

A QUEER RACE.

A STORY OF A STRANGE PEOPLE.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL.

CHAPTER IX.—YELLOW JACK.

Like a good many other men, Peyton did not like to own, even to himself, that he had made a mistake; and as I could well see, he was continually casting about in his mind for reasons that might justify him for taking the "Lady Jane" in tow, in forgetfulness of the French saying, *Qui s'excuse, s'accuse*. His very anxiety to clear himself from charges which, as yet, nobody had made, showed that he was conscious of having committed a grievous error.

"I am very sorry about poor Bailey," he said. "Yet, after all, it is no more than was to be expected."

"I don't quite see—"

"Don't you remember him handling that body on the 'Lady Jane'? It must have been then he caught the fever."

"But that is two days since. He was thoroughly disinfected; and if he had caught the fever then it would have shown itself much sooner. I have always understood that yellow fever is exceedingly rapid in its action."

"Generally; but there are exceptions. He must have caught it that time on the 'Lady Jane,' and would have died just the same whether he had taken the ship in tow or not. How else could he have caught it?"

"The rats. Bolsover tells me that they actually swarm about the water-casks; and you know what that means."

"Curse the rats!" Peyton exclaimed, passionately. "It's rats, rats, all day long! I think you have all got rats on the brain. Are you quite sure, now, you did see them among the hawesers?"

"Quite. Besides, if they are not from the 'Lady Jane,' how did they get on board?"

"Anyhow, it is not the rats that gave poor Bailey the fever; he got it in the 'Lady Jane,' and nobody can blame me for that. Who could tell beforehand that she was a fever ship?"

To this query I made no answer. I knew what he was driving at. In the event of the fever spreading, he wanted to make out that it had been brought on board by Bailey; that the rats had nothing to do with it. I felt annoyed that he should thus try to wriggle out of the responsibility he had incurred by taking the "Lady Jane" in tow, and only the fact of my being his guest prevented me from saying so.

If he had been less obstinate, he would have cast her off at once, for besides taking us out of our course, she was greatly impeding our progress; and with fever on board our own vessel, and a fever ship in tow, no port in that part of the world would receive us; what he would do with the "Lady Jane" in such circumstances as these was a mystery.

Bailey's death naturally caused great alarm, both among the passengers and crew. The captain tried to persuade them that it was merely an isolated case, and that he had adopted such precautions as could prevent the pest from spreading. I don't think, though, that anybody believed him. I know I did not. The rats, I felt sure, would infect the whole ship, and it was quite possible that the fate of the "Lady Jane's" crew would be our—and mine—for the more imminent grew the danger the less confident I felt in my supposed immunity.

We dined at half past five on board the "Diana." The party generally consisted of the seven passengers, the captain (who presided) and sometimes the first or second officer. The bell rang fifteen minutes before the time, and again at the half hour, when, as a rule, we were all in our places except Bulnois who was in the habit of indulgently prolonging his afternoon nap, and about every other day had to be wakened up by a special messenger.

This happened on the day Bailey was buried, and the conversation with the captain which I have just described took place.

"Where is Mr. Bulnois?" asked Peyton, when we were all seated. Asleep, as usual, suppose. Steward, send a boy to rouse him up, and say that dinner is on the table."

Just as we were beginning with our soup the boy came back to say that Mr. Bulnois was very ill—had a bad headache, was very sick, and could not come to dinner.

We all looked at each other. My companions turned pale, and I have no doubt I did; for the same thought passed through every mind—Bulnois had got yellow fever. It was like the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. The foe was inside the hotel, and each of us was mentally asking himself whose turn it would be next.

The captain was the first to break the silence.

"A trifling indisposition, I expect," he said, with an affected nonchalance which natched ill with his anxious face. "Bulnois is subject to headaches, I think. I will go and see him presently, and give him something that will do him good. Very likely an attack of indigestion."

The captain looked round as if to invite an expression of opinion in accordance with his own; but nobody answered a word, and the dinner was finished hurriedly, and in a deep, almost solemn silence. But when Peyton left us to see poor Bulnois, every tongue was loosened.

"He is among us now, and no mistake," said Robinson.

"Who?"

