

THE GRIP OF HONOR

Cyrus Townsend Brady,
Author of "The Southerners," "In the Whirl of War," etc.

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CHAPTER I.

THE wind is freshening. We gain upon her easily, I think. "Decidedly. This is our best point of sailing and our best wind too. We can't be going less than 10 knots," said the captain, looking calmly over the bows at the water racing alongside.

"I can almost make out the name on her stern now with the naked eye," replied the other, staring hard ahead through the drift and spray.

"Have you a glass there, Mr. O'Neill?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir; here it is," answered that gentleman, handing him a long, old-fashioned, cumbersome brass telescope, which he at once adjusted and focused on the ship they were chasing.

"Ah!" said the elder of the two speakers, a small, slender man, standing lightly poised on the topgallant forecastle with the careless confidence of a veteran seaman as he examined the chase through the glass which the taller and younger officer handed him. "I can read it quite plainly with this. The M-a-i-d-Maldstone, a trader evidently, as I see no gun ports nor anything that betokens an armament."

"Give her a touch with the right hand, please, ladies," said old Price. "Steady, above in that quon a little; easy there; overhaul those tacks! All ready, sir."

"Now!" cried O'Neill.

A booming roar and a cloud of smoke broke out forward, and the hull rose, and the water and sank just under the quarter of the chase.

"Let her go again," cried O'Neill to the quartermaster, and a moment later as the sails filled and she heeled once more to the wind, "very well eyes enough off!" he cried to the captain.

"A good shot, Master Price, and a glass of grog for you presently in reward," said Jones quietly. "Ah, we shall have some abuser at our rate."

"At this moment a small red flag broke out from the gaff of the English vessel.

"Show our own colors aft there, though they can scarcely see them," cried the captain. "He's a plucky one, that fellow. What he's doing now? More grog for the gun crew, and the quartermaster, a stern chaser. Must have arms on board."

The Ranger was rushing through the water again at a rapidly increasing rate, almost burying her lee cathead in the foaming sea under the freshening breeze, and was now very near the Maldstone, which at this moment discharged the small stern chaser which had been dragged astern, the shot from which passed harmlessly through the rigging and above their heads.

"Give her another, Price," said O'Neill under a nod from Jones.

"Into her this time, sir?"

"Yes; anywhere you like."

The Ranger luffed again, losing a little distance as she did so, but weathering appreciably on the stranger, and this time the flying splinters from the stern of the chase showed that the shot had met its mark. There was a sudden scattering of the men upon her quarter, and most of them disappeared, but the young girl could be seen holding on to the weather sparker and apparently looking defiantly at them.

O'Neill took up the glass and examined her.

"Faith, sir, she looks as pretty as she is brave. See for yourself, sir," he added as he handed the telescope to the captain, who took a careful look at her through the glass.

"You have a good eye for the beautiful," he replied, smiling, "even at a long range. Secure the bow chaser, sir; we are within musket range of her."

While this was being done the Ranger had crept up on the stranger till her bow began to overreach the weather quarter of the other vessel. As they held on recklessly together suddenly the speed of the chase was diminished. Her helm was put down, and with several other vessels she swung up into the wind.

"We have her now," said Jones, springing on the rail and leaning over forward; "may, it's too late. Missed stave! By heaven, she's in iron! She's doomed! Ah! there, steady with the helm! Give her a good fall!"

In the next instant, with a crash heard above the roar of the storm even on the other ship, the ill-fated Maldstone drove upon the reef broadside on. The shock of meeting was tremendous. Her masts were snapped short off like pipestems; the howling gale jerked them over the sides, where they thundered and beat upon the ship with tremendous force. The girl disappeared.

"Breakers ahead!" on the instant roared out a half dozen voices in the forecastle.

"Breakers on the starboard bow!" came the wild cry from all sides.

"Down with the helm—hard down!" shouted O'Neill, with a command ready instinct, without waiting for the captain. There was a moment of confusion on the deck.

