

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XIX.

The mutineers of the Osprey had been long since given up as dead, and the story of their desperate escape had become indistinct to the general public mind. Now that they had been captured in a remarkable manner, popular belief invested them with all sorts of strange surroundings. They had been—according to report—kings over savage islanders, chiefs of lawless and ferocious pirates, respectable married men in Java, merchants in Singapore, and swindlers in Hongkong. Their adventures had been dramatized at a theater, and the popular novelist of that day was engaged in a work descriptive of their wondrous fortunes.

John Rex, the ringleader, was related, it was said, to a noble family. He had every prospect of being satisfactorily handed, however, for even the most outspoken admirers of his skill and courage could not but admit that he had committed an offense which was death by the law. The already crowded prison was re-created with half a dozen life-tenants men, brought up from Port Arthur to identify the prisoners. Among this number was stated to be the "notorious Dawes."

This statement gave fresh food for recollection and invention. It was remembered that "the notorious Dawes" was the absconder who had been brought away by Captain Frere, and who owed such fettered life as he possessed to the fact that he had assisted Captain Frere to make the wonderful boat in which the marooned party escaped. It was remembered, also, how sullen and morose he had been on his trial five years before, and how he had laughed when the commutation of his death sentence was announced to him.

Miss Sylvia Vickers also received an additional share of public attention. Her romantic rescue by the heroic Frere, who was shortly to reap the reward of his devotion in the good old fashion, made her almost as famous as the villain Dawes, or his confederate monster, John Rex. It was reported that she was to give evidence on the trial, together with her affianced husband, they being the only two living witnesses who could speak to the facts of the mutiny. It was reported, also, that her lover was, naturally, most anxious that she should not give evidence, as she was affected deeply by the illness consequent on the suffering she had undergone, and in a state of pitiable mental confusion as to the whole business. These reports caused the court, on the day of the trial, to be crowded with spectators, and as the various particulars of the marvelous history of this double escape were detailed, the excitement grew more intense. The aspect of the four heavily ironed prisoners caused a sensation which, in that city of the broad, was quite novel, and bets were offered and taken as to the line of defense which they would adopt.

Mr. Meekin, sitting in the body of the court, felt his religious prejudices sadly shocked by a sight of John Rex. "A perfect wild beast, my dear Miss Vickers," he said, returning, in a pause during the examination of the convicts who had been brought to identify the prisoner, to the little room where Sylvia and her father were waiting. "He has quite a tigerish look about him."

"Poor man!" said Sylvia, with a shudder.

The major tapped his fingers impatiently. "Come here, Poppet," he said, "and look through this door. You can see them from here, and if you do not recognize any of them, I can't see what is the use of putting you in the box."

The raised dock was just opposite to the door of the room in which they were sitting, and the four manacled men, each with an armed warder behind him, were visible above the heads of the crowd.

"No, papa," she said, with a sigh of relief; "I can't recognize them at all."

As she was turning from the door, a voice from the witness box behind her made her suddenly pale, and pause to look again. The court itself appeared, at that moment, affected, for a murmur ran through it, and some official cried, "Silence!"

The notorious criminal, Rufus Dawes, the desperado of Port Arthur, the wild beast whom the newspapers had judged not fit to live, had just entered the witness box. He was a man of thirty, in the prime of life, with a torso whose muscular grandeur not even the ill-fitting yellow jacket could altogether conceal, with strong, embrowned and nervous hands, and upright carriage, and a pair of fierce black eyes that roamed over the court hungrily.

Not all the weight of the double iron awaying from the leathern thong around his massive loins, could mar that elegance of attitude which comes only from perfect muscular development. Not all the frowning fates bent upon him could frown an accent of respect into the contemptuous tones in which he answered to his name, "Rufus Dawes, prisoner of the crown."

"Come away, my darling," said Vickers, alarmed at his daughter's blanched face and eager eyes.

