

# NOT QUITE LOST.

In the spring of 18— I was at one of the islands on the west coast of Africa, anxious to take the first chance that offered of getting back to Old England. One of the huge Cape mail-boats was due in about a week from the time my story commences—boats which combine the comforts of a first class hotel with the nearest approach to absolute safety that persons trusting themselves to the mercy of the sea can reasonably expect. I did not, however, intend to wait for the mail-boat, if any other vessel offered a chance of getting to England before her. One morning a steamer came in bound for England. She was a cargo-boat, but carrying a few passengers; and the captain said he could make room for me. Before taking a passage in this vessel I had a good look at her, and I came to the conclusion that, though there were not many comforts on board, at any rate she looked like a good safe sea-boat. She had plenty of freeboard; indeed, I found out afterwards that her cargo was a light one, consisting of wool and raw hides, so that she was higher out of water than usual, and she had good beam for her length.

I went on board about six p.m., on a Friday evening. The weather was beautiful. The deep blue sky—set off by the still deeper blue of the sea, only broken here and there by the smallest of "white horses"—and the island glowing in all the beauty of tropical sunshine, made a picture not easy to forget. The passengers consisted of eighteen first-class and ten steerage. Amongst the former were two ladies and four little children. The crew mustered about twenty men all told. After dinner, I went on deck to smoke the pipe of peace and think of wife and children, who were being brought nearer to me by every throb of the powerful engines.

All the cabins were on the upper deck, the hold being devoted to cargo, with the exception of one small cabin for the steward. The vessel was steered from the bridge; but there was another wheelhouse right aft, for use in case of emergency. She carried two masts, and was square-rigged on her foremast.

Next day, when I turned out, we were out of sight of land; the weather was still fine, though there was a little sea, caused by the north-east trade-wind, which was blowing steadily, though not very strongly, against us. All went well till the evening. At six o'clock the cabin passengers dined, the captain, a jovial, ruddy-faced sailor, who looked as if he had no cares in the world, taking the head of the table; and the doctor, a self-possessed wiry little man, taking the other end. As dinner went on, the flow of small-talk increased, till, towards the end, there was a regular hum of conversation, and most of us were looking tolerably happy and contented. Suddenly, the whole scene changed; first came a crash, which seemed to shake the ship from end to end; and then scrape, thud, hammer, as the engine continued to make several revolutions before they were stopped. As we were at least two hundred miles from any land or shoal-water, I knew instinctively that the screw-shaft was broken, and that, in all probability, those last two or three revolutions had done terrible mischief.

We all made the best of our way on deck. The passengers were not much alarmed as yet; but I noticed a look of great anxiety on the captain's face as he hurried away.

It soon transpired that the shaft was broken; and the broken ends hammering against each other before the engine could be stopped had broken the after-bearing where the shaft passes out through the ship, and water was pouring in there into the tunnel, fifty or sixty feet in length, leading to the engine-room, along which the shaft passes. The well was sounded—about a foot of water was found, and preparations were at once made to get the pumps to work.

I must now recount a noble deed, which under other circumstances might well have earned a Victoria Cross. The tunnel, which I have just mentioned ended at the engine-room with a water-tight door in a so-called water-tight bulk-head. The chief engineer, knowing at once what had happened, and finding a large body of water coming out of the tunnel, called for volunteers to go with him up the tunnel and try to stop the leak. The danger was very great; the tunnel was already half full of water, the rush of which was so strong that it was difficult to walk against it; and at the rate it was rising, it seemed almost impossible for men to get to the end of the tunnel and back again before it was full of water, in which case they must have been drowned. One man only responded to the appeal of the chief; and these two brave fellows, regardless of everything but their duty, dashed into the tunnel, carrying blankets and ropes to secure over the leak. They actually got to the end of the tunnel, and succeeded in placing the blankets over the hole; but before they could secure them, the rising water forced them back, just filling the tunnel as they dashed back into the engine-room. Then, with great difficulty, the water-tight door was closed; and the fires not having been put out, though the water had nearly risen up to them, they were able to work a powerful steam-pump with which the vessel was fitted, soon reducing the water in the engine-room. The water-tight bulk-head was still leaking badly in several places, and it required all the skill

of the chief engineer to make it sufficiently tight to prevent the water from gaining on the pumps inside the engine-room.

