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FROM white to red burns my blossom spread,  
A Neath a sky of deepest blue,  
A pledge for the wide world's wealth and weal,  
With each summer's sun anew,  
And ere fierce winter can call his clans,  
Or his shrilling trumpets blow,  
The fields shine white, through the autumn light,  
With my harvest crown of snow!

Then on, in the eager world's embrace,  
I hasten to bear my part;  
There's highway for me, o'er land and sea,  
And welcome in every mart.  
My vassals true are the gin and screw,  
The wind and the winged steam,  
My thrall the boom of the mill and loom  
And the dancing shuttle's gleam.

From rainbow tint to the opal's glint  
My varying colors run,  
And I change my form as the clouds that swarm  
The couch of the setting sun.  
The spider weaves in her nest of leaves,  
No gossamer web like mine,  
And strong the grasp that my fibres clasp  
In the twisted cord and line.

I enter the door of rich and poor,  
I clothe the king and the clown,  
And serve man's need with my stalk and seed!  
When my leaf is scar and brown,  
A truce to your wains of golden grains,  
While my flag is still unfurled,  
O'er mill and wheel, and spindle and reel,  
I rule the trade of the world!

—From Youth's Companion.

## DOWN IN THE SEA.

**W**HAT water at the last cast?" "Mark thirteen; no bottom, sir." "Then lay your lead in." The leadman in the gunboat's port cabin coiled up his leadline and secured it, swung himself inboard and disappeared down the forehatch in search of his tea. Astern was the red sector of Europa Point Light, which shows over the Pearl Rock, and to the starboard the lights of Algeiras twinkled in the gathering dusk a fine evening in late September, clear and hot, but the west wind swept up the Straits of Gibraltar, bringing with it a cool breath of the North Atlantic. Soon dusk changed to blue-black, darkling night and the wind dropped to the lightest of zephyrs. The stars burned in the cloudless sky with such intensity as to reproduce themselves on the greatest of all ocean highways, save one, the English Channel, which does not concern itself with stars in this manner. She is outside the Pearl Rock now and rising Tarifa light, and from the lookout man on the forecastle head comes reports of lights seen in quick succession. From all the western ocean, from the North Atlantic and the South, from the Baltic to the North Sea, from Ushant and the Biscay ports, and the harbors of the English Channel, the ships pass in an unending procession. Man-of-war, mail steamer, tramp, wind jammer sailing through the Gut, and faring onward past the Pillars of Hercules to unknown destinations in "the tideless sea." Those who know the great sea thoroughfares will tell you that at times they seem crowded beyond belief, and at other times there is an almost unbelievable absence of ships where ships are usually most in evidence. But on this occasion the former condition of affairs prevailed, and all the surface of the waters was spangled with lights moving, some swiftly, some at a snail's pace. With all her glaring electric lights shining through open ports a 7000-ton liner rushes past and a faint strain of music is borne across the sea as she passes, wall-sided, swift, and businesslike. A red blur crawls, as were, reluctantly into sight, and the signalman on the bridge stares at it intently through his night glasses.

"One of them there Norwegian timber dawks, I'm thinking, sir," he says at last. A great bluff bowed 4000-ton tramp comes hurt on her heels—one of the sort they build by the mile and run off by the fathoms on Thames, Tyne, and Clyde—a smother of white water rises from under her clumsy

bows, and on her iron decks grow derricks of portentous size and ugliness, an up-to-date vessel. But an electric eye winks maddeningly for above the navigation lights of a vessel approaching from afar. "And me up that there lantern, BIL," says the signalman to the quartermaster of the watch, "it's that there new battleship, sir, what's bound up the Straits to Malta." On battleship and gunboat the lanterns blink in bewildering flashes, long and short. "Wish you a pleasant passage, sir; that's the end of the message," says the signalman at last. Fifteen thousand tons and 300,000 horse power surges past at a short quarter of a mile, going well within herself at sixteen knots. Meanwhile a felucca, showing no lights, gets under the gunboat's bows and is nearly run down, and Jose, Juan and Jaime hear some pretty straight talk from the bridge of the latter vessel as she jams her helm hard-a-port and slides under their stern. They shrug their indolent and ineffectual shoulders, and mutter "que importa" as they light fresh cigarettes. On the forecastle, where the men are smoking their pipes, the comments are lurid and picturesque. "And if we'd a' run her down, we'd 'ad to lower a boat and pick the blighters up, and I don't 'old with lowering no boats at sea after what I seen one time in the North Atlantic," said the chief boatswain's mate.

