

The Daily Astorian

VOL. XXIII, NO. 123.

ASTORIA, OREGON, SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1885.

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PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AS adopted by the Board of Pilot Commissioners for building a Pilot Schooner are now ready and may be seen at the office of Brown & McTear, Front and F streets, Portland, where they will remain until May 25. The Board will receive bids in accordance with same until June 1st, or until the right to reject bids is called. After May 25th the plans and specifications will be at the office of the Board in Astoria, where all bids will be received.
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STORIES OF GREAT WAVES.
Some Dangers of the Deep - An Old Sea Captain Tells of Wonders Performed by Storm Waves.

Capt. Parselle, of the White Star steamer *Adriatic*, has been performing the boundless main these forty years. He has navigated every ocean and almost every known body of water large enough to float a ship. During recent years he has commanded some of the Liverpool steamers of the White Star line, and has thousands of acquaintances in the city who know well what an honest, bluff, straightforward old sea-dog he is. This introduction to the *Tribune* readers would be wholly unnecessary but for the miraculous nature of the stories which are to follow, and which, says Capt. Parselle, "are as true and sure as that the sun is now shining on us here on my deck."

The conversation which had preceded these wonderful tales had referred to the storm wave lately encountered in mid-ocean by the *Germanic*. The captain explained what sort of a sea it was. "The newspapers called it a tidal wave," he said, "but it was nothing of the sort. Tidal waves only occur in bays, firths and rivers which are so situated as to be peculiarly sensitive to the influences of the moon and of gravitation. At least, that is how meteorologists explain them. But though I have studied their theories with laborious care, I have encountered tidal waves that had an origin far more subtle than that in the local situations that make water especially exciting."

"For instance, I saw a tidal wave once from a high bluff on the banks of the Ganges. It was a perpendicular wall of water advancing at the rate of about twenty miles an hour. It was perfectly straight, except at the very top, where it erupted into foam that had not strength enough to fall. It was about seventeen feet high. That was a pure tidal wave, and I have never yet been able to work out its origin or cause."

"Now, a storm wave, such as struck the *Germanic* is a very different thing, and is explainable upon thoroughly well-defined meteorological principles. The wind in a first-class ocean storm is hopelessly erratic. I have known it to blow from every point of the compass within half an hour. It blows with terrific force, and, of course, creates tremendously heavy seas in every direction whence it blows. The sea recovers very slowly, so that after the wind has veered from south to north the seas come up in an enraging wave in every conceivable direction. Now, there is a point where the influence of all these seas unite, producing a wave that reaches incredible altitudes with a force that is irresistible. That is a storm wave, and that is what knocked the *Germanic*. No seaman can locate it, and if you happen to be in its path, all you can do is - take it."

"Have I ever encountered one? Well, I should say so. I don't often tell these stories, for if a man tells many of them he is in danger of losing his reputation for veracity. The yarn I am going to spin now, however, is true. It is my own experience, and whether any one believes it or not, it is so. Thirty-three years ago I was the chief officer of a nine hundred ton ship. We sailed between London and India. One evening, when a few hours out from London, in the English channel, the time came to relieve the watch. That was of course, the sky was a little hazy, but not absolutely cloudy. The channel waters were calm. The breeze was fresh, blowing from the west at such a rate as to compel us to sail under a reefed mainsail and double-reefed topsails. On our lee side was a brig. My captain and I were standing together on deck. I had given orders for the watch to be called, and they were then assembled on the poop-deck. The captain said to me, 'Mr. Parselle, I think the light ought to be visible by this time' - meaning the Eddystone light. 'Suppose I go aloft and look,' I answered. 'I went up the rigging till I got about sixty feet aloft, and suddenly, when just in that perilous position, I heard a terrible shout from the deck. I looked down to see what was the matter, and just as I did so, a mountain of water struck us amidships. It picked me right off my feet, and hurled me clear through the rigging and flattened me against the mast, whence I fell down into the main-top, and the rest of what happened I discovered after my recovery. The wave took off every strip of rigging and canvas, all the yards, boats and arms, and left the ship with only her masts standing. We ran back to the Isle of Wight, and anchored in the Solent to ascertain the extent of the damage, and then we discovered the most wonderful thing of all. The ship had been sheathed with copper all that wave had stripped its top sheet off for eighty feet of the ship's length, as clean as a mechanic's shears could have done!'

