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FROM THE NEW YORK (LATE ALBANY) DUTCHMAN

THE MONOMANIAC;

OR THE

EVERLASTING PRESENCE.

A WILD STORY OF THE OCEAN, AND THE RED FIELD OF BATTLE.

BY CHARLEY CLEWLINE.

CHAPTER I.

The Sea Voyage, and the Two Mysterious Passengers.

"There is a something which I dread—
It is a dark, a fearful thing;
It steals along with withering tread,
Or sweeps on wild destruction's wing.'
[Lucretia Davidson

FIFTY—aye, a hundred times, have I been urged by my friends and acquaintances, to tell the strange, wild legend which I am now about to narrate, to the world. But I have ever answered "no," emphatically "*No!*" For this continued, and most determined refusal on my part, I have been censured by several to whom I have related the story in confidence, as they said that I could do full justice to the legend in print, and I ought to give it to the public for the especial benefit of the wonder-loving readers of the marvelous. But I thought differently, as I always had a peculiar horror of telling a story in the first person singular, where it becomes necessary to marshal so often in the front rank the odious pronoun "I." It smacks too much of wholesale egotism. And then again my stories heretofore having *always* been made up of real life incident, and carrying with them a general air of probability, I feared that in pursuing a tale so full of strange adventure and thrilling periods as my present one must necessarily be, the whole community of readers and writers would unite *en masse*, and give me per force to the very top rung of fiction's ladder. Besides, as two or three of the principal actors in the little drama which is to follow, are still living, I could not consent to drag them before the public without first having obtained their permission to do so. This, within the last few days, has been freely given, and for the first I shall dismiss my usual most indefatigable attendant—modesty—and tell the story in my own way, just as it occurred, trusting wholly to the well-earned merit of the publishers, and the proverbial indulgence of the reading public, for its kindly reception.

It was almost night, on a cold, rainy afternoon, in the latter part of February, 1837, that the order was given to man the windlass, on board the Helen McLeod, a fine new brig of two hundred and forty tuns, which for the last five days had lain quietly at anchor just abreast of the little hamlet composed of pilot houses at the S. W. Pass of the Mississippi, loaded with staves and tobacco from New Orleans, bound for Barcelona; and as the wind had been fair for nearly forty-eight hours, we all very naturally wondered why the "old man" did not get under way before. But as the weather had continued stormy and unusually cold for those latitudes, we didn't growl much at the captain's choice of laying there at a snug berth inside, in preference to boxing it out in a cold rainy "northor" between the Balize and the Tortugases.

The order, however, was quickly obeyed when it did come, for the captain and first mate, we had learned on our passage from New York to New Orleans, were both regular martinets, and were accustomed to have all their orders obeyed off-hand, without any one ever stopping to enquire into the why's or wherefore's.

Round went the ponderous old-fashioned windlass, slip slap, and in fifteen minutes the chain was hove in till the anchor was nearly under foot, and the hoarse growl-like order of "avast heaving, and loose away the topsails!" came from the mate, who had been all the while leaning over the night-heads, and watching the huge muddy chain as it came slowly creeping through the hawser-hole, like some slimy marine serpent.

The topsails were soon loosed, sheeted home, and the yards mast-headed, and we were just about to resume our handspikes at the windlass, when a whale boat shot out from a little cove near the pilot houses, and pulled by six pair of sturdy arms, rapidly approaching the brig.

"Hold on the windlass there," shouted the captain from the quarter-deck, "hold on the windlass, and get a line ready for the boat."

In two minutes the boat was along side, and a tall, athletic figure, enveloped in a heavy military cloak, stood up in the stern sheets, and after giving a few hurried orders in a low tone, to the boatmen, sprung lightly on deck, and after shaking the captain warmly by the hand, the two descended to the cabin, the latter giving his orders to the mate to heave the anchor as soon as he got the stranger's baggage up out of the boat.

