

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Lichtenberg Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lenz Hambrecht Doyle Gjellerup
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Hanrieder Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma Verne Hägele Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Langbein Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Schiller Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim Vulpius
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht Ringelnatz
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz
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The Survivors of the Chancellor

Jules Verne

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Jules Verne

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-5305-2

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INTRODUCTION

THE SURVIVORS OF THE CHANCELLOR was issued in 1875. Shipwrecks occur in other of Verne's tales; but this is his only story devoted wholly to such a disaster. In it the author has gathered all the tragedy, the mystery, and the suffering possible to the sea. All the various forms of disaster, all the possibilities of horror, the depths of shame and agony, are heaped upon these unhappy voyagers. The accumulation is mathematically complete and emotionally unforgettable. The tale has well been called the "imperishable epic of shipwreck."

The idea of the book is said to have originated in the celebrated French painting by Gericault, "the Wreck of the Medusa," now in the Louvre gallery. The Medusa was a French frigate wrecked off the coast of Africa in 1816. Some of the survivors, escaping on a raft, were rescued by a passing ship after many days of torture. Verne, however, seems also to have drawn upon the terrifying experiences of the British ship Sarah Sands in 1857, her story being fresh in the public mind at the time he wrote. The Sarah Sands caught fire off the African coast while on a voyage to India carrying British troops. There was gunpowder aboard liable to blow up at any moment. Some of it did indeed explode, tearing a huge hole in the vessel's side. A storm added to the terror, and the waters entering the breach caused by the explosion, combated with the fire. After ten days of desperate struggle, the charred and sinking vessel reached a port.

The extreme length of life which Verne allows his people in their starving, thirsting condition is proven possible by medical science and recent "fasting" experiments. The dramatic climax of the tale wherein the castaways find fresh water in the ocean is based upon a fact, one of those odd geographical facts of which the author made such frequent, skillful and instructive use.

"Michael Strogoff" which, through its use as a stage play, has become one of the best known books of all the world, was first pub-

lished in 1876. Its vivid, powerful story has made it a favorite with every red-blooded reader. Its two well-drawn female characters, the courageous heroine, and the stern, enduring, yearning mother, show how well Verne could depict the tenderer sex when he so willed. Though usually the rapid movement and adventure of his stories leave women in subordinate parts.

As to the picture drawn in "Michael Strogoff" of Russia and Siberia, it is at once instructive and sympathetic. The horrors are not blinked at, yet neither is Russian patriotism ignored. The loyalty of some of the Siberian exiles to their mother country is a side of life there which is too often ignored by writers who dwell only on the darker view.

The Czar, in our author's hands, becomes the hero figure to the erection of which French "hero worship" is ever prone. The sarcasms thrown occasionally at the British newspaper correspondent of the story, show the changing attitude of Verne toward England, and reflect the French spirit of his day.

The Survivors of the Chancellor

by Jules Verne

CHAPTER I

THE CHANCELLOR

CHARLESTON, September 27, 1898.—It is high tide, and three o'clock in the afternoon when we leave the Battery quay; the ebb carries us off shore, and as Captain Huntly has hoisted both main and top sails, the northerly breeze drives the Chancellor briskly across the bay. Fort Sumter ere long is doubled, the sweeping batteries of the mainland on our left are soon passed, and by four o'clock the rapid current of the ebbing tide has carried us through the harbor mouth.

But as yet we have not reached the open sea we have still to thread our way through the narrow channels which the surge has hollowed out amongst the sand-banks. The captain takes a south-west course, rounding the lighthouse at the corner of the fort; the sails are closely trimmed; the last sandy point is safely coasted, and at length, at seven o'clock in the evening, we are out free upon the wide Atlantic.

The Chancellor is a fine square-rigged three-master, of 900 tons burden, and belongs to the wealthy Liverpool firm of Laird Brothers. She is two years old, is sheathed and secured with copper, her decks being of teak, and the base of all her masts, except the mizzen, with all their fittings, being of iron. She is registered first class, A1, and is now on her third voyage between Charleston and Liverpool. As she wended her way through the channels of Charleston harbor, it was the British flag that was lowered from her mast-head; but without colors at all, no sailor could have hesitated for a moment in telling her nationality,—for English she was, and nothing but English from her water-line upward to the truck of her masts.

