

From the proof sheets of "Hedley's Italy and the Italian," now in press.

### A MAN OVERBOARD.

"The pleasure of our passage was much marred by the loss of a man overboard. When within a few hundred miles of the Azores, we were overtaken by a succession of severe squalls. Forming almost instantaneously on the horizon, they moved down like phantoms on the ship. For a few moments after our struck us, we would be buried in foam and spray, and then heavily rolling on a high sea. We however prepared ourselves, and soon got every thing snug. The light sails were all in—the jibs, top-gallants and sparker furled close, the main-sail clewed up, and we were crashing along under close reefed topsails, when a man who was coming down from the last reef, slipped as he stepped on the bulwarks and went over backwards into the waves. In a moment that most terrific of all cries at sea, "A man overboard! a man overboard!" flew like lightning over the ship. I sprang upon the quarter just as the poor fellow with his "fearful human face," riding on the top of a billow, fled past. In an instant all was commotion: plank after plank was cast overboard for him to seize and sustain himself on, till the ship could be put about and the boat lowered.

The first mate, a bold, fiery fellow, leaped into the boat that hung at the quarter side of the deck, and in a voice so sharp and stern, I seem to hear it yet, shouted, "in men—in men!" But the poor sailors hung back—the sea was too wild. The second mate sprang to the side of the first, and the men ashamed to leave both their officers alone, followed. "Cut away the lashings," exclaimed the officer—the knife glanced around the ropes—the boat fell to the water—rose on a huge wave far over the deck, and drifted rapidly astern. I thought it could not live a moment in such a sea, but the officer who held the helm was a skillful seaman. Twice in his life he had been wrecked, and for a moment I forgot the danger, in the admiration of his cool self-possession.—He stood erect, the helm in his hand—his flashing eye embracing the whole pearl at a single glance, and his hand bringing the head of the little boat on each high sea that otherwise would have swamped her. I watched them till nearly two miles astern, when they lay to, to look for the lost sailor. Just then I returned my eye to the Southern horizon and saw a squall blacker and heavier than any we had before encountered rushing down upon us. The captain also saw it, and was terribly excited. He afterwards told me that in all his sea life he never was more so.

He called for a flag, and springing into the shrouds, waved it for their return. The gallant fellows obeyed the signal, and pulled for the ship. But it was slow work, for the head of the boat had to be laid on, almost every wave. It was now growing dark, and if the squall should strike the boat before it reached the vessel, there was no hope for it. It would either go down at once, or drift away into the surrounding darkness, to struggle out the night as it could. I shall never forget that scene. All along the southern horizon, between the black water and the black heavens, was a white streak of tossing foam. Nearer and clearer every moment it boiled and roared on its track. Between us it appeared at intervals that little boat, like a speck on the crest of the billows, and then sunk apparently engulfed forever. One moment the squall would seem to gain on it beyond the power of escape, and then it would detach itself, as I stood and watched them both, and yet could not tell which would reach us first, the excitement amounting to perfect agony. Seconds seemed lengthened into hours. I could look steadily on that gallant crew, now settling the question of life and death to themselves and nephews, as they would be almost unmanly in the middle of the Atlantic, and encompassed by a storm. The sea was making fast, but yet that frail thing rode it like a duck. Every time she sunk away she carried my heart down with her, and when she remained in a longer time than usual, I would think it was all over, and cover my eyes in horror—the next moment she would appear between us and the black clouds literally covered with foam and spray.

The Captain knew, as he said afterwards that a few minutes more would decide the fate of his officers and crew. He called for his trumpet, and springing up the ratlines, shouted over the roar of the blast and waves, "Pull away my brave fellows, the squall is coming—give way, my hearties!" and the hold fellows "give way" with a will. I could see their ashen faces quiver as they rose from the water, while the life-boat sprung to their strokes down the billows like a panther on the leap. On the same, and on came the blast. It was the wildest struggle I ever gazed on, but the gallant little boat conquered. Oh, how my heart leaped when she at length shot round the stern, and rising on a wave far above our lee quarter, shook the water from her drenched head as if in delight to find her shelter again.

