Last Cruise of the Mary Ann

CAPT. ELISHA HOPEWELL, of the brig Mary Ann, of Salem, had been repairing and repainting and making his craft ready for a voyage to London and return. The year was 1786, and boy and man he had been sailing for over thirty years.

Although he had owned and commanded the Mary Ann for ten years, she was by no means a new craft when he got her. In making repairs he had found many signs of weakness, and as he finished his day's work and started for home his knees were stiff and his back ached.

He reached his house to find his wife, Nancy, and supper waiting for him, and as he took his seat at the table he looked at her critically and for the first time noticed that there were gray hairs among the brown on her head.

"Elisha, have you lost your jackknife or heard that your brother was dead?" quietly asked Nancy after awhile.

"No," he answered, and followed the word with a sigh.

"Mebbe ye are comin' down with measles. Your mother says ye never had 'em as a boy."

"Mebbe I am," he gloomily replied.

Nancy waited for three minutes to see if he had an explanation, but as none came she briskly said:

"Now look here, Elisha, I know all about it, and I've been sort o' spectin' this thing would happen any time. You've been overhaulin' the Mary Ann and you've found she's growing old. You've found out the same thing of yourself, and you've suddenly seen it in me. It has struck you all in a heap, and you feel glum over it."

"Then, by Josh, you've hit it!" exclaimed the captain, glad to have an opportunity to talk it over."

"Wall, there ain't no call to cry over it," she continued. "Ever since you got this charter, I've made up my mind that it would be our last voyage."

"But how can it be, Nancy."

"It won't be so hard. We are purty well off fur common folks, Elisha. That is, we've got enough money to start you in ship chandlery, and we own our own house and lot. No fear but what we'll come out all right. We must give up the sea to younger folks."

They talked it over for a couple of hours, and it was fully decided that when the Mary Ann returned to Salem her last voyage under Captain Hopewell would be ended. Perhaps an astrologer might have warned them that there would be no homecoming for the brig which had borne them safely over so many leagues of ocean, but there was no reader of the future at hand.

It got to be known over Salem that Captain Hopewell was making his last voyage, and when the Mary Ann cast off from the wharf there was a big crowd at hand to cheer her departure and wish her a safe return. She headed out into the Atlantic on a summer's afternoon, and as the Massachusetts shores faded behind them, Captain Elisha said to Nancy:

"By Josh, then, Nancy, but it seems as if a piece of that beef we had fur breakfast had got stuck in my throat."

"It's a sort o' weakness of our feelins', Elisha," she replied as she turned away to wipe her eyes, "but I guess we've decided for the best."

For a thousand miles, headed toward the rising sun, the Mary Ann was driven as she had never been driven before. There was a piping breeze, and it scarcely varied a point, and a third of the run had been marked off when there fell a flat calm.

It was noon when the wind died out, and the man sent aloft reported the ocean clear of sail. As sundown came the sea was like glass, and it was the same state of affairs at midnight when the watch was changed.

The mate went off and the captain came on and he had been only on deck half an hour when Nancy appeared. She declared it to be too hot below to sleep.

In a calm midocean at night there are strange and uncanny sounds from the hold of a ship as she lazily heaves up on the ground swell. Boxes and barrels down in the hold rub each other, bulkheads creak and timbers groan, and now and then there are shrill squeaks from the fighting rats. Men who sleep during a clam breathe stentoriously and sigh and groan now and then, and the wakeful ones move about uneasily and cast apprehensive glances over the sea.

Nancy walked aimlessly about for a while and then rested her arms on the rail and gazed off into the darkness and let her thoughts wander back home. She had been silent for a quarter of an hour when she gave a sudden start and bent her ear to listen. Captain Elisha happened to note her attitude and he crossed over to her side and asked:

"Wall, Nancy, d'ye think anybody has stole the woodpile while we're gone on this trip?"

"It's Notestor, Elisha," she replied, and she laid a hand on his arm. "Don't you hear the sound of our boats all along the starb'd?"

"Some mates in the hold," he replied after listening a minute. "Shucks—there don't

[illegible]

oars at work, but how on earth can a boat be out there?"

"I dunno, but there is one. Now you git the sounds plainer. It's a boat, I tell you, and she's pulling at least four oars. She must be from a wreck, and you'd better light a lantern and lash it in the riggin' to guide 'em."

