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IN THE CHINA SEA

A NARRATIVE OF ADVENTURE.

By SEWARD W. HOPKINS.

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CHAPTER IV.

[CONTINUED.]

"Would I know him again?" I replied rather warmly. "Why, his ugly face hasn't been out of my sight since I saw it. Would I know him? Well just let me get my fingers on his accursed throat. His own father would not know him then!"

Mr. Snell's little eyes opened at my warmth. He was about to reply, when Ralston returned. Mr. Snell skillfully changed the subject.

On January 9th we saw in the distance a long, shadowy fringe on the horizon. It looked like land. I asked the captain if it was such. He replied:

"Yes, that is land. It is the island of Formosa. We are now entering the China Sea."

The China Sea interested me only as the stretch of water that then separated us from Hong Kong. As we began to draw near to the end of our journey, I felt a feverish anxiety to hasten through with our affair.

It had become my habit of late to meditate on deck at night. Sometimes Laugston and Ralston went. Sometimes only one or the other would be with me. Sometimes I went alone.

On the night of the day we passed Formosa, I went on deck as usual. Ralston was reading, and Laugston was busily engaged in conversation with an Indian army officer. They said they would be up later. I did not object to being alone. My thoughts kept me company. I liked to stand by the rail and muse over the possibilities—what was before us. I knew they were wide and various. Knowing that my two friends were coming to join me, I did not turn when I heard a footfall behind me.

"Fine evening, there," said the voice of Mr. Gaubick Snell. "Are you enjoying that moonlight, Master Crickmore?"

"I am enjoying the prospects of leaving much more," I replied.

"Very good. But have you noticed, Crickmore, what a queer light comes from the China Sea when the moon dances in its little waves?"

I had not noticed. I leaned over the rail, and there surely was a peculiarity in the emerald sheen that was reflected from the water. I bent low, admiring the pretty effect.

In an instant I was seized from behind in an iron grip. I turned quickly, but was at a disadvantage. Before I could cry out, I received a stunning blow on the head. Only half conscious, I felt myself lifted and shoved over the rails.

A hateful voice sounded in my ears:

"Now you can't identify anybody, can you, Crickmore?"

The wind whistled past my face; I fell. I felt the waters close over me. I had been thrown overboard by Gaubick Snell.

I was powerless to utter a sound as I went down. I struck the water head first as clean as though I had taken a dive for sport.

The momentum of the ship and the height from which I had fallen sent me deep into the sea. Down—down I went, until in a half conscious way I wondered if I was ever going to stop. I do not know how far down I went or how long it took me to get there—probably not many seconds—when I felt a rush of cold water. The coldness of the water restored my senses, but I was absolutely powerless. The rush of the water was tremendous. It whirled me and turned me upside down, rolled me over and over and swept me away like a piece of paper. It dashed over me that I was in one of those swift submarine currents so common in the south seas. Some of these independent currents are said to travel at a greater rate of speed than a mile a minute. The one that had me in its grasp was not the slowest of its kind.

What has ever since seemed to me a most remarkable thing but which did not seem at all strange then, was the fact that I did not lose my presence of mind. I could do nothing, it is true. I was helpless in the grasp of the waters. But I so fully realized this that I held my breath and let the great force sweep me along unresisting.

Since boyhood I had been a good swimmer. Hours and hours I had spent in the water, floating, diving, swimming under water, and I had, in my library in San Francisco, several medals that I had taken in college aquatic contests. This training now stood me in good stead.

It was possible for me to hold my breath under water for some minutes. But it seemed like five years to me shooting along under the China Sea. It was probably just about five minutes before that icy current let go its grasp. Feeling the warmer and clearer waters around me, I shot upward with a mighty stroke. I felt, rather than saw the light through the rapidly shoaling water as I neared the surface. I also felt the decrease in the pressure. A few more strokes and I breathed again.

I looked around me.

The good ship City of Rio de Janeiro—or what I supposed to be her—was visible in the far distance, just a dark streak and a cloud of smoke, so sing her course. It was plain that no help could be expected from her even if they had been aware of my catastrophe at once. I was so quickly carried out of their reach that they would give me up. I wondered how Laugston and Ralston would bear my loss, and if they would suspect Gaubick Snell. I did not think the latter probable. The fellow was cool enough to be the first to break the news of my "accident" and to be a sympathetic listener. Meanwhile the hard-faced villain was on board.

