

# Caught in an Ice-Floe

By WILLIAM A. STIMPSON.

The sun that winter afternoon was quite warm, but the north wind, blowing down the ice laden river, cut like a knife. Philip Ross, captain of the barge Bessie, standing in the bow of his clumsy craft directing a gang of men unloading the stones which comprised the cargo, shivered as the strong blasts rushed by, and drawing his heavy overcoat closer about him, took refuge behind the supporting mast of the derrick where his body was not so much exposed.

Quitting time arrived before all the stones had been raised and landed, and Captain Ross blew his whistle as a signal that work was over for the day. The teamster unhooked the horses from the derrick tackle; the laborers gathered up coats and dinner pails, and in an incredibly short time they were lost to sight down one of the city's streets. The two members of the crew and the cook had been granted permission to spend the evening on shore and left at the same time.

When all had gone, Philip walked to the stern of the barge and stood looking out over the water. The tide was ebbing, and the blocks of ice in the stream were being borne along toward the bay in heaving masses. The river, with its shipping, its miscellaneous cargoes and the suggestions of new and strange places the sight of incoming and outgoing vessels were always bringing before his mind, was dear to the young man, and he longed for the day when the firm by whom he was employed would send him to sea on one of their ocean going steamers.

One large cake of ice directly opposite him attracted his attention. He followed it with his eyes as it went tumbling along its way to the sea, and wondered how long a time would elapse before the action of the salt water would melt it.

All at once the entire flow seemed to pause in its onward progress. At the same time the deck on which he stood began to rock like a vessel in motion. The sensation awoke him from his reverie, and glancing hurriedly over his shoulder, Philip saw that the bow of the barge was swinging about, for the bowline, a thick, heavy hawser which held the forward part of the craft to the dock, had parted, leaving only the lighter line at the stern to keep the barge from drifting away from her moorings entirely.

Instantly Ross saw that another line would have to be run ashore to take the place of the broken hawser, and at once, or the barge would be adrift. The distance between the barge and the dock was too great to leap, so throwing the loop in the end of a line over a bit head he dropped the coil of rope into the bottom of the dory fastened to the river side of the larger craft. Cutting the boat loose he picked up the oars and began to pull rapidly, following out a plan he had formulated almost as soon as he perceived that the bowline had parted. This was to maneuver around the bow of the barge, reach the dock, fasten the other end of the rope to the snubbing post, and thus hold the unwieldy hulk until he could get a tug to tow the barge back to her position.

There were at his disposal only a few seconds for the accomplishment of his object, and Philip bent to his task and sent the dory out in the river with strong, swift strokes. Then turning the boat's head up stream and shoreward, he put forth all his strength and skill in his efforts to make the dock before the barge had floated the rope's length down the stream.

But, riverman though he was, Philip had failed to consider the difficulties of his task. No sooner was the dory well out from under the lee of the barge than the floating ice struck it, effectually stopping its progress. One huge cake caught the small boat in its embrace, and while Philip was working around the block the tide was carrying the ice and boat down the stream.

By the time he had succeeded in getting clear of the cake he was so far below the dock that it was useless to try and gain the dock in time to snub her, and Philip realized that his efforts were to end in failure. The unwieldy craft had swung around and floated down stream as far as the stern line would allow. This hawser held her, much to Philip's surprise, but he felt certain the rope would not stand the strain long.

The captain swept the river with his eyes in search of a tug to tow the barge back, but while there were many vessels in sight, they were all too far away for him to signal. Then, too late, he thought of his plight and that he was being borne toward the river toward the bay with a tide against which it was not easy to pull. However, he had no reason to doubt his ability to regain the bank, and bending to the oars again, pulled his best.

Slowly the boat began forging ahead against the tide, and pointing the bow toward the spot where he wished to land, Philip settled himself on his seat for some hard work. The warm sun earlier in the day had loosened great quantities of ice in the upper branches of the river, and it was being carried down the stream in mighty floes, some of which extended all the way across and were particularly thick between the boat and the bank. Philip had not pulled two minutes before he found himself surrounded by masses of floating ice that offered such resistance that his strokes were of no avail.

