

A Flood That Led on to Fortune.

BY OLD BOOMERANG.

Author of "In the Depths of the Sea," "Lionel's Story," "The Pioneer of a Family," "The Shipwreck," etc.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

(Continued.)

The captain is a straightforward sort of man if he were left alone, but the chief mate is a negro-driver, and the second mate isn't a bit better. You'll never learn anything that is worth knowing from them, for though they crawled in at the hawse-holes, as the saying is, it isn't in their nature to do anything to help a poor lad on. They are a pair of the grudging, growling sort, and I could stop the heart of either of them in the bowl of my pipe. Besides, you have had enemies on board who told me that Ned, and not I, it is no good your stopping to fight it out with them, for some of them will go in the ship next voyage. I heard it said with my own ears that you flung your knife at Chips, when he captured you on the foredeck, just because you made a snapping over his head and frightened him.

"My knife! The knife I used at him! Oh, what a wicked story!" exclaimed Ned. "I should hate myself as I live if I committed such a murderous act. It was a joint of my little life that I threw at the carpenter, and sorry enough I was for doing it the instant after it had left my hand."

"I know all about it, Ned. It's easy for the devil or his friends to turn a fine fellow into a knave, if it serves their turn, but there's a long stretch of difference between the two. I think I know the spiteful rogue who told the captain that, and I dare say he has made the old man believe it. But, cheer up, my lad! I am quite sure that lies can't hurt any honest fellow in the long run, and I'll bet you a guinea that you will be on the quarter-deck as chief mate, or perhaps as commander, when some of your lying lubberly enemies will be on shore, crying 'Fish O!' or hawking cabbage and taters in a wheelbarrow—and it's likely enough some of them will be in jail."

"I will speak to the captain about this false report, as soon as he comes on board again," said Ned. "I'll tell him all the truth."

"It will do no good in the world, even if he would stop to listen to your yarn, because he has got a down on you, my boy. As I said before, the best thing you can do is to bolt from the ship, for ten to one if the old man doesn't land you in Sydney with a hole in your character if you stay on board. Bolt like a negro with a tiger after him!"

"Where am I to bolt to, Bill? I don't know a soul in London."

"Never mind, Ned, don't fret about that. I'll take you in tow, and I won't cast you off till I get you into snug moorings. Cheer up, my hearty! Where is your damage? We must muddle that on shore somehow."

Ned's conscience told him that to run away from the ship was a dishonourable act, but his fears would highly disapprove of, but his fears silenced his conscience for a while, and Bill assured him that sailors think no more of bolting away from a bad ship than they would do of breaking out of a lock-up if they get a chance. An old sailor is seldom at a loss for expedients; and an hour or two afterwards Ned was sitting in a comfortable little back room in a house off the Commercial Road, which was occupied by Bill's sister, who was a sailor's widow. Bill had contrived to bring most of Ned's outfit on shore as his own; and as Ned had been allowed by the second mate to help Bill to the dock gate with his baggage, he had not much difficulty in slipping off himself. He had only fifteen shillings in his pocket, but Bill told him not to worry about money, for he had a few shillots in the locker, and he would not see a poor ill-used lad hard-up and hungry.

Widow Hunt, Bill's sister, had a buxom daughter named Susan; and she had a sweethearth, who was second mate of a whaling ship then about to sail to the South Seas. Mr. Lancer, or Tom, as old Bill familiarly called him, was a bad boy on board the *Finchak* when Bill was harpessed on board, seven years before, and by steady perseverance he had, at the age of twenty-five, risen to the post of second mate of the same ship. Bill was much pleased to see his old ship-mate again, and was also glad to know that his niece was likely to have a good husband, for Tom was a fine, steady young man, and an excellent sailor. They were engaged to be married when he returned from his next voyage.

After hearing Bill's spirited account of the unfair treatment Ned had received on board the *Trident*, Mr. Lancer said, if he liked to go a voyage in a whaler, he would speak to Captain Lamb of the *Finchak*, and he would perhaps take him, though they did not usually carry boys in that ship.