"Wait," she said, impatiently, listening for the voice whose owner she could not see. "Rufus Dawes! Oh, I have heard that name before!"

"You are a prisoner of the crown at the penal settlement of Port Arthur?"

"Yes."

Sylvia turned to her father with breathless inquiry in her eyes. "Oh, papa, who is that speaking? I know the sound! I know the voice!"

"That is the man who was with you

in the boat, dear," says Vickers, gravely. "The prisoner."

The eager light died out of her eyes, and in its place came a look of disappointment and pain. "I thought it was a good man," she said, holding by the edge of the doorway. "It sounded like a good voice."

And then she pressed her hands over her eyes and shuddered. "There, there," says Vickers, soothingly, "don't be afraid, Poppet; he can't hurt you now."

The colloquy in the court went on. "Do you know the prisoners in the dock?"

"Yes."

"Who are they?"

"John Rex, John Shiers, James Lesly and, and—I'm not sure about the last man."

"You are not sure about the last man. Will you swear to the three others?"

"I was in the chain gang at Macquarie Harbor with them for three years," Sylvia, hearing this hideous reason for acquaintance, gave a low cry, and fell into her father's arms.

"Oh, papa, take me away! I feel as if I was going to remember something terrible!"

Amidst the deep silence that prevailed the cry of the poor girl was distinctly audible in the court, and all heads turned to the door. In the general wonder no one noticed the change that passed over Rufus Dawes. His face flushed scarlet, great drops of sweat stood on his forehead, and his black eyes glared in the direction from whence the sound came, as though they would pierce the canvas wood that separated him from the woman whose voice he had heard. Maurice Frere sprang up and pushed his way through the crowd under the bench.

"What's this?" he said to Vickers, almost brutally. "What did you bring her here for? She is not wanted. I told you that."

"I considered it my duty, sir," says Vickers with stately rebuke.

"That ruffian Dawes frightened her," said Meekin. "A gush of recollection, poor child. There, there, calm yourself, Miss Vickers. He is quite safe."

"Frightened her, eh?"

"Yes," said Sylvia, faintly, "he frightened me, Maurice. I needn't stop any longer, dear, need I?"

"No," says Frere, the cloud passing from his face. "Major, I beg your pardon, but I was hasty. Take her home at once. This sort of thing is too much for her." And so he went back again to his plane, wiping his brow, and breathing hard, as one who had just escaped from some near peril.

Rufus Dawes had remained in the same attitude until the figure of Frere, passing through the doorway, roused him. "Who is she?" he said, in a low, hoarse voice, to the constable behind him.

"Miss Vickers," said the man, shortly, flinging the information at him as one might fling a bone to a dangerous dog.

"Miss Vickers?" repeated the convict, still staring in a sort of bewildered agony. "They told me she was dead."

The constable sniffed contemptuously at this preposterous conclusion, as who should say: "If you know all about it, animal, why did you ask?" And then, feeling that the fixed gaze of his interrogator demanded some reply, added: "You thought she was, I've no doubt. You did your best to make her so, I've heard."

The convict raised both his hands with sudden action of wrathful despair, as though he would seize the other, despite the loaded manacles, but, checking himself with sudden impulse, whirled round to the court. "Your honor! Gentlemen! I want to speak."

The change in the tone of his voice, no less than the sudden looseness of his exclamation, made the faces, hitherto bent upon the door through which Mr. Frere had passed, turn round again.

Who there it seemed that the "notorious Dawes" was no longer in the box, for in place of the upright and defiant villain who stood there an instant back was a white-faced, nervous, agitated creature, bending forward in an attitude almost of supplication, one hand grasping the rail, as though to save himself from falling, the other outstretched toward the bench.

