

For the Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)
Sylvia flashed burning red at this indignity. "Frightened! If there had been anybody else here but women, you never would have taken the brig. Frightened! Let me pass, prisoner!"

As Mrs. Vickers descended the hatchway, the boat with Frere and the soldiers came within musket-range, and Lesly, according to orders, fired his musket over their heads, shouting to them to lay to. But Frere, boiling with rage at the manner in which the tables had been turned on him, had determined not to resign his lost authority without a struggle. Disregarding the summons, he came straight on, with his eyes fixed on the vessel. It was now nearly dark, and the figures on the deck were indistinguishable. The indignant lieutenant could not guess at the condition of affairs. Suddenly, from out of the darkness, a voice hailed him.

"Hold water! back water!" it cried, and was then seemingly choked in its owner's throat.

The voice was the property of Mr. Bates. Standing near the side, he had observed Rex and Fair bring up a great pig of iron, erst used as part of the ballast of the brig, and poise it on the rail. Their intention was but too evident; and honest Bates, like a faithful watchdog, barked to warn his master. Bloodthirsty Cheshire caught him by the throat, and Frere, unheeding, ran the boat alongside, under the very nose of the revengeful Rex. The mass of iron fell half in-board on the now stayed boat, and gave her sternway, with a splintered plank.

"Villains!" cried Frere, "would you swamp us? What do they mean to do next?"

The answer came pat to the question. From the dark hull of the brig broke a flash and a report, and a musket ball cut the water beside them with a chirping noise. Between the black indistinct mass which represented the brig and the glimmering water was visible a white speck, which gradually neared them.

"Come alongside with ye," hailed a voice, "or it will be worse for ye!"

"They want to murder us," says Frere. "Give way, men!"

But the two soldiers, exchanging glances one with the other, pulled the boat's head round and made for the vessel. "It's no use, Mr. Frere," said the man nearest him. "We can do no good now, and they won't hurt us, I dare say."

"You are in league with them!" bursts out Frere, purple with indignation. "Do you mutiny?"

"Come, come, sir," returned the soldier, sulkily; "this ain't the time to bully; and as for mutiny, why, one man's about as good as another just now."

When they reached the brig they found that the jolly boat had been lowered and laid alongside. In her were eleven persons—Bates, with forehead gashed and hands bound; the stunned Grimes, Russen and Fair pulling; Lyon, Riley, Cheshire and Lesly with muskets, and John Rex in the stern sheets, with Bates' pistols in his trousers' belt and a loaded musket across his knees. The white object which had been seen by the men in the whaleboat was a large white shawl which wrapped Mrs. Vickers and Sylvia.

By the direction of Rex, the whaleboat was brought alongside the jolly boat, and Cheshire and Lesly boarded her. Lesly then gave his musket to Rex, and bound Frere's hands behind him in the same manner as had been done for Bates. Frere attempted to resist this indignity; but Cheshire, clapping his musket to his ear, swore he would blow out his brains if he uttered another syllable; and Frere, catching the malignant eye of John Rex, remembered how easily a twitch of the finger would pay off old scores, and was silent. "Step in here, sir, if you please," said Rex, with polite irony. "I am sorry to be compelled to tie you, but I must consult my own safety as well as your convenience." Frere scowled, and, stepping awkwardly into the jolly boat, fell. Pinioned as he was, he could not rise without assistance, and Russen pulled him roughly to his feet, with a coarse laugh. In his present frame of mind, that laugh galled him worse than his bonds.

Poor Mrs. Vickers, with a woman's quick instinct, saw this, and even amid her own trouble found leisure to console. "The wretches!" she said, under her breath, as Frere was flung down beside her. "To subject you to such indignity!" Sylvia said nothing and seemed to shrink from the lieutenant.

"Now, my lads," says Rex, who seemed to have evaded the cast-off authority of Frere, "we give you your choice. Stay at Hell's Gates or come with us; can't wait here all night. The wind is freshening, and we must make the start. Which is it to be?"