Ahaft the engine-room the water was rapidly rising. Some of the passengers had been set to work at a hand-pump on deck; but being a poor pump, it was worked very hard with little result. We took the work in two gangs, twenty minutes off and on, and I found myself smoking my pipe between the spells with considerable comfort.

The well was sounded again, and five feet of water found in it. Shortly after this, the captain told me privately that there was no chance of saving the ship; and he was shortly going to give the order to prepare the boats for leaving her. This order was soon given; and then occurred the only sign of panic which I saw from first to last. Some of the crew, which was composed of men of several nationalities, made a dash at one of the boats with the intention of getting away in her by themselves. The night was dark, the moon not having risen, so that they were not noticed for a minute or two; but when the mates found out what was going on, they bundled them out of the boat in no time.

About this time I had occasion to go through the saloon; the steward was there; and although he knew that orders had been given to leave the ship, he was busy dusting some glasses in a rack, and had evidently been round the saloon putting everything in perfect order, so that it might go to the bottom tidy! I suppose habit was second nature to him. On going out, I passed the cabin where the four children were peacefully sleeping. I could not help peeping in; but it was sad to look at the rosy cheeks and peaceful faces of the little ones, and to think what a small chance they had of surviving a long boat-cruise.

The vessel was well found in boats, six in all—four large ones, and two light gigs. It was decided to use only the four large boats, as they would take us all; and we set to work to get them swung out and provisioned in a hurry. It was an exciting time! If the vessel had been sinking quickly, we should not have got one boat away. Nothing would work easily; the davits stuck for a long time, and resisted all our efforts to turn them; and the falls jammed in the blocks. Moreover, the boat I was told off to had been painted the day before, and was all over wet paint, which made it most difficult to handle her, besides leaving a remainder on one's garments. However, it was done at last; and tinned meat, biscuits, and water put into each boat. As to our water-cask, it was so rotten it could not hold water at all, and we had to content ourselves with filling a few bottles.

The captain then ordered the women and children and one sick man into the boat he was going to take charge of; and in they got, the boat still swinging at the davits. One old man brought all his heavy boxes from the cabin, and placed them beside the boat he was going in; and when told he could only take some wraps, he quietly dragged them back to his cabin.

Just as the order was going to be given for all to leave the ship, and even the man at the wheel had been called away, the chief-engineer came on deck and said to the captain: "Don't you leave the ship, sir; I believe we can save her." He then explained that though the engine-room bulk-head had leaked considerably, he and his men had made it nearly tight, and what little water came into the engine-room was easily pumped out again; and though the water was still rising abaft the engine-room, it was not rising so fast as it did at first; and the vessel, in his opinion, was sure to float for some hours yet, if she could not be kept afloat altogether.

The captain consented to wait till daylight, and we men went back to the pumps, though the poor women and children were still kept swinging at the davits, the captain being afraid to take them out of the boats, for fear there would not be time to get them in again. But after about two hours of it, he let them come out.

The dreary night wore on. Cocoa, and once a drink of rum, were served out to the men at the pumps. When the rum came—a wine-glassful to every two men—the man I shared with was a grimp stoker, and he had first drink, for a moment I hesitated when my turn came; but the claims of exhausted rest being damp and useless.

The moon was up now. We got some sail on the vessel, and headed her for Madeira, which was about two hundred miles distant, and the wind fair. As far as we could see, no vessels were in sight; but some rockets were tried. Only one of them, however, went up, the rest being damp and useless.

Sunday morning broke at last. A sad Sunday! We anxiously scanned the horizon; there was not a sail in sight anywhere. The bulk-head which was keeping us up for the time-being was nearly amidships, but not quite, it being a little aft of that position, so not quite half the vessel was at the mercy of the sea.

Shortly after daylight there was a consultation in the captain's cabin as to what should be done. It was decided to take the hatches off, and throw over all the cargo abaft the engine-room that could be got at. There was a steam-winch available, and a derrick was soon rigged up. The cargo we could get at was all wool, in bales of about ten hundredweight each; and as bale after bale went over the side, we made a long wake of them, as they did not sink at once.

The weather still kept fairly fine; had it not been for the hatches, we could not have taken off the hatches, as the after-part of the vessel was by this time rather low in the water, and we should, in all probability have been unable to save the ship.

The steward had not neglected his duty, and had prepared as good a breakfast as he could manage; and mechanically we went to it, not that anybody had any real wish to go to breakfast, but as a matter of habit. It was an uncanny thing, also, to take a meal in a cabin which one felt almost sure would be at the bottom of the sea before the next meal-time came round. Yet, in we went, the captain taking the head of the table as usual; but he could eat nothing, and even his jovial ruddy face was much altered.

