

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1899.

SPEAKING OF SWIMMERS.

A MAINE SAILOR'S YARN ABOUT ONE DAN FISH.

The Cheerful Person who Acted Like a Lunatic, was Picked up off the Danish Coast, was Lost at Sea and Turned up in New York all Sober.

'Speaking of swimmers,' said a retired Maine sailor, 'in the year '56, when I was before the mast on the American bark Andrew Todd, I met Dan Fish. Curious thing that the durndest swimmer I ever heard tell of should be named fish. But so it was. Names come that way once in a while. Once I knew a feller named Barnes that was a hostie. A feller named Ketchum was a deputy sheriff once in the town where I was brought up. But he never did.'

'Well, about Fish. We went up the Baltic on that trip. On the way out we run pretty well in toward the Danish coast. One day we saw a feller on a lonesome cape making signs. He was just a-working hisself into spasms with the signs that he was making. Old man happened to be on deck at the time, and said: 'Wonder what that blamed jumping-jack is trying to make out to do?'

'Mate said he thought man must be having fits. Cap'n allowed 'warn't that. Thought he must want to say something to us. Cap'n didn't want to stop, but thought it might be something he ought to know, and so he hung up head to the wind, and sent a boat ashore. Boat came back with the feller aboard. He clum over the rail. 'What kin I do for ye?' asked the old man.

'Goin' to New York?' asked the feller. 'Yep. Started for there.' 'Wal, all right then, I want to go along.'

'You do, hey? Wal, this ain't no omnibus. We ain't running a stage coach. We ain't advertising for passengers.'

'Exactly; but I don't want to be a passenger. I want to work. I want to get to New York, and I'm an A. B.—able bodied; and you bet your life I ain't nothin' else.'

'Wal, it so chanced that the old man was short the right kind of a second mate. So he thought the thing over and asked the stranger if he understood things well enough to take the berth. Man said that was just the lay he was strong on. So the old man took him below.

'It come so that he was in the skipper's watch. Old man usually hung round on deck till about nine and then he dropped below for forty winks. He allus left word that he was to be called if breeze piped up any. Things went on first rate for a few days. We got down pretty well into the mouth of the channel. Got so that we could see our way clear to go whoopin' down into the deep water. Weather began to look a little more nasty. Old man would warn the second mate every night more up and stiff about calling him up if the thing come on to blow any in partikler.

'One night I was at the wheel. Heard all the conversation. Old man got down so that only his head was above the companionway. Said he to the mate: 'Lock'sort of muddy around the aidges to-night.' 'Sure, Mike,' says the mate. 'Old man didn't like for a cent the familiar way the mate had, and he jwined him by the acre about it. 'Say, don't you talk to me like that any more,' he yelled to the mate. 'Not on your life, Pete,' the mate said, 'so cheerful like and sincere and all that, you couldn't get mad at him. 'The old man looked at him for a minute as though he would like to eat both his ears off without pepper or salt. Then his head went down the companionway and out of sight. In a moment it came up again. 'Say!' he yelled. 'Aye, aye, sir,' shouted back the mate, still with that cheerful grin on.

'If she comes on to blow up any be sure to rouse me out.'

'Sure Mi—oh, aye, aye, sir! But bless your soul, Cap'n, I can handle her like a book. Don't you worry. Sleep the sleep of the angels.'

'Well, if it comes on to blow and you don't rouse me out,' said the old man, 'you'll be an'angel. You can sure Mike that all right?'

'Twasn't long before the wind begun to pipe. I had to wrassele summat hard with that old wheel to keep'er up. But the mate pendulemed up and down the deck whistling, and never said a word about taking in a stitch of sail. Pretty soon she began to

wopse around so that the old man stuck his head out. The wind caught up his hair and it strung it up into the night like a flag of truce. 'Say, ye ought to take in your royals there,' yelled the old man. 'S'all right, s'all right,' just as cheerfully answered the mate, as though they had been talking about the hay crop. 'We might just as well keep'er on. We shall get there sooner. There ain't no danger at all. She ain't got a nite more sail than she can lug. Go right down and go to sleep, Cap'n.'

'The old man didn't like the looks of things, but the mate acted so confident like that he gave a few snuffs and then bobbed down out of sight. 'In another half an hour he was up once more. The mate was whistling a tune and looking at the stars. The old crib was lurching down into the seas like a gentleman jag going downstairs. 'Take in them royals,' screamed the old man. 'Nuthin' but a puff, Cap'n; nuthin' but a puff,' said the mate. 'Jest then there was a mighty r'p and whoop of the wind and the upper sails went out of the eyelets like smoke. The mate was standing looking at the rags scudding off on the wind when the old man came stamping up behind him. The old man hit him one clip behind the ear and over the rail he went right into the smother.

