

HUNGER AND CANNIBALISM.

The Desire to Eat a Fellow-Man Stronger at Sea Than on Land.

Then it comes to pass, when the moment of keenest agony is reached, that the starving man begins to eye his companion with the wolf glare of a beast of prey. His pangs become paroxysmal. During the greatest intensity there springs up within him a fierce impulse to slay his neighbor that he may feed on his flesh and alkali his thirst with his blood. This terrible prompting to cannibalism, it may be noted, is, however, rare, save in cases of famine from shipwreck.

Although it is customary to regard it as a common feature of starvation and to make thrilling statements of the frequency with which even civilized people will, under the goad of hunger, kill and eat their children, and although startling assertions to this effect have been made by historians of great ages, yet it ought to be said that, as a general rule, well-authenticated cases of cannibalism among civilized people will be found to occur only at sea. They are very rarely found on land. And what is more curious still, whenever famished shipwrecked men set foot on shore, no matter how desolate and barren may

be their rock of refuge, they seem as if by magic at once to banish from their minds the very idea of anthropophagy, or man-eating, and that, too, though they might have been resignedly contemplating it as a desperate necessity a few hours before.

In the case of English Private, of the Eighty-fourth regiment, and his companions, who were wrecked on the barren island of Cape Breton in 1780, the difference of famine on shore and on sea is curiously exemplified. Private records that they were able to endure the most fearful pangs of hunger without ever so much as a thought of resorting to cannibalism for relief, so long, however, and only so long as they kept on land. But when they took to sea, and it was not only necessary for them to eat their own excrement, but also to eat the flesh of their dead companions, they experienced this—in order to escape from their rock-bound prison, though they were not a whit worse off than when they were on land, yet they would they put to sea with one of their dead companions, and they would eat of his flesh. On the other hand, when they found their attempt to escape futile and put back to sea, whenever they landed, the horrible idea of cannibalism seemed to vanish.—Science for All.

CLARENCE.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

There was something more than the habitual respect of their superior in their faces as he came forward. For it was the general who had commanded the brigade the day before—the man who had led them into the forward rank of military leaders. It was his terrible spirit that had led the advance, held back defeat against overwhelming numbers, sustained the rally, impressed his subordinate officers with his own undeviating purpose, and inspired among them an almost superstitious belief in his destiny of success. It was this man who had done what was deemed impossible to do—what even at this time it was thought unwise and unstrategic to do—who had led a weak position, of apparently no importance, under the order of his superior—which at first only asked for a sacrifice and was rewarded with a victory. He had decimated his brigade, but the wounded and dying had cheered him as he passed, and the survivors, impressed among them until the bugle called them back. For such a record he looked still too young and even effeminate, albeit his handsome face was dark and serious and his manner taciturn.

Clarence had already caught sight of the rifle body of the officer and contracted. As the captain of the detail saluted him he said curtly:

"I thought the orders were to fire upon anyone deserting the dead."

"They are, general, but the hyenas don't give us a chance. That's all you poor fellow saved from their claws," replied the officer as he held up the sealed packet. "It has no address."

The general took it, examined the envelope, thrust it into his belt and said:

"I will take charge of it. The sound of horses' hoofs came from the rocky roadside beyond the ditch. Both men turned. A number of field officers were approaching.

"The division staff," said the captain, in a lower voice, falling back.

They came toward him, a central figure on a gray horse leading here, as in history. A short, thick-set man with a grizzled beard closely cropped around an inscrutable mouth, and the serious formality of a respectable country deacon in his aspect, which even the simple stars on his shoulder failed to loosen, he had in his hand a paper which he had just discovered. He had heard from her only once, and then through the agency of a messenger who had been in California property, and believed that she had gone to her relations in Alabama, where she had identified herself with the southern cause even to the sacrifice of her private fortune. He had heard her name mentioned in the southern press as a fascinating society leader, and even consulted of southern politicians—but he had no reason to believe that she had taken so active or so desperate a part in the struggle. He tried to think that his unbusinessy interest in the woman was a passing fancy, and that the treacherous part she had played in the California conspiracy—although he had long since acquitted her of the betrayal of another trust. But there was a fatal similarity in the two cases. There was no doubt that the traitor, Wainwright was a traitor in the camp—that he had succumbed to the miserable sophistry of his class in regard to his superior allegiance to his native state. But was there the inducement of another emotion—or was the photograph of the woman, which she had carried with her, the real cause of his betrayal? He had long since acquitted her of the betrayal of another trust. But there was a fatal similarity in the two cases. There was no doubt that the traitor, Wainwright was a traitor in the camp—that he had succumbed to the miserable sophistry of his class in regard to his superior allegiance to his native state. But was there the inducement of another emotion—or was the photograph of the woman, which she had carried with her, the real cause of his betrayal?

