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A STRANGE TRAGEDY.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL.

It is proper I should state at once that the names I give in this extraordinary experience are fictitious. The date of the tale is easily within the memory of the middle aged.

The large, well known Australian liner White Star lay off the wool sheds in Sydney harbor slowly filling up with wool. I say slowly, for the oxen were languid up country, and the stuff came in as Fox is said to have written his history—"drop by drop." We were, however, advertised to sail in a fortnight from the day I open this story on, and there was no doubt of our getting away by then.

I, who was chief officer of the vessel, was pacing the poop under the awning, when I saw a lady and gentleman approaching the vessel. They spoke to the mate of a French bark which lay just ahead of us, and I concluded that their business was with that ship, till I saw the Frenchman, with a flourish of his hat, motion toward the White Star, whereupon they advanced and stepped on board.

I went on to the quarter deck to receive them. The gentleman had the air of a military man—short, erect as a royal mast, with plenty of whiskers and mustache, though he wore his chin cropped. His companion was a very fine young woman of about six and twenty years, above the average height, faultlessly shaped, so far as a rude seafaring eye is privileged to judge of such matters; her complexion was pale, inclined to sallow, but most delicate, of a transparency of flesh that showed the blood eloquent in her cheek, coming and going with every mood that possessed her. She wore a little fall of veil, but she raised it when her companion handed her over the side in order to look round and aloft at the fabric of spar and shroud towering on high, with its central bunting of house flag pulling in ripples of gold and blue from the royal mast head, and so I had a good sight of her face, and particularly of her eyes.

I never remember the like of such eyes in a woman. To describe them as neither large nor small, the pupils of the liquid dusk of the Indian's, the eyelashes long enough to cast a silken shadow of tenderness upon the whole expression of her face when the lids dropped—to say all this is to convey nothing, simply because their expression formed the wonder, strangeness and beauty of them, and there is no virtue in ink, at all events in my ink, to communicate it. I do not exaggerate when I assure you that the surprise of the beauty of her eyes, when they came to mine and rested upon me steadfast in their stare as a picture, was a sort of shock in its way, comparable in a physical sense to one's unexpected handling of something slightly electric. For the rest, her hair was very black and abundant and of that sort of deadness of hue which you find among the people of Asia. I cannot describe her dress. Enough if I say that she was in mourning, but with a large admixture of white, for those were the hot weeks in Sydney.

"Is the captain on board?" inquired the gentleman.

"He is not, sir."

"When do you expect him?"

"Every minute."

"May we stop here?"

"Certainly. Will you walk into the cuddy or on to the poop?"

"Oh, we'll keep in the open—we'll keep in the open," cried the gentleman, with the impetuosity of a man rendered irritable by the heat. "You'll have had enough of the cuddy, Miss Le Grand, long before you reach the old country."

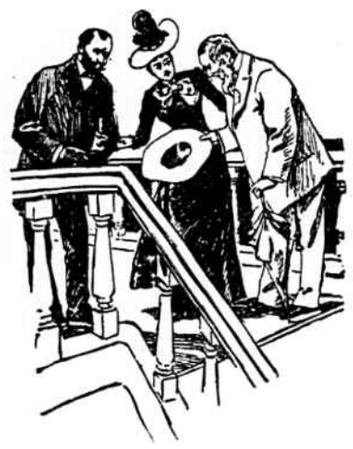
She smiled. I liked her face then. It was a fine, glad, good humored smile and humanized her wonderful eyes just as though you clothed a ghost in flesh, making the specter natural and commonplace

As we ascended the poop ladder the gentleman asked me who I was quite courteously, though his whole manner was marked by a quality of military abruptness. When he understood I was chief officer, he exclaimed:

"Then, Miss Le Grand, permit me to introduce Mr. Tyler to you. Miss Georgina Le Grand is going home in your ship. She will be alone. We have placed her in the care of the captain."

"Perhaps," said Miss Le Grand, with another of her fine smiles, "I ought to introduce you, Mr. Tyler, to my uncle, Colonel Atkinson."

Again I pulled off my cap, and the colonel laughed as he lifted his wide



"I ought to introduce you, Mr. Tyler, to my uncle, Colonel Atkinson."

straw hat. I guessed he laughed at a certain naivete in the girl's way of introducing us.