A lantern was procured and placed as suggested, and it had scarcely thrown its light over the waters when there was a hail from half a dozen throats at once. Captain Hopewell answered it, and within five minutes every one of the crew of the Mary Ann was on deck and wide-awake with curiosity.

The hails were repeated at intervals, the sound of the oars came nearer, and at the end of half an hour a big yawl with twelve men and their dunnage in it drew alongside the Mary Ann.

"By Josh, then, but it's a crew of Dutchmen!" exclaimed Captain Hopewell, as he peered down in the boat.

He was right. They were big and sturdy men who had sailed out of the Texel, and it was quickly discovered that not one of them could speak English. Each one brought his bag of clothing over the rail with him, but water and provisions were left behind.

A man who was doubtless the mate of the crew advanced to Captain Hopewell and entered into a long explanation, not one word of which was understood. It was, however, guessed that his ship had sprung a leak and that he had been obliged to abandon her.

He was made to understand that they were welcome and would be landed in London, and by and by the twelve men withdrew in a body and stretched themselves on deck and went to sleep. Nancy had looked into the faces of all in a critical way, and while the Dutch mate was telling his story her eyes never left his face.

When the strangers had withdrawn she descended to the cabin and a few minutes later Captain Elisha followed her and said:

"Nancy, I'm jiggered if this ain't a funny thing. I can't say that things look exactly right to me."

"I tell you what, Elisha," she replied in her quiet way. "If a ship had bin on fire or in a sinkin' state them men would never have brought all their clothin' and heaped in the water and provisions they did."

"No, by Josh, they wouldn't, but how do they come to be afloat?"

"Dunno, but there's a mystery about it. There's the hull crew except the captain. How did he come to be left behind? And didn't you notice how the men looked the brig over and kept dodgin' and whisperin'? I'm believin' we shall have trouble with 'em, Elisha."

"But they can't be pirates."

"Probably not."

"And there's no war between us."

"No, but we can't make out their story, and I do believe that mate was lyin' all the time. I wish he hadn't shown a light and brought them aboard."

The Dutchmen were tired with their pull at the oars and slept soundly till the morning watch of the Mary Ann was ready to wash down decks. Then they rose up, yawning and stretching, and the last was hardly on his feet before the breeze came. Sail was made at once, and as the Mary Ann laid her course Captain Hopewell called the cook aft to see about preparing breakfast for the extra men.

He had his eye on the strangers at the same time and noted that they had gathered in a bunch and were whispering together. Their yawl was a big and clumsy boat, provided with oars and sail, and as there was no room on the deck of the brig to stow it the captain went forward and tried to make the Dutch mate understand that the contents should be hoisted aboard and the yawl sent adrift.

He made himself clear enough, but as if his words and gestures had been a signal the twelve Dutchmen at once sprang upon the crew of the Mary Ann, all of whom were on deck. They were stout, determined men, and the move was so sudden that no resistence was made.

Nancy heard the scuffle and appeared on deck to find Captain Elisha and all his men prisoners. They were prisoners, and yet they were not bound. When they made no struggle, the Dutch mate took off his cap to Nancy and sought to make it clear to the others that they were to be sent adrift in the yawl.

"Wall, d'ye understand what he's drivin' at?" asked Captain Elisha, as he turned to Nancy.

"I do, Elisha," she replied, "and I'm not a bit surprised. They mean to turn us adrift, and go sailing away with the brig."

"But, by Josh, how can they do it! It's the same as piracy! Men, let's make a fight fur it!"

"Stop, Elisha!" called Nancy. "There's no show fur us! They'll beat ye to death before you can knock one of 'em down. Don't drive them to murder when there's no call fur it."

"And I am to let 'em have possession of brig and cargo?"

"You'll have to. If you are easy with 'em we'll git away all right, and we may sight a vessel to help us before noon."

"Aye, captain, we've no show agin 'em," called the mate, "but with that help you'll we needn't be afraid if we are at sea fur a month. We are fur the boat."

That settled it. It is due to the strangers to say that they made not the slightest objection when more water and provisions were lowered into the boat, and when the men packed and lowered their bags and Nancy brought up a big bundle of things from the cabin.

