

OLD LOVERS.

Heart of my heart, when the day was young, Hope beckoned to life with a silver tongue...

A HISTORIC RESISTANCE

A Tale of the Liberian Coast.

Towards the close of a sultry afternoon the little steamer Dunlin was churning her way through the glassy roll of the Atlantic.

Captain Orme leaned over the bridge-rails, glancing at the approaching coast-line and grumbling at the heat.

"Six fathoms, sir," hailed a quartermaster, as he dipped the lead; and the mate observed, "It's shoaling fast, and there are too many uncharted rocks about to make this a nice neighborhood to navigate in the dark."

Again Captain Orme looked at the creaming breakers ahead; then he stamped upon the bridge, for the climate of Africa in the rainy season is trying to both health and temper.

"I shall be glad to see the last of them—though they'd take charge of the ship once or twice. Go down and see if any headmen can pilot us in. We shall have to stay all night; I won't risk going out in the dark."

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"Thank goodness," said Captain Orme. "I'm glad that's over; wonder what it was all about anyway."

It was long past midnight when the harassed captain was awakened by a loud hammering at his door. Springsing out of his narrow bunk, and shaking down legions of cockroaches from the breast of his thin jama, he strode toward the entrance, and heard the rough voice of the quartermaster say: "Them devils are a seizin' the boats, sir. They've got No. 1 half-way lowered, and are cuttin' the falls of the rest."

"No nigger touches that; you're only here to show the way, not to command; savvy?" said Captain Orme.

"Not nigger, sah," answered the man; "only low bushman and Liberia nigger. Then his mouth expanded into the broad grin of the African, and pointing to a white-walled building among the palms, he added, "New custom-house, sah; Krooboy burn him one time."

The mate, who posed as an encyclopaedia in West Africa matters, laughed. "The old question—free trade versus protection," he said. "They play it out vigorously here, sometimes as a comedy and sometimes as a tragedy. In any case it's rough on the Krooboy, who doesn't want to be governed at all, to be taxed extortionately to pay for improvements in Monrovia. I wonder how many custom-houses he has burned."

Old Man Trouble, who understood the speech, nodded approval. "Liberian man bushman," he said. "We fit to fight him too much."

"The Krooboy he hanged," broke in Captain Orme. "I'm sick of them. We'll have a Liberian officer aboard now to charge us five hundred dollars for landing this crowd, of which he'll pocket half. Blow the whistle for the canoes."

Three times the deep boom of the steam whistle rang out, and echoed along the palm-clad bluff shore, until the sound died away and was lost in the monotonous song of the surf. Then the Dunlin's propeller turned slowly astern and her anchor rattled down.

Presently a little launch steamed out from behind a point of surf swept rocks and, when she shot alongside, a sable representative of the Liberian republic, covered with tarnished gold lace, strutted towards the bridge with the air of an admiral of the fleet. "You are fined fifty dollars for anchoring without permission, and if you desire to land those Krooboy men you must pay two and a half dollars a head," he announced, and proceeded to climb the bridge-ladder.

"Stop where you are, daddy," said the Captain, laughing. "No one sets foot on this bridge until he's asked. You'll get no fifty dollars from me, and as to paying two and a half each for the Krooboy, that's more than the best nigger in Africa is worth even if he is a custom officer. However, there they are you can sail in and collect it yourself. Don't be too exacting though, for they've all got matchet-knives."

Hardly had the dignity of the black republic reached the fore-well than a pandemonium of angry yells rose from the crowded deck, and bright matchet-blades glittered above a maze of naked arms. Captain Orme, who had been fined too many times on frivolous pretexts to love the Liberians, smiled grimly as the customs officer hastily returned to the foot of the bridge-ladder. His teeth were chattering and his knees shook like an acacia leaf in the rush of the harmattan.

"You shall pay for this," he gasped. "No attempt to land one boy till I fire on you, and advise Monrovia to put our navy on your track."

"If the Liberian navy gets in my way I'll run over the thing," replied the Captain; "it looked like an overgrown launch the last time I saw it. Is your gun on to Sierra Le-cmfvw shrdl sh western squadron like the other chaps? If they won't pay the Krooboy must go on to Sierra Leone, one, for they shall not take my boats ashore for you to confiscate—see? Here's a word of advice. This is a hard crowd, a fighting tribe from the interior; they might fancy swimming off in the dark, for we stay here all night and we dare not try to stop them. If they do, you'd better look out. Remember, too, that a little civility costs nothing; and now, good-day."

