

By H. M. LOCKE, JR.
Several bowlers for I come in my might!
With a good fire the mountain side light.

THE PEDLER'S STORY!
AN UNWELCOME PASSENGER.

A cold winter's night several years since found a stage load of travelers gathered around the warm fire of a tavern bar room in a New England village. Shortly after we arrived, a pedler drove up and ordered that his horse should be stable for the night.

THE AGITATOR

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"My next thoughts were of the suspicious individual I saw at the tavern. He had heard me say that my load was all sold out, and of course he supposed I had some money with me.

"In a very few moments my resolution was formed. My horse was now knee deep in the mud, and I knew I could slip off without noise. So I drew my pistol, and having twisted the reins about the whip stock, I carefully slipped down in the mud, and as the cart passed on I went behind it and examined the heap.

The door of the cart lets down, and is fastened by a hasp, which slides over a staple and is then secured by a padlock; it was gone, and the hasp was secured in its place by a bit of pine—so that a slight force from within would break it. My wheel, wrench hung in a leather bucket on the side of the cart, and I quickly took it out and slipped it into the staple, the iron handle just sliding down.

"Now I had him. My cart was almost new, made in a stout frame of white oak, and made on purpose for hard usage. I did not believe any ordinary man could break out. I got on to my cart as noiselessly as I got off and then urged my horse on, still keeping my pistol handy. I knew that at a distance of a half a mile further, I should come to a good hard-road, and so allowed my horse to pick his own way through the mud. About ten minutes after this I heard a motion in the cart, followed by a grinding noise as though some heavy force were being applied to the door, I said nothing, but the idea struck me that the villain might judge where I sat and shoot up through the top of the cart at me, so I sat down on the top board.

"Of course I knew now that my unexpected passenger was a villain, for he must have been awake ever since I started, and nothing in the world but absolute villainy would have caused him to remain quiet so long, and then start up in this particular place. The thumping and pushing grew louder, and louder and pretty soon I heard a human voice.

"Let me out of this," he cried, and he yelled pretty loud. "I lifted up my head so as to make him think I was sitting in my usual place and then asked what he was doing there.

"Let me look out, and I will tell you," he replied. "Tell me what you are in there for?" said I. "I got in here to sleep on your rags," he answered.

"How did you get in," I asked. "Let me out, or I'll shoot you, through the head" he yelled. "Just at that moment my horse's feet struck the hard road, and I knew that the rest of the route to Jackson would be good going. The distance was 12 miles. I slipped back on the foot board and took the whip. In fifteen minutes we cleared the woods, and away we went at a keen jump. The chap inside kept yelling to be let out.

words, and then he made for the door. He told the chap inside who he was, and if he made the least resistance held a dead man. Then I slipped the iron wrench out, and as I let the door down the fellow made a spring; I caught him by the ankle and he came down on his face; and in a moment more the officer had him. It was now daylight, and the moment I saw the chap I recognized him: He was marched off to the lock up, and I told the sheriff I should remain in town all day.

"After breakfast the sheriff came down to the tavern and told me that I had caught the very bird, and that if I would remain until the next morning I should have the reward of two hundred dollars which had been offered.

"I found my goods all safe, paid the express agent for bringing them from Indianapolis, and then went to work to stow them in my cart. The bullet holes were found in the top of my vehicle just as I expected. They were in a line about five inches apart, and had been where I usually sit, two of them would have hit me somewhere about the small of the back, and passed upwards; for they were sent with heavy charges of powder and his pistols were heavy ones.

On the next morning the sheriff had called upon me and paid me two hundred dollars in gold, for he had made himself sure that he'd got the villain. I afterwards found a letter in the post office at Portsmouth for me, from the sheriff of Hancock county, and he informed me that the fellow who had tried to kill and rob me, is in prison for life.

Last Words of the Great.
Tete de l'armee.—Napoleon.
I have loved God, my father, liberty.—De Stael.

Let me die to the sound of delicious music.—Mirabeau.
Is this your fidelity?—Nero.
I must sleep now.—Byron.
Kiss me, Hardy.—Nelson.
Don't give up the ship.—Lawrence.
I'm shot if I don't believe I'm dying.—Thurlow.

