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SACKVILLE, N. B., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1877.

WHOLE NO. 387.

LITERATURE.

LUCY'S CHOICE.

On a bright fair day in April, 1854, the barque "Polley," 400 tons burden, lay at her wharf in Nantucket harbor, preparing for sea. Huge piles of cordage, heaps of spars, harpoons, blubber spades and knives, empty oil barrels of water and salt junk, boxes of hard tack, and other stores, lay around or were being rapidly stowed aboard. There were supplies for years, as it seemed, and all would be needed, for the "Polley" was bound for the Arctic sea, where, amidst snows and ice, she was to cruise for whales and trust to providence for luck. All day long the toilers labored, as they had for many days before, but the task was nearly done. And when, night descending upon the town, her Captain turned to go, leaving the greasy task that held his fortunes to the careful watch, he rubbed his hands, and said to me that in three days more we should bid the old town good-bye for a long, long month.

Captain John Hoskins was an old friend of my father's, and many a trip had they taken together in former days; but my father's last voyage was over, and after growing grey amidst wild scenes of stormy seas and crashing icebergs he had laid him down peacefully at last, his perils ended, his rest that should have no end begun. I, Abner Skidmore, inherited the Captain's affection, and in my turn had become his shipmate. His home and my mother's was her only child—were almost close together, so close that the little patches belonging to each other, and where grew the few light crops possible to be raised in that sterile region, nearly touched. Her mother, who was a widow, and he, too, had but one living child, a girl, Lucy, of whom I have much to tell. She is—well, she was then—just eighteen. I think her an angel. Her name and guardian didn't, I suppose, for she called her cross names sometimes, which seemed to me absolutely wonderful. That pretty Lucy, with her blue eyes and pretty cheeks and golden hair and deliciously rounded figures, could be other than the best as well as the fairest of God's creatures appeared to be impossible. I knew that she was thus excellent. Well, for that matter, I think so yet; for I was in love, as may be imagined, and am not yet cured of that complaint. Did she know it? How could I tell. Her father's laughing eyes would often rest upon us when we were together, and I fancied that he would not frown upon a match between us; nay, I felt so sure that he read my secret, that I could at such times hardly meet his glance without blushing. You see, we were simple people, more used to old Neptune's ways than those of women, and I the simplest of them all. On that April morning, in fact, I thought rather bitterly that I had been an absolute fool. Here was I to leave her in three days, not to return perhaps for two and perhaps for more than two years, and had never yet found courage to speak plainly to my dear one or to her father. I dare say I showed something of this uneasy, mortified feeling as we came in sight of the two cottages, for the Captain turned half round and looked at me with a sort of enquiring wonder. Then and there I made up my mind.

"Captain Hoskins," said I, "I want to speak to you."
"Why, speak away, lad. Something particular, I suppose, to be called speaking, and different from conversing, which we've been doing more or less all day," and he laughed heartily.
"Yes, something that I've thought of for years. If Lucy—"
"Ah, the wind's in that quarter, is it, my lad? Well, I've not been blind; however, leave ahead."
"What you say makes it easier for me, and I am very grateful. May I hope that if she likes me well enough some day? There, air, it's all out, and I am glad of it, for I've been miserable long enough keeping my secret."
"Ah," replied the Captain, "so far as I'm concerned, you have my good will and best wishes. But how do you think she feels about it? You say if she likes you enough, you mean loves you enough, of course?"
"If I dared I would say that, I answer; but I am not sure that she does."
"You never asked her?"
"Never. How could I without your permission?"
"Quite right, lad; young people ought to have some regard to the opinion of the old folk. Though, for poor dear, when Lucy first told me about whether her father—but that's no matter; you have asked like the honest young fellow; I have always known you for. When will you speak to her? It's a sad world with an easy mind, 'd'ye see?"
"To-night," I replied, unhesitatingly. But though there was no uncertainty in my tone, it was not altogether easy bearing family name. Strong, Jacob, the sides, so, was, like ourselves, a whaler, and a fine, handsome, open-

hearted fellow as any one could wish to see. He was a very frequent visitor, not only at the Captain's house, but at my mother's; and I knew that he admired Lucy, to say the least. He and I were friends, and he had told me so many times there might be a possibility that he would be more favoured than I; and certainly she seemed to be as well disposed toward me as the other, though I was sure of her father. Very likely he might fancy that the coast was clear, for, as I have said, I had not made my hopes very apparent even to Lucy, and not at all to him. What is it, stupidity, or shyness, or blindness, that keeps many men silent when a word would secure their happiness? How is a girl to judge between a silent lover and one that compliments and pays court to her? At all events, not another sun should rise before I knew my fate—not the best frame of mind in which to seek it, you will say.

