

A HAUNTED SCHOONER

Her name was the Albicore and she hailed from Gloucester, Mass. She was one of the prettiest and sweetest looking schooners that ever crossed harbor bar bound to the banks for fish or safely weathered a wintry sea. She had lines like a yacht and many a time I have seen her sail past a gaily pleasure craft and leave her astern as though she were scorned. She had a sheer that was delightful to look upon and a saucy rake to her masts that gave her a coquettish appearance.

Her history was remarkable. She had been picked up deserted by the Spanish Main by a Gloucester fish engaged in carrying salt fish to the West Indies. She was rolling in the trough of the sea with only the stump of her mainmast standing. The skipper of the brig lowered a boat and went aboard of her. She was as tight as a bottle, and why her crew should have abandoned her was one of those inexplicable mysteries of the ocean upon which not even a faint light is shed.

There was nothing on board to give any clue to her history or nationality. She had been left in a hurry, as was shown by unmistakable signs, but her commander had taken all his documents with him, as well as his nautical instruments and chronometers. She carried two long brass cannons, and there was a stack of fifty muskets and the same number of cutlasses in the between decks—all highly suggestive of piracy. The hammocks of the crew were swinging to the beams and the bags and chests of the sailors were left behind. In her lower hold was a quantity of pig iron used for ballast, but no trace of treasure or cargo was to be found. Her boats were gone and the davit falls were trailing in the water, while two big tackles with which the long boat had been lowered into the sea hung from the wreckage of the rigging.

Old Billy Cuddington, the skipper of the brig, rubbed his horny hands with glee. It was often that he found him self playing in such luck. He took all his crew but two aboard the schooner and all worked with a will and soon rigged jurnymen. That night he took her in tow and at daybreak next morning all hands got to work again and got her in shape for a start. There was a spare foremast in her hold, which was bent as a mainmast, while a storm trysail did duty as a foremast. The bowsprit was unharmed, and after setting up the forestay a small jib was bent to it.

There were casks of salt beef and pork down below three tanks full of fresh water and any amount of haricutt, flour and rice. The skipper put the mate and four sailors in charge, with orders to keep him in sight and steer for Gloucester, Mass. The brig was in good sailing trim, having a quantity of rum and molasses in her lower hold, while the twelve decks were full of green coconuts.

Captain Cuddington, who was a thrifty New Englander that did not believe in giving anything away, opened his heart on this occasion. He filled a ten gallon keg with rum and broke out 200 or 300 coconuts and sent them aboard the schooner, with instructions to the mate to take his up regularly and always to remember to mix it with coconut juice, which had the effect of mellowing it and making it less heady.

There was a lovely whole-sail breeze when the mate and his men made sail on the prize. After they got the foresail, mainmast and jib on her she began to scoot through the water like a steamboat. The mate, seeing what a clipper he had under him, thought he would play a practical joke on old Billy Cuddington. The wind was on the starboard beam and both vessels were heading about N. W. The schooner was moving about three feet to the brig's one. Calculating his distance very neatly the mate tacked the schooner and ran down to the brig to leeward of her with lifted sheets and bellying sails. Then lifting sharp under her stern he went on the other tack and blanketed her. Then he hailed the brig.

"Goodly, captain," he yelled. "I'll tell the Gloucester girls you're coming. I guess I'll get there three weeks before you. Your damned old hooker can't get out of her own way."

I tell you old Billy Cuddington was madder than a March hare. He always had thought his brig was a hummer, and to see this schooner, with her jury rig and meager sail spread, walk away like a witch was too much for him. He hailed the schooner and ordered the mate to heave to, but that worthy was as full of mischief as a wagon load of monkeys, so he only laughed at the old man. An hour later he set a sort of apology for a spinnaker. It seemed to have the pulling power of several dry horses, and under its influence the schooner forged ahead and by nightfall was out of sight, much to the surprise and disgust of Captain Cuddington, who put no faith in humanity and was not sure that his mate would not put into some southern port and sell the craft and run away with the money.

