

THE BEAUTY OF A SHIP.

Mrs. Stowe's Fascinating Description of a Vessel Under Sail. Mrs. Stowe, in "The Pearl of Orin Island," gives this fascinating description of a ship under sail: "What is there belonging to this workaday world of ours that has such a fund of never-fading poetry and grace as a ship? A ship is a beauty and a mystery. As we see it, its white wings touch the regions of the unknown and the imaginative. They seem to us full of the odors of quaint, strange, foreign shores, where life, we fondly dream, moves in brighter currents than the muddy, tranquil tides of every day. Who that sees one bound outward, with her white sails swelling and heaving, as if with a reaching expectancy, does not feel his own heart swell with a longing impulse to go with her to the far-off shores? Even at dingy, crowded wharfs, amid the struts and funnels of great cities, the coming in of a ship is an event that never can lose its interest. But on these romantic shores of Orin Island, where all is so wild and still and the blue sea lies embraced in the arms of dark, solitary forests, the sudden coming of a ship from a distant voyage is a sort of romance. Who that has stood by the blue waters of Middle Bay, engirdled as it is by green slopes of farming land, interchanged here and there with heavy billows of forest trees of rocky, pine-covered promontories, has not felt that sense of isolation and solitude which is so delightful? And then what a wonder! There comes a ship from China, drifting in like a white cloud, the gallant creature! How the waters hiss and foam before her! With what a glad, free, generous splash she throws out her anchors, as if she said a cheerful, 'Well done!' to some glorious work accomplished! The very life and spirit of strange, romantic lands come with her. Suggestions of sandalwood and spice breathe through the pine woods. She is an oriental queen, with hands full of mystical gifts. All her garments smell of myrrh and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, where they have made her glad. No wonder men have loved ships like birds and that there have been found brave, rough hearts that in fatal wrecks chose rather to go down with their ocean love than to leave her in the last throes of her death agony."

JEFFERSON WAS THE MAN.

In Catskill the Famous Actor Taken For the Original Old Rip. Joseph Jefferson relates the following interesting incident: "There is in the village of Catskill a Rip Van Winkle club. The society did me the honor to invite me to act the character in their town," said Mr. Jefferson. "I accepted, and when I arrived was met by the president and other members of the club, among whom was Young Nicholas Federer, who claimed to be a blood descendant of the original Old Nick. I was fixing a cup of tea at the table in the hotel," continued Mr. Jefferson, "when I was attracted to the colored waiter, who was giving a graphic and detailed account of the legend of the Catskill mountains to one of the boarders who sat nearby opposite me. "Yes, sah," said the waiter, "Rip went up into de mountains, slep' for 20 years, and when he come back here in dis berry town his own folks didn't know him. "Why," said his listener, "you don't believe de story's true?" "True? Oh course it is! Why, printing at me," said Jefferson, "dat's de man. "When I got to de theater," said Mr. Jefferson, "remining the story, 'I could scarcely get in, de crowd was so great about de door. During de scene in de last act, when Rip inquires of de innkeeper, 'Is dis de village of Catskill?' I altered de text and substituted de correct name, 'Is dis de village of Catskill?' de people in de crowd house almost seemed to hold their breath. "The name of de village seemed to bring home de scene to every man, woman and child, and was looking at it from that time on de interest was at its full tension. Surely I had never seen an audience so struck with de play before. "There was a reception held at de club after de play, and de president was so nervous dat he introduced me as Washington Irving."—San Francisco Call.

Puppies and Flower Beds.

We once watched the united efforts of a litter of setter puppies, the particular object being the destruction of a line bed of geraniums, an enterprise which promised a "maximum of result" with a set off of a mere trifle of an effort, if once a protecting fence of wire netting could be surmounted. One after another the puppies charged the fence, only to fall back baffled, but not discouraged. Failure only made them more determined. With savage barks and growls they returned again to the attack until, after a desperate leap and scramble, the biggest puppy rolled over among the geraniums. For a moment he was almost swayed by his success. He squeaked and sat down, but only for a moment. Then he hurried himself to the thickest part of the bed and tore the geraniums to pieces.—Cornish.

In the Art Gallery.

Poasant Woman (noticing a man copying one of the old masters)—Why do they paint this picture twice? Her Husband—Why, that is obvious. When the new picture is done, they hang that on the wall and throw the old one away.—Flegende Blatter.

