

SIX

THE STAR, ST. JOHN N. B. THURSDAY, MAY 13 1909

AMONG THE PERILS OF THE OCEAN

None save a seaman can understand the countless risks that beset the seaman. The sea is a friend, in that it carries the keels homeward after many days of absence, but it is also a bitter malignant foe, and it is more as a foe than a friend that the son of the sea understands the element that gives him life. The sea is no friend; she is an exacting mistress, who demands an undivided service, even to the extent of laying down one's life on her behalf and repays the service with endless perils.

Naturally enough, the commonest dangers are those arising from the atmospheric upheavals of nature storms, whether they be gales, typhoons, hurricanes, pampetros, or "southerly busters." The average gale—the slow growth of elemental unrest from the first muttered warnings to the full shrieking cataclysm of wrath—is not much to be feared, for the seafarer is wise in his generation, and, given only a nearest fraction of preparation, is able to cope with the uproar successfully. One by one the towering sails come in, the ship is angled to meet all contingencies, and, given fair treatment, is able to weather the storm in comparative comfort, providing always that the storm is merely a storm, and not a living, howling terror.

NATURE TOO STRONG.

But there are other kinds of storms, each one known by a different name, which are not so easy to cope with. The hurricane, for example, is absolutely overwhelming if met with when it has attained its full force. Ships are simply pounded down before a sheer weight of wind; the gigantic sea that arises in the wake of the storm breaks down the sturdy defences of bulwark and hatch, and often enough the ship is swamped, her hatches stove in, and waterlogged, she sinks ignominiously. Her captain and crew are not to blame; they have done what they could; Nature has been too strong for them, that is all.

But a hurricane gives warning and by obeying the laws of storms a captain might easily keep his ship out of the danger quadrant of the storm. Not so with other atmospheric freaks commonly known to those who use the sea. A pampetro, for instance, gives scant warning of its coming. The storm is born on the Brazilian or the Argentine land, and sweeps out to sea with terrific velocity, unheeded by any lowering clouds or lightning flash; a solid thing hurtled down on the unready ship to strike terror and dismay into the hearts of all aboard. No time to get aloft and clew down the upper sails; they must be let go and blown out of the bolt-ropes if needs be; and if they are stout sails, strong sails, they may resist the firm awful shock of the hurrying wind, and drag the ship down on her beam ends before anything can be done.

And here appears another danger—the carelessness of stevedores. The writer remembers a case where a ship laden with nitrates was longward bound from Chili when a pampetro struck her. The Chilean stevedores are amongst the most careful in the world and usually when they load a cargo there is as much fear of the ship's keel starting from its holding as that cargo from its place. But now and then—well, the stevedores who had stored this ship's cargo had forgotten to attend strictly to the trim of the nitrates. As the ship heeled first a few sacks of the mighty stuff became dislodged, this caused her to heel still more. A further avalanche of sacks tumbled down to the low side, she was now over at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Even so she might have been saved, but the pampetro redoubled its efforts, pressed her down still further, and still more sacks broke away, and every sack gone meant a lessened resistance on the part of the main bulk of the cargo. Five degrees more of list and the entire mass took charge, thundered down to the lee side, and the ship slowly careened right on to her side. An attempt was made to cut away the masts.

TREACHEROUS SOUTHERLY BUSTERS.

But this ship's masts were steel, her rigging was wire, held to her deck by steel rigging screws. The axes would not sever the steel, and before the screws could be weakened free the work was done. Only at the last minute were the crew enabled to throw over a boat and escape with their bare lives.

Similarly, southerly busters are treacherous things. They occur off the Australian coasts and come along with most alarming suddenness, generally from a nearly opposite quarter to that from which the customary wind is blowing.

I remember my first experience of a southerly buster. It was a glorious day; the ship was sailing free from a fresh, crisp breeze that barely lifted the waves into foam. Working on deck I saw the man at the wheel making motions to me to give a hand with the helm; I ran to his assistance, but before I could touch a spoke the buster was on us. I had one glance of the wave-tops, swept clean off as if by a giant's foot, then the ship was over on her side, cracking furiously aloft. She had been caught flat aback, the sails were flattened against the mast, and she was listing over to what had been the weather side a few moments before. Then a solid sea broke over her as she lay there; it swept away everything that was movable and roamed on.

