

LITTLE FRANCE

A ROMANCE OF THE DAYS WHEN "THE GREAT LORD HAWKE" WAS KING OF THE SEA

BY CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

Author of "Commodore Paul Jones," "The Sea," "For the Freedom of the Sea," etc.

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(Chapter XVII. continued.)

He stood, with the tears trickling down his rugged old face, a picture of shame and sorrow.

One by one the big guns that ringed the city ceased to pour their shot upon the town, as the English saw the flag come down. Although the heavy smoke still hung low in the sudden air, a silence ominous and gloomy for the Frenchmen succeeded the roar of the cannonade. The ships in the harbor were soon black with men. From the meadows on the Plains of Abraham the sound of cheering could be heard faintly, and down by the St. Charles gate, where the columns of the English were massed, came back an echo of the joyful sound. It was the death-knell of the province.

M. J. Joannes, reluctantly complying, while bitterly protesting, was dispatched with a white flag to Gen. Townshend's headquarters. With the cessation of the bombardment the townspeople, regardless of the rain, poured into the streets. The plateau in front of the chateau was soon filled with people shouting, jesting, laughing, crying, sobbing like mad. The grim old governor, with the officers about him, stood at the foot of the flagstaff looking over that marvelous prospect which should never again belong to France. Presently Joannes returned.

"The terms, major?" cried the governor.

"The garrison to march out with arms, two pieces of cannon, and 20 rounds; afterward to be transported to France with such of the townspeople as choose to go with them. The free exercise of our religion permitted, and the rights and property of the people respected."

"And the alternative, monsieur?"

"Immediate attack."

"Have you the paper?"

"Within my breast, sir," answered Joannes.

"Let us go to the chateau; we will sign it."

Presently the two reappeared on the terrace.

"Say to the English that the people are starving, and ask them in the name of the women and children to send us something to eat at once," said the governor.

Joannes saluted, turned away, and was gone. The people watched him disappear in silence.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PLAY, THE STAKE, AND THE PLAYERS

MADEMOISELLE, what of the Countess Anne and Capt. Grafton? They had passed through a week of such mingled emotions such alternations of joy and sorrow, of love and jealousy, of remembrance and anticipation, as could scarcely be described.

When the woman he loved left him alone the night he recognized her, after that rapturous exchange of kisses, Grafton felt himself transported to heaven. He forgot, in the happiness consequent upon his discovery of her identity, the racial antagonism which should be between them; he forgot the great gulf of war which held them asunder; he even forgot the engagement of Anne to de Vitre. But the next morning, when the first glow of his passion had left him, he was enabled to view things in a clearer light.

He carefully took account of the different obstacles which separated, or might tend to separate him from the woman he loved. He intended to win her, come what might, and as the campaign was like to prove a difficult one, in which the odds were mainly against him, it behooved him to take stock of all opposition and carefully look over the field. He must think, he must plan, he must leave to stone unturned, lose no point in the game.

First of all he was an American, and that was different from an Englishman. Anne, although she showed little of it to a casual inspection, was an American as well. That was a point gained. The war, he believed, would presently be over. That was another point in his favor. If she loved him—if she loved him? Who could doubt it after last night? But did she love him enough to brave the anger and defy the opposition of her grandfather? Did she love him enough to marry him in spite of country, nationality, public opinion? He thought so.

She had great pride of race, and from the French point of view she would be condescending in marrying a mere commoner. For the matter of that, he thought, in his loving humility, that no man was fit to possess this priceless jewel of womanhood. He placed her upon a level so high that she would have been compelled to condescend to marry even a king, much less a simple American gentleman. Marriage with him meant for her the renunciation of title, rank, station, possessions, country, family, friends, traditions—he piled up the catalogue of sacrifices involved, in gloomy, ever-deepening humility. Still, other women had done such things; these were not insuperable obstacles.

The last difficulty was the greatest. There was de Vitre—a stumbling-block, indeed. No man could have done more for another than he had done for the young Frenchman. He had twice saved his life, he had established his honor, and, by a singularly ironic trick of fate, he feared he had been the means of bestowing upon him the hand of the woman they both loved.

His own sense of the obligation he had conferred upon that young Frenchman lay heavily upon his soul.

