

HELOGOLAND.

There are few places in Europe where the traveller may feel so secure from the companionship of the ordinary British tourist as in Heliogoland. And yet it is a British possession, and has been one ever since 1814. Up to that date the steep rock in the North Sea, whose name is sometimes spelt Helgoland, or Heiligeland, but which we call Heliogoland, had remained in uncoveted and undesired possession of the Danes. Early in the beginning of the present century, however, when strange acts of appropriation were committed under the influence of panic, and justified by the rough-and-ready laws of self-defence, we seized upon this little group of islands lying in the German Ocean, right opposite the mouths of the great rivers Elbe and Weser. It consists of Heliogoland, Sandy Island, and several reefs and rocks, of which only two have been given the distinctive names of the Monk and the Steen. Heliogoland itself is barely a mile long, and its average breadth is only the third of a mile. Even these moderate dimensions are said to be subjected to a steady reduction by the encroachments of the sea. There is every reason to believe that the whole group of islets, which bear distinct traces of change in their physical geography, once formed a single island—large compared to the size of any of its existing fragments.

A bit of old Frisian doggerel describes vividly enough the impression of the traveller who first sees Heliogoland in its summer dress:—

"Red is the land,
Green is the grass,
White is the sand;

"These are the colors of Heliogoland."

Small as is the principal island, it yet boasts of two towns—one on the high land, and one on the low land. There is as much as 170 feet of difference between the two "lands," and the visitor must climb 203 steps, if he would reach the upper to town from the sea-shore. On this "Ober-land" stands the Government House, the Church, the batteries and their magazine, and, higher than all, the splendid lighthouse, the lantern of which is 257 feet above the sea level. The dwellings are so neat and clean, that their wooden walls and red roofs help to produce the indescribably comic effect of the whole place having been just taken out of a box of children's toys, and neatly arranged in squares and rows.

The church is a curious building, and contains, suspended from the ceiling, several models of ships under full sail, presented *ex voto*, from time to time. The women sit by themselves down stairs, in pews marked with their family names; the men sit in a gallery up stairs, round which has been painted, by no mean artist, a series of scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

The font, too, is especially curious. It is held up by figures so ancient that *cognoscenti* declared they must be the remaining supports of some ancient altar to a heathen deity. When a christening takes place there is a preliminary ceremony of filling this font, and it is pretty to see fifty or a hundred children advancing up the aisle in a procession, each bearing a little mug of water. The service is Lutheran. It is not so long ago since prayers used to be offered up in this very church for wrecks; and it was an established custom, if the rumor of one arrived whilst service was being performed, for the clergyman to shut his book, seize the long hatchet-like pike placed in readiness for such an emergency, and lead his flock to their boats. But the mission was scarcely a Christian one, for no survivors were ever permitted to return and tell the tale of what sort of welcome they had received on these inhospitable rocks.

We must remember, however, in mitigation of such hard and cruel facts, that from father to son for many and many a bygone generation the trade and profession of each male inhabitant of Heliogoland had been that of a wrecker, with a very little exercise of the pilot's or fisherman's more gentle craft during the brief summer months. Indeed it has taken the strong repressive measures insisted on and strictly carried out by the present Governor, to subdue this inborn tendency to act on the saying of what is one man's extremity being another man's opportunity. The great improvement in wrecking morals and manners which has been accomplished with so much difficulty is, however, but skin deep, and will even now collapse on the smallest chance of escaping detection.

The present Governor of Heliogoland has indeed made enormous reforms in the system of legalized wreckage which he found in practice on the islands. He has established a volunteer corps of native coast-guards superintended by eight picked coast-guards men from England. Now, therefore, when a wreck takes place on the shore, the errand of those battling with the beating surf, the howling wind, and the blinding storms of sleet and snow, to where the poor ship lies stranded on the rocks, is one of savor and not of heartless villainy. Formerly the very same men would only have

hastened to the spot with their pikes and hatchets, to cut down the bullheads, force open the hatches, take out the cargo, and break up the ship as quickly as might be for the sake of appropriating her timbers, copper, and ballast.

In spite, however, of the utmost vigilance it sometimes happens that the old trade is still plied, and the Governor told me the following story himself:—

He was one day lately caught in a thick fog when out in a boat shooting wild sea-birds, and whilst waiting for the mist to lift, he heard a sound of hammering in the direction of a distant reef. His practiced ears soon told him what it meant, and in spite of the difficulties raised on the spot by the crew of his boat, and the earnest efforts they made to dissuade him, he persisted in steering towards where he knew the reef lay. Just before reaching it, the fog lifted slightly, disclosing to some sentinel wrecker the swiftly coming boat. In a moment the most absurd stampede took place. Out of the cabin and hold of the unfortunate ship the disturbed pillagers swarmed like bees, hoping to reach their own boats and escape unrecognized. So rapid were their movements, that only two or three of the least agile were captured, but those who succeeded in getting away left behind them their large axes and other ship-breaking implements, on most of which their names had been branded, and which thus furnished the means by which the owners were captured and punished. Since this adventure the wreckers have had to acknowledge that like Othello, "their occupation's gone," and they have taken every opportunity of enlisting themselves on the side of law and order.

