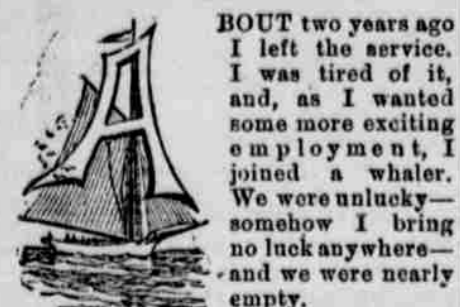


LONG TIME A-WAITING.
It's a long time a-waiting
For the ship from o'er the blue
But it's sailing and a-sailing
And in time will come to you.
Unless, perchance, fierce storms arise,
And cruel winds from angry skies
Should drive to where death hidden lies,
The ship that sails for you.
It's a long time a-waiting
For reward that's overclouded;
The recognition for your loss
The tardy world owes you;
But it will come, however late,
Unless, perchance, Death opens the gate
And loads you out while yet you wait
The wage the world owes you.
It's a long time a-waiting
For the joy that should be yours;
But joy and recompense will come
To that soul who endures;
And over all the storms that rise—
Above the clouds—sunny skies,
And Heaven holds a glad surprise
For that soul who endures.

Steer N. W.

A Mystery Yarn.



ABOUT two years ago I left the service. I was tired of it, and, as I wanted some more exciting employment, I joined a whaler. We were unlucky—somehow I bring no luck anywhere—and we were nearly empty.

One bright afternoon, just after eight bells, I made up the log and took it to the captain's cabin. I knocked at the door, and as nobody answered I walked in. I thought it odd the captain hadn't answered me, for there he was sitting at his desk, with his back to me, writing. Seeing he was employed I told him I had brought the log, laid it down on the table behind him, and, as he made no answer, I walked out. I went on deck and the first person I met was the captain. I was puzzled—I could not make out how he had got there before me.

"How did you get up here?" I said. "I just left you writing in your cabin." "I have not been in my cabin for the last half hour," the captain answered; but I thought he was chaffing, and didn't like it.

"There was someone writing at your desk just now," I said; "if it wasn't you, you had better go and see who it is. The log is made up. I have left it in your cabin, sir," and with that I walked sulkily away. I had no idea of being chaffed by the captain, to whom I had taken a dislike.

"Mr. Brown," said the captain, who saw I was nettled, "you must have been mistaken, my desk is locked. But come—we'll go down and see about it."

I followed the captain into the cabin. The log was on the table, the desk was closed, and the cabin was empty.

"You see, Mr. Brown," he said, laughing, "you must have been mistaken, the desk is locked."

I was positive. "Someone may have picked the lock," I said.

"But they couldn't have closed it again," the captain suggested; "but to satisfy you, I will open it and see if the contents are safe, though there is not much here to tempt a thief."

He opened the desk, and there—stretched right across it—was a sheet of paper with the words "Steer N. W." written in an odd, cramped hand.

"You are right, Mr. Brown; somebody has been here. This is some hoax."

Not to appear to suspect anyone in particular, the captain determined to have up all the crew. We had them up, one by one. We examined them and made all those who could write write "Steer N. W.," but we gained no clue. One thing was very clear—it could not have been old Shiel, who was proved to have been forward at the time I was in the captain's cabin. The mystery remained unsolved.

That evening I sat with the captain in his cabin. We were neither of us inclined to be talkative. I tried to think of home, and the pleasure it would be to see the old folks again, but still my thoughts always wandered back to that mysterious writing. I tried to read, but I caught myself furtively peeping at the desk, expecting to see the figure sitting there.

The captain had not spoken for some time, and was sitting with his face buried in his hands. At last he suddenly looked up and said:

"Suppose we alter her course to northward, Mr. Brown?"

I don't know what it was; I cannot hope to make you understand the feeling in my mind that followed those words; it was a sense of relief from a horrible nightmare. I was ashamed of the childish pleasure I felt, but I could not help answering eagerly, "Certainly; shall I give the order?"

I waited no longer, but hurried on deck and altered the course of the vessel.