"Yellow Jack. You must have brought him when you went aboard the 'Lady Jane' the other day, Erle."

"That is impossible. I was not there two minutes, and I came back as naked as I went. Besides, if I had brought it, I should have been the first victim."

"Well, how is it, then? I can understand that quarter-master getting it. But Bulnois never went near him, and at lunch he seemed quite well, and ate with good appetite."

"I'll tell you what it is," put in Saunders, the bank clerk, a quiet, observant little fellow. "It's those rats."

"Rats! What the deuce have rats to do with it?"

"Everything. I can see it all now. There was not a rat on board before Tuesday. I have inquired among the men, and I can not find anybody who saw a single specimen until Wednesday, and now they simply swarm; and as it was not on Wednesday morning that the captain had those guards put on the hawesers to prevent rats running over them from the 'Lady Jane,' depend upon it, he knows, only it does not suit his purpose to say so. Have you not noticed how he fires up when anything is said about rats?"

"By Jove! I do believe you are right. And if it all comes of taking that cursed fever ship in tow. Peyton deserves to be thrown overboard."

"No, no," I said; "Peyton is one of the best fellows in the world. He acted for the best, and took every precaution. Who

could foresee that rats would come aboard by a hawser?"

"He had no business to run the risk—a risk that involved others as well as himself—of taking a fever ship in tow; and what makes it worse, he did it for his own profit. We have no interest in the salvage."

After this I thought it discreet to let the subject drop, for in truth my friend's conduct was almost, if not altogether, indefensible.

"Never mind about the captain," interposed somebody. "What are we to do that is the question?"

"What can we do but grin and abide?" I answered. "There is no possibility of running away."

"But cannot we take something—brandy or quinine; or do something with carbolic acid?"

"Carbolic is merely a disinfectant; it is being used all over the ship already; brandy, I should think, is about the worst thing you could take, and quinine about the best. A manual of medicine I was looking at yesterday, in the captain's cabin, recommends strong doses of quinine as a prophylactic."

"Let us have some!"—"Where can we get it?"—"Has the captain any?"—"How much should we take?" shouted the five passengers.

I said that I believed the captain had some; and when he returned from seeking Bulnois they asked him for quinine even before they inquired after their sick friend.

He had some, though not very much, and gave each man a small dose forthwith. Bulnois was very ill; Peyton could not deny that his symptoms were those of yellow fever; and if he had denied it I should have known that he was wrong, for I had been reading the subject up. I had seen Bailey, and the moment I saw poor Bulnois (none of the other fellows would go near him) I recognized all the signs of the dread disease in its incipient stage—the shivering, the hot skin, the suffused eyeballs, the drunken-like aspect of the eyes, and the flushed zone that encircled them.

Poor fellow! we could do nothing for him; I doubt whether the ablest physician in England could have done anything for him. He died delirious on the second day.

In the meantime three of the crew had fallen ill, and they, too, died; and after that there were several deaths every day; within a week of the outbreak of the fever, the forty-six souls whom the "Diana" had on board when she sailed from Liverpool were reduced to twenty-five. Yet the virulence of the plague did not abate. It seemed as if we should all perish, and I do not think there were more than two men aboard who believed they would escape.

These two were Bolsover and myself. I had gone so much among the sick, exposing myself continually to the risk of contagion without suffering the least ill effect, that I began to think my immunity was real, after all, and that I ran no more risk of taking the fever than a man who has been effectively vaccinated runs of taking small-pox.

The boatswain was like Bonaparte—he believed in his star.

"I am not afraid, Mr. Erle," he said to me one day; "my time has not come yet. I am bound to see that treasure-ship before I die."

It was about this time that Bucklow (now first officer, his senior being among the dead) took me to the stern, and pointing to the water, said grimly—

"There they are, waiting for us. They have been following us these last three days."

"They" were five or six huge sharks, swimming in the wake of the ship. I looked at them for awhile as if fascinated, and then with a shudder turned away. I never went near the taffrail that I did not look, and they were always close under the stern.

As for Peyton, I thought he was going mad. He attended to his duties as diligently as ever, looked after the sick as well as he could, and kept the survivors of his crew to their duties, took the day's reckoning, and recorded the day's run; but he hardly ever spoke, except to give necessary orders.

