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## OUR FLAG.

At the recent sinking of the war ships at Apia the Captain of one of them ordered the flag unfurled. The men on board another of the doomed vessels greeted it with a cheer, which was responded to with their last breath by the loyal Captain and his men.

Across the peach-blow sky of spring  
The storm-dark clouds are looming;  
With sullen voice the breakers ring,  
The thunder loudly booming.

The huddled war ships ride apace,  
Each at her anchor straining;  
Black, black, is all of heaven's face;  
It lightens 'twixt the raining.

Like crumpled rose leaves the mist edge  
The hidden reef enwrathing,  
But cruel as hell the jagged ledge  
Beneath those waters seething.

On, on they come, the poor dumb things,  
The storm winds fiercely driving;  
At her dread work each breaker sings,  
For conquest madly striving.

"If we must die"—the leader's voice  
Outswelled the roar of thunder—  
"It is our own and solemn choice  
To die our dear flag under."

"For us to-day the battle field  
Is where the seas are lying,  
We claim a right we cannot yield,  
To glory in our dying."

He ceased; upon the topmost mast  
The Stars and Stripes were floating,  
The sight is like a trumpet blast,  
And other ships quick noting.

Up to the sky the sounds a cheer  
That starts the waves flying,  
Back come the waves, loud and clear,  
From galls and arts, though dying.

A moment's time, the waves in brine  
Baptized the flag low lying,  
And from the breakers comes no sign  
Of living or of dying.

O flag, dear flag, once more thy name,  
As always in thy story,  
Has set a thousand hearts aflame  
For thee and for thy glory.

—Annie B. King, in *Harper's Bazar*.

## A FATEFUL VOYAGE.

In the year 1868 I signed papers with Captain Delano, of the brig *Josephine*, for a voyage from Sidney to Auckland and return. She was an English craft, and was loaded with a general cargo, and had made many voyages across the New Zealand Sea. The crew consisted of Captain, mate, cook and four men before the mast, and every one but the cook was white and spoke English. I was then eighteen years old and just out of my apprenticeship. I should have had a second mate's berth, but the *Josephine* carried no such officer. The Captain stood his own watch, and there were occasions when the mate had to go aloft with the men. Captain Delano was a good sailor and a good-hearted man, and there was nothing in the grub or the discipline to find fault with. We left Sidney one morning with a fair wind for the fifteen-hundred-mile voyage, and had any one predicted the queer adventures and the tragedies which were to befall us he would have been looked on as a lunatic.

A portion of the story I am going to tell you appeared in some of the Australian papers twenty years ago, but only a portion, and that full of errors. It was only a month ago that I was asked to send my affidavit to certain facts to a lawyer at Melbourne, and so the whole series of adventures is fresh in my memory.

For the first three days out we had fair winds and a smooth sea, and the brig made fine progress. At midnight on the third night the wind shifted, blew up a squall which lasted half an hour, and then died away as flat as you please. We were left rolling on the waves for an hour or two, but when daylight came the surface of the sea was without a ripple, while there was not the slightest breath of air moving above. The sun came up like a ball of fire, and the greenest hand aboard knew that we were in for a calm. It was terrible hot by mid-forenoon, and our humane Captain ordered all hands to knock off and make themselves as comfortable as possible. By noon the brig was like an oven. The decks were so hot that even the cook with his tough feet dared not walk them unshod. Down in the fo'castle in was stifling, but as it was worse on deck we had to stand it.

It was about noon when the cook, who had gone to the side to throw over some slops, called out to us to come and see the largest shark which human eyes ever beheld. I crawled up from the fo'castle, always curious to see one of the monsters close at hand, but expecting that the cook had greatly exaggerated, and when I looked over the rail I was astonished. There lay a shovel-nosed shark of such dimensions that I dared not credit my own eyesight. He lay parallel and not over ten feet away, and when, after a few minutes, Captain and all hands had rounded up to look at the fellow, we got his exact length by a tape line along the deck. He was thirty-two and one-half

