NEW LIGHT OF ASIA.

Edwin Arnold Rejoices in the Triumph of Japan.

CAN SCARCE CONTAIN HIMSELF

Nothing Too Extravagant to Predict for the Mistress of the Orient Seas —The Jap's Sense of Honor.

LONDON, April 9.—Japan has a prophet in England who can scarcely contain himself for joy over her victory; who predicts vast things for her, and who is happy at her prospect, despite the fact that a part of his prediction is that through her gain England will lose heavily and the United States will be severely stricken. Yet he is an Englishman born and has been knighted by the queen; an Englishman of everbubbling patriotism. Yet he loves America, took an American wife and is admired and respected by Americans. He is Sir Edwin Arnold, celebrated as the author of "The Light of Asia" and many other wonderful books, and lately by his—shall we call it Japomania? For the most delightful Sunday afternoon of my stay in London I am to him indebted.

England and the English evince an even deeper interest in Japan and her recent doing than does America. The papers here print less detailed news of the war, but they print more comment on its possible results and take the whole thing more seriously than we do. A part of that can be attributed to the fact that England is willing to take almost anything seriously, from the Prince of Wales to an American joke; but apart of it is also due to the fact that this is a nation of experts on foreign affairs.

I am not in any sense betraying the country of which I become more proud every moment that I stay in this one, when I acknowledge that in foreign policy, in foreign representation, in everything pertaining to the conduct of affairs and judgment of affairs away from home, we seem mere clumsy amateurs when compared to Englishmen. It is their specialty, it is not ours. Our state department changes with every political reversal. With the coming of each new president, a new secretary and a new force have to learn and unlearn all the things which their predecessors learned and unlearned only forty-eight short months before; our diplomatic service changes its methods and its personnel as quickly as one of those little brass-chained chameleons changed its colors when it crawled from the brown silk to the green velvet of a New York society dame's dress before the S. P. C. A. issued its prohibitive edict. The English foreign service is a trained corps of men whose lifetime has been devoted to study of the work that is before them, and of nothing else. Its ambassadors and ministers and consul-generals and consuls are men who may feel practically sure that nothing but promotion or bad service will cause their removal from the posts they fill. Politics play almost no part in the matter at all, except with the foreign minister—the nominal head of the department. And even he—and he is by no means the most important person in the service—is certain to be chosen because he is fit to serve. The mere fact that a man is an aged politician, worn out by the winning of other and infinitely diverse official "honors," will not secure his appointment to any branch of the diplomatic service. Parliament asks even more questions than congress does, and bad appointments are likely to create a storm.

All this is merely to show that England may be supposed to be a better judge of the probable influence of the China-Japan war than we are. England looks upon it as the most portentous and important event of modern history. Sir Edwin Arnold—who is no less a politician than a poet—knows more about it than any other Englishman. Here is a part of what he said:

"Japan is one of my most enthusiastic loves. I have been there twice and both visits were long and pleasant. If I live I shall go again. I see the Japanese minister here every day, and I admire him, his land and his people even more heartily than I have ever said.

"Japan's victory is the greatest progression that the world has seen since the American colonies won their independence. For uncounted centuries an impassable boundary existed between the West and East. England broke it down so that India was open; America, through Perry, broke it down so that Japan was open. Now Japan has broken it down so that China—greatest of them all—is open.

"I do not mean by that that China will now, or, perhaps, ever, enter into the column of progressive nations. Japan will not go far enough in her victory to uproot the present Chinese government—a government that has been handed down with few changes since before the time of Christ. Japan knows too much for that. She understands the people with whom she has to deal. She realizes that they have been infected with a virus of stupidity and barbaric conservatism from which it is scarcely reasonable to hope to ever free them. Confucius was the man who killed China. His philosophy of fatalism has been and is the sleeping draught from whose effects she may never wake. China is like the grub chosen by the Iguna bird for her young. This bird injects a subtle poison into the worm she selects for her family's food, which paralyzes it and without killing it makes it like a dead thing. Confucius was China's Iguna bird. He introduced into her veins a poison which has made her comatose for many, many centuries. It is, in one sense, a dead thing which Japan has conquered, and it is doubtful if it will ever come to normal life. But it is a valuable corpse.

