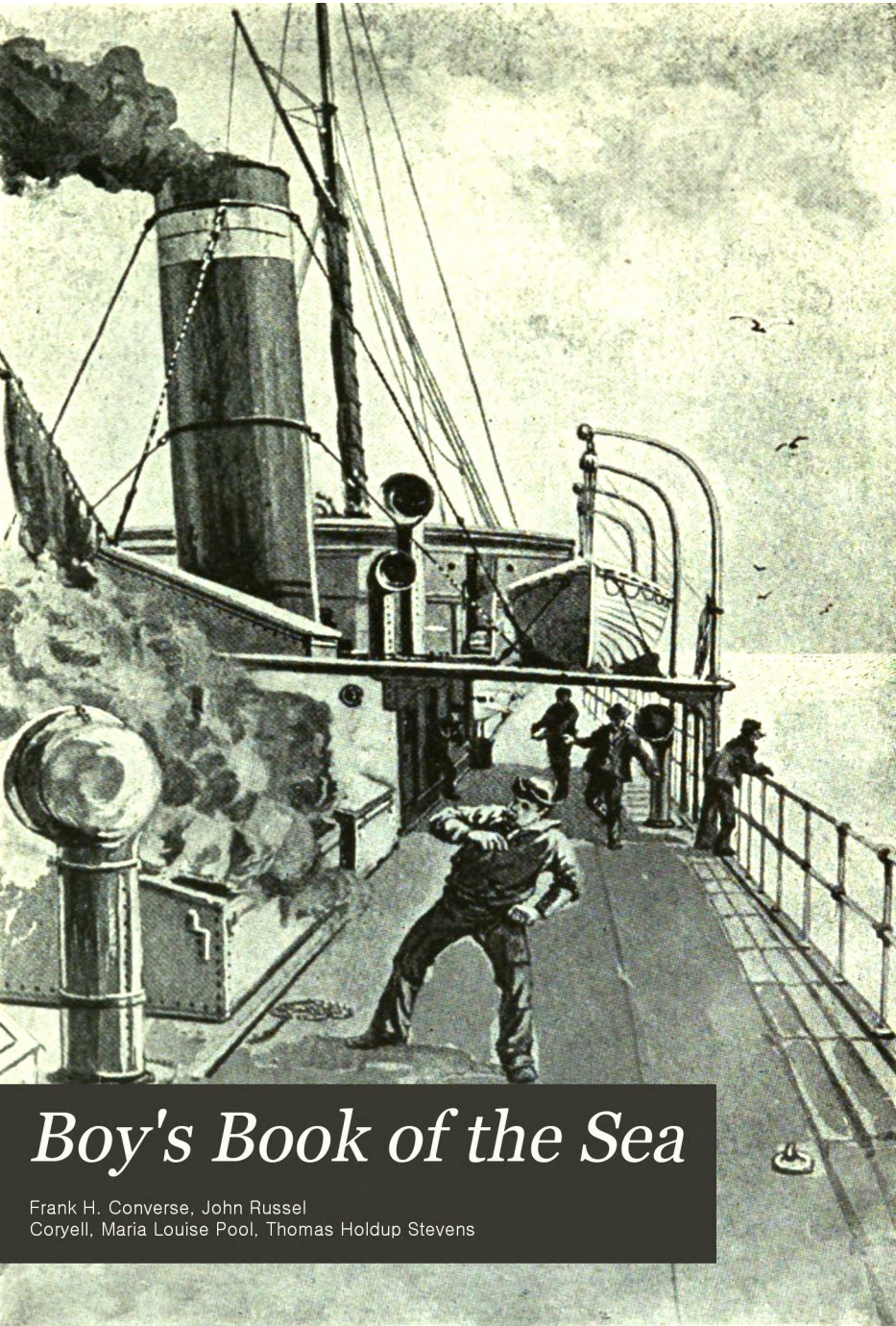

Boy's Book of the Sea

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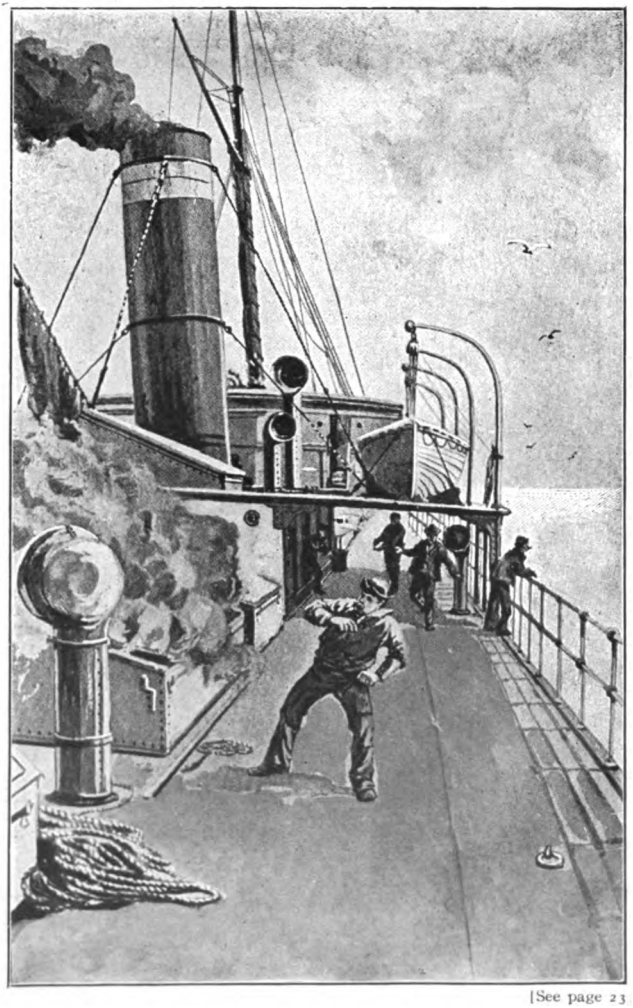

[See page 23

"A THICK CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE POURED FROM THE HATCHWAY"

BOY'S BOOK OF THE SEA

BY

F. H. CONVERSE, JOHN R. CORYELL
REAR-ADMIRAL T. H. STEVENS
MARIA LOUISE POOL
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK AND LONDON
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The Boys' Library

Illustrated—Jackets Printed in Colors

BOYS' BOOK OF COWBOYS
BOYS' BOOK OF INDIANS
BOYS' BOOK OF PIRATES
BOYS' BOOK OF THE RAILROAD
BOYS' BOOK OF THE SEA
BOYS' BOOK OF THE ARMY
BOYS' BOOK OF THE NAVY

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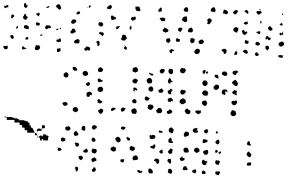

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INTRODUCTION

IN this book of the sea one may read strange stories of whale-hunts, wrecks and fires, storms and castaways, and gallant rescues. Most of these stories are founded upon facts. Nothing more dramatic than the realities of the sea is possible in fiction, although the art of fiction may lend its aid in the telling of the tale.

These pictures of the adventures encountered by those who go down to the sea in ships are of peculiar interest to American boys and girls; for in spite of the decay of American shipping, ours is a seafaring race. By inheritance and through the influence of the vast coast lines of the United States, Americans have come naturally to a use of the sea which bred the fishermen and traders of colonial times and the hardy sailors of the Revolution and 1812. Soon after the latter war the once

famous packet-ship service to Europe began with the Black-Ball line in 1816, and for a period approaching a quarter of a century the packets carried transatlantic passengers until the use of steam drove them from the ocean. But another brilliant era in American shipping came with the building of the clipper ships, from 1840 to 1855—ships designed especially for speed in traffic with the Orient.

Fishermen like those of Gloucester and the New-Bedford whalers have added other vivid chapters to the history of our country at sea, but the packets and clipper ships have long since disappeared. The disastrous effects of the Civil War might have been retrieved, but other conditions have restricted the growth of a new American merchant marine. Its place has been taken by vessels under other flags, built more cheaply in foreign countries, and manned by crews paid lower wages. So far as deep-water traffic is concerned, the American flag is rarely seen. Fishermen and coasters are our usual representatives, with here and there a steamship line. But the historic prowess of American sailors in war, which is sketched in Harper's *Strange Stories of the Revolution*, *Strange Stories of 1812*, and *Strange Stories*

of the Civil War has continued, and was shown again at Manila and Santiago. And the fascination of the sea remains, and will be felt throughout the varied and stirring scenes which are pictured in this book.

BOY'S BOOK OF THE SEA

BOY'S BOOK OF THE SEA

I

A SCHOOL OF SHARKS

And Their Part in the Cuban Insurrection

IT was pure luck when the firm of Henderson, Burt & Co., let us call them, manufacturers of fire-arms, had turned out five thousand rifles of what they supposed was the most improved pattern, at a time when the market was dull, that an obscure German chemist should invent a gunpowder requiring a cartridge which relegated those rifles to the catalogue of ancient weapons. And it was luck that the captain of the schooner *Hecuba* happened to be asleep one afternoon off the coast of Cuba, and his son and the ship's apprentice were boys, and had a

boyish desire to catch a shark, or the firm of Henderson, Burt & Co. would have been bankrupt, and a considerable portion of General Maceo's army would have had to struggle for freedom with their fists. And even Spanish conscripts, armed with rifles, cannot be beaten with fists. This is how it happened:

When the news of that German's discovery reached us, for I was the junior partner—the "Co." part—of the firm of Henderson, Burt & Co., it looked very much like ruin. The Orient, our hoped-for market, was not only too far away and uncertain, but our agent in Alexandria had already advised us that the Oriental was becoming more and more fastidious regarding his fire-arms. In our desperation I thought of Cuba, which, on account of the poverty of the insurgents, we had hitherto not considered. The details of the transaction do not matter. Sufficient to say that in a few days after the suggestion was made, an agreement was entered into with the Cuban agents that if two thousand stand of arms were delivered at a specified point on the coast of Cuba at a certain time, we would be paid in gold then, and not before. It was a strange contract. The sale was illegal, as the belligerency of the insurgents was not

recognized, and the risk of total loss by capture either by our own revenue-boats or Spanish cruisers was great. To me was assigned the entire conduct of the affair.

I didn't relish the task. All halcyon dreams about the Spanish main, coral islands, and hidden treasures, all latent admiration for picturesque pirates, low-raking schooners with tapering masts, snow-white decks, and "Long Toms" secreted under the long-boats, had evaporated. I was a business man, and assuming the rôle of the filibustering blockade-runner wasn't exactly in my line. And as the *Hecuba*, favored at last by a land breeze, crept out of the harbor of Tampa, Florida, in the darkness of the June night, I watched the lights of the revenue-steamer ahead, and thoughts of capture, jail, the disgrace of a trial, either in an American court or before a Spanish court-martial, possessed me, and I wondered why it was that ten years ago I had a wild longing to pace quarter-decks arrayed in a slashed doublet, a velveteen cloak, and a pair of uncomfortable big jack-boots, and yell in a voice of thunder, "Man the tops'l-yards! Port your helm! Run out Long Tom, and send a shot across her bows!" It occurred to me that there was just a little

bit too much eighteenth-century Captain Kidd, Sir Henry Morgan sort of romance being mixed up in this business transaction. I confessed to myself that I had outgrown all interest in the blockade-running business beyond seeing two thousand rifles safely delivered to a customer, and $40,000 received therefor. But in the words of the ship's boy, a runaway street Arab from New York, there were others. And he and the captain's son, for they were sworn friends by this time, discussed the chances of the trip from the vantage-ground of the ship's boat, into which they had clambered.

"D'ye t'ink they'll see us, Chimmie?" asked the Bowery boy, anxiously, for it had been impossible to conceal the object of the trip from the crew.

"I don't know. I hope they do," answered the youngster, who had often been on voyages with his father, and knew the sailing qualities of the *Hecuba*. "This breeze is going to freshen, and we're nearly out of the bay. Father will show those revenue-steamers a thing or two."

"If dey catch us, will we be hung to de yard-arm, way dey say in de books?" inquired the street Arab, whose first voyage it was.

"Perhaps," cheerfully answered Jimmie; and

with a son's unbounded faith in his father, he continued: "But they won't catch us. The worst is that they may get close enough to see who we are, and then there will be trouble when we come back."

"Den yer old man had better be a pirate. Dat's de way dey allus does—get into trouble in dere own country, and den go piratin' in de Spanish main after gold gallons," suggested the ex-newsboy.

