

Swallowed by a Sperm Whale

Sir Francis Fox, in his work, "Sixty-three years of Engineering, Scientific and Social work," just published in London, recalls the circumstances under which a sailor was swallowed by a sperm whale off the Falkland Islands.

About ten years ago a friend of the author, the late Rev. D. MacCalman, while travelling on a passenger steamer to the far north of Great Britain, was questioned by an elderly man as to his belief in the Bible story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale. The minister replied that he did believe it, upon which his interrogator declared it was "a mere fairy tale, for a whale feeds on animalcules."

The vessel put into port for 38 hours and as there was a whaling station in the vicinity the couple visited it and questioned the manager, who said the sperm whale's throat was such that it could take lumps of food 8 ft. in diameter, and in the stomach of one they found the skeleton of a shark 16 ft. in length.

Sir Francis later obtained information of a "well-accredited instance in recent times of a man being swallowed by a whale and being rescued alive after remaining hours in its stomach."

The incident, he says, was carefully investigated by two scientists, one of whom was the late M. de Parville, the scientific editor of the "Journal des Debats," of Paris. The account given is as follows:—

Taken From Whale's Stomach.

"In February, 1891, the whaling ship Star of the East was in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands, and the lookout sighted a large sperm whale three miles away. Two boats were launched and in a short time one of the harpooners was enabled to spear the fish. The second boat attacked the whale, but was upset by the lash of its tail and the men thrown into the sea, one man being drowned, and another, James Bartley, having disappeared, could not be found. The whale was killed, and in a few hours the great body was lying by the ship's side and the crew were busy with axes and spades removing the blubber. They worked all day and part of the next."

"Next morning they attached some tackle to the stomach, which was hoisted on to the deck. The sailors were startled by something in it which gave symptoms of life, and inside found the missing sailor doubled up unconscious. He was laid on deck and treated to a bath of sea water, which soon revived him, but his mind was not clear, and he was placed in the captain's quarters, where he remained two weeks a raving lunatic. He was kindly and carefully treated by the captain, and the officers of the ship, and gradually regained possession of his senses. At the end of the third week he had entirely recovered from the shock and resumed his duties.

Awful Experience.

"During his sojourn in the whale's stomach Bartley's skin, where it was exposed to the action of the gastric juices, underwent a striking change; his face, neck and hands were bleached to a deadly whiteness, and took on the appearance of parchment. Bartley affirms that he would have probably lived inside his house of flesh until he starved, for he lost his senses through fright, and not from lack of air.

He says he remembered the sensation of being thrown out of the boat into the sea and of dropping into the water. Then there was a fearful rushing sound which he believes to be the beating of the water by the whale's tail—he was then encompassed by a great darkness, and he felt he was slipping along a smooth passage of some sort that seemed to move and carry him forward. This sensation lasted but a short time, and then he realized he had more room.

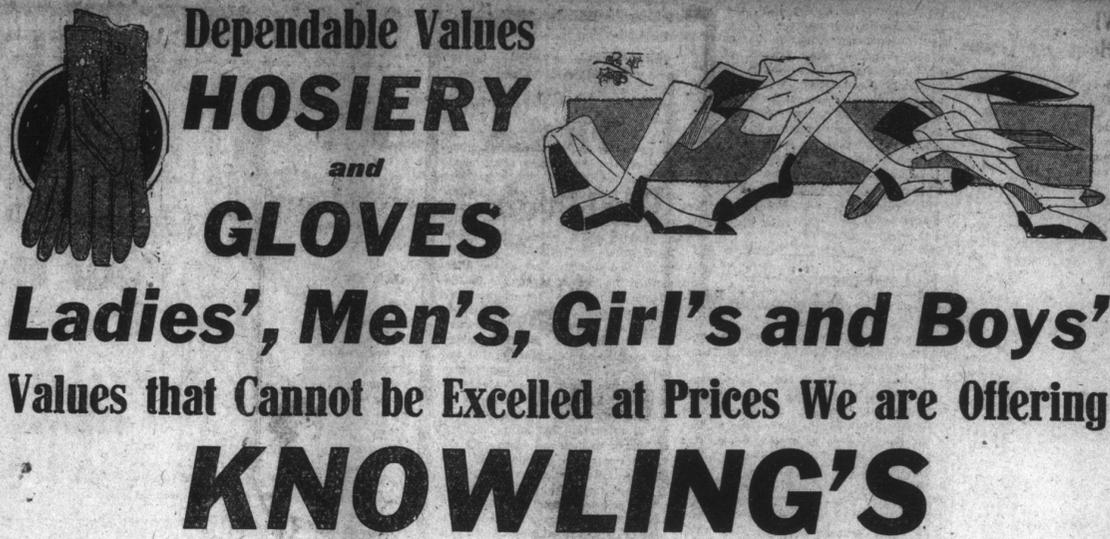
"He felt about him and his hands came in contact with a yielding slimy substance that seemed to shrink from his touch. It finally dawned upon him that he had been swallowed by the whale and he was overcome by horror at the situation.

