The Convict Ship. By W. Clark Russell.

Written For The Morning Call.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SHE LISTENS TO THE CONVICTS DEBATING.

Tom and the prizefighter talked together while Mr. Bates got the boats alongside and superintended the stowage of provisions and water in them. I went into the shadow of the awning to get out of the sun and to remove myself from Tom that we might not be seen together constantly. Some of the ringleaders, as I must term the fellows whom the convicts undoubtedly regarded as heads or chiefs under Tom and Aaron, joined my sweetheart and the prizefighter and the air speedily hummed with the eager, animated talk of the crowd. Will joined me and we watched the longboat. She had gone about a mile and they had hoisted the sail for the shelter of its shadow. It hung like a sheet of silver from its yard without a stir, so smooth was the sea, so still the air. The soldiers continued to sweep the boat along; the oars glanced like hairs of silver as they rose and fell.

Will went to the binnacle to judge of the course the boat was making; the scoundrel seaman who grasped the wheel growled out with a low, coarse laugh and in a cursing voice some remark I did not catch.

"You wouldn't have said that yesterday," exclaimed Will, and came back to me without taking further notice of the miscreant. "They are heading due west," said he. "I don't suppose they will make up their minds till the other boats join them."

"Which is the nearest land?"

"The Brazilian coast. But the nearest is a long away off. There's but a small chance for them outside of being picked up. And yet what a lump of a boat she is compared to the gig! When is she to be provisioned? And when are we to get away? And when we've got away, what's going to happen? Good angels, I wish we were both at Stepney!"

"Leave everything to Tom," says I, "and do as he tells you."

He looked at me with a mutinous eye, went to the rail and stared over the side. Tom and the council of convicts had left the poop. I peered through the skylight: the cuddy was empty, the table covered with fragments and remains of the food the people had rummaged out, with broken china and broken bottles and glasses, and the deck scarce fit to walk on for the broken, wounding stuff that strewed it. I went to the break of the poop to see what they were about on the main deck; both quarter-boats were alongside and a gang of convicts were stowing them. The decks were filled with the people who, since the departure of the longboat, had grown orderly; the mass of them conversed in knots; groups hung about the galleys; they had discovered pipes and tobacco—tobacco there would be in plenty for the guard and the crew, and possibly a stock of pipes; a number of the convicts had pipes in their mouths, and their profound enjoyment of the tobacco after months and perhaps years of penitential abstinence undoubtedly helped to keep them quiet.

The sun stood something to the left of the north and the tall, motionless spaces of canvas on high cast shadows over the decks, and betwixt the rails high noon was endurable. A thick, sickly smell of roasted paint rose from the ship's side. If you put your hand upon the exposed wood or any piece of metal, you were burnt as though you touched hot iron. I thought to myself. If these unhappy wretches should run short of water! If this calm should hold them motionless here for days and perhaps for weeks! For calms often serve ships so in these parts as I had heard my father and his sea friends tell. I sought to compute the number on board, and allowing for those who were presently to leave the ship, I calculated we should muster hard upon 250 souls. When Tom left them what would the miserable creatures do? But, then, what was that to me? All I cared for was that Tom should come off with his life and be a free man, no longer a degraded criminal, clanking in irons, to be mangled by the cat, perhaps, at the will of any ferocious Tasmanian ruffian who might take a dislike to him. The convicts had seized the ship: one had but to look toward the now distant longboat to appreciate the felons' estimate of human life; I could not pity them when I thought of how they would have kept the women and children and of the havoc they had wrought below, and when I looked at their faces, recalled their songs and oaths in drink, their bestial speech and saw the plunder on their vile backs.

Tom and Aaron and a little crowd of men stood near the gangway; my sweetheart looked on; he gave no orders; poor Mr. Bates did all the work of superintendence and watched the convicts as they slung the provisions and water for the seamen into the quarter-boats. When this work was ended some cries were raised; the throngs of people gathered about the main hatch and filled the quarterdeck: the armed malefactors formed a lane as before, but this time the fiddler did not make his appearance.

A hoarse voice at the main hatch summoned the fellows below to come up, and one after another of the crew arrived, headed by Mr. Balls, who was followed by the carpenter, the sailmaker, the cook, Mr. Stiles, Frank, the boatswain's mate and others, as though the procession had been formed with some regard to grades. Most of the men had been forced to change clothes with the convicts. This I had before gathered by observing the number of the people who were dressed in the seamen's apparel. The huge one-eared boatswain, with his staring, glassy eyes, scowled round him with daring, defiant looks. Aaron stood in the gangway, and he halted every man ere passing him over the side to say: "You cad stop with us if you like. We're short of working 'ads, and we'll treat you as wud of us. What'll you do?"

Mr. Balls made no answer. He passed sullenly on; so did the sailmaker and carpenter. Mr. Stiles, with a bewildered look at the convicts and then through the gangway at the white gleam of sea visible there, wiped his face on the sleeve of his convict jacket and said: "Where might you be bound to, sir?"

Some one cried out: "That bloke was the ship's steward. He's of no use."

"Over you go," said Aaron, giving Mr. Stiles a dab with his immense hand between the shoulder-blades, and the steward went with a run to the gangway and disappeared down the ladder.

Two of the sailors agreed to remain; Will, who had come to my side, told me that they were the poorest, most skulking and worthless of the forecastle hands. The convicts, however, cheered when these fellows said they would stay, and the armed men opened to let them pass into the crowd. Will's fellow apprentices looked up at him as they went to the boat, and one made a face as though to express his disgust at what he took to be my cousin's disloyalty or cowardice. I marked the effect of this upon Will and grasped him by the arm, whispering passionately, "Not a word!" and knew by the working of his face that I was just in time to arrest some angry protesting sentence that might have endangered him and me too.

While the seamen filed through the gangway I chanced to look down upon a crowd of convicts on the quarterdeck and spied a fellow pick another man's pocket. He did it with admirable nimbleness and dexterity. Both men, the thief and the victim, were dressed in Lieutenant Chimmo's clothes. The man that was robbed was the rogue who had held up Captain Sutherland's gold watch and chain as though he meant to play at bob-cherry, and it was this watch and chain which the other sneaked with inimitable adroitness.

