MOONDYNE.

HOW I FOUND HER.

THE CONVICT SHIP.

By John Boyle O'Reilly.

X.

PRISONER STATE.

From the moment that Will Sheridan had recognized Draper in the captain of the *Emmanuel* the chief was filled with an active fear that Alice Wyndmere might suddenly come face to face with the wretch who had blighted her existence. Such a meeting might be fatal—it certainly would be glorious.

It was the motive which induced Sheridan to offer to go to the ship in the capacity of the recognition. It seemed like a fair—and he deemed it best to continue the course of action already begun.

Safe as he was, he never had the consciousness of a ship sailing and the entire power over all on board. He had no escort, however, but Mr. Wyndmere, one or two constables and seamen in authority in certain matters relating to the prisoners. This gave him comfort. To see Draper recognized Alice Wyndmere on the ship, but natural Sheridan reasoned, he would make sure of the white-faced thing to Mr. Wyndmere, and avert treachery at all. If possible by fear, it must be by force.

Meanwhile Sheridan saw Sister Cecilia, who knew but he was at the front of the innocent and much-wronged girl, and acquainted her in very Alice at all times of the noble lady. He gave no reason for the request.

"Why, Mr. Sheridan," said the practical Sister of Mercy, "the most come into the open for some time."

"It was better for—better not," answered Sheridan, in a troubled mind. "It was better for the United certain at day in the hospital."

"In the hospital!" repeated the wise little nun, with a playing smile. She evidently saw more clearly than any one on board, the strange complications around her. The secrets of at least four of the principal actors in the successful drama were open to her eyes. She saw the relations of Sheridan, Alice, the miserable Rachel Draper, and her guilty husband.

But even Sister Cecilia, wise as the wise, did not know that there was a little hand dangling concealed in the play. In the secret Sheridan's words, her playing smile died away into lines of sorrow, as she now plainly the danger to a deeper one. She realized, too, at the sight, the supreme temptation and misery of that one who now spoke for days in the hospital.

"Do not leave, Mr. Sheridan," she said, in the tone of one her of mercy; "Alice will be safe. She will remain in my care great."

Darling like as an agreement with the subject, Mr. Sheridan realized that the conduct toward the captain should be absolutely correct, until the final conflict took place. Then, what to do was beset with difficulties. That the punishment should overtake the villain was clear; but first, if the public acknowledgment would disturb the peace of Alice, whose lovely trusting nature would lose its sweet repose?

Instead of coming to a decision, Sheridan resolved that at the first opportunity he would lay the whole matter before Mr. Wyndmere, and follow his advice.

Soon after attending the hospital, the *Emmanuel* had caught the trade winds, and sailed swiftly down the Irish coast. Her tall masts (painted piously—like a nun praying towards the setting sun) of Tenerife. Her dry—with one a line on the cliff a hopper towards from the sea, while above her towered into the air the Canaries thousand feet of tremendous precipice. She crossed the great Northern sea-ways of Africa; and once, for the first time since leaving England, her speed was checked. The trade winds failed and died, the sea lost its rhythm, but kept its waves, that rose and fell slowly, with long, monotonous rolls, like an ocean of molten glass. The sails of the *Emmanuel* dropped backward and forward, the ropes hung motionless, the pennants drooped from the mast. The coasts—fifty sea miles—of the coast of Africa, never Cape Blanco above the Line.

The faces of the ship's officers grew anxious when the wind died. They did not welcome a calm in such a latitude, and at this season. The men were listless and contentious, scarcely lowering by sea Cayenne in sight.

"I wish we were five degrees to the westward," said Sheridan to Mr. Wyndmere, the old sailor here recovering to him; "I have little fear of Cayenne."

"Why?" asked Mr. Wyndmere, standing to shade of a sail, while the young military officer sat beside Sheridan on the rail.

"I hate to be here for the chance; you can't dip your head in this water, for a thousand miles South and N. W. without having it snapped off. I hate to be in low coast, where so many splendid ships have met sudden disaster in Cayenne. I hate to be for the disease, worldwide, and above all, I hate to be in fever. I don't think there's anything good about the coast of Guiana."

"That is a bad showing, certainly," said the military officer.

"Yes; and life quite true," continued Sheridan.

"It is one can say a good word about this one."