For ten long minutes not one of us but thought the signal had settled us completely; and if it had not been for the fact that the helmsman had looked ahead and noticed the wave-tops cut off by the buster, and had got his helm partly up in time, we might never have seen another day.

PANDEMONIUM IN HARBOR.

The screaming typhoons of the China seas are terrible in their danger, ships are blown all whither at once, their sails are ripped clean out of the ropes, and the yards thunder after them; the masts unable to bear the awful pressure, fall like snapped carrots; and so, unable to heave to or to run before the storm, the unfortunate ship is often simply swamped by the seas that

follow after her and break over her stern. When a typhoon strikes a harbor full of anchored shipping the scene simply becomes pandemonium. The stoutest anchor cables cannot stand the strain; anchors are dragged from their holdings, and the helpless craft—for a ship in port is usually very helpless—are either driven one on top of another and so crushed in to their doom, or they are taken up in the arms of the wind, and cast ashore, like toys, on sand-bank or reef, bilged or wrecked, and it is only a mere chance if a single soul survives.

But apart from storms there are endless other dangers. Two of the derelicts, both of which are to be encountered in most of the well-known seas. And neither iceberg nor derelict carries lights.

There used to be an iceberg afloat in the Atlantic which carried on its base an entire liner, which had run up the shelving ice as if up a ramping ship, and remained there whilst the berg slowly melted and rose higher in the water, until there you had the liner, apparently unharmed, and yet it was easier to reach the moon down out of the sky than bring her back to her native element until the course of time made the iceberg melt still more, and then the sea poured in through the rent bottom and the liner went to join the host of arrivals in the Port of Misadventure.

Derelicts, again, who could guard against them? They lurk unseen, hardly beneath the water, perhaps just able to float, invisible to the keenest eye on a dark night, but sinister always.

And whilst speaking of derelicts a case that is peculiar crops up in the writer's mind. A large American schooner turned turtle in a squall—that is another danger in these days of great sail areas—her masts broke off short, and she went bottom up. The majority of her crew were on deck, these were swept away and drowned.

KEPT AFOAT BY AIR.

But four poor men were at work in the hold, and these remained alive. They had no means of escape, but the ship had carried a cargo of grain at no very distant date, and all remained in odd corners. The air in the ship's holds kept her from sinking, the water could only penetrate a certain distance through hatch and mast-holes. These men had a sufficiency of air and food, and they had no desire to end their days in black darkness. They thundered constantly on the wooden bottom of the ship, but obtained no answer, and then, realizing the need for displaying some signal that would convince passing ships of their plight, for most ships would give a derelict such as that a wide berth, they resolved to cut through the ship's bottom to the open air. They had to cut through solid oak some twelve inches or more in thickness, and they did it.

But with a lamentable result. They had found that by list of giving a concerted thrust on the square of wood on their days in black darkness. They thundered constantly on the wooden bottom of the ship, but obtained no answer, and then, realizing the need for displaying some signal that would convince passing ships of their plight, for most ships would give a derelict such as that a wide berth, they resolved to cut through the ship's bottom to the open air. They had to cut through solid oak some twelve inches or more in thickness, and they did it.

DEVOURING FIRE.

Fire, of course, is a ghastly danger, and the annals of the sea teem with cases where the bravest men have shown themselves unequal to the task of this devouring foe. There is something appalling in the case of a ship afire, especially when a storm rages outside.

One remarkable case of a fire at sea here comes to mind. It was a German ship this time, laden with saltpetre, homeward bound. Saltpetre is not particularly deadly when treated with proper care, but once it does get alight, nothing can stop it. This ship fell under the ban of a thunderstorm, a flash of lightning struck her; the fluid travelled down a mast into the hold, and in another moment she was on fire. The nitre burned like gunpowder; it was impossible to stop it. The decks caved in, the flames shot up about the masts and licked the sails away one by one. The crew, realizing their incompetence, abandoned ship without a moment's hesitation, and the vessel tore on, a glowing ship of fire, until finally the masts crashed down, boring holes in the heads of the crew. There was a vast plunge, and the work was done.

