

AN AMERICAN GIRL ABROAD.

BY WILLIAM BLACK.

CHAPTER XVII.

What the Sharpness people had been warning us about were by-and-by to discover. "The Shoots," as they are called, are formed by the sudden contraction of the Severn estuary between Northwich and Portskewett, and consist of a series of races and whirlpools, unlike those in the neighborhood of Corrieochan—over by the Corra Islands and the Durus Mor. When we found these currents strong enough to grip the pilot boat by the bows and yaw her about, it is to be imagined that our poor old Noah's ark, lumbering up in the rear, had anything but a "daisy time" of it. Moreover, the water became more and more lumpy—what with the swirling currents themselves, and the breeze blowing against the tide, the "Nameless Barge" began to forsake her heavy gambolings for all kinds of mystical and unexpected gyrations; and again and again ominous noises told of catastrophes within.

It was blowing hard, and looking very dirty in the south; and one of us, at least, began to wish that the two women could be transferred to the other boat. The pilot himself no longer seemed to regard this performance as a joke; they kept an eye on our unwieldy craft, as she plunged through the heavily running sea. Indeed, it was almost ludicrous to watch this mishapen thing dipping her nose in the water and springing forward again, and dashing the foam from her bows just as if she were a real yacht; and the only question was, how long she was likely to keep up the pretense by remaining afloat.

Presently a new and startling discovery was made. As there was no calculating what time we should get to Bristol, with this head wind driving against us, the steersman desired Jack Duncombe to go inside and bring forth a handful of biscuits; and the young man cheerfully obeyed. The next instant he came out again, without any biscuits.

"I say," he exclaimed, with a curious expression of face, "this blessed boat is full of water!"

In a moment, from the look of the women, he perceived the mistake he had made.

"Oh, no; not that," he protested, "but a little water has come in and it's slopping all about the floor of the saloon. Here, you'd better let me take the tiller for a minute, and you can go and look for yourself."

Of course, we all of us instantly made for the door of the saloon; and there a most unpleasant spectacle met our eyes; for if there was not as yet much water visible, it was washing from side to side as the vessel lurched; and, of course, no one could tell at what rate the leakage was coming in.

"Is she going to sink?" said Miss Peggy, rather breathlessly; it was Sir Ewen Cameron she addressed.

"I won't stay another moment in this boat," Mrs. Threepenny-bit exclaimed. "You must call to the pilots—tell them to stop and take us on board."

"Oh, be quiet!" one had to say to her. "This is nothing of a leakage—it only means that there's nowhere for the water to go to."

"And how fast is it coming in?" she asked.

"How can anybody tell? We'll have to wait and watch. Or, rather, Columbus must come inside and watch; and if the water should rise in any quantity, then we may have to get on board the pilot boat; that's all. It isn't doing any harm—it's only washing the floor."

Here a violent pitch of the boat flung us all together; and then we could see through the forward window her bows shaking off a great mass of foam.

"Do you see that now? She isn't used to dipping her nose like that."

Well, it has to be conceded to Col. Cameron that he was the only one who cared to wet his ankles in order to make an examination. He boldly splashed through the lurching water and got to the further end of the saloon, and, stooping down, strove to reach with his long arm the circular piece of glass set in the bows of the boat. But neither there nor anywhere else could we find out the source of the leakage; and when Capt. Colman was summoned from his post at the helm, he was generally agreed that the water must be coming in through defective seams.

Our gallant convoy continued to cut her way through those swift-running seas like a racer; and we laboriously plunged and rolled and struggled after. It must be said for the women that they were very brave over it; after that first fright about the water in the saloon they had hardly a word to say; they merely looked on in silence—sitting close to each other. And now that long, dark spur of land—Portishead Point, was it called?—was drawing sensibly nearer. The shipping that was gradually becoming visible no doubt marked the whereabouts of the King, or King's, road; and that, we knew, was just off the mouth of the Avon. Then the sea grew a little calmer. Capt. Columbus was provided with a huge sponge to help him in his bailing. We could hear Murdoch at the bow calling to his brother mariners ahead of him—asking for instructions, most probably. And at length and at last the connecting hawser was shipped, and we parted company. We found ourselves at anchor in a comparatively smooth sheet of yellow water, and near to a Dutch-looking line of coast, the topmasts of vessels, or here and there a little glimmer of distant landscape, appearing above steep banks of mud.

