

They was rigged up with a clockwork spring, an' when Peter Guppy touched a button they went right to work an' chewed. Just like I'm openin' an' shuttin' my hand here—champ, champ, champ! That's the way they worked when Peter Guppy held 'em in his hand. He figgered they'd save a lot of labor, an' lots of time, too, because all a feller had to do was push his food into his mouth, an' them teeth would do the chewin'. Peter Guppy was mighty proud."

"I'd be proud," said Daniel. "I wasn't," said S. Potts. "I waited. Peter Guppy went around town tellin' how he was the greatest benefactor America ever had, an' that all this nation had needed was him to invent them teeth, an' now it would be the happiest on earth. He said everybody knew that what was the matter with America was indigestion an' dyspepsia, caused by lack of not chewin' their food enough, caused by the lack of time for eatin'. Now, he said, folks wouldn't have to chew long, they could chew quick. They could set their teeth at high speed, an' the teeth would chew sixty bites a second, or if they wanted to git some satisfaction chewin' tobacco or gum they could set the teeth at

teeth," said S. Potts. "They had to have room in 'em for the spring, an' that made 'em step mos' too high when he had 'em in his mouth. Peter had only about a two-inch-high mouth, an' them teeth was three-inch steppers. They sort o' strained his mouth. There ain't nothin' much worse in false teeth than to have 'em tread too high, specially when they tread by machinery. It used to tire Peter all out, openin' an' shuttin' his mouth that way, sixty times to the second, an' them teeth used to knock so hard on the roof of his mouth that he had to sit at meals with one hand on the tope of his head to hold hisself down, an' even then he bounced so hard on the chair that he jarred the house some. The whole neighborhood could tell when Peter was havin' a little nourishment. He made a noise like a motor-boat. Them that seen him said it was sort o' funny to see him, settin' back with his mouth wide open an' them teeth jiggin' away inside of it. Often he used to joggle clean off onto the floor, an' if he didn't grab the table-leg with his free hand he would joggle all 'round the room. I wouldn't have had the things at no price."

"Neither would I," said Daniel. "Yes, you would," said S. Potts.

finger. They bit him three times before he could git his finger out, an' he was so mad he grabbed 'em an' threw 'em across the room, an' they lit on the sofa an' chewed a sofa-pillow till daybreak. When Peter got up in the morning there wasn't nothin' left of the sofa-pillow but fine leather dust, an' the teeth had chewed on through the sofa, an' fell to the floor an' chewed the hind leg of the sofa clean off. Peter's wife was so mad she never smiled again until she got his insurance money. Peter died from them teeth."

"I s'pose," said Daniel, thoughtfully, "I s'pose that when them teeth bit Peter they give him hydrophoby."

S. Potts looked at him sorrowfully. "Ef that ain't just like you, Daniel!" he said. "There ain't no logic in you. Of course if this was a pack an' parcel o' lies I was tellin' you, it might be that I'd go on an' say that Peter Guppy got the hydrophoby from that bite, but nothin' of that kind happened. Naturally. Because them was Peter's own teeth what bit him. If Peter had had hydrophoby when them teeth bit him then they would have give it to him, like as not, but he didn't have. The trouble was that he swallered them teeth. I don't suppose you know any-

way, if Peter Guppy had wanted to have a pair he could have rigged up another, but on the way down the push-button bumped against his esophagus, an' it set them teeth goin'. Never shall I forgit that scene, Daniel, an' I hope it will be a lesson to you."

"I hope so, S. Potts," said Daniel.

"I hope so, but I doubt it," said S. Potts. "I heard poor Peter yell, an' I run, an' so aid everybody, an' there was poor Peter layin' on the ground, writhin' in agony, an' nobody knowed what was the matter. Some thought he was havin' a fit, an' some thought maybe he was inventin' some new invention. Then all of a sudden we seen a little lump rise on his left knee, an' out come them teeth. Whilst we was all dumfounded, they sort of looked around an' give a champ or two, an' jumped right at Peter's other leg, an' disappeared, sixty champs to the second. There wasn't much we could do. Some said one thing an' some said another, but any of them wouldn't have done no good; if so I would have done it. You know that, Daniel. When the sun went down there wasn't nothin' left of Peter Guppy but one shoe, an' them Auxiliary Motor Teeth had begun on that, sixty bites to a second. But I stopped that right then."

"I bet you did, S. Potts," said Daniel enthusiastically. "I bet you did."

"I did," said S. Potts. "Here, I says, 'them teeth has had fun enough, an' it's time they stopped. We'd best stop 'em whilst there's enough of Peter Guppy left to have a funeral with.' That's what I said, but I had to get an axe before I could kill them teeth, an' then they nearly sprang on me an' bit me. But I was just a little too quick for 'em."

