

WRECK OF THE VALENCIA.

The tragedy of the Valencia is replete with lessons, and among them is the gratifying one that the hearts of those whom we meet from day to day are inspired with the best kind of courage. We shall never know fully what deed of heroism the decks of the ill-fated ship witnessed, but we do know that those who went to the rescue did all that men could do and were ready to risk their lives for others.

We also suggest that the United States government has a duty to perform in the premises. While few vessels go ashore on the southern side of the Strait, any precautions on the Vancouver Island shore will be even more for the benefit of ships engaged in United States commerce than for the benefit of those employed in our own.

At the time of writing the loss of life as a result of the latest shipping disaster on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island has not been definitely ascertained. It is feared, however, from a reading of the dispatches sent in by the representatives of the Times on the relief vessels, that the toll taken by the sea has been even heavier than the first advices indicated.

In the first place there has been a new demonstration that there is urgent need of improving the class of vessels which ply upon our coasts. No one can tell what would have happened if the Valencia had had a double bottom and a collision bulkhead; but it is reasonable to infer, in the absence of specific information, which will never be forthcoming, that these features might perhaps have kept the ship afloat.

In the second place it seems as if there ought to be a searching inquiry as to the boat equipment, and the appliances for lowering them, carried by passenger steamers. It is to be noted that the davits of the Valencia broke, and thus people were thrown into the sea; so did the davits of the Clallam.

We come now to a matter which is especially within the province of the Canadian people. There has been sufficient demonstration of the dangers surrounding the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The whole maritime world is interested in seeing that every possible protection is afforded, but especially so are the people of Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle, Tacoma and all the other ports on the waters reached by way of the Strait.

The British seaman is still endowed with the attributes which made the men who worked behind the wooden walls of old England famous. Every sailor of His Majesty's ship Egeria volunteered for service on the boats detailed to go to the rescue of the possible survivors on the wreck of the Valencia. Their hearts are true to the traditions of their heroic forefathers.

proper steps will be taken by the board of trade of this city, and also the boards of trade of Vancouver and Nanaimo and other public bodies to impress the necessity of action upon the government.

We suggest, therefore, that the United States government ought to provide a life-saving station at some convenient point west of Cape Flattery, and that communication between that station and the Canadian station to be established should be maintained by wireless telegraphy.

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The people of Victoria have but too frequently been called upon to pass under the rod of affliction, and can deeply sympathize with those who had relatives on the steamer Valencia.

It is altogether too probable that none survives to tell the story of the final act of the tragedy on board the steamer Valencia. Perhaps it is just as well.

The Crimson Blind By FRED. M. WHITE

CHAPTER X.—(Continued) He stood there rigidly, almost afraid to take the cigar from his lips; whilst Enid sped without further need for caution down the drive. The lodge gates were closed and the deaf porter's house in darkness, so that Enid could unlock the wicket without fear of detection. She rattled the key on the bars and a figure slipped out of the darkness.

"Really me, Enid, I came over on my bicycle. I am supposed to be round at some friend's house in Brunswick square, and one of the servants is sitting up for me. Is Reginald safe? He hasn't yet discovered the secret of the tradesman's book?"

"Oh, yes, Enid, if we had a dog, it would be a good deal better for us. I would have been far wiser to have taken Mr. Steel entirely into our confidence. Oh, yes, Enid, if we had a dog, it would be a good deal better for us. I would have been far wiser to have taken Mr. Steel entirely into our confidence."

"I am a maniac on the subject of old prints," he explained. "I never see a pile without a wild longing to examine them. And, by Jove, there are some really fine ones here. I am greatly mistaken—here, Steel, pull up the blinds! Good heavens, is it possible?"

"The picture was destroyed by accident after Rembrandt had engraved it with his own hand," Bell proceeded to explain. He was quite coherent now, but he breathed fast and gasped as he proceeded to give you the history of the picture presently, and more especially a history of the engraving.

"No getting away from the crimson blind," David murmured. "Still, I can quite imagine that to have been the name of an engraved jewel always seemed a charming omen to the novelist. He had an unerring eye for that kind of thing."

"The picture was destroyed by accident after Rembrandt had engraved it with his own hand," Bell proceeded to explain. He was quite coherent now, but he breathed fast and gasped as he proceeded to give you the history of the picture presently, and more especially a history of the engraving.

