

PHANTOM SHIP

—OR—
The Flying Dutchman.

—BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

CAPTER IV.

Two days later the widow's funeral was over, and Philip having found the key in a secret drawer of his mother's cabinet, was standing in the room that had been locked up for so many years.

The room was about twelve or fourteen feet square, with but one window; opposite to the door stood the chimney and fire-place, with a high buffet of dark wood on each side. On a table near by was a bunch of keys. With one of these he opened the wooden doors of the buffet, revealing an iron safe.

A second key on the bunch opened the iron doors; and Philip found himself in possession of a considerable sum of money, amounting, as near as he could reckon, to ten thousand guilders, in little yellow sacks. Philip replaced the sacks, and locked up the cupboard, after having taken out of one, already half emptied, a few pieces for his immediate wants. Then turning and gazing at the table again he beheld partly concealed under some embroidery, the sealed letter which his mother had declared had been left there by his father seventeen years ago. He dashed forward, seized the letter, and burst out of the fatal room.

"I cannot, dare not, read it here," exclaimed he; "no, no, it must be under the val of high and offended Heaven that the message must be received." Philip took his hat, and went out of the house; in calm despair he locked the door, took out the key, and walked he knew not whither.

Philip looked about him for some spot where he might be concealed from observation—where he might break the seal, and read this mission from a world of spirits. A small copse of brushwood, in advance of a grove of trees, was not far from where he stood. He walked to it and sat down, so as to be concealed from any passers-by. Then he broke the seal, which bore the initials of his father's name, and read as follows:

"To Catherine:
"One of those pitying spirits whose eyes rain tears for mortal crimes has been permitted to inform me by what means alone my dreadful doom may be averted.

"Could I but receive on the deck of my own ship the holy relic upon which I swore the fatal oath, kiss it in all humility, and shed one tear of deep contrition on the sacred wood, I then might rest in peace.

"How this may be effected, or by whom so fatal a task will be undertaken, I know not. Oh, Catherine, we have a son—but, no, no, let him not hear of me. Pray for me, and now, farewell.

"I, VANDERDECKEN."
"Then it is true, most horribly true," thought Philip; "and my father is even now in living judgment. And he points to me—to whom else should he? Am I not his son, and is it not my duty?"

"Yes, my father!" exclaimed Philip, aloud, falling on his knees, "you have not written these lines in vain. Let me peruse them once more."

Philip raised up his hand; but, although it appeared to him that he had still hold of the letter, it was not there—he grasped nothing. He looked on the grass to see if it had fallen—but, no, there was no letter; it had disappeared. Was it a vision? No, no; he had read every word. "Then it must be to me, and me alone, that the mission was intended. I accept the sign."

"Hear me, dear father—if thou art so permitted—and deign to hear me, gracious Heaven—hear the son who, by this sacred relic, swears that he will avert your doom or perish. To that will he devote his days; and having done his duty, he will die in hope and peace. Heaven, that recorded my rash father's oath, now register his son's upon the same sacred cross, and may perchance on my part be visited with punishment more dire than his! Receive it, Heaven, as at the last I trust that in Thy mercy Thou wilt receive the father and the son; and if too bold, oh, pardon my presumption!"

Philip threw himself forward on his face, with his lips to the sacred symbol. The sun went down and the twilight gradually disappeared; night had for some time shrouded all in darkness, and Philip yet remained in alternate prayer and meditation!

But he was disturbed by the voices of some men, who sat down upon the turf but a few yards from where he was concealed. The conversation he little heeded; but it had roused him, and his first feeling was to return to the cottage, that he might reflect over his plans; but, although the men spoke in a low tone, his attention was soon arrested by the subject of their conversation when he heard the name of Mynheer Poots mentioned. He listened attentively, and discovered that they were four disbanded soldiers, who intended that night to attack the house of the little doctor, who had they knew, much money in his possession.

"What I have proposed is the best," said one of them; "he has no one with him but his daughter. I value her more than his money," replied another; "no recollect before we go it is

perfectly understood that she is to be my property."

"Yes, if you choose to purchase her, there is no objection," replied a third.

