

The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER, }
Editor and Proprietor.

AN INDEPENDENT FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Terms: IN ADVANCE
One Dollar per Year.

Vol. V.

New Bloomfield, Pa., Tuesday, March 28, 1871.

No. 13.

The Bloomfield Times.

Is Published Weekly.

At New Bloomfield, Penn'a.

BY

FRANK MORTIMER.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS.

ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR!

60 Cents for 6 Months; 40 Cents
for 3 Months,

IN ADVANCE.

MR. SEYMOUR'S STORY.

Showing how he Lost his Property
and Recovered it.

CONCLUDED.

WE started on our journey early the next day in a large canoe with about fifty natives, and late in the afternoon we arrived at a small island, and sending a courier ashore by having him swim a couple of miles, we were conducted in great state to the council chamber of the chief, which was a large hut similar to the one I had first been carried to on Rava. Here, a feast of pome, breadfruit and other productions of pomona awaited us, giving to our arrival the same kind of reception that awaits an executive body in civilization, when on a friendly visit to a neighbor.

At night we were conducted to a hut much larger than any I had yet seen, on entering which I found to be a very excellent imitation of a theatre. There was a stage with regular footlights, and the hall and all around was illuminated with lamps evidently trimmed with lard oil; the curtain of canvas was down so I could not see its arrangements, but I almost expected when I heard a small bell ring, to see a well-organized troupe appear and play Shakespeare's 'Midsummer's Night Dream.'

As the curtain arose, a very beautiful young lady of, as I judged, about seventeen, appeared to my view, with a Zoroaster's robe on, while near her were the various implements of art that one generally sees in a well-regulated necromancer's apparatus.

Had the sky fallen, or I been carried by some magic carpet to the Museum on Tremont Street, I would not have been more astonished than I was at the sight before me, and my bewilderment was in no degree lessened to hear this beautiful maiden address her audience in pure Kanaka, and perform the usual trick of eating the established quantity of cotton, blowing fire from her mouth, and winding up with drawing from its place the parti-colored ribbon. Then followed the ring trick, oranges put under cups and disappearing, taking a small pig from the nose of a native, drinking several calabashes of water and drawing it again from her dusky assistant's elbow, in short all the usual sleight-of-hand-tricks that conjurers usually display.

When her performance was all over, she bowed to her audience, thanked them for their kind attention, and retired from the stage with due gravity.

As she left at its conclusion, I involuntarily cried out 'encore!' and drew many a dark look on me for doing so.

Scarcely had I said this, when she returned, and saying to them in their own language, 'I have one more thing to do; the one who cried "encore" will please come here.'

Utterly bewildered, I stepped on the stage from the corner I had been ensconced in, and as I did so, I was surprised to hear her say ventriloquially, 'keep your head, sir, or I'm lost.' And then producing a small percussion pistol, a great novelty in those parts where everything is flint-lock, she requested a chief to come up and load it, and for him to mark the ball, which he did by biting it and immediately dropping it in the muzzle, and ramming it home.—After he had done this, he passed it to her, and while she was capping it, a voice said in my ear, 'I have the ball in my hand; put it in your teeth unnoticed, and when he fires the pistol produce it.' As she said this, she passed the pistol back again to the chief, and as she led me to the rear, I put a ball she handed me in my teeth.

When I was posed, she ordered the chief to fire at me, which he immediately did, and I, in accordance with her direction, took the bullet from my teeth and returned it to him, and he with a howl of fright

as he perceived it was the one he had loaded with, jumped into the crowd at once; probably a more frightened audience was never beheld, as, in accordance with her command, they left the building.

"Your presence of mind saved me, sir," she said, as the last man went out. "Are you Tova, of whom I have heard so much?"

"Tovai was the name Whippy was called, and as I assured her I was not, and that I was a captive made so by treachery, she begged of me to rescue her if possible. I had barely time to tell her how I came there, and what little prospects I had for an escape; but that if I ever did escape I would come for her if it was ten years later, and had just asked her how she came there, when my master appeared and commanded me to follow him. I answered her look of appeal, by saying as I went, 'I will come sometime for you, keep your courage,' and then followed the king out.

"That night, for the only time after my capture, I was regularly kept under guard, and long before daybreak the king had me in the canoe headed back again, never seeming to breathe freely until Rava was plain in sight.

"Again I commenced my old routine, only feeling greater uneasiness than before, as I thought of the beautiful prisoner so near and yet so far from me, and I verily believe I should have lost my senses from brooding over my misfortunes, had I not made my escape from captivity.

