

THE LAST VOYAGE OF MARTIN VALLANCE:

A SEA STORY OF TO-DAY.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

Author of "Steve Brown's Bunyip," "In the Great Deep," etc

It was very awkward having no door in front of the deck-house, as everything had to be brought aft by the narrow alley-way between it and the bulwarks. So while the fine weather lasted we decided to take our meals under the awning. Thus we breakfasted with good talk of our position, not at all uncheerful. I was pleased to find that there were two sextants on board; also that the Major, with some foresight, had kept the chronometer going. After the meal I suggested that we should clew up the foresail, and the Major assenting, we had a half-hour's heavy pulling, after which I went aloft and in some sort managed to stow it—a regular hard-weather-stow—frapping a lump of canvas to the yard wherever I could get a hold. It was a big sail, and took me a long time to handle, even in such a fashion. But I managed it at last. And when I came down although pretty well knocked up, it was in much better humour with the brig under a couple of topsails and fore-topmast staysail, and for after canvas I could set the mizzen, close reefed.

Miss Fortescue was at work in the cabin, and the Major sat at the galley door peeling sweet potatoes, making things look a bit homelike, although the white shirt, solar-topee, yellow boots, and diamonds put a touch of incongruity into the scene that made me nearly laugh outright.

"I'm an old campaigner, Mr. Vallance," said he as I approached, "and I've seen some ups and downs in the world. But I can assure you, sir, that I don't think I ever felt so glad as I did when you appeared under the Hebe's stern and came to the rescue. Let me tell you, sir, that it was a plucky thing in you to board the brig, as you did with a wounded man-enter at large on her decks; and if I haven't, Mr. Vallance," he went on, much to my discomposure, "thanked you as I ought to have done, I sincerely apologise and in my own and my daughter's name do so now." And rising, he made me a most genteel bow, whilst all the potato-parings went out of his apron, greatly to Nan's delight. Receiving the Major's salutation to the best of my ability, we shook hands, and I felt that last night I had done the old man an injustice in thinking him either selfish or unfeeling.

At six bells, 11 a. m., a gentle breeze sprang up and sent us through the water at a three-knot rate; and presently the Major, sending Helen to the wheel to relieve me, brought up the sextants and, with no little show of pride began to screw the sun down.

"You take the other one, Mr. Vallance," said he, "and check me. I'm not a professional, you know," he went on squinting through the glasses, "but I don't think I'll be far out."

But it was all I could do to take my eyes off that most graceful figure of a helmswoman, swaying her lissome shape to the working of the spokes as if to the manner born, glancing at me now and again, with a sort of shy smile that seemed to my sanguine heart already to hold affection in it as well as friendship.

"Eight bells! Eight bells!" simultaneously from each of us; and away we went below to work out our reckoning. As luck would have it, and to the Major's extreme delight, there was only about a mile difference between us. Our longitude was 66 deg. 5 min. east, latitude 29 deg. 10 min. south, by which it will be seen that the brig's progress since the Major's last observation had been mostly all westing, which was so much the better for us. Getting out a chart, I found our position on it, making us on a west-by-south course 1500 miles from Cape Agulhas, and only 120 miles east of the island of Rodriguez. But there was nothing to call there for. And these at least, if my memory serves me aright, were the results of my first sights taken on board the Hebe.

The wind was westerly, with a little northing in it; and bracing the yards in we found that the brig would easily lie her course with a few points to spare, and that, even under such short canvas, when we managed to get a cast of the log—Helen at the wheel, holding the glass—she was sailing no less than six knots. This was truly wonderful; and I realised that I was on a clipper, and the fastest one I had ever been shipmates with.

"She steers beautifully," said Helen when I offered to relieve her, "and I like being here. Of course the boat bothers her a little; and I suppose, if it comes on to blow, it must go."

"I'm afraid it must go in any case," I replied. "But there's no particular hurry; and any minute something may be in sight."

Opening a little signal-locker, I took out from amongst the flags a small British merchant ensign, and asked the Major if I might hoist it as a distress signal. I had done nothing whatever hitherto on the Hebe without first consulting him.

