PHANTOM SHIP

—OR—

The Flying Dutchman.

—BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

In a few days Amine and Philip took leave of the priests, and quitted for Amsterdam—Father Seysen taking charge of the cottage until Amine's return. On his arrival, Philip called upon the directors of the company, who promised him a ship on his return from the voyage he was about to enter upon, making a condition that he should become part owner of the vessel. To this Philip consented, and went down to visit the Vrow Katerina, the ship to which he had been appointed as first mate. She was still unrigged, and the fleet was not expected to sail for two months. Only part of the crew were on board, and the captain, who lived at Dort, had not yet arrived.

So far as Philip could judge, the Vrow Katerina was a very inferior vessel; she was larger than many of the others, but old, and badly constructed; nevertheless, as she had been several voyages to India, and had returned in safety, it was to be presumed that she could not have been taken up by the company if they had not been satisfied as to her seaworthiness. Having given a few directions to the men who were on board, Philip returned to the hostelry where he had secured apartments for himself and Amine.

The next day, as Philip was superintending the fitting of the rigging, the captain of the Vrow Katerina arrived, and, stepping on board of her by the plank which communicated with the quay, the first thing he did was to run to the mainmast and embrace it with both arms, although there was no small portion of tallow on it to smear the cloth of his coat.

"Oh, my dear Vrow, my Katerina!" cried he, as if he were speaking to a female. "How do you do I am so glad to see you again; you have been quite well, I hope? You do not like being laid up in this way. Never mind, my dear creature! You shall soon be handsome again."

The name of this personage who thus made love to his vessel was Wilhelm Barentz. He was a young man, apparently not thirty years of age, of diminutive stature and delicate proportions. His face was handsome, but womanish. His movements were rapid and restless, and there was that appearance in his eye which would have warranted the supposition that he was a little flighty, even if his conduct had not fully proved the fact.

No sooner were the ecstasies of the captain over than Philip introduced himself to him, and informed him of his appointment. "Oh! you are the first mate of the Vrow Katerina. Sir, you are a very fortunate man. Next to being captain of her, first mate is the most enviable situation in the world."

"Certainly not on account of her beauty," observed Philip; "she may have many other good qualities."

"Not on account of her beauty! Why, sir, I say (as my father has said before me, and it was his Vrow before it was mine) that she is the handsomest vessel in the world. At present you cannot judge; and besides being the handsomest vessel, she has every good quality under the sun."

"I am glad to hear it, sir," replied Philip; "it proves that one should never judge by appearances. But is she not very old?"

"Old! not more than twenty-eight years—just in her prime. Stop, my dear sir, till you see her dancing on the waters, and then you will do nothing all day but discourse with me upon her excellence, and I have no doubt that we shall have a very happy time together."

"Provided the subject be not exhausted," replied Philip.

"That it never will be on my part; and allow me to observe, Mr. Vanderdecken, that any officer who finds fault with the Vrow Katerina quarrels with me. I am her knight, and I have already fought three men in her defense; I trust I shall not have to fight a fourth."

Philip smiled; he thought that she was not worth while fighting for; but he acted upon the suggestion, and from that time forward he never ventured to express an opinion against the beautiful Vrow Katerina.

The crew were soon complete, the vessel rigged, her sails bent, and she was anchored in the stream, surrounded by the other ships composing the fleet to be dispatched. The cargo was then recived on board, and, as soon as her hold was full, there came, to Philip's great vexation, an order to receive on board one hundred and fifty soldiers and other passengers, many of whom were accompanied by their wives and families. Philip worked hard, for the captain did nothing but praise the vessel, and at last they had embarked everything, and the fleet was ready to sail.

It was now time to part with Amine, who had remained at the hostelry, and to whom Philip had dedicated every spare moment that he could obtain. The fleet was expected to sail in two days, and it was decided that on the morrow they should part. Amine was cool and collected. She felt convinced that she should see her husband again, and with that feeling she embraced him as they separated on the beach, and he stepped into the boat in which he was to be pulled on board.