It was a clear, frosty night, and as I looked at the compass before going below I felt strangely pleased, and caught myself chucking and rubbing my hands; at what, I cannot say—I didn't know then, but a great weight had been taken off my mind.

I went down to the cabin, and found the captain pacing up and down the small space. He stopped as I came in, and looking up said, abruptly:

"It can do no harm, Mr. Brown."

"If this breeze continues," I answered, "we can hold on for thirty hours or so, but then, I should think

"But then—we shall find ice. How's the wind?"

"Steady, north by east."

I had the morning watch to keep next day. I was too restless to sleep after it, so I kept on deck the whole of the day. Even that did not satisfy me. I was continually running up

into the tops with my glass, but every time I came down disappointed. The captain was as quiet as myself. Something we expected to happen, but of what it was to be we could form no idea. The second officer, I believe, thought us both crazy; indeed, I often wondered myself at the state I was in. Evening came, and nothing had turned up.

Morning came, and with the first gray light I was on deck. It was bitterly cold. There was a mist low down on the horizon; I waited impatiently for it to lift. It lifted soon, and I could not be mistaken—beyond it I could see the shimmer of ice. I sent down to tell the captain, who came on deck directly.

"It is no use, Mr. Brown," he said; "you must put her about."

"Wait one moment, the mist is lifting more, it will be quite clear directly."

The mist was, indeed, lifting rapidly. Far to the north and west we could see the ice stretching away in one unbroken field. I was trying to see whether there appeared any break in the ice toward the west, when the captain, seizing my arm with one hand, and pointing straight ahead with the other, exclaimed:

"Good heavens! there is a ship there."

The mist had risen like a curtain, and there, sure enough, about three miles ahead, was a ship seemingly firmly packed in the ice. We stood looking at it in silence. There was some meaning after all in that mysterious warning, was the first thought that suggested itself to me.

"She's nipped bad, sir," said old Shiel, who, with the rest of the crew, was anxiously watching our new discovery. I was trying to make her out with the glass, when the flash of a gun, quickly followed by the report, proved that she had seen us. Up went the flag, union downward. We needed no signal to know her distress. The captain ordered the second officer off into the boat. I watched him as he made his way over the ice with a few of the men toward the ship. They soon returned with eight of the ship's crew. It was a dismal account they gave of their situation. They might have saved their way out of the ice, but the ship was so injured that she could not have floated an hour. The largest of their boats had been stove in, the others were hardly seaworthy. They were, preparing, however, to take to them as a last resource when our welcome arrival put an end to their fears. Another detachment was soon brought off, and the captain with the remainder of his crew was to follow immediately.

I went down to my cabin and tried to think over the singular fate which had made us the preservers of this ship's crew. I could not divest myself of the idea that some supernatural agency was connected with that paper in the desk, and I trembled at the thought of what might have been the consequence if we had neglected the warning. The boat coming alongside interrupted my reverie. In a few seconds I was on deck.

I found the captain talking to a fine, old, sailor-like looking man, whom he introduced to me as Captain Squires. Captain Squires shook hands with me, and we remained talking some time. I could not keep my eyes off his face; I had a conviction that I had seen him somewhere, where I could not tell. Every now and then I seemed to catch at some clue, which vanished as soon as touched. At last he turned round to speak to some of his men. I could not be mistaken—there was the long white hair, the brown coat. He was the man I had seen writing in the captain's cabin.

That evening the captain and I told the story of the paper to Captain Squires, who gravely and in silence listened to our conjectures. He was too thankful for his escape out of such imminent peril to question the means by which it had been brought about. At the captain's request he wrote "Steer N. W." We compared it with the original writing. There could be no doubt of it. It was the same old cramped hand.

Can anyone solve the mystery?

Power in Our Powder.

"Velocity and pressure," explained the powder mill superintendent, "are the two main requisites in proving powder. The Government is very specific in its contracts. It demands that when fired under service conditions in the gun for which it is intended powder must give to the projectile a muzzle velocity of at least a certain number of feet per second without producing a pressure of more than a certain number of tons to the square inch. For modern guns the velocity required varies from 2000 to 2800 feet per second, and the pressure is not allowed to exceed fifteen tons to the square inch. In some of our guns of the present day the amount of energy stored up in the powder charge is so tremendous as to be almost incredible. The limit of energy upon the projectile cannot be estimated, so vast are the possibilities.

