

Jeremy York.

I.

A light westerly wind had crowded the spacious waters of the Downs with anchored vessels. The colour, the apparel, the quaint bravery of the ships and mariners of the last century, made a noble and sparkling show of the marine pageant. The hour was a little before sundown, and the gush of warm red glory past the giant headland, went in a tincture of dark gold to the zenith, and thence pale as amber to the eastern sea-line, with a hot crimson head of cloud here and there vaguely defined upon the delicate radiance, whilst the horizon ran with a line as clear as though scored with the sweep of the leg of a pair of compasses.

It was an evening in the month of September. There were scarce fewer than three hundred sails of vessels gently straining at their hemp cables to the easterly set of the water. They had come together as if by magic, for that morning the historic tract of waters had steeped bare to the white terraces of the Forelands; whilst now the multitudinous shipping showed like a forest upon the sea, gay with fluttering pennons, delicate as a bit of peacocking with the wondrous intricacies of the rigging, brilliant with the red sheen of the waning luminary upon glass and brass; upon the writhing of gilt-work upon quarter-galleries and castellated sterns; upon innumerable figure-heads of fantastic device; upon yellow spars where the expiring flames in the west trembled in veins of burnished brass.

An old-world scene of this kind is not to be matched nowadays. The iron craft has entered the soul of the marine, and all is dull, flat, prosaic. Ships of fifty fashions filled the Downs that evening. There was the towering three-decker, grand as a palace afloat, with handsome galleries and spacious windows trembling to the lustre that rose to them from off the running water, the red coats of marines dotting the white lines that crowned her adamantine defences, shrouds as thick as cables soaring to huge round tops, from which, higher and higher yet, rose topmast and topgallant-mast and royal-mast into miracles of airy delicacy, from whose central spire languidly floated the pennon of the ship of the state. There was the East Indianman, outward bound, newly brought up, scarcely less regal in her way than the first-rate, with John Company's house-flag at the main under the dog-valet that glanced like a streak of fire to the railing of the splendour beyond the line of coast, the red flag at her peak, the grinning lips of cannon along her sides, the glitter of uniforms upon her quarter-deck, and rows of lively hearties aloft upon her topsail yards snugging the spaces of white clouds into lines of snow. There were the little bilander bound to the Mediterranean, rigged with a long lateen yard upon her mainmast; the highest-sterned pink; the round-bowed sturdy snow; the gallery of a hundred and fifty tons, whose long low hull, with ports for sweeps, gave her a most piratical look, with a malignant fancy to follow on a breathless calm and a stagnated vessel, towards which this same galley is impelled by her huge oars, as though she were some vast deadly marine insect subtly though swiftly stirring to the impulse of its antennae.

The scene was full of light and life. Standing on Deal beach, so quiet was everything ashore, so still this hour of sundown, you would have heard a blending of innumerable sounds softened into music by distance—the strains of fiddles in the nearer craft, the voices of men singing, the pleasant noise of bells, the clang and rattle of winches and capstans and windlasses, the chorusing of lungs of leather stowing the canvas, the shrill chirpings of boatswains' whistles. Then on a sudden broke the sudden harsh thunder of a gun from the line-of-battle ship. It was instantly followed by the graceful drooping of the many-coloured bunting to right and left denoting the hour of sunset; and now masthead and gaff end showed bare of the bunting that had but a little before made the mass of shipping appear like a floating city of banners; and high above the congregation of masts the towering fabric of the three-decker loomed grim and forbidding upon the darkness of the evening stealthily creeping like some dark curl of breeze out of the east.

II.

Whilst the sullen explosion of the gun was echoing along the Sandwich plains, a large, exceedingly handsome brig, that had been quietly pushing her way into the heart of the shipping, helped rather by the tide than by the faint fannings aloft, hauled up her courses and let go all halliards; and a minute after her anchor fell from the cathead and she swung quietly to the drag of her cable. She was from down Channel, a homeward bounder; but those were the ambling days of trade; no fuss was made over what we now call prompt despatch. It was merely a question of how the wind sat; and a six weeks' detention in the Downs was accepted as a commonplace incident in a voyage from the Thames to foreign parts.

A few minutes after the brig's anchor had been let go, a signal was made to the shore for a boat. The twilight was yet abroad; the line of the land dark against the rusty crimson of the west; the flag was to be readily descried, and there was a fluttering of air still to make a conspicuous thing of the bunting, amid the congregation of colourless spars and masts, amid which, here and there, you already saw the twinkling of a cabin lamp or of a lantern swinging pendulum-like from the fore-stay.

