The Santiam News.

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The Trail of the Dead:

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE OF DR. ROBERT HARLAND

By B. FLETCHER ROBINSON and J. MALCOLM FRASER

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CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

I do not know how we lived through that first furious hour. Isaac Treherne made no second mistake, but crouched at the tiller, tricking the succession of great seas that swung upon us out of the throbbing blackness. Stung by passing hailstorms, drenched to the skin, and aching with cold, I toiled with a tin pannikin, baling, baling until my back creaked with stiffness and my hands could scarcely feel the handle. Graden and the sailor worked beside me, so that we managed to keep the water under. Now and again a slit in the rushing dark above us showed me Marnac lying by the steersman's side. Was he alive or dead? I did not know, nor did I stay my labor to make inquiry.

The daylight came at last, the God-given light for which all poor mariners must pray in their hours of danger. With it came a lessening of the wind and a falling sea. Yet there had been an angry menace in the brilliant colors that lit the eastern sky, and I stared eagerly over the muddy green of the hurrying surges. Indeed, I was the first to see a steamer's smudge of smoke on the western skyline.

"Her be making for we, gentlemen," remarked our steersman, after a long stare at the distant vessel. "Happen her would take 'e aboard, if you be so minded. The weather be blowing up again, and 'tis a long reach back to Folleven."

"I don't like deserting the ship, Isaac," said Graden; "though, to tell the truth, I don't relish another day in the chops of the Channel."

"Bain't no desertion, sir. Me and Jake can take her whoam; and, to tell 'e the truth, her'll ride the lighter for the want of him!"

He pointed to where Marnac sat crouching under an oilskin coat. Save for occasional shivers, the old man seemed to be no worse for his handshake with Death. He received the sailor's remark with a benevolent smile. "Doan't 'e go grinning at me, you wicked-minded old toad!" cried Isaac. "'Twas only through special mercies that Providence forgot you was on board. We'd ha' been sunk for zarten, else."

Within half an hour we could see the steamer clearly, an ancient tramp of the seas, bluff in the bows, square in the flank, with a coloring of soot and rusty iron. She answered our signals with a melancholy toot and stood towards us. Graden, who had been watching her approach at my side, turned and walked aft.

"I have already dropped your revolver overboard, Professor Marnac," he said; "but I must trouble you to hand me your pocket-book. Money, you know, is often the most valuable of weapons."

The professor obeyed with a gentle cluck of amusement.

"I trust, Sir Henry, that the notes are not damaged," he said in the low, musical tones with which I was so familiar. "Indeed, I was assured that the case was waterproof."

"Now, your loose gold, if you please."

"Here it is, Sir Henry, with my watch and chain. Observe that my pockets are now completely empty. Ah, Mr. Harland, forgive me if I did not notice you before. I fear that these nautical adventures will interrupt your course of studies. Did you hear whom the university have appointed in my stead? I should be sorry if my students, among whom I always held you to be the most studious, if not the most able, should be long without a lecturer—like sheep that have lost their shepherd, Mr. Harland."

I turned from him with a feeling of nausea. Mad or sane, he had done such deeds as placed him beyond the intercourse of humanity.

The steamer was close upon us now, and as she came rolling down the heave of the swell we were hailed from the bridge in a tongue that was strange to me. Before we could reply, a seaman had sprung to the bulwarks and sent the coils of a line spinning over us. This Isaac made fast, allowing a fair space to intervene between his little craft and the rusty metal fabric that towered above us.

"Good-bye, Isaac," said Graden, shaking the little Cornishman warmly by the hand. "I will see to your check the moment I get to London."

"Doan't 'e mention it, zur. I was right proud to take 'e. Nor do 'e trouble about we uns. Jake and I will be making Folleven by midnight at latest—please be."

CHAPTER XIX.

It was an anxious scramble—they had to swing out a chair for Marnac—but the trawler was as handy as a row-boat, and at last the three of us stood on the deck of the stranger. A more ill-assorted trio of bedraggled voyagers never ranged in line.

