The Columbian.

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BLOOMSBURG, PA., FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1889. VOL. 24. NO. 50.

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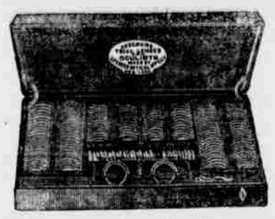

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A TERRIBLE LESSON.

HOW I WAS ALMOST THE CAUSE OF A FEARFUL DISASTER.

The broad canvass flapped heavily, the frigate rolled to port, then slowly by starboard in the last swell that lifted the huge fabric, and, a minute later, she lay nearly motionless as the faint flutter of the breeze died away aloft, and even the heaving of the great ocean seemed to subside.

We were becalmed off the line under the burning sun, whose rays melted the tar upon the shrouds, heated the anchors as if they had just been drawn from the furnace and started the pitch from the deck-planks, which fairly scorched the feet of the men through the soles of their pumps, in spite of the awning that covered almost every part of the upper or spar-deck.

Some of the hands fairly gasped for breath, and I heard the old coxswain of the first cutter say that it was the "tightest" day he had "weathered" since he was a boy.

In fact, among the whole of that ship's crew of five hundred men, even the strongest felt the effects of the heat, and many of the broad-shouldered, sun-embrowned fellows, who, before noon, had been sitting around on gun-slides and on the decks reading, conversing or mending their clothes, were now lazily reclining at full length, while the young topmen, usually so brisk and lively, no longer stood erect in the tops but leaned wearily against the masts and the rigging.

Therefore, when sturdy grown men thus acknowledged the power of old Sol, it seemed to me—a mere youthful novice, on his first voyage, in training for a reefer's warrant—that I had good reason to be provoked at our officer of the deck — Lieutenant Biddle — for sending me aloft, an hour before sundown, to the foretop-gallant cross-trees where, though it was late in the day, I could still feel the rays of the old "scorcher" darted at my devoted head like a hundred red-hot wires.

"What need," I reasoned, "of a look-out being kept in a dead calm? The little brig, our tender, which we last saw a couple of leagues to leeward, is no longer visible in the haze thereaway, and though my own father —Lieutenant Colton—is in command of her, I see no use of my watching for signals from him in this weather."

These thoughts I expressed aloud to the sturdy captain of the foretop, when he came up, soon after, to attach and hang to the cross-trees a coil of rope for reeving new top-gallant halliards on the morrow.

"Lieutenant Biddle knows what he is about, sir," the man answered, "Do you see that thick haze off there to windward, as well as to leeward?"

"Aye, aye, plainly."

"Well, that may mean a heavy blow, sir, or it may not. In either case you should keep a sharp lookout, as ordered. Always obey orders, my boy, if you would win your warrant; always do your duty without questioning why you were sent to perform it, and you will do well; otherwise, you will get into trouble."

The man went down to the top again, and I am sorry to say that I had not deemed his advice of sufficient importance to give it much attention.

As darkness closed about us, I made no very determined effort to rid myself of the dull, drowsy sensation, engendered by the close, sultry night, and the consequence was that ere I was aware of it, with my arms twined around the stay, near which I sat, I fell asleep.

This was the first time that I had ever actually fallen asleep aloft, and, although an experienced "Jack" will sometimes, on sultry nights, when off duty, safely enjoy a sound slumber in the breezy fortop, even of a rolling, plunging ship, yet it would have been extremely perilous even for such a person to take a nap on the narrow perch I now occupied, with only two cross-sticks.

Exactly how long I slept I know not, but presently I dreamed that my father, Lieutenant Colton, seeming to rise up pale, ghastly and dripping from the ocean, was hovering in the air, directly before me, solemnly shaking his finger at me, and saying, in a hollow voice:

"Frank! Frank! awake! awake! Have I not always advised you to be true and vigilant at the post of duty? God help you, boy! This is *criminal* carelessness! Awake! awake for your life!"

The last words seemed to fall upon my ears in a sort of a howling scream, and it was this scream—not that of any human voice, as I now discovered —which aroused me from my slumber. As I opened my eyes, that shriek rang louder than I had heard it in my dream, for it was the shriek of a storm and such a storm as appalled and startled my sudden awakened senses.