"He could easily breathe, but the heat was terrible. It was not of a scorching stifling nature, but it seemed to open the pores of his skin and to draw out his vitality. He became very weak and grew sick at the stomach. He knew there was no hope of escape from his strange prison. Death stared him in the face. He tried to look at it bravely, but the terrible quiet, darkness and heat, combined with the horrible knowledge of his environment overcame him. The next he remembered was being in the captain's cabin.

"According to the record the skin on his face and hands never recovered its natural appearance, but the health of the man did not seem affected by his terrible experience. It is stated that on the return of the vessel to England Bartley went to a London Hospital to be treated for the injury to his skin."

Sir Francis adds: "As the story of Jonah is often a source of merriment with some persons—and a matter of difficulty to many more—it seems only right to show that the story is not necessarily absurd."

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"Red" Party Illegal Judge Declares

London, Nov. 26. (Canadian Press cable).—The imprisonment of virtually the whole executive of the Communist organization here for sedition and incitement to mutiny in the British forces as the outcome of the trial and conviction of the twelve Communists may possibly not end the Communist Party's discomfiture, since justification of further proceedings against the party may be regarded as embodied in a significant phrase used by Judge Swift in sentencing the twelve men yesterday. He said: "You are members of an illegal party, carrying on illegal work."

The conviction of the twelve Communists is the leading topic of all the newspapers. Many of the papers applaud the prosecution of the "Reds" as providing a healthy warning and none of them question the legality of the conviction of the twelve, though some of them express doubt as to the wisdom of driving the subversive activities of the Communist underground.

The Manchester Guardian, Liberal, while admitting the illegality of the acts of the Communists, who were sentenced yesterday to imprisonment and saying there are few people who do not detest their doctrines, suggests that the popular confidence of the English people in the administration of the law is not what it was 15 years ago when members of Parliament circularized a battalion of the Grenadiers in London inciting them to mutiny in the interests of the Conservative Party.

The Guardian continues: "The Field Marshal took a hand in the dirty work of seducing the soldiers from their duty."

Lord Birkenhead gleefully prophesied, as some of the sanguine Communists do now, that the army would break in the government's hands if ordered to enforce the law where the law was extremely distasteful to his own party.

"Lord Carson boasted that the army is with us."

Lord Carson was made a Judge. Lord Birkenhead was made a Lord Chancellor.

The Guardian concludes by saying that it would be childish optimism to expect that such causes would be without their effect, and suggests that the good name of British criminal justice is not altogether safe in the hands of the present Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, under whose department the movement against the Communists' activities has been begun.

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Crisis Arises in Irish Free State

London, Nov. 26.—A crisis, the gravity of which is universally realized, has arisen in the Irish Free State consequent on the resignation of John MacNeill from the Ulster Boundary Commission, and it is feared that the stability of Cosgrave's government will be imperilled as a consequence. It is also accepted both in Belfast and Dublin that the work of the commission will go by the board, although official circles are still debating whether a report signed by only two of the commissioners would be valid, the opinion generally being that it would be so.

The reasons for MacNeill's resignation have some elements of mystery.

Up to a few weeks ago it is known that the work of the commission was proceeding satisfactorily, compromise adjustments along the frontier being agreed upon and the chief difficulty being what to do with Newry. MacNeill wanted Newry to come into the Free State, but the other two members of the commission opposed this and decided to leave it with Ulster.

The Morning Post recently published what purported to be the gist of the commission's findings, in which all the key towns were given Ulster and only strips of valueless land in Armagh, Tyrone, Germanagh and Donegal had been awarded to Ulster. Members of the Daily started protesting as soon as these reports were published, and Cosgrave's position became desperate, and this was followed by MacNeill's resignation, as a matter of course.

There is not the slightest doubt that the Morning Post obtained its information from Ulster sources, though not represented thereon.

Premier Cosgrave's charges that political pressure has been brought to bear on the commissioners is warmly resented by Judge Feetham of South Africa, the chairman and Joseph Fisher, the third member of the commission, and the charges only served to add fuel to the flames.

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Government Notice

Sealed Tenders will be received at the office of the Department of Public Works until 12 o'clock noon of Thursday, the 3rd day of December 1925, for the supplying of the Sanatorium, Hospital for the Insane, Poor Asylum, Fever, General and Suburban Hospitals and Penitentiary, with the following for twelve months from the first day of January, 1926, viz:—

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Forms of tenders must be obtained from this office.

The Department will not be bound to accept the lowest or any tender.

C. E. RUSSELL,
 Minister of Public Works,
 Dept. of Public Works,
 St. John's, Newfoundland,
 Nov. 27, Dec. 1, 1925

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