

a good running noose, as you call it, in it. You stand with this noose well advanced in your right hand, so as to avoid entanglement, your steersman brings the boat immediately over the spot where the whale is gone down; your best man—the man with the readiest eye and most reliable nerve—stands lance in hand, prepared to pin any too curious shark; at the right moment you leap into the water, and diving, fasten the noose on the teeth of the whale. You know the jaws of a large whale are from sixteen to eighteen feet in length; the teeth are about six inches long, and a foot apart. You can get a capital purchase on these, and the thing is done in a minute."

"Rather you than me though," said my brother.

The captain, like all truly brave men, was modest. "Oh," said he, naively, all you want is to calculate before you go down. Only say I have to do thus and thus, and thus, and when the thing is to be done you will have twice the confidence and twice the dexterity. The danger, of course is the sharks. The rope fixed, it is easy towing to the ship."

"But don't you often get your boats smashed in," asked Henry.

"Oh yes, that's an affair of frequent occurrence, and if you are engaged with a whale towards the end of the day, a source of extreme danger. For, of course, there is no twilight in those equinoctial regions,—now, broad daylight, five minutes hence, darkness. You get stove in just as the sudden darkness sets in, and the chances are you perish. For by the morning, the ship, quite ignorant of your whereabouts, may have drifted miles out of sight. Now I did see a brave thing done once in an affair of this kind. You know, ladies, or more probably, you do not know, a whaler's boat—there are three or four of them to a ship—is some thirty feet long and as thin as a lath—"

"Thin as a lath!" exclaimed Henry.

"Three cuts to the inch plank, in fact."

"But I should have thought you could not have had them too strong—so as to resist the strokes of the whale."

"The stoutest boat made to handle wouldn't do that; so these answer in that respect as well; and they are much more convenient for lowering from the ship and for repairing. Thirty feet long as they are, you and I could carry one on our two shoulders with ease. When a boat is stove, we right side it, lash the oars crossways so as to make a wide raft-like surface,—there are ropes expressly affixed to the sides of the boats—and all sit down to await assistance. Of course we are stationary; but thus sitting down, the weight of our bodies is not more than a pound or two on the boat; the water nearly supports us; if we stand up the boat sinks immediately. I once so sat—the water breast high—for three hours. Bless you, it's a luxurious position in those climates—provided your comrades look like eventually coming to your assistance. Well, on the particular occasion I have in mind, we fell in with a large whale late in the day. We were working in an extended line—the two other boats some long way to the right—with the ship at least three miles to leeward. We are stove in, and, as Coleridge has it, 'at one stride comes the dark.' The ship is miles away, the other boats far beyond hail, there does not appear a hope of salvation. Then one man gets up from among us and says he will swim for it. He does not propose trying for the ship, that is quite out of the question. But he points out how, in order themselves to reach the ship, the other boats must at some one spot come within three-quarters of a mile of us, and he hopes, in spite of the sharks, in spite of the darkness, to happen upon their path, when he will bring them to our aid. Over the side the man went, and we waited and waited, and listened and listened, and in no very long time we heard the grateful splash of oars, and they brought us all off safely. I do call that a brave fellow. Our passive endurance was of a very different quality. It was touch-and-go both for him and for us. I never had a nearer—except once, perhaps, when a whale, with a clever back-stroke of his fin, took my left eyebrow sheer off to the bone," and

the captain pointed to a very visible scar. "A trifle further, Miss Waven, and I should not be here to tell the tale, that I should not as I am a man alive."

"Yes," said my brother, "there is something very admirable about that man's act. Mr. Kavanagh might have remained in Lucknow with the other brave men and women, but he went out and won the Victoria Cross. Ah! sailors are subject to so much exposure, a little excess may be forgiven them."

"Now I'll tell you. I am fifty-five, and I was thirty years at sea—I was never screwed more than twice in my life. Once when I was a boy, and somebody who ought to have known better gave me some doctored stuff; and again on the occasion of my joining my second ship. I had something to remember that last by. As I went on board, a mate says, 'Harding, how are you old chap?' 'Right as a trivet,' says I. 'Right as a trivet.' And it passed into a by-word among them—Harding's being right as a trivet. It is a Suffolk saying, you know. I had a plan of my own with my crews. I found spirits in that climate did not agree with me, nor, indeed, any fermented liquors. So for myself I prepared a mixture of best Scotch oatmeal and water—the water simply poured over the oatmeal, about a pint to a spoonful. I found it very nourishing as well as thirst-satisfying. Now if I had gone to my men, and in so many words recommended it to them in the place of grog, they would have turned up their noses. But by putting a pail of it on the deck, and making a point of helping myself from it, in less than no time I had them following my example, and soon, like me, they would drink little else."