"But Japan will be from now on the great civilizing, regulating, dominating power of Asia. Without disrupting China she will let the whole world reap the advantages of her resources. She will introduce such modern methods as are possible into the interior which has been absolutely stationary for centuries. The day when lucifer matches and mills and railroads and other results of civilization can be shut out of one of the richest and broadest countries in the world, ended with the decisive battle of the Japan-China war.

"Japan is great morally and intellectually. She has her faults, but is any nation without them? Not long before I last left Japan Count Ito asked me what I would advise him to do in order to more rapidly and importantly develop his nation. I said: "I would, if I were you, double my navy, increase my army, educate my women and ransack my country for iron, coal and copper."

"These things he has done, and many others. What is the result? Japan has become one of the great factors of the universe. When people say to me that she may come to grief some day I laugh. I can see her future plainly, and I am sure my prophetic vision is not false, is not even exaggerated. She will be one of the world's great naval powers. She can build her own ships. She is building five now. She lacks iron, but she does not lack brains. She can buy iron much easier than she could buy brains, and the margin of profit which she will have to pay will be smaller. I do not consider her shipyards to be competent to build battle ships of the first class, but they can build splendid first and second-class cruisers of the type of your Chicago with immense success. That is one way in which Japan will make her influence felt on the world in the future as a great naval power, as the great naval power of the Pacific ocean.

"Then comes her importance as a commercial nation. The victory of Japan over China may well make certain English and American industries tremble for their future. It means that from now on cheap labor—labor which is incredibly cheap to us—will be thrown into competition with high-priced labor. Tariff duties will not protect us or you. No nation could protect itself by tariff against the attack which Japan can and will make in the near future any more than it could protect itself by guns and forts against an invasion of the influenza epidemic.

"Let your cotton growers look to their positions. Even England's Indian cotton growers will be hard pressed, and if the growers are in danger then the manufacturers are in greater danger. The capacity of the Japanese and the Chinese for incredible detail in their work makes of them the most perfect workmen in the world, as they are the most rapid. And when one realizes that this ability and capacity can be obtained there for an average of 8 cents a day against from $1.50 upward in America and 4 shillings upward in England, it is not hard to see that there is reason in what I say. I believe that Japan will, ere long, play very hot with Manchester, our great English manufacturing center, and there are American cities which, while they may not feel the evil effects of this modern progression quickly, will not feel them less seriously in the end.

"And cotton is only one of the industrial branches of which Japan is destined to become the queen. In silk growing and silk making and the labor and resources of China which she will develop she will be supreme, and in an infinitely varied and infinitely numerous list of other industries in which cheap labor must be the chief element—such as match making—she will rule the world."

After the knight had made these important predictions—and it is right to say that nearly the entire English press and most of the important English statesmen agree with him—he went into an analysis of the Japanese, their religion, their customs, their women, their morals, their manners, that was fascinating in the extreme. It should be stated that, because of Sir Edwin Arnold's statement that what we consider immorality does not exist in Japan, although in almost every Japanese city a portion of the town is given over to the occupation of what we would call abandoned women, he has been intensely criticized of late. He explained to me clearly what he meant.

"A people must be judged," said he "by the same standards of right and wrong on which they act. Judged from the Japanese point of view, and from the point of view of the Japanese religion—Buddhism—Japan is without vice. I can perhaps make my meaning clearer when I say that to me, a European, who has studied her, Japan seems to be the least immoral and the most unmoral country in the world. To me her women are pure, even though they be members of the class which Europeans condemn; to me her men are high-minded and unselfish."

"The Japanese are a noble people. That is ever true of a nation in which the women lead. The women of Japan are better than the men, and they are the nation's power. Like your little North American animal, the ermine, they are ever white, no matter how life places them. They will not soil. They are model, modest and upright.

