

THE PILLAR of LIGHT

By Louis Tracy, Author of "The Wings of the Morning" Copyright, 1904, by Edward J. Clode

AN ASSISTANT keeper, wearing a cork jacket, with a rope about his waist, was clinging to a stumpy mast in the center. Two stout guide ropes were manipulated from the deck of the vessel, and the flat, unwieldy mass of timber was slowly drifting nearer to the lighthouse with the tide.

The door of the column opened toward the east, so the wind, with its pelting sheets of spray, was almost in the opposite quarter, and the stout granite shaft itself afforded some degree of protection for the entrance.

The scheme signaled from the steamer was a good one. None but a lunatic would endeavor to approach the rock itself, but there was a chance that the raft might be made to drift near enough to the door to permit a grapple to be thrown across the rope held by the gallant volunteer on the raft.

It was his duty to attach the two ropes and thus render it possible for a stronger line to be drawn from the vessel to the pillar. There was no other way. The lighthouse did not possess a rope of sufficient length to be drawn back by the raft without the intervention of some human agency.

This was precisely the puny, half-despairing dodge that the reef loved to play with. Catlike, it permitted the queer, flat-bottomed craft to approach almost within hail. Then it shot forth a claw of furious surf, the heavy raft was picked up as if it were a floating feather, turned clean over and flung many fathoms out to sea, while both of its guiding cables were snapped with contemptuous ease.

The assistant keeper, kept afloat by his jacket, was hauled, half-drowned, back through the choking froth, while the wave which overwhelmed the raft curled up a spiteful tongue and almost succeeded in dragging out several of the men stationed in the doorway.

With a clang the iron shutter was rushed into its place, and when the sailor was rescued the Trinity boat steamed away to try to secure the raft.

So joyous hope gave way once more to dark foreboding, and the only comfort was the faint one to be extracted from the parting signal:

"Will try again next tide."

CHAPTER XIII.

DISCIPLINE slackened its bonds that night. For one thing, Mr. Emmett fell ill. Although injured to hardship in the elemental strife, being of the stocky mariner race which holds the gulf Atlantic in no dread, he had never before been called on to eat sodden bread, to drink condensed steam flavored with vanilla and to chew sustenance from the rind of raw bacon. These drawbacks, added to the lack of exercise and the constant wearing of clothes not yet dry, placed him on the sick list.

Again there were ominous whispers of unfair division in the matter of food. It was not within the realm of accomplishment that the purser, Constance, Enid and others who helped to apportion the eatables could treat all alike. Some fared better than others in quality if not in quantity. The unfortunate ones growled and talked of favoritism.

A crisis was reached when the second officer mustered the night watch. When one sheep leads the others will follow. A stout German from Chicago asked bluntly:

"Vere's de goot of blayin' at mound-in' gart? Dere is bud von ting to gart, und dat is der hidchen."

Community of interest caused many to huddle closer to him. Here was one who dared to say what they all thought. Their feet shuffled in support. The officer, faithful to his trust, was tempted to fell the man, but he thought the circumstances warranted more gentle methods.

"Why are you dissatisfied?" he sternly demanded. "What do you suspect? Are you fool enough to imagine that you are being cheated by people who are dividing their last crust with you?"

"How do ve know dat? Dose girls—dey are chokin' mit Mr. Pyne all der day. Dey can't do dat und be hungry like us."

"You unmitigated ass!" said the disgusted officer. "There is food here for three people. They have fed eighty-one of us for two days and will keep us going several more days. Can't you figure it out? Isn't it a miracle? Here! Who's for guard and who not? Let us quit fooling!"

And the doubters were silenced for the hour.

The hymn singer endeavored to raise a chorus. He was not greeted with enthusiasm, but a few traitor spirits came to his assistance. A couple of hymns were feebly rendered—and again silence.

"Say when," observed Pyne calmly when he entered the service room to find Brand trimming the spare lamp.

"Not tonight," said Brand.

"Why not? Hell may break loose at any moment downstairs." I heard something of a dispute when the watch mustered at 8 o'clock.

"Things are worse now. One of the men found a gallon of methylated spirit in the workshop."

"Good heavens! Did he drink any of it?"

