

# For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

## CHAPTER XXIX.—(Continued.)

"Well," said John Rex, "we are in private. What have you to say?"

"I want to tell you that I forbid you to carry out the plan you have for breaking up Sir Richard's property."

"Forbid me?" cried Rex, much relieved. "Why, I only want to do what my father's will enables me to do."

"Your father's will enables you to do nothing of the sort, and you know it." She spoke, as though rehearsing a series of set speeches, and Sarah watched her with growing alarm.

"Oh, nonsense!" cries John Rex, in sheer amazement. "I have a lawyer's opinion on it."

"Do you remember what took place at Hempstead this day nineteen years?"

"At Hempstead?" said Rex, growing suddenly pale. "This day nineteen years ago? No! What do you mean?"

"Do you not remember?" she continued, leaning forward eagerly, and speaking almost fiercely. "Do you not remember the reason why you left the house where you were born, and which you wish now to sell to strangers?"

John Rex stood dumfounded, the blood suffusing his temples. He knew that among the secrets of the man whose inheritance he had stolen was one which he had never gained—and he felt that this secret was to be revealed to crush him now.

Sarah, trembling also, but more with rage than terror, swept toward Lady Devine. "Speak out," she said, "if you have anything to say! Of what do you accuse my husband?"

"Of imposture!" cried Lady Devine, all her outraged maternity nerving her to abash her enemy. "This man may be your husband, but he is not my son! You have not stood the test, for you cannot recall the day of your quarrel and mine over my cousin, Armigell Esme Wade, Lord Bellasis."

John Rex gasped for breath; his hand tugging at his neck-cloth, rent away the linen that covered his choking throat. The whole horizon of his past was lighted up by a lightning flash which stunned him. His brain, already enfeebled by excess, was unable to withstand this last shock. He staggered, and, but for the cabinet against which he leaned, would have fallen. The secret thoughts of his heart rose to his lips, and were uttered unconsciously. "Lord Bellasis! He was my father, and—I killed him!"

A dreadful silence fell, and then Lady Devine, stretching out her hands toward the self-confessed murderer, with a sort of frightful respect, said in a whisper, in which horror and supplication were strangely mingled, "What did you do with my son? Did you kill him also?"

But John Rex, wagging his head from side to side, like a beast in the shambles that has received a mortal stroke, made no reply. Sarah Purfoy, awed as she was by the dramatic force of the situation, nevertheless remembered that Francis Wade might arrive at any moment, and saw her last opportunity for safety. She advanced and touched the mother on the shoulder.

"Your son is alive!"

"Where?"

"Will you promise not to hinder us leaving this house if I tell you?"

"Yes, yes."

"Will you promise to keep the confession which you have heard secret until we have left England?"

"I promise anything. In heaven's name, woman, if you have a woman's heart, speak! Where is my son?"

Sarah Purfoy rose over the enemy who had defeated her, and said, in level, deliberate accents, "They call him Rufus Dawes. He is a convict at Norfolk Island, transported for life for the murder which you heard my husband confess to having committed—Ah!"

Lady Devine had fainted.

Sarah flew to Rex. "Rouse yourself, John! We have not a moment!"

John Rex passed his hand over his forehead wearily.

"I cannot think. I am broken down. I am ill. My brain seems dead."

Nervously watching the prostrate figure on the floor, she hurried on bonnet, cloak and veil, and in a twinkling had him outside the house and into a cab.

"You won't give me up?" said Rex, turning dull eyes upon her.

"Give you up! No! But the police will be after us so soon as that woman can speak, and her brother summon his lawyer. I know what her promise is worth. We have got about fifteen hours."

"I can't go far, Sarah," said he; "I am sleepy, and stupid."

She repressed the terrible fear that tugged at her heart, and strove to rally him.

"Now, sit still and be good, while I go and get some money for you."

She hurried into the bank, and her name secured her an interview with the manager at once.

"That's a rich woman," said one of the clerks to his friend.

"A widow, too! Chance for you, Tom," returned the other; and, presently, from out the sacred presence came another clerk with a request for "a draft on Sydney for three thousand, less premium," and bearing a check signed "Sarah Carr," for two hundred pounds, which he "took" in notes, and so returned again. From the bank she was taken to a shipping office.

