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## Miscellaneous.

REBECCA THE DRUMMER.

A TRUE STORY OF THE WAR OF 1812.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning when the ship first appeared. At once there was the greatest excitement in the village. It was a British war-ship. What would she do? Would she tack about in the bay to pick up stray counters as prizes, or would she land soldiers to burn the town? In either case there would be trouble enough. Those were sad days, those old war times of 1812. The sight of a British war-ship in Boston bay was not pleasant. We were poor then, and had no monitors to go out and sink the enemy or drive him off. Our navy was small, and, though we afterwards had the victory, and sent the troublesome ships away, never to return, at that time they often came near enough, and the good people in the little village of Scituate Harbor were in great distress over the strange ship that had appeared at the mouth of the harbor.

It was a fishing place in those days, and the harbor was full of snags and boats of all kinds. The soldiers could easily enter the harbor and burn everything and no one could prevent them. There were men enough to make a good fight; but they were poorly armed, and had nothing but fowling pieces and shot-guns, while the soldiers had muskets and cannons.

The tide was down during the morning, so there was no danger for a few hours; and all the people went out on the cliffs and beaches to watch the ship and to see what would happen next.

On the end of the low, sandy spit that made one side of the harbor, stood the little white tower known as Scituate Light. In the house behind the light lived the keeper's family, consisting of himself, wife, and several boys and girls. At the time the ship appeared the keeper was away, and there was no one at home save Mrs. Bates, the eldest daughter, Rebecca, about fourteen years old, two of the little boys, and a little girl named Sarah Windsor, who was visiting Rebecca.

Rebecca was the first to discover the ship, while she was up in the light-house tower polishing the reflector. She at once descended the steep stairs and sent off the boys to the village to give the alarm.

For an hour or two the ship tacked and made for the shore. Men, women and children watched her with anxious interest. Then the tide turned and began to flow into the harbor. The boats aground on the flats floated, and those in the deep waters swung around at the moorings. Now the soldiers would probably land. If the people meant to save anything it was time to be stirring. Boats were hastily put out from the wharves, and such clothing, jewels and other valuables as could be hurried were brought ashore and loaded into carts, and carried away.

It was of no use to resist. The soldiers, well armed, and the people, made a stand among the houses, that would not prevent the enemy from destroying the shipping.

As the tide swept out over the sandy flats, it filled the harbor so that, instead of a small channel, it became a wide and beautiful bay. The day was fine, and there was a gentle breeze ruffling the water and making it sparkle in the sun. What a splendid day for fishing or sailing! Not much use to think of

either while the war-ship crossed and recrossed before the harbor mouth.

About two o'clock the tide reached high water mark, and, to the dismay of the people, the ship let go her anchor, swung her yards round, and lay quiet about half a mile from the first cliff. They were going to land to burn the town. With their spy-glasses the people could see the boats lowered to take soldiers ashore.

At once there was confusion and uproar. Every house in the village was put into some kind of alarm, and the women and children were hurried off to the woods behind the town. The men would stay and offer as brave resistance as possible. Their guns were light and poor, but they could use the old fish houses as a fort, and perhaps make a brave fight of it. If worse came to worse, they could at least retreat and take to the shelter of the woods.

It was a splendid sight. Five large boats manned by sailors, and filled with soldiers in gay red coats. How their guns glittered in the sun! The boats all moved together in regular order, and the officers in their fine uniforms stood up to direct the expedition. It was a courageous company came with a war-ship and cannon to fight helpless fishermen.

So Rebecca Bates and Sarah Windsor thought, as they sat up in the light-house tower looking down on the procession of boats as it went past the point and entered the harbor.

"Oh! if I only were a man," cried Rebecca.

"What could you do? See what a lot of them and look at their guns!"

"I don't care. I'd fight. I'd use father's old shot-gun—anything. Think of uncle's new boat and the sloops!"

"Yes, and all the boats."

"It's too bad, isn't it?"

"Yes; and to think we must sit here and see it all, and not lift a finger to help."

"Do you think there will be a fight?"

"I don't know; uncle and father are in the village, and they will do all they can."

"See how still it is in town; there's not a man to be seen!"

"Oh, they are hiding, all the soldiers got nearer. Then we'll hear the shots and the drum."

"The drum! How can they? It's here. Father brought it home to mend it last night."

country. They burst into the kitchen like a whirlwind, with rosy cheeks and flying hair. Mrs. Bates sat sorrowfully gazing out of the window at the scene of destruction going on in the harbor, and praying for her country, and that the dreadful war might soon be over. She could not help. Son and husband were shouldering their poor old guns in the town, and there was nothing to do but to watch and wait and pray.

Not so the two girls. They meant to do something, and, in a fever of excitement, they got the drum and took the cracked life from the bureau drawer. Mrs. Bates, intent on the scene outside, did not heed them, and they slipped out by the back door, unnoticed.

They must be careful, or the soldiers would see them. They went round back of the house to the north and towards the outside beach, and then turned and plowed through the deep sand just above high water mark. They must keep out of sight of the boats, and of the ship also. Luckily, she was anchored to the south of the light; and as the beach curved to the west, they soon left her out of sight. Then they took to the water side, and, with the drum between them, ran as fast as they could towards the mainland. Presently they reached the low heap of sand that showed where the spit joined the fields and woods.

Panting and excited, they tightened up the drum and tried the fife softly.

"You take the fife, Sarah, and I'll drum."

"All right; but we mustn't stand still. We must march along the shore towards the light."

"Won't they see us?"

"No; we'll walk next the water on the outside beach."

