

THE CYNIC'S PRIZE NOVELISTS.

No. 1.

EVA HEAD.

A NAUGHTIGAL ROMANCE OF BEAUTY, BLOOD, AND BOOTY.

(Continued.)

CHAP. X.

"Way down South, in Dixie."—Patriotic air.

In the city of New Orleans,—home of Creoles, Ku-Klux, and Cholera-morbus,—where Levees totally different to those of Quebec notoriety and St. Sauveur fame, restrain the rolling waters of the Mississippi;—where thieves, cut-throats, and gamblers are thick as Cecils* in spoiled bacon-ham;—where bowie-knives are a necessity, and where, to be on your guard, a Colt's repeater is the only reliable kind of watch,—there is a street called the Strada di Lazzaroni.

In writing a veracious history, it is necessary to be particular, even in small details, and therefore, à la Anthony Trollope, I would call your attention to the fact that, in the thirteenth house,—a building remarkable for its combination of wealth and bad taste,—lived a family noted for their bank account and position in the city.

A. Head, Esq., to whom, as you have already guessed, this "palatial residence" belonged, was once a pea-nut vendor on the corner of this same street. Even at this early stage of his history he was noted for the extreme sagacity and business talent he displayed; and as he sold his wares to members of the Kirk and Temperance Lecturers at half price, he naturally prospered.

A great man has always his detractors, and some people, envious of Mr. Head's present success, had been heard to assert that he set aside the doubtful nuts for the above purpose. This may or may not be; at all events, he progressed rapidly, was turned out of the Corn Exchange, and, having obtained a contract with Government for the supply of orange-marmalade to the troops, he managed to combine theatre-sweepings and maple syrup with such ingenuity and profit that he soon realized a handsome fortune, bought a plantation down South, attended church regularly three times a day, brought up his children,—the result of his union with his former patroness,—a black orange-woman,—in a superior manner, and, at the date of this history, was anxiously expecting news of the arrival of his only daughter Eva, at New York, whither he had despatched her by the good barque "Dixie," registered A. r. at Lloyds, copper-bottomed, and warranted in everything except reaching her destination in safety.

Five weeks had elapsed and no news had reached them from New York. A. Head grew nervous. Another week went by, and still no news. A. Head became excited. Three more days, and A. Head telegraphed "Any news of the Dixie?" and her agents in New York replied, "No news of the Dixie!" and A. Head bowed down before Fate. Then came "A message from the Sea," and all the bereaved father said when he read it was, "The Dickens!" for the "message from the sea," which had been picked up floating in a horn, was this: "Long. 102, lat. 8, 5.30 P.M. The gong has just sounded for supper, which awaits us below. Heaven help us,

WE ARE ALL GOING DOWN!!"

CHAP. XI.

"Je vous suis, Colonel."—Grand Duchesse.

From New Orleans to New York in these days of ocean telegraph, cheap postage, bank defalcations, and all other mercies, (for which let us be truly thankful,) is but a stride, and, therefore, to New York, with your permission, I will transport you somewhat a head of Carrajo and his bride, whom we

* Query, "Wurrums?"—Ed Dro.

left on the cars rapidly approaching the Gothamite metropolis. Arrived there, Carrajo, with a prophetic anticipation, drove immediately to the *St. Nicholas*, and deposited his wife in her room; but the remembrance of Sara becoming too strong for him, he sallied out, in company with one of the "helps" of the establishment, to engage passage for himself and wife by the steamer for New Orleans. This done, he returned to the Hotel, where Eva awaited him with all the anxiety of a six-days' bride.

"Why so long away?" she asked, as his manly form loomed up in the doorway. "What was't detained thee?"

"A most important matter, my dear," replied her husband.

"Hearing that Cullen was on our track, I hurried off with all our available silver to the brokers."

A dreadful suspicion shot across Eva's mind as Carrajo spoke. There was no dog-law in New York,—had he, then, been bitten by some rabid cur? was the Chief bent on that madness which this way lies? 'Twas a terrible thought, but was speedily dismissed as he whispered an explanation:

"'Twas the only thing to do, my dear; with the police at our heels you could scarcely blame me for wanting to change our quarters."

Intensely relieved, Eva bent her head for a caress, and the remainder of the day these two turtle doves passed in each other's society, "the world forgetting—by the world forgot." Carrajo, in the morning, was of opinion that the "cooing" was immeasurably preferable to the "billing," when the clerk presented his "little account."

This done,—(how easy for a writer of fiction to "arrange that little matter!")—they drove down to the wharf in a "caleche,"—pardon me, I had forgotten that New York is a little behind Quebec in several matters, and has not yet adopted that mystery of discomfort and extortion, of which the latter city is so proud.—

They were "hacked" down, however, by an "Irish American," who showed his contempt for the Saxon race by charging them treble the correct fare, and upsetting them into an "illigant" mud-heap on the corner of a street.

The steamer in which they were to embark was one of the old style constructed of wood, and as they stepped on deck, they felt that, literally and nautically, they were at last "on board," and then they went below to arrange their effects.

An old repartee of childhood has it that, in some cases "a person's room is better than his company." Carrajo and Eva,—boxed up in a small apartment, four feet by seven, their home on the rolling deep, and countless uninvited guests practising *flautotomy* on them with the most aggravating success,—were unable to see the force of the statement, and thought that the one was as bad as the other and a great deal worse.

We are anticipating, however.

As the vessel left her dock, Carrajo, who was an enthusiastic admirer of Mark Twain, profited by one of that author's suggestions, and raising his hat to the assembled crowd, shouted in his most impressive manner, "Good-bye, good-bye, Colonel!" Two-thirds of the people on the wharf returned the salutation, and one man, who had been a Brevet Ass. Paymaster's Clerk in the U.S.A., was taken away in a carriage, and a medical man called in, who, after an examination, was reluctantly compelled to leave him to his fate. 'Twas a sad case, but nothing could save him, as he was too evidently

BURSTING WITH IMPORTANCE!!

CHAP. XII.

"—There are heads to be broke."—Bonnie Dundee.

The Sea, Vast, Illimitable,—the Land, Narrow, Cramped, Hugely-Peopled, Antithesis of Nature: thus—Victor Hugo. The sea, raging, sickening, fear-compelling,—the land, firm,