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## THE STANDARD.

The March number of WOOD'S HOUSEHOLD MAGAZINE is a capital one. It opens with an interesting story entitled "The Guiding Hand," by Mrs. H. G. Rowe; following this Joseph Sailer gives his "Experiences in the City," an article which for its simple truth the youth of the land should read to their profit. My Prayer is not a religious sketch as one would suppose from the title, but is a most touching story told in the sincere manner and rough speech of a railroad hand. The "Weekly Diabolical," by Karl Koss, aims a sharp and timely blow at sensational literature. The Kaiser Frederick is one of Mary Hartwell's entertaining stories. In the installment of Misery Jip-pau, H. V. Osborne raps the knuckles of the fashionable clergyman, and buries "Penny Post" from sight. There are several other articles of a useful and home choice poetry. The Magazine contains six illustrations, including a fine design for a Country School House. Terms only one dollar a year—with chromo Yosemite one dollar and a half. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

BALLOU'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE for April.—The April number of this popular journal of literature is issued, and is fully equal to any that has appeared. Perhaps it may be a little more varied in this number, and the stories may be a little better, but it is hard to improve on any one number of Ballou's, for it is edited with such care that all tastes are suited. The boys find a new story in each number, the men a tale of adventure, and the ladies poetry and delightful love stories. In addition to all of this there are illustrations of popular subjects, and yet the price is only \$1.50 per year, or fifteen cents a single number, and each subscriber who sends a year's subscription receives a pretty little Chromo of considerable value as an ornament. The April number contains the following list of contents:—April Showers; The Apteryx; Sponges; Home; Captain Alice's Story; The Song of Spring; A Tragic Incident of "Nor-West" Whaling; Grandmother's Dream; Freedom; An Unfortunate Match; Anacostia; After Many Days; She was a Widow; Benoit's Twigs and Straight Saplings; Mrs. Cameron's Experiment; Clan Tartan and Plaid; The Diamond Crescent; Right or Wrong; Our Young People's Story-Teller; The Housekeeper, &c. Published by Thomas & Talbot, Boston.

## The Origin and Constitution of the Potato.

It is a question of some interest whence the potato of our fields and gardens is derived, as we have hundreds of varieties, some white, some yellow, some red, some purple, and some almost as black as jet, while their leaves and flowers vary in colour immensely. It is highly probable that they represent several distinct species, although it is customary to refer all to one, the reputed type of the genus, Solanum tuberosum. It is probable, however, that we have among our named varieties representatives of *S. cardiophyllum* (Lindley) whilst the distinctive peculiarities of the newest American varieties suggest that they have been wholly or in part derived from the Mexican *S. verrucosum* (of Schlechtendahl) or *S. stoloniferum* (of Schlechtendahl and Boche), which is probably the same plant slightly modified in character by the influence of the elevated region in which it is found. In Mexico, its habitat as a wild plant being at an altitude of 10,000 feet on the volcano of Orizaba. But if we cannot with certainty trace our many cultivated potatoes to their wild progenitor, we can at least trace them to plants that are natives of Chili and Peru, and that have strayed thence as wild plants from Mexico and the eastern parts of the Southern States of North America. The potato is a native of countries much warmer than ours, and therefore liable to suffer when subjected to conditions less favourable than those which ordinarily prevail in those districts of Great Britain in which potatoes are commonly grown. It is possible we have in our garden potatoes descended from those that St. Walter Raleigh brought from Virginia. The potato is a native of warmer climes than ours, and begins life at a disadvantage in that respect. [The Gardener's Magazine.]

An English paper tells the following story of Rev. William Thorpe of Bristol, England: He was so large that in preaching an ordination sermon he had to be hoisted into the pulpit over the side, the door being too narrow to admit him. Curiously enough his sermon was on "The Importance of a Right Introduction into the Christian Ministry," and he founded his discourse on the parable in which it is declared that "he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep, while he that climbeth up some other way the same is a thief and a robber."

Nimrod was a mighty hunter but he never saw an antelope.

## SELECT TALE.

### A Tragic Incident of "Nor-West" Whaling.

BY W. H. MACY.

We had been engaged for two hours, four boats crewed of us, in a fruitless chase after a right whale, who moved in a very eccentric orbit, popping up here and there in the most unexpected directions, and setting all calculations at defiance.

Shy as any finback I said Mr. Catcart, our mate, in whose boat I was bowman. It beats all my figures, to prick him. The Grand Turk'll have her boats down among us, directly, and they'll stand as good a chance as we.

The Grand Turk was lying about within half a mile of us, with her boats really in the water at the moment, but towing alongside under her lee. As she lay on the starboard tack we could only see one boat on her quarter, the other three being hidden from our view in range of the ship's hull.

