

The Journal.

Walter & Deisinger, Proprietors

B. O. DEISINGER, Associate Editor

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Millheim on the L. C. & S. C. R. R. has a population of 600-700 is a thriving business center, and controls the trade of an average radius of over eight miles, in which the Journal has a large circulation from all other county papers combined.

The Haunted Ship.

I shipped in the Norway for the passage from Cronstadt to Hull, and another English gentleman, who went by the name of Jack Hastings, joined her at the same time. He and I lodged together on the shore, and became somewhat acquainted before we became shipmates. He was a man of considerable information, and from his talk, had seen his share of the world but was not much of a sailor, as I had already surmised from the cut of his jaw.

We found Capt. Phelps, of the Norway a Tartar in the worst sense of the word; and the voyage was anything but a pleasant one, especially to Hastings. He had shipped for an able seaman's wages, and his deficiencies were soon apparent, especially to a captain who had a hawk's eye for the weak points in a man, that he might come down on him. As I had a strong feeling of respect for the young man, I stood his friend whenever I could, by trying to do more than my own share of duty, and covering up his shortcomings; but I couldn't always be as kind as I wished.

One night when it was blowing quite fresh, and I was at the wheel, the captain was up, and had all hands putting reefs in the topsails. The men had laid down on deck, and were mending the halyards to hold away, when poor Hastings, instead of the reef-looker, let go the weather foretopsail brace, and away went the yard fore and aft. However, by luffing up smartly, we managed to get it cleeked in again without carrying away anything. But Capt. Phelps, frothing at the mouth, vowed he would tar the clumsy lubber's hide that did it, and would ride him down like a pigsticker. He rushed at Hastings with a piece of ratline stuff, and brought it down, with a terrific cut, over his neck and shoulders.

As he raised it again to repeat the blow, while all hands stood looking on, I rushed into silence, a voice from aloft roared out: "Hold your hand!" The sound, which was wonderfully loud and clear, seemed to come down out of the mainmast. The captain fell back aft, so as to look up, but could see nothing.

"Aloft, there!" he yelled, in a rage. "No answer." "Maintop, there!" "Hullo!" was answered spitefully. "Come down on deck!" "Come up here and see how you like it!" The captain's rage was now fearful to behold.

"Who's aloft there? Who is it, Mr. Raynor?" he inquired of the mate. "Nobody that I know of, sir," answered the officer. "They're all here in sight." The men looked from one to another, but the number was correct. The second mate, without waiting for orders, sprang up aloft and looked over the top-rim, then made the circuit of it, looking all around the mast-head, and reported himself alone. The captain dropped his repeater end and went below, his mind in a strange chaos of rage and fear, and Hastings escaped further beating for that night.

But a few days were sufficient for the captain to forget his fears, and Hastings was the next victim of his wrath. He had ordered me to make a lanyard knot in the end of an old, ragged rope, to be used for a lashing somewhere. I did so, and returned it to him, telling him I had made the best job of it that I could. "Well, if that's your best," said he, "you're as much of a lubber as our partner, Hastings. I'll dock you both to our hairy seaman's pay." In vain I remonstrated, saying that the rope was too much worn and jagged to make a neat piece of work.

"Jagged, is it? Well, I'll finish it up over your lubberly back." "No you won't?" sung out a voice from behind the long boat. He rustled round in the direction of the sound, but there was no one there.

"Who was that that spoke?" he cried. "If I knew who he was I'd cut his heart out."

It was broad daylight, and all could see that there was no one up there. I was quite as much startled and mystified as my tyrant could possibly be, but the diversion served as good a purpose as the previous occasion, for he did not attack me again. Had he done so I meant to resist, and grapple with him, if it cost me my life.

That night the Captain's slumbers were disturbed by a fierce cry, which appeared to come in from the side light in his state room, left open for fresh air. The cry had been heard by the mate on the quarter-deck, and by Hastings, at the wheel, who could give no explanation of it, and seemed to share his astonishment and fear, when he rushed on deck and looked vainly over the quarter in search of the cause.

