

# FREEDOM AT LAST

History of a Man Who Lived in  
Misery and Torture

## CHAPTER II.—(Cont'd)

This man Cerdic was a born agitator. Without the dogged sincerity of Hyla, he had a readier tongue and a more commanding presence. His own injuries were the mainspring of his actions, for he had once been a full corl, with boc-land of his own. From yeoman to serf was a terrible drop in the social scale. As a corl, Cerdic had a freeman's right of bearing arms, and could have reasonably hoped to climb up, by years of industry and fortunate speculation into the ranks of the Gesith or Thanas. Speculation, indeed, proved his ruin, and debt was the last occasion of his downfall. He was nearly sixty now, and a slave who could own no property, take no oath, complete no document.

As Hyla sat in the sun he saw Cerdic coming towards him, followed by a little frisking crowd of puppies. The lawyer of dogs sat him down beside his friend, and, taking out his knife, began to whet it upon a hone.

"It's a sure thing, then?" he said to Hyla. "You are certain in purpose, Hyla? You will do it indeed? Remember, eftsouns you said that it was in you to strike a blow for us all; but it's a fool's part to fumble with Satan his tail. Are you firm?"

He took one of the little dogs between his knees, a pretty frisking little creature, thinking nothing of its imminent pain, and holding one of its fore-paws in his hand, picked up the knife. The puppy whined piteously as the swift scalpel divided the living gristle of its foot, but its brethren frisked about all unheeding.

Hyla saw nothing for a time. He seemed thinking. His intelligent eyes were glazed and far away, only the impassive, hairless face remained, with little or no soul to brighten it. And yet a great struggle was surging over this poor man's heart, and such as he had never known before. To his rough and animal life an emotional crisis was new and startling. Something seemed to have suddenly given way in his brain—some membrane which hitherto had separated him from real things.

While the little dog struggled and yelped as its bleeding paw was thrust in measurement through the metal ring, a new man was being born. Hyla's sub-conscious brain told him that nothing that had happened before mattered a shred of straw. He had never understood what life might mean for a man till now.

An ideal was suddenly revealed to him. But to accept that ideal? that was hard indeed. It meant almost certain death and torture for himself.

The promptings of self-interest, which spring from our lower nature, and which are pictorially personified into a grim personality, began to flutter and whisper.

"Supposing," they said, "that you did this, that you killed Geoffroi for his sins, and to show that the down-trodden and the poor are yet men, and can exact a penalty. How much better would your companions be? Fulke would be lord then, and he is even as his father. Let it go, hold Grauch in your arms—you have that joy, you know. And work is not so bad. They have not beaten you yet; there are sometimes good things to eat and drink, are there not? Mind when you took home a whole mess of goose and garlic from the hall door? Of tea you snare a rabbit, and the minter is not ill-disposed to you. You are the best of his men; to you it is given to drive the die and hammer the coin, to beat the die into the silver and to burnish it. It is possible—stranger things have happened—that you might even gain freedom, and become a villia. Lewin might speak for you—who knows? These things have happened before. Is it indeed worth while to do this thing?"

While these thoughts were facing through Hyla's brain, and he was considering them, a strange thing happened. To the struggling brain of the serf, all unused to any subtle emotion, Nature made a direct aesthetic appeal.

In the middle sky a lark began to trill a song so loud and tuneful, so instinct with Freedom, that it seemed a direct message to him.

He stared at the tiny speck from which these heavenly notes were falling down to earth, and his doubts rolled up like a curtain.

He saw that it was his duty to kill Geoffroi for the sake of the others, and, come what might, he said to himself that he would do this thing.

The clumsy medium of the printed page has allowed us to follow Hyla's thoughts very slowly. Even as his resolve was taken he heard Cerdic muttering that it was "ill to fumble with Satan's tail."

"I'll do it," he said, "and it's not the Divell that will be glad, Cerdic. No, it's not the Divell," he repeated, a little at a loss what further to say.

The passer-by would have seen two serfs, ill-clothed, unwashed, uncouth, eating bread and cheese under a wall. He would never have put a thought to them. Yet the conference of the two was fraught with tremendous meaning to those times. For a hundred years Hyla was remembered, and a star in the darkness to the weary; and after his name was forgotten, the influence of his deeds made life sweeter for many generations of the poor.

With a lingering memory of the form in which men swore oath of fealty to their lords, he said, "I become true man to this deed from this day forward, of life and limb and earthly service, and unto it shall be true and faithful, and bear to you faith, Cerdic, for the aid I claim to hold of you."

He did this in seriousness, beyond all opinion; but the importance of the occasion, and the drama of it, pleased him not a little. The new toy of words was pleasant.

Cerdic kissed him, entering into the spirit of the oath, for it was the custom to kiss a man sworn to service.

"And I also am with you to the end," said Cerdic, "and may all false ribalds die who use poor men so."

