

# Jephthah's Daughter:

A Story of Patriarchal Times.

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## CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

Then the face of each turned to each, and long time they gazed into each other's eyes, as though their very souls were bared unto each other. Then silently their arms entwined, and softly their lips met and pressed and clung; and so rested they, still upon their knees, for the moment was sacred as once to love and to death. The thought of what was to come was in the heart of each, and east around them a great awe that seemed to wrap them in; but even over this their pure love triumphed, and the man and the maiden were shown therein the truth of Namarah's words, that love is stronger than death.

Then Adina lifted up his voice and prayed.

And Namarah, in her gentle voice, which the words of Adina's prayer made now to tremble, answered even also, "Amen."

After they got them to their feet and went in search of the maiden's father Jephthah, that they might speak unto him cheering words and comfort him with the comfort wherewith their souls within had been comforted.

And Namarah spoke unto her father Jephthah, and said:

"Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my unhappy lot."

And he said:

"Go."

And after this, behold, the face of the maiden was no longer sorrowful, but ever there beamed forth from it a most calm and shining light that even comforted the hearts of all who gazed on her.

## CHAPTER VIII.

On the evening of the return from battle of the hosts of Jephthah, the Gileadites, Namarah went, as was her wont, to feed her doves, and as she stood among them, more white than was the gown she wore, there came to her, down the garden-walk, through the parted branches of the trees, the young man Adina.

Now, Namarah knew that he would come, even at this time and place, but her heart within her trembled, and the color was not so far gone from out her cheek but that his coming called it back, like to a rose in bloom.

Adina, who had rested from his traveling and refreshed himself, was clad, this evening, like Namarah, all in white, in a stately robe that swathed his stalwart body from the shoulder to the sandals on his feet. His beautiful strong young arms were hid beneath its folds, until, as he came up to where the maiden stood, he reached them out and folded her tenderly and strongly against his breast.

"Hurt not the bird, Adina," she said, slowly, as he held her there and knew not to distinguish between the fluttering of the dove and the beating of the maiden's heart. "It is even thy little messenger, which did company thee upon thy dangerous wanderings and bring me the message of thy heart to mine."

"How knowest thou it is the same, Namarah," he made answer, "seeing that these snow-white birds of thine are like as be garden-lilies?" And as he spoke, he held her still with one strong arm, while the other hand he laid above her little one that gently smoothed the ruffled plumage of the frightened bird.

"I knew it even by its travel-stains and by its broken feathers. See, the birdling hath e'en suffered in our service," and, as she spoke, she lifted it and kissed it tenderly, at which Adina swiftly bent his tall head and kissed the very spot whereon her lips had lain upon the bird, saying as he did so:

"Thy kisses are all mine, Namarah, and I must even take back the one that thou hast given to the bird. It was ill done of thee to bestow it on another than him to whom it doth by right belong. Release the bird that hath too long engaged the touches of thy hands, for these be mine also, and to-night I long for all thy love, seeing that my heart within me is like to burst with sorrow."

Then Namarah swiftly loosed the bird, which flew away and vanished from their sight, even as the maiden threw her arms about her lover's neck and yielded herself to his most sweet embrace.

"I pray thee sorrow not, Adina, my beloved," she spake low. "Thine am I for eternity, and Heaven's joys can never end. Wilt thou not strive to give me strength to do the thing that lies before me? Pray for courage for both thee and me, for love is sweet, and death seems cruel."

"Ay, Adina is cruel, cruel!" made answer Adina, with that his brow grew stern, and the very hands that were about her soft young body clinched as if in anger.

"Now, may God forgive me," said Namarah, "for the evil word I spake. It even passed the door of my lips without mine own consent. Our God is good, Adina, and if we dishonor Him not, by doubt of His goodness and rebellion to His will, He will most likely deliver us both; and if it pleaseth Him

to take my spirit back to Him who gave it, and so leave thee here upon the earth, will it seem too hard a thing to wait with patience until the hour of thy release from earth and flesh shall come, when thy spirit shall again meet mine?"

"Too hard a thing, Namarah! I could wait till eternity were ended sooner than I could love any other maiden than thee!"