"Watch over my movements had been gradually reducing until now I was left entirely to Kaloo, who frequently said he was guard over me, and I knew if there was any chance to escape, I could readily dispose of him.

"One morning I wended my way to my mountain lookout, as was my wont, when off in the horizon I saw something which at first I thought was the wing of a gull, but on steady examination I decided was the top hamper of a vessel, and soon her topsails were plainly in view.

"I think I never made better time than I did that morning in coming down hill; but as I neared the palisades, my better judgment prevailed, and I walked into town with my usual listless step. Arriving at my hut, I leisurely directed Kaloo to put the sail and a calabash of water in the canoe, and prepare her for a day's shooting on the reef. I put some ammunition in my bag, and taking my musket, followed him leisurely.

"As I was doing nothing unusual, I attracted no attention when we pushed out from the landing, and hoisted our sail and kept off for the point of the island where the ducks were numerous. As we rounded the point, I saw the vessel was just in sight, and as we were only two miles from shore, I ventured to keep her going. We were now getting beyond the fowl who kept nearer land, and I saw my companion began to grow restless; so pointing to quite a bunch of fowl that were outside of us, I steered for them. As we drew within easy shot I fired. Hardly had I done so than Kaloo was over like a dog, and swimming for the game, while I, easing off the sheet, was soon going like an arrow for the vessel whose hull was plainly in sight. In a moment I heard my comrade utter a cry of rage, and then turned for the land with a stroke that I feared would only too soon take him there.

"I shouted and prayed, cried and laughed, and even raved, in the excitement of my thoughts with soon being free, which was not allayed much by looking astern, and seeing over the point the sail of the largest war canoe.

"As I drew within hail, I shouted that I was an escaped prisoner, and in the name of humanity begged them to receive me, which they did, I getting on board as the pursuing canoe came within five hundred yards of retaking me.

"Giving a hasty look, and seeing she was a trader, and all prepared for an attack, I sank on the deck in a swoon, and remembered nothing more until I found myself in a hospital in Sydney, when I learned that we had been attacked by the natives and that I had fought like a tiger; that after the battle I was seized with a brain fever, which lasted all the time the captain was trading at other islands, and had then laid for months in a comatose state, barely taking enough sustenance to keep me alive, and that when I had spoken, it was to rave of a female juggler on a cannibal island.

"Upon my recovery I went to the American consul and stated my case; but while he sympathized deeply with my loss and cruel treatment, he treated my

story of a captive female juggler in the Fejees as an hallucination of a disordered mind, and finally told me so in plain language, telling me the most he could do for me was to provide me a passage home.

"As I could persuade no one to credit my story, I finally shipped as a green hand on a whaler, and landed eventually in Paita, where, hearing of the California gold mines, I worked my way up the coast, and after six years' vicissitude, here you find me what I am, and how I have fared."

As my friend told me his wonderful story, he walked the floor forward and back, and became so excited that I almost feared at times that his ill-luck and want of nourishment had unsettled his reason, but trusted that a few weeks of regular life would restore the balance of his mind, and as it was late, I prepared a bed on an old lounge that was in my room for him.

In the morning, with his consent, I went off to the bankers on the corner, and telling them that Seymour was there and had all broken down, they readily offered me one hundred dollars as a loan to set him on his feet, which I thankfully accepted for him, and in an hour afterwards you would never have recognized the fine looking man in the new suit of clothes, as the distressed looking wretch of the day before.

As soon as he was decently attired he started forth to look for employment, coming home that night to say he had secured a bookkeeper's place at liberal wages in a grocery store, to commence next week.—Congratulating him on his success, we strolled around the streets for a short time, and then went back to bed.

The next afternoon Seymour went out for a stroll.

He had not been gone an hour, when he rushed back in terrible excitement, and dropping into a chair, exclaimed, "I have seen him!"

"Seen him! Seen who?" I asked.

"Seen Darnford, the villain that left me with the cannibals," was the excited answer.

Sure that his wits were astray, I asked him to keep cool and tell his story.

"I left here," he said, "without any definite intention as to how or where I would go, and strayed into a place on the Plaza called the 'Bella Union,' to see if there were any miners there I was acquainted with; and as I stood in the entrance, who should come in but Captain Darnford, dressed finely and as he did not notice me, I thought I would listen to their conversation. After chatting a few moments on minor topics, he said, 'Well, gentlemen, I shall expect you to lunch on the Belle Blonde at five this afternoon, and till then adieu, as I must go to the ship. I was about to follow, when one of his friends said, 'What a pleasant man, and how rich he must be, to own the vessel and cargo.'"

