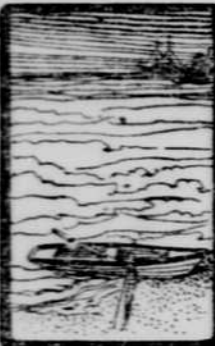




Neil Forced the Dugout Through the Water.

The COURAGE of CAPTAIN PLUM

R. JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGNUS & RETNER



SYNOPSIS.

Capt. Nathaniel Plum, of the sloop *Typhoon*, lands secretly on Beaver Island, stronghold of the Mormons. He is suddenly confronted by Obadiah Snow, an eccentric old man and a member of the electric company who tells him that he is expected. Plum ignores Nat's protestations that he has got the wrong man, and hurries for the ammunition about the camp. He finds Nat by a wooden gate leading to a package in Franklin Pierce, president of the town. Snow's story is that a young woman was the first to see the face of a young woman who disappeared in the darkness of a storm. He is in the dock, and he is waiting for the ship. Snow is a man of many guises. He is a man of many guises. He is a man of many guises.

CHAPTER VI—Continued.

Horror, not fear, sent an involuntary shiver through Nathaniel.

"They can't reach us," assured Neil. "There was the glitter of triumph in his eyes. This was to have been my way of escape after I killed Strang. A quarter of a mile deeper in the swamp I have a canoe." He picked up the gun and box and began forcing his way through the dense alder along the edge of the stream. "I'd like to stay and murder those dogs," he called back, "but it wouldn't be policy!"

For a time the crashing of their bodies through the dense growth of the swamp drowned all other sound. Five minutes later Neil stopped on the edge of a wide bog. The bog was giving fierce tongue in the forest on their left and their right. Nathaniel's hand to his pistol. Neil saw the movement and laughed.

"Don't like the sound, eh?" he said. "We get used to it on Beaver Island. They're just about at the place where they tore little Jim Schredder to pieces a few weeks back. Schredder tried to kill one of the elders for stealing his wife while he was away on a night's fishing trip."

He plunged to his knees in the bog.

"They caught him just before he reached the swamp," he lunged back over his shoulder. "Two minutes more and he would have been safe."

Nathaniel, sinking to his knees in the mire, forged up beside him.

"Lord!" he exclaimed, as a breath of air brought a sudden burst of blood-curdling cries to them. "If they'd loosed them on us sooner—"

He shivered at the terrible grimace Neil turned on him.

"Had they slipped the leashes when we escaped, we would have been with poor Schredder now, Captain Plum. By the way"—he stopped a moment to wipe the water and mud from his face—"three days after they covered Schredder's bones with moss out there, the elder took Schredder's wife! She was too pretty for a fisherman. He started on, but halted suddenly with uplifted hand. No longer could they hear the buying of the dogs. "They've struck the creek!" said Neil. "Listen!"

After an interval of silence there came a low mournful howl.

"Tread—tread or in the water, that's what the howling means. How Croche and his devils are howling now!"

A curse was mingled with Neil's breath as he forced his way through the bog. Twenty rods farther on they came to a slimy covered bit of water on which was floating a dugout canoe. Immense relief replaced the anxiety in Nathaniel's face as he climbed into it. At that moment he was willing to fight a hundred men for Marion's sake, but snakes and hogs and bloodhounds were entirely outside his pale of argument and he exhibited

no hesitation in betraying this fact to his companion. For a quarter of a mile Neil forced the dugout through water viscid with slime and rotted substance before the clearer channel of the creek was reached. As they progressed the stream constantly became deeper and more navigable until it finally began to show signs of a current and a little later, under the powerful impetus of Neil's paddle, the canoe shot from between the dense shores into the open lake. A mile away Nathaniel discerned the point of forest beyond which the *Typhoon* was hidden. He pointed out the location of the ship to his companion.

"You are sure there is a small boat waiting for you on the point?" asked Neil.

"Yes, since early morning."

Neil was absorbed in thought for some time as he drove the canoe through the tall rice grass that grew thick along the edge of the shore.

"How would it be if I landed you on the point and met you tonight at Obadiah's?" he asked suddenly. "It is probable that after we get Marion aboard your ship I will not return to the island again, and it is quite necessary that I run down the coast for a couple of miles—for—"

"He did not finish his reason, but added: "I can make the whole distance in this rice so there is no danger of being seen. Or you might lie off the point yonder and I would join you early this evening."