The drama of this history may now be said to have begun. The lamps are trimmed, the scene set, and you shall hear the stirring story of Hyla the serf.

## CHAPTER III.

While Cerdic and Hyla sat in the field weaving their design to completion, Lord Geoffroi, Lord Fulke, Lady Alice, and Brian de Burgh, the squire, set out after forest game. They were attended by a great hunting train. Very few people of any importance were left in the castle, save Lewin and Dom Ansem.

The sun, though still very hot, had begun to decline towards his western bower, and the quiet of the afternoon already seemed to foreshadow the ultimate peace of evening.

Very little was doing in the castle. Some of the grooms lay about sleeping in the sun, waiting the long return of the hunters in idleness. From the armory now and again the musical tinkering of a chisel upon steel sounded intermittently. Soon this also stopped, and a weapon-smith, who had been engraving foliates upon a blade, came out of his forge yawning. The Pantler, a little stomachy man, descended from the great hall, and, passing through the court, went out of the great gate into the village. Time seemed all standing still, in the silence and the heat.

Dom Ansem came into the courtyard, and sat him down upon a bench by the draw-well, just in the fringe of the long violet shadow thrown over the yard by Outfangthef. There was a bucket of water, full of cool green lights, standing by the well.

"I am late," said Lewin, as he came up; "but I have been hearing news, and have much to tell you. We had better go at once."

"Whiles I fetch my staff," said the other, and soon they were walking through the village, down the road which led to the fen.

They got into a flat-bottomed boat and pushed off across the stream. The water was too deep to pole in the centre, but one or two vigorous strokes sent them gliding towards the further rushes. Lewin punted skilfully, skirting the reeds, which rose far above his head, until he came to a narrow opening.

"This will do as well as another," he said, and turning the boat down it.

The water-way was little more than two yards wide, and the reeds grew thick and high, so that they could only see a little way in front. At last, after many turns and twists, they came to a still, green pool, a hundred yards across. In this stagnant evil-looking place they rested, floating motionless in the centre.

"Geoffroi himself, were he in the reeds, could not hear us now," said the priest.

"True, but drop a line to give a reason for being here."

The priest took from his girdle a line, wound upon a wooden spool. Baiting the hook with a piece of meat, he dropped it overboard, and settled himself comfortably in the bottom of the boat.

"Now, Lewir," said he, "you may go into the matter."

"I will tell you all I have heard," said the minter, "and we will settle all we purpose to do. You have heard that Roger Bigot has taken Norwich, and assumed the earldom of the country in rebellion to the king. Hamo de Copton, the moneyer, is a correspondent of mine, from London, and we have been interested together in more than one mercantile venture. From him letters are to hand upon the disposal of four chests of silver triens in London. You know our money is but token money, and not worth the face value of the stamp. We are making trial to circulate our money through Hamo, and in return he sends Lord Geoffroi bars of silver uncoined. Now, the letter bears a post scriptum to this end: 'The king is sick, and indeed was taken so before Whitsuntide.' The talk is all that his cause is losing, and that wise men will be nimble to seize opportunity. Hamo urges me to consider well if I should seek some other master than Geoffroi, who is the king's friend."

He stopped suddenly, alarmed by a great disturbance in the water. A pike had swallowed Ansem's bait and was beating about the pool five or six yards away, leaping out of the water in its agony. They hauled the line in slowly, until the great, evil-looking creature was snapping and writhing at the boat-side. Then, with a joint heave, it lay at the bottom of the boat, and was soon despatched by the minter's dagger.

"Go on," said Dom Ansem.

"Yestreen," resumed Lewin, "John Heyrown was privy with me for near two hours. He comes peddling spice from Dentown, hard by Norwich town. I have known him privily these six months. From him I hear that Roger Bigot is in the article of setting forth to come upon us here to take the castle."

## HOW THIN FOLKS CAN GET FLESHY

New Accidental Discovery Gives Startling Results—Puts Flesh on Thin People and Rounds Out Imperfect Figures.

Simple Prescription Given.

For women—and men too, for that matter—who can never appear stylish with anything they wear, because of abnormal thinness and angularity, this remarkable prescription is destined to solve the problem. As a beauty maker for the figure it is simply wonderful while it adds brightness to the eyes, and color to the cheeks and lips. It requires no particular dieting, but acts as an aid to nature by its peculiar action on the nerves and blood supply. The blood and nerves distribute over the body all the nourishment or flesh building elements obtained from the food. The trouble with thin people has always been that they do not absorb or retain enough of the fleshy matter to make them gain in weight even to a normal extent; but this new discovery of blending certain harmless drugs is a revelation to science, and hundreds have gained from ten to forty pounds in a few weeks. There is no danger of becoming too fat. When you get the right weight then stop using.

The general health and strength is greatly improved in anyone from the age of sixteen to sixty. Women soon get plump, with well rounded arms and full bust, and men become straight, strong-looking and healthy.