"It is a strange life," said the captain passing his hand meditatively over his hair. "When you get into the seas where the compass dips perpendicularly, you expect the strange things though. Now I'll tell you"—his favourite preface.—"My brother Jack went to sea a year later than I; consequently, our spells at home timed differently, and we lost all reckonings of each other. I had not seen him for twelve years, and I did not even know in what ship he was. I was second mate, or chief mate, I forget which, in the ship Eclipse, and it was in the Australian Seas." There is a certain particularity in the form sailors speak of their vessels. "I was at the look-out. I reported a sail, and the next minute I sighted a whale. The captain would not bear down on the latter lest the other ship should observe it and, being nearer, forestall us. But, in spite of our caution, in only lowering the boats, they perceived our object and followed our example; reaching the whale first, of course it became their lawful prey. As the boats neared each other, I sang out, 'Halloa, that's Jack!' meaning the officer in charge of the stranger's boat. I had not seen him for twelve years; but, bless you, I knew his build in a minute; just as I spoke the whale indulged in a few antics, and they were all thrown into the water. We were pulling to their assistance, when it happened that another whale spouted to the right. 'Bye, bye, Jack,' I shouted, with a wave of my hand, the boat's head was brought round, and we were off after it in a trice. We did not see one another again for eleven months. Now if you had to tell that in a book I doubt whether you'd get believed. 'A pretty brother for you,' said Jack, telling the tale only a few weeks ago to a lot of gentlemen. 'We had not seen each other for twelve years, and then he left me struggling in the water to go after a whale.' 'Quite right too,' I replied. 'You'd have done the same.' 'That I should,' he said, 'for the whale was worth five hundred pounds, and I know I was not—at that time.' Of course I knew he was in no danger; a whaler is, or ought to be, amphibious."

"It ought to be a paying concern, and I suppose it is?" said Henry.

"It was, but it is not now. I never went a voyage after I became master of a ship without bringing home from fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds for my share of profits. But now, what with goldfields in California, and goldfields in New Holland," (the name he always used for Australia,) "you can't keep

your crews—men worth having, that is. A lot of riff-raff I daresay you could have; but they are not the stuff for whalers. I left it as soon as I found how the wind lay."

The captain told us much more worth knowing; but this is all I remember with sufficient distinctness.

It was a rough night for his walk home, so my brother lent him an overcoat. It was of rather peculiar fashion, and required a little ingenuity in the putting on. When, after a minute of anxious examination, the captain announced that *the ropes were all right* we could not refrain from smiles. WYNN WAVEN.

PASTIMES.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. A word signifying "heavenly." 2. A town in Italy. 3. A tree, the leaf of which is much quoted by the poets. 4. An animal. 5. An abyss. 6. An aperture for cannon. 7. A town in England. 8. To invest. 9. An Emperor of Rome. 10. A feature of beauty. The initials will name a poet, and the initials one of his poems.

CRYPTOGRAPH.

Az etq omq iust m oxagp ar omzlime.
Dustf msmuzof stq iust iustf uxqi.
Gzlux stq qkq oaxp puefuzquet.
Ftq rmoqo ar ftq odqi.

CHARADES.

1. I am composed of 14 letters.
My 11, 8, 3, 9, 1, is what a sentry takes.
My 14, 2, 7, 13, 10, is fearful.
My 5, 7, 3, 4, 6, 5, is a disturbance.
My 14, 12, 9, 3, is a sound.
My whole is a French saying.

B. N. C.

RIDDLES.

1. The title of a well-known poem, consisting of nine letters—contains the five vowels, a, e, i, o, and u, four of them being together.
2. What word is that signifying what cannot be found, if differently divided implies presence?

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

My last defies my first:
And let him do his worst.
My last will fight
For Queen and right,
Against his cause so cursed.

- The lads and lasses gaily play,
And pass with games their holiday.
- Lo! from my shores the conqueror came,
And Europe trembled at his name.
- The conqueror's name these lines will show,
The pride of Gaul, Britannia's foe.
- The warrior Greek to me returns,
His faithful wife her suitors spurns.
- Each day, to age ago I bestow:
I take from none, I always grow.
- A Russian city stands beside
My icy current's rolling tide.

RUCLED.

DECAPITATION.

Take fifty off, a fruit remains
That you may fancy for your pains:
Cut off my head, and there's showu
A certain portion of your own;
I put back the head transposed, and lo!
A certain farmer's seed I show;
My head then off, and I proclaim
An animal, 'tis yours to name;
My whole's a certain kind of gem,
That gloweth in a diadem. C. B. G.

ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.

A gentleman left \$11,200 to be divided between his wife and three daughters, in such a manner that the proportion to each should be as 4 to 3, to that of the next younger. How was it divided?

ANSWERS TO GEOGRAPHICAL ACROSTIC &c. No. 92.

Acrostic—Bernadotte—1. Brest; 2. Egypt; 3. Rhine; 4. Nans, 5. Alleghany, 6. Derwent-water; 7. Olahcite; 8. Toronto; 9. Tobolsk; 10. Etna.

Square Words—

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| 1. WHARF | 2. SALT |
| HAGUE | ALOE |
| AGENT | LOSS |
| RUNIC | TEST |
| FETCH | |

Decapitations—1. Finger-fringe-ring-gin-in; 2. Wasp-paws-asp-was.

Charades—1. Pomegranate, 2. Potentate; 3. Kindness.

Battles & Seiges—1. Inkerman; 2. Agincourt; 3. Lucknow; 4. Camperdown; 5. Delhi.

Problems—The numbers are 12 and 25.

Answers received will be given in our next.