"For example, I may cite the Oregon's 13-inch rifles. Five hundred and fifty pounds of powder in these guns impart to an 100-pound shot a velocity of 2100 feet per second, and the energy of the projectile is nearly 34,000 foot tons. This power is sufficient to lift such a vessel as the Oregon eight feet out of the water.

"These screens between the cannon and the breastworks are electric chronographs 100 feet apart from each other and the cannon, and they register the time of the projectile's flight with absolute accuracy."

"And absolute accuracy is—what?"

"The millionth part of a second."—San Francisco Call.

Montana clipped 20,000,000 pounds of wool last year.

"To get all you can" is never the motto of a successful and honorable man. The law of mutual service is the law of all honorable business.

Two-thirds of the continental area of the United States lies west of the Mississippi River. To-day this vast area is inhabited by only 21,000,000 people, while the one-third of our area which lies to the east of that river is inhabited by 55,000,000.

Long range guns and rifles were supposed to have put cavalry out of action before our experience in the Philippines demonstrated that it is still as essential an arm of the military service as any other. The South African campaign has proved also that even the infantry must now be mounted to raise it to the highest degree of efficiency. The horse is still a great factor in war.

In 1889 a law was passed in Germany which made it compulsory for every German with an income of \$450 or more to insure himself against illness and death. In 1898 there were 11,200,000 persons in Germany thus insured, and so many of these suffered from consumption that thirty-seven of the insurance companies erected at their own expense a sanitarium for the care of these persons.

There is a church in Boston which is popularly known as the "Church of the Holy Beanblowers," in allusion to the fact that on its tower are angels with trumpets at their mouths. Another goes by the name of the "Church of the Holy Thermometer," because there is a big thermometer on its front; and still another is called the "Church of the Kindergarten Steeple," because it has one tall spire surrounded by several small ones.

When it was proposed by the Federal Postoffice Department to authorize letter carriers to register letters received at the homes of the writers there was some doubt as to whether the undertaking could be made practical. But careful experiment has dissipated all doubt and shown the value of the innovation. So pleased with the new system are the public and the department that it has been extended to fifty-five additional cities, and eventually it will embrace all of the 777 free delivery offices.

Discipline is sometimes carried to ridiculous lengths in English stores, if one may judge from a case which recently found its way into the papers "on the other side." A dry goods merchant in a London suburb went so far as to summarily dismiss a saleswoman because she committed the heinous offense of smiling during business hours. Whether her employer had formerly been in the undertaking business and thought even the mildest form of hilarity unprofessional did not appear, but as the girl obtained substantial damages for being "fired" without notice it is likely that the merchant will no longer object to his employes smiling, even if he is inclined to pull a long face himself.

One hopeful thing is that, no matter how much the romanticists and the misogynists discuss the question of happy marriages, young people will go thoughtlessly and blithely on in the same old way. The woman hater may be unconvinced of women's enduring charm. "The hardest task is to persuade the erroneous, obstinate misogynist that any discourse acknowledging their worth can go beyond poetry," wrote Whitlock. But misogyny belongs only to age. Romance is youth's own, and so long as youth is in the world so long will melancholy statistics be poolpoohed and marriage be popular. Carlyle was not wrong when he said: "The age of romance has not ceased; it never ceases; it does not, if we think of it, so much as very sensibly decline."

Much has been said in condemnation of the ugly advertising signs which deface the landscape wherever one turns, but little has been done to restrict the evil. It may, indeed, seem a trivial matter, in comparison with the reckless destruction of great forests and the demolition of such wonderful natural beauties as the Palisades. It is obviously of vastly greater importance to save the scenery than to protect it from petty disfigurements, but there is no reason why both movements should not go forward hand in hand. In the countries where civilization is older one would naturally look for a precedent in this matter, and in France they seem to have settled it in an ingenious way by adopting the policy of taxing the farmer who allows disfiguring signs on his property a price which is not covered by that paid by the advertiser.