Ned thanked Mr. Lancer, but seemed to be quite unable to decide for himself, whereupon his friend Bill said—

"If you take my advice, Ned, you will go in the ship. I'll warrant you and the ship will get on first-rate together, for he is as happy an old fellow as ever sang psalms on a Monday. The *Finchak* is a clumsy-looking hooker compared with the *Trident*, but she is a tight ship, and pretty dry and comfortable on deck. I have been on board

of her in some of the hardest blows that I have ever weathered out at sea, and I never saw her ship any heavier water. I wouldn't mind having another cruise in her myself, only I think I am too stiff in the joints to take the head of a boat. I am too old for a harpessed one now."

"Not you, Bill," said Mr. Lancer, encouragingly. "There's lots of music in an old fiddle, as the saying is. If you like to say the word, you can take your old post in the standard boat, for we have not yet shipped all our hands. The captain will take you and be glad to get you, I'm pretty sure, for he knows what you can do."

A long discussion ensued between Tom and Bill, which was very amusing to Ned, for it was interspersed with nautical humour and many reminiscences of their ups and downs together at sea. Eventually it was agreed that Bill and Ned should see the captain. The next day they went on board the *Finchak*, off Linehouse.

At once they were received in a kind manner, which was quite free from the peculiar brusqueness which some captains think it is dignified to assume at all times, when speaking to common sailors. Bill in a respectful way explained the object of his visit, and after a little negotiation the captain agreed to take him again as a harpessed one, the usual rate. He had some hesitation about taking Ned, who admitted that he was almost a novice on board ship; but when he learnt that the boy was a runner-away from the *Trident*, he bluntly refused to have anything to do with him, and reproved him for improper conduct in deserting his ship, which was almost as bad as high treason.

Poor Ned was again knocked down to the depth of dejection, but he did not venture to utter a word in self-defence, for he felt ashamed of the act in the sight that Captain Lamb put it to him; and he was strongly disposed to return to the *Trident*, and beg the captain's pardon for running away. But he reflected again, that if he went back he would face worse than he had done before, and he decided that he would rather seek employment on shore, to drive a horse and cart, or any other sort of work, if he could not get a ship. While he was silently cogitating the matter, Mr. Lancer was giving Captain Lamb a running account of Ned's trials on board his last ship, which statement was corroborated by Bill. Presently, Captain Lamb acknowledged that he had been under the impression that Ned was an apprentice when he spoke so sharply to him; but as he had only shipped for the voyage home, he was entitled to his discharge as well as the other hands, and he could not really be called a runaway. Moreover, it was pretty clear that Captain Fitch did not care to trouble himself about the lad, or he might easily have traced his whereabouts. Under the circumstances he would take Ned and give him a trial on board his ship, to see if Captain Fitch's estimate of him was correct or not. He should have a fair chance.

Ned's eyes brightened up again with joy, and he thanked the captain for his kindness and promised that he should have a fair chance. Ned was put on board. The captain then told him that his wages would be one pound a month; but as the voyage would probably extend to three years or more, if he showed himself a smart lad he should get something extra for the third year.

That evening Bill and Lancer sat smoking their pipes together in the widow's back-parlor, and their conversation turned upon Ned, when Bill remarked with honest earnestness, "That youngster will make a smart man if he is spared, take my word for it, Tom. But he has never had fair play yet, poor boy, he hasn't given him half a chance to show what he is made of."

"What is the reason everybody has been down on him so heavily, Bill? He seems a civil, well-behaved boy, as far as I can see of him."

"It was only a few spiteful ones that had down on him, Tom. Most of the hands forward were fond of him as if he were a pet monkey. He had the bad luck to offend Mr. Pall at first start off, through letting his tongue run a little too fast, and that is at the bottom of his bad luck. He might have had a set-to with all the other middles in the ship without much damage to himself; but then Mr. Pall's father, very rich, and that makes the clap up, and he could always find some toadies on board to take sides with him, so that they would with a poor lad who hadn't a rich friend in the world."

