

FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

IMPRISONED in a MINE

By Caroline Abbot Stanley.

IT was the hour for the three o'clock shift. The half-dozen men gathered in the shaft-house of the Bon Air Mine went, one by one, to the box of candles; each put four candles in the pocket of his rubber coat, and stood by the shaft. The bell clanged; they stepped inside the cage, and the engineer lowered them into the depths of the earth.

As they dropped slowly down the shaft, a bulge in the timbers caught the eye of one of the men. "That place will make trouble some day," he said. "Why don't they fix it?" asked a young fellow of nineteen or twenty, Bert Frain by name. "It costs money to re-timber mines." "But it's dangerous—" he persisted. A man beside him gave a harsh laugh. "The danger's to the men, not the Company; so what do they care?" "I guess they care something for the lives of their men," said the youth, indignantly. "They don't, I can tell you. You're green, boy. They don't care for nothin' but the almighty dollar. You an' me might drop to the bottom of this here shaft, an' the boss wouldn't stop to pick us up unless we was in the way of the ore-cars."

"I don't believe it." "You ain't lived in this world as long as I have," responded Hyler, grimly. "You'd know more if you had." "Better not know so much than to know so much that ain't so," retorted the young man.

In the laugh that followed, the cage reached the four-hundred-foot level, and the men turned into the tunnel, going to work with pick and shovel.

At the close of working-hours they stood at the shaft again, waiting to go up, the loaded cars beside them. "Say, boys," said the old miner, "if these cars go up now, some of us will have to wait till the next trip."

"Go ahead," said Hyler. "I've got to go back for my coat, anyway."

Bert Frain stepped off. "I'm in no hurry. I'll wait with Hyler." The cage rose slowly, and the two men walked back to the drift where Hyler had been at work. They were returning leisurely when they heard a crash. They rushed to the shaft, expecting to see a fallen cage and four mangled men. Instead, there was nothing to be seen but a mass of earth and timbers. The shaft had caved in!

They stared at it a moment in silence. Then they turned ghastly faces toward each other. "Hyler!"—the boy stepped close to him and spoke in a half-whisper—"surely they'll get us out?"

The man shook his head. "They can't! That shaft may be half full."

"But we can help! We can shovel the dirt into the cars and run them back into the tunnel and empty them. Then if they dig from the top—"

Hyler interrupted him: "How long do you s'pose we could shovel dirt and lift timbers without anything to eat?"

The younger man was silent. "How long would it take them to clean out the shaft, supposin' it was half full?" he asked.

"Longer 'n me and you'd hold out," said Hyler, with the calmness of despair. "No, boy; we're dead men—caught like rats in a trap!"

Then he cursed the Company and their own unhappy fate.

"Hyler," said Bert, at last, "they certainly will not leave us here to die. They'll put all hands at work to dig us out. Surely—"

"They don't know we're alive, I tell you. We was standin' right by the shaft. They'll think we're dead now." Despair was settling down upon the older man; but youth is always hopeful.

"I'm going to dig," said Bert. He found an empty ore-car, and worked with the energy of desperation. "Come on, Hyler; don't let's give up!"

Momentarily strengthened by his companion's courage, Hyler took his shovel and began to work. He laid it down in a few minutes.

"Taint no use, boy!" he said. "Might as well try to dip Salt Lake dry with a pint cup!"

But Bert worked on. He stopped at last, overcome with exhaustion. He could hardly see that he had made an impression. Then the full horror of his situation came upon him, and he sank to the ground.

"If they could only know that we are alive!" he groaned, "perhaps they could do something."

His shovel fell from his grasp, and struck against the iron water-pipe, making a sharp clang. The sound fell upon a brain growing benumbed, and electrified it. He sprang up excitedly.

"Hyler! Hyler! We can let them know we are alive by the pipe! Don't you know the earth carries sound?" He was wild with joy at the thought of communicating with the world above.

They rapped, then listened, then rapped again. No sound but their own labored breathing.

"Harder! harder!" and they rained blows upon the heavy iron.

The pipe was one used for draining the mine, and led directly to the shaft-house above. Bert's hope was that some one might hear the rapping, and understand that they were alive. As the minutes went by, however, and there was no answering signal, hope turned to fear, and fear to the agonizing conviction that their signals had not been heard by those above.