"He and his mate have emptied the tin. Right are hebbles drunk the

others quarrelsome. The next thing will be a combined rush for the storeroom."

"But why did not the second officer tell me?"

"He thought you had troubles enough. If he could depend on the remainder of the crowd he would rope the sinners. Says he knows a slave knot that will make 'em tired."

Brand's eyes glistened.

"The fools," he said, "and just as the weather is mending too."

"You don't mean that?"

"Listen."

He glanced up at the glass dome. Heavy drops were pattering on it. They looked like spray, but Pyne shouted gleefully:

"Is it rain?"

"Yes. I was just going to summon the watch to help in filling every vessel. By spreading canvas sheets we can gather a large supply if it rains hard. Moreover, it will beat the sea down. Man alive, this may mean salvation! The those weaklings and summon every sober man to help."

With a whoop, Pyne vanished. He met Constance on the stairs, coming to see her father before she stretched her weary limbs on the hard floor of the kitchen.

She never knew exactly what took place. It might have been politeness, but it felt uncommonly like a squeeze, and Pyne's face was extraordinarily close to hers as he cried:

"It's raining. No more canvas whiskey. Get a hustle on with every empty vessel!"

He need not have been in such a whirl, however.

When the shower came it did not last very long, and there were many difficulties in the way of garnering the thrice blessed water. In the first place, the lighthouse was expressly designed to shoot off all such external supplies; in the second, the total quantity obtained did not amount to more than half a gallon.

But it did a great deal of good in other ways. It brightened many faces, it caused the drunkards to be securely trussed like plucked fowls and dumped along the walls of the entrance passage, and it gave Brand some degree of hope that the rescue operations of the next day would be more successful.

When the rain cleared off the moon flickered in a cloudy sky. This was a further omen of better fortune. Perhaps the jingling rhyme of Admiral Fitzroy's barometer was about to be justified:

Long foretold,
Long last;
Short notice,
Soon past.

And the hurricane had given but slight warning of its advent.

"I feel it in my bones that we shall all be as frisky as lambs tomorrow," said Pyne when he rejoined Brand after the scurry caused by the rain had passed.

"We must not be too sanguine. There is a chance now. I won't deny that, but the sea is treacherous."

"This reef licks creation. At Bar Harbor, in Maine, where a mighty big sea can kick up in a very few hours, I have seen it go down again like magic under a change of wind."

"That is quite reasonable. Any ordinary commotion has room to spread itself in the tideway. Here the tide is broken up into ocean rivers, streams with boundaries as definite as the Thames. The main body sweeps up into the bottle neck of the channel. Another tributary comes round the north of the Scilly isles and runs into the tidal stream again exactly at this point. The result often is that, while little pleasure boats can safely run out into the bay from Penzance, there is a race over the rock that would break up a stranded battleship."

"Say, do you like this kind of life?"

"I have given my best years to it."

Pyne was smoking a pipe, one which Brand lent him. The tobacco was a capital substitute for food, especially as he had established a private understanding with Elsie and Mamie that they were to waylay him when possible and nibble a piece of biscuit he carried in his pocket.

This arrangement was to be kept a strict secret from all, especially from Miss Constance and Miss Enid, while the little ones themselves did not know that the she dragons whom Pyne feared so greatly gave them surreptitious doses from the last tin of condensed milk, retained for their exclusive benefit.

"Do you mind my saying that you are a good bit of an enigma?" he hazarded between puffs.

"It may be so, but I like the service."

"Just so. I was never so happy as when I took a trip as fourth engineer on a tramp in the gulf of Florida. But that didn't signify being tied to a long nosed oiler for the remainder of my days."

"Are you a marine engineer?" inquired Brand, with some show of interest.

"I hold a certificate just for fun. I had a mechanical twist in me and gave it play. But I am an idler by profession."

The lighthouse keeper laughed so naturally that the younger man was gratified. Polite disbelief may be a

complement.

"An idler, eh? You do not strike me as properly classed."

"It's the fact, nevertheless. My grandfather was pleased to invest a few dollars in real estate on the sheep farm where Manhattan avenue now stands. My uncle has half; my mother had the other half."