They had no jeers or insults to fling after those they had sent afloat, but at once made more sail on the brig and headed her on a new course. Nancy had smuggled the chart and a spare compass into her bundle, and as the boat drew away she was forced by the wind to hold a true course for the English channel. There were provisions in plenty, and scarcely a word was uttered before breakfast had been served out. Then Nancy quietly asked:

"Elisha, what ye goin' to do about it?"

"I'm goin' to stan' to the eastward for awhile," he replied, after thinking it over. "I'll jest keep track of the 'Mary Ann' as long as I can, and it's jest possible that we may be picked up and have a show to git her back. If we don't meet anything by to-morrow, and the wind allows it, I'll head for home, though I don't see how I'm ever to hold up my head in Boston or Salem ag'in. They'll say I was a coward not to make a fight fur it."

"Then they'll be fools! The Dutchmen would have killed every one of us but what they'd had the brig, and we ought to thank heaven we got off as well as we did. Don't ye despair, Elisha. We've seen some tight squeaks, but we've allus come out all right. Don't ye remember how a whale once saved us?"

"And the same whale may eat us this time!"

All that day the boat ran her true course, but as the brig bore into the north and sailed the faster her topsails were only a speck on the sea when the sun went down. As the breeze did not fall with the sun, the men were divided into watches, a lantern was run to the head of the mast head of the mast as a signal, and hour after hour the boat danced over the seas.

There were two men on the lookout, but after midnight Nancy roused up and spoke to them and found that both of them were asleep. She sat down beside one of them in the bow, wide-awake with her thoughts of the sudden change in their fortunes, and a long hour passed when the sight of a ship suddenly danced before her.

It was a craft with all her sails set, and having been taken aback she was drifting away stern first, though this fact was not known till later. A cry from the woman roused everybody in an instant, and pointing into the south she chokingly exclaimed:

"There—there—a ship—a ship!"

"By Josh, and there is!" answered Captain Elisha a second later. "Now, men, all together and hail her."

A great shout went over the water, but it was not answered, and neither was a light displayed. The shout was repeated again and again and again, and then after a long look Captain Elisha cried out:

"Why, I believe she's an abandoned craft and takin' care of herself! We'll run right alongside in five minutes!"

They reached the decks of the stranger to find her a ship of a good deal larger than the Mary Ann, and a search of ten minutes proved that not a living soul was aboard. There was a dead man, though.

Lying in the main cabin, fully dressed, was the corpse of the captain, and a sailor's sheath knife was still sticking in his back. Murder had been done before the ship was abandoned.

Did you ever read an account of that ocean mystery? The ship Voorne, Captian Bergen, master, had set out from North Sea ports bound for New York with a valuable cargo. That was the craft Hopewell found adrift in mid-ocean.

Her crew, from the mate down, were the men who took forcible possession of the Mary Ann, after killing their captain and abandoning their vessel. What drove them to the deed of blood—why they didn't stand by their ship afterward—where they headed for in the stolen brig—there are questions that have never been answered.

Perhaps the mate and his chief quarreled and murder was done in passion. Then fear of the law made the whole crew clamorous to get out of the ship. They took nothing with them which was not their own.

They even left over a thousand dollars in gold and silver behind them. If any human eye ever sighted the Mary Ann after her crew lost sight of her, the fact has not been reported to this day. It is easy to guess her fate, however. She either went down in a gale at sea or was wrecked on some iron-bound coast to the north, and every soul perished.

No sooner had the body of the late captain received burial and the ship's papers been overhauled to find her port of destination than she was headed for the port of New York to be delivered up to the consignees. It was a short-handed crew to work such a big craft, but every man tried to do two men's work, and it was recorded on the log that Nancy Hopewell steered her tricks at the wheel and kept lookouts with the men.

While they had been despoiled of the Mary Ann, they were to find themselves largely the gainers by it. After a run which was bare of event the derelict was safely moored in New York harbor, and Captain Elisha bade Nancy remove the tar from her hands and stick up to meet company.

