

## ANIGHTON THE RIVER

THE LAST RUN ON THE MISSOURI  
OF THE MARTHA MITCHELL.

**Dangerous Snags That Are a Constant Menace to River Traffic—The Sleepy Pilot of the Mitchell Was Mechanical and the Boat Went Down.**

Never doubt anything you hear about the treachery of the Missouri river. The oldest pilots on the stream—those grizzled fellows who went to Fort Benton on trips that netted from \$3,000 to \$30,000 each—will tell you that a "tie up" over night is the only way to insure the passengers that the morning will not find them stuck on a bar in mid-stream, or, what is worse, camped on shore with the boat pinned by a snag and settling in the mud. No modern snag boat can keep the channel clear of the heavy logs that are always floating down from somewhere up along the Dakota, Iowa or Nebraska shores, green at first as torn from caving banks, but dead, hard and splintered when most dangerous. Snags that stick their noses above the water are little to be feared, but the hidden logs, those whose limbs are caught in the mud, while the trunk swings up within a foot or two of the surface, have always made steamboating on the Missouri a precarious occupation.

I remember one instance, however, in which a visible snag sent a good side-wheel boat to the bottom on one of the clearest, brightest nights that ever hung over the river. It was in 1890, or perhaps a year later. The boat was the Martha Mitchell, a tramp from the lower waters, running from Cincinnati to New Orleans. She was making a trip to St. Joseph with provisions for the plains, mostly bacon; and bacon, let me tell you, was a necessity in the west then. The passenger list of the Mitchell was heavy, so that many of the travelers were forced to remain on deck. It was 12 o'clock on a moonlit night in August. The captain had gone to bed for a wonder, and only a sleepy watchman who sat astern represented the executive among those awake on deck. A dozen passengers were seated about the big bell forward, telling stories while they reveled in the beauties of the night. The moon was shining with a clear, white light that made everything for 100 yards ahead as plainly visible as at noonday. There was no noise save the dull throb, throb, throb of the engines, the gentle puff of the released steam and the breaking of the water on the wheel's paddles.

Suddenly Jack Caruthers, a young fellow from St. Louis, gazed forward in the course of the boat, and pointing to a small, black object just discernible in the distance, asked:

"What's that thing, boys?"  
"A log probably," returned an old timer. "They're always floating about."  
"But I've been watching it," Caruthers went on, "and she hasn't moved much."

The entire party looked at the black object in the distance. It grew plainer as the boat climbed the stream, but not as if it were floating down on the current—the approach was too slow.

"See there!" Caruthers exclaimed. "It's swinging from side to side."  
"Funny," said the old timer, "but if she's a snag the pilot'll get around it all right."

By this time all of the deck passengers were looking at the black object. The boat did not change its course. There was no more comment—all eyes were riveted on the dark spot in the river. When the boat was within forty feet of it the old timer sprang up and placing his hands in trumpet fashion about his mouth called back to the pilot:

"Hello, up there!"  
There was no reply, and the nose of the big boat continued straight for the object.

"Hello!" chorused the party.  
"Well, what is it?" came a gruff answer.

"Throw her hard to larboard," the old timer said; "There's a big snag twenty feet in front."

There was a clanging of bells below decks, and the passengers in their berths felt the boat lurch violently as the machinery was reversed and the steamer answered her rudder. But it was too late. In thirty seconds there was another jar, greater than the first. The Martha's nose seemed to climb into the air. An effort was made to back the boat, but it would not budge. Then the passengers became panic stricken, running about in their night garments and threatening to jump overboard. The clear headed captain was on hand in a moment, however, and before the old steamer had settled a foot every passenger was started for the shore.

In the morning we watched the cabin of the Martha float off while we stood on the great bluffs just above Rochepot. Then the hulk sank out of sight.

