

Brandon's Daughter

NO, I'VE NEVER been shipwrecked, nor been in collision all the time I've been to sea—a matter now of over forty years. But I've carried some queer passengers in my time. I'll tell you about two who exercised a powerful influence over me; but whether for good or evil you shall hear presently.

It was in the fall of '72, just when on the eve of sailing, that an old gentleman stepped on board, and hurriedly approached me. He was a tall, spare man, with iron gray hair, and had a slight stoop at the shoulders.

"Good day, captain," said he, "I only heard this morning that you were sailing for England, and hastened to see you. As it happens, you are only a few days from home, and I have accommodation for myself and daughter at so short notice.

"Certainly," I replied, in my hearty way; "I shall only be too pleased to take you. As it happens, there are only three passengers booked this trip, and they are second class, so you can have the saloon pretty much to yourselves."

He thanked me effusively, and disappeared into the saloon. I waited a while, and wondered where the daughter was to come from, for she was not visible anywhere.

I gave instructions to the apprentices to have their luggage conveyed on board, and myself hurriedly ascended the stairs to the two best appointed cabins of the ship. While so engaged, I heard a light footfall behind me, and, turning around, I beheld the fairest vision of loveliness that ever brightened my saloon.

"My daughter—Captain," I stammered, said Mr. Brandon, introducing us.

I was so taken aback by her exceeding beauty that I awkwardly touched my cap, and, with the wind clean out of my sails, stammered:

"Glad to see you, miss."

She placed her soft little white hand into my big, sun-browned paw, and, looking me squarely in the face out of her laughing blue eyes, said:

"I'm sure we shall be good friends, captain, during the voyage. I was in Arlington, Virginia, and it seems he embezzled large sums of money belonging to the bank to speculate with. Of course, he meant to replace it before the audit, when the deficit would have been discovered. But he lost it, and that is why he fled the country."

"Is that all," said I, with a sigh of relief. "It's bad enough, certainly, but I fall to see that in itself it forms a sufficient barrier to our union."

"But that is not the worst. My father is convinced that the police may have traced him to Melbourne, and to this ship. He declares he will be arrested on landing."

"Nothing more likely," I thought. But I remarked casually, "Has he any plan to suggest?"

"Yes, ah, yes, if you will only assist him. But it seems to be horrible to contemplate. He says it is his only chance of escape."

"That he should die and be buried at sea," she responded with a perceptible shiver.

"I don't understand."

"He proposes to feign death. Then, after he has been sewn up for burial, we must find means to liberate him and substitute something else."

The starting object of the proposal fairly took my breath away. If discovered, the consequences to me in aiding and abetting a felon to escape would be disastrous. I resolved to have nothing to do with such a criminal proceeding, but a look of anxiety from those fearful eyes made me father in my resolution.

"For my sake," she murmured, pleadingly, placing her fair, white hand on my arm.

Her touch thrilled me. I hesitated no longer, but gave an unwilling consent. Ah, what folly will not a man commit when in love!

Next day it was reported that Brandon was seriously indisposed. I took out the medicine chest as in duty bound, and ordered the cabin steward to attend him. Three days later Mr. Brandon was reported dead.

When I was informed of this I entered his cabin. He was lying in the under berth, pale and motionless as a statue. I felt the body to be cold and rigid. If this were death, he attempted it to perfection. I sent for the sailmaker, who sewed the body up in my presence. When his task was completed I dismissed him, and, securing the cabin door inside, with a sharp

knife ripped open the stitches. My hand shook painfully. What if he were really dead?

I confess to experiencing a singular feeling of relief when the cold, dead eyes opened, and the resuscitated Brandon sat up. I administered some brandy, which helped to revive him. He quickly and noiselessly dressed himself. Then he produced from an American trunk a dummy figure which he had previously procured and weighted, and inclosed it in the shroud. This he sewed up with his own hands. Not a word was spoken by either of us. When all was completed I stepped out to reconnoiter. Seeing the coast clear, I signalled him, and he crept swiftly across the passage into his daughter's cabin, where he concealed himself.

In the first dog watch of the same afternoon, the bell commenced to toll its solemn knell for the funeral of Anthony Brandon. Officers, crew and passengers stood round me with heads uncovered as I read from the Book of Common Prayer the beautiful and impressive burial service. God forgive me, it was an awful mockery. I don't know how I got through with it. Afterward I heard it commented that I was much affected during the service. Heaven knows I was, but 'twas with guilt and fear.

After the funeral Brandon returned to his own cabin, which was kept constantly locked, and the key of which I retained in my possession. With my convenience Alice smuggled food to him from day to day.

