

A SEA DEMON.

BY CHARLES B. LEWIS.

One morning in the year 1863 as the English brig Fair Hope was to the east of the island of Malacca, bound for the Straits of Malacca, a man who had been sent aloft hailed the deck with the information that a monster shark was lying alongside. The craft had high bulwarks, and the fish might not have been seen but for the man going aloft, as he did. This was the first authentic meeting with a shark which afterward took the name of the "Demon of the Sea."

It is the custom aboard of a merchant vessel when a shark appears alongside and the work aboard is not pressing to give the men a chance to destroy their enemy. In this instance, owing to the unusual size of the fish, the captain was anxious to make a capture and carry the specimen into Singapore. Hooks were got out and baited, and for two hours they tried all sorts of tricks to induce the monster to take hold. He was very wary, however, and refused to bite. There was an old harpoon aboard, and when it was seen that the fish could not be captured alive the carpenter got out the iron and tried to harpoon him. In the effort he fell overboard, and the shark seized him and disappeared so quickly that the dozen men who witnessed the affair could scarcely believe they saw a shark. The incident was recorded in the log and reference was made to it in Lloyd's Register for the first week in September of the year named. So far as is known this sailor from the Fair Hope was the first victim of the demon, but others were to follow in quick succession.

Three days later and 100 miles to the south of Ceylon the American ship James F. Bradwell, tea laden, was caught in a gale which lasted for six hours. Of a sudden men who were working in the rigging discovered the big shark alongside. He was at first taken for a small whale, and great was the amazement when it was known that he belonged to the man eating species. As in the other case, it was determined to capture him alive, and the men put in three hours' work seeking to tempt him with pork and beef. The big fellow simply refused to take the hook, and his actions were so sluggish that it was at last believed he was almost dead. A boat was lowered in hopes that a noose might be slipped over his tail, and it was while the man with the rope was trying to perform this feat that a tragedy occurred. He was bending over the bows of the boat when he lost his hold and plunged into the water. With lightninglike swiftness the shark turned and seized him, dived under the keel of the ship and was seen no more. Five men were close at hand when the shark grabbed the man, and they were unanimous in declaring that the victim was bolted down as if he had been a five pound piece of pork. That incident was also recorded in the log, and thus made authentic, but I do not think it was ever published. I got it personally 15 years later from the captain of the Bradwell.

The third appearance of the demon, so far as the record goes, was about two weeks later, and in the bay of Bengal, many hundreds of miles distant. An English whaling ship named the Two Sisters was lying off the Andaman islands at anchor while making some repairs aloft. At 10 o'clock in the forenoon, without the aid of a shark having been seen, the demon suddenly rose alongside and lay waiting for his prey. Everybody was astonished at his size, but as the repairs were urgent the men were not allowed to knock off to effect his capture. They did call to three fishermen, however, who were in a boat near at hand, and the natives responded. The shark played his old game and appeared to be scarcely able to move, and the idea of the men was to nose him and tow him ashore. No sooner had they rounded the stern of the whaler and taken a rope from one of the sailors than the demon turned and made for the boat. The native craft was a frail affair, used only for fishing on the reefs, and the shark struck it head on and stove a great hole in the side. Ropes were thrown to the men floundering in the water, but only one of them was safely hauled aboard the whaler. One was seized and bolted down, and a second, who hung to the ship's rudder, was picked off a moment later. What ever came aboard was hurled overboard to frighten the shark away from his second victim, but he could not be turned aside. This incident was not logged, as it did not concern the ship, but was published at length in the Bombay papers later on.

For the next three months there is no record of the shark's doings, though he might have secured many victims from native craft and the incidents escape public notice. Early in the year 1864 the bark Speedwell, bound from China to her home port of Philadelphia, had just cleared Acheen head, at the entrance to the Straits of Malacca, when a sudden squall carried away her main and fore topmasts and several of her sails. This was early in the morning, and while the crew were repairing damages and the ship proceeding on her voyage the big shark came up astern and took up a position on the port side and only about 20 feet away. His length was carefully measured by the officers and recorded at 88 feet 8 inches. He had been heard of through the papers, and the crew were warned to be careful in their work aloft. In hopes to drive the monster away Captain Taylor brought out a heavy shotgun and fired charges of buckshot into him at short range. The leaden missiles must have penetrated to some extent, as the demon gave a sudden dart and disappeared for a time, but five minutes later he was back in his old position. He was thus fired upon and driven away three successive times, but when he came back the fourth time he took up his position astern of the ship and swam so low in the water that the shot failed to reach him.