Wanted to see the fight, I reckon. He was a dashing fellow, a West Pointer—and a southerner, too—a Virginian."

"A Virginian!" echoed Brant quickly.

"Search him again," said Brant quickly. He had recovered his usual coolness, and as the captain again examined the body, he took out his tablets and wrote a few lines. It was an order to search the quarters of Lieut. Wainwright, and bring all papers, letters and documents to him. He then beckoned one of the detail toward him. "Take that to the provost marshal at once. Well, captain," he added calmly, as the officer again approached him, "what do you think of this?"

"Only this, sir," returned the captain, with a half smile, producing a small photograph. "I suppose it was overlooked, too." He handed it to Brant.

There was a sudden fixing of his commanding officer's eyes, but his face did not otherwise betray his emotion. "It is the same man," he said. "But this time rather a handsome woman." "Very," said Clarence Brant, quietly. It was the portrait of his own wife!

CHAPTER II.

So complete was his control of voice and manner that as he galloped back to his quarters no one would have dreamed that Gen. Brant had just looked upon the likeness of the wife from whom he had parted in anger four years ago. Still less would they have suspected the singular fear that came upon him that in some vague way she had just discovered. He had heard from her only once, and then through the agency of a messenger who had been in California property, and believed that she had gone to her relations in Alabama, where she had identified herself with the southern cause even to the sacrifice of her private fortune. He had heard her name mentioned in the southern press as a fascinating society leader, and even consulted of southern politicians—but he had no reason to believe that she had taken so active or so desperate a part in the struggle. He tried to think that his unbusinessy interest in the woman was a passing fancy, and that the treacherous part she had played in the California conspiracy—although he had long since acquitted her of the betrayal of another trust. But there was a fatal similarity in the two cases. There was no doubt that the traitor, Wainwright was a traitor in the camp—that he had succumbed to the miserable sophistry of his class in regard to his superior allegiance to his native state. But was there the inducement of another emotion—or was the photograph of the woman, which she had carried with her, the real cause of his betrayal?

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When Desperate of Humour.

There appear to be whole races of men—the North American Indians and the Cingalese Veddas, for example—that are destitute of the sense of the ludicrous. And in the higher races, says the Fortnightly Review, this sense is by no means universally found. The richest intellects possess it in amplest measure. The absence of it is a sure indication of mental poverty.

"Here comes a fool, let's be grave," said Charles Lamb upon one occasion. And I remember a friend of my own observing of a somewhat taciturn person whom we had met: "He must be a man of sense, for although he said little, he laughed in the right place." That laugh is a manifestation of intellectual abundance or exuberance: it is something over and above the actual work of life. And so we may adapt our present purpose some words of Schiller's in his Letters on Aesthetic Education: "Man sports (speaks) only when he is in the mood of the fall significance of the word, and then only in a complete man (granz Mensch) when he sports."

I need hardly observe how grossly this faculty of the ludicrous may be abused. There is nothing more diabolical than to turn into ridicule "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." There is no more detestable occupation than that of "sapping solemnity with solemn sneer." But it is a maxim of jurisprudence, "Abusus non tollit usum." And this holds universally.

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"I used to be a strong believer in physiognomy," said R. C. Kidley to a Washington Star writer, "but have lost some of my faith in it as a science."

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I need hardly observe how grossly this faculty of the ludicrous may be abused. There is nothing more diabolical than to turn into ridicule "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." There is no more detestable occupation than that of "sapping solemnity with solemn sneer." But it is a maxim of jurisprudence, "Abusus non tollit usum." And this holds universally.

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