"Are both of your parents dead?"

"Yes; years ago; lost at sea, too, on my father's yacht."

"What a terrible thing!"

"It must have been something like that. I was only six years old at the time. My uncle lost his wife and child, too, when the Esmeralda went down. It nearly killed him. I never thought he would marry again, but I suppose he's tired of being alone."

"Probably. By the way, now that you mention it, Mrs. Vansittart wished to see me yesterday. I could not spare a moment, so I sent her a civil message. She told Constance that she thought she knew me."

"Hardly likely," smiled Pyne, "if you have passed nearly the whole of your life in lighthouses."

"I did not quite mean to convey that impression. I knew a man of her late husband's name, many years ago."

"She is a nice woman in some ways," said Pyne reflectively. "Not quite my sort, perhaps, but a lady all the time. She is not an American. Came to the States about '90, I think, and lost her hubby on a ranch in California. Anyhow, the old man is dead stuck on her, and they ought to hit it off well together. The Vansittart you knew didn't happen to marry a relative of yours?"

"No. He was a mere acquaintance."

"Odd thing," ruminated Pyne. "It has just occurred to me that she resembles your daughter—your elder daughter—not so much in face as in style. Same sort of graceful figure, only a trifle smaller."

"Such coincidences often happen in the human family. For instance, you are not wholly unlike Enid."

"Hully gee," said Pyne, "I'm too run down to stand flaterry!"

"Likeness is often a matter of environment. Characteristics, mannerisms, the subtle distinctions of class and social rank, soak in through the skin quite as sensibly as they are conferred by heredity. Take the plowman's son and rear him in a royal palace, turn the infant prince into a peasant, and who shall say when they reach man's estate, 'This is the true king.' You will remember it was said of the Emperor Augustus, *Urben lateritium invenit, maremque reliquit* (He found the city brick; he left it marble). The same noble result may be obtained in every healthy child properly educated."

The college bred youth had not entered into any general conversation with Brand before. He had the tact now to conceal his astonishment at the manner of his friend's speech.

"You fling heredity to the winds, then?" he asked.

Brand rose to his feet, as was his way when deeply moved.

"Thank God, yes!" he cried.

A faint hoot came to them through the chortling of the wind.

"One of our visitors," shouted Brand, "and here we are gossiping as though snugly seated in armchairs at the fireside."

He hurried to the gallery, putting on an oilskin coat.

"We must win through, and I guess I'll play ball with my father-in-law," quoth Pyne to himself as he followed.

This time it was the Falcon alone, and she signaled with a lamp that it was deemed best to defer active operations until the following afternoon. The tide at dawn would not suit.

She went off, and the two men returned to the grateful shelter of the service room.

Brand forbade further talk. Pyne must rest now and relieve him at 3 o'clock. The youngster needed no feather bed; he was asleep in amazingly quick time. There is a supperless hunger which keeps people awake at night with a full larder in the house. The crude article differs from the cultured one so greatly that the man who hungers of necessity cannot sleep too much.

Thus far the inhabitants of the lighthouse had been given quite enough nutriment to maintain life. There was no reason why any, even the most delicate, should be in real danger during the next forty-eight hours. But scientific reasoning and the animal instincts of mankind clash at times; in that lay the danger whose sullen shadow was deepening the lines in the corners of Brand's eyes.

Every hour the officer on duty and some men of the watch visited him to report that all was well below. Some of the less drunken mutineers were pitifully sober now; the others were maudlin. Beyond the few words exchanged on this and kindred topics he was left alone with his thoughts throughout the silent watch. Pyne slept heavily. Glancing at times at the youngster's stalwart figure and firm, handsome face, Brand found himself reviewing the buried years. He thought of the days when he, too, looked forth on the world with the stern enthusiasm of triumphant youth.

Long forgotten ghosts were resurrected, shattered ideals built up again. He wondered, if the decades rolled back, would he decide a second time to abandon the fine career which lay at his feet and withdraw his grief and his talents to the seclusion of lonely rocks and silent headlands.

