THE BELL OF ST. JOHN'S.

BY RUFUS SAEGENT.

In a huge and smoky foundry close by the wharves in the town of B—, a gang of workmen were getting ready to cast the largest bell of the St John's cathedral chime. Only an hour more, and they would let the glaring, bubbling metal, flow from the huge furnace, into the mould which was buried deep into the black earth close by.

It was just at evening, and in the gathering twilight the lurid blue flames that burst from the top of the tall chimney flashed unearthly gleams upon the neighbouring windows and house-tops.

The scene within the foundry was weird and almost awful. The swarthy forms of the workmen partially lighted by the yellow glare, moved about like Tartarean shadows, and the sooty beams and ponderous chains crossing half black, half golden, under the glowing roof, recalled the engines of the Cyclops under Mount Ætna.

The town-clock struck six. It was time for supper. All the men threw down their tools, and ran and put on their outer clothing.

"Be back in half an hour sharp!" cried the forge-master. "We shall make the cast at a quarter of seven."

"All right, sir!" cried the men in response.

"I hear some of the town-folks are coming down to see the work." said one.

"Yes," said another, "and it'll be something to open their eyes. There was never such a bell cast in the whole State as this one will be."

In a moment more only one workman and the master was left in the foundry. The former was to stay and watch the "blast." He had brought a double allowance of dinner, and he would make a supper on what remained.

"Perhaps we can get the 'Inventor' to stay with you, George," said the master, laughingly, as he prepared to go.

"Yes, where is he?" returned the man in the same jesting tone.

"He's been around the works long enough to know when any thing goes wrong. Hallo, hallo, I say! Where's the Inventor? Come here! Ah there he is!" And in silent answer to the summons, a shock haired fellow, with large gray eyes and a pale, vacant face, appeared from behind a pile of castings.

He had on his back a gray shirt much soiled with dust, and he wore a pair of huge pantaloons, held up by a single suspender.

"Well, Mopus," quoth the man George, slapping him rather roughly on the shoulder, "I suppose you've got wit enough to help yell if anything's the matter?"

The young fellow looked stupidly around and nodded his head.

"Then sit here and look at that furnace, and don't take your eyes off."

The poor lad smiled and meekly did as he was ordered—just as an obedient dog would have laid down to watch his owner's coat.

A queer fellow was this "Mopus;" stupid enough in ordinary things to need a world of watching, but withal wonderfully fit to watch a furnace. He knew all the working of the foundry, by what seemed a sort of brute instinct, though really his strange sagacity in this was a remnant of a once bright mind.

If anything happened, or went on in an unusual way, he would always notice it, and say what ought to be done, though he could not tell, perhaps, *why* it ought to be done.

Two years before, he had been an intelligent promising lad. He was the son of a designer connected with the foundry company, and had always been allowed free access to the shops, and to mingle with the men and watch their work. But one day a great lifting-chain broke, with its load, and an iron fragment struck him on the head inflicting a dangerous injury. From this he partially recovered, and only partially, for his reason was impaired. But his natural love for machinery and mechanical experiments remained; and as he regained his bodily strength he spent most of his time making small wheels and shafts, and putting together odd contrivances, which he would exhibit with immense pride and satisfaction.

This peculiar trait in the young fellow gained for him the humorous title of the "Inventor." All the men felt a great kindness for him, even though their manner towards him was occasionally harsh and impatient.

Such was the person left to help watch the great blast for the cast of the king bell for the chime of St. John's. Faithfully he kept his place before the furnace, while the man George sat down at a little distance and began to eat his supper. Doubtless the latter intended to keep a general oversight, but he certainly made the Inventor's eyes do most of the looking. Whether he felt a kind of reckless trust in the instinct of his half-witted companion, or indolently concluded that nothing wrong should happen, he was sadly to blame for charging himself so little with the important duty before him.

Not a word was said by either watcher, and only the deep roar of the furnace-fire was heard through the vast foundry.

George finished his supper, and sauntered into one of the tool-shops to find his pipe. "Inventor" sat all alone before the great blast. The one rational faculty of his feeble mind enabled him to comprehend what it meant, and even something of the magnitude of the enterprise that was ripening inside those burning walls. He knew that the furnace was full of valuable metal, and that close beside him, buried out of sight in the deep sand, was the huge mould so soon to be filled with the precious cast. He knew and could see that all the channels for the flow of fiery liquid were ready, and that near the mouth of the furnace stood the long iron rod that was to be used when the moment came, to "let on" the molten stream.

All this his limited thoughts took in by habit. Dimly conscious that something great was soon to be done, he sat with his eyes on the furnace, absorbed and intent.