The Island of Formosa could not be seen. I judged from the direction in which I lay from the sun, that Formosa was on the other side of the ship. I did not know north from south, but I knew that when we had passed Formosa we had been south of it. I wished me to believe that I had been carried south by the current. Later events proved this, although I greatly miscalculated the distance, and was probably mistaken in supposing the island to have been the ship I had left. I floated for some little time, and I suppose until I had fully recovered. Then I scanned the horizon, to see anything that promised hope of shelter. But I saw nothing. I floated on my back, but, as there were no stars, I hoped to escape those dreadful monsters of the deep. So far as swimming any distance was concerned, I had no fear. I could without difficulty remain on top and propel myself whither I wanted to go. But my previous danger was exhaustion from hunger. I did not know how long I would be compelled to remain upon the water, and if longer made inevitable victim I knew I was lost.

The thing to do, then, was to reach the best speed while I could.

I started off with a long, easy stroke. The water of the China Sea is very salt and gives great buoyancy to a floating body. My only work was to propel myself.

Without stopping I swam forward for about an hour. I was a rapid swimmer, but the distance covered was but a dot in the vast expanse of water. Then I rested a moment and turning my head as high as I could I took another survey of the horizon. To my great joy, I saw far away in the direction toward which I had been going what appeared to be land. I could see no trees or evidence of vegetation of any kind. Probably this was an island of rock. I had heard that there were many such off the Chinese coast. But whatever it was, it afforded hope, and again I resumed courage. I swept the waters again with my vigorous strokes and started toward the speck. The island may have been a two miles away or it may have been five. Distance is almost annihilated in the clear moonlight of the tropics. All that I knew of the distance is that I swam about four hours before I got near enough to tell what it really was.

I saw the barest rock, rearing it bald head high above the water, black—nothing but rock. But even that was something, and I gave a long sigh for a mighty effort. Curling myself up in a ball I succeeded in getting off my shoes. They were at I think from me. I would have liked to save the coat but I knew it would retard my progress, and I had a long distance yet to swim. I was fighting for life, so the coat went with the shoes.

I did not rest while I was yet strong. I wished, rather, to husband my strength. It was well I did so. The rock proved to be farther away than I imagined. But, at last, I had the royal joy of being near enough to see the greenish-white foam from the waters that breaks upon its base. I had met with no greater danger than the water itself. I had no doubt that these southern seas swarmed with man-eating monsters, but the help of a higher Power must have been with me, for I saw not one.

I reached the rock.

My heart sank within me, for its sides were as smooth and as perpendicular as the side of a house. There was no handhold or foothold, also frowning down two high above me, cold, inaccessible, pitiless. I started to swim around it.

The rock covered, I should judge, if reduced to level surface, at most two acres. But it was like swimming around a continent to me, so hopeless did it become. There was no one within sight. My hopes of life—[illegible] rock.

At last, having [illegible] half way round, I found an opening that surprised me. A [illegible] by too gulfs. [illegible] opening led into an [illegible] miniature bay or inlet [illegible] fifty feet in extent, or perhaps [illegible] the water [illegible] calm, and would be [illegible] from the wind. I went through it [illegible] away, which was about twelve [illegible] feet in extent. [illegible] on the side, which appeared to [illegible] jagged shoving place in the rock [illegible] on each side was as smooth as if [illegible] fashioned.

There sat of anything that looked like the presence of a human being in that spot was something of a mystery, but that there was proof in those range [illegible].

By a great effort I reached one of the rings and drew myself out. It was no light task to me, for the exertion had left me for the moment [illegible] with strength. I put for [illegible] strength. I stretch[illegible] climbed, crawled and [illegible] myself to the rock like a mattress. I was saving my own life. When performing wonderful feats of strength under these circumstances.

At last I stood on a flat table rock. It was bare and barren. I had found a resting place, but no more. Not a sign of sustaining food. I could not eat rock, and I saw nothing else. I saw in my future nothing but a lingering death from starvation. Had I any kind of a contrivance with which I could fish, I would gladly have devoured some of the finny inhabitants of the deep without any cooking, but I had nothing.

I began to despair.

It is not a pleasant thing to look death in the face at any time. It is simply horrible to see it starting you out of countenance when you are in full possession of health, strength and vigor, and especially so when that death will certainly be of a lingering and agonizing kind, by the pangs of hunger, gnawing pains of the most acute kind through the body, a fearful mental excitement and even madness itself, then exhaustion and death. All this I knew and recalled, if it came to the worst. That before my mind ran away I would leap from the rock and shorten my agony before the suffering was too great to bear.