Jimmie said, in an apologetic tone, as if it were a blight on the character of his parent, that the skipper, as he called his father, in imitation of the sailors, wasn't exactly cut out for a pirate. He wasn't blood-thirsty enough, and mentioned several other drawbacks, much to the credit of Captain Wade. And then there was an intense discussion as to what they would do if they were captain and mate of the schooner *Hecuba*. How they would get a beautiful coral island with only savages on it, whom they would first kill, and then utilize the island for burying treasure, imprisoning captive maidens of ancient Castilian lineage, and holding rich grandees for ransom. The blood-thirsty little wretches had just determined that I should be their first prisoner, and was to be held for a ransom that would have

bankrupted half the arms factories of Connecticut, when the voice of the captain could be heard in sharp command:

"Ease her off and lay low. Cover up the binnacle light!" And in the darkness we could see the point of the land we were hugging over the port bow.

"They see us! They see us!" excitedly said Jimmie.

I looked, and felt a sick feeling in my heart as I saw the lights of the revenue-steamer slowly moving toward us.

"We're right at the mouth of the harbor," I could hear Jimmie whisper. "With this wind, she's a good one if she catches us."

In a few seconds I could feel the heavy swell of the Gulf of Mexico; and the *Hecuba*, with her canvas spread like huge wings that looked weirdlike in the darkness, sped before the wind. I felt, indeed, that Jimmie was right—the steamer would be a good one if she caught us. And she didn't catch us. But Yankee revenue-steamers are not easily run away from, and it was only after we had steered a course that led the government boat to believe that we were making for Jamaica did she abandon the chase. We were then far out of our course, and I now

had the additional anxiety as to whether we would be able to make Cuba in the appointed time. Slowly we beat up against adverse winds, practically retracing our course for miles, until at last we sighted the war-stricken island, with only two days left to make the little bay named as the rendezvous with the Cuban agents. The elements then seemed to rise up against us, for a storm came up in the evening with tropical vehemence, and the sturdy little *Hecuba* was compelled, with infinite peril, to seek the shelter of one of the numerous bays along the Cuban coast. For two days and nights the storm raged with such fury that it would have been madness to venture forth. We saw on the second night far out to sea an ironclad, which the captain's night-glass showed to be one of the fastest of the Spanish cruisers guarding the coast. We took the small crumb of comfort that it was an ill wind that blew nobody good.

'Twas the afternoon of the second day. The violence of the gale had spent itself that morning, and by noon had moderated into a gentle breeze, although a heavy sea was still running. It was the day that I was to have met the Cuban agents, and it was maddening to think that the place of meeting was only a few hours' run from

where we were idly lying. I begged the captain to venture forth, but he gravely handed me his powerful glass and pointed to a speck on the horizon. I looked, and saw the funnels of the Spanish cruiser that had passed us the night before.

"We shall have to wait for darkness," he said. "It would be worse than folly to try it now. I must turn in for a spell. I haven't had a wink of sleep for forty-eight hours." And he disappeared into his cabin.

I was not the only discontented being on board the *Hecuba*. The two boys resented the delay also, and having been kept below during the storm like prisoners, longed for action. They soon had excitement enough, however, to suit even their temperaments.

"Sharks!" screamed Jimmie, disturbing the drowsy sailor of the dog-watch, as he eagerly looked over the rail at a lot of plashing fins and swaying tails.

"S' help me!" said his companion. "Is dem de t'ings dat follies ships and swallers people?"

"No," said the sailor, coming up and contemptuously looking at the school of sharks, whose long tails were making the water boil and bubble as if a submerged volcano were in active

operation. "They're just thrasher-sharks, and they're playin'."

"But they'd eat a fellow," said the ship's boy, and he threw a piece of wood at one under the bow.

"No, they won't," said the sailor. "A swingle-tail, as some calls 'em, won't hurt anybody. Though some says a whole school will sometimes tackle a whale and kill it; but I don't believe it. A thrasher-shark is all play. The only trouble they make is when they get into fishermen's nets, and with those long tails of theirs slash around and tear and tangle everything up. They look big, but, you see, they run mostly to tail. Tail and all, they're between twelve and fifteen feet long, and weigh about four hundred pounds. They make a good fight if caught on the hook."

It must have been half an hour afterward when my absorbing thoughts about the affairs of Henderson, Burt & Co., the undelivered rifles, and impending ruin were interrupted by a sudden splash at the stern. I looked over and saw that the two young scapegraces, taking advantage of the captain's absence and the sleepiness of the watch, had lowered one of the *Hecuba's* boats.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Going to fish for sharks," answered Jimmie. "They are over there"—pointing a few hundred yards away. "We've got a shark hook and line, and the cook gave us a piece of pork for bait." And he held up a most portentous-looking hook, with about three feet of chain attached to prevent the teeth of the shark from severing it. In my ignorance of the ways of the sea, I didn't realize the danger. The big rolling waves made the *Hecuba* roll and pitch as she tugged at her anchor-chains, and I anxiously watched the daring young fishermen. When clear of the schooner they shipped the mast, and in a few minutes they were in pursuit of the sharks under full sail. I saw Jimmie throw out the line, but still they scudded on in the heavy sea. What happened then will never be accurately known. Whether it was that the tremendous tug at the line when the shark swallowed the hook made the youngsters lose their heads and forget everything—sail, sea, and a sudden puff of wind that came up—in their intense desire to secure it, neither can say. The probabilities are that the tiller being abandoned, as both boys held on to the line, the boat swung into the trough of the sea, the sheet got caught in some way, and the

sudden puff of wind capsized the boat in the midst of the exciting struggle.

I had watched the accident, and soon captain and crew were on deck. As I looked into the pale, tense features of the captain as he quickly gave his orders, I thought he was going on a hopeless errand. But no! Two figures appeared on the bottom of the capsized boat, and a cheer went forth from every throat. They would be saved yet. As if to add intensity to the scene, the wind rose in fitful gusts and a huge bank of clouds rolled up in the sky. Something had gone wrong with the gearing or tackle of the second boat, which was seldom, if ever, used; and I fairly trembled with anxiety as the valuable minutes passed, and looked at the boys clinging to the bottom of the boat as it was tossed on a huge wave. But, in Heaven's name! what were the boys doing? What did it mean? Were they mad? By everything that was sane, they were still holding on to the line.

"Cut away the tackle!" at last roared the captain, maddened by the delay, and noting the actions of the boys. It was done, and with a rush the boat went down almost stern first, and half filled with water. I felt that the fate of the boys was now sealed. With a water-

logged boat in that sea it would be impossible to cover the four hundred yards to where the boys were still clinging tenaciously to the line. Jimmie was standing up holding the line with both hands, in the position almost of "the anchor" in a tug-of-war, and the ship's boy, extended on his stomach along and astride the boat, held the line with his right hand, while his left grasped the keel. Shark-fishing may be exciting, but that the excitement was so great that one should court certain death was hard to understand. I could hardly believe the evidence of my eyes, and I screamed at the top of my voice, "Let go! Let go!" in the vain hope that I might be heard. It was only a few minutes, but it seemed hours, as the crew alongside bailed out the water. It would be too late. The positions of the two lads showed they were almost exhausted. They couldn't hold out much longer. If they let go there was yet time, but they seemed to hold on as if their lives depended upon it. The end couldn't be far off. The eyes of every one on deck were fixed on the boys, when off to the left we saw, coming out of the gathering darkness, a yawl manned by two men. It seemed almost ghostlike. But with split-sail bellowing out before the wind, she

raced on. The men bailing in the boat relinquished their efforts as they watched the yawl steer straight for the capsized boat. As they approached we saw one man move forward to the bow. There was some weapon in his hand. And as the boys apparently gave one last despairing tug at the line, the thrasher-shark in its agony gave a leap out of the water, but before its somersault was completed a harpoon quivered in its side. Almost at the same time the sail was lowered, the yawl was run alongside the capsized boat, and men and boys helped to manage the dying struggles of the shark. Instead of making immediately for the *Hecuba*, the Cubans, for such we could see they were, seemed to be questioning the lads as they anxiously pointed to the schooner. In a few minutes one of the men threw his cap in the air, and a cry that sounded like "Cuba libre!" was wafted on the breeze. It was too heavy a sea to tow the capsized boat, so, hoisting sail, they ran under the stern of the *Hecuba*.

"Well, we got the shark," said Jimmie, in a more cheerful tone than his dilapidated appearance warranted, as the boys and one of their rescuers clambered on deck. Captain Wade walked up to the Cuban, and there was a moist

look in his eyes as he took his hand. "He is my only child," we heard him say, and everybody understood.

"Oh!" said Jimmie, turning to me as he went below, "that gentleman from Cuba says he knows you. He wanted to know all about the *Hecuba* before he would come on board. You see, the Spanish flag we're flying made him nervous like," and Jimmie and his accomplice in trouble-making disappeared. When Captain Wade presented me to the Cuban—who seemed by his bearing to be a man of consequence—as the agent of the patriots whom I was to meet, I thought that if there was such a thing as luck in the affairs of Henderson, Burt & Co., it was not all necessarily bad. And I inwardly blessed troublesome boys and distinguished Cuban rebels who would run risk of capture and execution by rescuing a pair of youngsters from drowning in sight of what they supposed was a Spanish revenue-schooner. They told me that what with the presence of the Spanish cruiser and no sign of our schooner, they had thought that further waiting at the rendezvous was both useless and dangerous, and it explains their appearance at such an opportune moment.

When the arms were landed and hidden in a

dense jungle, and several bags of gold were snugly lying in the captain's locker, my views on blockade-running, boys, and things in general underwent a radical change. I even began to have a tender feeling toward sharks, particularly thrasher-sharks who lure boys into getting rescued by Cuban officers. And I mentally retracted all the then harsh things I had thought about the folly of holding on to a shark from the bottom of an upturned boat in a heavy sea. I asked the ragged young ship's boy why he held on so long.

"Hold on!" he said. "Why, I couldn't help it! When we upset, Chimmie's foot got tangled in de line, and it tied round his ankle. Hold on! Guess I did. Chimmie 'u'd be voyagin' round after dat shark now as dead as a Baxter Street herrin' if we hadn't. 'Course I held on!"

II

MESSBOY, CAPTAIN, AND MATE

Tom Riley on a Burning Deck

THE handsome British steamship *Mersey*, Captain Dawson, twenty-two hundred tons, built of iron, and loaded with cotton for Liverpool, lay in the Mississippi River off New Orleans, ready for sea. Her steam-winch was hoisting the anchor, and all the eighteen members of her crew were busy, except two. One of these idle persons was Captain Dawson, who was lying helpless in his berth with a broken leg. The other was the boy whose name was last on the crew-list, "Tom Riley, messboy."

Tom Riley, of New York, the messboy, having nothing better to do at the moment, stood leaning over the rail, taking his last look at New Orleans. He looked with some interest at the

steamer, too, for he had never been on board of her before that morning.

"It's rather a roundabout trip," he said to himself, "to go home to New York by way of Liverpool. But any port in a storm. I haven't been in Liverpool for 'most three years, and I might as well go there as anywhere. There's always a chance between Liverpool and New York."

As the ship dropped slowly down the river, Tom Riley gave a farewell look at the greatest city of the South, and, sitting down by the galley door, fell to work scouring a heap of cooking-pans. Though his name was on the crew-list, and he was large for his sixteen years, and well made, still he did not look, sitting there barefooted and coatless, like a boy who in a few days was to command the vessel, and set the whole nautical world to talking.

While he worked away, whistling, a young man stopped near him and began to talk. This was Dave Lewis, the third engineer, just off his watch. Probably it was Tom's youthful appearance that attracted Lewis, for the young engineer was not more than twenty himself.

"Work while you can, lad," Lewis laughed.

"You'll soon be too sick to work, when we get into the gulf."

"Don't you believe it," Tom retorted. "I'm no lubber; I know the smell of salt-water."

"Where have you been?" the young man asked, incredulously.

"Well, three years ago," Tom replied, "I made a voyage to Liverpool in a cattle-ship; helped tend the cattle, you know, and they gave me a passage both ways. Then a year ago I stowed myself away in a German tramp, and landed in Bremen. There was where I learned my great galley trick."

"Galley trick?" Lewis interrupted. "What's that?"

"Oh, that's a little invention of mine," Tom laughed. "It's a grand thing, too, for I can get on almost any freight ship with it, and go wherever I like. You see, my father is chief engineer of a tugboat in New York Harbor, and I get a chance to make trips with him sometimes. I learned to cook in the tug's galley, and learned some other things on her too."

"But what is the galley trick?" Lewis asked. He was interested in the young cook now, since he heard that Tom's father was an engineer.

"I'm coming to that," Tom answered. "In

Bremen I wanted to get home, and I went to about a dozen captains and asked for a job, but they all fired me out. Then I just happened to think of the galley scheme. Of course the captains didn't want to bother with me. Why should they? But if I could get a word with the cook, and show him how useful I could be in the galley, doing all his rough work for him, he'd want me along; and he'd ask the captain to take me, and that would settle it; for the cook is a big man aboard ship if he's a good one.

"Well, I tried that," Tom went on, "and it worked beautifully. I've never known it to fail. I cooked my way home from Bremen, and two weeks ago I cooked myself down to New Orleans in a fruit schooner. Now I'm going to cook my way home again by way of Liverpool."