"Do exactly what you think proper, Mr. Vallance," he replied, setting down a great round of boiled beef that he had brought from the galley. "You're our practical man although as you see, you're not going to have the navigation part of the business all to yourself," and he chuckled, and stood watching as I bent the flag on union down and hoisted it half-way up the signal-halyards, rove at the end of the mizzen-raft.

"There," said I, "if any ship sights that, she'll know we want something, even if our canvas isn't enough to tell her."

"My father thinks navigation is his strong point," remarked Helen, with a smile, as the Major tramped back to the galley. "This is not his first trip to sea, you must know. Once he owned a share in a Calcutta steamer, and made a voyage in her. He took up

the science then; and when poor Captain Davis and Mr. Skinner, the mate, were alive, he always used to help them with their observations."

"You must have had a very anxious time with so much sickness on board," I said.

"It was indeed a terribly anxious time," replied Helen. "The captain died quietly one night, without any one knowing it at the moment. But Mr. Skinner was delirious for some days, and kept constantly calling for me, never seeming easy unless I was with him."

"Was he a young man?" I asked, with a sort of empty feeling somewhere inside me.

"No, poor dear, he was not," answered she, smiling. "Old enough to be my grandfather, and quite gray. But," she added, perhaps on seeing how my face lightened, "I was very fond of him, and of the captain too—who leaves a wife and child at Point de Galle."

After dinner, finding that the brig steered a bit wild without any canvas aft, I set the mizzen—a mere rag with its close reef, but quite enough. Then whilst the Major took the wheel, I slung a pair of binoculars across my shoulders and went on to the main-royal yard in order to get a good look round.

I have said, I think, that the Hebe was lofty—over-sparred, indeed, in my opinion—and from the elevation I had attained she seemed a mere toy of a vessel underneath me. To set the mizzen I had been obliged to remove the awning, and thus had a clear view of her decks, looking solitary enough; for Helen had gone below, and the only person visible was the old Major, making a very different picture to his daughter, as he stood bolt upright like a sentry on duty, one eye on the compass, the other on the weather-leech of the main-topsail. As, presently, I swept the sea-line, some low, black object jumped into the field of the glass. For a time I worked away at it, but without avail. It might be a capsized boat, or a buoy, or a lump of wreckage—more likely the last—for anything I could make of it. It was broad on the weather bow; and hailing the deck, I motioned the Major to keep the brig off a few points until she pointed straight for the thing. Then, making sure there was nothing else in sight, I descended and told the Major, who became quite excited and called his daughter. But we had not risen it from the deck yet. Indeed, from the smallness of the object, I did not expect we should until close upon it. Helen and I went on to the forecastle head, there to get a better view; and all at once she cried: "I see it; it's a bit of a ship!" But, using the glass, the thing looked strangely familiar to me.

"By heavens!" I exclaimed suddenly, "if that's not mine and Nan's old pen, call me a Dutchman! I ought to know it!"

And so it proved to be; and as it came washing and bobbing heavily by, we went aft again and had a good view. It was just as I left it, floating face upwards; and it took very little imagination on my part to stretch me out and drenched and gasping, and to feel once more the comfort of touch that Nan's warm flesh gave to my chilled body.

"By gad!" exclaimed the Major after a long stare through his glass, luffing to his course, "fancy a man on that thing, wallowing about in mid-ocean with a goat for his crew, and a lump of sodden biscuit in the lazarette! Why, Vallance, you must have thought our boat the outcome of a miracle! What did you do?"

"Well, Major," I answered after some hesitation, "I went down on my knees and thanked God for sending her to me, as well as I could manage it."

"The very best thing, too, you could have done," replied the Major heartily, and rather to my relief. "It's only on some such occasion that we sailors and soldiers ever think of Him."

