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DAILY LEADER.

THE GRAY SWAN.

BY ALICE CAREY.

"Oh tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Ethlu,
A sailing with your ship?"
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew—
"Your little lad, your Ethlu?"
He said, with trembling lip—
"What little lad? what ship?"

"What little lad? as if I'd be could be
Another such a one as he!
What little lad, do you say?
Why, Ethlu, that took to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee!
The lad that went the other day!"
The Gray Swan sailed away.

"The other day!" the sailor's eyes
Stood open with a great surprise—
"The other day? the lad, you say,
His heart began to beat strangely—
"Ay, ay, sir, here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on."
"And so your lad is gone?"

"Gone with the Swan." "And did she stand
With her anchor clutching hold of the sand?
For a month and never-tit?"
"Why, to be sure! I've seen from the land,
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand,
The wild sea kissing her—
A sight to remember, sir."

"But, my good mother, do you know
At this was twenty years ago?
I stood on the Gray Swan's deck,
And to this lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off as it min round,
The kerchief from you neck."
"Ay, and he'll bring it back!"

"And did the little lawless lad
That has made you sick and made you sad,
Sail with the Gray Swan's crew?"
"Lawless! the man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had—
Be sure he sailed with the crew!
What would you have him do?"

"And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word nor made you sign
To say he was alive?"
"God, if 'twas wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine
And e'er be write from the grave?
Tut, man! what would you have?"

"Gone twenty year—a long, long cruise—
'Twas wicked that your love to abuse;
But if she sail still live,
And come back home, think you, you can
Forgive him?" "Miser able man,
You're mad as the sea—you rave—
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt as blue,
And from with in his bosom drew
The kerchief. "Is this your lad?"
"My God! my Father! is it true?
My little lad, my Ethlu!
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead, my living child!"

SINGLE SCULLS.

BY ALF. A. SIGMA.

THE RESCUE OF THE BELLE.

The boating mania had just begun to infect Peddlington when Frank Mitchell hung up his legal sign in that sweet little town on the Hudson. One boat club had been formed, and one single scull-boat ordered

"O Mary," said Belle Bogart to Mary Wilson, "I've such a pleasant invitation for you. The Pioneer Club have invited you and me to go down to the Abbey in the 'Phantom' this afternoon. You know the Pioneers—Harry Seymour, Lon Paige, and that set belong to it. Did you ever sail in a boat club? I never did. Won't it be grand?"

Mary echoed this sentiment with the same glowing cheek and eye.

One of the other of these two young persons was the handsomest girl in Peddlington. I have never been able to make up my mind which one it was.

Just then a young man passed them. It was our friend Frank Mitchell,

"A pair of remarkable pretty girls," was his mental comment.

"Who is he?" was Mary's audible question. Belle did not know of course.

Frank had only one friend in town. This friend, the writer, had (fortunately for several persons named and to be named) been smitten with the rowing fever. Being naturally of a solitary turn, instead of joining a club he ordered a single scull-boat. When it arrived he was terrified by its width—or, rather, absence of width—looked upon it as a floating coffin, and was afraid to get into it.

He mentioned his fears, in a disguised state, to Frank. Frank went with him to view it.

"Why, she is wide for a shell. There's nothing crank about it," was his observation.

"Perhaps you'd like to get into her," was his friend's sarcastic rejoinder; for he believed that the "Katydid" must be the narrowest boat in the world.

"Not just now, for I've white trousers on," said Frank, laughing, "but this afternoon I'll try her if you will let me."

So it was arranged that he should go on a trial-trip after dinner.

The day was a glorious one—neither hot enough to make the rowers wish themselves in Tophet as a cooling relief, nor cold enough to freeze the lady passengers. And the "Phantom bounded merrily on her way," as the local editor of the Peddlington Gazette would have put it. In simple verity, she went along at a tolerably good pace, considering that she looked very much because the men dipped too deeply and caught an average of a crab every four minutes.