The list of dangers might easily be extended considerably farther. Lightning accounts for some losses, uncharted rocks—very few of these nowadays, thanks to the admirable surveying of the various governments; collisions—a fruitful source of calamity these; it is impossible to give a complete account in the space of a short article such as this. But a sailor's life is no joke, taking one thing with another.

MR. AND MRS. BORDEN RECEIVE FINE PAINTING

OTTAWA, May 12.—The members of the opposition presented to their leader and to Mrs. Borden this afternoon a handsome painting by Homer Watson, A. R. C. A. The presentation was made by Claude Macdonell and Geo. Clare, M. P. A. In brief speeches expressive of the high place which both Mr. and Mrs. Borden had in the esteem of the Conservative members of parliament.

LABOR MEN ANGRY

QUEBEC, May 12.—The private bills committee of the legislative council spent two hours this morning listening to the representations of the Montreal Trades and Labor Congress as to why the property qualification for aldermen in Montreal should be struck out. At the afternoon session of the committee the clause was retained without a dissenting vote. To say that the labor men are angry is expressing it mildly.

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silk lined.....	2.48 "	Muslin Curtains.....	11c yd
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P. C. Corsets.....	89c "	" Pants.....	.79 "
Black Satteen Underskirts,		" Overalls.....	.39 "
69 were .95		Boys' Suits.....	1.75 "
" " " " .89 "	1.25	Boys' Knee Pants.....	.25 "
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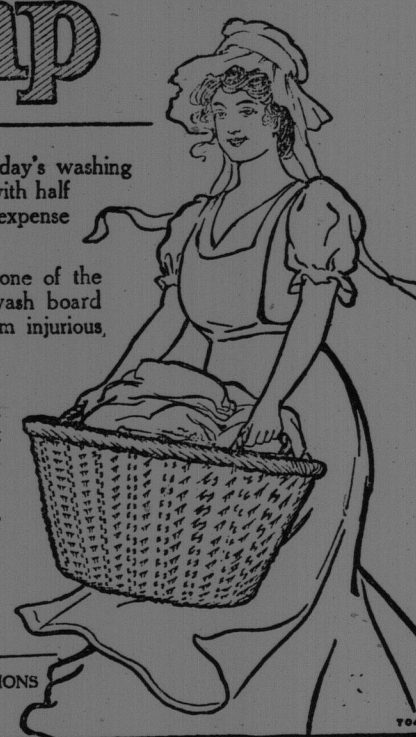
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FOLLOW 5c. DIRECTIONS



DECLARES NEGRO PASTOR "HONEYFUGLED" RIGHTEOUS

General Grant Stevens' Feelings Were Hurt by His Arrest on Charge of Disturbing Meeting.

NEW YORK, May 12.—Was it the devil, Old Nick, disguised in a long-tailed frock coat and shiny top hat, Satan in black face, who broke up the meeting in the Mount Olivet Negro Baptist church on a Sunday in February, 1908, or did General Grant Stevens have something to do with the row in church that sent a good part of the congregation to the West Forty-seventh street station house?

That was a question which a jury in the City Court took so long to consider this evening that Judge Donnelly got tired of waiting and sent home, after notifying the twelve to wait in a sealed verdict. At any rate, Pastor Matthew W. Gilbert and his flock, many of whom appeared in their best dress today, will know tomorrow whether they will have to pay for causing General Grant Stevens to be arrested, or whether Brother Stevens tinkered with the law.

It was all very much mixed up, the rights and wrongs of the case. As presented by the witnesses, Brother Gilbert had been honeyfugling the righteous, while counsel for the pastor and the two trustees, James Edward Taylor and J. B. Wood, said that General Grant Stevens was the ringleader in singing down the pastor.

TROUBLE OF LONG STANDING.

It is a matter that has been agitating the old-line negro Baptists that live around Seventh avenue and Fifty-third street, where the Mount Olivet church is located, for sixteen months. It started in November, 1907, when Pastor Gilbert resigned because he didn't like some things that had been said by members of a faction, but the majority decided to stand by Pastor Gilbert, and they wouldn't let him resign.