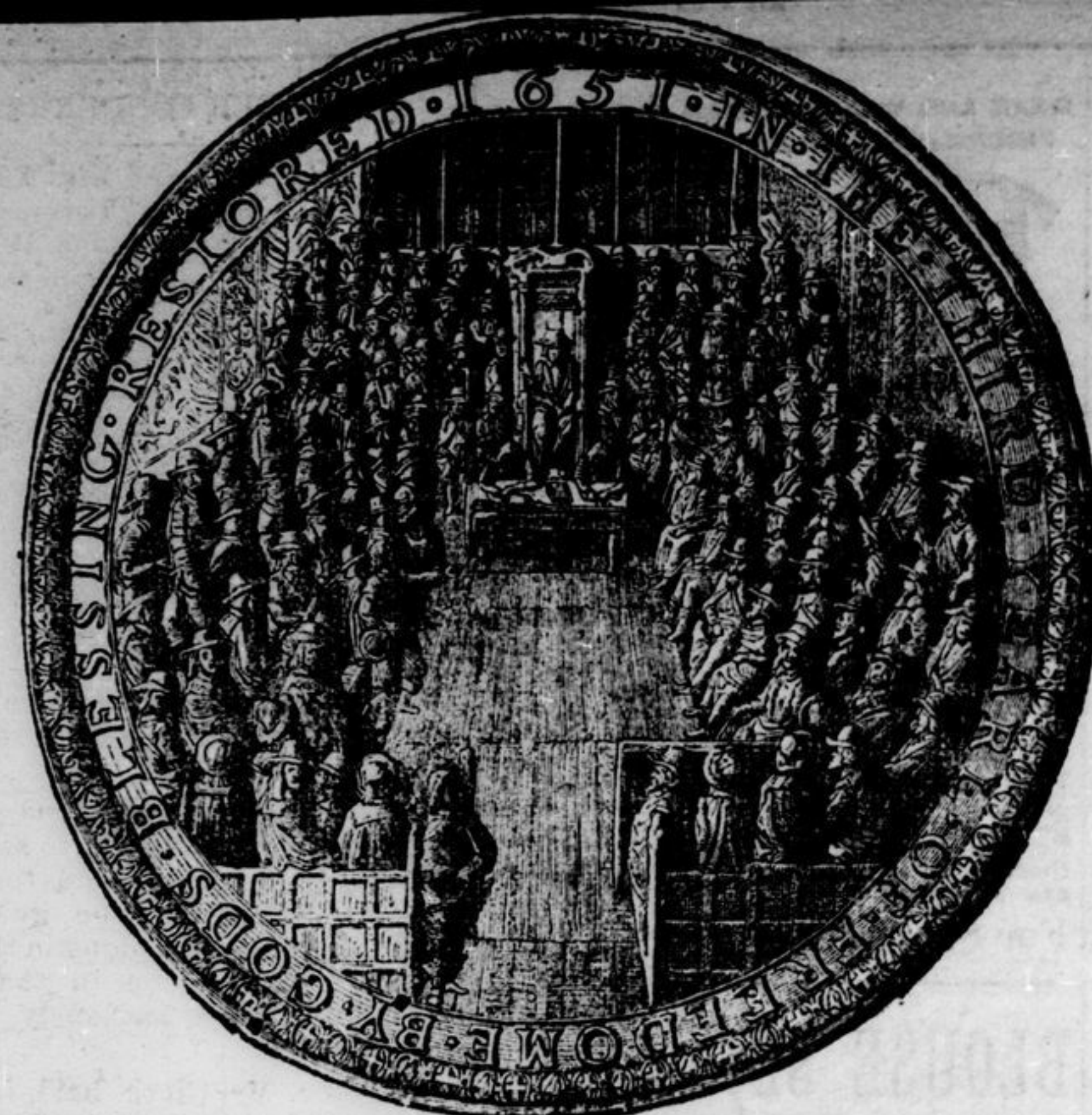
Towards evening the breeze freshened a bit, and we held a council. My opinion was that through the night we should heave-to as the mere keeping any sort of watch was, with our numbers, out of the question. It would, I argued, only entail an amount of fatigue, rendering us useless and knocked up in case we should be called upon suddenly to make some supreme effort.