"Yes," thought Amine, as she watched the form of her husband, as she distance between them increased; "yes, I know that we shall meet again. It is not this voyage which is to be fatal to you or me; but I have a dark foreboding that the next, in which I shall join you, will separate us forever—in which way I know not—but it is destined. The priests talk of free will. Is it free will which takes him away from me? Yes. Yes. But he is not permitted, for he must fulfill his destiny. Free will! Why, if it were not destiny it were tyranny. I feel, and I have felt, as if these priests are my enemies; but why I know not; they are both good men, and the creed they teach is good. Good will and charity, love to all, forgiveness of injuries, not judging others. All this is good; and yet my heart whispers to me that—but the boat is alongside, and Philip is climbing up the vessel. Farewell, farewell, my dearest husband. I would I were a man! No! no! 'tis better as it is."

Amine watched till she could no longer perceive Philip, and then walked slowly to the hosteiry. The next day, when she arose, she found that the fleet had sailed at daybreak, and the channel, which had been so crowded with vessels, was now untenanted.

"He is gone," muttered Amine. "Now for many months of patient, calm endurance—I cannot say of living, for I exist but in his presence."

CHAPTER XV.

We must leave Amine to her solitude and follow the fortunes of Philip. The fleet had sailed with a flowing sheet, and bore gallantly down the Zuyder Zee, but they had not been under way an hour before the Vrow Katerina was left a mile or two astern. Mynheer Barentz found fault with the setting and trimming of the sails, and with the man at the helm, who was repeatedly changed; in short, with everything but his dear Vrow Katerina; but all would not do; she still dropped astern, and proved to be the worst sailing vessel in the fleet.

"Mynheer Vanderdecken," said he, at last, "the Vrow, as my father used to say, is not so very fast before the wind. Vessels that are good on a wind seldom are; but this I will say, that, in every other point of sailing, there is no other vessel in the fleet equal to the Vrow Katerina."

"Besides," observed Philip, who perceived how anxious the captain was on the subject, "we are heavily laden, and have so many troops on deck."

The fleet cleared the sands, and were then close-hauled, when the Vrow Katerina proved to sail even more slowly than before.

"When we are so very close-hauled," observed Mynheer Barentz, "the Vrow does not do so well; but a point free, and then you will see how she will show her stern to the whole fleet. She is a fine vessel, Mynheer Vanderdecken, is she not?"

"A very fine, roomy vessel," replied Philip, which was all that, in conscience, he could say.

The fleet sailed on, sometimes on a wind, sometimes free, but let the point of sailing be what it might, the Vrow Katerina was invariably astern, and the fleet had to heave-to at sunset to enable her to keep company; still the captain continued to declare that the point of sailing on which they happened to be was the only point in which the Vrow Katerina was deficient. Unfortunately the vessel had other points quite as bad as her sailing; she was cranky, leaky, and did not answer the helm well, but Mynheer Barentz was not to be convinced. He adored his ship, and, like all men desperately in love, he could see no fault in his mistress. But others were not so blind, and the admiral, finding the voyage so much delayed by the bad sailing of one vessel, determined to leave her to find her way by herself as soon as they had passed the Cape. He was, however, spared the cruelty of deserting her, for a heavy gale came on which dispersed the whole fleet, and on the second day the good ship Vrow Katerina found herself alone, laboring heavily in the trough of the sea, leaking so much as to require hands constantly at the pumps, and drifting before the gales as fast to leeward almost as she usually sailed. For a week the gale continued, and each day did her situation become more alarming. Crowded with troops, incumbered with heavy stores, she groaned and labored while whole seas washed over her, and the men could hardly stand at the pumps. Philip was active, and exerted himself to the utmost, encouraging the worn-out men, securing where aught had given way, and little interfered with by the captain, who was himself no sailor.

"Well," observed the captain to Philip, as they held on by the belaying pins, "you'll acknowledge that she is a fine weatherly vessel in a gale—is she not? Softly, my beauty, softly," continued he, speaking to the vessel as she plunged heavily into the waves, and every timber groaned. "Softly, my dear, softly! How those poor devils in the other ships must be knocking about now. Heh! Mynheer Vanderdecken, we have the start of them this time; they must be a terrible long way down to leeward. Don't you think so?"

"I really cannot pretend to say," replied Philip, smiling.