"What was that, Alf?" asked a chief stoker.

"Time o' the sailing frigates, my son, what you never seen; we was four days out of Halifax, bound for Lisbon, and what you might call ugly weather, not blowing a gale, you understand, but a tidy lump of sea on, and the glass droppin' and it breezin' up. They clears lower deck and reefs tops'ls, an' the capt'n of the maintop o' that there frigate—e was just the smartest man wat ever put a foot to a rattlin'—run out along the yard; he did always. No foot ropes for 'im. I was a young A. B. in them days and in his watch. Well, that day 'e was on the yard and out at the yardarm afore any one of us was bare clear of the futtock riggin', an' he slugs out, 'Up, you blighters, an' light out to windward! Am I to reef this 'ere tops'ls all my lone self?' and he lays back with the carrying in both hands, lifting for all 'e was worth. That there carrying carries away just as she rolls to windward and he falls clean off the yard pump into the sea, where I seen 'im swimmin' a moment after." The narrator paused and knocked out his pipe. "Well, he went to Fiddler's Green, poor chap, but that wasn't the

tale of it by no means. We 'eaves the ship to, near takin' the sticks out of her in doin' of it, and starts in to lower the lee quarter boat, 'im swimmin' grand and risin' on the crest o' them big rollers." The chief boatswain's mate became somewhat husky in his speech and spat ferociously into the spltkid. "All ready, sir," sings out the coxswain of the lifeboat, and they starts to lower. Well, what the right of it was no one never quite knew; but, anyways, some one lets go the line of the patent slipping gear, and the forward pin weren't out. Consekens, down goes the stern and up comes the bows, and afore you could say Jack Robinson there's the whole boat's crew, thirteen men and the midshipman, overboard, too. All this time the sea's gettin' worse and worse. Well, we starts in and lowers the other boat, and she gets away clear, and then—my God!—she capsizes. All whatever got aboard out o' that mess was two men what caught the boylines we have to 'eep, so there were seven and twenty went to Davy Jones' locker that day. And that's why I've never seemed to fancy seein' boats lowered at sea."

"Not much wonder, neither," assented the chief stoker.

The coast of Portugal greeted them fair and bright, the land lay steeped in sunshine, the sea cobalt blue, and no tiresome head wind came to mar the complete comfort of this part of the passage. "Looks like making a flat calm of it all the way home," remarked the captain to the navigator as they paced the bridge together. A mile on the starboard hand lay Finisterre, land and sea asleep in the evening sunshine.

"Looks like it, certainly, sir," answered the latter, "but here's one thing you can never count on, and that's the Bay. I came home one time when the glass started to fall when we cleared the Straits, and by the time we got as far as this it seemed as if someone had knocked the bottom out of it, so low did it fall; and yet we didn't have a breath of wind all the way to Plymouth."

"Rum turn out that," remarked his superior officer, "but I must say I prefer the omens as they are this evening."

"She's on her course northeast half north, sir," reported the navigator to the captain an hour later, just as the latter officer was finishing his dinner, "and I'm sorry to tell you that the glass has gone down a tenth and it's looking a bit wicked ahead."

"Ah, I thought I felt her getting a bit of a jump on," replied the captain. "Let's hope we're not going to reverse your experience which you spoke of this afternoon."