He hung by the ship from 7 o'clock in the morning to 4 in the afternoon. At that hour the repairs were about complete, and the men were laughing and joking over the persistency of the demon, when one of them fell from the yard as they were making sail. He turned over and over in his descent and

struck the water feet first and was out of sight a long minute. When he came to the surface, he shot his full length out of water, and the men uttered a cheer to encourage him, and the life preserver was cut away. The man had just grasped it when the shark seized him by the legs, and those who were looking saw both man and the life preserver disappear in the maw of the monster. Later on fragments of the float came to the surface, but nothing further was seen of the shark. The incident was logged and duly reported in New York.

News of strange things at sea passes about in maritime circles with wonderful celerity. The various adventures with the demon were soon known far and wide, and every craft sailing for India or China kept a sharp lookout for him. If he was seen between January and April, 1864, there is no record of it, but on the 15th day of the latter month, when I left the port of St. Louis, in the island of Mauritius, bound for Bombay, in the brig Charleston, the monster appeared alongside before we were 50 miles out of port. This was the first time he had been seen so far to the south and was a distance of 3,000 miles from the spot where he had snatched up his last man. The demon appeared to us suddenly, as in all other cases. When sharks are around, their dorsal fins can be seen cutting the water here and there, and they seldom come near a moving craft. The first thing we knew the monster was running with the ship, and so close that one could have touched him with a ten foot pole. We measured his length by the rail, and then a taffelne gave us exactly 38 feet 3 inches. The only weapons aboard were two navy revolvers, and the captain took one and I the other, and we fired 12 bullets into the body of the fish. I am telling you the plain truth when I say that he did not swerve an inch or seem to feel the slightest pain. The bullets certainly went into him, but when an ordinary shark can have two or three feet cut off his tail and still continue to swim about unconcernedly there isn't much hope of pistol bullets ending his life.

Knowing that the presence of the demon meant a horrible death to any man who fell overboard, the word was passed for every one to be very careful of himself while aloft. The shark picked us up of a Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock. We had a fair wind for the north, and up to Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock he had not secured a victim. No matter whether the breeze was strong or weak, whether it was daylight or darkness, the demon kept his place alongside. We tried him with baited hooks, we stuffed an old suit of clothes and threw the figure overboard, we put more bullets into him and worked all sorts of schemes to drive him off, but it was not to be done. If he started off at some demonstration, it was to return after a moment and take up his old position. His presence was such a menace and peril that all felt uncomfortable and nervous, and by order of the captain the men were kept out of the rigging except when it became positively necessary to get aloft. When Friday came and no accident had happened, we began to take heart and hoped to see the demon leave us. In all those days and nights he had eaten nothing, and so easy was it for him to keep pace with us that one might watch for an hour and not notice a movement of his tail. While we were hoping that hunger and the long swim had about exhausted him the cook got upon the rail on the opposite side from the shark to draw a pail of water. A sudden lurch of the ship sent him overboard. I happened to be watching the shark at the same moment. With the quickness of thought he was gone from under my eyes, and, passing under the brig, he seized the cook before the latter had time to cry out and before a man had advanced to the rail. Four or five sailors got there just in time to see the victim disappear, and as there was no tinge of blood on the water they could well declare that the shark had swallowed him whole.

A month later, 300 miles to the eastward of Mauritius, the demon arose alongside the Scotch whaler Albatross and followed her two days and got a man who fell from the bowsprit. Three months later, to the south of Madagascar, he got a man from a Boston ship called the White Wave. During the same year, when the English ship Cape Horn was wrecked off Cape Town and some of the crew took to a raft, the big shark followed the raft for seven days and nights and devoured nine different men who fell or leaped into the sea. In 1865 the demon cruised in the route of ships between Cape Town and Australia and was seen a dozen times. In 1866 he was back in the bay of Bengal. The last seen of him was off the Lakadive islands in the Arabian sea. He arose alongside of an English gunboat one afternoon, and, after taking his measure, one of the guns was loaded with shell and trained to bear on him. When the smoke cleared away, the shark could no longer be seen, and as he was never met with afterward by any craft which made a record of the circumstance it may be safely argued that he was put out of the way for good and all.