There has been great difficulty too in inducing the natives to use the life-boats brought from England. On more than one occasion the coast-guard men have found the air-boxes broken and the linings cut by the natives, whilst they have themselves been absent on a life-saving expedition. But these obstacles lessen every day, under the firm yet kindly rule of the present Governor, who takes the liveliest personal interest in every detail of his administration.

The Waal Channel separates the Downs or Sandy Island from Heliogoland, and both islands are but thinly covered with soil, which is hardly anywhere more than four feet deep. Still there is pasture for cattle and sheep; and fair crops of barley and oats can be raised in summer. The principal revenue of the islands is derived from fish, which are sent to London via Hamburg, and from a large oyster-bed. For the last fifty years it has also been the favorite summer bathing-place of Austrians and Germans, who come over in great numbers between June and September. To enjoy Heliogoland you must be a good walker, for there are no horses on the island, and every place has to be visited on foot. There is a nice breezy walk across the highest point of the island to the north end, where a curious rock stands boldly out, almost separate from the mainland. The cliffs are full of caves and grottos, which are illuminated twice a year. A reckless expenditure of blue lights and rockets takes place on these occasions, producing, I am assured, a very enchanting and magical effect.

There is a generally received fable to the effect that Heliogoland is overrun with rabbits, which are rapidly and surely undermining the whole of Sandy Island and will eventually cause it to disappear beneath the sea. But, as a matter of fact, there is not a single rabbit on the island, nor has there been one in the memory of the present generation. The wild-fowl afford excellent sport. The guillemots breed in immense quantities among the picturesque rocks of the west coast, and in the autumn large numbers of woodcock land here on their way south in search of summer climes. In the town itself two large poles are erected at the corner of every street, and between them a net is suspended, by means of which many birds are caught during their flight. Mr. Gatke, the permanent Secretary to the Government, has a most interesting ornithological collection, consisting entirely of birds that have been shot on the islands, but embracing specimens of numerous foreign varieties. Many of those we saw must have found their way hither from Africa, from the Himalayas, and even from Australia, besides a peculiar kind of gull (Ross's gull) from the Arctic regions, of which even the British Museum does not possess a specimen. Mr. Gatke talks of publishing a book on this collection of feathered wanderers whose flight has ended here.

During the winter the rocks swarm with wild-fowl of all kinds—swans, geese and ducks, but only two of the species breed there, the razor-hawk and the guillemot. In the spring, when the rocks are literally covered with these birds, the effect must be inexpressibly droll, and the noise tremendous.

Insignificant as the place seems to most of us, Heliogoland has given a great deal of trouble in her day. Barely ten years ago she was the bugbear of insurance offices and ship-owners, and a well-known refuge for masters

desirous of getting rid of their vessels in a comfortable manner. No vessels once on the neighbouring reefs, or on the main island, was ever allowed to depart, while those wrecked in the Elbe or the neighbouring rivers were simply plundered by the Heliogoland fishermen and pilots under the plea of salvage. The remuneration for discharging or pilfering a cargo used to be settled in full assembly of the *Vorsteher* whose members, being principally pilot officers and wreckers themselves, were naturally interested in the amount of the reward received for salvage.

No debts could be recovered in the island, no legal decrees enforced, and a creditor had to wait for the death of an obstinate debtor, on the chance of his property coming before the court. The credit of the island, until lately, was at a very low ebb indeed, and, in order to increase its funds, contracts for public gambling were entered into between the *Vorsteher* and some German lessees, which had the desired effect for the moment. It is difficult to imagine that so small a place could, in the few years between 1815 and 1868, have involved itself in a public debt to the extent of £7,000. At present in spite of the abolition of the gaming tables and a great outlay on public works, this sum has been reduced to somewhere about £3,000. To the wise and prudent administration of the present Governor, this, as well as every other improvement, is due. Under his beneficent rule, Heliogoland has changed so much, that the visitor of even fifteen years ago would not recognize in the orderly, neat, thriving little settlement, the ruinous, lawless, bankrupt island of those comparatively recent days.—*Annie Brassey, in MacMillan's Magazine (Abridged.)*

NOW.

