

# NORTH SEA "COOPERS."

### FLOATING PUBLIC-HOUSES WHICH HAIL FROM GERMAN PORTS.

#### A Visit on Board a "Cooper," and the Skipper's Reception - The Cruise of the North Sea - Dishonest Smackmen.

[St. James' Gazette.]

In July last it was announced that a German vessel, the *Diedrich*, had been attacked and plundered in the North sea by a gang of pirates, supposed to belong to English fishing smacks working on the Dogger bank. The assailants, it was said, tossed up in boats, boarded the *Diedrich*, assaulted and maltreated her officers and crew, and made off with a considerable amount of loot. The word "piracy" was evidently an exaggeration, for it is not pretended that the "pirates" were armed. It was suggested, no doubt, that they carried knives and bludgeons. But bludgeons are no part of the stores of a fishing-smack, and every sailor carries a knife as a matter of course.

To those acquainted with the Dogger bank the whole thing was clear at once. The *Diedrich* was admittedly a German "cooper." The "coopers" are large smacks of sixty or seventy tons measurement, liberally rigged and fast sailers. They come out from the German ports with a cargo consisting principally of cigars, tobacco, and spirits. But they also carry soap, kid gloves, bangles, and other such wares, which the smacksmen purchase for the officers and daughters, or sweethearts. There will also be an assortment of sundries—cutlery, combs and brushes, razors, and boots, and with these other articles of a distinctly objectionable character, such as stereoscopic slides, the sale of which on shore in England would be an indictable offense. The prices charged are low, and the goods are no second-rate. The spirits are abominable, only a smacksman in want of a drink will drink anything. The genuine article a cooper carries is her tobacco. This costs you 18 pence a pound. The favorite brand rejoices in the title of "Hising Hope," and it would be cheap in London at 4 pence the ounce.

These coopers come out of the German ports and cruise about among the fishing fleet. There is no secret as to their business. It is publicly indicated by a small square blue flag hung at the mainmast. They are, in reality, floating public-houses, and the flag in question is their sign-board. Now English fishing smacks on the Dogger put down their trawl at sunset and haul it at sunrise. During the day a fishing smack, as a rule, lies to, drifting slowly to leeward and hardly shifting her position on the fishing grounds. It is during the leisure hour of the day—generally after dinner—that the visit to the cooper takes place. You row up to her, and are welcomed by a polygot skipper, who commences proceedings by handing round glasses of liquor and then gets to business. Over the business an altercation is by no means uncommon, and it will sometimes get beyond the length of mere words. If, on the other hand, things go amicably, an hour or two will be spent in drinking Hamburg sherry, potato-spirit, and other such poison; and then the men will rejoin their smack, all more or less drunk and loaded with rubbish.

There is nothing good on a cooper except her tobacco; and this is only because cut tobacco can not easily be counterfeited or adulterated. The floating grog-shops in the cooperating trade are the curse of the North sea. The men waste money on them which would be better spent on shore; and in too many cases the skipper of a cooper is neither more or less than a receiver of stolen goods. When the smacksman has no money he will tempt them to "truck" the stores of their vessel; and many a valuable net, many fathoms of rope, many anchors, and other such gear, have been reported as lost, which in reality have been bartered away for an eighth of their value in exchange for Hamburg spirits. No one says that this is honest on the part of the smacksmen; but there is rough sense in a remark often heard from the bench, that if there were no receivers there would be no thieves.

# MY KINGDOM.

[St. B. McManus in Detroit Free Press.]

She winds her arms tightly about my neck, Her dear little arms with dimples kissed over, And her baby breath touches my lips and my cheeks As sweet as the scent of a summer bloomed flower. Then she kisses me over and over and over, And each kiss is as sweet as a white-blossomed clover.

All night-capped my princess creeps into her bed, And, tho' gone but a minute, I know she is sleeping. And I feast on the slumber smiles lighting her face, While I sit by the window, my restful watch keeping; Like a robin wing-weary my bird is asleeping. And I sit in content, my restful watch keeping. To-morrow may come, as to me they have come, With frettings and cares the full hours to lesson, And the earth will fast fetter my hands and my soul, And the farthest star will seem nearer than Heaven— Yet no touch of the earth can these watch hours lessen, For I sit by the gate of my Kingdom of Heaven.

# Cape Coats Again.

[New York Sun.]