About two weeks afterward, while proceeding up the channel under all sail, we were halted by a tug, Antelope, slipping down the companionway, and conveyed Brandon to my own cabin for concealment. When I got on deck again, I was just in time to see a stout, well-groomed party clambering over the vessel's side. Without any preliminaries he brusquely demanded:

"Got a passenger by the name of Brandon on board?"

"I had, stranger; I had."

He gazed at me intently.

"Come along, sir," I said.

As we descended, he explained that he was a detective in pursuit of Brandon, who had absconded from Australia a considerable sum of money and valuable negotiable securities. When he had produced his warrant, he ordered the mate to fetch the baggage. Under date the 15th of January, he read this entry:

"Buried at sea in lat. 35 degrees 49 minutes N., longitude 33 degrees 16 minutes W. Anthony Brandon, aged 45, passenger. Cause of death unknown."

He muttered something under his breath which was quite unintelligible to me. Then he demanded to see Brandon's effects. I led the way into his cabin. He ransacked every trunk and portmanteau, but not a vestige of paper or anything of value did he discover. The expression on his face when he left the ship some hours later was not particularly pleasant.

When we arrived in the dock at London I smuggled Mr. Brandon ashore in one of his daughter's trunks after they had been searched by the customs officer. No one in the ship ever suspected the truth. Their secret remained alone with me.

It was arranged that Alice and I should be married quietly before setting out on my next voyage, and our honeymoon was to be spent on the bosom of the deep. When we parted that night she promised to communicate with me when her father had recovered some quietude in his country. She kept her promise. Here is the letter. I have preserved it all these years. It has neither superscription nor signature:

Dear Old Captain—Many thanks for all your kindnesses. My husband and I—Mr. Brandon is my husband, though it was not known in Arlington—will never forget them. Pray forgive the deceit we found it expedient to practice on you in order to carry out our plan. We are in fairly affluent circumstances, and my husband did not lose the money. I am, as I thought it necessary to tell you, Dear Captain, I know I can rely upon you for your own sake, not to inform the authorities of my husband's escape. As he died at sea, we expect to live forever, untroubled by the bank officials or the police. Good-bye for ever.

And that was the end of my romance. No, I never heard anything more about them. Whether they lived to enjoy their ill-gotten gains, or whether they didn't, I cannot say. This I do know, she was the first woman that ever fooled me, and, by heaven, she was the last. I never gave another the chance—Tit-Bits.

FRANKLIN AND GEORGE III.

The British King's Attempt to Change the Laws of Nature.

"Franklin as a Scientist" is the September chapter of the "Merry Science" Century studies of "The Merry Science" Franklin. It contains this anecdote: A powder magazine in Europe having been exploded by lightning, the British board of ordinance requested the Royal Society to recommend the best method for removing the remains at Purfleet from such a danger. The society appointed a committee of five, of which Franklin was one, to prepare a report, and they recommended Franklin's system. But from member Benjamin Wilson, dissented so far as to advocate the use of blunt, and not pointed, ends to the rods. The latter were adopted, and Wilson "arrogant" published two pamphlets, so Franklin states, "reflecting on the Royal society, the committee and myself, and some asperity." To this Franklin made no reply. "So this Franklin made no reply," he explained, "I have never entered into any controversy in defense of my philosophical opinions; I leave them to take their chance in the world. If they are right, truth and experience will support them; if wrong, they ought to be refuted and rejected. Disputes are apt to sour one's temper and disturb one's quiet. I have no private interest in the reception of my inventions by the world, having never made nor proposed to make the least profit by any of them."

His friend Ingenhousz, however, took up the controversy, and was, so Franklin laughingly noted, "as much heated about this one point as the Jansenists and Molinists were about the five." There the matter would, no doubt, have ended had not a new antagonist entered the field. George III, having good cause to dislike Franklin's political opinions, sought to discredit his scientific ones by ordering the substitution of blunt for pointed ends on New Castle. Such was his desire to prove Franklin in error that he asked Sir John Pringle to give an opinion in favor of the change, only to receive the reply that "the laws of nature were not changeable, a royal pleasure." It was then intimated to him by the king's authority that a president of the Royal society entertaining such an opinion ought to resign, and he resigned accordingly, at the same time being deprived of his position as a physician to the king, with all favor in court circles, so that he was forced

to leave London and live in extreme poverty. Franklin, unwitting of the injury it had brought his friend, asserted that the king's action was "a matter of great importance to add; if I had a wish about it, it would be that he had rejected them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of heaven that he dared to use his authority in destroying his innocent subjects." However, the court might side with the king, the wits did otherwise, and one of them produced an epigram well worth quotation:

While you, great George, for safety hunt,
And sharp conductors change for blunt,
The nation's out of joint,
Franklin a wiser course pursues,
And all your thunder furies views,
By keeping to the point.

