THE SEA-HAWK

A Forthcoming Post National Picture.

Part Two By Rafael Sabatini.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Of all this Sakr-el-Bahr gathered an impression, as, followed by Biskaine and the negroes, he swiftly made his way down from that eyrie that had served him so well. He sprang from red oak to cork tree and from cork tree to red oak; he leaped from rock to rock, or lowered himself from ledge to ledge, gripping a handful of heath or a projecting stone, but all with the speed and nimbleness of an ape. He dropped at last to the beach, then sped across it at a run, and went bounding along a black reef until he stood alongside of the galliot which had been left behind by the other corsair vessels, she awaited him in deep water, the length of her oars from the rock, and as he came alongside, these oars were brought in the horizontal, and held there firmly. He leaped down upon them, his companions following him, and using them as a gangway, reached the bulwarks. He threw a leg over the side and alighted on a decked space between two oars and the two rows of six slaves that were manning each of them.

Biskaine followed him and the negroes came last. They were still astride of the bulwarks when Sakr-el-Bahr gave the word. Up the middle gangway ran a boatswain and two of his mates cracking their long whips of bullock hide. Down went the oars, there was a heave, and they shot out in the wake of the other two to join the fight.

Sakr-el-Bahr, scimitar in hand, stood on the prow, a little in advance of the mob of eager babbling corsairs who surrounded him, quivering in their impatience to be let loose upon the Christian foe. Above, along the yardarm and up the rattlines swarmed his bowmen. From the masthead floated out his standard, of crimson charged with a green crescent.

The naked Christian slaves groaned, strained and sweated under the Moslem lash that drove them to the destruction of their Christian brethren.

Ahead the battle was already joined. The Spaniard had fired one single hasty shot which had gone wide, and now one of the corsairs' grappling irons had seized her on the larboard quarter, a withering hail of arrows was pouring down upon her decks from the Muslim crossbows; up her sides crowded the eager Moors, ever most eager when it was a question of tackling the Spanish dogs who had driven them from their Andalusian caliphate. Under her quarter sped the other galley to take her on the starboard side, and even as she went her archers and slingers hurled death aboard the galleon.

It was a short, sharp fight. The Spaniards in confusion from the beginning, having been taken utterly by surprise, had never been able to order themselves in a proper manner to receive the onslaught. Still, what could be done they did. They made a gallant stand against this pitiless assailant. But the corsairs charged home as gallantly, utterly reckless of life, eager to slay in the name of Allah and his prophet and scarcely less eager to die if it should please the All-pitiful that their destinies should be here fulfilled. Up they went and back fell the Castilians, outnumbered by at least ten to one.

When Sakr-el-Bahr's galliot came alongside, that brief encounter was at an end, and one of his corsairs was aloft, hacking from the mainmast the standard of Spain and the wooden crucifix that was nailed below it. A moment later and to a thundering roar of "Alhamdolillah!" the green crescent floated out upon the breeze.

Sakr-el-Bahr thrust his way through the press in the galleon's waist; his corsairs fell back before him, making way, and as he advanced they roared his name deliriously and waved their scimitars to acclaim him this hawk of the sea, as he was named, this most valiant of all the servants of Islam. True he had taken no actual part in the engagement. It had been too brief and he had arrived too late for that. But his had been the daring to conceive an ambush at so remote a western point, and his the brain that had guided them to this swift sweet victory in the name of Allah the One.

The decks were slippery with blood, and strewn with wounded and dying men, whom already the Muslimeen were heaving overboard—dead and wounded alike when they were Christians, for to what end should they be troubled with maimed slaves?

Sakr-el-Bahr stood forward, his light eyes considering them grimly. They must number close upon a hundred, adventurers in the main who had set out from Cadiz in high hope of finding fortune in the Indies. They voyage had been a very brief one; their fate they knew—to toil at the oars of the Muslim galleys, or, at best, to be taken to Algiers or Tunis and sold there into the slavery of some wealthy Moor.

Sakr-el-Bahr's glance scanned them appraisingly, and rested finally on the captain, who stood slightly in advance, his face livid with rage and grief. He was richly dressed in the Castilian black, and his velvet thimble-shaped hat was heavily plumed and decked by a gold cross.

Sakr-el-Bahr salaamed ceremoniously to him. "Fortuna de guerra, senor capitan," said he in fluent Spanish. "What is your name?"

"I am Don Paulo de Guzman," the man answered, drawing himself erect, and speaking with conscious pride in himself and manifest contempt of his interlocutor.

"So! A gentleman of family! And well nourished and sturdy, I should judge. In the sok at Algiers you might fetch two hundred philips. You shall ransom yourself for five hundred."

"Por las Entranas de Dios!" swore Don Paulo (who, like all pious Spanish Catholics, favored the oath anatomical. What else he would have added in his fury is not known, for Sakr-el-Bahr waved him contemptuously away.

"For your profanity and want of courtesy we will make the ransom a thousand philips, then," said he. And to his followers—"Away with him! Let him have courteous entertainment against the coming of his ransom."

He was borne away cursing.

Of the others Sakr-el-Bahr made short work. He offered the privilege of ransoming himself to any who might claim it, and the privilege was claimed by three. The rest he consigned to the care of Biskaine, who acted as his Kayia, or lieutenant. But before doing so he bade the ship's bo'sun stand forward, and demanded to know what slaves there might be on board. There were, he learnt, but a dozen, employed upon menial duties on the ship—three Jews, seven Muslimeen and two heretics—and they had been driven under the hatches when the peril threatened.