"That would be a better plan if we must separate," said Nathaniel, whose voice betrayed the reluctance with which he assented to the project. He had guessed shrewdly at Neil's motive. "Is it possible that we may have another young lady passenger?" he asked banteringly.

There was no answering humor to this in Neil's eyes.

"I wish we might!" he said quietly. "We can!" exclaimed Nathaniel. "My ship—"

"It is impossible. I am speaking of Winsome. Arbor Croche's house is in the heart of the town and guarded by dogs. I doubt if she would go away. She has always been like a little sister to Marion and me and she has come to believe—something—as we do. I hate to leave her."

"Obadiah told me about her mother," ventured Nathaniel. "He said that some day Winsome will be a queen."

"I knew her mother," replied Neil, as though he had not heard Nathaniel's last words. He looked frankly into the other's face. "I worshipped her!"

"Oh-b-h-h!"

"From a distance," he hastened. "She was as pure as Winsome like her. Little Winn looks like her. Some day she will be as beautiful." "She is beautiful now."

"But she is a mere child. Why, it seems only a year ago that I was talking her about on my shoulders! And—"

"By George, that was a year before her mother died! She is sixteen now."

Nathaniel laughed softly.

"Tomorrow she will be making love, Neil, and before you know it she will be married and have a family of her own. I tell you she is a woman—and if you are not a fool you will take her away with Marion."

"With a powerful stroke of his paddle Neil brought the canoe in to the shore.

"There!" he whispered. "You have only to cross this point to reach your boat." He stretched out his long arm and in the silence the two shook hands. "If you should happen to think of a way—that we might get Winsome—" he added, coloring.

The sudden grip of his companion's fingers made him flinch.

"We must!" said Nathaniel.

He climbed ashore and watched Neil until he had disappeared in the wild rice. Then he turned into the woods. He looked at his watch and saw that it was only 2 o'clock. He was conscious of no fatigue; he was not conscious of hunger. To him the whole

world had suddenly opened with glorious promise and in the still depths of the forest he felt his longing for his rejoicing. He had never stopped to ask himself what might be the end of this passion that had overwhelmed him; he lived only in the present, in the knowledge that Marion was not a wife, and that it was by whom fate had chosen for her deliverance. He reasoned nothing beyond the sweet eyes that had called upon him, that had burned their gratitude, their hope and their despair upon his soul; nothing beyond the thought that she would soon be free from the mysterious influence of the Mormon king and that for days and nights after that she would be on the same ship with him. He had emptied the pockets of the coat he had given Neil and now he brought forth the old letter which Obadiah had rescued from the sands. He read it over and over again as he sat for a few moments in the cool of the forest and there was no trouble in his face now. It was from a girl. He had known that girl, years ago, as Neil knew Winsome; in years of wandering he had almost forgotten her—until this letter came. It had brought many memories back to him with shocking clearness. The old folk were still in the little home under the hill; they received his letters; they received the money he sent them each month—but they wanted him. The girl wrote with merciless candor. He had been away four years and it was time for him to return. She told him why. She wrote that they, in their loving fear of inflicting pain, would never have dared to say. At the end, in a postscript, she had asked for his congratulations on her approaching marriage.

To Nathaniel this letter had been a torment. He saw the truth as he had never seen it before—that his place was back there in Vermont, with his father and mother; and that there was something unpleasant in thinking of the girl as belonging to another. But now matters had changed. The letter was a hope and inspiration to him and he smoothed it out with tender care. What a refuge that little home among the Vermont hills would make for Marion! He trembled at the thought and his heart sang with the promise of it as he went his way again through the thick growth of the woods.