"We'll go with you!" says the man who had pulled stroke in the whaleboat, upon which utterance the convicts burst to joyous cries, and the pair were revived with much hand shaking. Then Rex, with Lyon and Riley as a yard, got into the whaleboat, and having loosed the two prisoners from their bonds, ordered them to take the places Russen and Fair. The whaleboat, as manned by the seven mutineers, steering, Fair, Russen and the two crews pulling, the other four standing with their muskets leveled at the jolly boat. Their long slavery had been such a dread of authority in these men that they feared it even when it is bound and menaced by four guns.

"Keep your distance!" shouted Cheshire, as Frere and Bates, in obedience to orders, began to pull the jolly boat toward the shore; and in this fashion was the dismal little party conveyed to the mainland.

It was night when they reached it, the clear sky began to thrill with stars, and yet unwarmed, and the sea, breaking gently upon the beach, seemed with a radiance born of their motion. Frere and Bates jumping ashore, helped out Mrs. Vickers, Sylvia and the wounded Grimes. This done under the muzzles of the muskets, Rex commanded that Bates and Rex should push the jolly boat as far

as they could from the shore, and Riley catching her by a boat hook as she came toward them, she was taken in tow.

"Now, boys," says Cheshire, "with a savage delight, 'three cheers for old England and liberty!'"

Upon which a great shout went up, echoed by the grim hills which had witnessed so many miseries.

CHAPTER XIV.
There is no need to dwell upon the mental agonies of that miserable night. Frere had a tinder box in his pocket, and made a fire with some dry leaves and sticks. Grimes fell asleep, and the two men sitting at their fire, discussed the chances of escape.

A discussion had arisen among the mutineers as to the propriety of at once making sail; but Barker, who had been one of the pilot boat crew, and knew the dangers of the bar, vowed that he would not undertake to steer the brig through the Gates until morning; and so the boats being secured astern, a strict watch was set, lest the helpless Bates should attempt to rescue the vessel. During the evening a feeling of pity for the unfortunate party on the mainland took possession of them. It was quite possible that the Osprey might be recaptured, in which case five useless murders would have been committed. John Rex, seeing how matters were going, made haste to take to himself the credit of mercy. He ruled, and had always ruled, his ruffians.

"I propose," said he, "that we divide the provisions. There are five of them and tea of us. Then nobody can blame us."

This reasoning was admitted and acted upon. There were in the harness cask about fifty pounds of salt meat, and a third of this quantity, together with half a small sack of flour, some tea and sugar mixed together in a bag, and an iron kettle and pannikin, were placed in the whaleboat. Cheshire, stumbling over a goat that had been taken on board from Phillip Island, caught the creature by the leg and threw it into the sea, bidding Rex take that with him also. Rex dragged the poor beast into the boat, and with this miscellaneous cargo pushed off to the shore. The poor goat, shivering, began to bleat piteously, and the men laughed. To a stranger it would have appeared that the boat contained a happy party of fishermen, or coast settlers, returning with the proceeds of a day's marketing.

Laying off as the water shallowed, Rex called to Bates to come for the cargo, and three men with muskets standing up as before, ready to resist any attempt at capture, the provisions, goat and all, were carried ashore. "There!" says Rex, "you can't say we've used you badly, for we've divided the provisions." The sight of this almost unexpected succor revived the courage of the five, and they felt grateful. After the horrible anxiety they had endured all that night, they were prepared to look with kindly eyes upon the men who had come to their assistance.

"Men," said Bates, with something like a sob in his voice, "I didn't expect this. You are good fellows, for there ain't much tucker aboard, I know."

"Yes," affirmed Frere, "you're good fellows."

Rex burst into a savage laugh. "Shut your mouth, you tyrant," said he, forgetting his dandyism in the recollection of his former suffering. "It ain't for your benefit. You may thank the lady and child for it."

Julia Vickers hastened to propitiate the arbiter of her daughter's fate. "We are obliged to you," she said, with a touch of quiet dignity resembling her husband's; "and if I ever get back safely I will take care that your kindness shall be known."

So, with cheers and waving of handkerchiefs, the boat departed.

A council of war was held, with Mr. Frere at the head of it, and the possessions of the little party were thrown into common stock.