Spanish Town, in 1808, was blotted out by a terrible conflagration, which destroyed property estimated to exceed \$7,500,000 in value.

The first agricultural newspaper was The American Farmer, begun at Baltimore in 1819.

THE RETIRED BURGLAR.

An Experience Which was Unexpected and Decidedly Unpleasant. "Looking over the stuff on the sideboard of a house I was in one night," said the retired burglar, "I couldn't help thinking that if this was a fair sample of the house I'd just a night, silver plated teapots and sugar bowls fit for nothing but to hold tea and sugar and spoonholders and everything else just the same. In the drawers, among the plated spoons and forks, there was a miserable little lot of thin silver spoons and light forks, scarcely worth carrying off, and a souvenir spoon or two, but I sorted out these things and laid 'em together, curled in a little pile on the left hand side of the top of the sideboard, handy to pick up when I was ready. I had finished the sideboard and picked up the spoons and was just about to pat 'em into my left hand inside coat pocket when I heard somebody say: "There, that'll do nicely!" "Naturally enough, I suppose, I faced around toward where the sound came from, still holding the spoons in my hand. I realized in a minute just what it meant, and I might have thrown the spoons at him or turned the other way or dropped; but, to tell you the truth, I was a little surprised—it's a watchful man that'll never surprise—and in the fraction of a second that I stood there thinking about it there was a click and a flash, and I knew I'd been photographed. "I think," he says, "you'll find that'll come out very nicely—feature and all the accessories clear and distinct. We'll send you proof in about two weeks. What is de address, please?" It is customary for us to require a deposit from customers that we don't know. If you don't wish to make a deposit, you might leave the spoons with us as a sort of guarantee of good faith. "I'd dropped the spoons in my pocket and reached for my gun. I wasn't going away without that photograph machine and everything in it, but long before I was ready he'd pulled a string or something and turned up every light in that room and the next, and he was standing just inside the next room holding a gun very steady across the top of the camera. He was a cool, business like looking man—very much so. It was clear that there wasn't anything for me to do but to leave the spoons, and that's what I did, and when he said nothing further, but just held the gun on me, I understood that there was no use of my waiting for another sitting. "I was back in that town two or three years after that, and I looked along in the photographers' showcases for the picture, but I didn't see it."—New York Sun.

The Giants and the Flood.

Among the many queer stories related in the old Jewish Talmud is one concerning the action taken by the six races of giants at the time of the deluge. According to Rabbi Eliezer, when the flood broke upon the earth the giants exclaimed, "If all of the waters of the earth be gathered together they will only reach to our waists, and if the fountains of the great deep be broken up we will stamp them down again." The same writer, who was one of the compilers of the Talmud, says that they actually tried to do this when the flood finally came. Eliezer says that Og, their leader, "planted his foot upon the fountain of the deep and with his hands closed the windows of heaven." Then, according to this same queer story, "God made the waters hot and boiled the flesh from the bones of the haughty giants." The Targum of Palestine also says that the waters of the flood were hot and that the skin of the rhinoceros lays in folds because he was not allowed to enter the ark, but saved himself by hooking his horn under the edge of the vessel and floating with it. But the water which was directly under and at the sides of the ark was not hot—the rhinoceros loosened his skin swimming from a mountain peak to the side of the vessel. One account says that Og and another giant named Lami also saved themselves by taking refuge in the cool water under the edge of the ark's hull, along with the rhinoceros. One rabbinic authority quoted by Gould in his "Patriarchs and Prophets" says that Og saved himself by climbing upon the top of the ark, and that when Noah discovered and tried to dislodge him he swore to be a slave to Noah's family forever if allowed to remain.—St. Louis Republic.

How Legged Stockings.

During last autumn a pitman was asked by a friend who was very low legged to purchase, when near "if the foot," a pair of stockings for him. On the following day Saturday the pitman entered the shop of a well known hosier to make the purchase. The shopman was most obliging, but having shown the intending purchaser nearly every pair in stock he at last thought it time to ask of the man a more minute description of what was required. "He said he had shown nearly all they had, and he was sure their shop was second to none, and as they had hitherto given satisfaction to all classes it was strange that they could not now suit a customer. The pitman laconically replied, "What I want is a pair of bow-legged yins."—Straits Magazine.

Eugenie's First Ancestor.

