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Up the Rhine

Hood, Thomas

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To Rebecca Page, at the Woodlands, near Becknam, Kent

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tress she has been buying bargains—though more as foreign curiosities than for use, except a beautiful brass milk-pail, which I have taken off her hands for the dairy at Woodlands.

TO REBECCA PAGE, AT THE WOODLANDS, NEAR
BECKNAM, KENT.

DEAR BECKY.—Littel did I think I shud ever ever
ever rite you again! We have all bean on eternitty's
brinx. Such a terrifickle storm! Tho' we are on
Shure, I cant get it out of my Hed. Every room keeps
spinnin with me like a roundy-bout at Grinnage Fare.
Every chare I set on begins rockin like a nussin chare
and the stares pitch and toss so I cant go up them xcept
on all fores. They do say elevin other vessels flounderd
off the Hooks of Holland in the same tempest with all
their cruise. It begun in the artemoon, and prevaled
all nite,—sich a nite O Grashus! Sich tossin and
tumblin it was moraly unpossible to stand on wons
legs and to compleat these discomfortables nothin wood
sit easy. I might as well have et and drunk Hippo-
kickany and antinomial wine. O Becky the Tea-totlers
only give up fomentid lickens, but the Sea Totlers give
up every thing. To add to my frite down flumps the
stewardis on her nees and begins skreeking we shall be
pitcht all over! we shall be pitcht all over. Think I

if *she* give up we may prepair for our wartery graves. At sich crisisus theres nothin like religun and if I repeted myCatkism wunce I said it a hundered times over and never wunce rite. You may gudge by that of my orrifide state, besides ringing my hands till the nails was of a blew black. Havin nose wat else I sed for in my last agny I confest every partical I had ever dun,—about John Futman and all. Luckly Missus was too much decomposed to atend to it but it will be a Warnin for the rest of my days. O Becky its awful wurk when it cums to sich a full unbuzzaming and you stand before your own eyes stript nakid to the verry bottom of your sole. Wat seemed the innocentest things turn as black as coles. Even Luvvers look armless but they ant wen all their kissis cum to fly in your face. Makin free with trifles is the same. Littel did I think wen I give away an odd lofe it would lay so heavy. Then to be shure a little of Missus's tea and sugger seams no grate matter partickly if youve agreed to find yure own, but as I no by experence evry ownce will turn to a pound of led in repentin. That wickid caddy Key giv me menny a turn, and I made a pint as soon as the storm abatid to chuck it into the botomless otion. I do trust Becky you will foller my xampel and giv up watever goes agin yure consins. If I name the linnin I trust youl excuse. Charrity kivers a multitud of sins, and to be shure its a charrity to give a-way a raggid shurt of Masters providid its not torn a purpus witch I fear is sum times the case. Pray say the like from me to Mister Butler up at the Hall, he will take a Miss I

no,—partickly as I hav drunk unbeknown wine along with him, but wen yure at yure last pint wat is Port in a storm! Won minit yure a living cretur, and the next you may be like wickid Jonas in the belly of Wales.

The only comfort I had besides Cristianity was to give Missus warnin witch I did over and over between her attax. No wagis on earth could reckonsile me to a sea goin place. Dress is dress and its hard on a servent to find too nasty grate broke loose Trunks between them has battered my pore ban box into a pan cake. To make bad wus as the otion they say level all distinkshuns, and make won Womman as good as a nother I thought propper to go to sea in my best, and in course my waterd ribbins is no better for being waslit with serges, or my bewtiful shot silk for gittin different shades of smoak blacks,—besidesspiling my nice kid gluves with laying hold on tarry ropes, not to name bein drensht from top to toe with rottin salt water, and the personable risk of bein drowned arter all. But I mite as well have tould the ship to soot itself as my Missus. I verrily beleave from her wild starin at me she did not no wether I talked English or French. At last Martha says she we are goin to a wurd where there is no sitivations. Wat an idear! But our superiers are always shy of our society, as if even hevin abuv was too good for servents. Talkin of superiers there was a Tittled Lady in Bed in the Cabbin that sent every five minits for the capting, till at long and at last he got Crusty. Capting says she I insist on yure gitting the