Provoked at his failure he turned the dory towards the middle of the stream where he thought the ice might not be so thick, but it was growing dark and he could not see very well. Too late he found that instead of bettering his position he had gotten into a floe of larger proportions than the one which had first held him. Somewhat alarmed at this discovery he wheeled the dory about and sought to pull shoreward again, but the ice was getting thicker every minute and he could make no headway in that direction either.

The masses of floating ice were

very distinctly and the pilot had to guess his meaning. Philip's senses were sharp enough even if his body was numb, and he took in the significance of several sharp orders given by the commander of the tug during the next few seconds, in answer to which two men east of the hawsers leading to the three barges. Then the man at the wheel rang for half speed ahead.

Philip heard and understood the signal and was filled with a fear that the prow of the tug, forcing its way through the ice, would push the big cakes against his dory and sink it before he could be taken on board. Some such thought must have flashed through the pilot's mind at the same time, for he suddenly left the wheel, and leaning over the side of the tug, scanned the floating ice that tumbled about so threateningly between the two crafts.

"The ice cakes here are big ones, and you'll crash my boat if you're not careful," Philip called.

The helmsman observed the mass of floating ice with a critical eye, then gave another order to the engineer through the speaking tube, in obedience to which the tug's propeller reduced its revolutions until the vessel had just headway enough to keep stationary in the current.

Half a dozen men—all of the crew except the engineer, who remained at his post, and the pilot, in the wheelhouse—crowded to the bow of the tug, ready to lend a hand if needed, for the ice, impeded by the larger craft, was piling around the frail looking dory, now and then striking the gunwale with such force that only the stanchness of the little boat kept it from being demolished.

With the oars, Philip tried to clear a passage ahead toward the tug, but in his eagerness he bore down too heavily on one of the blades and broke it off short. Throwing the useless piece of wood aside, he picked up the other and went to work with that, but he was afraid to strain that one very hard for fear of snapping it also, and slowly the ice hemmed him in. Clearly he saw that it was only a question of time when the dory would go down and its sole occupant be precipitated into the icy water.

All hands realized that this would occur before the boat could reach the

## WIRELESS WILL PROTECT ENGLAND.

The Admiralty Rapidly Extending the Number of the Coast Stations.

Not only is the wireless apparatus being installed at the new Admiralty Building in Whitehall, London, for the purpose of keeping the British authorities in touch with naval ports and the home fleet without recourse to the land wires, but it is, I understand, intended to add to the number of wireless stations round the coast. April 1 saw eleven of these in existence and provision has been made for the erection of three more during the current year. So that, including the wireless stations, there will soon be 167 places in the United Kingdom from which the authorities can communicate with the land officers of the fleets or with the commanders of the ships.

The functions of the stations are of course entirely different. At the wireless telegraph centres it is possible to get into touch with vessels hundreds of miles away from the English coast, but the passing and receiving of signals by semaphore lamp or bunting is at present the limit of usefulness of wireless telegraph stations. With the development of wireless telegraphy it is, however, expected that their scope will be considerably extended. All these stations have now been placed under the control of the Admiral commanding the coast guard and reserves.

I hear that the probable "jumping off" spots are receiving most careful attention, and in this way it is hoped to avoid a surprise. The new arrangement certainly is vastly superior to the system which held good for so many years.—New York Herald.

**We Are Dying Younger.**  
In view of all that has been said about the fall in the death rate it seems strange to realize, says Health Culture, that we are not living so long as our grandfathers and grandmothers did.

More babies live to grow up nowadays than formerly, but people in later life die younger. Once arrived at adult age the average man or woman has fewer years of survival to expect.

