A BEAUTIFUL PIRATE

By Guy Boothby.

As the head of the first man appeared my companion raised his pistol and pulled the trigger. The bullet struck the poor wretch exactly on the bridge of the nose, making a clear round hole from which an instant later a jet of blood spurted forth. A second bullet carried another man to his account, and by this time the remaining four were upon us.

Of what followed in that turmoil I have but a very imperfect recollection. I remember seeing three men rush toward me, one of whom I knew for Kwong Fung, the little pockmarked rascal before mentioned, and I recollect that with the instinct of despair I clutched my bar of iron in both hands and brought it down on the head of the nearest of the trio with all my force. It caught him on the right temple and crushed the skull in like a broken eggshell. But the piratical scoundrels had forgotten the man lying on the deck. In their haste to advance they omitted to step over his body, caught their feet and fell to the ground.

At least I am wrong in saying they fell to the ground, for only the pockmarked rascal fell; the other tripped and would have recovered himself and

A second bullet carried another man to his account.

been upon me had I not sprung upon him, thrown away my bar, caught up his companion's knife, which had fallen from his hand, and tried my level best to drive it in above his shoulder blade. But it was easier said than done. He clutched me fiercely and locked hard and fast we swayed this way and that, fighting like wildcats for our lives. He was a smaller man than I, but active as an acrobat and in the most perfect training. Up and down, round and round, we went, eyes glaring, breath coming in great gasps, our hands upon each other's throats and every moment drawing closer and closer to the vessel's side.

Though the whole fight could not have lasted a minute it seemed an eternity. I was beginning to weaken, and I saw by the look in his hateful almond eyes that my antagonist knew it. But he had bargained without his host. A heavy roll sent the little vessel heeling over to the port side, and an instant later we were both prone upon the deck, rolling, tumbling, fighting again to be uppermost. From the manner in which I had fallen, however, the advantage now lay with me, and you may be sure I was not slow to make the most of it. Throwing myself over and seating myself astride of him, I clutched my adversary by the throat and, drawing back my arm, struck him with my clinched fist between his eyes. The blow was given with all my strength, and it certainly told. He lay beneath me a bleeding and insensible mass. Then staggering to my feet I looked about me. On the deck were four dead bodies—two on the break of the poop lying faces down, just where they had fallen; one at my feet, his skull dashed in and his brains protruding, a horrible sight; another under the bulwarks, his limbs twitching in his death agony and his mouth vomiting blood with automatic regularity. My companion I discovered seated astride of another individual admonishing him with what I knew was an empty revolver to abstain from any further attempt to escape.

"I think we have got the upper hand of them now," he said as calmly as if he were accustomed to going through this sort of thing every day of his life. "Would you be so good as to hand me that piece of rope? I must make this slippery gentleman fast while I have him."

"Surely it's the leader of the gang," I cried, at the same time doing as he had asked me. "The man you pointed out to me, Kwong Fung?"

"You're quite right. It is."

"And now that you have him what will his fate be?"

"A short shrift and a long rope, if I have anything to do with the matter. There! That's right, I don't think you'll get into much mischief now, my friend."

"My goodness, man, you're wounded," he cried, spinning me round to find out whence the blood was dripping. And so I was, though in my excitement I had quite forgotten the fact. A ball had passed clean through the fleshy part of my left arm, and the blood flowing from it had stiffened all my sleeve.

With a gentleness one would hardly have expected to find in him my friend drew off my coat and cut open my shirt sleeve. Then bidding me stay where I was while he procured some water with which to bathe the wound he left me and went for'ard. I did not, however, see him return, for now that the excitement had departed a great faintness was stealing over me. The sea seemed to be turning black and the deck of the junk to be slipping away from under me. Finally my legs tottered, my senses left me and I fell heavily to the ground.

When I came to myself again, I was lying on a pile of fiber sails under the shelter of an improvised awning. My companion, whose name I discovered later was Walworth, was kneeling beside me with a preternaturally grave expression upon his usually stolid face.

"How do you feel now?" he inquired, holding a cup of water to my lips.

I drank eagerly, and then replied that I felt better, but terribly weak.

"Oh, that's only to be expected," he answered reassuringly. "We ought to be glad, considering the amount of blood you must have lost, that it's no worse. Keep up your heart. You'll soon be all right now."

"Has anything happened?"

"Nothing at all! We're the victors without doubt. As soon as you can spare me I'm going for'ard to rouse out the rest of the gang and get the junk on her course again. We've no time to waste pottering about here."