That's what Cuddington would have done if he had had the mate's sea sense, but the mate was constructed on different and fairer lines. The sailors on the brig had a hard time of it the rest of the voyage. It was clear up and down continuously. The old man gave the boat no rest, but cracked on canvas in the hope of catching up with the schooner, making sail between the squalls with no regard for his scanty crew. The sailors said he was like a Portuguese devil, when he was good he was too good, but when he was bad he was a d-d bad.

One night not so very long after Cape Ann light was sighted, and at dawn the brig sailed into Gloucester harbor. The schooner was there moored to a wharf, looking as pretty as a picture. She had arrived ten days before the brig, having been blessed with fair winds all the way, which made her reel off the knots in regular clipper style.

After the brig had been made fast to her dock aboard came the mate and walked aft to where the skipper stood on the quarter deck. He looked pale as a ghost and sickier than a dog.

"Jack, my hearty, how are you?" exclaimed the captain as he seized hold of the mate's starboard flippers. "Come below and take a nip."

The mate followed the old man into the cabin. He moved in a listless, slipshod sort of way. His former energy and smartness had departed. He looked as limp as a wet swab. Was this the man that had played the skipper the practical joke of sailing around him and making fun of him a few short weeks before?

"Why, what's the matter with you?"

asked the old man, pouring himself out half a tumbler of rum and passing the demijohn to the mate.

"I'll tell you what's the matter," replied the mate, "that infernal schooner is haunted. My God, what a time I put in aboard of her!"

"Aboard there? Johnny, my lad, softly, softly! There are no such things as ghosts. Besides, if there are, it is no use making a song about them on the schooner. I am going to sell her for a fisherman, and I want no ghostly yarns spread abroad about this craft. So just clap a stopper on your jaw tackle until we get a good price for her. And hark ye, my lad, I'm going to do the handsome thing by you. If you keep your tongue between your teeth this schooner will be a matter of \$200 in your pocket. Take another nip, and when the vessel is disposed of you can spin me the whole yarn."

About a month afterward the schooner was sold to old Eben Fish, who was the owner of a little fleet of fishing vessels. Some of them used to fish on St. George's bank for the Boston market. Others were engaged in the codfisheries on the Newfoundland Great bank, and it was for this industry that the schooner was fitted out. She seemed well adapted for this work, being an excellent sea boat and very fast, as was proved by her remarkable passage to Gloucester under jury rig. She was hauled up on the ways and the necessary alterations were made in her to fit her for her new business. Her hull was constructed of live oak and teak and she was as sound in all respects as the day she was launched. Old Fish stuck two beautiful sticks of Old Fish pine in her and her new sails had as much trouble taken over them as the canvas of a yacht.

It was a proud day for old Fish when the schooner slid off the ways, and his pretty daughter Polly broke a bottle of wine on her sharp and graceful stem and shouted at the top of her sweet voice, "I christen thee Albicore, and may you be lucky."

An Albicore is a fish of the tunny kind and of remarkable swiftness, and a gilded head of one carved quite artistically adorned the bows of the schooner.

A crew was shipped, about half of them being Portuguese, and under the command of Captain Peter Ogden she started out on her first trip to the Great Banks. I was aboard, having shipped as ordinary seaman. We piled the canvas on her, and with a splendid quarter breeze away she flew on her course like some strong and beautiful bird of the ocean. All hands were delighted with her.

The skipper went into ecstasies over her behavior, especially as she passed every craft she encountered. She made an excellent passage to the banks and let go anchor in a favorite spot of the skipper where the codfish always were plenty. The ten dories were put overboard, and the fishermen were soon hauling up their tiny prey. We met with so much success that a few of us determined to fish all night. It was a lovely night. The moon shone on the placid water, which was as smooth as a landlocked pool without a ripple. There was a slight haze on the silvery sea, and the stillness and silence were actually oppressive.

