

Choice Literature.

THE LOVERS OF MADEIRA.

The island of Madeira is one of the world's paradises. Earth contains no fairer spot, nor is there anywhere any climate more soft and genial. Once on a time it was my lot to pass seven or eight months in that lovely isle; and as I look back to those days of roving and idling among the valleys and graves of that magical isle, where the trade wind from the sea ever cools the air and wafts the murmur of the surf on the shore at the foot of the mighty cliffs, they seem to have been literally days in a land of dreams.

In one of my cruises around the island I arrived one evening at the charming village of Machico, which lies at the bottom of a sheltered cove. The sun was setting and threw a mantle of gold over the landscape. In the purple shadow of the hills nestled the thatched cottages of the fishermen and peasants, and the mellow ring of the chapel bell floated on the calm evening air.

We drew the boat on the beach and my men found me a comfortable room for the night near the water where the music of the sea could soothe to healthful slumber. As we were preparing the evening meal a fisherman's boy brought some red mullets just out of the sea. After a capital meal I strolled to the water side where there was an old fort. The muzzles of the rusty cannon were overgrown with spiders' webs, a circumstance which seemed to add to the peacefulness of the scene. And there I reflected on the legend which had given the name of Machico to that spot. Centuries had come and gone since the day when Roger Machim had landed there; but I seemed to see him there, with his lady love under the dense shade of the primeval forest, and their ship riding in the bay, the first, perhaps, which had ever been there since the creation of the world.

It was way back in the reign of King Henry the Seventh, of England, in the fifteenth century that those things happened of which I am writing. Anna d'Arfet, or Dorset, as some call her name, was the daughter of a titled gentleman whose manor was in the south of England, near the sea. She was attractive and beautiful, and of a romantic turn of mind. Ladies who fall in love with men below their station may be supposed to have more sentiment than love of fortune and display. Among the retainers of her father was a youth named Roger Machim. From all accounts he was handsome and chivalrous in his bearing, but of a family inferior to hers. Therefore when her parents discovered that Roger loved their daughter and that she ardently returned his affection, they at once frowned on his suit and sternly forbade the lovers to meet. The haughty parents had other plans and more ambitious schemes for their daughter. Roger was dismissed with disdain, and ordered to keep his distance from the castle.

Love laughs at locks and keys, it is said by those who seem to know something about it. At any rate it proved so in this case. By the means of a trusty friend Machim contrived to communicate with his lady love. I have no opinion to express as to her conduct in corresponding with him after the express commands of her parents, because I am not acquainted with all the circumstances, and the history does not give her age. It is sufficient to know that a busy correspondence was secretly carried on which resulted in a plan for her elopement. Judging from the grim and determined character of the lady's father, Machim was convinced that it would be useless for them merely to fly to some other part of England. Sooner or later they would be discovered, and he would be slain, while the lady would be forcibly carried home to end her days in despair.

It was, therefore, decided to fly to the coast and there take ship for France. Anna confided the secret to one of her maids, who succeeded in winning a trusty family servant to the lady's cause. Without such aid it would have been well-nigh impossible to put the plan into execution. It is a sad and serious undertaking for a young woman to forsake her home, perhaps forever; it was doubly so in those olden times, when the means of travel were difficult, and to go to France was more hazardous than it is now to go to the ends of the earth.

But having once decided the lady did not hesitate. Her lover, with horses saddled and bridled, was waiting in a little wood hard by. It was dead of night when Anna d'Arfet, with her maid, stole softly down the dark staircase and through the winding corridors to the postern gate, where the old servant was waiting to turn the lock. They stepped forth into the cloudy, windy night, and crossed the moat and the drawbridge. Then the lady paused an instant and took a last look at the battlements of her father's house. At that moment a dismal owl on a turret gave a mournful hoot, like the note of a fateful doom. The lady shuddered, dashed a tear from her eyes, drew the mantle about her, and fled forever from her home.

Roger Machim was waiting in the wood with his attendants. Lightly she sprang on her horse, and then the cry was "To spur and away!"

Bristol was the nearest port. The record does not say whether Machim chartered a ship expressly for this voyage, or engaged passage on one that was about to sail. At any rate the ship was their waiting, and set sail as soon as the lovers arrived. She was very different from the ships we now use, and was what they called a galley. She had a very high bow and stern, towering far above the water, and tapering toward the top. This made the galley look top-heavy; but she was very broad at the water-line and was deep; qualities which made her sea-worthy. The cabin was a small, stuffy apartment, without staterooms or berths. The beds were spread on the deck. The entire ship reeked with the smell of tar and pitch and of mouldy biscuit, and salt fish and spirits. But perhaps people who went to sea in those days had stronger stomachs than they have now; at any rate, this was the only way they had of taking a voyage; the ships slow and the comforts none. It was little consolation to those who were tossed in such a tub as that to know that the stern was profusely decorated with gilded carvings or that a rank tallow taper was ever burning before the picture of the Virgin Mary at one end of the cabin.