"Your honor, there has been some dreadful mistake made. I want to explain about myself. I explained before, when first I was sent to Port Arthur, but the letters were never forwarded by the commandant. Of course, that's the rule, and I can't complain. I've been sent there unjustly, your honor. I made that best, your honor. I saved the major's wife and daughter. I was the man; I did it all myself, and my liberty was sworn away by a villain who hated me. I thought until now that no one knew the truth, for they told me that she was dead." His rapid utterance took the court so much by surprise that no one interrupted him. "I was sentenced to death for bolting, sir, and they reprieved me because I helped them in the boat. Helped them? Why, I made it! She will tell you so. I nursed her, I carried her in my arms. I started myself for her. She was fond of me, sir. She was, indeed. She called me 'Good Mr. Dawes.'"

At this a coarse laugh broke out, which was instantly checked. The judge bent over to ask, "Does he mean Miss Vickers?" and in this interval Rufus Dawes, looking down into the court, saw Maurice Frere staring up at him with terror in his eyes.

"I see you, Captain Frere, coward and liar! Put him in the box, gentlemen, and make him tell his story. She'll con-

tradict him, never fear. Oh, and I thought she was dead all this while!"

The judge had got his answer from the clerk by this time. "Miss Vickers had been seriously ill, had fainted just now in the court. Her only memories of the convict who had been with her in the boat were those of terror. The sight of him just now had most seriously affected her. The convict himself was an inveterate liar and schemer, and his story had been already disproved by Captain Frere. Rufus Dawes, still endeavoring to speak, was clanked away with amidst a buzz of remark and surmise."

The trial progressed without further incident. The defense set up by Rex was most ingenious. He was guilty of absconding, but his moderation might plead an excuse for that. His only object was his freedom, and, having gained it, he had lived honestly for nearly three years, as he could prove. He was charged with piratically seizing the Osprey, and he urged that the brig Osprey, having been built by convicts at Macquarie Harbor, and never entered in any shipping list, could not be said to be "piratically seized," in the strict meaning of the term. The court admitted the force of this objection, and, influenced doubtless by Captain Frere's evidence, the fact that five years had passed since the mutiny, and that the two men most guilty had been executed in England, sentenced Rex and his three companions to transportation for life to the penal settlements of the colony.

At this happy conclusion of his labors, Frere went down to comfort the girl for whose sake he had suffered Rex to escape the gallows. He found Vickers in the garden, and at once begged him not to talk about the "business" to his daughter.

"You saw how bad she was to-day, Vickers. For goodness' sake, don't make her ill again!"

"My dear sir," says poor Vickers, "I won't refer to the subject. She's been very unwell ever since. Nervous and unstrung. Go in and see her."

So Frere went in, and soothed the excited girl, with real sorrow at her suffering. "It's all right now, Poppet," he said to her. "Don't think of it any more. Put it out of your mind, dear."

"It was foolish of me, Maurice, I know, but I could not help it. The sound of—that man's voice seemed to bring back to me some great pity for something or some one. I don't explain what I mean, I know; but I felt that I was just on the verge of remembering a story of some great wrong, just about to hear some dreadful revelation that should make me turn from all the people whom I ought most to love. Do you understand?"

"I think I know what you mean," says Frere, with averted face. "But that's all nonsense, you know."

"Of course," returned she, with a touch of her old childish manner of disposing of questions out of hand. "Everybody knows it's all nonsense. But then we do think such things. It seems to me that I am double, that I have lived somewhere before, and have had another life—a dream-life."

"What a romantic girl you are!" said the other, dimly comprehending her meaning. "How could you have a dream-life?"

"Of course, not really. But in thought, you know, I dream such strange things now and then. I am always falling down precipices and into cataracts, and being pushed into great caverns in enormous rocks. Horrible dreams! And in these dreams," continued Sylvia, "there is one strange thing. You are always there, Maurice."

"Come, that's all right," says Maurice.

"Ah, but not kind and good as you are, Captain Brin, but smiling, and threatening, and angry, so that I am afraid of you."

"But that is only in a dream, darling."

"But you looked just so to-day in the court, Maurice, and I think that's what made me so silly."

