

GOOD SHORT STORIES

He Had Proved It

As a skipper who fears neither winds, waves nor men, the commander of the Shenandoah is as well known among seafaring people as his big, full-rigged ship, one of the largest sailing vessels under American colors. He has pulled through shipwreck, mutiny, and other perils of the deep with glory, except on one notable occasion, of which the New York Tribune tells. On that occasion one gun was temporarily silenced.

He was making a trip from New York to San Francisco, and had shipped a boatwain's mate, who also bore something of a reputation. One day the skipper ordered him aloft to examine a sail on the royal yard.

"Tain't safe, cap'n," protested the boatwain's mate. "The foot-ropes has got to be fixed first."

"Do as I tell you," thundered the captain. "The foot-ropes are all right. I know they are."

The man went up. Five minutes later he came tumbling down through the rigging from the top of the mast, a distance of over one hundred feet. With a bang he landed on the belly of the mainsail and bounded into one of the canvas-covered boats. The sailors, thinking him dead, crowded about him in a circle. To their amazement he sat up. His eyes wandered vacantly about till they rested on the leathery face of the skipper, when they lighted up with intelligence.

"Cap'n," he said, slowly, "you was mistaken about them foot-ropes."

Barnum's "Wild Man of Borneo."

"The Wild Man of Borneo" was a poor old drunken sailor whom Barnum was trying to reform; for Barnum, as in many little things, was first of all among the great temperance men. This old Yankee sailor, whom Barnum had known from the first, was an expert with his pocket-knife, and during long voyages across the Pacific he would whittle out skulls, skeletons and so forth. Finally he found himself at New Bridgeport, Conn., and destitute. He had nothing at all but a few wooden skulls and skeletons fastened together with wires so that the bones would rattle fearfully. He went to Barnum to try to sell these. He was ragged, hairy, hungry. "Why, where have you been?" "Been to Borneo." "Well, you look it! Come in and sit down. We are just going to have supper!"

The poor tramp begged Barnum to put him in a cage to keep him from drink—begged to be put in an iron cage like a wild beast, where he could sit and whittle and "sober up." And that is how "The Wild Man of Borneo" was conceived and brought forth. Little boys would literally fall over one another to get close to the iron cage where that Yankee sailor sat on a pile of wooden bones, gnawing at a wooden skull. But when he would jump up and shake that rattling skeleton in one hand and nearly tear down the cage with the other they would fall in heaps in their haste to get away. The old sailor would not play wild man after Barnum died. It is said that the great show man left him quite a pot of money.

A Tragedy Averted

The mood of the man is bitter. Gloom is upon his brow. He scowls fiercely. Anon he mutters, and his mutterings are as maledictions. The baby toddles against his foot and he immediately drives it away. Tragedy is in the atmosphere. In such moods men have done murder. Is the woman alarmed? Not to a noticeable degree. She glances at the man, notes his corrugated brow, and whispers: "Poor John! It is late."

Then she bustles about her work, and soon she speaks: "Dinner is ready, John."

Magic words!

In two minutes the man feels better; in three minutes he has recovered; in five he is calm; in seven, peaceful; in ten, happy fourteen, filled with ineffable bliss.

Now the man smiles constantly; he tells funny stories; good-nature oozes from him, and when the woman tenderly asks if he can afford two seats for the theater, he says, "Of course," and beams upon her.

And this is one man, not two, and thus is the evil spirit exorcised. Moral (for wise housewives only)—Feed him.

Not Entirely Done Away With

It is doubtful if Mark Twain has any difficulty nowadays in disposing of his stories, but it is evident from a recent remark that he has not grown out of sympathy with his struggling and less famous fellows in the literary field. The lady who tells the incident was talking with him on the disillusionments of authorship.

"And I even understand," said she, "that some of you authors compose on the typewriter."

"Such is the inartistic truth," Mark admitted.

"How unromantic to associate genius and the typewriter!" the lady exclaimed. "But, on the other hand, I suppose that 'writer's cramp' is thus avoided," she added, practically.