The galley had three short masts and three sails on yards hoisted from the deck, and she had an abundance of long streamers. The captain and crew were coarse but picturesque figures, heavily bearded and brown with fighting the rough sea. They knew the way to France, or Holland, or Spain, although rarely sailing as far as Spain; but of aught south of

it they knew little if anything, and absolutely nothing of what was westward. America had not yet been discovered, and the Atlantic was to them a vast, vague mystery.

To the poor lady, flying from home, and now for the first time on the sea, everything was so sad and strange and wild. Although they told her that in three or four days at farthest they hoped to land in sunny France, yet her heart was full of fears and many a time she longed to be once more safe in the home she had left behind. But the die was cast. Even if they had been willing to return for her sake the winds were now contrary, and there was nothing to do but to keep on.

But it soon became a question whether they should be able even to reach France. It was now the season of storms, the wild month of October verging on winter, and the clumsy little galley was but ill-fitted to battle with head winds and storms. It needed no barometer to tell the crew and passengers of the galley that heavy weather had set in for good. The white gulls darted swiftly round the ship over the foaming crests, the stormy petrels followed in the wake and hour by hour the surges and angry green swelled higher and higher and tossed the little ship like an egg-shell, now toward the leaden sky and now with a swift rush into the watery abyss.

Yes, it began to be a question at last not whether they should reach France, but whether they would ever again see land or make a port.

Day after day the galley scudded under a rag of canvas before the furious, howling northeaster, rolling her gunwales under and shipping tons of water that threatened to send her to the bottom. Every timber creaked and groaned, and every man on board vowed candles to the Virgin or promised to do penance at the first shrine to which they should come, if only heaven would bring them safe to land. They had no charts of the regions toward which they were heading. One day through the mist the high coast of Spain was seen off Cape Finisterre. Then they knew they were across the Bay of Biscay, and began to hope the fury of the storm might slacken. Never in all their experience had the bold captain and his pilots encountered such weather. But the storm continued and still the galley sped southward; the winds grew warmer and the skies more blue, but the wind held and the surges seemed higher than ever. One of these surges swept off the captain and several of the crew.

At last the wind moderated, and the sea began to grow more peaceful. Every one was exhausted to the last degree; they knew not where they were, and their best navigator had been lost. While they were debating what course to take, a sharp-sighted old salt at the mast-head shout "Land ho!"

Every one sprang on deck. It was a surprise to every one on board, for no one had ever seen or even heard of land in that quarter. Poor Anna d'Arfet crept out from her couch and, leaning on the arm of Roger, gazed wistfully at the gray form which rose like a mist above the sea. A mass of clouds brooded over the summit of the lofty mountains, which gradually took shape as the galley drifted toward this unknown land. Passing around a long, lofty, rocky cape the ship came under the tremendous precipices of this newly-discovered coast, and her crew gazed amazed on the dense forests which grew to the water's edge, and the cataracts which, as if from the clouds, dropped to the sea.

But lovely and grand as was this sublime solitude, and pleasant as it was to see land once more, yet Roger Machim was not without fear; for the new land might be peopled by savages and cannibals, or monsters, such as disturbed the imagination of the men of those days; and his conscience smote him, as if he felt that Providence had brought a punishment on them all for leading that fair young girl from her English home.

The galley dropped anchor at the entrance of an enchanting, retired cove, called from that time Machico, after Roger Machim. The water was deep and beautifully blue and clear; it was like molten turquoise. The bottom of the ship could be distinctly seen from the surface as she floated there, and it looked for all the world as if it were made of solid turquoise; the fish that darted under the keel also looked like turquoise fish. Never on the coast of England had they seen any such lovely effects in the water as one sees at Madeira. Tenderly they assisted the sick and careworn lady over the ship's side into the boat, and rowed her ashore. She was, perhaps, the first woman who had stepped foot on that most witching of all the isles of the sea. They were, perhaps, the first human beings who ever trod on the yellow sands of that solitary paradise.

A clearing was soon made amid the forests that came to the shore, and a tent was soon spread out of an old sail. All were exhausted, with anxiety, hardship and despair. But at last they seemed to have found a haven of repose where they could rest, gather strength and collect provisions to enable them once more to set sail for sunny France. They soon found that there were no savages, that in fact they were the only souls in that insular solitude, and that neither wild beasts nor poisonous reptiles were there to disturb them.