He could not demand from him freely or even take from him by force what he would have wrested cheerfully from another. A benefit conferred, however it may be considered by the recipient as a benefit forgot, invariably establishes a sense of obligation on him who confers it. Therefore, de Vitre was an obstacle to the most serious moment to the future progress of his happiness. How to contend with him he knew not. Certainly he could not make the relinquishment of the Frenchman's desire for Anne the price, or the reward, of his own past service. A genuine man, he could not even bear to have these services mentioned; and that they so persistently remained in his thoughts gave him honorable uneasiness. A very excited and chivalric nature had Philip Grafton. He was particularly nice on the point of honor.

That was not all either, for connected with de Vitre was the honor of the de Rohans. Anne, in the most possible manner and of her own free will, had betrothed herself to the young Frenchman. She had voluntarily entered upon the relationship and assumed the obligation. Her sense of honor was no less keen than his. She was a woman, he remembered, imbued with all the traditions of that race whose proud boast it was that while they had not been born to the kingly degree and they would not condescend to the princely rank, yet they were Rohans. Was Anne capable of sacrificing her word for her love? It was doubtful.

The last consideration that arose in his mind was an acute conjecture that the marquis would not be much better satisfied with de Vitre for a suitor for his granddaughter than he would have been with Grafton. The old man, probably, nay, certainly, had formed his own plans, and there was without doubt a third suitor of his personal choosing awaiting Anne in France. This meant much. If Grafton could succeed in matching the marquis' determination against Anne's will-power, between de Vitre and the other, he might the more easily achieve success.

He realized all these things, weighed them carefully, considered them exhaustively, and racked his brain in an endeavor to solve the problem. His resolute determination was unabated. That, his love for her, and her feeling for him, were the three things he counted upon to enable him to have his way and win her for his own. He was no longer a boy; he did not approach the problem lightly and carelessly, but with a deliberate calmness which outwardly belied his passion. He was a man thoughtful by nature and strengthened in character by the responsibilities of his position as the captain of a ship, and he deliberately determined to win the person, as he already possessed the heart of the French girl.

It was a sort of game he played, with her for the stake. The grim old marquis, with his pride of race, family and nation, and his ardent patriotism; the handsome, dashing young Canadian, the unknown suitor, who was sure to be a man of parts and condition, and the stubborn, determined little Englishman, which would win? Well, come what might, Grafton already had Anne's heart, de Vitre her promise, the marquis her duty, and the unknown as yet, nothing. The heart was the strongest card, he decided.

Of her love he felt no doubt, but love and marriage were two things that rarely went together in the mind of the high nobility of France in those days. But stay! Anne was different. As a child, when he had known her best, she had known none of these disagreeable conveniences of the society of her day. Had her sojourn in Canada, her entrance into the gay little world of New France, effected a revolution of her character? He did not believe so.

These were torturing questions all. Evening found him still thinking of them and thinking alone. His wants had been attended to by Josette or Jean-Renaud, now allowed free access to him. His anxious inquiries for the countess had been met by the statement that she was ill and could not come to see him—a declaration which added alarm to his longing and disappointment. His progress toward recovery had been rapid, but on the second day of her continued absence from his room he nearly fretted himself into a fever. He found that he could be more calm and cool in theory than in practice. Dr. Arnoux looked very grave when he paid his afternoon visit that day, and, ignorant of the real situation, spoke some blunt words to mademoiselle.

"This Englishman," he said, "is pining, worrying, fretting. Unless something can be done to restore his peace of mind I fear the consequences may be serious; inflammation may set in in his feverish condition, and then—"

His ominous gesture frightened her greatly. "Can't you, mademoiselle, cheer him up, distract his mind in some way?" he asked. Anne knew only too well what ailed her patient. She had distracted him too much already, possibly; yet, when she heard of the threatened danger, with her usual impetuosity she threw prudence to the winds, broke her promise to herself and fled to the chamber. He heard her fleet step on the stair, and when she entered he faced her from the pillow with such a smile of hope and joy as completely transformed him.

"Anne! Anne!" he murmured, reproachfully, "for two whole days I have lain here alone thinking, think-

ing, thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking. I wonder I did not go mad! And you never came!"

"I sent Josette, monsieur." "Josette! You might have seen every woman, every messenger in the world, and I would have thought only of you! How could you be so cruel! You love me, yet you left me!"

"How can I love the enemy of France, monsieur?" she answered, gazing down upon him with eyes that gave the lie to the cold words on her lips.

"I know not how you can, but you cannot deny that you do. Anne, sweet Anne, you are half American. This land is the home of your mother. Let it be the home of your heart as well!"

"And my grandfather, the marquis? He would never consent."

