

# For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)  
"Turn my face to it once more!" he whispered; and as they raised him, he inclined his ear to listen. "It's calm enough here, God bless it," he said; "but I can hear the waves a-breaking hard upon the bar!"

As Frere relieved Mrs. Vickers from the weight of the corpse, Sylvia ran to her mother. "Oh, mamma, mamma!" she cried, "why did God let him die when we wanted him so much?"

Before it grew dark, Frere made shift to carry the body to the shelter of some rocks at a little distance, and, spreading the jacket over the face, he piled stones upon it to keep it steady. The march of events had been so rapid that he scarcely realized that since the previous evening two of the five human creatures left in this wilderness had escaped from it. As he did realize it, he began to wonder whose turn it would be next.

The following day passed gloomily. It was hot and sultry, and a dull haze hung over the mountains. Frere spent the morning in scoping a grave in the sand, in which to inter poor Bates. Practically awake to his own necessities, he removed such portions of clothing from the body as would be useful to him, but hid them under a stone, not liking to let Mrs. Vickers see what he had done. Having completed the grave by mid-day, he placed the corpse therein, and rolled as many stones as possible to the sides of the mound. In the afternoon he cast the fishing line from the point of a rock he had marked the day before, but caught nothing. Passing by the grave, on his return, he noticed that Mrs. Vickers had placed at the head of it a rude cross, formed by tying two pieces of stick together. After supper—the usual salt meat and damper—he tried to talk to Sylvia. "Why won't you be friends with me, missy?" he asked.

"I don't like you," said Sylvia. "You frighten me. You are not kind. I don't mean that you do cruel things, but you are— Oh, I wish papa was here!"

"Wishing won't bring him," says Frere. "There! That's what I mean! Is that kind? 'Wishing won't bring him.' Oh, if it only would!"

"I didn't mean it unkindly," says Frere. "What a strange child you are!"

"There are persons," says Sylvia, "who have no affinity for each other. I read about it in a book papa had, and I suppose that's what it is. I have no affinity for you. I can't help it, can I?"

"Rubbish," Frere returned. "Come here, and I'll tell you a story."  
Mrs. Vickers had gone back to her cave, and the two were alone by the fire, near which stood the kettle and the newly made damper. The child, with some show of hesitation, came to him and he caught and placed her on his knee. The moon had not yet risen, and the shadows cast by the flickering fire seemed weird and monstrous. The wicked wish to frighten this helpless creature came to Maurice Frere.

"There was once," said he, "a castle in an old wood, and in this castle there lived an ogre, with great goggle eyes."

"You silly man!" said Sylvia, struggling to be free. "You are trying to frighten me."

"And this ogre lived on the bones of little girls. One day a little girl was traveling the wood, and she heard the ogre coming. 'Haw! haw! haw! haw!'"

"Mr. Frere, let me down!"  
"She was terribly frightened, and she ran, and ran, and ran, until all of a sudden she saw—"

A piercing scream burst from his companion. "Oh! oh! What's that?" she cried, and clung to her persecutor.

On the other side of the fire stood the figure of a man. He staggered forward, and then, falling on his knees, stretched out his hands, and hoarsely articulated one word—"Food!" It was Rufus Dawes.

The sound of a human voice broke the spell of terror that was on the child, and as the glow from the fire fell upon the tattered yellow garments, she guessed at once the whole story. Not so Maurice Frere. He saw before him a new danger, a new mouth to share the scanty provision, and snatching a brand from the fire, he kept the convict at bay. But Rufus Dawes, glaring round with wolfish eyes, caught sight of the damper resting against the iron kettle, and made a clutch at it. Frere dashed the brand in his face. "Stand back!" he cried. "We have no food to spare!"

The convict uttered a savage cry, and, raising the iron gad, plunged forward desperately to attack his new enemy; but, quick as thought, the child glided past Frere, and snatching the loaf, placed it in the hands of the starving man, with, "Here, poor prisoner, eat!" and then, turning to Frere, she cast upon him a glance so full of horror, indignation and surprise that the man blushed and threw down the brand.

As for Rufus Dawes, the sudden apparition of the golden-haired girl seemed to have transformed him. Allowing the loaf to slip through his fingers, he gazed, with haggard eyes, at the retreating figure of the child, and as it vanished into the darkness outside the circle of the firelight, the unhappy man sank his face upon his blackened, horny hands, and burst into tears.

## CHAPTER XV.

The coarse tones of Maurice Frere roused him. "What do you want?" he asked.

