Watertown Daily Times.

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The Daily Times.

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B. BROCKWAY, Editor and Proprietor.

MARRYING A CONVICT.

I had served twenty five years on board an East Indiaman, and for the last ten years had commanded the Belle, one of the finest crafts that ever floated. I was an old sea dog, and had dwelt so long on salt water that I felt almost a hatred for the land.

On the 20th of October, 1871, I received orders to put myself in readiness to sail for Cayenne. I was to transport seventy five soldiers and a convict. I had orders to use this individual well, and the letter I received from the directory enclosed another, with a huge red seal, which I was not to open until between 27 and 28 degrees, west longitude, that is, just before we were about to cross the line.

The letter was a long packet, so well closed on every side, that it was impossible to catch the slightest glimpse of its contents. I am not naturally superstitious, but there was something in the look of the letter that I did not altogether like, though I could give no reason why. However, I carried it into the cabin, and stuck it under the glass of a little shabby English clock, which was fastened above my head. I was busy fixing the letter under the clock when who should come into my cabin but the convict and his wife! This was the first time I had seen either of them, and I may say that a more prepossessing couple I never met. The woman was scarcely more than fifteen, and as handsome as a picture, while the husband was an intelligent, magnificently formed man, on whose features nature had never written "Villain."

His crime, to be plain, was the misfortune of being a hundred years ahead of his age. He and others had attempted something our Government called treason; and which is punished with death. Therefore, it occasioned me considerable wonder that he should be under my charge; but more of this afterward.

He had, I said, his wife hanging on his arm. She was merry as a bird; she looked like a turtle dove cooing and nestling beneath his great wing.

Before a month had passed over our heads I looked upon them as my own children. Every morning I used to call them both into my cabin. The young fellow would sit writing at my table—that is to say, at my chest—which was my bed. He would often help me at reckoning, and soon learned to do better than I could. I was amazed at his ability. His young wife would sit upon one of the round stools in my cabin, working at her needle.

One day we were all three sitting in this way, when I said:

"Do you know, my young ones, as it seems to me, we make a very pretty family picture? Mind, I don't mean to ask questions, but may be you have not much money to spare, and you are, both of you, as I think, too handsome to dig in the burning sun of Cayenne like many a poor wretch before you. It is a bad country—a bad country, take my word for it. I who have roughed it through tempest and sunshine till I have the skin of a rhinoceros, might get along there; but you—I am afraid for you. So, if you should chance to have a bit of foolish friendship for your poor old captain, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll get rid of this old brig; she's not much better than an old tub, after all; so I'll settle myself down there with you, if you like. You see I have not a living soul in the world to care for, or that cares for me. I want relations, I want a home, I want a family. I should like to make my home with you, my pretty young ones, what say ye?"

They said nothing at all, but sat looking, first at each other, and then at me, as if they doubted whether they understood what I said.

At last the little bird threw her arms around my neck and cried like a baby.

"But," suddenly pausing, "you haven't looked at the letter with the big red seal."

"Hang it," I exclaimed, "it had slipped my mind entirely."

With a cool, dreadful sensation I went to my chest to see where we were. I found that we had several days remaining before we should reach the proper latitude for opening the letter.

Well, there we stood, all three of us, looking up at the letter as if it could have spoken to us. As it happened the sun was shining full upon the face of the clock case, and fell upon the great red seal of the letter. I could fancy that it looked something like a big monster, an ogre's face, grinning from the middle of the fire; it looked horrid.

"Could not one fancy," said I, to make them laugh, "its great big eyes were starting out of its head!"

"Ah, my love," said the wife, "it looks like blood."

"Pooh, pooh!" said her husband, taking her arm under his, "it looks like an invitation to a wedding. Come, come, leave the letter alone if it troubles you. Let's go to our room and prepare for bed."