The colonel was disposed to chat. Out of England Englishmen are among the most talkative of the human race. Likely enough he wanted to interest me in Miss Le Grand because of my situation on board. A chief mate is a considerable figure. If any mishap incapacitates the master, the chief mate takes charge. We walked the poop, the three of us, in the violet shadow cast by the awning. The colonel constantly directed his eyes along the quay to observe if the captain was coming. During this stroll to and fro the white planks I got these particulars, partly from the direct assertions of the colonel, partly from the occasional remarks of the girl:

Colonel Atkinson had married her father's sister. Her father had been an officer in the army and had sailed from England with the then governor of New South Wales. After he had been in Sydney a few months he sent for his daughter, whom he had left behind him with a maternal aunt, her mother having died some years before. She reached Sydney to find her father dead. His excellency was very kind to her, and she found very many sympathetic friends, but her home was in England, and to it she was returning in the White Star under the care of the master, Captain Edward Griffiths, after a stay of nearly five months in Sydney with her uncle, Colonel Atkinson.

Half an hour passed before the captain arrived. When he stepped on board, I lifted my cap and left the poop, and the captain and the others went into the cuddy.

Our day of departure came round, and not a little rejoiced was I when the tug had fairly got hold of us and we were floating over the sheet calm surface of Sydney bay, past some of the loveliest bits of scenery the world has to offer, on our road to the mighty ocean beyond the grim portals of Sydney Heads. We were a fairly crowded ship, what with Jacks and passengers. The steerage and 'tween decks were full up with people going home. In the cuddy some of the cabins remained unlet. We mustered in all, I think, about 12 gentlemen and lady passengers, one of whom, needless to say, was Miss Georgina Le Grand.

I had been busy on the forecastle when she came aboard, but heard afterward from Robson, the second mate, that the governor's wife, with Colonel Atkinson and certain nobs out of government house, had driven down to the ship to say goodby to the girl. She was alone. I wondered she had not a maid, but I afterward heard from a bright little lady on board, a Mrs. Burney, one of the wickedest flirts that ever with a flash of dark glance drew a sigh from a man, that the woman Miss Le Grand had engaged to accompany her as maid to Europe had omitted to put in an appearance at the last moment, in perfect conformity with the manners and habits of the domestic servants of the Australian colonies of those days, and the young lady having no time to procure another maid had shipped alone.

At dinner on that first day of our departure, when the ship was at sea and I was stumping the deck in charge, I observed, in glancing through the skylight, that the captain had put Miss Le Grand upon the right of his chair, at the head of the table, a little before the fluted and emblazoned shaft of mizzenmast. I don't think above five sat down to dinner. A long heave of swell had sickened the hunger out of most of them. But it was a glorious evening, and the red sunshine, flashing fair upon the wide open skylights, dazzled out as brilliant and hospitable a picture of cabin equipment as the sight could wish.

I had a full view of Miss Le Grand, and occasionally paused to look at her, so standing as to be unobserved. Now that I saw her with her hat off I found something very peculiar and fascinating in her beauty. Her eyes seemed to fill her face, subduing every lineament to the full spiritual light and meaning in them, till her countenance looked sheer intellect, the very quality and spirit of mind itself. This effect, I think, was largely achieved by the uncommon hue of her skin. It accentuated color, casting a deeper dye into the blackness of her hair, sharpening the fires in her eyes, painting her lips with a more fiery tinge of carnation, through which, when she smiled, her white teeth shone like light itself.

I noticed even on this first day, during my cautious occasional peeps, that the captain was particularly attentive to the young lady, in which indeed I should have found nothing significant, for she had in a special degree been committed to his trust, but for the circumstances of his being a bachelor. Even then, early and fresh as the time was for thinking of such things, I guessed when I looked at the girl that the hardy mariner alongside of her would not keep his heart whole a week, if indeed, for the matter of that, he was not already head over ears.

He was a good looking man in his way; not everybody's type of manly beauty perhaps, but certain of admiration from those who relish a strong sea flavor and the color of many years and countless leagues of ocean in looks, speech and deportment. He was about 35, the heartiest laugher that ever strained a rib in merriment, a genial, kindly man, with a keen, seawardly blue eye, weather colored face, short whiskers and rising in his socks to near 6 feet. I believe he was of Welsh blood. This was my first voyage with him. The rigorous discipline of the quarter deck had held us apart, and all that I could have told of him I have here written.