"I think I can see through it all now, Bill."

"Of course you can, mate; and I could show anyone with common gumption, in half-an-hour, that all the scrapes poor Ned got into on board our ship were merely caused by a mettlesome spirit which most people like to see in a youngster, and that there is no more harm than that in him, and that he is a work-woman. I only wish I could handle a pen."

(To be Continued.)

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Scraps.

Mr. Balfour, First Lord of the Treasury, has issued a memo stating that the Government are confident that the Imperial Parliament could not control the Irish Executive if Home Rule were granted to Ireland.

The latest ideas are current in England. Mr. Dibbs asserts, with respect to the Australian colonies.

It is stated that the Pope will shortly issue an encyclical proposing the communion of Columbus, on the ground that the discovery of America was divinely inspired.

Mr. A. Doherty, of Nagambie, Victoria, was shot last week and subsequently died. A man named Norris then gave himself up as having fired the shot.

The small-pox patients at the quarantine station are progressing favourably. Marquis of Salisbury is becoming notorious. He has been delivering quite domain speeches of an Anarchist and dynamite type; and one of his insinuations if not crawling remarks on May 18 was that "it would be no infringement of the principle of free-trade to meet 'Bottle' tariffs by dealing with the importation of 'articles of luxury'." For a high and dry Tory to use the argument *ad caput*, i.e., a case down in the tone of Conservative politics.

According to an American newspaper, millionaire Con. Vanderbilt is about to build a £400,000 mansion. It will contain a private theatre and a monster hall and supper room.

A corn-hauling match took place at Windsor on Saturday, the winner hauling 500 cobs in 27 min. 42 sec.

A new meeting is to be held at Caulfield (Vic.) on July 12, the proceeds to go towards relieving distress in Melbourne.

In Melbourne the Governor-in-Council has been empowered to stop traffic into or through streets and public or private places where smallpox exists.

Mr. Suttor, Acting-Colonial Secretary, recently assured a deputation from farmers and milk companies that he would have an inquiry made as to whether any amendment of the Dairies Supervision Act was necessary.

A young Presbyterian clergyman named McCre, a passenger by the R.M.S. Orava, has developed smallpox in Melbourne, and been removed to the Sanatorium.

In Melbourne last week Elizabeth Perry was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for manslaughter by starving a child to death.

According to Mr. Gosce, M.L.A., there are 1700 rms in New South Wales; 1100 of them are registered in the names of banks or pastoral mortgage companies.

Two black answers the description of the Dora Dora blacks have been seen the south arm of the Clarence River. What is the description of these ubiquitous darkies? The exact colour should be given to a reader.

A cake of gold weighing 172oz., the result of three and a half years' work at the Aladdin's Lamp mine, is on exhibition at Orange.

A committee has been appointed at Melbourne to formulate a scheme for relieving distress by settling people on the land.

The Victorian Minister for Public Works refuses to allow the Labor Bureau to be used as a night shelter for the unemployed.

The Victorian Executive has passed an Order in Council for the compulsory retirement from the Civil Service of septagenarians.

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A TRIAL SOLICITED.

Under the head of small-pox, the "Braidwood Dispatch" says—The name of the passenger by the R.M.S. Orava, who we stated in our last issue had turned up in Araluen, is Mr. G. Page. He had been in the valley for some days before the fact leaked out. Dr. Llewellyn, in accordance with instructions from the Board of Health in Sydney, on Saturday visited Araluen and vaccinated Mr. Page. He was found to be in remarkably good health, the vaccine being applied merely as a precautionary measure.

Lady Leigh, mother of Countess Jersey, wants to make a nurse-girl of Dibbs, desiring him to bring out with him Lord Jersey's elder son, Viscount Villiers.

Kiana Bench decided by a majority of 11 to 4 not to put the dog Act in force within the police district there.