And off they went. They went up upon the deck and left me alone with the beast of a letter. I remember, I kept looking at it as I smoked my pipe; it seemed to fix its great red eye upon mine, fascinating like the eye of a serpent. It was red, wide, raw, staring like the eye of a wolf. I took my great coat and hung it over both clock and letter, and went upon deck to finish my pipe.

We were now in the vicinity of Cape de Verde Islands; the Belle was running before a fair wind at the rate of ten miles an hour. It was a splendid tropical night, the stars large and shining, the moon rising above the horizon as large as a silver sun, the line of ocean parting it, and long streams of bars, shimmering light falling upon the waves, which as they broke, sparkled like jewels. I sat upon the deck smoking my pipe and looking at them.

All was still except the footfall of the officer of the watch, as he paced the deck, gazing, as I was, upon the shadow of the vessel stealing over the silent water.

I love silence and order—I hate noise and confusion. The lights should all have been extinguished by this time, but when I looked upon the deck I thought I saw a little red hue of light beneath my feet. At another time and place this would have made me angry, but knowing that the light came from the cabin of my little deportes, I determined to see what they were about.

I had only to look down—I could see into the cabin from the skylight.

The young girl was upon her knees, she was saying her prayers. A lamp swinging from the ceiling lighted her room. She had on a long nightdress, and her golden hair floating over her shoulders, almost touched her two little bare feet, which were peeping out from under her white dress, so pretty. I turned away; but pshaw! said I, I am an old sailor! What matter? So I stayed.

The husband was sitting upon his little trunk, his head resting upon his hands, looking at her as she prayed. She raised her

Suddenly clasping his hands in a transport of love and affection, he said

"And yet, my little angel, I see you cry when you say your prayers, and that I cannot stand, for I know what causes it, and then I fear you must repent what I have done."

"Repent," she said, in a sad, rebuking tone. "Repent of having come with you. Do you think because I have been yours such a very short time that I should not love you? Was I not your wife? How can you be sorry that I should be with you, to live with you if you live, and to die with you if you are to die?"

The young man began to sigh, striking the floor impatiently with his feet, while he kissed repeatedly the little hand and arm which she was holding out.

"Ah, Laurette, Laurette! When I think if our marriage had been delayed only five days, only five days, and then I should have been arrested and transported alone, I cannot forgive myself."

At this the little one stretched out her round white arm, clasped his head, pressed his forehead, his hair, his eyes, smiling like a cherub, and murmuring all sorts of women's fond things. I was quite affected, and considered it one of the prettiest scenes I had ever witnessed.

"And, besides, we are so very rich, too!" she said, bursting out laughing. "Look at my purse, one gold louis d'or—all my worldly wealth."

He began to laugh too.

"Yes, dear, I have spent my last half crown. I gave it to the fellow who carried our trunks on board."

"Ah, poor!" she cried, "what matters it? Nobody so merry as those that have nothing at all; besides, I have two diamond rings that my mother gave me; they are good for something all the world over; we can sell them when you like; and besides, I am sure that the captain meant kindly by us, and I suspect he knows very well what is in the letter. It is a recommendation to the Governor of Cayenne."

"Perhaps so; who knows?"

"To be sure it is," continued the charming little wife. "You are so good, I am sure the Governor has banished you only for a short time. I know they have no feeling against you."

It was high time the light should be stricken out, and now I rapped on the deck and called them to do so.

They instantly obeyed, and I heard them laughing and chattering like two innocent school-fellows.

One morning when I woke I was surprised to find not the slightest motion of the vessel. Hurrying on deck, I found that we were becalmed. Latitude, one degree north; longitude, between 27 and 28 degrees west.

I waited until night, when I descended to the cabin and opened the letter, with a dull, awful feeling. I held my breath while I broke the big red seal, and read:

"Captain Fontainbleau: The convict Antoine Hindenloer stands convicted of high treason against the Republic. The directory order that he be shot in mid ocean, and you are hereby instructed to see that the orders are carried into effect."