But I was calm, wonderfully calm, as I reviewed the case as I look back upon the mental condition. I even smiled, with a grim sense of ghastly appreciation of my predicament.

"If I could only," I said to myself aloud as my eyes [illegible] the rich [illegible] in the face, "[illegible] I'd—and I will."

I stretched myself on the flat rock, with no covering but my wet clothes, as if the brilliant stars above me.

I was exhausted. I fell asleep.

When I awoke the sun was high and the rock was warm. My clothes had dried and I was covered with a coating of salt. My arms and legs were stiff, and I felt in every part of my body. The sun was shine and been a cruel one, but the long sleep had refreshed me wonderfully, at least. I got up and stretched and felt the kinks in my joints.

I was very hungry.

This was the beginning of my slow death. I realized this, and the bitterness of despair was upon me. I even contemplated leaping myself into the sea to end it all.

I had read of Robinson Crusoe. His was lot, indeed, compared to my miserable outlook. I would find here no man Friday to keep me company, no goats to give me refreshing milk, no goats to care and care in the future; no crops to raise and reap in the future; no crops to raise and reap in the future. There was more of the good fortune of the famous Swiss family Robinson, who were cast away on a supposed desert island, and found ready for their teaching all the elements of a successful stockade. I would train no zebra to carry me. I would find no breadfruit tree to give me life. I would find nothing but death. To all intents and purposes I was dead. No one knew where I could save me.

But even a strong man accustomed to hunger gradually. I [illegible] the rock, hoping I know not what—possibly to find some food savory there [illegible] possibly to [illegible] something [illegible] like my [illegible] possibly to penetrate and solve the mystery of the presence of the sea [illegible].

I picked my way from the flat rock upon which I slept, over a ledge of fine stone leading around the little inlet of water. This ledge seemed known by hand, but not of recent date. It was above sea-water mark. No natives of the isle had done it. And it was to recent for that. What was it, then? I thought I could see the marks of cutting tools. I carefully followed the ledge, which led to a crevice in the rock, down into which, as I saw, some rude steps were cut. Down into this pit I fled, and my heart bounded with hope. The interior of the pit was scarcely above the waves, sheltered by the high surrounding rock. An overhanging wall kept out the rain. Now I began to think of Monte Cristo. What if I found there such treasures in gold or silver or precious stones? Well, what if I did? I asked myself again. I would simply die in the midst of it all unless the lawful or unlawful owners of it came there and shooed me. There was greater danger of them killing me. So the discovery of what might prove to be the hiding place of the famed and feared pirates of the South Seas was not going to help me.

Gingerly I went down the stone steps. There were at least one hundred of them, and I knew, when I reached the bottom, that I was below the level of the sea.

CHAPTER V.

A CURIOUS MOVING CURRENT.

I was in the bottom of a great, funnel-like pit with a solid wall of rock around me.

I could see no opening, but there was a hole large enough to get a slender person in. What, then, was the purpose of the stairs? I confess to the curious crowd I had to bring. I had to and read all kinds of romantic stories, but I could recall no instance of any where there had been stairs in nature's unexpected [illegible]. It seemed to be that the purpose used for stairs goods by the people of the [illegible]. The climax of hopeful [illegible] when I discovered the stairs were not me, and my [illegible] with renewed power.

What a miserable fate! To die there alone, leaving no word or sign that would ever reach my friends to tell them of my unhappy end.

It was [illegible] to me. No use to give for me in my last moments, no sweetheart to [illegible] my severed head when the madness of fever was upon me! Nothing but stone—stone—stone!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FARM AND GARDEN.

One Way to Run a Farm.

Land never wears out if properly handled, and one of the most profitable methods of handling a farm is running a dairy or raising stock that consumes the produce raised and returns it to the land in the way of a fertilizer, while the finished product is allowed to walk off to market.

Destroying Insects in Asparagus Beds.

Cut off the tops from the asparagus beds before the seeds are ripe and then burn the materials. It is necessary place straw on the beds before firing. By so doing many of the insect enemies will be destroyed. Before winter sets in cover the bed with manure and leave it until spring.

A Well-Arranged Apiary.