Our own ship, the Janus, was a mile and a half to windward, running down. We had but a few minutes to wait, ere the whale again sent up his two diverging clouds of spray, or "forked spout," half a mile to leeward, directly astern of the Grand Turk.

Cat's all dough with us for the pre-out, said I mate. Our neighbor will have a chance now to try him a while. Roll up sail, and be ready at your oars, in case he turns to windward.

Out shot three boats, armed to the teeth, from under the Grand Turk's lee, and sped away swiftly towards the giant prey. The scene became in the highest degree exciting to us, as they drew nearer at each vigorous stroke of the paddles; even our breathing was suspended when the boat steered in the leading boat rose to his feet. Our enthusiasm was not unshared with a feeling of vexation; for, after all our weary chasing and dodging, the prize was to be taken by another ship's crew, who, until now, had been lookers-on.

He's fast, I cried half a dozen voices at once, as they were launched with the full power of a strong arm. A dash of "white water" flew high in the air, and the fast boat started ahead with a sudden jerk, at race horse speed, while her consort took to their oars for a stern chase.

We may as well go aboard now, and look for another, was the word that passed among us. There was one consolation—we should not have far to pull; for the Janus was already luffing in the wind, and five minutes would take us alongside.

But up went a signal at the Grand Turk's gaff, and our ship again filled away, running down close with her. What could be wanted? was now the question. Something, or such a time would not have been chosen for signalling a consort to come within speaking distance.

Hurrah! here he comes, right at us! sang out the boat-steerer, who was standing erect in the head of the boat. The whale, after running a short time on the wind, had turned about about, and was now coming on a bowline which would bring him right through the gambrel of our little fleet. Only one boat was fast, as yet, and the supporting boats, though pulling their best, were fast being left astern, as the monster rushed on, lashing the sea into fury, and snorting forth his blasta with a sound not unlike the ring of a brass kettle, as only a whale of the right species can do.

Up and down with frantic haste went signals from both ships, the "pointers" at the mastheads were waved eagerly in the direction of the fast whale, and we were not long in making out, what we had half divined already, that our help was wanted to make sure thing of the conflict. We knew already that the mate of the Grand Turk was off duty from sickness, and that she was there by weakness by the loss of her crack whale-man. Old Captain Jefferys was superannuated, and did not lower himself. He had hailed our captain, and agreed to "throw chances together" and share the proceeds. The signals, of course, were for us to attack.

Affairs wore a new face at this discovery. From mere spectators, we were at once fired with all the eagerness of principals, as we sprang ourselves in open order to meet the whale head-and-head. A slight deviation from his course brought him in the second mate's favor, and it was evident that the waist-boat would have the honor of drawing the next blood.

It was a most critical moment for her crew when the tortured whale dashed past them, for he was throwing his flukes in air with a malicious sweep, as if looking for his enemies. But Mr. Terry was not the man to hesitate. Besides, if he hesitated to await for a better time in, he was destined to an inglorious stern chase. It was emphatically now or never.

Port, Jack! we heard him shout to his boat-steerer. We saw the iron flash, and the next instant we could see nothing but a cloud of white spray which filled the air. But we heard an ominous crash, and as the "white water" cleared away, the whale had vanished, and the waist-boat,

nearly full of water, and minus two of her oars, was still riding gallantly in the slick, with her crew all safe. Her line was spinning out rapidly at the chocks, with a peculiar humming noise which tells of a high degree of friction round the loggerhead; and the boat-buckets were doing their duty manfully in throwing out the superfluous water.

Are you badly stove? was our first hail.

O no! answered Mr. Terry, cheerfully, only cracked a streak or two, and break a couple of oars—that's all.

That's your good luck then, muttered the mate. The whale meant worse than that, when he swung for us. Pull ahead, now, us, and stand by for the next chance when he breaks water.

But again he laughed at our calculations for he came up just out of reach, and a started off directly in the wind's eye, at a rate which baffled the efforts of the officers in the fast boats to pull up sufficiently near for firing their lances. The rest of us had nothing for it but hard pulling which barely sufficed to keep us at a respectful distance in the wake of the whale, who still appeared to retain his "vigorous" having as yet received no serious wound.

It was plain to be seen that the young third mate of the Grand Turk, in command of the boat which had first struck, was highly excited and indignant at the course taken by Captain Jefferys in offering us half the whale to assist in his capture. Ambitious of distinguishing himself, he performed herculean labors in endeavoring to haul up to the whale. We could hear him urging his crew to exertion, and could even distinguish the language, much more forcible than usual, which he employed to enforce his orders. After a time, the speed of the whale had somewhat slackened, exactly as if he were weary by his rush to windward; and, still heaving and holding on at every start, the young man had approached with his boat to within about fifteen fathoms of his mark. But, despairing of success in his efforts to get fairly abreast the whale's life, he now determined to try a trick with his gun. He could put a bomb into him, "quartering," he might reckon him, so as to make him bring to, and so eager was he to accomplish this, before any other boat should have a chance to divide with him the honors of the day, that he allowed almost the recklessness of insanity, in all his acts and speeches.