The good luck of the fishermen continued. The codfish were biting well. The phosphorescent gleam of the fish as they were hauled from the dark depths of the sea illuminated the water and the books many fathoms beneath the surface. There isn't very much sentimentality in a fisherman, and the fellows in the dories smoked their pipes and spun their yarns in the intervals between bites.

The striking of eight bells on a French fishing vessel anchored a few hundred yards from the Albicore announced the midnight hour. A dago on one of the schooner's dories began singing in a melodious voice the "Hymn to the Virgin." It was either Spanish or Italian, I don't know which (having been educated in the forecabin, where there was precious little book learning). But this I do know, that the strains were the sweetest and most thrilling I had ever listened to. Of course the soubsear soundings made the hymn more impressive.

My dory mate was a Portuguese. Suddenly he clutched my arm. "My God!" he cried. "Look at the schooner!" And I looked. She was about fifty yards off, and in the brilliant moonlight everything was clearly visible. On her quarter deck, which seemed to be enveloped in a luminous mist resembling the halo which encircles the moon and gives warning of the coming tempest, armed men were fighting, clad in picturesque garb, with crimson sashes around their waists and red caps on their heads. We could hear their cutlasses clash and their imprecations ring out on the still air.

"They are Spanish pirates, and they've seized the schooner," said the Portuguese.

Three bodies were thrown overboard from the Albicore. We heard the splash as they struck the water and saw the bubbles rising as they sank. Then suddenly the noise ceased and the midnight assassins vanished into thin air.

Then a cheery voice sang out loud and clear from the Albicore: "Come along, boys, I've got a steaming kettle of coffee for you on the galley fire."

It was the voice of the cook, and was the most welcome sound that ever reached my ears. We pulled alongside and climbed aboard. The cook had been in the galley since 10 o'clock making himself a suit of canvas clothes. He had heard and seen nothing of the mysterious conflict on deck and laughed at us as we described it. After drinking our coffee we turned in, having had enough fishing for that night.

At dawn next morning I had occasion to go aft on the quarter deck, which was raised about three feet from the main deck. At Gloucester the decks, which had become covered with slime while the devil was wallowing drenched in the trough of the sea, had been placed in his little quarter deck, and it had been polished until it shone like a bound's tooth. No fish were allowed in that part of the ship, and the sailors were made to wipe off their sea boots whenever they took their trick at the tiller or went aft to haul in the mainmast.

I imagine my surprise when I saw a deep crimson circular stain just about the cabin skylight. It was about three feet in diameter and it seemed to have been made by a pool of blood that had leaked into the snowy deck planks. At this moment the skipper came up the companion ladder. The first thing that attracted his attention was the stain on the deck.

"Why, what's the matter with you?"

"So some of those infernal Portuguese sons of guns have been gutting fish on my quarter deck, have they? By the great horn spoon, I'll teach the yellow bellied lubbers a lesson yet!"

Then I up and told the skipper what I had seen the night before, and convinced him that there was no blood of a coldfish that had dyed his quarter deck. He was a superstitious man, and turned white as a shroud.

That morning all the crew came aft and told the skipper they would fish no more. The schooner was haunted, they declared, and they insisted on heaving up anchor and putting back to Gloucester.

It is my private opinion that he was glad of the chance to go back. He was an excellent seaman and an expert fisherman, but he came of an old seafaring family and of course a belief in the supernatural was hereditary.

Well, we manned the windlasses, hove up anchor and made sail on the Albicore and pointed her nose for Gloucester. We made an unusually smart passage and our arrival in the old fishing port created much excitement. (We hadn't been troubled with ghosts during the run back.) Everybody thought we had come back laden with cod. The old owner came aboard with merry and light hearted as a three-year-old. He went ashore in doleful dumps the most disgusted man in Gloucester. We landed what few fish we had and then he and his hands left her. Mr. Fish tried his hardest to ship another crew, but those dagoes had spooked him about the schooner that nobody would go to the banks in her. So the sails were unblest and she was laid up.

I kept a logbook in those days. The date of the mysterious apparition was April 13, 1857.