I was standing near the mate when our passenger (for such he evidently was,) leaped on deck, and as the collar of his cloak fell back, partially revealing his features, I noticed that the mate turned deadly pale, uttered a quick, half stifled cry of anguish, and staggered two or three paces backwards, as though he had been smitten by the sudden shock of a powerful electric battery. In a moment, however, he seemed to recover his self-possession, and as soon as the two heavy trunks, and several small articles, comprising the stranger's luggage, had been passed up out of the boat, he gave the order to man the windlass, in his usual clear, commanding tone, as though nothing had occurred to disturb the general stern—almost haughty, demeanor which he had heretofore always maintained towards the crew, and even myself, who was an officer the next in command under him.

Within twenty minutes after receiving our stranger passenger on board, the brig was under top-sails, top-gallantsails, and courses, standing boldly out over the bar, before the strong breeze, which was however dying away, and it was evident that the norther would soon break up, giving place, probably, to a spell of fine clear weather from the westward.

We were perhaps a mile outside the bar, when the boat which was to take off our pilot hawled up along-side, and at the same moment Capt. McClever made his appearance on deck, followed by our passenger, who, from his manner towards the captain, I judged to be an old acquaintance. Scarcely had our commander showed himself on the quarter deck, ere some one hailed from the pilot boat, and enquired if he could take another passenger in the brig.

"Aye, a dozen if you wish," responded the captain to the hail; and a lad of not more than seventeen, as one would guess from his stature, (for his features were so effectually concealed by the collar of his Spanish cloak, a dark fur cap turned down over his ears, and a heavy scarf muffled about his throat, that it was wholly impossible to obtain even a glimpse at his face,) stepped forth from the cabin of the pilot boat, bearing a moderate sized valise in his hand, and springing lightly upon the brig's deck, he bowed, or rather nodded, as I thought, somewhat familiarly to the captain, and passed below, without appearing to notice the other passenger, which I thought strange, as it seemed that they must have met before, provided that they had remained long at the Balize, there being no other accommodations than those to be found at the pilot station; and it appeared wholly impossible that two persons should remain there many hours together without meeting.

I was just beginning to weave a web of romance about our two mysterious passengers, when the orders from the captain to loose the main royal and set foretopmast stun' sails, put an end to my speculations for the time; and I was so actively engaged for more than three hours in making sail, stowing the anchors, and getting the decks clear, that I had nearly forgotten all about our passengers, till I was called down to supper some time after six o'clock, at which time the captain and our fist passenger having partaken of their evening meal, were walking the weather side of the quarter-deck, engaged in a low, and what seemed to me a very confidential conversation. The chief mate had declined taking supper, and as our boy passenger was in his state-room, I of course had the table all to myself.

I was seated directly opposite the state-room occupied by the young stranger, and had nearly completed my supper, when by a sudden lurch of the vessel the door was flung violently open, and discovered to me the person of our boy passenger, divested of his cloak, cap and scarf, seated there in the bright glare of the cabin lamp, and presenting a spectacle of such exquisite beauty of form and features, that were I to live a thousand years, the voluptuous picture would still remain as vividly fixed upon my memory as though engraven upon my very heart in letters of living fire.

There he sat, a very boy in years, so faultless in all the glorious belongings of his superhuman beauty, that he might have served as a most perfect model for an Adonis, a Venus or an angel. Canova nor Reubens, in all their enthusiastic dreams of ideal beauty, never created in their soul pictures, anything half so beautiful. His skin was very dark—darker than that of any European I had ever seen—and had it not been for the general cast of his features, which was extremely delicate, and of the strictest Italian contour, I should have guessed at once that he was a child of the "sunny south," born of African parents. But the superbly rounded chin, the exquisitely chiseled lips, the beautiful Grecian nose, and the long luxuriant hair, which fell in wavy curls low down upon his neck and shoulders, all gave the lie to such a supposition.

Then I thought that he might be descended from the renowned Alfonso, whose pure blood still flowed unmingled with that of another race, in the veins of many an Andalusia's and Grenada's proud hidalgoes.

Suddenly the boy stranger arose, and closing the door thus shut out the magnificent vision which for a few brief moments had remained there before me, framed in the open space, and I returned to the decks, where I found the other stranger still engaged in conversation with the captain, and the mate leaning moodily against the long-boat apparently lost in thought, and totally unconscious of all that was passing around him.