Variable Heights. "How tall be you, Henry?" "Bout six foot, I guess, with my boots off. How tall be you?" "Bout six foot when my hair's out." —Harper's Bazar.

Meanness Personified. "Man Sandy," said a Perthshire farmer, "Jock Macpherson's an awfu' mean chap." "Hoos, toots, man!" said his friend. "Ye're haverin! Hoo d'ye mak' that out?" "Weel, I'm jist sayin' he's mean—beastly mean. It's like this: I was up at his house the ither night, and he said, 'Peter, will ye have a hauf o' whisky?' and I said, 'Aye, of coorse!' Weel, he got his bottle out and began to pour me out a glass, and, thinkin' to be surt o' politie, ye ken, I said, 'Stop, stop!' And he stopped!" —London Telegraph.

A Counterstroke. "We're ruined," exclaimed the editor, "utterly ruined!" "Why, what's the matter now?" "We advertised sheet music as a premium to subscribers, didn't we?" "We did." "Well, our miserable contemporary over the way is giving away pianos to play it on." —Atlanta Constitution. The Coliseum at Rome was built by Vespasian to accommodate 100,000 spectators. It covers five and one-half acres and was 120 feet high.

UPWARD. Draw the lines a little tighter, Spirit mine! Make the life a little brighter, Spirit mine! For the truth's sake be a fighter, Show the world life may be whiter, Purer, stronger, dearer, lighter, More divine! If one wills, life may be higher, Spirit mine! If one loves, God will be higher, Spirit mine! His affection does not tire, Let us then his truth desire, Seeking it past water, fire, Gold and wine! —John O. Out in "Great Thoughts."

ON THE CARDS.

"Can you tell fortunes?" she asked, leaning her elbows on the table and shuffling the cards. "Some people's. Shall I try your mother's?" Her mother was dozing in the armchair by the fire. "Oh, don't be silly! Mum's fortune is told."

"Poor mamma!" "Well, you know what I mean—all that's worth telling. She refused the fair man and married the dark one; wasn't very rich and wasn't very poor—quite poor enough!" She shrugged her shoulders and made a dainty grimace—alas, unnamable. "Had two tire-some boys and one very nice girl—voila moi!"

"Who was an incorrigible little flirt and tease," I suggested bitterly. "Fortunes don't go into such details about secondary persons, even if they happened to be true, which they aren't."

"Oh, yes, they do." "Since you know so much about it, you can tell mine." She scattered the cards toward me with a crash. "It's all right, mum; I'm only throwing the cards at Cousin Harry." Her mother gave a sleepy smile and returned to her slumbers.

"You mustn't blame me if the cards are unfavorable." "I shall know you've made it up if they are." "I wouldn't dream of jesting upon such a subject," I assured her. "Fortune telling follows certain essential principles, which are immutable and—"

"Should be practiced, not preached. Go on." "To start with, then, you are the queen of hearts." "Why?" "Because the queen of hearts represents feminine beauty and charm."

"Oh!" She leaned back and laughed. "If you are only going to flatter me, I won't listen." "I merely state a fact. You are the queen of hearts." "No, I'm not. I'm spades or clubs, because I'm dark."

"Excuse me, it is not a matter merely of complexion, but of general appearance. Spades represent plain people, diamonds passable people, clubs nice looking people and hearts very nice looking people. Therefore you are the queen of hearts." "Lots of people wouldn't consider me good looking at all." Her tone invited contradiction.

the diamonds, ending with the knave, to have made a fortune and retired, handing over the business to his son." I meant old Parsley. "I call it very unkind of you, Harry." Her lip dropped a little, and I hastened to apologize. "It isn't my doing. It's the cards."