The black official answered nothing. His self-esteem was wounded, and with a feeble attempt at a swagger he kicked his sable clerks down the ladder and descended into the launch. As the little craft steamed away a yell of derision and hate followed her, and matches flashed along the Dunlin's rail. Then the Krooboy settled down again into their customary easy-going good-humor, and the mate observed, "Scene one of the comedy. I wonder how it will end."

"No canoe come sah; you lend us surf boats one ill' time?" asked Old Man Trouble. But the Captain answered sharply: "No, you all go on to Sa Leone, and get back the best way you can. Here's a dollar; get away forward."

Darkness settled down across the misty ocean with the suddenness of the tropics, and after swallowing a hasty meal in their stifling, cockroach-haunted mess-room, captain and mate lounged about beneath the spar-deck awnings, trying to catch a stray breath of air.

"Pah! I'm half mad with prickly heat, and that din gets on my nerves," said the former. "This deck passenger gear is not worth the candle; look at them now."

A wild hammering of monkey-skin drums arose from the fore-well, followed by the rattling of matchet-blades. Then two hundred lusty voices broke out into the swinging chorus of a war song of the Kroo nation.

"Some of their chants are quite musical," said the mate; "and very old too; many tell how they fought the first white men, the Portuguese, four hundred years ago."

Presently, by a blaze of torch-light, for a fire of some kind is an essential feature of a west African palaver three wild figures danced upon the high forecastle-head, the red glare falling upon their naked skins as they flung their arms about and harangued the excited crowd below. A hoarse roar of approval went up in answer; then one of the orators appeared to dissent, and his comrades pitched him head over heels on to the iron deck beneath. Capt. Orme sprang to his feet. "There'll be murder done," he shouted, "and they're burning the new tarred gas warp too. Tell Mac to start the big pump."

"The hose is rigged. Pairsonal cleanliness is gold, an' there's naething 'ill settle a palaver like a pickle could water, with eighty men of steam ahint it," cried the engineer drily; the following clinging clang of the pump below a solid jet of water swept the deck and aft, till the council broke up ignominiously.

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Advertisement for 'Womans Best Friend-Dirt's Worst Enemy' by FAIRBANKS. Includes an image of a box of washing powder and text: 'Largest package—greatest economy. THE M. K. FAIRBANK COMPANY, Chicago, St. Louis, New York, Boston, Philadelphia.'

through a crowd of negroes surging around the davits. The big Krooboy who was thrusting the boat's bows off the rail went down like a dog as the heavy pistol-butts smote him between the eyes; and the mob fell back a pace or two. "Light a port fire on the hands," he roared. "We're a comin', sir," answered a voice out of the darkness, as a few drowsy seamen fought their way to their commander's side, the Krooboy's giving way before the swinging capstan-bars and iron pump-handles. Then a port-fire hissed and spluttered on the lofty bridge, and an intense dazzling green glare shone down on the swaying hand below.

"The first that lays a hand upon the boat I shoot," and the barrel of his revolver glinted in the light of the port fire. For a few seconds the negroes stood silent and irresolute, until a burly leader strode forward, saying something in an unknown tongue, and pointing to the boats.

The mate's grasp tightened on his handspike as he glanced at the rolling eyes and scowling faces before him. He knew that if the skipper's nerve proved unequal to the task it might go very hard with every white man on board, for many of the Krooboy were armed with matchet-knives.

"Give us them boat," white man, and plenty boy live for them back," said the spokesman. "If no fit, we chop you one time." For a moment or two the captain made no reply, but stood calmly facing the excited crowd, and glancing shorewards the mate saw a bright tongue of flame leap up from the summit of the bluff, while a hoarse murmur ran from man to man. Then again the tread of running feet echoed along the aft deck, and a hoarse voice cried, "Out of the way, ye brutes."

The big Krooboy glanced behind him, and swung his matchet, but a heavy steel spanner descended with a thud upon his woolly head, and the gaunt figure of the chief engineer leaped into the circle of light, while the negro, staggering sideways, fell groaning upon the deck. Next moment a wedge of sooty firemen and greasers, with shovels and rables in their hands, cleft the crowd apart and faced the Krooboy, who sullenly backed on either side.