"Men are wearing capes on their overcoats again," said a Broadway tailor recently, as he leaned against his counter and delved into the inner recesses of his mouth with a toothpick, "and they recall to old New Yorkers the popularity of the cape, and its sudden disappearance, after the murder of a young woman up-town by a young man named Robinson.

"Many years ago any man with any pretensions to style wore a cape. The garments were of various colors, often running to bright plaids, and they were worn quite long. A tall man wrapped up in one of these capes and walking along in the dark looked like a bandit. They were very convenient, particularly when a man went to the theatre in dress clothes. He had only to slip his cloak over his shoulders when running out between the acts, which was vastly easier than struggling into an overcoat, and saved many a man from catching many a cold. When the great Robinson murder trial came on, however, the testimony varied largely on a cape which was worn by a mysterious man, who was subsequently identified as Robinson. They then became known as 'Robinson capes,' and, by George, sir, they were driven out of the streets before the season was over. Until now they have never reappeared."

"What is the fashionable cape to-day?"

"It is a part of the top coat and hangs very close to the shoulders. It is never worn separate from the coat, and it will fit in the German style. A sack coat is the only proper form of coat, and when a Newmarket is topped with a cape the effect is anything but fashionable."

# Gardens in Germany.

[Haverock Cor. Boston Transcript.]

We have some pleasant gardens in Hanover, but they are now closed for the winter months. How we all regretted the day when Tivoli shut its gates, not to open them till the warm spring comes again! What happy afternoons and evenings we have idled away here under the trees, listening to the music of the fine military band! So we came with our work or books and so for hours dreaming and reading. How quiet and peaceful it always is! Even the little children seem to feel the influence of the place. Where in America would it be so? Where would it not be so in Germany.

All classes come to these gardens, where they quietly drink their glass of beer or coffee. It is quite the fashion to give a coffee party in the garden instead of at home, and one often sees a merry party of ladies sitting together drinking coffee and working away at their knitting or crochet. Sometimes the programme for the evening concert is so tempting that we order our supper here also, and remain till the close of the day at 10 o'clock—rather late for German hours—and everybody goes quietly home.

# A Very Odd Wedding.

[Boston Herald.]

A very odd Amish wedding took place in the Conestoga valley, near Morgantown, says a leading Pa. dispatch. Some three hundred people attended. John S. Mast and Miss Steenie Zook, children of very wealthy Amish farmers were the contracting parties. The plain ceremony of joining hands took place in the meeting-house, after which a lengthy procession proceeded to the house, where a banquet took place. A feature of the feast was as follows: A young man selected his sweetheart, and both went to the table. This action was followed by similar selections, until all the younger couples had gone in. A hymn was sung, when feasting for ten minutes followed. Then all arose, each couple holding a book between them, and another hymn was sung; feasting then continued another ten minutes, when there was more singing as before. In this way the festivities were kept up for six hours.

# Ice-house Fires.

[Detroit Free Press.]

Why should an ice-house burn? Ice, surely, is not inflammable; the houses are usually built in some retired locality, and save when alongside a railroad track, their surroundings are not dangerous. Yet ice-houses, and particularly those in New England and on the Hudson river, are reckoned among the special hazards. Many insurance companies will have nothing to do with them, and the number of companies who thus pass ice-houses by on the other side is yearly increasing.

# At the Razor's Mercy.

[Lancet Boomerang.]

Suppose your favorite barber should suddenly become insane, and suppose as you lay stretched out comfortably in his chair he should take a notion to cut your throat, what could you do to help yourself? Did you ever think that the brightest intellects of the age are daily at the mercy of the tonsorial artist?

More Than the Circus Poster Advertised. An equestrienne in a Russian circus, after going through several daring and difficult feats, flourished a revolver, placed the muzzle to her temple, and while her horse was in full career fired and dropped dead upon the sword. Such an attraction must be fearfully draining on the company, but it is sure to draw.

# Crab Sausages.

An American caterer has introduced "crab sausages," which are declared by *Ajaccio* of old to be "delicate and tempting." History repeats itself even in gastronomy.

The whale swims by striking the water up and down, instead of laterally, with a fish-like, horizontal tail.

# TRICKS OF MACHINES.

### UNACCOUNTABLE STOPS AND STARTS WHICH PUZZLE MECHANICS.

#### Watches That Have Needed Only a Little Help - The Shoemaker and His Cranky Machine - A Locomotive's Queer Freak.

[Philadelphia Times.]

