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THE SONG OF THE WIND.

Who hath an eye to find me?
Who hath a chord to bind me?
My haunts are earth's fair forests, fields and seas.
I break the sunlight into dancing flakes,
And blur the pictured dreams of sleeping lakes.
Hither and thither going where I please.
Men see not, but they hear me;
They love me, yet they fear me.
All nature breathes and moves at my command.
Sometimes I dally with a maiden's tresses,
Or bear faint odors from far wildernesses,
Then strew with wrecks the desolated land.
Well may the seaman tremble
When I with smiles dissemble!
For ne'er a spirit had such changing moods.
From wafting heavenward the white-winged ships
Under propitious skies, I seize my whips
And lash the tempests from their solitudes.
Who hath an eye to find me?
Who hath a chain to bind me?
The vagrant roamer of the homeless sky?
Before the hoary mountains were, I lived;
For ages murmuring through their pines
Have grieved
That I alone of all things ne'er shall die.
—J. P. Ritter, Jr., in *Belford's Magazine*.

THE SOUDANESE SPY.

BY WILLIAM M. GRAYDON.

"Listen, Bruce, what's that?" and Carriston raised his hand with a gesture of silence and looked at me intently. Then we both dropped our cigars and rushed out to the door of the Embassy.

A gun-shot, plain and unmistakable, had echoed through the night air, and we certainly had heard a faint cry.

But in the dreary street all was quiet, and the solitary electric lamp reflected no shadows save our own on the pavement of the British Embassy, while the palace across the way, with its coral facades and massive carved gates, showed no signs of life.

Then a gun went off, a drum began to rattle loudly, arms clashed, hurrying footsteps echoed on the stones, and shouts were given and answered. I listened in speechless astonishment, and then rushed back for my cap and sword. It was best to be prepared, though what possible ground for alarm existed I could not see. Suakin was protected by a line of sentries that extended a mile beyond the town. No signal had come from the outskirts, yet here was this turmoil in the very midst of the European quarter.

As I hurried back to the door the great palace gates swung open and a squad of Egyptian soldiers trooped out, their swarthy faces shining under their crimson caps. Close behind them, escorted by several officers, came a tall, dignified, looking man. He was bareheaded and held an unsheathed sword in his hand.

I recognized him at first sight as Achmed Ras, the Egyptian Governor of Suakin. He glanced up and down the street and then hurried across to the Embassy.

"You are a British officer!" he said, breathless with excitement.

Captain Dugdale, of the Ninth Dragoons, at my command, Your Excellency," I said, briefly.

"Thank you. I am in need of your services. An Arab prisoner, a captured spy of the Mahdi, has made his escape. My stupid soldiers are to blame. The fellow has been gone some time now, and it is important he be retaken, for he has stolen valuable plans of the town and fortifications. I fear my soldiers can do little, but if your dragoons will scour the plain—"

"Your Excellency," I interrupted, "what you desire shall be done at once."

I mounted my horse, waved a hasty salute, and galloped off down the narrow street, leaving Achmed Ras and Carriston hobnobbing together on the steps of the Embassy, for Carriston was the British Ambassador at Suakin. The hot blood was coursing madly through my veins, for I had only been at Suakin a week, and the faintest touch of excitement was intensely welcome.

I remembered, too, having seen this escaped Arab only a few days previous, when he was being led captive through the streets of the town—a great black giant, with muscular, brawny limbs and his black locks dangling in curls down his shoulders.

I spurred rapidly through the town, crossed the peninsula to the mainland, where the troops were quartered side by side with the native population, and soon the bugle call to arms was floating out on the night air, and the jingling of spurs and the trampling of hoofs were heard on all sides. A few brief, concise orders and we galloped out onto the desert and scattered over the sandy plain. Chances were in our favor, for the moon was coming up slowly, and the enemy's outposts,

where alone the Arab could find safety, were at that time three miles beyond the town.

Not a stone or bush or a mound of sand escaped scrutiny. The men were widely scattered, clinging far to the north and to the south and drawing steadily nearer to the enemy's lines.

I galloped straight across the plain, closely attended by a solitary trooper, a brave fellow named Tom Fraser. I kept as far as possible in the direction I judged the fugitive had taken and I hoped to have the pleasure of capturing him myself, for the trampling of my horse was muffled by the drifted sand and would not betray my approach until I should be close upon him.