A blinding flash of lightning crossed my vision, dark clouds of vapor were around me, I seemed to be borne along with terrific velocity on the roaring, whistling gale, while below me I beheld the gleam of the frigate's battle lanterns, by which I could see nimble forms hurrying to and fro, far beneath my confused gaze, hauling on ropes, putting extra lashing about the launch, carefully securing the guns, while the hoarse voices of the boatswain and his mates, together with the shouts of the officer of the deck through his trumpet, were blended with the answering cries from the topmen and others aloft, who were furling and reefing the heavier canvass—lighter sails, evidently, having already been taken in.

All these sights and noises, together with the din of the tempest, the roar of the ocean, the lurching and rolling of the hugh black hull as it was hurled along like a mere wisp through the angry waters, surprised and puzzled me; and in the half-dazed condition of my suddenly awakened brain, scarcely realizing my precarious situation there aloft, my hold of the stay, round which, when asleep, I had still kept my arm, became loosened by a violent pitch of the ship, and away I went, falling headlong from my position.

Down—down, with a horrible, sickening sensation in my breast, and even at this dreadful moment, with a sort of consciousness that my impending doom was the result of the neglect of duty, I shot through space toward the dimly-lighted deck, which, before my distorted vision, seemed springing up to meet me and thus hasten my fate of being dashed to death. Wildly throwing out my arms and clutching at the air the instant I fell, something the next moment touched one of my hands. It was, as I afterwards learned, a dangling rope—the foreto'-gallant studding sail halliard—which had previously been accidently loosened from the belaying pin below, and around this rope my fingers closed with a convulsive grasp, while my other hand was quickly used to add to the force of my grip. Alas! my decent had been too swift to enable me to retain my hold. As my body "righted" my hands kept to the rope but for a few seconds, my fingers slid away from the strands, and my descent through the air continued. In some degree my grasp of the line had checked the force of my fall, but I had as yet descended only about thirty feet, and the frightful distance of nearly seventy feet of space yet intervened between me and the deck, when, to my surprise, my further downward course was suddenly stopped with a jerk that nearly took the breath from my body, and I found myself swaying like a pendulum in mid-air, with a rope securely tied about my breast beneath the arms.

It is perhaps needless to state that this rope had been made fast to me while I was asleep, though by whom I could not imagine at the time. It had proved to be the means of saving my life, but had not my fall been previously checked by my clutching the studding-sale halliard, as I have mentioned I think I would have been somewhat injured by the jerk of the rope when my swift descent was so suddenly stopped.

Now as I swung inward towards the shrouds, I clutched them, and shaking like a leaf, still feeling faint and dizzy, I had braced myself against the rigging, while I stood on the rat-lines, when, despite the dense gloom, I imagined I saw, directly ahead of the frigate, the dim outline of a small partly-dismasted vessel looming up, not four ship's lengths off, her hull and a portion of her shattered jib-boom lighted by the phosphorescent gleam of the raging, foaming waters.

"Sail O! right ahead!" I cried, as loudly as I could, and my cry was repeated by the sailing-master and one of the lookouts on the forecastle, the master calling out, an instant after, to the Lieutenant, in a voice of thunder:

"Hard-a-port, sir, hard-a-port, or we will be a-foul of her!"

"Hard-a-port, quartermaster!" roared the officer of the deck.

"Hard-a-port it is, sir!" bawled the quartermaster, but it was evident that no human power could now save us from running into the craft ahead.

"My God, sir, she is doomed!" shouted the sailingmaster to me. "Why did you not sing out before?"

A choking sensation in my throat prevented my answering. One of the occasional flashes of lightning that accompanied this tempest had just plainly revealed to me the fated craft ahead, and that brief glimpse had shown to me that she was the brig, our tender, which was commanded by my father.

We would run her down—this could not, it was plain, be now avoided—and it was all my fault. Had not I gone asleep—had I held a strict watch, as Lieutenant Biddle had ordered me to —I would, from my lofty position, have seen the craft soon enough to have enabled us to keep the ship off and away from her.