"I want a cabin in the first ship for Sydney, please. When does the Dido sail?"

"To-morrow morning. She is at Plymouth, waiting for the mails. If you go down to-night by the mail train, which

leaves at 9:30, you will be in plenty of time, and we will telegraph."

"I will take the cabin."

John Rex was gnawing his nails in sullen apathy. She displayed the passage ticket. "You are saved. By the time Mr. Devine gets his wits together, and his sister recovers her speech, we shall be past pursuit."

"To Sydney?" cried Rex, angrily, looking at the warrant. "Why there?"

Sarah surveyed him with an expression of contempt. "Because your scheme had failed. Now, this is mine. You have deserted me once; you will not do so again in any other country. You are a murderer, a villain and a coward; but you suit me. I save you, but I mean to keep you. I will bring you to Australia, where the first trooper will arrest you at my bidding as an escaped convict. If you don't like to come, stay behind. I don't care. I am rich. I have done no wrong. The law cannot touch me. Do you agree?"

Having housed him at last—all gloomy and despondent—in a quiet tavern near the railway station, she tried to get some information as to this last-revealed crime.

"How came you to kill Lord Bellasis?" she asked him, quietly.

"I had found out from my mother that she was his deserted wife, and one day riding home from a pigeon match I told him so. He taunted me, and I struck him. I did not mean to kill him, but he was an old man, and in my passion I struck hard. As he fell, I thought I saw a horseman among the trees, and I galloped off. My ill luck began then, for the same night I was arrested at the corner's."

"But I thought there was robbery?" said she.

"Not by me. But talk no more about it! I am sick—my brain is going round. I want to sleep."

"Be careful, please! Lift him gently!" said Mrs. Carr, as the boat ranged alongside the Dido, gaunt and grim, in the early dawn of a bleak May morning.

"Gentleman seems to have had a stroke," said a boatman.

It was so. There was no fear that John Rex would escape again from the woman he had deceived. The infernal genius of Sarah Purfoy had saved her lover at last—but saved him only that she might nurse him till he died—died, ignorant even of her tenderness, a mere animal, lacking the intellect he had in his selfish wickedness abused.

## CHAPTER XXX.

"This is my story. Let it plead with you."

It had grown dark in the prison, and as he ceased speaking, Rufus Dawes felt a trembling hand seize his own. It was that of the chaplain.

"Let me hold your hand! Sir Richard Devine did not murder your father. He was murdered by a horseman who, riding with him, struck him and fled."

"How do you know this?"

"Because I saw the murder committed, because—don't let go my hand—I robbed the body."

"You?"

"In my youth I was a gambler. Lord Bellasis won money from me, and to pay him I forged two bills of exchange. Unscrupulous and cruel, he threatened to expose me if I did not give him double the sum. Forgery was death in those days, and I strained every nerve to buy back the proofs of my folly. I succeeded. I was to meet Lord Bellasis near his own house at Hempstead on the night of which you speak, to pay the money and receive the bills. When I saw him fall I galloped up, but instead of pursuing his murderer I rifled his pocketbook of my forgeries. I was afraid to give evidence at the trial, or I might have saved you. Ah! you have let go my hand!"

"God forgive you!" said Rufus Dawes, and then was silent.

"Speak!" cried North. "Speak, or you will make me mad. Reproach me! Spurn me! Spit upon me! You cannot think worse of me than I do myself."

But the other, his head buried in his hands, did not answer, and, with a wild gesture, North staggered out of the cell.

Nearly an hour had passed since the chaplain had placed the rum flask in his hand, and Gimblett observed, with semi-drunken astonishment, that it was not yet empty. If he did not finish the flask, he would be oppressed with an everlasting regret. If he did finish it, he would be drunk; and to be drunk on duty was the one unpardonable sin. He looked across the darkness of the sea, to where the rising and falling light marked the schooner. The commandant was a long way off! A faint breeze which had arisen with the night, brought up to him the voices of the boat's crew from the jetty below him. His friend Jack Mannix was coxswain of her. He would give Jack a drink. Leaving the gate, he advanced to the edge of the embankment, and, putting his head over, called out to his friend. The breeze, however, which was momentarily freshening, carried his voice away; and Jack Mannix, hearing nothing, continued his conversation. Gimblett was just drunk enough to be virtuously indignant at this incivility, and seating himself on the edge of the bank, swallowed the remainder of the rum at a draught. The effect upon his enforcedly temperate stomach was very touching. He made one feeble attempt to get upon his legs, cast a reproachful glance at the rum bottle, essayed to drink out of its spirituous emptiness, and then, with a smile of

reckless contentment, fell fast asleep.