"My darling! There! Hush—don't cry!"

But she had burst into a passion of sob and tears that shook her slight figure in his arms.

"Oh, Maurice, I am a wicked girl! I don't know my own mind. I think sometimes I don't love you as I ought—you who have saved me and nursed me."

"There, never mind about that," muttered Maurice Frere, with a sort of choking in his throat.

She grew more composed presently, and said, after a while, lifting her face: "Tell me, Maurice, did you ever, in those days of which you have spoken to me—when you nursed me as a little child in your arms, and fed me, and carried for me—did you ever think we should be married?"

"I don't know," says Maurice. "Why?"

"I think you must have thought so, because—it's not vanity, dear—you would not see have been so kind and gentle and devoted."

"Nonsense, Poppet," he said, with his eyes resolutely averted.

"No, but you have been; and I am very pettish, sometimes. Papa has spoiled me. You are always affectionate, and those worrying ways of yours, which I get angry at, all come from love for me, don't they?"

"I hope so," said Maurice, with an unwonted moisture in his eyes.

(To be continued.)

A Knack.

"He wants me to buy his claim," said the newcomer in Alaska; "says it's the best in this district."

"Huh!" snorted Chilkoot Charlie, "he's trying to throw gold-dust in your eyes."—Philadelphia Press.

Good Mauds.

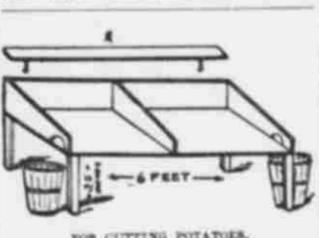
"These people are very good, aren't they?"

"Good! They're so good they wouldn't have anything in their house but an upright piano."—Baltimore American.



Potato Cutting Table.

When one has a large area to plant to potatoes the work of cutting the seed tubers in the ordinary way is not inconsiderable. One who is handy can readily make the seed cutter here described and save considerable time in preparing the seed for planting. Build a table about three feet deep and six feet wide, setting on it legs so it will stand about twenty-five inches from the floor, just high enough so the average man can get his knees under it comfortably when sitting down. Have a back to the table a foot high, with sides cut so that at the front end they

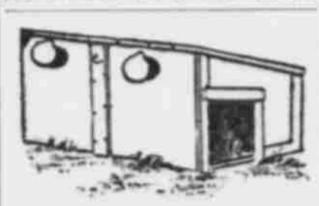


FOR CUTTING POTATOES.

will be not more than six inches high. A similar board is run down the center, thus making a table at which two can work. In the side pieces, about three inches from the end that is open, the front end, cut a hole eight inches long. A basket is set under this hole, on the floor, and the cut tubers are passed through the hole into the basket. This is done so that by a movement of the hand the cut pieces may be dropped into the basket, rather than have the cutter reach over or around to drop the pieces, which would be necessary if the baskets were behind him or at the sides. Tall baskets are used generally, although the ordinary peach basket will answer the purpose. A shelf is placed at the top of the cutting bench at the back, on which knives and any other tools needed in the work may be kept. The idea is plainly shown in the illustration.—Indianapolis News.

Colony House for Pigs.

Small houses built after the following description may be readily moved to any desired location on the farm. The house is very inexpensively constructed, consisting of two large dry goods boxes; the ends of the boxes are removed, the tops cut off on a slant and the edges of the ends are fastened together with small cleats of wood or straps of iron; these latter are better from the point of strength. A cleat of hard wood covers the rough ends of the boards of the floor six inches wide. All nails are clinched on the inside and all cracks between boards are bat-



MOVABLE HOUSE FOR PIGS.

med. The door is cut in the end and six, eight inches in diameter are cut in the upper front for ventilation. Small covers of wood may be fastened with screws so that they can be closed over the openings when the weather is very cold or stormy.