"Agreed; how much will you in conscience ask for a pulling girl?"

"I say five hundred guilders," replied another.

"Well, be it so, but on this condition, that if my share of the booty does not amount to so much, I am to have her for my share, whatever it may be."

"That's very fair," replied the other; "but I'm much mistaken if we don't turn more than two thousand guilders out of the old man's chest."

"What do you say—is it agreed—shall Baetans have her?"

"Oh, yes," replied the others.

"Well, then," replied the one who had stipulated for Mynheer Poots' daughter, "now I am with you, heart and soul. I loved that girl, and tried to get her—I positively offered to marry her, but the old hunk refused me, an ensign, an officer; but now I'll have revenge. We must not spare him."

"No, no," replied the others.

"Shall we go now, or wait till it is later? In an hour or more the moon will be up—we may be seen."

"Who is to see us? unless, indeed, some one is sent for him. The later the better, I say."

"How long will it take us to get there? Not half an hour if we walk. Suppose we start in half an hour hence, we shall just have the moon to count the guilders by."

"That's all right. In the meantime, I'll put a new flint in my lock, and have my carbine loaded. I can work in the dark."

"You are used to it, Jan."

"Yes, I am—and I intend this ball to go through the old rascal's head."

"Well, I'd rather you should kill him than I," replied one of the others, "for he saved my life at Middleburgh, when every one made sure I'd die."

Philip did not want to hear any more; he crawled behind the bushes until he gained the grove of trees, and passing through them, made a detour, so as not to be seen by these miscreants. That they were disbanded soldiers, many of whom were infesting the country, he knew well. All his thoughts were now to save the old doctor and his daughter from the danger which threatened them; and for a time he forgot his father, and the exciting revelations of the day. Although Philip had not been aware in what direction he had walked when he set off from the cottage, he knew the country well; and now that it was necessary to act, he remembered the direction in which he should find the lonely house of Mynheer Poots; with the utmost speed he made his way for it, and in less than twenty minutes he arrived there out of breath.

As usual, all was silent, and the door fastened. Philip knocked, but there was no reply. Again and again he knocked, and became impatient. Mynheer Poots must have been summoned, and was not in the house; Philip therefore called out, so as to be heard within. "Maiden, if you father is out, as I presume he must be, listen to what I have to say—I am Philip Vanderdecken. But now I overheard four wretches, who have planned to murder your father, and rob him of his gold. In one hour, or less, they will be here, and I have hastened to warn and protect you, if I may. I swear upon the relic that you delivered to me this morning that what I state is true."

Philip waited a short time, but received no answer.

"Maiden," resumed he, "answer me, if you value that which is more dear to you than even your father's gold to him. Open the casement above, and listen to what I have to say. In so doing there is no risk; and even if it were not dark, already have I seen you."

A short time after this second address, the casement of the upper window was unbarred, and the slight form of the fair daughter of Mynheer Poots was to be distinguished by Philip through the gloom.

"What wouldst thou, young sir, at this unseemly hour? and what is it thou wouldst impart, but imperfectly heard by me, when thou speakest this minute at the door?"

Philip then entered into detail of all that he had overheard, and concluded by begging her to admit him, that he might defend her.

"Think, fair maiden, of what I have told you. You have been sold to one of those reprobates, whose name I think they mentioned was Baetans. The gold, I know, you value not; but think of thine own dear self—suffer me to enter the house, and think not for one moment that my story is feigned. I swear to thee by the soul of my poor, dear mother, now, I trust, in Heaven, that every word is true."

"Baetans, did you say, sir?"

"If I mistook them not, such was the name; he said he loved you once."

"That name I have in memory—I know not what to do, or what to say; my father has been summoned to a birth, and may be yet away for many hours. Yet how can I open the door to you—at night—he not at home—!

alone? I ought not—cannot—yet do I believe you. You surely never could be so base as to invent this tale."

"No—upon my hopes of future bliss I could not, maiden! You must not trifle with your life and honor, but let me in."

"And if I did, what could you do against such numbers? They are four to one—would soon overpower you, and one more life would be lost."

