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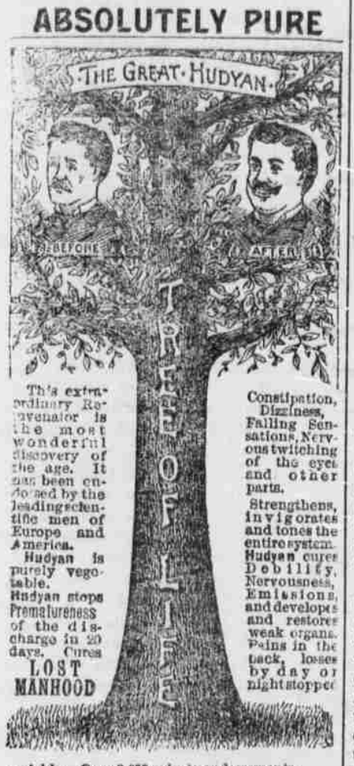

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TALES OF THE SEA.

WEIRD YARNS OF THE SUPERNATURAL SPUN BY THE CAPTAIN.

The Skull In the Chain Locker—The Unlucky Bark In the Demerara Trade That Was Said to Be Haunted—The Story of an Exile From Salvador.

We were eating dinner one night on the old cargo ship and talking of the happenings at sea and on shore that are called supernatural when the captain said:

"One sees some things at sea not supernatural which are fit to make a nervous man see ghosts. There was that case in one of Green's liners to the colonies, where a man was sent down to clean out the chain locker. The locker had seemed foul all the passage home, and so they hoisted out the chain and sent this fellow down with his brush and soap and bucket, with a lamp, to clean it out. I'll wager he saw ghosts for a year after that, for when he'd got down on his knees to begin scrubbing he found himself bending over the skull of a dead man.

"It was most likely a man that had stowed away out in the colony and had been caught under the cable when they were running it down quickly, and so had the life crushed out of him.

"However, I did know of a case that seemed supernatural right enough. It was in the Demerara trade, and I was acquainted with the first officer of the bark where it all happened.

"In the first place, while she was out there loaded and ready to sail, the captain had trouble with one of the seamen, who drew out his knife and stabbed him to death then and there. The mate afterward took her home, but on the way a passenger took to ailing in some mysterious fashion and up and died very suddenly.

"Of course she was a haunted ship when she arrived home, and so the owners had her name changed, and she was refitted and painted up entirely different from what she had been. Then she sailed away with a new captain, but on the way out he took to drink, and by the time she reached Demerara he was off his head and killed himself with a revolver.

"Now she was haunted, sure enough, if you could believe the mate. Mind you, after she was refitted the mate said never a word to the new captain about what had happened in her before, and even when a new captain came out from home to take charge of her, believing that the last captain was naturally a drunkard, instead of one who had taken to it after coming on this ship, this first officer never said a word, because he did not believe in ghosts or even in a future state.

"However, the first night the new captain was on board the trouble began. The captain at about 9 o'clock went to his room and retired. An hour later he was calling the mate and telling that he had gone to sleep and then had been awakened by a light in the room. On opening his eyes he saw a short, thick-set man, with side whiskers, in the armchair at the desk, leaning over, with his elbows on the desk, holding his head between his hands and saying: 'Oh, my poor head! Oh, my poor head!'

"That was enough for the mate. He left the vessel that night with all hands. This new captain knew nothing of the style or manner of the one who had killed himself, and yet the picture—ghost or what you may call it—in the chair was the image in appearance and dress of the suicide and had complained in precisely the words and voice of the dead man."

This brought out the story of an exile from Salvador whom the narrator met in Guatemala. Having got into trouble with the authorities, Senor Don Sebastian Mojarieta saved his life by fleeing to Amapala, Honduras, as many another exile has done, and there taking a steamer north to San Jose, Guatemala.

A friend of his who was involved in like manner was to have reached Amapala by a different route in time for the same steamer, and to prevent any possible delays Mojarieta engaged staterooms and secured passes from the Amapala authorities for his friend and himself as soon as he arrived. But the steamer day came without his friend, and Mojarieta was obliged to sail alone.