"Faith, your own consent is all that is necessary, sweetheart. If you love me enough—"

"But I am betrothed to Monsieur de Vitre."

"Why did you do it at the last moment, after you had recognized me, when fate—happy fate—threw me at your feet?"

"You do not love him, Anne, dearest? Come, the truth! The de Rohans were ever true, you told me."

"Ah, monsieur, I respect and admire Monsieur de Vitre. He is a brave and noble gentleman."

"Yes, but you do not love him?"

"How dare you catechize me in this manner?" she cried, piously, shrinking from his persistent questioning. "I will withdraw, sir. What warrant have you?"

But she made no motion to leave the apartment. On the contrary, he saw her body sway uneasily toward him. She could not control her feelings. If he had not been so ill, so weak, so pathetically helpless, he would have appealed less strongly to her, she might have resisted better. She was angry at herself for her lack of control, and bitterly mortified. Was this man her master in truth? And he wore another woman's picture! Shame on her, shame! Could he compel her to break her word, defy everything, and marry him against her will? Ah, but was it against her will? There was the rub.

She stood helpless before him. The whole current of her being flowing toward him, only her stubborn will and pride holding her back. But the struggle could not be maintained for long. He marked the rise and fall of her breast. Her fingers moved restlessly, her knees trembled, her eyes swam, her color came and went. The constraint she was under was terrible.

The girl loved him with all her soul. Yet she struggled on; she would not yield. 'Twas an unequal combat. She fought two; his will and her love. The odds were certain. He felt it was almost cruel as he watched her and knew it would come. All she needed in that moment to bring her to him was time. He was wise enough not to be hasty. He put equal constraint upon himself; indeed, his love was no less than her own.

"I have only the warrant of my love for you to plead my cause," he answered at last.

"Have you loved me all the time?" she cried, coming a step nearer.

"I know not," he answered honestly before her truth-compelling gaze, "but at least I have loved no one else, and since the night in the tower there has not been a day in which I have not thought of you. But never in my wildest visions did you appear so beautiful as you are to-day. Anne, sweet Anne! Dear little France! My heart knew you, even though my false eyes told no story to my bewildered mind. 'Twas God that brought us together again. We cannot be separated, my sweet, my own!"

"But Monsieur de Vitre, my engagement—"

"I ask you again why it was you entered upon it so suddenly?"

"I saw that locket you wear over your heart, Sir Philip, whose secret you guard so jealously, from which you will not be parted. You did not know me. You had forgotten me. There was some one else," she murmured. "I cannot marry the enemy of my country. I should be an outcast, a despised. You fainted in the hall of the chateau. Monsieur de Vitre was there. When I knelt beside you—I—I looked at you, monsieur. I forgot myself—a little. I betrayed myself unsought—unknown even. Monsieur de Vitre cried out before them all that I loved you. The thought stung me—my pride, you know, I could not bear it. There was but one way. He had besought me for my hand, I dared not trust myself before you unpledged. They looked at me so earnestly. It was a foretaste of what I should meet. I stopped every gossiping tongue, sufficed every suspicion by saying 'Yes' to my brave countryman. I—I do not regret it."

She forced herself to lift her head and look at him white-faced and trembling. His bold, burning glances plunged through his defenses like a sword-blade.

"This from the truthful de Rohan!" he murmured coldly, but with a breaking heart. "If you looked at me dying then—and perhaps dying now after that word—if you looked at me then as you look at me this moment, there were no ground for de Vitre's suspicion. Is this your fidelity? Go! You have not—you do not love me!"

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She buried her face in her hands beneath his stern accusing gaze—his reproaches seared her heart. She had not told the truth to him.

"Go, mademoiselle!" he continued, pitilessly, ruthlessly turning the weapon he had thrust into her heart. "The other night—does my imagination mock me, or did I dream of Heaven, of your kisses? Were the lips that now betray those that met my own? Was it that sweet head that lay upon my breast? Was it all a vision? Did I ever live for an hour with you in that old dark tower by the sea? Was I indeed the knight of that gentle child who wrapped herself around my heart? You weep, mademoiselle. Why? Happiness opens before you. You are the betrothed of de Vitre—"

"No more!" she cried, tearing her hands from her face and springing toward him. She seized his arm and unwounded shoulder with a grasp that was painful in its intensity. "No more! No more! You torture me be-

yond endurance! 'Tis no dream. I love you, I adore you, my king, my king! What are country, and grandfather, and friends, and all the world to me beside you!"

