

The TWICE AMERICAN

By ELEANOR M. INGRAM

"I thought you understood. For me, of course."

The black spider ran across Bruce's feet in its hasty retreat from the ring of the retiring visitor's footsteps. The cell presently quivered with a faint shock in response to the crash of the closing doors at the end of the corridor. Bruce continued to stand inert in the grip of his utter astonishment.

Yet, why should he be so astonished, he later asked himself? The first bewilderment of the brief visit over, he sat on his three-legged stool, trying to steady and quiet himself. Noe had asked if the prisoner was a graduate engineer; no doubt, then, he had occasion to employ such a man. Perhaps engineers were not so common here as at home. It was not surprising, after all, that Noe should utilize the convict skilled labor at his command. Bruce had grimly accustomed himself to acknowledge his status as a convict. He did not feel like a murderer. But he knew that he ranked as one, officially at least. Noe had made it very clear that the light in which he intended to consider the prisoner was that of a sort of ticket of leave man, Bruce thought. It gave him a sharp twinge to recall that Noe had not offered his hand, nor any expression of sympathy for the other man's situation. He simply had questioned, listened to the replies, and departed. Now what? Would he be employed under Noe personally, and frequently see him, he speculated, or would he be shipped off to some remote place where engineering work was to be done? Bruce scarcely knew for which he hoped. Noe had intrigued his interest to a high degree in that one interview, following so oddly upon "the Little Bald One" story. Moreover, he was the first white man Bruce had seen in a year, and if he had not been effusive he certainly had brought relief. Surely to be near Noe would afford a certain protection, yes, and lessen the dreadful sense of isolation from all his own people and race; it would be almost a distant companionship. But to this first impulse succeeded humiliation in Bruce's reawakening mind. He looked down at his ragged, unwashed person, at his bare feet. How trim, clean and soldierly Noe had looked! No, almost he would choose to be sent to some isolated mountain camp, where he might bury his identity and disgrace.

Not that he had any choice! He fell into a fury of impatience to leave this place, where an hour before he had expected to remain during his life. He paced his cell, going again and again to the wooden door to listen and look across the bars for any evidence of his approaching relief. But there was nothing. It crept upon his mind that Noe had not said when he would be sent for; perhaps he would not be needed for days, for weeks, for months! His forehead grew wet at the idea. But on the trail blazed by that thought, came another yet more appalling. Suppose Noe returned to the city, plunged into his many affairs, and forgot the captive or business which had led him to visit the little prison where Bruce was confined? Suppose he forgot Corey Bruce forever? He panted and sickened with the dismay of that possibility. Unable to stand, he went to the stool and sat down upon it, hiding his face in his hands and shivering like a man in delirium.

He was still crouching there in the same attitude, two hours later, when the jailer came to the door and summoned him. Then he sprang up, giddy and reeling with excitement. The guard caught and supported him until he was able to stand alone, and follow where he was bidden.

The way taken led to a court yard where a large stone basin caught the waters trickling down the cliff that formed one side of the enclosure. On a bench nearby was a pile of garments, toward which the jailer made a gesture.

"You are always taking a bath," he explained; "and you are to take a bath before going to his excellency," the man explained; he went and took his place near the door, lighted a cigaret. "It is true that you are no savory morsel, my friend, to present yourself at the Casa Noel!"

Bruce had no ears for the justified comment. His gloating, short sighted eyes had fixed upon the water and the clothing. He asked no urging of the jailer's invitation. His whole body ached for those divine luxuries before him.

The jailer, who was half Indian, half negro, and had the stolidity of both, watched the prisoner, with contemplative surprise at the enthusiasm of foreigners in such matters. He was, on the whole, a good natured fellow. He finally became interested in the proceedings, and contributed a very dull razor and a comb to improve the effect. When Bruce was clothed in a linen riding suit, with boots not to bad a fit, clean shaven and trimmed, the jailer offered him a bowl of beans. Under these new conditions, Bruce actually ate with a sense of appetite. After this he again followed his custodian. This time he was led outside. At the door a grave eyed Indian arose from his seat and saluted the white man. He was clad like a servant in a wealthy household, but there was something wild and untamed, something unusual in his face. He was not of the type with which Bruce was familiar, and his speech had a strange accent.

"I am eBnito," he announced. "His excellency has sent me!"

His gesture indicated two riding horses beyond the doorway. Bruce walked forward into the softly clouded afternoon and stood still.

No one stayed or hindered him. The breeze moved swiftly across his face and stirred his hair. One of the horses reached its soft muzzle to touch his hand. Away before him stretched the immensity of the mountain ranges mantled in thick forests.

