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**EBENSBURG, PA., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1887.**

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**HOW A DWARF CAPTURED THE SUN.**

Once upon a time there was a dwarf, so very small in size that when he killed a wren—all by himself, too—he thought he was a hero in the first degree, and he strutted about as proud as a peacock.

He had one-half of the wren—a fair half; none of his irregular fractions—cooked at once for a feast for the whole lodge, and had a mind to make himself a feather coat. And by and by he saw another wren die, and then he got his coat.

But happening to go to sleep one day in the sunshine, the heat made his coat so hot that he began to sweat, and he became quite uncomfortably small, and the dwarf was furious.

He vowed he would pay the sun out.

So he got his address to plant a rope out of hair, and having made a slipknot in it, he pegged it down on the side of the hill, close to the top of it, just where he had noticed a wren die, and he went to bed.

And sure enough, when the sun rose next morning, it ran its head right into the slipknot and got caught.

The consternation in nature was prodigious, what was the matter, went and nibbled the grass through and released the luminary, whereupon everything went on just as if nothing had happened.

But the dwarf came home to his sister in the twilight. He was not going, he said, to bother himself about sun any more. It was not worth his while. He had more serious matters to attend to. And so he began making preparations for going out on another wren hunt.

Such, in the bald outline, is a red Indian story, which seems to be related to the story of the sun being captured by the luminary of the aboriginal American.

The hero is a dwarf—and this is an essential point in the folk tale of a people who consider a fine physique the first qualification of manhood—and in his pompous pursuit of very small birds, and subsequent inflation when he is successful in the chase, the leading characteristics of the red man are slyly burlesqued.

It succeeds in an impossible exploit, and in the true spirit of a hero, makes no fuss about it, but when the sun is let go by the dwarf, he affects to think that such trifles as sun-catching are beneath him, and he goes on only to the task of killing another wren.

There is a novelty in the flavor of this folk tale, which seems to be a circumstance that, so it appears to me, make the absurd story attractive. [San Francisco Chronicle.]

**THE OLD FATHER TARRANT.**

The vehicles of a place that has long been in one family possession become historic. The wheel and axle of the present "milk cart," relegated now to the farmer's transits over the fields to pastures fair, why, these were once the sparkling belongings of the froggy old man.

The ancient family coach, marking geological periods more accurately than David ever rode in the rocks; that coach whose rumble was known to the villagers before it came to sight, an inseparable belonging of your family; its front seat the throne of such a succession of kings whose reigns you recall as you contrast the Presidents, each of whom taught you more evil than your careful mother could punish out of you;—oh, "tales of my grandfather," told to you that box seat as you rode outside, and your mother and sisters made party calls.

How long you stood dreaming before the door old ask! Nothing could induce you to sell it, or to ride in it now.

You put one foot on the lower step, upon the proud patriarch door and look on it. You see that Sunday morning load all stowed, your frost-checked mother, your noisy clam-billed-and-tinkered six, your father grave and sabbatic, standing as you do now—and you feel your eyes filling; for a thought and other coaches have borne them over land and sea since then, as wide apart, and there have been chariots more ethereal for some. [Boston Globe.]

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**OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS.**

Reports of Recent Experiments of Sea Captains in Heavy Storms.

The hydrographic office of the Navy Department, in view of the evidence of the value of oil to lessen the dangerous effect of heavy seas and of the desirability of the fact as widely as possible, recently prepared circulars to be issued to commanders of vessels, recommending experiments with oil when the opportunity occurs, and reports of the result to one of the branch offices of the hydrographic office.

The use of mineral oil is not recommended, while the importance of carrying a supply of animal or vegetable oil for use in emergencies, the chief of the bureau says, cannot be overestimated.

Among the reports filed is one from Captain Avery of the schooner Jennie, in connection with a severe hurricane off the Florida coast. He says he used oil with very satisfactory results, and adds:

"After the sails were blown away, and the vessel was being driven before the wind, I took a small canvas bag and turned about five gallons of lard oil into it, and hung it over the side of the vessel, and the sea was a little of the oil to leak out and smooth the surface, so that for two hours no water broke aboard. I carried the oil in a tin can, and during the last and heaviest part of the hurricane saved the vessel and the crew."

Captain Frost, of the ship St. David, speaking of his experience in a tempest on the coast of Cuba, says:

"I got up three canvas bags, oakum and some old fish oil that had been in the ship for a long time; oakum balls were put in the bags and being saturated with oil till each bag was half full; then one and a half gallons of oil were poured into the bag on top of the oakum, and the bags were put on deck and lashed one in each weather channel, so that when the ship rolled to the windward they would go under water. In this way the water was kept off the deck and spread over the windward side of the ship. After this no water broke over."

Captain Dawson, of the ship Hallowell, speaking of a severe storm, says:

"I carried a quantity of lard oil, and when the sea was so high that the vessel was being driven before the wind, I took a small canvas bag and turned about five gallons of lard oil into it, and hung it over the side of the vessel, and the sea was a little of the oil to leak out and smooth the surface, so that for two hours no water broke aboard. I carried the oil in a tin can, and during the last and heaviest part of the hurricane saved the vessel and the crew."

**A DUCK STORY.**

"A Settler" in the Way of Astonishing and Voracious Yarns.

Several old sports were seated around the table at the Board of Trade and as usual were deeply interested in narrating their achievements in the duck-hunting line, and some very tall yarns were spun, but nobody questioned the volunteered experience of anybody else in the crowd, everything went on peacefully until Colonel Minor took a hand with the following statement, which for the time being completely paralyzed the boys.

"You fellows think you're mighty smart when you try to do us, but you've killed forty and fifty ducks at a shot. You're no good. I saw a shot once that killed a million!"

"Oh, let up," chorused the gang.

"Well, I'll make it two million, and then I'll be on the inside."

"Let's have it, then, if it isn't too much sudden death for you."

"Well, I don't care whether you believe me or not," said the old gentleman, "but 't's the truth I'm telling you."

"In 1845 I was captain of the steamboat Gazelle, running in the gulf trade from Houston to Galveston, coasting as it were, and being a fine view of the bay was a river barely navigable at the best of times.

"The surrounding country was unsettled, and the region was a perfect goldfield for sportsmen. We got a party of our regulars, and seemed to make it their headquarters, more especially during stormy weather, as the locality was well sheltered and landlocked. One storm after we left Galveston on the particular trip, and as steamboats were not built either as large or as fast as they are at the present time, we broke for shelter and anchored at the mouth of the river. [The spot is now known as San Jacinto Bay.]

"It was barely twilight, but the river was so dark that we saw a solid mass of ducks, geese and trout."

"Suddenly a flash of lightning or a thunderbolt sprang out of the sky, there was a deafening and blinding shock, such as I had never before or have ever since experienced, and all these ducks turned up their toes."

"Bill 'em all!" asked one of the crowd.

"Blasphemy! If I know," said the Colonel, "but the whole of Galveston Bay was covered with ducks, and the present time, we broke for shelter and anchored at the mouth of the river. [The spot is now known as San Jacinto Bay.]

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An' the cat-bird up 'n' sneaked away a meow, a meow, a meow.

Has the killdeer in the stubble with dandy trills and trignings.

Has the jays a hollerin' an' a rillin' of each other with their brassy, sassy chaffin'.

But the jays-birds ain't no cowards, an' so they keep on stayin'.

Just as pert as they can be, 'f it's 'n't any layin'.

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Some Chapters of Mystery From the State Department at Washington.

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