"You bent her glorious head once more and kissed him as she had kissed him in the moonlight two nights before. Had he won? This time he did not lose control of himself. She was living that moment in the present, he could still, while sharing her emotion, think of the future. He would strike at once.

"But de Vitre?" he exclaimed.

She drew herself away from him slowly, rose tremblingly to her feet, and looked down upon him again.

"You remind me," she said, brokenly, "of my word, my duty. I know not how it is, she continued, "why I am so weak before you. Is it the strength of your love or the strength of mine? But I will be mistress of myself. I cannot break my word. I cannot break my old grandfather's heart. I cannot dishonor the name of my family. I am a de Rohan though but a woman. I will not—"

"Hear me, Anne!" cried Grafton, stretching out his hand to Heaven, "before God I swear you shall! You shall break your word with de Vitre! You shall cross the will of your people! You are mine by prior right. I will make you do it! You shall be my wife!"

"How, monsieur, will you bring about these things?" she cried boldly, every nerve in her body thrilling and quivering in passionate response to the imperious affection in his words.

"What power have you? What is it that will give you strength?"

"The power of love, Anne!" answered Philip. "When two love each other as we love nothing can come between them."

She looked long and earnestly at him. He spoke the truth, and she knew it, yet with the stubbornness of a man and the devotion of a woman she clung to her negation. Presently, as he said nothing further, she turned to leave the room.

"Wait!" he cried from where he lay exhausted by his own feelings. "Before you go, promise me that you will come again? That each day you will let me see you at least once?"

"I promise you, Sir Philip," she answered, "but I must have no more of this. Indeed, I cannot stand it. 'Tis not right, it compares not with my honor. You must promise me, too, I am pledged still to Monsieur de Vitre."

She was almost humble in her petition, as if to say "You have the power, you know it, oh, abuse it not, if you indeed love the woman who has given you her heart!" Her appeal met with an immediate and generous response from him.

"God bless you, Anne, for the saving grace of that word 'still'!" he cried. "I promise you, I shall ask no kiss of you, expect no caresses from you, beg no further word of love, until your engagement with de Vitre is broken."

"That will never be, monsieur," she said sadly, yet with heart and cherishing hope for his bold assurance. "An revoir."

With reluctant feet the girl turned and left the chamber. She sank down before the parlor in the room which she had occupied since Grafton came, and poured out her soul to the mother of sorrows in appealing plea and help. He loved her, O blessed Virgin, and she loved him. His masterful will was! He had sworn she would be his wife. His wife, yet, praise Heaven, that other woman whose face he wore over his heart! She tore the lace at her breast in wild and wailing pain at the thought. Was it possible for a girl to be at the same time so happy and miserable?

Poor Denis de Vitre!

CHAPTER XIX

ANNE DE ROHAN SAYS FAREWELL

GRAFTON saw Anne de Rohan daily after that. She kept her promise, and, touched by her dependence, he did the same. Yet not without a struggle, for the effort told on each of them. She had ventured into his room timidly the next day, but as he allowed his love to express itself only through the medium of his eyes which drank in her beauty as the field the rain, she had become somewhat reassured, and had not hesitated to come to his chamber more frequently.

It was lucky for him that her relative had died before he fell at her door, and it was also fortunate that, unconsciously, the frank freedom of Anne's American blood permitted her to do things to which a French girl she could never have conformed. She was thoroughly French in her emotions and quite American in her instincts—a delightful combination indeed.

Meanwhile, under the skilled nursing he received, aided by a sound and vigorous constitution, he made rapid progress toward recovery from his wounds. The first time he sat up in his chamber Anne happened to be with him. Jean-Renaud had dressed him and assisted him to a spacious chair which was placed near the window and from which he had a clear view of the street. The little family, by Anne's orders, had kept close at home, and the tremendous events which had culminated in the surrender of the town were as yet unknown to them.

The rain, which had been drearily pouring down for a day or two, had cleared away, and the September sun was shining brightly outside. The day was mild, the air balmy, and Philip sat at the open window drinking in the freshness of the morning. He looked handsomer than ever to the girl who stood by his side. The unusual pallor of his illness had been modified and a faint flush of color upon his pale cheek told of returning health.

There was a blowing of bugles, a rattling of drums, the sound of martial music heard in the street. They listened. It grew louder. Troops were approaching.

"Those are not French drums," said Grafton. "Hark! 'Tis an English roll! They are playing the British Grenadiers! What has happened?"

