



THE CONVERSION OF JOE RATTLIN.

Billy Capstan and Teddy Luff, two middle-aged fishermen, stood, or rather leaned, against one of those tall tar-smear wooden buildings at the front of the old town of Hastings; a building used for the hanging of nets and the storing of other paraphernalia of the fishing industry. Their boat, The Sober Jade, was hauled up high and dry on the pebbly beach, and the two men, silently smoking short clay pipes with bowls turned downwards, now and then cast a wistful glance at the craft of which they were part owners. According to the poem there should have been three fishers who went sailing to the west as the sun went down, but in this case the third, who was skipper and predominant partner of the craft, was, as Teddy Luff phrased it, lying up for repairs. Both men knew that he was dangerously near the boundary line of that fantastic country known as delirium tremens, and The Sober Jade was now out of the water waiting for her master to sober off.

Joe Rattlin, the captain of The Sober Jade, was not a man to be expostulated with. He was one of the domineering sort when sober, which was seldom, and very much more so when drunk, his principal line of argument being the flooring of a man with a handspike; therefore his partners and crew tried to avoid discussion with him, for in silence on their part lay the chances of a long life and immunity from bruises and black eyes. Even between themselves Billy and Teddy did not dwell at any length conversationally upon the shortcomings of their master and partner. Each of the two men liked a drop of grog himself, but neither had the ambition to be the main support of the



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rum industry, as was apparently the case with Capt. Joe Rattlin.

The two men stood there silently with their hands thrust deep in their trousers pockets, pulling at their pipes, and they seemed to find dumb consolation in each other's presence, although their disgust at the unsatisfactory situation of things found no expression in words. As they stood thus, there blew alongside a man from London, who began to ask them questions regarding nets and fishing boats, and the hard life they were supposed to lead, as is the custom with London visitors to Hastings. The men answered him with respectful patience, as had been their habit for years, going over the same dull round, for there is little originality in the questioning of a London man.

Yes, they encountered a bit of nasty weather now and then. No, there wasn't much money in the fishing industry. Yes, most of their catch went to London. No, the nets weren't painted brown to conceal them from the fish, but to preserve them. Yes, coming in and out of the water a good bit, they were apt to rot, and nets were expensive. No, they weren't going out that day on account of the skipper being ill; under the weather a bit. No, his malady wasn't exactly caused by the hard life he led. Yes, he'd get over it; he'd had these spells before, but he'd always recovered, although he seemed to be getting a bit worse as time went on. Yes, the chances were his trouble would carry him off some day, unless he was swept overboard in the meantime, and Teddy allowed that Joe would hate to come to his death by means of water.

Turn about is but fair play, and by and by the Londoner, from extracting information, began to impart some to the two men who listened attentively. If he were a fisherman, the London man said, he would put out to sea at once and sail for Spithead. The whole fleet was going to be on view there, and

a grand sight it would be, especially on Saturday night. Billy replied that as a usual thing they saw too much of the fleet. "We don't care much about the fleet," he added, "except to keep out of its way. A warship won't swerve from its course for anything afloat; and as for them torpedo boat catchers, he's a wise man who gives them a wide berth."

"There will be no danger on Saturday night," said the Londoner, "for the ships are all anchored, and the sight of them will be something a man never can forget, for each of the craft will have her outlines defined by something like a thousand electric lights, shaping her in the fire; masts, ropes, funnel, and all the rest of it. There will be over a hundred and fifty ships all ablaze like tals, and on that night the electric fleet will be worth seeing."

After imparting this lurid information the Londoner went his way and left the two men meditating over what he had told them. At last Teddy said solemnly:

"If we could run the old man up against that fleet of fire, and him not knowing anything of it, he'd think he had 'em sure, wouldn't he?"

"Yes," admitted Billy. "It would be a kind o' dazzeles."

"Let's get him aboard," cried Teddy resolutely, "and give him a lesson. We can drift down Spithead way and come on it kind o' casual like Saturday night, then if the fleet's ablaze, as the stranger said, it would make Joe think judgment day had come, and he'd likely swear off and not touch rum any more."

"It's worth trying," said Billy. "And anyhow, I'd like to see the fleet all lit up. We can pretend to Joe that we notice nothing out of ordinary, and I think that will stagger the old man."