From that day he was harassed and persecuted at every turn by an "invisible presence," which gave him no peace of his life. Whether on deck or below he found no escape from it, and especially when he began to abuse or swear at any of the hidden champion invariably took their part, the insolent laugh rang in his ear on every such occasion, seeming to come from overhead.

But no such manifestation ever troubled us in the fore-castle, nor did the unearthly voice ever address any one on board except Capt. Phelps. The more superstitious part of our crew would rather have borne his tyrannical treatment than have lived in a haunted ship, while some of us welcomed a friend in this unaccountable spiritual presence, or whatever it might be.

The captain's angry passions were to some degree checked by it, though now and then they broke forth so suddenly that the object of his fury received a blow before it could interfere. We had arrived within a couple of days' sail of the English coast, when, becoming exasperated by some blunder of Hastings, he hurled a blinding pin, which struck him on the head. The poor fellow suddenly clapped both hands to the spot with a yell and rushed into the fore-castle. The captain, after having thrown the missile, appeared, as I thought, surprised at not hearing anything, and I noticed his glance nervously aloft. But still hearing nothing he recovered his courage and ordered Mr. Raynor to "call that man on-deck again."

The mate, getting no answer to his call, went below and found Hastings delirious. He reported that he believed the man to be in a critical condition, and the captain directed him to do whatever he thought best for his relief. I think Capt. Phelps, like some other hard cases that I have sailed with, did not dare venture into the fore-castle himself, for fear that he might never get out again alive.

That night it became necessary to call all hands out to reef again, and while we were on the yards a thrilling cry arose from the bows, such as might well have been raised by a maniac. A human form was seen by several of us erect on the rail, near the fore-swifter, and then a loud splash was heard in the water under our bow.

Mr. Raynor and the captain, who were on deck, rushed to the side; a hat was seen for a moment bobbing up on the crest of the sea, and the same dreadful yell of insanity was repeated, even more shrill than before. Captain Phelps echoed the cry, but faintly, and fell insensible to the deck.

Mr. Raynor hailed us on the top-sail yard with a voice like a trumpet blast—"Lay down from aloft! Clear away the small boat!"

We thought the mate was quite as mad as the poor suicide; and so he was for the moment. By the time we reached the deck he was ready to countermand the order. Everything was hidden in darkness, the wind and sea fast increasing; and it was hardly possible, even then, for the clumsy little boat to live. The captain, still unconscious, was carried below, with many a muttered wish that he might never come up again; and bitter were the oaths of vengeance, mingled with kind words and tears for our departed messmate, that went round among our wretched little circle during that stormy, dismal night.

When the Hull pilot boarded us, forty-eight hours afterward, Capt. Phelps was at his post, trying to look like himself, but still pale and trembling. The mate told us that he should have him arrested as soon as we arrive in port. But I think he must have relented and connived at his escape, for he was missing before the ship was fairly secured. I don't think he was ever brought to justice, though I did not wait to see. I was glad enough to shake the dust of the Norway off my feet, and to forget, if possible, the history of the voyage.

But I often found myself, while on subsequent voyages, puzzling my brain to account for the strange phenomena of which I have spoken. Five years passed away and I was none the wiser in that respect, when

I found myself in Liverpool, where I had arrived from a South American voyage and had been paid off with fifty pounds—a considerable sum for me to have in my possession at one time.

Strolling along the streets at early evening, ready for anything in the way of amusement that might turn up, my attention was caught by a poster announcing the performance of "Prof. Holbrook, the unrivaled and world-renowned ventriloquist." I had never seen a performance of that sort; but after reading the bill I resolved to go. I was just in time when I reached the hall of exhibition, and taking a ticket I entered and took a seat. I thought the professor's entertainment the most wonderful thing I had ever seen or heard. After a variety of sounds and voices had been imitated with marvellous skill, he informed us that he would hold a conversation with an imaginary person up the chimney. When the responsive "Ha, ha!" came down I was startled to such a degree as to rise from my seat. It was the same voice, in precisely the same peculiar tones that I had heard so many times from the Norway's maintop.

A minute later, the professor having finished his part, came forward to the front of the stage; and, in spite of his flowing beard and other disguises, I recognized one whom I had supposed to be dead five years before.

