

400-402 Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton.

THE FAIR

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Great :- Alteration :- Sale :- Continued

We Mention a Few of Our Prices for This Week:

Table with columns: BARGAINS, Regular Price, Alteration Price. Lists various goods like Linen finish Toweling, Apron Gingham, Indigo Blue Calico, etc., with their respective prices.

FOR BARGAINS

THE FAIR

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Ocean Graveyard.

A Mystery of the Atlantic.

By DAVID WECHSLER.

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A dead silence followed this extraordinary story. It had been told in such a way as to convince us that there was something in it. Even Captain Lorton appeared to ponder over the facts. After a long pause Moxley said:

"I remember once hearing an old skipper from Dundee tell pretty much the same story."

It was plain to be seen that Linklater's strange yarn had made a deep impression upon every man present. After that last remark no one spoke. Perhaps if it had been told under different circumstances it might not have taken such a hold upon us; but somehow the pounding of the billows on the beach, the rumble of shingle and the furious gusts of wind that sent the rain dashing against the window seemed to deepen the effect.

"What do you think of all this, Captain George?" I said, at length, turning toward him.

"I think Captain Linklater is right," he answered.

"You believe in this mysterious rock, then?"

"Well, if that Scotch skipper could be found, three of us could bear witness to the fact, at any rate," remarked Linklater.

at sea fifty years ago, was thrown up off the Faroe Islands and towed into Galveston harbor. How do you account for that?"

The question led to a pretty lively discussion, and it was 8 o'clock before the party broke up. By that time the rain had ceased, and the wind was dying down. Captain George asked for a lantern to signal the Wanderer to send a boat on shore.

"Come on board with me, Lawrence," said he, as he was leaving. "I



"I Think It Will Convince Him."

want to have a chat with you about this matter we have just been discussing."

When we reached the wet, slippery deck of the yacht he led the way into the saloon, turned up the lamps, and pointed to a chair near the table. I sat down. He folded his arms, and walked backwards and forwards with gloomy look.

"A snug cabin this, Captain George," I said, glancing around.

"Rather too large for my taste," he replied, "but one requires a roomy boat when their home is on the sea. It is strange, Lawrence, what disappointment will do for a man; it drives some to drink, some to a monastery, and some to an asylum. It has driven me to the sea."

I didn't exactly know what to say, for I had never seen him in one of these dark moods before, and thought it best to remain silent.

"Well," he said presently, brightening up a bit, "I didn't bring you off here to listen to my growling. About this rock, you heard what Linklater had to say, though, perhaps, you may think he was mistaken. He was not. I can give you pretty fair evidence of its existence."

"He went to a sort of writing table at the head of the saloon, unlocked one of the drawers and took out a piece of torn, discolored paper.

"Read this," he said, laying it on the table before me. "You can take it on shore if you like, and show it to your surveyor. I think it will convince him."

and a small case of cedar wood. That case, which bore the initials 'H. B. W.' contained this scrap of paper. Though the water had soaked into it, I fancy it must have been floating when the greedy fish got hold of it. I infer this from the fact that there was an inch or so of string hanging from the case, as if it had been originally attached to a bottle, a piece of cork, or something of that kind."

"The Nevada," I said, repeating the name. "I fancy I remember hearing of that vessel."

"Very likely," he replied. "She was an Atlantic boat, running between Boston and London. If I'm not mistaken, she was lost in '78--another of those ocean mysteries, you see, for her fate is still a matter of mere conjecture in the shipping world."

"I suppose you endeavored to trace the friends and relatives of this Mr. West? for it looks like a man's handwriting."

"Not I. What good would it have done? His friends or relatives, if he had any, had long ago given him up for lost. Why should I open an old wound?"

"But at any rate you communicated with the owners of the vessel?"

