

EDWARD'S LAND.

It lies in the land of Mystery, In the center of the blue sea, ...

The Dead Singer

"She is dead!" they say, "she is dead!" ...

MOONDYNE!

Book Fourth. THE CONVICT SHIP. BY JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

THE FEVER.

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was not a sudden thought; but it was overwhelming. As a man may tremble

and go down at last with a rush, so the last barrier of Haggart's vanity

cracked that day, and left the reservoir of his conceit dry and unlightedly

blissful.

A man's sufferer deeply who has to turn an inward eye on such a scene.

But an honest man, helped by humility, will do it, and survive; and at bottom Haggart was honest and humble.

He did not appear on deck for days after the fire; and when he did come out, he spent his time in strange fashion.

He would hang around the passage to Sister Cecilia's quarters for hours, and when the little nun was on her way to the female quarters, the eagerly Scripture-reader would start from such unexpected angle, and watch for an opportunity to offer some service.

This continued for weeks, until at last Sister Cecilia noticed the attention. She quietly bowed her head away; and for the rest of the day Mr Haggart's face was lined with good humor and gratification.

When the ship was becalmed in the tropics the suffering of the imprisoned wretches in the steaming and crowded hold was pitiable to see. They were so packed that free movement was impossible.

The best thing to do was to sit, each on his or her berth, and suffer in patience.

The air was stifling and oppressive. There was no draught through the barred hatches. The deck above them was blazing hot. The pitch dropped from the seams, and burned their flesh as it fell.

There was only one word spoken or thought—no yearning idea present in every mind—water, cool water to slake the parching thirst.

Two pints of water a day were served out to each convict—a quart of half putrid and blood-warm liquid. It was a woful sight to see the thirsty souls devour this allowance as soon as their hot hands seized the vessels.

As the days wore on, the terrible calm held the ship, and the consuming heat sapped the lives of the pent-up convicts. They suffered in strange patience. The hold was silent all day. They made no complaints.

When the officers passed the deck and spoke to them they smiled and sat still in their berths.

Only once there was a sound of discontent—when the order was given that the daily allowance of water be reduced to one pint.

Among the officers of the ship there was silence also. They knew they were in a latitude where calms lasted for long periods. They flushed the decks with water constantly, to take the heat off the sides, for the sake of the prisoners below.

"We shall need fresh water in a week," said Captain Draper to Mr Wyville one day; "the tanks are low already, and evaporation rapidly increases."

Mr. Wyville did not answer, except with an inclination of the head. Words were useless.

"Where is the nearest land?" he asked Sheridan that afternoon, as they paced the poop.

"The island of Principe is about two hundred miles to the South," said Sheridan. "There is good water there."

"The thought in Mr. Wyville's mind never came to words. As Sheridan spoke, he stopped suddenly, looking away to the North, and pointing his hand with an eager face. A dark line, very faint, was moving on the face of the glass ocean.

"Thank heaven!" he said, "yonder comes the breeze!"

In half an hour it fanned their faces, but so gently that still the sails hung useless, and the pennant only stirred an inch from the mast. But it was a breath—it was a drink when the night fell the breeze strengthened, and the ship moved.

There was no sleep on board that night. The hearts of all were filled with deep relief and gratitude. The breeze held for four days, growing steadier as they sailed. On the evening of the fourth day a man stooped cried out, "Land ho!"

"They had sighted Principe. From deck the land was not seen for an hour later, and the Hougoumont stood off to sea, and the boats would be sent ashore for water.

At the first flush of dawn the ship was steered toward the island. A fog lay close to the water, and the eager eyes of the voyagers only saw a line of wooded mountain, the base and summit of which were veiled in mist.

The Hougoumont sailed into the fog-bank; and before those on board had time to realize the change, her foremast caught the mountain, and she swung to within a land-locked harbor as beautiful as a dream of paradise.

The water broke against the wooded shores all round the lovely haven. The hills were covered with trees to the top, and the cocoa palms crowded their lower slopes to the very shore. At the end of the harbor stood the little town of St. Antonio.

The Hougoumont came to anchor, and boats were sent ashore to fill the water casks. The swift, clear streams were running into the beautiful basin of the port.

While this work was going on, a sail-boat put off from the town, and laid to in the vessel. There were three men in it, and as they came within half a mile, keeping to leeward, they ran up a yellow flag.

"My God!" said Sheridan, who had been watching the boat; "they have the fever!"

"Get out as fast as you can," cried a man in the boat. "And be sure you allow no one from shore near the ship. We have the plague in St. Antonio."

"Without another word the boat's crew disappeared, and she returned to the town. The crew of the Hougoumont needed no incentive to work. By ten o'clock that night the casks were filled and the ship was under way.

"A fortunate thought," said the medical officer to Sheridan, who did not answer, but looked at the pennant. The wind had changed, and was blowing directly from St. Antonio.

"Have you noticed the beautiful island you are leaving?" asked the medical officer. "It is a beautiful island, but it is the plague."

"Anyhow, anywhere," cried Sheridan, "I will not see anyone who is sick. I want to do some good."

"Harris," said Cecilia, "you have told me your unhappy story, and I am sure you will be a good woman."

"I do—God knows I do—interrupted she with a sobbing cry.

"As you hope to be forgiven, you must forgive me," said Cecilia.

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and said, "This man on deck at once," he said, quietly, "and place him in the punishment division forward."

The warden went to carry out the order. The doctor hurriedly consulted a book, then left his room and walked forward.

The sick prisoner was there before him. The doctor examined him, quietly ordered his treatment, and returned. He joined Mr. Wyville on the poop.

"We have the fever on board," he said in a low voice. "A man has been attacked by the worst symptoms."

An hour later two more convicts complained of sickness. They were taken from the hold and placed in the cell forward.

Next day it was known throughout the ship that the fever, which the sailors called "the black vomit," was on board, and before daylight thirty prisoners were seized.

The sick were taken away from the hold at first; but this separation had soon to be abandoned. There was no room for them apart.

Those who took the fever had to lie side by side with their terror-stricken fellows.

Like an angel of comfort Sister Cecilia tended on the sufferers. Following her steps, and quietly obeying her word, went the doctor, and the female compartment, where twelve prisoners lay with the fever, Alice Walsley moved cosselessly in the work of mercy.

On the third day the chief officer of the ship said to Mr. Wyville, "Captain Draper has the fever."

The doctor, shortly after, came from the captain's room, and reported that Draper had, indeed, been seized with symptoms of less violence than the others.

"I will attend him," said Mr. Wyville, after a pause; "write your directions, doctor, and I will stay beside him to-night."

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

Hiduous incidents filled the days and nights as the convict ship sailed southward with her burden of disease and death. The mortality among the convicts was frightful. Weakness, the continuous heat, and the poisonous atmosphere, they succumbed to the fever in its first stages.

The dead were laid in a row on the port side, as they were carried from the hold. Relays of sailors worked at the shrouding and burial. The bodies were wrapped in sail cloth, with a cannon ball tied at the feet. As each corpse was hastily shrouded, it was passed forward, and the ghastly roll was continued to the deep.

There was no time for ceremony; but Mr. Haggart, as often as he could be spared from the hold, stood beside the opening in the rail, where the bodies were launched, and followed each fall plunge with a word of prayer.

"Mr. Sheridan," said Mr. Wyville, as he came from Captain Draper's room on the first night of his illness, "will you take command of the ship until the captain's recovery?"

"I will," said Sheridan, "I will do my best to see that the ship is properly managed, and that the crew is kept in order."

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Providence has kept this miscreant from a deeper crime; that he has not committed. Heaven