Rufus Dawes, raising his head, contemplated the figure before him, and recognized it. "Is it you?" he said, slowly. "What do you mean? Do you know me?" asked Frere, drawing back. But the convict did not reply. His momentary emotion passed away, the pangs of hunger returned, and greedily seizing upon the piece of damper, he began to eat in silence.

"Do you hear, man?" repeated Frere, at length. "What are you?"

"An escaped prisoner. You can give me up in the morning. I've done my best, and I'm beat."

This sentence struck Frere with dismay. The man did not know that the settlement had been abandoned!

"I cannot give you up. There is no one but myself and a woman and child on the settlement." Rufus Dawes, pausing in his eating, stared at him in amazement. "The prisoners have gone away in the schooner. If you choose to remain free, you can do so as far as I am concerned. I am as helpless as you are."

"But how do you come here?"

Frere laughed bitterly. To give explanations to convicts was foreign to his experience, and he did not relish the task. In this case, however, there was no help for it. "The prisoners mutilated and seized the brig."

A terrible light broke upon Rufus Dawes, and he began to understand how he had again missed his chance. "Who took her?"

"That double-eyed villain, John Rex," says Frere, giving vent to his passion. Rufus Dawes burst into a laugh so discordant that it made the other shudder. "We'll starve together, Maurice Frere," said he; "for while you're a crust, I'll share it. If I don't get liberty, at least I'll have revenge!"

The sinister aspect of this famished savage sitting with his chin on his ragged knees, rocking himself to and fro in the light of the fire, gave Mr. Maurice Frere a new sensation. He felt as if he might have felt that African hunter who, returning to his campfire, found a lion there. "Wretch!" said he, shrinking from him, "why should you wish to be revenged on me?"

The convict turned upon him with a snarl. "Take care what you say! I'll have no hard words. Wretch! If I am a wretch who made me one? If I hate you and myself and the world, who made me hate it? I was born free—as free as you are. Why should I be sent to herd with beasts, and condemned to this slavery, worse than death? Tell me that, Maurice Frere—tell me that!"

"I didn't make the laws," says Frere. "Why do you attack me?"

"Because you are what I was. You are free. You can do as you please. You can love, you can work, you can think. I can only hate!" He paused as if astonished at himself, and then continued, with a low laugh: "Fine words for a convict, eh? But never mind, it's all right, Mr. Frere; we're equal now, and I shan't die an hour sooner than you, though you are a free man."

Frere began to think that he was dealing with another madman. "Die! There's no need to talk of dying," he said, as soothingly as it was possible for him to say it. "Time enough for that by and by."

"There spoke the free man. We convicts have an advantage over you gentlemen. You are afraid of death; we pray for it. It is the best thing that can happen to us— Die! They were going to hang me once. I wish they had."

There was such a depth of agony in this terrible utterance that Maurice Frere was appalled at it. "There, go and sleep, my man," he said. "You are knocked up. We'll talk in the morning."

"Hold on a bit!" cries Rufus Dawes, with a coarseness of manner altogether foreign to that he had just assumed. "Who's with ye?"

"The wife and daughter of the commandant," replied Frere, half afraid to refuse an answer to a question so fiercely put.

"Poor souls!" said the convict. "I pity them." And then he stretched himself, like a dog, before the blaze and went to sleep instantly. When morning dawned Frere awoke him.

Rufus Dawes glanced around him stupidly, and then remembering what had happened, with a great effort he staggered to his feet. "I thought they'd got me," he said; "but it's the other way, I see. Come, let's have breakfast, Mr. Frere. I'm hungry."

"You must wait," said Frere. "Do you think there is no one here but yourself?"

The convict, stretching out his wasted arms, looked down upon them with the uncertain gaze of a drunken man. "I am weak now," he said. "You have the best of me;" and then he sunk suddenly down upon the ground, exhausted. "Give me drink!" he moaned, feebly motioning with his hand.

Frere got him water in the pannikin, and having drunk it, he smiled, and lay down to sleep again. Mrs. Vickers and Sylvia coming out while he still slept, recognized him as the desperado of the settlement.

"He was the most desperate man we had," said Mrs. Vickers. Identifying herself with her husband. "Oh, what shall we do?"

"He won't do much harm," returned Frere, looking down at the notorious ruffian with curiosity. "He's as near dead as can be."

Sylvia looked up at him with her clear child's glance. "We mustn't let him die," said she. "That would be murder."

"No, no," returned Frere, hastily; "no one wants him to die. But what can we do?"