"It is so fast, so so fast," said Mr. Wyndmere, smiling at Sheridan's earnestness. "On this very coast, within two hundred miles of us, is being solved one of the most interesting political problems in human history. Yonder lies a settlement with a national story unequalled for dignity and patience."

Sheridan and the young soldier looked up, astonished.

"What is it?" asked Sheridan.

"The Republic of Liberia," said Mr. Wyndmere.

Sheridan looked at the soldier, who, at the same moment, looked at him. They both smiled heartily, confessing their ignorance.

"I was too busy with sandalwood—" began Sheridan.

"And I with tactics," said the soldier. "But what is this Republic, sir?"

"A new country, honestly acquired," said Mr. Wyndmere; "the only country on earth not one or more from its rightful owners. A country where never have peacefully founded a nation of civilized freedom; where land was never land but is nearly digging out between both right and wrong—a country where all people are equal in power to the other and where there is equal power to maintain it."

"Who are the citizens?" asked the surprised officer.

"Slaves from America," said Wyndmere with an earnestness that made them forget the heat; "men who bear on their bodies the marks of the lash, and on their minds the mark of outraged rights; men who might be pensioned for suffering more than that been them," and as he spoke, he pointed away in the direction of the unknown and most unlikely place on earth. They have carved with them from the great Republic of the West only that which was good—the best principles. The unrepublican practices they have left behind."

"Will they not become strong?" asked Sheridan.

"Why?"

"When they become rich," said the officer sententiously.

"It is to be feared," answered Mr. Wyndmere. "But they have our sympathy."

"What is that?"

"Their climate is hardly to white men," said Mr. Wyndmere.

The appearance of Captain Draper, coming from the taffrail, interrupted the conversation. The young officer stepped to chat with him, while Mr. Wyndmere and Sheridan walked to the other side of the poop.

"There are two powers of government represented on this ship," said Sheridan, determined to bring the conversation to the point he wished to speak about. "Which is in command—the chief or military?" The captain of the vessel or the military officer?"

"Neither."

"I do not understand."

"When convicts sail from England, they are assumed to be at once in the Penal Colony. As soon as the convict ship arrives and the troops transport in the point are of Western Australia."

"Who administrates the law on board?"

"The representative of the Comptroller-General of Convicts, the actual authority over the criminals in Western Australia."

"Then we have a representative of the Comptroller-General on board?"

"Yes."

"Excuse me, Mr. Wyndmere; you speak riddles to-day. Let me a moment ago that many convicts ship and such a representative."

"Yes; unless it have the Comptroller himself."

"Does we have—does you the Comptroller-General?"

"Yes. The office was vacant, and at the request of the Prime Minister I accepted a temporary appointment. I am glad it was offered; for it will enable me to see my son very likely earlier."

The evening had closed in as they conversed, and now the moon became somewhat visible. Mr. Wyndmere and Sheridan had drawn their deck chairs toward the wheel house.

"I am glad there is a power on board above that of the scoundrel who commands the ship," said Sheridan, during after a long pause. "Then to continue explain:" Mr. Wyndmere, I have learned every day that I should have to struggle for myself. I should have told you before; but something always prevented. By some strange fatality there is on board the ship a woman whom I have cared all my life, and who has been mentally wronged by the man. I have come on the ship only to protect her."

Sheridan's earnest voice was trembling with deep emotion. Darling and in words he continued alone.

Mr. Wyndmere had been looking out on the gloomy and slow roll of the waves. As Sheridan spoke, the lips and mouth closed with a positive compression, and a light almost of alarm came into the eyes. He was thinking of Alice Wyndmere.

"You have loved her all your life," he repeated slowly, still looking at the sea.

"Since I was a boy—and she loved me once."

Mr. Wyndmere was about to speak; but it seemed as if he changed the mind. Still the lips moved, but he said nothing.

"Who is she, and where?" he said after a pause, and in the usual calm voice.

"She is a prisoner," answered Sheridan, "and she is confined in the hospital."

"In the hospital?" asked Wyndmere, looking to the fort, with almost a cry of joy; then, seeing Sheridan's face, he considered himself.

"That unhappy one?"

"Yes," said Sheridan, coldly, thinking that to be deceived Alice Wyndmere.

"God help you, my friend! you're in a terrible plight."

"I have feared that he would see her, or that she might see him."

"Fear no more," said Wyndmere, tenderly; "I have taken measures to prevent such a meeting."