It is not generally known that Empress Eugenie was partly an Irish woman. Yet upon one side she was descended from an Irish soldier of fortune, there were any amount of them—who made name and place for himself in the interminable Spanish wars. When there was talk of her marrying the Emperor Napoleon, some of the old nobility sneered at her pedigree. Then came heralds tracing out Irish blood lines until the French aristocrats in disgust conceded that Eugenie was descended from all the royalties of Ireland back to Brian Boru.

THE IDEAL.

We are uneducated and know not why. We seek for the ideal of our dreams. And strive to reach it guided by the beams of truth and faith. Setting our standard high, we struggle, but when the path is plain we find that it eludes us, and it seems to beckon onward, mocking with its gleams like some bright mirage in the azure sky. With eyes blind to the glory here below, our thoughts forever turned away from earth. We see no beauty around us and the world hidden in humble things we never know. We grope and pass unheeding in the way. The good that we seek is waiting day by day. —Donahoe's Magazine.

OFFICE BOY LAWYERS.

Collapse of a Grandiloquent Boast by a Redding Liar of the Law. In one of the big down town office buildings, tenanted principally by lawyers, a reporter rode down in an elevator car with two boys, who, to judge from their conversation, were budding into the law. One of them was about 15 years of age, and the other perhaps a couple of years his senior. "I had that judgment opinion this morning," remarked the younger of the two, flicking the ashes from a cigarette, "but I thought Giegerich was a little slow about it." "Ya-s," drawled the other, "it's certainly a great bore to have to spend so much time in court. Remember my bond and mortgage case in the supreme? Well, it was enough to try anybody's patience. The trouble with some of our judges, Frank, is that they don't know the rudiments of law, and they knock him out. Where are you bound?" "Oh, I've got a little corporation matter on hand today," was the reply. "Receiver wants to be relieved. I don't know whether I'll consent or not. I've got a demurrer to argue besides, and—" By that time the car was at the ground floor. A stout, matronly woman stood waiting to get in. "Well, young man," she said, addressing the boy who had been called Frank, "I was just about to go up and give you a talking to in front of your boss. Why didn't you get father's shoes that you took to be half sold?" "Hush, mother!" whispered Frank as his face reddened. "I don't want to be talking about that down here. I'm going to court." "You're going to court, are you?" responded the stout lady in a loud tone. Very well, go to court. But if you come home tonight without those shoes you get no supper, and you don't stir a peg out of the flat the rest of the week. Do you hear?" "Say," said the elevator man as he stuck his head out of the car and grinned, "you've run up against the chief justice of the supreme court, haven't you? Gee whizz!"—New York Mail and Express.

Former Knights of the Road.

The discipline of the monasteries had greatly increased vagrancy in the sixteenth century. Rich abbots, like that of Reading, employed large numbers of workmen and servants, who when their masters had fallen into evil case were thrown upon a homeless world and took to robbery for a livelihood. The hospitia of the monasteries in the good old days always provided food and a bed for weary travelers, of whatever rank they were, and needy wanderers sorely felt the loss of their kind hosts. The rich countrymen grabbed the church's lands and wealth, and the poor folk, in their example by grabbing whatever they could lay their hands on. Consequently there were in those parts "a great store of stout vagabonds and masterless men (able enough for labour), which do great hurt in the country by their idle and naughty life." The unfortunate persons who were robbed could obtain compensation from the inhabitants of the hamlets in which the robbery took place. This old law was as ancient as the time of our great Berkshire king, Alfred; for who is ignorant of the fact that when gold bracelets were hung up by the roadside on account of the enforcement of this law and the fear of the vengeance of the hundred no one dared to remove them? But when these highway robberies on Maidenhead thickened very so frequent, the burden of making compensation fell somewhat heavily on the inhabitants of the hundred of Bonhurst. In one year they paid as much as £235 for robberies committed on unfortunate wayfarers. Therefore a special act of parliament was passed in 1597 in order to relieve the inhabitants from their burdens.—Gentleman's Magazine.

A Good Estate.

When Gustavus of Sweden was besieging Prague, a bar of extraordinary aspect gained admittance to his tent and offered, by way of amending his majesty, to devour a large bag in his presence. Old General Konigsmarck, who was in attendance, at once suggested that the man with the gargantuan appetite should be burned as a witch, whereupon the bar, whose feelings were hurt by this observation, exclaimed, "If your majesty will but make that old gentleman take off his sword and apron, I will eat him before I begin the siege." This was accompanied by such a "hideous expansion of the jaws and mouth" that the general, though he had given his "proofs" on many a field, turned pale and fled incontinently to his tent.—San Francisco Argonaut.