A mile and a half from the town lay a belt of deserted intrenchments from which the enemy had been driven a month or so previous. As we approached these we slackened our speed and began to look for a suitable crossing place. The British shells had leveled them in places, and one of these points we soon found, a break in the trench with a gentle slope on either side. We rode slowly down into the hollow, and as our horses were commencing to ascend again Fraser suddenly tugged fiercely at my arm.

"Look, Captain, look!" he whispered excitedly, and as I followed the range of his outstretched hand I saw a sight that made my heart leap. Off to the south extended the trenches in one unbroken formation, their mounds of sands rigid and exact, and outlined sharply in the moonlight against the right hand wall of earth was a swiftly moving shadow. Even as we looked the specter vanished around a curve and we saw it no more.

We pulled our horses' heads round and dashed down the trench side by side, for it was fully wide enough for three horsemen to ride abreast.

We thundered on in silence. I clutched the reins tightly with one hand and with the other I held my saber. The Arab was unarmed and I would take him alive, I thought, and lead him back in triumph to Suakin. This all passed through my mind in an instant and then we galloped round the curve and saw our prey in full view before us. He was struggling along painfully and limping as though one leg was hurt. The moon shone full upon him, and to my surprise I saw that he carried a great shield and one of those enormous double-edged swords which these Arabs use with such terrible effect. He had doubtless found them in the trench.

We called on him to surrender, but he never even turned until as we were close upon him he suddenly whirled around in desperation and confronted us menacingly. We drew our sabers and dashed upon him.

Just here, extending full across the trench, was a rugged depression, caused probably by an exploding shell.

This we failed to see, and, while Fraser's horse leaped it gallantly, my animal stumbled and fell, and down I went, partly beneath him.

I tried to rise, but my ankle was badly sprained, and, with a cry of pain, I dropped down behind the horse. Then I forgot every thing in what I saw going on before me. The Arab had retreated against the wall and was fiercely keeping Fraser at bay. Their swords clashed until the sparks flew, and Fraser's heavy strokes were intercepted by the Arab's leathern shield.

They fought on in silence and in the moonlight I saw the Arab's face, the eyes sparkling with hatred and the white teeth clinched in deadly determination. Clash after clash rang on the night air. Suddenly Fraser spurred on his horse and dealt a fearful blow at the Arab's exposed head, but quick as a flash the great sword flew up, and the short saber striking full and forcibly against the awful edge, broke off close beside the hilt and lay shining on the sand at their feet. What followed I can never forget. It will haunt me to my dying day.

Fraser threw up his right hand, with the broken hilt, and with the left reached for his revolver, and then, as I looked on, stupid with horror, the Arab raised his great sword aloft with both hands, and with all the force of his desperate strength he hurled it forward like a catapult.

The gleaming blade flashed the moonlight from its edge and crushed with an awful sound through poor Fraser's head, cleaving its way through the skull and between the shoulders and on down through the back until its point fairly touched the rear of the saddle.

Split in twain from head to waist the poor fellow dropped to the ground without a cry, and his plunging steel tram-

pled over the body and then galloped in mad fright down the trench.

Wholly engrossed in this awful scene, I forgot my own peril, and only realized it fully when the Arab, bracing himself against the wall of the trench, began to drag his sword out of Fraser's body. With a shudder I reached for my pistol, and grew faint for an instant when I remembered that it lay under the horse in the holster. I was wholly at the Arab's mercy. The wretch was still tugging at the sword, and seemed unable to loosen it. If only I had my pistol how nicely I could bring him down.

All at once I saw something glitter in one of Fraser's outstretched hands, and the sight of it gave me a thrill of hope. It was his revolver, which he had succeeded in grasping just before the blow fell.

If I could reach it before the Arab could extricate his sword, I was saved. If not—Fraser's fate would be mine. I gritted my teeth, seized my saber firmly and rose erect. The Arab saw me, and, with a savage imprecation to Allah he threw himself on the sword with a terrible effort. Still it clung to Fraser's body, and then, as I leaped toward him, forgetful of my sprained ankle, and flourished my sabre fiercely, he grabbed his shield and fell back a few yards, keeping on the defensive. I uttered a loud shout to intimidate him, and then bent over poor Fraser. He still held the pistol, but his grip was like iron. I gave a strong pull and then another, and just as his stiffened fingers loosened their clasp my injured ankle asserted itself and I fell heavily to one side. The wary Arab was watching his chance and before I could even turn he leaped on me like a tiger and we rolled over in the sand splashing through a pool of Fraser's crimson life-blood.