For hours together he would pace about the quarter-deck, muttering—"It's my doing! it's all my doing! We shall all die! we shall all die! but my time has not come yet!"

Once, when I ventured to suggest that he should cast the "Lady Jane" off (at the instance of some of the men, who had got it into their heads that so long as we had the fever ship in tow the fever would never leave us) he turned on me almost fiercely.

"No!" he exclaimed; "I shall not cast her off. Why should I? What harm has she done? I am doomed—we are all doomed—and the salvage will be a provision for my wife and family. Don't you understand? A provision for my wife and family, that's why. But it's useless to discuss the subject or give my reasons. I absolutely refuse to cast the ship off; let that suffice."

He was doomed, but not to die of yellow fever.

The very next morning, when I went on deck, Bucklow told me, with a significant look, that the captain had been taken ill in the night, and seemed in a very bad way.

I went to him at once. Bucklow spoke truly. The captain was, in truth, in a very bad way. He had all the symptoms which I now know so well. Although the temperature of his cabin was nearly eighty, and his skin hot and dry, he shivered continually. He had a terrible headache, too, and albeit still sensible, rambled at times in his talk, and I doubted not would soon become quite delirious.

"Yellow Jack has got hold of me now," he said, trying to smile. "I thought he would; but not so soon, not so soon. I was quite well last night. What think you now—is a man safer at sea or ashore? Are these adventures to your taste, Erle? You will have more, more, and pleasanter ones, I hope. Sorry I asked you to come with me. Turned out badly, hasn't it? If I had known what would happen, you may be sure I would have given that brig a wide berth. But now it is too late! and the salvage, you know, will be a provision for the wife and children. Poor wife! poor children! I shall never see them again, Erle—never again! Give them my love when you get home, and say I thought about them to the last. I knew your father; he was a very good friend; yes, a very good friend. I was second officer of the 'Orion' when he and your mother were passengers; you were a passenger, too—a little chap about two years old. I remember you well; used to trot you about on my shoulder. How did they get to St. Thomas? That is where they came on board. Oh, I remember—in a falucha from Maracaibo; yes, that was it—in a falucha from Maracaibo. I say, what do you think I saw in the night?"—lowering his voice, and looking fearfully round. "Rats! Hundreds! They ran all over the place, and played at leap-frog on my bed—they did—played at leap-frog on my bed. And I could neither touch them nor call out. My arms were fastened to my sides, and my tongue refused to move. And what do you think? But don't tell anybody. A great yellow

one—twice as big as any of the others—a great yellow one, with black whiskers, and white teeth, and fierce red eyes, came and sat on my chest and spat at me. It gave me the fever, curse it! Get dogs and cats; set traps; lay poison. Kill it! kill it! Kill that cursed yellow rat, or you will all die. A little more of that eau-de-Cologne, please; on my eyeballs this time. Thanks. And now I will drink again. This thirst is terrible. I am very ill, Erle."

I remained with him an hour or more, leaving him some drink, and then, leaving him with his boy for awhile, I went outside to get a breath of fresh air, the cabin being both close and hot.

"Bucklow was still on deck."

"How long will he last, do you think?" he asked.

"Perhaps until to-morrow," I answered, gloomily. "They have all gone on the second day, or sooner, so far; and Peyton has it very badly. I am afraid he will be wildly delirious. Somebody should be with him continually."

"You have left the boy, I suppose?"

"Yes; and I shall go back in a few minutes."

"How long will this last, I wonder? It's hell! I'll tell you what, Erle. I have a great mind to cast that cursed brig off on my own authority. We have had no luck since we saw her. I am in command now. Do you think I might?"

"Certainly. Cast her off, by all means, and let us make all the haste we can for Montevideo, while there's somebody to navigate and sail the ship; and if—"

"Rats! Rats! Rats! There's that great yellow one with the red eyes! I'll catch him, if I die for it! Ah! he is making for the 'Lady Jane,' is he—"

"My God! what is that?" exclaimed Bucklow, as we both turned from the taffrail, over which we had been leaning.

It was the captain running across the deck in his shirt, and at the same instant, and before either of us could raise a hand to stop him, he sprang on the bulwark and jumped into the sea.

