

THE FROZEN PLAZA.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL. (Continued.)

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SCHOONER FREE HERSELF.

All day long the weather remained sultry and still, and the swell powerful. I was on deck at noon, looking at an iceberg half a league distant when it overcast. It was a small berg, though large compared with most of the others; yet such a mighty volume of foam boiled up as gave me a startling idea of the prodigious weight of the mass.

I returned aft, barely escaping a second deluge, and looked over the quarter; no ice was there visible to me. The vessel rolled horribly, and I perceived that she had a decided list to starboard, the result of the shifting of what was her beam when the ice came away from the main with her, and it was this heel that brought the water over the bow. I took hold of the tiller to try it, but either the helm was frozen immovable or the rudder was jammed in its gudgeons or in some other fashion fixed.

I was crazy to ascertain if the schooner was taking in water. I entered the fore-cabin, lantern in hand, prised open the hatch and dropped into the hold. It needed an experienced ear to detect the sobbing of infernal waters amid the yearning gushes, the long gurgling washings, the thunderous blows, and shrewd rain-like hissings of the sea outside. I listened with strained hearing for some minutes, but distinguished no sounds to alarm me with assurance of water in the hold. I could not mistake. I hearkened with all my might, but the noise was outside. I thanked God very heartily, and got out of the hold and put the hatch down. There was no need to go aft and listen. The schooner was by the head, and there could be no water in the run that would not be forward too.

Being reassured in respect to the staunchness of the hull, I returned to the fore and proceeded to equip myself for a prolonged watch on deck. Whilst I was drawing on a great pair of boots I heard a knocking in the after part of the vessel. I supposed she had drifted into a little field of broken ice, and that she would go clear presently, and I finished arming myself for the weather, but the knocking continued, I went into the cabin where I heard it very plain, and walked as far as the lazarette hatch, where I stood listening. The noises were a kind of irregular thumping accompanied by a peculiar grinding sound. In a moment I guessed the truth, rushed on deck, and by the dim light in the air saw the tiller moving to and fro! The best of the beam seas had unlocked the frozen froons of the rudder, and there swung the tiller, as though like a dog the ship was wagging her tail for joy!

In a few moments she was dead before it, the helm amidships, the wind blowing shore over the stern with half its weight seemingly gone through the vessel's running, the tall sea chasing her high stem and floating it upwards, till looking forward was like gazing down the slope of a hill. My heart was never fuller than then. I was half crazy with the passion of joy that possessed me. The wind was south-west, the schooner was running north-east, the bulk of the iceberg lay on the starboard bow, but there were others right ahead, and to starboard, where also lay the extremity of the island, though I did not fear that it could escape the rest. It was a dark night; methinks there should have been a young moon curled somewhere among the stars, but she was not to be seen. The clouds flew dark and hurriedly, and the frosty orbs between were too few to throw a light. The ocean ahead and around was dark as the dark night; methinks there should have been a young moon curled somewhere among the stars, but she was not to be seen. The clouds flew dark and hurriedly, and the frosty orbs between were too few to throw a light.

The posture of the ice inclined the schooner's starboard bow to the billow; and in a very short time she was trembling in every bone to the blows of the surges which rolled boiling over the ice there and struck her, flinging dim clouds of spray into the air, which soon set the scuppers gushing. I croaked in the companion-way hearkening to the uproar around, feeling the convulsions of the schooner, fully prepared for death, dogged and hopeless. No, I was not a coward; suffering and expectation had brought me to that pass that I did not care. "As such an end as hundreds and thousands of sailors have met," I remember thinking; "it is the fittest exit for a pariah; I have sinned in my time, but the Almighty God knows my heart." To this time ran my thoughts. I held my arms tightly folded upon my breast, and with set lips waited for the first of those crashing and rending sounds which would betoken the ruin and destruction of the schooner.

So passed half an hour. On a sudden—in a breath—I felt the vessel rise. She was swung up with the giddy velocity of a hunter clearing a tall gate; she sank again, and there was a mighty concussion forward, then a pause of steadiness whilst you might have counted five, then a wild upward heave, a sort of sharp floating fall, a harsh gurgling along her keel and sides, as though she was being smartly warped over rock, followed by an unmistakable free pitching and rolling motion. I had sprung to my feet and stood waiting. But the instant I gathered by the movements of her that she was released I sprang like a madman up the companion-steps. The sea, breaking on her bow, flew in heavy showers along the deck and half blinded me. But I was semi-delirious, and having set so long with Death's hand in mine was in a passionately defiant mood, with a perfect rage of scorn of peril in me, and I walked right on to the fore-cabin, giving the flying sheets of water there no heed. In a minute a block of ice tumbled upon me and left me breathless; the iciness of it cooled my mind's heat, but not my resolution. I

was determined to judge as best I could by the light of the foam of what had happened, and holding on tenaciously to whatever came to my hand and progressing step by step I got to the fore-cabin and looked ahead.

Where the ice was the water tumbled in milk; 'twas four or five ship's lengths distant, and I could distinguish no more than that. I peered over the lee bow, but could see no ice. The vessel had gone clear; how, I know not and can never know, but my own fancy is that she split the bed with her own weight when the sea rose and threw the ice up, for she had floated on a sudden, and the noises which attended her release indicated that she had been forced through a channel.

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The happiest woman like the happiest nation have no history says that wonderful writer, George Eliot, but woman can be happy who is suffering from the irregularities and "weakness" common to the sex. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription will soothe nervous troubles and restore health and vigor more than any other medicine. It is a positive cure for the most complicated and obstinate cases of prostration, weak back, "female bearing-down" sensations, chronic congestion, inflammation and ulceration, inflammation, pain and tenderness, and kindred ailments.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

MIRAMICHI ADVANCE CHATHAM NEW BRUNSWICK, JUNE 13, 1889.

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CASTORIA for Infants and Children. It is so well adapted to children that I recommend it as superior to any prescription known to me. H. A. ANGELL, M.D., 111 So. Oxford St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

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Cheese! - Cheese! IN STORE AND TO ARRIVE. 2 500 BOXES Factory Cheese.

C. M. BOSTWICK & Co. 2500 BOXES Factory Cheese. For sale low in lots.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria. Castoria is so well adapted to children that I recommend it as superior to any prescription known to me.

General Business.

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