There are many different kinds of weeds, and some of them start off early in the spring, almost before the frost leaves the ground. It is the early weeds that give the farmer the most trouble. If the land was plowed last fall, cross-plow it the coming spring, and then harrow or cultivate it as often as can be done until time to put in the seed. Every time the land is cultivated more weeds will germinate to be killed, and the more weeds that can be destroyed before the regular crop start the fewer there will be to combat later on.

Start the Pigs Right.

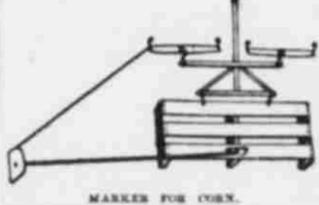
The man who starts off his pigs on the corn ration about as soon as he can after they are weaned is laying in a store of trouble for himself later. There is a trouble known to swine raisers as contracted stomach, which results from an improper ration. The animal is apparently "off its feed," but the fact is, the ration has been so poorly balanced that the stomach has not grown with the growth of the rest of the body. If the young pigs are to be allowed a range they will do more or less rooting, eating of soil and sod; as this is their nature, it will not hurt them, but if they are placed where one does not wish the sod uprooted, then the animals must be ringed. If middlings and oilmeal are introduced with the corn ration there will be considerably less trouble. Some of the stock foods on the market have their greatest value to the swine raiser who does not feed a balanced ration and if these stock foods can be obtained practically free from drugs or condiments, they are very valuable in such cases.

What Lime Does for Land.

Farmers often say that they do not need to use lime, because they use large quantities of it in fertilizer. Ground bone and other forms of phosphate contain lime. We cannot obtain phosphoric acid in ordinary fertilizers without lime. Such farmers mistake the most necessary function of lime in the soil. Air-slaked lime has a chemical action which sweetens the soil, makes it more compact or sets free other forms of plant food. This is quite distinct from its power to provide actual food for the plants. The lime in the bone or phosphate may in time serve as plant food, but the air-slaked lime is needed for the more important service.

Corn Marker.

Runners of this corn marker should be 2x6 inches by 2 feet. The side arm



MARKER FOR CORN.

is fastened to sled on a swivel, and is pulled along by attaching a rope to shoe and hooked to singletree as shown. This arm is made 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches and 10 1/2 feet long, for rows 3 1/2 feet apart. Of course this arm is reversible.

Good Word for Guinea.

The Guinea fowl may yet become a very profitable branch of farm poultry raising. The scarcity of certain kinds of game which resemble in flavor the Guinea, especially the Western prairie chicken and grouse, has led to a substitution of young Guineas on hotel and restaurant bills of fare. Guineas of about the broiler age, weighing about one pound and a half are of an exceedingly fine, gamey flavor, and seem to satisfy the customer. In this way the restaurants are able to dodge the game laws in certain States and serve "prairie chicken" on the bill of fare at all seasons. Gamehouses are paying high prices for young Guineas, and it would seem that large farms might be devoted to them profitably wherever turkeys and pheasants succeed.

Free Government Seeds.

The agricultural papers of the country have for years shown up the abuse of the annual congressional seed distribution. Last year the appropriation was 200,000, and over 50,000,000 packages of seed were distributed. The postage on these seeds if paid by individuals would cost about a half million dollars, and the labor, printing and other expenses would bring it up to over a million. The seeds usually are of poor quality and go for the most part to sections of the country where they are not acclimated, to carry political favors. It is an abuse that should immediately be discontinued.—Farm, Field and Fireside.

The hard experience of last year taught many of the Southern truck growers the old lesson of diversification, or in other words, not to put all their eggs into one basket. This year many of the farmers who staked all on one crop and failed last year, are now branching out a little more into fruit growing, etc., as well as the culture of vegetable crops. The indications are for a prosperous season for Southern truckmen, but it is always dangerous for a man of small capital to grow nothing at all but one line of produce.—American Cultivator.



Soup Without Meat.