"If I was your dad, I'd give you one good lesson not to run away," said Lewis.

"Oh, I don't have to run away," Tom exclaimed. "He says I've got to make my own way, and hustle around for a living. He likes to have me go. I'm going to ship before the mast in another year or so."

The cook interrupted the conversation by calling Tom into the galley, and the ship continued her course down the river, and in a few

hours was in the Gulf of Mexico. She steamed slowly to save coal, and nearly three days passed before she turned northward into the Straits of Florida, to run between the Florida peninsula and the Bahama Islands. Here she had the benefit of the Gulf Stream, and that saved more coal. In another day she was out of the straits and in the broad Atlantic, her bow pointed northeasterly toward Liverpool.

Tom had many opportunities to talk with the third engineer. Young Lewis told some of his sea experiences, and the two soon became intimate. With fair weather and a sound ship fitted with every modern appliance the voyage promised to be a safe and pleasant one.

But a volcano was slumbering beneath their feet. Among the thousands of bales of cotton in the ship's hold there was one bale with a tiny spark of fire in it; and this spark smouldered and spread until it needed only air to fan it into a terrible blaze. Knowing nothing of this, one of the sailors was sent to open the No. 2 hatch for some purpose. The hatch-cover had not been raised three inches before the sailor sprang back with that terrible cry at sea:

"Fire! Fire!"

No need to ask where it was, for a thick

cloud of black smoke poured from the hatchway.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" came from all parts of the ship.

"Lower that hatch!" Mr. Ringgold, the chief mate, shouted. But the men were already doing it, to keep the air from the hold.

Tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap! rang out the ship's bell. This called the men to their fire stations. The crew were well drilled, and in an instant every man was at his post. Steam-pumps were at work, lines of hose crossed the deck, donkey-engines were put in motion.

But what could all the pumps do with a cargo of cotton on fire? Tom Riley, having nothing to do with the working of the ship, was called aft to carry messages to the disabled captain, and bring the captain's orders to the mate. No. 3 hatch was cautiously opened, and another cloud of smoke poured out. It was the same with No. 1 and No. 4; the fire seemed to have spread all over the hold.

For thirty-six hours the crew heroically fought the fire, playing a dozen streams of water through holes in the hatches. So much water was thrown into the hold that the load-line was submerged by several feet, and the heavy ship rolled like a

log. But instead of diminishing, the fire increased. The iron decks grew hot. It was impossible to pour in more water without sinking the vessel. She was a doomed ship, all thought, when her engineers and firemen were driven from their posts by the heat, and she was headed under sail for the island of Abaco, lying S.S.E., to save the lives of the crew.

A few hours later Tom heard a hurried consultation between the disabled captain and his chief mate. The cabin was stifling hot, and the captain chafed under his helplessness. It was decided that the ship could not reach Abaco; the great heat might warp her plates at any moment, and they would all be carried to the bottom. There was nothing left but to abandon the vessel and take to the boats.

"See yourself to provisioning the boats," the captain ordered the mate. "You are sure of our position?" he asked.

"Latitude 28° 2′ north, longitude 78° 26′ west, at noon, sir," the mate replied. "That makes us eighty-six miles from Abaco, and about one hundred and fifteen miles from the Florida coast. But I don't give her more than an hour to float, sir."

'Then we must make for Abaco in the boats,"

the captain said. "For my part I should rather go down with the ship. I don't care to live if I lose my ship."

"There's more ships," the mate replied; "but you've only one life, captain."

A moment later Tom heard the order given on deck to provision the boats; but it was no sooner given than it was countermanded, for a sail was seen bearing down upon them, attracted by the smoke. It was the first sail they had seen for two days, and they would ask the ship's captain to take them off. No need even to set the distress-signal in such a cloud of smoke.

While the crew were preparing to leave the ship, Tom Riley was busy thinking; and he lost no time in sharing his thoughts with his friend the young third engineer.

"Do you know how to handle the ship, Mr. Lewis?" Tom asked him.

"Oh, I could make a try at it," the engineer answered.

"There's a chance here—a slim chance," Tom eagerly proposed, "to make a great strike. If the crew leave the ship, she's abandoned. Anybody who saves her or any part of her cargo is entitled to salvage. There's just a chance that she might be run ashore and some of the

cotton saved, for cotton burns slowly. I'd like to stay aboard and take the risk if any of the men would stay with me."

"Well, you're a plucky youngster!" the engineer exclaimed. "I've a notion it's worth trying. If it came to the worst, we could take to the boats ourselves. I'll speak to Henry Whittaker about it. He has plenty of pluck, and perhaps he'll join us."

Henry Whittaker was a young sailor, and he was willing to risk his life in the adventure. But the captain and chief mate would certainly have forbidden such a dangerous experiment if John Turner, an A1 seaman holding a second mate's certificate, the best man before the mast, had not stepped forward at the last minute and offered to join the forlorn-hope. This competent man's opinion made the venture seem less foolhardy, and it was soon settled that Tom Riley, messboy, Dave Lewis, third engineer, and Henry Whittaker and John Turner, able seamen, were to remain on the ship.

The sailing-vessel proved to be the Spanish bark *Morro Castle*, from Santiago for New York with sugar, and within an hour Captain Dawson and thirteen of the crew were transferred to her and were safely on their way to New York,

leaving the four venturesome ones alone on the great deep, with a fiery furnace between them and the bottom of the ocean.

From the very beginning of this perilous voyage Tom Riley was the moving spirit on board. Even Turner, the old seaman, asked his advice before doing anything. It was Tom who ordered the sails shifted, and who decided to head for the Florida coast rather than for the island of Abaco, because Abaco is rocky, whereas the Florida coast is all soft sand. And it was wonderful what confidence Tom Riley felt in himself when he found that all the responsibility rested upon his shoulders. He seemed to grow older and stronger every hour. Dave Lewis was a good engineer for so young a man, but he had not been through Tom's school of self-reliance. John Turner was a competent seaman, but he had been before the mast all his life, and he was helpless without some one to direct him. Henry Whittaker would take no responsibility. Every one looked to Tom, and Tom did not shirk.

If a stiff northeasterly wind had not sprung up at the right moment even Tom Riley could not have stranded the *Mersey* on the Florida coast. But the right wind came at the right time, driving them slowly toward land; and the

plates did not warp, notwithstanding the mate's prediction; and the ship did not sink, though she was liable to go down at any moment. After thirty hours of peril, with hot iron beneath her crew's feet and hot smoke nearly blinding them, she brought up gently on the Florida sands, fifteen miles south of Jupiter Inlet.

The *Mersey* rested easily in the soft sand; Tom Riley saw that for himself, and both the seamen admitted it. The tide was half up and still rising when the ship struck, and Tom began to take measures for putting out the fire.

"You must open something and let in the water," he told the young engineer. "As the tide rises it will flood the hold and put out the fire. I don't know what to open, but you must know."

The engineer did know; and as the tide rose the hold filled with water, and the fire was soon quenched. The decks cooled down, the smoke blew away, and in a few hours the poor old *Mersey* seemed like a ship again.

Even when the tide was completely out there was a broad stretch of shallow water between the ship and the beach, for with her cargo and the water in her she lay very deep, and stuck a

long way out. But up by the bow the water was not more than waist deep at low tide, and Tom lowered himself with a rope and waded about, looking carefully at the ship's position, and thinking very hard about something. Presently Turner and the engineer slid down the rope and joined him.

"This is a great piece of work you've done, Mr. Tom Riley," the old seaman said, as he saw how easy the vessel lay in the sand. "There's many a bale of good cotton in her yet, my lad. We'll all be rich."

"Oh, we haven't done much yet," Tom replied, modestly refusing to take all the credit to himself. "But I think there's a chance to do something. I want to work her off and take her into port."

"What!" Turner shouted. "Has that hot v'yage turned your head? Do you know what it means to strand a ship, boy?"

"I know a sound ship when I see one," Tom confidently replied. "Look at her; isn't she all right? It doesn't hurt a ship to strike gently in this soft sand. When we get the water out of her, she'll almost float herself at high tide. What water won't run out we'll pump out. I've been down in the furnace-room, and every-

thing is dry there at low tide. There's nothing to hinder our starting her engines. We'll take her to New York and deliver her to the captain."

"Then I've no more to say," Turner replied, looking as resigned and dignified as he could with the water up to his waistband. "I've followed the sea for twenty-two years, but I'm not too old yet to learn from a boy. Give your orders, Captain Tom Riley! If you can take this ship off, you ought to command her."

"Hurrah for Captain Riley!" Dave Lewis shouted, swinging his cap. "I believe you can do it too, Tom. But you must boss the job."

Tom was so busy with his plans that he had no time to make any objections. He merely answered:

"To-morrow we will take her off, if you will help me. To-night we must rest, for we are nearly worn out."

That night when the patrolman from the Jupiter Life-saving Station made his journey down the beach, he found the *Mersey* stranded, and carried the news to the station. Before daylight the whole life-saving crew of eight men were on the spot, and they were of great use in the hard work that had to be done.

When the tide was fully out again, at three o'clock in the morning, and the water only four or five feet deep in the hold, Tom told Dave Lewis to close all the valves and keep the water out, and to start up his great engine fires. With the assistance of the life-savers this was done, and the steam-pumps were set to work. By daylight the water was nearly all out of her.

"Move your shaft—very slowly," Tom ordered the engineer.

"Hurrah!" the men all shouted, as they heard the splashing at the stern, which showed that the propeller revolved.

Everything was going so well that Tom took courage to go up on the bridge and give his orders with the bell signals.

"Stop her!" he signalled, by pulling the proper handle, and instantly the splashing ceased. The machinery was uninjured, or the propeller would not have moved.

Three hours still remained before the tide would be at its highest, but they were busy hours for Tom. He engaged four of the life-savers, all sailor-men, to help take the ship to New York in case she floated; he appointed Mr. Turner chief mate, and sent Henry Whittaker

and one of the life-savers to the boiler-room to keep up the fires.

When the tide was at its very highest, Tom's heart was filled with joy; for, lightened as the ship was of water, he felt the stern rise and fall with the gentle waves. The stern was afloat! He mounted the bridge again.

"Lower away the port quarter-boat!" he ordered.

"Ay, ay, sir!" and Mr. Turner soon had the boat lowered.

"Take a kedge-anchor astern," Tom continued. "Give it plenty of cable; put the cable on the after-winch!"

When Mr. Turner and two men had executed this order and returned to the deck, Tom had more commands for them.

"Mr. Turner, start the winch."

"Back her, full speed," he signalled.

The kedge-anchor held in the sand far astern, and the cable began to strain. The propeller revolved.

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" every man on board shouted, as the great ship dragged her nose inch by inch out of the sand. They felt her grinding on the bottom; then the grinding ceased, and again the *Mersey* was afloat!

Tom felt like jumping up and clapping his hands, but instead of doing it he gave the order on the bells, "Stop her!" And followed it with, "Mr. Turner, send the boat astern to take in the anchor."

"That shows the boy was born in a fo'c'stle and raised on tarred rope!" Mr. Turner muttered, as he carried out this order. "If he'd been a lubber he'd have backed the ship over the anchor and stove a hole in her."

There remained now something to be said to the four members of the life-saving crew who were not going along to New York. They were all entitled to some share in the salvage; and in thanking them for their good work, Tom promised that their interests should be looked after as soon as the ship reached port. They gave a farewell cheer when they landed on the beach, and as soon as the boat returned Tom resumed his place on the bridge.

"Call Mr. Whittaker to take the wheel," he ordered.

"Ship the quarter-boat."

"Back her, full speed," he signalled.

"Mr. Turner, sound the wells."

"Ay, ay, sir!" came the reply; and Mr. Turner sent his three men to do this duty.

"All dry in No. 1 well, sir," was soon reported by the first man; and similar reports came from No. 2 and No. 3 wells, to each of which Tom answered, in true nautical style, "Very good, sir!"

The ship continued to back until she was more than a mile from the shore. Tom would run no risk of grounding her again. Then he pulled the bell that signalled "Stop her!" And the whir of the propeller ceased.

"Mr. Turner!" he called. And Mr. Turner immediately joined Tom on the bridge to see what was wanted. "Now that the ship is afloat, Mr. Turner," Tom said, "I put the navigating in your hands. I am sure I could take her up to Sandy Hook; but of course I have no certificate, so it would be illegal for me to do it when there is a navigator on board. You and Mr. Lewis will have a long siege of it, with no one to relieve you, unless we have the good-fortune to meet some steamship that can put another navigator and engineer on board of us."

"I think we'll pull through, sir," Mr. Turner replied. "We'll have no sleep for three of four nights, but we can stand that, and we may meet a steamer and get some help."

