

SPECIAL PROVIDENCES.

[CONCLUDED.]

"On the following morning I felt so improved with the importance of my midnight vision that I resolved to act upon it. I told the officers that I had discovered the source and direction of the mutiny, but I would not tell them how I gained the knowledge. Those of the men whom I knew I could trust were also called upon to help me. After dinner I stationed two of my officers at a favorable point in the cabin, armed with cords and canvas bags. Then I went my boy on deck to tell Brant that I wished to see him. He came down, and his foot touched the cabin floor, and a bag was thrown over his head, and he was thrown down, and bound and gagged with little trouble. As soon as he was hauled out of the way, I sent up for Cummings. He came and I was treated in like manner, though we had to administer a light tap upon the head before we could overcome him. I sent for McDermott next, and when he had been secured, the work was easy enough. We armed ourselves and went on deck. The crew were called aft, and I told them of the plot I had discovered. I did not tell them that I was a spy, but only of the particulars, but I promised to have certain information. When they found that the ringleaders were captured and bound, they began to confess, and behaved themselves for the future. I trusted them, and they revealed to me the whole plot, as the leaders had laid it out. It was exactly what I had dreamed of. Three days afterward, we reached Valparaiso, and the three mutineers were disposed of without much trouble.

"Two years after this I was in command of another ship, and lay at anchor in the harbor of Gibraltar. The American consul at Tangier had been a schoolmate of mine, and I was anxious to see him. Of course I did wish to run in there with my ship for that purpose, nor did I like the idea of venturing in one of my boats.

"I found a felucca which was going there, and I made arrangements to go in her. She was to start in the morning, and her captain promised to send a boat for me. The night I spent at a hotel on shore, and just at daybreak I was called from my bed by a servant, who informed me that an officer of the guard wished to see me. I dressed and went down, and was not a little surprised to learn that I was under arrest for a murder. A soldier had been killed on the evening before by an American, and the perpetrator of the deed had been seen to enter that hotel. I need not go into particulars. I will only say that I was found and set at liberty, with ample apology for the mistake which had been committed. The murderer was found and he proved to be a Dago instead of an American. However, I lost my passage in the felucca, and was much disappointed. On the next day I learned that this felucca went down, when about half way between Gibraltar and Tangier, and that all on board were lost. She was loaded with bricks, and had been captured by a small steamer. "After this I made several successful voyages, and was finally cast away upon one of the Florida reefs. I saved my life, but lost everything else. I made my way to Charleston, South Carolina, where I lay sick for three months. Late in the fall I reached New York. I was weak and broken down, and well nigh penniless. I found lodgings at a cheap boarding house, and while my money lasted I had shelter. I was totally unfit for work, and could not beg. On the fourth day my purse was empty, and I started out to find, if possible, some means of getting a passage to Boston, where I might find friends who would help me. I was dragging my way along Fulton street, when I saw a purse on the sidewalk. I picked it up, and when I had gained a secluded spot I opened it. It contained five hundred and some odd dollars in bank notes, and a small card, upon which was printed a neat advertisement for the Astor House. There was no name upon the purse, nor were there any papers in it.

"For the first time in a long and eventful life I was tempted to appropriate to my own use that which did not belong to me. I felt that I was forsaken by fortune, and that if I did not seize upon the aid which was thus offered to me, I should never be helped. But the spirit thus triumphed, and I resolved that, if I must suffer, it should be with a clear conscience. I remembered that unexpected help had been rendered to me in times past, and perhaps I might not be suffered to perish now.

"I judged from the card that the owner of the purse might be stopping at the Astor House, and thither I bent my steps. I asked the clerk if any of the guests had lost a sum of money recently. He informed me that a man who had lost five hundred dollars, was at that very time in the reading room, writing an advertisement. I went in, and the clerk pointed him out to me. He was a young man—not over five and twenty, and the moment he saw me, he was startled. He looked up, as the clerk stated my business and asked me if I had found his purse. But I could not answer him. I trembled like an aspen. He started forward and grasped me by the arm, and having gazed for a moment in my face, he dragged me away into another room where we were alone.

"He asked me what was my name. I did not tell him that, but I called him Brant. And when the tears came to my eyes, he threw his arms around my neck, and called me father!

"In a little while my boy told me his story. He ran away from my cousin's house, he was alone there, and his aim was to find me. So he shipped as cabin-boy for a voyage to Liverpool. He missed me there as he missed me for several years. He had often tried to find me, and was often failed. He had been very fortunate in business—had been loved by an orphan girl, who gave him a fortune with her hand. "When he had become settled down in a comfortable home, his next aim was to find his father. He had just been on to Boston to see if he could gain any tidings of me there, and he received the startling intelligence that my ship had been cast away some months before, upon the Florida reefs, and that I had been lost. With this sad blow upon his great hope, he was returning to his home to tell his wife that they had a father no more.

"I need not tell you how happy we were—nor how I went to my cousin's house—nor need I tell you how he loved me—nor how strong is the love that binds us still. I am going now to meet them at the White Mountains, and if any of you are bound that way, you shall see my boy, and you shall see my boy's wife, and you shall see, too, what handsome grandchildren I have to love me and to play with me.

"And now," said the old man, in conclusion, "I will simply remark, as I remarked before, I don't want to argue this question, nor to influence any man's belief against reason. But I must say, that I am happy in the conviction that I, at least, have been the object of some remarkable Special Providence."

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