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PORT ROYAL TOM.

The following graphically written story was the first contribution of the late Frank T. Bullen to appear in print. The story is a true record of a tragedy that occurred in the port of Kingston, capital of Jamaica. The story first appeared in "Young England," an English magazine, in 1888, and Mr. Bullen's recent death has led to its republication in the same magazine.

Kingston is, or was, the headquarters of the Admiral on the West Indian Station, and it owes whatever importance it possesses to this fact. It also has an ominous notoriety, as being a hot-bed of yellow fever, and the last resting-place of a vast number of our brave seamen and marines. Arriving there after a brief passage from England, and fresh from the delicious breath of the north-east trade wind, they fell easy victims to that deadly and insidious foe, grimly nicknamed by them "Yellow Jack."

At the time of which I write the guard-ship at Port Royal was the "Aboukir," a huge line-of-battle ship of the old type, that lay anchored just inside the harbor, about half a mile from the landing place. It may be as well to note here that the chief use of this guard-ship was to receive stores and fresh hands from home to relieve time-expired men thus forming a floating depot.

No one who has not spent some time on board a ship moored in a tropical port with average temperature at 95 degrees, and liberty to go ashore restricted to two hours a week, can have any idea of the deadly monotony of such a situation. When, in addition, Yellow Jack demanded four or five victims every morning, with horrible regularity, is it wonderful that the poor blue-jackets were continually running the risk of being

shot, drowned, devoured, or imprisoned, in their attempts to escape from such misery?

The usual mode of procedure for the would-be deserter to make up his shirt, trousers, and boots into a compact bundle which he secured firmly on his head. He then took the first opportunity of slipping into the water, and struck out silently for the land.

Having found that the sentinels were not always to be depended upon in the matter, and also suspecting them of occasionally aiding a deserter, the officers determined to subsidize a new sentry. It was necessary for their purpose that he should be ever at his post, unsleeping and vigilant, and proof against all allurements and bribes.

They found their ideal in "Port Royal Tom," an immense tiger-shark, about twenty-eight feet long, which was liberally fed with offal from the galley and sundry pieces of pork from the harness-cask, daily. He circled round and round the "Aboukir" with the regularity of a machine, or else lay lazily waving his dorsal fin under the shady side of the ship, and now and then glancing hungrily upwards with his cold, dead-looking eyes.

"No more desertions now!" chuckled the master-at-arms. "They'll face a most anything; but they can't tackle Tom, or dodge him either."

No, indeed; for it was only necessary to make the slightest splash in the water at any hour of the night, and immediately the depths would be all aglow with phosphorescent light. This was caused by the eager rush of the waiting monster, as roused by the faint sound, he darted from his lurking-place, and turned himself, with gaping jaws extended wide, to receive the expected prey.

Numerous were the plans laid and deeply discussed in corners of the lower deck after "lights out" for the destruction of the common enemy, but to no purpose; none dared put them into practice. At last, when all hope of being freed from the grim gaoler seemed dead, the following awful circumstances occurred.

A poor Spaniard, Jose Bautista, who with his wife, was in the habit of visiting the "Aboukir" daily with a boat-load of fruit, vegetables, and other fresh edibles, was one morning making his usual trip. Not a breath of air ruffled the glassy surface of the bay, and the sweet stillness of the

early morning breathed perfect peace. The calm influence of the beautiful scene was not without its influence upon Jose, who leisurely paddled along, crooning in an undertone an old Castilian ballad.

When within twenty yards of the guard-ship, suddenly there shot up from the blue depths a living pillar of silver, striking the boat under the tiller, and smashing her like an egg-shell. It was the dreaded Port Royal Tom, who, neglected of late, had grown ravenous with hunger, and had gone to the length of attacking the boat.

Man, woman, and cargo were shot, in one confused heap, into the water; both man and woman, accustomed to the water from infancy, would, but for one thing, have been quite at ease. This was the knowledge of the proximity of the shark; and they consequently strained every nerve to get upon the keel of the capsized and shattered boat.

The man soon succeeded in doing so, and was assisting his wife to gain a seat by his side, when the furious creature, almost balked of his prey, rose with one tremendous rush, and seizing the woman's legs in his vast jaws, tore her from her husband's grasp. The monster at once disappeared with her into the coral caverns below, leaving no trace behind but a faint tinge of blood to show what a fearful tragedy had been suddenly enacted.

Jose, thus cruelly bereft of his dear partner, lay for some time in his insecure position, starting with startling eye-balls, into the water, as if expecting to see his loved one re-appear. Suddenly starting from his lethargy, he plunged boldly into the water, and swam with hold, vigorous strokes to the ship. Reaching the ship unmolested, he ran swiftly up the ladder and along the boom inboard.