"Now, Miss Peggy, you and I expect to be waited upon by the whole of this ship's crew and passengers. We have been on duty since half-past two, and now it is ten. If that isn't working for one's breakfast, I'm hungry enough," said Miss Peggy, adly; and Queen Tita was so touched with compassion that she herself began to get the table ready, while

Murdoch was in the pantry, busy with ham and eggs and tea.

Now, we had just finished breakfast, and had gone out again to have a look at our surroundings, when we were approached by a wherry containing three men, who offered, for a consideration, to tow us to Bristol. Truth compels the admission that these three sailors of Bristol city were about the most villainous looking set of scoundrels one had ever clapped eyes on; and experience proved that they were capable of acting up to their looks. But still, getting to Bristol was the main thing; we agreed to their exorbitant terms, gave them a line, and away they went, we following.

Soon we had entered the river Avon, which is probably a rather full river at full tide; but was now, at low water, showing long mud banks that were far from attractive. As we got further inland, however, we passed through beautiful woods, now almost in full summer foliage; and, whatever had become of the storm we had seen gathering in the south, there were clear blue skies overhead, and a warm sunlight filling the river valley.

As we were leisurely getting along to our hotel on the College Green, a samson hung back a little, allowing Jack Duncombe to go on with the women folk.

"Look here, my friend," said Inverfask, in something of an undertone; "now it's all over, I suppose you ought to be congratulated on having come down the Severn in a houseboat, and in the face of half a gale of wind. Well, you've done it—successfully—for once. But, if I were you, I wouldn't try it again."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Next morning is a Sunday—calm and clear and still; a placid sunlight falls on the trees in the College Green, on the pavements, and the closed shop windows; a soft sound of church bells fills all the tranquil air. And then, when our women folk, accompanied by Col. Cameron, have gone away to the cathedral a kind of hush falls over this great hotel; the spacious rooms look preternaturally empty; one wonders when Jack Duncombe will have finished his letter writing, and be ready to set forth on a hunt for the whereabouts of the "Nameless Barge."

Presently he comes along into the hall. "Sorry to have kept you waiting," he says, as he lights a cigar at the top of the steps. "Fact is, I had rather an important letter to write."

But after a long hunting we at length discovered the "Nameless Barge," in a kind of end-dock, lying outside some empty coal boxes, and, having clambered over these and got on board, we found Murdoch in sole possession.

"Well, Murdoch," one naturally inquired, "I suppose you saw nothing more of those rascals yesterday?"

"Indeed, yes, sir," Murdoch answered, with a grin. "They came back to the boat."

"What for?"

"Well, sir, they said you had told them they were to come and get a bottle of champagne."

"And you gave it to them?"

"Not me, sir! I chattered them they were liars, and to go awch."

"And then?"

"Well, then, sir, they threepit and better threepit; and I said I would not give them a bottle of champagne, or a bottle of anything else; and I was thinking one of them was for coming into the boat, so I took up an oar." Here Murdoch grinned again. "Oh, ay, sir, they sah I was ready."

"Ready for what? For his coming on board?"

"Christ that, sir. If he had tried to come on board I would have split his skull," said Murdoch, coolly. "And they sah I was ready for them; and then there was a good dale of swearing, and they went awch."

We left full instructions about our departure on the morrow, and made our way ashore again. Now, as those other people would not be back from the cathedral till near lunch time, we set forth on a long ramble to fill in the interval—wandering along the old-fashioned streets and admiring here and there an ancient gable or latticed window, visiting a church or two and generally finding ourselves being brought up sharply by the twisting and impassable harbor. It was during this aimless perambulation that Jack Duncombe made a confession.

"I shall be glad when we get away from these towns into the quiet, pastoral districts again," he said. "Living on board is ever so much better fun than putting up at a hotel. It used to be so delightful to have merely to choose out a meadow and a few willow stumps and pass the night where you pleased. I am looking forward to the Kennet and Avon, and I don't mind telling you that I hope to enjoy this last part of the trip a great deal more than any that came before. The truth is, when I had to leave you at Warwick, I was in a little bit of a scrape."

