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When the Ship Went Down

By Owen Oliver

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There was a space of still water round the Uraian. One reef sheltered her as she lay upon another, straining and groaning, like a beast in pain. Her bows had climbed over the hidden rock, pointing scornfully upwards till they were bent with their own weight and sagged downward again.
Beyond the oasis of calm, a heavy sea swept shorewards in towering green waves, until it reached a comb of jagged rocks, and poured through the openings in sheets of foam to a long, sandy beach. Three tossing boats were approaching the rocks as slowly as the current would suffer, looking for a passage through. The fourth—the last remaining—was just leaving the ship. The men who had lowered it, with no appliances but bare ropes, rubbed their chafed hands on their trousers and mopped their foreheads, and gathered together silently—except a tall gentleman of about 40. He left the rest and went toward a lady, who stood back a little, watching them. The rest of the women, and all the children, were in the boats.

She turned when he reached her, and they walked forward together. He patted her shoulder approvingly, and she smiled at him. She was about five-and-thirty; could scarcely be called good-looking, but very likable when she smiled.
"That's why she wouldn't go in the boat!" one of the gathering observed. "Aye!" said an old sailor. "She's the right sort."
Then they were silent again. The man and the woman were silent, too. When they reached the end of the saloon promenade, beside the wrecked music saloon, they stopped and rested their arms on the rail and gazed at the shore a mile away; not as if they wished to look at the shore, but as if they feared to look at each other. The chief officer came swiftly down the narrow ladder from the navigation deck, with two life-belts on his arm.

"Best put them on," he advised; "but I don't think they'll be much use." He nodded toward the breakers. "She'll go in ten minutes." The man laid one belt on the deck, while he put the other round the woman. She held up her arms and smiled at him all the time. When he finished his task, and picked up the other belt, she took it from him.
"Let me do it for you," she offered. "I should like to if I may."
His grave face lit up for a moment. "I shall like you to," he told her. "You are a brave woman."
"Braver than I thought," she assented. "I used to think that I was just—ordinary; that we all were. Now I think it was life that was ordinary, not we. What shall we do with the rest of it—the ten minutes?"

"Let us open our hearts," the man proposed. "We may venture now. Dear lady, I have admired you and liked you all the voyage. We shall go as friends together, I think?"
"I wish no better company," she told him.
"Is there no one who has a better right?" he asked.
"No one. And you?"
"No one."
"And that," she said, "is why we thought life ordinary, I suppose."
"Yes," he said. "We are braver than we thought. You, dear lady, are the bravest and the best. You gave up your life when you gave up your place in the boat. Why?"
"I stayed for a friend," she explained.

"Me?" He looked at her quickly.
"You. I wonder—it doesn't matter what we say now, does it?—I wonder if we really cared for each other?"
"Ah!" said the man. "I wondered, too, but I thought women always knew."
She shook her head.
"I liked you, certainly, but I have liked other men. I never liked any of them enough. You see, I am not a marrying woman. I have—I had aims in life. Marriage meant sacrificing so much. And for what? To be a toy and plaything for a year. Perhaps not a year—don't call it selfishness. I'd have given up everything if I had thought that love would last! My dear friend, it doesn't last. You and I are not children. We have seen life. We know! But the woman's lasts longest. I was afraid of that!"
"I know." The man nodded. "I liked you, too; liked you more than was comfortable! I thought it was more than liking, Marian."
"I was very tempted sometimes to ask you to give me yourself; but— you see, I also have liked others; and not enough. I, too, was not sure if I liked you enough; but I liked you more than any of the rest—much more. I used to fancy that some night when the moon shone—some night when the end of the voyage and the parting from you were nearer than I could bear—and you looked at me with your beautiful smile—I could never reason with that smile of yours, Marian."

She turned to him, and smiled; and he took both her hands and kissed them.
"I did not mean to either," she confessed; "but I thought that perhaps—near the end of the voyage, as you say—if you took my hand—I could never reason with the touch of your hand on mine. I—oh, yes! I should have taken the risk, I think, if you had asked me."
He drew her gently to him. She laid her face on his shoulder for a moment, then lifted it to his.
"Oh, my dear!" she cried, "the risk was not that we should not love; only that we should lose sight of it, in the commonplace of life. Now, if we are spared, we shall know—"
"We shall know, darling. There is no hope, I think. May we both be saved, or neither!"