An attempt was made recently to arrest a German butcher, at Charing Cross, London. He resisted violently. He succeeded in killing the sergeant of police who attempted his arrest, and he badly wounded two spectators who came to the officer's assistance.

Last year the F.P. and I. Co. froze 371,475 sheep, besides a large quantity of beef, for export; they are now adding to the freezing plant a capacity of 3 to 4 thousand sheep daily.

Lord Chief-Justice Coleridge said in a trial in London lately that 160 capital crimes had been abolished since he was a boy. This is surely progress with which the abolitionists ought to be satisfied.

Lord Rosebery's Opinion.

As to the British Premier's recent speech Lord Rosebery said:—It is uncomplimentary to Lord Salisbury's sincerity that there has not been a violent fall in the public securities of this country. I venture to say this, that there has been in my lifetime no darker and more sinister contribution to the history of Ireland than this speech of Lord Salisbury's. I venture to say that in the last two centuries I can trace my memory with no speech of any Prime Minister that approaches it in danger, in recklessness, and in possible results. He is telling his own knell, and telling it while he means only to sound the tocsin which shall call the nations to civil war."

PRINCESS KARAJA'S BOOK.

A pleasing little book has just been sent forth to the world by the Princess Karaja, the wife of the Turkish Ambassador in Paris. The Princess is only 24 years of age and the work a brilliant little attempt, coming from a young lady who has been spending months in courts. The book is entitled "Rincelles," and some of the passages contained in it are very smart. Here is one:—"Say something clever before twenty people, and perhaps you will remember it next day. Say something foolish before one person, and twenty will remember it next day. Another:—"Believe in the badness of man, and you will have many agreeable surprises: believe in their goodness, and you will experience bitter disappointments." Again:—"Plenty of people would rather associate with their superiors who despised them than their equals who esteemed them." There are quite a number of others equally good, showing evidence of a very observant mind in one so young as the princess.

"VERNON" CHEAP LABOR.

The Police Magistrate of the lower Richmond, in the course of a recent case, said, the farmers of the district had a very strong desire for cheap labor, and in pursuance thereof were in the habit of engaging boys from the Vernon at the lowest of rates, rather than pay a local boy a fair wage. Often these lads were treated with shameful meanness. They were always vulnerable importations, as they imparted to the local youth their superior knowledge of the vices.

THE WAY IT CAME ABOUT.

"Why don't you borrow ten millions in one lot, instead of three or four?" said Baron Rothschild to Mr. Dibbs. "I save time, writing papers etc. etc." "These have been my sentiments for a long time," replied Mr. Dibbs; "some eight or nine years ago I did propose a ten-million loan, but your market would only stand five. However, you think the time has come. I will be pleased to listen to an offer from your old-established and reputable firm this moment." "Come and have a drink," was the Baron's remark.—*Wellington Argus.*

ART UNION LOTTERY CASES.

At the Melbourne District Court last week the promoters of the Druid's Dale Art Union were charged with conducting a lottery. The defendants were Dr. Maloney and Mr. Bromley, M.A.P., and Messrs. Gannon, Brennan, Leonard, Simpson, Kendrick, Mandell, Miller and Black. Mr. Finlayson represented the Crown, and Mr. Madden defended. For the defence, the lottery was admitted, but it was urged that the money derived thereby was devoted to the benevolent funds. Mr. Madden defended against defendants, and inflicted a fine of 10s each with 40s 10w costs. The charge against Dr. Maloney and Mr. Bromley was withdrawn, as it would have gone against their reputations as members of the Assembly.

INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSION.

A special committee of the Melbourne Chamber of Manufacturers took evidence respecting the industrial depression in the colony. Mr. E. Steinfield, in his opening remarks, said that in Melbourne the industrial institutions were groaning. The cause was to be traced to the great strike and to the collapse of the land boom. The chamber also believed that the depression was due to the present tariff, which had become obsolete. It was framed 20 years ago, and some extraordinary measures would have to be taken to effect the necessary reforms. Protection was the policy of the colony, but a great many articles were not protected.

A Peculiar Divorce Case.

