

## GHOST OR HUMAN?

[Exchange.]

Every one knows that all sailors, even the most intelligent, are more or less superstitious. This is the legitimate result of the life which they lead—lonely, monotonous and full of the silent but awful influences of the mysterious ocean.

It was when I was first mate of the Golden Scud that I was perhaps more forcibly impressed with this great fact than ever before. It was one of those calm, dark nights which bring out all the dormant superstition that has lain awaiting such an opportunity to torture your mind with horrid fancies and hideous semi-dreams until you are in a fever. Every familiar coil of rope becomes a hidden fiend ready to seize and carry you to its abode, where horror reside too great for the imagination to picture.

I had the midwatch, and a light, quartering air gave the vessel steerage way, but nothing more. There was a heavy swell setting on the port bow and causing the ship to rise and fall with a regular, easy motion, yet it was heavy enough to make the stern settle, as the bow rose, with a doleful swash, which seemed the proper and fitting sound for such a night. The sky was overcast, and thick, heavy clouds slowly passed athwart the moon. The air was heavy and oppressive, and a faint smell of sulphur seemed to faint the slow breeze which fanned our brows. Ordinarily I am most matter of fact and could not be credited with a lively imagination, yet to-night I was a prey to superstitions dread.

I had walked the deck trying to calm my excited mind, and after making a search of the sea with the glasses, and having seen that every sail was drawing to the best advantage, I leaned over the quarter rail trying to compose myself by thoughts of home. My brain, however, was in an unmanageable state and refused to obey me. It would not settle on any tangible horror, but seemed to roam over a wide field of horrible thoughts in which corpses kept beckoning to me from the water, and then, opening their mouths as if to speak, would disappear, only to be followed by others of even more hideous shape and appearance.

I turned away with loathing, knowing, that, if I let my mind rest on such fancies, I should become a gibbering idiot. I walked forward to the break of the poop and found the watch drowsily walking to and fro or gazing with sleep laden eyes at the sails and rigging. I turned to go aft, and as I did so I distinctly heard in a muffled, uncanny tone, the word, "Golden Scud, ahoy!" The cry evidently came from close alongside.

I was terror stricken. Cold perspiration streamed from all over me. My hair, stood erect, and my legs barely supported me. With a mighty effort I shook myself together, assuring myself that this was only a more realistic illusion than the others. Resuming my walk, I arrived at the binnacle, and I glanced in to see if the ship were going "course" the man at the wheel said, "I thought I heard some one hail us, sir."

I was surprised, but only more mystified than before. Could it have been a real hail? I hesitated to approach the rail, uncertain what fresh terror I should encounter. I asked the men forward if they had heard the hail. They answered that they had, but each one thought that it came from a different direction. There was nothing in sight, and all felt that something very strange had happened. As we eagerly strained our eyes to pierce the gloom I heard the hail again, apparently from under my feet, "Golden Scud, ahoy!" The last word was cut off and ended in a gurgling laugh, which sounded

fairly diabolical.

The captain was called, and the watch below came tumbling out of the forecabin. I explained the matter as best I could, interrupted every once in a while by the the demoniacal hail. A flashlight was shown. It revealed nothing, but only added to the weirdness of the scene, and all of us felt relieved when it was extinguished. Some of the hails were distinct, but muffled. Others ended in that awful gurgle which chilled our blood.

We searched in groups, being afraid to separate, and gathered courage from each other's presence.

Every horror that the imagination could concoct was suggested by different individuals as a solution. A Norwegian named Johnson collapsed under the strain, and we were forced to secure him.

Under such a strain and excitement our minds must either give way or resume their normal functions. The captain was the first to recover and calmed us by his example. We were organized into small squads and distributed about the vessel to ascertain the exact locality of the hail.

The squads which was stationed aft soon reported that it came from under the counter. We all rushed aft, gathering courage from our number, and waited silently to hear the next one, which came soon, although it was rather feeble. The captain immediately answered the hail with a hoarse bellowing "Ahoy!" As the stern voice rose on a swell the answer came: "Send me a line! Quick!"