Five years afterward I happened to be in Boston. The sharks and crimps had left me stranded, having got every dollar out of me that I was paid off with from a bark that brought hides and copper ore from Iquique. I was wandering around the docks in search of a chance when I came across the Albicore fitting out for a cruise to the banks. A Boston firm had bought her and had put Captain Baylis in charge. He was built on different lines from Captain Ogden, caring nothing for man nor devil. I shipped aboard of her, never mentioning anything of my past experience on her. We sailed for the banks, having good luck on our passage. We anchored and began our fishing operations, being fairly successful.

One evening, when putting off in my dory to fish, I happened to remember that the date was April 13, 1862. My dory mate hailed from Canis, Nova Scotia, and had as much intelligence as a clod of clay. We hauled in the cod fish hand over flipper. About 11 o'clock a thick fog came up suddenly. I didn't mind this bit, as I had a pocket compass with me and had the Albicore's bearings carefully noted. She wasn't more than 300 yards off anyhow, so we kept on fishing without the slightest alarm. It was within a few minutes of midnight when we heard the blast of a steamer's whistle, hoarse, yet distinct. It seemed to penetrate the fog and so we certainly knew the vessel was near. We heard a crash of timbers, and an instant afterward an enormous black glided by swiftly. Her propeller churned up the water and we heard the throb of her engines.

The Nova Scotian took the oars and I steered the dory to the schooner. When we got aboard we found all hands on deck in a state of terror. The steamer had run into her, cutting off a portion of her long overhanging stern. The well was sounded and no water was found. Her stanch construction had saved her. The steamer went on regardless whether she had sunk the schooner or not.

Next morning the captain got aboard my dory and I paddled him round the stern so that he might see what damage had been done. The steamer's cutter had shaved a clean slice off the stern. Jammed under the transoms we saw a shriveled corpse dressed in a Spanish costume richly adorned with gold lace. We got a stage out over the stern and hauled the body on deck. Imbedded in his left breast was a dagger bearing the inscription, "Guerra al culchillo, April 13, 1855." He had been carefully planked up and concealed.

There was the same old blood stain on the quarter deck, but it seemed much fainter than of old. I told the captain the whole story. He determined to take the body ashore and give it Christian burial. We nailed two thicknesses of canvas over the shattered stern, staid long enough on the banks to fill up with fish and then set sail for Boston, where we gave the corpse a splendid long shore funeral. This broke the spell. The Albicore ever after was the luckiest craft that sailed to the banks. I think she is running yet. But I never met anybody who could clear up the mystery of the derelict and her ghostly combatants.—A. J. K. in New York Recorder.

An Umbrella Is Good For a Shower.

A man was once advised to take shower baths for the general improvement of his health. A friend explained to him how to fit up one by the use of a cistern and colander, and he accordingly set to work and had the thing arranged. Subsequently he was met by the friend who had given him the advice and was asked how he enjoyed the bath.

"My dear fellow," said he, "it was capital. I liked it really well, and what do you think? I kept myself dry too."

"Whatever do you mean?" exclaimed his friend, in natural surprise. "How ever could you manage to take the shower and yet remain quite dry?"

"Why, you can't think for a moment I should be so stupid as to have a shower bath without an umbrella!" was the innocent reply.—London Tit-Bits.

In Mrs. Bismarck's House.

The Princess Bismarck conducts her house on the most delightful free and easy plan. Breakfast is served at all hours in the morning, each member of the family and each guest appearing only when ready. Dinner is supposed to be served at 5:30 o'clock, but it is generally 4 o'clock before the party is gathered around the board. Then they have coffee, and about 8 o'clock a promiscuous supper is served.—Philadelphia Press.

Why Will They Do It?

A Massachusetts minister pathetically said to a newspaper man the other day, "Why don't some of your reporters get an article on 'Why women stand at the door (especially the screen door in fly time) for the last words after they have taken five minutes to half an hour indoors to say goodbye?' The poor man has suffered, as his wife admitted at the time, and spends half his leisure in summer bathing fits.