This seems on the face of it so surprising a statement that in order to be accepted it should be backed up by data authentic and indisputable. Such data are furnished by the figures of the insurance companies (which all agree on the point), but it is easier to refer to the Government census reports, which tell the tale in simple and convincing fashion. Even during the last fifteen years the death rate among all persons over fifty-five years of age of both sections has risen very considerably.

**Congressional Finance.**  
Congress isn't always as ignorant of financial matters as some people pretend. The last Congress at least knew enough to increase the Congressional pay.—Philadelphia Press.

**Flower Sales and the Weather.**  
Flower sales, as the street vendors find, are affected by the weather. Of course, a bad day keeps buyers at home and the vendors indoors. Flowers of different colors that are favored in sunny days are not much noticed in chill, clouded weather. The daffodil, most cheerful of blooms, is bought with avidity on the darkest days. No other bloom can compete with this one at such times. On a mild and sunny day it is superseded just now by carnations, roses, pansies and violets, for which there is a steady demand. Sweet peas, arbutus and mignonette, with bunches of lilacs of the valley, sell in great quantities, but not so many of them reach the street market.—Philadelphia Record.

**Greatest Need of the Air Ship.**  
According to A. Mallock, before heavier-than-air flying machines can become popular, some method of automatically balancing them—that is, keeping them on an even keel—must be devised. In the few practical machines now built the balancing has to be done by the operator, and, while the ability to do this could probably be gained by most persons, if the accident usually puts an end to the lesson by putting an end to the scholar. Mr. Mallock suggests that an automatic balancer might be devised by the use of pendulums, one with a very long and the other a very short period.

**Legs and Legs.**  
After the Ways and Means Committee had been compelled to leave its old quarters and go over to the new House of Representatives office building some of its friends were sympathizing with Champ Clark.

"It might have been worse, Champ," they said. "Cheer up. Pretty soon they will have the electric cars running in the subway and then you can ride over."  
"Yes," replied Clark. "It might have been worse. Reminds me of an Irishman I knew down in St. Louis who had both of his legs cut off by a railroad train. 'It might have been worse, Mike,' they said. 'Sure, Mike replied; 'suppose I had been a chorus girl.'—Saturday Evening Post.

**A Sudden Metamorphosis.**  
"Who," she asked, "is that scrawny, bow-legged, ridiculous looking person talking to Miss Rockingham?"  
"That is Count Brisciecknitzel."  
"Oh! What an aristocratic, noble bearing he seems to have, now that he has shifted his position as that light strikes him properly."—Chicago Record-Herald.

**The Obliging Butcher.**  
The parson's wife had sent an order for a leg of mutton, and received in reply the following note: "Dear Madam—I have not killed myself this week, but can give you a leg of my brother, if that will do. Your affectionate butcher, John Sirlin."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

## THE REAL HUSKING BEE

There will be a husking to-night. The boys have selected about thirty huge and solid pumpkins for seats, and the stocks of corn stand twenty feet thick, all around outside. Wires are fixed, on which to hang the lanterns of the workers. Inside the seats, the whole centre of the yard is left clear for the clean golden ears after they are stripped. Josiah Andrews and Ephraim Foote are the chief competitors; only old man Denison gives them a close race. It is a curious and pretty piece of business. At 7 o'clock every seat is occupied with laughing, story-telling farmers, farmers' boys and farmhands. Grandfather Hull gives the signal. Lifting a stalk deftly, so as to bring the ear to the left hand, he strips the husks down with the right, and then twists the golden ear cunningly out of the stalk and the husks—quick as a flash tossing the ear to the ground. Soon there is a pile, and each man and boy has his own heap. Now all are at work. The jokes grow fewer, the talk lazier. Ears fly thickly through the air. There will be one hour's pull, and every bit of it will be farmer's science. With all their inventions they have never yet got a better corn husker than the two human hands, with brains running through them. You will easily see that it is brains if you watch the piles. Modern invention has spoiled mowing and reaping, and indoors there is no more sewing or knitting or candle making, but corn husking is, and I think it will long remain.