It is of the long ago I have written. The tomb-stones of both Elisha and Nancy are moss-grown in the old cemetery, but the salvage money received from the Voorne gave them years of comfort and happiness. People sometimes wondered that in their old age there was no abatement of their affections, and Elisha would always answer them with:

"Then, by Josh, it's because Nancy is the bravest and best woman on earth, and I don't care who hears me say so!"—New York Sun.

MODERNIZING THE HOLY LAND.

Invasion of American Mechanical Inventions Into Syria.

"A peaceful revolution is now going on in the Holy Land," writes an American correspondent. "Where plows of antique types were hauled by camels, oxen, and donkeys, the steam plow is seen. In harvest time, instead of the patient, antique methods, huge harvesting machines, reapers and threshers are operated by steam. The standard gauge railway has already penetrated inland to Homs, the 'Manchester of Syria,' where, on its arrival, a mob demanded its surrender. Victorias and landaus are running between Homs and Palmyra, where the ruins were once a sealed book. Automobile lines are preparing to cross the desert and succeed the mail lines of fleet dromedaries. When the American steam thresher arrived in Syria from Indiana the plant was promptly bought by Najib Sursock Bey, the progressive millionaire, owning great areas of Syria and Egypt, who vows to buying anything the Americans invent. The success of the plant was complete. The straw bruiser attached to the separator has opened a new dawn of plenty for starving animals of the Holy Land. Syrian straw is hard and stiff, and hence it was supposed for ages to be valueless. The bruiser, a steel cylinder with twelve rows of corrugated teeth making 1,200 revolutions a minute, now makes the straw fit for the animals to eat. The Koran," adds our correspondent, "will surely retreat before American machinery and methods introduced simultaneously with American schools. This may be said to be the first death blow at Mahomedanism. The Arab are accustomed to work, and court it. All the wars heretofore waged have never wielded the slightest influence on the religious fanaticism of these people. Machinery and modern methods and enlightened education, however, bringing the Arabs new and cheerful labor, better pay, and rewards, will expose them constantly to the weaknesses of their creed and end in their complete metamorphosis from their forms of dress, foods, thoughts and conduct."—London Sphere.

QUEER THINGS ABOUT SONGS.

Some Favorites of Latter Times Were Composed Centuries Ago.

Martin Luther was not the first to object to "letting the devil have all the good tunes," says the International Quarterly. The bishop of Ossory in the fourteenth century used such tunes as "Do, Do, Nightingale, Sing Full Merry," in compiling a book of hymns.

The song of Deborah and Barak in the scriptures, with its extemporization, its clapping of hands to mark the rhythm, its alternation of solo and chorus, would not be unlike the singing at a camp-meeting on a Southern plantation. The drum major of a military band is a survival of the champion who strode, twirling his sword at the head of an army in the old days challenging the champion of the other side to combat.

"We won't Go Home Till Morning" has a more interesting history than any other song. It was first sung in the Holy Land in honor of a French crusader named Mambron. The melody was caught by the Saracens and is still sung in the east. In France the name "Mambron" was centuries afterward altered to "Malbrooke," derisively applied to the Duke of Marlborough. "Malbrooke he went to war"—the words fitted well enough. The further statement, true of the old crusader, "he's dead and buried," was applied in spirit of hope to the victor of Blenheim.

Du Maurier in "Trilby" makes great use of "Malbrooke," as he does of "Ben Bolt." Beethoven used the theme in an orchestral score, "The Battle of Vittoria." In England the sun is oftenest fitted to the words "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." Scottish folksongs are most difficult to imitate. Mendelssohn did it so successfully, however, that most people who sing "Oh, Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast?" take it for an old native air.

Astonishing Musical Statistics.

In the course of a lecture at the Conference of Musicians in Dublin Ireland, some interesting particulars and some astonishing statistics were given relatively to the amount of work accomplished by the brain and nerves in piano playing. A pianist in view of the present state of piano-forte playing has to cultivate the eye to see about 1,500 signs in one minute, the fingers to make about 2,000 movements, and the brain to receive and understand separately the 1,500 signs which it issues 2,000 orders. In playing Weber's "Moto perpetuo," a pianist has to read 4,541 notes in a little under four minutes. This is about 19 per second; but the eye can receive only about ten consecutive impressions per second, so that it is evident that in very rapid music a player does not see every note singly, but in groups, probably a bar or more at one vision. In Chopin's "Etude in E minor" (in the second set) the speed of reading is still greater, since it is necessary to read 3,960 signs in two minutes and a half, which is equivalent to about 26 notes per second.