"Not if you have arms; and I think your father would not be left without them. I fear them not—you know that I am resolute."

"I do indeed—and now you'd risk your life for those you did assail. I thank you, thank you kindly, sir—but dare not open the door."

"Then, maiden, if you'll not admit me, here will I now remain, without arms, and but ill able to contend with four armed villains; but still, here will I remain and prove my truth to one I will protect 'gainst odds—yes, even here!"

"Then shall I be thy murderer! But that must not be. Oh! sir—swear, swear by all that's holy, and by all that's pure, that you do not deceive me."

"I swear by thyself maiden, than all to me more sacred!"

The casement closed, and in a short time a light appeared above. In a minute or two more the door was opened to Philip by the fair daughter of Mynheer Poots. She stood with the candle in her right hand, the color in her cheeks varying—now flushing red, and again deathly pale. Her left hand was down by her side, and in it she held a pistol half concealed. Philip perceived this precaution on her part, but took no notice of it; he wished to reassure her.

"Maiden," said he, not entering, "if you still have doubts—if you think you have been ill advised in giving me admission—there is yet time to close the door against me; but for your own sake I entreat you not. Before the moon is up, the robbers will be here. With my life I will protect you, if you will but trust me. Who indeed could injure one like you?"

CHAPTER V.

She was indeed (as she stood irresolute and perplexed from the peculiarity of her situation, yet nor wanting in courage when it was to be called forth) an object well worthy of gaze and admiration. Her features thrown into broad light and shade by the candle, which at times was half extinguished by the wind—her symmetry of form and the gracefulness and singularity of her attire—were matters of astonishment to Philip. Her head was without covering, and her long hair fell in plaits behind her shoulders; her stature was rather under the middle size, but her form perfect; her dress was simple but becoming, and very different from that usually worn by the young women of the district. Not only her features but her dress would at once have indicated to a traveler that she was of Arab blood, as was the fact.

She looked in Philip's face as he spoke—earnestly, as if she would have penetrated into his most inmost thoughts; but there was a frankness and honesty in his bearing, and a sincerity in his manly countenance, which reassured her. After a moment's hesitation she replied:

"Come in, sir; I feel that I can trust you."

Philip entered. The door was then closed and made secure.

"We have no time to lose, maiden," said Philip; "but tell me your name, that I may address you as I ought."

"My name is Amine," replied she, retreating a little.

"I thank you for that little confidence, but I must not dally. What arms have you in the house, and have you ammunition?"

"Both. I wish that my father would come home."

(To be continued.)

Happy Mark Twain.

Few items of news from the other side of the Atlantic are more likely to please American readers than the tidings that Mr. Clemens (Mark Twain) is no longer in financial straits. It is well known that some years ago the failure of a publishing house in which he was a partner left him saddled with heavy obligations. He undertook to pay his debts and regain a competence by work more speedily lucrative than the production of books. He signed a contract to lecture, and, notwithstanding occasional attacks of ill-health, he has fulfilled his agreement in the course of which he has made a tour around a large part of the globe. We are now told that his lectures have come to an end, for the reason that the profits already acquired will enable him to restrict himself henceforth to writing. This means that we may soon look for a new book from the pen of the author of "Innocents Abroad."—Collier's Weekly.

A Poor Showing.

"No," declared Horace Hardrocks, "I cannot consent to let you marry my daughter. A man who confesses bankruptcy as you did shall never become a member of my family if I can help it." "But," Albert Allingham protested, "many another man has gone into bankruptcy and still come out all right. Some of our ablest financiers have had that experience." "Very true, but that will never happen in your case. You have no financial ability whatever. Your assets were only \$5,000 less than your liabilities."

If the history of humanity had awl the blind watch out it, the lines would be too dim in pale to follow.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS TRAIN" AS SUBJECT.

"The Charlots Shall Rage in the Streets, They Shall Jostle One Against the Other in the Broad Ways"—From Nahum 2:4.