Under Mr. Turner's orders the ship's bow made a graceful curve seaward, and then pointed well to the northeast to give Cape Hatteras a wide berth. Tom, by virtue of his office, took possession of the cabin and the captain's stateroom; and when he was alone it made his head whirl to think of all he had been through. Perhaps it was as well he did not know that the strangest part of his adventure was still to come.

For two days and nights the *Mersey* steamed ahead without accident, but without meeting any vessel that could give her assistance. Mr. Turner and Mr. Lewis, however, who had to be at their posts continually, managed to take occasional cat-naps, the weather remaining fine. It was not till the morning of the third day that anything was sighted, and then it was a sailing-vessel far ahead on the starboard bow. Gradually the steamer overhauled the sail, till it was plain that she was a bark, heading northward.

While the vessels were yet a mile apart the bark hoisted the signal, "We want to board you." Tom watched her closely through the glass, and in a few minutes he exclaimed:

"Why, what can be the matter with her?

She's hoisting all the signals in the code, as if she was crazy, and there's fifteen or twenty men at the rail, waving their hats and arms like mad."

"Let me take a look at her, sir," said Mr. Turner, reaching for the glass. "Well, sir," he exclaimed, in a moment, "I've been twenty-two years at sea, man and boy, but this is the strangest thing I ever did see or hear tell on. Do you know what that there bark is, sir? That's the *Morro Castle*, with our captain and crew on board. That's what she is, sir; and they've made us out. The head-winds has held her back, and we've overhauled her. We'll have our own crew on board in half an hour, sir."

For a moment Tom almost lost control of himself under this new excitement. "I'd give half of my salvage money," he cried, "to know what Mr. Ringgold thinks to see the *Mersey* coming after him with no fire in her hold!"

In a few minutes Captain Dawson was back in his own berth, the chief engineer was in his old place, Mr. Ringgold was in command, and Mr. Lewis and Mr. Turner were relieved from their long watch.

But these two navigators could not turn in until they had told the captain how Tom Riley

had saved the ship, and how everything that had been done was through Tom's brains and pluck.

The cook had no assistant now till the *Mersey* reached New York, for Tom was an honored passenger in the cabin. And when the ship was docked, and pronounced seaworthy and fit to continue her voyage to Liverpool, Captain Dawson insisted that Tom must go along.

It was all very well to have a substantial sum of money divided among them for salvage on ship and cargo; but that was nothing compared with meeting the principal owner in London, and being told: "You're the kind of stuff we make commanders of, young man. After you've spent a year or so in the nautical school that we hope you'll let us put you in, you shall be second mate of the *Mersey*."

III

OUR NINE-POUNDER

How a Whaler Stopped a Slaver

WHILE I belonged to the whaling-bark *Hector*, cruising in the Gulf of Guinea, and occasionally touching upon the coast, there would now and then come to our knowledge some incident connected with the slave-trade, and more than once our curiosity was excited by the sight of suspicious vessels.

We learned, among other things, that the most notorious craft of the slaver fleet was a Brazilian brig called the *Dom Pedro*, having a crew of seventy men, with a pivot twenty-four-pounder and four carronades.

Time after time this brig had been chased by the English cruisers, yet always escaped; and it was very evident that she must have poured

golden fortunes into the hands of a number of unscrupulous individuals at Rio Janeiro.

Of such matters we often conversed in the forecastle, while the proximity of the African coast tended to vivify our conceptions of the secret and dreadful traffic of which we had heard and read so much.

Among our foremast hands were two colored men, both hailing from the New England seaport where the bark belonged, and as well known there as the captain himself, although they had originally been slaves at the South. Recognized as "Black Abe" and "Yellow Jack," they ranked with the best of the *Hector's* crew; able, willing, and full of jollity. The idiom of the plantation still clung to them, but for years they had followed the sea, and each had a wife and family in our village.

It was with a marked abhorrence that the two blacks would advert to the villanous business of the coast, as if dreaming of some possible but very improbable contingency by which they themselves might yet be consigned to the ghastly hold of a slaver. Of course they could entertain no serious apprehension of the kind, yet the passing thought was natural; and more than once, under the shadow of some sultry African

headland, or in view of a vessel of mysterious character, the simple fellows were teased by their white shipmates with good-natured jokes in this direction.

But how little did any of the bark's company imagine the episode which was in reality at hand!

The *Hector* having made a somewhat fortunate cruise, wanted at length but one or two whales. In quest of these she ran up the Bight of Benin, and here, close in with the coast, we presently raised a large school.

Our three boats were lowered, and we commenced a long and weary chase, the wildness of the game making it almost impossible to arrive within striking distance.

The general direction of the pursuit being to windward, the bark could follow us only by short tacks, so that, after a time, her topmasts alone were visible above the horizon; and at sunset, the atmosphere having become somewhat hazy, she was wholly out of sight. Nor from the mate's boat, in which I was, could we discern either of the two others, so widely had the chase scattered the three consorts.

About five miles off, however, was a vessel of some kind, nearly or quite becalmed, which

might be a merchantman, a whaler, a man-of-war, or perhaps something of more questionable character.

"I guess," said Mr. Gale, the mate, "that the old man and Mr. Orme have pulled back to the bark. At all events, we may as well give it up first as last, for it's—"

"There she blows!" called Yellow Jack, looking off to starboard. And "There she blows!" said Black Abe, as a second spout ascended, close to the first; for the two colored men were both of our boat's crew.

The whales, three in number, which had come to the surface not a quarter of a mile off, may have made a portion of the dispersed school we had pursued. This time they appeared unsuspicious, and we approached very near them. Our oars had been laid aside, and we had taken silently to our paddles, all of us standing carefully up, and each plying his noiseless implement.

Suddenly there was a rushing sound close beside us, a cataract of water tumbled against the boat, and a fourth whale, shooting his square head twenty feet high, "breached," as the sailors call the movement, not ten yards from our gunwale. Impelled toward us by his momentum,

he fell with his under-jaw just grazing the side of our poor little craft.

Confused, or, as whalemen call it, "galleyed," by the accident of his position, the monster, instead of turning away from us, started straight on, overturning and crushing the boat, and leaving us in the water, his three hitherto motionless companions gliding off almost as rapidly as himself.

It was one of those accidents to which whalemen are always liable, and which no watchfulness can avert.

Six in number, we clung to the wreck of the boat, confident that the *Hector* would pick us up in the morning, should not the unknown vessel, which was still in sight, anticipate her in so doing.

As it grew dark, however, the stranger, who seemed to have scarcely any wind, and so but very gradually neared us, was lost to view. Presently a very faint concussion broke the evening air, and we knew that the *Hector*, perhaps some twelve or fifteen miles off, had fired her nine-pounder to make us aware of her position. Probably Captain Phillips, our commander, and Mr. Orne, the second mate, had long since returned to the vessel,

where our own absence must cause some anxiety.

Twice after this during the night the signal was repeated. At length the day broke, and not more than a mile off we saw the becalmed stranger of the previous evening, with a light breeze just beginning to fill his sails.

As he came up within a cable's-length of us, we were surprised at the number of his crew; and it was with a kind of startled curiosity that, as his vessel—a large, rakish, full-rigged brig —rolled lazily in the groundswell, we caught glimpses of a heavy cannon mounted amidships on her deck, so high that it could be fired over her low bulwarks.

She might have run directly for us, and taken us on board by means of lines, but her captain preferred rather to lower a boat. None of us liked the appearance of things, and all glanced instinctively at Black Abe and Yellow Jack.

From the mingled tongues upon the brig's deck, in several of which we were hailed, we judged her crew to be composed chiefly of Spaniards and Portuguese, with a sprinkling of English or Americans.

The boat was manned with armed sailors, and as she came up to us, one of her hands, who

acted as spokesman in English for the others, commanded Jack and Abe to get on board of her. The poor terrified fellows refused; but the ruffians pricked them with their bayonets, and threatened them with instant death in case of further hesitation.

"We want nothing of the rest of you," said the hard-featured villain who had first spoken; "your ship will pick you up by-and-by, and we can't be bothered with saving a parcel of blubber-hunters; but we take *wool and ivory* wherever we can find them."

The feeble resistance of the two colored men was speedily overcome, and, wounded and bleeding, they were dragged into the boat, Mr. Gale and the rest of us expostulating vainly as we lay helpless on the floating boards.

Poor Abe! poor Jack! we saw them forced up the gangway of the sharp, saucy brig, and driven upon her deck. It was a spectacle at which Mr. Gale shed tears of grief and rage, while the indignation of his remaining crew equalled his own. We thought of the families of the kidnapped men—the simple wives and the little dark children who would be looking for the two stout colored tars when the *Hector* should get home.

"That brig," said the mate, "I think, is the *Dom Pedro*. I would have lost all I shall make on this voyage than have had such a thing happen. The miserable, cowardly villains!"

A few hours later a boat from the *Hector* picked us up; but when we reached our vessel, the slaver was out of sight. With a freshening breeze, she had stood along the coast, the tall tree-tops of which were barely discernible from aloft, and would doubtless enter some neighboring inlet or river's mouth, where her living freight might be in waiting.

For three days on board the *Hector* little was talked of but our two hapless shipmates and their wretched fate. In the mean while, however, remaining upon the same cruising ground, we secured the amount of oil required to fill the vessel.

The last of our blubber was boiled out in the night; and at daybreak next morning we heard the report of guns, as if some vessel were pursued and fired upon by another.

As the sky lighted up, we made out a brig under full sail, standing directly toward us, and presently saw that she was chased by a ship. The firing, however, had now ceased; probably from the fact that the fugitive had widened the

distance between herself and her pursuer. We were standing easily along under short sail, and the two strangers were rapidly coming up astern of us, each crowding all his canvas in the exciting trial of speed.

"That's the villain," cried Mr. Gale, looking steadily through his glass—"the very scoundrel that stole my men! But he'll get away, after all. That British sloop-of-war can't sail with him—he's run her out of gunshot already!"

All who had been in the mate's boat saw that the coming brig was indeed the kidnapper of poor Jack and Abe. Her low black hull and symmetrical spars were not to be mistaken.

Again the pursuing ship essayed two or three shots from her bow guns, but the distance was evidently too great, and once more she ceased firing. There could be no doubt that the piratical slaver would escape her, and the excitement and chagrin of our own crew became intense.

The fleeing vessel passed within a furlong of us, and was soon ahead. What a tempting mark she presented, with those long and tapering yards and jaunty topmasts!

Captain Phillips was a man of quick impulses and determined resolution. The scoundrels who

had insulted him by stealing his men were close under his eyes, and almost within pistol-shot. The ship-of-war in chase could not cripple the brig by her distant fire. He glanced about the *Hector's* decks, and a bare possibility suggested itself.

"Get ready that nine-pounder!" he cried. "Mr. Orne, have up the powder. You'll find three or four cannon-balls down there, too. And now bear a hand, for there's no time to lose."

Mr. Orne, taking with him a couple of the crew, ran below, and five minutes later the long nine—an old but somewhat handsome gun—stood grimly ready for action, having within it a heavy charge of powder and two well-fitting balls.

The *Hector's* course was altered for the occasion, so that the gun could be brought to bear on the brig from what is called a "swing port," and then all save the captain stepped back while he arranged his aim.

"When I give the word," he said to Mr. Gale, who held the match, "don't lose a fraction of an instant—let her go at once."

How keenly he squinted along that trusty old gun! How carefully he raised or depressed its

breech! Now it was an inch too high, now an inch too low.

"Ah! there! there!" he muttered; "no!—yes! —that's it!—just a little!—just a frac— *Let her go!*"

The gun almost parted its breech-tackles with the recoil as the charge burst from the muzzle, tearing our nerves with its noise.

"I haven't hit her!" cried the captain, springing to the side and gazing almost wildly at the brig—"haven't touched her. Load up again! Where's your powder? Load up, load up!"

"Hold on, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Gale. "Look! look! What's the matter with her foretopmast? It's going, sir—it's going."

As he spoke, the foretopmast of the slaver leaned heavily to leeward; then, like a falling tree by a river's brink, went swashing into the water.

The game was up with the fast-sailing brig. Confounded by the disaster, her crew attempted no revenge upon us, as they might have done, with their pivot cannon; and in less than half an hour the *Dom Pedro*, as she proved to be, was a prize to the pursuing sloop-of-war. Both our nine-pound balls had taken effect aloft.

It was found that the Brazilian brig had on

board no less than five hundred slaves, among whom, to our great joy, were discovered Black Abe and Yellow Jack. The captain of the British cruiser delivered over to us our two shipmates; while with the rest of the blacks, the prisoners, and the prize, he prepared to bear away for Sierra Leone, where the wretched Africans would once more breathe the air of freedom.

How happy were Abe and Jack! How they laughed and cried, danced and wept! And oh! the tales they told us of the miserable slave brig!

In two months thereafter we arrived home with a full ship; and when the *Hector* had been hauled in at the pier head, it did us all good to see four little colored children, followed by their mothers, come running down to the water-side to be folded in the arms of the warm-hearted fellows who so short a time before must utterly have despaired of such a meeting.