"Well, you know it isn't true. It's only"—she looked over her shoulder to see that her mother was still asleep—"mamma's silliness. Why, he's as old as dad, and I wouldn't. You know I wouldn't."

"The cards leave it to you, Milly." "Don't you believe me?" She looked quite hurt. "Of course—if you say so." I patted her hand, which was lying on the table, but she drew it sharply away and rubbed the touch off with her handkerchief.

"Well, the king of hearts—which does he mean?" "I considered a moment. 'The king of hearts,' I pronounced slowly, 'means a handsome young fellow who paid you a great deal of attention when you were staying with the queen of clubs, a dark relative—probably your aunt.'"

"I won't listen to another word!" she cried indignantly. "It's a nasty, horrid fortune, and quite untrue. There!" "Very well." I made as if I would sweep the cards together. "Don't be disagreeable." She looked at me reproachfully, with one of her kaleidoscopic changes. "I want to hear it my proper fortune—not nonsense."

"No, it isn't." "Didn't he pay you a lot of attention?" "Young Jephson?" "Yes." He was the rival I really feared. "Nothing special." "So many pay you attention that you think nothing of it."

"You silly fellow!" said she, scornfully. "Why, he's almost engaged to Cousin Annie." I felt as though a weight was taken off me. "Why," I said, "how stupid of me! She must be the dark lady, I suppose. I ought to have connected him with her instead of with you."

"I don't believe you understand the fortune business a bit." "It's very difficult," I apologized. "But you see the cards are all right, when you read them properly." "What else do they say?" "The next point is money. The seven of diamonds, next to the knave of clubs—probably your uncle—indicates a legacy, and—"

"No, no!" she interrupted. "I don't want to know about money." "Well, the duration of life is shown by—"

"That doesn't matter," said she quickly, shrugging her shoulders. "Then I hardly know what else there is to tell." I looked at her doubtfully. There was one thing only that I wanted to tell her. "What do you want to know, Milly?"

GETTING READY

Every expectant mother has a trying ordeal to face. If she does not apologize. "Well, you know it isn't true. It's only"—she looked over her shoulder to see that her mother was still asleep—"mamma's silliness. Why, he's as old as dad, and I wouldn't. You know I wouldn't."

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NEW TIME CARD.

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Legal Notices.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION. Land Office at North Platte, Neb., January 22d, 1898. Notice is hereby given that the following-named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before the register and Receiver at North Platte, Neb., on March 25th, 1898, viz: WILLIAM OCHAMPAUGH, H. E. No. 1814 for the northeast quarter section 20, town 9, range 30 west.

MASTERS' SALE.

In the Circuit Court of the United States, for the District of Nebraska. KERRER FIVE CENT BANK, Complainant, vs. JOHN C. HUFFER, et al., Defendants. In Chancery. Docket 354, No. Q.

FORECLOSURE OF MORTGAGE.

Public notice is hereby given that in pursuance and by virtue of a decree entered in the above cause on the 22d day of May, 1898, E. S. E. DUNDY, Jr., Master in Chancery of the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Nebraska, will on the 14th day of March, 1898, at the hour of 5 o'clock in the afternoon of said day at the front door of the Lincoln County Court House building in the City of North Platte, Lincoln County, State and District of Nebraska, sell at auction for cash the following described property, situated in the County of Lincoln, and State of Nebraska, to-wit: The south half (1/2) of section thirty-three (33), in township fifteen (15) north, and the north half (1/2) of section five (5), township fourteen (14) north, all in range thirty-one (31) east, twenty acres in a square form in the southeast corner thereof, west of the Sixth Principal Meridian containing 615 acres, more or less, according to Government Survey.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Land Office at North Platte, Neb., February 19th, 1898. Notice is hereby given that the following-named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before Register and Receiver at North Platte, Neb., on March 25th, 1898, viz: LORENZO D. GEORGE, who made Homestead Entry No. 16994, for the lots 1 and 2, section 2, township 14 north, range 31 west, 6th T. M.

D. M. HOGSETT

+ Contractor and Builder, + AND AGENT FOR ECLIPSE and FAIRBANKS WINDMILLS. NORTH PLATTE, NEB.

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