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Author of "Doctor Jack," "Doctor Jack's Wife," "Captain Tom," "Miss Pauline of New York," Etc.

CHAPTER X—Continued.

It has been decided that the little party shall go aboard after supper. By the light of the young moon, which will be nearly overhead.
Two boats have been engaged to wait for them at the quay.
It is at this time Sir Lionel hopes to make his point, and to accomplish it he does not hesitate to descend to a low plane, and even imperil human life.
When they reach the quay a breeze is blowing, but not strong enough to cause any uneasiness.
The party place their luggage in one boat.

Then comes a pretty piece of by-play that really reflects credit upon the engineering skill of the soldier, for it is his hands that pull the strings.
Lady Ruth steps into one boat. One of the men having stopped John to ask him something, the colonel is given a chance to occupy the same boat, and when Doctor Chicago arrives, he is told by the boatman that this craft having two passengers, and being smaller than the other, can carry no more.
Sir Lionel, as they push off, sings out to him, pleasantly:
"A Roland for an Oliver, Chicago."

John smothered his chagrin and enters the other boat with Aunt Gwen and the professor. After all, it is only for a brief time, and surely he can afford to give Sir Lionel that pleasure.
Thus they set out.

Lady Ruth appears to be in good spirits, for they can hear her voice in song, blending with the bass of the baronet, floating over the waves, which are really rougher than any of them had anticipated.

The lights of the steamer can be seen, and they head for her.

Suddenly the song ceases to float across the water. It comes so suddenly to a stop that John Craig sits up in the other boat and clutches the arm of the professor.

"Listen! I thought I heard a slight scream."

"Nonsense!" exclaims Aunt Gwen.

"That British prig—"

"Sir Lionel is a gentleman. He would not sully his reputation by a word or deed."

"There—again—"

"That time I heard it, too. Boatman, bend to your oars and pull. There is something wrong with the other boat," cries the professor.

Then across the bounding waters comes a hail, in the lion-like voice of the Briton. A hail that stirs the blood in their veins until it runs like



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That is not the time to give up—but the time for action, the time to seek out the seat of the trouble, and set as your best judgment and the experience of others will help you, guarding against mistakes in the treatment adopted for your particular ailment.

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molten lava—a hail that tells of danger.

"Ho! there, this way, quick! We're sinking! spilling a leak."

Such is the cry that comes to them.

All are at once alarmed. The boatman is pulling well, but, to John's excited fancy, it seems as though they hardly move.

He springs up and takes one of the oars.

"Professor, mind the helm!" he cries.

"Ay, ay!" sings out that worthy, adapting himself immediately to the situation.

The young American is hardly an athlete, although he belongs to one of Chicago's best boat clubs.

He has an incentive now which causes him to strain every muscle, and under the united strength of two men the boat dances over the billows in the quarter whence the cry of help was heard.

It nevertheless takes them nearly five minutes to reach the scene, and this is the longest five minutes John ever knew.

Only the voice of the boatman is heard, still calling, and by this they know that the climax has already come.

A dreadful fear almost palsies John's heart as they reach the scene.

The boatman is discovered clinging to the oars, and showing some evidence of alarm. Perhaps he has had more than he bargained for.

John helps him in.

"Where are the others?" he cries, hoarsely.

"I am afraid, lost."

"Just Heaven! What has happened?"

"Boat sprung a leak—go down fast. Soldier say he save lady, but struck his head on boat and lose senses. I saw them no more."

It is horrible!

"Did the boat sink?" asks John, huskily.

"I do not know."

"Would it sink under such circumstances?" he asks their own boatman, who also has the appearance of being rattled. When they entered into a little trickery with Sir Lionel, they had no idea it would turn out so tragically, and the possible serious consequences now staring them in the face make them uneasy.

"No; it could not," returns that worthy.

"Then, if floating still, we must find it. Our only chance lies there."

Fortunately, John is in a measure, self-possessed. He at least shows himself equal to the emergency.

They pull in the direction where it is most likely they will find what they seek.

John twists his neck as he rows, and endeavors to scan the sea around them. Again and again he calls out, hoping in the fulness of his heart that some answering cry may come back.

What laden seconds those are—never can they forget them.

"I see something," says Aunt Gwen, who is crouching in the bow, regardless of the spray that now and then spatters her.

"Where away," demands John, eagerly.

"Straight ahead."

They pull with fierce energy.

"Can you make it out?"

"It's the swamped boat," replies Aunt Gwen, who has remarkable eyes for one of her age.