Shortly after breakfast, one of the sailors who was on the lookout cried "Sail! ho!" We certainly saw what appeared to be a sail; but it disappeared and again appeared in a curious manner. Everybody brightened up at this news, particularly the poor women; but after careful examination through the glass, it turned out to be only some whales spouting.

Ten feet of water being in the hold by the afternoon, the stern of the vessel was very much lower in the water. Towards evening, as the light was beginning to fade, we saw a steamer; but it was hull down, and we could only see its masts and funnel. We had an old carronade which had probably last been fired at the battle of the Nile. This was loaded, and with great difficulty fired; but it took such a long time, that the steamer was out of sight before it went off, and no result followed. We also tried one or two more rockets; but it was of no use.

Sunday night. All the cargo in the afterhold that could be got at had been thrown overboard; so, by way of using the steam-winch, a large cask was rigged up and lowered into the hold, filled with water, heated up, and tipped overboard. This could be done about twice a minute, and helped considerably to keep the water down. The stench from the hold added now to our discomforts, as the raw hides and wool began to ferment, owing to the action of the water combined with the heat of the weather. But that was a small matter.

And so the second night went on. The great ship looming against the starlit sky with her dark square sails set on the foremast, her bows towering high above the sea, her stern nearly level with it, and three red lights on her foremast—signals of distress—looked like some huge monster out of a fairy tale stricken nigh unto death, but struggling on while life lasted. There were some curious traits of character exhibited on the part of both crew and passengers, though most of them did their duty quietly and manfully. One man, a steerage passenger took to his berth after the accident happened. When the second-mate went to rouse him up and make him take his turn at the pumps, he said, "he was not going to pump; he knew the vessel was going down, and he would die comfortable in his berth." In fact he was left there, as the mate had no time to waste over him. Another man armed himself with a revolver, with the intention of shooting himself if the worst came to the worst, as he said he preferred shooting to drowning. The revolver was taken from him.

To Be Continued.

## THAT MAN HAS £150 IN HIS BOOTS.

An Incident of the Days of Coaches in England.

In the days which were called "good old" days, without any apparent reason, a coach was once lumbering heavily between London and Brighton. It had not got half-way before it was stopped by highwaymen. "Don't mention the word boots, whatever you do!" whispered one old passenger to another, a hard-featured, spareman, "you see I have £150 in mine." The highwaymen did their work carelessly, for they wanted to be off again, and relied on threats to accomplish their purpose, without troubling to search thoroughly. When they got to the hard-featured man he said, "Gentlemen, I assure you I have no money at all; but that gentleman, your will find, has £150 in his boots." The robbers soon relieved the boots of their burden, and departed. Then the aggrieved passenger turned on his betrayer with savage recriminations. "Steady, sir; steady!" was the answer. "Don't grumble about the few pounds in your boots! I have £15,000 in mine! And as you have been of such service to me I shall be glad to pay you the £150, or even double, if you wish!"

## STRANGER THAN FICTION.

The Gentleman gives currency to a remarkable but well authenticated story which shows what most people are supposed to know already—that truth is stranger than fiction. Some years ago the cashier of a Liverpool merchant received a Bank of England note, which he held up to the light to make sure it was genuine. In so doing he noticed some very indistinct red marks, as if words had been traced on the front of the note and on the margin, and out of curiosity he tried to decipher them. At length he made out the following sentence—

"If this note should fall into the hands of John Dean of Longhillmer, he will learn thereby that his brother is languishing a prisoner in Algiers." Mr. Dean, on being shown the note, lost no time in asking the government for assistance, and finally secured the freedom of his brother, on payment of a ransom to the bey. The unfortunate man had been a prisoner for eleven years, and had traced, with a piece of wood for pen and his own blood for ink, the message on the bank-note, in the hope of its being seen sooner or later.

## A PECULIAR PLANT.

A plant grows in Assam, the botanical name of which is *Gymnaema sylvestre*, and which has the peculiar property, when chewed, of temporarily neutralizing the sense of taste as regards sweet and bitter things, while sour and saline substances remain unaltered. The Hindus claim that the plant is an antidote to snake bite. However that may be, it is believed that the plant might be advantageously introduced in our pharmacopoeia as a means of disguising the bitterness of quinine and other disagreeable medicines.

