

by the setting sun, and on the south by the day of judgement, and the peculiar circumstances in which the people are placed, can be traced in most of these stories.

The by-words or tall species of American humor was much in vogue some years ago, and such stories as the following were once very common:

"A man was so tall that he had to go up a ladder to shave himself," another, "was so strong that his enrage would kill a buffalo across the Mississippi river," "a Massachusetts pig was so lean that it was necessary to tie a knot on his tail to prevent it getting through the chinks of the pailing," "an American artist painted a snow-storm so naturally that he caught a bad cold by sitting near it with his coat off," "some land was so rich that a squash vine, in its rapid growth, overtook a drove of pigs," "the reason why cream is so dear is that milk has risen so high the cream can't reach the top."

There is a capital story, in which it is related that "a coach drove through the country so fast, and the mile stones passed so quickly by that the passengers thought they were in a church-yard." This coach, however, was beaten by the "skipper, which went so tar-zation fast in sailing around Long Island the 1-ft her shadow three and a half miles behind her." Major N., when asked whether he was seriously injured by the explosion of the boiler of the St. Leonard Steamer, replied that he was so used to being blown up by his wife that a mere steamer had no effect upon him. The evidence of a witness in a life insurance case, involved in the blowing up of a steambot on the Ohio, is still just because it is characteristic. The witness knew the missing man, and saw him on the deck of the steambot before the explosion. When asked by the lawyer, "when was the last time you saw him?" he answered, "The very last time I ever set eyes on him was when the boiler burst, and I was going up; I met him and the smoke stack coming down."

We all know that the American oysters are large, but that one must have been of extraordinary size which required three men to swallow it whole.

SIGNS, TOKENS AND WARNINGS.

I believe in signs, warnings, and tokens. I say this knowing that many will criticize, but I have had too many demonstrations to allow me to doubt that certain coming events cast their shadows before.

If you drop your dish cloth it is a sign that some one in the family is going to die. I have seen it tried. My mother dropped her dish cloth one morning, and just seventeen years after, to an hour, my grandfather fell dead.

If you break a looking-glass it is a sign that you are going to move soon. I knew a family once where the woman broke a looking-glass and said she defied the sign and that any one who believed in signs was lacking something in the head. What followed? Why at midnight that very night her house took fire, the firemen came, and the unbelieving woman was floated right out into the alley.

If the tea kettle sings it is a sign of some accident. There was Jones, he did not believe it; said he'd lick the hide right off any of his children who entertained any such belief. Now, mark the result. Just eleven years, five months and twenty-six days afterwards, Jones fell down stairs, drove his thumbs up, broke his knee, put his arms out of joint and injured his spine for life.

If you happen to set three lights in a row it is a sign that present plans will turn out as you hope for. I had an uncle who set three lights in a row, and his plans turned out all right. He got the house, just as he had planned and was well out of the neighborhood, but the sign could not do any more, and he was overhauled by a vigilance committee and left hanging to a tree to meditate. He wasn't worth much, except as a corpse, after he got through meditating.

If you see a white horse and don't spit over your shoulder and make a wish, it is another bad sign, you are going to meet with a great disappointment. A relative of mine used to pooh, pooh such things, said he'd be lusted if he'd spit over his shoulder if he met forty white horses. But he caught it. He didn't draw on the circuit duty as he planned, and was obliged to go to work and earn his bread or starve. Since then he has always spit over his shoulder to the sight of a white horse, and is always on a jury or gets big wages for being a witness.

A MEN REVENGED.

A man killed a hen that belonged to a neighbor, because it flew into his yard. The neighbor made no demonstration. But he went round among the juveniles and told them that the one among them who could say "Shoes and socks shock Susan" four times running, without mistake, would receive two dollars from the hen-killer. So they went up to his house, in the guilelessness of childhood, and filled the hall and the stoop, and crowded the yard, and made up their minds that they would earn that two dollars or die. And they sailed in, and the man tried to drive them off, but couldn't, and then he went up stairs, but they followed him. The air resounded with "Shu-wack, smoozen, socker," with hideous variations in the shrillest of voices keyed to the highest of pitches. In vain the victim pleaded for mercy with ink bottles, and hot water, and mustard boxes. His arguments were unheeded, and his cries were unheard, and he finally scaled a fence and fled, pursued by what he was firmly convinced were a score of demons. The hen was avenged.

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