

THEY SAW EUROPE ON FOOT

Inconvenience of Being Taken for a Lord.

Captured by Greek Brigands and Held for Ransom Which Never Materialized.

If an American wants to go abroad on a cash capital of \$500, there is no law to prevent, even if he is a newspaper man who has saved and economized for six or seven years to get that much wealth together. When I started out with my friend Gillam, who was an artist instead of a journalist, and had \$50 less capital as well, we took steerage passage on a steamer and planned to do Europe on foot and avoid all extravagances. As to how we got along until we struck Greece and a certain event happened is of no great consequence. We tramped here and there, ate, slept and had a fairly good time.

From Athens we went on a tramp up the country, viewing tombs and ruins by the way, and after putting in two days at Marathon we started out one morning for a hamlet called Histropolis. We were first met by about a dozen dogs of all sizes, ages and colors, and each one a worse looking dog than the one who came after. After we had clubbed the pack off we were charged down upon by nine children of various sizes and ages, all of whom needed soap and water. They rallied around us for small coin, and not getting any they fell back and gave four women a chance. We got rid of the latter to encounter three men, one of whom could speak a little English. They were dirty, ragged villains, who did not hesitate to threaten us, and not a word could we get out of them about the ruins until we had come down with backsheesh. Gillam started out after a bit to do some sketching, while I found a place to take a nap, and the inhabitants of Histropolis finally got out of breath begging for coin and trying to get us to buy a skeleton old goat for \$2 and went back to their flea infested hut.

At the end of two hours I was awakened by some one giving me a smart kick on the hip, and I roused up to see that we had been taken prisoners by four brigands. The fellows had come down off the mountains, about four miles away, having probably been notified by a messenger from the village. I have many times read of the picturesque Greek brigands, but the four who gobbled us up that day must have gone out of the picturesque business some weeks previous. They were ragged, ugly lot, no better than the men of the village, and we were far more disgusted with their breaths than afraid of their knives. The leader spoke English fairly well, and I have always felt grateful to him on that account. All leaders of Greek brigands should learn three or four languages before proceeding to business, as it is a great help toward an understanding about identity, money matters and so forth. It was the leader who had kicked me, which I have always taken as a compliment, and as I sat up he saluted me and said:

"My lord, you will please consider yourself a prisoner and come along without resistance."

"But don't make any mistake on me," I replied. "As near as I can make out from this short range you are brigands."

"I am Bobetto," he said, as he laid his hand on his heart and bowed low.

"Excuse me that I never heard of you before. You are a brigand and in it for money, and this is your band?"

"My lord is correct."

"Now, about this lord business. Let us have an understanding. Who do you take me for?"

"An English lord, my lord. I have been expecting you for several days. The name I cannot pronounce, but I know you to be a gentleman. Have no fears for your safety, as it will be a case of ransom."

"This is kind of you. If you take me for an English lord, who do you make this other chap to be?"

"Your companion, sir. His name I heard, but cannot give it. He will also be held for ransom."

Then we started off for the west. The particular retreat of this band was half way up a mountain, and consisted of two brush huts and a fire in front of them. We were in no manner ill used. They could have robbed us of our few dollars and personal property, but they did not even search us for weapons. As soon as we had arrived at the huts, however, Bobetto brought out stationery and commanded me to write to the English minister at Athens and obtain the sum of \$30,000. Both Gillam and I

burst out laughing at this demand, and after a little I said to the leader:

"Of what use to play the fool in this matter? As I told you before, we are Americans, and poor men at that. We can raise about \$200 apiece, but not an other cent, and if you take that we shall have to turn brigands and compete with you in business."

"You may be Americans, but you are my lord just the same," replied Bobetto.

"But there are no titles in America. If I should write to the American minister, he would take it as a joke. You haven't got a soft snap in this thing, old fellow. Had you got hold of Rockefeller, Gould or Vanderbilt you might have made a raise and bought a garage factory, but we are almost down to hardpan. Sorry for you, but you can't always hit it, even in the brigand business."

"But you must write," persisted the wooden headed rascal. "You must write to the American minister that if he does not send us \$10,000 by our messenger, your ears will be sent him in a package!"

I read the letter to Bobetto after it was written, and he was perfectly satisfied that it would fetch the cash in reply. It was sent off by a messenger, who would be gone at least ten days, and then we went into "retirement." It is the rule with all brigands who have a prisoner on hand to lie low and take no chances. I thought it well to prepare this gang for a disappointment, and when the messenger had departed I told them that he would only have the journey for nothing.

"It cannot be for nothing," grimly replied Bobetto as he brought out a knife and felt of its edge. "If no money comes, then your ears go to Athens! If they fail to bring it, then we will send on your head!" Sentinels were posted on the hills around to prevent a surprise, and we had nothing to do but loaf about. Bobetto thought he knew the game of poker, and it was for us to undecieve him. In three days Gillam and I had won every cent he had. We offered to put up \$200 against our ears, but the brigand assured us with great dignity that it wasn't regular. About one day I thought it my duty to inform Bobetto that we were moneyless Americans and that there was nothing in it for him and he always replied to me with a lift of the eyebrows and a shrug of the shoulders and the words:

"Time will tell, my lord; time will tell. It has happened that I have had to send ears and heads to Athens before."