The chains were fastened, and I never pulled with such right good will on a rope as the one which brought that boat up to the vessel's side. As the heads of the crew appeared over the bulwarks, I could have hugged the brave fellows in transport. As they stepped on deck not a question was asked—no report given—but "Forward men!" broke from the Captain's lips. The vessel was trimmed to meet the blast, and we were again bounding on our way. If that squall had pursued the course of all the former ones, we must have lost our crew; but when nearest the boat (and it seemed to me the foam was breaking over a hundred rods off) the wind suddenly veered, and held the cloud in check, so that it swung round close to the bows.

The poor sailor was gone; he came not back again. It was his birth-day, (he was 25 years old) and, alas, it was his death-day. Whether, a bold swimmer, he saw at a distance his companions hunting hopefully for him, and finally, with his heart growing cold with despair, beheld them return back to the ship, and the ship itself lose its spare away from him for ever, or whether the sea took him under we know not. We saw him no more—and a gloom fell on the whole ship. There were but few of us in all, and we felt his loss. It was a wild and dark night; death had been among us, and had left us with sad and serious hearts. And as I walked to the stern and looked back on the foam and tumult of the vessel's wake in which the poor sailor disappeared, I involuntarily murmured the mariner's hymn, closing with the sincere prayer—

"Oh! sailor boy, sailor boy, peace to thy soul!"

At length the winds lulled, the clouds broke away, and a large space of blue sky and bright stars appeared overhead. The dark storm-cloud hung along the distant horizon, over which the lightning still played, while the distant thunder broke at intervals over the deep. The black ocean moaned on its heavy sobbings, and the drenched and staggering ship rolled heavily on its restless bosom, and the great night encompassed all. This was solitude so deep and awful that my heart seemed to throb audibly in my bosom. My eyes ached with the effort to pierce the surrounding darkness, and find something to relieve the loneliness of the scene. At length the rising moon showed its bright disc over a cloud, tinging its black edge with silver, and pouring a sea of light on a sea of darkness, till the waves gleamed and sparkled as if just awakened to life and hope.—The moon never looked so lovely before; it seemed to have come out in the heavens on purpose to bless and cheer us.

### IMPORTANT TO MARINERS.

The following letter from Dr. Fansher to the President of the Royal Society of London will attract the attention of mariners. Since he first published his discovery, he has contrived a simple apparatus for raising a tide in a tubular of water, with an electrical machine—and the tide is produced by the positive electrical fluid, natural to the water, as in the ocean.

"Sir.—On performing an electrical experiment some years ago I noticed with surprise a protuberance in the surface of a bowl of water; and hence took the hint that the cause of the tides was to be accounted for on the doctrine of electricity. Further experiments fully, in my opinion, justify the reasonableness of that hypothesis; that the electric fluid, with which the whole circumference of our ocean is perpetually charged, attracts the heavenly bodies, and gives laws to the ebb and flow of the sea. But Sir, whether mankind will reap any particular advantage from this discovery or not, it has, as I conceive, opened the door to one of importance, and which it may serve to obviate an evil that has ever been a desideratum.

"You must be aware, sir, that voyagers have sometimes been inaccurately deceived in their reckoning at sea; and on taking an observation to their astonishment they have found the ship several leagues distant from that spot on the ocean which from their last observations and their log-book calculations, they had reason to expect; and chagrin, danger, and sometimes disaster and capture, has ensued. These facts are well known.