A tall young fellow of some three or four and twenty years of age stood in the gangway of the brig, impatiently gazing shorewards. He was distinctly handsome, spite of a certain haggardness and hollowness that seemed to betoken a considerable spell of illness. His eyes were large, dark and lustrous, full of intelligence, and, as one should say, of softness also. He stood a little above six feet, but with the stoop of a man who had not yet been able to stiffen himself out of a long term of prostrating sickness. His hair was long and abundant and curled plentifully upon his shoulders and back; an oddity in him, to engage at least a shore-going eye, accustomed to the perukes and bags and 'eyes' of the streets. He was habited plainly in a coat with vast cuffs and pockets and metal buttons, crimson breeches, coarse gray stockings, and shovel-shaped shoes heavy with large plate buckles. His hat was a three-cornered affair, and from time to time he fanned his face with it, whilst he continued to watch steadfastly and anxiously the approach of a boat from Deal beach.

"Here comes something that looks like a punt, at last, Mr. York," exclaimed the skipper of the brig, approaching him—a broad-beamed, bullet-headed bit of a man, standing on oval shanks and carrying a face as red as the flag he sailed under. "Hope you'll pick up ashore, I do. Remember my words—if you feel able to ship along with me by the time I am ready to sail, and that's giving you from now to December, why, all that I can say is, there's a berth ready for you."

"I am heartily obliged to you, sir, thank you from the depths of my soul for the kindness you've done me—indeed, Captain Settle, I shall never forget you; and if I am equal to going a-sailing again by December, you may reckon me already, sir, as upon the ship's articles."

They continued exchanging compliments after this pattern whilst the boat approached; presently it was alongside, and the tall young fellow whom the captain had addressed as Mr. York prepared to descend.

"I shall endeavour to be in London the week after next," he exclaimed, as he swung a moment by the man-ropes; "and I trust, captain, you'll not forget to put in a good word for me with the owners of the Coelia. It will be a matter of twenty-eight pounds to me, who am now in a condition to view even a sixpence as a very serious thing."

"Trust me, trust me, Mr. York, the captain exclaimed with a cheery wave of his hand.

The tall young fellow, named Jeremy York, lowered himself into the boat; a small bundle, apparently all the luggage he had—was handed down to him by the skipper; he flourished his hat; the crew of the brig, some of whom were at work upon the fore-castle and some aloft, gave him a cheer; and in a moment or two he was being swept shorewards by the vigorous arms of a brace of Deal boatmen.

It was now dark; the western hectic was gone, the stars floated in a showering of brilliant points to the liquid dusk, that hung glimmerless above the horizon, with here and there a round-browed cloud with a sheen upon it like the head of a snow-cloud rise to obscure a narrow space of the sparkling dome. The Foreland soared wan and massive from the white wash of the water at its base, then swept darkly to the flat land upon which were grouped the houses of the town of Deal, whose foreshore at this moment winked with its row of oil lamps, or a dim illumination in places of small lozenge-paved windows, and a brighter streak of light striking through an open door. High and dry upon the shingle rested groups of boats; and at intervals, as York approached the beach, he would catch a noise like to a rush of water upon shingle, and mark some little fabric newly launched, swiftly making off on a small buccannering cruise of its own amongst the shipping, or maybe to intercept some shadow hovering past the Goodwins with her hold full of silks, tea, and spirits, to be "run" before the morning, and under the noses, too, of the lookout aboard the first-rate, and the revenue people, trudging, solitary and austere, along the tall cliffs' edge or the long low line of beach.

"Many people in Deal just now?" York inquired of one of the boatmen.

"Town choke full, or allow," was the answer. "Take them there ships" with a nod in the starlight towards the phantasmal huddle over the stern of the boat: "one person from each craft 'ud be more'n enough to overflow us, and you'd say that one-third of every ship's company out yonder had come ashore."

"A bother!" cried the young fellow, a little petulantly; "small prospect of my hiring a bed, if it be as you say.—D'ye think there's a chance of my getting a night's rest in your town?"

"Why not?" answered the other boatman gruffly. "Ye're a seafaring man below, and there ought to be more'n soft plank proper for sailor's bones to be found vacant at Deal."

"No planking it for me, not if there's a mattress to be hired!" cried York. "Suffer such a fever as has kept me wasting for six months in Valparaiso, and you'll wish your skeleton marrowless, that it might give over aching."

"There are inns enough, anyway," said one of the men. "Troy Mother Puddell's first. She keeps the sign of the Cat o' Nine Tails, Snadown way. There should be a chance there; and o'll tell ye why; her liquor's cust bad. She's beknow'n for that, 'soides high terms. Taint that I name her 'cause I love her; but when a sick gent wants a bed, he ain't going to be hindered by a shilling too much, let alone a quality of liquor there's no call for him to drink."

As the man spoke, the boat's keel grounded on the shingle, and the little craft swept broadside to the beach, York, picking up his bundle, stepped out, and inquired the fare. The boatman demanded six shillings.

"See here," said he, pulling out a half-guinea piece, "this is all the money I possess, and I shall have no more until I can beg, borrow or steal it. If I deduct six shillings from this what does it leave me?"