"Partially, madame," replied Mark; "only partially."

"Why not altogether?" she demanded, puzzled at his smile.

"It may be avoided in the wrist and fingers," Mark explained, feelingly, "but we are all still subject to it in the stomach."—New York Times.

Nothing Easier

W. A. Sponsler, when in the State Legislature, was given to the making of very elaborate and florid speeches, and one day brought an address to a ciose with "Vox populi vox Dei."

"I'll bet you don't know the meaning of what Sponsler just said," said Al Crawford to Hugh E. Mackin.

"I don't know!" replied Mackin, indignantly. "Of course, I know!"

"You don't know for ten dollars!" suggested Crawford.

Mackin, still indignant, posted his part of the wager with another member of the Legislature; and Crawford said, tauntingly:

"Well, now, tell us—what do you mean?"

"Vox populi vox Dei," quoted Mackin, solemnly. "As everybody knows, is French for 'My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?'"

"Give him the money," said Crawford. "Darned if he doesn't know after all!"—Philadelphia Times.

Got a Bargain, After All

A lawyer who has won some distinction through his success in compromising suits for damages by accident says his most interesting client was a Swedish farmer from Delaware county whose wife had been killed in Philadelphia by a train crossing the streets at grade. The widower was simply insoluble, and, having been told that he could get \$10,000 if he insisted on pushing the case, refused for months to talk compromise. The lawyer, of course, did all possible to keep the hearing back, in the hope of discouraging the Swede; and at last he was rewarded by an offer to settle at a reasonable figure. The Swede called, the lawyer said \$500, and the bereaved one quickly accepted. As he folded the check and pocketed it, he observed:

"Well, I deed not do so padre! I fe got a' hundred dollar and a goot teal better vife than I had befoore." She and me was married yesterday."

Returns Not All In Yet

"It was during this feature of the program," said the editor of the Independence (Kan.) Reporter, in writing up a wedding, "that the only specially emotional feature of the evening occurred. J. J. Anderson, father of the bride, who never before had shed a tear, found several of them rolling down his sunburned cheeks as he came forward to kiss the bride, remarking that she was his 'last baby.' Immediately several of the ladies began to shed tears, everybody was somewhat excited, and in the slight confusion the writer hereof found himself embracing a lady who stood conveniently near and who proved not his wife. He immediately apologized to the lady and was forgiven. He apologized again later on to his wife, with no very definite returns up to this date."

An Extraordinary Bird

It was on the veranda of a club where the commanding figure of the ex-speaker of the House of Representatives is often seen and always welcomed. The doctor, famous for anatomical skill and gastronomic expertness, was recounting his feats of carving to the engineer.

"On one occasion," he remarked, "when I was a medical student in Philadelphia, I earned the undying gratitude of my landlady by carrying into satisfaction portions for twelve persons one red bird."

"Humph," replied the engineer, "it must have been a Tom Reed bird."

I: All Depended

A girl baby was recently brought to a clergyman to be baptized. He asked the name of the baby. "Dinah M.," the father responded. "But what does the 'M.' stand for?" interrogated the minister. "Well, I do not know yet; it all depends upon how she turns out." "How she turns out?" Why, I do not understand you," said the cleric. "Oh, if she turns out nice and sweet and bony about the house like her mother I shall call her Dinah May. But if she has a fiery temper and displays a bombshell disposition like mine I shall call her Dinah Might."

The Whole Truth

"Now," plaintively asked the woman's rights lady, "is there a man in this congregation who never spoke crossly to his wife? If there is, let him rise." Dead silence followed, in the midst of which a fat, red-faced man of forty solemnly rose to his feet.

"Can you truly say," said the lecturer, with a warning look in her eye, "that you never spoke a single cross word to your wife?"

"I can!" said the man emphatically. "I am a bachelor."

A SCENE OF TERROR

GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT LISBON EARTHQUAKE.

How One of the Most Appalling Calamities in All History Fell Upon the Light-Hearted People of the Portuguese City.