"Steady with the helm—steady, sir!" cried Jones in his powerful voice, with an imperious wave of his hand. "Steady, here and aft the decks! Every man to his station! Keep her a good full, quartermaster. Keep that helm as you have it. Look yonder, sir," he added, pointing to leeward to another danger. "Ready about, stations for stave! Aft with you, Mr. O'Neill, and see that the helm is shifted exactly as I direct. Make no mistake! Lively, men, for your lives!"

The eager crew sprang to their stations. There was another moment or two of confusion, and as they settled down the silence was broken only by the wind and waves. The water was seething and whirling under the forefoot of the Ranger. The reefs upon which the Maldstone had crashed were dangerously near. The keen eye of the captain had seen on the other side a slender needle of rock over which the waves broke in seething fury as they struck itself menacingly out of the angry ocean. They were right among the reefs, and only the most complete knowledge and consummate seamanship could save them. They were there.

To catch ship now and come up in the wind would throw them on the rocky needle; to go off would bring them down upon the other reefs. Jones, entirely master of the situation, perfectly cool in appearance, though his eyes snapped and sparkled with fire, leaned out above the knighthead and keenly scanned the sea before him. There was



"A good shot, Master Price."

wheel over a few spokes, and the Ranger shot up into the wind a little and hung quivering a moment with checked way.

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Just room for the Ranger to pass between the two reefs. A hair's breadth on either side would mean destruction. As the captain watched the boiling water, he seemed to detect through a slight change in the course a tremor in the hand on the wheel.

"Aft there!" he shouted promptly. "What are you about? Steady with that helm! No higher—nothing off!"

"Aye, aye, sir," replied O'Neill, standing watchfully at the con. "I will hold it myself."

The crash of the breakers as they withered their white crested heads around the ship's bows and on either side was appalling to every one. They were right in them now—passing through them. The rocky needle on the leeward hand slipped by and drew astern. The wreck of the Maldstone was last sight of in the heaving waves and driving spray of a rising gale. The ship was roaring through the sea at a terrific rate; the strain upon everything was tremendous; a broken spar, a parted rope, meant a lost ship.

"Very well done," cried the captain, casting a glance aloft at the weather leech of the topsails shivering in the fierce wind, the quivering masts and groaning yards, the lee shrouds hanging slack, the lee braces and head-boomlines taut as iron wires, the tacks and sheets and the weather shrouds as rigid as iron bars, the new canvas like sheets of marble. The ship was heeled over until the lee channels were almost awash, the spray coming in in bucketfuls over the lee cathead. She was ready if ever she would be; their fate was at the touch.

"Now," shouted Jones in a voice of thunder, "down with the helm! Over with it—hard over!"

The old experienced seaman put the wheel over spoke by spoke, slowly at first, then faster, until they finally hauled it down hard and clung to it with all the strength of their mighty arms.

"Helm's-a-lee, hard-a-lee!" cried O'Neill at this moment.

"Rise tacks and sheets!" roared the captain.

The ship shot up into the wind, straightened herself as its pressure was removed from the sails, lost headway, the jibs swinging and lurching as the gale as she began to swing to leeward away from the reef on the starboard side. She worked around slowly until the wind began to come in over the starboard bow.

"Haul taut!" shouted the watching captain. "Mainsail haul!"

The great yards, with their vast expanse of slatting, roaring, thrashing canvas, whirled rapidly around as the nimble crew ran aft with the sheets and braces. The Ranger fell off quickly and drifted down toward the needle, the aftersails aback.

"Board that main tack there! Man the head braces! Jump, men, lively! Let go and haul!"

There was a frightful moment. Would she make it? She stopped. Ah, thank God, they gathered way again, slowly, then faster.

"Right the helm; meet her—steady! Get that main tack down now! Fall on to it, all of you, swing away! Get a pull on the lee braces, Mr. O'Neill, and haul the bowlines. Ah, that's well done!"

They were rushing through it again. The white water and the breakers were left behind. A sigh of relief broke from the reckless crew, and even the iron captain seemed satisfied with his achievement as he walked aft to the quarter deck.