"Splendid fellow."

"Yes, and splendid vessel; clipper A 1, and new."

"I waited to hear no more, but rushed here for your advice."

"Seymour," I said, as conviction of his sanity came over me, and his excitement transmitted itself to me and made me forget fevers and everything else, "come along with me." And grasping my hat, we pushed across the square to the court house, where we met Sheriff Jack Hays leisurely coming down the steps, picking his teeth.

"Come along, colonel, here's work for you."

And with the salutation I made for Judge Broderick's chamber, where being acquainted, I introduced Seymour, and bade him make his complaint, which he readily did, and the judge, sending for the United States marshal, he soon came, and receiving a warrant to arrest Captain Darnford of the clipper ship Belle Blonde, swore in the redoubtable sheriff and myself as his special deputies to serve the warrant.

As it was now nearly five o'clock, the time he received his friends on his ship, we took a boat at the wharf, and were soon going up the accommodation ladder at the side; and landing on the deck were met by a grinning darkey, who, supposing we were some of the guests, invited us below. But on Hays telling him he must see the captain at once, as he had some important business with him, he dived below, saying, "Massa Cap'en don't like to be 'sturbed fore dinner."

In a few moments a tall gentlemanly looking man appeared, and said, "what can I do for you, gentlemen?"

"I am Sheriff Hays," my comrade said, "United States deputy marshal, and I have a warrant for your arrest for some little infraction of the laws, revenue or something. But as I understood from your nigger that you had company to dine with you, there is no great hurry, after dinner will do as well;

and as you may want bail, which, of course is a matter of form, perhaps we had better wait."

As the officer began his arrest, the captain turned pale as a sheet, and then as dark as a thunder cloud; but as he finished, treating the affair so lightly, the captain's brow cleared and he said frankly, "I am sorry I have broken, unintentionally of course, any law, and it would inconvenience me greatly to leave my friends before dinner; if you and your friend"—"Mr. Brevet, my assistant," interposed the polite sheriff—"would be pleased to dine with us; we should be pleased to have a glass of wine together over my mistake," and so saying, he preceded us to the cabin, where Hays, who appeared to be well known to all assembled there, was greeted with surprise.

After explanations were made by the captain, we sat down to as fine a dinner as I ever saw, and I must say no one enjoyed it better than the captain did, on whom the cares of this world seemed to hang lightly enough.

After our champagne was over, we all took the ship's boat, and being landed, made our way to the Judge's private office. We found him deeply interested in a book, and Seymour half asleep in a chair in a corner.

"Well, Judge, what is all this arrest about?" said the captain, with some bluster.

"Not much," was the answer; "here is a certain William Seymour, who charges you with selling him into captivity at the Fejee Islands, and stealing the vessel and cargo of which you were master, and he was supercargo, and owner."

As the judge said this, Seymour raised himself from his seat, and coming forward confronted his runaway captain, who turned so white, I really thought he would swoon; but with a mighty effort he recovered himself, and said with a curse, "I hoped you would have made a meal long ago, and thought you had been eaten by cannibals, as you hadn't crossed my wake since—"

In his excitement he spoke too much and now cut himself short when it was too late, and a sardonic grin from the sheriff at his committing himself so easily had brought him suddenly to his senses.

"Then there is something in all this," said the judge. "I must commit you without bail, as Mr. Seymour wants me to wait for him to produce his evidence. But for your unlucky admission and appearance of fear when you were confronted by your accuser, I should have accepted small surety for your appearance; but now I shall accept nothing."

As the judge said this, I had no idea that he was doing it as a trap to commit the accused into a confession, and produce a settlement; but so it was, and the villainous captain fell into it.

"Is there no way this can be arranged?" he pitifully said.

"You confess it is so, as I have sworn?" demanded Seymour, sternly.

"I didn't mean to leave you at the islands, but was forced to by the crew," was the whining answer.

"I think you will return every penny of it," Seymour gravely said. Then calling me to one side and conversing for a few moments with me, I agreeing entirely with all he said, he turned again to the miserable wretch before us, and said, "If you make me a legal transfer of the ship Belle Blonde with all her appurtenances as she now lies and a clear bill of sale of her cargo, I will agree never to prosecute you, and I will give you ten minutes to decide in; and if you refuse I shall leave you with the officer; for I found you with nothing, consequently every cent you have is made from what you stole from me, and I am going to have it for indemnity."