"Hope not, sir." But the hope was in vain. As the night closed in, hard, greasy looking clouds spread themselves in menacing masses across the northeastern horizon, and the glass fell another tenth; by midnight it was blowing hard and a considerable sea was running. At that hour the captain came on the bridge and took a heavy dose of spray slap in the face as he raised his head above the bridge weather cloths. "We're in for it, I'm afraid," he remarked to the officer of the watch, and the latter nodded grimly.

"I've had to ease her, sir, and I'm thinking it's about time I eased her a bit more." A gray-green sea climbed past the starboard cathead as he spoke, and roared over the topgallant forecastle, falling in tons on the deck below.

"Yes, ease her; high time," was the answer. It did not come all at once, but hour by hour the wind grew in violence, the sea-mounted even higher. The captain did not leave the bridge. At 4 in the morning she was going dead slow, but the water was slopping aboard of her in tons.

"This won't do. I'll leave her to as soon as the light comes, and I won't trust the trysails in this breeze. Let the watch rouse out the storm-sails and bend them." It was not a nice job or a particularly safe one, that bending of storm sails, for the hands on deck worked as often as not waist deep in water, and the men aloft were nearly blown out of the bowlines in which they sat; but it got itself done at last, and with the engines stopped, a storm staysail and two storm trysails, and the helm lashed hard alee, the gunboat rode the gale. It was at its height now, and the outlook was not cheering for those on board.

"It's a very queer thing," remarked the captain, "that there are people knocking about, presumably in possession of their senses, who will tell you that a gale of wind at sea is a beautiful spectacle."

"I wish to the Lord," said the navigator sourly, "that we had some of 'em aboard here now; I wonder what they'd think of it?"

The real big Atlantic sea was running now, the sea which becomes unchecked and unhindered over thousands of miles of water. As the ship fell into the trough of the sea the wind fell light and puffy, and this, perhaps, was the most disagreeable of all the sensations experienced by those on board. Then, on a long slant, for she had chosen, as all ships do, to heave herself to in her own way, and not in the way those on board would have liked, and nearly broadside to the wind she tossed her bows heavenward and slid up the incline to the boiling fury that crested the seas. Here the wind smotes her, and the water dashed aboard in a chaotic mist, and it was only by the thud on her decks that they could tell when it came in "green." Then once again would she slide downward, with freeing ports and scuppers spouting like a wounded whale.

"Thank the Lord for plenty of sea room," said the navigator.

"Oh, yes, we're all right," answered the captain; "she's as tight as a bottle, only it's just like this—if one of those chaps," pointing upward at the foam-crested monster whose side they had just begun to descend, "really makes business of it and comes aboard solid he'd simply drive us to the bottom like a stone."

"Pretty thing, a gale of wind, ain't it?" said the navigator; "living on cold 'Fanny Adams' and biscuits, let alone the chance of being drowned."

But all things come to an end at last, and after two days of unmitigated discomfort, the gale wore itself out. As the sea went down and the gunboat settled into her stride once more, people got into dry clothes and contrived to get a meal.

"But I stick to what I say," commented the navigator to the mess at large. "I'd like to see any silly fool who says a gale of wind at sea is a magnificent sight put aboard a hooker like this, and sent to look for a snorter like the one we've just gone through; then, if he did not die of fright and seasickness, I should like to ask for his impressions. I don't think you'd find he'd want to see another."

To which the mess responded, "Hear, hear!"—*Pail Mail Gazette.*

### The Sign Evil Spreading.

The fuss about the framed signed in the New York City Subway has started an outbreak of the billboard fever in an entirely new direction. Men were going around the downtown skyscrapers last week putting up small framed signs in the elevators. They were hung up and down the steel sides and the back of the car, advertising manicurists, stenographers, breath sweeteners, patent medicines, sign painters, stationers and various other persons with whom men who ride much in elevators are assumed to have business. In many cases they were flimsily fastened together and toppled down at the least provocation. A man who jostled against a sign in a crowded car was likely to bring the entire outfit on the heads of himself and his unoffending fellow passengers.—*New York Press.*

