

report about that one old hen. We cannot ration passengers and crew on one old hen.

And here, as we draw away from Canna, is the vast panorama of the sea-world around us once more—the mighty mountain range of Skye shining faintly in the northern skies; Hakeval—Hakeval still of a gloomy purple in the east; and away beyond these leagues of rushing Atlantic the pale blue line of North Uist. Whither are we bound, then, you small captain with the pale face and the big, soft, tender black eyes? Do you fear a shower of spray that you have strapped that tightly-fitting ulster round the small graceful figure? And are you quite sure that you know whether the wind is on the port or starboard beam?

"Look! look! look!" she calls, and our F.R.S., who has been busy over the charts, jumps to his feet.

Just at the bow of the vessel we see the great shining black thing disappear. What if there had been a collision?

"You cannot call that a porpoise, anyway," says she. "Why, it must have been eighty feet long!"

"Yes, yacht measurement," says he. "But it had a back fin, which is suspicious, and it did not blow. Now," he adds—for we have been looking all round for the re-appearance of the huge stranger—"if you want to see real whales at work, just look over there, close under Rùm. I should say there was a whole shoal of them in the Sound."

And there, sure enough, we see from time to time the white spoutings—rising high into the air in the form of the letter V, and slowly falling again. They are too far away for us to hear the sound of their blowing, nor can we catch any glimpse, through the best of our glasses, of their appearance at the surface. Moreover, the solitary stranger that nearly ran against our bows makes no appearance; he has enough of the wonders of the upper world for a time.

It is a fine sailing morning, and we pay but little attention to the fact that the wind, as usual, soon gets to be dead ahead. So long as the breeze blows, and the sun shines, and the white spray flies from the bows of the "White Dove," what care we which harbor is to shelter us for the night? And if we cannot get into any harbor, what then? We carry our own kingdom with us; and we are far from being dependent on the one old hen.

But in the midst of much laughing at one of the Laird's good ones—the inexhaustible Housh was again to the fore—a head appears at the top of the companion-way; and there is a respectful silence. Unseen north dies away before the awful dignity of this person.

"Angus," she says, with a serious remonstrance on her face, "do you believe what scientific people tell you?"

Angus Sutherland starts, and looks up; he has been deep in a chart of Loch Bracadale.

"Don't they say that water finds its own level? Now do you call this water finding its own level? And as she propounds this conundrum, she clings on tightly to the side of the companion, for, in truth, the *White Dove* is curvetting a good deal among those great masses of waves.

"Another tumbler broken!" she exclaims. "Now who left that tumbler on the table?"

"I know," says Mary Avon.

"Who was it, then?" says the occupant of the companion-way; and we begin to tremble for the culprit.

"Why, you yourself!"

"Mary Avon, how can you tell such a story?" says the other, with a stern face.

"Oh, but that is so," calls out the Doctor, "for I myself saw you bring the tumbler out of the ladies' cabin with water for the flowers."

The universal shout of laughter that overwhelms Madame Dignity is too much for her. A certain conscious, lurking smile begins to break through the sternness of her face.

"I don't believe a word of it," she declares, firing a shot as she retreats. "Not a word of it. You are two conspirators. To tell such a tale about a tumbler—"

But at this moment a further assault is made on the majesty of this imperious small personage. There is thunder at the bows; a rattling as of pistol-shots on the decks forward; and at the same moment the fig-ends of the spray come flying over the after part of the yacht. What becomes of one's dignity when one gets a shower of salt water over one's head and neck? Go down below, madam!—retreat, retreat, discomfited!—go, dry your face and your bonny brown hair—and bother us no more with your broken tumbler!

And despite those plunging seas and the occasional showers of spray, Mary Avon still clings bravely to the rope that is round the tiller; and as we are bearing over for Skye on one long tack she has no need to change her position. And if from time to time her face gets wet with the salt water, is it not quickly dried again in the warm sun and the breeze? Sun and salt water and sea-air will soon chase away the pallor from that gentle face; cannot one observe already—after only a few days' sailing—a touch of sun-brown on her cheeks?