It was my watch till twelve o'clock, and soon after my appearance on deck, the captain and his companion retired to the cabin, when the mate seized my arm, and whispered in my ear—

"Mr. Clewline, that man is my evil genius—*a fiend!* a being that haunts me like a nightmare with his eternal presence. My God! I cannot escape him! But I will tell you all some day—and now," and the mate darted down into his room, and I saw him no more till midnight, and then when I went to call him, he was in a raging fever, which lasted for many days, and then left him helpless as an infant:

The boy passenger I saw not again during the passage, for he remained constantly in his room, where he ate and slept alone, holding communication with no one. But the other—from the time that the mate was taken down with the fever, he took his place. He was a man who had seen perhaps thirty years, tall and most eminently handsome, and one of the most thorough sailors I had ever seen. His hair, whiskers, and heavy mustache, were black as jet, and his features were as dark as any Spaniard, and yet he spoke the English language so fluently, and without the least foreign accent, that I doubted very much his being a native of "the land of the olive and vine."

We were favored with fine pleasant weather, and fair winds, during the whole passage, and the morning of the thirtieth day after leaving the Balize, found the brig to an anchor in the harbor of Barcelona; and within two hours after our arrival, our two mysterious passengers had left the vessel in different boats, without having, so far as I could learn, ever exchanged a single word with each other during the passage; and during the following night the mate, who had so far recovered from his sickness as to be able to walk the deck, disappeared, nobody knew how, or where, or when.

Four days after our arrival in port, the captain informed me that the brig would be sold, and I would receive my two month's extra pay from the consul, and was at liberty to look out for an other berth as soon as I choose.

This information gave me little uneasiness, however, as I had all along determined to join the Carlist cause, which at that time was very popular in the eastern part of Spain.

CHAPTER II.

The service of Don Carlos—The mate again—A strange encounter—The whirlwind of death—We meet again.

"Alike we do to mole in our happiness;
Harried and dim, the unknown hours pass;
We question of the grief we cannot guess."
L. E. L.

In less than three weeks from the day of our arrival in the harbor of Barcelona, I was serving as boy lieutenant, in the mountains of Valencia, under the renowned Carlist leader Zomalacreiguy. It was no holiday service, however, that of Don Carlos, as we had learned beyond the possibility of doubt ere we were many days in the revolutionary army of Spain. But it was just such a service as suited the reckless spirits of which the entire Carlist force was almost wholly composed; and then we had little leisure for reflection or despair, for our indefatigable chief kept us constantly on the wing, and victory followed victory in rapid succession, until within the short space of three months after I joined the Carlist ranks, every mountain pass, town and castle, along the whole terrace of Valencia and Catalonia, was in possession of the victorious army of Don Carlist.

But reverses came at length, and step by step we were driven back before the overwhelming force which foreign gold and foreign influence had rallied round the triumphant standard of the trigress Queen Mother Christiana, until at last we were forced to abandon every position in the mountains, and fall back towards the valley of the Ebro, in order to form a junction with the patriots of Arogan and Leon.

One day—it might have been a week after we had reached a small village, situated on the right bank of the Ebro, about five leagues from Saragossa, and some five months after I had joined the Carlist army—I was seated at a camp table, with a map of the surrounding country spread out before me; the light which came in through the opening of the tent was suddenly shut out, and looking up from the map, I discovered, to my astonishment, the man who had been mate on the American brig, dressed in the showy uniform of the Carlists, with his arms folded on his breast, and standing within three feet of me.

"*Carramba!*" said I, using the very common Spanish expression for wonder or surprise, "in the name of all that is wonderful, where did you come from, Mr. Lindsey?" totally forgetful that he wore a Colonel's uniform, and, as my superior officer, was entitled to a more respectful reception than I had given him. He smiled sadly as he replied to my abrupt question, and never in my life had I seen so handsome or so gallant an officer.