"It would n't do no good, nohow," said Hyler despondently. "We're bound to starve before that shaft can be dug out!"

did not know much about prayer, but it was a straw, and he was a drowning man. "I know my mother will," said Bert, positively; "and I believe your wife will." "I don't know as she'd know how," Hyler spoke doubtfully. "She ain't had much time for prayin' an' all them things—havin' such a raft o' young ones to look after an' so much to do. She's had a hard life, Lizy has." Then he sat up, and said, with a little catch in his voice: "I tell you, boy, if I was out of this I'd give her a different sort of life from the one she's had!" Thus passed the long, long night away. They talked and dozed and dreamed and woke to wish their sleep had never ended. Finally, worn out with it all, they

fell into the dreamless stupor of exhausted nerves. They were awakened by an explosion that brought them to their feet. It seemed as if the very walls were falling. Bert lighted his candle with shaking fingers; his companion followed the example, and the two men peered around them. There was nothing that they could see. The walls were as solid as ever. They moved cautiously toward the mouth of the shaft, and in doing so had to pass the water-pipe. They lifted their candles above their heads and examined closely as they went. When they reached the pipe they stopped. *It was blown to pieces!* And as they stared and wondered and speculated, they saw something emerging from its mouth. It was a weighted cord with a note tied to it. They tore it off frantically. It said:

Keep up courage boys; we will let down food through the pipe, and in a few days we can get to you. The men are digging day and night. Tell us if you are hurt.

They dropped to their knees and cried like babies—cried and laughed and wrung each other's hands. Oh, the joy of life—just life! Bert took the pencil and wrote:

We are all right, but awful hungry. They had not felt their hunger till now.

What day is it? How long have we been in? And how did you do it?

He fastened the note to a weight, gave the rope a jerk, and it was drawn up. Before long a tin pail began to emerge from the pipe. It was filled with food. They emptied it quickly on to a rubber coat, and it was drawn up, to reappear with a supply of candles and another note. They lighted two or three of the new candles, laughing hilariously at their illumination, and read:

We heard you tap on the pipe and knew you were alive. Then we set our heads to work to get food to you. First, we pumped out the water. Then we let down a light charge of dynamite in the pipe to just the right distance, and set it off. Of course it burst the pipe, and now you are all right. Your wife's been at the shaft-house all along. Hyler, and Bert's mother has been on her knees most of the night. I'll send you the morning paper. It tells all about the cave-in.

"Hyler," said Bert, as he read the sentence about his mother, "I knew they would remember." It was not three days (the time predicted by the "Daily Eagle") that they were "entombed," but many. The opening of the old shaft was found to be impracticable, and a new one was started. But the two men were in safety now, and comparative comfort. Food, light, letters and papers were lowered to them, and there, four hundred feet below daylight, they read the story of the work for their rescue. They received and sent daily bulletins by the pipe.

But the days lengthened to weeks before they were released, though the whole force was put upon the new shaft, in half-hour relays. "The men are working like demons," the newspaper said.

On the twenty-third day the work was completed, and the cage bearing the entombed men was lifted slowly into daylight. The shaft-house was full, and as the men appeared, a shout went up. The manager stood by the shaft, and gave them each a hearty hand-shake.

"Stand back, boys," he said, as the men crowded round; "you must let their women have a chance with them first."

"Bert, you or'nary cuss," said one of the men, a little later, when the hand-shaking was over and they still lingered, "what do you s'pose it has cost to get you fellers out of there?"

"I don't know. What?" They had hardly thought of the money spent to pay for the work of rescuing them.

"Three thousand dollars! I told the boss, jokingly, after it was all over, that you was n't worth it; but he got mad at that, and said money had nothing to do with it, and that he'd save your lives if it busted the Company."

Three thousand dollars! The two men looked into each other's faces. Then Bert turned to the "boss." "Hendricks is right, sir," he said. "We ain't worth it—in money to the Company—but—"

He looked up at the blue Colorado sky that he had thought never to see again, and drew a long, free breath. Then he lifted his cap reverently. And Hyler took the heavy baby from his wife's tired arms.

"Come, Lizy, my girl," he said, with a gentleness new to him, "let's take baby home."



AS THE MEN APPEARED, A SHOUT WENT UP.

They fell back then against the walls of the tunnel, and sat in silence—Bert thinking of life and all it had promised, Hyler thinking of his wife and children.