For some time after we left Sydney nothing whatever noteworthy happened. One quiet evening I came on deck at 8 o'clock to take charge of the ship till midnight. We were still in the temperate parallels, the weather of a true Pacific sweetness, and by day the ocean a dark blue rolling breast of water, feathering on every round of swell in sea flashes, out of which would sparkle the flying fish to sail down the bright, mild wind for a space, then vanish in some brow of brine with the flight of a silver arrow.

This night the moon was dark, the weather somewhat thick, the stars pale over the trucks and hidden in the obscurity a little way down the dusky slope of firmament. Wind sails were wriggling fore and aft like huge white snakes, gaping for the tops and writhing out of the hatches. The flush of sunset was dying when I came on deck. I saw the captain slowly pacing the weather side of the poop with Miss Le Grand. He seemed earnest in his talk and gestures. Enough western light still lived to enable me to see faces, and I observed that Mrs. Burney, standing to leeward of a skylight talking with a gentleman, would glance at the couple with a satirical smile whenever they came abreast of her.

But soon the night came down in darkness upon the deep, the wind blew damp out of the dusk in a long moan over the rail, heeling the ship yet by a couple of degrees; the captain sang out for the fore and mizzen royals to be clewed up and furled and shortly afterward went below, first handing Miss Le Grand down the companion way.

I guessed the game was up with the worthy man. He had met his fate and taken to it with the meekness of a sheep. He might do worse, I thought, as I started on a solitary stroll, so far as looks are concerned, but what of her nature—her character? It was puzzling to think of what sort of spirit it was that looked out of her wonderful eyes, and she was not a kind of girl that a man would care to leave ashore. So much beauty full of a subtle endevilment of some sort, as it seemed to me, must needs demand the constant sentineling of a husband's presence. That was how it struck me.

By 11 o'clock all was hushed throughout the ship—lights out, the captain turned in, nothing stirring forward save the flitting shape of the lookout under the yawn of the pale square of fore course. It was blowing a pleasant breeze of wind, and, lost in thought, I leaned over the rail at the weather fore end of the poop, watching the cold sea glow shining in the dark water as the foam spat past, sheeting away astern in a furrow like moonlight. I will swear I did not doze. That I never was guilty of while on duty in all the years I was at sea, but I don't doubt that I was sunk deep in thought, insomuch that my reverie may have possessed a temporary power of abstraction as complete as slumber itself.

I was startled into violent wakefulness by a cannonade of canvas aloft and found the ship in the wind. I looked aft. The wheel was deserted—at least I believed so till on rushing to it, meanwhile shouting to the watch on deck, I spied the figure of the helmsman on his face, close beside the binnacle.

I thought he was dead. The watch to my shouts came tumbling to the braces, and in a few minutes the captain made

He lay on the deck.

his appearance. The ship was got to her course afresh, by which time the man who had been steering was so far recovered as to be able to sit on the grating abaft the wheel and relate what had happened.

He was a Dane and spoke with a strong foreign accent, beyond my art to reproduce. He said he had been looking away to leeward, believing he saw a light out upon the horizon, when on turning his head he beheld a ghost at his side.

"A what?" said the captain.

"A ghost, sir, so help me"— and here the little Dane indulged in some very violent language, all designed to convince us that he spoke the truth.

"What was it like?" asked the captain.

"It was dressed in white and stood looking at me. I tried to run and could not, but fell and maybe fainted."

"The durned idiot slept," said the captain to me, "and dreamt and dropped on his nut."

"Had I dropped on my nut, should not have woke up then?" cried the Dane in a passion of candor.

"Go forward and turn in," said the captain. "The doctor shall see you and report to me."

When the man was gone, the captain asked me if I had seen anything likely to produce the impression of a ghost on an ignorant, credulous man's mind? I answered no, wondering that he should ask such a question.

"How long was the man in a fit, d'ye think?" said he, "that is, before you found out that the wheel was deserted?"

"Three or four minutes."

He looked into the binnacle, took a turn about the decks, and without saying anything more about the ghost went below.