feet long, with jaws capable of cutting a bullock in two at one snap. The only sign of life he gave was a slight movement of the eye now and then. He lay with his great dorsal fin baking in the hot sun, and so near that we could see every little detail. All agreed that he was the largest shark any one had ever seen, although all of us had sailed in the warm seas, and some of the men had turned away when the cook climbed upon the rail and said he would stop a little for a game with the big fellow. He meant by that that he would have a talk with him. I have met numbers of ship's cooks who claimed to have "made up" with sharks and were not afraid of being hurt by them. The cook sat just opposite the shark's middle, and he had begun a sort of chant, when I passed forward intending to find a missile, and heave it over and scare the monster away. I had just found an old bit of iron and got back to the rail when there was a splash and a yell. The cook was in the water through some careless move of his. I had my eye on the shark, and his movements were like lightning. With one flirt of his tail he slewed himself around, his great jaws opened, and I was looking right down upon him as he took the cook in clear to the middle and bit him in two so slick and clean that the upper part of the body rolled away from the shark's nose and remained on the surface directly below me. After half a minute it began slowly to sink, but was not yet out of sight when I saw the shark seize it. As he grabbed it he rushed away and we saw him no more.

The tragedy upset us in more ways than one. Here we were, left without a cook at the beginning of the voyage, and there was something in his taking off which aroused the superstition of the hands forward. I think the Captain felt it as much as we did, but of course he concealed it as much as possible. All that day we lay roasting and motionless, and as the sun went down and a light breeze sprang up every man uttered a heartfelt "Thank Heaven!" We crowded too soon, however. The breeze did not push us over five miles before it tired out, and we were left as before, the sky full of stars and the sea like a mirror. I was in the mate's watch and came on duty at midnight. Indeed, we were all on duty for that matter, as there was nothing whatever to do and we were sleeping on deck. I was aroused, however, to take the lookout, and I took my seat on the heel of the bowsprit as a matter of form. As we were not moving, no other sailing craft could move, and the few steamers crossing on our line could see our lights and avoid us. Something happened, however, before I had been on duty an hour. The *Josephine* was rising and falling on the glassy swells, and swinging her head to every point of the compass by turns, and I was scanning the sea and the heavens in the most perfunctory way, when an object suddenly came into view. It was a black spot against the darkness, and after rising to my feet and watching it for a few minutes I made out, as I thought, the dimmest hull of a small vessel. It was coming down toward us, and when sure of this I hailed the mate. He came forward with the glass, and after a long look he said:

"Well, that beats my time. It is the hull of a dimmest schooner, and stands up high and dry. There's a lot of raffle around her bows, and I believe a whale is tangled up in it and towing the wreck!" He sent me to call the Captain, and in a few minutes all hands had caught the excitement. The wreck stopped for a while on our starboard bow, and not over a quarter of a mile away. Then it crossed our bows and came down on our port side to the quarter, where it lay so close that every man could see what it was. It was then, at the suggestion of the Captain, that we raised our voices in a shout to see if anybody was aboard the strange craft. We were answered almost immediately by the barking of a dog, and the Captain said:

"There are men there, and they may be starving and suffering. Well, lower a boat and pull out to her."

"Heavens! sir, but you wouldn't think of it!" whispered the mate. "She's being towed by who knows what? See! There she moves again! And just listen to that howling!"

It was true that the hulk was moving. She moved across our stern at slow speed and ranged up on the other quarter, and the dog ceased his barking and sent forth such mournful howls that every man was upset.

"What do you make out under her bows?" asked the Captain of the mate as he handed him the glass after a long look.

"Why, sir, there's the bowsprit, the foretopmast, and a big tangle of ropes," was the reply. "It looks to me as if all the foremast raffle had somehow slewed around under her bows, and I'm certain that a whale is tangled up therein. I can see flecks of foam as he churns away, and you can hear a ripple along our side from the sea he kicks up."

The dog barked and howled by turns, but we got no other answer to our repeated shouts.

"Men," said the Captain, as the wreck began moving slowly away, "it's our plain duty to board that hulk. I could never forgive myself if I left any one to die of starvation. I won't order any one to go, but I'll call for volunteers."

Not a sailor responded for a minute. I waited to give the men a chance, and as they hesitated I volunteered. Two others then came forward, and their action shamed the mate into saying:

"Very well, sir. I'll take Jones and Harris and pull off and investigate."