"I have come from the west—from Leon—with my command of six hundred brave fellows, and an hour since I arrived in camp, when learning that you were attached to this division of the army, I have hurried thither as soon as possible, after my interview with the general. You have known me heretofore as Mr. Lindsey—such, however, is not my real name, nor am I a sailor by profession, as you might suppose from the circumstances of my having been chief mate of the brig in which we went out to New Orleans, and thence to Barcelona. I am a native of Philadelphia—the son of the well known India merchant, Henry Granger, of whom you have doubtless heard. On completing my education at one of the eastern institutions, I made two voyages to India in one of my father's ships, for the purpose of seeing something of the world; and it was during those two voyages that I learned something of navigation, and sufficient of seamanship to enable me to go as chief mate of a vessel, although I had no idea at the time of offering my services in that capacity to any one.

"It is now nearly two years since I returned from my last India voyage, and after remaining a few days at home I visited Saratoga, where I almost immediately became acquainted with as glorious a creature as ever the sun shone on—a lovely girl of sixteen, the daughter of a rich Virginia planter, who was spending the season at the Springs, for the benefit of his wife's health.

"From the very first moment that I met with the beautiful and accomplished Helen Creighton, I would willingly have bartered away my soul's eternal salvation in exchange for so bright, so priceless a jewel. Oh! how I loved ——no, no! love is too tame, too meaningless a word! I worshipped—madly—blindly—worshipped at the pure shrine, as did the Aztecs of ancient Mexico at their sun altars.

"And I was successful. My devotion won her virgin love, and I was extremely happy. Her parents were satisfied with my prospects, charactsr, and position in society, and gave their willing consent to our union. But I had a rival, a strange, mysterious being, whom no body knew, and all feared. He was, perhaps, five years elder than myself, and—but there is no need of my describing him here, for you have seen him—you know him already. It was him who came off in that boat at the Balize, and took my place as mate of the brig when I was stricken down with the fever. I need not tell you that he is a demon, and it was his hand that smote me in that burning fever. He is a Lucifer! and Capt. McClever, of the brig, is one of his imps, although I did not know it until *that night*.

"This Reginald, as he is called, laid some terrible spell upon my angel Helen, and turned her brain; and then, with the malice of a demon, he told his foul lies to her father and mother, causing them to hate me; and then I remember no more till I was at sea in the brig; but *he* was always with me, and often has he whispered the terrible threat in my ear, that he would never leave me till I was dead.

"I fled from the brig to escape from the captain, whom the demon had delegated to watch me, and convey my soul to hell, so that I should never meet my Helen, on earth or in Heaven. But I have almost foiled them—I have seen him often here in Spain; but I shall kill him some day when we meet in battle, and then I shall win my Helen's love again, and we shall be so very happy once more, and you will come to the wedding, will you not? To the wedding, remember, of Col. Henry Granger and Helen Creighton—ha! ha! ha!"

He was raving mad. I saw the wild light of insanity flash from his eyes, and with gentle soothing words I sought to calm his peturbed spirit. In this I had partially succeeded, when the sudden braying of trumpets, the roll of drums, and the quick gallop of horses impatiently spurred forward by some fiery aid-de-camp, told of an approaching enemy; and with a bound like that of a maddened tiger, the Monomaniac Colonel sprang through the opening of the tent, vaulted into the saddle, and dashed off like the wind, in the direction of his command.

I had that very morning been appointed to the staff of the commander-in-chief, and in less than two minutes I was on horseback, and in front of the General's marque, where I found the numerous suit all in saddle, and surrounding the brave chieftain, who was giving his orders as quietly as though he was about to marshal up his holiday review.

I soon learned that the enemy, more than three times our strength in point of number, were within three miles of our camp, and had already thrown forward two detachments of dragoons to attack us on either flank, while his main body, composed of three regiments of the choicest troops in the Spanish service, was coming down in front, almost at a run, intending to surprise us before we could form in order of battle.