"We guessed as much."

"And it threatened to become a rather serious scrape. I suppose I may tell you the story, now that it's all over. You see, there is a young lady—"

"Of course."

"Yes, there generally is, but this one is a ward in chancery," he remarks, calmly.

"What?"

"A ward in chancery; that is where the trouble comes in. Her mother is a waspish old vinegar-cruet; tremendously proud of her ancestry; the family have been settled in Wilts since the time of Edward III.—at least so they say—and, of course, she hates me like poison. I can fancy the old cat crying: 'Imagine Mand marrying the son of a man who hasn't even a coat-of-arms on his carriage!' And I suppose it was she who set the guardians against me."

"And the guardians?" one says to him.

for awhile. Then one naturally began to think of how to mitigate these cruel circumstances."

"That means, I suppose, that you communicated with her all the same?"

"They pretended to think so," observes the young man, very slowly. "You see, it is very difficult to define what communications are—very difficult; and you can't expect lawyers to have large and liberal views. In fact, the Court of Chancery has no sense of humor whatever. If they think you're playing tricks, they only grow morose. Well, I tell you, when I left you at Warwick I was in a fix, and no mistake; I had visions of a scene in court, the vice-chancellor whistling and lighting all about my head, and finally sending me off to Holloway prison to purge my contempt. And the trouble I had to explain and apologize and give assurances by the yard—I assure you it required a great deal of tact to appear very penitential, and yet maintain that there was nothing for you to be penitential about."

"So you are engaged to be married, are you?" one says to him.

"We've been engaged these two years," he makes answer, "but it has been kept very quiet, owing to that absurd opposition. However, that will soon be over. Miss Wrexham—I may as well tell you her name—will be of age in about six months. And then," he adds, in a hesitating kind of way, "I should like your wife to see her. And—and—we shall be going by Devizes, you know."

"Yes?"

"Well, the fact is, Miss Wrexham has plenty of pluck, you understand; and if your wife were so awfully good-natured as to send her a little bit of a note she'd give over to some appointed place—she and her sister drive all about the country in a little pony chaise of their own; and then Murdoch could hold the pony, and the two girls pop into the saloon, and you'd give them a snack of lunch. I think it would be very jolly; they're rather nice girls; plenty of fun in them."

"And this is what you call obeying the vice-chancellor's orders, is it?" one demands of him.

"Oh, I should have nothing to do with it. If your wife asks two young ladies to come and look at a house boat, how can I help it? I'll sit dumb all the time if you like."

"What kind of treatment do they give you in Holloway?"

"Not at all bad, if you're a first-class misdemeanant."

"Certainly not?"

"Books?"

"Oh, yes."

"All right; we'll consider that project when we get along into Wiltsire."

Just as we arrived at the entrance of the hotel we could see the other members of our party coming across the College Green, through the dappled sun and shade beneath the trees. Notwithstanding her partly veiled face, we saw clear that Miss Peggy was laughing merrily; and Col. Cameron, who was apparently responsible for this breach of Sabbath decorum, had his eyes fixed on the ground; Queen Tita was looking elsewhere.

"What a handsome girl that is!" said Jack Duncombe, involuntarily, as he, too, caught sight of the tall young lady.

"Has that never struck you before?"

"Oh, yes, of course; but somehow, in the open sunlight, when you see her at a distance, her figure tells so well."

"Now that one thinks of it, my young friend, for a person engaged to be married, you seemed to pay a good deal of attention to Miss Rosslyn at one time, and that not so long ago. One might have been excused for thinking that you had serious views."

"About Miss Rosslyn?" said he, with evident surprise. "No, surely not; I have never nearly veiled face, we saw clear that Miss Peggy was laughing merrily; and Col. Cameron, who was apparently responsible for this breach of Sabbath decorum, had his eyes fixed on the ground; Queen Tita was looking elsewhere."

