

THE GOLDEN DAYS DEPARTED.

O voices still beneath the churchyard sod, Bright eyes that glistened from behind long lashes...

GOING ASHORE.

"There she is, sir; that's the snest just off the point there. She's coming stem on, and in an hour if she isn't on Bank Sands, I'm a Dutchman."

a boatload coming ashore. There, don't you see—now a-top o' that breaker!" I caught sight of a small boat crowded with figures, and then there seemed to be a tall wave curl over it, and I saw it no more.

"I'm ready, mates, if you're going," a remark that elicited no response, for every one stood stolidly gazing toward the doomed vessel.

"Bang!" went the dull, smothered report of a heavy gun, and in the shade of the coming night I just caught sight of a faint flash of light.

"No, no!" was the reply; and in the hush of expectation two men rose in the boat, dashed off their life-belt, and amid half-muttered groans, leaped out from their places and ran up the sands to the bank where they disappeared.

"Over seventy, sir," shouted a voice in response to a query. "Old man-o'-war's-man. Been in many a storm, but this here's awful."

"God help them!" I muttered. "Amen!" said the old man; and just then, away to our left, we saw the lifeboat carriage coming down at a trot, drawn by two stout horses, while a loud and prolonged "hurrah" welcomed its arrival.

ready to rush down and secure anything that might be washed ashore from the wreck. More straw was heaped upon the fire, and the flames and sparks rushed inland as they arose with the mighty current of air and darted across the sand-bank.

All at once there was a cry of "Here she comes!" but it was prolonged into a wild wail of despair, for by the light from the fire the boat could be seen broadside on and close ashore, and then after tossing about for a moment, she was dashed, bottom upward, upon the sands.

"Has she gone to pieces?" he whispered, stopping to wipe the blood away that oozed from his lips. "I fear so," I replied; "the shore is strewn with wreck."

"Where are you hurt?" "Ribs all crushed," he whispered. "It was under the gunwale of the boat, and it's all over. I could see it in the doctor's locker."

"But you did all as a part of your duty," he whispered, "duty. Yes, sailors should always do their duty, and I felt it was mine to-night to go. We old men-o'-war's men were trained to answer a call in calm or storm; and when lives were at stake to-night I felt that I was called, and I hope I did my duty."

"I promised I would not, and sat watching hour after hour, listening to the hard breathing of the sufferer, who seemed to sink into a state of stupor, moaning at intervals as he tossed his head from side to side on the pillow, and muttered a few words, broken and half spoken. The storm gradually sunk till the wind quite lulled, and at about three o'clock I half drew the curtain and looked out upon the sea, which still tossed fearfully, though all above was calm and peaceful, a light cloud just drifting slowly past the pale bright moon."

ashing upon the further shore. Breakers ahead! breakers ahead! Look out there! The old vessel's struck and she's going to pieces—the old seventy-four that's weathered many a storm, going ashore, farweld, merrimack; one short struggle, one cold plunge and a hopeful heart—a brave striking out through the harsh breakers! Land hot land hot on other the side—and it's a land of rest—a land of peace and hope. Now for it! The rush of the dark waters is coming—blinding—drowning—but keep a bold heart, merrimack. God bless you! I'm going ashore!"

Almost any one could collect and tell a good many incidents about lost money that has been found if he would try, but these cases came under our own observation, and we can vouch for their truth.

A farmer in Kinnickinnick Valley was paid \$1,000 while he was loading hay. He put it in his vest pocket, and after he had unloaded the hay he discovered that he had lost it, and no doubt had pitched the whole load into the snow on top of it.

"What did you want of me?" says the President. "I wanted to see you about a certificate of deposit I've got on your bank for eighteen dollars. Everything is gone. I can't pay it. Everything is gone."

