

LITERATURE.

THE HARMLESS CHASE:
A SEA SKETCH.

In the Autumn of 1839, we were one of a party of about a score of happy fellows, who escaped from the heat and dust of the city, by starting off on a fishing expedition. Our neat clipper-built schooner, the "Othello," as pretty and as saucy a looking craft as often sails, with four large port-holes on each side, secured by swinging ports, was, to use the expression of Sam Weller, "a werry suspicious lookin' sort of a thing."

About a fortnight had we spent on Saint George's Banks, where we "hauled in," and salted down a good number of mackerel, when it was unanimously agreed that we should 'put' for the Bay of Fundy, and accordingly our craft was brought up to the wind, and off she started. The next morning we were enveloped in one of those dense fogs which are so frequent on the Banks during the summer months, and for five days the misty cloud hung to us with the tenacity of a hungry creditor. The wind had been light and variable, but still we had kept very near our course, and as we had had the Gulf Stream to help us on, we knew that our schooner must have made some considerable headway; but we had very little idea of our exact locality, for a total absence of the sun for a hundred and twenty hours, with light, changing winds, in the vicinity of the Gulf Stream, puts all quadrants and chronometers out of use.

"Where are we now?" asked the Cook.

"That's the question," replied the skipper.

On the morning of the sixth day, all hands were electrified by the cry "sail-ho!" and quickly tumbling upon deck, we crowded towards the bows, where we got a view of the stranger. She was a pink-sterned schooner, with a decided Cape Cod cut of her jib, and as the fog gradually lifted we got a fair view of her.

"Perhaps this fellow can tell us where we are," suggested the skipper, as he rolled up his fist and applied it—a *la* spreading trumpet—to his mouth.

"Schooner ahoy!"

As soon as the skipper's voice reached the stranger, some half a dozen bushy flaxen heads appeared over the rail, after a hurried consultation, their respective owners scattered like a mess of scared sheep. In a few moments, two heavy sweeps were shoved over the pinky's sides, and the aforementioned owners of the flaxen heads began to pull as if for dear life. There was hardly a breath of air, and ere long, the Cape Cod representative was out of sight in the surrounding fog, which still hung within a few fathoms of the water.

"That's a smuggler," suggested Bill Bellis, as the end of the schooner's main-boom was lost in the fog.

"Smuggler or no smuggler, she's just out from port, and consequently must know pretty nearly our whereabouts," said the skipper with a chagrined look, as he went aft, "and if we can catch a breath of wind, we'll hunt her up."

"I'm going aloft to see if I can't look over this fog," said our old cook, as he started for the fore-shrouds. There was a wicked twinkle in his eye as he spoke; but as his eye always twinkled, perhaps he didn't mean anything.

The cook's mission proved of no advantage, for on his return he reported that the fog was thicker aloft than it was below. In the course of an hour, however, things began to wear a favorable aspect, for a smart little westerly breeze sprang up, and the dense fog began to roll off. At length the escaped schooner again hove in sight, but she was not alone, for we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a very respectable squadron of Cape Cod fishermen.

"Now we'll find out for certain," said the skipper, as he hailed the pinky again.

But the result was no better than before, for no sooner had the fog rolled off, than the Cape Cod men began to "haul their wind" and scatter, some of them to the Eastward, some to the

Southward, and some sharp on the wind, while the first mentioned schooner "put it" for the Northward. The latter was our own course, so we determined to overhaul her. Our sheets were eased off, and as the clipper bent to the breeze, she cut the water like a dolphin. In a few moments the pinky ran up her fore and main gaff-topsails, fell off a little from the wind and began to throw water upon the sails, in order to increase her speed. But her unaccountable efforts to escape from us were of no avail, for we came up with her hand over hand and in the course of fifteen minutes had come near enough to hail her.

"Schooner ahoy!" shouted our skipper, in rather an angry tone, "Why in h—ll don't you heave to?"

A sudden movement immediately took place among the six flaxen heads, and in a moment afterwards, something which bore strong resemblance to an old musket, was shoved part way over the rail.

"What the devil is that?" asked the skipper as the venerable shooting-iron made its appearance over the pinky's rail.

"It looks as if she was going to show fight," remarked the cook, with a comical leer.

The whole affair had been so inexplicable, and presented so ludicrous an aspect, that our naturally good-natured skipper became angry, and—it was very unusual with him—he swore some pretty round oaths, and in the heat of his passion he sung out—

"If you don't heave to directly, I'll run you down!"

