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## SOME NOTABLE DISASTERS.

(H. F. SHORTIS.)

From my personal knowledge, nothing one can write about interests the great bulk of our people more than a description of an ocean race between two or more vessels in our mercantile marine, a wreck and heroic rescue by our people after a storm, a collision with an iceberg, or some other accident in which a disaster was prevented by some of our people rescuing the unfortunate mariners from a watery grave. In the outposts especially such occasions are numerous, but, unfortunately, our people do not think it worth while to give particulars in detail of such events. In fact so accustomed are they to saving the lives of their fellowmen, both in Newfoundland, on the Labrador during the summer months, that they look upon such a matter as saving life as an event not to be published—that it is all in the day's work. From my very early days I have listened to the old people relate stories of the bravery and heroism displayed by our people both on the Labrador and the sealishery during the storms that have occurred at various periods in our history.

I could relate scores of instances in which our sea-faring men have performed deeds of heroism that, if such were performed by the people of any other country, would supply the great writers of song and story sufficient material to hand down to posterity a description of their bravery and heroism that would be perused and wondered at by the people of all lands. But our people do not take the trouble to make known such events and happenings, though it must be said they have not been entirely to blame, as up to a comparatively recent period, we had no channel through which they could make known their acts of heroism, daring and heroism, until the appearance of the daily newspapers amongst us. But to my mind, the most notable and historic events in our history occurred previous to the starting of the daily newspapers and our various magazines.

It is true that our people have always been noted for their retentive memory and descriptive powers, but all those historical facts and traditions have been kept within their immediate neighborhood, and seldom

place. All hands except the captain and two men passed away from exposure, and their sufferings can be better imagined than described. One of the survivors was a Frenchman, the other a Swede, and the Captain was an Englishman. The captain was well covered in the stern of the boat—his Frenchman had on a fine strong pair of boots, and the Swede cut up his blanket and wrapped it around his feet. They were all buried in the Methodist Churchyard. Their legs were amputated by old Dr. Skilton. The captain and the two survivors came on to St. John's, and were sent home to their own country by the first opportunity.

About seventy years ago, another shipwreck occurred in the same neighborhood, and a boat arrived at Elliston with the captain and crew of the ship. This disaster occurred about 50 miles off the Newfoundland coast. The mate of the wrecked vessel had his wife on board, and upon arrival were well looked after by the good people of the above village—were sent to St. John's and thence to their own country.

Bird Island Cove, or Elliston, as it is now named, has been noted for the daring and hardihood of the inhabitants. On many occasions they have risked their own lives to save the lives of shipwrecked mariners. Many of their heroic efforts have gone unnoticed, and certainly unrewarded, but I understand that some of the inhabitants of later years have been the recipients of medals, and also been recognized by the Royal Humane Society. They are noted for their heroism, hardihood, and agility; and it is to be regretted that some persons, duly qualified, does ascertain and publish the many heroic incidents in which they took such a prominent part in saving life, and assisting shipwrecked mariners who have lost their vessels in that neighborhood.

As far as I can learn, the first settlers of Bird Island Cove (Elliston) were George Coles, Cornelius Burt, Joseph Martin, Samuel Trask, Mark Chard, and on the South Side Thomas Cole, Sr., Robert Crew, John Goff, George Crew, Sr., John and James Hobbs, James Porter—all Englishmen. James Porter was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and it seems to me some little trouble in the Old Country. The law in England was very strict on the catching or shooting of hares, and one day James "drove a coach and four" through the law by having one of the hares in his "snare." He managed to get clear of the hare all right, but his father was very vexed with him for breaking the law, gave chase to him, and in trying to overtake him, went head foremost into a bog. The son, being frightened at the certainty of future punishment left Old England in one of Slade's vessels, arrived at Catalina, and settled at Bird Island Cove. In former years Bird Island Cove was noted for the large flocks of sea-birds that visited the locality, (which are black in summer and black and white in winter, with yellow legs) and it was owing to the visits of such great numbers of birds that the village received its name, and a very nice and common sense name it was until altered by the Nomenclature Society.

One year a man named James picked up a seal with two distinct heads and necks, to the fore-shoulder—one head, two fore-flippers, and four hind flippers.