The mate, with ready presence of mind, threw a buoy after him, at the same time ordering the ship to be brought to and a boat to be lowered.

My first impulse was to follow Peyton and try to save him.

"Don't!" said Bucklow, laying his hand on my shoulder. "He can swim better than you can. And, see, it would be certain death."

The captain was swimming with powerful strokes toward the "Lady Jane," in the very midst of a shoal of sharks. They were all round him, and ever before he reached the brig one of the creatures turned on its back for the fatal bite. An agonized scream, a piteous look from a fever-stricken face, a swirl of the waters as the wild beasts of the sea fought with each other for their prey, and all was over.

It seemed too terrible to be real. My brain was in a whirl; I felt sick and giddy; and had not Bucklow put his arm around me, I should have fallen on the deck.

"Don't give way," he said, kindly. "Horrid sight as it was, it is perhaps better so. Poor Peyton has been spared a long agony. It was not three minutes from the time of his jumping overboard to his death. I'd rather die like that than as some of our poor fellows have died. Just one crunch, and it's over. Come! I am going to cast the brig off. I cannot bear the sight of her."

"Sink her, and so prevent the disasters that have befallen us from befalling others."

"We cannot. She is timber laden."

"Burn her, then."

"I did not think of that. Yes, we will burn her; and those cursed rats with her, if there are any left. Will you come with me? and we will set her on fire, and bring those two fellows off. How they have escaped, Heaven only knows."

"With all my heart."

The dingy was lowered at once, and taking with us matches, axes, and a cask of turpentine, we went on board the "Lady Jane."

TO BE CONTINUED.

Why Envelopes are Redeemed.

Some people have an idea that the Government redeems postage stamps when from any cause they become unfit for use or are difficult to use. Frequently sheets of stamps are stuck together, or are torn or injured. The loss, if any, falls upon the owner, as the Government refuses to assume any responsibility of stamps when once sold.

The agents of the Government, the Postmasters, can redeem stamps which they have for sale, if through any accident they become unfit for use. But when the citizen buys a stamp he either uses it in the legitimate way or else he is out the value of the stamp.

The Government, however, redeems stamped envelopes. If one should happen to be misdirected or should become blotted, or for any reason a person should wish to tear open a stamped envelope after he has sealed it for mailing, he can bring it to the Post Office and get a brand new envelope in its place. The reason for this difference in the treatment of the adhesive stamp and the stamped envelope is that the adhesive stamp can be used and then washed and passed as good, unless a careful scrutiny is made. If the Government should begin the practice of redeeming adhesive stamps, the opportunities for fraud would be increased. Then the adhesive stamps are manufactured at a cost to the Government, which the stamped envelope is not. The stamps are furnished to the public at the face value, and out of this has to come the cost of manufacture, but in the case of stamped envelopes they are sold at their face value, plus the cost of manufacture.

Crumbling to Pieces.

The British parliament houses are crumbling to pieces so fast that there is constant danger of some portion of the buildings toppling down upon the members. Parts of the front of St. Stephen's have had to be entirely refaced because of the wearing away of the soft stone. Only a week or two ago a heavy piece of a stone heraldic animal suddenly fell close to the entrance of Westminster hall in Old Palace yard—a means of entrance to the house which is largely favored. But a few days before a portion of the ornamental stone work fell close to the member's entrance itself, and another heavy piece fell upon the pavement of New Palace yard not a month ago.

An official estimate sets down the number of wolves in Russia at 170,000; it is further stated that the loss caused by the destruction of sheep and swine by wolves is so great that it cannot be even approximately estimated.

HOMESTEAD WAGES

ALMOST CAUSE DEMOCRATS TO LEAVE CONGRESS.

Mr. Bynum Would Like to Have a Job—Some Things That Surprised Democratic Congressional Investigators—Protection Strengthens Labor.

The Democratic House sent a committee to Homestead with the hope of making a showing of distress and poverty among the laborers in protected industries. They hoped to show that workmen in protected industries get no benefit from a protective tariff. But they will not show that.