I must now relate how it happens that I have taken my passage on board the Chancellor on her return voyage to England.

At present there is no direct steamship service between South Carolina and Great Britain, and all who wish to cross must go either northward to New York or southward to New Orleans. It is quite true that if I had chosen a start from New York I might have found plenty of vessels belonging to English, French, or Hamburg lines, any of which would have conveyed me by a rapid voyage to my destination; and it is equally true that if I had selected New Orleans for my embarkation I could readily have reached Europe by one of the vessels of the National Steam Navigation Company, which join the French transatlantic line of Colon and Aspinwall. But it was fated to be otherwise.

One day, as I was loitering about the Charleston quays, my eye lighted on this vessel. There was something about the Chancellor that pleased me, and a kind of involuntary impulse took me on board, where I found the internal arrangements perfectly comfortable. Yielding to the idea that a voyage in a sailing vessel had certain charms beyond the transit in a steamer, and reckoning that with wind and wave in my favor there would be little material difference in time; considering, moreover, that in these low latitudes the weather in early autumn is fine and unbroken, I came to my decision, and proceeded forthwith to secure my passage by this route to Europe.

Have I done right or wrong? Whether I shall have reason to regret my determination is a problem to be solved in the future. However, I will begin to record the incidents of our daily experience, dubious as I feel whether the lines of my chronicle will ever find a reader.

CHAPTER II

CREW AND PASSENGERS

SEPTEMBER 28.—John Silas Huntly, the captain of the Chancellor, has the reputation of being a most experienced navigator of the Atlantic. He is a Scotchman by birth, a native of Dundee, and is about fifty years of age. He is of the middle height and slight build, and has a small head, which he has a habit of holding a little over his left shoulder. I do not pretend to be much of a physiognomist, but I am inclined to believe that my few hours' acquaintance with our captain has given me considerable insight into his character. That he is a good seaman and thoroughly understands his duties I could not for a moment venture to deny; but that he is a man of resolute temperament, or that he possesses the amount of courage that would render him, physically or morally, capable of coping with any great emergency, I confess I cannot believe. I observed a certain heaviness and dejection about his whole carriage. His wavering glances, the listless motion of his hands, and his slow, unsteady gait, all seem to me to indicate a weak and sluggish disposition. He does not appear as though he could be energetic enough ever to be stubborn; he never frowns, sets his teeth, or clenches his fists. There is something enigmatical about him; however, I shall study him closely, and do what I can to understand the man who, as commander of a vessel, should be to those around him "second only to God."

Unless I am greatly mistaken there is another man on board who, if circumstances should require it, would take the more prominent position—I mean the mate. I have hitherto, however, had so little opportunity of observing his character, that I must defer saying more about him at present.

Besides the captain and this mate, whose name is Robert Curtis, our crew consists of Walter, the lieutenant, the boatswain, and fourteen sailors, all English or Scotch, making eighteen altogether, a

number quite sufficient for working a vessel of 900 tons burden. Up to this time my sole experience of their capabilities is, that under the command of the mate, they brought us skillfully enough through the narrow channels of Charleston; and I have no reason to doubt that they are well up to their work.

My list of the ship's officials is incomplete unless I mention Hobart the steward and Jynxstrop the negro cook.

In addition to these, the Chancellor carries eight passengers, including myself. Hitherto, the bustle of embarkation, the arrangement of cabins, and all the variety of preparations inseparable from starting on a voyage for at least twenty or five-and-twenty days have precluded the formation of any acquaintanceships; but the monotony of the voyage, the close proximity into which we must be thrown, and the natural curiosity to know something of each other's affairs, will doubtless lead us in due time to an exchange of ideas. Two days have elapsed and I have not even seen all the passengers. Probably sea-sickness has prevented some of them from making an appearance at the common table. One thing, however, I do know; namely, that there are two ladies occupying the stern cabin, the windows of which are in the aft-board of the vessel.

I have seen the ship's list, and subjoin a list of the passengers. They are as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Kear, Americans, of Buffalo.

Miss Herbey, a young English lady, companion to Mrs. Kear.

M. Letourneur and his son Andre, Frenchmen, of Havre.

William Falsten, a Manchester engineer.