"Now," said the captain, "take that man away and pump on him. If there's one of you left on the spar deck in three minutes I'll shoot him." The negroes went slowly forward. It was the old story; the calmness and contemptuous fearlessness of the European had triumphed over the fickle impulses of the African. The negro savage is rarely a coward; in some circumstances he is recklessly brave; but he is always loath to face a determined white man. It is not unusual to see a score of stalwart bushmen flying in terror from the wrath of a sickly white trader, who would be as helpless as a child in their muscular grip. This is the more strange, as all the traders are by no means remarkable for nerve or courage, while the negroes have probably faced swift death at the point of a barbed spear several times before.

"A wee bit firmness gangs a lang way," said the engineer drily; "I'm thinkin' it's a gey hard skull he has anyway; the bit tap will no trouble him lang."

The mate burst out into a laugh to relieve his pent-up excitement, as he answered: "If it had been any one but a nigger, the bit tap would have killed him on the spot."

"I'm dead tired of them anyway," observed Captain Orme, slowly. "Five dollars a head from Lagos doses cover this kind of thing. I wonder what they'll be up to next." Even as he spoke a wild yell rose from the fore-deck, followed by a succession of splashes in the sea. "Come back there! Stop them! Light another port-fire," he roared.

This time a crimson flame blazed out from the rail of the spar-deck, and by the ruddy light the European saw the Krooboy's hurling their gin cases over the iron bulwarks, while already four or five sable figures were shooting through the circle of light which fell upon the long glassy undulations, as the steamer rolled and wallowed in the steep swell. The white seamen descended the iron runged ladder, but glistening matchet-blades barred their way and Old Man Trouble stood upon the windward side, lifting his voice. "Listen 'il' word, Captain sah," he said. "We dun pay you all five dollar fer land on Palm beach. Liberia man say no; Captain say no boat. Krooboy swim; if white man say no, we chop him. Live fer quiet; we go chop Liberia man instead."

"Let them go," advised the mate; "we can't stop them now, and would only get hurt if we tried. There's no surf in Africa big enough to drown a Krooboy."

As he spoke a crowd of naked figures flung themselves over the rail, and the sea was dotted with swimming heads; man after man followed in rapid succession, until the deck was empty of all save those bound for Sierra Leone. The sight was no unusual one, for when, as occasionally happens, the canoes do not come off to meet the coasting steamers, the Krooboy passengers swim ashore half a mile or more, pushing their gin cases before them.

"I wadna care tae be in the shoon 'o that custom care if they devils wae him up the night," said the engineer. "It's not our business," rejoined the mate, "and he probably deserves it. It wad be the first Liberian station the wily Krooboy has cleaned out. I am thinking most of the two French traders; I don't suppose they'll be molested, but we'll warn them anyway."

The long, reverberating boom of the steam-whistle rang out four times across the misty darkness, and then all was silent again. It is hard enough at any time to sleep

in the tropics during the stifling heat of the rains, and after what has happened none of the spectators cared to return to their berths again. They sat smoking instead upon the spar-deck, listening to the welter of water along the hands, each time the Dunlin rolled heavily down buried her rusty plates in a brimming swell. At last, shortly after dawn, the captain sprang to his feet. "They're burning the custom house, by George! Look there," he said, pointing to a broad sheet of red flame which roared aloft from the shadowy loom of the bluff, lighting up the fringe of foaming breakers, which hurled themselves upon the sand. "That officer is probably having a bad time now; the Krooboy have no particular reverence for the majesty of the Black republic," he added. "I wish it was daylight, so we could send a boat in for the sake of the Frenchmen; but she'd never get through the surf in the dark."

"I'll chance it, sir; we'll get through somehow," answered the mate. "They were very kind last time we called; and even if it were only on account of the black officer, we can't sit here and do nothing."

"Well," said the captain, "if you like to risk it, go. Mac is itching to go too. It's none of his business, but he's never happy unless he's putting something right."

