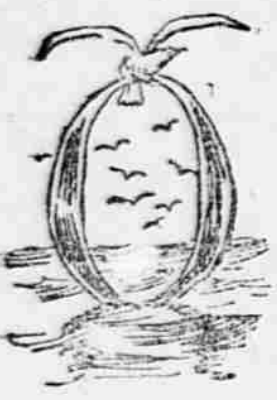


AT THE CHANGE OF THE WATCH

BY G. HAWLEY



UR steamer had just cleared Singapore. My duty in the engine-room was done, and I was sitting on the bridge watching the downward sweep of the tropic dusk. "It puts me in mind of a theater sunset," he was saying; "they always go by on the run. And that was a pretty theatrical bit you had in the engine-room." He said to my chief, who had joined us. We had found all the nuts but one off the connecting-rod head; had another half-turn been made our engines would have been a scrapheap.

"Only once has it happened before," said my chief, "and there was a grand tablet, as you call it, but not in the engine-room. Our stem and three ally-eyed junks were the actors. It was up there," jerking his head northwards. "There was nothing but a thousand odd miles of water and a dusting of islands between us and Hongkong."

The mate held a lighted match to the chief's pipe, and set him drifting on with the current of his yarn.

"You see it was years and years ago, and I was second in a local boat—Hongkong to Yokohama. We were the first to employ China firemen. We had been repairing and put on a fresh crowd, all except one, Li Chin. It was near monsoon time, and the second day out we were sitting, as we might be here; but there was no sunset on view. It had been hazy all day, and we were watching the moon rising; just past full, it looked as if someone had bashed one side off the true. It got up a haze, big and blood-red, like a fire balloon at old Cremorne. A mean, staggering swell had set in, so oily that it had no more to it than the slush in a greaser's bucket. We were all pretty well hipped and morose, being company for no one except the sea, and that—well, that looked as if it wanted to be sick and couldn't. Li Chin, who was decent for a heathen, was in charge below.

"My chief was sitting on the rails, and somehow he went over the side. You know pretty well how things like that galvanize everybody. Lose him? No. The oily swell saved him, for the bit more on the boat straight back in her own wake, which was marked out like a dusty road at night through a hilly country. Well, we came to where he was yelling, and got him out. By all law, the old man ought to have got into a splutter, but instead of that he said:

"Look here, Mr. Gamwell—that was my chief's name—I knew something had to happen in this cock-eyed no-side-up looking weather, but I don't believe this is the only thing to-night."

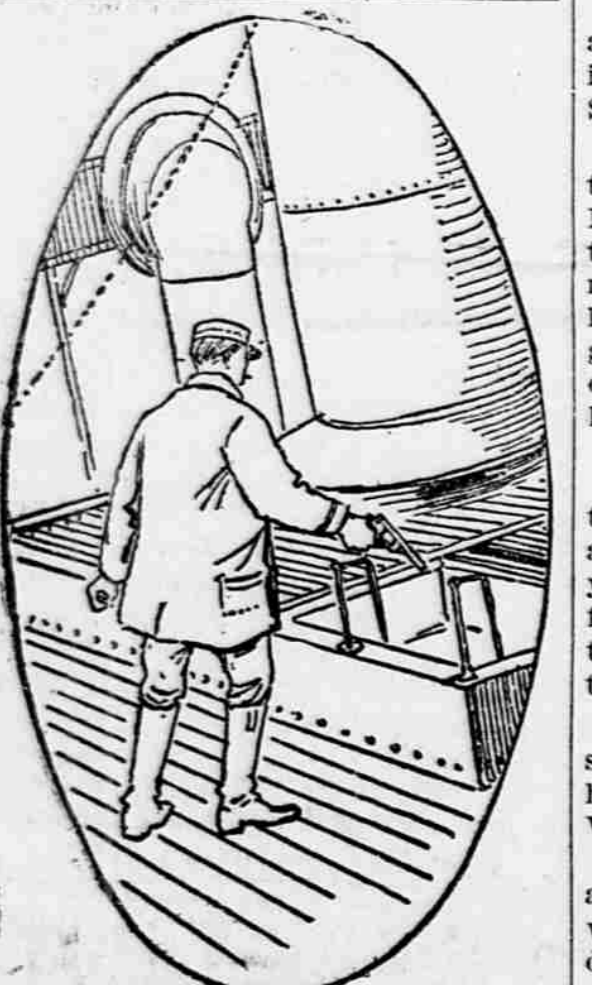
"And we all said together, 'That's just what I was thinking, sir,' as they do at church when the parson pipes out.