"There ain't no false teeth goin' to git the best of you, S. Potts," said Daniel admiringly. "But it does seem sort of too bad that they had to be killed off. They might have—"

"There you go!" said S. Potts. "If that ain't just like you! Why, them teeth was murderers! That's what they was—murderers!"

Daniel shook his head regretfully. "I'd liked to have seen 'em, S. Potts," he said. "If you hadn't killed 'em that way maybe I might have seen 'em, an' if I had seen 'em I might have knowed how to invent 'em a little better. Of course they was murderers, but you might have sort of arrested 'em—put 'em in the penitentiary. Them teeth oughtn't to have been killed that way with an axe, S. Potts; even if you did do it. They ought to have been arrested an' tried. They ought to have had a fair trial."

"Well, it ain't much use tellin' you things, Daniel," said S. Potts with disgust. "Seems to me like Peter Guppy give them teeth all the trial they deserved. I bet you don't even see the moral what this tale has got in it for you. Do you now?"

Old Daniel wrinkled his brow and thought deeply. Suddenly he smiled. "Sure I do!" he said. "Sure I do, S. Potts! When a feller invents Auxiliary Motor Teeth he don't want to use 'em; he wants to sell 'em to other folks."

"Great howling Christmas candles!" said S. Potts, and he got up and went back to his saloon.

SHE HAD A BETTER PLAN

IT WAS the dreamy hour after the Christmas dinner, and the girls were talking in the hushed tones appropriate to the occasion.

"I've just heard of a new charm to tell whether any one loves you, and, if so, who it is," whispered Elsie.

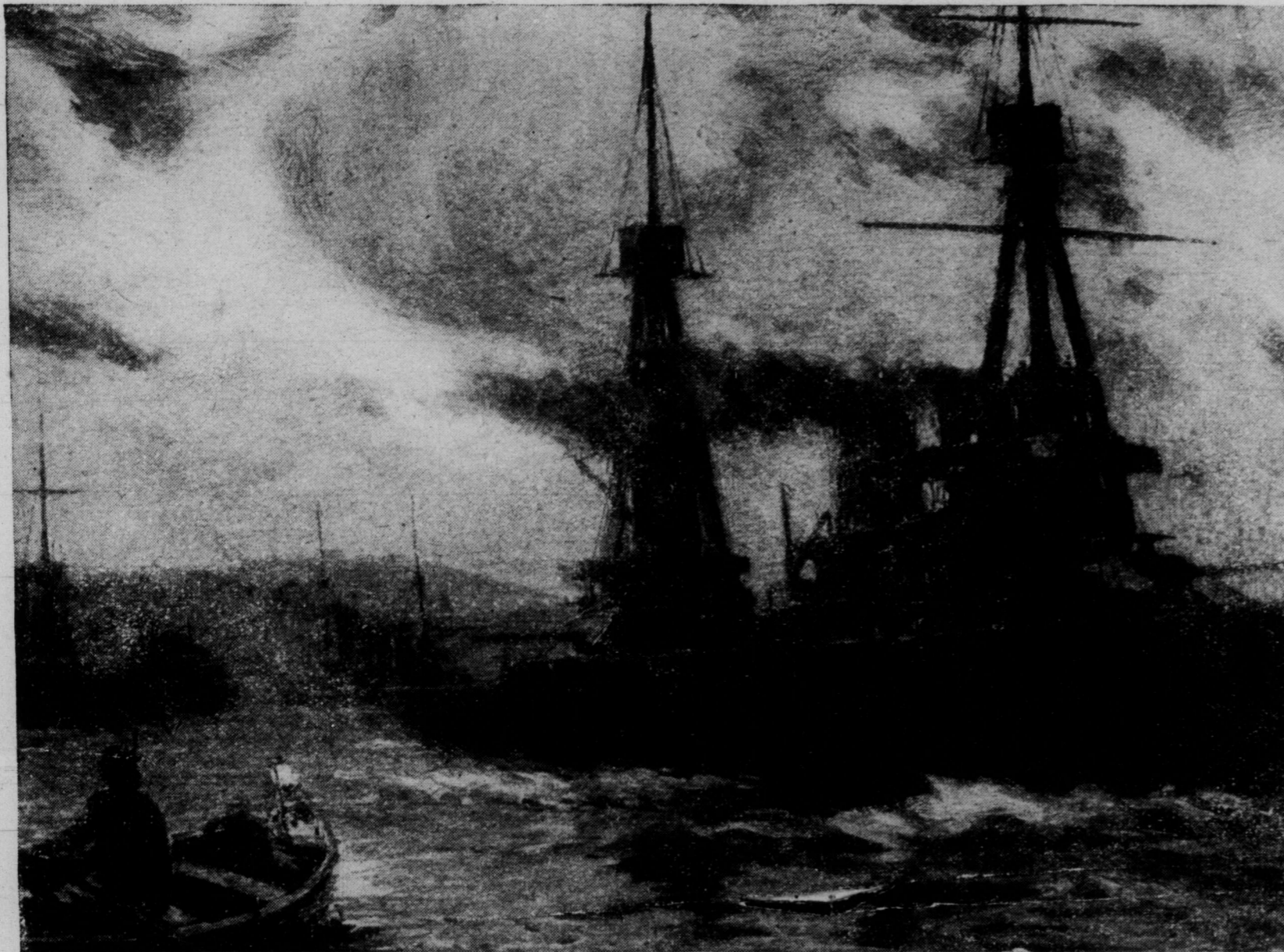
"What is it?" queried Sophie, absently fingering her new diamond ring.