I read the letter backward and forward. I went on deck. There they were, she looking upon the ocean, and he gazing upon her with an expression of unutterable fondness. Catching his eye, I signed for him to come into the cabin, and, bidding her good-bye, he came down, his face all smiles.

I was bathed in a cold sweat; I felt as if deadly sick; I handed him the letter and he read it, together with the death warrant, which was drawn up in due form and attached. I gathered voice as he finished.

He colored slightly and bowed.

"I ask nothing, Captain," he said, in the same gentle voice that always characterized his speech; "no man can be expected to swerve from his duty. I only wish to speak a few words to Laurette, and to entreat you to take care of her if she survives; I hardly think she will."

"All that is fair, my good fellow," I cried. "If you request it I will carry her back to France to her family. I will never leave her until she wishes to be rid of me, but I do not think she will survive it."

He took my hand and pressed it.

"Most kind captain, I see you suffer more in this business than I do; but there is no help for it. I trust you will preserve what little property of mine is left, for her sake, and that you will take care she gets what her poor old mother may leave her. I put her life, her honor, in your hands. She is" (and how fondly low his voice became) "a delicate little creature; her chest is often affected: she must keep it warm, and if she could keep the two diamond rings her mother gave her, I should be glad, but of course, if money is needed, they must go. My poor Laurette: how pretty she looks."

It was getting too much for me, and I began to knit my brows.

"One word is as good as a thousand," I said. "We understand each other. Go to her."

I squeezed his hand; he looked wistfully at me, and I added: "Stay a moment, let me give you a word of advice. Don't say a word to her; be easy; that is my business. It shall be managed in the best manner."

"Ah!" said he, "I did not understand; yes, much better. Besides, this leave taking! this leave taking!"

"Yes," said I, "don't behave like a child—much better. No leave taking if you can help it, or you are lost."

I kept my seat. I saw them walking arm in arm upon the deck for about half an hour.

I called the mate to me, and when he had read the letter, I said:

"Garley, that is bad business—bad business. I put it in your hands. I obey the orders, but remain in the cabin until it is over."

"How do you wish the thing done?" he asked in a nonchalant manner.

"Take him in a boat—out of sight; do it as quick as possible; don't say anything of this till the time comes."

Garley sat five minutes looking at me without saying a word. He was a strange fellow. I didn't know what to make of him. He then went out of the cabin without saying a word.

Night came at last. "Man a boat; go a quarter of a mile; be quick."

To obey a slip of paper; for it was a slip of paper after all. Something in the very air must have urged me on. I saw the young man kneel down before his Laurette; kiss her knees! her feet! her gown! I cried like a madman.

"Part them! Part them this instant! Part them—curse the Republic—curse the directory—the directors! I quit the service—curse the lawyers!—you shall tell them if you will!"

She was dragged into her berth, and the boat rowed away in the darkness.

Some time after a dull volley came over the sea to the vessel. It was all over.

Fool! madman! how I paced the deck and cursed myself. All night long I paced back and forth, and all night long I heard the moaning of the poor stricken bird.

Often I halted and was tempted to throw myself into the sea and so end this horrid torture of brain and heart.

Days passed; I saw nothing of Laurette. I would not see her. [illegible]

[illegible] in the hands of a trusty friend and sent it to [illegible] to use at the end of six months. I could not see her [illegible] her grief [illegible].

Weary, sick and desolate [illegible], I wandered off into New York State, and finally bought a little place where I hoped I should lie down and die.

I sent for Laurette. Poor [illegible], I must see her. I could wait no longer.

One summer night I sat in the porch of my house, smoking my pipe, and gazing down the road. Soon the rumble of wheels was heard and the stage halted.

The next moment a pair of soft arms were round my neck and the head of my sobbing Laurette was on my breast.

"Oh, you dear, excellent captain."

"Heavens, who is that behind you?"

There stood the manly form of Antoine Hindenloer, the convict.