Cotton Rate.

Rails have been found very useful in cotton mills where the raw cotton has been imperfectly ginned. In a Spanish cotton mill the store room was invaded by swarms of rats, who pulled the bales to pieces to get at the seeds left in the cotton. They did the work thoroughly, without injuring the fiber in any way. The Greeks and Romans had no week until they borrowed this division of time from the east. The Greeks divided the month into three equal periods; the Romans into three very unequal—the kalends, ides and nones.

A NOTABLE BANK.

The Most Independent One in the World is in Norway. Probably the most independent and aristocratic bank in the world is the Norges national bank of Norway. It seems to be wholly indifferent to doing business of any kind, and what it does do it insists upon doing in its own deliberate way. Socially the bank is of considerable importance. The directors meet twice a week, and these friendly gatherings are said to be most enjoyable affairs. Loans and discounts form the chief subjects of conversation. No loan or discount can be made without the approval of three of the directors. Suppose the directors are to hold a meeting on Wednesday and you want to borrow \$5,000 on Monday. You apply to Norges bank and are told that the matter will be taken under consideration at the directors' meeting on Wednesday, and you may look for an answer to your application by Thursday. It does not matter in the least that you want the \$5,000 on Monday and not Thursday. You simply have to wait. The origin of this institution was as peculiar as its management is unusual. Soon after the nominal union of the two kingdoms, Sweden and Norway, in 1814, the latter country began to feel the need of greater money facilities to meet the demands of the rapidly increasing commerce. The problem of securing the necessary capital for a great national institution was a very simple one for the Norwegian government. It raised stockholders for the bank as it raised soldiers for its armies. Every well-to-do citizen was compelled to take so much stock. He was always at liberty to take more if he chose, but always in amounts divisible by five. Bookkeeping was made easy on a new principle, in accordance with which sums ending in other figures than five and zero were to be excluded from the books. This national bank is also a pawnshop. It is authorized by law to lend money on any perishable goods, and it provides that they can be deposited in the bank and kept under lock and key. For this service it charges rather less than the private pawnbrokers in Norway. In the regular loan department the curious rule is enforced that loans may not be made for less than one month nor for more than six and only for sums of at least \$200.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

COST OF FIRING BIG GUNS.

Some of the Practice Shooting Indulged in Bismarck Away a File of Money. The days are long past when my English sang in a free and easy way: Two jolly Frenchmen and one Portuguese. One jolly Englishman could tick them all three. We are ready enough now to give our possible advantage in credit for pluck and perhaps for technical skill; and yet, as regards practice in the use of their weapons, we still have them at an immeasurable disadvantage. This factor is commonly omitted from newspaper comparisons, but it would probably have more weight than any other in determining the issue of an actual struggle. Two dentists may each have lion hearts and each the best Damascus blades, but if one has ten times more practice in the art of fencing than the other it is long odds that he will win. So it is with our navy. It has a far greater knowledge of ships, acquired by actual firing practice than any other power. And the reason of this is precisely because such knowledge is a very expensive thing to acquire, and England is the only nation that cares to afford it. It is probable that where France, the next naval power, spends a million in sea cruising and gun firing, we spend five. From every gun in our navy having a caliber of 10 inches and under about each quarter eight rounds of ammunition by way of practice and from all guns heavier than 10 inch four rounds a quarter, irrespective of the additional rounds used in the annual "prize firing." The heavy expenditure involved in this item alone may be hinted at by observing that every full round fired from a 13 inch gun costs \$16, from an 8 inch gun \$25, from a 12 inch gun \$123 and from the 16.5 inch, or 110 ton gun, as much as \$290. And these figures are only a small part of the story, for the life of a very heavy gun is not a long one, and though a 6 inch gun can last as many as 500 rounds, 70 or 80 full rounds are the limit of the 110 ton. After firing that amount they will both require a new inner tube, a costly matter enough.—Chambers' Journal.

An Alphabetical Advertisement.