It was found, upon a review of their possessions that they had among them three pocket-knives, a ball of string, three pipes and a fig of tobacco, a portion of fishing line, with hooks, and a big jackknife. But they saw with dismay that there was nothing which could be used axwile among the party. Mrs. Vickers had her shawl, and Bates a pea jacket, but Frere and Grimes were without extra clothing.

Having made these arrangements, the kettle, filled with water from the spring, was slung from three green sticks over the fire, and a pannikin of weak tea, together with a biscuit, served out to each of the party, save Grimes, who declared himself unable to eat. Breakfast over, Bates made a damper, which was cooked in the ashes, and then another council was held as to future habitation.

It was clearly evident that they could not sleep in the open air. It was the middle of summer, and though no annoyance from rain was apprehended, the heat in the middle of the day was most oppressive. At a little distance from the beach was a sandy rise, that led up to the face of the cliff, and on the eastern side of this rise grew a forest of young trees. Frere proposed to cut down these trees and make a sort of hut with them. It was soon discovered, however, that the pocket knives were insufficient for this purpose, but by dint of notching the young saplings, and then breaking them down, they succeeded, in a couple of hours, in collecting wood enough to roof over a space between the hollow rock which contained the provisions and another rock, in shape like a hammer, which jutted out within five yards of it. Mrs. Vickers and Sylvia were to have this hut as a sleeping place, and Frere and Bates, lying at the mouth of the larder, would act as a guard to it and them. Grimes was to make for himself another hut where the fire had been kindled on the previous night.

When they got back to dinner, inspired by this resolution, they found poor Mrs. Vickers in great alarm. Grimes, who by reason of the dent in his skull, had been left behind, was walking about the sea beach, talking mysteriously, and shaking his fist at an imaginary foe. On

going up to him they discovered that the blow had affected his brain, for he was delirious. Frere endeavored to soothe him, without effect, and at last, by Bates' advice, the poor fellow was rolled in the sea. The cold bath quelled his violence, and being laid beneath the shade of a rock hard by, he fell into a condition of great muscular exhaustion, and slept.

The condition of the unfortunate Grimes soon gave cause for the greatest uneasiness. From maundering foolishly, he had taken to absolute violence, and had to be watched by Frere. After much muttering and groaning, the poor fellow at last dropped off to sleep, and Frere, having assisted Bates to his sleeping place in front of the rock, and laid him down on a heap of green brushwood, prepared to snatch a few hours' slumber. Worn by excitement and the labors of the day, he slept heavily, but toward morning was awakened by a strange noise.

Grimes, whose delirium had apparently increased, had succeeded in forcing his way through the rude fence of brushwood, and had thrown himself upon Bates with the ferocity of insanity. Growling to himself, he had seized the unfortunate pilot by the throat, and the pair were struggling together. Bates, weakened by the sickness that had followed upon his wound in the head, was quite unable to cope with his desperate assailant, but, calling feebly upon Frere for help, he made shift to lay hold upon the jackknife of which we have before spoken. Frere, starting to his feet, rushed to the assistance of the pilot, but was too late. Grimes, enraged by the sight of the knife, tore it from Bates' grasp, and, before Frere could catch his arm, plunged it twice into the unfortunate man's breast.

"I'm a dead man!" cried Bates, faintly.

The sight of the blood, together with the exclamation of his victim, recalled Grimes to consciousness. He looked in bewilderment at the bloody weapon, and then flinging it from him, rushed away toward the sea, into which he plunged headlong.

Frere hurried to the side of Bates, and, lifting him up, strove to stanch the blood that flowed from his chest. It would seem that he had been resting himself on his left elbow, and that Grimes, snatching the knife from his right hand, had stabbed him twice in the right breast. He was pale and senseless, and Frere feared that the wound was mortal. Tearing off his neck handkerchief, he endeavored to bandage the wound, but found that the strip of silk was insufficient for the purpose. The noise had roused Mrs. Vickers, who, stifling her terror, made haste to tear off a portion of her dress, and with this a bandage of sufficient width was made. Sylvia brought some water from the spring, and Mrs. Vickers bathing Bates' head with this, he revived a little.