It was not a very propitious circumstance that when the Captain and I reached his house Jacob was there; and it looked rather squally for Lucy to run out of one door of the parlor when we walked in at another. Jacob's face, too, was not so calm as usual. He was flushed, nervous, and showed, in fact, that something had happened. There passed round us three, like lightning, a sort of questions and answers, like what in these later years I should call an electric telegraph of our inmost thoughts. The Captain seemed struck all of a heap.

"Well, Jacob," he said at last, "I didn't think to see you to-night; but you are welcome, as you always are. What's gone with Lucy? Have you frightened her away, or have we?"
"Neither, I hope," replied Jacob. "But I came over, Captain, to make an enquiry. She couldn't furnish the information, and so I am glad you have come. You may be able to tell me what I want to know."
"Captain—Jacob," I interrupted, suddenly, "don't let me be in the way. I wasn't going to stay. I'll just step over to mother's, and be back in an hour or so. As stupid like, I was gone before the last word was well out of my mouth."

Of course I knew what was the matter. Jacob had been beforehand with me. I had lost my stake before I had staked it. There was no more to be said. I was in a bad way, and I was striving further than in fishing for ropes and harpoons carried off by lost whales. And yet the information was given to him either! What he had confessed to her I could guess, but it didn't look as if she had responded with any confidence of her own! It might be—yes, it might be, that I had a chance!

Two hours passed; they seemed like two years. Then I went back to the Captain's, and he and Lucy and Jacob in the parlor to gether. "Abner," said the Captain, the moment I entered, "here's a worse coil than I looked for. It seems that Jacob here has been pretty much like you in regard to Lucy. Now, what fair play is this? I love you both, for good lands, and you don't need to be told how dear Lucy is to me."

Of course we knew it, and could only murmur our belief. "Now," he continued, "Jacob has spoken to Lucy, and she's given him no answer. I have told her what you have said to me, and I can get no answer either. She likes you both, and that is the extent of it. Now what am I to do?"
"What was he to do? Neither Jacob nor I could tell. The Captain was clearly vexed, and as for Lucy, she looked even in my love-dimmed eyes rather foolish. We were all silent."

"Well, then, let's put the matter into ship-shape at once," said her father. "Now you both love her, and can't both have her. That is number one. She don't want to lose you both, and would have taken either; if either hadn't come along, that is number two. Neither of you wants to give her up. That is number three. And when I add that she don't know her own mind, and ought to find out, that is number four, and all told."

"Nay, father," interposed Lucy, tearfully, "I only said that I wished for time to question my own heart. I am foolish and to be blame, I know, but all this has come upon me so suddenly, and I was not prepared for it. I am sure—and her voice faltered—they must both think me fickle, vain, and trifling. But I do not mean to be so. I hope they will forgive me, and—and—think of me no more." And she burst into a passion of tears, greatly to her father's and our distress and embarrassment. Jacob spoke first.

"Abner," said he, "you and I have been fast friends, and however this may turn out, I for one would have us remain so. Can you shake hands like a man upon it?"
"I can, with all my heart," I replied, instantly, suiting the action to the words.
"Then," he continued with a quiet smile, "some of the difficulty is cleared away. Now listen, all three. I confidently hope that Lucy may accept of either of you, and so does Abner. Now he's off on a cruise, and I'm not going to sail till next season, as you all know. I will not take the advantage this gives me. No man on earth shall say that I acted un-fairly; and I offer, Captain Hoskins, to join your ship, to share the cruise with Abner; and when we both return we will once ask Lucy the question she cannot answer now. Are you agreed, Captain? And are you,

Lucy?"
"Well," said the Captain, "I like you all the more for the offer, lad; and go with me or shall. Lucy need not have a word to say about it; in fact I forbid her."
"But I have," said I, "I will not be less generous than Jacob; he shall not leave this port in my company."
"That," quietly answered the Captain, "is for me to decide. Abner, you've signed articles; so your business is settled. Jacob will sign with me—understand that—and if I ship him aboard the 'Polley' I don't see as you've got to be consulted. Not another word. Give us my pipe and jug of cider, Lucy. The whole matter's laid on the table, as the congressmen would say; and it's not to be lifted till the 'Polley' sights Nantucket Harbor, maybe this time two years, maybe less, maybe more. You'll stay supper, lads, of course. Cheer up, my lasses; your trouble's over for time."