"There are times," said a well-known machinist, "when nearly all machines get cranky. The trouble is often a simple one and is not infrequently owing to the machinist not knowing his business. But that is not always the case. The very best mechanic in the world gets hold of a nut sometimes that is difficult to crack. A machine, no matter of what kind, may stop perfectly for months, and then one day something goes wrong with it. The machinist looks at it, examines it, perhaps even takes it to pieces and puts it up again, but all of no avail; the machine remains like a balky horse, which nothing will make go. At last the machinist gets tired and goes home, sick of pottering with the troublesome thing. He comes to work the next day, perhaps having forgotten the previous trouble, touches a handle here, a wheel there, drops a little oil in half a dozen places, turns on the steam and off she goes without a murmur, as if nothing had ever happened. No, I can't explain it—neither could he. The only conclusion to be drawn is that he omitted on the occasion of the stoppage those little necessary touches of handles, turning of wheels and droppings of oil. But there are other cases of a slightly different nature."

"Watches are so small and their mechanism is so delicate that it requires a careful inspection to find the cause of any trouble," said a jeweler. "The causes of sudden stoppage are very various, but among the most frequent is want of oil. A drop of oil in a watch will last from eighteen months to two years as a lubricator. At the end of that time the works become dry and considerable wear ensues. Still a watch may run five years before it stops. If a watch is brought to me I can not always say instantly what is the matter, though I often have to make some statement to satisfy a lady or an inconsiderate man. Sometimes I have had a watch to 'cure,' and have taken it to pieces, but do all I would I could not get it right. Then I lay it on one side and go to work on something else. When I come back to the watch it is just as likely as not that everything will slide into place as easily as possible. Of course, the reason of my trouble has been a little nervousness. I have been tired or anxious, or my eyes or fingers have been sore. Sometimes I have repaired a watch and hung it on a rack for a few days before returning it to its owner in good working order. Then perhaps in two or three days he brings it back stopped again. This is sometimes a poser, but in such a case I put the watch in my pocket and carry it with me for a few days. Hanging a watch on the rack, which is perfectly still and of even temperature, is not a fair test. By carrying it in my pocket I often discover the trouble, which is generally a very simple one."

"Sewing machines are just as pesky as cranky as women," said old Tom McManus, one of the oldest shoemakers in Philadelphia. "I've worked 'em all. There's Mackay's machine you've heard so much about. I used to work at one of Mackay's and was considered a pretty good hand. I thought I knew that machine like a book, but it went back on me one day. It played possum for two days. It went so stiff I couldn't do nothing with it, then it broke all my threads, and at last it took and tore about a inch and a half into one of my uppers. Well, I couldn't figure out what was the matter. I guessed the thing was bewitched. Anyhow, I went out and bought some spirits of turpentine and cleaned up every part of it, then I oiled it afresh and let him be for a whole day. I member me an' my ole woman took a holiday that day an' spent it on the river in a Delaware steamer. Well, I don't know what did it, whether it was the rest had put it in good humor, or the oiling, or the oil, but when I went down to the shop next day the old thing went along like a house on fire, as though there hadn't never been nothin' the matter with it."

"Ever had any bother with my engine?" said Ed. Murray, an engineer on the Pennsylvania railroad. "No, I can't say I ever did, but I've heard old Jake Finlay, who used to run the express between Philadelphia and New York, tell a queer story of a trouble he got into once. He was considered a good engineer and was undoubtedly a thoroughly capable man. It was one winter a good many years ago, he was running his usual engine on the evening express. He reached Trenton safely and stopped there twenty minutes for refreshments. The rest was over, the passengers all seated, the line signaled 'clear,' the bell rang and old Jake took off the brake and turned the steam on. The engine gave a sort of a feeble kick and the big driving wheels revolved half a dozen times, but didn't grip the rails and the train didn't move. "Jake thought the train was too heavy, so he backed it a little to gain an impetus. Then he put on the steam full again to go forward, but the old engine just kicked again and the driving wheels went round again, but the train never moved. Jake got mad at last and got off the cab to look for the trouble. He shouted to the fireman to turn on steam. His order was obeyed and without the slightest trouble the engine gilded out of the station as if she were on a soapboard. Jake was so worried about it that it preyed on his mind and about six months after he resigned his position. I haven't the least idea what was the matter, but I guess Jake had forgotten some thing he ought to have done, and the fireman, being just told to let her go, went through the proper business. Jake thought the engine was bewitched and died in that belief."

