TOILERS OF THE COLUMBIA

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CHAPTER I.

The Storm.

"Down she went!"

"All aboard were lost."

"She made a gallant fight."

"See! She comes to the surface again!"

The foregoing exclamations came from a group of fishermen who stood upon the shores of Baker's bay and watched a ship battling with the waves on the Columbia bar.

The rain fell in long, slanting, twisting sheets. It appeared as if the heavens were a vast waterfall swayed and tossed by all of the gods of fury. The wind howled and moaned like a powerful monster, making the earth and everything upon it tremble while it pursued its way as steady as a tide from the deep.

Trees bended their boughs to the ground and writhed and quivered to the end of their tiniest roots. Houses rocked and swayed like a weather vane upon their foundations. The more timid of the men and the women and children, though accustomed to storms, crouched and trembled with awed expressions upon their faces as they listened to the deafening din which was sweeping the earth.

The waters at the broad mouth of the Columbia river arose like wild steeds as they met the storm-driven waves of the Pacific and battled with them for supremacy. The combatting elements formed like a mountain range along the bar, showing, with the rapidity of a kaleidescopic view, peaks, gulches and canyons as the waters rose and clinched and then fell and divided for another attack.

Nature gave her picture additional grandeur by the coloring. The approach of night through such a storm, while there was still enough shaded light to cast a lurid haze over the scene, the mingling of the blood-red waters of the river with the green and white of ocean streaked the whole with a hue emblematic of contest and death.

The tides from the deep seemed to be angered by the battle above their heads and rose higher and higher, with a power that made the rock-bound shores shake, to crush out the wild contest between river and waves. The spray dashed up even to the timber belt above the beach, creating a fog on the windows of the high-perched lighthouse that made the newly lighted lamp appear dim, and the whole mountain range along the coast to the north quivered to its foundation while staying the mighty rush of the waters from the ocean.

A group of fishermen stood at a point on the shores of the bay. They were drenched to the skin, but they did not mind this. They were more intent upon watching an object battling for its life on the bar of the river. It was these who had made the exclamations given at the introduction of this chapter.

It was the severest storm for many years. They had been partially drawn, practically thrown ashore in their crude fishing boats by the receding waters from the conflict between ocean and river. While anxious eyes watched them from the windows of the fishing village in the rear, which was wrapped in the landstorm, they looked more anxiously out to sea. Having been handled so mercilessly by the waters which had spent their fury and were retreating from the battle at the bar, they trembled at the fate of an object which they discovered in the center of the raging conflict.

It tossed and leaped and rose and fell like a wounded and bewildered animal pierced by a bullet from some hunter's rifle. Now on a peak, which shot up like a rocket from the depths below; now on the brink of a deep canyon, formed in the twinkling of an eye; now on a narrow ledge pending over a deep abyss, and then in the depths of a gulch, whose watery walls were crashing down upon it—then it disappeared from view!

"Down she went!" said one fisherman.

"All aboard were lost," said another.

"She made a gallant fight," remarked a third.

"See! She comes to the surface again!" exclaimed the man who had first spoken.

The ship had instantly appeared again. But it writhed in the roaring surf like a stricken serpent. It had been a fine rigged sailing vessel, but now it was a mere hull with part of a deck and a few stumps of masts left. It had been the pride of a country and, like a brave soldier wounded and disarmed, it was fighting the enemy even in its dying gasps.

It lunged this way and that. One moment it careened on its side; another it stood on its beam; then it reared up like an animal in desperation, and with the agility of a cat regained its position on a wild wave and rode it with a gallantry that charmed the fisherman. Then lost for a moment it appeared again as if it had been discharged from one of Neptune's greatest guns stationed on a moro of the deep.

"Bravo!" shouted a fisherman.

"She deserves to live," said another.

"But look!" shrieked a third.

The shattered vessel had crossed the bar and was heading straight for Sand Island. Caught on the receding waters she was dragged mercilessly toward her doom.

The storm grew stronger in its fury. As if angry at the prolonged life of the dismantled ship, it gathered over the spot where it was making its last feeble fight to live. The sheets of rain grew thicker, the steady wind grew stronger, the waves dashed together behind her and reared high up into the air. Then they broke apart and those receding sent the vessel on more rapidly. The spray from the ocean and the sheets of rain from the heavens formed a veil which obscured all for a brief time.

The fishermen stood like statues for a few moments. Night was closing in. But for one brief instant there was a glimmer from the departing day and the men ashore saw the stranded vessel standing with nose in the sand while the victorious waves were pounding her at a rate that must soon break her to pieces.

But to render aid to those aboard the sinking ship was impossible. No earthly craft could live in such a sea. Slowly and sadly the toilers of the Columbia wended their way to their homes in the village where they told the story of the wreck.

CHAPTER II.

Age and Infancy Drift Ashore.