Clasp my hand, dear friend, I die.—Algeri.
God preserve the emperor.—Haydn.
The artery ceases to beat.—Haller.
Let the light enter.—Goethe.
All my possessions for a moment of time.—Elizabeth.

What is there no bribing death?—Beaufort.
Monks, monks, monks!—Henry VIII.
Be serious.—Crotius.
I feel as if I were myself again.—Walter Scott.
It is well.—Washington.
Independence forever.—Adams.
A dying man can do nothing easy.—Franklin.

The perils of the Polar Sea.—Dr. Kane Among the Icebergs.
It blew a perfect hurricane. We had seen it coming, and were ready with three good hawsers out ahead, and all things snug on board.

Still it came on heavier and heavier, and the ice began to drive more wildly than I thought I had ever seen it. I had just turned in to warm and dry myself during the momentary lull, and was stretching myself out in my bunk, when I heard the sharp twanging snap of a cord. Our six-inch hawser had parted, and we were swinging by the two others; the gale roaring like a lion to the southward.

Half a minute more, and 'twang, 'twang' came a second report. I knew it was the whale line by the shrillness of the ring. Our noble ten-inch manilla still held on. I was hurrying my last sock into its eskin boot, when McGary came waddling down the companion ladders: "Captain Kane, she won't hold much longer; it's blowing the devil himself, and I am afraid to surge."

The manilla cable was proving its excellence when I reached the deck; and the crew as they gathered round me, were loud in its praises. We could hear its deep Eolian chant, swelling through all the rattle of the running-gear and moaning of the shrouds. It was the death song! The strands gave way with the noise of a shot gun; and in the smoke that followed their recoil, we were dragged out by the wild ice at its mercy.

We steadied and did some pretty warping, and got the brig a good bed in the rushing drift; but all came to nothing. We then tried to beat back through the narrow ice clogged water way, that was driving, a quarter of a mile wide, between the shore and the pack. It cost us two hours of hard labor, I thought skillfully bestowed; but at the end of that time, we were at least four miles off, opposite the great valley in the center of Bevelled Reach. Ahead of us, farther to the north, we could see the strait growing still narrower, and the heavy ice tables grinding up, and clogging it between the shore cliffs on one side and the ledge on the other. There was but one thing left for us: to keep in some sort the command of the helm by going freely where we must otherwise be driven. We allowed her to scud under a reefed foretop sail; all hands watching the enemy, as we closed, in silence.

At seven in the morning, we were close upon the piling masses. We dropped the heaviest anchor with the desperate hope of winding the brig; but there was no withstanding the ice torrent that followed us. We had only time to fasten a spar as a buoy to the chain, and let her slip. So went our best bow!

Down we went upon the gale again, helplessly scraping along a lee of ice seldom less than thirty feet thick; one foot, measured by a line as we tried to fasten to it, more than forty. I had seen such ice only once before, and never in such rapid motion. One upturned mass rose above our gunwale, smashing in our bulwarks, and depositing half a ton of ice in a lump upon our decks. Our staunch little brig bore herself through all this wild adventure, as if she had a charmed life.

But a new enemy came in sight ahead. Directly in our way, just beyond the line of floe-ice, against which we were alternately sliding and bumping, was a group of bergs. We had no power to avoid them; and the only question was, whether we were to be dashed in pieces against them, or whether they might pot offer us some providential nook of refuge from the storm. But as we neared them, we perceived that they were at some distance from the floe-ice, and separated from it by an interval of open water. Our hopes rose, as the gale drove us toward the passage, and into it; and we were ready to exult, when from some unexplained cause, probably an eddy of the wind against the lofty ice walls, we lost our headway. Almost at the same moment, we saw that the bergs were not at rest; that with a momentum of their own, they were bearing down upon the other ice, and that it must be our fate to be crushed between the two.