It has been found out that many of the arts and discoveries which we supposed were peculiar to our own age are merely the restoration of thousands of years ago. I suppose that the past centuries have forgotten more than the present century knows. It seems to me that they must have known thousands of years ago, in the days of Nineveh, of the uses of steam and its application to swift travel. In my text I hear the rush of the rail train, the clang of the wheels and the jamming of the car couplings. "The charlots shall rage in the streets; they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

Have you ever taken your position in the night, far away from a depot, along the track, waiting to see the rail train come at full speed? At first you heard in the distance a rumbling, like the coming of a storm, then you saw the flash of the headlight of the locomotive as it turned the curve; then you saw the wilder glare of the fiery eyes of the train as it came plunging toward you; then you heard the shriek of the whistle that frenzied all the echoes; then you saw the hurricane dash of cinders; then you felt the jar of the passing earthquake, and you saw the shot thunderbolt of the express train. Well, it seems that we can hear the passing of a midnight express train in my text: "The charlots shall rage in the streets; they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

I halt the train long enough to get on board, and I go through the cars, and I find three-fourths of the passengers are commercial travelers. They are a folk peculiar to themselves, easily recognized, at home on all trains, not startled by the sudden dropping of the brakes, familiar with all the railroad signals, can tell you what is the next station, how long the train will stop, what place the passengers take luncheon at, can give you information on almost any subject, are cosmopolitan, at home everywhere from Halifax to San Francisco. They are on the 8 o'clock morning train, on the noon train, on the midnight train. You take a berth in a sleeping-car, and either above you or beneath you is one of these gentlemen. There are 100,000 professed commercial travelers in the United States; but 500,000 would not include all those who are sometimes engaged in this service. They spend millions of dollars every day in the hotels and in the rail trains. They have their official newspaper organ. They have their mutual benefit association, about 4,000 names on the rolls, and have already distributed more than \$200,000 among the families of deceased members. They are ubiquitous, unique and tremendous for good or evil. All the tendencies of merchandise are toward their multiplication. The house that stands back on its dignity and waits for customers to come, instead of going to seek bargain-makers, will have more and more unsalable goods on the shelf, and will gradually lose its control of the markets; while the great, enterprising and successful houses will have their agents on all the trains, and their charlots will rage in the streets; they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

I think commercial travelers can stand a sermon of warm-hearted sympathy. If you have any words of good cheer for them, you had better utter them. If you have any good, honest prayers in their behalf, they will be greatly obliged to you. I never knew a man yet who did not like to be prayed for; I never knew a man yet that did not like to be helped. It seems to me this sermon is timely. At this season of the year there are tens of thousands of men going out to gather the spring trade. The months of February and March in all our commercial establishments are very busy months. In a few days our national perplexities will all be settled, and then look out for the brightest ten years of national prosperity which this country has ever witnessed.

Now you, the commercial traveler, have received orders from the head men of the firm that you are to start on a long excursion. You have your patterns all assorted and prepared. You have them put up in bundles or cases and marked. You have full instructions as to prices. You know on what prices you are to stand firm, and from what prices you may retreat somewhat. You have your valise or trunk, or both, packed. If I were a stranger I would have no right to look into that valise, but as I am your brother I will take the liberty. I look into the valise and I congratulate you on all these comfortable articles of apparel. The seasons are so changeable you have not taken a single precaution too many. Some night you will get out in the snowbank and have to walk three or four miles until you get to the railroad station, and you will want all these comforts and conveniences. But will you excuse me if I make a suggestion or two about this valise? You say, "Certainly, as we are having a plain, frank talk, I will not be offended at any honorable suggestion."

Put in among your baggage some carefully selected, wholesome reading. Let it be in history or a poem or a book of pure fiction, or some volume that will give you information in regard to your line of business. Then