Four ounces of butter, two slices onions, two heads of celery, two lettuce, a small bunch of parsley, two handfuls of spinach, three pieces of bread crust, two blades of mace, salt and pepper to taste, the yolks of two eggs, three teaspoonsful of vinegar, two quarts of water. Melt the butter in a stewpan, and put in the onions to stew for three or four minutes, then add the celery, spinach, lettuce and parsley cut small. Stir the ingredients well for ten minutes. Now put in the water, bread, seasoning and mace. Boil gently for one and a half hours, and at the moment of serving beat in the eggs and the vinegar, but do not let it boil, or the eggs will curdle.

Cup Omelet.

An odd dish that will be found very appetizing for breakfast is a cup omelet. Butter six custard cups and fill lightly with soft bread crumbs and any nice cold meat; chopped fine, with plenty of savory seasonings, such as the family like. Beat three eggs; add one cupful milk, pour gradually into the cups, using more milk if required; set the cups in a pan of water and bake (or steam) until firm in the center. Serve in the cups, or turn out on a platter. These savory custards are delicious made entirely out of bread crumbs and seasonings, omitting the meat.

Gluten Bread.

Into a pint of cool, fresh milk stir an equal quantity of boiling water, then stir in a teaspoonful each of salt and butter melted. Dissolve a quarter of yeast cake in lukewarm water, and when the milk has reached the same temperature stir into it the dissolved yeast cake, one beaten egg and gluten flour to make a thin batter. Set aside in a warm place to rise and, when light, work in enough gluten flour to make a dough, taking care not to have this at all stiff. Knead thoroughly, form into loaves and set to rise. Bake for a long time in a steady oven.

Orange Pudding.

Soak one-half box of gelatine in a cupful of cold water. Set the cup in a pan of hot water to dissolve it. Add two-thirds of a cupful of sugar, stir until melted, and mix it with the juice of six large oranges. Let the pulp of the oranges, broken up and minus fiber and seeds, remain in, also a light grating of the orange peel. If liked, substitute the diluted juice of one lemon for two of the oranges, and as soon as it is partly jellied, whip it with the egg beater until it is like beaten egg. Turn into a mold to harden.

Creamed Liver.

Use what cold fried liver and bacon you have over, not forgetting the bacon. Chop it fine and mix with a white sauce. Add two or three hard-boiled eggs cut up in little pieces, a little grated onion, salt, pepper, a dash of nutmeg, and lemon juice if wished. Or stir until they bubble, a tablespoonful of butter and one of flour. Add a cupful of tomato, and when thick add your cold chopped liver and bacon and hard-boiled eggs. Season with salt and paprika.

Canned Grapes.

This will make excellent pies for winter use. Pick the fruit from the stems, and seed it by pressing between the thumb and finger. Put the pulp thus obtained into a porcelain kettle and boil until soft. Cool and pass through a colander to separate it from the seed. To this juice add the grape skins and a one-third part of elderberries nicely picked over. Boil until thoroughly cooked, and can in new tin cans. Keep in the cellar.

Potato Puffs.

Two cupfuls washed potatoes put into a saucepan. Add to this the yolks of two eggs, three tablespoonfuls of cream, one tablespoonful of butter, salt and pepper to taste. Stir constantly over the fire until the potatoes are very light and hot.

Take from the fire and stir in carefully the well-beaten whites of the eggs. Put the potatoes carefully into greased pan and bake in a quick oven until brown.

Lyonnais Potatoes.

Crop one small onion, and fry it slowly in two tablespoonfuls of butter! when slightly colored, add about three cupfuls of cold potatoes, sliced or diced; sprinkle over them a little salt, pepper, a tablespoonful each of chopped parsley and lemon juice. Stir carefully with a fork till all the potatoes are buttered and hot, but not browned.

Warm'd Over Meat.

Take cold roast beef or mutton, chop fine and put in an earthen dish with a little Worcestershire sauce. Cover with washed potatoes and bake.