"Ah, sweet, sweet is thy love and loyalty beloved!" saith Namarah; "and my heart is even warmed and comforted to hear thee speak those words. Nevertheless, there is a thing I would have thee remember. If it should be, when I am dead, that thou shouldst ever love another maiden—for thou art young, and there be others worthy of thy love, and life alone is long and sad—I would not have thee live unwed because of me. If thou choicest to marry thou hast my full consent, and even my blessing from Heaven."

But at her words the young man thrust her from him almost roughly, and turned on her the first ungentle look his face had ever worn to her.

"Thou art unkind and cruel unto me, Namarah," he said, "and thy love is not like to mine for thee, or thou couldst not think possible the thing whereof thou speakest. The soul of Adina slept within him until, at touch of thy soul, it waked; and it lives but for thee alone. If thou must die, the desire of my heart will be still to thee alone, and my soul shall even wait for thy soul."

## CHAPTER IX.

Then Namarah came again into his arms, and while they clasped her close with love's true tenderness, behold the maiden began softly to weep, and said:

"I am even satisfied to die to-night, knowing a love like thine. If I die and thou livest, I beseech thee that thou wilt be even as a son unto my father Jephthah, for his heart is broken within him, and by reason of his vow he giveth up his only child."

"That will I maiden," saith Adina; "and if so be that I shall live and thou diest, that will even be my work in life. Ah, Namarah, my most holy and most beautiful love, hast thou thought upon the weariness and darkness of the life that I will lead without thee, even through youth and manhood and old age?"

"Yea, beloved, I have thought of it," she answered—"be sure that I have thought of it—with a heart made wild with anguish, and it seemeth unto me that thy fate is even a harder one than mine. But now that we have spoken of these things, and thou knowest my thoughts and wishes concerning thy life, if thou art left to live it out without me, let us speak of it no more, and let us even, so far as in us lies, banish it from our thoughts. I would have thee give me a solemn pledge that when I depart on the morrow, I, and the maidens that be my companions, thou wilt pray continually, as I shall do, for deliverance. Kneel with me now, Adina, and let us pray thy prayer, even in the silence of our hearts."

And side by side, upon the grass beneath the white light of the moon, they knelt together, hand in hand, and lifted up their hearts. So still and silent was the night that the little brook which ran through the garden, down at the foot of the hill, could be heard gurgling over its stones, and the notes of the doves in their house near by sounded mournfully and pleadingly in their ears. The soft wind of the summer night played lightly over their bowed heads, ruffling Adina's golden curls and blowing against his throat a long tress of Namarah's silky hair. Long time they knelt there, their bodies touching only in that close hand-clasp, but their souls fused into one.

When they rose from their knees and stood erect in the pale moonlight, both so tall and young and beautiful in their fair white raiment, they turned and wound their arms around each other in an embrace of unspeakable love. Again the night lay wrapped in silence. Suddenly there was a fluttering above them, and a white bird flew down and alighted. There it nestled, with a little plaintive moan. As the young man and the maiden strove each to touch and soothe its ruffled feathers, their two hands met and clasped.

"It is the little messenger," said Namarah, as the bird crept closer to the warmth of their necks, between the arch made by their close-pressed cheeks. "It seemeth to be restless and unhappy. There was one of my doves killed by a hawk one day, while this messenger was gone with thee. Thinkest thou it could have been its mate? I saw the great hawk swoop down upon it one day, as it sat alone apart from all the rest, and before I could run to its rescue, the poor little thing had been carried off in those cruel claws. Thou knowest—dost thou not?—that the dove is the image of constancy, and that when it once loses its mate it takes none other evermore."

"Even as it shall be with me," breathed forth Adina. "If I lose the mate whereunto my soul is already

wed, so will I live lonely like the mateless bird, until mine end shall come."

Then, while the bird still rested between them, they clasped each other closer yet, for with the rising of the sun to-morrow Namarah and her maidens were to set forth unto the mountains, and this was their hour of parting.

Long time they rested there alone, after the bird had fluttered off to its house, and ever the sound of its sad complaining came unto their ears.

"It shall be my companion while thou art gone," said Adina, "and at night I will take it with me, so that its mourning shall be made against the warmth of my heart, that hath no voice wherewith to utter the greatness of its woe."