Anna d'Arfet, with her maid and Roger Machim, remained on shore with part of the crew; the rest of the crew kept on board to look after the ship. Everything promised well, and all went merry as a marriage bell. It seemed as if the lovers had found an ideal haven for their retreat, such as the poets sing of in their romantic dreams. Generally it is like that the year round at Madeira. But the fates seemed against poor Anna and her devoted lover, and the season seems to have been unusually inclement. On the third day after anchoring at Machico their hopes were sadly dashed when they saw another storm gathering and heard the wind moaning among the woods and rolling great rollers on the shore.

When the men on board of the galley saw the peril in which they were they slipped the cable and ran out to sea, hoping to come back with the return of fair weather; but they never returned, nor was the galley ever heard of again.

It is easy to imagine the terror and despair which came upon the fugitives left on the solitary island when they saw their ship driven to sea. The lady immediately began to droop again. In vain poor Roger attempted to cheer her with hopes that the galley would yet come back and take them home again. She saw too well in the wan face and lustreless eyes of her lover that he had no hope of leaving this island of exile. And there she died with his name on her lips. Scarcely had they laid her away in a grave a little removed from the shore than poor Roger Machim also yielded to his doom. His heart was broken, and in two days more the survivors folded his hands on his breast and laid him beside Anna d'Arfet.

After waiting long in vain for the galley to return the three or four sailors who were left on the island fitted up the small

ship's boat left with them, and started on the desperate undertaking of finding a way home, at least by falling in the track of some ship. The wind wafted them to the coast of Africa. There they were picked up by a Moorish corsair, which was cruising to attack Christian ships. These English sailors, on arriving at a port, were thrown into prison where a number of other Christian captives were already lingering in chains. Among them were some Portuguese mariners, who learned from the English captives of the island which they had discovered in so unexpected a way. After years the Portuguese mariners were ransomed and returned to Portugal. At Lisbon they met Zarco, a brave navigator at that port. To him they related the strange story learned from the English sailors. It was a period of discovery, and the Portuguese were among the foremost in leading the search for new lands. Zarco at once fitted out a ship and found the island of Roger Machim, which he took possession of for the King of Portugal, and called the island Madeira, because of its remarkable verdure. A chapel was built over the grave of Anna d'Arfet and Roger Machim, which still stands at Machico. The discovery of the island of Madeira has been of great use to the world; and thus we see again illustrated in its history the great fact—that man proposes but God disposes.—S. G. W. Benjamin in *The Independent*.

THE SONG OF THE LAURENTIDES.

Here from the dawn of creation,
Shot from the womb of the earth,
Waiting the sound of a nation
Noble and strong from its birth;
Winters and summers unnumbered
Passed us with ceaseless refrain,
Wakened us not as we slumbered,
Swept to their shadowy main—

Sandalled our feet with their roses,
Girdled our loins with their snows,
Robed us with fir that encloses
Limbs in their matchless repose;
Storms gathered round us and thundered,
Bolts at our helplessness hurled—
Firmly we stood, as we wondered,
Here from the birth of the world.

Calmly we gaze on the river
Forced through the gorge in a spray,
Chafing, with ceaseless endeavour,
Granite foundations away;
Spread in a crystal beneath us
Mirroring features our own,
Crowned with the clouds that enwreath us,
Tint blending tint into tone.

Fires assailed us with passion,
Scorched in their withering might—
Heard we the hoary pines crash on
The brow of some far distant height;
Soon came the summers renewing,
Grass-blade and leaf on the plain,
And, all our nakedness viewing,
Clothed us with verdure again.

Races of savages hunted,
Fought by the swift-flowing tide,
The riddle of life here confronted,
Lived to their knowledge and died;
Fell, as the leaves in November,
Where ere the north wind hath blown,
Burnt to the crisp of an ember,
After the summer is flown.

Here we are resting, reposing,
Till our long life day is done,
And, all his secrets disclosing,
Time says the victory's won;
Here we shall be when the angel
Summons the dead to arise,
Peals out the last great Evangel,
Down through the slopes of the skies.

—K. L. Jones, in *The Week*.

THE plush, velvet, and silk hangings must go. Seats must be covered with smooth leather that can be washed off, carpets give place to rugs, to be shaken in the open air at the end of every trip—better still, abolished for hard wood floors; the curtain abomination must make way for screens of wood or leather, the blankets of invalids' beds be subjected to steam at a high temperature, mattresses covered with oiled silk, or rubber cloth that may be washed off, and, above all things, invalids provided with separate compartments shut off from the rest of the car, with the same care which is taken to exclude the far less offensive or dangerous smoke of tobacco; cuspidors half filled with water, and consumptive travellers provided with sputum cups which may be emptied from the car. It is not necessary here that the sole and only danger lies in the sputum. The destruction of the sputum abolishes the disease. When the patient learns that he protects himself in this way as much as others—protects himself from auto-infection, from the infection of the sound part of his own lungs—he will not protest against such measures.—Dr. I. W. Whitaker in the *American Lancet*.

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