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"I could not drag myself away from the stirring scene around me, for I seemed held to the spot by a strange fascination. All at once a lurid light shot up, for a quantity of straw had been set on fire, and the flames roared and crackled as dry seaweed and pieces of wood were heaped up to increase the glare, which appeared to gild the crests of the waves, and threw into bold relief the figures on the sands—some watching eagerly the fringe of breakers,

The men who hunt alligators for their hides and teeth reap their harvest in hot weather. The warm weather induces great numbers of alligators to frequent the marshy banks of the rivers, and the absence of sportsmen during this season makes them comparatively fearless. The most successful hunters hunt only in dark nights. A few nights ago I had my slumbers broken several times by the discharge of guns. On repairing to the banks of the river the next morning to ascertain the cause of the noises I found two young men occupying a hastily constructed palmetto-farm camp. Six dead alligators were lying around the camp, varying in length from four to eight feet. The hunters had killed them the previous night. One of the young men was busy skinning the alligators, while the other, with the aid of a single cooking utensil which answered the purpose of baking oven and coffee pot, was preparing a frugal morning meal. The skin is removed from the belly, the under part of the jaws, and the inside of the legs. The skin on the back is worthless. As soon as the skins are removed they are salted and packed in barrels, which are shipped to a New York firm. The hunters receive \$100 a piece for all hides four feet long and upwards.

After the skins are removed the hunters cut off the heads, and place them on the edge of the river, where they remain for about a week. At the end of that time the teeth become so loose that they can readily be pulled out with the fingers. The teeth from half a dozen large alligators weigh about a pound, and are worth \$4. The two young men killed fifty alligators in the week that they hunted in this neighborhood. They begin hunting as soon as it becomes thoroughly dark. Their hunting outfit consists of a bull's-eye lantern, in camp language called "look-em-up," a double-barreled shot gun, or "kill-em-sure," and a hatchet, with which they split the alligator's skull, and to which they have given the very expressive name of "dynamite." The man who is to do the shooting for the night fastens the lantern to his forehead, and takes his place in the bow of a small boat. His partner paddles the boat cautiously along the stream, while the man in the bow keeps a sharp lookout for alligator's eyes, which, under favorable circumstances, he can "shine" with his lantern at a distance of two hundred yards. As soon as they discover a pair of eyes they paddle cautiously up to within a couple of feet of the alligator's head and discharge a load of buckshot into it. As soon as the shot is fired the paddler catches the alligator by the jaws, while he holds together with one hand, while he cleaves the skull open with the hatchet.

Sometimes the alligators retain considerable power of action. When such is the case, it is rather exciting work getting them into the boat. Sometimes very large alligators turn the boat over. If an alligator is not handled at once after being wounded, he sinks to the bottom and is lost.

I asked one of the hunters who had killed more than a thousand alligators, what was the size of the largest one he ever killed, and he told me 13-2 feet long. He said that his father killed one on the St. John's river 17-2 feet long, the head of which when placed in a flour barrel projected two inches over the top. He sold it to a museum for \$65.

The custom of touching glasses prior to drinking healths is very common in England and many other countries, and especially in Germany. It is curious to trace how this custom has prevailed, and still exists, even among savage tribes. To do the same thing, was one way in which the ancients celebrated a marriage, and the wedding feast continues to be not the least important of the marriage ceremonies to the present day. The Indians of Brazil retain a custom of drinking together a little brandy, as a sign that the marriage is concluded. In China similar customs are met with. In the mediaeval banquets of Germany it was the custom to pass a "loving cup" from hand to hand, but this gradually necessitated that the cup should be of enormous size, and thus smaller cups and glasses were adopted, and the custom was conformed to by the drinkers touching their glasses before drinking.

The ceremony attending the passing and drinking out of the "love cup" as practised at our great city festivals and at some of our college halls, is said to have arisen from the assassination of King Edward. It was then the custom among the Anglo-Saxons to pass round a large cup, from which each guest drank; he who thus drank stood up, and as he lifted the cup with both hands, his body was exposed without any defence to a blow, and the occasion was often seized by an enemy to murder him. To prevent this, the following plan was adopted: When one of the company stood up to drink, he required the companion who sat next to him to be his pledge—that is, to be responsible for protecting him against anybody who should attempt to take advantage of his defenseless position; this companion stood up also, and raised his own sword in his hand to defend the drinker while drinking. This practice, in a somewhat altered form, continued long after the condition of society had ceased to require it, and was the origin of the modern practice of pledging in drinking. In drinking from the "loving cup" as now practised, each person rises and takes the cup in his hand to drink, and at the same time the person seated next to him rises also, and when the latter takes the cup in his turn, the individual next to him does the same.