This threat had the desired effect, for in a few moments the schooner came up to the wind and hauled her main boom over to the windward, and without the least trouble, we rose up under her stern, and lay our clipper gracefully along side.

"What in thunder is the matter with you?" demanded our skipper, as a dozen of our chaps leaned over and grasped the pinky's sail.

The persons thus addressed did not answer the question, but with eyes and mouth wide open, they seemed to mentally devour every article upon our deck, and at length one who seemed to hold the command turned to his nearest companion and remarked:

"By thunder, Josh, they han't got nothin' thar 'at looks like cannons, hev they?"

"No, I don't see nothin', but them ere port holes looked kinder suspicious like, though, I'll be darned if they don't," replied Josh.

"Look here, my sweet fellows," exclaimed our skipper, "we have been in the fog for five days, and han't got a reckoning. Now will you just tell us where we are?"

"Wal, may I be knocked into the middle o' next week, ef you an't a regular out-and-out mack'rel man," ejaculated he of the pinky, as he finished a survey of our bait-boxes, line-buckets, &c., &c., without seeming to take notice of the question.

"And is that anything stranger?" asked our skipper.

"Wal, I thought when I first saw ye loom up through the fog, that you had a confounded slew of men for fishermen, master."

"What did you take us for?"

"Why, we took ye to be jest about what ye looked like, and so did the rest of our vessels. Didn't you see 'em scatter when the fog lifted?"

"Yes," replied our skipper, who could not resist a broad grin, as an idea of the ludicrous reality crept into his head: "I saw them scatter, and I saw you scatter, too; and now perhaps you will tell us what you took us to be."

"Why we took you to be pirates."

"Pirates!" shouted the skipper.

"In course we did," replied the commander of the pinky.

"What in the name of common sense put such an idea into your heads?"

"Wal," returned pinky, as he cast his eyes up at our fore-topmast, "I should rayther think that most anybody would take you for a pirate with such a tarnal thing as that ere flag o' yours, flyin' up thar."

All eyes were immediately directed to the fore-topmast, and there, in all the sombre majesty of its death-defying hue, flaunting boldly in the fresh breeze, waved the cook's black apron!

The cold-blooded rascal had mistrusted the truth, when the pinky first fled at the sight of our thickly crowded fore-castle, and regardless of the horrible fears which he must have known would result to the innocent fishermen from such a trick, he had, while pretending to be aloft for the purpose of seeing over the fog, very adroitly fastened his coal-black apron to the mast-head.

Matters were soon explained to the frightened men, and when they learned that a cook's apron had scattered a Cape Cod squadron, they gave utterance to some very wicked wishes with respect to the last abode of our cook—while he, totally impenitent, merely placed his thumb upon the tip of his nose, and made significant motions with his fingers.

We learned our latitude, however, and soon left the Cape Cod squadron far astern, and huddled together like so many sheep in a pen.

THE SAND STORM OF THE DESERT.

The great "desert of Sahara," in Africa, is one immense field of sand, stretching out over an area of more than four thousand miles. The solemn stillness of the spot, and the unbroken line of sand which meets the eye of the traveler, produces a feeling of profound awe. The wandering tribes of Arabs, who travel over its surface, are the only living beings found within its solitude; these tribes accompanied by horses and camels, are objects of great interest to all who visit this barren wilderness. Who has not heard of the horse of the desert?—the noblest of the noble species of animal. Elsewhere the horse may be more showy, or even more powerful, but it is only in the desert that he is found in a state bordering on perfection. He is remarkable for a small head, with pointed ears; peculiarly clean, muscular limbs; a corresponding, slender shape, and rather small eyes, expressing that intelligence which, as in the dog, is the consequence of being constantly with the member's of his master's family—in fact, he generally shares his meals. A meal after sunset, consisting of barley in some parts of the country, and Camels milk in others, or a paste of dates and water, which, in Nedga, is mixed with dried clover and other herbs, constitutes his usual sustenance, but on any extraordinary exertion being required, flesh is frequently given either raw or boiled. The catalogue of distinct breeds in the desert is almost endless, as every mare of the noble blood, if particularly swift and handsome, may give rise to a new stock. Their pedigrees are handed down from father to son with infinite care, and not unfrequently they belong to more than one family. The prevailing colors are a clear bay, sorrel, white, chestnut, gray, brown and black. Numerous striking instances have been published of the vigor, speed and power of endurance of the horse of the desert. On a sudden emergency the favorite mare is ready to scour the desert, guided only by a halter, and will strain every muscle at the encouraging voice of her daring master. For fifty miles at a single stretch, without a halt, will the fiery animal sweep along with power in every stride with flashing eyes and expanded nostrils, glorying in her might. One of these admirable creatures ran at Bangalore, four hundred miles in four consecutive days. Besides being the abode of these splendid animals, the desert is remarkable for a peculiar phenomena, of which we give an illustration above, called the Simoon or Sand Storm. The Simoon is a violent, hot, and almost suffocating wind, blowing furiously from the South-East. It is commonly preceded by a fearful calm, which is as much noticed by the horse and camel, as by their masters. As it approaches, the atmosphere assumes a yellowish hue, tinged with red; the sun appears of a deep blood color, and gradually becomes concealed, before the hot blast is felt in its full violence. The sand raised by the wind adds to the gloom, and greatly increases the painful effects of the heat and rarity of the air. The poor camel suffers from it equally with his master, and will often lie down, close its eyes, stretch out its long neck upon the ground, and so remain until the sand storm passes over. It not unfrequently happens that the death of the horse or camel ensues from this terrific avalanche of sand. The simoon generally lasts about half-an-hour; occasionally, however, it is much

