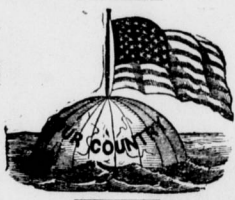


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THE GOADING SLUR.

A Cape Cod Life-Saver Who Proved Himself a Hero.

Circumstances singularly pathetic surround the loss which befell the crew of the Peaked Hill station, near Provincetown, Cape Cod. Keeper Atkins of this station was one of the true and trusted veterans of the service. But one stormy day in winter, after twelve hours' exposure on the beach, exhausted by futile efforts to launch the surf-boat, he and his crew had the mortification of seeing the rescue they had attempted made by a crew of volunteers. It mattered not that these had made no previous exertions, that they had come fresh and unweary upon the scene; Keeper Atkins and his crew had to take from the community what, in the staid, old-fashioned speech of the Cape, is known as the "goading slur." The keeper made no attempt to answer his critics; but gradually, as that season and the following summer wore away, a settled look of determination became stamped on his face, and his bearing took on a dignity almost tragic. When, at the opening of the next season, his wife, as he left his home for the station, begged him not to expose himself to needless danger, he replied:

"Before this season is over I will have wiped out the goading slur."

Reaching the station, he called his crew about him, and informed them that, no matter at what peril, a rescue would be attempted at every wreck within the limits of the station.

That winter a storm of almost unprecedented fury burst over the coast, and a vessel was swept upon the Peaked Hill bars. A surf-boat, launched by seemingly superhuman power, put out from shore. But neither desperation, nor even madness, could keep a boat afloat in such a sea; and when, one after another, those who had braved it were cast upon the beach, three were dead. One of these was Keeper Atkins. He had wiped out the "goading slur."

"Of such stuff are the heroes of the life-saving service.—Gustave Kobbe in the Century.

A Problem in Mute-Lovemaking.

Paul Milliken, who is quite an expert in the language of deaf mutes, says that one morning last week he was coming down on the Avondale car, when he became interested in a discussion between two mutes.

"Say, I want your advice," said one of them, using his hands as vocal organs.

"I shall be happy to oblige you," said the other.

"Are you up on the tricks of women?" inquired the first one.

The second man modestly admitted that he knew something of the gentler sex, although he disclaimed being an oracle.

"Well," resumed the one who wanted advice, "you know, I am in love with Mabel. That pretty little blonde, you know. At last I made up my mind to propose to her. Last night I made the attempt."

"And she turned you down?" eagerly inquired his friend, his hands trembling so with excitement that he stammered badly.

"That is what I am coming to," said the first. "I don't know whether she did or not. You see, I was somewhat embarrassed, and the words seemed to stick on my hands. And there she sat, as demure as a dove. Finally, my fingers clove together, and I could not say a word. Then Mabel got up and turned the gas down."

"Well," resumed the one who wanted advice, "you know, I am in love with Mabel. That pretty little blonde, you know. At last I made up my mind to propose to her. Last night I made the attempt."

"Well," resumed the one who wanted advice, "you know, I am in love with Mabel. That pretty little blonde, you know. At last I made up my mind to propose to her. Last night I made the attempt."

No Interruption Permitted.

The newly elected Justice of the Peace faced the happy pair. In all his legal experience he had never tackled so abstruse a problem. Nevertheless he determined to proceed with the ceremony to the best of his somewhat rattled ability. He went on with the affair by jerky and occasionally inaudible degrees. Presently he looked vacuously around him and hoarsely inquired:

"Does any man present know of any impediment to this union?"

He saw that nobody understood him. He tried again.

"Does any man know of any bar?"

He was interrupted by the bridegroom.

"That's a bar next door," said the happy man, "but, bet yer boots, squire, that 'wont be a drop o' lickin' till you say hatched!"

And the ceremony proceeded.

Cycling the Jeweler's Enemy.

A jeweler, bemoaning the impending ruin of his business, observes that nowadays young men pass his windows without so much as a glance and go off to the bicycle stores to buy their sweethearts presents, and the worst of it is that the silly girls appreciate the stupid things far more than they do pretty valuables in the way of rings and watches. In fact, he states that he quite expects to hear before long that it is fashionable for young people to give away bicycles instead of rings when plighting their troth.

Many State Homes.

In addition to the national homes, there are now twenty-four State homes, to which the Government pays \$100 per annum for each inmate. It is thought that these twenty-four homes have a population of about 22,000 also, which makes 45,000 soldiers now being cared for by the Government. Few realize what a home the nation provides for her worthy soldiery.