But the Major was opposed to this view completely. "We are three," said he, "four hours each. Constant look-out night and day. Helen can do her share as well as any of us. We must keep going."

I was about to expostulate, when a glance from Helen decided me to remain silent. Besides, was not the Major owner and skipper too? And, anyhow, what business had a poor devil of a second mate, whose clothes even did not belong to him, to interfere in the matter? But it angered me to think of a girl like Helen having to stand at the wheel until she was ready to drop. However, I thought it wise to lie low and let the Major see how the thing would work, especially as he said he would take the first watch from eight o'clock until twelve; and I had an idea, from the look of the sky, that ere then there might be a change. And presently, after getting a spare line and bending it on to the boat's painter in place of the boom-sheet, so as to give her a fair drift, I relieved the Major to go and get his tea below. It was already nearly eight bells, and he was soon on deck again.

"I shall let her go, Vallance," said he, pointing to the boat, "if the wind freshens any more. We can't have her falling on to us. It will mean another half-knot. Besides, it'll make a difference in the steering."

In the cabin I found Helen waiting, with white seamen. Think of the



THE GREAT SEAL OF ENGLAND.

Many people doubtless know that upon the accession of a new monarch to the throne of England a new Seal is struck, and the old one is cut into four pieces and deposited in the Tower of London. In former times the fragments of these great Seals were distributed among certain poor people of religious houses. When Her Majesty Queen Victoria ascended the throne of England, the late Benjamin Wyon, R. A., the chief engraver of her Majesty's Mint, designed the beautiful work of the present Great Seal of England. The details of the design are: obverse, an equestrian figure of the Queen attended by a page, her Majesty wearing over a habit a flowing and sumptuous robe, and a colour of the Order of the Garter. In her right hand she bears the sceptre, and on her head is placed a regal tiara. The attendant page, with his bonnet in his hand, looks up to the Queen, who is gracefully restraining the impatient charger, which is richly decorated with plumes and trappings. The legend, "Victoria Dei Gratia Britanniarum Regina, Fidei Defensor," is engraved in Gothic letters, the spaces between the words being filled with heraldic roses. The reverse side of the Seal, shows the Queen, royally robed and crowned, holding in her right hand the sceptre and in her left the orb, seated upon a throne beneath a niched Gothic canopy; and on each side is a figure of Justice and Religion; and in the exergue the royal arms and crown, the whole encircled by a wreath or border of oak and roses.

The Seal itself is a silver mould in two parts, technically called a pair of dies. When an impression is to be taken or cast, the parts are closed to receive the melted wax, which is poured through an opening at the top of the Seal. As each impression is attached to a document by a ribbon or slip of parchment, its ends are put into the Seal before the wax is poured in, so that when the hard impression is taken from the dies the ribbon or parchment is neatly fixed to it. The impression of the Seal is six inches in diameter and three-fourths of an inch in thickness. The great Seals of England are interesting from their bearing portraits of the sovereigns, as in the Seals of Offa and Ethelwolf, and that of Edgar with a bust in profile. After William I. all the kings are on one side on horseback, the face turned to the right, except that of Charles I., which is turned to the left. Edward IV. first carries the close crown; Edward the Confessor and Henry I. and Henry II. are seated with the sword and orb. Wax was not uniformly used for Seals, as impressions occur in gold, silver and lead, also in various other substances. The colours have varied at different periods, but red seems to have been the most ancient.

tea for me. For the size of the brig it was really a large apartment, running her full width, but for two state-rooms aft, two forward for the officers and a box of a pantry. Handsomely paneled and carpeted, well lit, with plenty of glass and silver-ware on a broad sideboard, it looked especially snug and cozy; fairly cool, too, with the bull's-eye windows along the upper part of the house all open. But the principal attraction to me, although nothing these details with a careless glance was the girl, her hair gathered into a mass of dark, shining coils around the small and shapely head—the first time I had had a good view of it without a hat on—who smiled a welcome to me across the well-spread tea-table.