"Why, there's not one of them in sight. Yes! by heavens, there is! Look on our lee beam. I see one now. Well, she must be a capital sailor, at all events; look there, a point abaft the beam. Mercy on me, how stiff she must be to carry such a press of canvas!"

Philip had already seen her. It was a large ship on a wind, and on the same tack as they were. In a gale, in which no vessel could carry the topsails, the Vrow Katrina being under close-reefed foresails and staysails, the ship seen to leeward was standing under a press of sail—top-gallant sails, royals, flying-jib, and every stitch of canvas which could be set in a light breeze. The waves were running mountains high, bearing each minute the Vrow Katrina down to the gunwale; and the ship seen appeared not to be affected by the tumultuous waters, but sailed steadily and smoothly on an even keel. At once Philip knew it must be the Phantom Ship, in which his father's doom was being fulfilled.

"Very odd, is it not?" observed Mynheer Barentz.

Philip felt such an oppression on his chest that he could not reply. As he held on with one hand, he covered up his eyes with the other.

But the seamen had now seen the vessel, and the legend was too well known. Many of the troops had climbed on deck when the report was circulated, and all eyes were now fixed upon the supernatural vessel, when a heavy squall burst upon the Vrow Katrina, accompanied with peals of thunder and heavy rain, rendering it so thick that nothing could be seen. In a quarter of an hour it cleared away, and, when they looked to leeward, the stranger was no longer in sight.

"Merciful heaven! she must have been upset, and has gone down in the squall!" said Mynheer Barentz. "I thought as much, carrying such a press of sail. There never was a ship that could carry more than the Vrow Katrina. It was madness on the part of the captain of that vessel, but I suppose he wished to keep up with us. Heh! Mynheer Vanderdecken?"

Philip did not reply to these remarks, which fully proved the madness of his captain. He felt that his ship was doomed, and when he thought of the numbers on board who might be sacrificed he shuddered. After a pause he said:

"Mynheer Barentz, this gale is likely to continue, and the best ship that ever was built cannot, in my opinion, stand such weather. I should advise that we bear up and run back to Table Bay to refit. Depend upon it, we shall find the whole fleet there before us."

"Never fear for the good ship Vrow Katrina," replied the captain; "see what weather she makes of it."

"Cursed bad," observed one of the seamen, for the seamen had gathered near to Philip to hear what his advice might be. "If I had known that she was such an old crazy beast I never would have trusted myself on board. Mynheer Vanderdecken is right; we must go back to Table Bay ere worse befall us. That ship to leeward has given us warning—she is not seen for nothing—ask Mr. Vanderdecken, captain; he knows that well, for he is a sailor."

This appeal to Philip made him start; it was, however, made without any knowledge of Philip's interest in the Phantom Ship.

(To be continued.)

The Prince's Defence.

Prince Louis Esterhazy, military attache of the Austrian embassy at London, was recently traveling alone on an English railway when an elegantly dressed woman entered the carriage. Presently she dropped her handkerchief and employed other expedients to start a conversation, but without avail, for the prince tranquilly smoked his cigar and took no notice of her. At last, as the train approached a station, the woman suddenly tore her hat from her head, disheveled her hair, and, as the train came to a standstill, put her head out of the window and shrieked for assistance. The railroad officials hurried to the scene, and to them the woman asserted that she had been terribly insulted by the prince. The prince did not stir from his seat, but continued tranquilly smoking his cigar, and the stationmaster exclaimed: "What have you got to say to the charge?" Without the slightest appearance of concern the prince, who was seated in the further corner of the carriage, replied: "Only this," and with that he pointed to the cigar which showed a beautiful gray ash considerably over an inch in length. The station-master was wise in his generation, and on perceiving the ash in the prince's cigar, he touched his hat, said quietly, "That's all right, sir," and arrested the woman instead.—Argonaut.

An Outrage.

Tenant—Some of the plaster in my kitchen fell down last night, and I want you to replace it. Landlord—What caused it? "The man who occupies the floor above sneezed." Landlord—Well, some people think because they pay rent they can carry on just as if they lived in a hotel.

Snakes in South Africa fear the secretary bird, and will even crawl away from its shadow. The bird can easily kill a snake twice its size.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS" SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

"My Father, if Thou Hast Opened Thy Mouth Unto the Lord, Do to Me According to That Which Hath Proceeded Out of Thy Mouth"—Judges, 11:36.