Eluding all attempts to detain and question him, he at once sought the carpenter's shop, and commenced energetically whetting his huge bowie-knife upon the grindstone. Having given it a keen edge, he further procured a small oak-stake, about eighteen inches long, pointed at both ends.

This stake and the knife were thrust into his waist-sash; and he then made his way into the ship's head where he sat steadfastly gazing into the water, and turned a deaf ear to all his interrogators. Several hours had elapsed, and he had never stirred, when a loud splash was heard. This attracted all hands to the fore-castle, where they became witnesses of a most memorable conflict.

The monster, gorged with his awful meal, had leisurely returned to his accustomed station. As he slowly glided round the vessel's bows, the watchful avenger spied him, and regardless of the terrible odds against him had plunged to meet his mighty foe.

Down, down, he dived, and, rising swiftly beneath the astonished shark, plunged his knife deep into its bowels. Sudden as an eagle in its mid-air swoop the maddened monster turned, with its five-fold rows of serrated teeth gleaming as it sought to rend its daring assailant. He, wary as well as daring, held out invitingly his left arm, the hand clutching the double-pointed stake firmly in the centre. Vengefully those terrible jaws came together; but only to find one point of the stake firmly embedded in the upper jaw, and the other deeply buried in the lower, transfixing the palate.

Now, for one brief gasp of air, Jose rises to the surface; then, darting back again, he hacks, hews, and stabs at the now helpless and floundering monster. So tenacious of life is it that, although fairly disembowelled, it dashed into ribbons from one end to the other, still one stroke of his tail would suffice to crush its dauntless antagonist but that stroke, though often dealt, is always eluded; and Jose rises to the surface, triumphant but exhausted, and floats languidly in the crimson foam till picked up by a boat's crew from the ship.

A general glow of satisfaction pervaded the lower deck of the "Aboukir" and many of the poor tars offered rude sympathy to Jose. He paid no heed to any of them, however, his brain having reeled and given way under the terrible shock. Until his death, which occurred six months afterwards, he remained a harmless idiot, whose sole occupation it was to sit gazing, hour after hour, into the sea, murmuring, in a monotonous minor "Inez, Inez, Inez," the name of his lost wife.

No further attempt was ever made to subsidize a sentinel-shark; and soon a more rational mode of treatment effected wonders in decreasing the number of desertions. The men became more contented, and willing to bear unavoidable hardships until the turn of each one came to be drafted into their respective vessels.

Then, cruising among the beautiful isles of the Antilles, with innocent change of scene, and the sweet sea-breeze pervading every crevice of the bounding fabric, health was soon restored, and the emancipated seaman happily forgot the lower deck of the "Aboukir" and miasma-loaded mists of Port Royal.

Middleton

Miss Laura Bailey spent a few days with friends in town last week.

Mr. and Mrs. B. Harris were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Marshall last week.

W. E. Roop of St. John, was the guest of his brother, F. H. Roop, quite recently.

Miss Mabel Palmer returned to Halifax last week after spending a few days with friends here.

Miss Olga Sponagle, who graduated from Mount Allison Ladies' College, arrived home on Wednesday.

Mr. L. Tupper returned home from Boston last Wednesday, where she has been visiting her parents.

Miss Wentzel of Riverport, Lunenburg County, is spending several weeks with Mrs. B. N. Wheeler.

Mr. G. F. Smith, of Wilmot, and Mr. Longley of Lawrencetown, are patients at the Cottage Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Burpee Alexander and baby, of Bear River were guests of Mr. and Mrs. T. Buckler last week.

Mrs. Odessa Elliott, who arrived recently from Boston, is spending a few days with her father, Councillor James Gates.

Miss Georgie Armstrong has engaged to teach during the coming year in the Crosby Girls Home at Port Simpson, B. C.

Rev. W. H. S. and Mrs. Morris, left on Saturday for Halifax, Rev. Mr. Williams took the services on Sunday in Holy Trinity and St. Andrews.

HASTINGS.

May 30.

R. M. McDormand spent Sunday in town.

Frank Carder has a new motorcycle.

Mr. J. M. Hastings was in town on Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Daniels spent Sunday in New Germany.

Wallace Ruggles visited his home in Paradise over Sunday.

Edison Road of East Dalhousie was a visitor to our town last week.

We are sorry to hear of Mrs. George Holmes' sudden illness.

Pastor Brown held services in the school-house here on Sunday evening.

The mill of the Davison Lumber Company here is running full blast now.

R. B. Cushing, the Bridgewater insurance man, was with us last week on business.

Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Venoit are receiving congratulations on the arrival of a baby girl.

D. J. Hewett of Bridgewater spent Sunday in town. We are all pleased to see "Dave."

Paul Lohnes, machinist, who has spent the past four years in our midst, leaves June 1st for Petersburg, Ont., where he has accepted a like position. Let us all wish him success.