BEES IN A BATHROOM.
A Baltimore Family Supplied With Honey by a Big Working Colony.

Honey bees of different times and countries have chosen many peculiar locations for their homes, but none have shown themselves more domestic in their choice than a colony in north-west Baltimore, which has invaded a dwelling-house, and cannot be induced to go elsewhere. This colony, which has thousands of members, has pre-empted for its own use a part of the dwelling 1945 Harlem avenue, occupied by Mr. E. J. Godman.

When that gentleman moved into the house, several years ago, he noticed that a large number of bees collected around the windows of the bathroom, on the second floor, and, on observing them closely, he saw that they came out and went into the opening in the house wall through which the pipe from the bathtub ran. He concluded that there was a hive somewhere in the vicinity of the bathroom, and on cutting out a small section of the flooring he found in the vacant space under the floor, and between the joists, on which the flooring rested, what seemed to him a million bees, with a large amount of honey.

Tubs and large pans were brought into requisition to hold the honey. The honey combs stood at right angles to the joists. They were an inch in thickness and about ten inches square. The squares of honeycomb, set on edge side by side, completely filled the space between the beams. To take them it was only necessary to detach them at each side from the beam and lift them out. The members of the family had all the honey they wanted and it was freely distributed to neighbors and friends.

The "robbing" took place in the fall. A small amount was left for the bees to subsist upon. Mr. Godman thought it would be better to transfer the bees to a hive and take them out of the house. There were some disadvantages connected with their presence in the bathroom now, especially since the hole had been bored in the floor to get at them. The children could enter the room and take the bees up from their place by the double handrail, and smooth them along their laps with their hands, but the workers of the colony were opposed to certain members of the family, and stung them whenever they got a chance. That was why Mr. Godman desired to put them in a hive in the yard.

The hive was prepared, and an effort was made to induce the bees to enter it, but the effort was not a success. It brought about a schism in the colony, however, and nearly all the bees went away. During the blizzard last February the colony that remained beneath the bathroom perished, and Mr. Godman thought he had gotten rid of the bees.

About a year after the exodus of the bees a swarm that seemed larger than the one that had gone away returned to the Harlem avenue house and reoccupied their old quarters. While entering through the aperture in the wall the bees swarmed about the waste pipe, and formed a bundle about as large as a half-bushel basket. They have remained there ever since, supplying the family with honey at intervals.—Baltimore American.

A Tale of Three Brothers.

Three brothers, all rich, live together in a fine old home not a thousand miles from Frankfort. They are bachelors, and probably none of them will ever marry, for the youngest will soon be sixty years old. It is singular how they live. The two younger ones are inseparable companions, and the oldest one does not speak to either of them. Years ago the quarrel happened—no one knows why—and though their enmity must have burned itself out long ago, the habit of not speaking has grown too strong for them, and will no doubt continue, like their habit of bachelorhood, till the end. There is a story to prove this assertion. The oldest brother once lay very ill. It was thought that he would die, and his fraternal enemies came in for the final reconciliation. A moving scene followed. They shook hands, wept, each blamed only himself, and all was forgiven and forgotten. But at the end the sick man said coldly, in his weak voice: "This don't count, you know, if I get well." "Oh, that was understood," the others answered. "We insisted on that before we would consent to come in." The head on the pillow nodded; the weak voice said: "Good-bye, boys," and a fortnight later the owner of those two properties was downstairs, dining heartily, pointing, in the old way, to the bread or the water instead of asking for them, and when signs would not avail, getting up and helping himself in preference to breaking the long, long silence that had been resumed once more.—Philadelphia Record.

Unfortunate.

There are many Joneses in this world, but perhaps not quite so many as people think. Not long ago two friends met who had not seen each other for ten years, since their school days.

"Whom did you marry, Billy?" asked one.

"A Miss Jones—of Philadelphia," replied Billy, who was a trifle sensitive.

"You always did take to the name 'Jones.' I can remember when we went to school together, you used to tag round after a little snub-nosed Jones girl."

"I remember it, too," said Billy. "She's the girl I married."

The treaty of peace between the United States and Spain was written in French, as also have been the majority of international documents during the last two centuries.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.
Road Mending.

