

# The COURAGE of CAPTAIN PLUM

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARCUS G. KETNER

## CHAPTER XII.

### Marion Freed From Bondage.

"Gone!" moaned Winsome again. "She has gone—back to—Strang!"

Nell was crawling to them like a wounded animal across the sand. She started toward him but Nathaniel stopped her.

"She is the king's wife!" His throat was swollen so that he could hardly speak.

"No. They are to be married tonight. Oh, I thought she was going to stay!" She tore herself away from him to go to Nell, who had fallen upon his face exhausted, a dozen yards away.

In the wet sand, where the incoming waves lapped his hands and feet, Nathaniel sank down, his eyes staring out into the shimmering distance where Marion had gone. His brain was in a daze, and he wondered if he had been stricken by some strange madness—if this all was but some passing phantasm that would soon leave him again to his misery and his despair.

But the dash of the cold water against him cleared away his doubt. Marion had come to him. She had saved him from death. And now she was gone.

And she was not the king's wife! He staggered to his feet again and plunged into the lake until the water reached to his waist, calling her name, entreating her in weak, half choked cries to come back to him.

The water soaked through to his hot, numb body, restoring his reason and strength, and he buried his face in it and drank like one who had been near to dying of thirst. Then he returned to Nell. Winsome was holding his head in her arms.

He dropped upon his knees beside them and saw that life was returning full and strong in Nell's face.

"You will be able to walk in a few minutes," he said. "You and Winsome must leave here. We are on the mainland and if you follow the shore northward you will come to the settlements. I am going back for Marion."

Nell made an effort to follow him as he rose to his feet.

"Nat—Nat—wait!" Winsome held him back, frightened, tightening her arms about him.

"You must go with Winsome," urged Nathaniel, seizing the hand that Nell stretched up to him. "You must take her to the first settlement up the coast. I will come back to you with Marion."

He spoke confidently, as a man who sees his way open clearly before him, and yet as he turned, half running, to the low black shadow of the distant forest he knew that he was beginning a blind fight against fate. If he could find a hunter's cabin, a fisherman's shanty—a boat.

Barely had he disappeared when a voice called to him. It was Winsome. The girl ran up to him holding something in her hand. It was a pistol. "You may need it!" she exclaimed. "We brought two!"

Nathaniel reached out hesitatingly, but not to take the weapon. Gently, as though his touch was about to fall upon some fragile flower, he drew the girl to him, took her beautiful face between his two strong hands and gazed steadily and silently for a moment into her eyes.

"God bless you, little Winsome!" he whispered. "I hope that some day you will—forgive me."

"If I have anything to forgive—you are forgiven."

The pistol dropped upon the sand, her hands stole to his shoulders.

"I want you to take something to Marion for me," she whispered softly. "This!"

"And she kissed him."

Her eyes shone upon him like a benediction.

"You have given me a new life, you have given me—Nell! My prayers are with you."

And kissing him again, she slipped away from under his hands before he could speak.

ment added to his faith in himself. Before noon he would be on his way to the Mormon kingdom, by nightfall he would be upon its shores. After that—

He examined the pistol that Winsome had given him. There were five shots in it and he smiled joyously as he saw that it had been loaded by an experienced hand. It would be easy enough for him to find Strang. He would not consider the woman—his wife. The king's wife! Like a flash there occurred to him the incident of the battlefield. Was it this woman—the woman who had begged him to spare the life of the prophet who had knelt beside him, and whispered in his ear, and kissed him? Had that been her reward for the sacrifice she believed he had made for her in the castle chamber? The thought of this woman, whose beauty and love breathed the sweet purity of a flower and whose faith in her king and master was still unbroken even in her hour of reputation fell upon him heavily. For there was no choice, no shadow of alternative. There was but one way for him to break the bondage of the girl he loved.

For hours he trod steadily through the sand. The sun rose above him, hot and blistering, and the dunes still stretched out ahead of him, like windows and hills and mountains of glittering glass. Gradually the desert became narrower. Far ahead he could see where the forest came down to the shore and his heart grew lighter.

