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WEIRD TALE OF THE SEA.

When Death Was Cheated by a Rope's End in a Raging Gale.

Few living men have ever looked death so square in the face as a certain Captain Hodson, who was for years connected with the customs service at Honolulu. Before that he was a shipmaster, and the remarkable adventure of which he was the hero occurred while he was in command of a schooner that traded in the Pacific.

On this occasion the vessel was several days out from land, in the midst of the ocean, when it was overtaken by a severe gale and thick weather. For a time Captain Hodson tried to keep the schooner's head up into the wind, but the storm became so violent that there was nothing for it but to run before the gale. He brought the vessel about and, pursued by a heavy following sea, scudded it under almost bare poles to the northward.

The captain himself stood by the wheel to give the helmsman directions. The rest of the crew, having made everything as secure as possible, were crouched in the lee of the deck house.

A flaw in the wind took the schooner aback for a moment, and in that instant a tremendous wave that was following close behind mounted over the bulwarks and swept several feet deep from stern to bow.

Every one but the captain had something at hand to cling to, although the wave wrenched the man at the wheel from his hold and threw him on his face. However, he brought up against the deck house and scrambled to his feet just in time to see the rushing water carry Captain Hodson overboard.

Hodson's case was as nearly hopeless as it could well be, for it was, of course, quite impossible to put out a boat in such a sea or even to bring the schooner about to pick him up. But at the very moment that the catastrophe happened the ropes that held the gaff of the foremast in place broke and let the stick drop to the deck. One end hung out over the side of the schooner, and several broken ropes dangled from it. As Captain Hodson swept by these rope ends struck him on the head. Instinctively he seized one of them and clung to it with desperation.

The schooner tore on through the water, and her master at the end of the dangling rope was drawn in close under her bulwarks and dragged along through the waves. He could not have long withstood this sort of treatment, for the sea beat him about fiercely and flung him again and again against the side of the vessel.

But presently a gust of wind lurched the schooner well over, her lee rail plunged beneath the water, and at the same instant another wave picked the captain up and tossed him sprawling on the sloping deck. Battered as he was, he had enough strength left to seize the standing rigging and cling to it, while the water poured back again into the sea.

The helmsman had seen Captain Hodson swept away to death, as he firmly believed, and his astonishment at seeing him back again on deck may be imagined. Hodson was not seriously injured by his experience, and his vessel weathered the storm and brought her safely into port.—Youth's Companion.

The Gaelic Tongue.

The Gaelic language was once spoken by a considerable number of the human race in the British Isles, the Isle of Man, northern France and Spain. There is evidence that the Gaelic branch of the Celtic breed was widespread. For instance, it is maintained by some excellent authorities that the Cimbri, who threatened at one time to overwhelm Rome and who were stopped by Marius, were of Gaelic speech. The ancient language is found today in the Isle of Man, Wales, the highlands of Scotland, western Ireland and in Brittany, northern France.—New York American.

Great In Little Things.

George Washington's surveying done 150 years ago with the comparatively simple instruments of the day has been checked up by government surveyors of today and found perfect. Experts in other lines might check up other works and qualities of his—his patriotism, his common sense, his foresight, his persistence—and find pretty nearly the same degree of excellence. Washington was only nineteen years old when he ran his lines through the forests and over the hills of Lord Fairfax's estate in Virginia. But the youth was father to the man.—Baltimore Sun.

Gigantic Neptune.

Neptune, owing to its remoteness, shines as an eighth magnitude star. Its diameter is 35,000 miles, or a little more than Uranus. Its mean distance from the sun is 2,746,000,000 miles. It has one satellite, which revolves at a distance of 220,000 miles, or about the same distance as our moon. However, of the planet itself we know very little, but it seems probable that it is little more than a globe of very heavy gas.

Unfair.

Office Seeker—Is there anything else in the job you speak of besides the salary? Political Boss—There's a little work on the side. Office Seeker—Ah, I knew there was some string to it!—Kansas City Star.

Hence His Sadness.

"You are going to the wedding, Jean Pierre, and you look so sad!"

"I should think so. It is my own marriage."—Paris Rire.

The highest culture is to speak no ill.—Robert Browning.

COURTESIES OF WAR.

Christmas Boxes the Boers Dropped Among the English.

When the Boers advanced on Ladysmith in the Transvaal war the late Melton Prior was one of the twenty newspaper correspondents who threw in their lot with the English army instead of making the hurried retreat that was still possible. In his book, "Campaigns of a War Correspondent," he tells many interesting incidents of the siege.

The enemy succeeded in placing thirty-two guns on the heights above the town and kept up such an incessant fire that the troops and civilians were soon engaged in digging bomb proof shelters. In a short time they learned to distinguish the different Boer guns by their sound and gave them amusing names. Three of the large ones they called "Long Tom," "Puffing Billy" and "Weary Willie." Then there was "Silent Susan," so named because the bursting of a shell was the first warning we got that it had been fired. "Bloody Mary," as you may suppose, was looked upon as a beast of a gun.