## THE SUPREME TEST.

Miss Fastidious is very dainty in her manners, isn't she? I should say so. Why, she can even eat corn off the ear without looking as though she had both hoofs in the trough.

# AGRICULTURAL

## WINTER PROTECTION FOR DAIRY CATTLE.

Dairy stock to be profitable must be made comfortable, and the more comfort they have, other things being equal, the greater will be the measure of profit. The whole question of profit in dairying hinges on this one word—comfort. There is more profit in producing milk in winter than in summer, but cows cannot give milk in winter to amount to anything if they are exposed to storms and suffer with cold, no matter how well they are fed, writes C. P. Goodrich. A dairy animal is very different from a beef animal as regards the endurance of cold. Fattening steers frequently seem to enjoy the crisp and frosty air of zero weather, while the dairy cows in the yard with them will at the same time stand with their backs arched up, shivering and suffering with cold. Every winter as I travel about, especially in the newer parts of the country, my heart aches for the poor cow—that blessed animal, which is a greater benefactor to man than any other—when I see her suffering from cold and exposure because of the neglect and cruelty of her inhuman owner. One would think that self-interest, to say nothing about the dictates of humanity, would prompt a man to give his cows good shelter in winter. We know that many who are just beginning on new farms in the West cannot have costly barns, but that does not excuse them for not having protection for their cows. I know how this is. Many years ago in my young days I started on a new farm with but little I could call my own except the debts I owed. The few cows I had were furnished, the first winter, with a straw stable, the walls of which were about three feet thick and the straw held in place with poles set upright. Straw was stacked over the top for a roof. Animals never had a more comfortable stable than that first one of mine was and it cost nothing but a very few days' work. I had used the wheat straw, such as some other prairie farmers burned up. The next year I built a log stable, chinked and plastered up the cracks with mud and made a roof of poles and straw. A few years after I was able to build a frame stable, and in time a larger and more costly barn. But, through it all, I have never had a place where cows seemed to take more genuine comfort in the cold and stormy days of winter than mine did, over forty years ago, in that first stable made of straw, while they were lying on a thick bed of straw and contentedly chewing their cud.

The settlers on the prairies of Minnesota and other Western states could, and many of them do, make such stables, but the fact remains that hundreds of poor rows have to shiver through the winter, having no better protection than they can get around the straw stacks, when they are not trying to satisfy their hunger in the stalk field. As I have tried to show, the settler on the prairie has no excuse for not protecting his dairy cattle. If he has not raised a crop of grain and therefore has no straw, he can throw up walls of sod and cover with prairie hay. The settler in the timber has everything right at hand to make a good log stable, which he can cover with brush and slough grass. I have been writing for the benefit of those who are poor or just beginning in a new country, and they are the ones who, I am sorry to say, too often allow their cows to go without shelter. Of course large, fine and costly barns are good things to have, but, after all, many of them, as they are managed, are very bad places to keep stock in. I have seen a tight stone wall basement to a barn, with very little light and no ventilation, crowded so full of cattle that the air was most stifling in the morning after the doors had been closed all night. Such a place is worse than leaving the animals without shelter. When they are out they have pure air, if they do have cold. Dairy cattle, to be properly protected in winter should be in barns with the walls well sealed up; there should be plenty of air space for each animal, plenty of light, and there should be ventilating shafts passing up and out at the roof.

## BEEES IN HORTICULTURE.

I have lately had my attention called to the fact that there was a great difference in the yield of honey from colonies located only from one to two miles apart. Judging from this, says Mrs. Harrison, orchardists, farmers and gardeners, will not get the full benefit of their crops of fruit, vines and clovers, if they do not keep bees upon their own fields. Especially is this true, if the weather should be foggy and damp during the blooming season. Specialists in bee-culture know that a good place to locate an apiary is near large orchards, seed farms, alfalfa or alsike clover fields, pickle farms, etc. Those who raise cucumbers under glass, find they must have bees in their green house or their cucumbers will not set. Those who are engaged in these pursuits, unless there are large apiaries near them should cultivate bees as well as fields.

He who would live at ease, should cultivate both fruit and bees." It would be better for the welfare of our country, if bees were more equally distributed. Very large apiaries are not as desirable as that every orchard and farm should have sufficient workers to gather the nectar, and fertilize the bloom. It is not necessary that every farmer should be a skillful apiarist, and secure large crops of honey, but he should keep bees in large hives, well protected from the intrusion of stock. Where horses and other animals have been injured by being stung it was usually the result of carelessness.