The two fishers without more ado trudged off to Capt. Joe's cottage. The skipper was feeling mighty bad and rusty. He sat with his head in his hands and gave no greeting to his shipmates. The prospect of getting him aboard did not look any too cheerful, and perhaps they would have been unsuccessful had not Mrs. Capt. Rattlin told the men that they ought to be ashamed of themselves coming after a sick man who ought to be abed, if he knew what was good for him. He wasn't in a fit state to go out in a boat. This at once aroused Capt. Joe Rattlin. He'd show her who was in a fit state, he cried, so bundling his two partners out of the house, and roaring defiance to his wife, who tried to stop his exit, he followed them down to the beach, and in a short time The Sober Jade was afloat on the salt water again, heading out from Hastings. There was some shrewdness after all in the captain's going to sea; the doctor had forbidden him liquor, and now giving the wheel to Teddy Luff, the skipper set himself industriously at the consumption of what rum there was aboard. No one dared say a word to him, or expostulate. And thus the three fishers sailed to the west as the sun went down on Saturday afternoon.

There came up a wild thunderstorm which drove the captain below, for he had not his oilskins on, and it also gave Billy an opportunity of largely diluting the rum with water, which the captain was now too drunk to notice. Teddy began to fear that the old man would be too far gone to notice the fleet, even if it all blew up, but the drenching he got before getting under cover partly sobered him, and the dilution of his grog kept him from getting much more intoxicated. As darkness came on The Sober Jade had "risen the fleet," as Teddy put it, and getting under the lee of the Isle of Wight, Billy cast anchor and there they lay.

"I'm afraid," said Teddy, "that the old man won't come up on deck again of his own accord, and I don't see how we can persuade him to come up ourselves, for we can't pretend we see anything."

"Oh, that's all right," said Billy. "I've put the rum up for'ard and he hasn't much more to go on, so we'll hear him sing out after a bit."

At 9 o'clock the first of the illuminated ships broke out in dazzling splendor, quite taking away the breath of the onlookers, and shortly after the whole fleet was one gigantic display of glittering starlike beauty as if the constellations of the heavens had fallen and shaped themselves into fairy ships.

"My eye!" said Teddy, "I never saw anything like that before."

"Nor did I!" answered Billy.

Both of the men were gazing with such admiration at the scintillating fleet that they forgot all about their inebriated captain, until he suddenly roared up at them:

"Here you, Teddy Luff; bring me some more rum."

"I got something better to do," growled Teddy. "Go and get it yourself; it's out for'ard."

"If I have to come up there," said the captain, "I'll throw you overboard. Billy Capstan, bring aft the rum."

"Captain Joe Rattlin," cried Billy, "you've had more than your share now. I've put the rum for'ard, and there the rum stays."

With a resounding oath, the captain came up, and then stopped, stricken dumb by the amazing sight spread out before his eyes. He drew his hand slowly across his forehead.

"My God!" he cried, "Billy, wnat's that?"

"What's what?" said Billy, indifferently coiling a rope with his back to the fleet, while Teddy was busying himself near the wheel.

"What's that I see in the offing?" cried Captain Joe. "Look at it a-standing out between sea and sky, like a thousand ships afloat!"

Billy and Teddy looked over in the direction pointed. Teddy shrugged his shoulders and was silent.

"What is it?" asked the captain, and his crew was pleased to notice a tremor of anxiety in his shaky voice.

"Rum, I expect," answered Billy grimly. "I don't see nothing, do you, Teddy?"

"No," said Teddy, "except black water and blacker sky."

"Look again, boys," cried the captain. "Off there, nor-nor-west. Don't you see the lights?"

There was a trace of nervous apprehension in the skipper's tone. His two



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comrades turned their gaze to the nor-nor-west, and again shook their heads.

"Don't see no lights," murmured Billy.

"Then," said the captain defiantly, "I've got 'em! I've got 'em, boys. I've been often on the borders before, but now I've got 'em, sure."

"Looks like it, skipper," said Teddy sympathetically, "but don't get frightened, Joe; it'll be all right if you swear off. That is sent as a warning you should pay heed to."

"A warning!" cried Capt. Joe exultantly. "Why, rot my balyards! It's the finest sight you ever saw. I never dreamt of anything equal to it. Talk about the deliriums! My word, it's heavenly. I thought a fellow saw something ghastly when he got into the tremens, but that isn't the case. You should drink more rum, you two, and then you'd know what enjoyment is. Take me for a gudgeon, if this don't beat all the magic lantern shows I ever see, and if a pint o' rum will give a man a heavenly vision like this what won't a quart do? By ginger, boys, I'm going to double this row o' lights; where'd you say the rum was? Well, here goes for the rest o' the cask."

Billy and Teddy looked at each other with dismay.

"I reckon," said Teddy, "we've been hasty. This lesson's a failure."

And Billy nodded his head solemnly several times without speaking.—Detroit Free Press.

Don't Wear Starched Linen.