He had been happy, as men count happiness, during the decades. No cloud had arisen to mar the complete content of his life. The blossoming of the girls into delightful womanhood was an increasing joy to him; and it was pitifully strange that his little household should be plunged into a whirlpool of events in the very hour when their domesticity seemed to be most assured. The changed moods of the elements found no counterpart in his nature. He, knowing the sea, did not

expect it to remain fixed in one aspect. Whether in calm or storm, the contrary would surely happen ere many days had passed. But life was a different thing. How came it that at the very close of so many years of association with the fickle ocean she should play such a trick on him and his daughters, unfold them with perils, snatch them from the quiet pleasures of the life they had planned for the future and thrust upon them, even if they escaped with their lives, a publicity which he, at any rate, abhorred and even dreaded?

He harbored no delusions on this point. He knew that the drama of the Gulf Rock was now filling the columns of newspapers all over the world. He and his beloved girls would be written about, discussed, described in fulsome language, pictured by black and white artists and eulogized by wideawake editors eager to make much of a topic dear to the public mind.

On the rock they were undoubtedly in grave danger. Death confronted them—death, at once extraordinary and ghastly. No tyrant of the middle ages, with all his paraphernalia for wringing truth or lies out of cringing wretches, had devised such a fate as threatened if the inconstant sea should choose to render the reef altogether unapproachable for many days. Yet if help came he and those dear to him were already steeped in unavoidable notoriety, bringing in its train certain vague disabilities which he had striven to avoid for over twenty years.

And all this because one fierce gale out of the many he had endured sprang into being at a moment when his mates were incapacitated and his daughters happened to pay him a surprise visit.

"It is an insane freak of fortune," he muttered, "so incomprehensible, so utterly out of focus with common events, that if I were a superstitious man I should regard it as betokening the approach of some great epoch in my life. Surely, a merciful Providence would not bring my girls here to subject them to the lingering torture of hunger and thirst. I must not think of it further. That way lies madness."

There was at least one other troubled soul on the rock which divined some sinister portent in the storm. Mrs. Vansittart, even at this moment, was staring into the black void with questioning eyes.

He resolutely threw back his head as if he would hurl into the outer darkness the gibbering phantom which whispered these words of foreboding. Although the lamp needed no attention just then, he climbed to the trimming stage merely to find relief in mechanical action. He carefully examined the adjustment, and, to judge how the weather was shaping, went out into the gallery to look at the distant lights.

The three quick flashes of the Seven Stones lightship were very clear. That was a good sign. The wind came from that quarter, and, blustering though it was, driving gigantic waves before it into the loud embrace of the reef, it maintained the good promise of the last few hours.

Seeking the comparative shelter of the east side, he gazed steadily at the Lizard. Its two fixed electric beams, nearly in line with the Gulf Rock, were dull and watery. A local squall of rain was sweeping down from the land. Changeable, threatening, unsettled—the meteorologist might apply any of these terms to the prevalent conditions.

Far out in the channel he saw the twinkling masthead lights of several steamers. Blow high or low, masts must travel and vessels put to sea. On such a night at other times he would re-enter the lighthouse with a cheery sense of its comfort and homelike aspect. Now he dreaded the brilliant interior of the service room. Its garish aspect ill accorded with the patient misery, the useless repinings, the febrile stupor which crouched beneath. If he and those committed to his charge were to be saved either the sea must be stilled or another miracle of the loaves and fishes enacted.

There, alone on the gallery, amid the din of howling wind and ceaseless plaint of the waves, he seemed to be

apart, cut off from the sufferings within. He lifted his eyes to the somber arch of the heavens. Men said the age of miracles had passed. Pray God it might not be so!

When Brand went out the sudden rush of cold air through the little door leading to the balcony aroused Pyne. That young gentleman was rudely awakened from a seriously vivid dream. He fancied that Constance and he were clinging to the tail of an enormous kite, which had been made to hover over the rock by a green imp seated in an absurdly small boat. They were solemnly advised by other gnomes, imps, with sparkling, toothy

eyes, to intrust themselves to this precarious means of escape, but the instant they dropped off the ledge of the gallery their weight caused the kite to swoop downward. The resultant plunge into the ocean and Constance's farewell shriek were nothing more terrifying than the chill blast and whistle of the air current admitted by Brand, but Pyne did not want to go to sleep again. He did not like emerald hued spirits which arranged such unpleasant escapades.