I supposed no one but myself saw this; many stood about close to and the fellow stole the watch with the most foolish, staring, innocent face you could imagine, looking at the seamen going through the gangway as though he could think of nothing else. But scarcely had he snugged the watch and chain in his side pocket, when another convict next him whipped it out with incredible skill and swiftness; indeed, I should not have remarked the motions of the rogue's hands but for the gleam of the gold. A minute later the first convict put his hand to his pocket and missed the watch. He turned furiously upon the second convict, shouting, "A thief! a thief!" for all the world, as though he had been some respectable man in the streets just robbed. The felon who had the watch roared out, "A thief! a thief!" and fell upon the second convict, whose pocket he had picked. A scuffle followed; the second convict, whose guilt appeared to be assumed by all who stood near, as though they knew him a[illegible] thief with[illegible] morals and capable of robbing a brother thief, was kicked and beaten, and a mob o howling convicts, with this rascal in the midst of them, surged forward, and I took notice that the rogue who shouted the loudest and kicked the hardest was the fellow who had the watch.

This commotion caused no uneasiness among the crowd who stood on the side of the deck where the open gangway was. No doubt they understood what had happened and guessed that enough were concerned in the scuffle to insure justice being done.

By this time both quarter-boats were filled with the seamen; I dare say there went eleven or twelve men in each, and more could not have gone without peril, for they were small boats, though stout and fairly new. Bates had seen that each craft had its proper equipment of spar, sail, oars, rudder and the like. One of the ringleaders, a big sallow-faced convict with a harelip and but two or three fangs in his upper jaw, roared down to the seamen to shove off, and in a few minutes both boats were heading in the direction of the longboat, which had come to a stand awaiting them. Many convicts sprang upon the bulwarks and howled out insults in the wickedest language of the slums, in the most revolting speech of the great city rookeries and haunts of sin and infamy; the seamen rowed away in silence.

Tom came on to the poop and looked at me a little while with a face of grief and horror, as though his very soul shrank up within him to think that I should be a

A CAST-EYED SAILOR WITH OAKUM HAIR.

spectator of such scenes and a hearer of such language. I read his mind; he would not approach me to speak.

Barney Aaron followed, and with him were the hare-lipped man and some score of convicts of whom half might have been principals in the seizure of the ship.

"Let's get to busidess," said Aaron. "Talk to the people as was arradged, Butler."

On this, Tom, laying hold of the brass rail, leaned forward and cried out that every man was to come together on the quarterdeck, as he had a few words to say to them. Mr. Bates stole up the ladder to my side, and without speaking gazed with a look of bitter distress at the receding boats. Still was the ocean, as polished a plain as ever it had been during the morning. The sun flashed up the water into blinding dazzle in the northwest and the heat was terrible. There was no motion in the ship to fan the lightest of the topmast cloths; the atmosphere floated like the breath of an oven, without refreshments of the draughts which circle about a deck when the becalmed craft leans with the swell and her courses and topsails swing. The convicts massed themselves upon the main deck; their faces were white with the heat, or scarlet. The drink had been distilled out of them by the roasting temperature and the unhappy beings stood looking up at Tom with as orderly a bearing as ever they exhibited when the doctor addressed them.

"Men," said my sweetheart, "I've taken charge of this vessel. It's the interests of everybody aboard her that I've now to consider; it's for us, all assembled as we are, to consider what's to be done. And first understand this: No ship can be sailed without discipline. Look aloft, men, at those vast heights. You see for yourselves what a complicated thing a ship is. If I and the mate of your own election," and here he pointed to Mr. Bates, "give an order it must be obeyed. If not—but you're not fools; you can guess what must follow if we're not obeyed. I'll not interfere in any arrangement which don't affect the safety of the ship. You'll sleep where you choose and eat when you choose, and whatever you do that doesn't concern our lives will be no business of mine. But remember there are nearly 250 of us."

He was interrupted by some voice shouting out the exact number.

"You taste this weather, don't ye? You can guess how it would fare with us to run short of water, and next to that would be the running short of provisions. You must be willing to go on allowance."

"Willing? Of course! That's to be expected," broke in three or four of them.

"Those among you who have been seafaring men will unite with the sailors and form a crew and take the forecastle for your quarters, which must be your own, never to be intruded upon. Is that understood?"

"Understood," was the answer, in a roar.

"The rest will form themselves into watches under heads, as in the doctor's time, and every watch will come on deck turn and turn about, and stand by to assist the crew by pulling and hauling, cleaning and making the ship sweet and so helping to keep you all alive and ready for the run ashore when the hour comes."

A great cheer echoed this sentence.

"Mr. Bates," continued Tom, "knows where everything is stowed in this ship. He'll sample your food for you and name you your water allowance. Use him kindly, men. He's of first-rate consequence to us."

When this was said Barney Aaron crossed to the mate, brought him to the middle of the break of the poop, near to where Tom stood, and there, in the sight of all the convicts, shook him by the hand. This was done in silence, but it was a very expressive performance, some might hold after the Eastern manner, seeing who was the main actor.

Tom went on: "I must have the captain's cabin; the navigating instruments of the vessel are there, and certain conveniences of furniture. The chief mate will also need his cabin; he'll share it with that young gentleman," said he, pointing to Will. "If any of you in the hurry of this morning have mistaken Mr. Bates' effects for Captain Barrett's or the other officers', or the commander's, I'll beg him to return them. He is our friend, and Mr. Aaron wishes him to be well used. It is not right he should be thus dressed."

"Look at yourself!" cried a voice on the quarterdeck.

"Yes, but I'm a convict!" exclaimed Tom, savagely.

This raised a roar. A hundred men seemed to speak at once. They yelled out to this effect—that there were no longer any convicts aboard that ship; that they were all free men; that they had got their liberty and meant to keep it, and so forth.