"I'll nurse him!" cried Sylvia. Frere broke into one of his coarse laughs, the first one that he had indulged in since the mutiny. "You nurse him! That's a good one!" The poor little child, weak and excitable, felt the contempt in the tone, and burst into a passion of sobs. "Why do you insult me, you wicked man? The poor fellow's ill, and he'll—he'll die, like Mr. Bates. Oh, mamma, mamma, let's go away by ourselves."

Frere walked away. He went into the little wood under the cliff and sat down. He was full of strange thoughts, which he could not express, and which he had never owned before. The dislike the child bore to him made him miserable, and yet he took delight in tormenting her. He was conscious that he had acted the part of a coward the night before in endeavoring to frighten her, and that the detestation she bore him was well earned; but he had fully determined to stake his life in her defense, should the savage who had thus come upon them out of the desert attempt violence, and he was unreasonably angry at the pity she had shown. When he got back he found Dawes stretched upon the brush wood, with Sylvia sitting near him.

"Is he better," said Mrs. Vickers, disdaining to refer to the scene of the morning. "Sit down and have something to eat, Mr. Frere."

"Are you better?" asked Frere, abruptly.

To his surprise, the convict answered quite civilly. "I shall be strong again in a day or two, and then I can help you, sir."

Within a week from the night on which he had seen the smoke of Frere's fire, the convict had recovered his strength, and had become an important personage. He was skilled in all the mysteries of the prison sheds. He knew how to sustain life on as little food as possible. He could fell trees without an axe, bake bread without an oven, build a weather-proof hut without bricks or mortar. From the patient he became the adviser; and from the adviser, the commander.

As the time wore on, and the scanty stock of provisions decreased, he found that his authority grew more and more powerful. Did a question arise as to the qualities of a strange plant, it was Rufus Dawes who could pronounce upon it. Were fish to be caught, it was Rufus Dawes who caught them. Did Mrs. Vickers complain of the instability of her brush wood hut, it was Rufus Dawes who worked a wicker shield, and, plastering it with clay, produced a wall that defied the keenest wind. He made cups out of pine knots, and plates out of bark strips. He worked harder than any three men. Nothing daunted him, nothing discouraged him. When Mrs. Vickers fell sick, from anxiety, and insufficient food, it was Rufus Dawes who gathered fresh leaves for her couch, who cheered her by hopeful words, who voluntarily gave up half his own allowance of meat that she might grow the stronger on it. The poor woman and her child called him "Mr. Dawes."

But the days stole on and no vessel appeared. Each day they eagerly scanned the watery horizon; each day they longed to behold the bowsprit of the returning Ladybird glide past the jutting rock that shut out the view of the harbor, but in vain. Mrs. Vickers' illness increased, and the stock of provisions began to run short. Dawes talked of putting himself and Frere on half allowance. It was evident that, unless succor came in a few days, they must starve.

One day Sylvia was sitting in the sun reading the "English History," which, by the accident of fright, she had brought with her on the night of the mutiny. "Mr. Frere," said she, suddenly, "what is an alchemist?"

"A man who makes gold," was Frere's not very accurate definition.

"Did the ancient Britons know it?"

"No; not so old as that."  
Sylvia suddenly gave a little scream. The remembrance of the evening when she read about the ancient Britons to poor Bates came vividly into her mind, and though she had since re-read the passage that had then attracted her attention a hundred times, it had never before presented itself to her in its full significance. Hurriedly turning the well-thumbed leaves, she read about the passage which had provoked remark:

"The ancient Britons were little better than barbarians. They painted their bodies with wood, and, seated in their light coracles of skin stretched upon slender wooden frames, must have presented a wild and savage appearance."

"A coracle! That's a boat! Can't we make a coracle, Mr. Dawes?"

The convict knitted his brows gloomily.

"Come, Dawes!" cried Frere, forgetting his enmity for an instant, in the flash of new hope, "can't you suggest something?"

Rufus Dawes, thus appealed to as the acknowledged head of the little society, felt a pleasant thrill of self-satisfaction. "I don't know," he said; "I must think of it. It looks easy, and yet—"

He paused as something in the water caught his eye. It was a mass of bladders seaweed that the returning tide was wafting slowly to the shore. This object, which would have passed unnoticed at any other time, suggested to Rufus Dawes a new idea. "Yes," he added, slowly, with a change of tone, "it may be done, I think I see my way. How far do you think it is across the bay?" he asked Frere.

"About four miles."

The convict sighed. "Too far to swim now, though I might have done it once. But this sort of life weakens a man. It must be done, after all."

"What are you going to do?" asked Frere.

"To kill the goat."

(To be continued.)