And now we are drawing nearer and nearer to Skye, and before us lies the lonely Loch Brealt, just under the splendid Coolins. See how vast the slopes of the mountains appear to come sheer down to the lake; and there is a soft, sunny green on them—a beautiful, tender, warm colour that befits a summer day. But far above and beyond those sunny slopes a different sight appears. All the clouds of this fair day have gathered round the upper portions of the

mountains; and that solitary range of black and jagged peaks is dark in shadow, dark as if with the expectation of thunder. The Coolins are not beloved of mariners. Those beautiful sunlit ravines are the sweet haunts of hurricanes that suddenly come out to strike the unwary yachtsman as with the blow of a hammer. *Stand by, forward, lads! About ship! Down with the helm, Captain Avon!*—and behold! we are sailing away from the black Coolins, and ahead of us there is only the open sea, and the sunlight shining on the far cliffs of Canna.

"When your course is due north," remarks Angus Sutherland, who has relieved Mary Avon at the helm, "and when the wind is due north, you get a good deal of sailing for your money."

The profound truth of this remark becomes more and more apparent as the day passes in a series of long tacks which do not seem to be bringing those far headlands of Skye much nearer to us. And if we are beating in this heavy sea all day and night, is there not a chance of one or other of our woman-folk collapsing? They are excellent sailors, to be sure—but—but—

Dr. Sutherland is consulted. Dr. Sutherland's advice is prompt and emphatic. His sole and only precaution against sea-sickness is simple: resolute eating and drinking. Cure for sea-sickness, after it has set in, he declares there is none: to prevent it, eat and drink, and let the drink be *brut champagne*. So our two prisoners are ordered below to undergo that punishment.

And, perhaps, it is the *brut champagne*, or perhaps it is merely the sogginess of our little luncheon-party that prompts Miss Avon to remark on the exceeding selfishness of yachting and to suggest a proposal that fairly takes away our breath by its audacity.

"Now," she says, cheerfully, "I could tell you how you could occupy an idle day on board a yacht so that you would give a great deal of happiness—quite a shock of delight—to a large number of people."

Well, we are all attention.

"At what cost?" says the financier of our party.

"At no cost."

This is still more promising. Why should not we instantly set about making all those people happy?

"All you have got to do is to get a copy of the *Field* or of the *Times*, or some such paper."

"Yes; and how are we to get any such thing? Rùm has no post-office. No mail calls at Canna. Newspapers do not grow on the rocks of Loch Bracadale."

"However, let us suppose we have the paper."

"Very well. All you have to do is to sit down and take the advertisements, and write to the people, accepting all their offers on their own terms. The man who wants 500*l.* for his shooting in the autumn; the man who will sell his steam yacht for 7,000*l.*; the curate who will take in another youth to board at 200*l.* a year; the lady who wants to let her country-house during the London season; all the people who are anxious to sell things. You offer to take them all. If a man has a yacht to let on hire, you will pay for new jerseys for the men. If a man has a house to let, you will take all the fixtures at his own valuation. All you have to do is to write two or three hundred letters—as an anonymous person of course—and you make two or three hundred people quite delighted for perhaps a whole week!"

The Laird stared at this young lady as if she had gone mad; but there was only a look of complacent friendliness on Mary Avon's face.

"You mean that you write sham letters?" says her hostess. "You gull those unfortunate people into believing that all their wishes are realized?"

"But you make them happy!" says Mary Avon, confidently.

"Yes—and the disappointment afterwards!" retorts her friend, almost with indignation. "Imagine their disappointment when they find they have been duped! Of course they would write letters and discover that the anonymous person had no existence."

"Oh, no," says Mary Avon, eagerly. "There will be no such great disappointment. The happiness would be definite and real for the time. The disappointment would only be a slow and gradual thing when they found no answer coming to their letter. You would make them happy for a whole week or so by accepting their offer; whereas by not answering their letter or letters you would only puzzle them, and the matter would drop away into forgetfulness. Do you not think it would be an excellent scheme?"

Come on deck, you people; this girl has got demented. And behold! as we emerge once more into the sunlight and whirling spray and wind, we find that we are nearing Skye again on the port tack, and now it is the mouth of Loch Bracadale that we are approaching. And these pillars of rocks, outstanding from the cliffs, and worn by the northern seas?

"Why, these must be MacLeod's Maidens!" says Angus Sutherland, unrolling one of the charts.

And then he discourses to us of the curious fancies of sailors—passing the lonely coasts from year to year—and recognizing old friends, not any living thing, but the strange conformations of the rocks—and giving to these the names of persons and of animals. And he thinks there is something more weird and striking about these solitary and sea-worn rocks fronting the great Atlantic than about any comparatively modern Sphinx or Pyramid; until we regard the sunlit

pillars, and their fretted surface and their sharp shadows, with a sort of morbid imagination; and we discover how the sailors have fancied them to be stone women; and we see in the largest of them—her head and shoulders tilted over a bit—some resemblance to the position of the Venus discovered at Milo. All this is very fine; but suddenly the sea gets darkened over there; a squall comes roaring out of Loch Bracadale; John of Skye orders the boat about; and presently we are running free before this puff from the north-east. Alas! alas! we have no sooner got out of the reach of the squall than the wind backs to the familiar north, and our laborious beating has to be continued as before.