The doctor next day reported that the Dane was perfectly well and of sound mind, and that he stuck with many imprecations to his story. He described the ghost as a figure in white that looked at him with sparkling eyes and yet blindly. He was unable to describe the features. Fright no doubt stood in the way of perception. He could not imagine where the thing had come from. He was, as he had said, gazing at what looked like a spark or star to leeward when, turning his head, he found the shape close beside him.

The captain and the doctor talked the thing over in my presence, and we decided to consider it a delusion on the part of the Dane, a phantom of his imagination, mainly because the man swooned after he saw the thing, letting go the wheel so that the ship came up into the wind, and it was impossible to conceive that a substantial object could have vanished in the time that elapsed between the man falling down and the flap of sails which had called my attention to the abandoned helm.

However, nothing was said about the matter aft. The sailors adopted the doctor's opinion, some viewing the thing as a "Dutchman's" dodge to get a "night in."

CONCLUSION NEXT WEDNESDAY.

Miscellaneous Reading.

DOWNTRODDEN ARMENIA.

Some Interesting Facts About an Interesting People.

Written for the Yorkville Enquirer.

This country upon which for months past the world, shuddering and astounded at the spectacle, has kept its eyes fixed—Armenia, of such unhappy and fatal prominence in our day, has little about it to suggest the grace and sweetness of "Eden's dawning day." And yet it is in this elevated tableland of Western Asia, among whose mountains rise the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, that the Bible narrative places Eden—the home and abode of our first parents. And it was on Mount Ararat, the great central mountain peak of Armenia, that we are told the ark rested, when the waters began to abate after 150 days. And it was on the slopes of this mountain in the centre of Armenia that Noah offered to God in joy and gratitude for his preservation a burnt offering, and received from God the token of the bow in the heavens—a promise and covenant that the "waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." And it was here, too, that to Noah the promise was made: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." This promise is being fulfiled today in Armenia; it is a rich and fertile country. And yet the oppression and devastation wrought by the hand of the Turk has made it necessary to appeal to the world to aid in keeping this ancient people from perishing of hunger.

As a Christian people the Armenians first come into notice about 302 A. D., when Gregory the "Illuminator," a member of the reigning family was converted to Christianity, and aided largely the introduction of the religion of Christ into the country. From that time to the present the Armenians have maintained themselves as an independent and national branch of the catholic, or universal church. they have never bowed the knee to the pope of Rome, and they have been free from the anomalies and eccentricities of our divided Western Christianity. They have kept the faith pure and free from Roman and Protestant corruptions and additions. They are catholic Christians then, and neither Roman nor Protestant.

The Turkish rule began in the Fourteenth century, and it began with appalling cruelties and bloodshed. For centuries there has been no Armenia nation, and Armenians like Jews have gone in considerable numbers wherever trade and commerce have invited them. Today two and half millions of them live under the rule of the Ottoman empire. They are subjects, but not citizens, of the Turkish empire. But one avenue is open to them by which they can secure citizenship—conversion to Mohammedanism. They are thus without civil or political rights; their testimony in the court of justice is not admitted against that of a Mohammedan, and they have no redress for the constant robbery and spoiling to which they subjected.

In the year 1875 Abdul Hamid II was called to the sultanate, and his is the one mind and will that has instigated, and openly accomplished, the massacres of the past two years. When Abdul came to the throne he found himself absolute ruler of forty millions of souls, and wielding a sceptre over more than one million square miles of the earth's surface. He is a man of great industry, astuteness, and in certain ways, of great ability. He toils at his desk in giving personal supervision to affairs of state and administration about eighteen hours a day. When he ascended the throne Turkish finances were in so bad a way that loans could be negotiated only at 12 per cent. today the sultan floats his bonds at 5 per cent. To a ruler such as this, the presence in his dominions of more than two million people of different religious and race sympathies from the vast majority of his subjects must be an unwelcome sight; and perhaps a cause of apprehensions of danger to the empire. Besides as Christians, it would be a laudable undertaking to convert the Armenians to the Mohammedan faith.

