

## THE LOSS OF THE HUAFU.

It is now 20 years since the marine tragedy at Valparaiso, Chile, and the mystery surrounding the affair is not much clearer than it was the day after it occurred. At midnight one stormy rainy night a Spanish man-of-war named the Huafu and carrying a crew of 400 men entered the bay at slow speed, intending to anchor within half a mile of the wharves. Of a sudden she was lifted out of the waters and casted over on her beam end, and so nothing was left to scrape along her whole side and keel. There was instant alarm throughout the whole ship, but before a single man of the watch below could reach the deck the Huafu turned turtle and went down in 60 feet of water. The suction carried down all who were on deck, and of that whole crew only 14 men escaped with their lives and among them was not one single officer. They were all agreed that the bows of the ship were suddenly lifted to an angle of 45 degrees and that after a few seconds she was twisted to port, and they heard the snapping and crashing of wood and iron.

It was at first believed that the Huafu had struck and run up on a submerged wreck, but after a vain search for such an obstruction the idea was abandoned. Had no one been left alive it would have been set down to a boiler explosion of any sort and that the propeller was still revolving as she settled down. As the unfortunate craft had cost about \$3,000,000 and this was the first trip, the Spanish government went in for the most thorough investigation. The depth of water was not beyond the divers, and a buoy was set to mark the spot as near as might be until men could go down. It was two weeks later before the divers were ready, and then a second mystery was at hand. The Huafu was not to be found under or in the neighborhood of

the buoy. For the first time in the history of the port it was learned that there was a stiff current running along the bottom of the bay, coming from the north and going clear around it to sweep out to sea on the south side. The surface of the bay was only disturbed by the wind and tide, and even as far down as 40 feet no current could be felt, but the last 10 feet of water before touching bottom had the rush of a mill race. When this fact was made clear to the searchers, they extended the field of their operations. The current ran strongest as the tide flowed in and directly in opposition. The Huafu had come in on almost full tide, and the current would therefore drift her along the north shore was searched without finding any trace of her. Then a search of the south shore followed, and then they hoped to find the sunken craft in some eddy near the center. It was five months before the divers declared that the bottom was clear of wreck of any sort.

Now came the question of what had become of the man-of-war. It did not seem possible that such a mass of wood and iron, with the weight of her guns and stores and unfortunate crew added, could be drifted any distance along the bottom, especially as the bottom was plentifully sprinkled with great rocks. There was no other way to account for her disappearance, however. The current bumped her along the bottom for a distance of three miles and had then taken her out to sea. Just off the entrance of the port the water deepens to 200 feet, and it was concluded that she had been carried into this basin to be buried under the ooze. The commission of inquiry closed its labors much more satisfied at the finish than at the start, and it was not believed that anything further would ever be heard of the craft.

Nothing ever has been directly said many things have come to light to still further tangle the mystery surrounding her. A year and a half later and as far to the south as the mouth of the gulf of Concepcion one of her boats was found floating. Its rigging had rotted from the davits and tread it. This did not prove the position of the lost Huafu, but it satisfied many minds that she must be drifting southward. Three months later some of her box-d stores drifted ashore on the islands, 400 miles to the south, and six weeks after this find and still to the south some of her cabin furniture was picked up by a whaler. This flotation was without baracles, proving that it had not long been afloat. It was concluded from this that Huafu was still creeping along the bottom, the plaything of the current, and the last find made almost settled the question. A second boat and more wreckage were washed ashore almost as far down as Cape Horn, and in the bottom of the boat were six inches of liquid mud. This must have accumulated as she floated or crept along the bottom of the sea, and the chances are that the boat had not drifted above 20 miles after rising to the surface.

As to the accident in the bay, it is generally believed that the vessel struck a large whale which had entered out of curiosity and that in his pain and fright the giant fish had hove her up and then flung her on her side, but as no whale had ever been seen in the bay there is room for doubt. Wreck or whale or what ever it may have been, it was the cause of one of the gloomiest tragedies of the sea, and no one can imagine that ill fated craft slowly creeping down around the Galapagos point of land which men call Cape Horn without a sigh of pity for the skeleton crew that mans its iron decks.

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## Capricious Indian Maiden.

Richest and Most Coquettish Kiowa Belle at Last Becomes a warrior's Bride.

When the new moon appeared in the western sky the other evening, it was the signal of great rejoicing in every Kiowa village in the Indian Territory, for it announced the beginning of a wedding festival that lasted three days and three nights.

This was an affair of tribal importance, and the whole nation has been preparing for it for several months. For two or three years Wild Buffalo has pursued the pretty Indian girl and sought to make her his wife. He has had many rivals, and during the days of his long courtship there have been periods when his hopes were clouded and

it looked as if some other brave enjoyed the smiles of Loralee.

There never lived a more capricious coquette than this pretty, spoiled maiden whom the Kiowas call Loralee.

The story of Loralee's career as an heiress and a bell would make a volume which nine tenths of the world would regard as the veriest fiction. The girl's father was one of the rewedest Indians that ever lived. His tribal name was Silver Hand, and he was so called because he always had plenty of money.

During the great autumnal hunt of the Kiowas last year the young braves of the tribe were made to understand that the Queen of Pearls intended to accompany the expedition for the purpose of selecting a husband from among the youths who displayed the greatest courage and endurance in the chase. Old warriors say that they never before witnessed a more successful hunt. The suitors scoured the country in every direction, and at night they piled a wonderful collection of trophies at the feet of Loralee.

It is highly probable that the young girl during this camp hunt first discovered that she was better pleased with the attention of Wild Buffalo than others who sought her hand, but she kept him in ignorance of her sentiments for a long time.

Her relatives held a family council and to-re-ter began preparations for a great wedding feast. The festivities will commence with the rising of the sun and last for three days and nights. Wild Buffalo, wearing all the gay trappings of a Kiowa chief, mounted upon a gayly caparisoned horse,

will dash into the village, followed by a dozen or more young braves, friends of the bridegroom. Crowds of young men and girls will greet them with shouts of derision. There will be much clapping of hands and a great deal of laughter. Those who understand the Kiowa tongue will soon learn that the gayly draped and rather licentious girls are making sport of the tardy bridegroom. They will tell him that while he slept a fortunate rival came and carried the beautiful Loralee away on a white horse. Wild Buffalo will affect great grief and distress. While the young men are wailing and breathing threats, the girls will laugh at them and call them "lazy lovers". An old woman whispers a word into the ears of the sorrowing lover and points toward the forest. Uttering shouts of the wildest joy, the young warriors set out in pursuit of the stolen maiden.

After some hours have passed Wild Buffalo will appear at a full gallop bearing his sweetheart in his arms. Followed by a long cavalcade of boys and girls, he will circle about the camp, welcomed by shouts of the wildest joy. The feasting and dancing will continue for three days.

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