"Yes—yes—hold me very tightly when—then! Oh! I love you so!"
He took up a piece of cord that lay upon the deck and made a fastening between the life-belts.
"If my arms can no longer hold you," he said, "we will still be together. It shall be both, or neither. I love you very much, Marian."
He kissed her many times, and she smiled the beautiful smile.
They clung to each other tightly. They did not stir even when the ship gave a long shiver and another. Then the chief officer hurried forward. He told them to hurry aft, and in a few moments the great vessel was rent in two by a terrific powder blast, and the stern floated off, held up by the water-tight compartments.
The fragment of ship swept unsteadily toward the shore, rocking and rolling so violently that those on it could scarcely cling to the rails. They were 50 yards from the rocks where the sea broke, and perhaps a hundred and fifty from the shore, when they managed to get a line to the beach.

Those aboard secured their end firmly to the ship and then their comrades ashore pulled it as taut as they could—tugging so hard that the poop of the ship moved yards nearer the breakers. The sailors substituted a stouter rope for the cord between the man and the woman, tied a loop in the end of the rope and greased it to make it run more easily. They put it over the hawser first, so that one would hang at each side, and told them to hold each other firmly. Then two or three men held them over the side ready to start.
"Now," asked the chief officer, "are you ready?"
The woman smiled at him, bravely. "God bless you all," she said. "There are more good people in the world than I thought. Good-by."
She lifted her face to the man, and they kissed each other.
"God bless you!" he said.
"Go!" cried the chief officer, giving them a mighty push, and they slid



They Clung to Each Other Tightly.

swiftly down the sagging hawser, through the drenching foam that sprang from the rocks and nearly took their breath away, holding each other more and more tightly, and rocking swiftly from side to side.
At first they went very fast; but as the rope sagged their motion was slower and slower; and though the joins in the hawsers the obstacles checked their speed. Then their feet dragged in the foam and they moved very, very slowly, till at last the current began dragging at their feet and the oldest sailor ashore yelled out sharply:
"Lower 'em! Lower 'em! The current'll fetch 'em!"
And suddenly they splashed in the water and the foam flew all over them; and a sailor waist-deep in the water and holding to others in a chain, seized them and dragged them on to the beach. And, without waiting to be untied, they joined the rest in hauling at the rope for the passage of the next pair, who were already at the ship's side; but as they pulled they kept smiling at each other.
"Oh!" she whispered once. "And we thought life ordinary!"
All their friends were ashore at last. The chief officer arrived a couple of minutes before the remains of the old ship broke up and disappeared. Then a sailor cut the couples adrift. When he severed the only lady and her companion he grinned.
"The next time you're tied up," he prophesied, "it'll be a knot that can't be cut—a parson's knot!"

Mexico's Poor Wheat Supply.
Writing from Saltillo, Consul Thomas W. Voetter says that on account of the poor Mexican wheat crop harvested in 1907 about all the wheat raised has now been ground and the mills will shut down. The supply of flour on hand is not sufficient to last until the new crop is harvested, and millers there are desirous that the federal government should reduce or take off completely the import duties on wheat, but so far as known no concerted effort has been made to secure this action. One of the mills in Saltillo has for several months past been grinding wheat from the Argentine republic, which was imported at the period when the government last reduced the import duties on wheat.

A Cautious Man.
First Thief—Ain't your two brothers gamblers?
Second Thief—Naw; only one.
First Thief—Ain't the other one?
Second Thief—Nixy. He don't take no chances of gettin' into musses with th' perlice. He's a burglar.—N. Y. Weekly.

FARMER AND PLANTER

Spring Fever.
"I don't want to work, or nothing, I don't want to read or walk; I don't want to drink, don't want to think—
Don't even want to talk.
You can hardly call it lazy, You can't rightly name it sick, Only I just want to lie
On the flat of my back and look through a crack
In the trees at the warm, blue sky. I know I ought to make garden, I know I ought to rake
The trash that lies in the yard and be helping mother to make Soft soap. But I just can't do it—I'm not in the right condition. But if someone'd dig some bait and rig
My tackle, I'd go fishin'."
—Farm Journal.