It was no use trying to open the discussion again. He would not even listen to a whisper from her, and we were fain to be content. That night, nor next day, nor the next, did either of us recur to it. And on the day after that—it was on Wednesday, the twelfth of April—a group of women stood on the wharf waving their handkerchiefs and watching with streaming eyes the barque Polley as she was working her way out to sea.

Life on a whaler-ship is not like life anywhere else. It is of gross, greasy. The Polley was an old tub whose every timber was soaked with oil—all that had been present in every part of her except among the ropes and spars under decks or aloft, and would, as we hoped, be so again. How many millions of cockroaches we carried Heaven knows; but they too swarmed every where—big fellows, too, that would eat a man's toenails off of a snore. Rats, too—huge, ferocious-whiskered creatures, that would look at you as if they owned the ship; and fat-well they knew what barrels of oil were, and profited by the knowledge. And, what with grease, and cockroaches, and rats, and close quarters, the cabin and the fore-cabin were not exactly like a lady's parlor, as may well be imagined. This the whaler combines sport with profit, and can put up with trifles. This is how the Polley was manned—There was the Captain and three mates—myself the third. Jacob was entered as a supernumerary on shares, which made four. There was four boats, and consequently four boats' crews, each of six men and a steerer each. A couple of negroes were cook and such, and two boys made up the lot—thirty-seven souls in all. Of these the officers and steerers were American, we never spoke of race or nationalities, but all tolerably experienced hands.

There was nothing unusual to note for some weeks. We made about an average run, and reached Baffin's Bay in the second week in May. I had caught a glimpse of a porpoise, and a blue shark, and seen icebergs getting more and more numerous as we drew near the Arctic seas, which were our hunting ground. I may as well mention that, by common consent, we never spoke of race or nationalities, but all tolerably experienced hands.

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At length we were fairly within the region of snow and ice, and began to look in earnest for fish. We were lucky. In three weeks we had captured and cut up five whales and melted down the blubber. On Monday of the fourth week, at ten of the forenoon, another was sighted three miles away on the starboard bow. Not a moment was lost in manning the four boats gliding swiftly and noiselessly on, with a man in the bow of each with poised weapon, and part of the coiled line upon his arm, waiting for the moment to strike; and, growing in bulk as he drew nearer and nearer, the great mound of inert matter rising above the surface of water. At last the word was given. From the first boat the harpoon flew swift and true, and buried itself to the socket in the fish's side. Then, as he felt it, with a plunge that struck the water into a whirlpool, down he went, while the line ran out seventy yards, in a cloud of friction-born smoke, over the gunwale, and dragging the boat along like a race-horse. A pause, then once more the monster rose to breathe, only to receive another blow, and again to dive, leaving the waters crimson as he vanished out of sight. Now came all the excitement of the chase. Five harpoons had done their work, and their lines held fast. The last dive had bitten him for a while, and now he lay helpless upon the surface. More venturesome, as whalers are apt to be, from the excitement of the moment, all four boats approached near enough to burst in upon the creature, and one even to strike at it with a boat-hook. But that piece of temerity was followed by what is always, or nearly so, looked for—the "flurry" of the whale. With a sound that resembled a huge holl, and yet not

that, nor yet the blowing of steam of a boiler, but something between the two, the whale suddenly rolled furiously, beating the waves with its broad tail until they were lashed into a sea of foam. "Back, back!" shouted the steersman, and every man bent to the cars on the instant. Too late. Too late for one boat, at least. For, with a single blow, the whale dashed it to atoms, leaving every one of its crew struggling in the water. Two men sank like lead never to rise again until land and sea shall give up their dead. One floated, stunned, for a moment, and then he too went down. Amidst a wild scene of shouts, and throwing floats, and rowing to and fro, the congressmen would say, and just as the whale slowly turned on its side, until its white and slippery belly glittered in the sun.