North, coming out of the prison, did not notice the absence of the jailer; indeed, he was not in a condition to notice anything. Bare-headed, without his cloak, with staring eyes and clinched hands, he rushed through the gates into the night as one who flies headlong from some fearful vision. It seemed that, absorbed in his own thoughts, he took no heed to his steps, for instead of taking the path which led to the sea, he kept along the more familiar one that led to his own cottage on the hill. "This man a convict!" he cried. "He is a hero—a martyr! What a life! Love! Yes, that is love indeed! Oh, James North, how base art thou in the eyes of God beside this despised outcast!" And so muttering, tearing his gray hair, and beating his throbbing temples with clinched hands, he reached his own room. Already he fancied he could see the speck that was the schooner move slowly away from the prison shore. He must not linger; they would be waiting for him at the jetty. As he turned, the moonbeams—as yet unobscured by the rapidly gathering clouds—flung a silver streak across the sea, and across that streak North saw a boat pass. Was his distracted brain playing him false?—In the stern sat, wrapped in a cloak, the figure of a man! A fierce gust of wind drove the sea-rack over the moon, and the boat disappeared, as though swallowed up by the gathering storm. North staggered back as the truth struck him.

Was it possible that a just heaven had thus decided to allow the man whom a coward had condemned to escape, and to punish the coward who remained? Oh, this man deserved freedom; he was honest, noble, truthful! How different from himself—a hateful self-lover, a drunkard! The looking glass stood upon the table, and North, peering into it, started in insane rage at the pale face and bloodshot eyes he saw there. What a hateful wretch he had become!

(To be continued.)

## CIGARS WILL COST MORE.

Great Damage Caused to the Cuban Tobacco Crop.

The American charge de affairs at Havana has reported to the State Department that the tobacco crop of the finest regions in Cuba is almost a total loss, says the Washington Star. The destruction is the result of torrential rains, which will reduce the yield from 469,328 bales, the figures of 1905, to less than 160,000 bales for 1906. This amount will in all probability be still further reduced, as the acreage this year is smaller than that of the previous crop.

The effect of the torrential rains has been to blight the seedlings, and the next crop will be almost a flat failure. As it takes at least 110 days from the planting of the seed to the cutting of the mature leaf, there will be a long interval of distress and shortage.

The government has received appeals for aid from many quarters, and proposes a series of public works which will give some relief to the workmen thrown out of employment and will tend to control the rivers in case of future floods and heavy rains.

The shortage in the supply of the tobacco leaf which is now assured will affect prices to a considerable degree. The market already has been strongly influenced, and a corresponding rise in the price of cigars must inevitably follow. The American smoking public will feel the increase in price before the foreigner, owing to the fact that the American consumer prefers the "green" cigar, while the Englishman, German and Frenchman place a higher value on the "seasoned" cigar. In England and Germany it is possible, consequently, to keep on hand large stocks of cigars. The American importer prefers a much smaller stock because of the fact that he has superior and more numerous advantages for obtaining new supplies of the weed in a short time. Furthermore, the enormous import duty on cigars undoubtedly operates strongly in discouraging the American importer of limited capital from laying in a large stock of cigars.

## Whipped 524 Pupils.

Alfred Bunker of Boston has become famous, not because he has been a schoolmaster forty-seven years, but because he has whipped 524 pupils of the Quincy school during the last half year of 1905. The school board has declared that it was not necessary to whip a single child, and Bunker is facing a crisis. His pupils are a hard set, being largely Poles, Italians, Syrians, Armenians and Jews, and the district is, of course, illiterate. Consequently, the pupils of the Quincy school were without home influence for betterment. Their educating influences began when they came into the school and ended when they left it. Moreover, it was peculiarly difficult to understand their natures. The duty devolved upon the principal and staff of the Quincy school, first, to get close to these children of foreign birth or foreign parentage; next, to keep them in order; next, to teach them the rudiments of knowledge.

