

# A SHORT RANGE VIEW OF FRANK R. STOCKTON.

IN Frank R. Stockton's latest book, "Kate Bonnet, the Romance of a Pirate's Daughter," the author has returned to a field he has hitherto found prolific in incident and adventure, for he has already produced several pirate books. One would hardly take him, imitable humorist that he is, as a man prone to revel in deeds of blood, for of a certainty he "is as mild mannered a man" as ever wrote about the deeds of buccaneers.

Author already of more than forty books, Frank Stockton is no longer in the freshness of his youth or even of middle age, for he is now sixty-eight years old, yet his work appears to be endowed with a perennial juvenility that will ever charm the popular mind.

Frank Stockton's literary career, in some respects unique, in others is similar to that of nearly every successful author. He began by writing children's stories in a homely, realistic vein and ended by inventing a new kind of humor.

"What was your first experience in literature?" he was once asked.

"Getting things sent back," he promptly replied.

This is usually the first and often the continued experience of literary people.

And yet this is not so remarkable as it would at first seem. A late veteran editor who was himself a successful author remarked that when an author creates a new field of literature he must create a taste for it. Such a writer has a double difficulty to overcome. He must first pass the editors to get before the public. Stockton was years passing the editors and might never have passed them had he not been favored by his employers. While an editor for Scribner's he printed parts of "Rudder Grange" in the magazine. Then he offered the work complete to one publisher after another. Finally he prevailed upon the Scribners to publish the book. It proved to be Stockton's first decided hit.

"Rudder Grange," its author has said, "was founded largely on my own experiences with one of the domestic of my own family. The canalboat was real, though we never lived in it. I found a family in just such a boat on the Harlem river, near Highbridge. I went up and spent several afternoons with them. The old boat lay high and dry on the flats, though the life washed its base twice a day. The boat dwellers appeared to be quite comfortable, and the children led as merry a life as any I ever saw. The domestic

found out a great deal that I never had known myself about the mystery. The most urgent suggestion was that I had better quit writing stories. The controversy got into the country debating societies, and the story as well as the author was torn to shreds. Mystery is the most desirable element in a story. As long as the mystery can be rationally sustained you are sure of the reader's attention. It must be carefully handled, however, or what the writer believes to be a mystery will be as clear as the noonday sun to everybody."

When asked what is the mystery in "The Lady or the Tiger," the author replied, "I really don't know which door opened."

The new vein of humor created by Mr. Stockton does not appear in all his works, and when it does appear is not always successful. Perhaps as good an example as any of this peculiar vein is to be found in "The Casting Away of Mrs. Leeks and Mrs. Aleskine." It would be interesting to watch the expression of some editor whose ideas of literary excellence have been definitely fixed for years prevailing without any preparation this string of absurdities. "How could the author have had the assurance to offer it to a first class periodical? Bosh! Rot!" And he tosses

## THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS REPUBLIC.

The president of Switzerland is elected in December of each year and is generally the vice president of the year preceding. The gentleman who now fills the presidential chair of the Swiss republic is Dr. Joseph Zemp, who was



born in the canton of Lucerne in 1834. He studied law at Munich and Heidelberg and later practiced in Switzerland as a solicitor, being quite successful in his profession. He was elected to the Swiss parliament as long ago as 1871 and twenty years later became a member of the bundesrath, or federal council, which exercises executive and administrative functions.

Among the freaks at a ladies' kennel club show recently was a setter with four false teeth of gold, in the middle of which was set a large diamond.

## THE KNICKERBOCKER, A \$3,000,000 HOTEL WHICH IS SOON TO BE ERECTED IN NEW YORK CITY.



A satisfactory indication of the country's growth is given in the unceasing expansion of new hotel enterprises in the larger centers of population. The latest to be reported is the Hotel Knickerbocker, to be erected as soon as possible in New York. It will stand at Broadway and Forty-second street, with a frontage of 121 feet on the former and 161 on the latter. The building will be fourteen stories in height, will contain more than 600 rooms, besides a banquet hall, parlors and reception rooms, and will cost, it is estimated, not less than \$2,800,000, with \$500,000 additional for equipment and furnishings. Together with the land upon which it stands, the total investment is \$5,000,000.