HARDSHIPS OF THE SEA.

The Adventures of a Sailor on a Single Voyage.

IN THE GRASP OF A DEVILFISH.

After Escaping a Horrible Fate the Unfortunate Mariner Was Thrice Shipwrecked, Five Days in an Open Boat—Cast Away on an Island.

There landed recently in the port of New London, Conn., a Danish sailor who will think twice before he again ships for a whaling cruise in southern seas. The story of his adventures is thus related by the correspondent of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat: The Dane was a member of the crew of the whaling ship, Tristram, that was cruising in the vicinity of God's Island. One day a whale was sighted and chase made for him. A harpoon was fixed in the flesh of the animal, which "bumped," dragging the line after him with terrific speed.

In running out the rope somehow caught the Dane around the waist, and in the twinkling of an eye he was overboard and being dragged toward the bottom of the sea with fearful speed. With great difficulty he drew his knife from his belt and cut the rope. He shot upward and caught sight of the circle of light over his head, that indicated the spot where he would rise to the surface, when the water about him suddenly seemed filled with swirling reptiles, and that instant he felt the slimy arms of a devilfish infolding him. Had it not been that the line was still fastened to his wrist the man would probably have been carried to the bottom by the ferocious fish. As it was, the men in the boat rapidly drew him up, and when he came to the surface he was slashing at the snaky arms that were tightening around him. The fish was an unusually large one and had no intention of giving up its prey.

When the sailor got so that he could breathe, he realized his strength and cut and stabbed the pulpy mass, but the arms continued to tighten around him, and he found that he was in danger of being crushed to death. The sailors in the boat were chopping at the hideous fish with hatchets and labelling with harpoons. The Dane's arm finally fell into the grasp of the fish, and he became absolutely helpless. All that he could do was to call to his fellows that the fish was surely crushing the life out of him.

After a fearful struggle the fish was so completely choked to pieces that it could do no further damage, and the sailor, unconscious of pain and the loss of blood, was drawn into the boat, where the tentacles of the fish were torn away from him in small pieces. It was two months before the Dane was able to get around the vessel, and he will carry the horrible disfigurement he received to his grave.

Three months after this experience the Tristram foundered during a storm off the Nightingale island and sank on a shoal. The Dane and two other sailors died for safety to the rigging of the ship, and as the sea and the water rose about her masts the men went up. When they reached the highest yard arm, the vessel struck the bottom, and the three men were perched on the frail support with the storm raging over them and the wild sea around them. Some time during the night one of the men became exhausted and fell into the water.

The storm subsided the next morning, and the sea ran down. The heat of the sun became almost unbearable, and the men soon began to suffer from thirst and then hunger. The waves ran about two feet over the yard on which they stood, and for some time the sailors saw a number of sharks gathered about them, splitting the water with their fins and thrusting their noses above the water, as if already relishing the feast that they were waiting for.

In the afternoon the Dane's companion lost his head and sprang into the sea, and the Dane saw him crushed in the jaws of the sharks that fought over his body. The terrified Dane hid himself to the yard and was found in an unconscious condition on the day following by the whaling bark Witch of New Bedford.

He had got to running in the direction of the Dane, and he seemed in a fair way of succumbing to it. Six months after he was rescued from the mast he had another thrilling experience. A heavy storm came up, and the Dane was sent aloft to assist in furling a sail. He was at the extreme end of the yard when the vessel suddenly lurched, and he lost his hold. He fell into the water, but being a good swimmer he managed to keep afloat, and the next wave that came swept across the deck of the vessel, carrying the sailor with it and lodging him under the lee of the mainmast, a force that broke one of his legs and knocked his senses completely out of him.

Once more this ill-starred man was spared, and in a few weeks he was able to hobble around the deck on a crutch, and in due time resumed labor. A short time after that luck had got to him again. The storm must have tried her severely, for she sprung a leak, and in spite of all that the men could do at the pumps the water gained on them, and they were finally compelled to take to the boats and abandon the vessel.