He leaned forward anxiously, but Anne checked his motion to rise, and thrust her head out of the window.

"Soldiers are approaching," she said.

"Yes," he cried. "Their uniforms?" "They wear red coats and shining caps. They are English. They are coming nearer. You can see them in a moment. What can it be?"

"'Tis a surrender!" cried Philip exultingly.

"Alas! yes, it must be so," answered the girl, turning toward him.

"Forgive my inconsiderate triumph, Anne," he answered softly, seizing her hand and carrying it to his lips.

She covered her face with her other hand and the tears trickled silently down her cheeks, while the advance guard of the British Grenadiers coming to take possession, marched gaily by amid the silence of the people looking gloomily on.

There was a step outside on the stair. De Vitre, pale and haggard, entered the room.

"Monsieur de Vitre!" cried the girl, surprised and disquieted. "What means this unceremonious entrance?"

"Mademoiselle Anne," answered the Frenchman, bowing profoundly, "forgive my haste, the city has surrendered. The English troops are approaching. I came to protect you, fearful lest—"

"The English soldiers war not upon women, Monsieur de Vitre," interrupted Grafton sharply, leaning forward, his face full of color at the presence of his rival. "Besides, I am here."

"But you are ill, sir, and while I respect the English soldiers, there are always evil-minded persons in the wake of an army, and surrender brings out all the vicious elements in our own population. I love Mademoiselle de Rohan, as you know, she is betrothed to me. I am but this moment released by the governor. Naturally I came to her."

"And you are right, Monsieur de Vitre. I doubt not I shall need your protection," said Anne, determined at last that all should be ended now.

"Mademoiselle, you honor me," cried the delighted Frenchman. "I hope to deserve your confidence now and always."

In spite of his jealous animus, Philip could not refuse to accord his rival a word of praise. He was a tall, handsome, gallant-looking sailor, whose every movement was full of grace. There was no doubt as to the depth of his affection for Anne de Rohan either.

A hard task indeed was before Master Philip Grafton.

"Oh, Mademoiselle," continued de Vitre, stepping nearer her and seizing her hand, "you made me so happy by what you said in the chateau. I have chafed in my restraint, wondering if it were true, fearful that I have dreamed it. For what had I done to deserve it?"

"Monsieur," said Anne quickly, catching sight of Grafton's clinched hands and convulsed face, which nothing but his own passion kept from the observation of the Frenchman. "Monsieur, I seize the first opportunity to say what I had scarcely time to explain or what you probably did not comprehend, when I bestowed upon you my hand. I have given my promise to you, and that promise I mean to keep, but, monsieur, there is another who must be consulted. The Marquis de Chabot, my grandfather, the ultimate disposal of my hand and fortune rests with him. Before the engagement is ratified or in short, monsieur, I beg you to treat me as your friend, until you have gained the consent of the head of my house to this marriage."

A loud thud had crushed Philip to the earth was lifted from his heart as he heard these words. It was a respite that he was giving him. At least he would not have the torture of the thought that the lips which had melted upon his own should quiver, however reluctantly, under the touch of de Vitre—not yet.

Time, only give him time. He would find a way to take her, even if he had to snatch her from the very heart of France, from the steps of the throne even. He breathed again as he listened.

"At least," murmured de Vitre, who was visibly disconcerted by this deliberate statement from the woman he loved, "at least say that you love me."

Philip's heart stood still for a moment, but the girl was equal to the situation.

"Monsieur," she answered, "I did not say that in the hall, I can not say it now. I respect you, I esteem you."

"Is there any other one?" he cried jealously.

"The truth that was behind the grateful words sealed Grafton's lips. For the moment he almost wished he had not interfered to save his rival's life—but he instantly put the thought away as unworthy a gentleman.

"'Tis nothing," he murmured, "you would have done as much for me, for any man. You put too much value—"

"Mademoiselle Anne," cried Josette, entering the room in great agitation, "a messenger from the Monsieur de Rohans!"

Anne took the paper and tore it open.

"A summons, gentlemen!" she said, "the governor requires me and my servants to attend him at once at the Chateau St. Louis. He thinks we will be safer with him. He knows of your presence, Monsieur de Vitre, for he says you will escort us."

Anne was glad to have the scene over. The emotions of the last few moments had been almost too much for her. As Josette brought her hat and wrap she turned to Grafton, extending her hand.

"Farewell, monsieur!" she said.

"'Tis not good-bye, Mademoiselle de Rohan," cried Grafton, seizing her hand. "I shall see you again!"

