

[Written for the New Northwest.]
PERILS BY DAY---PERILS BY NIGHT.
 A STORY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER.

BY A. A. CLEVELAND.

"You'll have to pull down to-night, Will, if you go below. There is not a breath of wind."

These words were uttered by a young and happy-looking woman as she leaned against the net-rack and looked down upon her husband, who was taking his seine into the boat.

"No, Lucy, I don't think it would pay to pull against the tide," replied Will. "Do you, Joe?" he asked, looking up at his boat-puller as he spoke.

"I think we had better wait till the tide turns," said Joe.

"That will be best, Will," added Lucy, "for then"—lowering her voice—"you can stay an hour or two longer with me."

"Yes, little one, but staying with you will not catch fish," said Will. "I'll lay out on this flood and then drift down on the next ebb tide."

The net was soon piled in the boat, and, ascending to where Lucy stood, Will said:

"Did you fill the lunch bucket?"

"Oh, yes, long ago. And I filled it full. But I do hope you won't stay away as long as you did last time. I wish you would give up fishing and stay with me."

"Only this year, little one. After that, I promise you never to wet shoe thread again." (Salmon nets are made of from 10 to 12 parts of flaxen shoe thread.)

"But, Oh, Will! If the wind blows and I hear the moaning of the bar," said Lucy, with a far-away look, "you don't know how I feel, when you are away, with only a thin plank between you and—"

Unable to finish, she turned away sobbing.

"Never fear, missus," said Joe. "Your man will be all right. If it comes on to blow, we'll run for shelter. So if you hear the wind howling round the house, you can say to yourself, 'My man is snug in some good place cooking coffee.'"

"That's a fact, little one," added Will. "I have a good boat—as good as the best—and I'll be careful for your sake. Now, cheer up and kiss me good-by, for we must be going."

"Good-by, Will, darling," said Lucy, through her tears. "Don't stay away too long."

"Cheer up, missus," said the oarsman as he pulled from shore. "I'll take care of your man. We'll be back in a day or two with a hundred fish in the boat."

The anchor was lifted, the sail was spread to the breeze, and with light hearts the brave fishermen headed for the Cape.

The Storm King was abroad that night and taunted the waters with the southwest wind, until, roused to fury, they fairly foamed. Against shores and sands and rocks they dashed, leaping heavenward in their rage, only to fall back and renew the contest with redoubled fury. The beacon light of warning and of hope burned brightly, and when at last its gleams grew dim, day had dawned.

Two men were together upon the water, but one was taken and the other left. He was found when the sun rose upon the sands. The lamp of life was but feebly burning. One hand was torn and bleeding; the other, tightly clenched, had something intertwined amongst the fingers. It was a "death grip" and could not be unloosened. Gently they lifted him from his sandy bed, and tended him as a mother would her child, until the vital spark was fanned into a flame.

"Who is he?"

A voice husky with emotion answered:

"It's Joe."

"Where is Will?"

The bowed heads bent lower still. There was silence. Not a voice answered.

By and by the shore was searched. And when the crowd of men, pale with apprehension, asked for Will, Joe wept and told his sad tale—a tale repeated, alas! too often—told how the breeze freshened to a gale; told of tears, of prayers, of almost superhuman efforts to save; of the remorseless waves seeking to engulf them; told how long the man held on. The boat was his all; was bread for wife and child. But the end came. The angry waters had claimed two victims from the boat. One was entangled in the net. With fearful roars it dragged him out to sea and in its fury cast the other torn and bleeding and almost lifeless on the sands.

For a moment, not a sound save that of smothered sobs was heard. Then a trembling voice was heard asking:

"Who will tell his wife?"

All stood silent. Then a true-hearted man stepped forth and said:

"I will go."

At these words, Joe sobbed like a child. Then the hand clenched with the "death grip" came slowly forth, and one by one the fingers were unloosened.

"Tell her," he said, between his sobs, "that I tried to keep my word. I tried to look after her man; he was tangled in the net when the boat swamped; and he called to me to save him. I reached his side as he was going down, and grasped him by the hair. But he was dragged from me. Did I do my best, boys?"

"Aye," they said; "you did, Joe. His hair is in your fingers now. You could do no more."

"Take it to her," continued Joe; "and tell her he wished her good-by before he went down."

And if we all meet on the other side, Will, I know, will say Joe did his duty like a man."