longer in duration. Another phenomena in the desert is the Zobeah, or whirlwind, which raises the sand in the form of a pillar to the height of 700 or 800 feet. These whirl pillars of sand (of which frequently ten or twelve occur in a day) are carried sometimes with very great rapidity across the desert.

An ingenious trick has been twice practiced upon the famous and fashionable house of the Stuarts in New York. About a year since, a well-dressed lady called in and selected a shawl, the price of which was \$600. She handed out a thousand dollar bill, which the clerk questioned. She took it back, and appeared to be indignant, when on reflection she handed over another and genuine bill on the same bank, and requested that it be taken to a bank. This was done, and the bill pronounced to be genuine. The lady then put it in her purse, shaking her pretty head ominously at the clerk who had dared to insinuate that her money was not good. She started to go out, making all sorts of apologies. But on reflection, she returned—the shawl pleased her—it was so very beautiful—she would not permit her excited feelings to deprive her of an article that pleased her so well. She would have the shawl put up. The smiling clerk had it put up in a jiffy. She handed out a thousand dollar bill, on the same bank—the clerk thought it was the same. They gave her \$400 change, and the fair one left with the shawl and the change. On making the deposit in the afternoon, however, they found that the bill was a straight out counterfeit. The lady shifted the good and bad, to suit her own purpose, coolly leaving the bad one in the hands of the rich Stuarts, carrying off their \$400 of good money and their rich shawl. A few weeks since, we are informed, the same trick was again played off upon the same, the only difference being that the beautiful lady on this occasion took two \$700 shawls, left one two thousand counterfeit, and received back \$600 in good cash in change.—*Hartford Times.*

(From the Olive Branch.)

No person should be delicate about asking for what is properly his due. If he neglects doing so, he is deficient in that spirit of independence which he should observe in all his actions. Rights are rights, and, if not granted, should be demanded.

A little "Bunker Hill" atmosphere about that! It suits my republicanism; I hope no female sister will be such a novice to suppose it refers to any but masculine rights. In the first place, my dear woman, "female rights" is debatable ground; what you may call a "vexed question." In the next place, (just put your ear down, a little nearer) granted we had "rights," the more we "demand" 'em, the more we shan't get 'em. I've been converted to that faith this some time. No sort of use to waste lungs and leather trotting to Sich-racuse about it. The instant the subject is mentioned, the lords of creation are up and dressed. Guns and bayonets the order of the day; no surrender on every flag that floats! The only way left is to pursue the "Uriah Heep" policy; look umble, and be almighty cunning. Bait 'em with submission, and then throw the noose over the will. Appear not to have any choice, and as true as the gospel you'll get it. Ask their advice, and they'll be sure to follow yours. Look one way, and pull another! Make your reins of silk, keep 'em out of sight, and drive where you like!

FANNY FERN.

The Detroit Tribune says a lady recently treated her company to stewed pears. A gentleman at the table put one, as he supposed, into his mouth, and attempted to pull out the stem; after pulling for some time he was obliged to give it up, and on putting it on his plate, he found he had been tugging away at the tail of a mouse, which had fallen into the lady's preserve jar.

Mrs. Partington says that Paul was not in the tomb of the Cabulets, but was buried in the old north burying ground; his funeral obstacles were intended more respectfully, and that a beautiful paregoric was delivered over his relief.