## Promising Late Strawberry.

The Fremont Williams strawberry is one of the new late sorts from which much is expected. When it is introduced the name will doubtless be shortened, in accordance with the general plan of using but one name for a variety when possible. The variety has been under test throughout the country for two years, and has shown every indication of being all that was claimed for it by the originator. Its one bad feature, and this will be mainly in the opinion of the consumer, is its rather misshapen form. It is full as late as the Gandy, generally considered the best late sort, of much better quality and is large and firm. In color it is an attractive, bright crimson, and this feature ought to offset, to some extent, the bad shape. If it does as well under general culture as it has under tests, it will be a valuable acquisition. It has not yet, so far as the knowledge of the writer goes, been introduced, but doubtless will be offered a year from now.

## Flowers for the Gardening Beginner.

To make his flower garden a continual delight, the amateur should study the characteristics of the flowers he grows and see that each serves a purpose. If he loves fragrance, nocotiana affinis, with its abundant star-shaped white flowers, is excellent, and a fragrant novelty which presents a striking contrast to this is nocotiana Sanders, with deep pink, almost red flowers. These, above all, are excellent for borders, planted in front of taller growing shrubs.

For a bed where a mass of yellow is desired, golden California poppy is useful. It must be sown where it is to bloom, as it does not transplant well. Its flowers are not adapted for cutting.

For side and back fences clumps of single and double hollyhocks in mass are good. A flower which grows nearly as high as the hollyhock is radbeek's golden glow, which produces a wealth of golden flowers good for cutting. It is a good plant to devote the space in front of one fence to dahlias and cosmos, for these are sure to please the most fastidious flower lovers. The cactus and decorative forms of the dahlia are becoming more and more popular every year. The tubers may be stored in the cellar in winter like potatoes. If there happens to be a sunny exposure in the garden, plant a few pompon chrysanthemums, which are hardy. They will give an effective display of tiny flowers in the autumn.

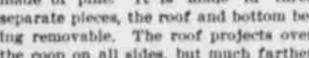
The Drummond pinks are exceedingly pretty, slow growing annuals, exceedingly showy in mass. In warm and exposed situations they last but few weeks in bloom.

## Coops for Small Chicks.

A farmer's wife writes: The coop I use, shown in sketch, is much better if made of pine. It is made in three separate pieces, the roof and bottom being removable. The roof projects over the coop on all sides, but much farther in front and back. This is to keep rain from beating in. The roof boards are nailed to two narrow pieces, which are just the length of the inside of the coop, and are placed far enough from the front and the back to fit inside the coop. The cracks are battened.

The floor, if made to slip in at the back like a drawer. This coop is very easily sunned and cleaned on account of the removable floor and roof. The 8-inch board at the top in front has holes bored in for ventilation. A wooden button on top board and a 2-inch strip at the bottom holds on the frame of wire screen which is used stormy days when the chicks are too young to run out, and on warm nights. At other times a slatted wooden front, b, is used.

I make this coop in two sizes—a single



DETAILS OF A CHICKEN COOP.

coop 20 inches square, 24 inches high in front and 16 inches in the back, and a double coop is 30 inches long and 24 inches wide. A removable lath partition, c, divides it.

## Hampshires and the Bacon Type.

At the last international I was much amused at the discussion in various quarters as to whether the Hampshire swine are of the bacon or lard type. The individual who calls Hampshire swine bacon animals has not yet learned the A B C of what the term bacon means, remarks Professor T. W. Shaw in American Agriculturist.

## Care for Sheep Foot-Rot.

For sheep foot-rot an English veterinarian gives the following as an excellent remedy: The sheep are walked once a month through a 5-per cent solution of copper sulphate, the hoofs being previously cleaned where necessary. Regular monthly treatment of this kind has been found a good preventive of foot-rot as well as a cure in mild cases. Where the disease has reached the advanced stage, the solution should be twice as strong, and the sheep should be walked through it about once a week.

## Give Hogs Little Salt.

In reference to proper proportions of salt and sulphur in mixtures for sheep and hogs, Professor Richards writes: "The mixture of salt and sulphur that we feed our sheep is made up of one part of sulphur and five parts of salt. It is not necessary that it be made up of any definite proportion, as there is no danger of feeding too much of either substance. We try to mix it in the proportions mentioned. A good mixture for hogs is one-fifth of sulphur, two-fifths of charcoal and two-fifths of salt."

## The Next Step.

"I don't want any government at all," said the anarchist.

"Suppose you succeeded in abolishing the government?"

"Then I could step in and start one of my own."—Washington Star.