A bowline was made on the tail of the main brace lowered over the stern. For a short time it hung limply from the rail, swaying with the motion of the vessel.

Then it was drawn under the stern, and after a short time it swung out clear and dangling. On the end was an indistinguishable mass.

Although very dubious in our minds as to the object we were about to haul up, we lay back with a will and soon a human figure was brought over the rail.

It was a man. An audible, deep drawn sigh of relief came from all hands as we clustered around the new comer, who lay on deck, too weak to stand.

A stiff glass of grog revived him so that he was soon able to answer the captain's question of "who are you?"

He replied, "I'm Ole Hansen, sir."

"Well, what you doing overboard? Were you wrecked?"

"No, sir. I fell overboard from the forecabin, sir, and caught the rudder chains sir!"

"What ship are you from?"

"Why, this one, sir, the Golden Scud."

"Why, Mr. Blake," said the captain, turning to me, is this one of our men?"

I struck a match, and holding it to the man's face I recognized the well known features of the stupidest, clumsiest lout I ever saw, and whom I unfortunately had in my watch.

I was almost too disgusted to reply, but I managed to say: "Yes, sir. It's that confounded idiot Hansen."

### Remedy for Warts.

Common soda, dissolved in water, as much soda as the water will dissolve, applied two or three times a week, or oftener, if desired. The warts will begin to scale off in three or four days. Keep up the applications the wart will gradually disappear. I have cured the worst cases with soda. Kerosene will accomplish the same result.—Exchange.

God has called many men to preach the gospel, but none to defend it.

## GREECE IN THE PAST AND PRESENT.

Time works enormous changes. In the days of Pericles, Athens, toward which all eyes are now directed held most of the Greek Islands as tributaries. The mainland was divided between several independent but jealous and hostile States. Athens, with her maritime supremacy, her art, architecture and literature, was envied and more or less hated by them all. After various fortunes she, with the other States of Greece, fell under the sway of the Macedonian Empire. That empire was overthrown by the Romans; and at last, amid the successive changes of war and peace, Greece, with a considerable portion of Southeastern Europe, was conquered by the Turks. That event occurred about five centuries ago—A. D. 1453-1460.

Now, after the lapse of ages, when her earlier conquerors have disappeared and the latest conquerors have fallen into decay, Greece, and a constitutional King, reappears in the theatre of affairs; and who shall say that out of the tumult which is perplexing the Powers she may not enlarge her dominion both on land and sea, regain Crete and the Aegean and Ionian Islands and become a powerful State? It is true that the jealousy, the ambition and territorial greed of the Powers would stay her march and prevent her acquisition of any considerable portion of Turkey proper. Russia, standing at the gateway with fleet and army, would demand the lion's share of the spoils. Nevertheless, in case of a successful war Greece would necessarily enlarge her boundaries. The Greeks number about six millions. They are not, to be sure, all included within the limits of Greece. They are scattered. Some live on the islands, some in Turkey, in Macedonia and in other parts of the world. But they are very proud of the historic land, and with the patriotic ardor will enlist under its banner and fight in its cause.

The Greeks of to-day can hardly be called the descendants of the Greeks of the classic ages. The waves of conquest have swept over their land, and the mingling of the blood of various races in successive ages has left but an infinitesimal residue of of pure Greek blood in their veins; but the soil of Greece, the air, the mountains, the seas that wash her shore are all conducive to intellectual energy, and the progress which her sons have made since relieved of the Turkish yoke shows their quality and suggests a future full of hope.

Commerce and commercial enterprise are a heritage and an instinct of the Greek. In the earliest history of the country as honest merchant or daring pirate he was aboard in all the seas. Even Homer, it is said, was probably "a considerable shareholder in the joint stock privateers from tenedos." Let Greece realize her aspirations. Let her become possessed of the Greek Islands; let her boundaries become enlarged on the mainland, and she would without doubt, develop into a maritime State that would be the leading factory in the commerce of the Mediterranean. All generous hearts must wish her goodspeed in her present endeavors and in her future hopes.—Philadelphia Record.

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