Nevertheless, I shall hear its complainings even with the ears of my soul," said Namarah, "and my heart shall answer them, in sounds inaudible that thy listening soul may hear. And now must I leave thee, beloved, for my father waiteth for our parting to be over, that he may even speak with me himself."

## CHAPTER X.

At break of day next morning, Namarah, accompanied by her maidens, dressed all in sad garments of mourning, passed through the streets of Mizpeh and wended their way toward the mountains, and, as they passed along, behold the people came forth of their houses to look upon them, and ever as they saw the maidens, in their sackcloth and ashes, men and women, and even little children, lifted up their voices and wept, for the vow that Jephthah had vowed was known unto all the people; also that the maiden Namarah was gone, according unto custom, to bewail upon the mountains with the maidens, her companions.

And as the maidens walked with sad and measured steps, the maiden Namarah walked ever at their head, her stately height and noble form swathed in sackcloth. And, although the hood of her mantle hid her face from view, the people said she sobbed in passing, because that they saw the fluttering rise and fall of her breast beneath the folds of her gown.

But Namarah was not weeping. Her brow was calm and solemn, and her great eyes serene as be stars. Her vigil had made her pale as the ashes wherewith she had sprinkled her garments; but the look of her face was strong and confident, and ever she whispered in the silence of her heart "He will deliver."

As the town was left behind, and the rugged mountain path up which they were to wend their toilsome way was come in view, Namarah paused, and the maidens who followed, pausing also, say her part the folds of her garment and take therefrom the messenger-dove which had already served so faithfully. She spake no word, neither looked she to the right nor the left, while all the maidens wondered, but lifting it to her lips she gently kissed it, then raising her arm above her head she held it on her open palm, giving it a little impulse upward, at which it spread its wings and flew, with a sure and steady flight backward along the path that they had come. Namarah stood and looked at it until the whiteness of its feathers was even one with the whiteness of the clouds, and then she turned about and began to climb the mountain-path, her maidens following. Then were there tears in her eyes, in that moment, which overflowed and fell upon her cheek, but no eye there was that saw them.

(To be continued.)

## His Best Ideas.

That the American "man with the hoe" does not find the life of the farm stultifying must surely be inferred from the words of an old tiller of the soil, who came across a classical volume and found in Plato a kindred spirit. The good American farmer called upon a doctor, and was ushered into the library. At once the well-filled book-shelves drew his attention. "Are you fond of reading?" asked the doctor, noting the wandering gaze. "Well, yes," returned the farmer, modestly. "I should be pleased to lend you a book to take home with you," said the other. "Just take any one that you think you'd like to read." "Oh, I'm no good at selectin'," replied the old man. "You pick one out, doctor." So the doctor, in a spirit of fun, gave the farmer a book written by Plato. The old man went away, and at the end of a week reappeared with the book under his arm. "Well," queried the doctor, "did you read the book?" "Yes, I did," was the emphatic answer. "And what did you think of it?" "It was fast-rate," responded the farmer. "I've read it through from kiver to kiver. I never heard tell of this fellow Plato before, but all the same I'm glad to find that the old chap has been writing up some of my very best ideas."

## An Ideal of True Greatness.

A Cleveland paper tells a story of a street incident which shows the ideal of greatness which the sensational newspapers, with their extravagant attention to "athletics," are inculcating among the street boys. Two very dirty boys of this class were engaged in disfiguring as much as possible every face on the advertisements on a big billboard. They turned the actresses into bearded ladies, put cigars in the mouths of respectable aged gentlemen, and gave Admiral Dewey a black eye. Then one of them started with his pencil for a face in the middle of the board. But the others called out: "Hey! Don't do anything to that!" "Why not?" asked the first. "Why, don't you know? That's Jeffries, the champion!" They left the face unmutilated, looked respectfully at it a moment, and trudged along.

## TALMAGE'S SERMON.

HARMONY AND MELODY LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

Strong Influence in After Years of Hymns Heard and Committed to Memory in Early Life—The Old Fashioned Pulpit.

[Copyright, 1900, by Louis Klopsch.] Text, Psalm cxviii, 14: "The Lord is my strength and song."