"You know, then?" asked Sheridan, surprised.

"I know the guilt—but not your sorrow. I know that he and she were on this ship. It was I who brought him here; and I had beforehand secured her confinement during the voyage in the hospital."

Sheridan was surprised at this, having no lately spoken to Sister Cecilia on the subject. But he set it down to the customary thoughtfulness of Mr. Wyndmere.

"I cannot speak my gratitude to you," continued Sheridan; "your visit to her prison awakened in her the life that wrong and grief had crushed. I know the whole story, and I have longed to speak my gratitude."

Mr. Wyndmere deemed that Sheridan referred to his visit to Harriet Draper in Walton le Dale. But how could Sheridan have discovered it? He had certainly never communicated with Harriet Draper.

"How did you learn of my visit to her?" asked Mr. Wyndmere.

"From the governor of Millbank."

"Ah—yes; I told him."

Sheridan felt a great relief from this confidence. He asked Mr. Wyndmere's advice as to his conduct toward Draper during the voyage; and was glad the find that it coincided with his own view; to treat him with cold neutrality until the *Emmanuel* had landed her passengers and had ceased to be a government ship.

When Sheridan had gone to his room, Mr. Wyndmere meditated on these events. He had been thoroughly happy last night, though he was oppressed by the grief of his friend. For one moment he had feared that he next would crush a death-stabbing that had grown within him like a nice and wonderful. As he recalled the scene, the heart stood still with the fear—then in silence.

"Thank God!" he murmured, as he watched the moon—the red and large—in the silvery horizon. "How slow has been speed!"

XI.

THE CRISIS.

Mr. Haggett—for he had found himself a lonely man on the convict ship—the position was anomalous. He was neither a minister nor a prison officer. But he been his friend, the ship's officers and the military. There would have also been his lady's name, had he been the sailor, the convict. Under would have been the companions. But he was only a fellow-prisoner, a non-professional. He was called simply "the Scripture reader."

So he was known for companionship on the two other empty passages, Ben Lodge and Tigrett jr. who were glad of the company, and entirely ignorant of the position.

Mr. Haggett's nature was by no means a bad one; indeed, in other circumstances it would have been an admirable one for we simply one of those persons who make up a million, who are constant, regular, and but which a pin may turn. He was a queer mixture of cat and cow-cat. He mind had two ways, as a spaniel has the only two notes, and these were sentiment and nothing.

Let he been talent or a mechanic, he would have patiently mastered the trade, never inquiring as what he had been taught and he would have been rule of the skill and faithful in it.

To give such a man a field of metaphysical abuse, to put into the yellow mouth the dissolute spiritual counsel of scoundrels of less in most of what spiritual guidance, was an experiment far more injurious to poor Haggett than to the convicts. It is to damage. A priest's sermons are not great for most natures, which they inspire, if they do not destroy.

He became puffed up with an almost sense of smooth, has almost amounted to bad character; while the convicts, heard one before, may confirmed their opinion that Christianity was a worthy and self-profession rather than a true saving principle.

When Mr. Wyndmere humiliated Haggett in Millbank, the blow appeared terrible; yet it was it may circumstance Haggett where he was perfect. As a man might cut a labour with a sharp sword, Mr. Wyndmere interference and authority not gashed the swelling vanity of the Scripture reader.

From that time, though he otherwise act out to be the Jesus Christ's thing world, Mr. Haggett had changed—he was gradually returning to the real nature, which was, as it ought to be, humble, diffident, and commonplace.

"This is a good man," something within him kept saying of Mr. Wyndmere; "Why are you the enemy?" And the answer came, and appeared truth: "Because you are the Jesus Christ's man."

These thoughts finished through Haggett's mind as he lost sight of Australia; and that they had an effect on the convicts was certain. Vague stare and doubts and down, which the Jesus world have been eager to seize, Haggett indeed had found, but had kept to himself.

Since the *Emmanuel* sailed he had been especially disturbed in mind. When the incident of the lies came, and he spoke the mind to Mr. Wyndmere in the market words, "Forgive me!" It was not a sudden thought. But it was overwhelming. As a man may tremble for years, especially in time of storm, and go down at last with a rush, so the last barrier of Haggett's reality broke that day, and left the remorse of the convicts dry and struggling to drown.