"Dar's de ole gun dat saved us," said Abe, to his little family, indicating the nine-pounder.

"An' dar's de man dat aimed it," responded Jack, with a grateful look toward Captain Phillips.

And so they went up the wharf.

IV

HOW PERRY'S KITE SAVED A CREW

The Tale of a Wreck on Long Island

ONE of the liveliest boys who ever hailed from Greenport, Long Island, was Perry Shipman, whose father owned several schooners engaged in the fishing trade. Perry was a lithe, handsome lad of sixteen. He had two hobbies, or "fads." One was a longing for sea-life, the other a fondness for flying kites. His father, a retired deep-water skipper, tried to dissuade him from the drudgeries of an existence on the ocean; while his mother, one of the sweetest of her sex, pointed out that the flying of kites might never lead to the Presidency—an ambition that every mother of an American boy cherishes in an eminent degree.

But while young Shipman dearly loved the

sea and his kites (of which last-named he had a most charming collection), he didn't neglect his studies. In fact, he was an average healthy boy, full of pluck and animal spirits, and always ready for a bout at football or baseball when the season of either sport was in full swing.

His dearest chum was Paul Pregaskis, a year younger than himself, but with an equally sturdy and indomitable spirit. They were boys of great popularity in Greenport.

Perry Shipman was well known in the neighborhood as the "Kite Crank." In his favorite den in the attic might be seen an infinite variety of kites, and the crude model of a flying-machine, as yet in embryo, but with which in course of time the ambitious youth hoped to solve the difficult problem of aerial navigation.

Perry owned a stout little row-boat, with which he fully explored nearly every cranny in Gardiner's Bay and the picturesque waters about Shelter Island. Often when the wind was brisk he would unship the oars, and, lounging lazily in the stern-sheets, would steer the boat at a fair rate of speed by means of a kite flying high in the sky, with the end of its tow-line made fast to a ring-bolt in the stem-head of the boat. How he contrived to make the kite ascend I do

not pretend to explain. Some skilful kite-flyers say they have often tried the experiment from an open boat, but have failed ignominiously. They attributed their lack of success to their inability to cause it to rise in the air from a point so near the surface of the water.

Perry always said that it was just as difficult to land a blue-fish with a kite as it would be to kill a thirty-pound salmon with tackle intended for trout. The kite he used for any kind of salt-water work was made of bamboo, whalebone, and fine linen cloth rendered water-proof by means of boiled linseed-oil applied when hot. A kite of this construction is light and strong, and cannot be hurt by either wind or water.

When fishing with his kite-gear young Shipman used an iron reel for his line, with a powerful hand purchase. The reel was secured to two pointed oaken stakes driven in the sand. After causing his kite to attain the desired altitude, which enabled the lure, properly weighted with lead, to just skim the surface of the sea, he would heave in and pay out on his line so that the squid was always kept moving in the water, and presenting a tempting bait for the jaws of a blue-fish.

The first fish that Perry hooked was one of a

hungry shoal that had just entered Gardiner's Bay by the way of Plum Gut. From the strain on the line and the erratic gyrations of the kite, the boy thought he was fast to a man-eating shark. The fish fought so bravely that he soon had the kite nearly in the water. Perry turned the crank of his reel as rapidly as he could, but it took him twenty minutes before the kite was recovered, and another five minutes before he and Paul, who was his constant companion on all his trips, had their finny prey hauled up on the beach. The fish weighed eleven pounds, but from his pugnacity one would have thought he was ten times heavier. Possibly if one of my readers were to attempt to troll for blue-fish with a kite, he might not catch one once in a blue moon. But then it is not everybody who is a "kite crank." Perry was a past-master of the art. He could make a kite do anything but talk.

Old Captain Shipman was quite proud of his son, but continued his efforts to discourage him from pursuing the sea as a career. With this end in view he spun him yarns fifteen fathoms long about the perils of the ocean. I believe that he exaggerated certain marine disasters in which he himself had participated in order to wean the mind of his son from a life on the briny wave.

He presented him with a copy of Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, in the hope that a diligent perusal of this true story of the sea might dampen the ardor of his ambitious would-be mariner.

But all was in vain. Neither reading nor lecturing had the slightest effect on Perry. The vessels at the docks or at anchor in the harbor had a peculiar fascination for our hero and his bosom friend. Every spare moment they spent near the water-front, discussing with the zeal of experts the lines of this brig or the "sit" of the sails of that schooner.

One day Perry said to his father: "I don't want to go to sea without your consent, but I'm afraid I'll have to go with or without it. I've always made a point of obeying you, but in this instance there seems to be an invisible rope pulling and hauling me seaward."

"Well, my lad," answered the skipper, "I don't know that you are altogether to blame. You may have inherited that salt-water craving from me. I remember at your age having had a bad attack of the same complaint, but before I had been at sea a month I was completely cured. I was ashamed, however, to confess it, for fear of the ridicule, the gibes, and the jeers of my schoolmates. Now if you will pledge me

your word to give me your true opinion of the sea on your return, I will arrange for you to take a trial trip to Trinidad and back on the *Llewelyn F. Jones*, a fine barkentine, commanded by my old friend Captain Anderson. But, hark ye, my boy, he is a regular sea-devil, and his specialty is the breaking in of lads who don't know when they are well off ashore. He will make you dance to a sick and sorry tune before you're out of sight of Sandy Hook. He is a thoroughly good sailor, but I never knew a man handier with a belaying-pin or a length of ratline stuff, or with a keener faculty of finding out a soft place in a boy's head or a tender spot in his stern."

"Oh, father, how good you are!" exclaimed Perry, who had not paid much attention to these last remarks of his parent. "Of course I'll promise. Oh, and can Paul go too?"

"Well, I'll try to kill two birds with one stone, but Paul will have to get permission from his mother. She is a widow and he is her only son, and perhaps she may object to parting with him, especially when accompanied by a harum-scarum chap like you."

Perry hastened with the good news to Paul, who danced about with glee when he heard of the proposed expedition. His mother was much

distressed at the idea of the voyage, but after an interview with Captain Shipman she gave a reluctant consent.

"You see, it's this way, ma'am," said the old skipper. "Those boys are bound to ship on some sort of a craft, whether we like it or not. I wouldn't care for them to run away from home, because in that case false pride might stand in the way of their coming back to roost when quite cured of the sea-fever. Captain Anderson is a thoroughly good and kind man—not half so black a Tartar as I have painted him to Perry. He will, however, take care that the youngsters shall experience as much as possible the unpleasant side of sea-life, and I have no doubt that on their return they will be heartily glad to settle down to the humdrum and prosaic routine of existence ashore."

Mrs. Pregaskis, after shedding many tears, made the best of the situation, and, thanking the captain, went home.

The week that followed was a busy one for the boys. The days soon passed, every hour being occupied in the purchasing and packing of their sea-togs. Captain Shipman would not permit them to buy elaborate outfits, being of the opinion that a trip to Trinidad and

back would supply them with a surfeit of the sea.

He gave the boys two of his old sea-chests in which to stow their dunnage, which consisted, in duplicate, of half a dozen pairs of duck trousers, a suit of blue serge, a suit of pilot-cloth, a dozen woollen outing-shirts, a plentiful stock of underwear, a sufficiency of hose, two pairs of canvas slippers, a suit of oilers with a sou'wester, a pair of sea-boots, a couple of yachting-caps, two straw hats, a sheath-knife and belt, and an ample store of soap and matches.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Perry to Paul. "I'll put my blue-fishing kite in my chest with as much stout line on the reel as it can carry. We may have fun with it ashore—and perhaps afloat, for all we know. So here goes; it won't take up much room, anyway."

The boys rigged themselves out in their new brave nautical apparel, and viewed themselves admiringly in the biggest mirrors in their homes. Such is human nature the wide world over. It breaks out in a brand-new "recruity" trying on for the first time the neat uniform of the army, or the enlisted man just arrayed in the picturesque garb of the United States navy.

The barkentine *Llewelyn F. Jones* was moored

to her dock in the East River, New York, taking in a general cargo for Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. It consisted of kerosene-oil in casks, flour in barrels, salt codfish in cases, dry-goods in bales, hardware in boxes, canned goods of every variety, sewing-machines, pianos, tools, salt beef, salt pork, and any amount of "Yankee notions," for which there is always a great demand in every West India port.

Captain Shipman convoyed the boys and their baggage aboard the barkentine, and introduced them to Captain Anderson in this rough-and-ready way.

"Well, Cap, here are the two boys I spoke to you about."

"What! those two clodhoppers?" growled the commander of the *Llewelyn F. Jones*. "Well, I'm dashed! Do you expect me to make sailors of these hayseeds? It seems to me they're fit for nothing but picking potato-bugs on an inland truck-farm. Here, Barleycorn!" he continued, hailing the coal-black cook who was scouring some brass-hooped mess-kids in the port scuppers, under the shade of the galley, "show these boys to the best spare bedroom, make them peel off their Sunday-go-to-meeting duds, rig them up in working-suits, and then give each one a

bucket of slush and send them aloft to grease down the masts. Report to me if they spill any on the decks. Now get a move on, you lubbers, and earn your salt. We want no more cats aboard this old hooker than can catch mice. See?"

"Barleycorn" conducted the half-scared boys to their new home, which was in the forepart of the house on deck, just abaft the galley. Partitioned off from the crew's quarters, it had accommodations for four—the cook, the boatswain, and the two boys. When the two chests were deposited in the little cubby-hole there wasn't room to swing a cat by the tail.

"Waal, honeys," remarked the cook, "I guess yo' like young bars, all yo' troubles to kim; but then ole skipper is a pow'ful han' at lickin' young cubs into shape, so b'ar a han' and put yo' wukkin'-close on, for aloft ye must skip and dip yo' lily-white paws in the slush-pot. Yo' hyar me?"

While our sea-pups were shifting their clothes forward, the two skippers were having a yarn in the cabin over a glass of grog and a pipe.

"Well, Shipman," said Captain Anderson, "I think I made an impression on the youngsters. If they desert the ship in Trinidad you needn't

be surprised. Of course I'll have them caught, and then I will ship them home by steamer. Don't be afraid; they sha'n't get hurt. To tell the truth, I rather like the looks of the lads, and I think they will make two tiptop sailors, but I infer from what you say that you don't want them to become seamen."

"What I want you to do," replied Captain Shipman, "is to forget that one is my son, and that the other is the son of one of our dearest friends. Give them each a fair show, and don't let them shirk work. In a word, treat them as you would a couple of lads just shipped in South Street—neither better nor worse. In fact, you know what you and I had to go through when we were boys together aboard the brig *Lucy*. Let that be your guide."

Captain Shipman then bade his old shipmate and the two boys farewell, and started on his homeward journey.

Next day a tug hooked on to the barkentine and towed her out to Sandy Hook Light-ship, whence, with every stitch of canvas set to a fresh off-shore breeze, she took her departure for her Southern goal.

The passage out was uneventful, the weather being fine, except for a bit of a blow off Cape

Hatteras, which compelled them to reef down. Our two youngsters took kindly enough to the hard work and the coarse and simple fare of the barkentine, and so willing were they to learn their duties that kind Captain Anderson couldn't find it in his heart to haze them a little bit. By-and-by they were taught how to furl the royal and the topgallant sail, as well as the flying-jib and the mizzen-topsail, and to take an occasional trick at the wheel in fine weather. Soon they became familiar with the running-rigging, got their sea-legs on, and recovered from a slight attack of seasickness, and all this long before they had reached the latitude of the Bahamas. In a word, their progress was great.

There wasn't a single sign of the lads becoming weary of their life aboard ship. They acquired a healthy tan and a vigorous appetite; each slept like a top in his watch below, and both were jolly as sand-boys.

It was early in October when the barkentine sailed through the Dragon's Mouth, which separates Trinidad from the mainland of Venezuela, and let go anchor off Port-of-Spain. The water in the bay is shallow, so all cargo is discharged into big flat-bottomed sailing-lighters, manned by negroes, whose racy songs as they

hoisted the cases and barrels aboard their unwieldy craft raised many a musical echo among the shipping in the roadstead.

The boys wrote enthusiastic letters home, telling of the beauties of the botanical gardens, of the oranges growing wild in the woods, of the sweet young tips of the sugar-cane, of the cool milk of the green cocoanuts, of the florid exuberance of the tropical vegetation, and the other wonders of this fertile island.

After the hold was emptied the barkentine sailed to La Brea, another port in the island, where several hundred tons of pitch were taken aboard from the famous lake—one of the wonders of the world—which the boys examined with curiosity and interest.