A well-arranged apiary that is simple and convenient is thus described by an Illinois apiarist: "The hives are placed diagonally in the row which runs southeast and northwest, so that in each pair of rows the hives front east in one and south in the other, making each north-and-south alley free from bees to be used as a passageway to work around the hives. The rows are placed seven feet apart on centers, and the hives four feet on centers. The hives are so placed that a line drawn from the rear of the first one will touch the front of that immediately behind it. There is one north-and-south alley crosswise through the center and in a large apiary more alleys would be advisable."

Digestion Trials With Chickens.

The following extracts are taken from a bulletin recently issued by the Oklahoma experiment station:

1. Chickens digested Kafir corn and corn more completely when the grain was fed whole than when the meal was fed.

2. The Kafir corn and Kafir meal fed in this trial yielded but two per cent. less total digestible matter than the corresponding corn products.

3. Kafir corn was a more suitable ration, considering only the relative amounts of growth-making and fat-forming materials, for chickens than Kafir meal, corn, or corn meal.

4. Cow peas were digested reasonably well, and are desirable feed for growing chickens and hens. But little gain in digestibility was secured by grinding the cowpeas.

To Help Out Pastures.

The Vermont experiment station has for many years experimented with sundry soiling crops, and as a result of its work recommends to Vermont dairymen the large use of summer silage and of oats and peas sown at weekly intervals and fed during July and August. Silage is probably the cheaper food; oats and peas somewhat the better. If the former is contemplated as a steady summer diet, for years, it would be well to consider the erection of a special summer silo, preferably round, with a small feeding area, a small diameter and a relatively great depth. Silage spread over a large surface in summer spoils rapidly and loses largely in feeding value.

If oats and peas be chosen they should be sown in successive lots at weekly intervals, the two sown separately, the peas first rather deeply and harrowed in, the oats two or three days later and bushed in. A better catch is likely to be secured in this way than if sown together. The crop may be either fed green, hayed or put in the silo. New England Homestead.

Securing a Trough.

Many pasture and farmyard watering troughs are half hogsheads set upon the ground. They are in constant danger of being upset by the cattle, which also fight each other away

A TROUGH FOR PASTURES.

from the water. A plan to obviate, in part, at least, both of these evils is shown in the cut. Two posts are driven beside the tub and a wide board nailed across as shown. This holds the trough firmly to the ground, and also separates the cattle while drinking. The same plan can be used with any shape of trough.—Farm Journal.

Useful Tools For Weeding.

If the weeds are cut when young and tender, a light hoe is preferable to a heavy one. When the weeds are large and dry, a hoe with more weight is desirable. In either case, the hoe should be as light as possible, and do the work. It should be of the very best material. The handle should be light, and of the best wood. The hoe should always be kept sharp by the use of a file or grindstone. If there are stones in the soil a file is preferable to the grindstone, as the hoe can be sharpened in the field when necessary. In consequence of use in the field and sharpening on the file or grindstone, or both, the hoe will wear rapidly, but it is well to remember that steel is cheaper than muscle. A sharp hoe, while in the hands of an intelligent man or boy, is death to weeds. At the same time it adds much to the sweetness of the handler's temper. A dull hoe, in the hands of a boy, tends to utter discouragement, and furnishes him with an excuse for getting away from the farm.

Trenching Cabbage.

The process of trenching cabbages for winter is very simple. A trench is made about eighteen inches deep and the cabbages are pulled, placed in the trench, leaving on all the leaves. Usually put the heads down and roots up, and shovel on an inch or two of earth when putting them in. Then just before the ground freezes I shovel on more earth, and cover them eight or ten inches deep, leaving a few openings to be filled with straw in cold weather. Cauliflowers can be kept for some time in a cold frame or cellar, if the roots are planted in moist soil. In the market garden, when beets, carrots, turnips, and potatoes are to be stored in pits, the usual way is to dig a pit three or four feet deep, and about six feet wide, and of the length required. The vegetables are placed in it in sections three or four feet wide, leaving a space of about two feet between the sections. The advantage of the sections, is that a few bushels can be taken out at a time without exposing the rest to the pit. When covering the pit, the top should be rounded, so the water will run off.—W. H. Jenkins, in The Epitomist.

Spring-Cultivated Strawberries.