"It is the women who govern in Japan, despite the infernal laws by which they are surrounded. They are the masters, and they will make Japan into a magnificent nation. One of the finest women in Japan is the empress. The religion of the nation lives in the women. They preserve its piety. I shall never forget the mornings when I have delightedly seen them going to the temple laughing; then seen them laughing, put their babies down, and then, still laughing, as happy and innocent as the birds of heaven, clap their little hands together in order to let Almighty God know that they have something to say to Him. Japanese religion is nine-tenths mirth and one-tenth fear. It is the women who keep up the marvelous family love of the Japanese. They care for the aged with a tenderness of which we can have but slight conception. They mourn for the dead with a sympathetic grief and lofty sentiment of loss which mean the very highest heart development. Tell me that a Japanese women is vile because she does not conform to our ideas of morality and I will laugh at you."

"Are they capable of intellectual development?" I asked.

"Of the highest," he promptly answered.

"But it is not their brains which will make the Japanese one of the most valuable of the future peoples—valuable because of the elevating, humanizing influence which they will have upon the others. It is their omniprescent self-respect and their homogeneousness. Take a handful of Japanese from a south village and another handful from a north village and place them side by side, and you will not see them separated by differing customs, differing views or sectional prejudices. Japanese are Japanese, no matter where they are or how situated. Their patriotism is sublime and invariable. This is because of the universal instinct of self-respect of which I have spoken. This is as invariable in the meanest coolie as it is in the highest noble. What a Japanese says he will do will be done according to his code of honor as certainly as the sun will rise.

"A Japanese will cheat you in business if he can, but he will never violate one of the tenets of his code of honor.

"In art the Japanese will be as important as they will be in manufactures. England never had a draughtsman so great as Hoksai. Only one thing can prevent this—the adoption of European methods. Let them develop along their own wonderful lines and they will accomplish marvels. If they try to work by European standards they become flat and commonplace. There are some things which their art does not embrace. It has no real sense of the beauty of the human form. Let them confine themselves to the birds, the flowers, the bamboo, and they will achieve a truth, a beauty, a grace, which will teach great lessons to all the art of all the world beyond them. Let Hoksai paint a woman and she becomes unlovely and grotesque. But his 'Flight of Ravens Going Home' is one of the most wonderful things in all the world.

"What do I think is the basis for the immense superiority of the Japanese over the Chinese? This: I do not think the Japanese are true Mongolians, and I do not think their development will be confined within the limits of the Mongolian mind. I think them to be a blend of the Mongolian, the Malay and the Kanaka, one of nature's extraordinary combinations, as amazing in its results as are the mixtures of a cunning whisky dealer.

"When this war was first heralded, I told some of our great men that Japan would win with ease. They had too little respect for the Japanese, and gave the Chinese too much credit. They had read solemn predictions of Mongolian invasions of the world, and while they did not thoroughly believe, they still wondered. I did not. I knew that civilized Japan would vanquish barbaric China. And the war has been fought and won with the same unerring perfection with which the Japanese would carve an ivory statue.

"Japan has coal and copper in abundance, and, despite the fact that she is not a large nation in size, vast undeveloped territory. She will control the Pacific."

Sir Edwin lives modestly for a rich London notable, but there is no flat in New York so large as his. Its drawing room is nearly 100 feet long, and no apartment in all London witnesses more pleasant and generous hospitality. He is a cosmopolitan of cosmopolitans.

EDWARD MARSHALL.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.
(From a recent photograph.)

THE JAPANESE WOMAN OF TODAY.
(From Sir Edwin Arnold's photographic collection.)

JAPANESE WOMAN OF THE FUTURE.
(From Sir Edwin Arnold's photographic collection.)

A VEGETABLE PYTHON.

The Wild Fig Vine Binds Big Forest Trees With Bands as of Iron.

The Guiana Forest.

Woe betide the forest giant when he falls into the clutches of the clusia or fig. Its seeds being provided with a pulp, which is very pleasant to the taste of a great number of birds, are carried from tree to tree and deposited on the branches. Here it germinates, the leafy stem rising upward and the roots flowing, as it were, down to the trunk until they reach the soil. At first these aerial roots are soft and delicate, with apparently no more power for evil than so many streams of pitch, which they resemble in their slowly flowing motion downward. Here and there they branch, especially if an obstruction is met with, when the stream either changes its course or divides to right and left.