BIG COTTON FARMS.

Their Effect on the General Diversification Plan.
Diversification is one of the great modern methods by which the agriculturist who resides in the South. The one planting of the cotton crop from year to year will certainly result in a hardship to the Southern planter. To make money on his cotton he must raise the supplies of the home on his plantation, planting a little of everything needed in the home, that he has, that he does not want or can not use, he can always sell at a very good price. Diversity has been preached to the Texas farmer for so long, but cotton was selling at a big price, and cotton lands going up fast in value. The landlords of many places compel the tenant farmers to cultivate each year so much cotton, letting him have but little land for anything else. This is on of the hardships of tenant farming in the South. As I write this I can look out of my window and see far in the distance one of the largest ranches in this country—the Light Brothers' ranch, one of the biggest in this country except the Jot. I. Gunter at Gunter, Texas. The Gunter ranch is six miles square, and seven or eight miles across. The Light Brothers is some twelve miles square, but is not altogether across. Just think of the immense cotton fields of these ranches. It is some sixteen miles from here to Celina; that is Pilot Point. You, on leaving Pilot Point going east, begin to go along beside the Light Brothers' ranch and travel on to Celina in Collin County all the way beside this great ranch. When you get to Celina you see another, the English ranch, of some twenty-five or thirty thousand acres all in one body. All of these are worked by the tenant farmers on the share of one-third of grain and corn and one-fourth of cotton. Just imagine that you were in Texas and saw the immense wheat, corn and cotton fields; cotton fields mostly, of these jumbo ranches.

Diversity is the thing that most of the Southern farmers should do with their crops, and many have made a success of it this year; but others can not. Why? The landlords will not let them have the land; to get land to work they must work so much cotton; pay money rent for all the land they work outside of corn and cotton, and some exact money rent for the corn lands.

The modern method of diversifying crops is one of the salvations of the South, with working of less land, giving the same better culture, but until the landlords agree to this it can not be done by the tenant farmer, who is in the majority of farmers.—Wm. L. Moore, in Southern Cultivator.

Help the Weak Farmer.
It is the duty of the strong to help the weak. It is the duty of every land owner to assist his tenants and endeavor to make them prosperous and contented. Every white tenant in the South should be encouraged by the land owner to get on a cash basis, diversify his crops, send his children to school, and if possible, ultimately to buy and own a small farm. If this is not done there can at least be a co-operation between the land owner and the tenant, which would greatly strengthen the control and marketing of the cotton crop each season. The weak cotton growers of the South are the men who need help in the marketing of cotton. They preponderate both in numbers and bales grown in the cotton area of the South.

The greatest prosperity in any agricultural country will be found in the success of the small farmer. The small, thrifty land owner means better roads, better homes, better schools, a higher type of educated husbandry and withal a more advanced, cultured and progressive civilization. We want to call the specific attention of large land owners to the subjects discussed above and request their serious consideration of the policies advocated and their prompt co-operation in getting them into practical co-operation.—Winnfield (La.) F. U. Banner.

Parcels Post Example.
The other day we sent a package of 250 note heads to a man at a town where there was no express office. The postage was 55 cents. The very same hour we sent the same sized package of note heads, together with 250 envelopes, all wrapped in heavy shipping paper, to another man by express for 25 cents. And yet a parcels post would not be self-sustaining, and would be the ruination of the South!—Farmers' Union Journal.

Nature's Pattern.
A prairie dog not only claims the hole he digs and occupies, but he seems to think that a little of the ground adjacent to that hole should be his also. He does not try to monopolize the entire prairie, however, so as to make his fellow-dogs bring him part of the grass roots and mesquite beans which they gather. The unspeakable biped calling himself man should not always refer to these little quadrupeds as "lower" animals.—Farmers' Journal.

WHERE TRUCKERS WIN.