"Then send her ahead again and let's get it done with," he said.

"Give her steam, Li Chin," I shouted down the skylight. Li Chin looked up and chattered:

"Hi! no talker talker; come chop chop." So I went down to him.

"I was pretty green in those days, and whatever came within a hair's breadth of happening made me feel as squeamish as if it had come off. Of course, you grow out of that, but then I felt my hair creep. Our high pressure connecting rod was on the down-throw with only a single nut on! She had the old style of engines remember, and when they went on a burst



"NEED ANYTHING THAT COMES OUT." they went handsomely, no tinkering up; new engines, perhaps new ship; may be even new hands. However, we began to screw up, at least the chief did; he'd only trust himself. Presently he showed a nut under my nose.

"That your trade mark?" he asked. The nut was chipped and scribed with bad spanner marks which I repudiated.

"In what followed I can never quite settle Li Chin's share in the program. This was how we were after we had

fixed all tight again: Li Chin was leaning through the eccentric rods with the lamp; I was half in, half out the crank pit, and the chief was at my back. He had the spanner. All in a breath he dragged me backwards, flat, my head cracking on the plates, and I saw the spanner go 'split' through the standards. It didn't hit any metal but something soft. Then he clapped his hand on my face and held me stone tight, and something came down and rubbed by my chest, scratching me—no more—and through his fingers I could see the crank moving, but it had passed me. If anyone believes that engines haven't souls, just you stick him in the crank pit, and let her go, only dead slow and just to clear him. That converted me.

"He dragged me right out, hissing in my ear:

"Whip up on deck; tell 'em to shoot on sight any who leave the stoke-hole." He slammed the iron door 'tween the boilers and us and turned on Li Chin, who was still holding the lamp, and had him by the throat before he could finish:

"No bobbery, all same white man." As I jumped past the starting platform I saw one of the new stokers lying on his back, his face a thing of horror. That was the soft thing the span-

"The three junks came on in a line abreast down the wind.

"There was a heathenish feeling about everything—that red, lop-sided moon making a big crawly snake on the oily water; the three junks sliding along, and us laid silent. There were three things I remember: The slap of the water under our stern, the rattle of the junks' sails flapping against their masts and our old man's fist; he was pounding time on the rail.

"The she began to blow off.