"Jack Hastings!" said I, aloud, forgetting, in my excitement, where I was.

"Sit down!" "Put him out!" cried a dozen voices at once. I subsided, of course, but not before I had received a sign of recognition from the ventriloquist. When the performance was over he beckoned to me, and in the privacy of his own room grasped my hand with a hearty pressure.

"Hastings," I asked, "how in the name of miracles were you saved?"

"Saved! Where?"

"When you jumped overboard raving mad?"

He laughed—his own natural, hearty laugh; not the unearthly one which he sent down from chimneys and mastheads.

"I never jumped overboard, Ashton," said he; "and I never was any more mad than I am at this moment. It was only a plan to frighten old Phelps, and I think it succeeded but too well. If he had been tried for his life and I had thought him in danger, I should have appeared in court and frightened him again to save his life. But he could not be found, and I never heard of him since. My marriage was all a sham, and the man overboard was only a bundle of old duds, surmounted by my old hat. I slipped down into the fore-castle and lay concealed till the night after the ship arrived, when I stole out and went ashore. Of course you understand the cries you heard?"

"Certainly; and the other strange sounds on board. Your ventriloquist explains the whole matter."

"I performed in most of the cities and large towns in England before I knew you; but I was then dissipated in my habits, and squandered all that I made. While on one of my spees I shipped and went to sea, and that is how you found me in Cronstadt. But I was never stock to make a sailor of. Since I have returned I have done well and saved money, and you must allow that I acquit myself better on this stage than I did on board the Norway."

And that was the only haunted ship that ever I was in. I've heard of others, but probably those cases might all be explained in some similar way.

A SILENCED FATHER.

The other day a boy about fifteen years of age entered a grocery store and after looking around for a few minutes he secreted a loaf of bread under his coat and started out. He was overhauled on the street by the grocer, who was shouting for an officer, when the lad's father came along and cried out:

"What! Is it my Thomas? Has my Thomas done to be a thief? Take him to the station at once!"

"You want him looked up, do you?" asked the grocer.

"I do! A child of mine that steals shall go to the prison. Thomas is a wild bad boy."

"And who has made me so?" cried the boy as he looked around on the crowd. "Mother—mother died three years ago, and father there hasn't spoke one kind word to any of the children since! I haven't slept in the house for months! Look at the bruises on my arms!"

"Thomas, you know I'm kind to all of you," replied the father, as the lad bared his arms.

"I haven't got a shirt to my name," continued the boy as he threw open his coat, "and Sam and Mary are worse off, 'cause they are barefooted. There hasn't been fire or wood in our house for two days, and when I came here to steal this bread the children were in bed shivering and starving. If you don't believe it, come along with me!"

The crowd believed it; there were tears in the boy's eyes and a quiver to his chin, and when the father went to remonstrate, a man in the crowd seized him, shook his heels in the air and yelled:

"You old Satan, you are a loafer and a gutter drunkard, and I know it, and if you ever lay hand on one of the children again I'll follow you to Texas but what I'll break every bone in your body!"

"Let the boy go!" cried the crowd, and he was released. More, he was given more bread and provisions than he could carry home at one load.

FASHIONABLE PREACHING.—As he was ascending the pulpit steps, one of the elders button-holed him to whisper an additional caution. "The liquor dealer has just come into the church, and he gives us a lift sometimes. I wish you would not be particular to allude to the whiskey business, or the temperance question." The young minister, getting fairly frightened to see the moral ground thus steadily narrowing before him, inquired:

"Whom or what shall I preach against, then?" The elder's reply came in an air of triumph. "Preach against the Mormons; they haven't got a friend in town!"

WHAT SHE TOOK.—A girl in St. Joseph, Mo., went to a drug store to buy arsenic with which to kill herself. The clerk happened to know that she had quarrelled with her lover, and he guessed her purpose. He gave her corn starch instead of arsenic, and hurried out to tell her lover. The lover repented having grieved the girl, went to her house, found her lying on the sofa waiting in vain to die of a dose of corn starch, and made up with her.

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