Now, although the two men at the helm jammed the wheel hard over, the great frigate, in that gale, with nearly every stitch of canvass stowed, was slow to answer, and on she went with terrific velocity, until suddenly there was a tremendous crash, as she struck the brig amidships with her enormous bows.

I heard the noise of the splintered woodwork, the grinding sound of the frigate's keel as she dashed along, scraping a few crackling fragments under her forefoot; then she went booming on, probably leaving behind only a few shattered pieces of the craft she had destroyed.

Meanwhile I had listened for some voice—some cry—from the ill-fated vessel, and had fancied—though it might have been the wild shout from one of our own crew blending with the din of the fierce gale—that I had heard a yell of agony as we went crashing through and over the brig.

But whether or not that cry had come from the destroyed craft, the terrible sense of my being to blame for the loss of her crew and of her Captain—*my own father*—lay like a heavy weight upon my conscience, and as I now unfastened from my breast the rope which had saved my life when I fell from aloft, I wished, for the moment, in my wild grief, that there had been no hindrance to my being dashed to instant death on the deck below.

In that tempest and in the deep gloom there was evidently no chance of any of the brig's hapless crew being saved, nevertheless, as the wind by this time had slightly shifted and abated, the frigate, by means of the reefed fore and mainsail, was got round, and she cruised about for a couple of hours burning blue lights and firing signal guns, but, as expected, no sign of the stoven vessel's people was discovered.

Lieutenant Biddle, ere now, had called me down, but he said not a word to me about negligence of duty, until the hopeless cruise for survivors of the wrecked craft was nearly ended. Then he sternly summoned me before him, and demanded why I had not kept a good lookout as he had ordered.

I made no attempt to excuse myself, but miserable and dejected, confessed my going to sleep aloft, and described my fall, which, in the intense gloom, no one aboard had observed, and told how I was saved.

The grim old gunner, the master-at-arms, and some of my young shipmates afterward told me that they had never so woe-be-gone and deplorable a picture as I presented at this time—and I believe that the Lieutenant, though a stern officer, felt sorry for me, as, after my explanation, he dismissed me, saying that he would say no more on the subject at present.

As I left him, the thunder of another gun from the frigate boomed over the angry waters, and as the broad flash from it, blending with the ghastly gleam of our blue-lights, streamed far out over the hissing foam, we suddenly beheld a large boat containing human forms, emerging from a cloud of scudding vapor, about twenty fathoms ahead.

Only for an instant did we see it, for, as it was beyond the gleam of our lights, it was the next moment, hidden by the darkness.

"Let her luff—luff you can, quartermaster!" roared the Lieutenant.

"Luff it is, sir," was the answer; and later, as the frigate's head was steadied, we ranged alongside the boat, a rope was thrown from the gangway and she was made fast.

She proved to be the lost tender's launch, and as we hove to, no words could express my joy when my *father*, Lieutenant Colton, *sprang aboard*, to be soon followed by the rest of the brig's people.

We now learned that they had left their vessel, taking to the launch before we ran the brig down, as the latter had been wrecked and nearly water logged by the first burst of the tempest, which had caught her aback, her rudder having, previously been damaged so that she could not be properly handled by the wheel.

"Let this be a lesson to you, Frank," said my father to me, when he had the story of my neglect of duty and my narrow escape aloft. "It has happened only by mere chance (to say nothing of your peril) you have been spared the terrible remorse you would have suffered for life by causing the loss of that brig with all her crew and myself, your own father!"

I never forgot those words, and being ever after careful to faithfully perform my duty, I finally obtained a reefer's warrant.

Meanwhile I was long puzzled to guess who had tied the rope about my breast, at the time I was asleep aloft but when, at last, we reached the port of Norfolk, Virginia, and the frigate's men were discharged, a sailor informed me that it was a young foretopman, who had attached the line to me, While helping to furl the for'-to-gallant sail, he had noticed that I slept, and thinking it would be a good joke to "give some line" to a napping novice, instead of awaking him, he had steathly made fast to me a portion of the coil of rope, which, as I have stated, the captain of the top had previously brought up to the cross-tree.—*Rufus Hale, in N. Y. Ledger.*

SOUTHERN IRON-MAKING.