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The Senate held no session on Friday. The House by a vote of 240 to 15 passed resolution for constitutional amendment providing for election of United States Senators by popular vote. Attempt of Mr. Hepburn of Iowa to set aside May 1 for consideration of the Nicaragua canal bill was defeated by objection of Mr. Burton of Ohio. Rest of the day devoted to consideration of private pension bills. There were several sharp attacks upon Mr. Talbert (Dem., S. C.) for his course in delaying action.

On Saturday the Senate passed eighty-three private pension bills. The Alaskan civil code bill was under consideration for some time, but finally went over until Monday. In the House after an hour of routine business the session was devoted to hearing eulogies on the late Gov. Oliver P. Morton of Indiana in connection with the acceptance of his statue, which has been placed in Statuary Hall at the capitol by the State which he served. The speakers included Messrs. Steiwer, Myers, Crumpacker, Overstreet, Griffith, Hemeway, Brick, Alexander, Paris and Watson of Indiana, Grosvenor of Ohio and Cannon of Illinois. Fifty-three private pension bills were passed.

On Monday the House joint resolution in favor of a constitutional amendment providing for the election of United States Senators by the people was laid before the Senate and after debate was referred to the committee on privileges and elections. During almost the entire session the Senate had under consideration the Alaskan civil code bill. The amendment providing for the mining of gold along the beach in the district was perfected, after a discussion lasting nearly four hours. In the House consideration of the naval appropriation bill began, its provisions being explained by Mr. Foss, the acting chairman of the naval committee.

The Senate on Tuesday heard Senator Hoar speak against the retention of the Philippines, and then resumed consideration of the Alaskan civil code bill. In the House the second day of debate upon the naval appropriation bill was confined closely to the subject matter of the bill. The questions of armor plate and the building of warships in Government yards attracted most attention.

The Senate on Wednesday passed a resolution introduced by Mr. Mason appropriating \$25,000 for bronze medals, to be distributed by the Secretary of the Navy to certain officers and men of the North Atlantic squadron who participated in naval engagements during the war with Spain. Devoted the rest of the day to consideration of the Alaskan civil code bill. The House debated the naval appropriation bill under the five-minute rule. A motion to strike from the bill the contingent fund of \$500,000 for the Navy Department was defeated. Conference report on the urgent deficiency bill was adopted.

In accordance with the recommendation of the President in his message the Senate on Thursday passed a joint resolution providing for the administration of civil affairs in Porto Rico, pending the appointment of officers under the Porto Rico Government law recently enacted. The Alaskan civil code bill was again under consideration, the debate continuing on the Hansborough alien miners' amendment. Mr. Carter presented formally his substitute for the Hansborough amendment and delivered a speech in support of it. Mr. Spooner antagonized both the original and substitute amendments, holding that the courts ought to settle the conflicting claims without interference by Congress. The House spent the day considering the naval bill in committee of the whole. The most important action was the striking out of an appropriation of \$100,000 for the use of the navy in making surveys and charts of the waters of our new island possessions. The regular appropriation of \$10,000 was put in the bill, the work to be done by the coast and geodetic survey.

This and That.

The postal appropriation carries \$115,000,000.

A marked increase in the number of left-handed persons is noted by a Washington physician.

A hotel exclusively for women is to be built in New York by the Woman's Hotel Company, chartered with \$400,000 capital.

The two counties of Brewster and Presidio, Texas, having a joint area of 600 square miles, have, it is said, fewer than 3,000 inhabitants.

A Swiss authority insists that 200 Russians will spend more in a month than 1,000 Englishmen and women for the same period of time.

Last year the American people ate 2,000,000 tons of sugar. Of this the American Sugar Refining Company, otherwise known as the trust, made 1,385,000 tons.

The street car charges at Cape Town are high, 6c being the regular rate for a distance of from two to three miles. Eight miles, the extent of the longest line, costs 36c.

The Chinese Six Companies at San Francisco have offered to pay for Chinese detectives to maintain order in Chinatown, provided the men are vested with police powers, which will be done.

The Paris police have issued a notice warning the public, and especially foreign visitors, that a great number of false 50-franc notes are circulating in Paris and the large French towns.