TROUBLE ALL THE WAY UP.

Bought a "Hobson's Choice" Downtown Landed in a Hospital Uptown.

The nurse adjusted the bandage on the patient's head in one of the wards of a big hospital uptown and then she said:

"Now you may tell me how it happened, if you will promise to be very quiet."

"Well, you know Monday was a warm day," he began, "so I went into a store and told the man I wanted to buy a straw hat. He picked up one, put it on my head and he says, 'That's the hat you want,' just that way. I said I would like to look at others. He said he had others, but insisted on my taking the one he had put on my head. I asked him if there was anything the matter with that hat and he said no, but it was the one he picked out for me as soon as he saw me come in. 'It's Hobson's choice,' he said. 'Whose?' I says, 'Hobson's,' he says. 'I said I didn't know him. Then he said everybody was saying it. Said it was a fad, or something like that, and if I wanted to be 'strictly in it' I would take the hat and if anybody said anything to me about it I should say it was Hobson's choice, and the drinks would be on the other fellow. So I paid him \$1.50 and went away under the new hat."

"When I was going up the steps at Park place station I met an acquaintance who says, 'Where did you get it?' I wanted to be sure he meant the hat, and I says, 'Where did I get what?' The 'shed,' he says. 'That threw me off. I asked him what he meant, and he pointed to the headpiece and says, 'That. You look like a calf under a new shed,' he says. 'That's one of Hobson's,' I says. 'Which is?' he says. 'The hat is,' I says. 'I didn't know Hobson was in the hat business,' he says. 'Which one of them?' I says. Then he laughed and poked me and says, 'Which one are you talking about?' 'Hobson,' I says, 'It's Hobson's.' 'If it's Hobson's,' he says, 'you'd better take it back to him and tell him to give you your old one.' 'You don't seem to know about it,' I says, and then I told him about how everybody was talking about Hobson. He looked at me and says, 'You'd better take something for it.'"

"And then I says, 'All right, come on,' and we went into the first place and we stood there quite a while and when we went out I found it had cost me about a dollar, and he hadn't paid anything.

"So I left him and came on uptown, thinking all the way up. Two men were on the seat in front of me. I couldn't hear all they said, but one of them remarked as his station was called that he s'posed it was Hobson's choice."

"Then I looked at my hat to see if it was all right. It seemed as if it was too small, but I put it back and went on to Forty-second street, where I got off and went into a lunch place, where I met another acquaintance. Pretty soon he says, 'That was a brave thing for Hobson to do,' I said yes. 'You heard about it?' he says. 'Yes,' I says, 'and it has cost me \$2.50, and you will please sell your gold bricks to somebody else,' I says. 'Don't take me for a fool all the time,' I says. 'You must be crazy,' he says. 'I got no gold brick,' he says. 'I'm talking about the brave man who sunk his ship in the harbor.' 'What's his name?' I says. 'Hobson,' he says. 'Then I got up and took my hat from the peg and showed it to him and I says, 'Do you see the hat?' He said 'Yes.' 'Well,' I says, 'that's Hobson's.' He looked at it and says, 'Why don't you wear your own hat? What are you doing,' he says, 'wearing Hobson's hat? And then I hit him. And when I came to I was here.'"

Dreamed Wide Awake.

The earnestness with which some children narrate the things which make impressions on them leads them at times to make laughable mistakes. A little girl downtown was telling her father about a dream. The child was in a high pitch of excitement and the father said:

"Annie, I guess you were asleep when you dreamed that."

"No, I wasn't," she exclaimed. "I was wide awake."

A Sad Waste.

"It's disheartening," said the pessimist.

"What's the matter?" inquired his friend.

"I was just thinking that even when men may earn glory and substantial reward risking their lives for their country, there will be the usual number of bathers who will see how far out they can swim."

His Idea of an Angel.

Wederly—"Do you know, my dear, I dreamed of your mother last night. I thought she was an angel."

Mrs. Wederly—"Indeed! Did she have the traditional harp and crown?"

Wederly—"Oh, no; I thought I met her on the street and she told me she never intended to darken my door again."

Very Bad Form.

"It is part of a public man's duty to his constituents," remarked the neatly clad congressman, "to habitually appear well dressed."

"Yes," replied his colleague, "but it's a bad idea for him to let the impresario go abroad that he is sugar coated."

One on the Bookkeeper.

"I told my wife I had to stay downtown late to get a balance."

"What did she say?"

"She said I seemed to have left before I got home."

WOULD SUIT BALZAC.

Curious Ending to the Life of a Woman Who Lived Away From Men.