IS THE PIG IRON INDUSTRY OF PENNSYLVANIA DECLINING?

The great activity during the past few years in the building of blast furnaces in the South has led the over sanguine to predict the decline of pig iron manufacture in the North, especially in Pennsylvania, and the ultimate growth of the Southern states to the prominent position of the leading pig iron producing district of the country. The increase in the number of blast furnaces in the South but especially in Alabama, during the past two years has certainly been exceptional, the number in that state alone increasing from twenty-four completed and nineteen building in November 1887, to forty-four completed and eight building at the present time. All these new furnaces are of large capacity, being built upon the latest design and with powerful blowing machinery. A glance at the industry in Pennsylvania would seem to show that the prophesied decline in that state had really begun, as there are but 230 active furnaces in the state to-day, whereas two years ago there were 242 furnaces which were in condition to make pig iron, a decrease in two years of twelve.

This apparent decline in the number of furnaces in Pennsylvania, however, does not indicate a real decline in the producing capacity of the state. We have ascertained the capacity of the furnaces in Alabama in November, 1887 and November, 1889, which will be found in the following table, in comparison with the capacity of the Pennsylvania furnaces at the same dates.

STATE.	Nov., 1887. Net tons.	Nov., 1889. Net tons.	Increase. Net tons.
Penna.	5,073,088	5,733,588	659,600
Alabama	428,000	1,277,000	849,000

That the ratio of increase in Alabama is not to continue is seen by the number of stacks under construction in Alabama and Pennsylvania at the present time. Tabulating these figures we have:

Capacity.	Pennsylvania Net tons	Alabama Net tons
Increasing capacity in two years	649,600	849,000
Capacity of furnaces building	390,000	210,000
Total	1,049,600	1,059,000

It will be seen that the increase in capacity of the two states is comparatively the same.—*From Iron*

COLUMBUS' ONLY PORTRAIT.

AN IMPORTANT ARTISTIC FIND OF AN ORIGINAL LIKENESS.

On the top floor of a house in Clinton Place N. Y., is the studio of a French artist of advanced years and venerable aspect, who possesses—if certain theories he holds be correct —one of the most interesting bits of canvas in the United States. It is claimed that the picture was painted some 400 years ago, and that it is a portrait painted from life of Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America.

This suppositious portrait of the great discoverer bears a most blackened and dilapidated appearance. Close examination discloses that a strip has been torn away from one of the corners, and the canvas consists of two pieces very deftly sewn together down the centre. The portrait which is worked out with the minutest attention to detail, is that of an elderly man, whose white hair crowns a wan, rather sallow looking face. Between the fingers of the uplifted right hand is an egg.—*From Once a Week.*

Consumption Cured With Grapes.

This fell destroyer has brought a blight to many a promising life, and sadness to many a home circle. There is one remedial agent that will assist nature in throwing off this terrible disease, viz: Speer's Port Wine. It has been used by hundreds with wonderful success; has checked the progress of disease and brought thousands back to health. Its property is to make new blood. For sale by druggists.

Court Proceedings.

The Court convened on Monday morning in regular session, Hon. E. R. Ikeler President Judge and Hon. C. B. McHenry Associate on the Bench.

Est. John Leggot, auditor's report confirmed nisi.

Order to viewers for road in Scott twp. near J. M. Shew's continued.

Est. Phillip Springer, decd. Order of sale continued.

Road in Catawissa near "Notestine Hill" petition for reviewers to be appointed in case exceptions are not sustained.

Estates of Jacob Klingerman and John Santee. Orders of sale continued.

The list of jurors was called and all but George Fenstermacher were present. Gideon Michael was appointed foreman.

On motion of J. H. Maize, Esq., James A. Rohbach was admitted to practice in the several Courts of the County.

Auditors' report in Sheriff sale Charles Krug and estates Daniel Force and Joshua Savage confirmed nisi.

Est. W. A. Robbins. Opinion filed setting aside sale of real estate.

