

THE SIGN OF THE SERPENT.

How It Did Rodney Barnes a Good Turn.

By William Murray Graydon.

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A Blackwell "bus," rattling eastward along Cornhill, London, reluctantly slowed up at the rear of the Royal Exchange to let two well-dressed gentlemen of middle age, a tall, well-built one with a high forehead and light beard, and a shorter one with a blue serge and a nautical air about him, his companion was a slim good-looking lad, some 18 or 19 years of age.

The captain drew the lad into a shady passage a little removed from the busting crowds on Cornhill. "I have business to transact here," he said, pointing to the broad entrance way of Lloyd's, where are the headquarters of the shipping interests of the world.

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impressed by the seaman's honest face. "It's hard to be out of work in a big city like this. If another shilling will help you along—"

"But, nevertheless, so unexpectedly and close at hand had the tug loomed up, there was imminent danger. The sailor knew this, and it flustered him a bit. With both hands he jerked at one oar—jerked so hard that the blade snapped off at the rowlock, and he fell sideways against the gunwale.

The tug and the wherry met with a crash, and the latter capsized in the twinkling of an eye. Rodney went far down toward the Thames mud, but he was a good swimmer, and did not lose his presence of mind or his breath.

Striking out hard, he came to the surface, where he shook the water from his eyes and looked about him. He had passed under the tug, and it was now some feet astern. Close to one side was Tom Pugsley, feebly splashing to keep his mouth above water.

There was a bleeding wound on his forehead, evidently caused by striking the bottom of the tug, so this seemed to have stunned him. No immediate help was at hand, and he was in peril of drowning.

Struggling desperately, they came to the top again. Rodney grimly held his breath, and now unable to break loose had to submerge. Once more he was dragged down, and he gave himself up for lost; thoughts of parents and home flashed across his wide-awake mind.

Then he saw light, and gulped a mouthful of air. The tug was alongside him, and his feet struck the gunwale and he was pulled up. In a moment the brave lad was all right and able to thank his rescuers. The struggle had drawn his shirt sleeve far up, and the tattooed serpent on his elbow was exposed to the glancing view.

"God bless you, young gentleman!" he cried. "I shan't forget you saved my life—that blow stung me. You put me ashore at Wapping stairs. If you don't mind, sir, I'll be on hand."

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At last a footstep made him look up, and he saw Tom Pugsley. "Are our things dry yet?" he asked. "Not quite, lad," he said. "I've got to go on."

"Yes, go on," he said. "I'll be on hand," promised Rodney. "I'll be on hand," promised Rodney. "I'll be on hand," promised Rodney. "I'll be on hand," promised Rodney.

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"YOU SNEAKING THIEF!" GASPED RODNEY.

with that he made an agile leap forward and struck up Steve's outstretched arm. The weapon flew against the wall, and the next instant two had grappled. Leaning together they fell to the floor, rolling over and over, and breathing hard as they fought for mastery. Steve did not dare to cry out, and Rodney kept silent because he still had hopes of gaining his end.

"You'll be caught," panted Rodney. "Give up!" "Never!" Steve hissed. "I'll fix you—"

"That's just this, sir, I sort of thought, when you seemed anxious yourself to find this other tattooed chap—"

"And 'as 'e wronged you, sir?'" "Yes, he robbed my father of a large sum of money—but what do you mean?"

"I mean I've got 'other tattooed chap' for you," was the walloped reply. "Alfred Dyer is the name 'e goes by. 'e's stayin' at my lodgin' place yonder in Upper East Street."

"Can he be the same?" "Yes, sure, I seen the serpent on 'is arm when 'e was washin' 'is 'ands, an' 'isn't 'e know 'is was about?"

"Think heaven!" exclaimed Rodney, impatiently grasping and shaking the sailor's hand. With difficulty he repressed his excitement, and after asking several other leading questions and thinking earnestly for a short time, he submitted to his companion the plan that seemed most promising.

"I'm sure Steve has the money yet," he said, "but he may have hidden it, and if that's the case it won't do any good to arrest him on either charge. I'll be the one to get it for you."

"Exactly," said Tom. "So we'll go to this place as soon as we get on shore," Rodney continued.

They turned from the river up Nightingale lane, between the high, dingy walls of great dock warehouses, and five minutes rapid walking brought them to Upper East Street.

"That's the place," whispered Tom, pointing to a sign on which could be read: "Lodging for seamen."

"All right," replied Rodney. "Here goes!" Rodney went to the door, unlocked it, and pulled his collar up and his hat down a little he slouched carelessly into a building that looked incapable of sheltering the possessor of anything like £200.

"I'll like to see Alfred Dyer," Rodney said to the grimy youth in attendance. "You know him, eh?" was the reply, accompanied by a keen glance at the stranger.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MOTHERS.

WE ARE ASSERTING IN THE COURTS OUR RIGHT TO THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF THE WORD "CASTORIA," AND "PITCHER'S CASTORIA," AS OUR TRADE MARK.

I, DR. SAMUEL PITCHER, of Hyannis, Massachusetts, was the originator of "PITCHER'S CASTORIA," the same that has borne and does now "Cast H. Fletcher" on every bear the fac-simile signature of "Cast H. Fletcher" wrapper.