We are told of Abdul that, "Ambitious even in piety, he is not content to emulate the modesty of his califf predecessors and be known simply as the 'Servant of the servants of God;' but gradually has made inordinately presumptious claims in spiritual, as he has in temporal, domains. For instance, the titles. 'Shadow of God,' 'Refuge of the world,' 'Slayer of men,' and 'Father of all the sovereigns of the earth,' were unknown to former sultans and find no support in the Koran." And so the sultan will strengthen the empire, and add lustre to his record as a pious Mohammedan by converting the Armenians. The death of thousands is a matter of small moment in the accomplishment of such an end as this. He is covetous of the title "Slayer of men." He has won the epithet, if 50,000 Armenians slain at his behest during two months, would entitle any man to such an appellation. And yet, as sultans go, Abdul is not a monster. He has accomplished considerable good results for his own people. Schools for the study of special subjects have been established; 2,000 elementary schools accommodating 100,000 pupils he has founded. He has encouraged the education of women by providing numerous girls' schools in the cities and towns of the empire. He is the first Turkish monarch who ever allowed a Christian woman to sit at his table; and it is said that it is easier to gain an audience with him than with any other European ruler.

The massacres were begun on a large scale in October of the year 1894; they continued with intermissions of a few weeks between each outbreak to the end of November, 1895. During the latter half of this period a fleet of warships, mainly British, has been off the Turkish coast, part of the time off Beirut, Syria, and latterly just outside the Dardanelles. Yet the discords of the powers have kept the fleet at its anchors. The massacres have ceased; but no guarantee against their occurrence once more has been made.

ROBERT A. LEE.

EARLY MINING DAYS.

Advantage of Big Fingers In a Bartender.

Gathered in and around Butte are men who have mined in almost every country under the sun. It was a Butte Inter Mountain reporter's luck recently to run against one who talked in an interesting way. He was a large, rather fine-looking man, apparently about 70 years old, and a man who had watched with close interest the progress of mining on the Pacific coast since th historic days of '49.

"Yes, I was out it Californy in the old days," he replied to a question, and then added, with a pleasant smile, "I was thar from '49 to '89, and took all the courses, from pan to little giant, and from handmade black powder cartridges to dinnymite.

"When gold was discovered by Marshall in that tail race Sutter was digging for his sawmill at Coloma, not a man in that country knew a thing about mining. Never heard how they knew it was gold, hey? Well, there has been a great many stories told about it, but here is the right one. It was a little nugget Marshall picked up, worth three or four dollars. Each one of the gang looked at it, bit it, tasted it, rubbed it, smelled it, but none of them had a clear idea what it was. Several thought that it might be gold, but none was sure of it. A happy thought struck Marshall. Mrs. Weber boarded the hands. She was making soft soap from pine ashes lye. Marshall proposed the lady should boil the nugget in lye a day or two, and if it didn't change color nor lose its substance in the test, it was sure enough gold. Well, it stood the test. The world knows the rest.

"Among the first on the ground was a lot of greasers, a cross between Mexicans and a lower class of humans. The greaser brought his willow-made pan and knife as his mining tools. He cut and scraped among crevices of rocks at the water's edge for 'chispas,' or, as we call them, 'nuggets,' An enterprising white man made a 'rocker.' That was a great improvement over the willow pan and knife. In the fall of '49, picks, shovels, iron pans, and sheet iron for rocker screens had been shipped in from the outside. Rockers sold for three ounces, shovels half an ounce apiece, picks the same, pans for a quarter of an ounce, gum boots an ounce a pair, and whisky a pinch a drink. That was the price in mining camps. A pinch was what a barkeeper could take between his forefinger and thumb. They had big fingers and thumbs in those days, and a barkeeper's salary was measured by their size. Wages was an ounce a day.

"The 'Georgia bumper' displaced the rocker. It was something like a rocker, but much larger, and had several 'rifles' to catch the gold. The ends of the rockers bump against blocks of wood to jar the gravel in the screen and between the rifles. A bumper cost $200, a wheelbarrow two ounces, and a China pump $25. That made a bumper mining outfit. The bumper didn't last long, for the 'Long Tom' soon took its place. That was a stationary affair with a long screen in which the 'pay dirt' was thrown. Water was conducted on the screen, the 'wash' falling through the perforations while one of the hands forked out the rocks or small stones.