The great increase in commerce and in naval armaments has placed the service of experienced seamen at a premium. The scarcity of sailors is felt in all navies, and even the great steamship lines are inconvenienced.

Lieut. Barton will organize the Native Philippine Battalions.

The surplus revenues of the year are likely to be \$60,000,000.

Hawaii coins are to be received at face value for all public dues.

The cable company has sent in a bill for Dewey's cutting at Manila Bay.

A bill to permit Indian Territory cities to issue bonds will be introduced in Congress.

The announcement is made that a line of steamers will soon commence running on the Dead Sea, the first of the fleet having already been purchased.

ROBERTS ARRIGNS BULLER.

Commanding General Scathingly Reviews Spion Kop Movement.

All England is agog over Lord Roberts' dispatch, in which he severely arraigns Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Charles Warren. After sketching Gen. Buller's intentions, as communicated to Sir Charles Warren, who commanded the whole force, Lord Roberts points out that Gen. Warren seems to have concluded, after consultation with his officers, that the flanking movement ordered by Gen. Buller was impracticable, and therefore, so changed the plan of advance as to necessitate the capture and retention of Spion Kop.

Lord Roberts continues: "As Warren considered it impossible to make the wide



GENERAL BULLER.

flanking movement which was recommended, if not actually prescribed in the secret instructions, he should, forthwith, have acquainted Buller with the course he proposed to adopt. There is nothing to show whether he did so or not. But it is only fair to Warren to point out that Buller appears throughout to have been aware of what was happening." Further on he says: "But whatever faults Warren may have committed, the failure must also be attributed to the disinclination of the officer in supreme command to assert his authority and see that what he thought best was done, and also to the unwarrantable and needless assumption of responsibility by a subordinate officer."

CUBA'S CENSUS COMPLETE.

Shows a Population of 1,572,797, with a White Majority.

Cuba numbers 1,572,797 souls, according to the census just completed by the United States Government. It is said that this is the first accurate enumeration ever made in the island. Officials of the War Department now acknowledge there is no reason of further delay in granting of municipal suffrage. The census shows that the white native-born Cubans hold a safe majority of the votes under the property and educational limitations to be imposed upon the exercise of suffrage in the island. There are 187,823 white adult males who were born in Cuba, as against 96,083 born in Spain, 6,794 born in other countries and 127,300 colored. The figures themselves show that the proposed basis of suffrage would not result in the Spaniards gaining control of the island.

WAR NEWS IN BRIEF.

The British casualty list lengthens out steadily.

Italy has refused to intervene in the Boer war.

If hard pressed, the Boers will retire across the Vaal river.

Close estimates place the number of Boers in Natal at 12,000.

Kruger attended a conference of Boer commanders at Brandfort.

Boers practically again hold the Free State eastward of the railroad.

Gen. Chermide has taken command of Gatacre's column at Bloemfontein.

Commissioner Fischer says the present Boer strength at the front is 38,000.

The Boer forces have changed their tactics and are now on the offensive.

Three thousand armed Basutos line the frontier to resist Boer encroachment.

Winston Churchill declares that 250,000 men will be needed before the war is ended.

Frank Smith, wealthy mine owner of Barkley West, has been captured by the Boers.

Hilyard Steyn, brother of Free State President, expects the war to last till Christmas.

The British losses at Wepener in four days' fighting were eighteen killed and 132 wounded.

The British Government is closing contracts in New York for 30,000 horses for army service.

The British war office proposes to land at Cape Town before the end of May, 20,000 horses.

British officers are instructed not to take any more expanding bullets to Africa for revolvers.

The Boers have mounted several heavy guns in commanding positions in the Biggarsberg mountains.

PULSE of the PRESS

Paris' Great Exposition.

The only department of the Paris exposition really ready for the opening was the ticket office.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Paris should have sent a few of her exposition commissioners to Chicago to get pointers on how to do things in time.—Syracuse Post-Standard.

The Paris exposition is not quite ready, but Paris is ready. The people of France are always ready for the dollar of the unwary traveler.—Springfield News.

Paris is now engaged in giving St. Louis a good illustration of the condition in which a big exposition should not be when it is opened.—St. Louis Republic.