"My father," said she, after we had talked awhile, "thinks it possible, apparently, that we three can carry the Hebe to Capetown, and although I did not like to tell him so, I hardly think it likely. Do you?"

"Not unless we get a fair wind, and one of about the strength of this, all the way there," I replied, laughing; "and even then, keeping regular watch and watch night and day, only our skeletons would be left by the time we sighted Agulhas. It sounds feasible enough theoretically, but practically, even with the small canvas we carry now, there would be constant callings for all hands. The brig is heavily sparred, and even to trim the yards in any sort of a breeze would take the three of us all we could do. In fact, watch, and watch, as we are now, means night and day work for all of us."

"I thought as much," said she, "and saw you were going to protest. But when my father has set his mind on a thing, it is better to let him try it. When he sees that it will not act, then he will be the first to acknowledge it."

"I have the next watch—the middle one," I said presently. "That leaves me to call you. How shall I manage?"

"If you will stamp on the deck," she replied; "my berth is there, you see, exactly under the wheel. I am a sound sleeper, but I think I shall be able to hear you. If I do not—well, you can't leave the brig to steer herself, or you might run down and knock at the door. It really does seem rather absurd! All you ought to sleep on deck within easy call. But father does not care about the open air at nights; nor, to tell the truth, do I. What a crew!" and she laughed merrily.

"Yes, even were we three tough and seasoned sailors," I said, "it would be as much or more than we could manage to work the Hebe to Capetown. But now!"

"I loved the sea," said Helen, "and I love it still. But I do not think, if we get safely to any port, that, after this experience, I should care about trusting myself to its tender mercies again. It has not used me too well. And, as you know, the voyage was planned especially for my benefit. Doubtless my health is as good as ever now; but at what a terrible cost!" and she shuddered at evil memories, and I saw tears rise to her eyes.

"It was all the fault of those rascally Lascars," I remarked after a pause. "You would have done well enough with white seamen. Think of the

brutes leaving you to roast alive.

"Yes, it was cruel," she answered. "Still, Mr. Vallance, my father, though generally the soul of gentleness with his own colour, like many old Indians has no patience with the native; and when the captain and the mate died—"

"Yes," I said quickly, for I had thoroughly imagined, long ere this, the The Last voyage of Martin Vallance sight of the Major bossing his "niggers." "But why, I wonder, did they not put yourself and the Major into the boat, and themselves stick to the brig?"

"Doubtless they would have done so," said Helen; "but, as I heard them say over and over again they imagined that a curse lay upon the Hebe, that a fearful plague was stowed away amongst the coffee, and that we were doomed to wander about the sea until all died."

"A prophecy pretty well fulfilled in their case, anyhow," said I. "And now I think I will go on deck and turn in, or my watch will be out."

For a few minutes I stood talking to the Major at the wheel. The wind was steady, the brig lying her course and going through the water in good style, although, as I judged bothered by the swing of the boat behind her. Getting the side-lights out, I retrimmed them and put fresh oil in; then going on to the forecastle, I lit my pipe, and after a long look round, carried my mattress from the quarter-deck and sat down and smoked. Nan as usual, lying at my feet. The night seemed fine enough for anything, and the barometer, as I had glanced at it before leaving the cabin was, if moving at all, on the rise. Still, instinct at times, if rarely, is more to be depended upon than any mere instrument, and I felt somehow that a change was pending—of what nature I could not be sure. However pretty certain that not much harm could come to us aloft, although a reef in each topsail would have added to my sense of security, I lay down.

Finding presently that there was rather too much wind for comfort rushing out of the foretopmast staysail, I shifted my quarters on to the main-deck and took shelter under the lee of the forecastle. Here I spread my mattress afresh, and pulling a rug over my head to keep off the moonbeams, I dozed off to sleep. My last waking thoughts being that the wind had taken a shriller note up there in the rigging, causing the Hebe, hitherto as upright as a factory chimney, to have a slight list, so that before midnight itself in the lee-scuppers. But I was too nearly asleep to go to the trouble of another shift. And I dreamt—naturally enough perhaps—that I was once again on the pen with Nan only this time the water kept pouring in in such volume that I could plainly hear it above all the raging of the storm; and as I lay listening to the noise of it, and of Nan's wailings as she vainly strove to free herself, I awoke suddenly, bewildered, to find myself and the deck's wash, Nan bleating on the spare spars to leeward; the brig flat a-back and nearly on her beam-ends, and a full gale of wind roaring and yelling aloft.