Witch hazel does political curses good.

A "FAKIR'S" CONFESSIONS.

Chicago, He Says, Is the Only "Square" City.

In the current Independent are published the confessions of a street "fakir" who for obvious reasons remains anonymous, from which account it appears that the business is profitable.

The fakir's real beginning as an independent operator was in Chicago, of which he says: "Chicago is the only 'square' town in this country—that is, 'square' from a fakir's or grafter's point of view. You pay for protection and you get it."

He paid the captain $5 for a week for permission to sell knife sharpeners, and gave the man on post about a dollar a day. He was warned not to try any "jamming" or "slum" at this low rate. These privileges cost $10 and $5 a day, respectively.

"Jamming" is getting possession of the money of a crowd on the understanding that it is to be given back, and then whipping up a fast team of horses and driving away. "Slum" is selling packages of jewelry, handkerchiefs, etc.

There are towns that are not "square." In Cleveland the confessing fakir paid for "protection" and was afterward arrested and fined. Then he went to New York, concerning which it is his testimony that it is a town of "easy marks." New York is "closed," except just before Christmas, but there is something doing in "sneak pitches"—that is, in "squaring" the man on post and selling for a few minutes between the visits of the "rounds." However, when the artist tried it he was arrested by the very man he had bribed, and thence went to Philadelphia, of which he says:

"Philadelphia is the cheapest city in the United States. The policemen are paid at the rate of $1.75 per day, and a fakir who gives one of them a quarter for protection is hailed as a Carnegie. For a dollar a day the guardian of the beat you are working on will keep your territory clear of other fakirs and vote you prince of good fellows.

"There is not much money to be made in Philadelphia by a fakir, for various reasons. First, the people have an inherited trait of thriftiness; second, they live their lives less feverishly than in any other large city of the United States; and there are 'home guards' in the town, who take care of all the surplus cash floating around."

New York and Chicago are the headquarters for new novelties, and fakirs of the first class secure the new things. The fakirs keep in touch with the novelty supply complaints for new things, and scan the papers constantly for announcements which indicate some unusual event that will draw a crowd.

"I think that for straight faking aluminium gas tips were the most profitable things I ever handled," says the account of the fakir in the Independent. "They cost me, with the brass pillar attached, $1.35 per gross. I laid out $500 in tips and printed matter, planned my campaign, and began an itinerary which occupied four months of my time. My bank account showed a balance to my favor just $4,527 in excess when I had completed my tour."

The Biggest Man.

Edward Beaupre, the biggest man in the world, was one of the sights on Broadway in New York the other day. Beaupre does not enjoy his unique distinction. Being independently wealthy and intelligent and refined as well he is not a sideshow sight. He stands 8 feet 3 inches in height and weighs 368 pounds. He wears a No. 8 hat and a 22 shoe. Beaupre weighed 9 pounds when he was born. He was just like other babies until, at the age of 3, he began to grow with remarkable speed. His parents are of normal size. He was 6 feet 4 when 9 years old. Now it takes 13 yards of cloth to make him a suit of clothes. He has two brothers and four sisters, none of whom is remarkable for size except one of the boys, aged 9, who is 5 feet 8 inches and growing at a rate at which he will soon catch up to his big brother.

The House That Jack Built.

9.

This is the number of bucks per week that was saved from to build the house that Jack built.

30.

This is the sum which Mrs. Jack looked like in the frocks she made for herself in order to save for the house that Jack built.

15.

This is the number of full meals that can be prepared without cooking from a package of the food which the Jacks ate in order to save for the house that Jack built.

87. 37.

The ages of Jack and his wife, respectively, when they had finally paid for the house that Jack built.

An Ardent Reader.

"Well," said the Sheriff, with an air of satisfaction, "noospapers don't make no great sight out o' me, now I tell ye, for it's seldom ever I set down to look at one on 'em. I got a book up home there I take an' read out on, ef I ain't got nothin' better to do. The woman she give a feller a dollar for her one time, an' put him up overnight, too, she did."—Century.

His High Average.

Friend—Of course your son graduated with a high average?.