'S'all I put 'bout ship?' I cried, for the thing sort of stunned me. 'Pat 'bout nothin'!' said the Cap'n. I ought to have done that long ago. He was a hoodoo, that's what he was. I don't want an loonytics on board the Todd.' And he ordered the watch to turn out and furl.

'It made the men feel sort o' blue for a few days to lose a man in that way. And do you know, we all sort o' liked the cuss. He allus had cheerful ways with him. And we thought the old man was a little mite ha'eb to knock him overboard the way he did and then to slip away and leave him. But the feeling wore away and almost before we knew it we were sloshing on our way up New York harbor.

'Say, now I'm going to surprise you. I'm afraid you'll think I'm not telling the truth. But, so help me the Great Crawfish if the man who came running down to the wharf to take the bow hawser wasn't Dan Fish. There he was just as large as life. Old man looked at him as he would at a ghost. Thought he really was a spook. So did all of us. But spooks don't lug lines as a general thing and smoke clay pipes while doing it. There didn't seem to be no doubt that this was Dan himself in the flesh, smile and all.

'You ker?' at last grasped the old man.

'Sure, Mike,' said Dan. 'Wasn't you drowned?' 'Not so that knowed it.'

'Wal, how'd ye get here before us?'

'Swum. I've been here just nine days waiting for you. I want to collect the pay that is due me.'

'He come aboard and the old man counted out his money. Every ten seconds the skipper would say: 'Ye esy ye swum?' And Dan would answer every time: 'Sure, Mike. I'm the champion swimmer of Yirrup, Yirrup and Amerikee. I kin outswim everything except the great Kechookibus whale, and I kin give him quite a sweat in a long run.'

'And that was all he could get out of him. Ain't no need of going into the details,' said he. 'That warn't no great trick. If I couldn't beat this old tub of yours by two weeks in a straightway swim across the Atlantic I'd never kick a fin 'gust salt water again.'

'But if you swim like that I kin make your fortune for you,' said the old man. 'Wal, go ahead and make it,' says Dan.

'It happened about the time that a mus. eum was advertising the greatest swimmer of the world. Oh, he could outswim anything, so the bills said. Cracked him away up. Jest as soon as he could get things stowed all right and the stevedores at work the old man hustled off up the street and hunted up the manager of the great swimmer. Old man said that he was interested in swimming himself. Manager began to brag on what the swimmer could do. Old man said that warn't nothin' much. He knew a feller that could take the rag off a that. Then the manager bigger. And the old man would chip in with the same old grind about that wasn't nothin' much to run up a flag about. Pretty soon the man got gorrammed mad.

'Who is this feller that you are talkin' so about?' he yelled out at last. 'What's his name? I never heard of him.'

'Name's Fish,' calmly said the old man. 'Fish that's his name.'

'Thought I k'dly, sneered the manager. 'Name's coffin or catfish or mackerel eh? Ob, you think you're a joker, don't ye?'

'No sir, I mean Dan Fish,' said the old man. He ain't no salt mackerel. I'll bet him against your man for all you want to stake. Bring on your dough. He's only a sailor' but he can outswim any man in creation.'

The manager thought he had struck a cinch. He asked the old man if he wanted to put up more than 50 cents. Finally the old man said he would bet his share in the Todd and cargo against \$5,000; but he said he supposed the manager was too poor to raise so much. That made the manager mad, and in less than ten minutes the money was up.

'For the next two days the old man wouldn't let Dan out of his sight. He kept asking him if he really was all the kinds of a swimmer he made himself out to be. Dan would say: 'Old man, you jest hang on to your boarding tackle and see if I ain't.'

When the day came there was quite a crowd down on the beach where the swimming contest was to take place. The great swimmer was there on the ground first, under the charge of the manager. The swimmer was all dressed up in rubber clothes, and had a paddle and a little flag to fly at his fore peak when he was in the water. He was a slick-looking chap. Looked as though he could go through the water like a pickerel.

Manager began to scout around, and finally went up to the old man and asked him where his swimmer was. Said his own man couldn't be standing around there much longer in the cold. Old man pointed up the street.

'Dan Fish was coming down. He had on three hats, one a straw, one a plug on top of it, and tied on to the plug was a fur cap with ear lappers. Dan had on two overcoats, and on his back he had strapped a big hamper. He walked down to the aidge of the water and stood there.

'Wal, get ready,' said the manager. 'Git ready your own man,' said Dan. 'I've been gitun' ready for twenty four hours. It takes time to get things together and packed away in small space same as I have. Why, I've got four months' provisions in that hamper.'

'Wh-wh-wh what, well what are you trying to do any way?' finally stammered the manager.