"Give us foive," said the man.

"Three," he answered; "for God's sake, don't take advantage of a sick sailor!"

An altercation followed; York was resolved, the boatmen importunate and clamorous, and presently offensive. Other boatmen were attracted by the noise, and soon there was a crowd of Deal men listening to the shouts of their two brethren and the cold, determined remonstrances of Mr. Jeremy York.

At last the tall young fellow cried out, "Make it for shillings, then, and you shall be paid." The others agreed; the half-guinea was changed into silver; and York walked away, followed curiously by the eyes of the group of men who had assembled.

"Tall enough for a Maypole," said one of them.

"What's his sect?" exclaimed another. "Looks as if his hair grewed from a woman's head."

"Smite me," cried one of the two boatmen who had pulled the young fellow ashore, "if ever I takes a job again without first agreeing with the party as to terms. A dirty four shilling! But what's a man to dew? He sits with his half-guinea piece, and says 'tis all the money he's got in the world; and who's to know that it ain't a forged bit tew? But that's Silly Tucker's consarn, who's got the coin." He spat with disgust and lurched off, on which the group broke up, and made in several detachments for the various public-houses or inns in Beach Street.

To be Continued.

Ways of Reckoning Time.

THE DAY BEGINS AT SUNSET IN MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES.

Firing a Noon Gun at Teheran, Persia—Very Good Time in Africa if There is a Telegraph Line to Greenwich—Four Kinds of Railroad Time in El Paso.

The ordinary method of reckoning time in Mohammedan countries is from sunset to sunset. Twelve o'clock is at sunset, and this is the beginning of the day. Two periods of twelve hours then pass till the next sunset, whereupon everybody sets his watch, if he has one, backward or forward, according to the season. Of course, accurate time is impossible under such a system. The telegraphs and railroads in Syria, for example, keep anything but exact time, though it might be procured from the observatory at Beirut, which uses its mean time. In Teheran, Persia, a midday gun is fired by the time shown on a dial, and this in spite of the fact that the correct local mean time might be procured at the telegraph office, which is regulated daily by a time signal from Greenwich and is the time standard for all telegraphic business. But the merchants and the street car company keep gun time, and the railroad trains do not seem to require a time table at all, as they seldom start until full or required to start by a Government order.

There are out of the way parts of the world that keep very good time, because their clocks are regulated by telegraph from Greenwich and then the Greenwich mean time is reduced to local time according to longitude difference. Thus, at Lagos and the Gold Coast, West Africa, the local time is checked daily by telegraph from Greenwich and transmitted to all the telegraph offices in the colonies. The time at Accra is only forty-six seconds slower than that of Greenwich, and is the time used.

THROUGHOUT THE GOLD COAST.

Most any sort of time is kept in China. As a rule, the Chinese use an apparent sun time obtained from sundials. The foreigners at the ports on the coast use an approximate local time calculated from the Shanghai time, supplied by the telegraph companies. In the great city of Tientsin, with a million inhabitants, the time is determined by the municipal chronometer, which is the town-hall clock. It is supposed to be regulated every Saturday, when the community may set their watches, but it has been known to be in error at least three minutes.

Last December was the time when all the towns in Colombia were expected, thereafter, to use the time of Bogota, the capital. With this responsibility upon them, it is hoped that the public clocks of that city will improve in their timekeeping, for visitors at Bogota say it is nothing unusual for the public clocks to disagree by fully a quarter of an hour.

In India, the standard time for the whole of the peninsula is the mean time of the Madras Observatory, and this time is used on through lines of railroad, and in recording the time of sending telegrams to foreign countries. Local time is, however, used in most towns and villages, and it is announced by clocks striking, gongs, bells and guns, and signals being given from churches, treasury buildings, forts and telegraph offices. The local clocks are set daily by the time telegraphed from Madras, and each telegraph office has a closely printed table, filling about

fifty pages, giving the difference between Madras and local time for all the Government telegraph offices in India.

Not a few countries constantly use two standards of time. Railroads and telegraphs throughout Spain use Madrid time, but for all other purposes, the official time is determined by the MERIDIAN OF EACH LOCALITY.

Throughout Russia, St. Petersburg time is used for telegraphic purposes, and each place has its own local time besides. In Portugal the country towns keep their local time very roughly, but Lisbon and the railroad and telegraph services have the time of the Tapada Royal Observatory. There is considerable confusion in the Netherlands, and if one's watch does not agree with the town clocks as he travels through the land it doesn't follow that he has a poor timekeeper. In the railroad stations, telegraph and post offices the exact time of the Greenwich Observatory will be found. In many towns Amsterdam time is in use, and it is about twenty minutes faster than reliable clocks in many other towns that use Greenwich time; and still other towns use their own local time, so the Netherlands do not lack for variety in time standards.