Meanwhile leafy branches have been developed, which push themselves through the canopy above and get into the light, where their growth is enormously accelerated. As this takes place the roots have generally reached the ground and begun to draw sustenance from below to strengthen the whole plant. Then comes a wonderful development. The hitherto soft aerial roots begin to harden and spread wider and wider, throwing out side branches which flow into and amalgamate with each other until the whole tree trunk is bound in a series of irregular living hoops.

The strangler is now ready for its deadly work. The forest giant, like all exogens, must have room to increase in girth and here he is bound by cords which are stronger than iron bands. Like an athlete, he tries to expand and burst his fetters, and if they were rigid he might succeed. The bark bulges between every interlacing—bulges out, and even tries to overlap, but the monster has taken every precaution against this by making its bands very numerous and wide.

As the tree becomes weaker its leaves begin to fall, and this gives more room for its foe. Soon the strangler expands itself into a great bush almost as large as the mass of branches and foliage it has effaced. If we look carefully around us we see examples of entire obliteration—a clusia, or fig, standing on its reticulated hollow pillar, with only a heap of brown humus at its base to show what has become of the trunk which once stood up in all its mighty majesty on that spot.

Farm Work in the Palouse.

Spokane Spokesman.

Palouse, April 9.—The pleasant fine days of the past few weeks have been a great advantage to the farming community, and all are kept busy at work on their ranches. The old-timers state that the soil has been and is in the most perfect condition for the plow, and in their own words, "it is a pleasure to follow the horses and see the soil turn over in such good shape."

It is estimated that work is about four weeks ahead of previous years and indications point to an exceptionally large yield of all cereals, which being early, will escape all danger of the fall frosts and rains which we have suffered so much from during the past two years.

By driving over the country roads, which are found to be completely dry, but not dusty, and in much better condition than is usual at this time of the year, the Spokesman correspondent finds that about two-thirds of the land to be cultivated this year has been plowed, and that half that amount has been seeded. The crop area is estimated at about 65 per cent. of last year, the low prices causing the farmers to be scary of sowing the usual amount, besides summer-fallowing will be a great benefit by making away with wild oats, which were very troublesome last year, and seem to be decidedly on the increase. The late improvement in price has, however, made some change their minds and sow more grain, in hopes that by fall a good figure will be offered.

Wheat is still the staple product, but shows a decrease of two-thirds under last year. The amount of fall sown was slightly lower than previous years, and with a few exceptions, which is affected by the late spring frosts, has weathered the winter nicely and shows a good stand.

Oats, barley and rye have decreased in proportion to wheat. Oats will be extremely early; the bottom lands on which they are sown are in shape for seeding, much to the surprise of all who always leave this land to the last, as it is generally not ready for plownig until the middle or last of May.

Potatoes are having quite a boom, and several hundred acres will be planted in this vicinity. Some farmers are planting all their farms out.

Oscar Wilde's Fetid Books.

New York Recorder.

I am glad to observe that the public library trustees of this city are refusing to join in the ridiculous raid upon Oscar Wilde's books set in motion by the British Museum trustees. Of course, Wilde's books are no more immoral now than they were before he lost his suit for libel against Queensberry; and if they had not been fit to read on their merits it is to be presumed that the British Museum trustees and librarians generally on both sides of the Atlantic would have found it out and refused to have them on the shelves at all. As a matter of fact, Wilde's books are full of brilliant inanity, sparkling twaddle, and of what, for want of a better designation, may be called greenery-yallery rot; but the reader must read between the lines, and with a mind well trained to discover double meanings, in order to find any immoral suggestions in them. Our New York librarians testify that there never has been much popular demand for Wilde's books in this city. Naturally there never would be. There is not virility in Oscar's pen to make his writing popular with Americans. His literary productions are all exotics. They could have been written nowhere outside the fetid atmosphere of Rotten Row and the London clubs. Nor will they ever be appreciated anywhere else. Meantime the British libraries are slopping over badly in their haste to exclude Wilde's books from circulation. Oscar's conviction of the crimes charged against him will not change one iota the merits of his books.

History Straightened Out.

Boston Herald.