THE LAW IN AMERICA.

A laborer named George Henry Pulling obtained a divorce from his wife on the grounds of misconduct and desertion.

Respondent left the petitioner in 1886 and went to America. A letter which she wrote to her step-mother was put in as evidence. Respondent wrote:—"I am settled down here in the United States, and you will be surprised perhaps to find that I have another husband, but I do not want you to let Mr. P. know that he is free. I got a divorce quite easily through the United States Court. I tell you it is quite an easy thing to get divorced in America and to get married again. At any rate, the one I married has proved a good, true husband to me, and my true name is M'Ilwraith."

His honor gave costs against the co-respondent.

The seven young men, members of the Waterloo "push," convicted at the Quarter Sessions of rioting at Redfern on May 5, were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 18 to three months.

The Victorian Bakers' Association have donated £300 towards the relief of the distress among the unemployed in Melbourne.

Melbourne wharf laborers accepted a reduction of 5s a week for permanent loads.

Hawkers and Disease.

The Philadelphia "Item" declares hawking and peddling as a dissemination of disease. It says:—"Physicians and sanitarians have for a long time entertained the suspicion that the peddler and his pack are dangerous and fruitful sources of disseminating contagious diseases, such as fevers, small pox and diphtheria. More than once the attention of the medical fraternity and health officials have been directed to this suspected channel of contagion. Heretofore the proofs have been lacking, although it was reasonably certain that they existed."

We have now the proofs furnished us that such is really the fact.

Some few weeks ago a half-dozen pack peddlers hailing from the city of New York, thoroughly covered that section of Connecticut in the vicinity of the town of Canterbury. These vendors forced their way into houses, and, opening their packs, displayed their cheap wares for the women to buy. They were generally successful, because the women bought to get rid of them. Two weeks after this invasion the community was started by an outbreak of scarlet fever and diphtheria.

It was ascertained in the investigation into the cases of the epidemic that the sickness was confined to those houses in which the peddlers undid their packs.

Deaths have already occurred and the scourge is spreading.

A newspaper dispatch from Canterbury says that in no family where the peddlers failed to enter the house has either disease appeared. It is the general opinion of the physicians who are attending the sick that the seeds of the diseases were spread by the peddlers and came from their filthy packs.

What a pointed warning for mothers with tender children under their care!

It is tolerably well known that these industrious peddlers, when at home in the cities, lodge in the slums, or in quarters which are given up wholly to the invading army of foreigners who come to us empty both in hand and pocket. Our readers do not have to be told how these miserable people huddle together like sheep, two or three families promiscuously in a room that filth and uncleanness abound, as has been so often described. It is these quarters which are a perpetual menace to the cities and give the health authorities the gravest concern. There they sleep in crowded rooms without ventilation, and in poisoned atmospheres. They live on unwholesome food, and are veritable windfalls for contagious diseases. It is from these shambles, reeking with filth, disease and oftentimes with vermin, that the peddlers in most cases go forth in the morning on their day's tramp, scattering over the city and country, pushing their way into houses in their eagerness to make a sale.

How easy for them to carry the seeds of disease, and particularly of diphtheria and scarlet fever, the enemies of childhood! In case of the typhus fever outbreak in New York it has been established that that disease was carried from an infected lodging house to other places.

Women should be extremely careful about receiving a peddler and his pack into their houses, and particularly if he be a dirty specimen of his class. He may have slept the last night in a crowded house in which there were cases of scarlet fever or diphtheria, and the microbes may be in his clothes or his pockets.

It will be found far cheaper in the end to buy goods from a reputable dealer, even if a bargain is not always thrown in.

The farmers of Wollar, Mudgee district, have undertaken the formation of a Dairy Factory Company. If carried out, this factory will be the ninth in the district.

The Post-master General says the G.P.O. is not big enough, and that an extra storey will have to be added to it.

Messrs. Crick and Willis M's.L.A. are partners on the Turf; they are represented at the next year's Derby list by a colt named Cull-gon.

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