# Indian Education.

[Indianapolis News.]

The government has now eighty-one boarding-schools, seventy-six day schools and six manual labor schools, for Indian education, and they are all crowded beyond their capacity.

# California's Marble.

The marble trade of San Francisco is worth \$4,000,000 annually. One-fourth of which is herefrom, has been paid to the Carrara quarry of Italy.

More suicides occur in San Francisco in proportion to its population, says *The Alta California*, than in any other city on the continent.

There is to be a revival of smooth faces among society men. The gutter chop must be chopped off and the gutter nut go too.

Texas Sittings: Laziness is the mother of tediousness and the grand-mother of poetry.

# FROM HONDURAS.

### THE WOODS OF CENTRAL AMERICA AT THE EXPOSITION.

#### The Wealth of a British Colony - Valuable Exhibit of Mahogany, Cedar, Rose-wood, and Other Beautiful Woods - Strange Vegetable Products.

[Garth's New Orleans Letter.]

Let us look at a new and strange exhibit that has journeyed over the stormy waters of the Mexican gulf to this our exposition—the contribution of British Honduras. Imbued with the popular idea that the colony is an arid, hot wilderness and inhospitable mainly negroes sufficiently Americanized to vitiate their native qualities, I was somewhat astonished when the gentlemanly, bronzed individual in charge informed me that Belize is a town of 8,000 or 9,000 inhabitants, governed chiefly by the large Scotch element of the population. A living witness, a lantern-jawed, sandy-haired Scot, came to the exhibit for orders just then in an atmosphere of old rye and confirmed his statement. The only portion of Central America over which British colors wave, it is the only spot among all the petty states that is not continually and blood-thirstily exercised over the maintenance of its dignity. Two hundred years ago a few British pioneers came to Honduras to cut logwood and mahogany. Their arrival was regarded by the colony as an imminent invasion, and it was only by successive treaties with that power, Guatemala, Mexico and the United States that the colony remains British to-day. Now the exhibit—the woods first, of course—the wealth of the colony: A mahogany log 28 feet long and 4 feet square, and a cedar 20 feet long and 4 feet square are the biggest things in the space. Cedar is used chiefly for cigar boxes, but of the noble mahogany we have more to see. Two beautiful "spurs," sliced cleanly out of the root of the tree, stand ready for table tops. One is almost square, 5 feet 4 inches by 5 feet 6 inches, the other round, about 4 feet in diameter. A beautiful, hooped, inlaid hat rack and three exquisitely designed card-tables, all from the Honduras government house, where they have sojourned for eighty years, are also shown.

"What is the value of those spurs?" I asked my pleasant informant.

"There, about \$4."

"And here?"

"About \$25. But the market is flooded. I have 250,000 feet of mahogany in this city to-day and can't sell to any advantage just now. People have had a craze for black walnut, too. Now it's getting scarce and they have to look to us again for woods. Mahogany will soon supercede it. It is infinitely more durable than any other. Now this," he added, taking up a beautifully polished piece of wood, "was taken from a log which formed a part of the foundation of the old Belize court house and which lay underground for over sixty years. As you see, it is sound as a bell."

Indian bowls, cut out of the solid wood and variously ornamented, with various other utensils, are heaped up in baskets woven of the cocoon fiber. Here is a "pit pan," a long, narrow loaf from forty to fifty feet in length, but only three feet wide. It is scooped out of a mahogany log and is padded up the tropically shadowed rivers to the cutters with provisions. Indeed it is the only means of river transportation. Several models are shown, one with a palanquin, under which the "boss" reposes on his visits of investigation. This one bears an inscription on one side, "No bodder than another, a perfect poem of a boat, has the legend, 'Sub-umora feroce' engraved on the back of the seat. Rosewood and zircote, a wood resembling ivory, come next in value. The toonum tree, with its india rubber product, is also shown, and logwood and fustic which, as every schoolboy knows, are exported for dyes.

