

SALT SEA YARNS.

Signs and Omens to Which the Sailor Grimly Clings.

A JOKE THAT PROVED FATAL.

Superstition and a Guilty Conscience Proved Too Much For the Norseman—A Bucket of Water That Stopped a Mysterious Wailing.

It is a well known fact that in the past the sailor was among the most superstitious of mortals, and even in these enlightened days there are a goodly number of old salts who cling tenaciously to their belief in certain signs and portents. Some, no doubt, of these superstitions have vanished altogether into the limbo of forgotten things, but there will always be a credulous few who will shake their heads solemnly and prophesy dismally if a knife is stuck in the mast or an albatross or a stormy petrel is captured and brought on board. The origin of some of these superstitions cannot be traced. Many of them have been handed down from father to son for a great number of years, with a touch probably added here and there, turning a comparatively ordinary story into a weird and mysterious legend.

The Finn is the most superstitious of all sailors. There are many of this race who still believe in the ominous portent of the phantom ship, the folly of starting a voyage on a Friday (a notion by no means confined to seafaring men), the low burning blue lights which are ghost spirits hovering near to give warning of approaching disaster and many other things, all of which

Fill the sailor's mind with murmurings and speak to him of wrecks.

A story is told of a brigantine which numbered several extremely superstitious men among her crew. One night when there was no moon and a slight ground swell was running the watch, who happened to be the most superstitious of them all, heard an unearthly wailing coming apparently from the very surface of the sea. The mate and the helmsman also heard it, but the former lacked imagination, and, although he was certainly interested, he nearly blew the watch's head off when he ventured to suggest mermaids. The helmsman did not feel quite happy, but he had to stick to the wheel. The watch was pale with terror, but he kept silence owing to the mate's complimentary references to his courage and abilities. Slowly the sound began to move along the ship's side, becoming more and more agonized as it approached. This annoyed the mate, and, going to the side of the vessel, he waited until he had located the sound and then emptied a bucket of water over the rail. There was a gasp, then dead silence, and nothing more was heard that night.

When the watch went off duty he of course gave a detailed and lurid account of the incident to his shipmates, who listened, as he thought, in awed silence and then called on one of the noddies for his version of the matter. This man, a Tyne-sider, who dearly loved a joke and had no respect at all for hoary superstitions, had conspired with his fellows to play a trick on the watch. On the night in question he had crept over the bows without a sound, carrying with him the ship's cat secured in a bag. Crouching under the stays, the Joker let the cat's head out of the bag, which he tied round the animal's neck so that it could not escape. He then applied his teeth to the unfortunate animal's tail. Everybody knows the fearsome sounds an angry cat is capable of producing, and those to which a cat whose tail is being bitten gives vent are among the most hair raising. The sound was more or less regulated by squeezing the luckless beast's body. The mate's bucket of water was as unwelcome as unexpected and caused the Tyne-sider to beat a hurried retreat.

Not only is the origin of many sea superstitions "wropt in mystery," but also any logical explanation of cause and effect. It would puzzle any one to say why it should be unlucky for the ship's boy to whistle on the weather bow, except that it is generally unpleasant from a music lover's point of view for a boy to whistle on any bow at all.

On one occasion superstition and a guilty conscience caused a practical joke to have fatal consequences. The incident arose through one of the sailors, a Norwegian, boxing the ears of the ship's boy for the aforementioned crime of whistling on the weather bow. Not unnaturally the boy was annoyed and determined to pay the Norwegian out. Aided by two other sailors, a white shirt and some string, a very presentable "ghost" was arranged in the foc'sle on the night the Norseman was on watch. He was to be allowed only a glimpse of the "spirit" on entering the foc'sle, and it was then to vanish from view, being jerked by means of a string underneath the bunk of one of the jokers. Everything was ready, and the three conspirators lay in their bunks awaiting their victim. Unfortunately they all fell asleep, to be suddenly awakened by a loud cry from the Norwegian. He stood gazing at the "ghost," the dim light shed by the lamp falling on his ghastly face. The three were about to call out to him when he spoke. "No, no," he cried, "I did not mean to kill you, Morgan! Oh, mercy, mercy!" And he rushed madly from the foc'sle. Terrified, his shipmates followed him, but as they reached the deck they saw the Norwegian throw himself into the sea.—London Globe.