## Not Friends.

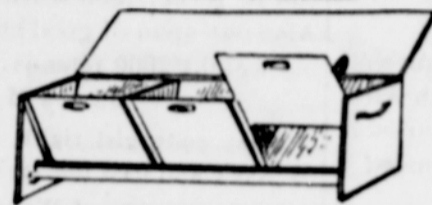
"Your ready repartee has made you many friends," said the sincere admirer.

"Your mistake is a common one," answered Miss Cayenne. "They are not friends. They are merely an audience."—Washington Star.



## Automatic Chicken Feeder.

The feed box or trough at the bottom for the chickens to eat out of is made out of 1x6 inch boards, 3 feet long, with slats on the side 3 inches wide, making the trough 2 inches deep; end pieces of 1-inch lumber, 1 foot wide, 18 inches high. The middle partitions are cut 6 inches wide at the bottom to fit bottom of trough 3 inches high, then tapers out to 10 inches at top, that makes it a V-shape from both sides, so chickens can eat from either side of feeder. One side is fastened to end pieces and middle partitions, the other side has pieces to slide up and down between cleats, so you can shut the feed clear off or raise it up any height according to what you have in the bins. The bottoms of these bins are 1 inch from bottom of feed trough, so as the chickens eat more feed it will come down. You can have corn in one, wheat



THE AUTOMATIC CHICKEN FEEDER.

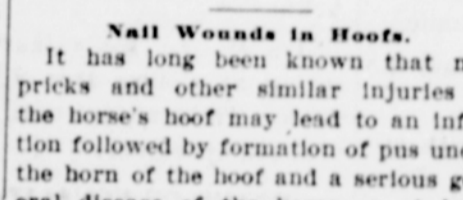
in one and grit or oyster shells in a third. The chickens can help themselves whenever they want to eat, and their feed is always clean and they can't waste their feed by getting it in the mud or snow, and the lid is on hinges, so it can be shut down and fastened, so that feed is perfectly dry. Each bin will hold one peck of feed.—Farm Progress.

## Nail Wounds in Hoofs.

It has long been known that nail pricks and other similar injuries in the horse's hoof may lead to an infection followed by formation of pus under the horn of the hoof and a serious general disease of the horse or at least the loss of the hoof. In a bulletin of the South Dakota Station, Moore has recently reported results obtained in a number of cases from applying a strict antiseptic treatment to injuries of this sort. The method consists in paring away the horn of the hoof from the affected part until the blood oozes out. The hoof is then thoroughly washed in a solution of bichlorid of mercury at the rate of one part to 500 of water, after which absorbent cotton saturated in a solution of the same strength is applied to the wound and the whole hoof is packed in cotton surrounded by a bandage and well coated with tar. This prevents any further filth from coming in contact with the wound. The operation must usually be done by a qualified veterinarian. Subsequent treatment, however, can be applied by the average farmer, since all that is necessary is to pour a little of this solution of bichlorid of mercury upon the cotton which projects from the upper part of the bandage. The cotton will absorb enough of the solution to keep the wound moistened and hasten the healing process.

## Fine Wool Sheep.

The Wensleydale breed of sheep is far from common even in its home, England. None is in America. It is a fine sheep, superior in some respects to all others. It is said that for cross-



A TYPICAL WENSLEYDALE.

ing on any other breed the Wensleydale has no equal. Since the Royal Agricultural Society of England commenced giving prizes for wool three years ago, the Wensleydale wool has each time secured first prize in the "any other long-wooled class." No long wool produced in the British Isles is equal to the Wensleydale in quality or value.

Many varieties of potatoes come and go, and, but for the introduction of new varieties, potatoes would soon be scarce. This is due to the careless selection of seed. All the tubers of a crop are sold for seed, when only the best should be selected. If only the largest tubers from the thriftiest and strongest plants were retained for seed, there would be an improvement in the old varieties instead of deterioration in quality. But as long as seed potatoes bring good prices, there will be both good and inferior seed used.