How long they sat there they never knew. They had no watches, and no way of telling day from night. After a while Hyler blew out his candle, muttering something about saving it, and Bert looked up with a frightened face. He had heard of men eating candles in extremity; was this what Hyler was thinking? He went back to the drift and collected a lot of the old ends. It seemed they had been there for hours when Hyler asked if he had matches.

He felt in his pocket. "Yes, I have." "Blow out your light, then, and let's go to bed. We'll sleep all we can."

They lay on the hard floor, their coats under their heads, and tried to sleep. Bert crept close to Hyler, and Hyler did not repulse him. The longing for human touch was upon them both. Then exhaustion overpowered them, and they dozed fitfully.

But their sleep was a nightmare. From a horrid dream Bert woke to a reality not far different. The darkness was insupportable, the silence such as chills. A cold sweat stood on his face in beads, and a shivering fell upon him.

"Hyler," he whispered. Even in the extremity of his terror, he would not wake his companion if he were asleep.

"What?" The man's gruff voice had softened strangely. "Oh, Hyler, have we got to die here in this hole?" "We're bound to, boy. There's no help."

They lay there a few minutes in silence; then Bert said brokenly: "Hyler, can you pray?"

"No."

There came into the boy's mind a far-off memory of "Now I lay me down to sleep," and the words "Our Father"; but they did not seem exactly appropriate, and were unsaid. He did not know that the very turning of the soul in a mute cry for help was prayer.

"Some are praying up above," he said. There was a gleam of hope in the thought. "It won't do no good," responded Hyler, gloomily. "You see, the trouble is, they can't get food to us. An' we can't live on prayin'! Like enough they won't think of it, nohow," he added, after a moment. He

PECULIARITIES OF LIFE IN THE ARCTIC.

By Professor J. H. GORE.

NATURE seems not to welcome the possession of the Arctic by birds, animals, or even fishes, and not only makes the climate severe, but has brought it about that, since each animal feeds upon some other, each can live only by evading hungry enemies. In this constant struggle to feed and avoid being fed upon, some interesting traits have been developed.

During the summer months much of the land becomes free from snow and ice under the joint action of sun and wind, and the snow that resists removal is darkened by a deposit of fine dust particles. In this season the animals wear their darker clothing, and birds have, by way of change, a less gaudy plumage. The background against which they stand would betray their presence if the white dress of winter were worn now; then, too, it makes it possible for the foxes, ducks, and other animals and birds to gratify a natural vanity by putting on, for a time at least, another coat.

In winter, white is again worn. The background is now snow and ice, and the only chance which the Arctic chicken now has to deceive the fox is to roll up like a ball and simulate a lump of ice. The ice-bear is equipped successfully to creep upon the ever-watchful seal, because he looks like the other blocks of white around him. He remembers, however, his black nose, and is said to be sharp enough to cover it with his paw while approaching his dozing prey.

The seal does not stop his search for food until he has completely satisfied his excellent appetite; then he takes a good nap, lying upon the very edge of the ice, or as close as possible to his breathing-hole. The slightest sound will awaken him, and without waiting to find out the source or direction, he rolls into the water. He can stay under for only thirty-five minutes, but where he will come up none can tell. This no one knows better than the bear; and if the bear realizes that it is impossible to steal upon the leeward side of the seal, having his black nose covered with his paw and his bloodshot eyes closed, when the seal has his open end on the watch, he looks about for a favorable point of departure, dives under the ice, and in he rightly judges the distance and direction, he comes up at the very spot where the seal had expected to go down. The seal's fate is thus settled, and the bear's shrewdness earns its reward.

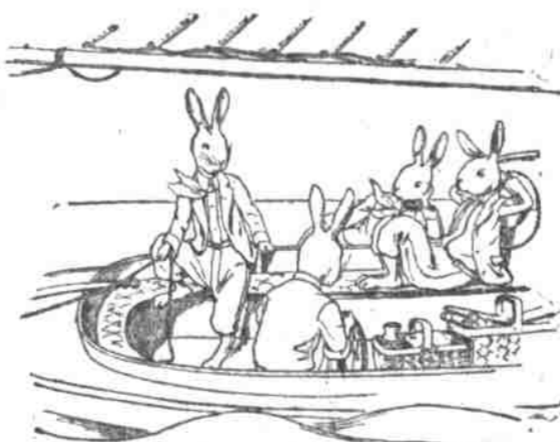
The beautiful eider-duck has often been cited as an ideal mother, and touching stories are told of her plucking the down from her own breast to make the nest in which to hatch her young. It is also said that if the hunters take the down, she will despoil herself for the second time, not calling upon the selfish drake until she has literally stripped herself. The drake is declared to be strict in keeping his mate to her duties, insisting that she shall attend to the work of hatching. If the duck ventures upon a walk, he does not offer to take her place while she goes gadding about, but, perhaps knowing she is too fond of idleness, cruelly drives her back to her household duty. The duck lays only five eggs, and if she feels that her nest is large enough and warm enough to hold more, she boldly robs her neighbors, carrying the eggs, one at a time, under her wing, until she has seven or eight.