## Mothers Will Find Mr. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the Best Remedy to Use for Their Children During the Teething Period.

## His Curiosity Excited.

The subject under discussion at the corner grocery was the Panama canal.

"I've heard a good deal," remarked Mr. Wipedunks, "about this Culabra cut. Why in thunder don't some of the newspapers print it?"

## Too Curious.

One well-known New York woman has discovered, like some others of her sex, that it does not pay to be too curious. One of the old family retainers is a Scotchman, named William, who does not believe in glossing over the truth for the sake of sparing his listener's feelings. The woman in question, although possessed of considerable charm of manner, is not a beauty and knows it. Her husband, recently deceased, was a remarkably handsome man, and his wife was one of his sincerest admirers. One day when she was looking at her husband's picture on the mantel in the sitting room, William was fussing around the grate, and in a moment of impulse she asked: "William, what do you think made such a handsome man as Colonel S. marry such a plain woman as me?" William looked from the portrait to the speaker, meditated a second, and answered: "Must have been heaven's will, ma'am."

## Reconciled Science and Religion.

A clergyman is quoted in Everybody's Magazine as confounding an advanced young woman who was demonstrating to him that science had disproved religion with this little parable. "Madam," he said, "I once knew a member of your sex who perfectly reconciled science and religion. She is a prominent member of the Young Women's Christian Association and she was making an address to a large gathering of women, which was interrupted by a terrific thunder shower. She shared with many the awful fear of thunder and lightning, and, with the others, she trembled in silence for a few moments. When a blinding flash was swiftly followed by a frightful clap of thunder she struggled to her feet, and began to pray. 'Oh, Lord, take us under thy protecting wings, for thou knowest that feathers are non-conductors.'"

## Pat's Effort to Keep Lent.

In an ordinary restaurant a waiter was surprised at being asked with Ireland's inimitable smile for "dilled whale." "Is it filleted shark that ye have, thin?" pursued the Irishman on being refused this delicacy. Again receiving a reply in the negative he tried once more. "Thin ye can bring me some roasted porpoise," he said. The waiter showed signs of becoming restive, and Paddy sank back in his seat and heaved a sigh of contentment. "I'll take some roast beef and vegetables," he said cheerfully, "and sure ye'll not be fat saying that I didn't ask ye for fish."—London Chronicle.

## Don't Forget the Lettuce.

Lettuce plants that have been wintered over in the cold frame should be planted at the earliest possible date in spring, and a sowing of the seed should be made at about the same time. Many kinds of vegetables will yield good returns on land but moderately enriched, but lettuce can only be grown to perfection in very rich and heavily manured ground. Plant in rows twelve or fifteen inches apart; plants should be set eight inches apart in the row, and the seed sown in drill and when large enough thinned out to about eight or ten inches. Give clean and thorough cultivation. Varieties of lettuce are exceedingly numerous, and the selection of a few good kinds is not without difficulty.

## Fertilizing an Orchard.

Nothing is better for fertilizing an orchard than raw bone meal and potash, says an expert orchardist. The bone will have nitrogen enough for the orchard in soil, and the phosphoric acid will become soluble by degrees as the trees need it. The principal need of your sandy soil in apples is potash, for not only is such a soil usually deficient in potash, but apples take a large amount from the soil. We would apply 400 pounds per acre, mixed 350 pounds of the bone meal and fifty pounds of muriate of potash. Then mow the orchard and use the cut grass as a mulch for the trees. In short, keep the orchard for apples alone, and devote all that grows on the land to the trees.

## The New Flax Industry.

An industry new at least to Minnesota has been introduced during quite recent years. It relates to the manufacture of flax straw into binding twine. Professor Shaw affirms in Orange Judd Farmer that one of the finest features of the new industry is that it will tend very much to lessen waste on many farms of the west. No where probably in all the United States has the sin of waste prevailed to such an extent as in the western and northwestern states. Flax straw was almost a complete waste. The greater the number of acres devoted to the growth of flax the greater was the waste.

## Ended at Last Through Using Doan's Kidney Pills.

Mrs. Selina Jones of 200 Main St., Ansonia, Conn., says: "If it had not been for Doan's Kidney Pills I would not be alive today. Seven years ago I was so bad with pain in the back, and so weak that I had to keep to my room, and was in bed sometimes six weeks at a spell. Beginning with Doan's Kidney Pills, the kidney weakness was soon corrected, and inside a week all the pain was gone. I was also relieved of all headaches, dizzy spells, soreness and feelings of languor. I strongly recommend Doan's Kidney Pills.

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