WITH the opening of the riding and driving season, and especially with the reappearance of bicycles, we shall hear much of good roads. It is wished that in this country we might see as much as we hear of them. Where the highways are improved they are valued, and people who use them are never again willing to go back to the kind of trough of sand and mud that passes for a turnpike in many parts of this country. The good roads movement has not ceased from moving, and cheering news comes, every now and again, of the laying of asphalt in cities and of macadam in the country, yet so little is done in proportion to what ought to be done, and must be done, that one loses heart, now and again, and fears that for the next century this country is doomed to travel over almost the worst roads in all the world. A traveler who has just reached the East, on his return from a wheeling tour of nearly three years around the world, reports that he found the roads in Illinois worse than those in China, which were heretofore supposed to be the meanest that could be found in any land that had roads at all.

One of the chief causes of the slowness with which reform progresses will probably be found in the fact that in our country districts the farmers discover that good roads do not stay good forever. They appear to think that their whole duty is done when a proper foundation is laid and it is smoothed by a roller. They do not think in this wise of their houses or their churches or their farms. They know that buildings need repair; they know that trees need trimming; they know that fields need plowing, and they gather the stones and stumps out of them every now and then; yet the road that passes their doors and is used by hundreds of thousands of persons, is buried in snow in winter, is scored by rain and pierced by frost, receives no attention from them whatever. They do these things better abroad. They first make a road with a clean, broad, properly graded surface, then they appoint men whose daily business it is to go over it and make repairs.

Queens County has spent millions of dollars for macadam, and it has secured the best roads in the State of New York. If they are allowed to go to ruin the work will all have to be done over again at a tremendous expense. A road mender can keep at least a couple of miles repaired; and his pay will not be more than a couple of dollars a day, unless he is in politics. It is wiser to pay this sum than to have a bill of thousands of dollars to meet at the end of some years. In Europe the menders watch the highways just as track walkers watch the railroads. Whenever a heavy rain has started a little channel in the pavement it will widen and deepen with every succeeding rainfall until that part of the pavement is torn beyond repair. A little tamping with gravel, a stous put in the channel, a shovel of earth here and there, a cart rolled obliterated, a loose stone thrown aside now and then will keep the road in serviceable condition for a life time. The way not to do it is fluely illustrated in Prospect Park, where a couple of men of intelligence and a little more diligence than we see in public service would make farther repairs needless; but absolute neglect follows the surfacing of every path and drive. The stitch in time that saves nine is never applied. It is not sufficient to make good roads. It is just as important to keep them good.—New York Mail and Express.

The Economic Phase.

Speaking of good roads as an economic proposition, there is no doubt that if the common highways of the United States were placed in anything like proper condition they would save millions of dollars annually. A Government expert estimates it at half a billion dollars, or one-half the appropriations of the famous "Billion Dollar Congress."

There was a national good roads movement on a different principle early in the century. It included the building of a national turnpike from Washington to St. Louis. The advent of railroads nipped the movement in the bud, and all that remains of it today is the Cumberland turnpike. But highways were needed and the necessity was recognized. The iron rails have been made the leading highways during the past half century.

A railroad is a highway of commerce in the same sense as a public road, and so are rivers, harbors and canals. They are the arteries of trade. This country has spent billions of dollars for railroad building, hundreds of millions for canals and still more for rivers and harbors.

Yet not one ounce of any commodity, of any kind, that is hauled over railroads, canals, rivers and harbors, but is first hauled over country roads or city streets.

The Way to Get Good Roads.

One hears a good deal from time to time of the good roads movement. Is public sentiment behind it? Do the farmers of New York really want first-class highways, or are they content with those they now drive on? The treatment which the bill pending at Albany appropriating \$1,000,000 for good roads gets will throw light on these questions. It is provided in this measure that the appropriation shall be spent in accordance with the provisions of the law of 1898, by which the State pays fifty per cent. of the cost of road improvement, the county thirty-five per cent. and the town or abutting property owners immediately interested the remaining fifteen per cent.