"Order!" bawled Aaron, raising his arms above his head. "We're here to discuss batters quietly. The captid's talked very sensibly, u' I'b with hib up to the hilt as far as he's gord. Are those your sedibents?" said he, looking round at the little crowd of convicts who stood near.

"There must be discipline," answered one of them, "and Butler's talked very good sense so far."

"How about the stock of spirits?" exclaimed a tall, thin, pale, gray-haired convict dressed in an officer's shell-jacket too short for him—so that when I think of him now it is always somehow in connection with Mr. Dickens' incomparable figure of Smike. "'Sponsible men are wanted to see to that."

"You're right, Williams," said Tom, giving him an emphatic nod.

"Every cask of spirits," continued the man, speaking somewhat nasally and amid a silence that might have rendered his voice audible as far as the forecastle, "is full of little devils swimming about. And every little devil when he's swallowed carries seven other little devils all a-clinging to one another's tails down into a man's inside. Call it eight devils," said he, raising his voice, "one for each eye is two, one for each ear is four, one for the tongue's five, and there's three over to keep the others goin' it. 'Sponsible men, Aaron, if that there sea is not to shut up this pleasing dream of liberty."

"Men," said Tom, "there's sound reason in what you've heard. But I spy good sense breaking out among you all. Don't let your feelings carry you away. Look at the mess in the cuddy. What good has your drunken, breaking scramble done? The sober and sound among you should compel the men who smashed that pleasant interior to clear it out, and to make it a shipshape abode for those whose quarters it's to become."

Some one shouted, "We'll have that done."

"Dow talk to us about where we're to go," said Aaron.

"Talk to me and I'll advise you," said Tom, with his eyes upon the crowd beneath, folding dis arms and standing erect.

"You're a navigator and know the world," exclaimed the sallow, ill-looking man with the hare-lip.

"Ay, and I'll counsel you when you've spoken and want advice," said Tom.

"Where are we now?" exclaimed a convict on the quarterdeck.

"Shall I give it to you in parallels and meridians?" answered Tom, with a sort of angry scorn in his voice. "You wouldn't understand me. Suppose Mr. Bates brings you up a chart; there's no room for hard upon 250 heads to overhang it at once—and how many of ye can read, that it should be passed round? Now, listen; we're in the middle of the ocean north of the equator. Yonder," said he, pointing over the port beam, "many hundreds of leagues distant is the Gulf of Guinea and the great bight of the African coast from Cape Formosa to Cape Frio."

The convicts turned their heads all one way, staring like one man, some of them getting on their toes to look.

"Yonder," continued Tom, pointing over the starboard beam, whereupon the heads of the convicts went round as before, and all the poor ignorant wretches stared as though by looking they'd see the land, "is the great Brazilian seaboard from Cape St. Roque to Rio Janeiro."

I observed that Aaron gazed at Tom with an indescribable smirking grin of admiration, as though struck by his familiar acquaintance with land entirely out of sight.

"But my words," continued my sweetheart, "give only a few who are educated among you any ideas. Yet I can tell you no more than this: that we are in the heart of the great Atlantic Ocean, and that a huge world for choice is spread on either hand, away in the Pacific round Cape Horn, and away in the Indian and Southern oceans round the Cape of Good Hope. Where shall I carry you to?"

A number of convicts spoke at one.

"Wud at a tibe!—Wud at a tibe!" yelled Aaron.

"Let's go home," shouted a man on the quarterdeck.

"Debate it," said Aaron.

An uneasy stir ran through the mass of the convicts, and a long, deep growl of dissent.

"Home!" cried Tom passionately. "How's home called in English? What's it's name? Is it Newgate or Millbank or her Majesty's ship Warrior? Is it the dockyard and the arsenal and irons and handcuffs, cursing warders and carbines ready for your brains? You want my advice; I'll counsel you."

Some angry laughter broke from the men.

"Who's the madman that talks of home?" shouted Tom. "Shall I sail you up the Thames and moor ye alongside the hulk? Is Plymouth your port, or do you choose Portsmouth?"

"Why not try for the islands about Torres Straits?" exclaimed one of the convicts who had been a seaman. Several bawled to know where Torres Straits were.

"To the norrard of Australia," replied the convict. "There the sea's thick with islands. Plenty to eat and drink, mates, and casting away a ship is as easy and safe as drawing a cork."

"Ain't Norfolk Island hard by?" exclaimed another.

"My idea," said a ringleader, raising his voice as he overhung the poop rail, "is to beach the vessel on the west coast of Africa; there we breaks up into parties and disperses, and every party has their yarn ready manufactured to account for theirselves agin being met with or falling in with a settlement."

"Were you ever ashore on that coast?" exclaimed Tom.

"No," answered the man.

"Then put this picture before you, one and all, for I who address you know what I am saying: Not a patch of verdure—leagues of sand like glass glaring and shining—a few half-starved jackals—a few bushmen who live on beetles and putrefied seals and go clothed in stinking sheepskins—a hare or two at long intervals and a few sand plants—the sun at noon and night like a lantern looming in vapors—here and there penguins braying, here and there sea fowls shrieking—and the surf roaring always. Is that good enough for you? You'd be clean-picked bones in a week."

All this while the ocean remained breathless. Far away were the two black specks of quarterboats, and beyond was the gleam of the longboat's sail, a point of light under the horizon like the image of a star. Fortunately for the convicts, the lay of the yards flung the shadow of the canvas upon the deck; otherwise it was broiling where the sun was. The poop was sheltered by the awning that stretched from the mizzenmast to the brass rail. Many of the people stood with their coats over their arms and their shirts open; a mist rose from them; I figured how it had been at night in their quarters when I saw that mist and the motionless windsails and the main hatch half sealed with its cage-like barricade.

"May I speak?" cried a man on the quarterdeck, lifting up his hand.

"To the poit," answered Aaron. "Every bad with ad idea bay speak; but to the poit."

