

# **THE ODYSSEY OF A TORPEDOED TRANSPORT**

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The Odyssey of a torpedoed transport by Maurice Larrouy & Grace Fallow Norton

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**MAURICE LARROUY & GRACE FALLOW NORTON**

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OF A  
TORPEDOED  
TRANSPORT

By  
Y. Larronny Maurice

*Translated from the French by*  
Grace Fallow Norton



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## PREFACE

THERE seems to be no information concerning the author of these letters save that contained in the letters themselves. They reached the *Revue de Paris* through the friend to whom they were addressed. Their serial publication was interrupted by the censor, but resumed again after several months. It is evident that the idea of publication never once entered the author's head. He was not "literary."

But he had a great relish for life, a fresh, huge appetite for the daily doings of the winch, the horizontal shaft, and the weather; and a positive passion for human nature — for his crew, his Hindus, for what the "big vegetable" said and what the little lady did, for what Plantat, Flaunigan, and Mousseaux thought, for Villiers, with his unanswerable arguments and his multicolored *lingerie*, and above all, for the pasha — Fourgues. Y. was impelled to write of all these things, partly for the pleasure of living every detail over again and partly in order to sense fully his captain, who was so important to him, whom he enjoyed so much and whom he saw so clearly. For Y., in the process of becoming a man, felt Fourgues to be a real one and was reaching for Fourgues' qualities. Some way or other he imparts his relish and his admiration to



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those who come to his artless pages. He imparts his amusement, his heartache, his sense of his fate, his struggle with his pride. For he sincerely longed to count. He never questions the cause of France. That is beyond discussion, though he grumbles whole-heartedly about French policies. It does him no injustice to say that he had to struggle with the idea of Reward and Place. Some small recognition of the part he was playing would have been so sweet to him! He received none. But to believe in one's work is the sweetest reward one can have and he had this reward at last, for he came to believe in the Merchant Marine.

He said, in anguish, "All we shall have for our funeral oration will be silence everywhere." But he had already written his own epitaph and that of his brave companions: "You know what professional honor is!"

G. F. N.

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