Quite a number of the members of Lake View Lodge, No. 97, I. O. O. F. went to New Germany on Sunday to attend the march and services held there by the Pine Grove Lodge. It is reported that all enjoyed themselves.

TORBROOK.

May 30.

F. M. Jolley, Cohalt is spending a month with his family.

Sorry to report Robert Neily on the sick list. Also Mrs. W. G. Holland.

Miss Laura Aldred of West Gore, is visiting her aunt Mrs. Barkhouse.

S. W. Barteaux spent a few days last week with his mother, Mrs. J. B. Barteaux.

Mrs. Annie Ward arrived home on Friday after spending a week with her sister in Lawrencetown.

The most powerful flashlight light-house is situated on the island of Heligoland, in the North Sea. It has a forty million candlepower light, and can be seen thirty miles out to sea. The cost of maintenance is nearly eight thousand dollars a year.

OLDER BUT STRONGER

To be healthy at seventy, prepare at forty, is sound advice, because in the strength of middle life we too often forget that neglected colds, or careless treatment of slight aches and pains, simply undermine strength and bring chronic weakness for later years.

To be stronger when older, keep your blood pure and rich and active with the strength-building and blood-nourishing properties of Scott's Emulsion which is a food, a tonic and a medicine to keep your blood rich, alleviate rheumatism and avoid sickness. At any drug store.

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Lawrencetown

Mrs. Elwin Daniels is visiting her brother at New Glasgow.

Rev. Mr. Reynolds exchanged pulpits with Mr. Armitage on Sunday evening.

A son was born Monday morning to Mr. and Mrs. Lew Beals. Congratulations.

Mrs. Crofton Whitman entertained a party of friends on Friday evening. The occasion was much enjoyed.

An ice-cream social will be held by the members of the Epworth League, on the parsonage grounds Tuesday evening.

Mrs. J. E. Shaffner and Miss Mildred Durling are to attend the Branch meeting of the M. E. Church of Lunenburg—one as delegate to the auxiliary and one from the Mission Band.

A LAWRENCETOWN PRODUCT.

The recently built residence of Mrs. Pollard deserves more than passing notice. The designer and builder Mr. Charles Lowell, of this place, after selecting an excellent site erected on it one of the most attractive homes in the town—both as to exterior and interior appearance of finish.

The whole is harmonious in proportion, and such attention has been paid to detail, that the impress of skilled workman is everywhere noticeable.

Plenty of light and ventilation is provided by means of large windows and a fireplace.

The wide verandah promises comfort for the summer and the hardwood floors of halls, living and dining rooms, etc., proclaim in their shining smoothness, that cleanliness and absence of dust have also been provided for.

A furnace in the well cemented cellar, electric lighting—pantry that makes one suspect some woman had offered a few suggestions, ample clothes closets, specially built wood-box, even, all combine to make a housekeeper viewing it say: "Well, it is certainly complete, and I wish Mr. Lowell would build me a house."

The finish is smooth and painted white, and of excellent material—no knots or flaws in view.

The hardware is of good quality—even where, in some places, one would think a cheaper grade might have been used.

A floored and sheathed wood-house leaves nothing to be desired in the way of having everything "handy."

Double doors and windows, and front walk neatly laid, are all adjuncts of this cozy six-roomed cottage on Bridge Street.

The grounds have been graded in a truly workmanlike manner, by Mr. Joseph Ritchie, another townsman.

We understand that Mr. Lowell made several additions to the house, not called for in the contract, additions which greatly enhanced appearance and convenience.

Mrs. Pollard will be "At Home" to her friends on June 8 and 9.

In advance we take pleasure in tendering the hostess congratulations in the possession of such a charming house.

THE TRUE STORY OF JENNIE WREN.

It is a long time ago, as you will know when I tell you that William III. was then King of England.

There was a war during that summer of 1690, and the poor soldiers suffered very much. Upon the eve of one great battle they were so tired after one of their marches that they lay down for a short sleep, when it would have been much better and wiser had they remained on the watch for the enemy.

Among the men was a little drummer boy, whose eyes, like those of his elders were fast shut; who knows that he might not have been dreaming of his mother, his home, his brothers and sisters?

Just before he fell asleep he had been eating his rations, and some crumbs of bread had dropped on the head of his drum. A little wren, perching in one of the trees beneath which the soldiers were reposing, espied these crumbs and flew down to secure them.

As she hopped about on the parchment of the drum, the tapping of her beak awakened the lad. He opened his eyes, and was startled by the sight of the enemy advancing. He had just time to beat the signal of alarm, which woke comrades and put them on their defence.

The skill of King William won him that battle of the Boyne of July 1, 1690; but if the "Jenny Wren" had not chanced to rouse the little drummer boy, the fortunes of that day might have been quite altered.

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