By Sakr-el-Bahr's orders these were dragged forth from the blackness into which they had been flung. The Muslimeen upon discovering that they had fallen into the hands of their own people and that their slavery was at an end, broke into cries of delight, and fervent praise of Allah than whom they swore there was no other God. The three Jews, lithe, statuesque young men in black robes that fell to their knees and black skull caps upon their curly black locks, smiled ingratiatingly, hoping for the best since they were fallen into the hands of people who were nearer akin to them than Christians and allied to them, at least, by the bond of common enmity to Spain and common suffering at the hands of Spaniards. The two heretics stood in stolid apathy, realizing that with them it was but a case of passing from Charybdis to Scylla, and that they had as little to hope for from heathen as from Christian. One of these was a sturdy bow-legged fellow, whose garments were little better than rags; his weather-beaten face was of the color of mahogany and his eyes of a dark blue under tufted eyebrows that once had been red—like his hair and beard—but were now thickly intermingled with gray. He was spotted like a leopard on the hands by enormous dark brown freckles.

Of the entire dozen he was the only one that drew the attention of Sakr-el-Bahr. He stood despondently before the corsair, with bowed head and his eyes upon the deck, a weary, dejected, spiritless slave who would as soon die as live. Thus some few moments during which the stalwart Muslim stood regarding him; then as if drawn by that persistent scrutiny he raised his dull, weary eyes. At once they quickened, the dullness passed out of them; they were bright and keen as of old. He thrust his head forward, staring in his turn; then, in a bewildered way he looked about him at the ocean of swarthy faces under turbans of all colors, and back again at Sakr-el-Bahr.

"God's light!" he said at last, in English, to vent his infinite amazement. Then reverting to the cynical manner that he had ever affected, and effacing all surprise—

"Good day to you, Sir Oliver," said he. "I suppose ye'll give yourself the pleasure of hanging me."

"Allah is great!" said Sakr-el-Bahr impassively.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

THE NEBBS

YOU TELL 'EM KID.

Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

Barney Google and Spark Plug

Well, There's Nothing Lacking About Barney's Enthusiasm.

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck

(Copyright 1924)

BRINGING UP FATHER

Registered U. S. Patent Office

SEE JIGGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus

(Copyright 1924)

JERRY ON THE JOB

IS THERE NO JUSTICE?

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban

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Second Honeymoons

By Briggs

ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield

A Bit of Engineering.

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. M'INTYRE.

New York, April 24.—In some ways Gotham is the most difficult and in other ways the easiest town in the world in which to make a living. You hear much of the newcomer beating vainly against the gate of the metropolitan heart as flinty as its rock-ribbed foundation.

There is much to be said for either viewpoint. It is a city where the original idea is the biggest factor in making for success. It upsets many of the platitudes—such as "keeping everlastingly at it," etc. I know many men who are growing rich and yet who work perhaps an hour a day.

They have an idea, and it is always something different. No city will pay such a high price to be amused. The performer who can offer a bit of originality is sure of big rewards. It may be a grotesque dance, a silly song or harlequinade.

The people who come here and meet with the greatest discouragements are those who have nothing above the commonplace to offer. Competition in the commonplaces is almost tragically keen. The average worker in the average line is far better off in smaller cities.

Ordinary business transactions are a constant despair. The salesman spends the largest part of his time waiting in ante-rooms to see the buyer. There are always delays that dishearten. The "conference" is one of the biggest setbacks in salesmanship.

Along Madison avenue in mid-town are innumerable florists. Competition is decidedly brisk. One dealer found he was losing out in the race. He staked all on a single idea. He kept closed during the day and opened from 7 in the evening until 1 in the morning.

He had a fresher supply of wares. He offered special motorcycle delivery service and his trade for the theaters and to midnight supper club patrons more than trebled his former patronage. It was the idea again.

On Fifty-sixth street west of Broadway is a row of boarding houses where the guests are mostly instalment house bill collectors. Here are men whose lives are rarely touched by sentiment. A landlady characterized them as "a batch of crabby old bachelors." Their contact all day is largely with dead-beats. When they go home at night they are dog tired from wrangling with reluctant paying customers. Most of the instalment house collectors are thrifty. They have been fed-up on the pangs of poverty and misery.

On a New York newspaper there is a fault finding conductor who is always growing vitriolic over trivialties. He croaks dismally over finding a misplaced comma or the hopelessly split infinitive. He is sour visaged and churlish. On an afternoon journal there is a light-hearted columnist who has nothing but good to say of everything. He bubbles with the sheer joy of living. Yet in personal contact the grouch is always merry and bright and the joyous scribbler is as glum as an owl.

Some people are able to hide their inner feelings by masks of indifference. Not long ago at a social gathering there was a pleasant faced woman who was continually hurling honeyed endearments at her husband. She seemed the almost perfect wife. It so happened I followed them down darkened steps when they left. "It was a nice evening, wasn't it, dear?" he asked. "Oh, shut your face," was her retort.

A few years ago there were only about five theatrical hits for each season. The past season there were 35 hits. That is to say at 35 theaters the attractions played to capacity houses every matinee and evening.

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State Teachers' College to Open Training School

Kearney, Neb. April 23.—Arrangement has been completed whereby the State Teachers' college will use the new Whittier building of the public city school system as a training school during the summer term.

This is the third summer for this plan. The first included merely one rural school, and the authorities begged for children to attend. Now parents and children alike are anxious that the work be continued. This summer will see a larger enrollment in the summer model schools than heretofore.