

The Wave That Gave Up Its Prey

By ALBERT SONNICHSEN, ABLE SEAMAN.

The poets will tell you that the sea never gives up its prey, but if you were to repeat that to the sailors on the docks of Honolulu, they would tell you "The poets be blowed!" or something that would refer you to old Sam Harland, the night watchman of the railway dock, who came there five years ago on the Henry B. Howard.

You would then demand more details, and in a humorous way they would tell you how the waves once took old Sam for their own and tried hard to swallow him, but he proved too bitter a pill, even for the hoary old sea, so it spued him up again in disgust.

"To sea," they say, "Sam is a powerful chap on the booze, an' his old carcass is so soaked with rum that he couldn't be digested. The sea took him and chewed and chewed for quite a while, but he was just a bit too tough."

I have heard Sam tell his story, but being a rank egotist, he tries to make you believe that his swimming saved him, which isn't entirely true. His shipmates on the Howard told quite a different story, and, according to general opinion, theirs was the true version.

The big four-masted bark Henry B. Howard, left New York in May with general cargo for San Francisco. She brought her round the Horn in August and up to the North Pacific in October, and had time of year, just when the equinoctial storms are brewing. The Howard was just about five hundred miles southeast of Hawaii when one of these bitter gales struck her and brought her hove to under lower topmasts.

The ordinary landsman doesn't quite realize what a storm in these regions, at that time of year, means. Sailing is impossible—the ship that simply holds her own against those midsea billows is doing well. She is stripped of all but three or four heavy storm sails, enough to give her the necessary steerageway to keep her nose pointed towards the oncoming seas, so that they shall not strike broadside on.

Thus had the Howard been hove to for three days, meeting each foam-capped billow with an upward toss of her bows sometimes showing her nose deep into the green sea, sending ponderous cascades thundering down from her forecastle head, flooding the main deck to the cabin aft. Sometimes the forecastle, an iron house on the deck, would be entirely submerged, and then the men of the watch below, who lay in upper bunks, could behold the sea through the plate glass portholes, as you see in the aquarium, casting a sickly green light over their haggard faces and giving them a death-like pallor.

With a gurgling roar the water would pour and spread aft, and good wholesome light of day come in again. Aft on the poop were gathered the officers and the men of the watch on deck, a dozen oilskinned figures clutching the lifelines rigged from rail to rail. Thus they stood, four hours at a

time, drenched, gazing stolidly at the whirl of spray and sand about them, with nothing to do, only to stand by. The men at the wheel were lashed to his post; his duty it was to keep the helm jammed hard over. Such is the sailor's school of physical endurance.

One bell struck—the poop. Even that old martinet, the skipper would expect no man to strike it for'd for the bell on the forecastle head clangs suddenly at intervals in low throaty notes, as the roaring torrents pour over it. Bad enough it is for the man to dodge for'd in the first lull to the lee door of the forecastle, to jerk those drowsy fellows of the other watch out of their few hours of slumber.

"Ho-o-o, ho-o-o, ho-o-o, all hands, ahoy! Awake, ye sleepers! One bell!"

With sleepy yawns and drawing curtains, the men drop out of their bunks to their chests and slowly, reluctantly, don their oilskins, while the sea bangs the weather wall of the forecastle like shells from heavy guns.

"Eight bells—relieve the watch!"

Aye, eight bells; but the watch has yet to wait a while, for no mortal man could wade those flooded decks from for'd to aft. Sea after sea green and white pour over the bulwarks, like the breaking of a big dam.

Finally comes another lull. The ship pauses as though to rest, while the tons of water on deck shoot out through hawspeirs and scupper. Once more the deck is visible, covered only by the foam-rimmed sheets of rippling water. The lee door of the forecastle flies open and one by one the men shoot out, like bees from a hive, and scurry aft, fairly throwing themselves up the poop ladder.

All hands, are aft—all but one. Old Sam Harland, able seaman, lingers to fill his pipe, as he invariably does, in fair weather or foul. Creeping Sam they call him. At last he crawls out, shuts the forecastle door and starts aft.

Suddenly all hands shout and gesticulate to him. He sees but the shouts are lost in the roar of the gale. Slowly he waddles aft, unconscious of his danger. Were he to look behind him, he would see coming up on the weather bow a distinct but fast approaching wall of greenish gray, its white tops apparently licking the low hanging clouds.