However, when the brood is hatched, the drake becomes the teacher to the young. Not in swimming, for that comes naturally, but in diving, which is a means of flight as well as for finding food. The little duck, coming into life above water, hesitates to risk it by going under, nor will he follow the oft-repeated example of his parents. When it becomes necessary to resort to force, the drake comes quietly near the unwilling pupil, suddenly throws a wing over him, and dives down. The little one is let go under water, and coming to the surface unharmed, even if somewhat startled, he is ready to start diving on his own account.

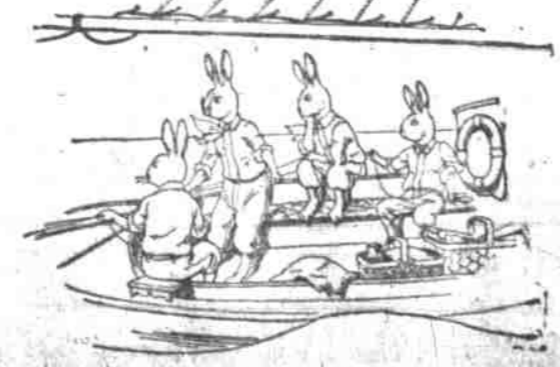
The statement, so often made, that Arctic birds become so confused by the perpetual day that they do not sing, was not verified by my experience. The few sparrows that visited us on Dane's Island were very generous with their music, and especially memorable was their merry singing one of those Arctic nights between the hours of twelve and two o'clock.

THE ANGLING BUNNIES.

BY ALBERT BLASHFIELD.



A PARTY OF bunnies. As brave as could be, Went fishing one day, In the depths of the sea.



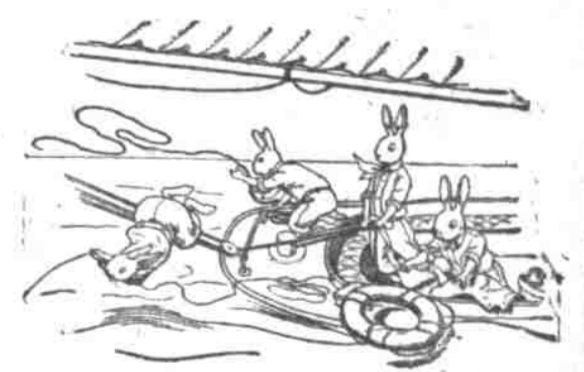
Their host, full of fun, Had provided good cheer; They had pickles and pie And good ginger-beer.

They soon set their lines; Each eye was intent, All watching to see Which way the luck went.

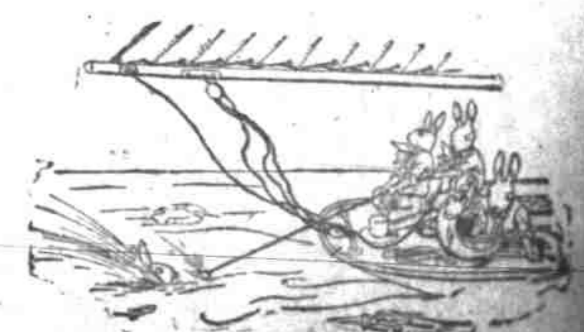
"See, see! there's a bite! It's your line, friend Dick. Now, steady, my boy, And pull it in quick!"

But the gamy young fish, Ran off with the hook, And jerked it so hard, All strength Dick forsook.

Still holding his line, He fell in headlong, While his friends to the rescue Came, mighty and strong.



"Be sure of the fish!" Poor Dicky called out, And soon a fine blue Was flopping about.



That eve they sat down, As merry as lords, To the best dish of fish The deep sea affords.