

A TERRIBLE STRUGGLE.

AWFUL EXPERIENCE OF A NEUTRAL BAY YOUNG LADY.

THE interesting story of Miss Mashford's narrow escape from death and subsequent recovery has caused so much excitement in the Neutral and Moesman's Bay district that a reporter was despatched to interview the young lady at her home at Woodville, Neutral Bay, instead of finding a patient looking invalid, struggling to overcome the debilitating effects of a long and trying illness, he found in Miss Mashford a sprightly girl in robust health and good spirits, who readily offered to give any information she could regarding her recent recovery and the particulars of how her life was saved.

The following is Miss Mashford's story:—"I shall be 21 next birthday, and I have never been really strong in all my life, but it was towards the beginning of last year (1896) that I began to feel very much worse than I had ever felt before. My nervous system seemed shattered, a feeling of languor would at times quite overcome me, and last but not least I suffered agonising pains from neuralgia. I began to droop and loit about, couldn't work, d didn't eat, and had no inclination to do anything. I certainly was a good friend to chemists, for I spent a lot of money in tonics, none of which did me any good, and it was a sheer waste of money. My parents sent me away for a change of air, being dreadfully upset about me, but I returned but little better. Anæmia or bloodlessness was what I was suffering from. In my despair I was ready to try anything when chance threw in my way a pamphlet relating to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People, which had been left at our house by a distributor. Reading in it of a case which described something exactly like what I was suffering from, and in which a permanent cure had been effected, I determined to try them, which I did, and you see what I am like now."

"You do not look at all like an invalid now, Miss Mashford."

"No, indeed, nor do I feel like one. I cannot say that I have tried no other medicine, for I imagine I have tried every other, but with no benefit whatever. I certainly took no other medicine at the time I was taking Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, for the instructions on the wrapper advised me not to."

"You can then truly say, Miss Mashford, that your recovery is solely attributable to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills?"

"I can, indeed. I shall always fully believe in them, knowing what they have done for myself, and I shall also recommend them to all my friends and acquaintances."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People are not a patent medicine, but are a thoroughly scientific preparation, the result of years of careful study on the part of an eminent Edinburgh University physician, and they were successfully used by him in his every day practice for years before being offered for general sale. They positively cure Rheumatism, Sciatica, Lumbago, and Neuralgia, and Influenza's after effects, and are a specific for all diseases of women, such as anæmia, poor and watery blood, female irregularities, nervous headaches and hysteria. They are not a purgative medicine, but brace up and permanently strengthen the whole system.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are obtained from all leading chemists, or from the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Wallingford, N.Z., who will forward (post paid) on receipt of stamps or post order, one box for 3s, or half-dozen for 15s 9d.

A RACE OF LEPROUS.

IN Southwestern France, in Bearn and the Basque province, live the Cagots, a people who are the descendants of lepers. For centuries they have lived apart from their neighbours—their little houses, called 'chrestians', and the peculiar cancerous odour about them warning away any stranger. Thanks to the greater intelligence of the present age, the old prejudice which prevented effort toward improving their condition is fast dying out. As a result the scourge is gradually disappearing, and year by year the chrestians of the Cagots become fewer and fewer. In the old days each Cagot's shoulder was marked with a bright red sign, representing a hand disfigured by leprosy. They were not permitted to enter a church but by a special door, nor to approach the common holy water basin, having one for their sole use. Once one of these Cagots who dared dip his fingers into the holy water tank of his healthy brethren was punished by having his hand nailed to the church door for several days.

HORRIBLE SCENE AT SEA.