He does so at last, but too late. The ship gives a quick lurch, a heave, attempts to rise to the oncoming billow but fails. High up, level with the foreyard, towers the white crest. For one breathless moment to those aft it seems to hesitate, lifts, leans forward, then falls, crashing down on the whole for'd part of the ship. From rail top to rail top to the main deck fills in an instant, each mast the centre of a whirlpool of yeasty foam. Then, as the ridge of the wave passes under the ship, she lurches, rolls over to windward in the hollow beyond, dumping her deckload of seeth-

ing water over her weather bulwarks into the sea.

If you were to put a dry pea into an empty sauceman, and then pour a bucket of water over it you would understand what happened to Sam Harland, able seaman. His shipmates saw him slowly sucked towards the bulwarks, then shot across their top into the reflux of the sea outside.

What they felt is not part of the story; such accidents occur often, and seamen are not prone to describe their emotions. "Man overboard," Sam Harland, able seaman, lost at sea, October 8." Such notes are common in log books. There were few of Sam's shipmates who had not seen this tragedy enacted before. It was what followed that was unusual.

Suddenly the mate gave a yell, audible even above the roar of the tempest. "There he is, boys, away to windward!"

They crowded together to the weather rail. Sure enough there he was, a black speck far out in the white froth, his face turned towards them. Then he rose on the crest of a wave, and sank out of their sight into the hollow beyond, only to reappear again, mounting another oncoming billow.

Already he had thrown off his sou'wester and oilskin coat, and was swimming. Hopelessly beyond all human aid, he struggled still, while his shipmates could only stand helplessly by, breathless, watching him fight his last fight then he was swallowed up.

The ship was being blown away from him. They tried to heave him a life-belt, but the winds blew it back against the rail.

Still Sam fought manfully. With beating hearts they saw him rid himself of his gun boots, and even his oilskin trousers—he ripped them off with his sheath knife. Impulsively they cheered. He was dying game.

But he odds were against him. Further and further he drifted away from him, catching only an occasional glimpse of his naked shoulders as he mounted the sea and toppled over their crests. The skipper had brought up the log line and tried to heave the metal fan with its coil of thin cord, but, strong of arm though he was, it went not even one-third of the distance. He threw it down on deck and turned away.

Again came one of those booming rollers. They saw the drowning man mount its slope until he was struggling in the hollow curve under the combing top. On it came, he in it. With a heave the big ship shot upwards and they saw him in the hollow beyond. He seemed to have been hurled nearer, and this caused intense excitement.

"Swim, Sam, swim!" they yelled. "Keep it up, Sam! Hang on, Sam!" They howled and gesticulated, and once more the skipper tried to heave the log line. They might as well have spared their efforts.

The ship was drifting and having so much surface exposed to the wind, she naturally sagged to leeward faster than the man, leaving him to windward. He heard nothing from them. Still, they saw him more plainly now, saw his white face, his clinched jaws, his powerful arms beating the waves. By this time he had freed himself of all his clothes. But excepting that he kept himself up he was helpless; like a block of wood he was whirled about and tossed up and down—ground by

the waves as though they were indeed chewing well before swallowing.

Then he suddenly disappeared. For five minutes the men stood, still clutching the rail, instinctively they bowed their heads, as men do in the presence of death.

Then came a lull. Again the decks were clear.

"Come boys," shouted the second mate, "set for'd and turn in."

The watch just relieved moved with difficulty down to leeward and prepared to snatch a few hours' rest.

But before they could gain the shelter of the for'd dockhouse, the vessel reared on its stern. They could not climb that slanting deck. From for'd came that awful growling roar again. The green wall swept on, shot up alongside, ready to topple. An impulsive cry burst from the lips of all, their danger forgotten in the sight before them. Almost over their heads rose that glassy, foam-streaked green mountain, and on its very top lifted the naked form of a man, his arms outstretched, mouth agape, eyes staring, legs outspread, like some spirit of the storm, wrapped in a smother of froth and spray. They caught just that one glimpse—then came the crash—again the decks were flooded.

Fortunately all had gained some hold, and when the waters subsided none were missing. In the pump-hole, by the mainmast, they found the naked, unconscious, but still living body of their lost shipmate, washed aboard by the reflux. The sea had given up its prey.

GIRL OF 13 YEARS

IS A BLACKSMITH.