Hives should be well protected, and no placed near hitching posts, nor drinking places.

Plant for Bees.—Beekeepers who have experimented along this line, claim that it does not pay to plant for honey alone; but there are many crops and trees that can be grown, that have a dual value, such as the clovers, alsike and white. What is more beautiful upon a lawn than the linden or basswood? Sweet-clover, *Melilotus alba*, and *Melilotus officinalis*, are yearly gaining in favor, as food for stock and bees; and are fast rooting out dog-fennel and other noxious weeds from roadsides and waste places. They thrive on gravelly knolls, railroad embankments and rocky hillsides.

## COMING SHOWER OF STARS.

A Rain of Fire Predicted by Several Astronomers.

The astronomers look for the next great meteoric shower on the morning of November 15, 1899. They calculate that the earth will then pass again through the centre of an immense swarm of meteoroids, as they are called before combustion. These great "Leonide star showers," as they are called, occur at intervals of every thirty-three years and one day. The great shower of 1799 occurred on November 13; that of 1866 on November 14; and, consequently, a repetition of the next wonderful phenomena is expected on the morning of November 15, 1899.

In the meanwhile, however, as the aggregation of meteoroids is of immense length, one end of it will encounter the earth in 1898 and the other in 1900, making, as Prof. Lewis Swift, the distinguished astronomer of Rochester, N.Y., says, considerable showers in those years also. Not only this, but it is stated on the same authority that many forerunners of the great shower may be expected to come within the earth's atmosphere on November 14, 1897, because many of the meteoroids are always considerably in advance of the main cluster. Prof. Swift says "the thickness of the meteoroidal stream is 100,000 miles and the duration of the shower is equal to the time of the diagonal passage of the earth through it, usually from midnight to dawn." He adds: "As there is a light shower of Leonids every November, we know that there is a vast ring formed by the comet's tail and that the immense shower in one portion is the production of the exploded comet itself, through which we pass once every thirty-three years and a day."

The meteoroids are dark bodies, and it is only when they pass into the earth's atmosphere that they are ignited by friction and become visible for a few seconds. The stream makes a revolution around the sun in about thirty-three and one-fourth years, and by consequence the earth passes through it in a new place each year. The length of the swarm is so enormous that although at perihelion it moves at the rate of nearly twenty-five miles a second, yet it takes it two years to pass the earth, so that when its hinder part is still with us its advancing side will have reached the orbits of Jupiter and Saturn. Notwithstanding this extent, it is but a fraction of the entire orbit. Prof. Swift says: "This great cluster will reach the earth's orbit about June 1, 1899, but the earth will not have arrived there then, but will be due nearly six months later, when our planet will plunge into the swarming mass, and for at least five hours we shall experience a literal rain of fire."

## A SLIGHT RESEMBLANCE.

Mme. Patti, the popular songstress was delighting a large audience in the Town Hall of Birmingham when a workman at the rear of the building was observed to be in tears. There was nothing in the song to account for this display of grief for the famed prima donna was singing in the Italian tongue; but the grief of the man became more pronounced and annoying ere Mme. Patti had concluded.

At length amid a thunder of applause the singer retired, and the stranger was asked the reason of his grief.

"She reminds me so of my darter," said the tearful one. "She was in the singing line."

"But surely your daughter could not sing like that!" said the man on the next seat.

"No," answered the mourner, with another sob; "but you never could tell what she was singing about."

## WAVES SUBDUED BY RAIN.

It seems rather hard to understand how the tiny raindrops can flatten down the enormous swells of an angry ocean, but the observations of a well-known English scientist explain it clearly. Each drop, he says, sends below the surface a certain quantity of water in the form of rings, which, with gradually decreasing velocity and increasing size, descends as much as eighteen inches below the surface. Therefore, when rain is falling on the sea, there is as much motion immediately beneath the surface as above, only the drops are larger and their motion slower. Thus, unseen by the human eye, the water at the surface is being made to continually change places with that beneath, and in this way the wave-motion is destroyed.

## HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT.

Some one has been looking over an American book, published in 1872, entitled, "The Home; Where It Should Be, and What Should Be Put Into It," and makes the discovery that the household equipment, costing \$1,000 at that time, can be bought now for \$400.

## IN DARKEST AFRICA.

The Missionary—Here! Here! I'm shocked! What are you two fighting about?

The Combatants—Jonah an' de whale.