The Arab had clutched at my throat, but missed it and clasp each other's shoulders we floundered about the trench, now one uppermost and now the other. With clenched teeth, and struggling for breath we fought on desperately, knowing that one or the other must die. I could feel the Arab's hot breath upon my neck and his huge brass earrings flapping against my cheeks. I still held the pistol tightly in my left hand. If I could only get a chance to use it! Very foolishly I relaxed my grasp a brief second and in that lightning-like interval the Arab seized the advantage and fastened both his brawny hands firmly on my throat.

In vain I struggled and strove to turn, the bony fingers were pressing my wind-pipe and the hideous face was glaring into mine with a mocking smile.

I was choking, suffocating—all sense was leaving me.

Must I die thus? It was horrible. With a fearful effort, the strength that madness alone can give, I twisted the Arab sideways. My left arm was free.

My hand still clutched the pistol. I raised it with a jerk. I put the muzzle to his ear, with the last atom of strength I pulled the trigger, and as the stunning report echoed through the trench with thundering reverberations everything grew black and dim.

Attracted by the pistol-shot, they found us there half an hour later, still locked in a close embrace. My uniform was spattered with the Arab's blood. Messengers were sent to Suakin for stretchers, and while waiting the body of my desperate foe was buried where he lay in the trench, and beside him was laid my horse, whose neck had been broken in the fall. We marched mournfully back to Suakin, and the next day poor Fraser was laid to rest in the English cemetery on the shores of the Red Sea. I've been in many a skirmish with the Arabs since, but that night in the trenches outside Suakin was the closest call I ever had, and as a living remembrance I have kept that great two-edged sword which split Tom Fraser nearly in half before my very eyes.—*Leviston Journal*.

The Sea a Diver's Tool Chest.

There is a diver at Bangor, Me., who, if he had lived a thousand years ago, would have had a wonderful story to tell of water-nixies and the aid they had given him. He was under the water examining an obstruction in front of one of the Bangor wharves and wanted a pickaxe or crowbar very much but thought it would take too much time to go for them. Accordingly he resolved to make one more attempt at what he desired to do without either. He had not moved five feet along the river bottom before he stumbled over a pickaxe that some unknown mortal had at some time lost overboard. Thus equipped he finished his work without trouble.—*Leviston Journal*.

A DEN OF DEATH.

A WIRE CAGE WHICH CONTAINS 200 RATTLESNAKES.

A Man Enters and Fondles the Reptiles—Their Deadly Breath—Feeding and Washing Them—Once a Week.

I was taken to a Dime Museum on Eighth avenue, says Nym Crinkle in the *New York World*.

It was one of those shows of which we have altogether too many. A collection of human monstrosities, human frauds and human invalids, with a fringe of museum and an attempt at performance.

But in one corner on the second floor, where no sunlight ever came, and abutting the little stage where disease stalked in tinsel and to which morbid visitors came with delight, there stood a wire cage about eight square, with a movable lid, and by its side sat a rather spare young man with a turban on, made of a dirty American flag. In this cage, coiled, interlocked, writhing in convoluted masses, and darkly moving about were the two hundred rattlesnakes. They were the unmistakable crotalidae, and represented every variety of the animal that is known to our land, from the lively and cinerous prairie rattler to the scaled beast that one seldom sees except in the rocky retreats of the Alleghanies, the Catskills or the White Mountains.

The wire cage in which they were placed was not over three feet high, and when the lid was lifted it was open across one-half its top. Presently the floor-walker of the museum, who conducts the crowd from freak to freak and explains the wonders with proverbial rhetoric, approached this end of the room, and as he called the attention of the sight-seers to the den of snakes, the man with the star-spangled turban, who had been sitting on a box by the side of his cage, got up and with the utmost sangfroid lifted the lid and stepped over the wire side into the box. I noticed that he was very careful where he put his moxaceous feet, the toes of which went down very gingerly in the narrow space where there was no snake. But the moment he put his hand upon the lid to lift it the occupants of the box showed a curious activity, and there rose from every serpent the whirring cicada sound of rattles. There was an unmistakable endeavor on the part of each snake to get himself into the concentric position, which is most favorable for striking, but so interlocked and massed were they that it was not an easy matter.