It was half an hour before he came out upon the beach. Eagerly he scanned the sea. The *Typhoon* was nowhere in sight and for an instant the gladness that had been in his heart gave place to a chilling fear. But the direction of the wind reassured him. Casey had probably moved beyond the jutting promontory, that swung in the form of a cart wheel from the base of the point, that he might have seen in case of something worse than a stiff breeze. But where was the small boat? With every step adding to his anxiety Nathaniel hurried along the narrow rim of beach. He went to the very tip of the point which reached out like the white forefinger of a lady's hand into the sea; he passed the spot where he had lain concealed the preceding day; his breath came faster and faster; he ran, and called softly, and at last halted in the arch of the cart wheel with the fear full-flaming in his breast. Over all those miles of sea there was no sign of the sloop. From end to end of the point there was no boat. What did it mean? Breathless he tore his way through the strip of forest on the promontory until all Lake Michigan to the south lay before his eyes. The *Typhoon* was gone! Was it possible that Casey had abandoned hope of Nathaniel's return and was already lying off St. James with spotted gun? The thought sent a shiver of despair through him. He passed to the opposite side of the point and followed it foot by foot, but there was no sign of life, no distant flash of white that might have been the canvas of the sloop *Typhoon*.

There was only one thing for him to do—wait. So he went to his hiding place of the day before and watched the sea with straining eyes. An hour passed and his still abiding vision saw no sign of sail; two hours—and the sun was falling in a blinding glare over the Wisconsin wilderness. At last he sprang to his feet with a hopeless cry and stood for a few moments undecided. Should he wait until night with the hope of attracting the attention of Neil and joining him in his canoe or should he hasten in the direction of St. James? In the darkness he might miss Neil, unless he kept up a constant shouting, which would probably bring the Mormons down upon him; if he went to St. James there was a possibility of reaching Casey. He still had faith in Obadiah and he was sure that the old man would help him to reach his ship; he might even assist him in his scheme of getting Marion from the island.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Didn't Like Course, Dinners.

A colored woman, native of the south, had been working for a flat dwelling family of moderate means in the East end, but resigned recently to accept a place bringing higher wages with a wealthy family who lived in a large house on Euclid heights and have their dinner served in courses every night just as if there was company.

This colored woman had been brought up to put everything on the table at once, with the exception possibly of the dessert, and did not take kindly to the course system.

A few days ago her former mistress met her on the street and inquired how she liked her new place.

"Oh, not ve'y well," she replied. "I don't like this byah way of su'vin' things in courses. The's too much shiffin' of the dishes for the fewness of the vittles."

Matter of Principle.

"Is he lazy?"

"I would hardly say that. You've heard the expression: 'Unseemly haste'?"

"Well, certainly."

"Why, all haste looks that way to him."

Stop Her Talking.

Mrs. Crommonbeak—"This paper says that a frog cannot breathe with its mouth open."

Mr. Crommonbeak—I wish to gracious a woman was built that way!—Yonkers Statesman.

PRINCESS XENIA TO WEAR "HAPPY CROWN"

ROME.—"There will be no alliance between his imperial highness the duke of the Abruzzi and Miss Katharine Elkins of America."

This is the semi-official announcement doubtless inspired from the court of Victor Emmanuel III, king of Italy. Queen Helena makes no secret of her satisfaction at the outcome of this remarkable romance between the daughter of the late West Virginia millionaire and United States senator and the man who is first cousin to the king, and who might ascend the throne should death take away his brothers and the little sons of the royal family. And as for the Bourbon Duchess d'Aosta, sister-in-law of the duke, she is unfeignedly delighted. From the first she utterly opposed the marriage of a prince of the blood royal and a "vulgar American commoner," as she was pleased to dub the beautiful and exceedingly rich young American girl.

So once, at least, romance is dead. Why? Did not the ardent young lovers plight eternal troth? Of course no one but they really knows, yet the report that they did was more than mere rumor. The story has it that the King of Italy was willing to give his consent. If this was true, he gave way before the united opposition of the ladies of the royal family. It has been said that the duke and Miss Elkins vowed that if they could not wed each other, they would never wed any one else. There was at least a substantial basis of truth in these reports, but just how far the romance went and just what killed it the world will probably never know.

Affections Transferred.

And so the duke of the Abruzzi went away to seek solace in the wilds of Africa. Report has it that the wound in his heart has healed and that formal announcement of his engagement to the dashing, handsome, hot-headed Princess Xenia, daughter of the ruler of little Montenegro, who last August proclaimed himself king over his 300,000 subjects, may be expected, writes a correspondent of the New York World. Though the king's income is not a fifth of that so long enjoyed by Senator Elkins, he is of royal blood. His daughter, according to foreign etiquette, is therefore quite the duke's equal and fit to be the wife of the man who might some day be king.