## A HOUSE OF HISTORICAL INTEREST TO AMERICANS.

It will be interesting to Americans to learn that the house in which resided that Admiral Lord Howe who brought British ships against American vessels in the war of the Revolution, is still



standing and has recently been designated by a tablet. It is known as Cannon House and stands in Highgate street, Portsmouth, England. A descendant of the admiral unveiled the tablet and made a speech on the occasion. The present earl, who is the fourth in succession, is forty years old and owns an estate of 25,000 acres, besides half a dozen town and country houses.



FRANK R. STOCKTON.

Stockton in his earlier days was on both sides the literary fence, as he was for many years both author and editor. A certain war who once held these two positions was asked, "What is the difference between them?" He replied, "The author is the person who writes the things, and the editor is the one who sends them back."

Stockton's initial story was called "Kate." He sent it, he says, to every magazine in the country. At last the editor of the Southern Literary Messenger received it and sent the author word that he couldn't afford to pay anything for it, but that if the author would write a second serial story for him he would pay \$30 for it. Stockton wrote the story and received the pay.

After occupying various literary posts, Stockton found himself an assistant editor on the staff of St. Nicholas. While there he devoted himself largely to writing fairy tales. At another period he was an editor on Scribner's magazine—that Scribner's which afterward became The Century. While reading the works of others he was himself continually writing. The reading of good, bad and indifferent productions is one of the most wearing of occupations and if carried on too long is liable to be destructive to one's freshness and originality, but a fair experience in such a field teaches the writer that if he is to succeed he must write something beyond the ordinary. Stockton saw this and attempted to find a new vein. The productions he sent out into which he had breathed his originality were not understood by the editors and were promptly declined. More than this, the editors laughed in their sleeves at the man who had the hardihood to offer such stuff. For years Frank Stockton's manuscripts were the laughing stock of publishers.

arrangements of the abandoned boat were excellent. An awning was extended over part of the deck, and in the cool of the evening what had sheltered the "Rudder Grangers" from the heat kept off the falling dew. Theoretically it was an ideal life.

But "Rudder Grange," while it gave the writer literary reputation, did not cause him to be generally known. A sudden introduction to the public came with a literary bit of which nothing was expected, a short story which most editors would be likely to decline on account of what they would be pleased to regard as "an ambiguous ending."

"The Lady or the Tiger" left unanswered a question over which the world has ever since been pondering. It was the exciting of this curiosity rather than the story's so-called literary merit that advertised Stockton as an author. He has given the following account of the writing and reception of the story:

"A lady at Franklin had an evening party. I agreed to tell a story. I hit upon the two door idea from a place in my house where there are two doors adjoining each other. But I could not write the story to suit me, and after rewriting it five times I was less and less satisfied. In spite of all I could do, apparently, the mystery eluded itself too early in the story, thus foreshadowing the climax. If the definition sometimes given of a climax as being the point in a story or drama at which the reader ceases to read and begins to think be a good one, The Lady or the Tiger admirably fills the requirements. Well, years afterward I got the story out, gave it another dressing up and offered it to The Century people. They were in doubt at first, to put it mildly, because it was not a complete story. The Century's editor finally published it, however, and from the public I

found out a great deal that I never had known myself about the mystery. The most urgent suggestion was that I had better quit writing stories. The controversy got into the country debating societies, and the story as well as the author was torn to shreds. Mystery is the most desirable element in a story. As long as the mystery can be rationally sustained you are sure of the reader's attention. It must be carefully handled, however, or what the writer believes to be a mystery will be as clear as the noonday sun to everybody."

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## HOW THEY ARE FIGHTING THE PLAGUE IN NAPLES.



In Naples, Italy, where the plague has been raging fiercely, the authorities, accepting the theory of the dissemination of the bacillus pest by means of rats, have given orders that every rodent shall be exterminated. In carrying out this order the public sewers have been invaded by men, who, armed with spears and acting under the health officers, have sought out and killed millions of rats with which the subterranean conduits were infested. Each man wears a white cloak saturated with a disinfectant.

## ZULUS' GRAND OLD MAN.

The "grand old man" of the Zulus is hardly a good copy of the late Mr. Gladstone, but he is well up to the native standard and is quite grand and great—for a Zulu. He has never written any books and has never made any speeches in parliament, but he has a keen wit



and considerable shrewdness. As an old acquaintance of both Pretorius and Kruger, he was well known to the Boers, but he took the British side in the war and as a consequence lost cattle and horses. His name is Sikonyana. He is about seventy years of age and was once a great warrior.