But we are not discontented. Is it not enough that the golden and glowing afternoon wears on, to listen to the innocent prattle of Denny-mains, whose mind has been fired by the sight of those pillars of rock. He tells us a great many remarkable things—about the similarity between Gaelic and Irish, and between Welsh and Armorican; and he discusses the use of the Druidical stones, as to whether the priests followed serpent worship or devoted those circles to human sacrifice. He tells us about the Picts and Scots; about Fingal and Ossian; about the doings of Arthur in his kingdom of Strathclyde. It is a most innocent sort of prattle.

"Yes, sir," says Brose—quite gravely—though we are not quite sure that he is not making fun of our simple-hearted Laird, "there can be no doubt that the Aryan race that first swept over Europe spoke a Celtic language, more or less akin to Gaelic, and that they were pushed out, by successive waves of population, into Brittany, and Wales, and Ireland, and the Highlands. And I often wonder whether it was they themselves that modestly called themselves the foreigners or strangers, and affixed that name to the land they laid hold of, from Galicia and Gaul to Galloway and Galway? The Gaelic word *gall*, a stranger, you find everywhere. Fingal himself is only *Fionn-gall*—the Fair Stranger; *Loch-gall*—that is, the familiar Dugald—or the Black Stranger—is what the Ilay people call a Lowlander. *Ru-nn-gall*, that we passed the other day—that is the Foreigner's Point. I think there can be no doubt that the tribes that first brought Aryan civilization through the west of Europe spoke Gaelic or something like Gaelic."

"Ay," said the Laird, doubtfully. He was not sure of this young man. He had heard something about Gaelic being spoken in the Garden of Eden, and suspected there might be a joke lying about somewhere.

However, there was no joking about our F.R.S. when he began to tell Mary Avon how, if he had time and sufficient interest in such things, he would set to work to study the Basque people and their language—that strange remnant of the old race who inhabited the west of Europe long before Scot, or Briton, or Roman, or Teuton had made his appearance on the scene. Might they not have traditions, or customs, or verbal survivals to tell us of their pre-historic forefathers? The Laird seemed quite shocked to hear that his favourite Picts and Scots—and Fingal and Arthur and all the rest of them—were mere modern interlopers. What of the mysterious race that occupied these islands before the great Aryan tide swept over from the East?

Well, this was bad enough; but when the Doctor began to declare his conviction that no one had the least foundation for the various conjectures about the purposes of those so-called Druidical stones—that it was all a matter of guess-work whether as regarded council-halls, grave-stones, altars, or serpent-worship—and that it was quite possible these stones were erected by the non-Aryan race who inhabited Europe before either Gaul or Roman or Teuton came west, the Laird interrupted him, triumphantly—

"But," says he, "the very names of those stones show they are of Celtic origin—will ye dispute that? What is the meaning of *Carnac*, that is in Brittany—eh? Ye know Gaelic?"

"Well, I know that much," said Angus, laughing. "*Carnac* means simply the place of piled stones. But the Celts may have found the stones there, and given them that name."

"I think," says Miss Avon, profoundly, "that when you go into a question of names, you can prove anything. And I suppose Gaelic is as accommodating as any other language."

Angus Sutherland did not answer for a moment; but at last he said, rather shyly—

"Gaelic is a very complimentary language, at all events. *Bann* is 'a woman'; and *beannachd* is 'a blessing.' *An ti a bhannachd thu*—that is, 'the one who blessed you.'"

Very pretty; only we did not know how wildly the young man might not be falsifying Gaelic grammar in order to say something nice to Mary Avon.

Patience works wonders. Dinner-time finds us so far across the Minch that we can make out the light-house of South Uist. And all these outer Hebrides are now lying in a flood of golden-red light; and on the cliffs of Canna, far away in the south-east, and now dwarfed so that they lie like a low wall on the sea, there is a paler red, caught from the glare of the sunset. And here is the silver tinkle of Master Fred's bell.