Use of Coal Ashes. While coal ashes contain no fertilizing value they are certainly useful on the farm and should be saved. They are not entirely valueless in the soil, for they will materially assist in making a stiff clay soil more workable if well mixed with it. The best use for coal ashes, however, is in the filling in of wet spots, sifting them and using the fine ashes in the dust boxes in the poultry houses and the coarser portions for the making of walks alone or mixed with gravel. They may be used to advantage as a mulch around trees mainly for the purpose of keeping the soil moist and keeping grass from growing around them.

Apply a Good Fertilizer. The value of vegetables depends largely upon quick growth, and if crops are not growing well some quick-acting fertilizer like nitrate of soda, guano or poultry droppings, should be worked into the soil close to the roots. Frequent cultivation of the soil with the cultivator, rake or hoe will often be all that is necessary.

Vines in the Barnyard. The barn should never be built near the house, and wherever it is, it should be kept as sanitary as the house itself. A country barnyard should be as neat and tidy as the dooryard. There is no reason why vines should not grow over the walls and fences, and trees shade the inclosed animals. It is possible to have lilacs and mock oranges growing around the barn, as freely as about the shrubbery. The animals are not any less happy, and one can pick great bunches for oneself and friends.

## Use the Poultry Yard.

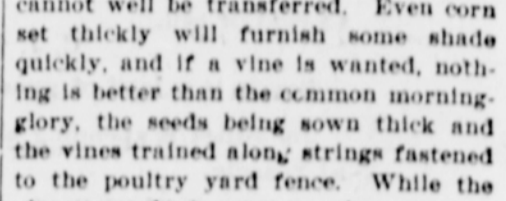
If it is necessary to confine the poultry during the summer and the inclosure cannot be placed near the shade of buildings or trees, try the plan of growing some plants just outside the fence, but far enough from it so that the fowls cannot get at the foliage. One of the best plants for the purpose is the canna, using the cheap, tall-growing sorts, and buying the roots, not the seeds. Another quick growing plant, one which will make an abundance of shade is the castor bean, which may be grown from seeds planted where they are to stay; that is, the young plants cannot well be transferred. Even corn set thickly will furnish some shade quickly, and if a vine is wanted, nothing is better than the common morning-glory, the seeds being sown thick and the vines trained along strings fastened to the poultry yard fence. While the vines or plants are growing erect a rough roof of boards open on all sides to supply temporary shade.

## A Pointed Question.

Two cows cost \$40 each per year for keep. One of them yields you 4,000 quarts of milk a year, that bring you \$86. The other yields 120 quarts, that bring you \$26. The latter loses for you about \$14 and reduces the gain on the former from \$46 to \$32. Why do you keep the 1,200-quart cow? You would be better off with the one that clears \$46, for you would have only half the investment, half the work, and half the feeding, and you would gain \$14 each year. There would be no surplus butter on the market for years to come and prices would rule strong if the cows were eliminated which are kept at a loss. Dairy farmers have not yet half waked up to an understanding of the great practical importance of weeding out the unprofitable cows from their herds. Many a man would make a fair profit, that now faces a constant loss, if he would keep only such cows as pay a profit on their keep.—Farm Journal.

## Farm Irrigation Plant.

A current wheel to run a chain and bucket gearing is quite feasible for farm irrigation purposes. Herewith is given an illustration of such a wheel for operating a chain and bucket. The diagram is self-explanatory.



IRRIGATION BY CURRENT WHEEL.

## Hauling Hay.

It is a very desirable thing to be able to haul all the hay into the barn the same day it is cut. The worry and anxiety consequent upon the liability of a storm before mowing are thus avoided, and experience has taught that hay having no more than three or four hours' sun will come out in the spring perfectly sweet and in fine condition for the cattle. In adopting this plan it is well to keep the hay constantly stirred with a tedder. There has been a fear of putting hay into some barns that contain a noticeable amount of water, but if it is properly packed by being evenly distributed over the mow, each forkful trodden upon, and the barn kept closed as much as possible, the result will probably be gratifying.

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