"Here's a big ship," said the man, in a very fair cultivated accent (he was about six and twenty years of age) had held a situation as a clerk and had been sentenced for forgery, "and we're a numerous and powerful company of determined men, needing nothing but the organization that Captain Butler's capable of. I propose that we chase small vessels and capture them, send their crews adrift like those yonder, man each captured craft with a number of ourselves, every lot containing a proportion of those who are sailors or who have followed the sea. This would disperse us. Every crew would do as they thought proper with their own craft. I should be for wrecking mine on some safe coast near a town where we could represent ourselves as castaways."

The convicts listened with close attention Aaron looked at Tom, who made no sign.

"What d'ye say to it, Butler?" shouted a fellow.

"Do what you please," answered my sweetheart.

"Advise us," said the hare-lipped man.

"It's a landlubber's fancy," said Tom.

A number of men talked at once. One of the original crew of the Childe Harold roared out: "It's smothering rot! The capt'n's laughing at you. Chase! In a craft arter this pattern, with twelve or fourteen hands and a working crew, ne'er a great gun nor a soul saving the capt'n and the mate as 'ud be capable of navigating them small craft after they was boarded and taken!" He spat hard and turned his back in contempt.

"My notion's been this all through the blushen piece," said a beetle-browed, flat-nosed, ruffianly looking convict. "Sail to an oninhabited hisland and set le him. A hisland where there's grub a-going in fruit trees and beastesses of fish what crawls upon the beach, all which there'll be some here as heard of. Where water trickles sweet an' cold and the weather it ain't too hot. There, upon that hisland, we can concoct and consart, and them what pleases can be took off by passing vessels. The others will be a-doing as did them mutineers of the Bounty, whose capt'n he was named Bligh. We moors this ship and keeps her handy. Females ain't ever fur to look for. In this 'ere ship wives can be brought from places which ain't too far off from where the color won't be wrong, the 'igh seas being vide of choice. That's bin my notion all through the fired piece."

"Who's next?" shouted Aaron, impatiently.

One of the remaining crew of the ship, a sailor with a cast eye and a head of hair so exactly resembling oakum that no convict could look at it without finding something personal and a sort of reflection in it; this man, who sat high-perched above the heads of the throng on the quarterdeck winch, snapped his fingers at the poop and asked leave to address the gents.

"What d'ye want to say?" shouted the hare-lipped man, who, I gathered, ranked next to Aaron as the principal ringleader.

"Gents all," cried the fellow, "man an' boy I've followed the seas for two and twenty year, and in that time I've sailed all about the world, and there's scarce a furrin part as I haven't visited. No, if I was you, speaking with Captain Butler's good leave, what I'd do's this: Round the Horn t'other side of South Amerikay there lies what's called the North Pacific Ocean. From the Sandwich Islands, right away to this side the Philippines, including of the Ladrones and the Caroline Islands, it's all chock-a-block with the sort of little countries ye oughter visit. Beautiful women come a-swimming off to your ship afore the anchor's let go. A lovely cordial drink they manufactures out of cocoanut juice. There's no call for clothes. The natives are friendly disposed. Them as ain't are easily knocked over the head. White men like yourselves live in them islands. If I was you, gents, I'd get Captain Butler to steer the ship into the North Pacific, touch and discharge a score of ye, touch and discharge another score, touch and touch again till this here multitude was broke uu. That's my notion, gents, and your chance, and I'll ask Captain Butler what he thinks."

"I'll do," exclaimed Tom. "I would propose nothing better."

On this there was some confusion, owing to a number of the convicts cheering, while others shouted questions to the poop. The silence upon the sea, and the ship lying as stirless as though she were at anchor, made this strange council of convicts somewhat ironical to my mind. It was hard to cast one's eye over the lakelike ocean and realize the remote North Pacific as a part of the world that was to be come at by the vessel. Tom's approval of the seaman's scheme seemed to settle the matter; many questions, most of them ignorant and ridiculous, were bawled; they were answered from the poop, sometimes by Tom, sometimes by Aaron and the ringleaders, and sometimes they were answered by fellows on the quarterdeck.

After a little, and while the decks were a-buzz with the vast noise of talk, the prizefighter asked Mr. Bates to produce a chart of the islands named by the seaman. Mr. Bates fetched a chart. It was a big sheet with a blue back, comprised a portion only of the North Pacific and was very clearly drawn and printed. This chart was laid upon the skylight and the corners weighted; the principal convicts drew in a body to it.

I stood near and overheard the talk. They called up the sailor and he pointed to three or four of the islands which he said he had visited. The hare-lipped man asked him if British ships-of-war cruised in these seas; he answered that here and there a small surveying vessel might be fallen in with, "but nothen to take notice of," said he, "nothen that's going to hurt ye. It's your best chance, gents. Many sorts of vessels are a-touching at them islands for water, nuts, and sometimes for their entertainment, and often again for their convenience. The sailors run, 'specially from the South Sea men; the bully boys get in tow of the gals all a-blowing and a-growing, fine gals some of them are, hair down to their heels, skin as fair as that covey's," said he, pointing to a staring, open-mouthed convict; "men must be had and there y'are to offer your services. You'll have your yarns ready in case of questions, but down in them parts curiosity ain't what you might call active. Stick to this here scheme, and there's nothing to hinder any man as has a mind to return home from finding himself arter a year or two in Lunnon again, with dollars enough in his pocket to keep in wittles till something turns up."

"All that this man says is very true," exclaimed Tom. "He's given us a good scheme. We're obliged to him."

Saying this, he edged out of the crowd about the skylight, and, seeing me abreast of the rail, came and stood beside me.

"Is it a good scheme?" I whispered, without looking at him.

"It will amuse them," he answered, softly; "I must seem in earnest; what do I care?"

"You control them wonderfully."

"Poor wretches!" he muttered, and stepping to the companion took the ship's telescope out of its brackets and pointed it at the three boats upon the sea. Their situation was now determinable to the naked eye by the dim, tiny gleam of the longboat's sail.

