



WON BY A SIREN.

The Romantic Tale of an American Professor's Downfall.

Led by the Wiles of an Aleutian Island Maiden to Forsake His Wife and Country—A Touching Story of Life in the North.

Maj. S. R. Nettleton, who was two years United States special treasury agent at the Pribylov islands, or Seal islands as they are sometimes called, was a close observer of the customs of the Aleutians, and relates many interesting anecdotes of his sojourn there, says the St. Louis Republic.

"In the far away Pribylov islands there is a little convent devoted to a nameless religion," said Maj. Nettleton. "It has only one occupant, whom the natives call Kchatka, the Aleutian nun. She worships no invisible divinity and has no theoretical doctrines, but she teaches her people that if they live honestly and relieve the sick and unfortunate they will be rewarded.

"Years ago, when the islands were the property of Russia, a Russian trader came to the islands to exchange his merchandise for seal skins and the fur of the silver gray fox. He fell in love with an Aleutian maiden, the belle of the island, and in the due course of time they were married. The trader and his dusky wife made many voyages between the island and Russian ports, but one day they were brought from their ship to one of the Alaska Commercial company's huts, both very ill with a terrible fever. With them were two little twin girls, whose exuberant health and spirits were a sad contrast to the condition of their parents. The next day their mother died. Her husband was at the point of death, but when his dying wife was brought to his bedside and asked him to give their children to her parents he feebly assented. When the funeral of his wife was taking place he too died, and the two little orphans were removed to the home of their grandmother.

"Their lives were uneventful until they reached the age of sixteen. Neither had been to school, and they knew nothing of the outside world, except what they remembered of the fairy tales told to amuse their childhood fancies. About this time the United States purchased Alaska and sent a young professor from one of the leading eastern universities to the island on a scientific expedition. The trip was an arduous one, and he left his young wife at home with her relatives. Securing the data and statistics for which he was sent in a few days, time hung heavily on his hands, and the young savant undertook the task of instructing the beautiful but illiterate sisters. Kchatka was an apt pupil, quaffing eagerly from the Pierian spring, but her sister, although quite as bright, seemed to be much more interested in her tutor than she was in her grammar or arithmetic. The attraction was mutual, and when a ship came on which the young professor might have returned home he wrote to his wife that he was unexpectedly detained and could not come home for another three months. The arrivals of ships at the islands were few and far between, and the next mail brought a letter imploring him to return home, as his wife was at the point of death. It so happened that one of the Alaska Commercial company's schooners was to sail for San Francisco the following day. The young professor resolutely went on board, bribing the boatmen to refuse to bring his Aleutian sweetheart to the schooner should she ask them to do so.

"The schooner lay fully a mile from the shore, and the sailors were already in the tall masts spreading the canvas preparatory to departure, when one of them caught sight of a woman swimming in the water. She came on board and implored the young man to abandon his idea of returning home, or to stay at least until the next ship. Her knowledge of English was limited, but as she knelt before him on the deck of the ship, her dark eyes pleading more eloquently than words, he decided to forsake his invalid wife and spend his days with his Aleutian love.

"He returned to the island and endeavored to forget the woman whom he had promised to love and cherish, who, lying at the dark portals of death, was longing for a parting kiss or a last embrace before she died. The mail which next reached the islands informed him that his wife was dead; that she died with his name on her lips, and that her last intelligible utterance was a hope that he would meet her in the better land.

"He read the letter and fell to the floor unconscious. Fully two months of faithful nursing saved him from dying of brain fever. When he was well enough to return home he married his Aleutian sweetheart, Kchatka, her sister, refused to leave the islands. During the epidemic of smallpox, which nearly depopulated the islands a few years ago, she was one of the very few who did not take the disease, although she was constantly at the bedside of the sufferers. The simple natives say that the Great Spirit refused to spoil her beauty, that she might shine as an angel of light among them and teach the road to the Aleutian heaven, where seals are plenty and it is never cold."

"The total number of new enterprises organized in the south during the last quarter of 1893 was 436, while for the first three months of this year the total was 692, an increase of 256. This number is larger than during any quarter of 1893 except the first, which showed considerable activity prior to the general depression that came on last spring.—Manufacturers' Record.

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WORK WITH FOOT AND HAND. East Indian Artisans Generally Able to Make Use of the Prehensile Toe.

The traveler who walks in the native quarters of the cities of India can easily study there all industries in their beginnings, as they were probably practiced in Europe in the middle ages. The shops are usually open and the workmen can be seen inside; textile industries, pottery, shoe making, joinery, armoring, jewelry, confectioners—all can be observed in a single street, like Chitpore street, Calcutta. If we take pains to examine attentively the methods of working, we shall be struck by the enormous function played by the lower limb. Whatever the industry, the Indian, squatting or sitting on the ground, works with his feet as well as with his hands, and it might be said, adds a writer in the Revue Scientifique, that all four of his limbs are in constant exercise. The joiner, for example, has no assistant to hold his plank, but makes his great toe serve that purpose. The shoemaker does not employ a fixed clamp for the shoe on which he is sewing, but holds it in his feet, which change position to suit his convenience, while his nimble hands do the sewing. The metal worker holds the joint of his shears on his feet in cutting copper.

In the making of wooden combs I have seen the comb held straight up by the feet, while the workman marked the teeth with one hand and with the other directed the instrument to cut them. The wood turner directs the hand-rest with his great toes; so, generally, do Egyptian and Arabian turners. In smoothing twine or sewing a bridle the Indians hold the article between the first and second toes. When the butcher cuts his meat into small pieces he holds the knife between the first and second toes, takes the meat in both hands and pulls it across the knife. I have seen a child climb a tree and hold a branch between his toes. The great toe is capable of considerable lateral movements from the second toe, so that the Indian can easily pick up articles from the ground with his foot and even exert some force sideways.

THE TEMPLE OF DAAL.

Description of the ruins of what was once a magnificent building. There rises a high, rectangular wall, high, inclosing a square court, of which the side is seven hundred and forty feet long, says a writer in Blackwood's Magazine. Part of the wall, having fallen into ruins, has been rebuilt from the ancient materials, but the whole of the north side, with its beautiful pilasters, remains perfect. As the visitors enter the court they stand still in astonishment at the extraordinary sight which meets their eyes, for here, crowded within those four high walls, is the native village of Tadnor. It was natural enough for the Arabs to build their mud huts within these ready-made fortifications, but the impression produced by such a village in such a place is indescribably strange. The temple, so to speak, is eaten out at the core, and little but the shell remains. But here and there a fluted Corinthian column or group of columns, with entablature still perfect, rises in stately grace far over the wretched huts, the rich, creamy color of the limestone and the beautiful moldings of the capitals contrasting with the clear blue of the cloudless sky. The best view of the whole is to be obtained from the roof of the naos, which, once beautiful and adorned with sculpture, is now all battered and defaced, and has been metamorphosed into a squalid little mosque. To describe the view from that roof were indeed a hopeless task. High into the clear blue air and the golden sunshine rise the stately columns; crowded, and jumbled, and heaped together below, untouched by the gladdening sunbeams, unfreshened by the pure, free air, lies all the squalor and wretchedness of an Arab mud-hut village.

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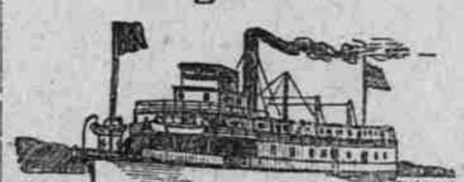
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