The exhibitor seated himself in the centre of the box. Its inhabitants were now in a most lively condition. They squirmed and rattled, but not one of them struck at him. He picked them up, regardless of their attitudes and warnings, laid them one upon the other across his knees, put them about his neck so that the little black scaly heads came together on his chin, and hung two of the smallest over his ears, and presently he was pretty well covered with a writhing mass.

I noticed that he exercised a great deal of dexterity in picking them up. This is to say he picked them up gently, and at the same time appeared to do it carelessly. His one great care was obviously not to irritate the snake. In putting down his hands to feel for them on the floor of the cage he could not turn his head to direct the motion of his hands with his eyes, as his writhing neckerchief interfered. He therefore groped deftly about with his fingers, now collecting a snake by the head, now by the tail, and nearly every one that he lifted kept up the rattling, rather, however, in an automatic than in a vicious manner.

He remained in the cage just two minutes and thirty seconds by the watch. When he disengaged himself and slipped out he was in that condition called as "a dripping perspiration," and his pulse was abnormally high. The crowd paid no attention to him and passed on to the other wonders. So I had him alone.

I found him to be an intelligent Irishman (O'Connell is his name), and he told me that he could not stay in the cage over three minutes, because "the breaths of the snakes overcame him."

I asked him in what way he was affected. He said it made him "weak."

This is a curious and interesting point, and I am inclined to believe that this man suffered from an unconscious fear. He has been struck three times, and has escaped so far, but he never steps over the wires without a sub-consciousness that it may be the last time. That this affects him in some way I have no doubt.

Mr. O'Connell told me that he had no

fear of snakes, and never saw one that he could not handle. But this only amounts to the statement that he was not aware of any fear, and I have heard the boast before about handling serpents. Once a week he washes his pets and rubs them off gently with a whisk broom, after which they shine, he says, like a morning star. What is still more interesting, he feeds them on raw meat, and has to open their mouths and put it in, the snake of course not being disposed to seek food that is not animated. He has to put this meat into their throats, so to speak, before the act of deglutition begins.

All the information that he gave me concerning the crotalidae was correct enough. I asked him why he did not extract the fangs, and he said they would grow in again, which is true, for behind the developed fangs are the rudiments of others, sometimes as many as five. I have seen an expert Indian boy jerk the tooth out with a piece of canvas which the snake had struck. Mr. O'Connell insists that the rattlesnake never strikes unless it is irritated.

I believe this to be true. So flat a head as that of the crotalidae leaves them without any upper brain whatever. They have not even the cerebraum of a porgie.

It is idle, therefore, to look for volition in his scaly system. He furnishes the best example of the muscular automaton in the chain of animated nature and would have delighted Descartes. He is a creature of surface irritation. The whirr of a bird, the sharp crack of a bough, the tramp of a heavy foot sends the nervous current along that spine to the alarm. But the sleeping beauty might harbor him in her bosom if she were quiet.

Mr. O'Connell appears to know this from experience. Better philosophers than Mr. O'Connell have advanced it out of their inner consciousness. The crotalidae are subject to rhythm. This is the explanation of serpent charming and the explanation of Mr. O'Connell's success. The Hindoo uses the rhythm of sound. The Irishman uses the rhythm of motion. He is like a serpent himself in his motion and gesture.

Incense for Homes.

The agreeable fashion of burning pastilles and fragrant herbs in rooms that are apt to grow "stuffy" in damp weather is almost a substitute for a fire on the hearth, which purifies and cheers the whole house. Ever since the mania for Japanese decoration came in there has been a demand for the delicious pastilles, or "reeds," which are the condensation of Eastern fragrance, and their use has brought about a greater love for aromatic odors of a refined and purifying nature. The subtle sweetness permeating articles that come from China or Japan will last for years and affect the atmosphere, not merely of the room they are in, but of the entire house. There is not a Rimmel or a Lubin in Europe that can produce this intoxicating, and, if one may say so, high-bred perfume from the Orient, try as he may. A bunch of Japanese pastilles, smoldering one at a time in a little incense burner, will last several weeks, while for olfactories disliking any perfume, however delicate, a bit of gum camphor or a little stack of pine needles produces a most refreshing odor while burning. Pine needles can be gathered by the bushel and kept all winter to be thrown on coal fires in city houses or burned by themselves in one of those little chafing dishes for which Japanese art is famous.—*Chicago Herald*.

A Dog With a Record.