"I'm well enough now. Only give me something to protect myself with in case of accident."

"Here's your own revolver, of which I relieved our pockmarked friend yonder. I've refilled it, so if you want to you can do damage to the extent of six shots—two for each of the three remaining men."

After glancing at his own weapon to see that it was fully charged he picked his way for'ard and called in Chinese to those in hiding to come forth if they wished to save their lives. In response to his summons three men crawled out and stood in a row. After he had harangued them I noticed that he questioned them eagerly in turn and was evidently much perturbed at the answers he received. When he had said all that he had to say, he searched for something and, not finding it, left them and came back to me. Before making any remark he turned over the bodies on the deck and when he had done so seemed still more put out.

"What's the matter?" I inquired. "Are we in for any more trouble?"

"I'm afraid so. That rascally captain, seeing how the fighting was going and dreading my vengeance, must have jumped overboard, leaving no man save myself capable of navigating the junk, added to which the food and water supply—which, had this trouble not occurred and we had got farther upon our way, would have been ample for our requirements—will only last us at most two more meals. However, it's no good crying over spilled milk. We must do our best with what we've got, and having done that we can't do more. Let us hope we'll soon pick up the boat of which we're in search."

"And what boat may that be?"

"Why, the vessel that is to take us to the island, to be sure. What other could it be?"

"I had no idea that we were in search of one."

"Well, we are, and it looks as if we shall be in search of her for some time to come. Confound those treacherous beggars!"

As he said this he assumed possession of the tiller, the vessel's head was brought round to her course, and presently we were wabbling along in a new and more westerly direction.

It was not a cheerful outlook by any manner of means, and for the hundredth time or so I reproached myself for my folly in ever having undertaken the voyage. To add to my regret, my arm was still very painful, and though to a certain extent I was protected from the sun by the awning my friend had constructed for me, yet I began to suffer agonies of thirst. The afternoon wore on, the sun declined upon the western horizon, and still no wind came. It looked as if we were destined to spend yet another night upon this horrible junk, the very sight of which had become beyond measure loathsome to me. As darkness fell it seemed peopled with ghosts, for though the bodies of those killed in the late affray no longer defaced the deck with their ghastly presence I could not drive the picture they had presented from my brain.

I was asleep next morning when the sun rose, but his heat soon woke me to the grim reality of our position. My companion was still at the tiller, and from where I lay I could see that we were still sailing in the same direction. He called to me to know how I felt, and to show him that I was better I endeavored to rise, only to fall back again in what must have been a dead faint.

I have no recollection of what followed immediately upon my recovering myself except a confused remembrance of craving for water—water, water, water! But there was none to be had even if I had offered £100 for a drop.

Toward evening our plight was indeed pitiable. We were all too weak to work the boat. Friends and foes mingled together unmolested. Unable to bear his agony, one of the men jumped overboard, and so ended his sufferings. Others would have followed his example, but my companion promised that he would shoot the next man who attempted it, and so make his end still more certain.

About half past 7 the sun sank beneath the horizon, and with his departure a welcome breeze came down to us. Within an hour this had freshened into a moderate gale. Then, just before darkness obscured everything, a cry from one of the Chinamen for'ard brought my companion to his feet. Rushing to the side, he stared toward the west.

"Yes! Yes, it is! We're saved, De Normanville—we're saved! As he says, it is the schooner."

Then for the fourth time during that eventful voyage my senses deserted me.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEAUTIFUL WHITE DEVIL.

When I opened my eyes again, I found myself, to my intense astonishment, lying, fully dressed, in a comfortable hammock beneath a well constructed awning. The canvas walls of my resting place prevented me from seeing anything more of my surroundings than my toes, but when I lifted myself up and peered over the side it was not the junk's evil planks that I saw before me, but the deck of a handsome, well appointed yacht. My hammock was seemingly swung amidships, and judging from the side upon which I looked—save the man at the wheel and a couple of hands polishing brasswork for'ard—I appeared to have the entire deck to myself. Whose boat was she? How had I come to be aboard her, and how long had I been there? But though I puzzled my brains for an answer to these questions I could find none. My memory refused to serve me, and so, feeling tired, I laid myself back again upon my pillow and once more closed my eyes.

I had scarcely done so before I heard a noise on the other side which caused me to look over again. How shall I describe what I saw there? Three years have passed since then, but I have the recollection of even the minutest detail connected with the picture that was before me at that moment just as plainly engraved upon my memory as if it had occurred but yesterday.