He floated about for five days. They suffered from the heat, but they had plenty of water and provisions to keep them alive. There were three boats of them. On the morning of the sixth day they espied a small island a few leagues away and made for it.

The surf was running high on the shore of the island, but the sailors thought they could land safely, and they made the attempt, with the result that the entire number, with the exception of the Dane, was drowned. He got hold of an oar, and after a hard struggle he managed to reach dry land. The island was a small affair, but the Dane managed to subsist on the berries that grew there in profusion for a few days until picked up by the brig Elio, which carried him to New London.

An Impressed Whale.

The people around Dark Harbor, Grand Manan, are somewhat excited over a big whale which got into the harbor and cannot get out. The whale ran in the harbor on Friday. It is presumed in pursuit of a school of herring. At high water there is only ten feet of water at the entrance, and as the water runs in for two hours after high tide, his whale-ship, when he tries to get out after that, finds the water too shallow for him.—Exchange.

Wicked Boys in Air.

Some bad boys climbed to the top of a church steeple in Los Angeles the other day and pelleted passers in the streets below with pigeon eggs that they found there in large quantities. They were out of reach and enjoyed the sport thoroughly until a policeman mounted to the belfry and took them in charge.—San Francisco Call.

His Old Pipe.

"Isn't that a rich color!" said a well known lawyer the other day as he held up a briar wood pipe of an almost ebony hue. Then he stroked it fondly with his hand and finally took to rubbing it with his coat sleeve. "It has taken me over a year to color that pipe, and I don't think you could buy it now at 10¢ price. I used to smoke cigars—I do now to some extent—but I prefer a pipe when reading or working over my papers. You see a cigar is always dropping ashes and messing things up. Then the smoke gets in your eyes when leaning over. But a pipe—oh, there is nothing like it for real solid comfort. My wife says this old fellow is getting dreadfully strong, but he hasn't the heart to ask me to discard it for a new one. See the way that rich chocolate tint merges in the black—that velvety looking black—and then the gold that seems to have grown up from beneath the surface."

"Strange how a man should become attached to such a thing. But, on the other hand, think of the nights this old pipe has stood by me when I worried my brain over legal tangles, when I grew cross and irritable, how its sweet perfume has quieted and soothed me. Friends might forsake me and fat fees vanish into thin air, but my old pipe was ever at hand with its comfort. What a sense of calm contentment settles over me when the work of the day is done and I sit down in the library at home, with my wife and little ones about and this old fellow filled to the brim and good. Why, man, the cares and worries of the day slip off, and away with the curling smoke! Just look at that exquisite color!"—Brooklyn Eagle.

Rich Sap From Maple Trees.

The more uneven, rocky and ledgy the land and the drier the soil, except where cold springs abound, the better are the products of the maple. Trees standing in or near cold springs will discharge the most and the sweetest sap. I am acquainted with one tree standing by a spring, seven quarts of whose sap will make a pound of nice white sugar. The richness of this sap will be realized when it is remembered that it takes 16 quarts of average sap to make a pound. The black maple is the richest for sap of any variety. Our poorest sugar orchards give us about two pounds of sugar to the tree, while our best ones yield five and six pounds a tree. I have heard of a few extra orchards yielding 7, 8 and 10 pounds to the tree, and one extraordinary one that has yielded 16 pounds to a tree. The quantity of sugar that can be made from single trees in one season of six weeks at most will depend on many circumstances.

The more spots put into a tree the more sap is obtained and the more sugar is made. From the tree already referred to as standing near a cold spring there were made 300 pounds in one season with two spots, which emptied into the same tub. They were set in holes bored 14 inches deep with a three-eighths bit. Another tree I have known of yielded 50 pounds, and a third 25. Still another tree was tapped with 10 spots, and 50 pounds of sugar were made, but it killed the tree.—Timothy Wheeler in Garden and Forest.

Stranded in Artistic Surroundings.