"Well, you take four or five chestnuts, name each of them after some man you know, and then put them on the stove, and the first one that pops is the one that loves you."

"H'm," said Sophie. "I know a better way than that."

"Do you?"

"Yes, indeed. By my plan you take one particular man, place him on the sofa in the parlor, sit close to him with the light a little low, and look into his eyes. And then if he doesn't pop you'll know it's time to change the man on the sofa."



H.M.S. "Indomitable" at Quebec

low speed an' chew long an' steady. All lazy people would have to do would be to set with their mouths open an' let the Guppy Auxiliary Motor Teeth go ahead an' chew. Peter Guppy used to stand down at the post office corner an' place them teeth on the sidewalk an' set 'em, goin'. an' the whole crowd would stand off and admire 'em whilst they champed away, sixty bites to the second, as regular as clockwork."

"What'd he put 'em on the sidewalk for, S. Potts?" asked Daniel.

"They were safest there," said S. Potts. "Peter Guppy had let 'em champ so much in his hand that the muscles of his hand was all tired out, an' he was afraid they might champ out of his hand an' fall an' git broken; but on the sidewalk they just champed around in a circle, goin' kind o' hippety-hop. They traveled backward like a crab, but the action was more like a clamshell, only quicker. You don't often see a clamshell open an' shut sixty opens an' sixty shuts to the second, Daniel."

"I don't recall none," said Daniel. "Why didn't he use them teeth in the regular way?"

"There was one bad thing about them

"You would if I hadn't been there to stop you. You would have gone an' bought a pair, like as not. 'Twould have been just like you to sleep with the blame things in your mouth, like Peter did. That's what spoiled Peter's looks. He'd been a fair looker before that, but one night he went to bed with them teeth in his mouth, an' they got touched off accidental whilst he was asleep, an' they champed all night, an' the next morning Peter had the top of his mouth all blistered, except where them teeth had worn callouses, an' his lower jaw was pushed down so far out of plumb that it was permanently lowered, an' all the rest of his life he had to go 'round lookin' like a big-mouthed bass out of water. He couldn't git his mouth shut by an inch. No, sir! You bet he never wore them teeth to bed again!"

"Took 'em out nights, I reckon," said Daniel.

"He took 'em out," said S. Potts, "but he didn't do like he ought to have done an' put 'em outside the house. He laid 'em on the stand by his bed, an' woke dreamin' they was stole, an' when he put out his hand to see if they was there they bit him on the

thing about physiology, Daniel?"

"Well, S. Potts," said Daniel apologetically, "I ain't looked into it much. You ain't never told me much about—what did you say that word was, S. Potts?"

"Physiology," said S. Potts. "But if you don't know nothin' about it, it ain't much use tellin' you about what happened to Peter Guppy, 'cause you wouldn't understand it. I don't reckon you know what an esophagus is, even?"

"Now, S. Potts," began Daniel pleadingly, "you know I never had any esoph—"

"Daniel," said S. Potts, "an esophagus is a sort of knob on the inside of your throat, that's what it is. It's put there to help you swallow. But the whole inside of Peter Guppy's throat was spread wide by the constant champin' of them teeth, an' where the back end of them rubbed, his esophagus was worn down to a nubbin. So that's how it happened that whilst Peter Guppy was goin' down-town one day he swallered his teeth. He threw back his head to sneeze, an' whilst his mouth was open them teeth slipped on down his throat. That wouldn't have been much loss. Them teeth was a failure, an' any-