Not that the beautiful Xenia is not well bred and of exquisite charm and grace. Her highness had the advantage of a bringing-up at the Russian court, where they do things differently from the somewhat primitive court at Cetintje. Her father, who has ruled since 1860, lives little differently from the fierce and uncouth men who are his subjects.

To begin with, Princess Xenia is best known in Europe as one of the few living women who have flitted a king. It was King Alexander of Serbia whom she flitted, away back in 1899, when he came a-courting to the miniature court of the then Prince Nicholas of Montenegro, now self-proclaimed king.

"Impossible!" cried Princess. "As it always is with royalty, the marriage had been arranged by the families in question. Whether or not the Princess Xenia would like Alexander, whom she had never seen, did not concern them; the piquant and self-willed daughter of the ruler, she was not even consulted.

Alexander had already scoured the courts of Europe for a mate. Russia and Austria had told him that no Serbians need apply. Finally he got down as far as Montenegro, and Nicholas, eager for more influence in the Balkans, gladly gave his consent for his daughter Xenia. The poor princess, barely 18 then, was told to make ready to meet her future lord and master.

In he shambled, grinning, blinking through his heavy glasses, knock-kneed, and most unattractive. The princess gave him one glance and shuddered.

"Mon Dieu!" she cried in French, "mais vous etes impossible!" or in polite English, she frankly told Alexander that he was impossible. It was the cry of an innocent, unspoiled young girl. The prince was not at all rebuffed, and attempted to mumble some protest that perhaps fatigue and nervousness had overcome her royal highness.

Nicholas heard of this wonderful ocean tramp, would as soon think of sailing to sea without her compass as without the precious volume. The explorer, too, over the desert sands or trackless ice, must have his "N. A." with him, and would rather part with food and stores than with its sacred pages. Many well-known travelers have publicly declared their indebtedness to it. Dr. Nansen, before setting out on his adventurous journey northwards, paid a visit to the "Nautical Almanac" office and was supplied with advance proofs to aid him in his calculations, and after his polar expedition he stated that for some considerable time during his lengthy stay in the far north the only book to which he had access was a volume of the work in question.

The great African traveler, Dr. Livingston, was once obliged to reduce his library to the Bible and the "Nautical Almanac," and M. du Chaffin and the late Captain Speke were placed in a similar position upon various occasions. The work, too, of surveyors and boundary commissioners on the African continent and elsewhere is dependent on the figures tabulated in its



Xenia gasped once more. And then she fled from the room. The royal romance had died before it was born. Alexander married Mme. Draga Maschin, and a few years later both were assassinated by the king's officers in the royal palace at Belgrade.

Put the fame of the Princess Xenia's spirit and wondrous classic beauty had gone abroad in Europe, and many a peer and nobleman came a-courting.

Prince George of Greece was eager to marry Xenia, but she would have none of him. The Grand Duke Michael, brother of the czar of Russia, was another aspirant for her hand, but he got the mitten, too. At 29 today she would have Abruzzi.

Proud of Daughters' Stations.

There are five living daughters of King Nicholas, and three of them have made matches far in advance of anything their own Montenegro might afford, as the king himself bosted not long ago to a questioning Britisher at Cetintje.

"It's too bad," remarked the Englishman, who was a man of great importance, "that Montenegro offers such a poor field for exportation."

"On the contrary," answered the king with spirit, "we have here the most beautiful articles for exportation."

"And what are they, your majesty?" queried his guest.

"Why, my own daughters," answered Nicholas with a hearty laugh. "Princess Helena is queen of Italy, Princess Miliza married the Grand Duke Peter of Russia, Princess Zorica, had she lived, would have been queen of Serbia, Princess Annastasia is now Grand Duchess Nicholas, and Princess Anna is Princess Francis Joseph of Battenberg. Now you must admit that I have placed my articles of exportation very favorably on the foreign markets."

It is only too true, and it is chiefly due to Princess Helena, now the wife of Italy's King, that this newest royal match is about to be made. And also to the promise of an aged soothsayer in whom Xenia believes implicitly. It is a weird story.

Soothsayer's Warning.

No people of all Europe are so superstitious as those of Montenegro. And Princess Xenia feels the same as her father's uneducated peasantry. She is said to believe in signs and talismans and fortune telling, which, after all, is not astonishing when one considers that she was brought up in the court of the czar, who is much addicted to consultation with priestly soothsayers. If the report is true. Superstition has been in the "bavie blood" too long to be eradicated in one generation.