"In my search for bits of life which are picturesque, to use Bagehot's word," said Gaster, gently rotating the cherry in his glass, "I seized with avidity on one that came to me in a letter from a relative in a distant town. I may say by the way that I don't approve of letters from relatives—they have to be answered."

"The town is the one I was born in; and, set in a waste of family affairs like an oasis, the letter told about the death of a woman whom I remember. I never made her acquaintance. No one ever made her acquaintance. She was a widow and lived with her spinster daughter, and I believe the first man to enter their house was the doctor who attended her in her last illness. They kept a big and savage dog for protection, and they rarely left the little yard which surrounded the house. All the work on the premises they did themselves, even to cutting the grass in summer."

"They kept no servants, and yet they were not poor. The postman rarely called. It was isolation complete and apparently desired."

"I was informed by the letter that the widow died last week, and it seems that she left instructions for a funeral. One of the local ministers was asked to read the burial service, and my correspondent tells me that the daughter was the only other attendant, except the pallbearers. Had she relatives at all or friends anywhere? I do not know."

"The pallbearers were her tradesmen—the butcher, the baker, the grocer and the coal dealer who had supplied her wants."

"Her tradesmen were the pallbearers," repeated Gaster softly, and then asked curiously: "Would not Balzac have handled that well?"

Queer Jail for College Students.

At the ancient and famous University of Heidelberg a jail is maintained specially for the benefit of students. For all minor crimes and misdemeanors they are tried and imprisoned by the civil authorities, but by the university.

The Heidelberg Carcer, or university prison, has been occupied by the most famous men of Germany. While there they always decorate the walls with their names and in other ways, so that their stay in jail may be permanently remembered.

Every reader of Mark Twain will recall his entertaining description of the place, and how he contrived to visit it, even unwittingly enlisting as his guide a "Herr Professor." His pretext was to see a young friend who had conveniently arranged the day to suit Mark—for the German student-convict goes to prison on the first suitable day after conviction and sentence. If Thursday is not convenient he tells the officer sent to hale him to jail that he will come on Friday or Saturday or Sunday, as the case may be. The officer never doubts his word, and it is never broken.

The prison is up three flights of stairs, and is approached by a passage as richly decorated with the art work of convicts as the cell itself. That apartment is not roomy, but bigger than an ordinary prison cell. It has an iron-grated window, a small stove, two wooden chairs, two old oak tables, and a narrow wooden bedstead. The furniture is profusely ornamented with carving, the work of languishing captives, who have placed on record their names, armorial bearings, their crimes and the dates of their imprisonment, together with quaint warnings and denunciations. Walls and ceilings are covered with portraits and legends executed in colored chalk and in soot, the prison candle forming a handy pencil.

The prisoner must supply his own bedding and is subject to various charges. On entering he pays about 20 cents, and on leaving a similar sum. Every day in prison costs 12 cents; fire and light, 12 cents extra. The jailer supplies coffee for a trifle. Meals may be ordered from outside. Every prisoner leaves his carte de visite, which is fixed, with a multitude of others, on the door of the cell.

Academic criminal procedure in Heidelberg is curious. If the city police apprehend a student, the captive shows his matriculation card. He is then asked for his address and set free, but will hear more of the matter, for the civil authority reports him to the university. In Heidelberg the University Court try and pass sentence, the civil power taking no further concern with the offence. The trial is very often conducted in the prisoner's absence, and he may have forgotten all about his little outbreak, until the university constable appears to conduct him to prison.

Ivory Eyes a Pledge of Love.

Paris, which is always doing something extraordinary, has devised the ivory eye as a love token. The emblem of the engagement ring as a pledge of the union of hearts is sinking into oblivion in the exchange of eyes. The engagement eye must be an exact reproduction of the individual eye. Every model must give his or her artist at least three sittings to get the right shade and the perfect expression. Then the lover carries his sweetheart's eye around with him as a watchful guard against evil.

How It Struck Him.

The Miller—What did your husband think of that thirty-dollar hat I made for you last week?

Mrs. Heighly—Oh, he just raved over it—when I told him the price.

Cigarette Cases for Women.

The making of cigarette cases for women is becoming a paying industry.

FIGHTING IN THE MAST.

How the Rapid Fire Guns in the Fighting Top are Operated.

Fighting in the military mast of the big battleships in our navy will probably be the most dangerous duty our seamen will be called upon to perform in the war with Spain, says the Kansas City Journal.