"A sluice or two were added to the Tom. These, as well as the Tom, were supplied with rifles, which generally caught about all the dust. Long Tom were first used in Nevada City in 1850. Improvements in modes of placer mining rapidly followed. Sets of sluices without the Toms were used; then ground sluicing came next, and hydraulic mining, where water and fall could be obtained, displaced the rocker, bumper and Tom. Hydraulic mining is an old thing now."

"How about underground mining?," inquired the reporter.

"Goldbearing quartz was first discovered by some miners in the bed of Deer Creek, below Nevada City, in the summer of 1850. It was found in a narrow vein, but the discovery led to the opening up of the magnificent goldbearing quartz mines of Grass Valley, in Nevada county. All the equipments of the mines were at first crude, but the mines were rich and paid well. Black powder was used in blasting where blasting was necessary. Some years after nitro-glycerine was introduced in the State, but an explosion of the stuff in a San Francisco express office knocked it out, and giant powder came into use. You know the rest."

LONGLIVED DESCENDANTS OF CONSUMPTIVES.—A writer in the Philadelphia Press from Mount Holly, Pa., says: Probably the most remarkable case of longevity in this county is to be found in the Wilkinson family, the majority of the members being residents of Mount Holly. The ages of the eight persons now living are Mrs. Martha Groom, 91 years; Priscilla Wilkinson, 88; years Margaret F. Lamb, 84 years; Ann Curtis, 83 years; Mrs. Ruth R. Barton, 82 years; Lavinia Wilkinson, 79 years; William E. Wilkinson 79 years; Abel Wilkinson, 79 years; their aggregate ages being 662, an average of 82 years. They are all well, active, possess the best of health, sound minds, memory, and understanding.

"There are many remarkable circumstances connected with the lives of these people, particularly the fact that both father and mother died at an early age, both parents being the victims of consumption. Abel Wilkinson, a Welsham, died in 1828, at the age of 48, and his wife Deborah, a German, died in 1832, at the age of 52. Not one of the children has had the slightest trace or sympton of that dread disease."

DR. MARY WALKER'S IDEA.—Dr. Mary Walker, who 40 years ago preached the gospel of dress reform to the women of this country, and who was arrested in many cities for dressing and appearing in puclic in male attire, is the apostle of a scheme for the bloomer girls.

Through Lawyer Henry C. Benedict, of Oswego, N. Y., Dr. Mary has bought a farm containing 135 acres of land seven miles west of that city and proposes to form a colony in which man shall have no part. Only females who will bind themselves to a life of celibacy while members of the community and to wear bloomers for life are to be eligible.

They will work the farm in all its details, plant and harvest the crops, dispose of them in market and take care of the stock. She has drawn up an elaborate plan as to the manner of conducting the farm.—Chicago Times-Herald.

☞ One of the queerest and yet more important inventions for which a patent has been recently issued was that of Emil Reyer, a resident of South Bend, Ind., for a poison bottle indicator." The "indicator" consists of a metallic crown or cap which bristles with sharp, needlelike points. The affairs is placed over the neck of a bottle containing a poisonous matter or fluid, like the tinfoil cap of a champagne bottle. In case a person should grasp this crowned poison bottle by mistake or in the dark, he or she whould soon discover their mistake, as the tiny points projecting from this bottlehead would enter the flesh of the fingers.

HIS COMPOSITION.—Teacher—Have you finished your composition on what little boys should not do in school?

Little Johnnie—Yes'm.

Teacher—Read it.

Little Johnny (reading)—Little boys when at school should not make faces at the teacher and should not study too hard, 'cause it makes them nearsighted, and should not sit too long in one position, 'cause it makes their backs crooked, and should not do long examples in 'rithmetic, 'cause it uses up their pencils too fast.

EFFECT OF LIGHT ON METAL.—A curious fact has been noted by the fine steel workers at Sheffield, England. It is this: Fine edged tools assume a blue color and lose all temper if exposed for any considerable length of time to the light of the sun, either in summer or winter. A similar effect is exercised by moonlight, a large crosscut saw with which the experimenters were working having been "put out of shape and its temper ruined by a single night's exposure to a first-quarter moon."

☞ Yeast for bread-making was first manufactured in 1634. It is computed that over 2,000,000 pounds enter into the daily bread of the people of this country, while treble this amount is used in Europe.