Suddenly something startled him. There was a slight noise, and a burning red crack and a scorching brick fell out and rolled to the ground at his feet!

The lad opened his mouth to shriek, but so terrified was he that the sounds stuck in his throat, as if he had been in a fit of nightmare.

A thin red stream followed the fallen brick and trickled down the furnace side like running lava. Then came another alarming noise, and a thin gap half-way down the masonry let out more of the hissing metal.

Where was George? Was the unfaithful fellow still hunting for his pipe? The furnace was bursting, with only a poor half idiot lad to guard it!

What could *he* do? He did what perhaps a lad in his right mind would not have dared to do. Rushing to the mouth of the furnace, he seized the long iron rod that stood near, and tapped the vent. One desparate thrust with the sharp point up the terrible funnel—a few quick, prying strokes! away, and the yellow-white flood spurted out with resistless force. It leaped into the clay-lined trough, and hissed its way flaming, down to the mouth of the bell-mould,

The "fool" had done a deed worthy of a general on the field of battle.

Was it too late? Every moment new fissures opened in the doomed furnace. Some of the upper stones toppled over. Still the metal poured out into the mould. But the waste was great from those graping flaws. The pressure was relieved by the opened vent, but the leaks multiplied continually. It was Art running a race with Ruin.

Poor "Mopus" stood powerless before the coming catastrophe. His knees knocked together and his head swam.

A great heap of red-hot bricks and rubbish fell at his feet. He had barely thought to get out of the way and save his life. He heard a wild shout of human voices in the distance, then an awful roar behind him, and he saw and *felt* himself burned by surges of seething fire. Sharp, blistering pains pierced his flesh at a hundred points. The rest was all a horrible, unintelligible dream. It was as if he had suddenly sunk into the earth and been swallowed up forever.

By seven o'clock comparative quiet reigned again on the scene of disaster. Ruins lay everywhere. The engines had quenched the flames that had caught the building, and the men, blackened with smoke, stood in silent groups about the remains of the furnace. It had fallen to pieces, and nothing was left but heaps of steaming rubbish.

Poor "Inventor," who had been found with the tapping-rod in his hand, lying on his face in the sand, frightfully burned, had been carried to his home.

Little was said, but the few words spoken uttered with no mild emphasis the natural wrath of the master and the hands against the man George, whose excuses for himself only aggravated his offence.

"See what he's done," say they, a few days later, as they stood in the half-burned foundry." Five thousand dollars gone to waste in a minute! The best job in twenty years spoiled! The rascal, to go hunting for his pipe, and leave that stuttering idiot to watch! Is that all he can say for himself? Out upon such carelessness! Why, the boy didn't even know enough to bawl out, when he must have seen the furnace tumbling to pieces!"

The master, who had more at stake than the men, of course felt the loss more keen than they. He almost wept with mingled grief and rage. Suddenly something peculiar caught his eye among the *debris*, and he cried, in a startled voice:

"Hallo! What's this? What's this?"

He snatched up a fragment of one of the troughs which had led from the furnace to the mould, There were tracee of the stream of bronze still running in it. Then the possible meaning of the rod found in the injured boy's hand flashed upon him.

"Bring me a shovel, quick!" he shouted.

A spade was put into his hands, and he began nervously to heave away the hot mass that lay piled over the bell-mould. It was a Herculean task, but he worked like a giant, and three or four of his men took hold and helped him.

Brickbats, ore, slag and ashes flew in every direction. Presently the master's spade penetrated the sand, and touched something hard. He stooped down. Then he leaped up like one half-frantic, and plying his spade with redoubled energy, tore away the remaining sand, disclosing what looked like a great metalic ring.

"Men," he cried out, lifting his flushed face, "*the bell is cast!*"

"Who did this?" asked every excited voice, as soon as the cheering died away.

"Come with me, two or three of you!" cried the master. "I think I know who did it. It's a miracle!"

They hurried away to the home of the half-witted boy. The attendant met them with her finger of her lips.

"The poor lad is in a brain fever," said she.

"Does he say anything in his delirium?" whispered the master.

"O, yes; he raves all the time about the big bell-mould. 'I hope it will fill—I hope it will fill,' he says.',

The men exchanged glances. It was indeed true. The idiot had cast the great bell of St, John's. Just then the physician came out. "Perhaps he will recover his reason by this shock and sickness," he said. "Such things have happened,"

"Do you think so? Pray heaven he may!" solemnly ejaculated the master and his men; and they turned away, deeply moved.