Seated in a long cane chair, one elbow balanced on the arm rest and one tiny hand supporting her dimpled chin, was the most beautiful woman—and I say it advisedly, knowing it to be true—that I had ever or have ever beheld or shall ever behold in my life. Though she was seated, and for that reason I could not determine her exact height, I was convinced it was considerably above the average; her figure, as much as I could see of it, was beautifully molded; her face was exquisitely shaped; her eyes were large and of a deep sea blue; while the wealth of rippling hair that crowned her head was of a natural golden hue and enhanced rather than detracted from the softness of her delicate complexion. As if still further to add to her general fairness she was dressed entirely in white, even to her deck shoes and the broad panama hat upon her head. Only one thing marred the picture. By her side, presenting a fitting contrast to so much loveliness, crouched, his head resting between his fore paws, a ferocious white bulldog, who ever and anon looked up with big bloodshot eyes into her face as if to make quite sure that there was no one within reach whom she might wish him to destroy.

She was evidently absorbed in her own thoughts, and presently the hand that was hanging down beside the chair found the dog's head and began softly to stroke his tulip ears. Then her eyes looked up, caught mine, and seeing that I was no longer asleep she rose and came toward me.

"So you are awake at last, Dr. De Normanville?" she said, with a smile, and as I heard her it struck me that her voice was even more beautiful than all her other attributes put together. "You have had a long sleep—12 hours!"

"Twelve hours!" I cried in amazement, at the same time gazing at her with admiration only too plainly written on my face. "You don't mean to say that I've been 12 hours asleep? I can hardly believe it. Why, it seems only a few minutes since we were aboard that rascally junk. And what has happened since then? Is this the vessel we left Hongkong to meet?"

"Yes, this is the boat. We were just beginning to grow anxious about you when the junk was sighted. I am afraid, from your companion's account, you must have had a desperate time on board her."

"I should not care to go through it again certainly," I answered truthfully. "One such experience is enough to last a man a lifetime. By the way, how is my companion? I hope he is none the worse for his adventures."

"You need have no fear on that score. He is accustomed to that sort of thing and thrives on it, as you may have noticed. He is below at present, but as soon as he comes on deck I will send him to you. Now you had better lie down again and try to get some more sleep. You must remember that your strength is of the utmost value to us."

"I don't think I quite understand. But before we go any further will you tell me what yacht this is and to whom I am indebted for my rescue?"

"This yacht is called the Lone Star," she answered, "and I am the owner." As she said this she looked at me in rather a queer sort of a way, I thought, but I let it pass and asked another question.

"I am very much afraid you will think me pertinacious, but is it permissible for me to know your name?"

"You may certainly know it if you wish to," she answered with a short and, I could not help thinking, rather

She was evidently absorbed in her own thoughts.

bitter laugh. "But I don't think you will be any too pleased when you hear it. My real name is Alie, but by the benighted inhabitants of this part of the globe I am called by another and more picturesque cognomen."

She stopped, and I almost caught my breath with excitement. A light was breaking upon me.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A CLEVER RUSSIAN.

He Found a Method of Beating His Persian Creditor.

In Persia, when a creditor fails to get his money in any other way, he appears in the debtor's house and sits down. Then he does not move away till the delinquent pays up. He enters the debtor's sleeping apartments, if possible, and has his meals brought in. A few years ago a Persian held an unsatisfied claim against the British government, and he presented himself before the British minister one day and camped out in his private office. The minister did not see the joke, and sent for a policeman. That made a lot of noise and trouble, and the Russian representative in Teheran evidently learned a lesson from it, for he managed a case of the same kind much differently.

The Persian who demanded money from the Russian (Count Kolomeisow) was a holy man, a dervish, and when he sat down in the Russian's anteroom to wait till the latter paid his disputed claim Count Kolomeisow knew that he could not get rid of him without much fuss and explanation. It is against the laws, or at least the custom, which is just as firm, to touch a creditor who takes this means of collecting money, so the count could not throw him out. He thought over the matter, and one morning he sent for a lot of masons. Then he ordered them to build a wall around the dervish, who was sitting in the middle of the room. The dervish watched them placidly at first, but when the wall grew and it became apparent that it would be completed soon he jumped over it, ran away and has not been seen since. They say that the count is the first man in Teheran who has beaten a creditor of this kind without recourse to the police.—New York Press.

"Taste Orchestration."