On that Sunday in February, 1908, when the congregation met for worship, there were signs of coming trouble, and Pastor Gilbert had asked the West Forty-seventh street police to have a man on hand. Pastor Gilbert went into the pulpit and opened his mouth to speak, but fifty-three policemen began to sing hymns. Policeman Wagner took a look at the recalcitrants and decided they were too many for him, so he sent in a call for the reserves. When the reinforcements came they gathered in, after a lot of confusion and shuffling and shouting, many who had been singing loudest, but somehow General Grant Stevens was overlooked and the case against him was dismissed by a magistrate.

Pastor Gilbert said that General Stevens beat it out of a back door when the row got hot, but the general turned up in the station house, "right in the maw of the law, your Honor," said the general lawyer, and was arrested at the request of Trustees Taylor and Wood. There was a great to do that morning, but the case against Stevens and others was dismissed by a magistrate.

But the general's feelings had suffered. Great mental anguish and tribulation of souls, pangs of humiliation and flashes of just rage rent the general's loom, according to counsel, and he went to law to get square. He sued Pastor Gilbert and Trustees Taylor and Wood for \$2,500 apiece for false arrest and malicious prosecution. "And what, I ask you learned gentlemen," said the lawyer, "was this man doing in the maw of the law, in the very teeth of the police, if he had been guilty of wrongdoing? Are you peers going to let this preacher honeyfugle and bamboozle you and jump on an offending worshipper? The whole question was that the pastor wanted the filthy lucre. Think of it, a minister of the Gospel wanting filthy lucre! Is that the spirit of the Master?"

But Pastor Gilbert's lawyer contended dryly that Brother Stevens had been foremost in singing down his client. There had been a conspiracy, deep-dyed and secret, to break up the meeting.

Judge Donnelly charged the jury that their principal business must be to settle in their own minds whether Policeman Wagner was telling the truth when he said that he was present and saw Brother General Grant Stevens leading the chorus of dissension.

Maybe the end is not yet, whatever verdict the jury brings in. Pastor Gilbert insisted that he was fighting for a principle, while Brother Stevens said that he was representing all mankind in fighting against malicious prosecution.

PARIS REJECTS THE KING'S FASHION

Beau Brummels of All Nations Seen With Side Trouser Creases at the Races.

PARIS, May 12.—It is worthy of remark that till now not a trousers leg in Paris, so far as is known, has adopted the side creases noted in King Edward's while he was in Paris. Sunday's races afforded an unsurpassed field of observation, attended as they were by the Beau Brummels and Comte d'Orsay's of all nationalities. Faultlessly ironed creases were aplenty, but without exception they were all, as heretofore, fore and aft.

"Are all the people really going to strike?" inquired a woman this afternoon as she took tea on the terrace outside "Les Cent Portraits." If they do I shall believe it is simply amazing. We reached Paris the day before the former strike, then going to Constantinople. We were no sooner there than the Turks overruled. Now returning we seem to have jumped from the frying pan into the fire. I want to go home.

The opinion of cosmopolitan society as to whether or not the threatened strike will take place appears to be about equally divided, perhaps with a slight leaning toward the likelihood of a strike. Nobody seems to care particularly one way or the other.

Quits as much, if not more, interest taken in the recent started rumor that King Edward will visit Cautelet before the summer is out, and the probable consequences should the rumor prove well founded.

Appropos of summer resorts, an American woman, remarkably good looking and apparently in the very best of health, had been at a table when her husband joined her. As he took a seat she greeted him with "X, says I've got the gout and must go to Aix, Vichy or some other old place for the cure."

Thereupon, without turning a hair, the man enunciated quietly the following—

"People nowadays are doctor ridden. They used to be priest ridden. Formerly they couldn't live unless they went to church and had the priest's advice. Now they can't live without consultation with a doctor. If I were a doctor, I would be a fashionable physician." (With apologies to both, whose little dialogue could not but be overheard.)

Out of sixty-eight people in the restaurant at the time forty-nine were unmistakably Americans and six just as unmistakably British, which shows that this year's immigration of Uncle Sam's charges is large.

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