The American exhibit at the Paris exposition will be closed Sundays, but the rest of the show will be kept open for the benefit of American visitors.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Paris is a merry place, but during the approaching summer it will be merrier for landlords than for their guests. There will be consolation for the people obliged to stay away.—Milwaukee Wisconsin.

The American exhibit, if those in charge will but give us a fair show, will still further open the world's markets to our products and help along the industrial boom we are now enjoying.—Grand Rapids Herald.

The fact that the share of the United States in the Paris exposition is greater than that of any other country except France appeals to the pride of Americans and may be expected to prove of no small benefit to our commercial interests.—Omaha Bee.

Americans have scored their first victory at the Paris exposition by an exhibition of energy in getting their building and exhibits advanced so much ahead of others as to make the French commissioner general say: "It is an object lesson to us all to see the American people work."—Indianapolis Journal.

Cleveland's Lecture.

Mr. Cleveland is eminently fitted to instruct Princeton students how to cut loose from the Senate's apron strings.—Nashville American.

Mr. Cleveland had, Congress on his hands at times when he was President. In his lecture at Princeton he had Congress on his mind.—Pittsburg Chronicle.

Ex-President Grover Cleveland in the first of his two Princeton lectures on the independence of the Executive took ground which hardly conforms to Admiral Dewey's idea that a President has nothing to do but execute the laws of Congress.—Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

It was a thoughtful exposition of the place of the Chief Magistrate in our scheme of government, and while probably finding no part of its inspiration in a recent periclit estimation of the duties and responsibilities of that high office, came almost as a rebuke of that extraordinary utterance.—New York Mail and Express.

That a Democrat of so great ability as Mr. Cleveland should publicly advocate a change in the method of electing a President which would ignore entirely the State lines and make him the choice of the majority of the voters, regardless of the choice of the States, indicates how far the national idea has progressed and how far the idea of a federation of sovereign States has been forgotten.—Brooklyn Eagle.

The presidency, to reach the level of its highest usefulness, must be strong and independent within the limitations which the constitution prescribes in connection with the office. "The Independence of the Executive" was illustrated in a most interesting and conspicuous manner by Grover Cleveland for eight years. There is no man better qualified than he to discuss that instructive topic.—Kansas City Star.

Queen's Welcome to Ireland.

But it is not in the heart of an Irishman to make war upon a woman, and the Queen is a woman to her subjects in that island.—Boston Post.

The Queen's visit is significant of England's desire for friendlier relations with the people of Ireland. It is, in part, a tribute to the gallantry of the Irish troops in the Transvaal.—Minneapolis Times.

It is conceded that the visit has brought Englishmen and Irishmen into friendlier relations than have existed between them since the days before Parnell's revival of the cause of home rule.—Milwaukee Wisconsin.

Victoria's visit, if intelligently directed, can do much toward arousing a sentiment throughout Great Britain which will remedy the seven-century old series of wrongs which Ireland has suffered.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

The present is an opportunity for the radical betterment of conditions, and if Ireland's independence should follow as a result of this visit, it would prove the crowning event in the long and remarkable reign of Queen Victoria.—Scranton Truth.

The past cannot be recalled, and it may be that the spontaneity which marks this, the last visit the sovereign will probably pay to the Emerald Isle, will be regarded by the Irish people as a large, if not a complete, atonement for the mistake, to put it mildly, of nearly half a century.—Philadelphia Times.

Carnegie and Frick.

Neither Carnegie nor Frick appeared to be anxious to open the big jack pot, and wisely decided to pull the stakes.—Omaha Bee.

The signing of the new stock certificate might be called the formal ratification of the Carnegie-Frick treaty of peace.—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

Philanthropist Carnegie retired from business some months ago when he had enriched his partner, Frick, out of several millions. When he was called to time and made to disgorge he re-entered business, taking Frick in with him as a partner.—Memphis Commercial-Appeal.

Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Frick have set a good example in making peace rather than fighting their way to each other's pockets through the courts. They have compromised at least \$100,000,000 worth of stock. Why can't men whose differences are measured by \$50?—Springfield Republican.