What they found was workmen getting from \$1.40 a day (the lowest rate, and that only a few) up to as high as \$16 per day. There were men offered \$1,000, \$2,500, \$3,000 and even \$5,000 per annum, and working about 270 days in the year—and yet they had learned to feel and believe, under the experience of a protective tariff, that they ought to have more. No wonder Congressman Bynum, Democrat, of Indiana and a member of the committee, inquired with some show of eagerness whether there was a chance for him to secure a position in the works.

When Hugh O'Donnell, the leader of the strikers was on the stand, Mr. Boatner (Democrat, of Louisiana) asked him:

"You are one of the skilled workmen, are you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"About what were your wages?"

"About \$144 per month."

John McLuckie, a member of the Amalgamated association and a burgess of Homestead, complained to the committee that the McKinley law reduced the tariff on steel billets, and that wages, therefore, began to go down with the price of steel billets after its passage. He advanced the

condition of laboring men in Europe and Great Britain is proved not to be true out of the mouths of the strikers and the Democrats themselves.

ON THE OTHER SIDE.

The Free Trade Party Endorsed by English Papers.

Senator Hale.—The fight will be fought out by the Republican party as an American fight. The policy of the Democratic party, as shown by the tariff plank, is British and not American. Tariff for revenue only, with protection denounced as robbery and fraud, is British doctrine, and it is with no wonder that I read from the London Graphic, in its issue of June 23, the following:

Englishmen will watch Mr. Cleveland's campaign with cordial sympathy, for not only is his tariff policy in accord with the orthodox economic school of England, but his party platform wisely condemned the arrogant and irritating foreign policy of its opponents.

The London Star of June 24 declares: Mr. Cleveland is the best type of the American statesman, and if he does not win it will be because he is too sound a reformer.

The London Post declares that: A Republican victory at the polls in November would be a blow to the free trade party in the States, and would retard, for a considerable period, the progress of those sound commercial and economic doctrines which underlie British commercial greatness and alone maintain British commercial ascendancy.

The great London journal, Engineering, says that:

There is a somewhat general idea in this country that the McKinley tariff bill will be repealed before long, or, at all events, be so much modified that the sting will be taken out of those clauses most objectionable to British manufacturers; and it is for this reason that the

gross tons. In the same time there has been an average decrease in the cost of mining of 50 cents a ton, an average decrease in the value at the mines of 66 cents a ton, and an average increase in a mining operative's earnings of more than \$100 per annum. Considering the depressing effects of the "robber tariff" this is quite a remarkable record.

The Teacher's Power.

It is quite as appropriate, I think, that the President of the United States should review the teachers of the land as that he should review its army or its militia. [Applause.] For, after all the strength and defense of our institutions, not only in peace but in war, is to be found in the young of the land who have received from the lips of patriotic teachers the story of the sacrifice which our fathers recorded to establish our civil institutions, and which their sons have repeated on hundreds of battle fields.—President Harrison to National Educational Association.

A Tariff Picture.

As the iron industries of the United States have developed under protection the wages of iron workers have advanced. In 1860 puddlers got

\$3.51 per ton.
In 1890 they got \$5.50 per ton.

A Pertinent Inquiry.

Mr. Pierce pertinently inquires of his Democratic colleagues in the House what they are shooting through their pop-gun tariff bills for under suspension of the rules if their objection to the silver bill is that it would be approved by the President.

The Mother's Doubt.

Mother—I hope, my son, if you go into politics you will be honest and respectable.

Son—Great Scott, mother, you talk as though you thought I might become a Democrat.



CONFRONTED BY A CONDITION—Grover Cleveland Finds the Task of Writing a Third Letter of Acceptance to Be a Rather Difficult One.

somewhat extraordinary opinion that the securing of the reduction of tariff on steel billets was part of a conspiracy to reduce the wages of workmen. He also charged that the company "shortly converted the Duquesne works into a billet plant, increased the production, flooded the country so that prices may be reduced, and thus effect our wages. The Duquesne produces large amount of billets."

This would seem to account better for the reduction in the price of steel billets than the removal of the tariff. Representative Oates of Alabama, the Democratic chairman of the Democratic committee of investigation, was interviewed after he returned from Homestead and said: "That the workmen at Homestead were far above the average in intelligence and seemed to be fairly prosperous, living in good, comfortable houses. He saw none of the poverty common in great manufacturing centers. Many of the men, particularly the skilled workmen, made good wages, some of them as high as \$275 per month. Others made only \$50 per month. The common laborers earned from \$1 to \$1.50 a day."