But if we were strange to look upon, so were the group of men who confronted us. They were of the degenerate Latin breed, dark, small, uncertain in temper, and dirty by nature and training. Their seafaring dress seemed as ill-suited to them as a sash and a colored cloak would be to a British shellback.

"Eengleshe?" asked one whom I took to be the mate. "Eengleshe? What say?"

"We are Englishmen who were driven out to sea by last night's storm. If I may see the captain, I will explain," said my cousin.

The man grinned his lack of comprehension. Plainly his vocabulary was of the smallest.

"These men are Portugese, Sir Henry," said Marnac, stepping quickly forward. "I know their tongue. Allow me to explain the situation."

But he got no further. My cousin's long arm shot out, gripping his collar firmly from behind. With a gentle heave, he swung the professor from his feet and dropped him behind us.

"Please to keep silence, Professor Marnac. Your explanations might be somewhat biased," said he, with a grim smile. And then turning to the sailors, who had been watching the little scene with evident surprise—

"Da none of you speak English?" he asked.

They seemed to understand the question, for some talk, eked out by much gesticulation, ended in one of their number trotting up the ladder to the bridge, where he disappeared into the wheelhouse. An instant later a long, red-headed man emerged and came running towards us.

"And shure wud Oi not have greeted yer honors before now," he exclaimed in the most strenuous of brogues; "but 'twas me trick at the wheel, and niver a wan of these spalpeens wud relieve me. An' what can Oi do fer ye now at all?"

"What boat is this?"

"The Portugalese ship, San Joseph, fr'm Buenos Ayres to Hamburg, wid a mixed cargo, and a very mixed crew, sorr. If it hadn't been fer a back answer whin the wine was in me, faith! it's not in this greasy flat-ir-ron that Tim Blake wud be after serving."

"Do you speak the language, my man?"

"Indade an' Oi do, soor; an' good raison, seeing that 'tis fower years come Christmas that Oi've been steward on th' yacht Iv wan Iv tha' Portugalese nobility."

"That's good news. And now where is the captain?"

"Faith! but 'twas a jool Iv a time we were after havin' in the Bay last night, sorr, an' the old man's turned in. The second mate has gone aft, gatherin' his courage in both hands fer to wake him. Indade, sorr, 'tis a r-resolution that wud put the fear iv the Lord into a better man than him."

"Rather a Tartar, eh?"

"A strong man, sorr, an' a good seaman fer a greaser, though his temper is most pro-digious. But see, here he comes, like a dook out iv a theater."

He was indeed a fine figure of a man, fully six feet in height and proportionately broad. His skin was very dark, and his eyes of the deep blackness that I have since observed in Indian races, but very soft and glowing. His hair, which he wore at a greater length than is customary amongst sailors, showed under his cap in glossy curls; and his mustache was twisted back almost to his ears.

He bowed to us with a deliberate courtesy, muttering a greeting in his own tongue. He spoke no English, and it was through the medium of Tim Blake that he offered us hospitality. It was no time for explanations, so, guarding Marnac between us, we hurried down to a large cabin where warm garments and steaming cups of hot coffee and sugar were brought by the worthy Irishman, to whose care we had been assigned. As far as could be judged, I had not contracted so much as a cold in the head, despite my long exposure. When we had completed our change of clothes, my cousin beckoned me outside the cabin, closing the door on our prisoner.

"I have asked Blake to take me to the captain, for it is right that he should know the true position of affairs," he whispered. "While I am gone, you must sit with Marnac. Remember, do not let him out of your sight for a moment."

"Very well," I said, and he strode off down the dark alley of the passageway.

When I re-entered the cabin I found Marnac muffled to the chin, under the blankets of a bunk. He gave me one of his quick, evil glances, that was unpleasantly reminiscent of an aged rat surprised in an iron gin. I had so great a horror and detestation of the man that his mere presence was a source of physical discomfort to me; and when, sitting up amongst his wraps, he commenced to pester me with questions, I could endure it no longer. I retired outside the cabin, seating myself with my back to the door. I was as well there, I argued, as in the interior, and in a position infinitely more satisfactory to myself.