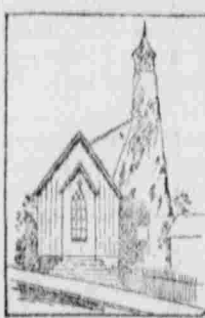
## EDNA LYALL, AUTHORESS.

The real and full name of the original of this illustration is Ada Ellen Bayly. In her autobiography she does not confess to her age, but she has been writing novels for nearly a quarter of a century she is no novice at the art and, in fact, won a reputation long ago. Her methods are strictly up to date, as she uses a typewriter, making corrections in the proofs. As a rule, she doesn't notice the noise of a typewriter, but adds in explanation that she has been writing her own stories "on a machine" for many years. "It is therefore," she says, "no more difficult to use the typewriter than a pen, and the fatigue is considerably less." Her latest work, however, which has a considerable vogue, was written with a pen, as she was ill at the time and could not sit up at her desk.



## A TREE AS A BELFRY TOWER.

The chief factor in art, a certain philosopher has said, is utility, and the early settlers of Tacoma must have had this saying in mind when they utilized the trunk of a giant poplar tree for a belfry tower, as shown in the illustration. This unique tower stands near St. Peter's Episcopal church, where it may still be seen, the congregation having become greatly attached to it on account of its picturesque beauty.