Why he left me out I do not know, but I was quietly ignored, and the two middle-aged men whose names I have given had the oars as the boat moved away. The Captain called after the mate to be sure to board the hulk, and if he found her in good condition to cut the raffle loose and report. The wreck had been moving away from us pretty steadily for ten minutes, and as the yawl left us I could hardly make her out. The mate was to show a light when he boarded her, and for the next half hour we were straining our eyes to catch it. Then we figured that he had missed the hulk and was pulling back to us, and although we had our regular lights, which could have been seen for two or three miles, we sent up several skyrockets and burned a flare as further guides. But the hours wore on and brought no tidings, and daylight came we swept the sea in vain for sight of either hulk or boat.

A breeze came with the sun, and we began a search which lasted all the day without result. The loss of three men reduced us to sad straits. There were only two working hands, and as a measure of safety we had to get the big sails reefed against what might come. The breeze was light, and as we were under shortened sail we did not cover any great distance during the day, not over thirty miles. This satisfied us, however, that a calamity had occurred. The wreck could not have been over half a mile from us when the yawl pulled away. I would not take over ten minutes to pull to her. What could have happened to the boat? If not able to board, she should have returned. In boarding she should have displayed a light, as ordered, and then returned to report the state of the wreck. The last ever seen of the three men was when they pulled away from us. Not a word has been heard from them to this day, nor will it ever be known how they perished.

Night brought a calm again, and I was so fagged out with the heavy work of the day that I went to sleep almost before I had finished the cold bite I got from the pantry. We understood from the Captain that he should cruise about for a day or two more in hopes of falling in with the boat, but it was easy to see that he was badly upset, and in the afternoon I smelled liquor about him very strong. When he told us to go into the pantry and forage for something to eat his voice was thick and his legs very weak. My mate was to stand watch the regular time and then awaken me. Sometime in the night I was aroused by something and sat up and looked about me. The calm continued, and everything was quiet, and so I lay down and slept again. It was daylight when I awoke again, and after a wash I got some biscuit and meat from the pantry and looked around for my mate. Not finding him after a hunt of ten minutes I knocked at the open cabin door. Receiving no response, I finally ventured in, and five minutes later I realized that I was entirely alone aboard the *Josephine*. Neither Captain nor sailor could be found, nor was there the slightest clue to tell me how or why they had disappeared. I did not give up until I had searched every possible place where they could have hidden away, and then I sat down and let superstition and terror take such hold of me for half a day that I liked to have gone crazy. It was only by calling up all my will power that I could prevent myself from leaping over the rail. After several hours, however, this feeling wore off, and I could view the situation with common sense. I was alone, but it was a flat calm, and I turned into the cabin and slept for six hours before I opened my eyes. Then it was to find that evening had come, and that the

brig had been boarded by a boat from one of the mail steamers plying between the big island and New Zealand. My explanations astonished and astounded the men, and after I had been taken off to the steamer, and given all the details to the Captain, he took the brig in tow and continued his course for Sidney. There the story was told and retold, but with very little satisfaction to any one. A craft was sent out in search of the lost yawl and the hulk, but neither could be found. The general idea at Sidney was that the Captain and sailor both got drunk that night, and somehow got overboard, but no one could even guess the calamity which befell the yawl.—*New York Sun*.

## A Profitable Hand-Shaking.

It was some years since, in the Ozark region of Missouri, where I was riding a circuit, that I saw a minister enjoy a most substantial hand-shaking. Shaking hands was his peculiarity. He believed in the potency of a cordial grasp to win men to the church. And though successful in winning souls, he was very unfortunate in the matter of getting dollars. In fact, poverty continually stared him in the face. He owned a little farm and mortgaged it as long as it would yield a dollar. The mortgages were falling due, but there was no prospect of paying them. But it did not bother him a bit. He shook hands more heartier than ever. "I have unbounded faith in hand-shaking to bring everything out right," he often said, until his penchant came to be the talk of the town. At last came the day when the mortgages must be foreclosed that would deprive him of the little home that sheltered his family. On the eve of that day a knock at the door of his house, which was a little way from town, called him. When he opened the door a whole crowd rushed in and, without saying a word, commenced shaking hands. He felt something cold in the hand of the first man, and when the hand was withdrawn it stuck to his own. "That is the most substantial shake I ever experienced," he said, as he held up a \$5 gold piece. But the next man stepped up and a silver dollar was left in the preacher's palm. No one would say a word in explanation, but pressed in on him as fast as he could stick the metal and bills into his pockets. The house was not large enough for the visitors, each one of whom deposited from \$1 to \$10 in the outstretched hand. Each left the moment his little errand was accomplished, and not a word could be had in explanation, except the last one, who, as he turned to go, remarked: "We wanted to play a little joke on you, and we have." The several "jokes" netted just \$781. His home was saved and a neat balance was left besides. The minister maintained that he had contracted a habit that night that for a year afterward when he shook a hand prompted him to look into his own palm, half expecting to see a piece of metal there.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