However, everything was novel and charming to the young ladies. The beautifully painted boat, the gay flags and uniforms, the discipline, the time kept by the oars, (when not engaged in crabbing), the crabs themselves, which were supposed to be part of the manual—all delighted the girls. Their whole former experience of boating consisted of having been tugged about in a skiff by a perspiring swivel-oar puller.

Belle Bogart never could keep still when delighted.

She fidgetted, and wanted to get up but had no excuse. By and bye the coxswain said, "There's the Abbey."

Then Belle arose—to see the Abbey, of course. Then a desire came over her—an irresistable one—to stand upon her seat. The boat was going very steadily—why not? Just at this moment the coxswain sung out:

"Give way, hearty! There are milk punches waiting for you at the Abbey."

To this exhortation four men responded by a hearty pull; No. 2 caught a bad crab, No. 5 a worse one; the boat rolled and wobbled; there was a piercing scream from Mary Wilson, and Belle Bogart was overboard.

Now, a club boat can be stopped by a vigorous "stern all" or "hold water," within her own length, but it must be expected that Belle's exodus was a very unexpected performance, and that the coxswain and crew were verdant. Before the "Phantom" could be stopped, two hundred feet of water lay between the lady and the boat. I am afraid the coxswain swore once as he rose to his feet and threw off his coat. But, before he took a header into the river, help came to Belle Bogart.

Frank Mitchell that afternoon was giving the "Katydid" a trial. He pulled down the river a firm, easy, swinging stroke, showing that he was no novice with the sculls. Then he pulled up again. By and bye he caught sight of the "Phantom." He kept a parallel course and criticised her.

"Boating is looking up here. I wonder whether those girls are good looking?" A green crew—bad stroke that is for such a heavy boat; too quick. Hallo! there's a crab! There's another one! Catching disorder, I imagine. I can row around any such crew. Let's see if those girls are homely."

He had not pulled three strokes when he heard a scream. Casting his eye over his shoulder, he saw a lady floating on the water, buoyed up by her crinoline. The "Phantom" was apparently running away from her and leaving her to her fate. With a muttered curse at the folly of green crews taking out liquid, he went down to his work. One of the two best, the "Katydid," flew over the water as though she was personally acquainted with Belle Bogart and felt a deep interest in her fate. When Frank got close to the floating lady, he saw that he could reach her before her face went under. Instantly he stopped pulling, drew a piece of string from his pocket, and fastened it to a boat-rigger. By that time he had reached her. Taking the string in his teeth, he urged the boat by a vigorous side-wallop.

Filling up to tumble out might have stunned her or injured the canvas, dont you see? He swam to Belle, drawing the "Katy" after him. Her face had nearly reached the surface in her downward setting course. He pulled the boat close up, and made her throw her arm over the stern, thereby precluding any possibility of her strangling, swallowing water, or getting her hair damp and her hat ruined.

Then he swam around her, and uttered laughing words of encouragement. She had never spoken or screamed during the whole time, but was deadly pale.

"A pretty girl," said Frank to himself, "I have seen that face before."

By this time the coxswain had begun to back the "Phantom," and his crew, obeying his orders with more zeal than discretion, put on so much steam that they would infallibly have run Belle down, if Frank hadn't towed the "Katydid" out of the way. Then the diving Belle was taken on board, and Mary became speedily almost as wet as Miss Bogart, hugging her.

"Come aboard, sir," said the coxswain, holding out his hand.

"Thank you," said Frank; "I'll pick up my sculls and paddle my own canoe, if you've no objection."

"If the coxswain had no objection, one of the sculls had; for it disappeared, and was no more to be seen by Frank or its owner. So he climbed into the "Phantom." His long whiskers held water like sponges—he looked like a young Neptune. With a jolly laugh he said:

"Allow me to introduce myself. I am Frank Mitchell. Please let me pull or I'll catch cold."