THIS is the story of the curious adventures of a sailor (says the *Waikato Herald*). The ship 'Tanjore', after knocking about the coast for a time, sailed away to Melbourne and loaded wool for London. Among the members of the crew picked up in Melbourne was one Mike Cregan, who declared he was in the ship 'Bald Eagle' when she was burned by Chinese coolies, 500 miles east of Manila, on their way to Callao, Peru. It was blowing a good stiff breeze, but the sea had not got up much yet, and she was reeling off ten knots easy enough. About five bells in the afternoon watch the Chinamen, who had been as still as mice, suddenly broke out in a simultaneous shout, rose up as one man and pulled down their bunkboards and made a rush for the hatchway ladders. Fortunately the yell they gave warned the crew, and they slapped the hatch gratings on and fastened them down. Evidently, now, the proper thing to do was to starve the Chinamen into submission, if they would not submit, for, no matter what their grievance might be, the time for considering that had passed, and for the subjugation was the only remedy for them. But the captain was a Portuguese, and he brought out his revolver and began shooting them down through the grating, and the mates got their oars, too, and took a hand. The Chinamen were so frenzied that they would stand out on the open hatchway, apparently cursing and defying the officers to do their worst, until there was a pile of dead bodies under the hatch four or five deep, and somehow, during the fusillade, a spark from a revolver ignited the clothing of one of the dead coolies. The rest saw it and fell over one another, and suffered to get hold of the burning cloth. One fellow grabbed the smoldering part and tore it from the garment, and was about to blow it to keep it alive when he was shot from above; but almost before he fell another had grabbed the burning rag from his hand, only to be shot down in his turn. But there were plenty more, and shoot as fast and accurately as they might, the bit of burning cloth disappeared at last from the hatchway altogether. It had gone forward to the Chinaman's quarters, and in the course of half an hour smoke was reported as coming out of the fore and main hatches. They didn't dare to life a hatch, nor would anyone have dared to go down there if they had, so they got the carpenter to chop small holes in the deck, and they put the wash-deck hose through them, connected it to the force pump, and pumped for dear life. Now, chopping holes in the deck is a desperate remedy when there's nothing but fire to fight; but when in addition there are hundreds of maddened Chinamen down there determined to burn the ship it was merely wasting time and strength pumping water in among them. It would seem they had expected that the crew would open the hatches to get down and put out the fire, and that would be the chance to get on deck and take charge of the ship.

No doubt that was their idea in setting fire to her; and when it first dawned on them that their plan had miscarried and they were to be left to roast in their own fire, then there was pandemonium. The spaces under the hatches were packed solid with writhing, shrieking humanity; for the others who were directly exposed to the smoke and fumes, pressed in upon them from all sides, and they could hardly have been rammed in tighter with cotton screws, and the faces of the imprisoned wretches who were visible in the hatchway were a nightmare. Their dirty yellow complexions turned a sickly green; their eyeballs almost burst from their sockets as they glared up at the fast waning daylight which was to be the last they were ever to see; and their big, ugly mouths were stretched in a continuous yell, or rather screech, as they strained like a nest of eels. Even the Portuguese captain hadn't the heart to shoot any more of them, but left them to stew in their own juice, while he and the officers gave their attention to saving their own lives. After a great deal of trouble they got the ship hove to, for it was now getting quite dark, and the dense smoke which was pouring out of the hatches, and the holes cut by the

carpenters made it impossible to see a thing and hardly possible to breathe. To make matters worse, it now began to rain in torrents, and the cries of the imprisoned Chinamen made it impossible to hear an order five feet from the person giving it. However, about eight bells in the evening, they got their boats over—the long boat and three-quarter boats—one of which was stove in in the launching. That left them rather short for boat room. The ship was now a roaring furnace, and the last wall of the dying Chinamen had gone up in smoke. The stench was horrible, and they naturally got away from the wreck as fast as possible. A little water and some hardtack were stowed in each boat, about enough for one square meal for the crew there was to go—twenty-two able seamen, six apprentices, the captain and four mates, cook and steward, boatswain, carpenter, and sailmaker—thirty-eight souls all told, to sail 500 miles through stormy seas in three small open boats. The quarter boats could take but ten men apiece, consequently the long boats must take eighteen, and when they were all in her the gunwales were almost awash; and the other boats were not much better off. For three nights and two days they held their course. The night wore away without serious mishap, but, welcome as the dawn was, it brought a

new terror to the seamen, for not twenty feet away from the boat, and directly ahead, was the dorsal fin of a huge shark, and this escort never left them while they were in the boats. He did not always keep the same relative position, for two or three times a day he would drop slowly in alongside, and after casting up his evil eye at them, apparently counting them to see if any had got away, he would sink slowly till most out of sight, gradually reappearing on the other side. The 'Bald Eagle' had been in the coolie trade so long that the original crew had all left her and Portuguese sailors had taken all their pieces except that of Mike Cregan. They were all good Catholics, now that they were in danger, and whenever the shark passed under the boat the Portuguese would turn their faces from him, cross themselves piously, and call on San Antonio. But some of them called in vain. But for Mike the greatest terror came.