John Ruby, a Cardiff merchant; and myself, J. R. Kazallon, of London.

CHAPTER III

BILL OF LADING

SEPTEMBER 29.—Captain Huntly's bill of lading, that is to say, the document that describes the Chancellor's cargo and the conditions of transport, is couched in the following terms:

Bronsfeld and Co., Agents, Charleston:

I, John Silas Huntly, of Dundee, Scotland, commander of the ship Chancellor, of about 900 tons burden, now at Charleston, do purpose, by the blessing of God, at the earliest convenient season, and by the direct route, to sail for the port of Liverpool, where I shall obtain my discharge. I do hereby acknowledge that I have received from you, Messrs. Bronsfeld and Co., Commission Agents, Charleston, and have placed the same under the gun-deck of the aforesaid ship, seventeen hundred bales of cotton, of the estimated value of 26,000 L., all in good condition, marked and numbered as in the margin; which goods I do undertake to transport to Liverpool, and there to deliver, free from injury (save only such injury as shall have been caused by the chances of the sea), to Messrs. Laird Brothers, or to their order, or to their representatives, who shall on due delivery of the said freight pay me the sum of 2,000 L. inclusive, according to the charter-party, and damages in addition, according to the usages and customs of the sea.

And for the fulfillment of the above covenant, I have pledged and do pledge my person, my property, and my interest in the vessel aforesaid, with all its appurtenances. In witness whereof, I have signed three agreements all of the same purport, on the condition that when the terms of one are accomplished, the other two shall be absolutely null and void.

Given at Charleston, September 13th, 1869.

J. S. HUNTLY.

From the foregoing document it will be understood that the Chancellor is conveying 1,700 bales of cotton to Liverpool; that the shippers are Bronsfield, of Charleston, and the consignees are Laird Brothers of Liverpool. The ship was constructed with the especial design of carrying cotton, and the entire hold, with the exception of a very limited space reserved for passenger's luggage, is closely packed with the bales. The lading was performed with the utmost care, each bale being pressed into its proper place by the aid of screw-jacks, so that the whole freight forms one solid and compact mass; not an inch of space is wasted, and the vessel is thus made capable of carrying her full complement of cargo.

CHAPTER IV

SOMETHING ABOUT MY FELLOW PASSENGERS

SEPTEMBER 30 to October 6.—The Chancellor is a rapid sailer, and more than a match for many a vessel of the same dimensions. She scuds along merrily in the freshening breeze, leaving in her wake, far as the eye can reach, a long white line of foam as well defined as a delicate strip of lace stretched upon an azure ground.

The Atlantic is not visited by many gales, and I have every reason to believe that the rolling and pitching of the vessel no longer incommode any of the passengers, who are all more or less accustomed to the sea. A vacant seat at our table is now very rare; we are beginning to know something about each other, and our daily life, in consequence, is becoming somewhat less monotonous.

M. Letourneur, our French fellow-passenger, often has a chat with me. He is a fine tall man, about fifty years of age, with white hair and a grizzly beard. To say the truth, he looks older than he really is: his drooping head, his dejected manner, and his eye, ever and again suffused with tears, indicate that he is haunted by some deep and abiding sorrow. He never laughs; he rarely even smiles, and then only on his son; his countenance ordinarily bearing a look of bitterness tempered by affection, while his general expression is one of caressing tenderness. It excites an involuntary commiseration to learn that M. Letourneur is consuming himself by exaggerated reproaches on account of the infirmity of an afflicted son.

Andre Letourneur is about twenty years of age, with a gentle, interesting countenance, but, to the irrepressible grief of his father, is a hopeless cripple. His left leg is miserably deformed, and he is quite unable to walk without the assistance of a stick. It is obvious that the father's life is bound up with that of his son; his devotion is unceasing; every thought, every glance is for Andre; he seems to anticipate his most trifling wish, watches his slightest movement,

and his arm is ever ready to support or otherwise assist the child whose sufferings he more than shares.

M. Letourneur seems to have taken a peculiar fancy to myself, and constantly talks about Andre. This morning, in the course of conversation, I said:

"You have a good son, M. Letourneur. I have just been talking to him.

He is a most intelligent young man."

"Yes, Mr. Kazallon," replied M. Letourneur, brightening up into a smile, "his afflicted frame contains a noble mind. He is like his mother, who died at his birth."