'Do?' shouted Dan. 'do? why, I'm goin' to take a swim. It that there guy in the nursing tube suit is a-goin' along o' me he'd better take his grub. He won't get none of mine. He'd better take along some extra clothes. My notion now is that I will strike right for the east coast o' Greenland and cruise around in that section for a time. If we get up there and you have the shivers you needn't think you can borrow my extra overcoat. I give ye fair warning now. Fact, is ye want to stock up for a four to six months' cruise.'

'Why,' says the feller in the rubber tube suit, 'my idea was that we were to have an exhibition. Just swim out here and show what we can do for tricks, you know.'

'Call that swimming?' asks Dan. 'Why, a monkey can slosh around in a puddle and do tricks. This is swimming that I do. If you want to swim come along.' And he waded out to his neck. Then he faced around with that assorted variety of hats rising above the water.

'There was a live argument on shore. Finally the man in the rubber suit said that he wasn't going to trust himself out in the water with a lunatic, and he put his paddle over his shoulder and struck off up the road with the manager trailing along behind, asking and begging him to come back. That's all there was to it.

'That is to say, only that the old man went up and pulled in the stakes, and give up a blow out on board.'

FUN WITH PAPA.

How He Helped Jamie's Bark Along on the Boy's Birthday.

When materfamilias gets ahead of paterfamilias there is everlasting fun in the family, and the 'old man' usually acknowledges the corn as gracefully as possible. The little son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. had one of these banks that open when \$10 in dimes is deposited in one side and \$5 in nickels in the other. Papa came home one night with a load of coins, announcing that as Jamie's birthday was at hand he would advance enough to withdraw the \$15 and give the whole to the boy as a present. After dropping into the slot several dollars' worth of specie he remarked: 'I thought you had more money in this thing. It doesn't seem to open. Here goes my seventh dollar, and neither side moves.' The good wife, overhearing the remark, said, demurely: 'Why, George, dear, there were thirteen and a half dollars, for I counted them.' 'How could you count them?' Because this afternoon I put in a dollar and a half and the bank opened.' George gasped. Then he hic-coughed. Then he went to the buffet and made a large cocktail. Then he sat behind the evening paper and reflected.

He was \$7 out, but Jamie and his sister had their \$15 all right, thanks to mamma, and their bank half filled again.—N. Y. Press.

SHE DRIVES A MOUNTAIN STAGE.

A California Girl of 20 Years Handles Her Four Horses Like a Veteran.

With the firm hand and easy manner of a veteran whip a frail young woman of the California mountains drives the four-horse stage coach between Mesa Grande and Ramona, fifty miles back of San Diego, in Southern California. There are steep grades there and sharp ticklish turns in the winding road and narrow stretches along the beetling edges of the canon as the path skirts up and down the mountain-side. It is a man's work to handle the ribbons of such a team, and one requiring a man's quick judgment and cool nerve. But these are characteristics of this brave mountain girl. Almost every day she makes the long trip with her four-in-hand down the mountain from Ramona to Mesa Grande and back, with passengers and mail.

Alice Westover, the pretty driver is 20 years old and the daughter of T. M. Westover, a well-known ranger of Mesa Grande who has the contract for carrying the mails in that region. Mr. Westover is a very busy man, and, having no sons to help him, he was almost on the point of giving up his mail contract when Alice one day asked to be allowed to drive the stage to Ramona and back.

'What?' exclaimed her father. 'Those leaders would whisk you off the box before you could say Jack Robinson. You would never reach Santa Isabel Creek, much less Ramona?'

'I should like to try, anything,' was Alice's reply. 'Unless you absolutely forbid me to make the attempt I will drive the stage down to-morrow.'

The next morning Alice, in a becoming skirt, hitched up the four horses and was ready to start out with the coach before her father knew what was going on.

Miss Westover has driven the four broncos down the mountain many times since then, but she will never forget the first trip to Ramona, eighteen miles over the rough road grades, and the return trip later in the day. Over the crest of the hump which hides Mesa Grande Post Office from the top of the grade the stage lumbered, the horses in high spirits and anxious for a gallop. There were no passengers in the stage that morning.

The road takes a winding course down the grade, and there are sharp turns to be made to avoid the trees and an occasional boulder. It makes a particular sharp descent in passing Luce Falls, where the water from the mountain falls a sheet 100 feet and runs down the canon to Santa Isabel Creek. The creaking brake and chattering hoots of the horses had caused an early traveller on the grade to make a wide turn out from the road at a convenient point even before he saw the stage coming. He started in a unfeigned surprise when he saw nobody but a young lady on the box. The horses completely under her control, though rattling along at a lively rate with the swaying stage.

The end of the nine-mile grade down Mesa Grande ends at Black Mountain canon, where Miss Westover drew up the horses at a farmhouse known as Sutherland Post Office and took on another mail bag. It was not long after that before the stage was crawling up the dangerous Graves canon road, where even lighter vehicles have to be managed with great care to avoid accidents at the abrupt turns among the trees. But the stage was taken through safely, and better time was made on the road leading through Hatfield canon.