Clara Medlin, of Pilot Oak, Ky., Shoes

Horses and Welds Tires with Ease.

MADISONVILLE, Ky., Friday.—The village of Pilot Oak boasts of having the only woman blacksmith, perhaps, in the South. Miss Clara Medlin is her name and she is only eighteen. For more than a year in her father's shop she has been doing the work of a farrier and blacksmith. Wonderfully strong and agile, Miss Medlin is at the same time pretty and well formed. Her hands have a grip that an athlete would envy, yet they are neither rough nor coarse. Yet black hair and dancing black eyes are the attraction of the young woman for miles around.

It is said of Miss Medlin that she can shoe a horse or weld a tire with ease and dexterity, and that she has mastered the business in every detail. In addition to her other accomplishments she can paint and stripe a buggy to any carriage painter.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Medlin, of Pilot Oak. She will probably succeed her father in business, unless some man wins her heart. Notwithstanding she spends most of her time at the forge, Miss Medlin, ever a modest girl, is popular among the village belles and beaux.

"What are you feeding to those hogs, my friend?" the professor asked.

"Corn, professor," the grizzled old farmer, who knew the professor by sight, replied.

"Are you feeding it wet or dry?"

"Dry."

"Don't you know if you feed it wet the hogs can digest it in half the time?"

"The farmer gave him a quizzical look. 'Now, see here, professor,' he said, 'how much do you calculate a hog's time is worth?'—Lippincott's.

Ran a Blockade at His Leisure.

Merchantman Skipper Matched His Wit Against the Dominican Navy.

After a neat game of hide and seek, including doused lights and all the nautical nocturnal strategy known to vessels in hostile waters, Capt. Archibald, of the Clyde line steamer Cherokee, which arrived at her dock in New York recently, succeeded in eluding the government blockade of three Dominican ports that were occupied by rebels and in landing the cargoes destined for each of them, right in the face of a positive order to the contrary issued by President Wos y Gil from his beleaguered capital of San Domingo City.

This was done, too, under the nose of the Dominican gunboat El Presidente, which Capt. Archibald adroitly kept running on wild goose chases while the Cherokee was calmly delivering the goods at ports for which they were destined.

The Cherokee arrived at the city of San Domingo on Monday, Nov. 2, and discharged the cargo for that port. She had other ports on the island to make with merchandise, said to include firearms and ammunition—Samana, Sanche, Porto Plata and Monte Christi. Just before the Cherokee sailed from San Domingo for these destinations, the Dominican customs house officer came on board and told Capt. Archibald that he would not be permitted to land at any of the ports, for the reason that they were in the hands of the rebels under Jimenes and were under blockade. Capt. Archibald protested, and carried the matter to the American minister, Mr. Powell, who joined in a protest that was laid before President Wos y Gil. The president was obstinate. A blockade was a blockade, and must be respected. There was nothing for Capt. Archibald to do save to yield, outwardly at least, to the voice of authority.

SEE SAILS AWAY.

So the Cherokee sailed from San Domingo with Capt. Archibald determined to land his cargoes, blockade or no blockade. On Tuesday evening the Cherokee arrived at the mouth of Samana Bay. Here the fussy little Dominican gunboat El Presidente came bustling up, and fired a blank shot across the Cherokee's bows as a signal to leave to. The Cherokee heavily, to a gig shot out from El Presidente, and a subordinate officer of that grim craft of war came on board.

"You cannot land at either Samana or Sanche," said this official. "They are blockaded."

"But the blockade there is illegal," protested Capt. Archibald. "There has not been the requisite fifteen days' notice."

Capt. Archibald went on board the Dominican navy. El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo was gracious, polite, complimentary even, but resolute, a veritable Gibraltar. He said his orders were to blow the Cherokee out of the water if she landed a cargo. He showed the order, which, indeed, instructed him to do as he had said.

Capt. Archibald affected to accept

the situation, and said he would proceed on his voyage away from Santo Domingo.

The two captains exchanged assurances of distinguished consideration, and Capt. Archibald went over the side and on board the Cherokee. In a few moments that vessel turned her nose seaward and began melting away into the shadows of the night. The dim outline of her hull vanished as her lights disappeared one by one. Her masthead light seemed to sink lower and lower and finally to get under the horizon altogether.

THE DISAPPEARING VESSEL.