The Old Athenian who insists that it was Capt. Scott's and not Col. Crockett's coon that came down on a critical ocasion is entirely correct. Capt. Martin Scott was a great rifle shot in his day and generation, and it is related that he invited a party of friends out hunting once upon a time. They were soon scattered through the woods, and one of the party came upon a raccoon that was sitting on one of the branches of a very tall tree. He fired at him and missed aim. One by one the other members of the party took aim and fired, but they failed to dislodge the animal. At length Capt. Scott arrived on the scene, and he was in the act of pulling the trigger when the coon looked down and said:

"Who are you?"

"I'm Scott."

"What Scott?"

"Capt. Scott."

"Are you Capt. Martin Scott?"

"The same."

"Well," said the coon, unlimbering himself, "you need not shoot. I will come down."

Effects of Reading Ibsen.

Puck.

Mrs. Culchard—That's a bright young fellow you've taken into the office, Henry. He looks like a foreigner.

Mr. Culchard—Yes; he's a Norwegian.

Mrs. Culchard—A Norwegian! Good gracious! Then he's run off from his wife or murdered his uncle or something! Get rid of him at once!

OLDEST MAN, MAYBE

The Life Story of Noah Raby, Aged 123 Years.

ON A POOR FARM, OF COURSE

A Sailor Before 1812—Saw Washington Angry—Has Used Whisky and Tobacco 118 Years.

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New Brunswick, N. J., April 20.—Is Noah Raby, of Piscataway poor farm, the oldest man in the world? If his own story of his life, which he tells with an air of the most profound conviction, be true, he has passed his 123d birthday, and no one living has knowledge of any facts to the contrary.

It was about eighty-three years ago, according to his recollection, that Noah Raby, ordinary seaman, received his discharge papers from the staunch frigate Brandywine, which had just finished a cruise of inspection of the various ports of the United States and was then docked at the Brooklyn navy yard. The day after he left the naval service he betook himself to New Jersey, where he joined himself to a farmer and for money agreed to serve as a hired man. Since that time he has never stopped outside the boundaries of New Jersey. For more than half a century, with more or less steadiness, he followed the occupation he had chosen, and then, twenty-eight years ago, being full of years and decidedly averse to earning his own living any longer, he settled down at the poor farm in the township of Piscataway, not far from New Brunswick, and there he has since remained.

Today he is totally blind, but his eyes, though sunken, have the sparkle of one who can see perfectly. His body is bent and his shoulders are contracted, but the muscles of his arms and legs are firmer than those of many a man not yet 30. His jaws are toothless and his words are uttered with a whistling accompaniment, but his voice is strong and full and his laugh is hearty as it was a century and more ago. His long hair is white, but thick and luxuriant, his whiskers are iron gray, his heavy, bushy eyebrows are still almost jet black, and he can dispose of a solid drink of good rye whisky with the sort of smack that betokens the heartiest relish. Though he believes his father to have been an Indian, his skin is white, and his features are of a pronounced Caucasian type.

When I told him a few days ago that I wished to write of his life for the newspapers, he gave evidence of the greatest delight, and when I added that I intended to have him photographed, so that all the world might see how the oldest man appears, he trembled with joy.

"Oh, mah gracious, suh," he cried, in an accent reminiscent both of the South and the sea, yet greatly influenced by his long sojourn in New Jersey, "have the folks in the big cities heard of me? Oh, mah gracious! what a pity it is that I can't see no moh, so's I could read all about myself. Where was I born? In No'th Cahlinoh, suh, in Eatontown, Gates county, jess ovah th' Vaginny line, two or three years before the Revolution. I can't remember it, of course. Mah mother she was a South Cahlinoh white woman, name Sarah Raby, and mah father was a No'th American Indian; yes, suh; yes, suh—a native of this country, name Andrew Bass. Mah father and mah mother never married, suh, and I didn't have a chance to get much learning. I never went to school at all, but I learned to read the Old Testament and the New Testament and the hymn book and the newspapers. I never read the newspapers much, though. There ain't anything spiritual in 'em, suh! I never learned to write. I can't even write my own name.