"I'll give up; can you pull stroke?" asked the stroke oar, who was naturally lazy.

"A little," answered Frank, modestly, and sat down.

"Give way" said the coxswain.

"I rather think he can pull stroke," said No. 3 to 4.

His long, steady, slow swing infected them all. The "Phantom" ceased rolling—no more crabs were caught, and in an unprecedentedly short time they were at the abbey dock. Belle had been rolling up in carpets of the boat, and the stroke oar had given her a slight dose of brandy and river water; so she was able to walk when the party disembarked.

"Wet people go first," shouted 5, who was a bit of a wag.

Frank offered his arm to Belle. He did not know then that his future wife hung upon his arm.

THE RESCUE OF THE BOUQUET.

Boating continued to flourish. Other clubs were organized; other scull-boats were to be seen on the river. And finally some original genius proposed a single scull regatta and a champion belt, with everything in the regular style. The idea pleased. A very handsome belt was purchased by subscription, and the race was advertised as "open to all Peddlingtonians."

This turned out to be a great mistake. All the shell-boats on the river were owned by club boatmen, when the notice of the race was published. But the "roughs" got wind of the value of the belt. They clubbed together, bought a second-hand shell, and chose Jimmy Doran, the skiff-ferryman, their champion. And as Jimmy beat all the "silk stockings" every time he met them practising, it looked very much as though the silver champion belt would go into peculiar keeping.

The young lady friends of the boat clubs were of course intensely interested. Belle Bogart poured forth her griefs to Frank Mitchell one evening.

"I thought my cousin Dick was going to win, everybody said so; and so I promised to present a bouquet out of my own garden to the winner; and now the skiffman is going to beat them all; and Harry Seymour told me to day that he was going to have a beautiful "bookay" given him by a nice young lady. I wish somebody would beat him. Wont you?"

Frank laughed, and said that he had no boat.

There were four entries for the belt until within five days of the race, when the trustees received by mail the entrance-fee required, and a request that Nemo might be added to the rest.

Who was Nemo? was now the great question in boating circles. Where did he get his practice?

No one could answer these queries. No one had seen any strange oarsmen on the river. Jimmy Doran wished he could have one brush with him.

This mysterious entry disquieted Jimmy's soul. He haunted the river at strange hours, getting up at midnight of a moonlit night and scouring the stream before the city, but in vain.

The eventful day came. Peddington had poured forth its swarms of spectators, who were spread along the river banks like strips of variegated ribbon. The judges were in their boat. The names of the first four entries were called and answered to, but Nemo answered not. Jimmy was relieved.

"That there Nimmo's a fraud," he said, exultingly, to his backers.

As if in answer to this declaration, from among the crowd of skiffs which lay a little way from the judges shot forth a shell. It came very swiftly toward the scene of action.

The other boats shone forth in all the glory of bright colors and coach-body finish. Not so this coming boat. Rusty of canvas and dingy of paint, it formed a great contrast to its opponents.

It was, of course, contemplated with intense curiosity, particularly by Jimmy Doran. Every one knew it was Nemo. Every one wished to see who Nemo was. Every one was disappointed.

He wore a fine half-mask, which allowed him to see perfectly without being recognized. Loud was the buzz of astonishment. Who could it be? Belle Bogart thought for a moment of Frank Mitchell; but this "man with the iron mask" had no whiskers. The man drew for positions. Nemo had the inside. "One! two! go!" and they were off; Dick ahead, Jimmy hard after him, Nemo pulling quietly behind; the rest nowhere, except one who was in the river, under his boat. Belle watched him with her opera-glass. Dick, knowing he could't compete with Jimmy all the way around, determined to keep ahead up to the stake boat and then pull home! Belle's heart rejoiced when she saw him turn in advance; but then he suddenly stopped, having bethought him of a new expedient. He dropped one scull overboard as if by accident and was a great while fishing it up. That "horrid" Jimmy now had it all his own way. The Fishslip boys and the foundry lads passed on to victory. To victory? Not so fast! That dingy boat, rowed by the man in the iron mask, is, somehow or other, sticking fast to Jimmy. Jimmy tries a spurt. The dingy boat still sticks to him. Worse than that, it gains! Slowly it creeps up until it is fairly alongside. There it stays—Jimmy spurts again—the dingy boat keeps its position; Jimmy growls out an oath—the unknown smiles benignly. They were half a mile from home. Jimmy was just screwing himself up for a tremendous rally, when the man in the dingy boat said quietly:

"Good-by, old fellow!"