The owners of the Martha did not save their bacon. The sleepy pilot saved his by escaping through the woods. We only wondered that he did not run ashore before the accident, but the captain said that he knew the river so well there that his work was mechanical.—Detroit Free Press.

**Electric Test for Spurious Coins.**  
Some interesting tests with alternating currents and a particular form of magnet have been made in England. Among the experiments shown was one which illustrated a new method of detecting counterfeit coins. A genuine coin, being a good conductor, was held between the poles of the magnet, but a bad coin, not possessing that necessary qualification, immediately dropped when placed in position.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

**Rather Mixed.**  
The following was the peroration of an orator at a political meeting not long ago:

"The time has come when we must leave off voting for ornamental principles and vote to put bread and butter in our pockets."

## THE PERFECT FRIEND.

One only friend we have  
Accounted sure:  
One only love is ours  
That will endure.

All other friends are dear:  
He knows how dear  
Who gave them for our joy  
And solace here.

All other loves are sweet:  
He knows how sweet  
Of whom sad souls that lack  
For love entreat.

But friends however true  
This life will test,  
And they will fall as oft  
Who know us best.

And loves however strong  
In time may change:  
Misfortunes may divide,  
New ties estrange.

Sorest of all will come  
Some sad offense:  
Mistrust will chill, and doubt  
Drive friendship hence.

Oh, slow of heart to learn  
What yet we own—  
One only perfect friend  
Hath any known!

—H. M. Kimball in New York Independent.

## The Transition of Electrical Theories.

To the question, "What is electricity?" which is often asked, no absolute and satisfactory answer has yet been found. Notwithstanding the wonderful development of electrical applications, electricians are still feeling their way as to the nature and many of the principles of the operation of the mighty force that they are learning to control. This was suggestively shown by a remark made by the vice president of the American Institute of electrical engineers at the annual convention of that body.

The speaker claimed that the present theories of electricity should be regarded merely as stepping stones to more comprehensive and satisfactory ones. He contended that modern theories of electrical phenomena, if adopted as an absolute framework of all our knowledge of these subjects, may, in a few years, become prison bars that will prevent the mind from making a free and unprejudiced investigation of new theories and new phenomena, and giving due weight and significance in the general science of electricity to the results obtained by the most recent experiments.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

## The Future of the Mississippi Valley.

The delta of the Mississippi, below its junction with the Ohio, richer than the Nile or the Rhine, exceeds the combined area of Holland and Egypt, and is destined under the stimulus of free labor and the incentives of self government to build a fabric of society more opulent and enduring. Add to this the inexhaustible alluvion of the streams above, and the fertile prairies from which they descend, and the arithmetic of the past has no logarithms with which to compute the problems of the economic and commercial future of the west. It will be predominant in the development, not of this country alone, but of the hemisphere, and will give direction to the destinies of the human race.

We stand in the vestibule. We have not yet entered the temple.—John J. Ingalls in Lippincott's.

## He Was the Duke.

When, in 1883, Professor Freeman was examining Battle abbey, he found himself dogged by a person who, as he thought, somewhat officiously obtruded his offers of assistance. After vainly trying to shake him off, he broke forth with: "I don't want your assistance. The Duke of Cleveland promised that I should not be interfered with by the gardeners." "Exactly so," was the reply; "I hope they have obeyed my orders. I am the Duke of Cleveland."—San Francisco Argonaut.

## A London Bachelors' Club.

The Bachelors' club, a London institution, in 1891 suffered no fewer than twenty-three defections in the shape of members who married; but the club gained £575 in fines at the rate of £25 a wedding. The club is flourishing, and seems on the whole to encourage rather than deprecate matrimony as a fine art. There are still 839 bachelors in the list of members.—London Tit-Bits.

## Deaf Mute Pupils.

It is not generally known what wonderful progress has been made in this country of late years in teaching the dumb to speak. It appears from the official records that last year articulation was taught to no less than 4,345 pupils in American schools for the deaf. In a large number of these cases the infirmity dated from birth and was inherited.