I will allow you a glimpse into one of them," he added compassionately. "By reciting a few outlines. The first is a divorce case. Nothing startling about that you will say. Well—wait a moment and perhaps you will think differently. The wife is a young and beautiful girl, only just turned 18.

"The first year rolled around in one delirium of happiness. The second year found the girl a bride. She was courted by many handsome fellows. The third year found her dissatisfied and distracted with the unattainable perfection that her marriage was a great mistake, and that her husband, who was four years her senior, had taken advantage of her tender years and inexperience.

"After leaving the university the young husband failed to get employment. His mind leaned more to athletics than either business or a profession. He had no money, and he was a failure. This, perhaps, made him indifferent to the subject of work. Her father gave her plenty of spending money. She gave most of it to him, and she would never consent to be the yoke of matrimony heavy upon her neck.

"I did not think she meant it for a moment, but I am too old a lawyer. But it was different with the young husband. He trembled like a leaf, burst into tears and told her she was free to obtain the divorce at once. He would never consent to be wedded to her again, and he would never be seen at my house at the same time. This meeting was a surprise to both. She said she could say to him his love and demanded a divorce on the ground of non-support. She shed bitter tears, upbraided him for taking advantage of her youthful innocence and finally begged him in the name of her dead mother to release her or she would kill herself.

"That is the girl," said the lawyer in his ear, as he led the reporter into the next office. "It is very sad, isn't it?" But the reporter had not time to ask for whom before the door closed and the lawyer and his fair client were left in deep consultation.

At that moment a beautiful, flashing girl entered the lawyer's office, attired in the most costly raiment. Her large brown eyes danced with the light of mischief, her cheeks were like roses as she sat herself down in a large arm chair in the office with such a delightful air of freedom that the reporter's reporter simply stared with admiration.

"We are anxious to do a little good in this world and can think of no pleasanter or better way to do it than by commending One Minute Cough Cure as a preventative of pneumonia, consumption and other serious lung troubles that follow neglected colds."

SANTA FE, N. M., Feb. 16.—The United States court of private land claims has confirmed the Jaramillo grant, a small tract within the Lobito claim, on the Chama river in Rio Arriba county. The Rio Tesuque Pueblo Indian claim for valuable lands in Tesuque valley, nine miles north of Santa Fe, was confirmed.

Arnold's Bromo Cough Cure headaches, 10c, 25c and 50c. All druggists.

Three Beautiful Women OFFER RELIEF TO THEIR LESS FORTUNATE SISTERS



A Sure Road to Beauty. The justly famed Complexion Specialist, The Misses Bell, No. 78 Fifth Avenue, New York, offer the most beneficial Tonic which they have so long used successfully in personal treatment under the patronage of the leaders of New York's elite society.

THE MISSES BELL'S COMPLEXION TONIC is entirely different and far superior to anything ever before offered in that it has almost immediate effect in clearing and brightening the skin. It is not a cosmetic in any sense of the word, as it does not cover up the blemishes as powders and pastes do, but it is a colorless liquid that, when applied to the skin, does not show, but its effect is marvelous, as it cleanses the pores of the skin of all poisonous and foreign filings and dissolves entirely freckles, pimples, blackheads, moth patches, excessive oiliness or redness in the skin.

One Bottle Costs You Nothing if the effect is not exactly as claimed, so that you take no risk in sending for this wonderful complexion purifier. The price, \$1.00, places it within the reach of all. It will absolutely clear a poor complexion and beautify a good one. It is indeed a boon to women, and this generous offer should be accepted by all.

Ladies can address The Misses Bell on all matters of complexion and hygiene in the strictest confidence, and satisfactory advice will be given promptly without charge. An interesting pamphlet will be sent upon receipt of stamp.

Address all communications and send all orders to THE MISSES BELL, or The Bell Toilet Co., 78 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK.

HE THAT WORKS EASILY WORKS SUCCESSFULLY. 'TIS VERY EASY TO CLEAN HOUSE WITH SAPOLIO

WINE OF CARDUI The Medicine of All Others.

UNA, Davidson Co., Tenn., Sept. 16th, 1897. I enclose the names of some afflicted women. Please write them about Wine of Cardui. I want them all to get the medicine. It has done a great deal for me. I suffered from both falling of the womb and painful menstruation. I think I will never be without Wine of Cardui in my house again. It is the medicine of all others for weakly women.

MRS. W. K. NICHOLSON. There are thousands of American women who feel just as Mrs. Nicholson does about Wine of Cardui. They know it is the medicine of all others for weak and suffering women. There is a good reason for the unparalleled success of Wine of Cardui. Nine-tenths of the sickness of the average woman comes primarily from some derangement or weakness in her delicate menstrual and genital organs. A little trouble there affects her whole system. Wine of Cardui acts directly upon these afflicted organs. It makes them strong and healthy. They do their work painlessly. Then a woman is soon well all over. Often a few doses of this wonderful medicine show that happy result.

A Large Bottle of It Only Costs \$1.00 at Your Drug Store.