Half an hour later he entered the margin of trees. Almost immediately he found signs of life. A tree had been felled and cut into wood. A short distance beyond he came suddenly upon a narrow path, beaten hard by the passing of feet, and leading toward the lake. He had meant to rest under the shade of these trees but now he forgot his fatigue. For a moment he hesitated. Far back in the forest he heard the barking of a dog—but he turned in the opposite direction. If there was a boat the path would take him to it. Through a break in the trees he caught the green sweep of marsh rice and his heart beat excitedly with hope. Where there was rice there were wild fowl, and surely there were wild fowl there would be a punt or a canoe! In his eagerness he ran, and where the path ended, the flags and rice beaten into the mud and water, he stopped with an exultant cry. At his feet was a canoe. It was wet, as though just drawn out of the water, and a freshly used paddle was lying across the bow. Picking him up he took a quick and cautious glance about him he shoved the frail craft into the lake and with a few quick strokes buried himself in the rice grass. When he emerged from it he was half a mile from the shore.

For a long time he sat motionless, looking out over the shimmering sea. Far to the south and west he could make out the dim outline of Beaver Island, while over the trail he had come, mile upon mile, lay the glittering dunes. Somewhere between the white desert sand and that distant coast of the Mormon kingdom Marion was making her way back to bondage.

Nathaniel had given up all hope of overtaking her now. Long before he could intercept her she would have reached the island. When he started again he paddled slowly, and laid out for himself the plan that he was to follow. There must be no mistake this time, no error in judgment, no rashness in his daring. He would lie in hiding until dusk, and then under cover of darkness he would hunt down Strang and kill him. After that he would fly to his canoe and escape. A little later, perhaps that very night if fate played the game well for him, he would return for Marion. And yet, as he went over and over his scheme, whipping himself into caution—into cool deliberation—there burned in his blood a fire that once or twice made him set his teeth hard, a fire that defied extinction, that smoldered only to await the breath that would fan it into a fierce blaze. It was the fire that had urged him into the rescue at the whipping post, that had sent him single handed to invade the king's castle, that had hurled him into the hopeless battle upon the shore. He swore at himself softly, laughingly, as he paddled steadily toward Beaver Island.

The sun mounted straight and hot over his head; he paddled more slowly, and rested more frequently, as it descended into the west, but it still lacked two hours of sinking behind the island forest when the white water-rim of the shore came within his vision. He had meant to hold off the coast until the approach of evening, but changed his mind and landed, concealing his canoe in a spot which he marked well, for he knew it would soon be useful to him again. Deep shadows were already gathering in the forest and through these Nathaniel made his way slowly in the direction of St. James. Between him and the town lay Marion's home and the path that led to Obadiah's. Once more the spirit of impatience, of action, stirred within him. Would Marion go first to her home? Involuntarily he changed his course so that it would bring him to the clearing. He assured himself that it would do no harm, that he still would take no chances.

He came out in the strip of dense forest between the clearing and St. James, worming his way cautiously through the underbrush until he could look out into the opening. A single glance and he drew back in astonishment. He looked again, and his face turned suddenly white, and an almost insupportable cry fell from his lips. There was no longer a cabin in the clearing. Where it had been there now gathered a crowd of men and boys.

Above their heads he saw a thin film of smoke and he knew what had happened. Marion's home had burned! But what was the crowd doing? It hung close in about the smoldering ruins as if every person in it were striving to reach a common center. Surely a mere fire would not gather and hold a throng like this.

Nathaniel rose to his feet and thrust his head and shoulders from his hiding-place. He heard a loud shout near him and drew back quickly as a boy rushed madly across the opening toward the crowd crying out at the top of his voice. He had come out of the path that led to St. James. No sooner had he reached the group about the burned cabin than there came a change that added to Nathaniel's bewilderment. He heard loud voices, the excited shouting of men and the shrill cries of boys, and the crowd suddenly began to move, thinning itself out until it was racing in a black stream toward the Mormon city. In his excitement Nathaniel hurried toward the path. From the concealment of a clump of bushes he watched the people as they rushed past him a dozen paces away. Behind all the others there came a figure that drew a sharp cry from him as he leaped from his hiding-place. It was Obadiah Price.

"Obadiah!" he called. "Obadiah Price!"

The old man turned. His face was livid. He was chattering to himself, and he chattered still as he ran up to Nathaniel. He betrayed no surprise at seeing him, and yet there was the insane grip of steel in the two hands that clutched fiercely at Nathaniel's. "You have come in time, Nat!" he panted joyfully. "You have come in time! Hurry—hurry—hurry!"

He ran back into the clearing, with Nathaniel close at his side, and pointed to the smoking ruins of the cabin among the lilacs.

"They were killed last night!" he cried shrilly. "Somebody murdered them and burned them with the house! They are dead—dead!"

"Who?" shouted Nathaniel.