It is really amusing and sometimes pitiful to see how men suffer from the artistic mania of their wives. I know of a case where a husband was not allowed to touch any of the furniture in the drawing room for fear he would disturb the effect of color and outline. He wisely stipulated, however, that he should have his own chair in the room, which he was to be at liberty to do with as he liked.

Being a man of infinite taste he managed to evolve the most delightful and comic situations when visitors were present, explaining that it was his want of artistic feeling which made it necessary for him to carry his chair about with him. He asked that when his friends contemplated their surroundings from an artistic point of view they should kindly consider him and his chair out of the picture. Needless to say it was not very long before all restrictions were withdrawn and he was allowed to work what havoc he pleased in the drawing room, as well as everywhere else in the house.—Boston Globe.

Danger on Every Hand.

An electric light wire caused a fire in a Pittsburgh store the other day. It was very simple. The insulation coating was worn off, and the wire rubbed itself into a flame among the sticks in a show window. The result was a blaze that would not do much damage to the whole building had it taken place in the night, when no one was about, instead of in the daytime. As it was, the fire department responded promptly, and the store was saved, with comparatively slight damage. But the danger to life and property from the general use of electricity for illuminating purposes is growing from year to year.

In so many places the convenient white incandescent light has taken the place of the yellow, flaring gas, that the peril from bare wires is growing greater from year to year. The natural gas fire that are liable to spring up in the night and set fire to the house is one source of danger and the electric light wire is another. Then there are burglars, sneak thieves and other perils, so that altogether the Pittsburgh household is in the midst of dangers that require all his ingenuity to meet.—Pittsburgh Bulletin.

The Books of 1891.

The last number of The Publishers' Circular gives the usual analytic table of books published in England during 1891. The grand total was 5,794, made up of 4,459 new books and 1,337 reissues. These figures show a slight decrease on those of the previous year, a larger decrease on those of 1889, and a very considerable decrease when compared with the grand total of 1888, which was 6,591. There has been no material variation of recent years in the proportion of the several classes, except that novels are still growing steadily. Since 1880 the total number of novels (new and old) published in a year has increased from 580 to 1,216, or more than twofold, and miscellaneous (including pamphlets) has increased from 353 to 731, again more than twofold.

On the other hand, arts, sciences and illustrated works have decreased from 479 to only 116, or less than one-fourth; and theology has decreased from 975 to 677. The annual output of poetry seems to remain constant at between 100 and 170 volumes, while the new editions of old poetry, which come into competition with contemporary verse, also remain pretty constant between 40 and 70 volumes.—London Academy.

GIRLS WHO FLIRT.

WHY MEN MARRY WOMEN WHOSE ACTIONS THEY CONDEMN.

A Possible Solution of the Mystery of the Single State of Sedate Girls and the Splendid Marriage of So Called "Frisious" Young Women.

Select your own immediate circle of young lady friends—those whom you have known during the last ten years—and you will find, I think, that few if any of the flirtatious girls remained single, while several of their prudent and well behaved and more industrious sisters are still clinging, ungathered, on the parental branch.

Not many years ago I heard a father caution his two lovely and accomplished daughters against an intimacy with two of their girl friends. "Those girls are becoming so flirtatious and gay," he said. "I am sure your good names will suffer if you are seen much in their company. Men are quick to comment upon and misinterpret such frivolous actions as I see those girls indulge in, and I do not want you to suffer from an unwelcome intimacy. I have no doubt that these innocent girls are but they will soon lose the reputation of innocence if they are not more prudent."

The daughters of the gentleman listened to his counsel and ceased to visit the young ladies who had been accused of being flirtatious and without cause, and yet, I regret to relate, the two flirts are today wives of men who adore them, and who are the most tender and devoted husbands, while the two prudent daughters of the discreet gentleman have remained at home unwed and unwon.

Immense cases of a similar kind have come under my immediate observation.

I always feel exasperated with men when I see them choosing such girls for wives, while the prudent and discreet ones are passed by, exasperated not because of their choice so much as because of their praise for the type they neglect and their censure for the type they select. It is a curious problem.