A murmur from eBnito aroused him from his abstraction of delight. The Indian was proffering a small covered dark box.

"His excellency sent," he murmured by way of explanation.

Bruce focussed his blinking, light-dazzled gaze upon the box with a growing incredulity and hope.

"Why! Why!" he stammered, fumbling the lid with nervous fingers. A loud cry broke from him as the box opened. Out into his hands fell a familiar pair of black rimmed spectacles. With a passion of eagerness he filled them on—and saw the world leap into distinctness and leap into glorious distinctness and color.

Absolutely crushed by the ecstasy of this miracle of his restored sight, for it seemed no less, glowing with a fervor of gratitude toward David Noel that a woman could only have expressed by tears, Bruce mounted the horse presented to him.

They had ridden several miles along the mountain road, or rather, trail, before Bruce realized that he and the Indian were quite alone. Practically, he was unguarded, since Benito obviously assumed the place of an attendant, not a keeper. The trust in his parole heartened him. It was a tonic to his self respect, reacting upon his whole body. He straightened himself in his saddle and looked with more confidence at the Indian. He began to think with less acute embarrassment of meeting Noe; Noe who could not despise the prisoner, since he trusted him.

"Where are we going?" he asked.

"To the river, Senhor; to the boats," answered Benito somewhat vaguely.

"Yes, but afterward?"

"Home, Senhor," answered the Indian—"to the House of the Little Shoes."

CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSE OF DAVID NOEL.

For a long time the road had been winding among passes, high walls of rock and verdure. Now turning back, the way had opened out before the traveller, and Corey Bruce saw the magnificent coast far below him, like an unbelievably lovely picture that had no limit, but finally merged into the blue immensities of the ocean. Involuntarily he reigned in his horse and looked, baring his head.

Far to the northward, like a magical vision to city stretched gleaming along the shore of a bay all rose and silver light in the afternoon glow, and dotted with islands green as the plumage of the parrots in the forest around the travellers. Away on either hand as far as the eye could follow, masses of mountains of fantastic forms seemed piled one upon another, until they merged finally into sea or cloud. The superb forests crept down and clasped the city, and the city reached up toward the mountains; villas rested here and there on cliffs or great ledges were highways went winding devious courses. As Bruce gazed, feeding his sight with beauty, the Indian beside him uttered a sound to attract his attention and pointed across the height on which they were.

"It is there," he uttered in his guttural speech. "It is home, Senhor; it is the Great House of the Little Shoes."

Bruce followed the pointing hand with his gaze. On a slope, perhaps five miles from him, one white mansion gleamed out of the setting of violent tropical colors. Even at that distance, it showed a columned, classical stateliness of design, in contrast to the usual florid Italian architecture prevalent in South America.

Bruce stared at it.

"What do you call it that?" he finally queried, "and whose is it?"

"When we reach it, the Senhor will see why that is its name. It belongs to the master. Who else could it belong to? Who else is great enough to build the house which is his? Years ago were its first stones laid, when the master could come but seldom to view the building of it; yet he ordered all. All day for seven days has he ridden, only that he might pass an hour there where it rose out of the ground; speaking to the overseers who directed all as the master commanded. Yes, between battles, between talking in the cities, from the forests and from the seraon, has the master turned to visit the great house. And it is his."

He urged his horse forward with the last word, and Bruce's mount followed. But the engineer continued to look toward that distant house whenever the road permitted. He recalled now things he had heard of David Noel before his arrest. His imagination was seized by the idea of the man who had fought his way up to such influence in the country, planning at the same time this house to match the success he meant to attain. He glimpsed across the Indian's speech the figure of the explorer, the commander in wild countries, the statesman of the capital, turning aside to the building of his house as to a recreation and a design formed in some moments of dreaming and held through all the turmoils of his work. He must have turned within

the rising walls of that house, in the dusty travelworn garments of a man from the forest jungle, in the uniform of a soldier on campaign, and latterly, in the fine linen of a statesman from the adjoining capital. Bruce thought of him thus, in consultation with his architects, bending over blue prints and plans. Benito had called the builder of the house an overseer, but Bruce knew only an accomplished architect could have developed that white building with its exquisite proportions, its stateliness that was not stiff, and its massiveness that was not clumsy. He grouped these things, and the thing "the Little Bald One" had told him, about the central figure of the grey clothed, grey eyed man who had visited him a few days before. Assembling his own impressions, he found his keenest surprise was that David Noel knew of him. His keenest anxiety was, what did that man want with a convict engineer?