The garments they had lent me were thick and warm; the dose of brandy had been considerable. I was weary from the toil of a sleepless night. Those are my excuses for the fact that in the course of the next five minutes I fell soundly asleep.

It was Graden who woke me, a very angry and exasperated Graden who shook my senses into with with unnecessary violence. I started up, protesting against his treatment.

"I thought better of you than this," he said, with his hand still fixed in my collar.

"My back was against the door. He could not pass without waking me. What does it matter?" I grumbled, with every sign of irritation.

"I told you to watch him, to stay inside the cabin, and I find you snoring here. No more excuses, please. You know the ability of the man. Let us hope he has not taken advantage of any chances you gave him."

He opened the door cautiously, peeped in, and then flung it wide with a great oath. The cabin was empty!

Yet there was no doubt as to his manner of escape. In the middle of the flooring there gaped a little hole, with a heavy square of wood lying beside it. On examination we found that this entrance had also been barred by a grating, which now swung downwards on its hinges, disclosing a wooden ladder, the foot of which was indistinguishable in the gloom below.

"He is in the hold!" I cried. "He is hiding somewhere amongst the cargo! We shall never find him without the help of the crew."

Amongst the excellent points in my cousin's character was that of perfect self-control. There was no anger in his voice to remind me of my blunder when he spoke again.

"It's not the hold, Cousin Robert," he said. "This is the ship's laxarette, where the food is stored. There are usually two entrances, each similar to this. If he has escaped by the second, it's a bad business. It will mean he has found a friend, for these gratings should be secured. But it may be that he is lurking amongst the pork and biscuits. If so, we ought to find him easily enough. I don't want to bring the crew into this affair if I can help it. It will be enough if the captain knows."

"That's the blackest part of the luck. The ship caught it pretty badly last night; they were right in the thick of it. I found the captain on deck superintending three or four sailors who were clearing away the wreckage of one of the boats. He was in an amazing temper, and Blake advised me that if I had a favor to ask him, I had best let him cool off a bit. So I dismissed the Irishman and climbed up to the bridge. I should think I'd been there about twenty minutes watching the work, when I saw a sharp-looking lad pop out from the companion and go over to where the captain was standing. They had a fine pow-wow together, looking up at me from time to time. It rather puzzled me, and presently I dropped down the stairs and walked over to where they were. The captain seemed decidedly chilly, and I soon saw by his manner that he was not wanting a talk just then. Whereupon I came below. So kindly light the lamp I see in the bracket yonder, Cousin Robert, and we'll go hunting again."

CHAPTER XX.

We descended the ladder, Graden going first, and I following with the lamp, the light of which I endeavored to throw over his shoulder.

It seems a cowardly thing to confess, writing as I am in the broad daylight, with the bees amongst the flower-beds singing their song through the open window, but though we were two to one, and our quarry an old man, my cousin had twice to rate me for the deliberation of my movements. We peered about amongst the lurking shadows, with the thunder of the seas hammering on the iron sides without. Now and again a heave of the ship would send us staggering apart, to bring up amongst unexpected barrels. Perhaps it was the want of sleep that had jangled my nerves, but I knew in my heart that if I were suddenly to catch a sight of those wicked eyes staring out from the gloom before us, I should shriek and run like a hysterical schoolgirl.

But Marnac was not there. The grate of the second stairway was closed and locked, and yet he had disappeared. Someone had helped him—that was plain enough. We stood disconsolate amongst the details of the ship's larder.

"Well, he's gone right enough," said my cousin. "Hallo! what the deuce is this?"

He took the light from my hand and stooped to examine something at his feet. It was a steel cylinder, about eight feet in length; a second lay beside it.

"Ammonia! So they run a cold storage on board."