Mark Twain says: I managed to find my way back alone to the place from whence I had started on this foolish enterprise, and then hurried over to Canada to avoid having to pay for the guide. At the principal hotel I fell in with the Major of the Forty-second Fusiliers and a dozen other hearty hospitable Englishmen, and they invited me to join them in celebrating the Queen's birthday. I said I would be delighted to do it. I said I would be acquainted with, and that I, like all my countrymen, admired and honored thy Queen. But I said there was one insuperable drawback—I never drank anything strong upon any occasion whatever, and I did not see how I was going to do proper and ample justice to anybody's birthday with the thin and ungenerous beverages I was accustomed to. The Major scratched his head and thought over the matter at considerable length; but there seemed to be no way of mastering the difficulty, and he was too much of a gentleman to suggest even a temporary abandonment of my principles. But by-and-by he said: "I have it. Drink soda water. As long as you never do drink anything more nutritious there isn't any impropriety in it."

And so it was settled. We met in a large parlor handsomely decorated with flags and evergreens, and seated ourselves at a board well laden with creature comforts, both solid and liquid. The toasts were happy and the speeches were good, and we kept it up till long after midnight. I never enjoyed myself more in my life. I drank thirty-eight bottles of soda water. But do you know that is not a reliable article for a steady drink? It is too gassy. When I got up in the morning I was as full of gas and tight as a balloon. I hadn't an article of clothing I could wear except my umbrella.

After breakfast I found the Major making grand preparations again. I asked what it was for, and he said that this was the Prince of Wales' birthday. It had to be celebrated that evening. We celebrated it. Much against my expectations, we had another splendid time, we kept it up till some time after midnight again. I was tired of soda water, but I didn't stop. You may consider lemonade better for a steady drink than soda water, but it isn't so. In the morning it had soured on my stomach. Biting anything was out of the question—it was equivalent to lock-jaw. I was beginning to feel worn and sad, too.

Shortly after luncheon I found the Major in the midst of some preparations. He said it was the Princess Alice's birthday. I concealed my grief. "Who is the Princess Alice?" I asked. "Daughter of her Majesty the Queen," the Major said. I succumbed. That night we celebrated the Princess Alice's birthday. We kept it up as late as usual, and really I enjoyed a good deal. But I could not stand lemonade. I drank a couple of kegs of ice water. In the morning I had toothache and cramps and chilblains, and my teeth were on edge from the lemonade, and I was still pretty gassy. I found the inexorable Major at it again. "Who is this for?" I asked. "His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh."

"Son of the Queen?" "Yes." "And this is the birthday—you haven't made any mistake?" "No; the celebration comes off to-night." I bowed before the new calamity. We celebrated the day. I drank part of a barrel of cider. Among the first objects that met my weary and jaundiced eye the next day was the Major, at his interminable preparations. My heart was broken and I wept. "Whom do we mourn this time?" I said. "The Princess Beatrice, daughter of the Queen."

"Here, now," I said, "it is time to begin to inquire into this thing. How long is the Queen's family likely to hold out? Who comes next on the list?" "Their Royal Highnesses Anne, Mary, Elizabeth, Gertrude, Augusta, William, Simon, Ferdinand, Irene, Sophia, Susannah, Socrates, Samson." "Hold! There is a limit to human endurance. I am only mortal. What man dare do, I dare—but he who can celebrate this family in detail and live to tell of it is less or more than man. If you have to go through this every year, it is a mercy that I was born in America, for I haven't constitution enough to be an Englishman. I shall withdraw from this enterprise. I am out of drinks. Out of drinks, and thirteen more to celebrate. Out of drinks, and only just on the outskirts of the family yet, as you may say. I am sorry enough to withdraw, but it is plain enough it has to be done. I am full of gas and my teeth are loose, and afflicted with scurvy, and toothache, measles, mumps and lockjaw, and the elder last night has given me the cholera. Gentlemen I mean well, but really I am not in a condition to celebrate the other thirteen. Give us a rest." I and, now, that it was all a dream. One avoids much dissipation by being asleep.

A Curious Book.

Perhaps the most singular curiosity in the book world is a volume that belongs to the family of the Prince de Ligne, and is now in France. It is entitled "The Passion of Christ," and is neither written nor printed. Every letter of the text is cut out of a leaf and being interleaved with the blue paper it is as easily read as the best print. The labor and patience bestowed on its completion must have been excessive, especially when the letters are considered. The general execution in every respect is indeed admirable, and the volume is the most delicate and costly kind. Radolph II of Germany offered for it, in 1640, 11,000 ducats, which was probably equal to 60,000 at this day. The most remarkable circumstance connected with this literary treasure is that it bears the royal arms of England, but when it was in that country and by whom owned has never been ascertained.