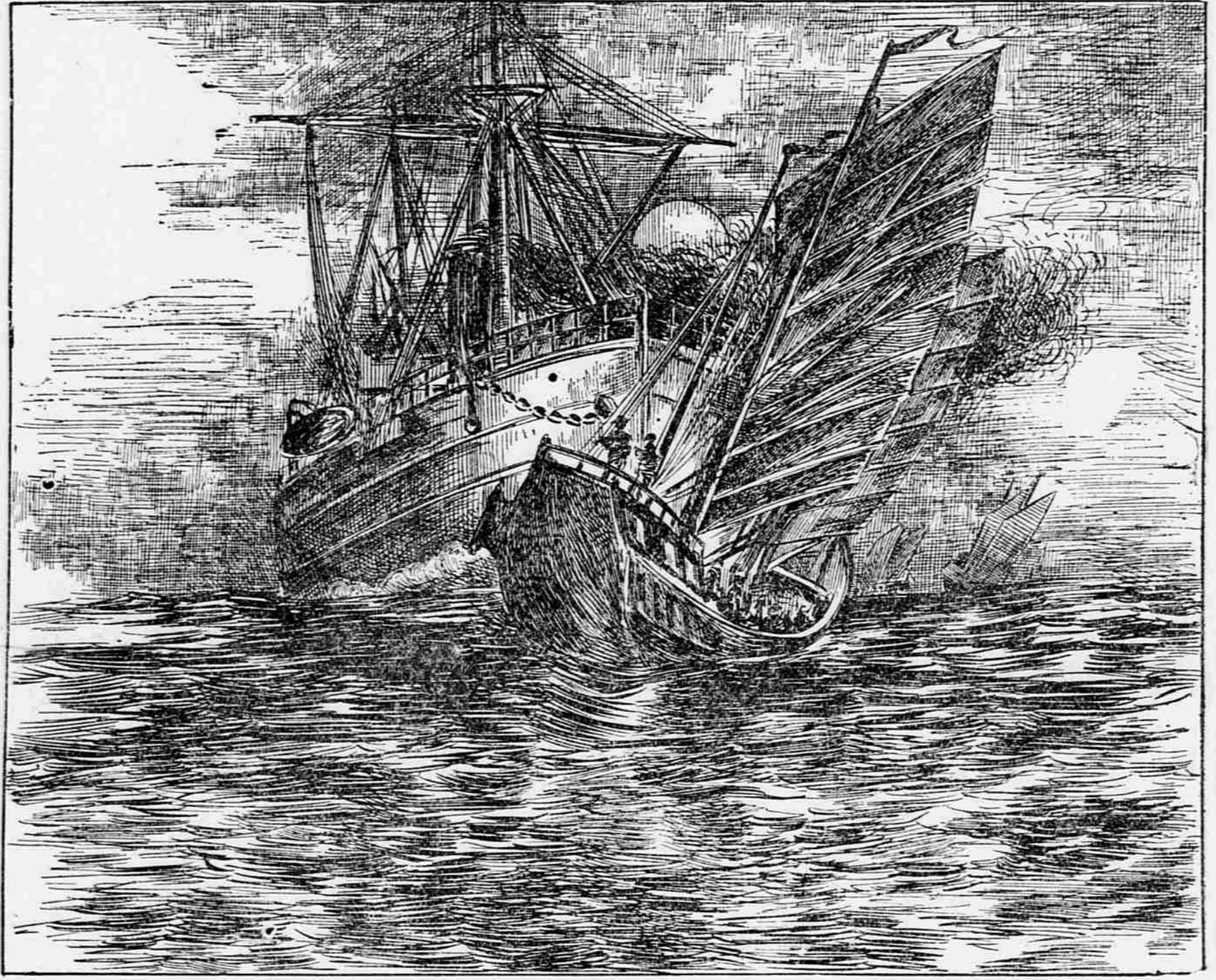
"All at once he roared out:

"Port, hard a-port!" and rang her full speed, and we began to move. Lord! in three minutes we had got our pace.

"The junks had turned after us at first, but they seemed to guess something was wrong, for one sheered off. Presently we'd done the half circle and headed stem on to the other two. Then I reckon they realized.

"The first broke out into lights and shouts; she was right under our bows, and you could hear her spit like dry firewood. Her big batted mainsail rattled on our fore'sle head like a shower of canes. The sea itself seemed to yell all round us as we steamed through the cargo of drowning pirates.

"I looked over the rail; we'd hit the other and smashed one side off, and, as



"SHE WAS RIGHT UNDER OUR BOWS."

ner hit, and you know what size a connecting rod takes.

"Both mates and the old man were on the bridge watching something ahead. All in a sweat I sang out my message, and the old man never asked why or wherefore, but popped in the chart-room and slipped a revolver in the second mate's hand, saying:

"It's come to us then." The mate didn't move, so the old man yelled at him:

"Why d'ye stand there, Mac? Are you white livered?"

"Now Mac was a Greenock man, and he said:

"Y' ken, I want orders frae you, and I'll shoot your ain brother." Just in a quiet and matter-of-fact way. And, Scott, he would. I know them.