Jimmy will never forget those words, or the quiet tone in which they were uttered. They cut short his career as a sculler. Immediately after they were uttered, Nemo disappeared in his range of vision, and in the words of John Bunyan, "He saw him no more" until he reached the judges' boat, which had been reached about ninety seconds before by his opponent

The unknown received the belt without unmasking; then he rowed to Belle Bogart's boat, and bowing low, inquired, with a decided German accent, if she was the young lady who had promised the winner a bouquet.

She blushed and said he must call at her house for it. In truth she could not bear the idea of presenting it publicly to Jimmy, and she had left it home. Nemo bowed gravely, backed water with one oar, pulled round with the other, and went steadily up the river, humming "Its a way we have at Old Harvard," leaving behind him more curious people than ever Peddlington assisted before.

Balls and a large number of ladies and club-boat men returned to her house. They lamented that she had set no hour at which she would deliver the bouquet, for then they could all be spectators of the presentation.

Waiting, wondering, arguing, they all went tumultuously into Belle's parlor, where sat Frank Mitchell with his whiskers cut off, and the champion belt lying on the table.

"There was a row and a time! After an interval spent in short congratulatory addresses concerning his triumph and Jimmy's defeat, the boatman present began to wonder where he had got his practice. So he told the whole story.

"You remember, Miss Belle, once wishing that some one would prevent Mr. Doran from winning you bouquet?"

Belle blushed a little, and said yes.

"Well, the next morning early I was walking about four miles up the river, when I saw a dirty little shell-boat in front of a little tavern. I went down and looked at her, and found her to be a genuine first-class shell. The landlord told me that he had held it for two years as security for an unpaid board bill. Then the idea struck me of hiring the boat, practising up there, swearing the landlady and landlord to secrecy, and disguising myself on the day of the race so that no one would know me if defeated. My friend Alf. was in the secret, and assured the other judges that I lived here. The bet I am going to put up to be rowed for by my boat-club sculllers—the bouquet I rather think I'll keep myself."

I don't mean to say that the events I have described made the match between Belle and Frank. They did not prevent it, at any rate; for in six months after the rescuing of the bouquet, the champion sculler performed an operation which facetious 5 called "ringing the diving Belle;" and as the story-books say, "they lived happily ever afterward."

The Original Squeers.

A correspondent sends us the following curious account of a recent conversation he held with a gentlemanly Englishman now traveling in this country. We give it or whatever it is worth:

In the midst of a familiar chat, he asked, 'Did you ever read Dickens' Nicholas Nickleby?'

I answered 'Yes.'

'Well,' returned he, 'old Squeers was my old master, William Shaw. And here you have the rest of his story: One day when I was passing by a bookstore on Holborn Hill, London, near the Saracen's Head Hotel, I saw a finely, though comically devised picture of a schoolmaster. On stopping to observe it more carefully I recognized the lineaments of my old Yorkshire schoolmaster, Shaw, and I went in and purchased the volume containg the picture, and found that it was Dicken's Nicholas Nickleby. A short time afterwards, I met an old school-fellow by the name of Bishop, from whom Dickens got the facts of the school part of the story; he told me that he put Dickens in possession of them as the surest way he knew of to pay off old Shaw for his brutality.