But our army was too well practiced in the arts of mountain warfare to be caught at fault so easily; and when the long line of royal infantry broke cover from the dense thicket of brushwood, not a quarter of a mile from our camp, they instinctively faltered in their quick march, as their eyes encountered the surried array of more than three thousand of the best lancers in Spain, drawn up in solid columns, and flanked by the grim warriors of the Sierre Morena and Valencia, mounted on their powerful Andalusian chargers, on our left; while our right was covered by the light dragoons of Leon, commanded by the Maniac Colonel, Henry Granger.

For ten long, agonizing minutes, the silence of death reigned throughout the ranks of the two averse hosts, when at a signal from our chief, the bugles sounded to the charges, and the horrid work of slaughter commenced in all its wild terrible details. In front, our three thousand lancers hurled themselves upon the astonished infantry, crashing into the very heart of their ranks, like an Alpine avalanche.—On the left our brave mountaineers were doing terrible execution amid the panic-stricken cuirassiers of Madrid and Toledo. On our right the mad Colonel raged like an infuriate demon, charging home upon the bewildered and astonished household troops of the Queen Mother, in a perfect hurricane of steel. The charging battle cries of "*Murion los Christianoes*," and the answering yells of "*Dios y la Constitution*," were every where heard above the roar of musketry, the quick rattle of pistol shots, and the clash of weapons as they smote the opposing steel.

Right gallantly did the brave Carlists acquit themselves on that bloody field.—"They fought like brave men, long and well," but the odds opposed to them was too great. Human valor could avail nothing against the crushing flood of overwhelming numbers; and after more than two hours of the most desperate fighting, when more than three-fourths of our force had gone down before the murderous fire or whirlwind charge of an enemy, who, from the first outnumbered us three to one, the survivors seemed stricken with a sudden fear, and in a moment, as it were, the scene was changed from a desperately contested field, to a human slaughter yard. Penned in between the wild, black waters of the sullen Ebro, and the long extended line of gleaming pikes and flashing sabres, the bewildered Carlists were driven hither and thither, hemmed in on either hand, by the rushing torrent, or a living wall of foemen, pealing forth their fierce battle yells and bristling at the points with murderous steel.

For another hour the work of death went bravely on, and not one in fifty of that gallant army who had stood there in the bright morning's sunlight, was left alive upon the death swept field of carnage.

Far to the right the banners of Leon and Burgos were still visible, making brave head against the heavy squadrons of Granada and Castile. Our noble chief gathered about him the few survivors of his brilliant staff—not more than ten in all—and rising in his stirrips, he pointed with his sword to where the standard of Leon was dimly seen in the distance, and shouting his magic cry of "God and St. Leon!" he drove his reeking spurs rowel deep into the flanks of his powerful charger, and hurled himself headlong upon the solid wall of men and horses, which opposed their serried front to bar our onward course.

Like chaff before the shrieking blast of the wild tornado, the stalwart chief scattered the foemen from his path, and with his single arm opened a passage for his scanty followers.

Somehow in our mad career, I became separated from my companions, and, after escaping as if by a miracle, from fifty uplifted sabres aimed at my head, and as many pistol shots aimed at my heart, I found myself borne along in the very front rank of the charging legion of Leon, as led on by their maniac chief, they went thundering on in their last terrific onslaught upon the powerful troopers of Granada and Castile.

Not a spear's length from me, on the left, rode the maniac commander: and never while I live shall I forget the wild, demoniac-expression of his handsome features as he recognised me riding by his side—The next moment he uttered a yell, so shrill and unearthly, that it seemed for a moment to hush the discordant din of battle, and drawing up its commanding figure to his full-height, he pointed with his drawn sword to a giant-warrior directly in front, dressed in a magnificent black uniform, turned up and faced with gold, and bestriding a powerful steed, black as the sable plume of his dark-featured rider.

"'Tis he! *The Fiend! The everlasting presence!*" shouted the monomaniac, and on the instant I recognised the mysterious passenger of the American brig.

Like two adverse thunderbolts in mid air, they met. The maniac Colonel—Henry Granger, the mad Carlist leader—and the black warrior, Reginald the demon. Instantly the combatants on either hand drew back in mute wonder to witness the mad encounter between the two rival chiefs; and never since the first dawn of ancient chivalry was there seen in any land an encounter so terrible.

