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ADVENTURE ON THE ADIGE.

(From "Solitary Walks through many Lands," by Derwent Conway.)

Those of my readers who have walked on the banks of the Adige, below Rovigo, will know that about a league, and a half from that town, there are one or two islands in the midst of the channel, between which and the shore the water is not more than a foot deep; and those who have never stirred from home have probably heard that the Adige is extremely subject to violent inundations, equally remarkable for the suddenness of their rise and fall, owing to its mountainous origin and short course.

On the evening of one of the last days of May, I arrived opposite to one of these islands. The water was as pure as crystal, gently flowing over a fine pebbly channel; the island which might be about forty yards from the shore upon which I stood, though more than double that distance on the other side, was inviting from its extreme greenness, and from a profusion of hyacinths on one side; a flower to which I am extremely partial. Three or four trees also grew upon its edge, the trunks inclining over the water, and with but few branches. After a day's walk, nothing is more agreeable than wading in a stream; and as I had sufficient time to spare, I resolved upon reaching the island.

This was soon accomplished: I found the depth nowhere exceeded two feet, and the island when I reached it, as agreeable as I had fancied it to be; and having culled a large bouquet, I lay down upon the hyacinth bank and gave myself up to those pleasant recollections of home and past scenes, which the fragrance of this flower brought along with it. I had lain I think about a quarter of an hour, entirely forgetful of time and place—a busy actor in scenes far removed by both when my attention was slightly roused by a distant sound, which I supposed at first to be thunder, a good deal having been heard to the northward in the course of the day; and when it continued, and grew louder, I still supposed it was one of those prolonged peals which are so frequent to the south of the Alps. Soon, however, the sound changed, and seemed like the sea; and as it became still louder I started up in some alarm—and what a sight met my eye!

At the distance of a few hundred yards, I saw a mountain of dark waters rushing towards me with inconceivable velocity, like a perpendicular wall, and now roaring louder than the loudest thunder. Not a moment was to be lost; the level of the island would be instantly covered, and to gain the shore was impossible—for we cannot run through water with the swiftness with which we pass over dry ground. I instantly made for the largest of the trees, and had gained an elevation of about ten feet above the island, when the flood reached it. As it came nearer, its power appeared resistless; it seemed as if it would sweep the island from its very foundations; and I entertained not a ray of hope that the trunk upon which I was seated would escape the force of the torrent. It came, and the tree remained firm—it covered the island, and all its vegetation in an instant; and I saw it rush beneath me, bearing along with it the insignia of its power and fury—huge branches and roots, fragments of bridges, implements of household use, and dead animals.

As regarded myself, the first and immediate danger of destruction was over; but a moment's reflection—one glance around me, showed that I had but small cause for congratulation. Betwixt the island and the shore, a torrent, that no human strength could withstand, rolled impetuously on; and although not fifty yards over, it would have been as impracticable an attempt to pass it, as if its breadth had been as many leagues. The first rush had left the tree unloosened, yet a second might carry it away; and the flood was still rising—almost every moment I could perceive the distance betwixt me and the water lessen; and, indeed, I was not more than four feet above its surface. I had only two grounds of hope—the most languid however, that ever was called by the name—it was possible that some person might see

my situation from the shore before nightfall, and bring others to my assistance; and it was possible also, that the river might rise no higher, and speedily subside. The first of these chances was one of very improbable occurrence, for this part of the country is but thinly inhabited—the high road did not lie along the river side, and the shore for three or four hundred yards from the channel of the river, was overflowed to the depth of probably three or four feet; and, besides, it was difficult to see in what way human aid could extricate me: no boat could reach the island; and if a rope or cord could be thrown as far, it was extremely improbable that I should catch it, as it was impossible for me to stir from the tree upon which I was seated; and as to any likelihood of the water subsiding, there was no appearance of it: it was at all events impossible that this could happen before nightfall.