Two months later the great bell hung from a huge derrick in the lathe-room of the factory, and beneath it stood a heavy truck upon which it was about to be lowered. A silence fell upon the group of workmen as the pale face and feeble form of "Inventor" appeared, borne in on a small soft reclining chair. He had recovered his reason, and was fast getting back his strength. His large grey eyes instantly fastened themselves on the bell—that splendid masterpiece, whose meaning meant so much to him. They had told him the whole story of the casting, and the disaster in the foundry, but it all sounded like a wild romance to him.

"I remember nothing that happened," said he, shaking his head with a smile. "Its all new to me, all new and strange—so strange!"

"Yes," said the master, devoutly, "it was God's hand."

Every eye was turned upon the invalid. Some of the men felt almost afraid, it was so much like a resurrection to have him there amongst them, the boy they had known so long underwitted, now a young man keen and intelligent, as if changed into another being.

"I should like to strike the bell once," said he. Two men lifted him up and put a small hammer in his hand.

He struck one gentle blow.

A deep, sweet, mournful tone, solemn as the sound of distant waterfalls, rolled from the great bell and echoed through the foundry. Tears filled the eyes of the rough men as they heard it.

"Ah," said the master, "there's a hallelujah in that, and it may well begin here. Long may this bell praise God! He saved it in the ruins of the furnace by one wise thought in the ruins of a human brain. Our furnace is rebuilt, and behold, this dear boy has reason again! The bell and the boy shall glorify God together!"

"Amen!" murmured all the listeners.

Then the great bell was lowered, and as the truck rolled away with its melodious burden, the boy was lifted and carried after it, and both went out into the sunny day together, the rough men standing in the doorways, waiving their hands.

Little "Inventor" afterwards well proved his claim to the title so lightly given him in his unfortunate boyhood. His name is now read on many a bell whose matchless richness of tone his genius and skill in metals alone created.—*Youth's Companion.*

NEW DESCRIPTION OF POTATO.

Mr. Isaac Killam, of Overton, two years ago raised a small quantity of potatoes from "balls" of his previons years crop of "pogies," and saved the lot for seed; from this seed last year he raised a larger crop, nearly all of which he planted the present season, the yield being in about equal ratio. The potato is of darker color than the old-fashioned pogy, is different in appearance from any other that has of late years appeared in our market, and is of excellent quality. A peculiarity of the "tops" is that instead of there being several small leaves on the stem, each stem has but a single large leaf, measuring about 10 inches in length and 6 inches in breadth. It is a novelty in the potato line.—*Yarmouth Herald.*

BABY-LAND.

"How many miles to Baby-land?"
"Any one can tell;
Up one flight,
To your right;
Please to ring the bell."

"What can you see in Baby-land?'
"Little folks in white—
Downy heads,
Cradle beds,
Faces pure and bright!"

"What do they do in Baby-land?"
"Dream and wake and play;
Laugh and crow,
Shout and grow;
Jolly times have they!"

"What do they say in Baby-land?"
"Why, the oddest things;
Might as well
Try to tell
What a birdie sings!"

"Who is the Queen of Baby-land;
"Mother kind and sweet;
And her love,
Born above,
Guides the little feet."

HOW THE ENGINEER "LET HER OUT A LITTLE" AS HE PRAYED.

Not long ago an engineer brought his train to a stand at a little Massachusetts village where the passengers had five minutes for lunch. A lady came along the platform and said, "The conductor tells me the train at the junction in P——— leaves fifteen minutes before our arrival. It is Saturday night, that is the last train. I have a very sick child in the car, and no money for a hotel, and none for a private conveyance for the long, long journey into the country. What shall I do?"

"Well." said the engineer, "I wish I could tell you."

"Would it be possible for you to hurry a little, said the anxious, tearful mother.

"No, madam, I have the time table, and the rules say I must run by it."

She turned sorrowfully away, leaving the bronzed face of the engineer wet with tears. Presently she returned and said, "Are you a Christian?"

"I trust I am," was the reply."

"Will you pray with me that the Lord may in some way delay the train at the junction?"

"Why, yes, I will pray with you, but I have not much faith."

Just then the conductor cried, "All aboard." The poor woman hurried back to her deformed and sick child, and away went the train climbing the grade.

"Somehow," said the engineer, "everything worked to a charm. As I prayed, I couldn't help letting my engine out just a little. We hardly stopped at the first station, people got on and off with wonderful alacrity, the conductor's lantern in the air in a half a minute, and then away again. Once over the summit, it was dreadful easy to give her a little more, and then a little more, as I prayed, till she seemed to shoot through the air like an arrow. Somehow I couldn't hold her, knowing I had the road, and so we dashed up to the junction six minutes ahead of time."