In spite of the havoc that the cannon worked, the soldiers soon grew accustomed to the shelling. One day the Second Gordon highlanders were playing football, when a shell plumped in among them. Fortunately, no one was hit, and they went on playing. The Boers were so interested, apparently, that they gave up firing and actually sat on the edge of the hills, watching the game. Then, when it was all over, the firing started afresh.

But this was not the only courtesy the enemy showed. On Christmas day they saluted the happy morn by salvos of shells. The first two that fell into the camps of the carabineers and the Imperial Light horse did not burst. When the shells were picked up it was found that wooden plugs had been inserted in place of the fuses, and inside the shells were plum puddings. On the outside were the words, "With the compliments of the season."

THE CRUSH OF WORLDS.

It Will Come When the Solar System Falls Into the Sun.

The whole of the present solar system is ultimately to fall into the sun, causing an explosion that may result in a new solar system. Such is the theory put forward in the Journal of Natural Science by Professor Philip Fauth, a well known astronomer, whose reputation has rested principally upon his researches into conditions on the moon.

The novel feature of Dr. Fauth's theory is that it is based upon the supposition that a great part of the known solar system, including especially the planets Jupiter, Uranus and Saturn, are not composed of mineral matter at all, but are tremendous masses of ice, or balls of ice surrounding a mineral kernel. Furthermore, he declares, a part of what is now known as the Milky way is not mineral or gaseous, but "a ring of ice dust," masses of particles of ice suspended in space, the outer planets receiving a constant addition to their ice mass from this source.

Professor Fauth declares that the world already at some remote period has had a similar experience, resulting in the death of nearly all animate nature, and that all species of life as we know it have arisen since then. Eventually the planets swinging through their narrowing orbits will fall into the sun, causing a new explosion and perhaps the birth of a new solar system, but for thousands of years before that time all life, either on earth or elsewhere, will have disappeared.—New York Sun.

His Conceit.

Abbe Pradt, a minor light of Napoleon's time, was a most conceited man. The Duke of Wellington met him in Paris at a dinner given in honor of himself. The abbe made a long oration, chiefly on the state of political affairs, and concluded with the words, "We owe the salvation of Europe to one man alone." "Before he gave me time to blush," said the duke, "he put his hand on his heart and continued, 'To me.'"

All In Harmony.

"Have you been in Mrs. Gilder's new home?"

"No."

"It's furnished perfectly exquisite. You ought to see the antiques! Everything is just as old as it can be. Why, she hasn't neglected a single period."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. What do you think? She's even got a Queen Anne vacuum cleaner!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

An Oath of Silence.

In certain districts of Western Australia there are women who take an oath to remain silent after the death of their husbands. In some cases they will remain mute for two years after the funeral, and very often the oath is kept also by the mother and mother-in-law of the deceased.—Paris Revue Medicale.

Honduras' Silver Coins.

In the republic of Honduras the silver currency was for years minted from Sonora bullion. This nearly always contains a certain proportion of gold, which used not to be separated before it went to the mint, so the Honduras silver coins prior to 1911 generally contain a certain proportion of gold.

Out of His Line.

Mother—Now, Freddie, at the party when asked if you'll have something you must say, "Yes, thank you," or if you don't want it you must say, Freddie—Don't you bother, ma. I don't expect to refuse anything.—Boston Transcript.

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Sleeping in Church.

A German professor who undertook to discover why women do not go to sleep in church like men arrives at the very obvious and fundamental conclusion that it is because the men are not so much interested in the apparel of their fellow man as are the women in the raiment of their sex. He believes that men pay more attention to the sermon than women do and that if the preacher has something to say that interests them they will stay awake. As for the women, he doubts if they ever pay atention to a sermon, but argues that they find enough to keep them interested in the contemplation of their sisters' gowns and bonnets.

The good professor's argument has some merit. A woman can entertain herself very well if she has before her a variety of styles in hats and dresses. It matters not whether the minister's text is "All is vanity" or "Consider the lilies of the field." She can institute an unerring appraisement of every hat within range of her vision, and when "meeting" is over can tell whether Mrs. Brown's headgear is new, made over or borrowed. She is able to tell how much Mrs. Smith's skirt is off in its tube effect, and what Ms. Jones paid for her new waist.

A man can sit in a church all day and emerge without being able to tell whether the minister wore a white shirt or a sweater. He wouldn't venture to say positively whether his new neighbor wore shoes or was barefoot. He is not interested in knowing whether his friend from the same office building has on a Bulgarian tie or a black string cravat. He couldn't tell whether the man in front of him had on a new suit or an old one cleaned up. Therefore, if the sermon is not interesting Nature is prompted to take toll in a quiet snooze. The women of the congregation, busy inspecting each other, have plenty to keep them awake.—Louisville Times.

Kept Busy.

"I suppose that with Jinks it was a case of marry in haste and repent at leisure." "Not exactly. His principal complaint appears to be that he has no leisure."—Buffalo Express.

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