Obadiah had stopped and was rubbing and twisting his hands in his old, mad way.

"The old folks. Ho, ho, the old folks, of course! They are dead—dead—dead!"

He fairly shrieked the words. Then, for a moment, he stood tightly clutching his thin hands over his chest in a powerful effort to control himself.

"They are dead!" he repeated.

He spoke more calmly, and yet there was something so terrible in his eyes, something so harshly vibrant of elation in the quivering pulsation of his voice that Nathaniel felt himself filled with a strange horror. He caught him by the arm, shaking him as he would have shaken a child.

"Where is Marion?" he asked. "Tell me, Obadiah—where is Marion?"

The counselor seemed not to have heard him. A singular change came into his face and his eyes traveled beyond Nathaniel. Following his glance the young man saw that three men had appeared from the scorched shrubbery about the burned house and were hurrying toward them. Without shifting his eyes Obadiah spoke to him quickly.

"Those are king's sheriffs, Nat," he said. "They know me. In a moment they will recognize you. The United States warship Michigan has just arrived in the harbor to arrest Strang. If you can reach the cabin and hold it for an hour you will be saved. Quick—you must run—"

"Where is Marion?"

"At the cabin! She is at—"

Nathaniel waited to hear no more, but sped toward the breach in the forest that marked the beginning of the path to Obadiah's. The shouts of the king's men came to him unheeded. At the edge of the woods he glanced back and saw that they had overtaken the counselor. As he ran he drew his pistol and in his wild joy he lunged back a shout of defiance to the men who were pursuing him. Marion was at the cabin—and a government ship had come to put an end to the reign of the Mormon king! He shouted Marion's name as he came in sight of the cabin; he cried it aloud as he bounded up the low steps.

"Marion—Marion!"

In front of the door that led to the tiny chamber in which he had taken Obadiah's gold he saw a figure. For a moment he was blinded by his sudden dash from the light of day into the gloom of the cabin, and he saw only that a figure was standing there as still as death. His pistol dropped to the floor. He stretched out his arms, and his voice sobbed in its entreaty as he whispered the girl's name. In response to that whisper

came a low, glad cry, and Marion lay trembling on his breast.

"I have come back for you!" he breathed.

He felt her heart beating against him. He pressed her closer, and her arms slipped about his neck.

"I have come back for you!" He was almost crying, like a boy, in his happiness.

"I love you, I love you—" He felt the warm touch of her lips. "You will go with me?"

"If you want me—after you know what I am—" She shuddered against his breast, and he raised her face between his two hands and kissed her until she drew away from him, crying softly.

"You must wait—you must wait!" (To be Continued.)

## GRAVEL TRAIN NOT POPULAR

Admitted to Be Necessary, But No Railroad Man Really Loves It.

Like the fat man of the comedy, the gravel train is loved by no one. Yet its awkward moves and blundering attempts to get out of the way of the principal actors must be tolerated on the railroad stage where are produced the tragedies and problem plays of the nation. This apparently inconsequent supererogatory goes on making its entrances at the wrong time, causing the stage manager of the system to fume at the awkward situations thus created and even those who sit back on easy cushions to fret at the tangle. But like the spear carrier who paves the way for the coming king, it will be easily forgotten when the gloriously arrayed principal—the limited—holds the center.

The gravel train is the dispatcher's bane. In his game of "Pigs in Clover," after he thinks he has all the little trains safely rolling toward the pockets it is this work special that bumps into view and reminds him that it must be taken care of. He lifts the train sheet puzzle this way and that and after all of the train balls have been shifted unconsciously, finally lands a part of them in the terminal or dividend clover field. He must let the gravel train work just as long as it can before it starts to hiding on some nearby switch, for the ballasting work must be ended as soon as possible.

Conductors of the passenger and freight trains regard the crawling laborer as a special effort of some undefinable enemy to mar their records for that ever sounding virtue, "getting over the road." In expressing this they forget that the man in charge of the lumber train ranks as high in "the brotherhood" as they and greetings are as strenuous as in the pioneer days of "back-up-your-own-train" railroading.

The head of the maintenance of way department breathes a sigh when the season of ballasting is over, for during that time his responsibility is a convenient peg for trainmen to hang upon all sorts of possible delays. Even the section foreman and, below him, his men do not welcome the graveling season, for it means whipping up above the average working gang.

Known by Numbers In America, But In Other Countries They Cling to Old Style.