Then back to Port-of-Spain, where the vessel was filled up with cocoanuts, sugar, rum, and molasses. In the first week of December the barkentine weighed anchor for home. Swept through the Dragon's Mouth by the rapid current, strong as it was in the days of Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the island, they soon reached the open ocean and the favoring trade-winds. Fine weather prevailed until they reached the latitude of Bermuda, where they struck a heavy storm, which kept them under

close-reefed canvas for a week. Strong gales were also encountered off Hatteras, and, to make it worse, it was a dead thresh to windward up the Jersey coast.

Thick fogs so hampered them that Captain Anderson had to grope his way by log and lead; in fact, he was not able to take a celestial observation for ten days. Stronger and stronger grew the easterly gale. The New Jersey beach was close under his lee, but the captain carried on a press of sail, hoping to claw off shore and save the ship. The lee rail was under water. It was still thick as a hedge. A cast of the lead was taken, bottom being found at six fathoms, showing that the vessel was in dire peril of striking. A mountainous sea was running, and the night was pitch-dark.

As a last resort the captain determined to bring up. Both anchors were made ready for letting go; the reefed foresail and the lower foretopsail were clewed up; the foretopmast-staysail was hauled down, the vessel was brought head to the wind; both anchors plashed simultaneously into the water from the port and starboard catheads. Every fathom of cable was paid out. There was an immense strain on the windlass, but as the chains were shackled round

the foot of the foremast, no danger was apprehended on that score so long as the anchors didn't drag and the cables didn't part. The sails already taken in blew away in rags, but by dint of hard labor the reefed mainsail and mizzen were safely lowered and secured.

At midnight the sea grew heavier; the vessel plunged bows under to every gigantic wave that struck her. It was evident that no ground-tackle forged by mortal hand could long endure so terrific a test. All hands were huddled close together on the poop—the only dry spot on deck. The brave captain spoke encouraging words, assuring them that if the anchors held till dawn every soul on the ship would be saved, even if the barkentine became a total wreck.

Meanwhile how fared it with our two youngsters? They recognized the grave peril they were in, and were prepared to face their fate with fortitude. They took heart from their valiant skipper. It was bitterly cold, but nobody cared to go below except the cook, who boiled a big kettle of strong coffee on the cabin stove, and served out a steaming pannikinful to each half-frozen man and boy, together with

a handful of hardtack and a chunk of salt beef. This meal restored the sinking spirits of the sailors.

But the ship was doomed. Just as the faint gray gleam of dawn partly illumined the dense fog that hung like a pall over the turbulent and tempestuous sea, a violent squall smote the barkentine. Both cables parted. Impelled by the force of wind and wave, she was soon ashore, with the big seas breaking over her. The lash of the surf as it boiled up on the sand told them they were quite close to the beach, but the thick fog veiled it from their view. Guns were fired from the wreck and rockets were sent up to attract the attention of the life-savers, who regularly during the winter months patrol our storm-swept Atlantic coast.

"Now, boys," cried the captain, "we must all seek refuge in the maintop. I saw this ship put together. She is as strong as oak and copper and iron can make her. Her mainmast is the stoutest stick of Oregon pine I ever saw, and the standing-rigging is of the finest brand of silver-steel wire. Now jump aloft, a couple of you, and send down a line, and we will bend on the tub in which the deep-sea lead-line is coiled, and you can haul it up to the main-

top. It may come in handy when the surf-boat puts off for us."

"And so may my kite!" exclaimed young Perry, as he made a dash forward to his berth. It was perilous work picking his way along the main-deck, where a big sea might easily have washed him overboard. But fortune favors the brave, and, grasping his kite and reel, the lad successfully clambered up the main-rigging, and was assisted into the top by his shipmates, including his chum Paul, whose loyal heart was in his mouth as he watched Perry's dangerous rush for his precious kite.

Young Shipman explained to the captain how communication might be made between ship and shore by means of the kite. The skipper was incredulous at first, but after a little consideration admitted that the plan was worth trying. A hand-lead was made fast to the blue-fish line, which was still attached to the kite's tail. A notch-block was lashed to the mast-head, and through this the deep-sea lead-line was rove and bent on to the end of the line to which the kite was attached. All the gear was then seen clear for running.

The sea grew more mountainous than ever. The ship was fast breaking up. The bulwarks

had been swept away; so had the house on deck, the boats, and the cabin skylight and companionway. The hull was full of water. Suddenly the fog dispersed, and the men clinging like grim death to the maintop saw they were within five hundred yards of the beach and close to a life-saving station, whose crew were already getting their gun ready to fire a line to the wreck.

Something was wrong with that gun. They did not seem to be able to get the range. Thrice they fired, but each shot fell short. Then came an interval of inaction. No boat could live in the hissing surf, and the treacherous undertow would have quickly drowned the boldest and stoutest swimmer.

"Perry, my lad," said the skipper, "our last hope rests on you and your kite, so far as human aid is concerned. If this fails us, all we have to trust to is an all-merciful Providence, who has worked many a miracle on the sea. So, Perry, do your prettiest, for all our sakes."

"Ay, ay, sir," was the cheery response. Then he went to work. With the aid of Paul, who knew how to handle the gear, he got the kite on end outside the lee rigging. He stationed two men at the main line and another at the

tail line, ordering them to pay out slowly when he gave the word. Taking advantage of an extra puff, he launched the kite to the breeze. It rose handsomely in the air as the lines were slackened, but the light hand-lead seemed to have no influence on it. The weight hung at least fifty yards from the ground.

A cry of disappointment came from the sailors. It looked as though they were doomed.

"It's all right," exclaimed Perry. "Stand by to let go by the run, but take care that the end of the deep-sea lead-line is securely fast to the rigging."

"All fast!" cried the boatswain, as he took a couple of extra hitches round one of the wire shrouds.

"Now let her go, and keep your eyes on that kite!" yelled Perry, with an excusable semitone of triumph in his voice.

The kite, relieved of its controlling line, whirled frantically in mid-air and collapsed. The weight of the hand-lead drew it to the earth. So well had Perry judged the distance that the lead fell among a group of life-savers, who soon had the struggling kite in hand. In a moment, with a hearty cheer, they bent to the end of the lead-line the block with the endless line

"THE KITE WHIRLED FRANTICALLY IN MID-AIR"

rove through, by which the gear of the breeches-buoy is hauled to a stranded ship. The men in the top pulled on the lead-line with joyous vigor. They felt in their bones that they were saved. Ten minutes later the breeches-buoy was in their grasp.

"Now, Perry, we owe our lives to you; jump in and tell them we're coming," said the captain.

"No, sir," replied Perry, most emphatically. "Paul must go first. His mother is a widow, and she has no other children. I have a sister. Now don't listen to him, sir; clap him in and let him get ashore. I want my breakfast badly. Don't waste any time."

No sooner said than done. Paul was whisked ashore in a jiffy. Perry was jammed in next, and was soon safe on firm ground. The rest followed in rapid order, the captain being the last to leave the wreck.

"I congratulate you heartily on that kite idea, captain," said the chief of the life-savers. "It clearly saved you all. That gun of ours is hopelessly out of order. Why, bless my soul! look yonder," he interjected, suddenly pointing a stubby forefinger seaward. An extra big mountain of water had swept away the three masts of the wreck.

"I tell you, captain, that kite was a splendid invention of yours."

"You are mistaken, sir," replied Captain Anderson. "We owe our lives to God and to that brave young fellow there, who made the kite and directed its operation from the wreck." So saying, the old skipper took off his sou'-wester reverently and brushed the moisture from his eyes with the back of his hairy hand.

The wires were set to work. Mrs. Pregaskis and Mrs. Shipman were the first to receive the good news. The two boys reached home next day, little the worse for wear. It is indeed astonishing what hardships a sturdy American boy can stand.

I am not quite sure that the two chums will not go to sea again in spite of their wreck. Perry's father claimed the kite, and it now hangs up in his office.

V

THE "LUCK" OF THE SCHOONER *DOLLY*

Anchoring to a Whale

BACK in the year 1804—eight years before the War of 1812, in which year the famous naval duel between the *Enterprise* and *Boxer* took place off the coast of Maine—good old Deacon Elnathan Jones built and launched from his own little ship-yard the schooner *Dolly* (called after his wife, whose baptismal name was Mary Alcidora Matilda), a—for those days—well-proportioned vessel of some eighty-five tons burden. In the early times of which I write, the *Dolly* was considered to be altogether too large for ordinary coasting purposes.

"An eighty-ton schooner!—who ever heard of sech a thing?" growled one old sea-captain, blissfully unconscious of the future. And let

me add, in this connection, that in those days a full-rigged ship of three hundred tons burden was looked upon very much as you and I would regard the *Mauretania*, or a still more colossal modern steamship.

But in the year of our Lord 1840 the good schooner *Dolly* was regarded as an enormous piece of naval architecture, and certain seafaring men, in making mention of her, were accustomed to refer to the vessel in question as Jones's Folly. But, all the same, the good deacon believed that his new enterprise would pay—and he was right.

In due time Deacon Jones was gathered to his fathers, and by the terms of his will his eldest son Ichabod was forbidden to sell the schooner except in the event of the direst necessity.

"Without beeing Superstitious"—so ran the document, which is yet on file in a dusty pigeonhole in a certain county record office—"I have a fancy that ye pet name of my Beloved wyfe Mary will bring good Fortune to ye vessel and her owners, hence it is my express wish and desyre that s'd vessel be kept in ye family so long as may be for Interest of all concerned."

And so it is that through several successive generations the schooner has been owned and

commanded by some one of Deacon Jones's descendants. In the War of 1812 Captain Jordan Jones, of Machiasport, took out letters of marque, and transformed the *Dolly* into a privateer for the time being. In less than six months the little vessel captured and brought into the port of Castine three prizes, the value of any one of which was more than double that of the schooner herself. Ten years later, while in the West India trade, the *Dolly* herself was captured by the then notorious pirate Maxwell, who put a prize crew, consisting of four men and his second officer on board her.

One of the Windward Islands, where the buccaneers had their stronghold, was her destination. But there was a cask of spirits in the hold; the pirates became intoxicated, and Captain Jordan Jones, Jun., managing to free himself from his shackles, released the three men composing his own crew, bound their previous captors, and brought them into Salem, Massachusetts, where, according to local history, they were hung in chains.

And so down through the years the *Dolly* was in many respects what is called a "lucky" vessel. In summer-time she carried lumber from Bangor to Boston; in winter, if freights were good,

ran down to Mexico for mahogany, or Cuba for sugar. During all her voyaging the *Dolly* was never known to lose either spars or sails, and after more than seventy-five years of service Captain Adoniram Jones was wont to proudly boast that the "ol' *Dolly* was jest as sound as the day she was rushed off the stocks."

But while the *Dolly* was lucky in this particular respect, in a financial point of view she was unlucky as the years went on. The increase of steam navigation and a corresponding decline in freights had made a marked change in the vessel's receipts.

"We won't much more'n pay our runnin' expenses *this* trip, Dolly," Captain Adoniram rather gloomily observed, as on a certain bright June morning the old schooner, with a deck-load of baled hay, lay becalmed a few miles to the eastward of Cape Ann. The sun shone down on a glassy sea, unruffled by a breath of wind, and as the vessel rose and fell on the long, sluggish swells, the "flap" of the reef points against the slatting sails, and perpetual swing and squeak of the booms, had a most exasperating effect upon the captain's nerves, the more particularly as being suggestive of a probable day's delay in arriving at Boston.

"I'm afraid not," cheerfully answered Dolly, the captain's fifteen-year-old daughter, who had been named after the vessel with which his fortunes and misfortunes were so intimately connected. For following close upon the death of his wife, a few years previous, came the loss of his little property, and since then neither Captain Adoniram nor his daughter had been able to claim any other home than the schooner's cabin, which, however, was comfortably and even cosily fitted up, Dolly's sleeping-apartment being a tiny state-room in the after-part of the vessel.

"No gettin' into Provincetown to-night, *that's* certain," remarked Eph Cummings, the captain's nephew and entire starboard watch, as he leaned in a leisurely—not to say indolent—manner against the wheel, chewing a bit of hay pulled from the nearest bale.

Captain Adoniram shook his head.

"There's no chance of gettin' anywhere for the next twenty-four hours, far's *I* can tell," he returned, rather despondently, "and there's Cap'n Cracker all ready for sea, and we layin' here becalmed with all his 'gear' aboard. Plague take sech luck, I say!"

"Gear," let me explain, is a term used by

sailors to describe the entire outfit of a boat. In the case of a whaleboat it would include six to ten harpoons (or "irons") and lances, properly arranged in beckets, boat-knife, hatchet, spade, waifs, lantern, compass, line-tubs, etc. Captain Cracker, of the whaling-brig *Sea Fox*, having bought the "gear" of a condemned whaler in an Eastern port, had shipped the same to Provincetown per schooner *Dolly*, and was impatiently awaiting its arrival.

Meanwhile Dolly, who was a slim, hazel-eyed girl with a profusion of crinkly dark hair flowing from beneath the cape of her sunbonnet far below her waist, was gazing intently through her father's battered canvas-covered spy-glass at some occasionally appearing jets of vapor dimly outlined against the distant horizon. Captain Adoniram's attention was attracted in the same direction.