"What does this mean?" I demanded, hardly knowing whether I was dreaming or not.

"Are you glad to see me?"

"Thank God, thank God!" was all I could ejaculate.

I understood it all. The mate Garley had read my heart better than I did myself. After leaving the brig in the boat, he arranged the whole affair. The volley was fired, but no bullet touched Antoine Hindenloer. He was smuggled into his berth again, and took care to avoid my sight. The whole crew were in the plot, and thank God, I was duped.

I sent Garley a thousand dollars as a reward.

I am now an old man; but I am happy. My children and my grandchildren (I call them nothing else) seem to think old Capt. Fontainbleau is not such a wretch after all.

An Old Friend in a New Hole.

THE CARDIFF GIANT AGAIN.

The New York Evening Post, which made the acquaintance of Old Gypsum while he was in the zenith of his glory, has kept close watch of his movements and the comments on the "old fellow," as will be seen by the following from its pages:

Our old friend the Cardiff Giant is still alive. The last event of which we have knowledge in its devious career is a sale at auction, to which it was subjected somewhere in the southern states, to pay for its storage. It now turns up at the lovely old town of Innspruck, in the Austrian Tyrol, where, at the twenty-ninth meeting of the German Philological Congress, according to a correspondent of the London Academy, it was introduced by Professor Schlottmann as a Phoenician statue of Adonis. Professor Schlottmann is somewhat late in ascribing a type peculiar to the Phoenicians to this uncouth piece of stone. Professor McWhorter, of New Haven, having conceived the notion some years ago that it was one of the gods of that enterprising people. It makes little difference, however, what it is called. Its supposed or real similarity to images of Phoenician handiwork, such as have become familiar to us of late by the Cesnola collection in our metropolitan art museum, serves to show only that we have not advanced much in the art of idol-making during the last few thousands of years. But it is singular what immortality there is in a delusion of this kind. Is it true that falsehood ever travels by post, while truth limps after on foot; and that the only way to avoid the repetition of error is to drive it clean out of the world? There is this to be said, however, that credulity is not confined by geographical limits. The philologist at Innspruck, we are told did not give full assent to Prof. Schlottmann's opinions, remembering perhaps, the recent experiences of the German archæologists with the Shapira inscriptions; while it seems to us that the managers of the Academy, in publishing the letters of their correspondent without an explanatory word, put themselves in the same category with the persons whose proceedings they printed. There are individuals in this country to-day who believe in the authenticity of the political party passing itself off as democratic, which is a manifestation of credulity fully equal to that of the philosophers of Innspruck when they listened gravely to the assertion that the Cardiff Giant, that sham "fosterchild of silence and slow Time," is a Phoenician statue of Adonis.

As this is the season of the year when tooth-ache abounds, we give the following cure from an exchange on the principle of "no cure, no pay:" "If any of your readers suffer from tooth ache, or neuralgic affection arising from the teeth in any stage of decay, they may experience relief, instantaneous and permanent by saturating a bit of cotton or wool with a strong solution of ammonia, and apply it immediately to the affected tooth. The pleasant contrast instantaneously produced sometimes causes a fit of laughter, although a moment before extreme suffering and anguish prevailed. I have used the remedy for over one year, and have obtained sufficient proof to warrant its publication."

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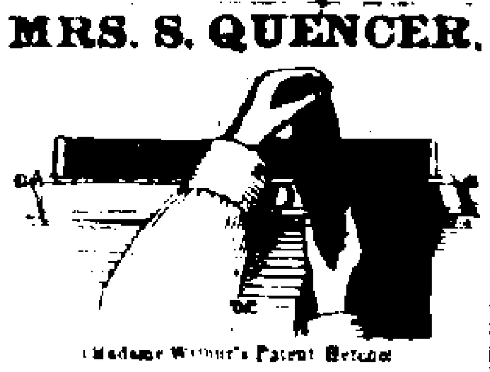

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