Send the Press to a friend.

France Wants Wheat.
A Portland dispatch says: With crops ruined by excessive rains, France has turned to America for wheat and local exporters have been ordered to buy bluestem. Although the wheat market has advanced 2 1-2 cents, only small lots have moved within the past 24 hours from the interior on the basis of 98 1-3 trackage, Portland. Farmers are holding throughout the northwest seemingly believing that higher prices will prevail. A prominent French grain man in Chicago said: "It will take France several years to recover from her failure of crops. The terrific rains ruined the farmers and the bankers' losses are tremendous. We usually look to Bulgaria, Russia and Argentina for wheat, but this year turn to America as a last resort."

Announcements.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

In the County Court of the State of Oregon for Umatilla County.
In the matter of the Estate of Emery LaHue, deceased.
Notice is hereby given to all whom it may concern: That Sarah LaHue has been appointed administratrix of the estate of Emery LaHue, deceased. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with proper vouchers as required by law, to me at the law offices of Peterson & Wilson, at Athens, Oregon, or at Pendleton, Oregon, within six months from date hereof.
Dated this 12th day of August A. D. 1910.
Sarah La Hue, Administratrix,
Peterson & Wilson, Attorneys.

SUMMONS.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Umatilla County.
Flora Stover, Plaintiff
vs.
Edward C. Stover Defendant } Summons.
To Edward C. Stover, the above-named defendant:
In the name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit within forty-two days from the date of the first publication of this summons upon you. Defendant will take notice that if you fail to appear and answer or plead within said time, plaintiff, for want thereof will apply to the court for a decree of divorce, a dissolution of the bonds of matrimony now existing between you and the plaintiff; and the plaintiff will ask the court to award the plaintiff the care and custody of plaintiff's and defendant's minor child, and for \$15.00 per month permanently, as alimony.
This summons is published pursuant to a certain order made and entered in the above entitled Court at Pendleton, Oregon, on the 14th day of July, 1910, the first publication is to be on July 15, 1910, the last on August 26, 1910.
Homer I. Watts,
Atty. for Plaintiff.

Notice for Publication—Isolated Tract.

(Publisher.)
PUBLIC LAND SALE.
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.
U. S. Land Office at LaGrande, Ore.,
July 7th, 1910.

Notice is hereby given that, as directed by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, under provisions of Act of Congress approved June 27, 1906 (34 Stats., 517,) we will offer at public sale, to the highest bidder, at 10 o'clock a. m., on the 1st day of September, 1910, at this office, the following-described land:
Lots 3 and 4, Sec. 5, T. 4 N., R. 35 E. W. M., Serial No. 07115.
Any persons claiming adversely the above-described land are advised to file their claims, or objections, on or before the time designated for sale.
F. C. Bramwell, Register,
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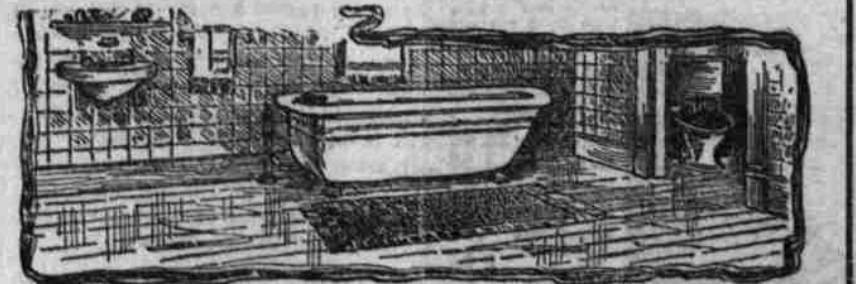
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