"Well, my mother she lived in a house made of pitch pine poles, notched at the ends and plastered with mud. She was pore and she wanted to get married and I had to go somewhere. So I was bound out when I was 7 years old to an old white-headed farmer named Mills Field, and I stayed on his farm till I was 21. Mr. Field agreed to give me one year's schooling, but he didn't do it— too stingy, maybe—but he was a pwerful fine man. He had a big farm just over the line in Virginia from Gates county, and he had lots of slaves. One of his slaves was the strongest man I ever saw. Mr. Mills was offered lots of money for Big Tom, but he wouldn't sell; he didn't believe in selling niggahs, suh, but he was willing to own 'em. Mr. Mills wasn't no professor of religion, suh, but he was a good man, and he always treated every one around him right.

"I began to smoke, suh, when I was home with my mother, when I was about 6 years old. I used to light my mother's pipe for her—fill it with tobacco, you know, and put a coal on it and take a few whiffs. No, I don't rickollect that tobacco ever made me sick. I don't think it has ever hurt me, either, and I have smoked going on to 118 years now, suh—pipes, cigars and stogas; suh, but no cigarettes. Never, suh! I've drank whisky almost as long as I've smoked, suh, and just as steady. But I was never overcome by whisky, suh, what you might call drunk, but three times in my life.

"I was about 16 or 17, the first time—jess a boy. Well, there was going to be an eclipse and some folks said the world was coming to an end. I was a poor, ignorant boy then, and I was powerful scared and I believed like enough the world would all burn up. I'd know better now, but then I made up my mind that if the end was a coming, I wouldn't know anything about it. Well, suh, young Mr. Mills and me and an old nigger went to town the day before the eclipse. The nigger stole a shilling, and he asked me to buy him some whisky at the tavern, for nobody wouldn't dare sell no whisky to no nigger in them old days, and I got a big black bottle full. I took one big drink before I gave the bottle up and the nigger gave me two more— oh, my gracious, they were great big drinks!—and that settled me, suh. I was drunk on my own account then, and I had to git down in the bottom of the ox cart and lie there all the way home and young Mr. Mills, he had to drive the oxen home. Well, he hit the oxen once and me four times with his ox gad all the way home. Oh, I was fuddled, but I could feel them whacks on my ribs, suh, and between the whisky and the licking, I didn't get out of my bed for most a week. I must have been about 60 or 70 years old when I got drunk next time. I was chopping wood up in Morris county, suh, up here in Jersey, and my boss give me too much rum and black pepper for the shakes. The last time was since I've been here. A young chap got me to go to New Brunswick with him and got me full, but he had the worst of it, for he had to bring me back to the poor farm pig-a-back, suh, through the mud and the snow. He dropped me a few times, suh, but I didn't mind that. I was too much fuddled." And the old man laughed till it seemed as if his toothless jaws never would close again.

"I never was much scared after that eclipse, when I got drunk the first time," the old man went on, "but once, and that was when I was a boy, too, and a big black snake—a regular racer—chased me about half a mile. Oh, my gracious, suh, that was a big snake! I could see him rise right up every once in a while when I would turn to look over my shoulder. Then he would hump himself to catch me, and then I would hear him go down on the ground, kerflop, like a big pole. Then he'd go siss-siss-siss—like that—and I thought I was a goner, sure. But he didn't get me, thank the Lord. No, suh; not a bit of it. I've been free from all slavish fear for more than eighty years now—ever since I left the navy. I was never scared in New Jersey, but before that I used to give up most shameful, suh. I found out a good while before you were born, sonny, that nobody'll make no trouble for nobody that don't make no trouble for them, and I hain't made no trouble for nobody ever since. I never had no fights; I'd rather run than fight, any time, and I've always come out the better for it, too."

Noah Baby's Romance.

When Raby was 21 he got away from Mr. Mills Field's plantation as fast as he could, and started out to find employment.

"I didn't jess know where I was going, suh, but I thought I'd find some place where I could stay," the old man said, after he had explained his life philosophy. "Well, I walked along and walked along till I come to the house of the Widow Penelope Parker. Oh, my gracious, suh, she was well off! She had a big farm and a couple hundred of slaves, and she raised all kinds of crops, and there was tar kilns on her place that would make a thousand barrels of tar. Well, the widow saw me walking along the road and she came out, and she says:

"'Noah, how far are you going?'