A man suffer deeply who has to turn as inward eye on such a scene. But as honest man, helped by humility, will do it, and survive; and so honest Haggett was honest and humble.

He did not appear on deck for days after the lies; and when he did come out, he spent the 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 convicts, the ungainly Scripture reader would start from some unexpected angle, and which for an opportunity to offer some service.

This continued for weeks, until at last Sister Cecilia noticed the attention. She quietly bowed her head one day in thanks for some slight favor; and for the rest of the day Mr. Haggett's face was lined with good humor and gratification.

When the ship was inundated in the tropics, the suffering of the imprisoned convicts in the steaming and crowded hold was piteous 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 feet as it fell.

"We shall need fresh water in a week," said Captain Draper to Mr. Wyndmere one day; "the casks are now growing and consumption rapidly increases."

Mr. Wyndmere did not answer, except with an inclination of the head. Worse were notes.

"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's good water there."

The thought in Mr. Wyndmere's mind never came to words. Sheridan noticed it dropped suddenly, looking away to the North, and pointing the hand with an inner line. A dark line, very faint, was showing on the face of the glassy ocean.

"Thank heaven!" he said, pointing across the sea.

In half an hour it hung their faces, but so gently that still the sails hung loose, and the pennants only stirred as their hung on the mast. But it was a breath—it was a breeze. When the night fell, the breeze strengthened, and the ship moved.

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

They had sighted Principe. From deck, fore and aft, was not seen for an hour after; and the *Emmanuel* stood off and on till morning, when boats would be sent ashore for water.

At the first light of dawn the ship was moored towards the island. A long line to the water, and the eager eyes of the voyagers only saw a line of wooded mountains, the lees and summits of which were veiled in mist.

The *Emmanuel* sailed into the fog-bank, and before those on board had time to realize the change, her forecastle caught the sunshine, and the rising to within a and indeed further as beautiful as a dream of paradise.

The water broke against the wooded shores all round the lovely haven. The silk were covered with trees to the top, and the same palms crowded their lower slopes to the very shore. At the end of the native town (half little town of St. Antonio).

The *Emmanuel* came to anchor, and boats were sent ashore to fill the water-casks. The swift, clear streams were run into the beautiful bath of the port.

While this work was going on, a sail was put off from the town, and held toward the vessel. There were three men in it, and as they came within hail of ship, keeping in seaward, they set up a yellow flag.

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

"Shut 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 course was changed, and she returned to the town. The crew of the *Emmanuel* needed no incentive to work. By ten o'clock that night, the casks were filled and the ship was under sail.

"A fortunate escape!" said the medical officer to Sheridan, who did not answer, but nodded as the pennants. The wind had changed, and was blowing directly from St. Antonio.

Next morning the beautiful island was out of sight. The convicts got plenty of water that day, and their hearts were glad. Toward evening, one of the warders went to the doctor's room, and said there was a prisoner very ill, who complained of tetanus and pains in the head and stomach. The doctor's face grew pale as the word; but he turned away from the warder.

"Take that man on deck at once," he said, quietly, "and place him in the pen. Immediately forward."

The warder went to carry out the order. The doctor hurriedly committed a book, then left the room and walked forward.

The sick prisoner was there before him. The doctor examined him, quietly ordered the hammock, and retired. He joined Mr. Wyndmere 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 after, two more convicts complained of sickness. They were taken from the hold, and placed in the cell for worst.

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

The sick were taken away from the hold of fear; but the separation had soon to be abandoned. There was no room for them space. The hospital was full. Those who took the fever had to lie side by side with their worse stricken fellows.

Like an angel of comfort, Sister Cecilia landed on the sufferers. Following her step, and quietly obeying her word, went Mr. Haggett. In the female compartment, where twelve prisoners lay with the fever, Alice Wyndmere moved ceaselessly in the work of mercy.

On the third day, the chief officer of the ship said to Mr. Wyndmere,—

"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 virulence than the others.

"Who will attend on Captain Draper?" asked the doctor. "He will be unconscious in another hour, and will need care."

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

TO BE CONTINUED.

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INDIFFERENCE.