"I did nothing of the kind. I should only have brought their representative down upon me; probably he would have followed me from port to port, and I had no fancy to be pestered in that way. Very possibly a newspaper man would have been sent to my track, and I couldn't have given him the slip so easily. If he failed to find me in port, he would have started off in chase of the Wanderer, and tried to interview me on the high seas as one of them did, you remember, in the case of Capt. Morrell, of 'Missouri'."

"So you kept this information entirely to yourself?"

"I made good use of it. I went and searched for that rock; and I found it. 'Where does it lie?'"

"You shall see for yourself; that is, if you agree to proposition I have to make. When I discovered the position of the rock I determined, some day or other, to make a careful survey of the spot on my own account by sending down a diver to examine its formation. The conversation this afternoon has revived my--well, whim, fad, or whatever you like to call it. I am ready to set out on the expedition whenever I can find a diver bold enough--"

"I'm your man, Captain George!" I exclaimed. "I could not ask for better. I think you will find it as profitable employment as staying at home and taking your chance at wrecks. This is not exactly the best time of year for the enterprise, but no matter! It will take a week or so to get the Wanderer properly fitted out and ship sufficient stores. Can you be ready within ten days?"

solving this great Atlantic mystery, which, if it really existed, must have caused untold disasters. Still, I was not altogether carried away by Captain George's views, and entertained considerable doubt as to our success.

"We steered west-south-west for several days. We sighted some of the big Atlantic liners in the distance. One evening a huge Cunarder passed within a mile or so of us, lights all aglow, her funnels belching out columns of smoke that trailed away far behind."

"Making a rush with the mails," Captain George remarked as we watched her.

Next day it was blowing rather fresh, and we had a choppy sea. It struck me as strange that, up to the present, Captain George had made no direct reference to the object of our voyage.

"That morning, however, after breakfast, he said to me: 'We must take our bearings at noon, Lawrence, or we may overshoot the mark.'"

We did so, and when we had picked out our position on the chart, the course was altered to south-south-west. This brought us more out of the track of Atlantic steamers, though we still sighted a number of sailing ships. I noticed that Captain George kept a close eye on the chart during the next few days.

One morning, when he had made the usual daily reckoning, he came down into the saloon with a paper in his hand, upon which was marked the latitude and longitude.

"Get your diving gear ready, Lawrence," he said. "You'll want it before long."

"Is the rock in sight?"

"No, nor likely to be. Probably it is submerged, as I believe is generally the case, though at what depth is another question. All the same, we are not far off it."

"That evening the engines were slowed down. Captain George stood on the bridge, and for upwards of an hour he took entire charge of the vessel, altering the course from time to time. Then he gave the signal to stop.

The men in the bows were ready with the anchor, and presently I heard it splash into the water. We were provided with a special deep-sea cable, but I was rather surprised to find the depth was not so great as I had fancied. Captain George descended from the bridge, and joined me.

"Tomorrow morning we will get the long-boat out, if the weather holds fine," he said. "You will have to proceed more to the south, before you make your first descent."

I confess I did not sleep much that night. My mind was too full of the mystery of this ocean rock. Was the story true? Did the terrible spot really

lie within reach of us? If so, what an appalling sight would meet my view when I stood beneath it, and gazed around at the havoc it had wrought! I felt I might be on the verge of some startling discovery.

I lay awake until long after midnight. Then I determined to get up and go on deck. As I passed Captain George's cabin I could tell by his heavy breathing that he was sleeping soundly. I moved on, and stepped out into the cool night air.

How well I can recall the scene from the Wanderer's deck at that silent hour! The moon was on the wane; she was wading slowly through a mass of dark clouds emerging occasionally to flood the ocean with her silver light.

Not a sound was to be heard, save the melancholy moan of the sea, or the splash of the water against the yacht's side.

In the morning I felt more like myself; perhaps I was too busy with my preparations to think much of anything else. Following Captain George's directions, we rowed away to the south, and when we got about half a mile from the yacht I went down.

[To Be Continued.]

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AMUSEMENTS.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC. THURSDAY, FEB. 7.

THE NAVAL PLAY,

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