With the closing in of darkness the storm abated. As if rebuked by the deep shades of night it skulked away like a subdued trespasser. Only its rumbling, disappearing footsteps could be heard in the distance.

But for the booming of old ocean's mad waves, who seemed to feel that she had conquered all within her grasp and was reaching out her arms for the sky and rocks to catch all above and about her, a stillness would have prevailed such as only exists in a calm after a great storm.

The fishermen began to emerge from their homes. The news of the terrible fate of the ship and her crew had spread about the village. While there was none of those hardy fellows who would dare the white-capped waves, yet they could not sleep while succor might be rendered in some manner.

Beacon lights were kindled upon the hills along the shore and above the safe landing places so that if any craft should have survived the storm it might steer for the place where landing did not mean certain death, though the best was hazardous.

"More wood!" they shouted, as the fires began to die down and in every direction spectre-like forms were seen moving about like shadows among the big trees that lined the hills near the shore.

Others lined up near the water's edge with ropes in hand, and strained their eyes and ears for a glimpse or a sound that would direct them to a place where humanity's most charitable act could be bestowed.

But it was a night of work and vigilance without reward. No an object was seen, not a sound heard save that of the receding waters as they returned to the deep from which they came.

The sun shot above the horizon the following morning with a flash. The sky was as clear as a crystal. The waters were as smooth on the bay as a lawn. Only out on the bar did an occasional whitecap show its head.

The beach was soon lined with men, women and children. The smoldering fires on the hillsides sent swirling streams of white smoke straight toward the heavens. The great trees above the beach had straightened their boughs and no evidence remained of the battle with the storm save the broken limbs and the high piles of driftwood that littered the shore.

On the approach of a newcomer a first glance was cast out over the bay. It was followed by a cloud of disappointment on his or her face. Sand Island had claimed many victims and another disaster was to be added to her record.

Buried deep into her sands was the hull of another vessel. Only a few stumps of masts remained above the wreck. Strain their eyes as they would under the shadow of their hands or through their strongest glasses, not a living thing could be discovered on or about the remains of the vessel which had made such a gallant fight the previous day.

Suddenly a boat shot out from the shore to the east. An involuntary hiss escaped through the lips of the other fishermen. It was old Seadog and his boys. They had slept through the night while others kept the beacon fires burning. They were not now on a mission of charity bent. They had gone for plunder before.

But old Seadog had other motives in view. His keen eyes had pierced deeper into the storm the previous day. He had also been reading the marine news, besides letters and newspapers from a foreign land. He thought he recognized the vessel's country, by the vessel itself and had a motive for being first aboard should his surmise be true.

On they dashed, propelled by the skilled oarsmen, growing less and less until like young jackals they lifted their boat on the sands and climbed over into the hull of the stranded vessel.

The people began to break away in small groups. They were silent but old Seadog and his boys were condemned in the minds of many. Still they did not know the real motive that prompted the land pirates.

The men scattered up and down the beach that they might find whether any evidence of the vessel or her crew had drifted ashore. This had always been their custom and small boats and dead bodies had often been found even so soon after great catastrophes.

In a few hours the searchers began to return to the village empty-handed. As they came each reported in turn that nothing had been found. It had been a severe storm, however, and everything had probably been dashed to pieces against the rocks about Cape Disappointment, and the bodies of the crew, they thought had been sent to the bottom of the sea or were lashed to the remnants of the vessel where all must be dead.

The forward party which followed the beach toward the ocean, and had proceeded about a mile was startled by a noise while climbing among the driftwood in a little cove.

"A wharf rat!" exclaimed one.

"No, a weasel," said another.

"It is the voice of a human being, as sure as you live!" shouted a third, who was nearer the sound than the others.

"On then," replied the man who had first spoken.

The members of the party all rushed to the place from which the sound emanated.

"Didn't I tell you?" said the man who had proclaimed it a human voice, when he reached the place.

"Well, I told you that it was a small human being, and it is," replied the man who had pronounced the cry as coming from a wharf rat.

"It's mate is old enough for you," remarked one of the fishermen.

"Yes, but he is of little use now, he is dead," was the reply.

"Not much, see, he opens his eyes!" shouted one of them joyfully.

A sad picture, yet one that gave pleasure to the fishermen, presented itself. A short, stout old man, with gray hair and whiskers, lay lashed to a broken spar of a ship. He was probably three score and ten. The spar lay upon his right leg and he could not move. Had this not been the case he could never have released himself from the timber, for he was numb and dazed, more dead than living and the chords had drawn deep into his body. But in the aged man's clasp, like that of the dead, he held close to his heart a crying infant.

CHAPTER III.

Old Seadog Rejoices.

Long before the old man and the child were found, other fishermen had launched their boats and had pulled out on the bay.

Some went to the fishtraps and others made straight across to the wreck.