The most fascinating theme for a heart properly attuned is the Saviour. There is something in the morning light to suggest Him and something in the evening shadow to speak His praise. The flower breathes Him, the stars shine on Him, the cascade proclaims Him, all the voices of nature chant Him. Whatever is grand, bright and beautiful, if you only listen to it, will speak His praise. So when in the summer time I pluck a flower I think of Him who is "the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley." When I see in the fields a lamb, I say, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." When in very hot weather I come under a projecting cliff, I say:

Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee!

Over the old-fashioned pulpits there was a sounding board. The voice of the minister rose to the sounding board and then was struck back again upon the ears of the people. And so the 10,000 voices of earth rising up find the heavens a sounding board which strikes back to the ear of all nations the praises of Christ. The heavens tell His glory, and the earth shows His handiwork. The Bible thrills with one great story of redemption. Upon a blasted and faded paradise it poured a light of glorious restoration. It looked upon Abraham from the ram caught in the thicket. It spoke in the bleating of the herds driven down to Jerusalem for sacrifice. It put infinite pathos into the speech of uncouth fishermen. It lifted Paul into the third heaven, and it broke upon the ear of St. John with the brazen trumpets and the doxology of the elders and the rushing wings of the seraphim.

Instead of waiting until you get sick and worn out before you sing the praise of Christ, while your heart is happiest and your step is lightest and your fortunes smile and your pathway blossoms and the overarching heavens drop upon you their benediction, speak the praises of Jesus.

The old Greek orators, when they saw their audiences inattentive and slumbering, had one word with which they would rouse them up to the greatest enthusiasm. In the midst of their orations they would stop and cry out "Marathon!" and the people's enthusiasm would be unbounded. My hearers, though you may have been borne down with sin, and though trouble and trials and temptation may have come upon you, and you feel to-day hardly like looking up, methinks there is one grand, royal, imperial word that ought to rouse your soul to infinite rejoicing, and that word is "Jesus."

## Power of the Hymn.

Taking the suggestion of the text, I shall speak to you of Christ our Song. I remark, in the first place, that Christ ought to be the cradle song. What our mothers sang to us when they put us to sleep is singing yet. We may have forgotten the words; but they went into the fiber of our soul and will forever be a part of it. It is not so much what you formally teach your children as what you sing to them. A hymn has wings and can fly everywhere. One hundred and fifty years after you are dead and "Old Mortality" has worn out his chisel recutting your name on the tombstone your great-grandchildren will be singing the song which last night you sang to your little ones gathered about your knee. There is a place in Switzerland, where if you distinctly utter your voice, there come back ten or fifteen distinct echoes, and every Christian song sung by a mother in the ear of her child shall have 10,000 echoes coming back from all the gates of heaven. Oh, if mothers only knew the power of this sacred spell, how much oftener the little ones would be gathered, and all our homes would chime with the songs of Jesus!

We want some counteracting influence upon our children. The very moment your child steps into the street he steps into the path of temptation. There are foul-mouthed children who would like to besoul your little ones. It will not do to keep you boys and girls in the house and make them house plants. They must have fresh air and recreation. God save your children from the scathing, blasting, damning influence of the street! I know of no counteracting influence but the power of Christian culture and example. Hold before your little ones the pure life of Jesus. Let that name be the word that shall exercise evil from their hearts. Give to your instruction all the fascination of music morning, noon and night. Let it be Jesus, the cradle song. This is important if your children grow up, but perhaps they may not. Their pathway may be short. Jesus may be wanting that child. Then there will be a soundless step in the dwelling and the youthful pulse will begin to flutter and little hands will be lifted for help. You cannot help. And a great agony will pinch at your heart, and the cradle will be empty, and the nursery will be empty, and your soul will be empty. No little feet standing on the stairs. No toys scattered on the carpet. No quick following from room to room. No strange and wondering questions. No upturned face with laughing blue eyes come for a kiss, but only a grave and a wreath of white blossoms on the top

of it and bitter desolation and a sighing at nightfall with no one to put to bed. The heavenly shepherd will take that lamb safely anyhow, whether you have been faithful or unfaithful, but would it not have been pleasanter if you could have heard from those lips the praises of Christ? I never read anything more beautiful than this about a child's departure. The account said, "She folded her hands, kissed her mother good-bye, sang her hymn, turned her face to the wall, said her little prayer and then died."