"Shoot anything that comes out of the stoke-hole," said the old man, and Mac slid along whistling soft and quiet to his station. Yes, that was it, 'Annie Laurie,' but it wasn't for her that he laid down and died. Poor Mac; he got sand-bagged at New Orleans over a chit of a Yankee girl not fit to black his boots.

"The old man grabbed me by the arm.

"Look here," he said, pointing out three sails wallowing along between us and the moon. "That's the little game your friends below are after. Their friends are coming to join in. And by thunder, so is our stem!" He turned on the chief mate like a flash:

"You jump down with Mac into the stoke-hole, and make every pig-tail heathen stoke her up to the blow-off. Wipe 'em out if they've any lip, Scott!"

"He was tramping up and down like a terror. I never dreamt that a man with a wife and family looked like a demon.

"You," he cried to me, "jump below and don't let the engines move a hand's breadth till I ring her. Then let her rip."

"I only went below the skylight and told the chief from there; I didn't care to pass that thing on the platform again. And besides I wanted to see what was going to happen. I was all on the jump, like a white-faced girl; so I staid looking out.

"The steamer was wallowing in 'he trough like a lame duck. All the crew had turned out forward after fixing up the turned-in China firemen.



"WHAT HAVE I DONE!" shaking his fist at her; then all at once he quieted, and conned us like a Thames steamboat skipper.

"And we hit that junk clean in the stern, and rode over her from end to end. It was sickening to see the struggle in our wake; I ran and asked him if we weren't going to save some of them.

"He knocked me clean off my feet. I was silly for more than ten minutes, and when I pulled together we were still running ahead.

"My chief was binding up my head, and the old man was staring astern. All at once he screamed:

"Lord, what have I done!" and chucked up his arms and fell back. He never spoke more, but went out next

morning. We made the heathens stoke us back to Hongkong—and jail. I went to the hospital completely knocked over.

"You know Aberdeen? Yes, well, you know that old house against the town hall—an eating-house; his widow keeps that now, and if ever you're stuck up say as you know one who sailed with him. And if you're flush—" Black and White.

Japanese Swords.

The Japanese, whose civilization was old before ours began, have produced beautiful examples of the sword-maker's art. The Japanese nobleman carried his swords as the insignia of his rank. He wore one on each side, thrust into the folds of his sash.

These swords have been handed down as heirlooms from father to son; and it was not unusual for families of ancient lineage to have as many as fifteen hundred of them—marvels of costly and artistic workmanship—in their possession. The scabbards are richly lacquered, and bound about with a silken cord in a curious pattern. The blade is curved, and the round guard is pierced to carry a small dagger. This guard, called a tsuba, is decorated with curious designs; and so great is the ingenuity of the Japanese metal-workers that among the thousands of swords they have produced it is impossible to find two guards exactly alike. They are prized so highly by collectors that large sums of money have been paid frequently for an antique sword, only that it might be ruthlessly torn apart to secure the guard.—St. Nicholas.

Irrigation by Windmills.

It was found that in the Arkansas valley water could be obtained by shallow wells ranging in depth from eight to twenty feet. This is raised by hundreds of windmills into hundreds of small reservoirs constructed at the highest point of each farm. The uniform eastward slope of the plains is

THE ROSE.

Facts Concerning the Origin of One of Our Sweetest Flowers.

Some indication of the origin of the rose, both in time and in country, is probably given in its name. This, undoubtedly comes to us through the Latin from the Greek "rodon," a word which is now agreed to be, in the wider sense, oriental, not Greek. But to which of the two great families of languages it belongs is less certain. Heyn maintains it to be Iranian, that is, of the Aryan family—of the older tongue of Persia and Bactria; and Persia might unquestionably put forward strong claims to be the true native country of the rose. But Prof. Skeat, who has the majority of modern authorities on his side, declares it to be a pure Semitic word—the Arabic word "ward," a flowering shrub, thus denoting the flower of flowers par excellence. It is worth noticing that the Persian word "gul" similarly meant at first only a perfumed flower, but has come to be used of the rose alone. "Ut rosa flos florum, sic est domus ista domorum," is the emphatic way in which the inscription over the lovely chapter house at York claims it as being the very fower of architecture.