add to that a Bible in round, beautiful type—small type is bad for the eyes anywhere, but peculiarly killing in the fold of a rail train. Put your railroad guide and your Bible side by side—the one to show you the route through this world, and the other to show you the route to the next world. "Oh," you say, "that is superfluous, for now in all the hotels, in the parlor, you will find a Bible, and in nearly all the rooms of the guests you will find one." But, my brother, that is not your Bible. You want your own hat, your own coat, your own blanket, your own Bible. "But," you say, "I am not a Christian, and you ought not to expect me to carry a Bible." My brother, a great many people are not Christians who carry a Bible. Besides that, before you get home you might become a Christian, and you would feel awkward without a copy. Besides that, you might get bad news from home. I see you with trembling hand opening the telegram saying, "George is dying," or "Fannie is dead—come home!" Oh, as you sit in the train, stunned with the calamity, going home, you will have no taste for fine scenery or for conversation, and yet you must keep your thoughts employed or you will go stark mad. Then you will want a Bible, whether you read it or not. It will be a comfort to have it near you—that book full of promises which have comforted other people in like calamity. Whether you study the promises or not, you will want that book near you. Am I not wise when I say put in the Bible?

"Oh," you can say, "I have no taste for reading." Now, that is the trouble, but it is no excuse. There was a time, my brother, when you had no taste for cigars; they made you very sick; but you persevered until cigars have become to you a luxury. Now, if you can afford to struggle to get a bad habit, is it not worth while to struggle to get a good habit like that of reading? I am amazed to find how many merchants and commercial travelers preserve their ignorance from year to year, notwithstanding all their opportunities. It was well illustrated by one who had been largely successful, and who wanted the show of a library at home, and he wrote to a book merchant in London, saying: "Send me six feet of theology and about as much metaphysics and near a yard of civil law in old folio!" There is no excuse for a man lacking information, if he have the rare opportunities of a commercial traveler. Improve your mind. Remember the "Learned Blacksmith," who, while blowing the bellows, set his book up against the brick work and became acquainted with fifty languages. Remember the scholarly Gifford, who, while an apprentice, wrought out the arithmetical problem with his awl on a piece of leather. Remember Abercrombie, who snatched here and there a fragmentary five minutes from an exhausting profession, and wrote immortal treatises on ethics.

Be ashamed to sell foreign fabrics or fruits unless you know something about the looms that wove them or the vineyards that grew them. Understand all about the laws that control commercial life; about banking, about tariffs, about markets, about navigation, about foreign people—their characteristics and their political revolutions as they affect ours; about the harvests of Russia, the vineyards of Italy, the tea fields of China. Learn about the great commercial centers of Carthage and Assyria and Phoenicia. Read all about the Medici of Florence, mighty in trade, mightier in philanthropies. You belong to the royal family of merchants; be worthy of that royal family. Oh, take my advice, and turn the years of weariness into years of luxury. Take those hours you spend at the depot waiting for the delayed train, and make them Pisgah heights from which you can view the promised land. When you are waiting for the train, hour after hour in the depot, do not spend your time reading the sewing machine advertisements, and looking up the time-tables of routes you will never take, going the twentieth time to the door to see whether the train is coming, bothering the ticket agent and the telegraph operator with questions which you ask merely because you want to pass away the time. But rather summon up the great essayists and philosophers and story tellers and thinkers of the ages, and have them entertain you.

Again, I charge you, tell the whole truth about everything you sell. Lying commercial travelers will precede you; lying commercial travelers will come right after you into the same store. Do not let their unfair competition tempt you from the straight line. It is an awful bargain that a man makes when he sells his goods and his soul at the same time. A young man in one of the stores of New York was selling some silks. He was binding them up when he said to the lady customer: "It is my duty to show you that there is a fracture in that silk." She looked at it and rejected the goods. The head of the firm, hearing of it, wrote to the father of the young man in the country, saying: "Come and take your son away; he will never make a merchant." The father came in agitation, wondering what his boy had been doing, and the head men of the firm said: "Why, your son stood here at this counter and pointed out a fracture in the silk, and of course the lady wouldn't take it. We are not responsible for the ignorance of customers; customers must look out for themselves, and we lock out for ourselves. Your son will never make a merchant." "Is that all?" said the father. "Ah! I am prouder of my boy than I ever was. John, get your hat and come home."

