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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

HISTORY OF THE GLORIOUS STORMING OF TRIPOLI.

Decatur and Somers Led the Assault on the Pirate's Stronghold—The Duel—What Troubled the Landlord—A Strange Friendship.

Storming of Tripoli. Mrs. Molly Elliot Seawell, in her story of the gallant careers of Decatur and Somers, gives this account of the storming of Tripoli in the St. Nicholas:

On the morning of August 3, 1804, began that immortal series of five assaults on the town, the fortresses and the fleets of Tripoli that was destined to forever destroy the piratical and barbaric power. The force of the Americans was but little. With one heavy frigate, the glorious Old Constitution, three brigs, three schooners, two bomb vessels, and three gunboats manned by 1,050 officers and men, Commodore Preble stood boldly in to attack the town defended by the bashaw's castle, not less than a dozen powerful forts, a fleet of three cruising vessels, two galleys and nineteen gunboats, manned by 25,000 Turks and Arabs. The harbor was, moreover, protected by a line of shoals and reefs perfectly well known to the Tripolitans, but very imperfectly known to the Americans, and which the Constitution could not approach closely without incurring the fate of the unfortunate Philadelphia. But whatever "Old Pepper" lacked in ships and guns, he made up in men; for every soul on the American fleet was worthy to serve under the flag that flew from the mastsheads.

In considering the claims of his different officers in leading the attack, Commodore Preble had at last determined upon Decatur and Somers. The larger vessels were to cover the advance of the gunboats, which were to do the real fighting; and these gunboats were divided into two divisions, the first under Decatur, the second under Somers.

As the two divisions of three gunboats each formed and pulled away, they saw two divisions of Tripolitan boats, much larger, stronger, and more fully manned, pull slowly out from behind the line of reefs. The windward division consisted of nine gunboats, and the leeward of five, while a reserve of five others lay just inside the harbor, protected by the reefs.

As Somers took his place in the gunboat, he said to the man at the tiller: "Do you see that division of five boats to leeward? Steer straight for it, and get within pistol-shot of it, when I will give you further orders." The breeze was easterly, and with one lateen sail drawing well, the boat was soon covering the distance between her and her enemies across the blue waters. The firing had begun, and a terrific roar, as the Constitution barked out all her guns in broadside, showed that the ball was opened. Somers watched until his boat was abreast of the Tripolitans, when, himself sighting the one long gun amidships, he fired, and saw the shot had instant and terrible effect.

Somers turned round and saw the next boat to his, under Lieutenant Blake, a brave young officer, drawing off, obeying a signal of recall which, however, was made by mistake from the flag-ship, and the very next moment the third boat, commanded by James Decatur, caught a puff of wind that brought her head round and carried her directly into the other division of boats, which was dashing forward to attack the nine Tripolitan gunboats.

"Very well," said Somers, with his usual calm smile, "as Decatur says, the fewer the number the greater the honor! So we will go ahead, boys."

The sailors gave a cheer, and in another moment they were under fire of the five gunboats. The situation of Somers was now critical in the extreme, but he gave no sign of it in his manner, which was as cool as if he were at anchor in a friendly port. He opened a steady and well directed fire that soon began to weaken the attack of the Tripolitan boats, and not one of them dared to come near enough to attempt boarding him. Still, he was drawing nearer and nearer the batteries. Commodore Preble, who was watching him from the Constitution's quarter-deck, exclaimed: "Look at that gallant fellow, Somers. I would recall him, but he would never see the signal."

At that the commodore heard a boyish voice at his elbow, and there stood little Pickle Israel.

"If you please, sir," said he, with the air of one making a great discovery, "I don't believe Mr. Somers wants to see any signal."

"You are right, my boy," cried Old Pepper, who was in high good humor over the gallant behavior of his "school-boy captains;" "but at least he shall be supported."

With that he gave orders, and the ship, advancing slowly, but as steadily as if working into the roadstead of a friendly port, delivered a tremendous fire upon the batteries that were now trying to get the range of the daring little boat.

In spite of Somers' efforts to keep from drifting too far toward the reefs and the reserve squadron, by backing his sweeps astern, he soon found himself under the guns of one of the large forts. The Constitution was thundering at the forts, but this one was a little too near, and her shot fell over it. The situation of Somers was now desperate, but his indomitable coolness stood him in good stead.

"If we can knock the platform down that holds these guns, my men, we shall be all right," he cried; "and see, it is very rickety."