There stood the other train, and the conductor with his lantern on his arm. "Well," said he, "will you tell me what I am waiting here for. Somehow I felt I must await your coming to night, but I don't know why." "I guess," said the brother conductor, "it is for this woman, with her sick and deformed child, dreadfully anxious to get home this Saturday night." But the man on the engine and the grateful mother think they can tell why the train waited.—*Watchman.*

THE BEETLE IN BREMEN.

While the eyes of Christendom have been turned toward the east, watching the progress of Turkey's war with its feudatories, and speculating on the final settlement of the Eastern question, an event of an apparently trivial character has occurred which some day may seriously affect the condition of many millions of the people of Europe. The Colorado Beetle, alias the potato bug, has crossed the ocean and made good its landing on German soil. Dreading such an occurrence several European Governments have prohibited potato importations from the United States But the bug entered snugly stowed away in a bag of maize. In what numbers the voracious insect disembarked on the shore of the Fatherland is not known. But the probability seems to be that enough landed to stock all Europe, the British Isles included, in a few years. Were it not that this pest of the potato fields can, with some pains and energy, be successfully confronted, the passage of the bug from the new world to the old might be regarded as a serious calamity to a large portion of the human family. But even as it is that passage will likely prove the beginning of a new trouble for European potato cultivators.—*St. John News.*

DOOMED HELL GATE.

A GRAND EXPLOSION SET DOWN FOR NEXT MONTH.

The end of Hell Gate, the great bugbear of navigation around the port of New York, is probably very near. The excavations were completed some months ago, and now all remaining arrangements having been made the grand "blow up" will take place some time next month, the exact day having yet to be definitely fixed. The inhabitants of this city not unnaturally feel some little excitement on the subject, and perhaps a few of them some apprehension, though that is entirely unnecessary. It is certainly no small thing to have an earthquake announced for a certain day with as much exactness as a comet or an eclipse is predicted. It is not expected that the explosion will afford much of an exhibition to mere gazers, although its effects will be watched with intense interest by a large numbers of scientific men, as nothing like this experiment has ever been tried before. The engineers do not anticipate seeing a huge column of water thrown up in the air, but think that the escape of some of the charge through seams in the rocks may produce some small *jets d'eau*. There will not even be a rush of water to fill up the excavation, as the whole mine is to be flooded before the charges are exploded. Neither is it expected that the air will be rent for miles by the concussion, as nearly all the force will be exerted beneath the ground. It is considered as certain, however, that the earth will be shaken for some distance, and that the vibrations will be carried much further through the earth than the atmospheric waves will travel above the land. A number of scientific men have even made arrangements to station themselves a distance of 200 or 300 miles away for the purpose of trying to measure the velocity of the sound waves through the earth. No one but Gen. Newton, the Engineer, and the engineers assisting him, know the amount of powder and dynamite which which is to be ignited to blow up the mine. The probable force of the explosion may be calculated, however, when it is known that there are about 4000 drill holes three inches in diameter and varying from seven to thirteen feet in depth, each and every one of which is to be charged with a separate canister of dynamite, vulcan and rendrock powder, all to be fired at the same instant by an electric current from a battery of 800 cells. There are 172 natural piers of rock, and these support the shell over head, which varies from six to sixteen feet in thickness. Piers and roof have all been drilled full of holes, and soon the tunnels will be closed to the public and the work of inserting the charges will begin. For every pound of dynamite two pounds of powder will be used. The explosion will leave 30,000 cubic yards of broken rock under the water, all of which will have to be dredged out in order to secure the depth of 26 feet for the channel at this place. The total amount of appropriations to date is $1,940,000, and the estimated cost of completing the entire work of improving Hell Gate and East River is $5,189,120.

A PREVENTION OF SEA-SICKNESS.—A letter recently printed in an English scientific paper gives the following in relation to a method for the prevention of sea-sickness:

"Many years ago I had frequently to cross the Irish Channel, and was invariably sick, if there was the least motion in the water. Once when it was very rough, and the wind blowing a hurricane, in some unaccountable way I hit luckily on an expedient, which, for me at least, is an effectual preventive, and should like it to be tried by others. For what reason I cannot say, but I made my respiration coincide punctually with the heave and fall of the vessel; as she rose I inspired slowly and regularly, and as she fell I expired, and the effect was so completly successful that I several times fell asleep. But each time (I suppose because the breathing was no longer synchronous with the vessel's movements) I was awakened by sensations of sickness, which two inspirations and expirations, as above described, immediately dispelled, and I completed a very rough voyage with comparative comfort. I have sailed since, though not on a very rough sea, and have been able to walk the deck and enjoy the voyage. My inference is that sea-sickness is caused by the heavings and falls of the vessel crossing the motions and operations of the diaphragm, which unseasonably presses on the upper stomach and liver and so disorders their functions."