"How did it happen? Don't ask me. I suppose there may have been a little hole in the copper, and the water was forced into it with such immeasurable power as to have the effect I have described. But you remember I told you there was a brig to the leeward of us. The next morning we saw her lying astern of us in the Solent. Her masts were gone, and if an army of carpenters had been at work clearing off her deck, they could not have left her more

barren than that wave did. Her watch had been swept overboard, and every man of them lost.

"Well, that was a storm wave for you, but I struck one in 1877 that was much more remarkable. I was of the coast of Japan, captain of one of the finest steamships afloat. We were in a typhoon. They call them typhoons there, but they are identical in character with our own cyclone, and the African tornado. It was an awful storm, the worst I ever saw. The wind howled and shrieked and raved like a million demons loosed from the Styx. The sea struggled with each other for our possession, and reared the most infernal noise as they broke over us in merciless force. The sky was inky, but not a drop of water fell. My chief officer and myself were standing on the bridge directing the helm. Suddenly, directly in front of us, about a hundred yards away, I saw a most prodigious mountain of water. Its towering crest was lashed into a white foam and appeared just between the two yards of the mast. Above the hellish din of the storm I could hear the awful bass roar of the monster wave as it came toward us like a steam engine. I turned to my officer. His face was as white as chalk.

"Here's the last of our good boat, my boy," I said and turned her nose right into the wave.

"Her bow rose until we were almost perpendicular. I almost thought we should be thrown over. The crest struck us and blinded me so I can not see. And then so sure as I am an honest man, her bow fell and her keel rose, and we passed over that most terrible wave as gently as a chip over a mill-pond ripple! I never was so dumbfounded in my life, for I fully expected that moment to be the last that ship would ever know. These two years, mind you, are my own personal experiences, and I give my word of honor for their truth.

"About three weeks ago, on my last trip back to England, we called at Queenstown. There I met my friend Thomas Gray, the secretary of the London board of trade, a thoroughly well-known man, whose word is as good as his bond. He told me in good faith the following story, and said he knew it to be true: 'Some time ago, precisely when I don't just now remember, a new light was being put up in the Eddystone lighthouse. This house, you know, stands on a solid rock which the sea entirely covers at high water. The building is a circular iron tower, hollow in the center and about nine feet in diameter. The materials which were used to fix the new light were brought by steamers to the rock, and holes were opened in the base of the lighthouse, through which they were admitted into this hollow space. Then they were hoisted up by derricks to the top of the lighthouse.

"One afternoon the son of the architect, a young man just about of age, was standing at the top of the tower, looking down through this hollow space, a distance of 150 feet, to the rock below. Suddenly he became dizzy and fell headlong into the abyss. Just at that opportune and providential moment a storm wave, such as I have been describing, broke against the lighthouse. The hole in its base had not been closed, and in the twinkling of an eye, at the very moment the young man fell, the water rushed in through these holes, up the hollow tower and received the falling form. Receding immediately the water left him, alive, and none the worse for his plunging, on the rock at the tower's base!'

"The sea saves lives as well as devours them."

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Union India Rubber Co's
Pure Para Gum
CRACK PROOF
RUBBER BOOTS.
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Be sure the boots are stamped **CRACK PROOF** on the heels, and have the **PURE GUM SPRINGS** on the foot and instep, which prevent their cracking or breaking. We are now making them with **RUBBER AND ASPHALT** Soles which will make them last more than twice as long as any Rubber boots made.
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