## The Bucking Horse.

Most persons who have witnessed the vicious and acrobatic antics of the "bucking bronco" in Buffalo Bill's and other wild Western shows have supposed that the animals were merely acting a part to which they had been trained, like the trick-mule of the circus. The fact is that these traits are in the nature of the beast; and what the horses do on exhibition is as nothing to the diabolical contortions which they go through when endeavoring to unseat a cowboy rider on their native prairies. The Broncos of the Southwest, like the cross-bred Indian and cayuse ponies of Montana, are not usually broken until they are four or five years old, and then their training is of the rudest and most impromptu character. Individual animals, like individual men, exhibit tempers and idiosyncrasies of their own; but even the best-tempered companies will sometimes buck on a frosty morning. Such "mavericks" are turned over to hands who make a specialty of conquering horses that are determined not to be ridden; for a great many thorough cowboys who are good horsemen in the sense of being able to get the best work out of their string of steeds in a round-up do not pretend to be able to sit a hard-pitching or vicious animal. The horse-tamer, with his wonderful lariat, brings the rebellious horse to the ground by a noose around one of the fore feet; then he mounts, and pursues his dare-devil, anti-bucking tactics until the shaggy pony is dazed and cowed into meek submission.—*Frank Leslie's*.

One pound of coal equals in value 74 feet of natural gas.

## CURIOUS FACTS.

Windmills are of great antiquity.

The first paper mill in this country was started in 1790 near Philadelphia.

It is estimated that only one death in 10,000,000 occurs from a railroad accident.

The Chinese, before the invention of paper, wrote with an iron tool upon thin boards or bamboo.

It will be 317 years next November since stern old John Knox, the founder of Presbyterianism, died.

Parchment was used for the purpose of writing on as early as 250 B. C., by Eumenes, King of Pergamus.

The first paper mill in England was erected in the reign of Henry VII., by John Tate, the younger, at Hertford.

The first bottles were made of the skin of animals—mostly goats. Of this kind were the bottles spoken of in the Scripture.

More than 1000 empty patent medicine bottles were found in the house of a rich bachelor who died at Knoxville, Penn., lately.

It is reported from Pennsylvania that black bears are more numerous in that State than they have been before for many years.

A boy was killed the other day in San Francisco, near the Palace Hotel, and the body permitted to lie for hours on the sidewalk.

Skin bottles are still used in Southern Europe for the transport of wine, and by different tribes of Africa and Asia for carrying water.

For 600 years Rome existed without physicians. Within 600 years after its first physician the Roman Empire had ceased to exist.

It proves that it was a sun glass in the hands of a seven-year-old boy which caused the recent destructive fire at Moreland, near Chicago.

A gentleman, in painting the wreck of a garden boat on the Rhine, showed a lot of carrots floating down the stream, forgetting that carrots never float.

A Georgia colored man is very fond of alligators as a food product. He captures the saurians, and after duly preparing them cures them as he does his hams. In his smokehouse at present five or six of these reptiles are hung up undergoing the smoking process.

In Llandferr, a small village in Wales, the village preacher makes shoes for a living. His annual stipend from the church is \$40 a year. It is not an uncommon thing to meet in different parts of the interior of Wales clergymen who have learned a trade to eke out their income.

Cossacks, in time of war, from eighteen to fifty, are bound to serve on horseback. They provide their armor at their own expense, and are armed with a lance twelve feet long, a carbine, pistols and a saber. Their horses are small, but swift and wiry. They are divided into polks (regiments), subdivided into hundreds, fifties and tens. They number about two million. Their language is Russian, and they adhere to the Greek creed.