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"My dear cousin, if you can't remember the part that ammonia plays in the manufacture of ice, I shall not attempt to——hallo! stop that—stop that, I say!"

He sprang forward, caught his foot in an empty sack, and fell heavily, extinguishing the lamp. As he did so, I saw an arm reach down and draw up the grating through which we had descended. A key clicked in the padlock. Graden was on his feet in an instant, and together we rushed to the foot of the ladder.

In the patch of grey daylight above us we could see the face of the captain looking through the bars, and peeping down beside him, with the sweetest dimple of an old man's smile upon his lips, was Professor Marnac!

There was a pause, filled with much whispered talk from above. Then the red head of our friend Tim Blake came thrusting into the picture. He seemed much distressed at the situation.

"Faith; but 'tis not Oi that knows fwhat to belaive," said he; "but the skepper here will have it that yer're a pair iv desprite and revolting characters. Oi am also to tell ye, gintlemen, that ye've the very mischief's own choice of ut. Eyther ye will let me r-run through yere pockets wid me practiced hand, upon which ye may come up an' make us acquainted wid yere ginseral defence, or, if ye refuse, be jabbers! but they'll clap on the hatches an' lave ye in the dark."

"Tell the skipper, Blake," said my cousin, "that he has been grossly deceived, for we are law-abiding English gentlemen. Nevertheless, if he will keep to his terms and hear our case out, we consent to being searched."

(To be continued.)

Prodigal's Reception.

The automobile rolled up to the tumbling shanty and a young man with diamonds sparkling over him rushed through the gate.

"Dad!" he cried, excitedly, "don't you recognize me? Why, this is Bill. Don't you remember that ten long years ago you sent me after a plug of tobacco and I ran away? Now I have returned and brought you gold and enough government bonds to build a castle."

The old man arose from the broken chair and frowned.

"Boy!"

"Yes, dad!"

"What's that plug of tobacco?"

Womanlike.

"What kind of a place is this?"

"Why, it is a woman's club."

"But there is a 'No Admittance Except on Business' sign on the door."

"That is for the members."

"What kind of business do they attend to?"

"Everybody's."

In the Beginning.

"Yours is certainly an unusual case," said the lawyer, "and it will be necessary to consult a number of books."

"So?" queried the client.

"Yes," answered the legal light, "and we will begin with your pocketbook."

Disappointed.

Jack—So Katherine decided to withdraw from the field of literature?

Helen—Yes, indeed. After she found out the much-talked-of "literary style" had nothing to do with gowns or hats she was disgusted.

All good thought and good action claim a natural alliance with good cheer.

OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

NEW LINES IN CLACKAMAS.

Capital Seeks Investment in Electric Railways.

Oregon City—Consequent upon an increase in population from 23,000 in the Spring of 1905, as shown by the assessor's census, to 30,000, which is considered a reliable estimate of the county's population at the present time, Clackamas county is experiencing a new era in its growth and development.

Several agencies are contributing to this material development of the county and its resources, foremost among which is the building of electric railway systems. Idle capital recognizes as a desirable investment the building of transportation lines into Clackamas county, where the various resources are still undeveloped and merely awaiting the encouragement that will follow direct communication with a market.

The interests back of the Oregon Water Power & Railway Company, which has already done a great deal in building up this county, are recognized in the proposed building of an electric line from Canemah to Salem, and this enterprise is assured, rights-of-way having been secured and surveys made over the entire route. The same interests, it has lately developed, caused the mysterious survey to be made between this city and Molalla and Wilhoit Springs some three months ago. This will be a branch line operated by the same company and will penetrate one of the richest sections of the valley. Assurance is given that this line will be built.

The survey is now being made for another proposed electric line between this city and Molalla, with the celebrated Wilhoit Springs as the ultimate terminus. This is being done by the Oregon City and Molalla Railway Company, a corporation in which Oregon City business men own a controlling interest. Its route is via Beaver Creek, through a rich timber and agricultural section, and the promoters of the enterprise promise to begin construction work within a few weeks.