"Hark! what is that? A gun from the ship!" shouted Jacob, as he suddenly turned to look at the other with the whale. There we were, at least five miles away from her. "Something's wrong," said I. "But he's," he said, "Well, but I'll pack her once."
After a hasty word or two with the crews of the other two boats, ours, that is, the one in which were Jacob and myself, began to row back as quickly as we could, leaving the others with the whale. There we were lost but why abandon the prize? As I have said, we were five miles away. We rowed with a will, being sure, turning a look at the "Polley" as she lay motionless in the distance. And what did we present ourselves? A heavy cloud of smoke rose from her decks, rise thicker and thicker with every moment, until it hid its masts and rigging from our sight, and lay all around her like a curtain, black as night.

The other crews had seen it too, and with a yell were making the water foam as they plied the stout ashen oars until they bent like willow wands. For our lives we strained for oars? Nay, for those on board the "Polley." God! that with all our efforts it must be so long before we could reach her!

Not a word spoke any of us. The horror upon us was too great. The ship, saturated as she was with oil, must, we knew well, burn like gunpowder with profit, and can put up with trifles. This is how the Polley was manned—There was the Captain and three mates—myself the third. Jacob was entered as a supernumerary on shares, which made four. There was four boats, and consequently four boats' crews, each of six men and a steerer each. A couple of negroes were cook and such, and two boys made up the lot—thirty-seven souls in all. Of these the officers and steerers were American, we never spoke of race or nationalities, but all tolerably experienced hands.

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Then that little water we had gave out. Hunger killed by exhaustion but thirst drives men mad.
One of our men went mad the day after that, and with a horrid shriek, leaped overboard. We tried to get him in but could not. That same night another died, quietly enough, for we found him as we thought lying asleep. Then, it might have been a day or it might have been two days after, there was absolutely nothing to eat or drink, and death seemed close upon us. What followed is like a dream. I have visions to this day of a gleaming knife and a rush of blood, and a mad struggle to tear each other like wild beasts, and of Jacob lying insensible at my side; and I too was soon like him.

Strangely enough, as it seemed to me, I revived, though not to full consciousness. It was as if I had just awakened from a dream. I did not realize my position in the least, but I did vaguely look at Jacob, and, if I thought at all, wondered he should be so still. And this went on for I know not how long. Unutterable content, as it were, had come over my whole being—that I do know.

The end, but not as I had expected. There rose up out of the horizon a sail! I looked at it without even curiosity. Tall masts crowded with canvas grew into sight, but I was not able to gaze, I knew, at my frail tub, but why they looked I did not know. The bulk of a ship drew out of the offing, but I was indifferent if it were ship or iceberg. The ship came over the waves towards me, look-out men aloft gazing, I knew, at my frail tub, but why they looked I did not know. The bulk of a ship drew out of the offing, but I was indifferent if it were ship or iceberg. The ship came over the waves towards me, look-out men aloft gazing, I knew, at my frail tub, but why they looked I did not know.

No! I was saved—I alone of all the "Polley's" crew. Good God! Death had been busy with us poor creatures, but I came to myself, not till many hours after, I learned the fate of all. The other boat was never heard of more. Jacob lay at the bottom of the sea, as they told me, not without tears, for sailors are tender-hearted as they are brave.

All this has been said but briefly, for I don't like to dwell on it over-much. I pass over, too, my slow recovery, and only pause to add that if men were angels of kindness, the men who had saved me were, it happened that their ship was full—it was the second season of her cruise—and she was homeward bound for Nantucket. Her captain knew. In the middle of October we fetched the lights off the shoals on the way home.

Home! I shuddered at the thought and the task before me. The fatal news that I brought—alas! which I tell the poor women who should hear it!
Well, we were signalled, and when we ran up to the wharf there was a large crowd to meet us. All my own folks among the rest. The captain had heard all my story, and I had consulted with him as to how they were to hear it. As agreed upon, I was helped ashore by him, and put in my mother's arms—she telling her that I had come back sick—and that I was, and very weak—and must get home at once. When Lucy and her aunt and Jacob's people pressed round us for news of their loved ones, he hurried on board, saying I would tell them all, and they had best go along with me. And so they did, in a procession of tenderness for me and of expectation. Arrived in town, I was soon lying on a lounge, the centre of a crowd of curious on-lookers.