DUTCH WORDS COMMON.

Sense and Sound of Some Terms Frequently Seen in Dispatches.

From the New York Tribune.

Matters in South Africa are fast approaching a point where the average newspaper reader will need a little more than the average knowledge of Dutch words to understand what is going on, and of Dutch pronunciations to talk about it without confusion and mutual misunderstanding. It might seem strange to Paul Kruger that the citizens of this originally Dutch settlement should be in any doubt as to the pronunciation of Dutch words; but then if you come to that, the very lineal descendants of the New York Dutch do not always know how to pronounce the names they have inherited, in which strange ignorance they are distanced by the Irish-Americans, who often turn O'Meara into O'Heer and Mahoney into Ma-ho-ney in two generations.

What mistakes the English-speaking New Yorker in the language of the Boers is its similarity in spelling to German. The confusion is increased by an occasional oversight of the London transmitters of Transvaal news, substituting, e. g., the German "sein" for "zijn," the Dutch for "zijn."

It looks as if the Dutch were biologically akin to German more than to English. Dutch and Flemish belong in one group of the Teutonic languages (Low Dutch); German is the only surviving written language of the other group (High Dutch). This once understood, it is not very difficult, especially if one has read a little Chaucer, or even Spenser, to guess correctly the meanings of the Transvaal names which will soon fill the European dispatches.

"Bloomfontein," for instance, pronounced "Bloom-fone-teen"—is Bloom Spring, or Flower Spring. Laing's Nek needs no explanation. Majuba—pronounced, of course, Ma-yoo-ba—is not a Dutch word, except by right of adoption and conquest, but Kaffir. A Boer general is called a "voetschoor" or "field lord." "The veld" is simply "the field"—the open country, as when it is said that an army "takes the field." The rural guard or military police of the Transvaal are the "veldwachters" or field watchers. The veld in many parts of the Transvaal is rich in copper by cliffs or ravines, which the newspaper correspondents are sure to call by the Cape name of "kloofs"—pronounced "kloofs," as, by the way, President Kruger's pet name should be pronounced "come Powel." You must take care, if you wish to do anything, to speak of Oom Paul's general, not as if Joubert was a French name, but with the pronunciation Yowbert. The members of the first and second "raads" or "ordons" of the legislature are called "jonkheeren"—pronounced "yongheeren"—and "voetschoors" and they assemble in the "rand huis," pronounced "rand hoys." The much bandied name of the individuals who are excluded from voting, spelled "Tritlander," is pronounced "Oxi-lan-der."

That part of the Transvaal territory which has been won from the "voetschoor" of Ophi and of Gledonda combined is the "rand," the word means "division" or "border line"—the line that runs or severs one state from another. "Witwatersrand" means "edge of the white water." Many of the Boer names of places are "dorps," which is neither more nor less than "thorp," the Yorkshire name for a hamlet; German "dorf." "Stad" is like the German "stadt," "acity," "Stroom," sometimes printed "strom," is "stream" or "little head" is also used for smaller emplacements.

One feature of the South African open country of which much is likely to be heard is the "measle field." The English speaking colonists often wonder as it would be in English; the Dutch pronunciation is more like "medly." It means just what it looks—a field where you get the vegetable material for a meal, which material, in those parts, is chiefly what Americans call corn and Englishmen maize. The unfortunate young Prince Imperial was killed by a measle field in the Zulul war. He had gone on reconnaissance several miles away from his "laager"—pronounced something like lah-ber—which means a camp, or, as it would be called if the hosts were a host of wild beasts, his "bayer," in modern spelling "laager." When hunters or soldiers in the veld are not in "laager," they are on the "trek" or "making tracks," as the forty-niners were in the habit of saying. And the Dutch settlers who made their trek across the Vaal river sixty-five years ago, because the British authorities suppressed their "peculiar institution" of slavery, and who have been blocking up the "trek" of advancing civilization ever since, pronounced their distinctive name "Boers," which, like the German "bauer," and the identical English word, means "rustics." It seems a little paradoxical to read of "the Boer burghers," because a "burgher" (bourgeois, or man

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TONS OF GOLD COIN.

Work Done at the United States Mint in San Francisco.

From the San Francisco Chronicle.