I asked him in what part of Yorkshire the Shaw Academy (Dotheboy's Hall) was situated; and his reply was at Bows. And then by piece-meal I examined the characters of Squeers: (Mr. Shaw,) Mrs. Squeers (Mr. Shaw,) Miss Squeers (Miss Shaw,) Miss Squeers (Miss Helen Shaw,) and Master Wackfort (Mr. John Shaw.) Mrs. Shaw was to a dot as Dickens represents her. She used to take all our lead pencils, paper, shirts, collars, &c, and either sell them or give them to Jonny. O what a hateful little fellow he was; he'd steal our balls, and as we did not care speak to his father about them, he always kept them. Miss Shaw is unfairly drawn by Dickens; she was well educated and considerably refined, having been sent to a first-class ladies' boarding school. Mr. Shaw was a very passionate man, and when enraged at a boy in school, would order two boys to hold him down on a table, one holding down his head, the other his feet, and then he would gash his bare back with birch sticks. But no boy in school dared cry when whipped, for if he did the other boys pinched and kicked him when they got out of doors. Mr. Shaw never taught any branches except reading and spelling. The reading exercise consisted of Bible reading from the whole school, one hundred and twenty boys, two verses apiece; and the writing exercises of two lines of large and small hand. If any boy in either of these exercises didn't satisfy Mr. Shaw, he would forthwith lay him out on the table, order two boys to hold him down, and flog him till he got tired. One day getting mad at a boy for a small fault in penmanship, he struck him with a rod and cut open his right cheek. The assistant masters were orphaned boys whom cruel guardians had apprenticed to him. One of them had had a large fortune left him by his parents, but his guardian had apprenticed him to Shaw as farm boy and teacher, and kept the fortune for himself Mr. Shaw's large farm was cultivated by the boys. If they didn't work hard enough they were flogged or allowed half rations. For nearly two months they had to work at haying, the school being divided into throwers and rakers. After the haying, old Shaw would say to the boys in the writing class, "I'll not flog the rakers, for their hands are sore; but woe unto you, throwers!'

He used to go to London twice a year, and then the boys had to write letters telling their parents what a good man Mr. Shaw was, and how kindly he treated them. Before the letters were written he used to say, "I defy a boy of you to say that ever I took away a collar, shirt, or even a pin from him," but Mrs. Shaw always did that part of the business. When in London he quartered at the Saracen's Head. Once in three weeks the boys were ranged in rows, and the assistant masters went around and saw whether each boy had his load upon fork and knife in hank; if he hadn't them, he lost his pocket money for two or three months. After the publication of Nicholas Nickleby, Mr. Shaw lost all his pay scholars, and so he apprenticed his apprenticed schoolmasters to shoemakers, blacksmiths and carpenters. Mrs. Shaw in about two years afterwards died of a broken heart. Her contemptible old husband died almost an idiot. Helen married a low, drinking fellow; Johnny became a London loafer, and the second son, Jonathan, who studied medicine, spent whatever was left of the old man's property among his fellow-students in drinking and high living generally; but for some years has been the village physician in his native place, Bows. John Brodie actually existed in John Doats, the village shoemaker, who had the humane habit of helping the boys in running away from Shaw's dungeon, as he called the school.

When a boy came to the school, his clothes and other things were taken possession of by Mrs. Shaw, and he was given pants of leather which had been worn by generations of boys before him, and which had been so patched with different colored pieces of cloth that the poor schoolboys mistakenly called them 'Joseph's coat of many colors." When Mr. Shaw and all the contemptible tribe of Yorkshire schoolmasters had been shown up and ruined by Dickens' Nickleby, the London Dispatch came out advising Shaw and his fellow sufferers to prosecute Dickens for libel; but my brother and I, who by bitter experience knew the truth of Mr. Dickens' exposition, wrote to the editor of that paper, assuring him that the book was almost literally true. And then the Dispatch pitched into old Shaw more savagely than Dickens had done. Nicholas Nickleby, or rather a young Londoner, came into the school as assistant teacher after I left.

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