"They're sneaking westward," said Tom, talking low, with his eye at the glass. "The American seaboard may give me the chance I want. Eastward nearly everything afloat is British—curse the name!"

By this time the convicts on the quarterdeck had got wind of the chart on the poop and were crowding up the ladders to look. That all might obtain a sight Aaron bawled a recommendation to them to form themselves into small divisions. This was done. The chiefs or ringleaders broke up the mass into little gangs, and one after another these gangs came to the skylight and overhung the chart. The cast-eyed sailor with the hair of oakum stood by to answer questions and pointed out the islands. Some of the educated convicts dwelt upon the chart so long, musing, running their fingers down the meridians, calculating distances, and so forth that the waiting gangs howled at them with impatience. Yet all was now as orderly as one could wish—far more orderly than I had dared to expect.

As the gangs passed on from the skylight aft, viewing the chart and questioning the cast-eyed man, they broke up and hung about various parts of the poop or returned to the main deck. The coarse joke, the loud, brutal laugh was frequent, but there was no horse-play, none of the former huge, hideous, cart-horse gamboling, shouting and tipsy fighting. The heat lay upon the people like a weight; their spirits were sobered by the extraordinary oppression of the vast, silent, roasting calm.

"Aaron," called Tom, holding the telescope and still standing at my side, "let some of the men, those responsible for the mess, clean the cuddy out. Look through the skylight; the deck's full of broken glass. And my advice to you and the others is to arrange without delay for the distribution of the people for the night. You'll want cooks; those who have been cooking so far should continue. They know what's needed, where to seek, how to manage. Mr. Bates, here, will counsel you on quantities; I wish to see the ship cleared fore and aft and everything ready for any sort of weather that may come along. Ay, and there's more yet; suppose an English man-of-war heaves in sight and signals us, we must know what to do and be in readiness to do it. The pennant's an old cure for dull sight. A devilish keen eye that never winks lies spliced in the fly of every man-of-war's whip. And d'ye see that, Aaron?" he cried, pointing at the sea over the starboard quarter.

Twenty or thirty convicts were upon the poop, and they all turned their heads and stared in a hurrying, eager way in the direction indicated by Tom's leveled forefinger.

"See what?" exclaimed the prizefighter, lifting the sharp of his massive hand to his brow, and straining his black, fiery vision.

"That dark blue line."

He stepped to the rail and cried out: "Stand by, all you seamen aboard this vessel, to trim sail." Then turning to Aaron, "Tumble the people to their work of cleaning up, will ye?" he cried. "Put the cooks to their duty; we can't starve." He then turned to me, and placing the telescope in my hand, said loudly: "Marlowe, replace this; then go to your berth and carry what belongs to you to my cabin and wait for me there."

To be continued.

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A Fragment of the Moon.

St. Louis Republic.

A remarkably fine specimen of meteoric iron (which, according to Professor Tshermel's views, is simply a piece of ore projected through volcanic agency from the face of the moon) has been sent from Rockingham County, S. C., to the State Museum at Columbia. Its greatest length is not above twelve inches and its thickness through the thickest part is about two inches. In general shape it is flat, though somewhat concaved on one side and convexed on the other, as if broken off from the outer surface of a rounded and larger mass. It is entirely coated with a thick crust of a dark brown rust and weighs 24¾ pounds.

The Columbian Year.

Suppose that while we've got these stamps,
They for n a mucilage trust—
Then heaven help us, gentlemen,
The Government would bust. —Puck.

WOMEN AND HOME.

Novelties for the Coming Season.

A NEAT AND STYLISH CAPE.

How to Make a Window Attractive. A Home-Made Gown—An Ornamental Stand.

There is no sign here or abroad of the passing of the cape, says the New York Tribune, and that graceful garment will probably remain as a necessary companion to the prodigious sleeves. In Paris women are not now wearing the cape in tiers of three, but the one cape which has taken its place is lavishingly trimmed. One method of trimming may be seen in the accompanying cut. The full ruff is an invariable feature of the French cape. Many of the small yokes of the capes have

quantities of lace falling from them. Jets and lace, in fact, are as popular a combination for these charming garments as one can find. Sometimes the cape is merely a mass of beautiful deep black lace falling from a black jetted satin yoke, and sometimes this yoke and the ruff are lined with some pale shade of color.

This charming cape is of mauve drap de sole, trimmed with prune velvet. The yoke and other trimming are of gold embroidery.

FOR HOME WEAR.

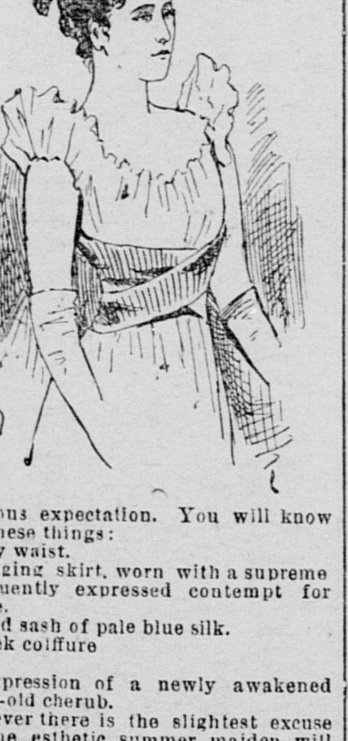
A home gown which should tempt the young woman who has "bought all her spring clothes" to add one more costume to the outfit is shown in the illustration. The material is soft gray crepon, and the trim-

ming an exquisite pattern in raised silver passementerie. A square yoke is outlined on this trimming, as is the bottom of the full skirt. The sleeves are puffed from shoulder to elbow, where they end in a deep, tight-fitting cuff. A wide belt of gray silver ribbon laid in folds may be worn if the wearer has a slender waist; otherwise it should be carefully avoided.

THE ESTHETIC MAIDEN.

New York World.

The esthetic maiden of the summer of 1893 is already making her appearance—with a certain diffidence, it is true, but with a strong undercurrent of satisfaction



and joyous expectation. You will know her by these things:

A baby waist.