Both theories, however, of the name agree with other indications that we can trace in placing the original home of the rose, much as that of our earliest forefathers, in the central or western-central district of Asia; but, instead of spreading only in a westerly direction, the rose took, apparently, a more catholic view of the earth, and expanded impartially east and west, without showing any reluctance about longitude, while disliking the more violent changes of temperature implied by an extension of latitude. It has been found by travelers as far south as Abyssinia in one hemisphere and Mexico in the other; but it never seems, voluntarily, to come very near to the equator. Northward, however, nothing seems to stop it, since it has conquered Iceland, Greenland and Kamtchatka.

"In Iceland, so (in) fertile in vegetation that in some parts the natives are compelled to feed their horses, sheep and oxen on dried fish, we find the rosa rubiginosa, with its pale, solitary, cup-shaped flowers; and in Lapland, blooming almost under the snows of that severe climate, the natives seeking mosses and lichens for their reindeer, find the roses, malis and rubella, the former of which, brilliant in color and of a sweet perfume, enlivens the dreariness of Norway, Denmark and Sweden."—Quarterly Review.

Cane or Lamp, Which?

It is a curious fact, says Popular Science, that there are more inventions made in connection with walking canes than with anything else man makes use of.

Some time ago a man patented a cane which was practically a portable drug store, being hollow, and filled with vials containing all the medicines handiest in the emergency of sudden illness or injury. But now some one else has fairly outdone him, and has contrived a cane which is at the same time an electric light.

The cane is hollow, and the interior is filled nearly to the top with the necessary chemical solution.

The knob is really an incandescent bulb, with an ornamental and protective covering of nickel or silver, which either unscrews or flies open at a touch upon a spring.

The poles of the battery extend into the hollow of the cane, but not far enough to reach to the acid. But when a light is desired, the cane is held knob downward, the acid attacks the zincs, and the electricity generated lights the bulb.

They give out a really surprising amount of light, and last nearly two hours. There is no waste of material when the light is not in use, as no electricity is generated except when the cane is turned upside down and the acid so brought in contact with the zincs. So a single filling may last for weeks or months.

When the bulb is burned out, or the zincs are eaten away, or the acid loses its strength, the owner can easily reload the cane, as the supplies can be bought for a trifle.

This wonderful cane weighs only about a pound, and is made to resemble an ordinary ebony walking-stick, of the usual length, with nothing about it to indicate that it is a lamp as well.

They Were Not Welcome.

He was short, round and rubicund, with merry blue eyes and a stout fringe of sandy-gray hair showing under the old-fashioned derby. His chin was be-whiskered, but the clean upper lip denoted shrewdness and determination, despite the soft curves at the corners. He hustled into the car at Polk street, struggling cheerfully with a huge oil-cloth valise. She followed, and was tall, gaunt and careworn, although her expression of childish expectancy made the old face almost young.

She wore a "turned" merino gown, and on her faded bonnet bloomed a bunch of brave new daisies.

We soon learned that they were "going to s'prise Henry."

"Y'aint los' the apples, father?" she inquired.

He displayed three enormous red ones. "Reckon the young'uns eyes'll shine!" he chuckled.

At Twenty-second street a fashionably dressed couple entered; the country people started; the old lady's eyes filled and she nervously pulled off a cotton glove, exposing a work-worn hand.

"My son!" she breathed, and raised a radiant face to his. His sentiment, however, was curbed by conventionality, and while he greeted "mother" and the "gov" good-naturedly he ignored the expectant lips and only pressed the hand. Gertrude's greeting was polite—and cold.

A look of astonishment and pain settled on the old man's face.

"Go right up to the house," Henry

said; "awfully sorry, but Gert and I have an engagement; the girl'll take care of you until we get back."

They got out at Twenty-eighth street, and at Twenty-ninth the old man signalled the conductor.

"I guess we'll go back to the Corners, mother; I 'low we've made a mistake."