"Parlon my enthusiasm, sir, if I say that no longer is that attraction which occasions the tides to be wrapped in mystery; but what I have already felicitated myself likewise on having developed, the mysterious cause of some aberration in the undulating laws of nautical science, happily calculated to exonerate the faithful mariner from unmerited censure from a misfortune which hitherto no mortal man could forecast or anticipate. The secret is this, viz: that the attraction between the electricity of the sea and that of the thunder cloud is capable of veering the ship imperceptibly out of her proper course, especially when a thunder cloud, not within striking distance, shall linger longer on one side of the vessel, thereby giving it two motions, ahead and sideways.

"And, sir, why should it be thought strange for the amazing power that lifts a portion of the water of the globe, which falls to the heavenly bodies in its rotary motion, thereby producing the flux and reflux, that electrical force which appears to reverse the laws of gravitation, and rears the stupendous moving pillars of sand from the earth to the clouds in the desert, is capable also of attracting and veering a ship from its proper course in a thunder storm, as it is well known by mariners that it is the case in water-spout operations.

"EXPERIMENT.—Float a ship in miniature in a bowl of water, and give it a headway; then, as it moves, present a negatively electrified surface, representing the cloud towards one side of the vessel, and it will have two motions, head and broadside way; and the mystery of the mariner having been deceived in his reckoning is explained.

"Was this doctrine fully believed by mariners and as well understood as that of the variation of the compass, of the trade winds, the evil alluded to might be anticipated, and perhaps in a measure remedied by calculating for leeway; and I have thought of a mariner's electrometer, for ascertaining the amount of attraction on the vessel in a thunder storm, or in the neighborhood of water-spouts.

I have the honor to be, Your Obedient Servant, S. FANSHER.

"N. B.—A mariner saw my experiment with my ship in miniature, in a bowl of water, expressed his astonishment, and declared at once "he had not a doubt of the truth of this theory; for he remarked, that his and a number of ships were becalmed at a certain place up the Baltic; and at once the vessels were all on the move, yet there was no wind or current, and that the crews had all to take out boats and tow, to keep the ships off from the rocks."

In his book in trying to withdraw his attention it adhered to his raven coat. The sight was now extremely laughable; blacky shook his head, but he lost not the envelope; then attempting to fly, he snared a considerable height in the air skimming buffy around under his wings he dropped and was taken by the way down to the water, where he was buffed against each other, till the bet was decided by a larger quantity being caught than the stipulation of the bet required and in less time.

### ANTIQUITY OF THE I. O. O. F.

We find in an English paper the following extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Cooper, at a meeting of the order, in Greenock, Scotland, on the occasion of a celebration of the institution of their Widow and Orphan Fund, which will give our readers some idea of the standing and condition of the order in the British Islands.

Mr. Cooper said:—"The origin of the order of Odd Fellows is of great antiquity. It was first established by the Roman soldiers in the camp, during the reign of Nero, in the year 53. At that time they were called 'Fellow Citizens.' The present name was given by Titus Caesar, in the year 79, from the singularity of their noting, and from their fidelity to each other by night or by day, and by their fidelity to their country, and their love of the good of the human race. At the same time, as a pledge of friendship, presented them with a dispensation engraved on a plate of gold, bearing different emblems, such as the sun, moon, stars, the lamb, the lion, the dove, and other symbols of morality.

The first account of the order being spread in other countries, is in the fifth century, when it was established in the Spanish dominions, and in the sixth century, by King Henry in Portugal, and in the 12th century, it was established in France, and in the reign of John de Neville in England, attended by five knights from France, who formed a Loyal Grand Lodge of Honor in London, which order remained until the 18th century, (on the reign of George the Third), when the part of them who were called 'Fellow Citizens,' and a portion of them remain up to this day. The Lodge which now remain are very numerous throughout the world, and call themselves the 'Original Odd Fellows,' being a portion of the original body. The Manchester unit is of more ancient date, although there is no doubt of its emanating from the same source. Its first introduction into Manchester was about the year 1800, by a few individuals from the union in London, who formed a Lodge, and continued to exist, with some differences, until the year 1810, when some of them endeavored to declare themselves Independent.—They have kept their word—Independent they have been since.

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