"Oh, yes; they'll think it's soldiers going down to the Point to head 'em off."

"Just so. Come begin! One, two—one, two!"

Drum! drum! drum! drum!!!

Squeak! squeak! squeak!!!

"Forward—march!"

"Ha! ha!"

The fife stopped.

"Don't laugh. You'll spoil everything, and I can't pucker my lips."

Drum! drum! drum!!!

Squeak! squeak! squeak!!!

The men in the town heard it and were amazed beyond measure. Had the soldiers arrived from Boston? What did it mean? Who are coming?

Louder and louder on the breeze came the roll of a sturdy drum and the sound of a brave fife. The soldiers in the boats heard the noise and paused in their work of destruction. The officers ordered every body into the boats in the greatest haste. The people were rising. They were coming down the Point with cannons to head them off! They would all be captured, and perhaps hung by the dreadful Americans!

Home the drum rolled. The fife changed its tune. It played "Yankee Doodle"—that horrid tune! Hark! The men were cheering in the town; there were thousands of them in the woods and along the shore, to defend themselves.

ors pulled! No fancy rowing now, but desperate haste to get out of the place and escape to the ship.

How the people yelled and cheered on the shore! Fifty men or more jumped into boats to prepare for the chase. Ringing shots began to crack over the water.

Louder and louder rolled the terrible drum. Sharp and clear rang out the cruel fife.

Nearly exhausted, half-dead with fatigue, the girls toiled on, fearless, laughing, ready to drop on the wet sand, and still beating and blowing with fiery courage.

The boats swept swiftly out to the harbor on the outgoing tide. The fishermen came up with the burning boats. Part stopped to put out the fires, and the rest pursued the flying enemy with such shots as they could get at them. In the midst of it all, the sun went down.

The red-coats did not return a shot. They expected every minute to see a thousand men upon them at short range from the beach, and they reserved their powder.

Out of the harbor they went in confusion and dismay. The ship weighed anchor and ran out her big guns, but did not fire a single shot. Darkness fell down on the scene just as the boats reached the ship. Then she sent a round shot towards the light. It fell short and threw up a great fountain of white water high into the air.

The girls saw it, and dropping their drum and fife, sat down on the beach and laughed till they cried.

That night the ship sailed away. The great American army of two had arrived, and she thought it was wise to retreat in time!

Rebecca is still living, old and feeble in body but brave in spirit and strong in patriotism. She told this story herself to the writer, and it is true.—St. Nicholas.

### Too Curious.

The Persian Ambassador, Mirza Aboul Hassan, while he resided in Paris, was an object of so much curiosity that he could not go out without being surrounded by a multitude of gazers, and the ladies even ventured so far as to penetrate his hotel. On returning one day from a ride, he found his apartments crowded with ladies, all elegantly dressed, but not all equally beautiful. Astonished at this unexpected assemblage, he inquired what these European odalisques could possibly want with him. The interpreter replied that they had come to look at His Excellency. The Ambassador surprised to find himself an object of curiosity among a people who boast of having attained the acme of civilization; and was not a little offended at conduct which, in Asia, would have been considered an unwarrantable breach of good breeding. He accordingly revenged himself by the following "little scheme."

The illustrious foreigner affected to be charmed with the ladies. He looked at them attentively, alternately pointing at them with his finger, and speaking with great earnestness to his interpreter, who he was well aware would be questioned by his fair visitors, and whom he, therefore, instructed in the part he was to act.

Accordingly, the eldest of the ladies, who, in spite of her age, probably thought herself the prettiest of the whole party, and whose

curiosity was particularly excited, after his excellency had passed through the suite of rooms, coolly inquired what had been the object of his examination.

"Madame," replied the interpreter, "I dare not inform you."

"But I wish particularly to know, sir."

"Indeed, madam, it is impossible."

"Nay, sir; this reserve is vexatious. I desire to know."

"Oh, since you desire, madam, know, then, that his excellency has been valuing you."

"Valuing us! How, sir?"

"Yes, ladies; his excellency, after the custom of his country, has been setting a price upon each of you."

"Well, that's whimsical enough! And how much may this lady be worth, according to his estimation?"

"A thousand crowns."

"And the other?"

"Five hundred crowns."

"And that young lady with fair hair?"

"Three hundred crowns."

"And that brunette?"

"The same price."

"And that lady who is painted?"

"Fifty crowns."

"And pray, sir, what may I be worth in the tariff of his excellency's good graces?"

"Oh, madam, you really must excuse me, I beg."

"Come, come; no concealments!"

"The prince merely said, as he passed you—"

"Well, what did he say?"

"He said, madam, that he did not know the small coin of this country."

Sharp Sayings from the China News.

The following clippings are from the China News, a San Francisco paper:

The meanness of Henry Ward Beecher, the Christian priest in port, suading Mrs. Tilton that she was acting religiously, should be a warning to all good men not to forsake the teachings of Confucius, for those of men who adopt religion merely to get money and other things by it.

How beautiful is virtue, and how rare! An American may walk off with a whole poultry yard, but a Chinaman may not look over the fence.

There is a good temperance paper published in San Francisco. It is called the Post. It is subscribed for by Good Templars and Dashings aways.

An American actress in order to be very popular must be able to play the banjo.

A San Jose paper says that the grandfather of Tiburcio Vasquez, owned under a grant from the King of Spain "all the country composing the present site of San Jose." The place has fallen into bad hands now. We wish the grandfather of Vasquez was alive, and owned the property.

What a heartless world, this would be if there was no tears in it.