But old Seadog had prepared to go aboard the stranded vessel and to hold it against all comers until he should carry out his plans. Firearms had been secreted in his small boat before leaving shore and these were transferred to the wreck.

One of the boys was left on guard while the old man leading the others went on a searching tour of the ship.

They soon found that the vessel possessed but little that was of value for it had discharged its cargo at San Francisco, and had come to the Columbia for a return consignment.

But it was not wealth of the kind that the world considers valuable that old Seadog was looking for, it was that which would remove all cloud from the title to his own wealth.

It was while thus engaged in ransacking the unfortunate vessel that the advance guard of the fishermen arrived in their small boats. Old Seadog was always first appealed to by his sons before action was taken and the one on guard called to his father and informed him of the approach of their neighbors.

The old man rushed upon deck and seizing a gun, he presented it and said:

"Upon your lives, come no closer, men! Stop where you are and return to your boats or I will shoot!"

"What right have you to the craft?" asked the bolder of the party.

"The right of salvage men, the right of salvage! We were first to board her after she went aground," replied the old man.

"Well, we will report you to the law," shouted one of the fishermen as they left the place, some returning to the village and others pulling for their traps further up the bay.

(To be continued)

Dug Into a Wolf's Den.

An Oklahoman named Lawson had an unpleasant experience while visiting his brother-in-law, Milo Blodgett, who lives near Adobe Walls in the Texas panhandle. Lawson went wolf-hunting alone. Next day his horse was found saddled, but without a bridle. Blodgett summoned about thirty neighbors and began searching for Lawson, who was located after nearly a day's hunt. His feet were sticking from the top of a wolf den and about three feet of dirt rested on his body. Lawson was so fastened that he could not extricate himself.

He had dug down in the wolf den about five feet on a slant in a manner something like the entrance to a dugout, then lay down in his trench to reach in after some coyote pups. He caught one and threw it out and it is supposed that this frightened his horse, which was tied to a bunch of bear grass near the hole. The horse, making a lunge, caused the banks to cave, the dirt falling on the prostrate body of the man, covering his body and head. The dirt caught him with his arms stretched out in front so he could not use them to much advantage, but he managed to work his hands and shove the dirt down the hole until his head was uncovered and he could get air from the top. He lay in this position from 5 o'clock Thursday afternoon till 10 o'clock Sunday morning.—Kansas City Star.

The Other Fellow's Job.

There's a craze among us mortals that is cruel hard to name,
Wheresoe'er you find a human you will find the case the same;
You may seek among the worst of men or seek among the best,
And you'll find that every person is precisely like the rest.
Each believes that his real calling is along some other line
Than the one at which he's working—take, for instance, yours and mine.
From the meanest "me-too" creature to the leader of the mob,
There's a universal craving for "the other fellow's job."

There are millions of positions in the busy world to-day,
Each a drudge to him who holds it, but to him who doesn't, play;
Every farmer's broken-hearted that in youth he missed his call,
While that same unhappy farmer is the envy of us all.
Any task you care to mention seems a vastly better lot
Than the one especial something which you happen to have got.
There's but one sure way to smother Envy's heartache and her sob;
Keep too busy, at your own, to want "the other fellow's job."

—Success.

A Domestic Chef.

Mrs. De Style (after giving her order for dinner)—Can you remember all that?

New Girl—Sure, it's a French chef yes think Oi am.

"It is our ordinary company dinner. Guests are expected, you know."

"Wull, mum. Oi'll just make yez an Oirish stew, an' thin yez can sort the things out to suit y'rsilves, an' call thim as many nose-crackin' French names as yez loike."

Laplanders have been known to skate a distance of 150 miles in one day.

Do not fail to provide some means for ventilation during the night.

GOOD Short Stories

That sudden cabinet changes are apt to be confusing to the officials of the United States in other parts of the world is evident from a message received at the Navy Department from Admiral Yates Stirling, of the Asiatic squadron. Since Paul Morton of Chicago, the new Secretary of the Navy, was sworn into office, some instructions were sent Admiral Stirling, and, with the usual brevity of the cable code, were simply signed "Morton," the last name of the Secretary. Admiral Stirling answered promptly as follows: "Instructions received; will be carried out. Who is Morton? Stirling."

In the "Realities of Irish Life," by W. S. French, is this anecdote: "I have heard a story that upon one occasion the Bishop of London asked the celebrated actor, Garrick, if he could explain how it was that he and his clergy failed to arrest the attention of their audiences, although they preached every Sunday of the realities of the world to come, while he (Garrick) filled crowded houses with the most rapt attention, although they knew perfectly well that all he was saying was fiction. 'The reason is very plain, my lord,' replied Garrick, 'you deal with facts as if they were fiction; I deal with fictions as if they were facts.'"

