

I became suddenly extremely delighted with my company. A man who "lived by his sword," before my eyes, close at my elbow! So such people did exist in the world yet! I had not been born too late! And across the table with his air of watchful, unmoved benevolence, enough in itself to arouse one's interest, there was the man with the story of a shipwreck that mustn't be shouted on housetops. Why?

I understood very well why, when he told me that he had joined in the Clyde a small steamer chartered by a relative of his, "a very wealthy man," he observed (probably Lord X, I thought), to carry arms and other supplies to the Carlist army. And it was not a shipwreck in the ordinary sense. Everything went perfectly well to the last moment when suddenly the *Numancia* (a Republican ironclad) had appeared and chased them ashore on the French coast below Bayonne. In a few words, but with evident appreciation of the adventure, Mills described to us how he swam to the beach clad simply in a money belt and a pair of trousers. Shells were falling all round till a tiny French gunboat came out of Bayonne and shooed the *Numancia* away out of territorial waters.

He was very amusing and I was fascinated by the mental picture of that tranquil man rolling in the surf and emerging breathless, in the costume you know, on the fair land of France, in the character of a smuggler of war material. However, they had never arrested or expelled him, since he was there before my eyes. But how and why did he get so far from the scene of his sea adventure was an interesting question. And I put it to him with most naïve indiscretion which did not shock him visibly. He told me that the ship being only stranded, not sunk, the contraband cargo aboard was doubtless in good condition. The French custom-house men were guarding the wreck. If their vigilance could be—h'm—removed by