For the first five days of our captivity we were closely guarded, and there could be no thought of escape. Then, as we appeared to make ourselves at home, the vigilance of the brigands was relaxed. While only four had been concerned in our capture, there were really six in the band. One of them had a broken leg, and the other was acting as a nurse. Two sentinels were always stationed at points half a mile away, and occasionally a brigand fell asleep during the day. I think it was on the eighth day and at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the brigand nurse was sent for provisions. As two were acting as sentinels and a third was lying helpless, this left only two to deal with. One of these was Bobetto, and he sat with his back to a rock dozing with the heat of the day. Gillam was lying on his back, while I was looking carelessly at a Greek newspaper. All of a sudden the artist sat up and whispered to me:

"Let's end this right here and now! You tackle the leader, and I'll go for the other fellow!"

The "other fellow" was at the fire heaping the brands together. We rose up in unison and made the attack. I gave old Bobetto a kick on the jaw which knocked him over and caused doleful howls, and Gillam hit his man such a blow on the neck as to render him unconscious for half an hour. There were two guns in camp, and we seized them and made for the highway, only a mile distant. Before departing I gave the leader a tap on the head to quiet his yells, and so far as I know we were not followed a rod. We reached the highway just in time to get a lift in a passing cart and in a couple of hours were in Marathon. As to the letter, it was delivered at the consulate, but was looked upon as a joke and the messenger sent empty handed. We might have lost our ears on his return, but were not there to have them sliced off. Bobetto died two years later, as I read in the papers, and it is said that he was badly disfigured by a broken jaw—the one "my lord" gave him with an American calfskin shoe.

M. QUAD.

The Master of Debate.
There is no man in Canadian public life who can stir the political depths as well as Sir Richard Cartwright can.

Since the opening of the present session of parliament, he has made three

notable speeches, the first on the war and Canada's action in regard to it, the second on the budget, and the third at the banquet tendered him, when he dealt humorously with Sir Charles Tupper. On each occasion he showed those gifts of debate which he possess to a degree not found in any other of our public men on either side of politics. These three speeches are such excellent examples of the art of speech-making that they might be used in schools and colleges, if it were not that they deal with party questions. Playing through each of these speeches is a good humor, that is very seductive, and when he strikes his opponents it is with a skill and precision that commands the admiration even of the persons who are not his friends. Long ago he was described as one who wields a rapier, but not a club, and never was his practice finer than now, probably because in parliamentary combat he finds the club too much in vogue, and would vindicate his choicer weapon. His speeches are compact, direct. He unswervingly pursues his course without vain repetition, or floundering in the hope that his voice will say something that his mind cannot think of—as some wordy speakers appear to do.

On the opposite side of the house there is no match for Sir Richard Cartwright in debate and so the reply to him must come from a hundred newspapers that profess to deplore the "bitterness of his onslaughts," while they freely express admiration for the rough work that N. P. Davin does with his rude and gnarled club. This will not deceive the people. Sir Richard Cartwright is not bitter, but the most jovial combatant in the whole political arena, extracting more humorous satisfaction from the futile fury of the Tories out in the cold than any three other Liberals in parliament.—Toronto Star.

Brady on the Fly.
Alaska's missionary governor, John G. Brady was in the city for a few minutes this morning having arrived on the Zealandian and left at 9:15 on the Hannah for down river points. Ten years ago Brady would have been a suitable governor for Alaska as there were but few residents then in the district aside from the salmon-scented natives. But today he is a back number of whom modern Alaska is ashamed. The day when a man whose only qualification is that he came from Amazon Grace township, Indiana, can preside over a large and growing commonwealth like Alaska, and rub his bigoted ideas into a modern and progressive populace is happily past. Brady is Alaska's governor only in name. As a missionary and an honest man he is respected; but as a statesman, a pilot on the ship of state, he is conspicuous for his narrow-mindedness and inability.

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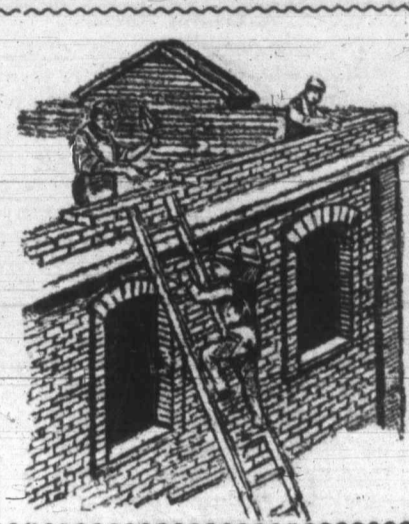
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