Graduate's Father (not yet recovered from the bill)—Yes, it cost me $4,000 last year.—Baltimore American.

Too many men mistake alcoholic thoughts for genius.

Science and Invention

The house fly, with a total life of about ten days, develops in these periods: Egg from laying to hatching, one-third of a day; hatching of larva to first molt, one day; second molt to pupation, three days; pupation to issuing of the adult, five days.

The new boat of M. Turc, of the French navy, designed to pass through the waves without roll or pitch is described as a combination of submarine and high platform. The submarine is three hundred feet long, seventy-five feet wide and twelve feet deep, and is to contain boilers, engines and steering gear, which will be submerged to a depth of twelve feet. From the submarine will rise vertically two floaters, sixty-five feet apart, each two hundred feet long and ten feet wide.

In addition to an eight-inch disappearing gun, firing a light projectile by compressed air, there is, in an armory of the National Guard in Brooklyn, a model of a ship's cutter, carrying a crew of ten men and a one-pounder gun, and running on concealed wheels, which are driven by means of a rope attached to the oars. A rudder-post is geared to a guiding wheel in the stern, so that, with oars swinging and men bending to their work, the boat glides about the armory floor, and looks, in partial darkness, as if it were genuinely afloat. The boat and the disappearing gun, together with the model of a fort, enable the regiment to practise many of the manoeuvers of coast attack and defense as they are carried on in actual warfare.

A scientific investigation of muscular fatigue has been begun by M. A. M. Bloch. From questions sent to persons of many occupations he finds that it is not the most used muscles that are most subject to fatigue, but those that are kept under tension, although doing no work. The back, loins and neck need more exercise to strengthen them, the arms and legs less. The baker becomes first tired in the legs, the wood-sawyer in the calves of the legs or the loins, the road-digger in the legs, the blacksmith in the back and loins, the young soldier in the back of the neck, the horseman in the thigh, the artilleryman in the neck and loins, the immature violinist in the neck, the practiced violinist in the left hand, the expert fencer in the right shoulder, the oarsman in the calves and insteps.

The department of agriculture has undertaken a series of experiments intended to answer, if possible, the old question, "How long can seeds remain buried in the soil and still retain their power of germination?" Many extraordinary stories have been told of the prolongation of the vitality of seeds during many years, and even centuries, but very few actual experiments have hitherto been made. In 1901 Doctor Beal reported that he had found seeds which responded to germination tests after having been buried twenty years. The seeds buried by the agricultural department at the Arlington farm last December were packed with dry clay in porous clay pots, covered with saucers, and placed at various depths, from six inches to three and a half feet. There are 32 complete sets, in 3,584 pots, representing 107 species, 84 genera and 34 families. Tests are to be made at the end of 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, and 50 years.

The President's Trip.

The President's trip is likely to induce more of his countrymen to see the magnificent scenery of the West. He was happy in his choice among his companions, of two such lovers and interpreters of nature as John Burroughs and John Muir, writers whose preaching of the gospel of outdoor life is one of the sanest influences of our berated times. Mr. Roosevelt's debt of health to the West and his appreciation of its great natural features lend practical force to his wish that his countrymen shall know it better. His regretful statement that the larger proportion of visitors to the Yellowstone are foreigners would probably apply to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado as well, if not to the Yosemite. All three of these marvelous regions should be as familiar to our people as Niagara or the White Mountains. "The spoiled child," say the Japanese, "should be made to travel," a prescription which may well be made for the child in danger of being spoiled. It would be fortunate if well-to-do parents in the Eastern States could see the advantage of sending their sons out from the fret and luxury of our complex life into the wholesome calm, simplicity, and unforgetable majesty of these Western wonderlands.—Century.

Lithographic Stone in Greece.

One of the rarities of the earth is the fine-grained limestone used for making lithographic plates. The quarries at Solenhofen, Germany, are celebrated not only for the excellence of their lithographic stone, but also because remarkable specimens of the extinct flying reptile called the achaeopteryx have been found embedded in the stone. News now comes from Athens that large deposits of this stone have been discovered in Thessaly, not far from Pharsalia, where Pompey the Great was defeated by Julius Caesar. Some experts say this Greek stone is superior to the best hitherto known in Europe.