I have tried to solve it and render the conduct of men consistent with their ever repeated assertion of aversion to the very girls they seem most ready to marry.

It seems to me that I have arrived at the explanation of the problem.

Men themselves do not know why they are attracted to and won by these girls, despite their better judgment, but I think I can explain the matter to them.

Stronger and deeper than man's cultivated and acquired taste for the domestic virtues of civilized life is his inborn admiration for what they usually term "go" in a woman.

I think I have seen more men's eyes sparkle when they described a woman as full of "go" than I have ever seen from any other cause.

A man will be very calm and matter of fact when he tells you how very beautiful some woman is, he will be phlegmatic and promise about having a wife like her, but when he tells you of some "highly accomplished and charming woman" he knows, not a ripple will disturb the repose of his face when he speaks of some good, domestic, virtuous girl of his acquaintance; but when he says, "By Jove! she's full of go!" his calm becomes excited, his eyes glow, his voice thrills.

I have heard them say it scores of times, and it is always with the same intense delight and appreciation.

I heard it said one of a girl on a country farm; the hired man fell ill just in the harvest season, and she took his seat on the great reaper and drove four horses until the overripe wheat was cut and bound. I heard it said of a young girl who had been reared in luxury and idleness, and whose father died suddenly and left the family with nothing but debts, in less than six months she had saved all the debts, and the family was enabled to pay their debts and had obtained a large paying class in music. I heard it said of the wife of a famous politician, whose energy and tact and brilliancy won him half his success, and I heard it said of a society girl, who was not beautiful or rich, but who became a belle because she was the best dancer, rider, swimmer and talker in her set.

Now it is the same element—a sort of combustible hidden quality of character—that seduces them to do what they did, which causes many girls to become flirts. Girls devoid of this element do not understand why they are not as attractive to men as some less beautiful and less prudent friend may be, and think the male sex very unappreciative.

They hear men severely criticize the girl whose misdirected "go" has led her into flirtations follies with his sex, yet he is attracted, in spite of himself, by the quality which actuated her follies, and he ends by marrying her.

I do not see that it pays to be well behaved and prudent, said a very beautiful and modest girl to me recently. "The men treat you with respect, but they pay all their attention to and finally marry the girls who flirt with them."

I could not deny the truth of her statement, yet I felt sorry to admit it. But no modest and discreet girl need envy the happiness of a flirt.

If she marries a man she loves, every discreet act and every familiar attention she has received from other men during her flirtatious days will be the drop of gall in her cup of sweets. And if she does not love the man she marries surely she is not to be envied, for she is very likely to continue her flirtations after marriage.

The best advice I can give to the modest and good girls is to cultivate "go." Externally discreet and domestic girls who never feel any inclination to kick over the traces of conventionality, are worthy and excellent members of society, but they seldom possess much "go." This quality needs to be born in a person, like most other qualities, if we would achieve great results, yet it can be cultivated.

Shake yourself up, overcome your self-consciousness, your indolence and your fears of public comment! Try to be animated, try to be ambitious, try to be amusing and thoughtful of others.

Don't get into conventional rules and act like every other girl you know. Dare to be yourself, for every one has an individuality peculiarly her own. But if you are so fortunate to be attractive don't attempt to be flirtatious when it is not your nature to be so, because you see that men make love to flirts even while despising them. If you do you will surely bring ridicule and disgrace upon yourself and win no man's regard.

It is not the flirting which draws the man—it is the element I have referred to which, when misdirected, frequently causes a girl to flirt, that attracts them, even in spite of their prejudices.

A man would prefer a girl who possessed "go" and who did not become a flirt. If you, devoid of this element, degenerate into a flirt, you will be like some literary aspirant who emulate the views of Balzac and Swinburne without possessing any of their genius.

Avoid flirting, my dear girls, but cultivate "go."—Ella Wheeler Wilcox in Chicago Tribune.