For seven or eight minutes the villain twisted and turned but as his time expired, the sheriff produced a pair of handcuffs, and ostentatiously began to unlock them. You ought to have seen what an assistance to his mind the bracelets were, for he moodily said, "Take the property; I suppose you would get it in the long run, and I might as well be free as behind grates."

No sooner had he uttered this, than the judge, producing the vessel's case of papers, which it appeared he had obtained from the custom house during our absence, began to fill a blank bill of sale of the vessel, and having done so, proceeded with a bill of sale of the cargo, according to the entry that had been made.

In twenty minutes from the time the acceptance was made, the transfer was effected, and the custom house deputy collector, who had been induced to remain long after business hours, had taken the documents to his office for record. While he was gone

Seymour requested the late captain to write a letter of introduction to the new officers of the vessel, which he begged piteously to be let off, finally agreeing to introduce us, in person. And as the papers, duly recorded, were handed us from the custom house, we bade good day to the polite judge, telling him we would call in the morning and make settlement with him, and that with his permission, which he readily granted, the charge against Captain Darnford was withdrawn.

During all these proceedings, the friends of the captain had been perfectly silent, but now they broke forth.

"You mean, contemptible skunk, what do you mean by cavorting round as you have?"

"Kick him!" shouted another.

"Steamboat him out of town," the next said. And there seemed for a moment that there would be serious trouble.

But the sheriff who had accompanied us said, "Steady, gentlemen; this man must go aboard the vessel and complete this business, otherwise you interfere with the injured man, and I must protect both."

For Jack Hays to speak protection, was sufficient safeguard for any one; for he certainly had a neat trick of enforcing the law with a dexterous pistol shot that generally carried full conviction of the earnestness of his remarks. So the principal merchant said, "All right, Hays, we only feel mad at the skunk in taking us in so; finish up the work, and we will wait on the gentleman on the vessel to-morrow at two, to purchase the cargo; that being what called us there to-day." And bidding us good-evening, they left us to go our way.

We soon found the ship's boat, and were quickly off in the stream; and going on deck were met by the second officer, who was directed by the captain to call the chief mate and others as quickly as possible. And they having come on deck, he gravely introduced Mr. Seymour as owner of the whole. Somewhat surprised they looked around to find the meaning of it, and were still more perplexed to hear Seymour say, "Order the boat again, mate, and land the captain."

"You do not mean to let me land as I am?" said the unfortunate man. "I must get my clothes and private things from my cabin."

"You have no private things on my ship," said Seymour with savage emphasis on the word my. "And you had better start at once."

"I haven't a five dollar piece in the world with me; my money is all below," shrieked the miserable man.

"Just so; I hadn't a cent when you landed me, and so we are even. But captain, you are making yourself ridiculous with your crew."

"Curse your soul!" he muttered, as he passed over the side into the boat. "If I catch you ashore, we'll have it out man for man."

"Start along, or I'll kick you," said Seymour. And rather helping the unfortunate man over, as the boat disappeared, he told the officers and crew who were now all assembled, and to whom the affair seemed strange, that the vessel and cargo had been stolen from him by the rascally captain who had left him with cannibals to perish, but from whom he had escaped and now reclaimed his own.

Three hearty cheers followed the explanation, and we then went below. There for an hour we examined the captain's state-room, finding, among other things, over five thousand dollars in gold. The vessel was fitted gorgeously, and Seymour was now rich enough.

It would be needless to say that he gave me command of her at extra wages, and that after selling the cargo, which brought him over two hundred thousand dollars, the owner, in whose sanity I began to believe, fitted her for a second trip to the Fejees, to redeem his promise and deliver the fair juggler to freedom.

The week before we sailed I took up the "Daily Ingot," and read in its columns:

"MURDER AT THE BELLA UNION.—A man was shot in a fracas at the Bella Union last night, who lately came here in command of a splendid clipper ship, of which he was the owner. He was arrested on a grave charge—what we cannot learn—and transferred the vessel and cargo at once to new owners. The transfer must have been a bona fide one, as he has been loading around dead broke ever since; and last night, intimating to a man in the notorious saloon on the Plaza, that his mother was of canine origin, received a pistol shot in the head, killing him instantly. The murderer escaped."

"And so ends Darnford," I said.