Prof. Max Rubner, who lectures on hygiene at the Berlin University, has published a very interesting article on the use of starched laundry in summer. After extensive and careful investigation he has come to the conclusion that starched linen forms a very strong obstacle to the discharge of heat, and this influence becomes stronger in the same proportion as the outside temperature rises. This seems to prove that the starching of shirts is a rather unreasonable custom. In winter, when we try hard to retain our bodily heat, the protection given by starched linen is very small, on account of the low temperature on the outside, and in summer, when we try as hard to cool off as much as possible, starched linen energetically keeps the heat in. It is true enough that with the rising temperature perspiration will dissolve the starch, but even then it is very disagreeably felt. In this condition it closes up the pores of the linen and renders difficult the entrance of dry air to the skin, and it is just the fresh and dry air that gives us coolness in summer. Prof. Rubner closes his argument with the advice to leave off the use of starched linen entirely in summer, and, if possible, also in winter, although he admits that custom and fashion will hardly allow starched linen to disappear entirely.

HUSBAND GIVES NO EXPLANATION.

The Wife Burned to Death in Her Home at Dayton, Ohio.

Dayton, Ohio, Oct. 11.—Residents of the tenderloin district yesterday morning saw a column of flame in the rear yard of the home of William De Puyster. In the midst of the flames was found Mrs. De Puyster, and before aid could be rendered she was dead, the clothing burned from her body and her flesh literally roasted. The kitchen of the house was covered with oil spots and fragments of a broken lamp were found in the house and yard. De Puyster, when found, would give no explanation of what had occurred and was placed under arrest on suspicion of murder. The neighbors say he and his wife had been quarreling all night.

LUETGERT MURDER CASE.

Evidence All In and Arguments in the Luetgert Case Begun.

Chicago, Oct. 12.—The Luetgert trial came to a sudden and unexpected close yesterday. Witnesses of the defense for rebuttal failed to respond when their names were called, and ex-Judge Vincent announced the defense was all in. Then the arguments to the jury began. Assistant State's Attorney McEwan opened. He will be followed by Attorney Payne. Ex-Judge Vincent will close for the defense, and State's Attorney Deneen will close for the prosecution. The case will go to the jury next Saturday night.

HE PROMISES GREAT ENERGY.

New Captain General of Cuba Has a System to End the War.

Madrid, Oct. 12.—Gen. Blanco, the new captain general of Cuba, announced that he will act with great energy against the insurgents and will employ all political means to restore equality of treatment in the various sections of the community. He has the greatest desire to end the war and establish peace by the system he adopted in 1879. The inhabitants of Palma, the birthplace of Gen. Weyler, are proposing to give him an ovation on his return from Cuba.

THE UNITED STATES TREASURY.

Annual Report Compares the Past Two Fiscal Years.

Washington, Oct. 12.—The annual report of the treasurer of the United States will show that on June 30, 1896, the total available assets of the treasury were \$855,685,321, and on June 30, 1897, they had increased to \$874,764,377. Of these sums, \$308,354,448 was available on June 30, 1897, for the strictly fiscal operations of the government. On June 30, 1896, \$547,330,973, and on June 30, 1897, \$591,468,953 were held on deposit against outstanding certificates and treasury notes.

New Barracks at Helena.

Helena, Mont., Oct. 10.—It is likely that within a few days the new barracks at Fort Harrison will be occupied by two additional companies of the Second regiment of the United States infantry. The buildings that have been under way have been completed. The new barracks building was turned over to the government by the contractors last month, and has been formally accepted by the government. The new double set of officers' quarters ordered at the same time has been completed at all intents and purposes, and is ready at any time to move into.

Fatal Accident at Butte.

Butte, Mont., Oct. 12.—Joe Wallace was instantly killed and David McElvoy fatally injured last night at the St. Lawrence mine. The men were miners and were coming up on the cage. The engineer failed to stop the engine and the cage was carried up into the sheaves, throwing both men off. Wallace had his neck broken.

New Cases at Edwards.

Jackson, Miss., Oct. 11.—There are no new cases of fever at Nitta Yuma. At Edwards there are nine new cases, four of which are colored people, and one death. The state board of health has advised the industrial institute at Columbus, Miss., not to open the fall term until general frosts occur in the state.

Dividends on Insolvent Banks.

Washington, Oct. 12.—The comptroller of the currency has declared dividends in favor of the creditors of the insolvent national banks, as follows: 25 per cent, Merchants' National bank of Helena, Mont.; 12 per cent, the First National bank of Port Angeles, Wash.

Sweet Singers on Board.

New York, Oct. 12.—Among the passengers on the French liner La Bretagne, which has arrived from Havre, were Mme. Nordica, the prima donna; Mme. Schlachina, who sings in Nordica's company, and Clara Barton, president of the American Red Cross Society.

Shut Down.