One of the most afflictive narratives I have ever heard or read of, I came across in a record a short time ago, and it will be perused with the deepest feelings of commiseration by the readers of the Telegram. I may here state that the Mr. Coles referred to below was a well-known and prominent business man and politician in the early and middle part of the last century. The following is a copy of the record:—

BRIGGS, Nov. 21st, 1828.  
The "James" belonging to Mr. Coles arrived at Cupids yesterday from Portugal. The master says, that a

few days ago, in the latitude of 30 deg., he fell in with a brig water-logged, having a living woman lashed to the main-top, four living seamen in the rigging, and (Oh! dreadful to relate) a dead man spread in the shrouds on whom the unfortunate and unhappy survivors were subsisting! The master says, that he made every exertion to save them, but, alas! without avail, and that a very heavy gale, which lasted 48 hours, caused him to leave them to the mercy of the foaming ocean, into the bowels of which he had no doubt, they were consigned soon after its commencement. The master described "Indi"—on some part of her. He came close to her several times, and requested the poor fellows to throw themselves overboard, that he might be enabled to pick them up, but he could hear them say that they were too weak; and when they saw the impossibility of saving them, their lamentations were dreadful.

I may here mention that one of the most fatal and otherwise deplorable accidents which it has ever been the misfortune of the people of Terra-Nova to experience occurred on June 28th, 1883. Whilst Mr. Henry Curtis, with a crew of six men—two of them brothers, and two others first cousins—were hauling fish, to-day, near Cape Pine, and whilst in the act of gathering in a seine full of fish (the water being perfectly smooth at the time and no sign of a breaker anywhere) the sea, without a moment's warning, broke upon the ship, killing and drowning all hands except Mr. Henry Curtis. By a miracle he was saved, after being dashed about in the sea and among the rocks for hours, keeping himself afloat all the time by the aid of two ears he managed to grasp when the accident happened, until thrown up on an island rock. Here he remained for hours, the sea continually breaking over him. Finally, however, he was rescued by means of a finger and line thrown to him. The line was attached to a stronger one, and was drawn through the water for several hundred yards by two boats' crews. The following is the list of the lost:—Joseph Curtis and James Curtis, brothers of Henry John Curtis, and sons of John Curtis, one of the oldest inhabitants of the place and dealer of Messrs. G. F. Bennett & Co., St. John's for many years; Henry P. Curtis and Joseph Hewitt, Jr., first cousins; Michael Molloy, brother-in-law of Joseph Curtis, and Patrick Maddigan, of St. John's.

### Just Folks.

By JUDGAR A. GURNEY.

#### AUTUMN.

When autumn comes  
At last to me,  
May I be robed  
As in the trees;  
May I stand out  
In splendor dressed,  
Not gaunt and pale  
But at my best.

When autumn comes  
And age is near,  
When I have almost  
Run my year,  
May something fine  
Which men can see  
Proclaim what I  
Have tried to be.

May all my  
Failures be forgot,  
And all my faults  
Remembered not;  
May friends or foe,  
If such there be,  
Find something fit  
For praise in me.

When autumn comes  
And strength is spent,  
I shall be happy  
And content,  
If in my passing  
Men shall see  
The grace and charm  
Which mark a tree.

### Where Marriage by Capture Still Rules

Among the most interesting but least known of the natives of Africa are the Lango, a tribe which flourishes in the Uganda district.

Unlike many of their neighbours, the Lango do not practise any direct form of witchcraft; any who are foolish enough to indulge in the black arts are nearly clubbed to death. The tribe has a large number of superstitions, however, one of the most important ones being the driving away of disease, which takes place in June.

The first part of this ceremony is the dislodging of disease from his hiding-place by the beating of hides and the waving of torches in every house. When the evil has been driven out into the street "the whole village escorts it, raising the cry of victory, and beating the hides, until it is driven into a river or swamp, from which it cannot return," writes Mr. J. H. Driberg in his interesting book, "The Lango."

There are many customs, too, governing the conduct of women. In one clan, for instance, they are forbidden the flesh and skin of leopards, while the fig tree must not be touched by them. "No woman may possess property," continues the author, "except her ornaments and tail," the latter being a decoration attached to the girle.

Another custom which survives in this tribe is that of marriage by capture, but, as a matter of fact, the "cap-

ture" is always arranged beforehand.

The friends of the bridegroom repair to the lady's house and courteously invite her to accompany them. This, by custom bound, she refuses to do, and insults them soundly, "until they finally seize her, struggling, biting, kicking, and screaming," which continues until they thrust her into her lover's house. This in no way indicates reluctance on the girl's part.

The Lango have an elaborate style of hair-dressing which consists in the main of the threading of beads on to the hair in such a manner that the head appears to be covered with a white skull-cap. The fee received by the hair-dresser for carrying out this

operation consists of one pot of beer and one chicken.

### The Burrowing Fowl

The burrowing owl is a small owl which burrows in the ground in many parts of North and South America. It is about ten inches long, greyish-brown, profusely spotted with white, with the head smooth without plumage. This is the owl, well known on the western prairies in connection with the prairie dogs; in the deserted burrows of which it makes its nest. These animals are diurnal, and feed upon insects and small mammals and reptiles.