A few minutes afterwards there was a clatter of blocks and a big surf boat splashed into the sea. Krooboy boats and white seamen slid down the falls; the mate shouted, "Shove off, before she's stove alongside," and the boat shot away from the wallowing steamer on the smooth back of a swell. Glancing over his shoulder, the mate saw a shadowy figure leaning out over the Dunlin's rail and heard the captain's voice: "Be careful. Look out for—"

and then the vessel rolled wildly down, and the words were drowned in a gurgling rush of water. "Paddle there, paddle," was the order, and the black boat-boys, balancing themselves on either gunwale, gripped a loop of fibre with their prehensile toes, as they swung the dripping paddles, and the big surf boat went fast inshore, now shooting aloft on the crest of a roller, now sinking deep in the gloomy trough. Ten minutes later they paddled slower, and the mate stood erect in the stern-sheets as the boat rose and fell sharply just outside the fringe of breakers. Gray dawn was coming across the heaving ocean, the red streak broadened and deepened along the eastern horizon, while beyond the parallel lines of roaring surf the feathery tufts of the palms rose dimly above the misty forest. The fire had died away, and only a few wreaths of dingy smoke were faintly visible against the bluff.

"You fit take us through surf, Frip-pan?" asked the mate; and the grizzled helmsman nodded silently as he took a firmer grip of the sculling oar. "Then in you go. Give her fits! Hya! Krooboy!" shouted the officer, and the engineer slowly and methodically buckled a cork life belt about his waist. "Cleanliness is gold," he observed; "but you's no the best place for a mornin' bath."

Then the headman raised his voice, the Krooboy's broke out into wild chant as they leaned over the bending paddles, and the foam boiled high on either bow as the boat leaped forward. Presently she swept aloft with a snowy smother spouting above the gunwale; then the paddles whirled together and she swooped wildly down into the black hollow beyond. Again she rose, and this time half a ton of yeast-water poured in over the stern, and the white men washed the spray from their eyes and gazed at the liquid walls rolling between them and the thundering beach.

"We're in for it now, and must face it out," said the mate hoarsely, and the engineer nodded with the light of battle in his eyes. Again the headman shouted, and a wild outburst of yelling and whistling followed. The paddles dipped together, and the boat was swept madly forward on the crest of a curling half hidden in the mass of curling foam, while the helmsman grasped out unheeded orders, and bent himself double over the sculling oar. For a moment or two the white men held their breath; then there was a silencing crash and a catarract of spray fell upon them; the boat's keel ground deep into the sand and the backwash roared against the bows. A dozen Krooboy leaped over the gunwale; officers and white men were carried beyond the reach of the ebbing water; and before the next breaker poured its mile-long ridge upon the sand the surf-boat was run up high and dry.

"Them Krooboy devils has all gone, sir," said the quartermaster, a few paces in advance, and the white men came out from the gloom of the dripping palm fronds. A faint voice cried, "Help!" and starting at the sound the new-comers turned their heads and saw a sight which at first moved them to pity, and afterwards to hearty laughter.

The black customs official, his gaudy uniform stained with mould and drenched with dew, was leaning limply against a palm stem to which he had been loosely bound, while the two black clerks, with terror-stricken faces, occupied a similar position near by. Some woolly haired savage, by way of a joke, had jammed a battered silk hat over his eyes, and tied a roll of landing permits about his neck. The officer made no pretence of importance now; he was in a state of hopeless collapse.

"Been having a bad time," said the mate, removing the hat; "but why don't you get out of those lashings?" "I am fast hand and foot. Call you to witness," gasped the wretched Liberian. "My rascally men deserted me,

but we made a heroic resistance—the clerk and I," said the engineer chuckling; "they draggit ye out from beneath a couch, mair likely." "You must enjoy being tied up, at any rate," added the mate, "for any child could wriggle that lashing slack. Get up on your feet."

The Liberian with pretended effort cast off the ropes, and desiring to stalk forward with the air of a wounded gladiator, fell miserably in the attempt.

"Every sign of a heroic resistance," said the mate; "rifles thrown away—as I thought, they were in too great a hurry even to pull the trigger; here's a cartridge in the breach." Then he laughed and pointed to a little machine gun which lay upside down among the trailing yams, and he noticed there was no fouling about the muzzle. "Sentries asleep, I suppose, and as usual the quarter-civilized black soldier boiled at first sight of the foe. The savage is always braver than the negro of the settlements he added.

The quartermaster now came up. "Them niggers has been holdin' a high class barbecue, sir," he said; and the mate laughed again as he approached the spot where a bon-fire had been made of the furniture and stationary. The remains of a sumptuous feast lay around. Empty bottles of Worcester sauce, tomato catsup, and Hamburg gin showed that the beverages had been curiously assorted. Scraps of pickled mess beef, with which somebody's unequalled pomade had evidently been used as a condiment, lay about among empty tins of metal polish and oil-ground rottenstone.