Jephthah was a freebooter. Early turned out from a home where he ought to have been cared for, he consorted with rough men and went forth to earn his living as best he could. In those times it was considered right for a man to go out on independent military expeditions. Jephthah was a good man according to the light of his dark age, but through a wandering and predatory life he became reckless and precipitate. The grace of God changes a man's heart, but never reverses his natural temperament. The Israelites wanted the Ammonites driven out of their country, so they sent a delegation to Jephthah, asking him to become commander-in-chief of all the forces. He might have said, "You drove me out when you had no use for me, and now you are in trouble you want me back;" but he did not say that. He takes command of the army, sends messengers to the Ammonites to tell them to vacate the country, and, getting no favorable response, marshals his troops for battle.

Before going to the war Jephthah makes a very solemn vow, that if the Lord will give him victory, then, on his return home, whatsoever first comes out of his doorway he will offer in sacrifice as a burnt offering. The battle opens. It was no skirmishing on the edges of danger, no unlimbering of batteries two miles away, but the hurling of men on the point of swords and spears until the ground could no more drink the blood, and the horses reared to leap over the pile of bodies of the slain. In those old times opposing forces would fight until their swords were broken; then each one would throttle his man until they both fell, teeth to teeth, grip to grip, death-stare to death-stare, until the plain was one tumbled mass of corpses from which the last trace of manhood had been dashed out.

Jephthah wins the day. Twenty cities lay captured at his feet. Sound the victory all through the mountains of Gilead. Let the trumpeters call up the survivors. Homeward to your wives and children. Homeward with your glittering treasures. Homeward to have the applause of an admiring nation. Build triumphal arches. Swing out flags all over Mizpeh. Open all your doors to receive the captured treasures. Through every hall spread the banquet. Pile up the viands. Fill high the tankards. The nation is redeemed, the invaders are routed, and the national honor is vindicated.

Huzza for Jephthah, the conqueror! Jephthah, seated on a prancing steed, advances amid the acclaiming multitudes, but his eye is not on the excited populace. Remembering that he had made a solemn vow that, returning from victorious battle, whatsoever first came out of the doorway of his home, that should be sacrificed as a burnt offering, he has his anxious look upon the door. I wonder what spotless lamb, what brace of doves will be thrown upon the fires of the burnt offering.

Oh, horrors! Paleness of death blanches his cheek. Despair seizes his heart. His daughter, his only child, rushes out to throw herself in her father's arms and shower upon him more kisses than there were wounds on his breast or dents in his shield. All the triumphal splendors vanish. Holding back this child from his heaving breast, and pushing the locks back from the fair brow, and looking into the eyes of inextinguishable affection, with choked utterance he says, "Would God I lay stark on the bloody plain! My daughter, my only child, joy of my home, life of my life, thou art the sacrifice!"

The whole matter was explained to her. This was no whining, hollow-hearted girl into whose eyes the father looked. All the glory of sword and shield vanished in the presence of the valor of that girl. There may have been a tremor on the lip, as a rose leaf trembles in the sough of the south wind; there may have been the starting of a tear like a drop of rain shaken from the anther of a water lily; but with a self-sacrifice that man may not reach, and only woman's heart can compass, she surrenders herself to fire and to death. She cries out in the words of my text: "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do unto me whatsoever hath proceeded from thy mouth."

She bows to the knife, and the blood, which so often at the father's voice had rushed to the crimson cheek, smokes in the fires of the burnt offering. No one can tell us her name. There is no need that we know her name. The garlands that Mizpeh twisted for Jephthah the warrior have gone into the dust; but all ages are twisting this girl's chaplet. It is well that her name came not to us, for no one can wear it. They may take the name of Deborah, or Abigail, or Miriam, but no one in all the ages shall have the title of this daughter of sacrifice.