When the men began to grow hungry after the hard tack had all been eaten, it seemed to Mike that the Portuguese regarded him with anything but pleasant looks, and as they confined their conversation to their own language, of which he understood not a word, his imagination had full play. And then as their hunger increased there appeared a aggressiveness in their glances in his direction, when they were talking in low tones among themselves, and the horrible thought entered his mind that they were consulting over eating him. Quietly drawing his sheath knife, he kept it in readiness, determined that he would not furnish the first or the only contribution to the ship's stores. After that he never slept a wink on board the boat. Just before dark of the second day the captain ordered Mike, who was in the bow, to keep a good lookout for land, but Mike was so busy watching the dagos that he didn't bother his head much about it. The time passed very slowly and without incident, save at one time he thought he heard a faint cry astern. As no one else noticed the cry Mike said nothing about it, but kept his watch on his shipmates until near morning, when he happened to see that they were driving into a fog bank. Calling to the boatswain, who had the helm, he suggested rousing the captain, lest the boat be thrown ashore, but the boatswain said that he rather hankered for such an accident as that, and held on his course until the sun rose, and then the fog suddenly disappeared and they found themselves in the harbour they had hoped to reach. But as they looked round to congratulate their shipmates, they found that the second mate's boat, the last, had disappeared. An English gunboat, the 'Rattlesnake', was in port, and her captain sailed out in search of the missing boat. He found it with one side stove in, and afloat, but not a trace of any of her crew. What had wrecked her will never be known, but the Portuguese insisted that the shark, realizing that they were nearing land, and fearing that they would escape him altogether, breached the boat for a victim, wrecking her in the act.

GENERAL DEBILITY and Indigestion

Made Her Life Miserable, but She is Cured by

Ayer's Sarsaparilla

Read the testimony of Mrs. E. G. Monroe, Coburg, Victoria, whose portrait is also given:



"Some few years ago I suffered terribly with indigestion and general debility. I could not sleep, and my condition was such as to make my life miserable. None of the many remedies I tried did me any good, and I despaired of ever getting better. One of my friends told me of the blood-purifying and strength-giving properties of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and I began taking it. Before I had finished the first bottle I felt better, and was thus encouraged to give the medicine a thorough trial. In all I used four bottles, and then was perfectly cured of the grievous trouble which had afflicted me. I now recommend, to anyone suffering as I did,

AYER'S SARSAPARILLA As a Splendid Nerve and Blood Medicine.

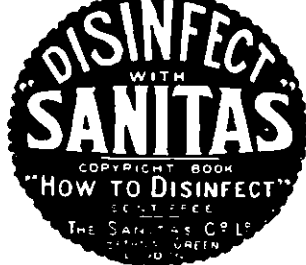
REMINISCENCES OF DICKENS.

IT was at the juvenile birthday parties that Dickens seemed in all his glory (says a writer in *Harper's Round Table*). At the upper table, in helping some little miss to 'trifle', he would assure her with all possible gravity that it was no trifle at all. When the writer, urged to make a little speech on the occasion of Charlie's birthday, came to a full stop at the words, 'I am sure', Dickens at once came to his assistance and enabled him to retire from the platform, however ungracefully, with the remark, among others, 'Always be sure, my dear boy, and you'll get along all right.'

At the little theatrical entertainments Dickens was the Alpha and Omega of the proceedings. He was sometimes author, adapter, condenser, musical director, manager, prompter, and even stage carpenter. He overflowed with energy.

Dickens, doubtless remembering his own acute sensitiveness as a child, could not wittingly wound a child's feelings. He made fun with, not of us. No party ever came off at Dickens's without 'Sir Roger de Coverley' being introduced. Dickens shouted with laughter as some novice got badly mixed up in 'all hands down the middle.' Off he darted after the lost sheep—generally an awkward boy—and turned his blushes to smiles by saying, 'What a dancer this boy will make when he's tackled a little more roast beef!' or 'Isn't Tommy a nice young man for a small party?'

There was nothing of the pedagogue about him. No vulgar attempt to pose as the brilliant 'Box.' He was simply a big boy, and he came down the ladder of his fame to meet his fellows on their ordinary platform—to be one of them in their own simple way for a time.



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