Galveston, Tex., Oct. 12.—On account of the yellow fever scare the printing house of Clark & Courts, with a pay roll of \$1000 per day, has shut down for an indefinite period. All business out of Galveston has ceased. There is no panic and little alarm.

Yellow Fever at New Orleans.

New Orleans, Oct. 14.—There were 32 new cases of yellow fever reported yesterday and nine deaths.

A dispatch from Tokio, Japan, says it is reported there that the king of Corea has proclaimed himself emperor of Corea.

TAX RIOTS IN ITALY.

Indignant Romans Make a Demonstration Against Taxation.

Rome, Oct. 12.—A large procession of tradesmen, headed by the pro-syndica of Rome, and the president of the chamber of commerce, marched to the office of the minister of the interior to protest and confer with the government regarding the increased taxation. Premier Rudini received the committee and promised that everything possible would be done to promote friendly relations and greater equity between the collectors and the taxpayers. A large crowd of people collected around the ministry and angry shouts were heard and some of those present assumed a threatening attitude. The police attempted to disperse the violent portion of the crowd, and in the conflict six policemen were injured and one rioter was killed. Revolvers were freely used, many persons in the crowd being injured, and 20 leaders of the disturbance were arrested. The condition of three of the wounded policemen is serious.

SECRETARY WRECKED IT.

Owes a Chicago Building and Loan Association \$300,000.

Chicago, Oct. 12.—Judge Haney has appointed Joseph W. Suddard and Arthur Walsh permanent receivers for the Mechanics & Traders' Savings, Loan & Building Association, for which temporary receivers were appointed last July. A rather startling state of affairs was disclosed when the report of Expert Bard, who had been appointed to examine the association's books, was made. According to this report, Secretary Charles G. French owes the association about \$300,000. He holds property of the association either in his name or in the name of friends, upon which there are loans of \$316,000. This is secured by mortgages on property, the appraised value of which, according to the expert's report, does not exceed \$78,000. French is supposed to be in Colorado.

OCTOBER CROP REPORTS.

Issued by the Statistician of the Department of Agriculture.

Washington, Oct. 12.—The October report of the statistician of the department of agriculture shows the average condition of corn on October 1 to have been 77.1, as compared with 79.3 on September 1, with 79.5 on October 1, 1896, and 82.5, the average for the last 10 years. The preliminary estimate of the yield per acre of rye is 16.1 bushels, or 2.8 bushels per acre greater than the October estimate of the crop of 1896. The condition of barley shows an improvement of 1.2 per cent during the month, standing on October 1 at 87.6 points. The average in California is 9 points higher than on September 1. The condition of tobacco declined 5.2 points and Irish potatoes 5.1 points during September.

QUICKSILVER MINES IN OREGON.

Capital Has Been Secured for Their Extensive Development.

Port Townsend, Wash., Oct. 12.—Jacob Behrman, who held an option on what is known as the Black Butte group of quicksilver mines, located in Lane county, Or., 16 miles from Cottage Grove, has succeeded in getting some capitalists interested in the scheme, and the money for the first payment has been advanced and the deal closed. That the mines are immensely rich in quicksilver has been fully proved, assays taken showing from 20 to 40 per cent pure mercury, while some samples went as high as 70 per cent. There are, so Behrman asserts, no less than 3,000,000 tons of ore in sight. Development work on an extensive scale will be started at once.

SPAIN'S EVASIVE REPLY.

An Answer to the Note Presented by Minister Woodford.

Madrid, Oct. 13.—It is semi-officially announced that Spain's answer to the note presented by Minister Woodford has been drafted by the minister of foreign affairs. The reply will say that Spain is unable to fix an exact date when the war will end, but the ministers are persuaded it will not be long. Owing to the rebel situation and the concession of autonomy, which will be effective before January, the government hopes that actual hostilities will shortly cease.

A SERIES OF MURDERS.

Bloodthirsty Wretch Captured Near Lyons, France.

Lyons, France, Oct. 13.—A shepherd named Vacher has been arrested near here charged with committing a series of so-called Jack the Ripper murders. He has confessed to eight murders. The authorities say Vacher was formerly confined in an insane asylum. The murders attributed to him commenced in 1894 and appear to have been actuated by purely bloodthirsty instincts, as the victims were all poor people.

ENGLISH STRIKE SPREADS.

All in Sympathy With the Engineers Will Quit Work.

London, Oct. 12.—The secretary of the Federated Trades, comprising 30 important industries, announces that the executive committee has definitely decided to call out all members in sympathy with the struggle of the engineers against their employers, on Friday next, when it is estimated that 400,000 men will stop work.

Partial failure of the potato crop in Ireland is reported.