The Free Press.

WRECKED OFF THE RIFF COAST.

It was a standing puzzle to him, and a source of perpetual irritation how that by flirting beauty, who divined his admiration and did not seem to dislike it, whose languid eyes flashed and fell, and whose color went and came under his ardent glances, could ever have been bred in such a vulture's nest. For Osaler was as unlike his offspring as mischief and had nothing whatever of the gentlemanly prepossessing about him. Short and stout, squat and grizzled, something like a sheep-butt rolling along on a couple of quarter-casks, you could only guess his race and religion in the unmistakable order that nature had stamped upon his nose. No wonder that Esther was shy and fluttered; that the usually off-hand Roper was ill at ease, or that the shrewd Osaler never relaxed his observations on those rare occasions when the trio came together in society. Roper's presence provoked remark and piqued curiosity. The whole room was wide awake to the unaccustomed visitor as well as the little gossip that was going forward. Osaler felt that he was being made a fool of. He feared, a little too late perhaps, that the same thing might possibly happen to his daughter; and finally, as the situation grew insufferably tense, he withdrew her into absolute retirement.

Not being overburdened with military duties, Roper had leisure to indulge his dreamy fancy. Although Gibraltar is geographically Andalusian, the place is thoroughly English in price-clay, nickets, rounds, and police arrangements. There is little of that "plucking the turkey," where the Peninsular lover presses and kisses the hands of his adored one through the proferous window bars that form her cage. Mr. Abraham Osaler lived in a charming cottage villa looking across to Apesh ill—all bay windows, verandas, and trailing masses of creepers. But Miss Esther was as sequestered in it as if she had been double locked in a grill and duenna-guarded chamber of Cadiz, with the windows turned inward on a Moorish *patio*.

In these desperate circumstances Roper decided on a dashing coup. As behold his story to the present narrator, whom he installed as his confidant, *bon gre, mal gre*.

'As matters had come to a dead lock, I thought the best thing to be done was to make Osaler's acquaintance professionally. He wasn't likely to decline to accommodate me on the ground of my being attentive to his daughter; while, on the other hand, you know, it might increase his objection to me if he heard that I had carried my custom past the family. And the connection seemed likely to be worth having; for, to tell the truth, since I had first set eyes on Esther I had taken to revoking at whist, and all manner of follies, and it was high time I made arrangements for replenishing my purse. As the novels have it, Osaler was civil but distant when I made my advances, and I ev'n say he showed me much consideration on account of the romantic sympathy that drew me to him. Since then we have had no end of interviews, but the conversation has confined itself strictly to bills and discount—and now—'

'And now?'

'Now it seems to me I've been making stern-way rather than otherwise. I see much more of Shylock than I like, and just as little as ever of the lady.'

So it had gone on. Now, as far as I could gather—and Roper would be only too minute in his confidences—Osaler was revenging himself in the way of business on the handsome young gunner for all the domestic bother he was causing; and if that were really the Hebrew's game, it must be confessed that Jack played into his hands. What with blighted love, [illegible] grew [illegible] worried [illegible] and-tried father of his jealousy, and the more he saw of him the less he liked him. The odd part of it was that his growing antipathy for the parent was anything but antidote to his fancy for the child. In an atmosphere that could not have stinted it, his love flourished as luxuriantly as the tropical vegetation on the Alameda, and what had begun like a hundred other caprices, had gradually grown into an absorbing sentiment. So between his attraction and repulsion forced from the Osaler family, Roper was bored flesh and spirits; friends and acquaintances began to fall away from him; the regimental doctor prescribed change of scene, and he would not be persuaded to banish himself to England, he had got up this flying trip to Tangiers.

And there we are back again, after the long digression, awaiting the precarious departure of the cattle boat, which is taking his cargo on the bay. Dumbiard was gone downstairs, and Jack had begun to fidget in his armchair.

'I think I'll just stretch my legs before turning in; one sleeps all the better for being blown about a bit.'

'Nonsense, my good fellow. Why, you'll have keep your cigar alight in the wind. The rain has hardly held up for an hour yet, and you can hear the street coming down in floods.'

But Jack was on his feet and off before Osaler himself could not have been more impracticable, and, after all, the point was scarcely worth arguing. In a few seconds he was back again, looking rather pale and excessively savage.

'Stumbled on a ghost? I inquired with some curiosity.

'No such luck,' he answered with vindictive vehemence. 'I'd sooner be haunted anything in the spirit than the flesh. Whom do you fancy I ran up against just outside the door, of all impossible people?'

Why the way you take it, I can only suppose it was that eternal bore, Osaler's protégé that sets you on to worry me in season and out of season. And though I see no particular reason why he should not be in Tangiers, it does seem unlikely he should be stood in such weather and at such an hour. A case of mistaken identity, I expect, or perhaps a spectral apparition produced by a fevrish imagination, acting on a couple of bottles of claret. I can't say on an empty stomach, although you are so uncparately—'

'Hang it, man, it's past a joke. There's a coincidence, a destiny—what do you call it?—about it. I tell you I spoke to him, and made him answer me.'