"I followed you on purpose," the girl said, quietly. "I can't tell you everything, because it is not my secret to tell. But believe me everything will come out right in the end. Don't think badly of me, don't be hard and bitter because—"

"Because I am nothing of the kind," David smiled. "It is impossible to look into a face like yours and doubt you. And I am certain that you are acting loyally and faithfully for the sake of others—"

"Very like the story of the stolen Gainsborough." "No doubt the one that inspired the other." It was sent with a look for Van Steel, only to find that he had suddenly left the city. He had got into trouble with the police, and had fled to avoid being sent to jail.

"Not personally," the agent admitted. "So far as I can tell, the property came into the woman's hands some years ago by inheritance. The property also included a very old house called Longeane Grange, not far from Rottingdean, where the lady, Mrs. Benson, lives at present. Nobody goes there, nobody ever visits there, and to keep the place free from prying visitors a large number of savage dogs are allowed to prowl about the grounds."

"Do you know the lady at all?" Bell asked. "Not personally," the agent admitted. "So far as I can tell, the property came into the woman's hands some years ago by inheritance. The property also included a very old house called Longeane Grange, not far from Rottingdean, where the lady, Mrs. Benson, lives at present."

place that touched the imagination of the young, sensitive genius, who was drifting himself prematurely into his grave had made some wonderful discoveries relating to the brain and psychology generally, so I decided to learn what I could before it was too late. I found the young doctor to be an exceedingly good fellow, only too ready to speak of his discoveries, and there I stayed for a year. My word! what do not owe to the misguided mind! And what a revelation he would have made in medicine and surgery had he lived long!

"Well, in Amsterdam I got to know everybody who was worth knowing—medical, artistic, social. And amongst the rest was an Englishman called Lord Littimer, his son, and an exceedingly clever nephew of his, Henson by name, who was the son's tutor. Littimer was a savant, a scholar, and a fine connoisseur as regards pictures. He was popularly supposed to have the finest collection of old prints in England. He would travel anywhere in search of something fresh, and the rumor of some apocryphal treasure in Amsterdam had not struck him. He and I were friends from the first, as, indeed, were the son and myself. Henson, the nephew, was more quiet and reserved, but fond, as I discovered, of a little secret dissipation.

"I was very happy party there until Van Sneek and Von Gulden turned up. Enid and I had come to an understanding, and though we kept our secret, we were not going to do so for long. From that moment Van Gulden admired her. He was a handsome, swaggering soldier, a good-looking, wealthy man, who had a great reputation for gallantry, and something of a reputation for gallantry, and something of a reputation for gallantry."

"The following morning the great discovery was made. The Van Sneek I have alluded to was an artist, a dealer, a man of the shadiest reputation, whom my friend Lord Littimer had picked up. It was Van Sneek who produced the copy of 'The Crimson Blind.' Not only did he produce the copy, but he produced the history from some recent discoveries of papers relating to the Keizerkroon tavern of the year 1656, which would have satisfied a more exacting man than Littimer. In the end the Viscount purchased the engraving for £800 English."

"I have never been able to verify it. All the same, you can imagine what an enormous weight it was off my mind, and how comparatively unimportant it was as I crossed over to the hotel of Lord Littimer after breakfast. I found him literally beside himself with passion. Some thief had got into his room in the night and stolen his Rembrandt. The frame was intact, but the engraving had been rolled up and taken away."

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at present happy in the possession of his own lost property, and up to this very day I was under exactly the same delusion. Now I know that there must have been two copies of the plate, and that this knowledge was used to ruin me."

"I am just coming to that. We hunted high and low for the picture, but nowhere could it be found. The Affair created a profound impression in Amsterdam. A day or two later Von Gulden went back to his duty on the Belgian frontier and business called him home. I packed my solitary portmanteau and departed. When I arrived at the frontier I opened my luggage for the custom officer and the luggage contents were turned out without ceremony. On the bottom was a roll of paper on a stick that I quite failed to recognize. I took it to the custom officer, who opened it and immediately called the lieutenant in charge. Strange to say, he proved to be Von Gulden. He came up to me, very gravely, with the paper in his hand, and said, 'What an interesting discovery amongst your papers!' he asked, 'I could say nothing; I was dumb. For there lay the Rembrandt. The red spots had been smudged out of the corner, but the picture was there. I recognized it. I was just coming to that. 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