ship more out of the wind. I wish I could says he. Don't you no who I ham, says she very dignifide. Yes my Ladyship says the captin, but its blowin grate guns and if so be you was a princess I couldn't make it blow littel pistles. Wat next but she must send for the Mate to ask him if he can swim. Yes my lady says he like a Duck. In that case says she I must condysend to lay hold on yure harm all nite. Axing pardin my ladyship says he its too grate honners for the like of me. No matter says she very proudlike, I insisit on it. Then I'm very sorry says the Mate makin a run off, but I'm terrible wanted up abuv to help in layin the ship on her beam ends. Thats what I call good authority, so you may suppose wat danger we was in.

Howsumever here we are thenk providens on dry land if so be it can be cauld dry that is half ditchis and cannals, at a forin city, by name Rotter D—m. The King lives at the Ha-gue and I'll be bound its haguish enuf for Holland is a cold mashy flatulint country and lies so low they're only saved by being dammed. The wimmin go very tidy but the men wear very large close for smallclose and old fashinable hats. But I shouldn't prefer to settle in Holland for Dutch plaices must be very hard. Oh Becky such moppin and sloppin such chuckin up water at the winders and squirtin at the walls with littel fire ingins, but I supose with their moist climit the houses wouldn't be holesum if they warn't continually washing off the damp. Then the furniter is kep like span new without speck or spot, it

must be sumbody's wurk to kill all the flies. To my mind the pepel are over clean as John Futman said when his master objectid to his thum mark on the hedge of the plate, a littel dirt does set off clenliness thats certin. Then as to nus mades they ought to have eyes all round their heds like spiders to watch the childrin by the cannals, thenk God I ant a Dutch parent I should be miserable for fear of my yung wons gittin to the keys. Lawk, an English muther in Holland wood be like a Hen with Ducklins !

We have seen many fine sites, and bildings, and partickly the Butcher's Hall, witch is all of red Brix, pick't out with wite, jest as if it was bilt of beefstake. Likewise the statute of Erasmis who inventid pickle herrins,—they do say in any orange bovine revolushuns it jumps into the cannal, and then cums out agin when the trubbles is over—but in course that's only a popish mirakle. Then there's the House of Fears,—fears enuf I warrant for every other hole and corner in the town was ravaged and ransackt by the French,—and the pore soles every minit expecten naber's fare. But that cant hapin agin, as in case of beseiging they open all their slowces, and the Dutch being amphibbyus, all the enemy is drownid xcept themselves. As respects vittles, we do verry well, only I am shi of the maid dishes, being sic a mashy forren country for fear of eating Frogs. Talkin of cookin, wat do you think Becky of sittin with a lited charcole stow under yure pettecots? Its the only way they have for airin their

linnin,—tho' it looks more like a new cookey reecat for
How to smoak yure Hams. But I hear Missus bell,
so with kind luv to all, includin John Futman, I
remane in haste, my dear Becky Yure laving frend,

MARTHA PENNY.

TO GERARD BROOKE, ESQ.

MY DEAR GERARD,—At last we have turned our
backs on the good city of Rotterdam, and made our
first advance up the Waal branch of the fashionable
river. As you are aware, the banks of the Lower
Rhine are of a very uninteresting character: to sing
their beauties one needs only, with Desdemona, to "sing
all a green willow, sing willow, willow, willow." In
such a case there is but one alternative. In the
absence of good scenery and decorations, the traveller
must turn for entertainment to the strolling company
on board, and such *pièces de circonstance* as they may
happen to present.

It is one of the discomforts of striving against the
stream on the Rhine, that you must start extra-
vagantly early, in order to accomplish the next stage
before night. To aggravate this nuisance, the *garçon*
appointed to rouse us crowed, like the "bonnie
grey cock," a full hour too soon; and then, by way
of amends, called us as much too late; so that we
had to save our passage and passage-money (paid