"I said I was going till I found a place to work, and she says:

"'Well, I guess you've found it. I knew you when you was a baby.'

"Well, I hired out to the Widow Penelope, to be her overseer, for $200 a year. I stayed there most five years, and then I left to work for her daughter-in-law, the Widow Sarah Parker. She was well off, too, but not like the old widow. When the young widow wanted me to be her overseer the old widow offered me $50 a year more to remain on her farm, but you see I thought maybe I could marry the young widow, if I was smart, and then her plantation and the niggers and the big house and the tar kilns would be mine. Well, my plan would have worked, yes, suh, if I hadn't fallen in love. No, not with anybody else, but with the widow herself. I was all tangled up, heels over head in love with her. Why, the ground where she stood looked crooked, suh, and I got afraid of her. No, suh, I didn't have the brass to tell her I was in love with her, but if I hadn't been dead in love with her I could have told her, sure. Everbody on the place knew how I felt, and finally old Uncle Mingo, a nigger I thought a good deal of, he says to me:

"'Massa Noah, you go to missus and you tell the secret to her. You tell her you must have her. Tell her you love her with your whole heart, and if she says no, then I'll fix her. I'll charm her for you, and she'll have to marry you.'

"But I wouldn't marry her that way. If she didn't love me herself, I wouldn't have her charmed. Besides, I know now that old Uncle Mingo couldn't have done it. So I didn't open the secret to the mistress. Oh, my gracious, suh, she was a handsome woman. She was—just—a—beautiful! Her face was like a wax doll's face. Her cheeks was red—like red apples. Her eyes sparkled like the sun was shining on them all the time. Her hair was jet black—black and fine. But I never told her till it was too late.

"Well, suh, I felt like I would die. I couldn't do no work, and one day my half brother, he saw me, and he asked me was I in love. For a joke, you know, he said it, and I surprised him when I said I was. Well, my half brother was in the navy, and he gave a great big laugh, and said:

"'If you're in a love scrape, Noah, there ain't but one thing to do, and that is to come with us and go on a cruise.'

"So I got right out, that very night, without settling up or saying anything to anybody. I shipped on the Constitution, and that broke me of being in love. Yes, I saw the young widow once more. I got leave of absence once, and went to her plantation to settle up, and she paid me off all right. Then she said:

"'Noah, why did you go away that way, and leave me, and never say anything about it?'

"Then I told her all about it; how I was in love with her, but didn't have the brass to tell her; and what do you suppose she said—'Faint heart never won fair lady!'

"Yes, suh; that's what she said, and by that I've always thought that if I had told her in time she'd a had me. Why didn't I marry her then? Good enough reason—the man who was her overseer after me wanted to own her plantation, her niggers and big house, and he asked her to marry him, and she did, suh. Yes, suh! And they hadn't been married more than a week then, suh!

"Maybe, though, she wouldn't have had me if I'd asked her, and I'm glad I didn't. It would have been awful troublesome to have a wife all these years, especially when the civil war came along. Why, suh, I wouldn't have been in the civil war, suh, for all the world and all the women in it, no matter how much I was in love. But I never fell in love no more and I never married anybody, and I guess I've been more comfortable after all. Yes, suh; certain, suh."

Noah Raby seems to have been a fairly satisfactory seaman, but he was glad to leave the navy when his time was up, for a number of reasons.

"It was at Portsmouth and Norfolk, suh, that I shipped," the old man continued, "and I shipped on the Constitution—the Con-sti-tu-tion, suh. She was a great vessel, suh, but then she was old and used for a receiving ship. Well, I worked for a year on the Constitution, going up and down the ratlines to the 'top' on the mast, but no further. I never got to be anything more than an ordinary seaman. I didn't want to be an able seaman. I didn't want to go higher up the mast than the 'top.' That was as near heaven as I ever wanted to go till my time came. It's far enough to fall from the 'top,' let alone the 'crosstrees.' Why, suh, if you fall from the 'crosstrees' you get the worst of it, certain, even if you fall in the water, and if you fall on the deck you're gone, suh—gone. After I'd been on the Constitution a year I went on the Brandywine, on the inspection cruise. Do I remember the captain's name? You bet I do. It was Farragut. He was a fine, portly, good-looking man, suh, and another man of the same name was a big captain afterward. No, I was never flogged, but I've seen lots of others punished. Once I came near being, but it was just because I tried to get away when some one else was being punished. Which of the ports we visited did I like best? All of 'em, suh—all of 'em. I could have shore leave three times a week when we were in port, and we could always find ways of having good times—there were always bright eyes to shine on Jack Tar in them old days, suh—certain."