But it is almost night, and you go back to the hotel. Now comes the mighty tug for the commercial traveler. Tell me where he spends his

evenings, and I will tell you where he will spend eternity, and I will tell you what will be his earthly prospects. There is an abundance of choice. There are your room with the books. There are the Young Men's Christian Association rooms. There are the week-night services of the Christian churches. There is the gambling saloon. There is the theater. There is the house of infamy. Plenty of places to go. But which, O immortal man, which? Oh, God, which? "Well," you say, "I guess I will—I guess I will go to the theater." Do you think the tarrying in that place until 11 o'clock at night will improve your bodily health, or your financial prospects, or your eternal fortune? No man ever found the path to usefulness, or honor, or happiness, or commercial success, or heaven through the American theater. "Well," you say, "I guess then I will go to—I guess I will go to the gambling saloon." You will first go to look; then you will go to play. You will make \$100, you will make \$500, you will make \$1,000, you will make \$1,500—then you will lose all. Then you will borrow some money so as to start anew. You will make \$50, you will make \$100, you will make \$600—then you will lose all. These wretches of the gambling saloon know how to tempt you. But mark this: All gamblers die poor. They may make fortunes—great fortunes—but they lose them.

But now the question is still open: Where will you spend your evening? Oh, commercial travelers, how much will you give me to put you on the right track? Without charging you a farthing, I will prescribe for you a plan which will save you for this world and the next, if you will take it. Go, before you leave home, to the Young Men's Christian Association of the city where you live. Get from them letters of introduction. Carry them out to the towns and cities where you go. If there be no such association in the place you visit, then present them at the door of Christian churches and hand them over to the pastors. Be not slow to arise in the devotional meeting and say: "I am a commercial traveler; I am far away from home, and I come in here tonight to seek Christian society." The best houses and the highest style of amusement will open before you, and instead of your being dependent upon the leprous crew who hang around the hotels, wanting to show you all the stunts of the city, on the one condition that you will pay their expenses, you will get the benefit of God in every town you visit. Remember this, that whatever place you visit, bad influences will seek you out; good influences you must seek out.

While I stand here, I bethink myself of a commercial traveler who was a member of my church in Philadelphia. He was a splendid young man, the pride of his widowed mother and of his sisters. It was his joy to support them, and for that purpose he postponed his own marriage day. He thrived in business, and after a while set up his own household. Leaving that city for another city, I had no opportunity for three or four years of making inquiry in regard to him. When I made such inquiry, I was told that he was dead. The story was, he was generous, and kind-hearted, and genial, and social, and he got into the habit of "treating" customers and of showing them all the sights of the town, and he began rapidly to go down, and he lost his position in the church of which he was a member, and he lost his position in the commercial house, of which he was the best agent; and his beautiful young wife, and his sick old mother, and his sisters, went into destitution, and he, as a result of his dissipations, died in Kirkbride insane asylum.

Oh, commercial travelers, I pray for you the all-sustaining grace of God. There are two kinds of days when you are especially in need of divine grace. The one, the day when you have no success—when you fail to make a sale, and you are very much disappointed, and you go back to your hotel discomfited. That night you will be tempted to go to strong drink and rush into bad surroundings. The other day, when you will especially need divine grace, will be when you have had a day of great success, and the devil tells you you must go and celebrate that success. Then you will want the grace of God to sustain you from rollicking indulgences. Yes, there will be a third day when you will need to be Christians, and that will be the last day of your life. I do not know where you will spend it. Perhaps in your house, or more probably in a rail car or a steamer or the strange hotel. I see you on your last commercial errand. You have bidden good-by to the family at home for the last time. The train of your earthly existence is nearing the depot of the grave. The brakes are falling. The bell rings at the terminus. The train stops. All out for eternity. Show your ticket now for getting into the gate of the shining city—the red ticket washed in the blood of the Lamb.

At the Theater.

"Really, Jane, dear," said Mr. Robbeter to his wife, as they sat down in the theater, "your hat is too high. Take it off and put it in your lap."

"Well, I like that!" snapped Mrs. Robbeter. "If I put that hat in my lap how am I going to see over it?"

How It Started.

The trouble came up in this way: She had been handing him a few hot ones. "As far back as I can remember you—" Then he stopped her with: "Oh, hold on! Let's stick to the nineteenth century." Attorneys have been engaged.