This certainly is a fair division, or, at all events, it is a division which enables those who desire good roads to secure them without placing too heavy a burden upon their shoulders. The bill is one of the results of the good roads convention lately held in Albany. If the farmers as a whole desire its passage and bestie themselves to that end they can have their way. If they remain passive the Legislature will be justified in concluding that the time is not ripe for making so large an appropriation.—New York Mail and Express.

PRESENTS IN MEXICO.
The Giving of Them is Surely a Matter of Etiquette and Not to Be Taken Seriously.

"I have just returned from a two-weeks' sojourn in the City of Mexico," said a Mississippi lumberman, who is a frequent visitor in New Orleans. "I had a rattling good time, and learned several valuable lessons in foreign etiquette—one of which was to beware of gifts. The story in connection with it is this: A friend who resides in the city introduced me to a lot of charming people directly after my arrival and one of them, a young Mexican lawyer, invited me around to his bachelor quarters. While there I happened to notice a beautiful panel on which was an elaborate floral design executed entirely in feathers. I never saw anything like it before, and was expressing my admiration when my host interrupted by insisting that I accept it as a souvenir. I didn't want to do so, but he was so pressing and apparently so sincere that I finally thanked him, and when I left I carried the thing away. On the following day I saw him again, and was very much surprised at the change in his manner. He was cold and distant, and in fact he hardly recognized me at all. I was at a loss to account for such a transformation, and reported the matter to my friend, who was also puzzled and questioned me closely as to my visit to the lawyer's quarters. Finally I remembered about the panel, and when I narrated the incident my friend was horrified. He told me that I had made the worst possible 'break' in accepting the present or at any rate in taking it away, and explained that in Mexico it is a piece of merely perfunctory politeness to offer a guest anything for which he expresses admiration, but that such gifts are never taken seriously.

"We got out of the scrape by returning the panel with a note saying: 'I had merely wished to examine it closely, and now desired to restore it to the collection which it adorned. When I again met the Mexican gentleman he was cordiality itself. I remembered, on second thought, having read something about the custom in regard to presents, but had no idea it was really followed. Even at the bull-fights it is a common thing for spectators to throw magnificent sombreros into the arena, ostensibly as gifts to the matador. They are always scrupulously collected and returned to the owners.'—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Truth is violated by falsehood, and it may be equally outraged by silence.—Amman.

Persistent people begin their successes where others end in failure.—Edward Eggleston.

We are answerable not only for what we know, but for what we might know.—Manning.

There is no great achievement that is not the result of patient working and waiting.—J. G. Holland.

The grand essentials of life are something to do, something to love, something to hope for.—Chalmers.

"They that cannot have what they like should learn to like what they have." A tough lesson, but well worth learning.—Spurgeon.

A man by his conversation may soon overthrow what by argument or persuasion he doth labor to fasten upon others for their good.

One day of sickness will do more to convince a young man that his mother is his best friend than seventeen volumes of proverbs.—Roseleaf.

Never build after you are five-and-forty; have five years' income in-hand before you lay a brick; and always calculate the expense at double the estimate.—Kelt.

One can never be crushed by sorrow who is unselfish in a sense of sympathy with others or in a sense of the duty of loving service for others.—H. Clay Trumbull.

Those who say they will forgive, but can't forget an injury, simply bury the hatchet, while they leave the handle out, ready for immediate use.—Dwight L. Moody.

Remember that if the opportunities for great deeds should never come the opportunity for good deeds is renewed for you day by day. The thing for us to long for is the goodness, not the glory.—F. W. Farrar.

"But" is a word that cools many a warm impulse, stifles many a kindly thought, puts a stop to many a brotherly deed. No one would ever love his neighbor as himself if he listened to all the "buts" that could be said.—Bulwer.

There is no music in a "rest" that I know of, but there's the making of music in it. And people are always missing that part of the life melody, always talking of perseverance and courage and fortitude; but patience is the finest and worthiest part of fortitude, and the rarest, too.—Ruskin.

The well-ordered life, the life obedient to law, is alone the life of liberty. As well call a ship free that without rudder or compass drifts here and there upon a great high seas as to call a life free that is without definite guidance and direction and obedience.—John W. Chadwick.