The arrival of Miss Westover with the stage at Ramona was an event the people thereabouts haven't ceased talking about yet. Since that first trip with the four-horse stage last summer Miss Westover has made the trip almost daily. Fortunately, Miss Westover has had no serious accidents on the road and very few minor ones, though she was frequently alone both going and returning. One of the small mishaps was when one of the leaders kicked a trace loose. The plucky driver, instead of calling one of the male passengers to her assistance, put on the brake tightly, and, after wrapping the lines around the brake bar, dismounted and hitched up the animal before the passengers knew why she had stopped.

At Ramona, where the stage horses are usually shod, Miss Westover supervises the operation at the blacksmith shop, having her own ideas as to how such an important piece of work should be done. On the road she has become expert with the whip and she has a fly from the back of the off leader with the skill of an experienced Jehu.

Miss Westover is always interesting to the passengers. She can sit upon the box and point out all the places where her predecessor was held up by the leading road agent's when such pastimes were popular in the wild West.

WINTERING IN THE ANTARCTIC.

The Facts That are Known About the Place Where Borzhgrevink is in Camp.

It is now early winter in the Antarctic regions. The explorers of the Borzhgrevink party are spending the first winter ever passed by any human being, as far as is known, in camp on the Antarctic coast. They have reared their huts on the southern land yet discovered in south polar waters. A few facts contained in the narrative of Sir James Ross, written over a half century ago, and the report of Mr. Borzhgrevink of his visit to the same region in 1895, give us a very fair idea of the place where he is spending the winter. Borzhgrevink, with his ten men and equipment, including seventy-five dogs, were landed late in February last at the spot he had selected for his winter camp. This was on the Beach of Victoria Land at Cape Adare. It is situated in 71° 23' S. lat. and 169° 56' E. long., and fronts to the north. The coast line here extends for about 100 miles in a northwest and northeast direction, and the camp is in a bay on the northwest side of Cape Adare, which is the only conspicuous promontory on this stretch of the Victoria Land coast. This is the place where Borzhgrevink landed in 1895. Sir James Ross did not land on the mainland when he visited it over fifty-eight years ago, though he planted the British flag on Possession Island, near the coast and further south.

The camp is on a long, flat beach strewn with pebbles, and the little bay on which it fronts is protected from the sea by a small promontory which seems to have been formed by a great landslide from the frowning heights of Cape Adare behind it. The beach itself appears to be a part of the same landslide. The promontory is about seventy acres in extent and is covered with guano, for penguins resort there in great numbers to breed, and thousands of their primitive nests, which they make of pebbles, are scattered over the guano deposits. On the rocks were found, in 1895, quite a number of specimens of cryptogamic vegetation, and the nests of the penguins were traced up the sides of Cape Adare to a height of 1,000 feet.

The surroundings of the camp are of the wildest and most rugged description. In the neighboring waters are many enormous icebergs. They are probably grounded and may remain there for a long time until they are wasted so far that they are able to float off. Behind the camp is frowning Cape Adare, a large, square basaltic rock, with sides for the most part perpendicular. It rises to a height of 1,779 feet above the sea. The edge of plateau is crowned by the Admiralty Range, which is over 100 miles long and rises to a height of 10,000 to 12,000 feet. Through rifts in these mountains great glaciers, fed by the inland ice, descend to the sea. As many as twenty of these glaciers may be counted from the camp. One of them in 1895 seemed covered with lava and another layer of lava appeared to be imbedded in it. A neighboring volcanic peak, 8,000 feet high, had undoubtedly been in eruption a short time.

Another advantage of the site selected for the camp is that good facilities are near at hand for gaining access to the top of the plateau where a sledge journey toward the South Pole over the inland ice is to be undertaken in the coming southern spring. Several spurs that may be ascended with great difficulty lead up from the beach to the summit of the cape, and from there a gentle slope conducts to the great, ice-covered plateau of Victoria Land. The leader of the expedition derived the impression in 1895, from the presence of the penguin colony, their undisturbed old nests; the vegetation on the rocks and the flat top of the cape that stern nature in Antarctica does not exert the whole severity of her powers at this point. He believed that the situation was a desirable one for the houses, tents and supplies of an exploring party, and he announced four years ago that if he should lead an expedition to Victoria Land he would choose Cape Adare as the centre of operations. He has been so fortunate as to reach the spot he selected for a camp, and it is to be hoped that it is meeting all his expectations.

A Gallant Rustic Inn.

'Did Mrs. Hayden obtain that divorce she sued for?' asked Keedick.

'Yes; she obtained a decree, but with restrictions,' replied Fosdick.

'She was forbidden to marry again, I suppose?'

'That wasn't it. What was the restriction?'

'She was forbidden to go on the stage.'