Of course this offering was not pleasing to the Lord, especially as a provision was made in the law for such a contingency, and Jephthah might have redeemed his daughter by the payment of thirty shekels of silver. But before you hurl your denunciations at Jephthah's cruelty, remember that in olden times, when vows were made, men thought they must execute them, perform them, whether they were wicked or good. There were two wrong things about Jephthah's vow. First, he ought never to have made it. Next, having made it, it were better broken than kept. But do not take on pretentious airs and say, "I could not have done as Jephthah did." If in former days you had been standing on the banks of the Ganges, and you had been born in India, you might have thrown your children to the crocodiles. It is not because we are naturally any better, but because we have more gospel light.

Now, I make very practical use of this question when I tell you that the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter was a type of the physical, mental, and spiritual sacrifice of ten thousand children in this day. There are parents all unwittingly bringing to bear upon their children a class of influences which will as certainly ruin them as knife and torch destroyed Jephthah's daughter. While I speak, the whole nation, without emotion and without shame, looks upon the stupendous sacrifice.

In the first place I remark that much is a system of sacrifice. When children spend six or seven hours in school, and then must spend two or three hours in preparation for school the next day, will you tell me how much time they will have for sunshine and fresh air, and the obtaining of that exuberance which is necessary for the duties of coming life? No one can feel more thankful than I do for the advancement of common school education. The printing of books appropriate for schools, the multiplication of philosophical apparatus, the establishment of normal schools, which provide for our children teachers of largest calibre, are themes on which every philanthropist ought to be congratulated. But this herding of great multitudes of children in ill-ventilated schoolrooms, and poorly equipped halls of instruction, is making many of the places of knowledge in this country a huge holocaust. Politics in many of the cities get into educational affairs, and while the two political parties are scrabbling for the honors, Jephthah's daughter perishes. It is so much so that there are many schools in the country today which are preparing tens of thousands of invalid men and women for the future, so that, in many places, by the time the child's education is finished the child is finished! In many large places, in many cities of the country, there are large appropriations for everything else, and cheerful appropriations; but as soon as the appropriation is to be made for the educational or moral interests of the city, we are struck through with an economy that is well nigh the death of us.

In connection with this I mention what I might call the cramming system of the common schools and many of the academies; children of delicate brain compelled to tasks that might appal a mature intellect; children going down to school with a strap of books half as high as themselves. The fact is, in some of the cities parents do not allow their children to graduate, for the simple reason, they say, "We cannot afford to allow our children's health to be destroyed in order that they may gather the honors of an institution." Tens of thousands of children educated into imbecility; so that connected with many such literary establishments there ought to be asylums for the wrecked. It is push, and crowd, and cram, and stuff, and jam, until the child's intellect is bewildered, and the memory is ruined, and the health is gone. There are children who once were full of romping and laughter, and had cheeks crimson with health, who are turned out in the afternoon pale-faced, irritated, asthmatic, old before their time. It is one of the saddest sights on earth to see an old-mannish boy or an old-womanish woman! Girls of ten years of age studying algebra. Boys of twelve years of age racking their brain over trigonometry! Children unacquainted with their mother tongue crying over their Latin, French and German lessons! All the vivacity of their nature beaten out of them by the heavy beetle of a Greek lexicon! And you doctor them for this, and you give them a little medicine for that, and you wonder what is the matter with them. I will tell you what is the matter with them. They are finishing their education!

* * *

In our day most boys start out with no idea higher than the all-encompassing dollar. They start in an age which boasts it can scratch the Lord's Prayer on a ten-cent piece, and the Ten Commandments on a ten-cent piece. Children are taught to reduce morals and religion, time and eternity, to vulgar fractions. It seems to be their chief attainment that ten cents make a dime, and ten dimes make a dollar. How to get money is only equaled by the other art, how to keep it. Tell me, ye who know, what chance there is for those who start out in life with such perverted sentiments! The money market resounds again and again with the downfall of such people. If I had a drop of blood on the tip of a pen, I would tell you by what awful tragedy many of the youth of this country are ruined.

Further on, thousands and tens of thousands of the daughters of America are sacrificed to worldliness. They are taught to be in sympathy with all the artificialties of society. They are inducted into all the hollowness of what is called fashionable life. They are taught to believe that history is dry, but that fifty-cent stories of adventurous love are delicious. With capacity that might have rivaled a Florence Nightingale in heavenly ministries, or made the father's house glad with filial and sisterly demeanor, their life is a waste, their beauty a curse, their eternity a demolition.