In a half pint bottle get three ounces of essence of pepsin and three ounces syrup of rhuarb. Then add one ounce compound essence cardioli, shake and let stand two hours. Then add one ounce tincture cadomene compound (not cardamom). Take a teaspoonful before and after meals, and weigh before beginning.

# SHREDDED

A meat diet is too heating

Shredded Wheat is the natural summer food. Cooling, yet full of rich nourishment. All the strength-giving elements of the whole wheat. A biscuit covered with fresh fruit is enjoyable. Serve with cream and sugar.

Sold by all grocers, 13c. a carton, two for 25c.

# WHEAT

Geoffroi has great store of fine armor of war, eke fine metals and jewels of silver and gold. Hilgay would extend Roger's arm far south, and make a fort for him on the Eastern road to London. He is pressing to London with a great force and inventions of war. Now listen, John Heyrown is neither more nor less than in his pay, and he comes here to see if he can find friends within our walls. Roger knows of me and my value, and offereth me a high place, and also for my friends, do I but help him. What do you say?"

Dom Ansem's thin face wrinkled up in thought, weighing the chances.

"I think," he said at last, very slowly, "I think that we must throw our lot in with Roger Bigot, and be his men."

"I also," said Lewin. "And I have already been preparing a token of our choice."

He pulled a piece of vellum from his tunic.

(To be continued.)

A genius is a man who tries to borrow money—and gets it.

Some animals multiply rapidly and some snakes are adders.

A girl isn't necessarily an angel because she's fly.

## McKenzie Mine at Elk Lake Has Started Bagging Ore

Successful Operations at the Mine Which Make the Property a Coming Shipper.

ELK CITY, May 4.—With the opening of navigation, which is now in full swing, the greatest of activity prevails at the various mines and prospects in this vicinity and the city is rapidly recovering from the recent fire.

The district is likely to become another Cobalt and the veins run to depth with values. Among the shippers and properties bagging ore are the Lucky Godfrey, the Borland-Thompson, the Devlin and the Moose Horn mines.

The Moose Horn mine put in a new plant this spring and are now sinking a winze at the 125-foot level on a vein which has shown values from the surface.

In the midst of the mines is the McKenzie, a group of five properties on which work was begun last January. They have been fortunate from the start and soon hope to rank with the shippers.

The engineer in charge, Mr. Harry McMaster, reports that the vein on location 846 of the company's group at a depth of 50 feet continued steadily the whole distance and showed free silver all the way with the exception of four feet. Several hundred feet of stripping has already been done, resulting in the discovery of two additional veins, one of which is 7 inches wide, cutting at an angle of six degrees. It is the intention to continue this shaft to the 75 or 100 foot level, then drift to the McKenzie vein,

where the new 7 inch vein crosses. Mr. McMaster states that in his opinion this week will result in the placing of the value of the mine beyond question. The necessary buildings have now all been erected, including bunk house, cooking camp, manager's dwelling, blacksmith shop, powder house, and the necessary machinery is being installed. A good wagon road has been built from the main road which parallels the road from Elk Lake.

The McKenzie company are in a very fortunate position, owning a group of five properties which have been thoroughly tested. Six assays made from the veins on which the company are now working have shown results of from 400 ounces of silver up as high as 15,000 ounces to the ton.

This company is under good management, and it is the opinion of the engineer in charge and those who have seen the property that it should be brought to the shipping stage in a very short time, 500 pounds of good ore having been bagged by May 1, and the work in this regard being pushed rapidly from day to day.

Application is being made to list this stock on the New York Curb. The Transfer Agents are The Trusts and Guarantee Company of Toronto and the Guarantee Security and Transfer Company of New York.

I am offering 50,000 Shares of this stock at 25c. per share, subject to prior sale. Write or wire me your subscription at once.

P. S. HAIRSTON, Manning Arcade  
Toronto, Ont.

## Cool Kitchen—Perfect Cooking



The housewife with years of experience—the woman who knows how to cook—finds, after practical tests and hard trials, the New Perfection Oil Cook-Stove is her idea of what a good cook-stove really ought to be.

She finds it requires less attention, costs less to operate, and cooks all food better than any other stove she has ever tried.

She finds the New Perfection oven bakes and roasts perfectly. The

## New Perfection WICK BLUE FLAME Oil Cook-stove

has a Cabinet Top with a shelf for keeping plates and food hot. There are drop shelves for coffee pot or saucepans, and nicked towel racks. It has long turquoise-blue enamel chimneys. The nickel finish, with the bright blue of the chimneys, makes the stove ornamental and attractive. Made with 1, 2 and 3 burners; the 2 and 3-burner stoves can be had with or without Cabinet.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: Be sure you get this stove—see that the name-plate reads "NEW PERFECTION." Every dealer everywhere; if not at yours, write for Descriptive Circular to the nearest agency of the

The Queen City Oil Company, Limited,  
Toronto.