"He is full of reverence and love for you, sir," I remarked.

"Dear boy!" muttered the father half to himself. "Ah, Mr. Kazallon," he continued, "you do not know what it is to a father to have a son a cripple, beyond hope of cure."

"M. Letourneur," I answered, "you take more than your share of the affliction which has fallen upon you and your son. That M. Andre is entitled to the very greatest commiseration no one can deny; but you should remember, that after all a physical infirmity is not so hard to bear as mental grief. Now, I have watched your son pretty closely, and unless I am much mistaken there is nothing that troubles him so much as the sight of your own sorrow."

"But I never let him see it," he broke in hastily. "My sole thought is how to divert him. I have discovered that, in spite of his physical weakness, he delights in traveling; so for the last few years we have been constantly on the move. We first went all over Europe, and are now returning from visiting the principal places in the United States. I never allowed my son to go to college, but instructed him entirely myself, and these travels, I hope, will serve to complete his education. He is very intelligent, and has a lively imagination, and I am sometimes tempted to hope that in contemplating the wonders of nature he forgets his own infirmity."

"Yes, sir, of course he does," I assented.

"But," continued M. Letourneur, taking my hand, "although, perhaps, HE may forget, I can never forget. Ah, sir, do you suppose that Andre can ever forgive his parents for bringing him into the world a cripple?"

The remorse of the unhappy father was very distressing, and I was about to say a few kind words of sympathy when Andre himself made his appearance. M. Letourneur hastened toward him and assisted him up the few steep steps that led to the poop.

As soon as Andre was comfortably seated on one of the benches, and his father had taken his place by his side, I joined them, and we fell into conversation upon ordinary topics, discussing the various points of the Chancellor, the probable length of the passage, and the different details of our life on board. I find that M. Letourneur's estimate of Captain Huntly's character very much coincides with my own, and that, like me, he is impressed with the man's undecided manner and sluggish appearance. Like me, too, he has formed a very favorable opinion of Robert Curtis, the mate, a man of about thirty years of age, of great muscular power, with a frame and a will that seem ever ready for action.

While we were still talking of him, Curtis himself came on deck, and as I watched his movements I could not help being struck with his physical development; his erect and easy carriage, his fearless glance and slightly contracted brow all betoken a man of energy, thoroughly endowed with the calmness and courage that are indispensable to the true sailor. He seems a kind-hearted fellow, too, and is always ready to assist and amuse young Letourneur, who evidently enjoys his company. After he had scanned the weather and examined the trim of the sails, he joined our party and proceeded to give us some information about those of our fellow-passengers with whom at present we have made but slight acquaintance.

Mr. Kear, the American, who is accompanied by his wife, has made a large fortune in the petroleum springs in the United States. He is a man of about fifty, a most uninteresting companion, being overwhelmed with a sense of his own wealth and importance, and consequently supremely indifferent to all around him. His hands are always in his pockets, and the chink of money seems to follow him wherever he goes. Vain and conceited, a fool as well as an ego-

tist, he struts about like a peacock showing its plumage, and to borrow the words of the physiognomist Gratiolet, "il se flaire, il se savoure, il se goute." Why he should have taken his passage on board a mere merchant vessel instead of enjoying the luxuries of a transatlantic steamer, I am altogether at a loss to explain.

The wife is an insignificant, insipid woman, of about forty years of age. She never reads, never talks, and I believe I am not wrong in saying, never thinks. She seems to look without seeing, and listen without hearing, and her sole occupation consists in giving her orders to her companion, Miss Herbey, a young English girl of about twenty.

Miss Herbey is extremely pretty. Her complexion is fair and her eyes deep blue, while her pleasing countenance is altogether free from that insignificance of feature which is not unfrequently alleged to be characteristic of English beauty. Her mouth would be charming if she ever smiled, but, exposed as she is to the ridiculous whims and fancies of a capricious mistress, her lips rarely relax from their ordinary grave expression. Yet, humiliating as her position must be, she never utters a word of open complaint, but quietly and gracefully performs her duties, accepting without a murmur the paltry salary which the bumptious petroleum-merchant condescends to allow her.