"Friends," said my mother, "don't all talk at once. My boy's back and I'm thankful. Lucy Hoskins has the first right to make enquiries."
All of a tremble, she asked me, "You left my father at sea with the 'Polley'?"
"I did, with the 'Polley'."
"And he was well, my dear, good father?"
"He was—well."
"Now my turn," interrupted Mrs. Strong, my Jacob, was well too?"
"He was."
"Well, that's good news, Abner,"

Continued on fourth page.

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DRESS-MAKING
AND
MILLINERY I

THE SUBSCRIBER wishes to intimate to the ladies of Sackville and vicinity, that he has added to his business a Dress Making and MILLINERY DEPARTMENT, each branch of which is under the supervision of a competent person, having had experience in first-class establishments in St. John. A good stock of DRESS GOODS and MILLINERY will be kept, which will be made up in Fashionable Styles and at reasonable prices.
Patronage respectfully solicited.
July 26 J. F. ALLISON.

U. S. Piano Co.
\$290.

YOU ask WHY we can sell First-class 7-13 Octave Rosewood Piano for \$290. Our answer is, that it costs less than \$300 to make any \$600 Piano sold through Agents, all of whom make 100 per cent. profit. We have no Agents, but sell direct to Families at Factory price, and warrant five years. We send our Piano everywhere for trial, and require no payment unless they are found satisfactory. Send for Illustrated Circular, which gives full particulars, and contains the names of over 1500 Bankers, Merchants and Families that are using our Pianos in every State of the Union. Please state where you saw this notice.

ADDRESS:
U. S. PIANO CO., 310 BROADWAY
New York.

Business Cards.

NOTICE.

THE CO-PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS which existed between the Subscriber and his late father, THOMAS BAIRD, Esq., is now continued by the Subscriber JOHN MILTON BAIRD, alone under the old style of Firm of

THOMAS BAIRD & SONS,
Pursuant to the provision of his father's Will.
Sackville, Oct. 22nd, 1877.

Notice of Removal.
G. H. VENNING,
Clock and Watch Maker.

WOULD respectfully inform the inhabitants of Sackville and vicinity that he has removed his Shop to Mr. John Bell's NEW BUILDING, where he will be happy to attend to his old customers and as many new ones as will favor him with their patronage. He can promise strict attention and reasonable despatch. Plain Gold Rings made to order. Jewellery neatly repaired. sep 26 G. H. V.

NEW HARNESS SHOP
I HAVE OPENED, in connection with the old stand, a

Retail and Repair Shop,
In CHURCH HALL, Lower Sackville, where all my customers will be attended to promptly and at cheap rates.—Mr. O. B. Estabrook in charge.

STEPHEN AYER,
HARNESSES at either establishment will be sold for prompt pay or cash at three months. Cheaper than at any other establishment in the Province. Call and obtain prices. S. A.

Wilson, Gilmour & Co.,
204 UNION ST.,
Capt. McLean's Brick Building
ST. JOHN, N. B.

Marbled Mantles and Grates,
PORTABLE RANGES,
STOVES,
Tinware, etc., etc.,
REFRIGERATORS,
GRANITE IRON WARE

July 19 W. G. & CO.
Administatrix Notice.

ALL PERSONS having claims against the Estate of EDWARD CARROLL, late of Elgin, deceased, will present the same duly attested within three months, and all persons indebted to the said Estate will pay the same forthwith to

ADAMINA CARROLL,
Administratrix,
Elgin, Oct. 17th, 1877. 3m

\$54.30 PER WEEK at HOME
Samples and Watch Free to all. Address,
MONTREAL NOVELTY CO.,
236 St. James Street, Montreal, P. Q.

DR. WILLIAM GRAY'S SPECIFIC FOR BRUISES, Swellings, Sprains, Rheumatism, Burns, Scalds, Bruises, Hemorrhoids, Piles, and all other ailments of the skin. It is a sure and speedy cure for all these complaints. Full particulars in our pamphlet, which will be sent free to all who send for it. Wholesale and Retail, Canada, U.S.A., and all other parts of the world. For sale at the Sackville Dispensary.

For 50 Cents we will send to any address, 1 elegant Gent's Watch Chain with Seal, 1 pair Sleeve Buttons, 1 set Shirt Studs, 1 Collar Button, 1 heavy pair of Gold Chain with Seal, 1 pair Pin. Retail price \$3. \$100.000 stock