Oregon City is becoming metropolitan. A free mail delivery service for the city has been ordered established December 1. An improved telephone system is being installed by the Pacific States Company, while the Home Telephone Company will begin installing its system soon, having completed the construction of its line to the Clackamas river, just north of this city.

The great increase in sales of realty is added evidence of the growth of the county. Large farms are being subdivided and disposed of in smaller tracts, with the result that a larger acreage is being placed under cultivation.

RAILROAD PETITION DENIED.

No Reduction of Assessment of Property in Linn County.

ALBANY—Before the Equalization Board of Linn County adjourned its sessions the Oregon & California Railroad Company appeared by its agent, George Scriber, and requested a reduction in the taxation value of the property from $19,000 per mile on the main line in the county and $11,000 per mile on the branch lines, to $10,400 and $5400, respectively. A reduction in the assessment on its timber land from $7 to $3 an acre was also asked. The company has 66,054 acres of the finest timber land in Linn County. After hearing the claims of the company, the board decided to let the assessment stand as fixed by the Assessor. The total assessment of the railroad company is $1,732,148, of which $1,269,700 is on its roadbed and rolling stock and $462,248 on timber land.

GIVEN BETTER FACILITIES.

Good River Now Ships Apples in Refrigerator Cars.

HOOD RIVER—Refrigerator cars were taken out over the Mt. Hood Railroad and for the first time apples are to be shipped direct over the new railroad. At several points along the road where there are large orchards the railroad company has built sidings so that growers can load almost direct from their orchards. This is proving a great help to fruit growers on the east side of the valley as the apple crop is so large that they are experiencing considerable trouble in getting their fruit hauled to the railroad.

Wallowa County's Big Fair.

ENTERPRISE — That Wallowa County is coming to the front in agricultural, fruit and stock was shown by the exhibitis at the County Fair at Lostine, which in every way was a revelation. The attendance was good and the exhibits excellent ,varied and represented every part of the county. Fine cattle of several breeds were on exhibition; also some very good sheep and hogs that probably have no superior in the state.

Chinook Becoming Scarce.

HOOD RIVER—Employes of the Government fish station on the Clackamas River, who have been taking salmon eggs at the mouth of the White Salmon River, have completed their work for this season and report that the number of eggs secured this year is the smallest since the work of endeavoring to preserve the salmon in the Columbia River was taken up. Altogether but 5,000,000 eggs were taken this year as against 16,000,000 last year. The work commenced on September 19 and was stopped about the middle of October.

FOR LONGER TERMS.

Superintendent Ackerman Favors Change in Present Law.

Salem—That the apportionment of public school funds should be made upon the basis of the number of teachers employed, and not upon the number of children in the district, is one of the most important recommendations in the biennial report of Superintendent of Public Instruction J. H. Ackerman, which was made public today. This very radical change in the plan of distribution is suggested as a means of enabling the sparsely settled district to employ as efficient a teacher and have as many months of school during the year as the larger and more favored district. This privilege, Superintendent Ackerman says, is one to which the smaller district is entitled. California has such a law.

Among other recommendations made in the report are: That the minimum length of the school year be increased from three to five months; that the levy for school purposes be increased from $6 to $8 per capita; that the inheritance taxes be turned into the irreducible school fund, and that a part or the whole of the corporation tax be turned into the common school fund to be expended each year for school purposes. In connection with the recommendation regarding the length of the school year, Superintendent Ackerman says there are too many districts satisfied to maintain school only the minimum number of months required by law.

"There is no reason why a child in a small, isolated district is not entitled to as many months of school as is the child in a more favorably situated district," said he. "Mere location should not be the test of the number of months' schooling to which a child is entitled." The suggestion that the rate of levy be increased is founded upon the need of more funds in order that longer terms of school may be maintained.

Big Timber Deal Is On.