The kitchen is lighted with unusual brilliance, and there is a hum of business inside. 'Taint odors of doughnuts come to the champions. If you could only look indoors you would see a long row of pumpkin pies, and there are seven jars of honey, for these huskers are hearty eaters. Parson Chase is here, and Deacon Hanford, and they are doing work neither need be ashamed of. After the feasting, when it comes to the dancing, and the champion leads the girl of his choice, the parson smiles and says genially: "Folks do not see things as they used." "Bless the Lord, no!" says the deacon. "There's no use manufacturing sins. There's enough of them in the nature of things."

The hour is up; yes, a good long hour and a-half. The village clock strikes 9 before the huskers shove sick from the stocks—what there is left of them. The girls are coming from the house with arms full. Cider frat—a genuine brew. I should like to stop right here, to sing the praise of real cider—September cider—made half and half of pound sweets and gravensteins. But really if I were to tell you all that I know, and all that I think of this pure brewing of the best fruit God ever made, I should never get to the end of the dancing and feasting, and we should not get home until midnight. Only this I say, cider is fit for mortals only when made of sound apples, and every one washed at the spring. Coffee comes for those whose blood goes slow, and are already sleeping or nodding. This is one of the fine things about farm life, that as soon as the work is done the worker sleeps.—From "Corn and Grapes," by E. P. Powell, in the Outing Magazine.

**WORDS OF WISDOM.**  
There is at least one redeeming feature about air castles, and that is we do not have to pay taxes on them.

The kindness of insincerity is like the beauty of artificial roses; we value it for what it is intended to represent.

When you are in error never be ashamed to acknowledge it. It gives the other fellow no excuse for keeping it up the argument.

If you want to know how people speak of you behind your back, listen to the reckless manner in which they pitch into others.

The man who is always proclaiming that he is in the right is intolerable; the man who admits he has been in the wrong is charming.

A couple of interviewers spent the night in a cell with a man who was doomed to be hanged, and in the morning the prisoner was perfectly willing to die.

Better be defeated in an honest effort than to be discouraged and cease to make that effort. Up and at it should ever be the watchword of the man who feels that he has right on his side.

There is always more than enough brightness in life to offset the gloom, if we will look for it. And there is still enough gloom in life to quench all brightness, if we are determined to have it that way.—From "Nuggets of Wisdom," in the Bee-Hive.

# NEWS OF PENNSYLVANIA

## HAD A SECRET DOOR.

Pittsburg (Special).—A secret panel door leading from his private office enabled William Montgomery, cashier of the Allegheny National Bank, to cover up his alleged defalcations for many years, according to William L. Fields, national bank examiner, who has charge of the case. Mr. Fields declares Montgomery worked with some employe of another bank, presumably Henry Reiber, the teller of the Farmers' Deposit National Bank. When the presence of the bank examiner would be announced, he says, Montgomery would slip out through his panel door, hurry to the other and secure a temporary loan sufficient to make good the deficit. The money would be returned after the departure of the examiner.

The directors of the Allegheny Bank met and deducted from their surplus the sum of \$469,000, the amount Montgomery is charged with getting away with. It is probable that an assessment will be made against the stockholders of the institution later on. As soon as the bank opened a telegram was sent to the Seaboard National and the Park National Banks, of New York, asking them to forward immediately \$500,000 that the Allegheny National has on deposit. The bank also secured all the cash it could get its hands on, and this was piled several feet high on a big table in the center of the banking room. The immense sum could be seen from the street, and was sufficient in itself to prevent a run, although a run was at no time threatened.

It is declared here that Montgomery did not profit to the extent of a single cent. It is alleged that many Pittsburg business houses and manufacturers owe their existence to Montgomery, who advanced them money to keep the doors open. When he attempted to get this money back, it is asserted, he found that the people whom he had favored were unable to give it to him. Today, when it is too late, it is remarked that friends of Montgomery would raise \$1,000,000 if necessary to get him out of his trouble.