In the siege of Charleston, during our civil war, a lieutenant of the army stood on the floor beside the daughter of the ex-governor of the state of South Carolina. They were taking the vows of marriage. A bombshell struck the roof, dropped into the group, and nine were wounded and slain; among the wounded to death the bride. While the bridegroom knelt on the carpet trying to stanch the wounds, the bride demanded that the ceremony be completed, that she might take the vows before her departure; and when the minister said, "Will thou be faithful unto death?" with her dying lips she said, "I will," and in two hours she had departed. That was the slaughter and the sacrifice of the body; but at thousands of marriage-altars there are daughters slain for time and slain for eternity. It is not a marriage: it is a massacre. Affianced to some one who is only waiting until his father dies, so he can get the property; then a little while they swing around in the circles, brilliant circles; then the property is gone, and having no power to earn a livelihood, the twain sink into some corner of society, the husband an idler and a sot, the wife a drudge, a slave, and a sacrifice. Ah! spare your denunciations from Jephthah's head, and expend them all on this wholesale modern martyrdom.

I lift up my voice against the sacrifice of children. I look out of my window on a Sabbath and I see a group of children, unwashed, uncombed, unchristianized. Who cares for them? Who prays for them? Who utters to them one kind word? When the city missionary, passing along the park in New York, saw a ragged lad and heard him swearing, he said to him, "My son, stop swearing! You ought to go to the house of God today. You ought to be good; you ought to be a Christian." The lad looked in his face and said, "Ah! it is easy for you to talk, well clothed as you are, and well fed; but we chaps hain't got no chance." Who lifts them to the altar for baptism? Who goes forth to snatch them up from crime and death and woe? Who today will go forth and bring them into schools and churches? No. Heap them up, great piles of rags and wretchedness and filth. Put underneath them the fires of sacrifice, stir up the blaze, put on more faggots, and while we sit in the churches with folded arms and indifference, crime and disease and death will go on with the agonizing sacrifice.

I congratulate all those who are toiling for the outcast and the wandering. Your work will soon be over, but the influence you are setting in motion will never stop. Long after you have been garnered for the skies, your prayers, your teachings, and your Christian influence will go on, and help to people heaven with bright inhabitants. Which would you rather see?—which scene would you rather mingle in, in the last great day—being able to say, "I added house to house, and land to land, and manufactory to manufactory; I owned half the city; whatever my eye saw I had, whatever I wanted I got;" or on that day to have Christ look you full in the face and say, "I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick in prison, and ye visited me; inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me?"

THE REAL THACKERAY.

Thackery is misunderstood by many readers. They place him among the satirists or the cynics, who delight to ridicule the foibles and weaknesses of human nature. It is true that he was a satirist. His love of sincerity made him hate shams. These he keenly pictured, but gentleness was exhibited even in his satire.

Glimpses of the real Thackeray are given us in the introduction which his daughter, Mrs. Ritchie, has written for the biographical edition of his writings. Here we see him as he was: playful, affectionate, benevolent, the kindest of critics, the most tender-hearted of editors, sending checks to writers less fortunate than he, and feeling it "a thorn in his pillow" when, as editor of the Cornhill Magazine, he had to return a manuscript. After his death, this entry was found in his diary, written just after he had moved into a new house:

"I pray Almighty God that the words I write in this house may be pure and honest; that they may be dictated by no personal spite, unworthy motive, or unjust greed for gain; that they may tell the truth, as far as I know it, and tend to promote love and peace among men, for the sake of Christ our Lord."

When these words were written, Thackeray's work, though he could not know it, was very nearly done. The entry is dated March 8, 1862, and in December of the next year he died. But the words expressed, not a new aspiration, but the purpose which he had kept steadily in view through his whole literary career. This sense of moral responsibility deepens respect for the great novelist. A general adoption of his ideal would sweeten and elevate fiction.

Haydn's Birthplace.

A fire occurred two weeks ago in the village of Fohrau, on the Hungarian frontier, and among other houses destroyed was the modest thatched building in which Joseph Haydn was born. The book in which visitors inscribed their names and the commemorative tablets were saved.

A man may leave footprints on the sands of time with impunity, but he should be careful how he leaves them around on a recently scrubbed kitchen floor.