The sad news was told carefully, tenderly, to the wife. Who can describe her sorrow? Let us not attempt it.

When, clad in the habiliments of woe, she walked the streets, the fishermen with downcast looks and with hushed voices would say:

"'Tis Will's wife."

One by one the faces we used to see are hidden from our sight—buried fathoms deep beneath the waves. And now when the Storm King rides abroad, our hearts sink, for we know the fisherman is in peril by day and in peril by night.

AMONG THE TYPES.

A NIGHT VISIT TO THE COMPOSING ROOMS OF A METROPOLITAN DAILY.

The morning paper comes in fresh and damp, and while you are reading it, the men who made it for you are asleep. They did their work while you were reposing on your downy couch—their life is emphatically one of the night. They sleep when the sun shines. They go to bed when he rises. It is all night with them. Steadily click, click, go the types, one line after another, paragraph follows paragraph, columns take their places beside columns, ever lengthening, filling up the gaps, assuming form and proportion, seeking out and settling into appropriate place, ever approaching completion, ever getting ready for the reading that is to be done at so many breakfast tables, on so many railways, and in so many counting-rooms on the morrow.

"Time." The hour for work has come. The men go to the desk. There is little talking—that is left to the central figure. The group consists of thirty men or more, and their faces are a study. Some are young, some are old, all are earnest. Their life makes them so. They have divested themselves of coats, the most of them; some have put on a thin jacket in place of the heavier out-door garment.

The one who stands the farthest from us with a light straw hat tipped jauntily on the side of his head, which he now takes off—the hat, not the head—and lays on a case near by, is a graduate of one of our best colleges. Don't smile. Five more in that group are graduates, one with the honors of a valedictorian clustering around his brow.

The slender lad of not more than nineteen, who stands next to him, is a collegian now, a junior. He spends his vacations here for the sake of the twenty-five or thirty dollars a week which it is sure to afford him. He devotes all his vacations to this work.

The man on the right, with a heavy mustache, is a sporting man, regular correspondent for *Wilkes Spirit of the Times*. He is fond of taking Saturday afternoon for a game of base-ball. It is his one free afternoon, and he, with eight others, all before us, devote it with their might to the muscular work.

The central figure, who now says "Nineteen," is a Colonel in the army, and got that scarred cheek at Gettysburg.

The fierce-looking Frenchman behind him led some of the cavalry charges that graced the hills of Virginia. In the corner over here, at our right, are wooden swords which he and others, who cleft the startled air with their shining blades eighteen years ago, cut and slash now, sometimes, to keep their practice up.

The Indian clubs near the same pile belong to the wiry man near the window. He is a gymnast, and has appeared more than once on the boards at our city theatres.

"Nineteen." The Frenchman steps up and takes from the desk a sheet of straw-colored paper, looks at it for a moment, and retires.

"Twenty-one."

The gymnast steps up and takes a slip, looks at it, and a slight chuckle is audible. The simple expression, "Fat, eh?" comes from some one in the group. The gymnast answers with a quiet nod and a smile that shows he is content with the piece of copy that fell to him.

"Twenty-two, Twenty-three, Twenty-four, Twenty-five, Twenty-six, Twenty-seven, Twenty-eight, Twenty-nine, Thirty, One, Two, Three."

All the numbers are quietly uttered by the central figure, but his eyes are rarely raised. The whole thing on his part is mechanical. The men receive their "takes" and pass on. When they are all gone, he leans his head on his hands and gazes in vacancy. It is the last of the week, and he is tired. All around him the types begin to click, click, click. You cannot tell it from the clock's tick. The gas is all lighted to its fullest blaze. Every face is sober as the men bend steadily over their cases, for there are wives and babies depending on the money to be earned.

The compositor does not often look up. He is intent on the work before him. He finishes his "take" and gets another. He seldom speaks. Thirty or forty in a room, all intent on the work which requires their thoughts as well as their eyes and fingers, have no time for looking up.

The man just before us has just finished what he took, and, through a peculiar fancy of his own, puts his copy between his teeth and goes to the "galley bank." Three or four more come at the same time by a fortuitous coincidence. They say nothing. They hardly look at one another. Their respective stickfuls are emptied. The galleys on the bank begin to fill. Each man adds a little, and when it is in its place, with pencil and paper he designates it with a mark to correspond with a mark already on the page of copy. No man takes precedence here, or elsewhere, except by numbers when "time" is called, and by "finish" during the rest of the night.