'Well, I suppose I must give in to the evidence of a couple of your senses, for spectres seldom speak when they are spoken to, and ordinary hallucinations don't go from sight to sound. As I said, why shouldn't Osaler not be here? He must have irons in the fire at Tangiers as well as everywhere else. But if he has, you may be sure that Monsieur Dumbiard, can tell us all about it, and something more. You had better ring the bell, and let's have him up again.'

Mr. Dumbiard proved to the full as well informed as Roper him credit for being.

'You ask if Monsieur are met M. Osaler. But I believe it well, and why not? Whilst the gentlemen have been detained within, where, I dare to hope, they have found themselves not too ill,' observed M. Dumbiard, parenthetically, with a comprehensive bow, 'M. Osaler, by a strange hazard, has been sojourning opposite. M. Mordecai, my neighbor, is of the same faith; and, indeed, I believe he is of M. Osaler's relations. In every case M. Osaler has been there, as I say, and his daughter also—*très belle fille! parfaite!* I was admiring her from my belvidere but yesterday, when the weather cleared itself. for a moment—'

'What,' shouted Roper, springing out of the chair into which he had subsided, and making the clock and candles clatter with the violence with which he threw himself against the chimney-piece—'what, you saw Miss Osaler yesterday, and you never told me a word of it, Pahaw! what am I talking of? I beg your pardon, M. Dumbiard. I forgot you know nothing; how should you? You were saying, I think, that you saw the lady—'

And Jack had the nerve to recover his control as quickly as he had lost it; so that Dumbiard, who had at first been aware at the moment he rang most innocently, quickly grew flattered at the extreme interest vouchsafed him, and exerted himself to gratify the curiosity he had piqued. The sum of his long story was, that it was by no means surprising that M. Osaler should be at Tangiers. Quite the contrary. He did more trade with the town than any other half-dozen merchants put together. He had a contract for provisioning the English garrison. 'By Jove, and that's true,' interposed Roper. He owned the better part of the boat we meant to embark upon. And so on, and so on. M. Dumbiard had plenty to tell; and all he had to tell went to magnify the means of the Hebrew.

After that last interpellation of his, Jack's facile sympathies and quick perception had told him that the handsome young English man's distraction had its origin in a profound interest in the bounty over the way, and to his accordingly he had addressed his narrative.

'You can do me a great service, M. Dumbiard, if you will allow me to make a friend of you and give you my confidence. I am persuaded I can rely absolutely on your discretion.'

'Monsieur has but to command,' M. Dumbiard rejoined courteously.

'It strikes me, you see, that as Osaler has so much to do with the boat he means most likely to go over in her.'

'And Mademoiselle also—nothing more probable,' assented M. Dumbiard; 'specially as he is always immersed in his affairs and enormously pressed for time.'

'Exactly so. Now, as he is master of the situation and may send down sailing orders a any moment, he's safe to try to steal a march, and leave us planted here; and I'm sure it would be impossible to be more comfortable anywhere,' he added politely, as an after thought.

United States Items.

Seven teachers in the public schools at Virginia City, Nev., were ill with typhoid fever last week.

A human fiend in Dixfield, Me., recently tied a rope to a balky horse's tongue and pulled it out by the root.

A tract of 160 acres of good corn was burned at Arcola, Ill., on Sunday. Children accidentally set the fire.

The scarlet fever is raging to such an extent at Alton, Ill., that it has very nearly broken up the public schools.

About fifty cent. of the money collected third of the all River strikers went for expenses of collection and distribution.

A run of western and southwestern cattle has already begun in Kansas, and the herds now coming forward are said to be of very fine quality.

A dozen cases of typhoid fever have recently occurred at Pawtucket, R. I., all caused by the use of a single well, the water of which has been analyzed and found to be impure.

The latest trick of the petty swindlers is to sell a 15 cent paper stove polish, with a chromo, for $1 to the unsuspecting victim. It has been extensively practiced in New England.

A young man named Allen was arrested in Muncie, Ind., on Saturday on the charge of having stolen corpse which he was shipping. The amount stolen was only 75 cents.

The convention of the Illinois Christian Association (opposed to secret societies) will be held in the Congregational Church, Peoria, Ill., commencing on Tuesday, November 9, and ending on the following Friday the 10th.

The elevated railroad in New York is now built to Forty-fifth street, and will be open to the park before snow. Tramway columns are bolted in stone. The rails on which the track is laid are bolted to them with red hot.

The State of Texas has recovered $80,000, realized from the sale of indemnity bonds, sent to England in 1862, for the purchase of arms and supplies, and since held impounded there, in spite of persistent effort to recover the proceeds.

There is but one family in Pleasant Valley, Lafette County, Kan., who had not sickness by way of chills and fever. They use pure rain water for their drinking purposes, which is supposed to be the secret of their good health.

Germany, with a population of 42,000,000, last year graduated six hundred and sixty physicians, rejecting one hundred and eight applicants. In the same time the United States, with a population of 40,000,000, graduated three thousand physicians.