(Continued)

Has Arrived.

There is a new member on the staff of the experiment station at OAC, concerning whom the Forest Grove Times has the following to say:

"Prof. C. E. Bradley, who has been a member of the faculty of P. U. for the past five years, has received and accepted a call to the State Agricultural College at Corvallis. He will be connected with the experiment station and will have no teaching to do. The recent session of congress passed what is known as the Adams act appropriating a sum of money to be apportioned to the different states supporting agricultural schools to provide for original scientific research work. Only men of established reputations in that kind of work are eligible to the positions and as Prof. Bradley had been giving much attention to those lines and had done much work of that character, in looking over the state for a suitable man for the position the authorities selected him. It is not only a high honor to be so chosen but it also puts him in a position to give his entire attention to a work that is most congenial to him and in which he has already accomplished good results. Although he regretted to leave P. U. and Forest Grove at this time, yet he felt that this was an opportunity he could not refuse in justice to himself, and so he has accepted and is moving there this week as his duties begin at once.

The people of this community will very much regret to lose Prof. Bradley and his estimable family, though they are pleased to know that the Professor's ability as a scientific investigator are recognized by the leading educators of the country.

Corvallisites There.

The quarterly meeting of the Central Willamette Medical Association was held at the Alco Club Thursday evening with a large attendance and an interesting evening's program was enjoyed. During the evening Dr. W. T. Williamson, of Portland, who was present, presented an interesting paper on "The Differential Diagnosis of Cerebral from Spinal Diseases," an able and practical presentation of the subject that was later freely and exhaustively discussed by the medi-

cal gentlemen in attendance. Dr. G. R. F. of Corvallis presented an interesting paper on "Differential Diagnosis of Cerebral from Spinal Diseases," which also brought out a most interesting discussion.

A clinical case was presented by some of the Albany physicians and discussed at length when the company adjourned to the Imperial restaurant where an excellent banquet was enjoyed.

The next meeting of the Association will be held on the evening of the first Thursday in December, at Corvallis. Those in attendance at last night's meeting and banquet were:

Dr. W. T. Williamson, Dr. E. A. Pierce, and Dr. Coffey, of Portland; Dr. G. R. F., Dr. B. A. Cathey and Dr. P. not, of Corvallis; Dr. J. C. Booth and Dr. Drucks, a medical student, of Lebanon; Dr. Bennett, of Bluffton; Dr. A. G. Prill, of Scio; Dr. J. P. Wallace, Dr. W. H. Davis, Dr. H. M. Ellis, Dr. W. A. Trimble, Dr. J. L. Hill, Dr. A. Stark and Dr. Russell Wallace, of Albany.—Albany Herald.

A PRFTTY WEDDING.

At Dallas Sunday—Whiteside-Guthrie.

At the bride's home near Dallas, at high noon, Sunday, Clarence J. Whiteside and Miss May Guthrie were united in marriage by Rev. Wigmore of Eugene.

As Miss Christie Burkhead played the wedding march, the young couple entered the parlor where fifty guests waited to witness the ceremony. Following congratulations a delicious wedding breakfast was served.

The bride was lovely in a costume of cream voile, and carried a shower bouquet of bride roses and asparagus fern. The bride's bouquet was caught by Miss Edna Burkhead.

The decorations in the rooms were very effective, consisting of Oregon grape, ivy, roses and dahlias, and transforming the apartments into a place of fragrance and beauty.

The bride is a popular and esteemed young lady of Polk county, while the groom is one of Corvallis' best young men respected by all.

Mr. and Mrs. Whiteside drove to Corvallis Sunday evening, where a neatly furnished cottage awaited them, and where they are now at home to their many friends.

She Found Relief.

If you are troubled with liver complaint and have not received help read this. Mrs. Mary E. Hammond, Moody, Texas. "I was in poor health—with liver trouble—for over a year. Doctors did me no good and I tried Herbine, and three bottles cured me. I can't say too much for Herbine, as it is a wonderful liver medicine. I always have it in the house. Publish where you wish." Sold by Graham & Wortham.

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