A clinging skirt, worn with a supreme and frequently expressed contempt for crinoline.

A broad sash of pale blue silk.

A Greek coiffure

And

The expression of a newly awakened two-year-old cherub.

Whenever there is the slightest excuse for it, the esthetic summer maiden will dispense with sleeves. She will wear white canvas shoes, hose to match the blue silk sash, and she will receive the undivided attention of every eligible young man within reach of her childlike glance.

SPRING AND SUMMER CURTAINS.

New York Herald.

The hues of the windows and the doors in most of our houses are uncompromisingly ugly and severe, so that if left totally undraped they give a cheerless aspect to the room. Yet curtains are apt to be stuffy and portieres are apt to shut

out the air, and the unfortunate housewife stands midway between her desire for decoration and the necessity she feels for providing all possible ventilation. Let her buy the light, almost diaphanous, material intended for summer draperies, and let her see to it that the design is dainty.

The very charming arrangement for a double window drapery shown in the cut is designed for a bedroom or boudoir, but it might, if the material were selected aright, be used with equally good effect in the simple "sitting-room" of a country home. As shown in the drawing, the window is draped with inexpensive cotton crepe, old blue in tone, with a simple conventional figure in white. While it is charming in color and excellent in its lines, it costs an absurdly small sum. The crepe, which is one yard wide, can be purchased for 15 cents a yard, and the edge of a single white ball for a trifle more. In order to get absolutely free use of the window both for light and air, the curtains are hung from a small rod beneath the drapery that adds so largely to their effect. They are looped in preference to being allowed to hang straight, as that method regulates without sacrificing the amount of air desired. The drapery over the pole, of course, is stationary and does not move as the curtain does, so that even when the greatest exposure is obtained there are graceful folds and lines in place of the hard, ugly woodwork that is ordinarily seen. Cretonne, Madras, Japanese crepe and almost any of the excellent lightweight materials now in vogue might well be used.

DRESSING THE HAIR.

New York Herald.

A heavy head of hair demands a great deal of time. It is a natural ornament which one desires to keep as long as possible. If properly worn the hair is supple, light and very easy to manage.

To obtain the best results it is necessary to apply to a good hairdresser, who will tell you, according to the nature of your hair, the attention that you should give to it.

For several years an abundant head of hair has shell. Another 1830 style has

the hair drawn tight, forming two shells, one upon the other.

Another style has the hair raised and puffed in the front, twisted and ending in a ball, and this is varied by making it very much frizzed and to stand out from the head, finishing with a comb in front.

In another model the hair is raised, the back is frizzed and a twist ends in a lock coming forward.

A stylish coiffure has the hair raised a la Chinese; a little tight twist almost in the neck.

A pretty style is to separate the hair into waved bands with a simple twist in the nape of the neck.

For a great deal of hair the chignon is made frizzy; the hair is waved all over, with little curls in the front.

THE HANDY SHIRT WAIST.

New York Advertiser.

To have your serge dress live up to all the possibilities of which it is capable you must have a goodly number of shirt waists in your summer wardrobe.

They are absolutely bewitching this season, and the economical woman who can't afford to buy but one is tempted beyond all feminine endurance.

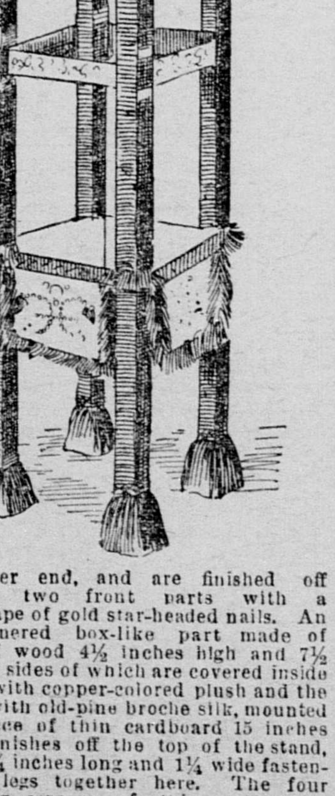
There are shirt waists plain and sedate to be worn beneath a blazer, and shirt waists enveloped in frills, which are too

pretty to cover up. They are all comfortable, dainty and fresh looking. A novelty is of pale blue crepon gingham. It is made with wide revers ouer the shoulders and an adjustable tucked yoke. The revers widen out over the shoulders and are decorated with two lines of feather stitching in white silk. The yolk is usually of sheer white cambric, which gives to the waist a delightfully cool effect. It may be made in any color you choose. The sleeves are puffed with a slight shirring about the inner seam. The rest of the waist is plaited and belted in with a band of blue ribbon fastened with a silver buckle in the front.

AN ORNAMENTAL STAND.

The Season.

This stand, which is 3 feet 8 inches high, is covered entirely with dark terra cotta frieze, pasted on with hot glue. The legs, each 3 feet 3¾ inches long, are rounded off slightly at the sharp edges, and the lower ends trimmed with a double piece of moss-green silk fringe, three inches long, headed by gold-yellow galon, fastened on with small, flat gold-headed nails, above which is seen a shape in nail work composed of flat and star-headed nails, with a pointed sharp-edged silver nail in the middle. Two rows of galon, set on 1¾ inches from each other, trim the legs eight inches from



the upper end, and are finished off on the two front parts with a small shape of gold star-headed nails. An eight-cornered box-like part made of pieces of wood 4½ inches high and 7½ wide, the sides of which are covered inside and out with copper-colored plush and the bottom with old-pine broche silk, mounted on a piece of thin cardboard 15 inches square, finishes off the top of the stand, ledges 8¼ inches long and 1¼ wide fastening the legs together here. The four projecting corners of this square are bent in and nailed with small gold nails to the sides, which are ornamented on the outside with three shapes in nail work, one being of large square-edged and star nails, the other of small round-headed nails and openwork metal rosettes ¾ and 1¼ inches large. A passementerie fringe composed of a net heading of old-gold and copper-colored silk cord, put through silk ball the same color, trims the box part. About 8¾ inches below this are ledges 1 inch wide and ¼ inch thick, covered with frieze, and the wide side ornamented with large rosettes put on beside each other, every two being nailed on with a square gold nail and small round nail knocked through the middle. A square piece of wood covered with plush is put on 21 inches from the top of the stand and supports four wooden boards 4¾ inches high, covered with white leather and decorated with a pattern in gold, silver, plain and embossed nails, trimmed at the sides and lower edge with copper-colored crimped silk fringe.