The following remarkable alphabetical ad, appeared in an issue of the London Times away back in 1842: Widowers and Single Gentlemen, invited by a lady, a situation to be attended the household and preside at table. She is agreeable, becoming, careful, desirous, English, factious, generous, honest, industrious, judicious, keen, lively, merry, natty, obedient, philosophical, quiet, ray faced, sensible, temperate, useful, vivacious, womanish, Xantippish, youthful, zealous, etc.—Et. Louis Republic.

Working Days.

The average number of working days in a year in various countries is as follows: In Russia, 267; in Britain, 278; in Spain, 290; in Austria, 295; in Italy, 298; in Bavaria and Belgium, 300; in Saxony and France, 302; in Denmark, Norway and Switzerland, 303; in Prussia, 305; in Holland and North America, 308, and in Hungary, 312. The fall of dead branches from a tree is an excellent sign of an approaching storm. The dead wood, much decayed, absorbs moisture, and loses its tenacity, thus causing the branch to fall. Spain has 4,130,000 women over the age of 16.

TRIES THE NERVES.

AN OLD FIREMAN ON THE EFFECT OF A SERIOUS ACCIDENT. The Thoughts That Flash Through the Engineer's Brain Just Before a Collision Occurs—A Smash Up Makes a Man Seary Ever Thereafter. There is something attractive about railroad life to the man who once enters it. The railroad companies rarely give up a reliable, faithful man. He may become maimed and unfit for the most remunerative positions and be forced to accept some humbler place with a smaller salary, attached to it, but it is an unwritten law with most of the great railroad companies that the man who is injured in their service shall be placed in some position where he may obtain his livelihood. Thus it may happen that when you fall in conversation with the man who occupies a humble position, or a fireman's shanty you are talking with one who has had his share of excitement and been through experiences that would make the hair of the average man stand upon end. A reporter met a switchman the other day the pathos of whose life was expressed in the wooden leg which he used, and as the Empire dashed by he looked up and said: "Yes, I like railroading. I have been in the business all my life and expect to spend the rest of my days over the rails, but I am quite content to remain here in my little cottage and tend to my flagging rather than have the position of the man who holds the throttle on that big engine which just whizzed by here. You may think it a snap to sit there and ride over the country at the rate of a mile a minute, but I tell you the man carries a load of responsibility on his shoulders which I would not want on mine and which the average man knows very little about. I know something of it, for I was fireman some years ago on one of the fast engines and lost my leg in an accident between here and Albany. But if I had come out of that accident as sound as you are I never should have been able to hold my nerve for any more fast trips. That finished me for that work." "Then if a man has been hurt in a railroad accident it makes him seary of that kind of work, does it?" asked the reporter. "You bet it does," answered the switchman with emphasis, "and don't you see one fool you that it doesn't. The man who was running that engine the day I was hurt escaped with hardly a scratch, but he never could keep his time up the way he did before that and finally was put on a freight engine, where the running was a great deal slower. "I shall never forget the way he looked after the smash up occurred. Just before the crash came I looked at him. We were rounding a curve down by Schenectady. His long gray hair was flowing in the breeze, his face was set and his eyes fixed on the track ahead. "All at once he jumped to his feet and reversed the lever and exclaimed: 'a startled tone, 'My God, we are caught!' It was probably not more than half a minute after when I was lying beneath the engine with my leg crushed, utterly unconscious of the fact that a great wreck had occurred but every movement and occurrence of that half minute is as vividly impressed upon my mind as if it had taken weeks of time to impress it there. "As he spoke I looked through the cab window ahead of us, and there, within 20 rods, was a freight engine coming straight at us, and there was no possible chance to escape a crash. The engineer was doing his duty. I knew that. He was reversing the lever, applying the brakes and doing his best to avert what he knew was inevitable, but I had nothing to do, and it seemed as if everything in my life was before me in those few seconds. I felt absolutely sure I was going to die. Strange as it may seem, the thought did not seem horrible to me. A whole lot of the slang sayings, such as, 'You are learning to fire here in this world so as to be prepared for the next,' and 'You won't mind a hot job over there,' and a number of these stale things which a fireman has to take, came into my head, and even in that awful moment it occurred to me in a humorous sort of way that I had made a good start here below, or here above, as I might say. The next moment I was thinking of my wife and children—yes, and of mother too, who had been dead a number of years. A man's thoughts of his mother at such a time, come into my head, and even in that awful moment it occurred to me in a humorous sort of way that I had made a good start here below, or here above, as I might say. The next moment I was thinking of my wife and children—yes, and of mother too, who had been dead a number of years. 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