Then ordering a double charge put in the long gun, he sighted it himself. A shot went screaming over the water, and immediately a cloud of dust, brick, and mortar showed them it had struck the right spot. The platform was destroyed, and the battery tumbled down among the ruins.

Somers then turned his attention to the five gunboats, that he could now drive still closer to the reef, and on which every shot from his boat was telling.

And so, for an hour longer, did the little American boat, with her one gun, her resolute young captain, and her brave crew, hold in check a force five times her own; and not until a general recall was ordered did she leave her perilous position, and retire under the guns of the frigate.

A Strange Friendship. Chickens and cats, collectively, are not considered the most congenial companions. A strange exception to the enmity that usually exists between the feline and feathery tribes is to be found in Mount Vernon, Ill., in the household of a photographer, where the family cat, with an instinct of maternal solicitude rarely exhibited in animals for the young of other species, took into her fold of newly born kittens a little orphan chicken, cherishing it as one of her own offspring. The little waif was accidentally cast upon the world, the egg which contained it being hatched in an unaccountable way, without the warmth always given by the mother hen. The little kittens and their adopted sister thrived in peace and harmony together. Of course, the little stranger did not eat at the same table with the rest of the family, but found its nourishment from little insects, worms and crumbs. But they basked in the sunshine under the same maternal guidance, and warmed on cold nights at the same motherly breast. The strangest part of all was when the kittens arrived at maturity the old cat parted with them without a murmur, while nothing, it seems, can sever the ties that bind her to the chicken, now grown to stately henhood.

The Duel. The ginsham dog and the calico cat side by side on the table sat. 'Twas half past twelve and what do you think, Neither of them had slept a wink!

And the old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate, Seemed to know, as sure as fate, There was going to be an awful spat. (I wasn't there—I simply state) What was told to me by the Chinese plate? The ginsham dog went "bow-wow-wow!" And the calico cat replied "me ow!" And the air was streaked for an hour or so, With fragments of ginsham and calico. While the old Dutch clock in the chimney place Up with its hands upon its face, For it always dreaded a family row! (Now mind, I'm simply telling you) What the old Dutch clock declares is true) The Chinese plate looked very blue And wailed: "Oh, dear! what shall we do?" But the ginsham dog and the calico cat Walked this way and tumbled that And utilized every tooth and claw. In the awfullest way you ever saw— And oh, how the ginsham and calico flew! (Don't think that I exaggerate) I got my news from the Chinese plate! Next morning, where the two had sat They found no trace of the dog or cat; And some folks think unto this day That burglars stole that pair away. But the truth about that cat and pup Is that they ate each other up! Now, what do you really think of that? (The old Dutch clock, it told me so And that is how I came to know) —Eugene Field

Chicago's Midget Dog. S. Goldsmith of this city has a dog which is the admiration of all who have seen him since he grew large enough to be seen without the aid of a microscope. He is of Mexican breed and of the variety that never sheds hair, for the reason that he never has any to shed.

The dog in question was born three weeks ago, and there were two others born at the same time. In the three weeks he has managed to grow to the length of one inch and to attain the weight of a trifle over one-quarter of an ounce for his kennel and apparently enjoys life in a large wad of cotton which constitutes his bed and feeding ground. The cotton is saturated with cream and the dog extracts the moisture when he is hungry. Mr. Goldsmith does not expect that his midget will ever be much of a fighter, but he says that he will "back" him for any amount against any other dog of his size and weight. He will even concede the adversary a quarter of an ounce. The mother of the dog is scarcely three inches tall.—Chicago Record.

What Troubled Him. The habit potentes have of traveling incog, frequently causes suffering where it is least expected. It is told of the Emperor Joseph Second, that once while traveling in this fashion, he put up at an inn kept by an Englishman. After eating a few slices of ham and biscuit, he went to bed. In the morning he paid his bill and departed. A few hours after several of his suite arrived, and hearing the rank of his guest, the landlord appeared much troubled.

"Pshaw, man!" said one; "Joseph is accustomed to such adventures, and will think no more of it."

"But I shall," said mine host, "and never forgive myself for having had an emperor in my house and letting him off for three and sixpence!"—Harper's Young People.

A Tired Baby. Children of Bostonian parentage are notoriously precocious. A child of Mr. and Mrs. Preble Quincy Saltontall of Marlborough street, recently astonished his mamma by remarking from his cradle after the departure of some lady callers: "Mamma, the paucity of ideas of the fine de siècle society woman is something shocking. In future you will greatly oblige me by removing my couch during such rapid discourse. I prefer the company of my own reflections. Where's that bottle?"—Baltimore Sun.

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