Bruce's mind had had time to clear on the journey down the river and the ride following it, which was now drawing to a conclusion. He knew, or thought he knew, something of the southern disposition. It must be for some purpose that Noel had taken him from an interior prison and brought him here. Was that purpose one which could be best accomplished by a man helplessly in Noel's power? Bruce had heard of such things; everyone has heard of such things in every land. What use had Noel for a man who was free, yet a prisoner.

The cool air of approaching evening was soothing his long parched lungs, and cleansing his long poisoned brain of remembered foulness of odor and sound. His body luxuriated in the contact of clean linen. Just what would he refuse to do, if confronted with the alternative of return to that prison?

Before he had ridden another mile, it had fully penetrated Bruce's conviction that he had been unbelievably blind; that David Noel had tried to convey to him the very understanding at which he now had painfully arrived. He recalled the frank and uncompromising statement that the prisoner would be paroled in custody of his employer. Noel had made no affectation of pity or charity in the matter, and his last remark gathered new force: "I thought you understood. For me, of course?" Well, it was best to be prepared by realization of what lay before him, even if realization brought despair.

A turn in the road brought them beneath a great tree wrapped from bottom to summit with a mass of brilliant blue blossoms. When he roared beneath and as he passed, a gust blue lightly a pendant branch against his face. Involuntarily he raised his hand to protect his beloved glasses from injury. And touching them, he touched a new collection. Noel had sent to him his eyeglasses. He must have gone or sent to the old camp where Bruce's effects had lain abandoned for a year, to find the case containing those still rimmed spectacles. That action was not born of self interest, but of pure kindness. As long as he lived, Corey Bruce was never to touch or see his glasses without a renewal of the poignant attitude he had felt on opening the case at the prison door. Souching them now, he hated his own distrust of Noel. Might not his purpose be secret without being evil? Might not—

The voice of eBnito summoned him from his gloomy abstraction.

"The gate of the great house," said Benito.

Bruce started and raised his head. They had lost sight of the white villa as the road wound down the mountain. He could not see it now, but he stood before a magnificent jungle of tropical trees and vines of clinging blossoms, some crimson, some blue, some lavender. Opposite them was the only visible break in this jungle; two marble gate columns from behind which a broad white road curved away through the wall like masses of jade green and flame colored foliage. The columns were taller than a mounted man, octagonal in shape and tapered to summits perhaps eight inches square. Upon each of these pedestals stood a small object carved of white translucent stone. Bruce leaned nearer to verify his first impressions, incredulous of his sight. But he had been right, singular as the ornament had seemed. On either pillar was set a little shoe, carved of white onyx; so daintily done that the little tassel upon each one seemed to sway in the breeze, and a child's little foot to have rounded their outlines but a moment since.

"The House of the Little Shoes," murmured the soft guttural voice of Benito. "The Senhor understands now?"

"But why were the shoes put there? Why were they chosen for the gate?" wondered Bruce.

"It was the will of the master, Senhor."

"But there might be a story, perhaps a legend, to account—"

"Who knows, Senhor? No one ever heard such a tale in this country."

Bruce stared at the pillars. No coat of arms, no insignia, no monogram or name; simply the shoes exalted above those who passed in and out of the house of David Noel. If they had been a woman's shoes, he could have smiled, shrugged and guessed. But a child's! Yet, there they stood, strangely accompanied by tropical forests.

"The Senhor Noel is married?" Bruce hazarded.

"No, Senhor."

"He—has been?"

"No, Senhor, on, as the Indian's glance urged him. As he passed between the pillars, he perceived that they supported massive gates of ironwork. There was no guard or lodge keeper, and the gates stood open with an appearance of permanency in their position.

To Bruce's nervous fancy, those open gates had an air of insolent security. It was as if they proclaimed to all who passed that the master of the house beyond feared no one, repelled no one.

"But he may be protected well, for all that," reflected Bruce.

He thought of himself. The Indian was his only guardian, yet how hopeless would be an attempt to escape! The American might ride free for a day, a month, perhaps a year; but in the end he would be run down, no doubt, and brought back, if he lived.

The belt of forest proved to be half-mile deep. Abruptly the road emerged from it, ran under a green arch, and before the dazzled eyes opened a great stretch of gardens lovelier than a dream landscape. High ly cultivated as an English estate, colored with the opulence of the tropics, cunningly designed with the flash of waters here and there, and the gleam of distant pergola or caravan seat to forbid monotony, the whole fairness folded around the white villa like an embroidered garment planned to enhance its beauty. Bruce closed his eyes, reopened them, gazed and gazed, and was yet unsatisfied.

Well pleased, Benito did not disturb his ward, waiting in sleek and satisfied content while Bruce admired. The horses chafed finally at the delay, recognizing themselves at home. As soon as permitted by their rides, they loped along the road that curved past limpid pools, over a high arched bridge, between lovely scented things full loops from trees or columns set for them. Bright hued birds plunged among the trees, long legged cranes waded in pools.