### Photographing the Brain

The photographer of the future will not tell you to "look pleasant." He will exclaim "look clever!"

For the latest development of photography is the brain-photo.

We are used, by now, to seeing pictures of most of our anatomy, thanks to X-Rays, and can obtain pictures of the unseen damage going on inside our teeth; the grotesque bones behind the superficial beauty of our hands, or the needle that has penetrated into our foot. But the brain "snap" in its latest form, is something fresh.

The picture is not taken, as in the case of X-Rays, through the head. An

opening is actually made in the skull, and a photographic cystoscope is inserted. Two tiny lights are affixed to the end of this, and a child of ten months who recently had its brain photographed in this way suffered no ill effects.

Several pictures of the child's brain were taken, and they were all in the interests of the child's future brain-development.

All the same, it will be some while before we shall drop into the photographer's and sit for brain-portraits. Most of us are quite content to keep our secrets hidden.

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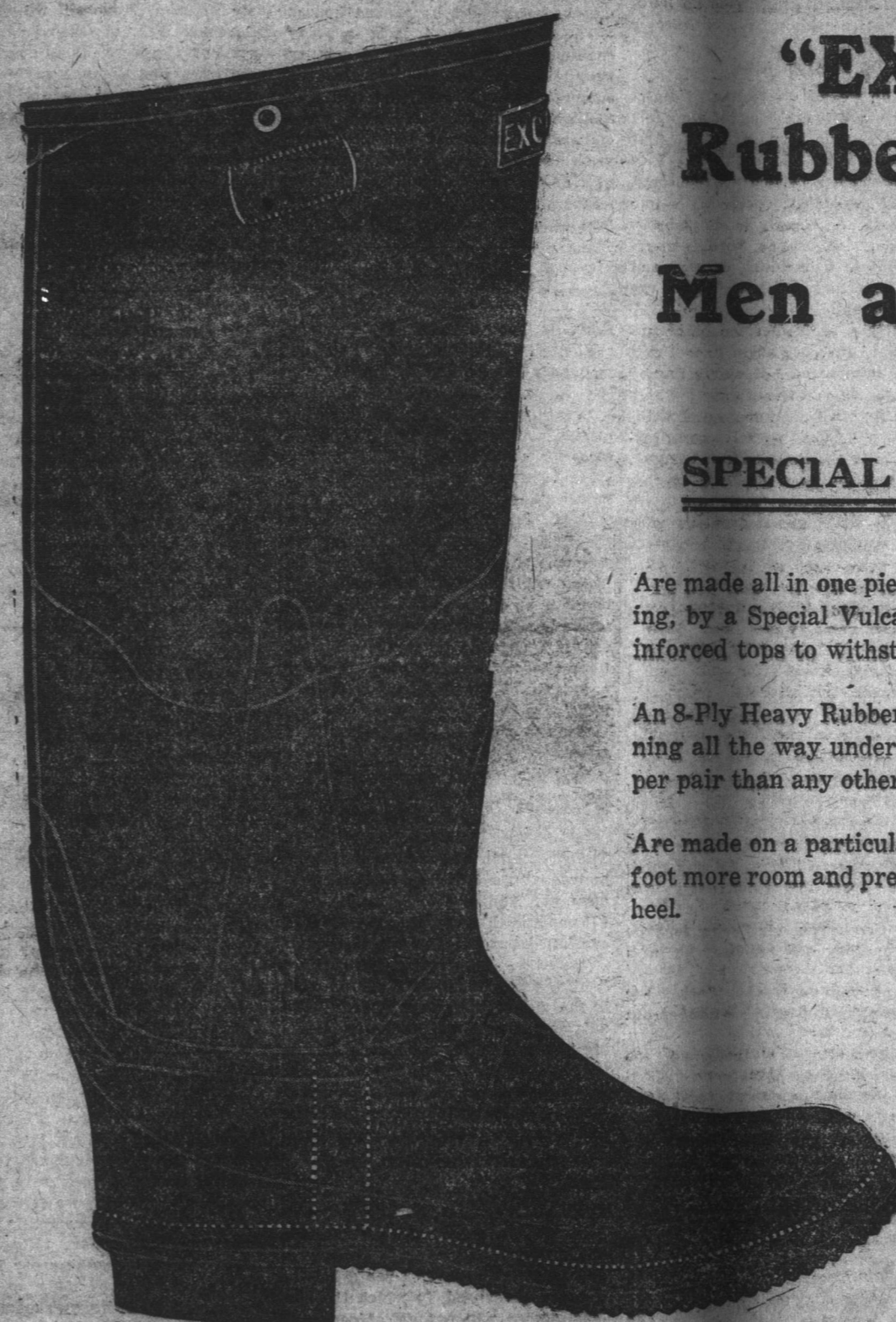
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