ETHIOPIAN DWARFS.

Two Pigmies From the Central African Forest Taken to Europe.

New York Sun.

Two interesting young people from Central Africa have just been brought to Europe. They are pigmy girls from the forests through which Stanley's expedition wandered. They are Akka dwarfs, and a description of them printed in England says that they are the first specimens of their race brought to Europe. This is a mistake, for several Akka dwarfs have been taken to Italy, but none of them thrived there.

Dr. Stuhlmann and his companions, while members of Dr. Emin's expedition, rescued these two young girls from the hands of their Arab captors. They are supposed to be between 17 and 20 years of age, are well proportioned, and about as tall as boys of 8 years. They bore the sea voyage from Zanzibar to Italy well. Neither was afflicted with seasickness, and they became very fond of the ship and the sea, of which they had never heard before. They were sent to Europe in charge of a young Swahili—a coast native from the neighborhood of Zanzibar—who had been Dr. Stuhlmann's man servant for five years.

They learned to speak the Swahili tongue and thus were able to communicate through the interpreter with the whites they met upon landing in Italy. They were on the way to Germany, where they will be taken before all scientific societies interested in anthropological research. The intention is to take them back to Africa in a few months, as they might not endure the winter of Europe.

The young women have small heads, prominent foreheads, with lustrous black eyes, a copper-colored complexion (few of the pigmies of Africa are black), hair which grows in separate tightly twisted curls, flat noses, and protruding red lips. Their eyes are very wide open, their hands and feet are small, and the forearm and wrist are perfectly shaped. The spine curves strongly inward, making the back hollow, and the stomach protrudes proportionately, which is a characteristic of their race.

In behavior they are described as infantile, wild and shy. One of them is rather cross in disposition, while the other is of a sunny temperament and was much pleased with the bead bracelets and other trinkets that were given to her. While in Naples they were taken to the house of a wealthy man and a number of people were invited to meet them. The sunny-faced girl showed her appreciation of chocolate bonbons and was proud of the red lining of her blue frock, and kept showing it and her red stockings to the bystanders.

They made a capital dinner on rice and meat, eating heartily as long as they were alone with their attendant and the white man servant, but stopping at once when any member of the family came into the room. At first they ate with their fingers, but, seeing the forks, picked them up and helped themselves with those instruments. They would not touch oranges, and the Italian man servant had to t ste every dish before they or the Swahili boy would partake of it. It is evident that they were suspicious of being poisoned in that strange land, and followed the practice of African chiefs, many of whom have all their food tasted before they eat it.

After dinner the little women were led into a pretty garden, where they sat under a fine palm tree. They enjoyed the sunshine, gradually acquired confidence and allowed themselves to be photographed, arm in arm, with the little son of their hostess. The sunny-faced girl shook with laughter while the photograph was being taken, but the cross girl still looked glum and suspicious. They showed neither wonder nor admiration of the people and things around them. They will attract great attention in Germany, and ethnologists will be particularly glad to improve this opportunity to acquire a better knowledge of the language of the Akkas.

FIGHTING WOLVES.

A Desperate Battle Once Waged by Three Lumbermen.

London Graphic.

Not many years ago the center of the lumber region every winter saw large camps established. Among the employes at one station were three brothers, as fine specimens of humanity as could be seen in a day's march. Soon after the snows fell they had a grievance, some difference of opinion with the boss, or head man, so they resolved to leave and make their way to the nearest settlement, a distance of about three days' journey. The snow was not yet in good order for traveling, being exceedingly loose and powdery, the result of the lowness of the thermometer, no thaw having occurred since it fell. However, our adventurers were lusty of body and stout of heart; so sunrise one brilliant morning saw them start, carrying but a light "pack" and only armed with their axes. As they slowly progressed through the pathless forest they became aware that it was becoming sensibly colder, but this was not a matter of great import to them, for there were sheltered nooks to be found and fuel in abundance existed on every side. The pine forests at this season of the year are very silent, for nearly all the birds have emigrated to warmer climes: even the wild quadrupeds seem to be affected by this silence, and, with the exception of the bay lynx and timber wolf, all have lost their voices. On the third day, as the woodmen were passing along the margin of a cedar swamp, they became conscious of the vicinity of wolves by hearing an occasional yelp.

The animals are so little dreaded by mature human beings in this country that the travelers scarcely paid attention to the circumstance, but when they had gained a well-timbered ridge a cry was heard in the distance, as if a pack of foxhounds was in full chase of game. The lumbermen at once concluded that the pursuit was after a moose or caribou and, with natural curiosity, halted with the hope of witnessing a part of the hunt. This they did sooner than expected and in a more disagreeable way than anticipated, for, coming up the slope which they had already traversed were distinctly to be seen several large wolves, followed by a numerous retinue, and, without a doubt, they were running upon the men's trail. No time was to be lost; immediate action had at once to be taken, so the three brothers placed their backs to a giant tree, and, with their trusty axes, resolved to sell their lives as dearly as possible. The first onset was led by four most powerful beasts. Two of the lumbermen, with adroit skill, disposed of their respective foes; not so with the third man. His leading assailant fell, but before he could raise his ax he was pulled down by the other brute, and but for his prompt presence of mind he must have been severely torn, if not killed. Finding that his ax could not be further used, the brave fellow dropped it, threw himself on his knees and buried his sheath-knife in the rib of his assailant. This thrust was so immediately successful in its results that in a moment after he had recovered his former weapon and his position against the tree.