(To Be Continued.)

A Hopeless Invalid.

SUCH WAS THE CONDITION OF MISS RODD, OF BROOKLIN.

An Editor Relates the Story of Her Illness and How a Remarkable Change in Her Condition Was Brought About.

From the Gazette, Whitley, Ont.

For some five years the editor of this journal has made weekly visits to Brooklin in search of news. One of his earliest recollections of the village was in noting that Miss Levia Rodd was very ill. Miss Rodd was well known, and as week after week rolled round, it was natural to ask how she was getting on, and the reply always came that she was no better. Time went on and it became settled that Miss Rodd was a confirmed invalid and that such she would continue until a kind Providence took mercy on her by allowing death to end her sufferings. None of the villagers anticipated any other ending. Our astonishment can better be imagined than described, therefore, when Mrs. B. Wells hailed us one morning with "Well, editor, we have some news for you to-day." "What is it?" "Why, Miss Rodd has gone on a visit to Columbus friends." "Why, I thought she was a confirmed invalid?" "So she was, but she has been improving so much lately that she is now able to help herself a good deal, and it was thought a change of scene would do her good."

"That is certainly news," replied the quill-pusher, "and good news too, but what cured her?" "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills," replied Mrs. Wells. "We then decided to ask Miss Rodd upon her return for an interview, but it was some time before it took place, owing to the limited time at our disposal between trains, and partly owing to a desire to wait and see if the improvement was likely to prove permanent. However, after many put-offs, we finally called at the home of Mrs. Doolittle, a sister of Miss Rodd's, who has carefully cared for her during the long illness. At the request of the editor Miss Rodd made the following statement:—"I am fifty years of age and have lived in Brooklin ten years. Five years ago I was taken ill with acute rheumatism, and have not done a day's work since. The trouble began with my feet and the swelling extended to my arms, wrists and shoulders, and finally settled in my neck. I had such pain that I was obliged to use a walking stick to ease me in moving about, and two and a half years ago the stick had to make way for a crutch. At this time I used to get up a little each day, but it was not long before I was denied even the privilege, and the next six months I was perfectly helpless and bed-ridden. I could not even turn my head or put a cup of tea to my mouth. I got completely discouraged after ineffectually being treated by two physicians and trying the different medicines recommended for my ailment. While I was in this helpless condition, a niece came in one day and prevailed on me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. After taking two boxes I felt a slight change for the better so I continued to take them, with the effect that I continued to improve slowly ever since. I now sleep well, have a good appetite and have gained in flesh. I can stand now, walk about and even get in and out of the buggy upon the occasion of my late visit to Columbus. Since that time, too, I feel stronger and my reason for still using a crutch is on account of my knees being weak and a desire to not overtax my strength. Judilee Day was the first time in twenty-two months that I was able to put my feet outside the door and I am satisfied had I tried Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in the first place instead of the other medicines used, I would have been spared much suffering. I am sure I owe my improvement to these Pills alone."

Mrs. Doolittle, who, as we have previously stated, attended her sister through her trying illness, was equally strong in her recommendations to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills having effected the radical change, and the three of us agreed that it would be only just that this case should be brought to the notice of suffering humanity in the hope that it might prove a blessing to more than Miss Rodd, who still continues to improve and who hopes to again be able to do her full day's work at no distant date.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure by going to the root of the disease, and renew and build up the blood, and strengthen the nerves, thus driving disease from the system. Avoid imitations by insisting that every box purchased is enclosed in a wrapping bearing the full trade mark—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People."