Montgomery appeared at a meeting of the bank directors. He was closely questioned but refused to admit that any other person had anything to do with the robbery. In spite of this statement, however, there are persistent rumors that several prominent politicians are implicated.

Because of the large number of speculations in Pittsburg banks officials of the banks have adopted a system of shifting their employes. In a number of the banks a man is allowed to remain in a position for a few months only, after which he is transferred to some other department.

**SLAYER PRAYS CONSTANTLY.**  
Easton (Special).—Robert Bachman the religious fanatic, who killed Irene May Smith, his niece, at Nazareth, gives no attention to anything except his religious devotions. He does not take the exercise in the jail which is allowed the other prisoners and spend most of the time lying on his cell cot praying.

His lawyers have made several attempts to talk with him about the crime and discuss his defense, but without success. To one of them who attempted to bring him to a realization of his position, he said: "God will keep me and nothing mortal man can do will injure me." Bachman has made no inquiries whatever about his wife or his relatives.

**GET THEIR DIPLOMAS.**  
Selins Grove (Special).—The annual commencement exercises of the Selins Grove High School were held in the Opera House. A class of ten was graduated. Miss Lillian Estelle Fisher was the valedictorian, and Miss Mary Louise Keiser, valedictorian.

The Daughters of the American Revolution prize was won by Miss Lillian E. Fisher. The W. C. T. U. prize was awarded to H. Clay Bergstresser. Orations of the class were delivered by Ruth Kathryn Crissinger, Alice Harriet Howe, Thomas Fisher Petteforff, Florence Osasso Meek, Alice Marguerite Musselman, Esther Viola Phillips.

George R. Hendricks, president of the Board of Education, presented the diplomas.

**POSTMASTER ACCUSED.**  
Altoona (Special).—An investigation into charges of pernicious activity in politics, coercion of Government employes, illegal delivery of mail on Sunday and six kindred counts, lodged against Postmaster George Fox by Grant G. Staines, a letter carrier, who was recently dropped from the service, was begun by Post Office Inspector W. W. Stone, representing the department, and J. H. Yocis, of Philadelphia, secretary of the Third Civil Service District, representing the Civil Service Commission.

The charges grew out of the last municipal campaign, when political literature was distributed on Sunday to relieve the congested condition of the office.

**Bucknell's Honor Students.**  
Lewisburg (Special).—At a meeting of the faculty of Bucknell University, the following members of the senior class were appointed as commencement speakers: Winfield Scott Booth, Philadelphia; Ralph Womelsdorf Haller, Reading; John Earl Hummer, Harrisburg; Robert Bruce Morris, Rebersburg; Robert Curlyton Sprout, Muncy; Robert McCurdy Steele, Brockwayville; John Raymond Stratton, Blossburg; Miss Helen Marr Forrest, Lewisburg; Miss Margaret Ellen Klap, Mt. Pleasant.

**Worked On Railroad 80 Years.**  
Pottsville (Special).—When Jeremiah M. Conrad, the veteran conductor on the Colebrookdale Branch of the Philadelphia & Reading Railway Company, turned over the Wednesday's receipts and his lantern, he rounded out thirty-six years of continuous service with the company. At the age of 23 years he entered the employ of the company as a brakeman on a mixed train. He was promoted to the position of conductor twenty years later and for the past twenty-seven years he has occupied this position.

## MAY BE MURDER MYSTERY.

Phoenixville (Special).—Searchers for Thomas Snyder, a resident of Kimberton, a village near here, who disappeared from his home on Monday, unearthed another mystery in the finding of a body of an unknown man in a dam in the French Creek. Not one of the hundreds of persons who viewed the body can give any clue to his identity and no papers were found in his clothes which would identify him.

A short distance from the spot where the body was found the dead man's hat was discovered on the side of a steep railroad embankment, which descends to the water's edge. An investigation by Deputy Coroner Howell, of this place, has revealed that the man's death was not due to violence on the body and nothing save a vial containing a few strychnine tablets was found on the body.