In the meantime his brothers had been busy; their coolness and dexterity had done fearful execution, well attested by the dead and maimed brutes that surrounded them. The lesson that had been taught the leaders began to tell upon their followers, for they now hesitated to charge home, but retained a respectful distance, which was soon followed by all retiring into the forest retreats, doubtlessly conscious that lumbermen could not be molested with impunity. The truth of this story cannot be doubted, for next spring the heads of the slain were presented to the proper authorities to enable the brothers to claim the royalty upon wolves' skulls.

The Lust of Power.

Texas Siftings.

A Texas gentleman contracted with a negro to do some repairing on a house for the sum of $25. The next day the gentleman found that the man had hired two hands who were hard at work while he was strutting around giving instructions.

"How much do you pay them?" he was asked.

"Well, sah, I pay one man $10 and the odder one $15."

"But where does your part of the money come in?"

"Come in? Why, I'se de boss. Don't you see?"

Going over to the European continent it is found that the population of New York State to-day only lacks 262,000 of being greater than that of Sweden and Norway combined. It is greater than Norway and Denmark; 1,500,000 greater than Portugal; nearly three times as large as Denmark; half as large again as Holland, and 400,000 greater than Belgium.

THE BOON.

The shekh had wandered many a lonely day
Along the grim and parching desert way.

His Nedjid steed, at once his stay and pride,
Beneath the burning sky had failed and died,

And now the master struggled on and on
With but a scanty crese to lean upon.

One morn it chanced the well nigh famished man
Strayed on the pathway of a caravan

That late had passed, and scanned with fevered gaze
The brown plain fervid 'neath the noonday blaze.

Thinking from some o'erburdened camel's pack
A fallen boon might lie beside the track,

As ranged his eye along the barren land,
He saw a sack half buried in the sand.

He darted, seized, and in his frenzied haste,
Scattered its precious contents on the waste—

Not dates nor grain, but strewn in gleaming whorls,
Mocking his vision—iridescent pearls!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

INVITATIONS TO SMILE.

"This is what I call solid comfort," was the remark to the young husband when he partook of his wife's first sponge-cake.—Boston Gazette.

A Labor-Saving Device.

Baroness—Clara, bring me those dozen pocket handkerchiefs in which I told you to mark my monogram.

Lady's Maid—Here they are, my lady.

Baroness—But how is this? You haven't marked all of them with my monogram?

Lady's Maid—Indeed, I have, my lady. I marked one with your monogram and I marked all the others with the word "Ditto."—Schelk.

Her Explanation.

Mistress (finding visitor in kitchen)—Who is this, Mary?

Mary (confused)—My brother, m'm.

Mistress (suspiciously)—You're not much alike.

Mary (stammering apologetically)—We were, m'm; but he's just had his beard shaved off, and that makes him look different.—Quips.

A Good Reason.

"Why did you invite Mrs. Instyle to your tea when you dislike her so?"

Wife—Because I knew she wouldn't have time to get a new dress.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

An Unexpected Offer.

Visitor—I have a poem here I wish to sell.

Editor—Indeed? Are poems worth any thing?

Visitor—Of course they are.

Editor—Well, I have a desk full here. What'll you give me for the lot?—Detroit Free Press.

After the Honeymoon.

Mr. Newed—There is one virtue about these biscuits, my dear.

Mrs. Newed (blushing with pleasure)—What is it, dearest?

Mr. Newed (brutally)—If they were worth their weight in gold we would be everlastingly rich.—Truth.

Down in Georgia.

Now, who cares for an office
When the west wind is blowin'
An' river fish make lines go "swish,"
An' melons are a-growin'?
—Atlanta Constitution.

A Substantial Fluid.

Timid Visitor—Isn't this water unhealthy?

Chicago Landlord—What? That water, sir, is filled with life and strength.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Architect Was Pleased.

"This is not altogether the kind of a house I counted on," said a suburban resident, showing his new residence to a friend, "but the architect says it suits him."—Philadelphia Record.

A Bad Combination.

Meekison—That flat house was fireproof, was it not?

Murdison—Yes.

Meekison—Well, how did it happen to get burned down?

Murdison—It was set on fire by some safety matches that were carelessly left lying about.—New York Herald.

Up to Date.

First Frenchman—I would challenge you to deadly combat but for one thing.

Second Frenchman—What is that?

First Frenchman—There is a clause in my insurance policy against dueling.—New York Herald.

A Timely Caress.

Young lady is suddenly kissed by her cousin while she is reading a sensational novel, whereupon she remarks: "Fortunately, my dear Augustus, I am reading a delightful passage with which your kiss thoroughly harmonizes. Otherwise I would have rebuked you severely for your impudence."—Fliegende Blaetter.

Sensitive.

Dr. Emdee—Feet go to sleep? That shows your circulation is bad.

Editor Daily Kazoo—That's all you quacks know. I suppose if my corns ached that would show that the advertising patronage was falling off.—New York Herald.

At the Authors' Club.

Saidso—Schreiber wrote his "Confessions of a Bachelor" in less than a month.

Heardso—How could he do it?

Saidso—He said he dictated most of it to his wife.—New York Herald.

In the Spring.

Why should we waste time and fret?
The marigold's afire:
Each meadow has its violet,
And every fish its liar.
—New York World.

What Did She Mean?

Young Tutter—My overcoat is getting to be so tight that I'm afraid, when I go, I shall have to ask you to help me on with it.

Miss Pinkerly—I assure you, Mr. Tutter, nothing would give me greater pleasure.—The Club.

A Natural Mistake.

Mrs. Mulcahy (through the tenement air shaft)—Hurroo! Mistress Muldoon, below! Are yez corn bafe an' cabbige boilin' over?

Mrs. Muldoon (below)—Whisht! No; but me ould mon's smokin' a cigarette thot a dood gev him on l'avin' th' cab lasht noight!—Puck.

English as She Is Spelled.

A poor little fellow called Vaughan
Was playing one day on a laughan,
When a whirlwind came nigh,
Took him up to the skigh.
And none could tell where he had gaughan.
—Truth.

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