One of the ways in which we too often cheat ourselves of improvement, is by postponing our reforms to a moment not yet come. "What are you going to do this morning?" asks some one, and the answer is ready: "Oh, nothing this morning, but to-morrow morning I shall begin"—reading, or sewing, or studying, or working for the poor, as the case may be—and so the present idleness is veiled by the thought of future achievements. Or sometimes it is only for the hour that we are idle. We dream away fifty or sixty minutes, easing our consciences with the thought that we are going directly, yet lingering inexcusably all the time. Strange it is, that this oft-repeated excuse is yet so potent when we whisper to ourselves, "we are not idling, oh, no! we are only indulging in a little season of waiting before we enter on the task belonging to us. So we go on, through hours and days, through weeks and months, through years at last—and still the new life has not been lived, and still we stand dallying with this "now" as once with all those other nows which make up our yesterdays. Let us wake up to one truth. Resolutions for the future are no resolutions at all. To begin at all, in anything, we must begin now, this day, this hour, this moment, or we shall never begin. For we are what we are now—and as we live to-day so shall we live to-morrow, and the next day, if thus we suffer resolutions to blind us to our want of present effort. Once more, then, let your resolves be for the present moment, let your deeds be instant, for thus, and thus only, can you reach the good for which you strive. It is not what you are planning, but what you are doing, that reveals your true self.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

THE RULE OF HOSPITALITY.

True hospitality is a thing that touches the heart and never goes beyond the circle of generous impulses. Entertainment with the truly hospitable man means more than the mere feeding of the body; it means an interchange of soul gifts. Still it should have its laws, as all things good must have laws to govern them.

The obligation to be hospitable is a sacred one, emphasized by every moral code known to the world, and a practical outcome of the second great commandment.

There should never be a guest in the house whose presence requires any considerable change in the domestic economy.

However much the circumstances of business or mutual interests may demand in entertaining a stranger, he should never be taken into the family circle unless he is wholly worthy of a place in that *Sanctum Sanctorum* of social life; but when once a man is admitted to the home fireside, he should be treated as if the place had been his always.

The fact of an invitation gives neither host nor guest the right to be master of the other's time, and does not require even a temporary sacrifice of one's entire individuality or pursuits.

A man should never be so much himself as when he entertains a friend.

To stay at a friend's house beyond the time

for which one is invited, is to perpetrate a social robbery.

To abide uninvited in a friend's home is as much a misdemeanor as borrowing his coat without his permission. It is debasing the coin of friendship to mere dross when a man attempts to make it pay his hotel bills.

The fact of two men having the same occupation and interests in life gives to neither a social right to the other's bed and board. A travelling minister has no more right to go uninvited to a fellow-preacher's house than a travelling shop-keeper or shoemaker has to go uninvited to the house of his fellow-craftsman. Men are ordained to the ministry as preachers, teachers and pastors, and not as private hotel-keepers.

They who go into the country in summer as uninvited guests of their farmer friends should be rated as social brigands and treated accordingly.

These few social maxims are by no means to be taken as a complete code of laws. Others quite as important will spring out of the personal experience of every reader of this article, and the justice and equity of all may be tested by that infallible standard of society,—the Golden Rule. There can be no true hospitality that in practice is a violation of this rule; and you may safely rest assured that you have given the fullest and most perfect measure of entertainment to your neighbor if you have done exactly as you would be done by.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

AMBIDEXTERITY.

Mr. Charles Reade has lately written to the *Daily Telegraph*, strongly urging that children be taught to make the same use of both hands. He was taught to do so himself, and with the happiest results. As further evidence in favor of ambidexterity, a local paper remarks: "The late Mr. Ridding, who was rector of Andover and fellow of Winchester College, being himself ambidexterous, educated his four sons to be able to use their left and right hands indifferently and indiscriminately, and I believe I am within the mark in affirming that any one of them could change knife and fork at dinner, from hand to hand, without the least inconvenience. Moreover, the Ridding family justified Mr. Charles Reade's inference that ambidexterity is beneficial. They were one and all magnificent athletes though short men, and their brain power was of so very high an order, that the whole quartette of brothers were simultaneously fellows of different Oxford colleges, whilst the youngest, as all the world knows, is now head master of Winchester."

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

The initials of the following names give the name of a prophet who was also a priest; the initials, the name of the city where he dwelt.

The man who was full of the "spirit of wisdom."

The city which worshipped Baalzebub. One of the five kings of Midian who was slain in consequence of the sin of Baal peor. A country famed for its wisdom.

A man to whom David showed kindness for Jonathan's sake.

The ruler of the half tribe of Manasseh in the reign of David.

The emblem of industry. The place where Israel defeated Arad the Canaanite.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- By whom was the first burying ground bought?
- According to sacred history who was the first hunter?
- Who built the first ship?
- Who was the first Christian martyr?
- Who was the first person known to have worn a ring on his finger and a gold chain on his neck?
- Who was the first man who was named by the Lord before his birth?
- Who was the first to weep according to Scripture?
- What was the first Scriptural song?
- Who made the first confession to the Lord as recorded in the Bible?
- Who was guilty of the first theft aside from Eve?
- What was the first offering of Woman recorded in the Bible?
- Who erected the first monument to the memory of the dead?

He that trusteth in
his own heart is a fool.