Exposed to the full fury of the enemy's fire, with scarcely any protection, and with the possibility of having the entire mast shot away, the man on duty in the mast is in a position perhaps the most dangerous in all modern naval warfare.

The steel barbettes of the present time, save in certain battleships, where an overhead shield is carried, give a protection more apparent than real, more picturesque than practical. And while the military top crews have the advantage of seeing something of the scrimmage, yet they present too inviting a mark to the enemy, and have stations which in battle are pretty sure to be untenable from the heat and smoke.

The small arms men have frequent practice aboard ship, and considering the difficulties of the environment, are good marksmen. It is no easy task to fire from a platform placed at the fob end of a pendulum, swinging irregularly, and the results attained testify to the value of the drill and to the physique of the individual.

On the larger battleships the military masts are hollow, and access to the fighting tops is gained through the interior. The ammunition is also passed up inside. In the smoke and grime of battle one can well realize what a hell these places would be.

Another thing that must be considered is the fact that this will be the United States navy's first practical test of the modern warfare. The last ten years have brought about a greater and more sudden change in the outward appearance of men-of-war than has ever been recorded in the history of naval affairs. This is in the main due to the almost complete banishment of sails, yards, and the more or less intricate rigging necessitated by their use, in favor of military masts, or, in some cases, mere signal poles.

The military mast of to-day is constructed primarily to carry guns, and secondarily for signalling purposes for it must be remembered that in all cases in which ships have been equipped with fighting tops since their very first inception, the primary duty of the mast which upheld it was to carry sail for the propulsion of the ship.

Some of the masts are supplied with an upper top for the electric light, a peculiarly shaped edifice below to enable three quick-firing guns to be discharged right ahead, and a species of conning tower below, from which the captain can overlook the smoke clouds and see to direct his ship in action.

The later types are all constructed with much the same ideas. Some have a lookout, or conning tower, others have not, but all have three or six ponder quick-firing guns and electric light projectors, and one or two lighter machine guns in addition.

The small caliber rapid-fire and machine guns employed in tops are supported by riflemen, and in every fighting their work of clearing the guns, sweeping the decks and superstructures, and of picking off the officers and leading men is, to say the least, hazardous. In the galleys days the military tops were fairly well protected, but during the sea era the topten handling the swivel pieces and deck rakers, and forming a special corps of musketeers, had no protection, except what was given by a network of mattress-filled hammocks.

It would take a big projectile to bring a mast down, but then, if it did, great would be the fall thereof. And think of the poor devils that would come crashing down with it! And think of them even if the mast doesn't come down, perched up there, living targets for shot and shell! The thin plating is of no avail against anything larger than a rifle bullet, and a small shell might pass harmlessly over the heads of the men in an open top which in a closed one would have been burst by the iron sides and scatter death and destruction within.

Australia's Curiosities.

There are some curious things in Central Australia. According to Prof. Baldwin Spencer, Lake Amadeus, in the dry season, is merely a sheet of salt. Ayers Rock, about five miles round, rises abruptly from the desert. Formerly vast rivers flowed here, and the diprotodon, a wombat-like creature, worthy of its name, and four times as large as a kangaroo, flourished on the plains. Now there are hardly any animals to be seen. The fish live in water holes of the hills until the floods wash them down to the valleys. At the end of the wet season the water frogs fill themselves with water, roll themselves in the mud, and lie low till the next rains, which may not come for two years. Meanwhile, the provident frog, like the "mouse" of Robert Burns, may have the misfortune to furnish a drink to a thirsty black. The natives also get water from the roots of trees. They are in the "totem" stage and reverent certain plants or animals which protect them. Men of one group can only marry women from another single group.

Age of the Whale.

The age of the whale is calculated according to the number of laminae, or layers, of the whalebone, which increases yearly. From these indications, ages of 300 to 250 years have been assigned to whales.

Importance of Trifles.

It is the trifles of our lives that makes its history.

Letter from a Woman

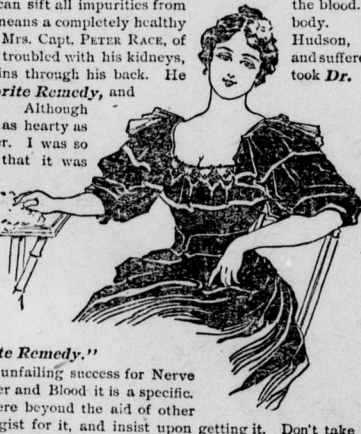
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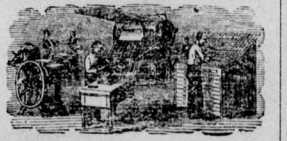
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