"Don't die, Mr. Bates—oh, don't die!" said Sylvia, standing, piteously, near, but afraid to touch him. "Don't leave mamma and me alone in this dreadful place!"

Poor Bates, of course, said nothing, but Frere frowned heavily, and Mrs. Vickers said reprovingly, "Sylvia!" just as if they had been in the old house on distant Sarah Island.

In the afternoon Frere went away to drag together some wood for the fire, and when he returned he found the pilot near his end. As the sun sank Bates rallied, but the two watchers knew that it was but the final flicker of the expiring candle. "He's going!" said Frere, at length, under his breath, as though fearful of awaking his half-slumbering soul. Mrs. Vickers, her eyes streaming with silent tears, lifted the honest head and moistened the parched lips with her soaked handkerchief. A tremor shook the once stalwart limbs, and the dying man opened his eyes. For an instant he seemed bewildered, and then, looking from one to the other, intelligence returned to his glance, and it was evident that he remembered all. His gaze rested upon the pale face of the affrighted Sylvia, and then turned to Frere. There could be no mistaking the mute appeal of those eloquent eyes.

"Yes, I'll take care of her," said Frere. Bates smiled, and then observing that the blood from his wound had stained the white shawl of Mrs. Vickers, he made an effort to move his head. It was not fitting that a lady's shawl should be stained with the blood of a poor fellow like himself. The fashionable fribble, with quick instinct, understood the gesture, and gently drew the head back upon her bosom. In the presence of death the woman was womanly. For a moment all was silent, and they thought he had gone; but all at once he opened his eyes, and looked round for the sea. (To be continued.)

Too Soon for Divorce.
"Is Sue Brette married yet?" asked the returned traveler.

"Of course," replied the native; "give her a little time, will you?"

"Eh? What are you talking about?" "Why, the wedding took place only six weeks ago."—Philadelphia Press.

Green-Eyed Monster.
She—Cousin John's wife is the most jealous woman I ever met.

He—Indeed!

She—Yes. Why, when they went to Niagara Falls on their wedding trip she got real angry because he fell in love with the scenery.

Two of Many.
"I was married to that man once," said the first society woman.

"To Mr. De Voss? The idea! Why, so was I," replied the second ditto.

"Well, well! You don't say? Were you before or after me?"—Philadelphia Press.

Pleased.
"Are you pleased with the educational progress your son is making?"

"Yes," answered Farmer Cortnosel, "after seeing him in the football game, mother 'lows there won't be any trouble with tramps when he's living home."—Washington Star.

Fixing the Limit.
"Why," asked the fussy passenger, "is this slow train called the 'limited'?"

"Cause, sah," explained the porter, "yer all ain't s'posed 't gib de portah moh dan er dollah tip at a time sah."

To Tunnel Behring Strait

FOR NEW YORK TO PARIS RAILWAY



From New York to Paris, France, by rail, is the dream of a French engineer, M. Lobe de Lobel. The idea is by no means a new one, and M. Lobe is confident that within four years, certainly not much longer than that it will be possible to step into a Pullman coach at New York and go through to Paris without change of cars. That the project involves the construction of a tunnel under Behring Straits—thirty-eight miles long, does not appear to M. Lobe an insurmountable obstacle. M. Lobe claims to have interested Americans, English and European capital in the enterprise, and an advisory committee of American and Canadian engineers has been appointed to look after the interests of the project on this side of the Atlantic.

The idea of an all-rail route from New York to Paris originated with M. Lobe seven years ago. As a member of the Paris Geographical Society he visited Alaska back in 1898, and the feasibility of the Trans-Alaska-Siberian Railway, as the projected road is known, occurred to him. He studied the geology and climate of the country, made soundings of Behring Straits, which it is proposed to tunnel, and since then has devoted his entire time to the promotion of the enterprise.

At the point where his rails would reach the water in Alaska at Cape Prince of Wales, and Cape Siberia at East Cape, the Behring Strait is only thirty-six miles wide. The chances of successful ferrage across the water were long under discussion, while even a gigantic bridge was suggested to joint the two continents. These plans, however, did not seem to meet the favor of many of the engineers he had consulted, and then M. de Lobel conceived the idea of a tunnel under the straits, and this has been deemed, after investigation, entirely practicable.