"The Crown of Happiness"—such is the gift she has reason to believe the duke of the Abruzzi is holding out to her. She heard the words even before she was called to meet Alexander and ever since then she has been expecting their fruition. There was an aged soothsayer who told about the Montegrain mountains with his wife and daughter, telling their futures to the simple folk who dwell on the rocky slopes of the tiny kingdom.

The warning was not forgotten. Soon afterward Xenia refused King Alexander and his crown did fall in the bloodstained royal slaughter of modern times, dragging his queen down to death with him and setting up another dynasty.

"He was right, as I knew he would be," declared the princess when word of Alexander's assassination came to Cetintje. And her father, who had been angered at her refusal of a throne, perforce had to agree with her. Xenia, of course, had more abiding faith than ever in the soothsayer's strange words.

"I will take the second royal crown when it is offered me," she said, calmly enough. "It will be the crown of happiness, as the old man said, and that is what I most desire in this world!"

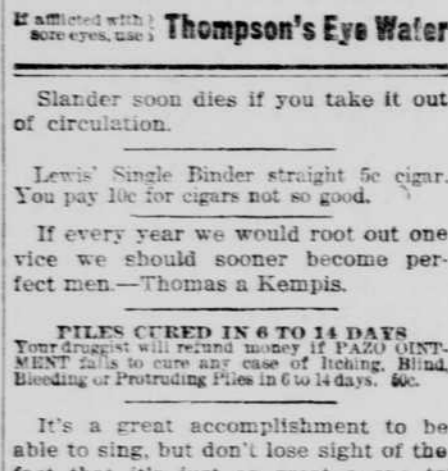
But the years sped on and no crown was offered. The lovely Xenia passed twenty-five years and twenty-six and twenty-seven. Her next birthday, April 10, will be her thirtieth. The people of Montenegro think that it is high time their princess should find herself a husband. So does Queen Helena of Italy, her elder sister, who has already tried several matches for her, only to be met with the curt "Not until I can convince myself that the crown offered to me is the 'Happy Crown!'"

Are You Weak, All Run Down?

This condition is directly caused by bad blood. When the blood is made rich and pure by Hood's Sarsaparilla, you will feel strong and cheerful; it will put new life into your veins, new vigor into your muscles; give you a sharper appetite and good digestion; make you look better, sleep better and feel better; will make the hardest work lighter and the darkest day brighter. Facts! Thousands confirm them. Get Hood's today.

Make the Liver Do its Duty

Nine times in ten when the liver is right the stomach and bowels are right. CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS gently but firmly compel a lazy liver to do its duty. Cures Constipation, Indigestion, Sick Headache, and Distress after Eating. Small Pill, Small Dose, Small Price. Genuine must bear Signature.



Lofty Ambition.

"What is your ambition?" "Merely to make more money than my wife can spend."—Detroit Free Press.

The Difference.

Ted—Did he sober down and marry? Ned—No; he married and sobered down.—Smart Set.

A Son's Compliment.

His incessant work, his avoidance of all rest and recreation and his rigorous self-denial made Joseph Pulitzer, in his days in harness, the despair of his family.

In this connection a pretty story is told about the famous journalist's son Ralph. Mr. Pulitzer had refused to take a holiday, and Mrs. Pulitzer exclaimed: "Did you ever know your father to do anything because it was pleasant?" "Yes, once—when he married you," the young man gracefully replied.

ANNOYING.

Bill Bug—What makes your back so stiff? Rheumatism? Waldo Worm—No; I swallowed a toothpick.

COLDS Cured in One Day



Munyon's Cold Remedy Relieves the head, throat and lungs almost immediately. Cures Croup, stops Discharges of the nose, takes away all aches and pains caused by colds. It cures Grip and obdurate Coughs and prevents Pneumonia. Price 25c.

Have you stiff or swollen joints, no matter how chronic? Ask your druggist for Munyon's Rheumatism Remedy and see how quickly you will be cured.

If you have any kidney or bladder trouble get Munyon's Kidney Remedy. Munyon's Vitalizer makes weak men strong and restores lost powers.

PATENTS

Nebraska Directory

RUBBER GOODS

AGENTS A VACUUM CLEANER

WANTED