## Our Far Alaskan Citizens.

A writer familiar with the uncivilized Eskimau of far Northern Alaska says that they are the most abject beings he ever saw. They neither wash nor comb their hair, and they wear dirty, filthy garments year in and year out. Eskimau means "raw flesh eater;" their diet is chiefly fish and game, kept until it is in a state of putrefaction, when to them it is most delicious. Raw blubber of the whale is a great delicacy. Their manner of eating is dog-like. Fixing their teeth in a piece of blubber, with a dull knife they saw off the portion which the mouth will not admit. The men hunt and fish, while all other work is done by the women. The old-time custom of tattooing the face, arms and breast is still practised. The women wear ivory studs in the lower lip, in which is inserted their sewing-needle for convenience when not in use. The men also have these apertures with bone or ivory studs in their ears, in which rings are inserted. This same fashion prevails largely in southeastern Alaska. "Out of the fashion, out of the world," is as true of them as of us. There is much caste among them, and it would be hard to find a more conservative and conventional people.—*Sitka Alaskan*.

According to the *Methodist Recorder*, there are 421,784 members of the Wesleyan body in Great Britain, the last year showing an increase of 5000.

## FUN.

A man buried in thought is usually able to resurrect himself.

It is the undertakers who never fail to carry out what they undertake.—*Waif*.

The man who stutters conveys his thoughts by limited express.—*Merchant Traveler*.

There is a considerable difference between a key on the seaboard and a C on the key-board.

Indian meal—Anything the Indian can get to eat without working for it.—*Merchant Traveler*.

An observer has noticed that the necessity for having separate exchanges for oil and stocks arises from the fact that oil and water do not mix.—*Harper's Bazar*.

Small Boy to Englishman—"Say, mister, you've dropped something." Englishman—"Ave I? What?" Small Boy—"Your h's."—*Burlington Free Press*.

"Benzine Bill" is the suggestive souvenir of a Kansas man who proposes to do missionary work in Oklahoma. He ought to make a bright and shining light.—*Detroit Free Press*.

It is estimated that the human heart does 5,000,000 pounds of work each day. The man who made the discovery was probably on the sunny-side of his wedding day.—*Statesman*.

Our old friend Calino has just received a telegram from Russia. "What a grand invention the telegraph is! And how expeditious! To think that it is 2700 kilometres from here to St. Petersburg, and the gum on the envelope is still damp!"—*Lyons Republican*.

## Battle With a Boa Constrictor.

One of the most perilous battles between a woman and a large boa constrictor occurred at Grand View recently, says the *Kansas City Traveler*. About 7 o'clock, as Mrs. H. N. Strait, the handsome and accomplished young wife of H. N. Strait, of the Wyandotte Plumbing Company, descended into the cellar of their residence on Sixteenth street, Grand View, she was startled by a loud hiss and two fiery red eyes looking at her. Returning with a lamp, the lady discovered a large snake coiled around a piece of wood. Taking a coal shovel in her hand, Mrs. Strait prepared to do battle with the monster. The first blow seemed to infuriate the reptile, and, with a loud hiss, it sprang at the now thoroughly alarmed but brave woman. A blow from the shovel knocked the thrust aside, and with the rapidity of lightning the snake again prepared to strike. Five consecutive times did the huge monster retreat, and then plunge through the dimly lighted air at the woman who was so nobly defending herself. At last a well-directed stroke knocked the reptile to the floor and seemed to stun it for a moment. The glistening eyes had become two fascinating balls of flame, and the great fangs worked with awful velocity. Following up the blow, Mrs. Strait succeeded in killing the boa, and with fast-failing strength she reached the floor above, where help soon reached her.

Mr. Strait is in Wyoming Territory, where he is largely interested in a newly discovered mica mine, and his wife was alone with the servants. A party of neighbors were summoned and the snake carried into the woodshed. It proved to be a boa constrictor and measured eleven feet and eight inches from the head to the tip of the tail. It is supposed to have escaped from some menagerie.

## Gold Plating the Human Body.

There is a St. Louis gentleman engaged in the silver and gold electroplating business, who has for five years been engaged in a private laboratory upon a series of remarkable experiments, the object of which is to supplant the present art of embalming the dead by silver or gold plating the human body. The electroplating process would, of course, present a hermetic surface, and the body if prepared as now for embalming and then put through a silver or gold bath would keep forever. An egg electroplated seven years ago, when recently opened was found to be as fresh as the day when it was laid. The experimenter had progressed a long way when he succeeded in plating a chunk of cheese, and later on he succeeded in preparing successfully the human leg. His experiments are conducted with great secrecy. It is probable that a really beautiful way of preserving the bodies of the dead has been discovered. The advantages of silver-plated ancestors mounted on pedestals as statuary are at once apparent.—*Star-Sayings*.