The woods of Central America are simply unknown to botany and value. Here they stand, split and oiled, and beautiful fifty varieties—Copal, palmetto, sandre bean, ban tan, and pieces of the cabbage tree, which the natives use for clapboards; no nail can pierce its density. The fruit of the tree, when young and tender, are an excellent substitute for cabbage. The vegetable products are strange and interesting. *Sarsaparilla colica*, crambatic bark, a much prized tonic; cassava, used by the natives for bread; arrowroot; many specimens of St. John's diet of locusts, which look like big brown beans, cohoon nuts, and the valuable water-bakers oil that is made from them; gourds, cocconuts, tobacco, mono bark, and hennequin, from which a fine, strong cord is made. I have not begun to name them. A case of fascinatingly ugly Indian relics, dug up in the abounding mounds, stands near the vegetable display. They are chiefly grinning heads and discolored members, seemingly of baked clay. A carved turtle is prominent among them, the work of some obscure Carib artist whose aspirations will perish with him. Branching coral and fairy forms of seaweed adorn the "court" of British Honduras. The skull of a log-headed turtle, about twice the size of a man's; the scaly coat of the armadillo, a sort of well-protected guinea pig, about eighteen inches long, and the skull of a mountain cow, a curiously formed structure, are other interesting objects.

"These mountain cows are dangerous things," said Mr. Agar, to whom you are now introduced. "Many a time out hunting I have been persuaded to take to a tree in view of their prospective society."

"Snakes—green and blue 'racers,' red and black 'corals,' vipers, the most deadly 'Tommy Goff,' and beautiful dark red little sea horses are bottled up in alcohol. All sorts of ill-looking bugs and reptiles associate with them, including the dreaded centipede and monster locusts fully six inches long. With a glance at the beautiful Indian wood-carrying and embroidery we must go.

"As we leave the main building to saunter down the broad walk with an ever changing crowd and a delight that is always new, the bells ring out 'The Land of the Seal.' Oh, it is worth the long journey southward to hear those bells tinkle and mellow away into the sunlight and across the listening city to the very borders of the cyprus swamps. Come and hear them."

# To Determine Doubtful Death.

[Scientific Journal.]

A new agent for determining the question of doubtful deaths is announced by an electrician, who says that in bodies in which life is not extinct, the temperature rises upon the application of an electric current, and never in the case of actual death.

# An Ohio Wagon in Pekin.

Rev. J. Walter Lowrie, a Presbyterian missionary to China, has the only four-wheeled vehicle in Pekin—an ungraceful but useful covered depot wagon, built in Ohio. The natives are amazed at its wheels, so light and yet strong.

# Quick Railway Time.

Rockford, Ill., Jan. 1880.

This is to certify that we have appointed Frank P. Blair, sole agent for the sale of our Quick Train Railroad Watches in the town of Bellefonte.

ROCKFORD WATCH COMPANY, BY HOSMER P. HULLAND, Sec. Having most thoroughly tested the Rockford Quick Train Watches for the last three years, I offer them with the fullest confidence as the best made and most reliable time keeper for the money that can be obtained.

I fully guarantee every Watch for two years. FRANK P. BLAIR, No. 2 Brookerhoff Row, All other American Watches at reduced prices.

DICHTON, Jan. 27, 1882.

The Rockford watch purchased Feb. 1879, has performed better than any Watch I ever had. Have carried it every day and at no time has it been irregular, or in the least unreliable. I cheerfully recommend the Rockford Watch. HORACE B. HORTON, at Dighton Furnace Co.

TAUNTON, Sept. 18, 1881.

The Rockford Watch runs very accurately; better than any watch I ever owned, and I have had one that cost \$150. Can recommend the Rockford Watch to everybody who wishes a fine timekeeper. S. P. HUBBARD, M. D.

This is to certify that the Rockford Watch bought Feb. 22, 1879, has run very well the past year. Having set it only twice during that time, its only variation being three minutes. It has run very much better than I ever anticipated. It was not adjusted and only cost \$20. R. P. BRYANT.

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**AUDITORS NOTICE.**—In the Office of the Auditor of Centre County is the matter of the estate of A. T. Hahn deceased, the undersigned Auditor appointed by said court, in said case to have a full and complete audit and to make a statement of the funds to and from said estate, and to file said report, will meet all parties interested at the office of R. K. Keller, Esq. Friday, February the 27th, A. D. 1880, at 10 o'clock A. M., when and where all parties concerned may attend.

ROBERT KELLER, Auditor.

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