Social standing in the outside world of daylight counts for little here. The man is known by his number, and when his bit of copy is done and the type deposited on the bank. If there is no more on the desk, he writes his number on a slate or paper, and marks down opposite to it the hour and minute.

The galleys are filling fast now. Here is an editorial. It will take a whole column of the paper to-morrow. Here is a letter from a foreign correspondent. It will occupy nearly two columns. Fifteen men each take up a title, and in twenty minutes the whole thing will be put in

type. Each man takes a page of manuscript copy. Each man knows the contents of the fragment he has. He can read the balance in the paper to-morrow, if he chooses. He rarely takes the trouble to do it before. That he may know the part he sets, he puts at its head a "slug"—a piece of metal of peculiar shape, but it bears his number, and when the proofs are taken, the slugs are drawn and put on the "bank" for further use, leaving the type solid and compact, in column form, each article complete.

"Out of the way." Here comes a black-eyed, black-haired man. With a twist of the finger and a turn of the wrist, he has drawn from a secret recess a long, narrow stick. It drops into its place in the galley beside the type, the quoins fly up the narrowing passage, the locked galley slips on to the press with a click, the proofs are taken, one, two, three, one for the compositors to claim their matter with to-morrow, one for the final revision and polishing by the proof reader, and one for a free-and-easy slip, which goes to the editorial room to show what has already been done.

Things are getting lively now. Copy lies in abundance on the desk; the "bank" is receiving deposits by hand-fuls and giving out by galley-fuls. The compositor's fingers have grown limber as he warms to the work, and fairly fly over the case. A type here, a type there, adjusting one line, and plieing another.

The Associated Press dispatches are hurrying in on their transparent paper—toss a sheet of it in the air, and it floats like delicate silk. The "specials" race along with them; news items, police reports, court calendar, come bouncing in like school-boys; the proofs are being passed to the reader, long white ribbons with dark centers. Gaily and brightly they enter the room, but the spider-work of the proof-reader crawls over them before they go out, and they are not so clean. Out they fly; a rapid comparison of numbers takes place—click—on to a correcting case where every fault is rectified—all that are found—and away it rushes for the "turtle."

But—there is talking in all directions. A dozen men are standing idle. Some are going toward the desk. They put their number on the slate, look at the clock, reckon all fractions in their own favor, and join the group of those who are talking, chatting, lounging, slashing wooden swords, or whirling Indian clubs. There is no copy on the desk, and they are "only waiting."

A sharp strike of the bell, a rattling of the box as it dashes along its narrow passage-way from the editorial rooms, announces a fresh arrival of copy. There is utter silence. "Five, Twelve, Nine, Seventeen, Twenty-seven," etc., is the order of numbers on the slate; and as each number is called, each man takes his slip of copy, goes to the slate, counts the fractions in his own favor again, dots down the number of minutes he has been away from his case, and is standing in his place again as sober as a judge, and working like steam.

Steadily the hours roll on. One o'clock strikes, two, three, four; there are rapid movements now; men begin to run with their galleys and their sticks of type; some late news has come and it must go in the paper. At a given moment a signal comes and there must be nothing left. The men are tired, excited, eager. Away in the basement a score of men are waiting at the presses, and their work must be done that the mails may close and the railway trains be loaded with the latest news, on time. The composition-room must have its work done at a given moment, and when the signal comes the great "turtles" are swung to the drop, and away they go to the presses with their masses of type.

"All up," "all up," is echoed from one end of the room to the other. There will be no more copy from the editorial room to-night. One by one each man puts his last piece of copy and work on the bank, turns his gas down, pulls his coat on; the hat slides on he little cares how, and with hardly a "good-night" to those around him, he goes out into the night just as it is closing. He hears the milkmen as they drive rumbly along the deserted streets; he sees occasional dark figures gliding along, bent on the same errand as himself—home; he passes now and then a policeman—sometimes stops for a word or two, no more. Meanwhile, the great cylinders begin to move, and the heaps of papers with the last item, pushed in by the skin of its teeth, are being counted out for the troops of boys who are now waiting outside.

Truly, our night's adventure was like a dream. —Chas. R. Brainard in *Newspaper Reporter*.

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