Ordinarily people speak of gold bullion when quantities are mentioned as so many ounces, except in San Francisco, where the receipts of gold bullion at the United States branch mint are referred to as so many tons for certain days. It sounds like an enormous boast, bordering on the fabulous, yet it is true. The receipts of gold bullion at the United States branch mint for the month of August last were 14,000 tons of the precious metal were received at the mint for coinage, while in October, 1897, the receipts for one day were six tons. That exceeds the receipts of any other mint as far as known, and shows the total coinage of the San Francisco branch mint exceed that of any other of recent years, and is still on the increase.

The coinage of the last fiscal year, ended June 30, 1899, according to the report just completed, was the largest in the history of the mint. It consisted of 12,874,215 pieces, valued at \$63,842,275. That coinage has been exceeded only in amount in the coinage history of the government on two occasions. At the mint in Philadelphia in the year 1851 some \$50,000,000 was coined, and again in the same place in 1851 something over \$56,000,000 was coined. Since then California has pushed forward and now holds the front rank for amounts.

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This was only exceeded once, as far as the records show, and that was one day in October, 1897. The deposits for the month were 955, and the coinage \$20,000,000. But six tons of gold came in one day, valued at about \$2,000,000, rating a ton at \$500,000, which is the accepted valuation. This deposit consisted largely of British sovereigns from Australia, though there was considerable Klondike gold received that day.

For the first two months of the current year the coinage was \$19,272,836, as against the corresponding two months of the last fiscal year, \$19,697,334. Nearly all the gold from the Klondike and Cape Nome has found its way of late to San Francisco. Last year the gold was sent from Seattle to Philadelphia for coinage.

Now that the bulk of the gold product of the north comes to San Francisco the best record of the output is obtainable here. On Sept. 1 of this year \$3,421,493 was deposited from that source. Since that date about \$1,500,000 more has been received at the San Francisco mint, making practically \$11,000,000 for the Klondike this season thus far. Judging from the receipts of last year, it is safe to estimate the total output for the year at \$14,000,000. If this be realized it will exceed the output of last year by \$3,000,000.

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The coinage of the last fiscal year, ended June 30, 1899, according to the report just completed, was the largest in the history of the mint. It consisted of 12,874,215 pieces, valued at \$63,842,275. That coinage has been exceeded only in amount in the coinage history of the government on two occasions. At the mint in Philadelphia in the year 1851 some \$50,000,000 was coined, and again in the same place in 1851 something over \$56,000,000 was coined. Since then California has pushed forward and now holds the front rank for amounts.

The largest amount heretofore coined in the San Francisco mint during any calendar year was in 1878, a month before the change is expected to be at least approximate that of 1898. Prior to 1878, and for the fifteen years preceding, the coinage of the San Francisco mint averaged about \$25,000,000 a year. In that year the amount took a sudden leap and went up to \$60,084,299.

The largest number of deposits for one month in the history of the mint was in August, 1899. They reached 1,253, aggregating nearly 700,000 ounces, value about \$12,500,000. For the three years prior to that time deposits averaged from \$9 to \$10 a month, which was considered very good business. The heaviest deposits for one day in that month aggregated four tons of gold. A large consignment of English sovereigns arrived that day from Australia, and were sent to the mint to be recoined; a large lot of the same coins were landed from the Klondike, while some gold came from Pacific coast mines and Mexico.

This was only exceeded once, as far as the records show, and that was one day in October, 1897. The deposits for the month were 955, and the coinage \$20,000,000. But six tons of gold came in one day, valued at about \$2,000,000, rating a ton at \$500,000, which is the accepted valuation. This deposit consisted largely of British sovereigns from Australia, though there was considerable Klondike gold received that day.

For the first two months of the current year the coinage was \$19,272,836, as against the corresponding two months of the last fiscal year, \$19,697,334. Nearly all the gold from the Klondike and Cape Nome has found its way of late to San Francisco. Last year the gold was sent from Seattle to Philadelphia for coinage.

Now that the bulk of the gold product of the north comes to San Francisco the best record of the output is obtainable here. On Sept. 1 of this year \$3,421,493 was deposited from that source. Since that date about \$1,500,000 more has been received at the San Francisco mint, making practically \$11,000,000 for the Klondike this season thus far. Judging from the receipts of last year, it is safe to estimate the total output for the year at \$14,000,000. If this be realized it will exceed the output of last year by \$3,000,000.

While the mint at Philadelphia has produced a larger number of coins

of the city is essentially distinguished from a "boer."

TONS OF GOLD COIN.

Work Done at the United States Mint in San Francisco.

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