"What is it, Dolly—a sail?" he asked; then in the same breath bellowed, as from the masthead of a whaler, the loud-voiced, long-drawn, "Ar-r-r-r blows! ar-ar-ar blows!" indicative of whales "spouting" in the distance; for Captain Adoniram, in his thirty odd years of seafaring life, had made more than one whaling voyage, and the old instincts peculiar to this

class of seafarers were still strong within him.

"I thought you see a breeze comin', and, so fur's I can see, it's nothin' but some old whales," muttered Ephraim, in an injured voice.

Whales were no novelty in the eyes of the youth, who had often seen them blowing in the distance while on different coasting trips. And Ephraim, who had quite a taste for good eating, was anxious to get into port, for having been four days out, the beans had run short, and Eph was as fond of pork and beans as the most pronounced Bostonian.

Whales? yes; but as the spouts increased in number and nearness, even Captain Adoniram was fain to remark that he'd be "hornsnoggled" —the nearest approach to profanity that he ever indulged in—if he ever see sech a passel of 'em together to once in all his born days: humpbacks, with the curving protuberance not unlike that peculiar to the back of a camel projecting above the water; lean, long-bodied "right" whales, noted for making more fight than oil; immense "bowheads" from the northern seas; and most formidable in appearance among them all perhaps was the cachalot, or sperm-whale, with his square, blunt head and

lance-like lower jaw, with which in his anger he can cut and slash at an overturned boat until it is reduced to splinters.

On they came, a mighty phalanx of marine monsters, puffing and blowing out great jets of vapor with a noise like that made by so many low-pressure Mississippi steamers. They surrounded the schooner, lashing the surface of the sea into a smother of foam in their clumsy gambols, and at times coming so near the vessel's side as to cause young Mr. Cummings to turn very pale, and remark that if he'd 'a' knowed it was goin' to be any sech trip as this—dead calms, and whales pretty nigh comin' right in on deck—he'd 'a' staid to home on the farm.*

"There isn't any danger, is there, father?" asked Dolly, who had been watching this really wonderful sight with the deepest interest, not unmixed with a little natural fear as some whale

* "The schooner *M. B. Millen*, Captain Young, arrived this morning (June 23, 1884) from Savannah, after a passage of nine days. Captain Young reports that on June 20, at noon, in latitude 35° 50′, longitude 74° 14′ W., during a dead calm, the vessel was surrounded by a school of whales, which could be seen as far as the eyes could reach, coming to the surface and blowing. They came so close to the vessel that they could be reached from the deck with a common harpoon."—*Daily Paper*.

would rise to the surface, almost directly under the schooner's quarter, with a snort—if I may so express it—like the steam from a gigantic escape-valve.

"Land sake alive! no, child," answered her father, whose eyes were glistening with excitement, "and I only wish—"

The sentence was not completed. All at once an immense mountain of dun-colored flesh, down whose glistening sides streamed vast sheets of foaming water, rose to the surface so close as to touch the vessel's hull with his huge body.

But this was not all. Being still "on soundings," the anchor lay on the rail with one fluke projecting outboard, ready for letting go at short notice. And as the leviathan of the deep threw his vast head in the air, bringing his jaws together with a vicious snap, the outboard anchor fluke in some way hooked itself just inside the thick folds of flesh at the junction of the jaws, and in another moment disappeared from the rail, while after it flew about fifteen fathoms of chain.

Then came a jerk which shook the schooner from stem to stern, causing Ephraim to fall over the barrel of the wheel with great expedition,

while Captain Adoniram, quite bewildered, ran forward to see what the trouble was.

He very soon found out. The *Dolly* was rushing through the calm water at a rate far excelling any previous record that she had made, even when driving before a cyclone in the Caribbean Sea under the merest rag of sail. As the terrified Belgian who composed the entire port watch expressed it, "Ze big feesh vos run away mit der *Dolly*."

For almost the first time in his many years of seafaring life, Captain Adoniram was puzzled to know just what to do. A cold-chisel with which to have cut one of the links of the tautened chain would have solved the difficulty, but unfortunately there was nothing of the kind on board.

"Mebbe he'll tow us straight inter Provincetown—he's headin' direc' for Cape Cod," grimly observed the captain, glancing at the compass.

"But, father—" began Dolly, when a new and unexpected danger threatened them.

Suddenly slackening his mad onward rush, the whale "milled" round, and lay motionless for a moment or two—the chain hanging in a great bight, over which the vessel was carried,

by her own impetus, directly toward the monster.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Captain Adoniram, tugging excitedly at his grizzled beard, as the recollection of the loss of the ship *Essex* by a blow from the head of an infuriated whale flashed across his mind, "he's a-layin' for us. What'n creation *are* we goin' to do?"

"Father," eagerly cried Dolly, who, though very pale, had behaved with remarkable coolness from the very first, as the remembrance of an incident narrated by her father came to her as a sort of inspiration, "perhaps a bomb-lance would frighten him."

Catching eagerly at the suggestion, the captain dived below, and in rather less than five seconds appeared on deck with a heavy rifle of extraordinarily large bore. Charging it with a thimbleful of "Dupont's best," he rapidly pressed down upon the powder a hollow pointed iron tube some six inches in length, which is filled with an explosive material that the powder lights when the gun is discharged. Capping and cocking the heavy weapon, Captain Adoniram raised it to his shoulder—and not a moment too soon.

The whale, beating the water with his tre-

mendous flukes, was backing with an evident purpose of getting more headway for his intended blow, while the vessel was so near that those on board could easily see his small eye, which seemed to gleam with rage.

The ribs of the whale are so near together that oftentimes the bomb-lance, imbedded in thick blubber, strikes one of the great bones, and explodes harmlessly in the oily mass. But it was not the first time that the captain had sighted a whale-gun, and as the cachalot started for the *Dolly*, Captain Adoniram fired.

The "thud" of the bomb-lance as it penetrated the monster's hide was followed by a dull explosion, and the enormous whale, throwing himself entirely clear of the water, fell back with a crash that churned the surrounding sea into a mass of foam, and then with one great gasp the mighty leviathan of the deep rolled partly over upon his side, and the waves were crimsoned with his life-blood, while the great body of whales on every side struck off at a terrific rate of speed, as though by common consent.

"That 'ere bomb-lance went right direc' to the critter's vitals," shouted Captain Adoniram, dropping the gun and hugging Dolly wildly; "and if we can tow him into Provincetown, he's

worth a clean six thousan' dollars, for he'll try out eighty barrels *sure!*" *

With infinite difficulty the whale was secured alongside, the slack chain hove in, and a breeze springing up shortly afterward, the *Dolly* slowly made her way to Provincetown with her valuable prize, which was readily disposed of to old Captain Sylvester for a little more than the sum mentioned by Captain Jones.

But though Dolly the maiden no longer follows the sea (the captain having bought a snug little home near Rockland, Maine), *Dolly* the vessel does; and Captain Adoniram Jones confidently declares that she's bound to make his fortune before he gives up sea-going, "in spite of fate."

* The whale caught by the crew of the schooner *Lizzie P. Simmons*, of New London, at Cumberland Inlet, turned out to be more valuable than was at first supposed. The exact returns of the sale were as follows: from whalebone, $12,230; oil, $3490; total, $15,720. This is the largest amount ever realized from a single whale.

VI

OFF THE ALACRANES

A Strange Fishing Trip

WHEN the news finally came from Tom Henderson's father in Yucatan that Tom was actually to start in two weeks on a much-talked-of visit to Mexico, Tom was overjoyed. It was snowing and cold when the steamship *Orizaba* left New York, and for two days after the weather was wintry, and the waves and sky looked cold and gray. But the morning of the third day brought balmy southern winds and the lazy warmth of a summer sun. By daybreak of the sixth day the *Orizaba* dropped anchor in thirty feet of water, five miles from Progreso, a cluster of low, white houses, with the unfinished light-house overtopping them. A tug carried passengers and baggage ashore, and at the end of the

long wharf Tom found his father awaiting him.

Strong mules, urged by shouting Indians, drew countless bales of white hemp over the rough tracks laid down on the wharf, to where they were loaded on lighters or vessels of shallow draught. Within an hour Tom had passed the customs inspection and, with his father, was seated in an open car of the narrow-gauge railway, speeding through broad fields of spike-leaved hemp plants, toward Merida, the state capital, thirty miles away, where Mr. Henderson had his main office.

Mr. Henderson's house in Merida was low and broad and white, with a large court in the centre. The kindly Maya servants made the young American comfortable; he adopted cool linen clothes, and worked hard at his Spanish under the instruction of a native priest.

"Tom," one day said his father, "would you like to take a fishing trip in the *Lone Star*?"

"I would that," answered Tom, who had often heard his father mention the sloop, though he had never seen her.

"Well," continued Mr. Henderson, "I've got something to tell you about the *Lone Star*, so listen carefully. I bought that sloop some six

months ago, fitted her up for fishing, and put an Englishman named Hastings in charge of her. She runs to the Alacranes, sixty miles off this coast, for red-snappers, and as the fish are plentiful and sell well here, the venture has added considerable to my income. But lately the catch seems to have fallen off; instead of coming home with both pounds full, and a deck-load as well, the *Lone Star* comes in trip after trip with a cargo that hardly pays, and I suspect Hastings and his crew of some trickery. I don't know what it is, and I want you to find out for me, so that we can stop this loss of money to the family. Now if you went aboard the *Lone Star* as my son you would learn nothing—they would be on their guard. But if you go to Hastings as a stranded American boy, ready to work for his keep, I am sure Hastings will take you on, because he is looking for fishers just now. Once on board, you can keep your eyes open and soon find out what is wrong."

This was the plan, and after careful consideration it was decided that Tom should make the trial. So one morning, long before daybreak, Tom, clad like a tropical tramp, with old Indian sandals on his bare feet, softly closed the door of his father's house behind him, and slipped

away through the dark streets to catch the early train for Progreso.

Tom spent the day on the wharves and among the shipping, and that same night, under cover of the darkness, he rapped on the window of his father's house in Progreso.

"Do you want to give it up, Tom?" asked his father.

"Give it up? Never!" answered Tom, who was busy with the dinner his father had kept for him. "I am just beginning to enjoy it. I learned more Spanish here to-day than I would in two weeks up at Merida. I've had my eye on the *Lone Star*, and to-morrow I expect to get in with some of the crew. I'll sail on her this next trip, you see if I don't. Now let me get some sleep, because I must be out before daylight."

Tom's boast was not vain. The *Lone Star* sailed Friday night, and Hastings, pleased to get a smart American lad who would work for his food, was careful to see that Tom Henderson, son of the owner, but apparently a penniless tramp, was safe on board long before the anchor was hauled on deck.

With a fair northeast wind the *Lone Star* laid her course for the Alacranes, those low sand

islands that serve as a nesting-place for gulls and are a menace to coasting craft. Tom spent the first night on deck. Before sunrise he was roused from his broken sleep by Hastings, with sharp orders to step lively and show what he was good for. Tom worked with a will; sails were dropped and furled, and the *Lone Star* came to anchor about half a mile distant from one of the islands. In an hour's time the fish-lines were all out, and the first big snappers were swimming from side to side of the *Lone Star's* fish-holds, which were so arranged that the sea water had free passage through them, thus keeping the fish fresh for market. Tom stuck manfully to his three lines. The hot sun burned his face and arms a livid red, the lines blistered and cut his hands, and his arms and back ached as they never ached before. When night came Tom spread a bit of sail on deck and lay down to the soundest sleep of his life.

During the afternoon Tom had heard certain remarks among the crew that gave him a pretty fair idea as to what became of much of his father's profits. So when night came, and the *Lone Star*, with her full cargo, still stayed off the islands, Tom did his best to keep awake. The night was clear and starlit overhead, but a mist

lay over the sea. There was little wind, and the sloop rocked gently at anchor as the tired crew slept among the fish. Only Hastings and his mate, sitting aft, broke the stillness with occasional remarks.

It was early in the night when Tom was aroused by the crew hauling up the anchor; sails were run up quickly, and the *Lone Star* filled to the gentle night wind. In the silence that followed, Tom heard over the still sea the regular clanking of machinery that betokened an approaching steamship. Then the mate burned a sputtering red light on the sloop's rail, and the steamer answered with three short whistles. Soon her lights were seen through the mist; then suddenly the steamer seemed right on them, and the men on the *Lone Star* heard the sharp strokes of her engine-room bell and the churning of water at her stern.

Tom was kept busy handling lines and clearing away hatches. Ropes were passed from the steamer to the sloop, and as fast as Tom and the rest of the crew could fill the big baskets with the slippery fish, the steam-winch hauled them out and they were dumped into the hold of the *Bertrand*. Hastings kept tally from the sloop, and the captain of the *Bertrand* did the same

from the steamer. When both the *Lone Star's* holds were emptied Hastings called out that that was all he could let go.