As Mr. Frick had positively declined to disclose to the committee the cost per ton of producing steel billets at the Homestead mills, Mr. Oates could not say whether the contention of the men that the company was making a great deal of money at the present prices was true or not. He was satisfied, however, that the allegation of the men that the company had purposely produced an overstock of steel billets in order to reduce the scale of wages of the workmen was untrue.

Blatant demagogues have spread many lying reports of the misery, poverty and degradation of the workmen at Homestead, and Democratic politicians have been quick to take up these reports and glory in them as showing the calamity of a protective tariff. But the day has gone by when lies of this sort can befool the people. The country is not prepared to judge finally on the merits of the strikers' quarrel at Homestead. But that the wages they have been getting and the wages they are offered are such as would leave them in the helpless and poorly paid

hopes of the Democrats for the approaching Presidential election are so largely shared in this country.

Prices of Domestic Products.

It is desirable that the prices of domestic products should remain uniform, and that they should be so high as not to justify a feeling of unrest in the operatives, or a fear of impending disaster in the investors of any vocation. Such an industrial adjustment should be secured as would equalize the surplus annual product of all vocations. That is to say, the ordinary demand for their consumption should exhaust the products of all vocations as nearly as possible in equal times. Such a condition of industrial and financial equipoise can never be attained while our markets are exposed to the disturbing effects of an alien competition, or while the interests of our producers are exposed to the vicious assaults of the whims and the sophistries of our non-producing free-trade politicians.

The Pacific Slope.

Judge M. M. Estee of California, who was chairman of the Republican National convention of 1888, said recently: "I regard the administration of President Harrison as having been wise, prudent and judicious. He can carry California by a sound majority. The prosperity of California in the last year has been marvelous. We produced wheat, raisins, prunes and wine in unprecedented quantities. The McKinley tariff law is popular with us, because it protects our products. The duty on prunes is an example. It is two cents, yet prunes are cheaper in New York and over the country to-day than when the law went into effect. The same thing is true as to raisins, on which the duty imposed is two and one-half cents."

Iron Ore Industry.

The iron ore industry of the United States has shown since 1880 one of the most remarkable strides ever recorded of any industry in any country. The census figures have just been tabulated, and it appears that the increase of production in ten years has been over 100 per cent., from 7,000,000 to 14,000,000

Political Pointers. Tammany never bolts. It knives. The campaign song to the tune of Boom-tarra-ra-boom-de-ay is in full bloom.

Speaker Crisp has declined to entertain a "dilatatory motion," and Tom Reed smole a bland smile.

The Democrats are likely to lose North Carolina if they pass a free lumber bill through the House. The word is therefore passed around, "Wait until after election."

It is not an issue in the campaign that W. J. Campbell does law business for Armour, any more than is the fact that G. Cleveland is the paid attorney of a soulless street-car corporation.

Union miners are killing non-union miners in Idaho with bullets and dynamite because they take the lowered wages which the union men had refused. Yet there is free trade in the product of Idaho mines.

There is a just mean, I think—that between a system of intellectual competition which destroys the body and a system of physical training that eliminates the mind.—President Harrison at Saratoga.

Famous Old Oaks.

The largest oak now standing in England is the "Cowthorpe," which measures seventy-eight feet in circumference at the ground. At one time this tree and its branches covered more than an acre of space. The gigantic old "Parliamentary Oak," in Clipstone park, London, is believed to be 1,500 years old. The tallest oak on the British Isles is called the Duke's Walking Stick. It is higher than the spire of Westminster Abby. The oak of Gelemos, which was felled in 1810, realized \$4,350 for its owner. The bark was sold for \$1,000 and the trunk and branches for \$3,350 more.

Big Work for One Bird.

A resident of Columbus, Ind., has a gamecock which was recently attacked by a bull, but in a very few minutes the bull was minus an eye. About a year ago the gamecock killed in one day seven geese, eleven turkeys and three roosters.