Not Depending on Any One Crop. They Succeed.
These are the advantages the trucker gets from diversification of vegetable and fruit crops: (1) The same unfavorable weather will not injure them all. (2) The necessary work will not fall so much on the same day, and there will not be the hoeing problem that many strawberry growers have to face, or the picking problem. (3) The market price for all kinds of vegetables and fruit will not be low the same year. (4) Helpful changes in the crops grown on a given piece of land can be made from year to year, so plant diseases and insect pests can be more easily controlled. (5) The land will respond better to the food demands of crops grown in rotation.
The reason of every trucker who reflects on these points will see they are true, and that growing several crops is advisable. During fat years, when one is giving all his energy to one or two crops, he will not take these points seriously. He may admit them—and dismiss them in the same breath. But when he has had one or two or three lean years, he has had to scrape and beg for money to carry him till he can market a crop, he is likely to hunt something that will pay him and make a yearly income of decent size. Common sense suggests that he had better not wait till he is in dire straits before he looks to his own safety.

If children eat unripe fruit and suffer pain, we feel that after the pain they suffer and the bitter medicine they have to take they ought to know better than to go back to the dangerous unripe fruit again. Truckers are about as bad in some instances. After going wild on strawberry growing, making good profit a year or two, maybe, but finally suffering distressingly lean years, they go wild on growing cabbage or some other crop that for a time offers good profits. Lean years will come to the cabbage grower. The trucker who dodges about from one crop to another, and does not have a large enough variety in his crops puts himself in the class of the child that eats green fruit, suffers aches and bitter medicine, and then goes back to eating green fruit.

If truckers' associations will get their members to work on the diversification plan, it will be just as easy to get the crops to market easily and quickly. The same buyers who may come from distant cities can stay right on the ground from week to week to purchase the crops in the fields or at the railway station, or the truckers can make their own shipments. All this can be done just as well as if the number of crops raised was small. Distressingly lean years will be almost impossible. Years that are so fat that the trucker is encouraged to get extravagant with suddenly acquired wealth may not come often, but on the whole the net profit will be better and surer. Home supplies are also more likely to be raised, and more stock are likely to be kept. Until truckers get to having a good number of market crops, they are in danger of very lean years. No other one thing has a larger influence on their success than this single principle. If it seems good, do more than admit it—practice it.—Starkville, Miss., Southern Farm Gazette.

On Being Well Fixed.
You frequently hear some one speak of a farmer as being "well fixed." Generally the meaning is that the farmer has lots of land and cattle and possibly other property. The true meaning does not necessarily mean that he has a great deal of property. The poor farmer can be well fixed as well as the rich one. The News' idea of a well fixed farmer is one who has a nice house, with shade trees, shrubbery and vines in the yard, a good well of water that is piped into the kitchen and lots, good fences and gates in repair, a good barn and sheds and convenient lots, a poultry and rabbit-proof garden, a good orchard and vineyard with a variety of fruits and berries, and good soil, well tilled, drained and in good cultivation. The fact of the business is there are more well fixed farmers of moderate wealth than those who have an abundance. The homes of many of our wealthy farmers are more like campouses than homes. There is little comfort and less convenience, and they are not "well fixed." The main cause of this is that 99 out of 100 farmers try to cultivate too much land. All of it is half-way tilled and many things are neglected that could be attended to if too much land was not put in.—Ex.

Homely Philosophy.
A man hates to wear a collar that doesn't fit—so does a horse.
When a man blows his own horn he is nearest the small end of it.
"Cotton is King," and those who raise cotton exclusively are his slaves.
A man frequently gets warm under the collar when he is given the cold shoulder.
Continual fault-finding with your boy is a good way to drive him off the farm.
Lots of folks never get to the top because they try to carry the bottom with them.
The farmer who wants to be independent doesn't keep his smokehouse in Chicago.
One mistake may be better than a success—if you don't make the same mistake twice.
A bunch of radishes in your own garden is worth half a dozen in the other fellow's crate.
If your home isn't made attractive for your children, don't blame them if they prefer to seek more congenial surroundings elsewhere.
We should not ask other people to do for us what we are not willing to try to do for ourselves.
Don't give your boy a pocket to raise in the spring and then peg it the cash when he sells it in the fall.
The farmer who raises everything he needs to eat at home doesn't worry about the high price of smoked bacon.

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