The whaling gun, used for shooting the bomb-lance, is a short heavy instrument of the blunderbuss style, which is raised to the shoulder for firing. The lance itself is a cone or rather pointed cylinder of cast iron, containing a heavy charge of powder, with which a fuse is connected. The firing of the gun after it has entered the whale; the time being usually regulated to ten or fifteen seconds.

Young Randall, the third mate, had put his gun carefully under the head sheets of the boat, with the hair trigger set, a delicate arrangement, which required scarcely more than a feather's weight to start it. At the moment that he deemed most favorable, he suddenly stooped for his gun, at the same time, in a low voice, and with a fierce gesture to continue their efforts.

While still lying back at my oar, I naturally kept my face turned so as to see over my shoulder, and was looking directly at Mr. Randall when he stooped to grasp his gun. A quick report followed. I could see no more of him, he had dropped out of sight; but, a cry, not of enthusiasm, but of horror, rose from the crews of both the fast boats.

"My God! he's shot himself!" cried Mr. Catcart, with blanched cheeks and starting eyes.

In a moment more we were alongside of the boat for his crew had of course, instantly cut the line by which they were attached to the whale. The unfortunate young officer was just breathing his last in a pool of his own blood, the cylinder of iron having passed completely through his body, as easily through the side of the boat, which was one half inch or so deep. In his eagerness he had carelessly turned the gun muzzle toward him, while pulling it out from under the head sheets, and a slight touch had started the hair-trigger. A "click" was enough to satisfy us that we could be of no service; and while the boat, bearing the corpse of the youth, who but a moment before was so full of ambition and physical vigor, made her melancholy way on board, we continued in pursuit of the whale, which had held on his course, with our own mate's boat still in tow. But he soon showed signs of fatigue, and slackening his pace, we were not long in overtaking him. Mr. Terry had got his boat fired of her dead weight of water, and had already given him a mortal wound before our oars were thrown. Other reinforcements quickly arrived, and with heavy hearts and hushed voices we took our prize in tow, and started on our return. Both ships had their flags at half-mast, and in the topsails flying in morning festoons, as soon as the whale was secured; and nearly the whole of both crews were assembled on the main-deck of the Grand Turk, to pay the last

and offices to the mangled body of young Randall.

With bowed heads we joined in the rude services pertaining to a sailor's burial by his shipmates, and then turned away to our duties, the same rough adventurers as before, though a little chastened at heart for the time being. To the soldier or seaman, who may be said to hold his life in his hand, impressions of pain or sorrow seem to be like those of childhood, evanescent and quickly forgotten.

## A Minister and a Wytile Tree.

Yesterday, at the Sheriff Small Debt Court, judgment was given by Sheriff Substituted Halstead in an action at the instance of Miss Agnes Tod against Rev. John Wemyss, 9 Duncan Street. The account served upon the defendant by the pursuer was in these terms:—"January 2, 1874.—To value of myrtle tree, belonging to me and cut down by you, or others acting by your instructions, adjoining house presently occupied by you at 9 Duncan Street, Newington, Edinburgh, and forming part of house and ground of which I am proprietor, and which are leased by you from me, and which tree you, or others by your instructions, unlawfully and illegally, and without any authority from me or any one on my behalf, cut down, and which is valued at £10."

When the case first came before the Court the evidence led for the pursuer showed that originally the tree was a sprig taken from her mother's bridal bouquet. It was planted forty seven years ago, and becoming a fine myrtle tree a greenhouse was built for its protection. The defender, it was alleged, considering that the tree presented some plants from growing properly, cut it down. On behalf of the defender it was urged that he had liberty to do so. Mr. Porteous (Jerk) stated that the reporter, to whom the matter had been remitted, valued the tree at £2, 10s. The Sheriff then went over the salient points of the case, remarking that he had no doubt in his mind that the tree had been cut down improperly by the defendant, although his attention had been specially called to it.

Defender's Agent said: would remind your Lordship that the defender understood he had permission to cut it down. The Sheriff—1 overrule that. I was very much struck by the evidence of Mrs. Wemyss and Miss Tod. I have no doubt they gave me a most accurate account of what took place, and the inference I draw from their evidence was that the pursuer had not given any leave of the kind, but that the defender had been specially warned of the special value set upon the tree, therefore it should have been religiously preserved by him. The sum of £2, 10s. is the potential value of the tree—its mere value as a shrub—but the pursuer sues for something more, and I now ask you (pursuer's agent) what sum you are willing to take. Pursuer's agent replied that he was inclined to leave the case in the hands of the Sheriff.