In removal of dead from Welsch Baptist Burial Ground. Opinion filed ordering the removal of the dead within six months from date.

The following reports from viewers were confirmed nisi: In favor of a bridge in Greenwood and Pine near Benj. Lee's; against a road in Pine twp. near Jerre Burger's; in favor of bridge in Sugarloaf near J. P. Fritz's; in favor of a bridge in Mifflin twp. over Heller's Run; and the reports of bridge inspectors for bridges near Eyer's Grove and near Mendenhall's.

Estates of Susan Hostler, Joseph E. Barkley, Sarah Johnson, Mary A. Brittain, Margaret J. Brittain a lunatic, Thomas Shearman and John F. Fowler, reports of sales confirmed nisi.

Est. Stephen Thomas. Auditor's report referred back to auditor.

Estates B. F. Peterman, Herman G. Creveling, J. P. Sands, William Gidding, John Harning and James C. Sylvis. Widows' appraisements confirmed nisi.

Com. vs. George Mason, Assault and battery. Recognizance entered into with W. C. Mason as surety in the sum of $500.00.

Com. vs. Alfred Yetter. Larceney. A true bill.

Com. vs. John Omlove. Assault and battery. A true bill.

Est. Sallie Johnson dec'd. Exceptions filed to confirmation of the inquisitions in partition.

Com. vs. B. & S. R. R. Co. Neglecting and refusing to re construct a road. On motion of District Attorney nolle prosequi allowed on payment of costs.

Com. vs. James Long. Fornication and bastardy. Continued on account of pending rule.

Com. vs. Samuel T. Campbell. Fornication and bastardy. Continued to next term.

Com. vs. Mrs. Mary Casey. Defendant pleads guilty and is sentenced to pay costs.

Estates Isaac Wagner and Elizabeth Gearheart. Inquisitions in partition awarded.

Estates Joseph Hess and Daniel Brewer. Reports of sales confirmed nisi.

Roads in Orange twp. near Justin Johnson's and in Benton near Ira Hess,' reports of viewers confirmed nisi.

Petition of C. C. Evans guardian of Morris R. Sloan for allowance filed.

Com. vs. Wellington Yeager. Bench warrant issued.

Com. vs. James Pheeny, Ellen Musbelheimer and Mary Doyle. Larceney A true bill on the first count.

Com. vs. Albert Yetter. The defendant pleads guilty and is sentenced to pay costs and enter into his own recognizance in $300.00 for good behavior.

George M. Moorehead, D. A. Beckley, Howard Ohl, Andrew Reichard and J. M. Shew excused as Jurors.

Com. vs. Casper Rhawn. A true bill on first count.

Road in Briarcreek near H. S. Kleck's, William Mosteller, Wm. Fleckenstine and James Brown appointed reviewers.

Road in Main near Lewis Miller's, Samuel Neyhard, Samuel yetter and R. B. Angell appointed reviewers.

Rheumatism.

Is undoubtedly caused by lactic acid in the blood, acid attacks the fibrous tissues, and causes the pains and aches in the back, shoulders, knees, ankles, hips, and wrists. Thousands of people have found in Hood's Sarsaparilla a positive cure for rheumatism. This medicine, by its purifying action, neutralizes the acidity of the blood, and also builds up and strengthens the whole body.

Railway Mail Service.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT.

Lowrie Bell, the General Superintendent of the Railway Mail Service, has submitted his report of the operations of his bureau for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1889.

The report shows that during the year postal clerks were employed in the distribution of the mails on 133,110 miles, service on the remaining 17,271 miles having been performed by means of closed pouches, which were, while in transit, in the custody of the railway employes.

Upon the subject of city delivery Mr. Bell says: "The importance of effecting an early morning delivery of mails arriving at the great commercial centres has become so apparent that much attention has been given to the perfecting and enlargement of the arrangements and schemes. By extending the system of preparation, it has been made possible to send out by the first carriers a vast amount of mail, which, by the usual process of assorting at the postoffices, could not be delivered before noon, or during the afternoon. It is believed this system can be much enlarged upon with great advantage to the public.

"Since the last annual report," says Mr. Bell,