Oh, if I could gather up in one paragraph the last words of the little ones who have gone out from all these Christian circles, and I could picture the calm looks and the folded hands and sweet departure, methinks it would be grand and beautiful as one of heaven's great doxologies! In my parish in Philadelphia a little child was departing. She had been sick all her days and a cripple. It was noon-day when she went, and, as the shadow of death gathered on her eyelids she thought it was evening and time to go to bed, and so she said, "Good night, papa! Good night, mamma!" And then she was gone! It was "good night" to pain and "good night" to tears and "good night" to death and "good night" to earth, but it was "good morning" to Jesus—it was "good morning" to heaven. I can think of no cradle song more beautiful than Jesus.

## Songs for the Old.

I next speak of Christ as the old man's song. Quick music loses its charm for the aged ear. The school-girl asks for a schottisch or a glee, but her grandmother asks for "Balmorhea" or the "Portuguese Hymn." Fifty years of trouble have tamed the spirit, and the keys of the music board must have a solemn tread. Though the voice may be tremulous, so that grandfather will not trust it in church, still he has the psalm book open before him, and he sings with his soul. He hums his grandchild asleep with the same tune he sang forty years ago in the old country meeting house. Some day the choir sings a tune so old that the young people do not know it, but it starts the tears down the cheek of the aged man, for it reminds him of the revival scene in which he participated and of the radiant faces that long since went to dust and of the gray haired minister leaning over the pulpit and sounding the good tidings of great joy.

I was one Thanksgiving day in my pulpit in Syracuse, and Rev. Daniel Waldo, at 88 years of age, stood beside me. The choir sang a tune. I said, "I am sorry they sang that new tune; nobody seems to know it." "Bless you, my son," said the old man, "I heard that seventy years ago."

There was a song today that touched the life of the aged with holy fire and kindled a glory on their vision that your younger eyesight cannot see. It was the song of salvation—Jesus, who fed them all their lives long; Jesus, who wiped away their tears; Jesus, who stood by them when all else failed; Jesus, in whose name their marriage was consecrated and whose resurrection has poured light upon the graves of their departed. "Do you know me?" said the wife to her aged husband, who was dying, his mind already having gone out. He said, "No." And the son said, "Father, do you know me?" He said, "No." The daughter said, "Father, do you know me?" He said, "No." The minister of the gospel, standing by, said, "Do you know Jesus?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I know Him, chief among 10,000, the one altogether lovely!" Blessed the Bible in which spectacles old age reads the promise, "I will never leave you, never forsake you!" Blessed the staff on which the worn out pilgrim totters on toward the welcome of his Redeemer! Blessed the hymn book in which the faltering tongue and the failing eyes find Jesus, the old man's song! When my mother had been put away for the resurrection, we, the children, came to the old homestead, and each one wanted to take away a memento of her who had loved us so long and loved us so well. I think I took away the best of all the mementoes; it was the old-fashioned round-glass spectacles through which she used to read her Bible, and I put them on, and I could not see across the room. But through them I could see back to childhood and forward to the hills of heaven, where the ankles that were stiff with age have become limber again, and the spirit, with restored eyesight, stands in rapt exultation, crying, "This is heaven!"

## Words of Peace.

I speak to you again of Jesus as the night song. Job speaks of Him who giveth songs in the night. John Welch, the old Scotch minister, used to put a plaid across his bed on cold nights, and some one asked him why he put that there. He said, "Oh, sometimes in the night I want to sing the praise of Jesus and to get down and pray. Then I just take that plaid and wrap it around me to keep myself from the cold." Songs in the night! Night of trouble has come down upon many of you. Commercial losses put out one star, slanderous abuse puts out another star, domestic bereavement has put out 1,000 lights, and gloom has been added to gloom and chill to chill and sting to sting, and one midnight has seemed to borrow the fold from another midnight to wrap itself in more unbearable darkness, but Christ has spoken peace to your heart, and you sing:

Jesus, lover of my soul,

Let me to thy bosom fly,

While the billows near me roll,

While the tempest still is high.

Hide me, O my Saviour! Hide

Till the storm of life is passed,

Safe into the haven guide;

Oh, receive my soul, at last.