On deck after dinner; and the night air is cooler now; and there are cigars about; and our young F.R.S. is at the tiller; and Mary Avon is singing, apparently to herself, something about a Berkshire farmer's daughter. The darkness deepens, and the stars come out; and there is one star—larger than the rest, and low down, and burning a steady red light—that we

know to be Ushinish light-house. And then from time to time the silence is broken by, "Stand by, forrard! 'Bout ship!" and there is a rattling of blocks and cordage and then the head-sails fill and away she goes again on the other tack. We have got up to the long headlands of Skye at last.

Clear as the night is, the wind still comes in squalls, and we have the topsail down. Into which indentation of that long, low line of dark land shall we creep in the darkness?

But John of Skye keeps away from the land. It is past midnight. There is nothing visible but the black sea and the clear sky, and the red star of the light-house; nothing audible but Mary Avon's humming to herself and her friend—the two women sit arm-in-arm under half a dozen rugs—some old-world ballad to the monotonous accompaniment of the passing seas.

One o'clock: Ushinish light is smaller now, a minute point of red fire, and the black line of land on our right looms larger in the dusk. Look at the splendour of the phosphorous-stars on the rushing waves.

And at last John of Skye says in an undertone to Angus—

"Will the leddies be going below now?"

"Going below?" he says in reply. "They are waiting till we get to anchor. We must be just off Dunvegan Loch now."

Then John of Skye makes his confession.

"Oh, yes; been into Dunvegan Loch more as two or three times; but I not like the dark to be with us in going in; and if we lie off till the daylight comes, the leddies they can go below to their beds. And if Dr. Sutherland himself would like to see the channel in going in will I send below when the daylight comes?"

"No, no, John; thank you," is the answer.

"When I turn in, I turn in for good. I will leave you to find out the channel for yourself."

And so there is a clearance of the deck, and rugs and camp-stools handed down the companion. *Deoch-an-deuch* in the candle-lit saloon? To bed—to bed!

It is about five o'clock in the morning that the swinging out of the anchor-chain causes the yacht to tremble from stem to stern; and the sleepers start in their sleep, but are vaguely aware that they are at a safe anchorage at last. And do you know where the brave *White Dove* is lying now? Surely if the new dawn brings any stirring of wind—and if there is a sound coming over to us from this far land of legend and romance—it is the wild, sad wail of Dunvegan! The mists are clearing from the hills, the day breaks wan and fair; the great gray castle, touched by the early sunlight, looks down on the murmuring sea. And is it the sea, or is it the cold wind of the morning, that sings and sings to us in our dreams—

"Dunvegan—oh! Dunvegan!"

(To be continued.)

THE GLEANER.

THE English lord whom Miss Vanderbilt is to marry is in debt about a quarter of a million of dollars.

LEADVILLE, from an uninhabited spot, has become a city of 40,000 inhabitants in less than three years.

THE death is announced of the celebrated Danish Arctic explorer and interpreter, M. Carl Petersen, who was born in 1813.

It is said that seventeen editions of the life of Garfield are in preparation by different writers for circulation during the canvass.

THE heat has been so intense on the farm lands south of Tennessee that even the negroes had to leave the corn and cotton fields during the middle of the day.

THE fastest cutter yacht in England is the *Fandora*, hailing from the Clyde, and owned by a Scotchman. She is very large, is the first racing yacht ever built of steel, and is carrying everything before her.

A SOLDIER under the first Napoleon has been found by the census enumerator in Calcasieu parish, La. His name is Pierre Lanette. He was captured after the battle of Moscow and sent to Siberia. He is now eighty-seven years old.

THE German sculptor, Muller, whose statue of "Prometheus Bound" has been bought for 60,000 marks by the government and placed in the Berlin National gallery, was, when a poor boy, a cook in a Munich hotel.

THE Empress of Austria carries her hunting tastes even into the decoration of her table. She has ordered in London a magnificent china service for breakfast, dinner and dessert, which is to be ornamented with hunting scenes, after designs by the best British animal painters.

ON her return to England at the end of this month the Empress Eugenie will only stay for a few days at Chiselhurst, as she intends to spend the autumn at Arenberg, her beautiful place on Lake Constance. Before going to Switzerland the Empress will pay a visit to Queen Victoria at Osborne.

THE year 1880 is destined, it is believed, to be very memorable in the ecclesiastical annals of Germany, inasmuch as not only is it to see Cologne cathedral completed, but the venerable cathedral of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, part of which was burnt in 1867, restored. Interest in this structure centres in the electoral chapel, in which the Archbishop of Mainz used to crown the German Emperors, who were then anointed before the high altar. The first was thus crowned in 1562, the last in 1792.