The Manchester engineer, William Falsten, looks like a thorough Englishman. He has the management of some extensive hydraulic works in South Carolina, and is now on his way to Europe to obtain some improved apparatus, and more especially to visit the mines worked by centrifugal force, belonging to the firm of Messrs. Cail. He is forty-five years of age, with all his interests so entirely absorbed by his machinery that he seems to have neither a thought nor a care beyond his mechanical calculations. Once let him engage you in conversation, and there is no chance of escape; you have no help for it but to listen as patiently as you can until he has completed the explanation of his designs.

The last of our fellow-passengers, Mr. Ruby, is the type of a vulgar tradesman. Without any originality or magnanimity in his composition, he has spent twenty years of his life in mere buying and selling, and as he has generally contrived to do business at a profit,

he has realized a considerable fortune. What he is going to do with the money, he does not seem able to say: his ideas do not go beyond retail trade, his mind having been so long closed to all other impressions that it appears incapable of thought or reflection on any subject besides. Pascal says, "L'homme est visiblement fait pour penser. C'est toute sa dignite et tout son merite;" but to Mr. Ruby the phrase seems altogether inapplicable.

CHAPTER V

AN UNUSUAL ROUTE

OCTOBER 7. — This is the tenth day since we left Charleston, and I should think our progress has been very rapid. Robert Curtis, the mate, with whom I continue to have many a friendly chat, informed me that we could not be far off the Bermudas; the ship's bearings, he said, were lat. 32 deg. 20' N. and long. 64 deg. 50' W. so that he had every reason to believe that we should sight St. George's Island before night.

"The Bermudas!" I exclaimed. "But how is it we are off the Bermudas? I should have thought that a vessel sailing from Charleston to Liverpool, would have kept northward, and have followed the track of the Gulf Stream."

"Yes, indeed, sir," replied Curtis, "that is the usual course; but you see that this time the captain hasn't chosen to take it."

"But why not?" I persisted.

"That's not for me to say, sir; he ordered us eastward, and eastward we go."

"Haven't you called his attention to it?" I inquired.

Curtis acknowledged that he had already pointed out what an unusual route they were taking, but that the captain had said that he was quite aware what he was about. The mate made no further remark; but the knit of his brow, as he passed his hand mechanically across his forehead, made me fancy that he was inclined to speak out more strongly.

"All very well, Curtis," I said, "but I don't know what to think about trying new routes. Here we are at the 7th of October, and if we are to reach Europe before the bad weather sets in, I should suppose there is not a day to be lost."

"Right, sir, quite right; there is not a day to be lost."

Struck by his manner, I ventured to add, "Do you mind, Curtis, giving me your honest opinion of Captain Huntly?"

He hesitated a moment, and then replied shortly, "He is my captain, sir."

This evasive answer of course put an end to any further interrogation on my part.

Curtis was not mistaken. At about three o'clock the look-out man sung out that there was land to windward, and descried what seemed as if it might be a line of smoke in the northeast horizon. At six, I went on deck with M. Letourneur and his son, and we could then distinctly make out the low group of the Bermudas, encircled by their formidable chain of breakers.

"There," said Andre Letourneur to me, as we stood gazing at the distant land, "there lies the enchanted archipelago, sung by your poet Moore. The exile Waller, too, as long ago as 1643, wrote an enthusiastic panegyric on the islands, and I have been told that at one time English ladies would wear no other bonnets than such as were made of the leaves of the Bermuda palm."

"Yes," I replied, "the Bermudas were all the rage in the seventeenth century, although latterly they have fallen into comparative oblivion."

"But let me tell you, M. Andre," interposed Curtis, who had as usual joined our party, "that although poets may rave, and be as enthusiastic as they like about these islands, sailors will tell a different tale. The hidden reefs that lie in a semicircle about two or three leagues from shore make the attempt to land a very dangerous piece of business. And another thing, I know. Let the natives boast as they will about their splendid climate, they are visited by the most frightful hurricanes. They get the fag-end of the storms that rage over the Antilles; and the fag-end of a storm is like the tail of a whale; it's just the strongest bit of it. I don't think you'll find a sailor listening much to your poets — your Moores, and your Wallers."

"No doubt you are right, Mr. Curtis," said Andre, smiling, "but poets are like proverbs; you can always find one to contradict an-