Many strawberry growers claim that spring cultivation of the plants reduces the yield, while others declare that the crop will be doubled. Both are right. It all depends upon the method of cultivation practiced from the beginning. The men first mentioned cultivate shallow and little; the second deep and a good deal. The principle involved in each case is the same. Strawberries produce an abundance of feeding roots near the surface during the fall months when the weather is cool and the soil well supplied with moisture. These roots are the ones upon which the plants depend in the early spring to finish them into flower and fruit. Thus feeding in the spring would kill them and injure the chances of a crop.

After the fruiting is over these roots become useless and new ones are sent to lower levels to get water and thus keep the plant from dying of thirst. Then the soil may be cultivated without fear of injuring the plants. The men who cultivate deep during the summer, and keep it up late in the fall, make the roots form at a much lower depth than those men who cultivate only shallow or not at all. The result is that they may cultivate in the spring with no doing any injury, but on the contrary doing good, provided they cultivate shallow at this season. They also provide a mulch to conserve moisture. In this way the roots come gradually from lower levels, toward the surface, and are forced back only by the hot weather.—M. G. Cain, in Agricultural Epitomist.

Protection From Bees.

One of the most urgent needs of the beekeeper is a good protection from stings. I know of nothing that takes the enthusiasm out of a beginner like getting stung about the face. The best color for a veil is black, as it does

BEE VEIL AND APRON.

not incommode eyes. Bobbinet or tulle is the best material. One and a half yards of cotton net twenty-two inches wide makes a good one. Sew the ends together in a seam, line the lower edge with some light material, run a round elastic just long enough to go round a hat crown by stretching a little in the top edge and you have a veil which will fasten the lower edge well. Men can put it inside the vest or under the suspenders. I always wear an apron for the purpose, cut like the illustration, and when the upper part is pinned down over the veil it is bee proof. Large pockets are convenient. In one I carry matches for my smoker, a good pair of scissors to clip queens' wings and a large screw driver or knife that has had the blade broken off to pry off honey board covers and frames and to scrape off bits of wax. The other pocket is used to hold the wax that is scraped off. Three yards of denim or heavy gingham will make the apron.

I have tried many kinds of gloves, including snuffers, but have laid them all aside. For the last six years I have used mittens made of heavy cotton sock legs. Take long ones and cut off just above the heel. Run two or three rows of machine stitching around the edge to keep from raveling, sew in a short open-ended thumb and you have a mitten that will not interfere with the use of the fingers, will protect your hands from the sun and bees and keep bees from getting up the sleeves. A small safety pin will hold them in place. With a good smoker, veil, apron and mittens one can work confidently and the bees are not so likely to be troublesome when one is not dodging and showing fear.—Mrs. A. J. Barber, in American Agriculturist.

WOMAN'S REALM

AUTUMN MATERIALS.

Henriettas, Poplins, Armures and Serge Among the Popular Fabrics.

Fashion writers agree that as far as the fall fabrics are concerned, wool in and velvet will usurp all the glories, with rump handsome and ethereal effects in the latter that hardly deserve the name of woolens. Of course, there will be the usual demand for handsome black silks, and for this handsome qualities are specified and care will be taken offered. Heavy, lustrous, in black and colors, will be more than ever in vogue for many seasons to come. An exceedingly attractive wave in women's hats will be evident for those who prefer to wear black in diverse goods. Beaver knotted and trimmed in black will about be the type to be made into the hats. Broad brimmed sailors, neat and in good taste, knotted with ribbon to harmonize with the dress, will be in vogue. Hoods will be in the new Alpine and Swiss shapes. Felt fashion will prevail in preference. For general wear, everyday utility woolens, rough goods will be most worn, as looking well longest. Scotch mixtures, tweeds, diagonals, and Oxfords will be the popular favorites in this class of goods. A new dress is narrower only in stripes similar to those so much worn 2 years just gone, will be [illegible] and will be [illegible] for dress goods.

All the old time favorites are to be found among the showings so come it fall dress goods with [illegible] difference as regards [illegible] and color from those of last season. Double faced goods will be more in vogue than ever, [illegible] to be used for cloaks and the later coats predicted this year for fall. Venetian cloth and all other desirable woolen rather resemble the Venetian in general appearance, some Viennas, any one of the materials, particularly in black, make a very elegant choice for your winter full garment.

In silks the old standbys, taffeta and [illegible] will be the most with every [illegible] [illegible] Among the fancy economical choices for evening wear, many will prove well to be most [illegible]. Handsome effects in allover [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] the dress [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]