In this dreadful and perilous situation, evening passed away; no one appeared, and the river still continued to rise. The sky lowered and looked threatening; the torrent rushed by, darker and more impetuous, every few moments reminding me, by the wrecks which it bore along with it, of the frailty of the tenure by which I held my existence.—The shores on both sides were changed into wide lakes; and the red sun went angrily down over waste of red waters. Night at length closed in—and a dreadful night it was. Sometimes I fancied the tree was loosening from its roots, and sloped more over the water; sometimes I imagined the whole island was swept away, and that I was sailing down the torrent. I found that my mind occasionally wandered, and I had the precaution to take out of my pocket a silk handkerchief, which I tore in several strips, and tying them together, bound myself round the middle to a pretty thick branch which supported my back; this, I thought, might prevent me from falling if giddiness seized me, or momentary sleep should overtake me. During the night many strange fancies came over me, besides that very frequent one of supposing the island sailing down the torrent. Sometimes I fancied I was whirling round and round; at other times I thought the current was flowing backward; now and then I fancied I saw huge black bodies carried towards me upon the surface, and I shrunk back to avoid contact with them; at other times I avoided something rose out of the water beneath, and attempted to drag me down; often I felt convinced I heard screams mingle with the rushing torrent, and once, all sound seemed entirely to cease, and I could have ventured almost to descend, so certain I felt that the channel was dry; one or twice I dropped asleep for a moment, but almost instantly awoke with so violent a start, that if I had not been fastened, I must have fallen from my seat.

The night gradually wore away; it was warm and dry, so that I suffered no inconvenience from cold. I became nearly satisfied of the stability of the trunk, which was my only refuge; and although deliverance was uncertain, at all events distant, I made up my mind to endure as long as I could; and thus I passed the night under a starless sky, and the dark flood roaring beneath me. Before morning broke, I felt assured that the waters had begun to subside; the noise I thought was less: I fancied I saw shrubs appear above water on the island; I then waded to the part which was dry, and lay down, exhausted with the night's watching, and aching with the position in which I had been obliged to remain.

The water now continued to fall perceptibly every moment; soon the island was entirely dry, and the inundation on shore had subsided into the natural channel; but still the torrent was too strong and deep to attempt a passage, especially, weakened as I was by the occurrences of the last twelve hours, and by the want of food. I had no certainty as to the hour, for I had not of course remembered to wind up my watch the evening before; judging from the height of the sun however, the water had so much diminished before noon, that in two or three hours more I might attempt to gain the shore. About three in the afternoon I accordingly

entered the stream: I found it then nowhere deeper than four feet, and with a little struggling and buffeting, succeeded in gaining the bank, which I once thought I should never have trodden more. The bunch of hyacinths, which I had not forgotten to bring from the island, I still held in my hand. I have dried a few of them, and kept them ever since; never do I smell this flower, as I walk through the woods or the fields, that I do not experience in part the sensations I felt when I lifted my head and saw the impetuous flood rushing towards me; and however dreadful a reality may be, the recollection of it is not unmixed with pleasure. I often open the leaves where lie these withered hyacinths, and I cannot say, that when I look upon them, I ever think they have been dearly purchased.

THE EUPHRATES EXPEDITION.

LOSS OF THE TIGRIS.

We extract the following despatch from the Supplement of the London Gazette.

"EUPHRATES STEAMER, ANAH, MAY 28, 1836.

"Sir,—It is with feelings of the deepest regret that I do myself the honour of informing you, that the Tigris steamer was totally lost, during a hurricane of indescribable violence, which after the short struggle of about eight minutes, sent a fine vessel to the bottom in five fathoms water, and deprived His Majesty of fifteen valuable men, and five natives in addition.

"A little after one, p. m., on that melancholy day, the flat boats being a little ahead, and the Tigris leading the Euphrates, a storm appeared, bringing with it, high in the air, clouds of sand from the west northwest quarter. At this moment we were passing over the rocks of Is Geria (deeply covered) and immediately after we made a signal for the Euphrates to choose a berth and make fast; which was done more as a matter of precaution, on account of our not being able to see our way through the sand, than from apprehension that the squall would be terrific. The Tigris was immediately directed towards the bank, against which she struck without injury, but with so much violence as to recoil a distance of about eight yards, leaving two men on the bank to make fast. The wind then suddenly veered round, drove her bow off, and thus rendered it quite impossible to secure the vessel to the bank, along which she was borne rapidly by the heavy gusts, her head falling into the stream, as she passed close by the Euphrates which vessel had been backed opportunely to avoid the concussion. The engines were working at full power, and every endeavour made to turn the vessel's bow to the bank. One anchor was let go, but the heel of the vessel made it impossible to get the other out, and she was then nearly broadside to the wind, with the engines almost powerless, and the waves rising to four or five feet, forced their way in at the windows. Lieut. Cockburn, the Messrs. Staunton, and some of the men made effectual attempts to keep out the water, for the fate of the vessel was already decided; and the fore part of the deck being under water, Lieut. Lynch came to report that the vessel was sinking, and the word was immediately passed for all to save themselves. At this very instant, a momentary gleam of light faintly showed the bank at the apparent distance of eight or ten yards; and as there seemed every probability that the stern would touch it before she went down, Lieut. Lynch encouraged the people to remain steady until they reached the land. All were on deck at this critical moment, some clinging to the ropes of the awning, the paddle boards, and the funnel; but the majority were close to the tiller, and all behaved with the most exemplary obedience until the vessel went down all at once, and probably within half a minute after we had seen the bank for an instant.