BELIEF IN UNLUCKY HOURS.
Common as is the superstition that Friday is the most unlucky of days and thirteen of numbers, the belief in unlucky hours is equally widespread on the European Continent and in the East. Gambetta was so firmly convinced that certain hours of the day are lucky and others unlucky that he would never commence any important undertaking or start on an important journey without consulting a famous reader of cards as to the auspicious hour, and President Faure, who was prudent enough to select a lucky hour for starting on his recent journey to Russia, is said to share Gambetta's superstition. President Carnot was less credulous, and selected an unlucky hour for starting on the journey to Lyons, where he was assassinated by Caserio. The superstition is so common in Paris that cards tastefully embellished and containing a list of "hours to be avoided" are extensively sold.

Breakfast Eggs.—Break eggs into a teacupful of water, simmer gently ten minutes, pepper and salt, and pour of brown bread. Serve hot.

Shirred Eggs.—Melt a tablespoonful of butter in a frying pan, add three tablespoons cream, season with salt and stir up from the bottom until thickens throughout. Plate slices of bread browned, but not crisped, put a medium of grated cheese, the shirred eggs on the top.

Fondue a L'italienne.—Slice over the fire, put half a pint into which has been stirred full of flour. Stir until it is consistency of melted butter, pound of finely grated cheese remove the pan from the fire, it is lukewarm beat in the four eggs, then the white of a stiff froth. Pour this mixture into a hot pan, fill it not more than full, bake twenty minutes hot from the oven, before

Spanish Sandwich.—Slice thin, spread a slice with mayonnaise and thin slices of hard-boiled other slice with stoned olives in a mayonnaise dressing, the two together.

Pickled Eggs.—These are lish eaten with fresh bread. Remove the shells from eggs and place the eggs in water jars. In a thin muslin spoon loosely in the following: For each half pint, half a teaspoonful of white mustard and three or four drops of the vinegar, a little brisly add a little quantity of vinegar. When it boils over the eggs. Keep them vinegar with a small quantity of spices on a small spoon may not discolor the cold tie up. They will be ready in two or three weeks.

Eggs for an Invalid.—If two teacups, put two tablespoons milk and a little salt; break an egg not more than hours old, set the cups in over boiling water and cool are well set.

Creamed Eggs.—Cut a slice round end of several hard-boiled and stand them upright in a dish. Pour over them a sauce of a teacupful of this which has been smoothly blended of softened butter, a colery salt and white pepper.

Tomatoes with Tomatoes.—Cut tablespoons until soft, season with salt and a little pepper. Just before serving, turn in eggs, stir one way until they are cooked.

Egg Mayonnaise.—Beat four eggs with a tablespoonful softened butter, salt and pepper and beat to a smooth paste, pour over the mayonnaise with sliced pickled eggs, stir one way until they are cooked.

Eggs with Fish.—Soak fish in cold water until

HOUSEHOLD

PIAZZA FURNISHING

First of all, the situation of the house must be considered before the awnings is decided. If large trees protect it from rays of the sun, then a fashionable shade of tan or brown may be used without fear, but if there is no such gratification, a darker color, such as pale grey, navy blue and brown and tan may be selected. Green is especially gratifying, but some of the new stripes, are, perhaps, more pleasing. Many housekeepers now prefer blinds rather than the awning on iron bars, but the appearance of width is desired, are decidedly preferable.

To make a piazza really livable should be some sort of floor and for that purpose nothing better than a rug of Japanese pattern, the coloring of the awning, large rug is better than several ones, as the latter are apt to be at the corners, and so become in a short time.

As to the furnishings, there should be a long rattan couch heavily upholstered cushions; a suitable or two, and a variety of wood or basket chairs, all should be low and wide and comfortable. The newest vogue is in the colonial style, has a back with extended sides, the occupant from a draughty arms, furnished with pockets are convenient receptacles for a magazine or a bit of fancy.

To add a touch of prettiness, whole palm fronds in jars, be set about, and one or two terra cotta vases for cut flowers, and a few field flowers which the children are sure to bring home from their daily

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