Oyster Dredging.
A very large proportion of the oyster eaters have at best but an indefinite idea of the way in which these interesting bivalves are fished out of the deep, to supply their palates and satisfy their appetites. Some may imagine they are picked off the rocks, like the Irishman's gold dollars from the streets; others that they are the mysterious product of the restaurants, obtained by merely knocking apart their shell; while many have some indefinite notion of a process of planting oysters in the mud, in shallow water, to be procured, when wanted, by dexterous manipulations of rakes and tongs, like potatoes from a hill. This latter mode of catching oysters is the one most common in Northern waters—the oyster having first been brought from the South, and "bedded" here; as it is thought that by this transplantation, they are much improved in flavor.

There are, however, some varieties of the native oyster that are held in the highest esteem by epicures—being of extraordinary size and superior flavor; and as these are to be found only in deep water, rendering the process of catching them quite laborious, their market value is much enhanced. Of native oysters the "East Rivers" are most in favor—the market prices for which range from \$1.50 to \$5 per hundred. These are caught by "dredging."

During the autumn months the attention of travellers on Long Island Sound is invariably attracted by the large fleets of sailing craft that never fail to meet the eye when the wind is fair, tacking hither and thither, and stretching away on either side, as far as the limits of vision extend. Frequently, upwards of one hundred may be counted at once, under canvas, and presenting a beautiful appearance. Of these many are coasting vessels, which may always be seen dotting the blue waters of the sound; but the greater number are fishing smacks, dredging for oysters. Such fleets are encountered at intervals, all the way from Frog's neck to Whitestone and Norwalk, which points embrace the fishing ground for "East River."

The "dredge" is a sort of drag net, made of the strongest materials, and holding about two bushels. This is lowered to the bottom, and towed after the vessel by a stout rope, varying from six to twenty-five fathoms in length, according to the depth of the water. Frequently, as many as half a dozen dredges are employed at once—each one being hauled in every few minutes, and emptied of its contents of oysters, mud and stones which may have been scooped up while dragging on the bottom. The process is slow and laborious, as hauling in so great a weight, with the vessel sailing under a three or six knot breeze, is no slight task, and not less than four or five days' constant labor are required to complete a full load. It is customary for the smacks to start out on Monday, and deliver their cargoes in market on Friday or Saturday, though shorter trips are sometimes made. On the best grounds one hundred bushels per diem are taken; but the average is far less.

This mode of catching oysters is also practiced on the waters of the Chesapeake, whence are taken the greater part of the oysters brought to the north to be planted, thousands of cargoes of which are shipped higher every year.—N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

Just Missed.—A spinster of our acquaintance, somewhat literary, who is married to infinite Good Nature, (who is after all the best husband,) gives us an account of the nearness to which she once came to a proposal. A widower of her acquaintance, a lawyer, was in that forlorn state of uncomfortable tenderness consequent upon the loss of his wife. In this condition our heroine chanced to call upon him one day at his office, (he was a lawyer.)

Upon her entering he mentioned to his partner somewhat mysteriously to leave the room. He brought his chair in the nearest possible contiguity to the lady. "Myrah, he said with downcast eyes, as he took her hand, 'you knew my wife?'" "Certainly."

"It is not good for man to be alone!" "Perhaps not?" "Did you ever reflect upon that part of the marriage service which requires couples to cleave unto each other, till death do them part?" "I have."

The Inquisitive Yankee.
The following "new edition, with improvements," of an old anecdote, is exceedingly rich: "A gentleman riding in an eastern railroad car, which was rather sparsely supplied with passengers, observed in a seat before him, a lean slabsided Yankee, every feature of whose face seemed to ask a question; and a little circumstance soon proved that he possessed a most 'inquiring mind.' Before him occupying the entire seat, sat a lady, dressed in deep black; and after shifting his position several times, and maneuvering to get an opportunity to look into her face, he at length caught her eye.

"In affliction?" "Yes sir," responded the lady. "Parient?—father or mother?" "No sir."

"Child perhaps—a boy or a girl?" "No sir." "Must be your husband, perhaps?" "Yes," was the curt answer. "Hum—cholery—a tradin man, may-be?" "My husband was a sea-faring man—captain of a vessel, he didn't die of cholera, he was drowned."

