chilled.

One of the most successful poultrymen we know makes it a practice to grow a quantity of lettuce in hotbeds especially for feeding his young chicks for green food. This seems to be