Arrived at the broad central entrance, a servant appeared to take Bruce's horse, and guide him up the steps. Benito effaced himself, his duty obviously completed with the safe delivery of the engineer.

Weak from long and hideous confinement, tired by the long ride and the uncertainties of his situation, gathered only vague, kaleidoscopic impressions of an entrance hall of columned airiness with a fountain as its center, of rooms artfully beautiful opening on either hand, through which he was led. Once he glimpsed himself in a long mirror, and was profoundly startled and abashed. Was this he, this gaunt, stoop shouldered man whose shock of unkempt red hair made his head appear out of all proportion to his lean body, whose face was hollow cheeked and sallow beyond his own recognition? And how came he to be tolerated here, with his imperfect cleanliness, his soiled boots and dusty garments, bringing his convict atmosphere amid all this immaculate luxury? Surely the servant was mistaken in bringing him here! Or, no! No but he was being taken before Noel, where he would be instructed as to his future work.

He was taken to a bedchamber, and received by a deferential native boy, who undertook the duties of a valet.

(To be continued next week.)

LIVING YOUR ALLOTMENT.

A young woman contending that the expectation of human life should be more than 70 years was told that the prophet David had set three scores and ten as the allotted age of man, to which her reply was, "But see what a life he led!"

The rule is that men who have gone to bed do not necessarily die three scores and ten. Some do, but the great majority do not. The young people talk about "a short life and a merry one." Those who reach three scores and ten, however reckless they may have been in youth, are willing to live so as to husband the years.

The great necessity is to live so as to throw as little pressure as possible on the vital organs. Perhaps the greatest single bane is high blood pressure. Of course, apoplexy, and some varieties of Bright's disease and heart disease are closely associated with high blood pressure.


In cases of high blood pressure the foods to avoid are those rich in purin bodies. The relative purin content of various foods are as follows:

Beans	.....	4.16	Sweetbreads	.....	70.43
Lentils	.....	4.61	Liver	.....	19.26
Mutton	.....	6.75	Beef Steak	.....	14.45
Halibut	.....	3.50	Strain	.....	9.13
Oatmeal	.....	3.45	Chicken	.....	9.06
Cod	.....	4.01	Loin of Pork	.....	8.48
Coffee	.....	79.00	Veal	.....	8.12
Tea	.....	1.21	Ham	.....	8.05
			Salmon	.....	8.05

An old person with high blood pressure will do well to live on bread, oatmeal, other cereals, vegetables, fruit, fats, sweets, milk and cheese in moderation. Constipation must not be permitted. As a rule, old people will do well to avoid meats, soups and gravies, beef teas, extracts and essences. Soups containing a great deal of flour are liable to cause flatulence. They should get most of their animal nitrogen they need from cheese, eggs and milk, but they do not need a great deal of these. They should get most of their nitrogen from vegetable proteins, particularly those of oatmeal, bread, macaroni, and beans.

They need a good deal of fat to keep up their body heat. They can get fat from butter and oleomargarine and bacon. Cold fat is better than warm fat for anybody.

They will not have much of a sweet tooth, but a moderate amount of sugar is good for them. In fact, the old are the only people who can be allowed to eat sugar as freely as they wish.



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HAS BUST OF HERODOTUS HOW THE SQUIRREL HELPS

Antique in Metropolitan Museum of Art Identified as Portrait of Father of History.

Uncle Sam Needs Seeds of Douglas Fir and Knows Where to Find Them.

Dr. Robinson, director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York, has identified an antique marble bust, which has been in the museum's store-room for 20 or 30 years, as being a portrait of Herodotus, "the father of history." The marble, which has lain in dust all these years, will now assume an important place of honor in the institution.

There are but five known portraits of Herodotus. The New York portrait-bust was originally found at Benha, in Lower Egypt, and passed into the possession of Emil Brugsch Bey, from whom it was acquired and presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Arts. The recognition was based on the resemblance of the known portraits and the finding of the learned man's name inscribed upon it. As a work of art it was not very highly regarded, but as the sixth known portrait of Herodotus it assumes new dignity. It is also said to be one of the best portraits extant.

Tactful Nephew. Old Aunt (despondently)—Well, I shall not be a nuisance to you much longer.

Nephew (reassuringly)—Don't talk like that, aunt; you know you will.

A Silent Partner. Mrs. Heck—Does your husband talk politics around the house?

Mrs. Peck—My husband never talks anything around the house.

No Melba. "Harry clapped his hands when I was singing."

"Over his ears?"

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