"I shall always be glad to see you, monsieur," she answered simply, biting her lip to control its quivering.

"Come, Monsieur de Vitre."

"My friend," said de Vitre, ere he followed her from the room, "have no anxiety. I will see that some one comes to you at once."

"But Mademoiselle de Rohan?" cried Grafton.

"I will take care of her, monsieur," returned the Frenchman meaningly. "Remember 'tis my right."

In one sense de Vitre was as good as his word, for the room was soon filled with English officers, who welcomed Grafton as one risen from the dead. They had given him over for lost at last, not having heard from him, and he had the pleasure later on of reading his own obituary in the general orders commending his conduct on the debarkation of the troops, which had been published by the vice admiral.

Several days passed without his seeing or hearing anything from Anne de Rohan in spite of his inquiries. Days filled with the most consuming anxiety. Yet he had endeavored to be patient, having set himself resolutely to get well, and had made much progress in recovering from his wounds. He realized that he could not afford to lose any time in the fight for Anne. On the fourth day a note was put into his hand.

"Philip, my Philip," it read, "my knight, my love, I am calling you so for the last time. When you read this I shall be far down the river on board a ship for France. With the first of the refugees I was permitted to go, and—forgive me, my own—I could not trust myself to see you again. I will not deny—indeed, how can I?—that I have loved you with a love that grows dearer to me every day. Yet you wear one woman's picture over your heart, dear, and I humiliate myself by sending you this counterfeit presentment of another. Alas, 'tis all of me that you may ever have! Look upon it, monsieur as you have loved me in spite of the other and then break it, and—forget me. Farewell!"

ANNE.

In a little diamond-studded, heart-shaped locket, which he had often seen on Anne's finger, there was a cunning miniature of the woman he loved. He pressed it to his lips and then slipped it and the letter in a pocket near his heart. Then, with the assistance of the English sailor who had been detailed to wait upon him, he made ready to leave.

He looked long and earnestly about the room, hallowed by their meeting, and filled with blessed associations of her presence, ere he crossed the threshold, for he did not intend to return.

He was informed by Gen. Townshend, then in the patched-up Chateau St. Louis, when he reported to him, that three days since the first shipment of fugitives who had chosen to leave Canada rather than remain under the rule of the English, had departed. Among them was Mademoiselle de Rohan and her servants.

"Who commanded the cartel?" asked Grafton.

"A Canadian officer, who was to be exchanged in Europe."

"And his name, Gen. Townshend?"

"Lieut. Denis de Vitre, he is called."

"I wonder what he's up to!" thought the general, as Grafton saluted, turned on his heel, and hurriedly left the room.

CHAPTER XX

WET SHEETS AND FLOWING SEAS.

A GRAY sky and an angry sea. A solitary ship in the waste of waters, staggering along in a roaring gale from the west; every rag of canvas that could safely be spread—ay, and even more—urging her forward before the fierce wind; driving her madly through the tossing waves. A lonely, restless man upon her deck passing the long weary hours on the forecastle looking eagerly ahead, ever ahead; turning like a devotee his face to the east, pointing his vessel toward the rising sun, though driven aside by the happenings of the sea, returning to his goal with the accuracy and the persistency with which the polar needle swings toward its star.

Some 200 leagues ahead of the frigate, with the man on the knight-boards peering fruitlessly across the waste of waters, staggering another vessel, driven in like manner steadily pursued its course for the same destination. As if conscious of the unwearied, indomitable pursuit, she, too, made her way onward madly, recklessly, crossing the great deep.

Skill and seamanship of the highest type were at her service as well. A willingness to drive was there in almost as great a measure for this ship was homeward bound. When she dropped anchor in the waters of France, those aboard of her, now held prisoner by the heavy-linked chain of honor, would be free.

And a woman hung over the quarter of the second ship listening indifferently to words of sweetness, responding not at all to passionate pleadings that fell upon her ear, a woman, turning her eyes back toward the west, gazing upon the setting sun that had carried down to darkness with it her maiden heart, a woman marking the long white wake of the ship, her sadness growing greater her regret deepening, deepening with each swiftly passing league.

And yet the lonely woman on the quarter-deck with the infrequent sunlight looking itself in her midnight hair, with her violet eyes staring backward, backward, backward, from out a pale glow whose whiteness matched the foaming waves was drawing on as surely and irresistibly as the loadstone the needle, the eager man upon the other ship.

"I think there can be no doubt of our observations, captain. You see we have had