John shouts again.

"Boat ahoy!"

This time an answer comes back, but not in the roar of the British lion.

"Here—come quickly—I am nearly worn out!"

John's heart gives a great bound.

"Thank Heaven! It is Lady Ruth!" he says.

CHAPTER XI.

John can hold back no longer, but gives his oar to the boatman, and seeks the bow in place of Aunt Gwen, who allows him the privilege.

They are now almost upon the floating swamped boat.

"Careful now. Don't run into the wreck. I see her," and with the last words, John, who has kicked off his shoes in almost a second of time, throws coat and vest down in the boat and leaps overboard.

His hands seize upon the gunwale of the nearly submerged boat, over which waves break. He pulls himself along, and thus reaches Lady Ruth, whom he finds holding on to one of the tiller ropes which has formed a loop, through which her arm is passed.

"Thank Heaven! You are safe! Here comes the boat! You must let me help you in, Lady Ruth!" he says, dodging a wave, and ready to clutch her if she lets go.

"I am not alone. You must take him in first," she gasps.

Then John for the first time becomes aware that she is supporting Sir Lionel, whose arm has also been passed through the rounded tiller rope.

He seems to hang a dead weight.

Amazed at the action of the brave English girl, John at once takes hold of the soldier. The boat by this time comes up.

In getting him aboard, a spill is nar-

rowly averted, and now a new trouble arises. The boat will hold no more, and is dangerously loaded even now.

What can be done? Lady Ruth must be taken aboard. Her strength is almost gone, and John, in deadly fear, lest one of the hungry waves should tear her away before their very eyes, passes an arm around her waist.

He takes in the situation.

"Here, you!" to the already wet boatman, "tumble overboard, quick now. We can hold on behind, I reckon."

The man hesitates, and this is a bad time for deliberation.

Professor Sharpe suddenly seizes upon him, and in almost the twinkling of an eye has the fellow overboard, more through a quick movement than any show of strength.

"There's a boat from the steamer coming this way. Hail it, Philander!" exclaims Aunt Gwen, and this gives them new life.

(To be Continued.)



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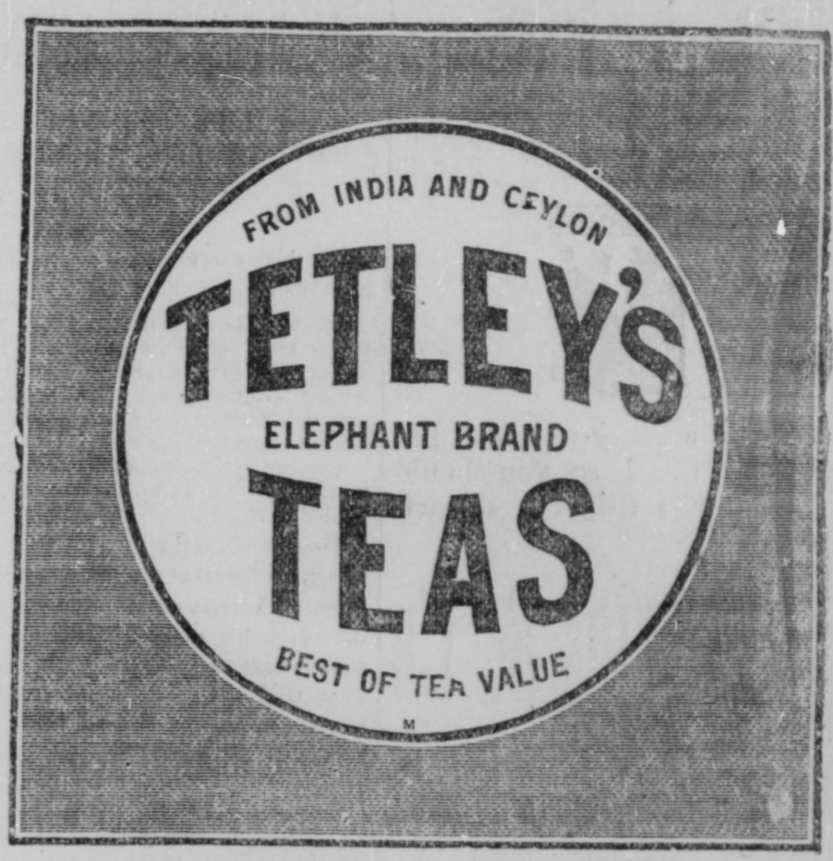
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