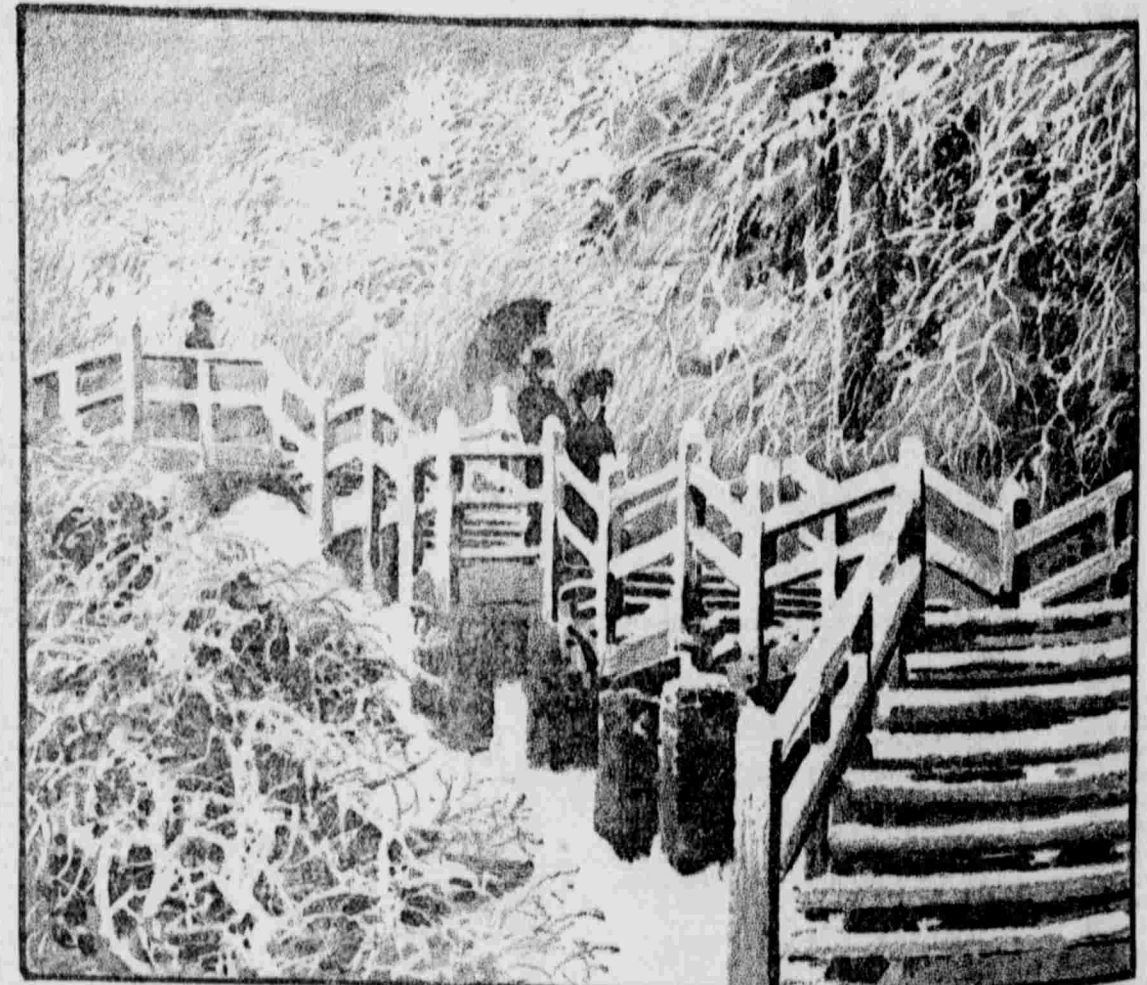


## TOWED TO SEA BY A HUGE SHARK.



The scene of the accompanying illustration was off the coast of New Jersey, and the actors in an extremely rapid moving picture were two sailors and a shark. The latter was of the "basking" variety, which sometimes attains the length of fifty feet, and this particular shark was estimated to be forty feet long. As it got away, however, the measurement cannot be verified, but it was long enough and strong enough to tow the sailors' boat a distance of many miles and was still going at high speed when one of them cut the towline with a knife. The great basking shark, to which family this fish belongs, is really a resident of northern waters, but in the summer descends to the latitude of the middle states, sometimes affording a profitable catch on account of the oil which is extracted from its liver.

## NIAGARA'S SEASONAL TRANSFORMATION SCENE ATTRACTS THOUSANDS.



All who have seen Niagara falls have been impressed, of course, by its tremendous volume, sweep and power, no matter at what season it may have been visited, but it is in winter especially that the scenery immediately around the falls becomes really fascinating. Winter works wonders there, and every fall of snow evokes grand transformation scenes in a few hours by covering twig and branch, tree and bush, as well as mighty rocks, with beautiful crystals. The ice bridge that annually forms in winter across the gorge below the falls is, however, the principal object of interest to visitors. The illustration shows some of the snow effects on Goat Island.

## IN DAYS LIKE THESE.

It is estimated that the projected railway from South to West Australia will cost \$22,000,000 and take five years to build.

A storage reservoir system, with a capacity for supplying water to 150,000 acres, nearly all of which is now desert land, is to be built by New York capitalists on the Verde river fifty miles

north of Phoenix and at a cost of \$2,000,000. A dam 338 feet long at its base, 1,250 feet at its crest and 150 feet high is to be constructed.

Germany furnishes about seven-eighths of the world's supply of coal tar dyes. Its income from this source being over \$25,000,000 a year.

The department of agriculture is anxious

to encourage the growing of flowers for perfume making in this country, and attention is called to the fact that conditions in the southern states are particularly favorable for industries of this kind. It is believed that in California the essential oil, or attar, of roses might be produced on an extensive scale to great advantage.

One of the oldest of recent inventions

is a refrigerating egg, as it might be called. It is an oval capsule of nickel plated copper about the size and shape of a hen's egg, hollow and nearly filled with water. For use it is frozen, so that its contents become ice. If you have a glass of milk that is not cold enough, you do not like to put ice into it because dilution with water spoils the beverage. But if you have one of these eggs handy you may drop it into

the glass, and in a few moments the liquid is reduced to the desired temperature.

In Lahore there is, or was, a massive building made only of bricks and mortar, but the builders, who erected it about 320 B. C., understood their business so well that the fabric defied the engineering efforts of four successive governments to remove it. India, too, can show plastered buildings white and

shiny like marble and as smooth and polished as glass.

A novel invention is now used in the north of England. It is a sort of automatic "bouncer" for use in public houses. Punctually at closing time the legend, "Time, please, gentlemen," appears on a glass face, and then an electric gong starts ringing with such amazing power that it becomes quite impossible for even the most enthusiastic

astle toper to occupy the bar for another instant.

Out of 156,000 houses or flats in Glasgow 36,000 were found to have but one room and 70,000 but two rooms.

A costly marble monument stands in a fashionable cemetery in Seattle, Wash., sacred to the memory of a faithful horse. The animal's owner was himself buried beside the horse recently.