Defender's Agent—According to this account the injured feelings of Miss Tod would amount to £7, 10s., if the potential value of the shrub was £2, 10s., the total amount sued for being £10. The Sheriff—in the absence of lawyers, feelings which are put in on one side come out at another in the shape of prejudice, shiftings, and piques. (Laughter.) Ultimately his Lordship gave decree for £5, with two guineas of extra-judicial expenses, besides Court expenses. [Edinburgh Courant.]

## Animal Teaching.

Long years before the American Bary's name was heard as a "horse-tamer," a secret existed, as a family heirloom, among a branch of the O'Sullivan's in the south of Ireland. This family was known as "The Whisperers," and they possessed the power of rendering as quiet as a lamb the most stubborn and unmanageable horse that ever existed. Whether they did anything more to a horse than breathing into his nostrils we know not, but by doing this and by kind soothing, and other ways known to themselves, they affected their purpose and retained their time. Putting the question of drugs or stimulants, or other fascinating means aside, and coming to the point of pure and unadulterated domestication and teaching, perhaps there was no person in modern times achieved so much success in animal teaching as S. Bissett. This man was a humble shoemaker. He was born in Scotland, in 1721, but he afterwards, removed to London, where he married a woman who brought him some property. Then, turning to a broker, he accumulated money until the year 1759, when his attention was turned to the training of animals, birds and fishes. He was led into this new study on reading an account of a remarkable horse shown at St. Germaine. Bissett bought a horse and a dog, and succeeded beyond his expectations in teaching them to perform various feats. He next purchased two monkeys, which he taught to dance and tumble on a rope, and one would hold a candle in one paw and turn the organ with the other, while his companion danced. He next taught three cats to do a great many wonderful things, to act before music boxes,

and to squall notes pitched to different keys. He advertised a "cats opera" in the Haymarket, and successfully carried out his programme, the cats accurately fulfilling all their parts. He pocketed some thousands by these performances. He next taught a leveret, and then several species of birds to spell the name of any person in the company, and to distinguish the hour of the day or night. Six Turkeycocks were next rendered a menable to a country dance, and after six months' teaching, he trained a turtle to fetch and carry like a dog, and having chalked the floor and blackened its claws, he made it trace out the name of any given person in the company. [Land and Water.]

## Bay of Fundy Red Granite Company.

POLISHED COLUMNS AND PILASTERS. TOMBS AND MONUMENTS, Mausoleums, Vaulting, &c.

Estimates made for building work. Granite supplied to dimensions. Designs furnished to order. The Polishing Works and Quarries of the Bay of Fundy Company are now in full operation, and the Company are prepared to fill orders with despatch. Further particulars and price list on application to the Secretary at St. George, N. B., St. George, N. B., March 18, 1874.

## Mail Contract.

SEALED TENDERS addressed to the Postmaster General, and marked "Tender for Mail Service," will be received at Ottawa until 12 o'clock, noon, on MONDAY, the 18th April, for the conveyance of Her Majesty's Mails between

Saint John and Digby

—AND—

St. John and Annapolis.

For the term of Four Years from the 1st May next, to be performed as follows, viz:—From the 1st April to 15th December, four times per week each way between St. John, Digby and Annapolis, and between the 15th December until the 1st April twice per week, each way, between St. John and Digby, extending the trips to Annapolis whenever the navigation of the Annapolis River will permit.

Separate Tenders are also invited for the conveyance of Mails between the same points, six times per week, from 1st April until the 15th December, and three times per week from the 15th December until the 1st April.

The conveyance to be made by a seaworthy and commodious passenger steamer, of sufficient power and capacity to perform the round trip in twelve hours, including a reasonable detention at each port of arrival for the exchange of Mails. The vessel employed in this service to be subject to the approval of the Postmaster General in regard to safety, accommodation for passengers and rate of speed.

The Mails are to be conveyed to and from the several Post Offices at the expense of the Contractor.

The contract, if satisfactorily expected will continue in force for a term not exceeding four years, the Postmaster General reserving the right to terminate the agreement at any time previous to the expiration of four years, should the public interest in his opinion, require it—upon giving the Contractor six months previous notice of his intention so to do.

It is to be clearly and distinctly understood by persons tendering for the above service that they will not receive any further sum or subsidy from the Government for the performance of the service beyond that stipulated in the Contract to be paid by the Post Office Department.

Printed Forms of Tender and guarantee may be obtained at the Post Office at St. John, or at the office of the subscriber.

JOHN McMILLAN,  
Post Office Inspector,  
St. John, 23rd Feb, 1874. } Mar. 4.

## Notice.

APPLICATION will be made at the next Session of the Legislature of the Province of New Brunswick, for the passage of an Act to incorporate the Chamcook Wharf Company.

## NOTICE.

APPLICATION will be made at the next Session of the Legislature of the Province of New Brunswick, for the passage of an Act to divide the Parish of St. Andrews, and to form a new Parish.