### The Slagen Viking Ship.

According to Prof. Montelius, the Viking ship unearthed at Slagen, in Norway, is a pleasure yacht of the period, having several marked characteristics which distinguish it from the Gokstad ship. The shutters closing the oarholes and the shields along the gunwales are absent, proving that the ship was not intended for warfare or long cruises. It is very low amidships. Several costly carved objects were also found, such as sledges, in which even the coachman's footboard is decorated with a handsome carved design and numerous small figures of men and animals. One object was part of a walking stick, the handle of which was carved as a dog's head in fine, almost modern style. Gangways to ships were also found, and oars handsomely ornamented, and so well preserved as to warrant the use of them to-day.—*The Athenaeum.*

### To Keep Soldiers Alive.

An emergency ration, packed in a small two-compartment cylinder of tin, is carried in the haversack of every British soldier. As its name suggests, the ration is not to be used except in cases of the direst necessity. One compartment holds four ounces of cocoa paste and the other a similar quantity of concentrated beef. If consumed in small quantities, it will maintain strength for many hours.

## SCIENCE & MECHANICS

The Slaby-Arco-Braun system of wireless telegraphy is in use across Lake Baikal.

Consul-General Guenther at Frankfurt reports that the chemist, Verneuil, has succeeded in making artificial rubies, pure and brilliant in color, and apparently possessing all the physical properties of natural rubies, by melting a mixture of clay and oxide of chromium at a temperature of 7000 degrees, obtained by means of a blaze of oxyhydrogen gas. The molten mass when suddenly cooled becomes very hard, and can then be cut and polished like the natural stone. A ruby weighing five pounds has thus been produced, but so inexpensive is the process that the value of this huge artificial gem is sold at only \$600. Natural rubies of fine color are among the most costly of precious stones.

In the great corn and wheat belt of the Middle West improved windmills are now used to develop electric power for general use on large farms. At first the electricity so obtained was employed only for lighting houses and barns, but more recently it has been utilized for running small motors. For many years windmills for raising water to irrigate the land have been almost as common in some parts of the prairie States as in Holland, but often they were quite crude in construction. The Department of Agriculture has now taken up the subject, and begun the distribution of information among the farmers concerning the latest forms of windmills, and it is such improved mills that are found useful for developing electric power. In Germany electricity derived from the wind for agricultural purposes has been used successfully for the past two years.

Although the problem of color photography is still far from solved, progress is being occasionally made. A new German discovery—that of Dr. Koenig—relates to printing from tri-color negatives, and depends upon the use of paper coated with collodion solutions of colorless compounds of greenish blue, cherry red and yellow dyes that develop the original colors on exposure to light. The set of three negatives is first made under the usual light filters. The printing paper is first coated with the solution of the dye that is changed by light to greenish blue, and, after drying, it is exposed about thirty seconds under the negative taken through the red filter. When the required depth of color is reached, it is fixed in a solution which removes the unaltered dye compound. The paper is then recoated, this time with the collodion for the red print, and exposed in exact register under the green negative. After this is fixed the third coating is made, and the yellow image is developed under the blue negative.

Artificial cotton is now made from various woods, as from pine in Bavaria and from fir in France. In the French process, the wood, freed from bark and knots, and pulverized by a special machine, is steamed ten hours in a horizontal brass lead-lined cylinder of 3500 cubic feet capacity, after which 2000 cubic feet of a bisulphate of soda wash is added and the whole is heated thirty-six hours under a pressure of three atmospheres. The fibre, thus made very white, is then washed and ground by a series of strong metallic meshes, after which it is given electrochemical bleaching by chloride of lime. The mass is dried between two powerful rollers. The resulting pure cellulose is reheated in a tight metal boiler with a mixture of chloride of zinc and hydrochloric and nitric acids, to which is added a little castor oil, casein and gelatine to give resistance to the fibre. The very consistent paste produced is drawn into threads through a fine draw plate. The threads are then over gummed cloth, then in weak carbonate of soda, and finally given a local bath.

In Japan a boy is reported to have been able to hold his breath for 100 minutes.