Passing out she murmured: "They wuz ashamed—they wuz ashamed."

Looking back as we jogged on we saw the quaint figures waiting for the "up" car. His blue eyes were no longer merry and on her faded cheeks were traces of tears.—Boston Post.

A Subterranean City.

It is generally believed that human beings cannot flourish—in fact, can hardly support existence—without an ample supply of fresh air and sunlight. Yet it appears that there is at least one civilized community which gets along very well, although deprived of this advantage. A writer in Popular Science News thus describes the city:

In the salt mines at Wielleska, in Galicia, a population of 1,000 working people—men, women and children—has dwelt for centuries, in health and contentment, several hundred meters below the earth's surface.

Galleries have been hewn from the glittering mineral, and houses, a town hall, assembly-rooms, and even a theater, built entirely of the same.

The little church, with its statues—all of rock salt—is accounted one of Europe's architectural wonders. Well graded streets are met with, and spacious squares, lighted by electricity.

In some cases not an individual in successive generations of these modern cave-dwellers has ever beheld the light of day; and yet their average longevity is said to be remarkable.

Salt, of course, is unfavorable to the propagation of microbes, and its hygienic properties are proverbial. Could a sanitarium be constructed of this material, we might witness surprising results in the treatment of consumption.

But what if some hidden water-course should one day work its dissolving way into the subterranean city?

Marvelous Light.

A marvelous triumph of science is reported from Vienna, says the Sun's London correspondent.

It is announced that Prof. Rontgen, of the Wurzburg University, has discovered a light which, for the purposes of photography, will penetrate wood, flesh and most other organic substances.

The professor has succeeded in photographing metal weights which were in a closed wooden case, also a man's hand which shows only the bones, the flesh being invisible.

It is said the process is simple. The professor takes a so-called Crooke's pipe, viz.: A vacuum glass pipe with an induction current going through it, and by means of rays which the pipe emits, photographs on ordinary photographic plates.

In contrast with the ordinary rays of light, these rays penetrate organic matter and other opaque substances just as ordinary rays penetrate glass.

He has also succeeded in photographing hidden metals with a cloth thrown over the camera. The rays penetrated not only the wooden case containing the metals, but the fabric in front of the negative. The professor is already using his discovery to photograph broken limbs and bullets in human bodies.

Two Hats and No Head.

M. Lablache, the famous singer, was very absent-minded. While at Naples on one occasion, King Humbert was also there, and expressed a desire to make his acquaintance. On entering the ante-chamber in the palace, M. Lablache found that the gentlemen present were all personal acquaintances of his, and asked to be allowed to keep his hat on, as he was suffering from a severe cold. A lively conversation was cut short by the entrance of a chamberlain announcing that the King would receive M. Lablache at once.

In the momentary confusion the singer forgot that he was wearing his hat, took hold of another which had been placed on a chair near him, and went before his majesty, who, at the sight of him, burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. Utterly confused, M. Lablache asked humbly to be informed of the reason of the King's merriment. "Let me ask you a question first," replied the King; "which is your hat—the one you are wearing on your head or the one you carry in your hand?" "Confound it all!" replied Lablache, joining in the laughter; "truly, two hats are too many for a fellow who has lost his head."

Origin of Windfall.

The origin of the expression "windfall," which is used when one wishes to refer to a streak of good luck, dates back to the time of William the Conqueror. At that time it was a criminal offense to cut timber in the British forests without royal consent. All that could be gathered for fuel or other purposes was such limbs as the wind should happen to break and cast to the ground. On this account the peasants hailed a great windstorm as a blessing, because it was apt to cast enough of "windfalls" for winter firewood. From this old-time forestry custom comes the modern application of the expression.

Just Escaped.

"Madam," said the new boarder, "one of your family came very near dying last night."

"Indeed, I had not heard that any one was ill. Who was it?"

"The man in the room next to mine who played the cornet till 3 a. m. He stopped just in time to save his life."—Detroit Free Press.

A man always gets the impression that perhaps his family would love him more if he made more money.