Judge Boreman's recent charge to the grand jury of the Third Judicial district court of Utah, was a plain instruction that they must either indict every case of polygamy brought to their knowledge, or violate their oaths.

A New York youth named Moses Margasimky drew a pistol the other day on a boy who was teasing him, and wounded a disinterested passer-by, and in returning the weapon to his pocket it was again discharged, the ball entering the shooter's leg. He was arrested.

A common school at Newton, Conn., was the other day the scene of "a little unpleasantness" between the teacher and a Catholic priest who entered and forbid the Catholic children from giving attention when the Bible was read. Refusing to withdraw he was ejected.

On Tuesday morning, soon after the train on the Staten Island railroad left Tottenville, the engineer discovered a man lying close to the rail, outside of the track. Brakes were immediately applied, but before the train was stopped the engine and tender had passed without touching the man, but the stepping of the following car caught him and rolled him away from the track without hurting him. The man proved to be a tramp, and he was taking a nap. When thus rudely awakened he cursed the conductor and engineer for disturbing him.

On last Friday, it being District Court at Montezuma, Iowa, Judge Winslow granted a decree of divorce in a certain case pending therein, for a certain woman in Poweshiek county, just before noon. Just after dinner he was applied to to officiate in performing the matrimonial ceremony joining the same woman in wedlock to another man.

Upward of 150 Mormon converts arrived at New York on board the Dakota, the other day, and took trains for Utah soon after. The party consists of English, Scotch, Welsh, Germans and Scandinavians, and are a remarkably well to-do and respectable-looking set of people. The money for their passage had been sent over principally by their friends in Salt Lake City.

The Supreme Court of Iowa has rendered a decision directly opposite to that of the Indiana Supreme Court on the same subject. The former holds that the act of playing billiards with the agreement that the lover shall pay for the game constitutes gambling, and the proprietor of a billiard-room where such a custom is prevalent may be indicted for keeping a gambling house.

Scientific Notes.

A Frenchman named Patrian, who styles himself "contractor for public lighting," has a factory and warehouse for the making and selling of oxygen, which is kept stored in metallic reservoirs under a heavy pressure, and delivered to customers for such purposes as the lighting of theatres and dining-halls, blow pipe use, inhalation and ventilation, and air baths.

Hoppe-Seyler believes that the statements made from time to time as to the existence of live fish in the water of hot springs are probably based upon errors of observation. He has observed that the fish invariably confine their gambols to certain cooler currents, abruptly coming in contact with the hotter ones, instant death being the penalty for overstepping the boundary between them.

An apparatus for washing smoke, and thus depriving it of its character of a nuisance, is in operation at a factory at Menilmontant, Paris. A fine shower of water, traveling in the direction of the smoke, and at five times its velocity, is projected into the chimney, where it mixes with the smoke, taking up the soluble gases and precipitating the impurities carried up with the smoke by the draught. The foul water is discharged into a cistern, where it is collected, and a fine brace paint is got from it.

Rajewsky, working under Hoppe-Seyler's directions, has attempted to determine the length of time which must elapse between the ingestion of a dose of alcohol, and the disappearance of all traces of it from the brain. He finds that the method of analysis employed furnishes positive indications even when no alcohol has been previously administered. Following up this clue, he is led to the conclusion that the brain and other nervous normally contain a minute quantity of alcohol, or else that alcohol is invariably generated from some of their constituents when they are subjected to distillation in carefully closed vessels.

English physicians are in the habit of sending patients to Italy, to get the benefit of the climate and drink asses' milk. In order to ensure the purity of the milk, the asses are ordered each day to the patient's door, where the milk is done under his own eye or that of a servant or friend. A traveler, writing of this custom, says that "the asses milkers in the Italian towns usually carry a bladder of lukewarm water under their cloaks, kept up to the heat of the body under the armpits, of the contents of which they furtively infuse a portion into the several milk jugs in the face of the domestic, who never suspect the trick. Thus are poor patients, when given up by the faculty and sent to languish under an Italian sun, and die, turned over to the tender mercies of tricksters, generally the associates or creatures of cheating hotel keepers.'

Foreign journals describe a process used by the Japanese in the production of a metal leaf used for decorative purposes. Thirty or forty thin plates of gold, silver, copper, and various alloys are laid the one over the other in a given order, and soldered together at the edges, so that a stout plate of metal is formed of the whole. Punches of various shapes—conical, pyramidal, and with triangular, square, or pentagonal sides—are now used to make a pattern of perforated figures, which exhibit on their inner sides concentric circles, triangles, and other forms corresponding to the punches used. The plate so prepared is hammered and rolled till it becomes very thin, the holes disappear, and the figures have spread out, preserving, however, their parallelism. A hammered broken straight and curved lines are thus produced, which, as in a Damascus blade, are true of each other, though consistent in themselves in the same metal, their effect being further enriched by the use of acids to modify the colors. It will be easily understood that such plates prepared in this way, having an extremely flexible nature, admitting relief, with stamped or engraved designs, and capable of receiving the most varied colors and forms, will have many uses in decorative art.

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