Every place in Newfoundland use St. John's time, for all purposes, excepting Heart's Content, which has special privileges as a cable station. For local purposes this little town employs local time. Every day it receives a signal from London giving the Greenwich time, and as the difference in time between the two points is 3 hours, 33 minutes and 33 seconds, it is only necessary to keep the local clocks that much slow on Greenwich time to have the exact local time. But in the cable office all foreign business is transmitted with Greenwich time.

IN GREAT BRITAIN

Greenwich mean time is the standard, and is used for all purposes nearly everywhere. Among the few exceptions is the city of Canterbury, which uses a time about four minutes fast on Greenwich, and clocks at a few railroad stations are kept one or two minutes fast. Ireland uses the time of Dublin, and so all the clocks in the island are 25 minutes 22 seconds slow on Greenwich time.

The official time throughout Argentina is that of the city of Cordova, which is telegraphed every day, to control the timepieces in the various cities. It is used everywhere in the railroad and telegraph offices, but many citizens in the provinces prefer to use local time to doubtful accuracy. The people of the Hawaiian Islands try to keep their timepieces 10 hours 30 minutes slower than those of Greenwich, and call this standard time. At Belize, British Honduras, the clock over the Court House, which furnishes the time for the town is usually regulated by the time kept by the ships in the harbor. The town of Nukualofa, which furnishes the time for the entire Tonga group, is in west longitude, but because all business relations, except with Samoa, are with places in east longitude, the east longitude time for the day of the week and month is kept.

DOCTOR'S WARNING.

A Noted Physician Says Consumption Comes From Cats and Birds.

If you want to avoid consumption don't keep canary birds.

If you will keep them, don't let them "kiss" you with their beaks.

Don't keep parrots, rabbits, rats, cats, mice, pigeons, flies, dogs, hens.

These are the conclusions of Dr. A. Tucker Wise, M.R.C.S., Eng., L.R.C.P., Lond., Diplome Suisse Federal, given in an article in the Lancet.

Caged birds and domesticated animals are particularly liable to disease because of the unnatural conditions under which they are kept. Tuberculosis is common among cage-birds.

Parrots are also attacked by tuberculosis. Psittacosis, an infectious disease of parrots, gives pneumonia to men. Nocard described its bacillus in Paris in 1893.

Tuberculous dogs and cats spread infection by nasal and other discharges and by sores upon their bodies.

Canaries are more commonly tuberculous than other cage-birds. The symptoms are a husky cough, inability to moult and gradual emaciation. Hens suffer in the same ways. "Pip" has not yet proved contagious to human beings—though it may be—but "rickets" and "scrofula" are tuberculous and infectious. Gilbert, Roger and Cadot have infected rabbits with bird tuberculosis. Dr. Wise gives some startling instances. In one family, living in a large, well-built house, about twenty or thirty birds were kept, partly in the house. Eight cases of tuberculous disease developed in this family. There was only one death—that of an athletic young man who had birds in his bedroom. The others yielded to treatment or change of climate.

But the most remarkable case described is that of a family in Silesia. The four grandparents had lived to an average age of seventy-eight years and none had consumption. The family kept many birds, and father and mother and nine sons and daughters died of consumption one after another. Two probably there is no danger in keeping perfectly healthy pets, but cage life is prejudicial to health, and sick birds can poison a whole household by tuberculous dust, either breathed into the lungs or settling upon milk, butter, cheese, jellies, upon milk, butter, cheese, jellies, pastry.

On the other hand, pets readily catch tuberculous diseases from human patients, so that honors are easy.

THE EXTREME VARIETY.

Pa, what is an extreme optimist? An idiot who fancies he'll find his wife asleep at 2 a.m.

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SIZE OF THE OCEANS.

Few Statistics About How Much Water There is in the Different Seas.

An observant man once remarked that most men seem to be as ignorant about the size of the sea as they are of the distance between the heavenly planets. Here are a few facts: The Pacific covers 68,000,000 miles; the Atlantic, 30,000,000, and the Indian Ocean, 12,000,000. The Arctic and Antarctic, 10,000,000. To stow away the contents of the Pacific it would be necessary to fill a tank one mile long, one mile wide and one mile deep every year for 440 years. Put in figures, the Pacific holds in weight 948,000,000,000,000 tons. The Atlantic averages a depth of not quite three miles. Its waters weigh 355,000,000,000,000 tons, and a tank to contain it would have each of its sides 450 miles long. The figures of the other oceans are in the same startling proportions. It would take two gallons of water in the world 2,000,000 years to flow over Niagara. A tank to hold it would have to measure nearly 1,000 miles long each of its sides.

METHOD IN HER LENIENCY.

Why is it, they asked, that you let your husband have his own way in everything? Because, she replied, I like to have some one to blame for things going wrong.

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