Naturally the most difficult part of the project will be the construction of the tunnel, but the best sense of the engineers is that this work can be accomplished. The

water over the route of the tunnel is from 165 feet to 180 feet in depth, with intrusive granite as the underlying rock. Between the Siberian and Alaskan coasts lie the Diomed Islands. There are two of them and the larger it is claimed will permit of the division of the tunnel into two sections of nearly equal length. There also, it is expected, they can erect works necessary during construction as well as a motive power plant for moving trains either by electricity or compressed air and also for ventilation of the tunnel.

Including the approaches, the tunnel will be about thirty-eight miles in length, and this with the 3,800 miles of railroad which they propose constructing in Siberia and the 1,200 they intend building in Alaska, will go to make up the Trans-Alaska-Siberian Railroad. The road will connect in Siberia with the Trans-Siberian road at Irkutsk, while the Alaskan road will pass through Council City, Nulato and Fairbanks, connecting at a point south of Dawson City with the Grand Trunk Pacific, which it is expected will extend northward into the Klondike gold fields.

The Russian government, according to M. Lobe, has approved of the plans, and has granted a concession of a strip of land sixteen miles in width along the entire length of the road in Siberia, almost 40,000,000 acres. It is calculated it will require about \$250,000,000 to complete the road. It is intended to form an American company to undertake the actual work of construction, and M. Lobe claims to have the assurances from men high in finance in Russia, France, England and the United States that they are ready to put \$250,000,000, and if necessary \$300,000,000, into the enterprise.

IF I MIGHT SING.

If I might sing for you as waters sing
In gushing melodies, or as the birds
Whose rapture soars on free, unfettered
wing;

If from my life might spring
One song untrammelled of the net of
words;
Then might I praise you as my heart
would praise;
Nor grieve though song should leave me
dumb through afterdays.

If I might breathe your beauty into song,
The singing stars would tarry into flight
To harken, dreaming that death's an-
cient wrong,
Enthroned on earth so long.

Was scattered by the everlasting light,
And earth new winged with singing and
with flame
As when exultant she from out of chaos
came.
—Fall Mall Gazette.

A SPIRIT IN FLESH

THE SENATOR was cozy in one of the secluded Oriental corners of Mrs. Alden's large reception room. Beside him seemed to float an intangible, indefinable white mist. Was it a dream, or was it reality? Dare he reach out his hand to grasp it, or would it at his gentlest touch softly melt away? Now it seemed for the moment to be resting lightly, breathlessly, a mass of gold, a flush of pink, poised on shoulders, glistening—gleaming—which seemed to rise from endless billows of misty white.

Mrs. Hardy had introduced them only a few moments before, and had fumbled her name. Mrs. Hardy always fumbled names. He wondered what it was. Indeed, so eager had he been to learn that when he found himself cornered with the young woman he was quite calm in face of such calamity. The Senator avoided young creatures usually, but this one was different from all the rest. Already they were chatting and laughing, "gossiping," smiled the Senator to himself, "like two old women." He couldn't remember that he had ever been guilty of such conduct before.

They discussed each woman in turn as they peered at them from behind the curtain, where they sat. Mrs. Alden's gown, Mrs. Bradway's hair, Mrs. Brown's jewels. Those jewels, she said, were worth an enormous sum.

"How much?" asked the practical Senator.

She breathed, almost reverently, a fabulous sum.

"How would you feel with all that on you?"

"Um-um" came the erratic answer through closed lips.

He turned and looked at her, slowly, shaking his head.

"No, never; that would make you, then, a little like the rest of them—earthly."

They were peeping again.

"I wonder where the authoress, Miss Mitford, is? I hold the evening in dread because of her."

"Why?" she asked.

men like you and others who are in the midst of this great life would freely give a little of their knowledge to a woman who cannot learn these things save through the experience of others."

"But why do women bother with such things? Why can't they all be sweet and gay? Why?" he exclaimed.

"I have had more genuine pleasure talking frills and furbelows behind this curtain here with you tonight than I have ever had in all my life talking with one of those learned bachelor women."