The dead man was about 55 years of age, medium size, with light red hair closely cut. His clothes were those of a workman.

## OCTOGENARIAN DIES.

Contesville (Special).—Richard Strode, one of the best-known business men in this section, died in his 84th year.

He was a descendant of the original Scotch-Irish settlers of Pennsylvania, and a brother of the late Robert Strode, a Philadelphia contractor, and of James W. Strode, for many years master mechanic in the Elmira, N. Y., shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In 1849 he bought a large tract of land in this place and engaged in the lime burning and brick making business. He served as Burgess and as Councilman at various times, and was the organizer of the branch of the Abolition party here.

## Killed In Fall Downstairs.

Scranton (Special).—Mrs J. V. Titus, 32 years old, was found dead when her daughter returned from church. The aged woman had fallen downstairs and had her neck broken. Patrick Finnerty was reading a paper while sitting on the back porch of his house and lost his balance and fell down the stairs a distance of twelve feet. He died in a few hours.

## Miner Killed By Fall Of Coal.

Mahanoy City (Special).—Charles Rollas was killed and Stines Seykoffsky, Charles Smith and Charles Zeman seriously hurt by the collapse of the roof in a gangway at Mahanoy City Colliery. Rollas was buried under several hundred tons of earth, and the body has not yet been reached.

## Gets \$4,000 For Auto Injuries.

Chambersburg (Special).—A jury gave a verdict of \$4,667 to Miss Marie Kauffman against Thomas M. Nelson, president of Chambersburg Trust Company, and three or four other corporations, the wealthiest citizens of the town, for damages for being struck by his automobile a year ago as she dismounted from a trolley car.

## "Black Hand" Gets Four Years.

Bloomsburg (Special).—Four years imprisonment and a fine of \$200 was the sentence imposed by Judge Evans on James Piper, of Centralia, an alleged member of the "Black Hand," who was convicted of assault with intent to kill William Merton, in March, 1907.

## Oldest Baptist Preacher Dies.

Indiana (Special).—Rev. A. B. Runyan, aged 80 years, died at his home in Homer City. He was one of the oldest Baptist ministers in the State. His pastorates were in Indiana, Lock Haven, Liberty, Milesburg, Apollo, East Mahoning, Crooked Creek, Brush Valley and Homer. His wife and daughter survive.

## STATE ITEMS.

Joseph Johannes, of Wayne County, has caused the arrest of his neighbor's boy for painting his horse green and blue. The boy's mistake had effect the horse suffered much from the application of turpentine, and may die.

Salvatore Magnolia, of Scranton, has sued John Welsenfuh for \$1,000 damages, because John applied uncomplimentary epithets to the plaintiff.

Miss Elizabeth Chelton died at Blakely, of scarlet fever. She contracted the malady from a patient whom she was nursing. An epidemic of the disease prevails in the borough.

John Gotwals, of Onks, Montgomery County, was relieved of sixty-five pigeons by a thief.

The Zwinglian Literary Society of Ursinus College has awarded the following prizes in the essay contest for sophomore students: First prize of \$10, F. L. Moser, Collegeville; second prize of \$5, E. C. Wanger, West Chester.

Harry Yessel, a stone and brick mason, hanged himself in the attic at his home in Chambersburg. Members of the family found the body.

Officials of the American Flat Glass Workers' Union and representatives of the Glass Manufacturers, in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, West Virginia, Ohio and Indiana, concluded a two days' conference at Pittsburgh by agreeing to discontinue the usual two months' summer shutdown. Hereafter it will be optional with glass workers whether they will close down from July 1 to September 1.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the Collegiate Fire Company, No. 1, gave a musical and vocal entertainment at the Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, of that borough for the benefit of the fire company.

H. M. Bretz, of Harrisburg, was appointed auditor of the Newcastle Savings and Trust Company, by the Court, upon petition of the Attorney General.

An Adams Express Company horse turned a complete somersault at Altoona, when the frog of its shoe caught in the grating over a sewer inlet while it was trotting along the street.