It was while he was at Norfolk and Portsmouth that Raby says he heard Gen. Washington make a speech. Raby is not certain what the general was talking about, but there is no doubt in the oldest man's mind that the father of his country was indignant and excited.

"Yes, suh," said Raby, "I saw the old gineral and I heard him talk. He was pretty mad, too—oh, my gracious, yes! I shall never forget one thing he said—it has stuck to me most a hundred years now:

"'Go right on, fellow citizens, as you have been going on, and I assure you that we shall have the devil to pay in this republic and no pitch hot!'

"That's what the gineral said, suh, certain, and I heard him say it, and so did a great many other people, but I suppose they're all dead but me now.

"Once when I was in the Brooklyn navy yard, suh," continued the old man, "I got a shilling for being patriotic. It was before the second war with England, and a British officer and an American officer were talking together, and the Englishman said there were plenty of nations that could whip the United States. Well, suh, I thought them two gineral-men fight, suh, I did, indeed, and finally the American officer he turned quick and he said:

"'We'll see what a Yankee sailor will say to your talk, sir.'

"Then he asked me if I thought the United States could be licked, and I said that I didn't believe there was any nation in the world that could whip the republic. If they were all rolled into one they might, but no single one could do it, least of all, England.

"Well, suh, you ought to have seen that English officer go away mad, and how good our officer looked when he gave me the shilling.

"While I was in Brooklyn navy yard I got leave one day and went out to see a monstrous pretty burying ground—Greenwood, they call it now, I hear. A man who came to see me two or three years ago told me that they bury a lot of folks every day there now—that the bodies go to that burying ground, just like an everlasting stream of water. Oh, my gracious! what big cities New York and Brooklyn must be if that's true.

"I left the navy because I was afraid there'd be a war and I didn't want to fight. Well, there was a war, but I didn't see no fighting, only on the sea, and then I was on land, and a good ways off. I've lost my discharge papers and I'm sorry. If I had 'em maybe I could get a pension, and anyway, I could prove my age by them."

Some forty or fifty years ago Noah Raby joined the Baptist church at Elizabeth, N. J., being immersed.

"I believe the Baptist church is all right," he said, "but I don't think that just because I'm a Baptist and have been immersed that I'm all hunkl-dory. You've got to have a change of heart to go to heaven, and that's what I got down in old Virginia a good many years ago. I was taken sick and had to lie on my languishing bed, and one night I was happy in the spirit and I got up and went about the house singing and shouting hallelujah! Yes, suh, and I wish everybody could be as happy as I was then. I've had nothing to complain of all my life, though, sonny. Since I was in love with the widow Sarah, I've never had much to trouble me. I'm a little man, but I've got monstrous nerves, suh, anyhow. I never tried to get much money, and I've never worked unless I had to, but I've had enough to eat and to wear and to drink and to smoke. I've had a good time, too, and everybody who knows me will say so. In politics I've been a good old Dimocrat, but I don't vote nowadays. They won't let me because I can't pay poll tax. But I don't mind that. I'm sorry I never learned to write, but I couldn't see to write now if I'd learned."

"Come, Noah," said the poormaster at this point, "its time to take your bitters."

And when the official put a tumbler of whisky and water to the blind old man's lips he drank off the draught with great gusto.

"A good many gallons of liquor have gone where that's gone, Mr. Hummer," said he, as he handed back the glass.

When Raby was at his best he weighed but 130 pounds and was not much over five feet tall. He now weighs less than a hundred and is not more than four feet six.

DEXTER MARSHALL.

NOAH RABY.

RABY TELLS HIS LIFE STORY.

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