"Oh, drowned, eh?" pursued the inquirer, hesitating a brief moment. "Save his chest?" "Yes the vessel was saved, and my husband's effects," said the widow. "W-a-a-s they?" asked the Yankee, his eyes brightening up. "Pious man?" "He was a member of the methodist church."

The next question was a little delayed, but it came. "Don't you think you've great reason to be thankful that he was a pious man and saved his chest?" "I do," said the widow, abruptly, and turning her head to look out of the window. The indefatigable "pump" changed his position, held the widow with his glittering eye once more, and propounded one more query in a tone a little lower, with his head slightly inclined forward over the back of the seat.—"Was you calculatin' to get married again?"

"Sir," said the widow indignantly, "you are impertinent!" And she left her seat and took another on the other side of the car. "Pears to be a little huffy!" said the ineffectable bore, turning to our narrator behind him, "she needn't be mad, I didn't want to hurt her feelin's. What did the tax you for that umbrella you've got in your hand? It's a real pretty one!"

Kissing a Queen.
There is now on exhibition in our print shops an excellent picture of Franklin at the Court of France; not however, critically true to history, if my memory serves me right. In this print Franklin stands, as he ought to, in the foreground, he being the soul of the subject; his plain attire contrasts well with a brilliant court, embroidered from head to foot, and bedizened with diamonds and hair powder. Franklin, I understood, was dressed in second rate homespun, yarn stockings, substantial shoes, and his hair of its native color; not at all conscious of any inferiority, how ever, but with that self-possession which is his distinguishing trait of well-bred people everywhere. His native dignity was his sole decorative. As a stranger, he must have observed the common practice in France, of kissing, even in the streets, and other places, when friends meet after a long or short absence, without regard to sex. This kissing, however, is no more than our shaking hands, and is performed by applying one cheek to another—once, twice or more, according to the intimacy and feeling. It may be called cheek-by-jowl. Franklin may not have observed minutely the modis of this practice, but he thought that a kiss was a kiss; or thought nothing at all about it. It is said that he was reminded by one of the dignitaries, that when he was presented he must kiss the queen, who, it was also said, was a very kissable woman. The queen approached familiarly and very near—probably impelled by curiosity to see well this handsome savage, Franklin remembering his lesson, without reluctance put it in practice, in the only way he had ever been taught to kiss, and gave the queen a mighty Yankee buss on the lips, to the great amazement and mortification of the old maids, but to the great amusement of all others—especially the king, who was delighted with this savage simplicity; and it is said that he cried out, "Encore, bis, de capo," or "do it again." How many more things were said or done, it is not my business now to relate, or to vouch for. Therefore I only object to the print for not being truly historical, and especially for not having chosen one of the most remarkable of Franklin's court feats. Some of the wags of Paris had not the most implicit confidence in Franklin's simplicity, and said he knew more than he pretended to.—Correspondence of the Boston Transcript.

AN IMPATIENT JURYMEN.—An Arkansas correspondent of the New Orleans Picayune gives the following as authentic: "You are fond of cracking jokes at the expense of Arkansas; now, here is one on your State, absolutely true. I got it from an eye witness: 'The district court in one of your northern parishes was in session—'twas the first day of court; time, after dinner. Lawyers and others had dined, and were sitting out before the hotel, and a long, lank, unsophisticated countryman came up and unceremoniously made himself one of 'em, and remarked: 'Gentlemen, I wish you would go on with this court, for I want to go home—' left Betsy a looking out.'

"Ah!" said one of the lawyers, "and pray, sir, what detain's you at court?" "Why, sir," said the countryman, "I'm fatch here as a jury, and they say if I go home they will have to find me, and they wouldn't do that as I live a good piece." "What jury are you on?" asked a lawyer. "What jury?" "Yes, what jury? Grand or traverse jury?" "Grand or travis jury?—dad-fetched if I know." "Well," said the lawyer, "did the judge charge you?" "Well, squire," said he, "the little fellow that sits up in the pulpit, and kinder bosses it over the crowd, gin us a talk, but don't know whether he charged anything or not." "The crowd broke up in a roar of laughter, and the sheriff called court."