But brief was the combat; for ere a dozen blows had been exchanged, the treacherous blade of the Carlist chief snapped short off at the hilt, and he sat there wholly at the mercy of his demon foe.

I was about to bound forward and interpose my sword between the disarmed colonel and the gigantic black warrior, when I was partially stunned by a tremendous sabre cut, which came crashing in through the crest of my brazen helmet, and at the same instant a lance was driven deep into the flesh and muscles of my shoulder.

A dizzy faintness came over me, and I sank down half insensible; but as I fell I caught a glimpse of a boy warrior bestriding a splendid milk-white courser, and clothed in the picturesque costume of the brigand riders of the Sierre Morena. In the single glance that I caught of that young face, I read the well-remembered features of that glorious picture which I had seen framed there in the open door way of the American brig. A hundred dark, bronzed faced warriors swept by; and my senses entirely deserted me just as the young chief dashed in between the mysterious warrior in the black uniform, and the maniac colonel, who was thus rescued from death, and hurried away by the charging troop of mountaineers.

When I recovered my reason I was a miserable, wretched prisoner, in the hands of the enemy, and ten days after the unfortunate battle, I was consigned to the mines of Jara for life. But my destiny was not yet accomplished. A *woman's* wit, and a woman's fearless hand, forced me from the infernal regions of the dreary mines, and I was again at liberty.

(CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

SINGULAR BUSINESS.

In a work lately published in Mexico, the author makes some queer revelations as to the habit of the lower class. Among other things it is stated, that all along the coast, the people are in the habit of inoculating themselves with the venom of the rattlesnake which they affirm renders them ever afterwards safe from the bite of all venomous reptiles, and of course, particularly as it regards their great enemy, this species of snake, it protects them from all fear of harm or danger. The author gives the following account of this matter:

"The person to be inoculated is pricked with the tooth of the serpent on the tongue, in both arms, and on verious parts of the body, and the venom introduced into the wounds. An eruption comes out, which last a few days. Ever after, these persons can handle the most venomous snakes with impunity; can make them come by calling them; and the bite of these persons is poisonous. You will not believe this: but we have the testimony of seven or eilgt respectable merchants to the fact.—A gentleman who breakfasted here this morning says that he has been vainly endeavoring to make up his mind to submit to the operation, as he is very much exposed where he lives, and he is obliged to travel a great deal on the coast; and when he goes on these expeditions, he is always occompained by his servant, an inoculated negro, who has the power of curing him, should he be bitten, by sucking the poison from the wound. He also saw this negro cure the bite given by an inoculated Indian boy to a white boy, with whom he was fighting, and who was the stronger of the two. The stories of the eastern jugglers, and their power over these reptiles, may, perhaps be accounted for in this way. I cannot say that I should like to have so much snaky nature transferred into my composition, nor to live among people whose bite is venomous."

AWFUL MURDER.—On Saturday morning, one of the most revolting crimes which has ever stained the history of our city took place on Cypress street. It appears that B. Wanner kept a shoe shop, and his brother Christian Wanner, lived and worked at the trade with him. Some time ago Christian had borrowed from his brother a sum of money, and the two had lately frequently hard altercations about the payment. On Saturday morning, about half-past eight, cries of "murder" were heard in the house, and a young girl living next door, and engaged to be married to Christian, ran in. The two brothers were clinched, and Christian called out that he was stabbed. Presently they let go, and Christian ran out and entered the next house where he fell, and soon after died from the effects of a stab in the thigh, severing a blood vessel. A Coroner's Inquest was held upon the body, and the Jury returned a verdict that the deceased came to his death from injuries inflicted with a pocket knife in the hands of B. Wanner his brother. The murderer was promptly arrested and lodged in jail.

[*Buffalo Courier*, Dec. 15.

ANECDOTE.—A juryman applied to be excused from serving at the Monmouth Assizes.

Judge Bolland—On what ground, sir? Are you not well?

Juryman—Yes, my lord, but I can only hear with one ear.

Judge—Then you may go, sir. A juryman ought to have two ears; it is his duty to hear both sides.