When the railroads first broke their way through the prejudices of our fathers one of the forces behind them, as opposed to these prejudices, was the romantic affection for the project that every builder has for his work. In no way was this more cleverly shown than in the naming of locomotives.

By and by this land of the prosaic, of figures, of standardized parts, abandoned the flower nomenclature of the old days and in place of the Thunder or came the 999; the General was succeeded by some such bald fact as the 146, and the thousand men who worked upon a single engine made engine parts that would as well have fitted the 999 as the 146.

But in the old world standardization of parts, rapid building and pooling of engines were not allowed to rob the mchty flyers of all their romance. In their names is still recorded the popular worship of some soldier idol of glorious battlefield or loyalty to a leader or ruler.

The Sevastopol, Inkerman and Alma were succeeded by the Tel-el-Kebr, Alexandria, Omderman and Atbara, which have in turn given place to the

Baden-Powell, Ladysmills, Mafeking, Sir George White or Kimberley, while such names as Beatrice and Princess of Wales pay their tribute of popularity to the reigning house. Even the first of that most unromantic of all locomotives, the oil burner, was elevated into the Petrolia.

In fact, so numerous are the named locomotives that considerable ingenuity is required in the invention of new names. The Great Western is now drawing upon the floral kingdom, and Hyacinths, Lobelias, Gardenias and other delicate blossoms are blooming smokily along its right of way, while the saints of earth and the angels of heaven have long ago been drawn to the point of exhaustion—that is, exhaustion of the locomotive builder's familiarity with them.—Railroad Man's Magazine.

A Railroad to the Mer de Glace. One of the most recent mountain railroad enterprises in the Mont Blanc region is the light steam railroad line which has been built near Chamounix. It is known as the Mont-emvers line and is designed to take tourists up the steep mountain side, so as to enable them to reach the immense glacier known as the Mer de Glace, which is one of the most visited places of the region, lying amid lofty mountain peaks. Before the above-mentioned railroad was built tourists had to make a difficult climb either on foot or on mule back over a steep and rocky mountain path and the ascent and descent took the greater part of half a day. There was thus a great demand for a comfortable and rapid means of reaching this elevated point. By the new railroad, the Mer de Glace, the station of Mont-emvers, which overlooks the great glacier, can be reached within 50 minutes after a comfortable trip, so that the view of the glacier can be enjoyed without fatigue.—Cassier's Magazine.

Spectacular Scene at Fire. Sensational scenes were witnessed at a fire which broke out recently in the St. Petersburg palace of Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch, which contains great art treasures and much valuable plate. Several notable pictures by Rubens and Watteau, valued at more than \$65,000, were destroyed. Two servants perished in the flames, while many were injured. Some 15 persons endeavored to escape by fleeing across the iron roof of the burning palace, which, after the cutting of the electric cables, suddenly became electrified. The refugees appeared to be suffering fearfully from the electric shocks, and were seen to dance grotesquely amid the rising flames. They were eventually saved by the fire brigade, the members of which donned india rubber shoes.

Prominent Moorish Statesman. Benafus, the representative of Mulai Hafid, the sultan of Morocco, in the Mannesmann affair in Berlin, is described as a handsome, dark skinned, black bearded, bright eyed man of middle age. His snow white flowing robes make him a conspicuous figure wherever he goes. Having been asked by people with whom he became acquainted for a portrait, he posed for one, assuming a unique attitude for the purpose. The picture shows him reclining on a divan, with his right hand holding his left naked foot, which rests on the right knee. The picture is in strange contrast with those of his associates in the commercial affairs which brought him to Germany.

The Conservation of Nature's Resources applies as well to our physical state as to material things. C. J. Budlong, Washington, D. C., realized his condition, and took warning before it was too late. He says: "I suffered severely from kidney trouble, the disease being hereditary in our family. I have taken four bottles of Foley's Kidney Remedy, and now consider myself thoroughly cured. This should be a warning to all not to neglect taking Foley's Kidney Remedy until it is too late." McBride & Will Drug Company.

Chinese Telegraph. The Chinese, owing to the multiplicity of the characters in their written language, have solved the problem of telegraphy by using numbers for transmission over the wire instead of characters. The numbers have to be reinterpreted into characters when received.

From Home of the Cranberry. Cape Cod figures that she produced last year about 250,000 barrels of cranberries out of the 650,000 produced in the whole country. Let Cape Cod furnish the cranberries to the people and she cares not who provides the turkeys to go with them.—Boston Globe.

## ENGINES NO LONGER NAMED

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