## Discovered Affection.

Clara—Can it be, Dolly, that you are to marry Mr. Smith, after saying to me repeatedly that you could not endure him?

Dolly—The truth is, Clara, dear, that until I heard that his aunt had died leaving him a fortune I was deceived in my own feelings toward him.—Exchange.

In New Orleans the dog catchers who feed the pound with vagrant curs proceed about their work with a slip noose, which they hold in front of the dog's head or under his feet.

The Spanish government has taken possession of the largest shipbuilding works in that country, and is offering inducements for English shipwrights to superintend the work.

Horace Greeley once described a very famous literary woman of the last generation as "a great woman and a greater bore. Her talk was incessant."

It is a curious fact that the late Earl of Yarborough should have married a lady named Hare, and the present one a lady named Fox.

Out of thirty-two cities with populations ranging from 200,000 to 50,000 all but one are using the electric railway system.

## A Real Nice Girl.

"Why, my darling," exclaimed Mrs. Worldly to her eighteen-year-old rosebud Maud, "why in the name of goodness can you want to marry that impecunious young fellow Harry Juventus, when there is that charming Sir Cressus Senectus, a man of dignified maturity and countless wealth, who is dying to make you Mrs. Senectus, and who would place my jewel in a magnificent setting?"

"How can you talk so, mamma?" replied Maud, looking down and blushing a few lines of solid nonpareil. "It is true that Sir Cressus is rich and Harry is not; but then Harry is young and Sir Cressus is old. Now, Harry is young and he can acquire wealth; while Sir Cressus is rich, but he cannot acquire youth. Do you catch on, mamma, as the boys say?"—Minneapolis Journal.

## Compress Heater and Sterilizer.

A useful appliance has been introduced in hospitals in the shape of a compress heater and sterilizer. There is no moistening or wringing of hot cloths necessary. It does away with the use of oil or cotton, as it cannot wet bedclothes and will retain heat longer than the ordinary compress, and the compresses may be applied to different patients without washing, as they may be easily sterilized and freed entirely from germs.—New York Telegram.

## Street Railway Figures.

The extent of the street railroad interest in the United States may be estimated from a report which states that there are 5,783 miles of such roads in operation, having 32,505 cars and employing 70,764 men. The total number of passengers carried in one year was 2,023,010,202, being \$49,829 per mile of road work and 62,237 per car.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

## A Legal Question.

Little Willie—Papa, when a man takes up the law it means he starts in being a lawyer, doesn't it?  
His Father—Yes.  
"And when he's a judge and lays down the law is that where he quits?"  
But his father told him it was time he was in bed long ago.—Kate Field's Washington.

## He Had Been There.

"Mr. Jones," said Mrs. Jones, looking up from the paper she was reading, "here is an excellent article on 'How to Hang Pictures.' You ought to read it."  
"Oh, I know how—hang 'em!" retorted Mr. Jones savagely, and then silence came like a poultice to heal the blows of sound.—Detroit Free Press.

## Seaweed Made Useful.

The hollow stem of the species of seaweed indigenous to the neighborhood of the Cape of Good Hope was formerly used by the natives as a trumpet when dried. Still another kind furnishes the savages of some parts of Australia with vessels, many implements and even food.—Washington Star.

## In Boston.

"Who was called the father of his country, Miss Beacon?"  
"George Washington was called the father of his country; but this was an erroneous idea, for it has been proven that to Adam belongs the ignominy."—Lafa.

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We carry only reliable makes, and we could fill the one side of this issue with testimonials in regard to the wearing qualities of our shoes. What is termed among shoe dealers as cheap shoes, "for instance," shoes that sell for one dollar a pair, we do not handle, for the simple reason that goods of that kind will not build up our shoe department. We buy no shoes from what is called "Jobbers," but place our orders three and four months in advance, with the best shoe manufacturers in the country.

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