El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo thought some Yankee trick was brewing and he straightway headed for Porto Plata, where he expected to find the Cherokee dumping her cargo. Capt. Archibald had divined that the gunboat captain would do just what he did do. The Cherokee at the time lay comfortably off about two miles from shore with every glimmer of light on board doused, and a dead silence reigning on her decks. Capt. Archibald is a student of marine scenic effects. To give the true artistic touch to an imitation of a brilliantly lighted passenger steamer disappearing by night at sea, he knows that you must put out the lowest lights first, and then work gradually upward, dousing all the glimmers as you go until the light at the masthead alone remains.

The thing to do with that is to lower it gradually toward the water and finally snuff it out also. All this was done with much skill and realistic effect until the Cherokee lay an indistinguishable mass on the water, but still within easy sailing distance. When the shrewd El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo, eagerly bent on his surprise for Capt. Archibald at Porto Plata, had got well out of sight, the Cherokee went coolly into Samana and to Sanche, where she discharged the cargoes destined for those ports in a leisurely way, then she put out to sea again.

Meantime El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo reached Porto Plata and scanned the horizon with many chuckles for the Cherokee's smoke. But there was no smoke. The sun rose high, the forenoon went by and the afternoon and night came, no Cherokee.

"Madre de Dios, caramba, Godam!" remarked El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo, "Can it be that that d— Yankee—"

"We will go back to Samana," he said to his first officer. "Quick, full steam ahead."

El Presidente splashed and foundered on the back track over which she had come the night before. And as soon as she had got out of sight and well on her way, in sailed the Cherokee to Porto Plata and there comfortably discharged her cargo as she had done the night before at Samana and Sanche. Of the four ports on the list three had now been visited and the cargoes duly landed.

There only remained Monte Christi,

and at Monte Christi only mails were to be delivered, but in the meantime El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo had learned what had happened at Samana, had guessed at what had happened at Porto Plata, and was driving El Presidente at full speed for Monte Christi, where, in fact, he did intercept the Cherokee. El Capitan Lorenzo Pazo is described by those on board the Cherokee who had the pleasure of seeing him on his arrival at Monte Christi as being in a highly inflamed condition. He spoke in chosen language. He announced his intention of blowing the Cherokee out of the water. The eruption continued many minutes, and was suggestive of Mount Pelée at its worst. And when the pent up gases were all blown off El Capitan meekly asked if Captain Archibald had any meat to sell.

"They sent us off on a two weeks' cruise with only peas and beans to eat. Behold us starve," said El Capitan. "Sell us of your pork, we beseech you." "Certainly," said Captain Archibald, "twenty dollars a barrel." There was a consultation on board El Presidente. The treasure chest was explored. The officers emptied their pockets into the common fund. The sum of \$2 was finally amassed and offered.

"I am afraid it is a case of nothing doing," said Captain Archibald, and he sailed away toward his surly frozen north.

"We got everything on shore except the Monte Christi mail," said one of the Cherokee's officers, "and I think they will let us land that when we get back."

FATHER AND SON RIVALS IN LOVE.

Ill, Believed to Be Dying, Henry Ballard, of Passaic, Asks Boy to Marry Girl Both Sought.

NEW YORK, Dec. 10.—In a friendly rivalry to win the same woman, Edward, the son of Henry Ballard, of Passaic, N. J., won. Both were in love with Miss Grace Thompson, housekeeper for the family. The father, on what he thought to be his deathbed, withdrew from the matrimonial race. When Edward Ballard and Miss Grace Thompson were married, November 29, what was then a supposed ending of the rivalry was brought about by the gradual failing health of Henry Ballard, the father. He was suffering from nervous prostration.

The father, who is more than sixty-five years old, and was thought to be critically ill, called his son to his bedside and asked him to marry Miss Thompson. At the further request of his father, the wedding was arranged for immediate celebration.

From the date of the marriage Henry Ballard gradually grew better, and is now able to go to New York each day to attend to his business. Since the death of Mrs. Henry Ballard Miss Thompson has been in charge of the house. Both father and son fell in love with her. The ending of the courtship, however, was amicable when the betrothal took place and the young couple were married. Mrs. Edward Ballard is still the housekeeper for the family.

Pupil (after repeated attempts)—Oh, I'm sure I never shall be able to!

Professor—Oh, yes, you will. I was just as big a donkey myself at first!—Punch.

Wake Up Santa Claus

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