"At the usual hour, on the first night out," the story teller went on, "Mojarieta retired and went to sleep, but had no sooner dozed off than he awoke, hearing his friend's voice, as he says, in the next stateroom, which he had supposed to be empty. Leaving his berth, he went out into the passageway and opened the door to the adjoining room, and there, he says, he saw lying in the berth the body of his friend fully dressed, but with three bullet holes in the breast of his coat and one in the right cheek.

"At that Mojarieta fainted and was found on the deck by the steward and put to bed again. Thereafter it was a most miserable passage, for the vessel touched at both of the Salvador ports and was about a week reaching San Jose. Mojarieta was sure his friend had been shot and expected a force to come off from each of the Salvador ports to demand him. Moreover, he was haunted continually by that picture of his dead friend.

"Once in Guatemala he obtained employment quickly and then began to recover something of his former spirits. He ascribed his vision to his overwrought imagination and was beginning to hope that his friend would yet appear when a letter was received from a relative in Salvador. It not only told that the friend had been shot by the government soldiers, but described the wounds of the body after it was dead. Mojarieta declares that the description accurately portrayed the vision he had of his friend, and he believes that his friend's spirit, being unable to rest or wholly throw off its desire to take passage on the steamer, had come on board and was occupying that berth."—New York Sun.

Politeness In an Emergency.

Colonel William Nave's chivalry and politeness are household words out west. One day the colonel was a passenger on a western train which was held up by train robbers. While the robbers were going through the passengers it was whispered around that the leader was none other than the notorious Jesse James. When it came to Colonel Nave's turn to empty his pockets, he said to the leader, "Am I correctly informed, sir, that I have the honor of being robbed by the celebrated Jesse James?"

"That's my name, sir," was the reply.

"Then, sir, I tender you my regrets and apologies," said Colonel Nave. "I am mortified to say that I have only $3.80 in my clothes. If I had anticipated this distinguished privilege, I assure you that I would have been better supplied with currency. However, I happen to have a blank check, and if you will allow me I will take a great deal of pleasure in filling it out, payable to your order."

"Well, I'll be blessed! You're a cool one," said the robber chief. "But I'll be hanged if you shall outdo me in politeness. You can keep your $3.80 and your check too."

"But I insist, sir!"

"Oh, you be hanged!" said James, and he went on and lifted the next passenger's watch.—Cor. Chicago Inter Ocean.

Embarrassing.

The short man got in the car at the corner of Broadway and Reade streets and took the only vacant seat, next to the tall man with chin whiskers. In a few minutes he began a conversation with the tall man, or rather made remarks, to which the tall man nodded assent or disagreement as the occasion demanded.

Finally the short man nudged the tall man, and pointing to a young man in the farther corner of the car, who wore an unusually high collar and conspicuous tie, he coarsely whispered:

"Look at that young fellow's get up. Isn't it strange that men should make such guys of themselves?"

"Very," answered the tall man dryly.

"If I were his father, I wouldn't be seen on the street with him."

"Probably not," said the tall man as he rose, and with a motion of the hand to the young man he said, "Come on, son," and the two left the car.

The short man looked at the floor, and the other passengers tittered, and at the next corner the short man got out and waited for the next car.—New York Herald.

An Important Amendment.

A certain Russian princess lost her husband a few years ago, at which she was inconsolable and raised a fine mausoleum to his memory with this inscription:

"My grief is so great that I cannot bear it."

Time rolled on and accomplished its usual work of forgetfulness, and the lady one morning was remarried to a handsome officer in the imperial guards, followed by an inexpressibly happy honeymoon. Then the day came when the inscription consecrated to No. 1 began to trouble the now consoled widow, who, with most naive simplicity, modified it by the addition of a single word:

"My grief is so great I cannot bear it—alone."—Exchange.

Notice to Humorists.

Jokes on the following subjects must not be sent in to Tit-Bits for the next ten years:

About mothers-in-law; doctors killing their patients; lovers occupying one chair and sitting up late at night burning gas, with the attendant expostulation of the irate parents; lovers frightened by watchdogs; dairymen and watering of milk; borrowed umbrellas, never returned; l'enfant terrible, who is always giving away his sister in the presence of her suitor; trying to find a pocket in a woman's dress; going through husband's pocket while asleep; about people being photographed looking pleasant; curious things knocked down at auctions because one nods to a friend.—Tit-Bits.

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