In the early morning of All Saints' Day, Nov. 1, all Lisbon was abroad. The morning was hot and still and veiled in a film of yellow haze in which the color of city and sky and river ran riot. Behind the seven hills on which the town was built rose higher hills, heaving softly into green swells and billows, a deeper background for white-walled monasteries and a confusion of red-tiled roofs and turquoise towers and minarets and the yellow outer walls lapped by the blue river. In the streets people hurried in and out among the booths and shops, gathering into momentary groups to discuss the absence of rain, the fact that the wells of the country had suddenly gone dry, the coming bull fight, the latest scandal perpetrated by armed and hooded noblemen roving after dark. The yellow glare beat on lofty houses covered with Dutch tiles done in blue and white, highly glazed and wrought into scenes from Bible tales; on the small shrines to saints or the Madonna at every corner, and threw out into sharp contrast the somber green of citron and lemon trees. The procession of the Vatican swung past, through black lanes of kneeling people, with the Host borne along by barefooted men of rank under a canopy that blazed with gold and jewels. White clad Dominican friars threaded through the cloud, with austere faces and dark-clouded eyes; negro fruit vendors shouted their wares above the babel of songs and laughter, the chanting of psalms and drowning prayers. Rosy monks, black cowled, jostled among the women, with coarse robes trailing about fat white ankles. Slim figures discreetly shrouded slipped through the throng, conveyed by alert duennas. English and Dutch talked business at the corners, intent on finance or on trade. Streams of dark-clad people trickled through the massive entrance into the great church of San Domingo. Above the hum and swarm of the town the church bells pealed, vibrant, masculine, deep-toned and slow, their mellow notes pulsing over the blue river and drifting out among the hills. And at the tenth hour the ground quivered as though to the rumble of a heavily-loaded wagon in the streets.

Two minutes later, with a sudden ripping crash, as of a lightning bolt struck home, the earth heaved like an animal in pain. In an instant the air was fogged with blinding dust, through which could be seen the first sickening lurch of buildings toppling to their fall; the wide downward sweep of uprooted trees. In all directions were flying figures that reeled to the earth's motion and fell, and rose and staggered on. For ten minutes the convulsion lasted; minutes that seemed each one an hour. The dust clouds then lightened, and those who were left upon the broken streets got their bearings and started for the river and quays. The great marble quay at the Terreiro do Paco, crowded with panic-frenzied refugees from all parts of the town, sank suddenly beneath the river, without warning, leaving never a trace or sign, and the waters gulped over it and hurled themselves forward on the city, seeking other prey. Out on the river straining ships were sucked into the jaws of a whirlpool that drew each one remorselessly to itself, striving never so hard to fly—merchantsmen, gallant ships of the line, tiny pleasure boats with paintings of impotent saints on their yellow sails—all with rows of rigid faces staring over the rail into the death that waited.—C. Bryson Taylor, in Everybody's Magazine.

Alcohol in the Tropics

A medical adviser to the British government, selected for service in South Nigeria, Africa, writes as follows respecting the use of alcohol in the tropics:

"Brandy ought never to be touched unless ordered medicinally by a physician.

"If a man has been a total abstainer before coming to Africa, my advice to him is—so.

"If a man has been a temperance drinker before coming to West Africa, let him remain such, and only be more strict than ever in his temperance.

"If a man has been a free liver, it is absolutely essential that he should change his habits without delay, or the climate of West Africa will terribly avenge itself on him for his bravado and folly.

"Of spirits, brandy, gin, rum and absinthe should be regarded as poisonous. Old Scotch or Irish whisky in great moderation, well diluted, and never taken on an empty stomach, is perhaps the least deleterious of spirituous liquors and the slowest poison.

"Coffee, tea and cocoa are excellent restoratives for the fatigued body or

Total Abstainers Will Lead

Writing in answer to the question: "Will leaders of men be total abstainers fifty years hence?" Rev. H. P. Doyle, editor of the Catholic World, says:

"It is rash to risk a dogmatic statement of what will be the case fifty years hence. Events happen careless of the reputation of prophets. A close study of the trend of affairs, however, may lead one to pronounce a prudent judgment.