"Then you think a woman's mind ought not to rise above the ruffle of her petticoat?"

He made no answer and she went on.

"This authoress you speak of as a spinster—is she old?"

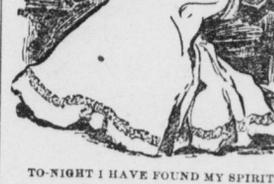
"Yes"—emphatically.

"The paper stated she was only in her twenties, and beautiful."

"Bother, she bribed the papers. She is old and ugly."

The sweetest music he ever heard came in ripples from her red, red lips.

"You have never seen her," she cried, "yet you know it here, I suppose." She clasped her hands together



TO-NIGHT I HAVE FOUND MY SPIRIT.

and pressed them lightly over her heart.

"Right there and there." He pointed to his head.

"Oh, oh!" came in little gasps. "No doubt you are right." She entered into his spirit. "She is freckled, I know," she cried.

"Freckled," he nodded.

"And there's something not exactly hers here," she fumbled her mass of gold.

The nod continued.

"And her—beautiful, pearly—"

"False," he muttered.

"Ah, poor thing; she has only a soul! A creature, hairless, spotted, toothless, yet with a woman's unconquerable desire for friends and love, she builds in the realms of her imagination a world of her own. Dear ones spring up about her; she loves them tenderly, deeply and secretly, which is the most beautiful of all, and as their beauties glow upon her day after day she feels the selfishness of her secret and in the spirit of self-sacrifice reluctantly shares those dear ones with the world."

"Great Scott! You make me fidgety!" He turned to her with a new look in his eyes. "When Miss Mitford comes I will tell her all I know, everything. I might even write out some of the ex-

cliting events I have seen. Her spirits are always searching for new adventures, aren't they?"

She looked at him and smiled. The smile was undoing. He bent closer over her.

"I wonder if you are real," he whispered, "all these years I have dreamed of you—beautiful, alluring, elusive—night you gently shadow me, at noon you sweetly mock—yet always when I reach out to clasp and hold, you flee my grasp and I am left alone. Tonight I have found my spirit, yet I dare not try to touch one wave of that misty cloud you float in. Tell me, are you real or have you only come, in flesh, to mock me?"

The curtains parted and Mrs. Alden looked in.

Both arose to their feet a little awkwardly.

"Miss Mitford!" she exclaimed. "I have been looking everywhere—the president is asking to meet you, come!" She turned to go.

Miss Mitford started to follow, when she felt her hand clasped in two strong ones and drawn tightly to a bearded cheek.

"Miss Mitford," he whispered, savagely, "I shall never let you go unless you tell me when you will forgive."

"When forgiveness has been earned," she flashed back, but so sweetly that he felt the kindness beneath—Indianapolis Sun.

RAILROADS OVER PYRENEES.

French and Spanish Governments Prepare to Build Three Lines.

An important series of railway works to be constructed in the near future is the system of lines that, piercing the Pyrenees, are to connect France with Spain.

While so long ago as 1879 plans were prepared for crossing these mountains by railways, yet for military and other reasons they have never been realized, and the lines connecting these countries, two in number, are near the shores of the Bay of Biscay and of the Mediterranean Sea.

Recently the governments of Spain and of France have agreed on the construction of three important lines, the effect of which will be to put Toulouse and Barcelona in closer connection, as well as other important towns.

The most northern route will penetrate the mountain near Canfranc, involving the construction of a tunnel 4.8 miles in length at an estimated cost of \$2,900,000, of which each government will contribute half.

For the central or Salau route a still longer tunnel, with a length of 5.4 miles, must be constructed at a cost of \$3,850,000, while in the French territory the country is rough and much engineering work must be done on that section. For the eastern or Puigcerdas route there is no international tunnel, but in both countries smaller tunnels must be constructed through the mountains.

The three railways are to be constructed simultaneously and are to be completed within ten years, and will improve important branch lines that in both countries have been constructed up the various valleys on each side of the mountains.

Opposites.
"Why does he wish to marry her?"

"He says people should marry their opposites."

"Why, they are both dark."

"Yes, but he hasn't a cent, and she has a million dollars."—Pittsburg Post.