"This so called new theory of color hearing isn't new at all," said a chap who takes an interest in curious things, "and the whole idea is very neatly embodied in the old story of the blind man who, after much reflection, told his wife that he had discovered what scarlet was like. 'It resembles the sound of a trumpet,' he said. The same theme was worked out years ago in an uncanny French novel that described a wealthy roue who exhausted every form of pleasure and finally retired to a secluded chateau, where he experimented upon the interrelation of the senses.

"Different liqueurs and cordials suggested certain musical instruments to his overwrought brain, and he constructed what he called a 'taste orchestrion.' It was a cabinet containing innumerable strange foreign drinks, and by passing with a wineglass from one tap to another he produced the effect of a symphony. How was that for a fantastic conception? I mention this book, which was written by a very distinguished French novelist, merely to show that the theory of making one sense do duty for another is by no means a modern scientific fad, but is something that has excited speculation for many, many years."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A One Sided Affair.

"You and Hogby are dear friends, aren't you?"

"Well, he has been dear to me, but I have never cost him anything."—Chicago Record.

In China the detection of false coins is a skilled, prosperous profession known as "shroffing," and is taught in special schools.

DAIRY & CREAMERY.

PROPER CARE FOR COWS.

Features of a Model Dairy Farm Near New York.

In describing a model dairy farm near New York, the Brooklyn Citizen says that at night the cows are housed in barns as neat as wax. In a single long barn there are two rows of 30 or more stalls facing each other, with a pathway between and at the back for attendants. Just at 5:20 every afternoon the cows come through the bars to the stables, each going to her respective stall, which is indicated to the visitor, if not to the cow herself, by the name card above it. At the rear of the stalls is a trough with traps opening into an earth pit below to receive all refuse from the cow barns. These are swept

COW STALLS.

and flushed out every day, and are as free from dirt and dust as hard wood floors in a well kept house. Each cow, too, is groomed as sleek as a carriage horse. A hint at the precaution in the care of the cattle is suggested by a placard stating that visitors are not allowed to handle or to feed the cattle, while the supreme cleanliness which pervades the entire farm is manifested by a toilet room, with mirrors, set washbowls and clothes lockers, where men who milk the cows are required to wash and don a white linen suit before entering upon their regular morning and evening duty.

At the rear of the largest barn is the hospital, with several box stalls, and comfortable looking straw beds for the indisposed members of that cow family. To the right is the cows' kitchen, furnished with bins of grain and pans and dippers, in which food is prepared. Never on any occasion, said the guide, is the food mixed by hand.

Another apartment, with two or three playful heifers and little calves, each in her separate room, was pointed out as the nursery.

The creamery is a separate building from the barns, equipped with a small steam engine and the necessary apparatus for chilling the milk, skimming, packing, etc.

Every morning and evening the milk is brought in shining tin pails into the receiving room, which is on the second story of the building. The floor of this room is covered with zinc to insure easy and perfect cleanliness. At one end there appear the tops of two immense tanks, which extend to the room below, having a capacity of 1,100 quarts each. These are surrounded by ice and have a central cylinder filled with ice and in appearance resemble a huge ice cream freezer. The outlet from these tanks is in the room below, where by means of a double line of spigots, attached to the flow pipe of each tank, as many as 20 quart bottles are filled per minute. In one tank cream is allowed to rise on top, and is then taken off by means of a skimmer and flow pipe inserted near the surface of the milk. The milk that is filling the bottles for the city market is kept in motion, so that the cream will not settle and partially skimmed milk fill some of the bottles and then 24 hours later call forth the wrath of the city consumer, who thinks he has a right to rich milk.

Heavy cream that housekeepers call for in the city market is that which is separated by a machine removing by centrifugal force all the cream that is in the milk.

Another zinc floored room up stairs contains a tank in which cream is soured at regulated temperature, for the butter making processes which go on in the room below. Pipes from the tank above connect with a box churn of 1,200 quarts capacity. Steam is applied by a belt from the engine, and the motion which makes the butter is rotary. The butter is worked by a steam cone shaped roller on a circular tray and is wrapped for shipping in finished squares of snow white muslin. Print butter from this model dairy is always made from the milk of a few especial cows and retails the year around in the city for 50 cents.

Poetic Retribution.

Wheeler—What's the matter with you? Had a fall from your wheel?

Scorcher—Naw. Got run down on the sidewalk by a woman with a baby carriage.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Unable to Leave.

Browne—Was your Thanksgiving dinner party a success?

Towne—Tremendous! Why, some of the guests are at my house yet.—New York World.