"I know the world has always used stimulants in one form or another, and in my most enthusiastic hopes for temperance work I never expected that the practice of total abstinence would become universal.

"This much I do know, that the complexities of our modern life do as much to create a total abstinence sentiment as all the lecturing of temperance orators. The race of life is a fierce competition, and victory is for the man of clear head and steady nerve. The opinion is becoming very prevalent in business life, as well as in art and science, that if a young man drinks he is not reliable. The young man who drinks is in a fair way to

An Irish Temperance Revival

Among the most pleasing and hopeful prospects for the future of Ireland is that indicated by the remarkable temperance revival that has been going on in many parts of that country of late years. The determined action of the bishops, and their bold handling of the subject of temperance reform in recent pastorals, are to the good, followed up, as they are to be, by the conference of Irish magistrates for the discussion of the subject, not to mention the various children's temperance leagues. It is apparent that the people in all parts of the country have begun to realize the importance that attaches to this new movement. In one county, at least—that of Wexford—a league has been started which

A Swedish Expert on Drink

Seved Ribbing, the famous professor of medicine at the Swedish university of Lund, makes these remarkable statements in concluding an address on one phase of the drink curse:

"How large a per cent of moral downfalls are caused through drink I am unable to say, but certainly it is not infrequent that you hear from many a questioned youth for an answer, 'I was somewhat under the influence of liquor.' Through drunkenness and in drunkenness one accustoms himself to conditions which, under ordinary circumstances, would be religiously shunned. In course of

Temperance in British Navy

The annual report of the Royal Naval Temperance Society of Great Britain says:

Temperance work in the navy at the dawn of the twentieth century shows a bold front. Not a ship commissions but she carries a large number of temperance men, only waiting to be banded together to work enthusiastically and well for their own good and the betterment of their shipmates.

Thirty-six new branches have been added during the past year, and 14,627 pledge cards and 359 pledge books have been issued. Nearly 6,000 pledges were taken at Portsmouth and Devon-

Paupers of Two Lands

Great Britain and Japan have a population almost the same. Japan has poor people who require assistance from the public hand, and so has England. But England has, by a long way, the start of Japan on lines of civilization, and naturally we should expect the best showing on the pauper line from the former nation. But we are doomed to disappointment. Japan has 24,000 paupers; not one of whom has been made such by strong drink. Great Britain has 1,000,000 paupers—forty to one for Japan—and the great

TEMPERANCE

THE HEART OF THE WOODS

Such beautiful things in the heart of the woods! Flowers and ferns, and the soft green moss: Such love of the birds, in the solitude! Where the swift wings glauco, and the treetops toss: Spaces of silence swept with song. Which nobody hears but the God above, Spaces where myriad creatures throng, Sunning themselves in His Guarding love.

Such safety and peace in the heart of the woods, Far from city's dust and din, Where passion nor hate of man intrudes, Nor fashion nor folly has entered in, Deeper than hunter's trail hath gone.

Glimmers the tarn where the wild deer drink And fearless and free comes the gentle fawn To peep at herself over the grassy brink.

Such pledge of love in the heart of the woods, For the Maker of all things keeps the feast, And over the tiny flowerlet broods, With care that for ages has never ceased.

If He cares for this, will He not care for thee, Wherever thou art to-day? Child of infinite Father, see; And safe in such content keeping stay, —Margaret E. Sangster.

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"There is another fact affirmed by athletic sports, that perfect health is not only consistent with total abstinence, but is acquired only by a regimen of total abstinence. Life insurance men, too, help to emphasize this same fact.

"I argue this way: If first place in the race is for the man with the best brain and brawn, and total abstinence contributes to the highest exercise of both qualities, it is natural to suppose that the leaders of fifty years hence will be the men who in their struggle for pre-eminence become enamoured of total abstinence.

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