In Cuba, one night during the El Caney affair, Gen. Lawton was watching a lot of his soldiers file past, and among them he noticed a burly negro corporal, a six-footer, who, in addition to two guns and two full cartridge belts, was carrying a dog. The soldier to whom the extra gun belonged was limping alongside his comrade. The general halted the overloaded soldier. "Look here," he said: "you marched all night, fought all day, and are marching again." "Yes, sah," responded the negro. "Then," said Lawton, "why on earth are you carrying that dog?" "Why, general," said the negro, with a grin, "the dog's tired."

Jay Hambridge, the artist, spent last summer in a sleepy New England village where the older inhabitants are opposed to anything modern. There was a meeting of the hose company one night, and one of the younger members announced that there was a sum of money left in the treasury. He suggested that a chandelier be bought with it. But at this juncture one of the old inhabitants slowly arose and cleared his throat. "I'll vote dead agin any such a fool plan to squander money," he announced, firmly; "for what's the use of buyin' one of them dern things when it's likely there isn't any one in the hull company that knows how to play it?"

A Japanese youth, who obtained a situation with an English firm on trial, was asked by the cashier a few days after his appointment to write to a customer who had been owing money to the house for a long time, and who seemed to have no intention of paying. "Write briefly and politely," said the cashier, "but let him understand distinctly that we expect the money without further delay." The letter was written, and on the following day came a check for the amount due. The surprised cashier asked the new clerk to show him a copy of the letter which had been so effectual. It ran thus: "Dear Sir: If you do not send us at once the money you owe us, we shall be obliged to take steps which will cause you the utmost astonishment. Respectfully yours."

MUSTANGS ARE DYING OUT.

Hardy Western Ponies Are No Longer Numerous on the Frontier.

Everyone who has lived on the frontier, especially in the southwest, will feel a pang of regret at the announcement that the little mustang, or broncho, is slowly but surely passing away. They were popular with the Western pioneers because they were hardy, easily kept and cheap. Texas once had scarcely any other horses except mustangs and Choctaw ponies, but that pioneer age has passed.

Since the organization of the Texas State Fair the horses, in common with all other live stock in Texas, have greatly improved. The fair itself has been the principal factor and incentive to the improvement of Texas horses. In the earlier years of the association the heavier breeds were largely exhibited there.

Then the heavy draft horses of the Clydesdale, Norman and Percheron types were seen in large numbers. Of late years, however, the tendency seems to be toward the lighter breeds mostly, such as Cleveland bays and American trotter. The last-named breed is particularly in favor in Texas just now.

It seems that the drain made upon our country for horses by the Spanish-American war and the war in the Transvaal has caused a dearth of desirable animals. The demand for "family horses" is unusually good and the energy of breeders seems to be now especially directed to high-bred American trotters. It seems that this class of horses is paying the breeder much better at present than any other. The large-sized trotter is eliciting much interest from the farmers as well as from the town people. Many farmers are buying them for breeding purposes, seeing good money in this highly popular class of horses.

The sales of these animals are by no means confined to Texas buyers either. They are being purchased by horse fanciers in many parts of the Union for abroad as well as at home. Many good sales of saddle and harness animals are being made daily at the fair.

Japanese Firemen.

With all his enterprise, the Japanese dislikes to hurry. Firemen going to a fire make the occasion a ceremonial affair. With their beautiful uniforms the companies march and countermarch and dance in leisurely state, no matter how serious the fire may be, some men carrying pails and ladders, but more bearing banners, as if flames could be extinguished by a display of magnificence.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF MAILS.

HOOD RIVER.

The postoffice is open daily between 8 a. m. and 7 p. m.; Sunday from 12 to 1 o'clock. Mails for the East close at 11:20 a. m., 8:30 p. m. and 9 p. m.; for the West at 2:40 p. m. and 9 p. m.

The carriers on R. F. D. routes No. 1 and No. 2 leave the postoffice at 8:30 daily. Mail leaves

For Mt. Hood, daily at 12:00 m.; arrives, 10:30 a. m.

For Chenoweth, Wash., at 7:30 a. m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; arrives same days at 6 p. m.

For Underwood, Wash., at 7:30 a. m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; arrives same days at 6 p. m.

For White Salmon, Wash., daily at 2:45 p. m.; arrives at 11 a. m.

WHITE SALMON.

For Hood River daily at 9 a. m.; arrives at 1:45 p. m.

For Husum, Trout Lake and Guler, Wash., daily at 7:30 a. m.; arrives at 12 m.

For Glenwood, Gilmer and Fulda, Wash., daily at 7:30 a. m.; arrives at 5 p. m.

For Pineflat and Snowden, Wash., at 11:30 a. m. Tuesdays and Saturdays; arrives same days, 10:30 a. m.

For Bingen, Wash., daily at 4:45 p. m.; arrives at 8:45 a. m.