Lieut. Lynch, who was at my elbow, dived out underneath the starboard ridge rope at the moment when there was about four feet water on the deck, and I had the good

fortune to get clear in the same way, through the larboard side, and also to take a direction which brought me to the land, without having seen anything whatever to guide me through darkness worse than that of night. When it cleared a little I found around me Lieut. Lynch and Mr Eden, (both greatly exhausted) Mr Thompson, the Messrs. Staunton, and several of the men. The hurricane was abating rapidly, and as the distance from the vessel to the shore was very short, we indulged the hope that the rest of our brave companions had reached the bank lower down. For an instant, I saw the keel of the Tigris uppermost near the stern. She went down head foremost, and having struck the bottom in that position, she probably turned round on the bow as a pivot, and thus shewed part of her keel for an instant at the other extremity; but her paddle, beams, floats, and parts of the sides were already broken up and actually floated ashore, so speedy and terrific had been the work of destruction. From the moment of striking the bank until the Tigris went down, it scarcely exceeded eight minutes; whilst the operation of sinking did not consume more than three; indeed the gale was so very violent that I doubt whether the most powerful vessel, such as a frigate, could have resisted it, unless she were already secured to the bank; and, for this there was in our case little or no time, as it was barely possible, in the position of our consort, to make fast and save the vessel.

I had little, or rather no hope, that the Euphrates had escaped, but the intrepid skill of Lieutenant Cleveland and Mr Charlwood enabled them to get out two anchors in the very nick of time; and by the united means of two hawsers, and the engines working at full power, the vessel maintained her position at the bank until the storm abated; and as it required all the powers of a 50 horse engine, in the case of the Euphrates, to keep her hawsers from cracking, I infer that the 20 horse of the Tigris would not have been sufficient to enable her to keep the position at the bank, even if the officers had succeeded in wearing her alongside of it.

Lieut. Lynch and Mr Eden continued cool and collected until the last moment, nor were any efforts wanting that skill or presence of mind could suggest to save the vessel in the first instance, and the lives in the second, when the first had failed; nor could anything be more exemplary than their conduct, and that of all on board; scarcely a word was spoken, not a murmur was heard, and death was met with that exemplary degree of intrepidity and resignation which have been displayed by every individual throughout the arduous and trying service in which we have been engaged since January, 1835.

I have the honour to be, &c., F. R. CHESNEY, Colonel, commanding the expedition.

The following is a return of the officers and men lost by the before mentioned catastrophe:—

Lieut. R. B. Lynch, 26th regt., Bengal N. I.—Ensoff Sarded, interpreter—John Struthers, engineer—Lieut. Cockburn—1 sergeant 4 gunners, Royal Artillery—1 Sapper and Miner—5 seamen—5 natives. Total, 20.

Mexico. The New Orleans Bee of the 24th June, has information from a private source, by the arrival of the Charles Goodwin, that the excitement continues to increase in all the Mexican provinces, where the news of the defeat and capture of Santa Anna has reached. On the subject of Texas, there appears to be but one feeling, that of the bitterest kind. The Charles Goodwin left Vera Cruz, June 15th, and brought 12,000 dollars in specie. The New Orleans Courier says:—"Great excitement existed there in consequence of the capture of Santa Anna, and that the inhabitants had threatened to murder all foreigners, particularly Americans. They said they were the cause of the Texan war, and considered it no more than right that all the American property should be seized to pay in part for the expense and trouble to which the Mexicans have been put by that event."