Infidelity is dangerous for the most part, when the form of indifference. It is far-spread Protestantism. It is cold, and careless about religious truth. The atmosphere around about it becomes chilly and frigid. Attention infidelity is not the red-hot fury of a Bonnell or Ingersoll in the old world. It has simply succeeded into indifference. It conforms rather than hates, ignores rather than persecutes religion. But it is none the less deadly. Indeed it is even more deadly than that sanguinary, vindictive, roaring infidel of religion which is perpetually assailing the Church in Europe. It is more deadly because its positive negate a kind consciousness on the part of Catholics; because its frigidity, chilling the atmosphere under the action of Catholic faith, and thus begets a indifferentism, which often ends in spiritual death. Better the open onslaught of a malicious foe than the insidious antipathetic effects we are now going to an unseen enemy. When men are only attacked, they are fairly defiant. But when they are in aggression, they come vigilance.

Indifferentism is a foe that appears not to attack, and yet is ever undermining our spiritual safety. It is around us everywhere, we meet it daily, sometimes with it in intimate terms, and it is ever breathing its noxious poison into our lives. Unless our faith be separately conserved by frequenting the sacraments, in the presence of its fury we be free from root rotten. This is our great danger in America—to withstand the pernicious effect of an omnipresent indifference in religious matters. Let us first realize it, then cure it.

Many a Catholic, who in the presence of opposition would vigorously contend for his faith, has grown lapsed and languid under the narcotic effect of the prevailing indifference around him. Let us remember that indifference is only the mask of infidelity. It is a vice of the deadliest character and destroys the life of the soul more effectively than all the seven deadly sins. It paralyzes the spiritual faculties, and the victim finds himself unable to act even when he desires to. So much the greater reason for Catholics to be on the alert against an subtle an adversary. In the sacraments only will they find a preventive or a remedy against this disease, to which they are so constantly exposed. Let us remember that indifference is infidelity of the rankest kind, and we will then be more alive to the dangers of the pestilence.—*Church Progress.*

CONFESSION OF A WOMAN WHO LAGS IN UPPER BURMA.

Mr. W. J. Wheler, junior, wrote to the following news from Mandalay: On Sunday last the village of Chan-tha-gyan presented a gay appearance with bright coloured flags floating on the house-tops and fluttering on the branches and tops of trees. It was a gala day for the inhabitants, of whom nearly 65 per cent. were about to be numbered into the fold of the Catholic Church. The Right Reverend Bishon Simon, assisted by Fathers Tuffine and Wellinger, presided at the baptism of the converts. The village was crowded with visitors, mostly of the Catholic persuasion. The initiative of the inhabitants of the village are to be baptized at the new cathedral at Mandalay. One correspondent states that much is due to Fathers Tuffine and Wellinger, who have been scarcely six months at their labor of love in the village of Chan-tha-gyan, for bringing about the conversion of a whole village in such a comparatively short space of time. Amidst religious ceremonies and observances the bodily welfare of the people was not forgotten; a breakfast was provided at which a large number sat down. After receiving a blessing from His Lordship they dispersed, gratified alike in body and soul.

THE DANGERS OF SPRING.

Poets and novelists go into ecstasies over what they romantically call "beautiful spring," and "gentle spring," and while, no doubt, every one is glad to see winter release its icy grasp, "beautiful spring" is, after all one of the most deadly seasons of the year. Sudden transitions from warmth to extreme cold, with piercing, chilling winds; from dry to sloppy, "muggy" weather, all combine to make the season a most trying one, even to the hardiest constitution, while to those with weak constitutions the season is one of positive danger. Undoubtedly the greatest danger at this season of the year is from cold in the head, which very few escape, and which if not promptly and thoroughly treated, developes into catarrh, with all its disagreeable and loathsome effects. Catarrh, neglected, almost as certainly developes into consumption annually destroying thousands of lives. At this trying season no household should be without a bottle of Nasal Balm. In cases of cold in the head it gives almost instant relief and effects a speedy cure, thus preventing the development of catarrh. Where the latter disease has already secured a hold it is equally efficacious, and with persistent use will cure the worst case. From the outset it sweetens the breath, stops the nauseous droppings into the throat and lungs, dispels those dull headaches that afflict the sufferer from catarrh. Nasal Balm is not advertised as a cure all—it is an honest remedy which never fails to cure cold in the head or catarrh when the directions are faithfully followed, and thousands throughout the country have reason to bless its discovery. Nasal Balm may be had from all dealers or will be sent post paid on receipt of price (50 cents, small, or $1, large size bottle) by addressing Fulford & Co., Brockville, Ont.

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