GOLD HILL—The four thousand-acre timber tract, situated at the head of Foot's Creek, is now being cruised in the interests of Idaho and Ashland., Or., capitalists. The sale of this property would mean much to Gold Hill and vicinity, as it would involve a large expenditure of money in building of a logging road to connect with the S. P. Railroad at the mouth of Foot's Creek.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

WHEAT—Club, 64c; bluestem, 66c; Valley, 67c; red, 61c.

OATS—No. 1 white, $24.50@25.50; gray, $23.50@24.

BARLEY—Feed, $21.50 per ton; brewing, $22; rolled, $23.

RYE—$1.35@1.40 per cwt.

CORN—Whole, $25.50; cracked, $26.50 per ton.

MILLSTUFFS—Bran, city, $14.50; country, $15.50 per ton; middlings, $24; shorts, city, $16; country, $17 per ton; chop, U. S. Mills, $15.50; linseed dairy food, $18; acalfa meal, $18 per ton.

HAY—Valley timothy, No. 1, $10@11 per ton; Eastern Oregon timothy, $14@16; clover, $6.50@7; cheat, $7@7.50; grain hay, $7; alfalfa, $11.50; vetch hay, $7@7.50.

DOMESTIC FRUITS—Apples, common to choice, 25@75c per box; choice to fancy, 75c@$1.50; grapes, $1@1.60 per crate; peaches, 75c@$1; pears, 75c@$1.25; cranberries, $9@9.50 per barrel; quinces, $1@1.25 per box; persimmons, $1.25@1.50 per box.

FRESH VEGETABLES — Cabbage, 1¼@1½c pound; cauliflower, $1.25 per dozen; celery, 75@85c per dozen; egg plant, $1.50 per crate; lettuce, head, 20c per dozen; onions, 10@12½c per dozen; bell peppers, 5c; pumpkins, 1¼ cents per pound; spinach, 4@5c per pound; tomatoes, 30@50c per box; parsley, 10@15c; squash, 1½c per pound; hot-house lettuce, 25c per doz.

ROOT VEGETABLES—Turnips, 90c @$1 per sack; carrots, 90c@$1 per sack; beets, $1.25@1.50 per sack; garlic, 7½@10c per pound; horseradish, 9@10c per pound; sweet potatoes, 2@2½c per pound.

ONIONS—Oregon, 90c@$1 per hundred.

POTATOES—Buying prices: Oregon Burbanks, fancy, 90c@$1.05; common, 75c@90c.

BUTTER—City creameries: Extra creamery, 30@32½c per pound. State creameries: Fancy creamery, 25@27½c; store butter, 16@17c.

EGGS — Oregon ranch, 32½@35c dozen; best Eastern, 26@27c; ordinary Eastern, 24@25c.

CHEESE—Oregon full cream twins, 14@14½c; Young America, 15@15½c.

POULTRY—Average old hens, 12½@13½c; mixed chickens, 12@12½c; Spring, 12½@13c; old roosters, 9@10c; dressed chickens, 13@14c; turkeys, live, 17@17½c; turkeys, dressed, choice, 21@22½c; geese, live, per pound, 8@9c; ducks, 14@15c; pigeons, $1@1.50; squabs, $2@3.

VEAL—Dressed, 75 to 125 pounds, 7½@8c; 125 to 150 pounds, 7c; 150 to 200 pounds, 6c; 200 pounds and up, 5½@6c.

BEEF—Dressed bulls, 2@2½c per pound; cows, 4@5c; country steers, 5@5½c.

MUTTON—Dressed, fancy, 7c per pound; ordinary, 5@6c; lambs, fancy, 8c.

PORK—Dressed, 100 to 130 pounds, 8c; 150 to 200 pounds, 7@7½c; 200 pounds and up, 6@6½c.

HOPS—1906, choice, 15@17c; prime, 13@17c; medium, 12@12½c per pound; olds, nominal.

WOOL—Eastern Oregon average, best, 13@18c per pound, according to shrinkage; Valley, 20@21c, according to fineness.

MOHAIR—Choice, 26@28c.

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