"The niggers ain't partickler as to mixin' their drinks," said a grinning seaman. "Jamaca rum and Worcester sauce for a likoor, an' ships' bread with rottenstone for desert."

The officers nodded a smiling approval; they knew that whatever comes out of a tin is considered edible by the Krooboy. Then the mate turning his eyes seawards, saw a puff of white steam rising from the Dunlin's funnel; it was now broad daylight, and the hot of the whistle warned him that the captain was growing impatient.

"Take me on to Sinou; you won't leave me here to be murdered," gasped the Liberian.

"No," said the mate; "if you like to chance landing on Sinou beach, we'll stop for you. There's ten minutes for you to find your men in;" and officer and clerks disappeared into the bush.

Then a young French lad from a neighboring factory entered the compartment. He had heard no noise in the night, but had just seen the smoke. The mate explained, and asked after his acquaintance the agent.

"Ah," said the lad, "the poor Chyrien he die—how you call him?—dentery, and Canot he go back ver' sick; but you dejeune wit' us?"

The mate refused courteously, and while they stood laughing together the representative of the Liberian republic entered, his dozen men following sheepishly behind him with neither scratch nor scar.

"The Krooboy he will not hurt us, bon voyage," said the young Frenchman raising his hat, and the big surf-boat went out on the backwash of a sea. Half swamped and battered she recrossed the breakers, and in due time shot alongside the Dunlin.

"They took us by surprise. We have drilled the soldiers on the Prussian system, and do not look for a foe that swims, climbs the veranda posts, and drops from the thatch without a noise," said the Liberian, when he related what had happened on board the steamer. "But we made a heroic resistance."

"Heroic fiddlesticks! Tell that to the Monrovians or the marines," answered Captain Orme. "This is not the first time the wily savage has been one too many for the republic."

Then the windlass panted and rattled, the cable came clanking home, and presently the Dunlin steamed out across the flashing swell, and so westwards until the palm-clad bluff and thundering beach faded away into the azure distance.—Harold Bindloss in Macmillan's Magazine.

Southern Express Stockholders Meet. Savannah, Ga., November 22.—The thirty-fifth annual meeting of the stockholders of the Southern Express Company was held in this city today. The directors were re-elected. The officers elected were H. B. Plant, president; M. J. O'Brien, vice president and general manager; M. F. Plant, vice president; George H. Tiley, secretary and treasurer; E. H. Leary, Chattanooga, Tenn., assistant general manager and F. G. DuBignon, Savannah, Ga., general counsel.

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Advertisement for COGELIN. Includes text: 'Nature's Nervine and Rapid Restorative. An unfailing cure for Diseases of the Digestive, Nervous and Generative Systems. A Tonic of rare efficacy for the old and young and of marked service for Students, Teachers, and all who are engaged in brain work or close occupations. CURES: Depression, Nervousness, Loss of Appetite, Restlessness, Nerve Weakness, General Discomfort, Excesses, Alcoholism, Tired Feelings, Muscular Weakness, Palpitation of Heart, Hysteria, and that almost innumerable series of diseases and complications resulting from any derangement of the Nervous system. Invaluable for weak women and nervous children.'

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Advertisement for CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS. Includes text: 'CURE SICK HEAD ACHE. Sick Headache and relieve all the troubles incident to a bilious state of the system, such as Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Distress after eating, Pain in the Side, &c. While their most remarkable success has been shown in curing Headache, yet CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS are equally valuable in Constipation, in curing and preventing this annoying complaint, while they also correct all disorders of the stomach, stimulate the liver and regulate the bowels. Even if they only cure! Ache they would be almost precious to those who suffer from this distressing complaint; but fortunately their goodness does not end here, and those who once try them will find these little pills valuable in so many ways that they will not be willing to do without them. But after all sick head-ache is the bane of so many lives that here is where we make our great boast. Our pills cure it while others do not. CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS are very small and very easy to take. One or two pills, three or four, are strictly vegetable and do not grip or purge, but by their gentle action cleanse all who use them. In vials of 50 cents, two for \$1. Sold everywhere, or sent by mail. CARTER MEDICINE CO., New York. Small Pill, Small Dose, Small Price.'