As a finely proportioned Newfoundland leaped out into the exercise ground of ten acres, Mr. Ireland described him as a dog with a history. "This," he said, "is champion Miro, who has won twenty-seven prizes and has never been beaten. Nobody knows his pedigree, but it is, of course, of the very best. Mr. Ben Lewis, of this city, saw him one day a few years ago, lying in front of a butcher's shop in New Orleans, and asked concerning his career. The butcher was totally unaware of the rank and value of the dog, and only knew that Miro had come to New Orleans on a ship from some foreign port and had deserted the vessel there. In the few months that he had been in New Orleans Miro had made a great record in saving the lives of drowning people in the Mississippi River.—*Philadelphia Record*.

Miss Caroline King, a young Boston artist, was offered \$300 to make a series of designs representing the industries of women. She wanted the money, but when she found the pictures were to ornament cigarette packages, she refused the contract.

FUN.

"Do you want to buy this hand-book?" "Do you call that ponderous quarto a hand-book?" "Certainly; it's a work on palmistry."—*Life*.

Railroad Patron—"Why don't you have a clock here?" Station Agent—"Got tired telling people it was right."—*New York Tribune*.

"What cruel luck! Just as I had made up my mind to be an out-and-out pessimist, this joy must needs come in the way."—*Fliegende Blaetter*.

Wife—"Where shall we hide the silver while we are away?" Husband—"Put it in the pockets of your dresses in the closet."—*Harper's Bazar*.

Teacher—"Name some of the most important things existing to-day which were unknown 100 years ago." Tommy—"Us."—*Terre Haute Express*.

"I want to write a letter to the Secretary of the Navy. Shall I address him as 'Your Excellency?'" "Oh, no; use the term, 'Your Warship.'"—*Life*.

The maid you meet in Fashion's whirl, That you'd ne'er try to woo, Is just the very kind of girl Your mother picks for you. —*Life*.

Old Lady (to elevator boy)—"Little boy, do you go up in this elevator all day?" Little Boy—"No, ma'am. I come down the other half."—*Philadelphia Times*.

A. (somewhat illiterate)—"I read something in a paper about idiots. Are they human beings?" B.—"Certainly; they are human beings like yourself."—*Texas Siftings*.

"This heading, 'French Duel—A Man Hurt,' doesn't fill out the line by about three-quarters of an inch," sung out slug 47. "Fill out the line with exclamation points!" thundered the foreman.—*Chicago Tribune*.

Mr. Lytewaiter—"Miss Hightone, how do you like my painting, 'Columbus Discovering New York Bay?'" Miss Hightone—"Oh, the painting is lovely; but didn't you forget to paint in the Statue of Liberty?"—*Time*.

FISHERMAN'S LUCK.

A city young man had a lingering wish To tickle his palate with something delicious, So got him a tackle and went out to fish, Believing the time and the region auspicious; But returned empty handed and weary at night— Said luck was capricious, For fish were the only things that didn't bite. —*New York Herald*.

America's Worst Penmen.

The most celebrated exponent of bad penmanship in America was Rufus Choate, the great Boston lawyer, whose signature has been aptly compared to "a gridiron struck by lightning," and whose handwriting was, in many cases, absolutely undecipherable, even by the writer himself. On one occasion Mr. Choate was having his house repaired, and made arrangements to have a carved mantelpiece put up, promising to send the model. Failing to obtain one to suit him, he wrote to his workman to that effect. The carpenter, after studying the missive—which looked as if a spider wading in ink had crawled across the paper—at length concluded that it must be the desired plan, and forthwith began fashioning probably the most original mantelpiece that ever ornamented a room. This story is almost equal to that told of the great Napoleon, who was such a wretched writer that it is said his letters from Germany to Josephine were at first taken for rough maps of the seat of war.

It is related of the late Dean Stanley that a short time before his death he was invited by the editor of one of the New York magazines to contribute an article to its pages on some timely topic. The paper was promptly written and duly received, but, to the consternation of the editor, no one could be found who was able to decipher the handwriting. Finally, in despair, the editor was obliged to return the manuscript to England, to be rewritten for publication. In fact, the good Dean, like Choate, did not write, out made a few arbitrary strokes with a pen on paper.

No mention of remarkable penmen would be complete which did not include the name of Horace Greely, whose chirography was once tersely described by a new compositor in the *Tribune* office in the savage remark, liberally interspersed with profanity: "If Belshazzar had seen his handwriting on the wall he would have been more terrified than he was."—*Globe-Democrat*.

The fortune of the richest man in New South Wales, Sydney Burdekin, began in pawnbroking. He is worth several millions of dollars.