"Get a good offing, Mr. O'Neill," said the captain, "and then let her go. I'll send the hands aloft to take in the topgallant sails, and then you may get a boat ready. We must see if there are any poor creatures left on that ship yonder."

"Very good, sir," replied the lieutenant, giving the necessary orders, when presently the ship, easier under the reduced canvas, was hoisted in the beating sea.

"Shall I take the weather wheel, sir?"

"Yes," returned the captain. "I think you had better try to board under her lee if it be possible to do anything among that wreckage. I doubt if there be anybody left alive on her, but we can't afford to risk the possibility, especially in the case of that woman whom you found so beautiful," he added, with a smile.

"Aye, aye, sir," said the lieutenant, blushing beneath the bronze in spite of himself as he directed the boat's strain to call away the whaleboat, which, manned by six stout oarsmen, with himself at the tiller, was soon cast into the heaving sea. Meanwhile the Ranger sailed away again and beat to and fro off the coast, taking care to preserve the necessary offing, or distance from shore to leeward.

[To be continued.]

Why Cooperators Never Saw Mercury.

To most people, says Mr. Percival Lowell in "The Atlantic," Mercury is known chiefly as being very difficult to see, and to be seen at all it must be looked for low down in the twilight sky at certain specified times during certain equally specified seasons of the year. Seeing him is enhanced by the rumor that the great Cooperators died without ever having done so.

It is, however, not so difficult to detect as this probably true rumor. Cooperators has led many to suppose. Two impediments to Mercury's observation stood in Cooperators' way—the one that Cooperators lived very far north, the other that the mists at the mouth of the Vesta rose nightly to obscure the twilight sky. The Cooperators, however, as it made Mercury the reverse, the former will be none the less apparent when we reflect that the path in which all the major planets travel is in northern latitudes greatly bowed to the horizon. To Cooperators, that path is subject for a long distance from the sun to all those atmospheric disturbances peculiar to the horizon, disturbances which make observations near it practically impossible, and the farther north the greater the difficulty.

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One by one the indictments found against public officers in King county have been dismissed, the courts doubting regarding it a bad precedent to punish malfeasance in office.

CHURCHILL
The Stationer.



Dog-matic People

Are often capable of doing injury to less positive people, the very emphasis of their affirmation making up for lack of argument and want of evidence. And the worst of dogmatists are those doctors who, harking back to some old dogma of the school, discover that certain patients are beyond all medical help, because, forsooth, their diseases are beyond the limited medical knowledge of the dogmatist.

"When the physicians had given me up I was cured by the use of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. That statement, varied sometimes in form but identical in fact, is one of the common expressions found in the letters of those cured by 'Golden Medical Discovery.' Sometimes the statement runs: 'I was given up by four doctors,' showing a desperate effort to find relief in local practitioners. But however the story begins, it almost invariably ends with the statement, 'I am perfectly cured by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery.'"

"Persons suffering from weak lungs, hemorrhages, deep-seated cough, emaciation and weakness, have been restored to perfect health by the 'Discovery.' The philosophy of the cure effected by this marvelous medicine is not hard to understand. Life is sustained by food, digested and assimilated. If the food eaten is not being converted into nutrition and the body and its organs, being starved, must grow weak. There is only one way to get strength and that is by food. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery heals diseases of the stomach and allied organs of digestion and nutrition, so enabling the body to assimilate the needed nourishment.

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ALMOST A MIRACLE.

"I took a severe cold which settled in the chest," writes Mrs. George H. Hall, of Great Falls, N. H., "and was not cured by any other means. I was cured by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It is a good appetite and a sound digestion. In almost all cases of disease loss of appetite is an early symptom, and this is promptly followed by the food eaten is not being converted into nutrition and the body and its organs, being starved, must grow weak. There is only one way to get strength and that is by food. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery heals diseases of the stomach and allied organs of digestion and nutrition, so enabling the body to assimilate the needed nourishment.

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