Songs in the night! Songs in the night! For the sick, who have no one

to turn the hot pillow, no one to put the taper on the stand, no one to put ice on the temples or pour out the cheering anodyne or utter one cheerful word. Yet songs in the night! For the poor, who freeze in the winter's cold and swelter in the summer's heat and munch the hard crusts that bleed the sore gums and shiver under blankets that cannot any longer be patched and tremble because rent day is come and they may be set out on the sidewalk and looking into the starved face of the child and seeing famine there and death there, coming home from the bakery and saying in the presence of the little famished ones "Oh, my God, flour has gone up!" Yet songs in the night! Songs in the night! For the widow who goes to get the back pay of her husband, slain by the "sharpshooters," and knows it is the last help she will have, moving out of a comfortable home in desolation, death turning back from the exhausting cough and the pale cheek and the lusterless eye and refusing all relief. Yet songs in the night! Songs in the night! For the soldier in the field hospital, no surgeon to bind up the gunshot fracture, no water for the hot lips, no kind hand to brush away the flies from the fresh wound, no one to take the loving farewell, the groaning of others poured into his own groan, the blasphemy of others plowing up his own spirit, the condensed bitterness of dying away from home among strangers. Yet songs in the night! Songs in the night! "Ah," said one dying soldier, "tell my mother that last night there was not one cloud between my soul and Jesus." Songs in the night! Songs in the night!

A Christian woman, the wife of a minister of the gospel, was dying in the parsonage near the old church, where on Saturday night the choir used to assemble and rehearse for the following Sabbath, and she said: "How strangely sweet the choir rehearses tonight. They have been rehearsing there for an hour." "No," said some one about her, "the choir is not rehearsing tonight." "Yes," she said, "I know they are. I hear them singing. How very sweetly they sing! Now, it was not a choir of earth that she heard, but the choir of heaven. I think that Jesus sometimes sets ajar the door of heaven, and a passage of that rapture greets our ears. The minstrels of heaven strike such a tremendous strain the walls of jasper cannot hold it.

I wonder—and this is a question I have been asking myself all the service—will you sing that song? Will I sing it? Not unless our sins are pardoned and we learn now to sing the praise of Christ will we ever sing it there. The first great concert that I ever attended was in New York when Julien in the Crystal palace stood before hundreds of singers and hundreds of players upon instruments. Some of you may remember that occasion. It was the first one of the kind at which I was present, and I shall never forget it. I saw that one man standing and with the hand and foot wield that great harmony, beating the time. It was to me overwhelmingly. But, oh, the grander scene when they shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south "a great multitude that no man can number," into the temple of the skies, host beyond host, rank beyond rank, gallery above gallery, and Jesus will stand before that great host to conduct the harmony with His wounded hands and wounded feet! Like the voice of many waters, like the voice of mighty thunderings, they shall cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive blessing and riches and honor and glory and power, world without end. Amen and amen!" Oh, if my ear shall hear no other sweet sounds may I hear that! If I join no other glad assemblage, may I join in that.

I was reading of the battle of Agincourt, in which Henry V. figured, and it is said after the battle was won, gloriously won, the king wanted to acknowledge the divine interposition and he ordered the chaplain to read the Psalm of David, and when he came to the words, "Not unto us, O Lord, but to Thy name be the praise," the king dismounted, and all the cavalry dismounted, and all the great host, officers and men, threw themselves on their faces. Oh, at the story of the Saviour's love and the Saviour's deliverance shall we not prostrate ourselves before Him today, hosts of earth and hosts of heaven, falling upon our faces and crying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory!" "Until the day break and the shadows flee away turn our beloved and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Beth."

## Frakishness of Boer Bullets.

The freakish performances of the Mauser bullets, as reported by surgeons from South Africa, are almost unbelievable. Letters received from Mr. Frederick Treves, the eminent London surgeon now at the front, speak of one bullet which entered the top of the head, passed down through the brain into the mouth and finally out at the side of the neck. A little headache and a slight squint in one eye were the only perceptible effects, and recovery was complete and rapid. In many cases the abdomen, bowels and liver have been penetrated almost without inconvenience. Wounds piercing the lungs often give rise to nothing more than a little blood-stained expectoration. In one phenomenal instance a bullet entered just below the collar bone, traversed the whole length of the chest and body, emerging from the inner side of the left thigh, without effecting more than a little temporary shock.

A convict is extremely familiar with the stripes and bars.