Tom shinned out of the hold just in time to see Hastings and his mate climbing aboard the *Bertrand.* "I must see the end," said Tom to himself, "and especially the payment." He watched his chance, and quickly climbed over the steamer's iron bulwarks. The *Bertrand's* decks were in darkness, and her crew busy with tackle and hatches. Tom peered cautiously from the shadows, and saw that he was unobserved. Then he began carefully to pick his steps over the unfamiliar ground to where a light shone from the deck-house on the starboard side aft. He reached a side window and listened. Inside were Hastings, his mate, and the captain of the *Bertrand.* The door of this room faced aft and was open, so the light from the lamp inside shone out on deck; but the shutter to the window where Tom stood was closed, so he could see nothing.

"I make it fifty-five baskets, captain; and at a dollar-fifty a basket that comes to eighty-two fifty, and it's cheap for the money. I'll have to ask you more next trip." Tom heard distinctly, for his ears were close to the shutter.

There was more talk by Hastings and his mate for higher prices, while the captain of the *Bertrand* was filling the glasses. Then Tom heard the unlocking of a metal box and the clink of money. "I must see the payment," thought Tom, "then we can convict 'em." He dropped on his hands and knees, and with his nose close to the deck, crept slowly and carefully around the corner of the house and lifted his head for a view of the room. But some noise made by the boy had attracted the attention of the *Bertrand's* captain, for Tom's first sight of the room showed this man looking squarely at him. Tom drew back like a flash and stood upright in the shadow. With clinched fists and arms rigid at his sides, he awaited the captain's coming.

"Who are you, my boy, and what do you want?" were the captain's first words upon perceiving Tom. "Stand out in the light—"

"Why, he's the boy from my sloop!" broke in Hastings, who, with his mate, filled up the doorway behind the captain. "What you doing here, you cub?" he continued, menacingly, to Tom. "Spying on me? Get back on board, where you belong! What you spying on me for, anyway? Going to tell old man Henderson

about the fish? That's your game. I see it now! I'll fix you, you monkey!"

Hastings pushed the captain aside and started toward Tom, who still stood motionless and silent in the shadow of the house.

It looked black for Tom, alone against two angry men, when the captain of the *Bertrand* jumped between Hastings and the boy.

"Not aboard *my* ship, Mr. Hastings. No two men can pile on a boy, no matter what he's done. Take him back to Progreso, and if he's done wrong you can punish him there; but you won't hurt him while I'm around."

"Wait till we get you aboard the sloop!" called out Blivens. "Spying on us about them fish! We'll settle you!"

The captain stood as Tom's protector, while Hastings and his mate threatened his life if once they had him alone on board the *Lone Star*.

"What's the boy done, anyhow?" broke in the captain. "I'm beginning to believe you men have been selling me fish that didn't belong to you, and you're afraid he'll inform your owners. He'd do well if he did, and I'll stand by him. I'll carry him back to New Orleans with me before I'll let you rascals get at him. Here, boy,

which 'll you do—stay with me, or go back to the *Lone Star?*"

"I'll go with you, sir," answered Tom, who had no doubt but that Hastings and his mate would serve him as they threatened.

"All right; go you shall. Now, Mr. Hastings, you've got your money for this load of fish, so you and your mate can go right aboard your sloop and cast off. Go on; hurry up, or I'll have my lines in and you can swim for it."

The captain's manner left no doubt as to his intention. Hastings ceased his bluster as soon as he perceived it had served his purpose, and he and his mate scrambled over the steamer's rail, pleased with the outcome of the situation.

The *Lone Star* fell behind as soon as the last line was aboard; the *Bertrand's* helm was over, and she drew away from the sloop on the sweep of a large circle, and then squared away for the run north.

A week later Tom landed again at the long wharf at Progreso. His father greeted him warmly, for his boy's absence had worried him greatly. Tom quickly related his adventures.

"So I found out what became of the fish," he concluded, "but I'm sorry I could not get back in time to have Hastings and Blivens punished.

I suppose they are both out of the country long ago."

"Out of the country? Not a bit of it," retorted Mr. Henderson. "When the *Lone Star* came back without you on board I had Hastings and his mate put in jail until I should hear of you. They're there now, and we can prosecute them for theft as soon as we please. But we have none too much evidence," mused Mr. Henderson.

Tom's face brightened. "Then perhaps I did do well to get the captain of the *Bertrand* to go before the Mexican consul in New Orleans and make affidavit as to how long he had been buying fish from Hastings," said Tom.

"You did, indeed, my boy," answered his father.

And on Tom's evidence and the captain's affidavit the Mexican court meted out just punishment to Captain Hastings and his colored mate Blivens.

VII

A CARGO OF BURNING COAL

Alone on the "Mercedes"

IT may seem that while coal is a dirty cargo, it is in other respects an innocent one; but there is no shipmaster who does not dread a long voyage with this kind of freight, for many a fine vessel has been lost owing to the coal taking fire through spontaneous combustion; therefore, the greatest care is exercised in carrying it, and whenever the weather will permit the hatches are opened in order to give the gases in the hold an opportunity to escape. The regular coal-carriers are fitted with ventilators set in different parts of the deck, and the holds of the vessels are kept pure and wholesome by turning the gaping mouths of a number of the huge funnels so that the wind will pour into

and down them to the interior of the ship, and keep up a circulation by escaping through other ventilators that are turned in a contrary direction.

A good many years back, when I was an able young seaman on board the bark *Raleigh*, I had an experience that was both exciting and strange. Our vessel was loaded with coal, and bound from Philadelphia to Australia. The run down to the equator had been a slow but pleasant one, owing not only to the mild, beautiful weather that we had held right along since sailing, but because the *Raleigh* had what was something of a novelty in those days, in the way of an excellent and kindly set of officers. We were what is called a "happy ship."

After reaching about the parallel of twenty degrees south we got a stress of weather for over a week, in which several of our sails were blown away and a number of our light spars were wrecked. All our live-stock of pigs and chickens were drowned, owing to the flooding of our decks, for we sat very low in the water.

On the day that we ran into pleasant weather again we started to take off the hatches, when a gassy, choking smell poured out of the opening. The cargo was on fire. There was only

one thing to do—to replace the hatches, bore holes through them, and pump streams of water into the hold, endeavoring to drown the fire before it gained additional headway. All hands were called to the task, and for twenty-four hours we worked for our lives, the crew being divided into relief gangs so that the deck-pumps might be kept constantly going.

Before another morning came, however, we knew that the ship was doomed, for the decks grew hot under our feet, and through various crevices the weakening, nauseating fumes of coal-gas poured, overpowering us at times as we plied the pump-handles. The wind died away, leaving the ship becalmed, and over and around her hung a sickly blue pall of vapor. Then the order was given to provision the boats and desert the *Raleigh*. We pulled a little way from the vessel and rested on our oars, watching the noble ship. As long as she floated there we seemed to have something to cling to on the wide, desolate reach of waters.

Shortly afterward the main-mast swayed like a drunken man, then with an awful crash it pitched over the side, dragging with it the foretopgallant mast and the mizzen-topmast. Through the broken deck a column of winding,

sulphurous flame shot into the air. The pitch ran wriggling out of the seams of the *Raleigh's* planking, and fell hissing in little showers into the water alongside as the vessel rolled sluggishly on the swells. An hour later the bark was a mass of flames, and we pulled away to escape from the heat.

There were two boats, the captain commanding one and the chief mate the other. Each had been provided with a chart and compass, and in addition to these instruments the two officers had carried away their sextants in order to navigate by the sun and stars. Into each boat had been stowed food and water, which it was calculated would last about ten days by putting all hands on short allowance; but it was hoped that before the provisions were consumed we would either be picked up by a passing vessel or successful in sailing to Rio Janeiro, distant from us something less than six hundred miles. The captain's boat, being the larger of the two, carried the second mate, steward, cook, and eight seamen, while the mate's boat held the carpenter and four seamen—of whom I was one.

The boats laid alongside of each other while the captain and mate decided upon the course

to be steered; then we separated, made sail to the southeast breeze that had set in, and stretched away into the northwest, the captain's boat in the lead. The wind gathered strength from the southeast, giving us a following breeze for the port toward which we were steering, and both boats made good weather of the moderate sea then running, sweeping along at the rate of five knots to the hour.

All that afternoon the boats kept within sight of each other, and when night fell not over a quarter of a mile divided us. With the first flush of dawn we swept the expanse of waters, but nothing was to be seen. We were alone. Every little while during the day that followed we would scan the horizon, hoping to lift the long-boat's sail into view; but in vain. We never saw her again, or heard tidings of the twelve brave souls from whom we had parted only a few hours before. That she never reached port is certain; but what her ultimate fate proved, no one knows.

It blew up a gale of wind that afternoon, and I heard the mate say that the storm experienced during the week that was past had recurved, and that we would get it worse than ever on its back track. To prevent the boat from founder-

ing, we unstepped the mast, made a span to it by securing a length of rope to each end, and to the middle of this bridle we bent the boat's painter. Then we dropped this sea-anchor over the bows, and rode to it, the strain upon the painter keeping the head of the boat to the seas that rolled down on us.

When night settled upon the deep it shut out one of the wildest sights of ocean-lashed waters that I had ever seen; but the darkness only intensified the terror, for in the blackness we would feel the frail boat swung with dizzy velocity up and up and up on some mountainous sea, as though she was never going to stop; then, while the great seething crest was roaring in a thousand diabolical voices about us, she would drop down, down, down with a motion that was like falling through space.

It might have been the middle of the night when, worn out from the labor of bailing without intermission for many hours, I threw myself down in the bows of the boat, and locking my arms around one of the thwarts to keep from being pitched about, I fell into an exhausted sleep. I don't know how long I slept, but I was brought to my senses by a sea bursting into the boat, and I found my legs wedged

under the seat as I sat half suffocated on the flooring with the water up to my armpits. Looking aft, I could see by the phosphorescent glow of the breaking seas that no shapes of men were visible against the background of sky. My companions were gone.

The gunwale of the boat was within a few inches of the water, and it needed only the spume of another wave falling in the boat to sink her. There was no time for indulging in grief over the loss of my shipmates—there was time only for work, and very little for that, if I was to save my life. Tearing off my cap, I used it as a bailer and worked desperately.

At last another morning came, and with it the gale broke; but I allowed the boat to remain hove to during that day and following night, so as to give the seas a chance to go down.

The second morning dawned clear and beautiful, with the ocean subsided into long, even swells, and the wind settled down again to the regular trades. Most of the provisions had been ruined by the sea that had filled the boat, but I found two water-tight tins filled with pilot-bread that promised to supply my needs for some time to come. The fresh water in the boat-

breakers had kept sweet owing to the bungs being in place.

I had opened one of the tins, and was sitting on a thwart making a breakfast from its contents, when, happening to look astern, I made out, not more than a mile away, the wreck of a small vessel. Everything about the foremast was standing below the cross-trees, but only the splintered stumps of her main and mizzen masts were to be seen above the deck, while the spars themselves, together with their gear, were hanging in a wild confusion over the side. I got in my drag, restepped the mast, set the sail, and bore down upon the wreck. As I drew close to her I expected to see some signs of her crew, for the vessel sat fairly high in the water, and looked seaworthy enough to be navigated into port by making sail upon the fore, and rigging up jury-masts on the two stumps abaft—plenty of material for such to be found in the raffle alongside. No evidence, however, of life showed itself when I rounded under the stern, reading the name *Mercedes* in large white letters. Letting fly my sheet, I caught the leeward chain-plates, and jumping on board with the painter, I secured the same to a belaying-pin, and looked about me.

I was at once sensible that there was some water in the hold by the peculiar motion of the vessel as she rose and fell to the seas that underran her; but at the same time it was apparent that there could not be anything like a dangerous quantity, otherwise the plane of the deck would have floated much closer to the surface of the sea. Without regarding the nationality of the name, it was clear to me that the vessel was either a Portuguese or Italian trader by the rainbow character of her paint-work, the slovenliness of the rigging, which was yet almost intact upon the fore, and, in spite of the drenching that she had received, the unmistakable evidences of dirt everywhere. There were no boats left, but whether they had been crushed in the wreck of the masts or had received the crew of the barkentine—for such I saw had been her rig—I could not tell.

Entering the cabin, I overhauled the four state-rooms it contained, finding in three of them nothing but such odds and ends as are peculiar to sailors' chests, and in the fourth room, which had been used as a pantry, quite an assortment of boxes and barrels of provisions, although there was proof that some of them had been broken into and rummaged quite recently.

Then I went on deck again and lifted off one of the main hatch-covers. No cargo of any nature was to be seen, nothing but a mass of black, oily water washing from side to side. It was plain that the vessel was in ballast, that she had sprung a leak in the last gale of wind, that her crew had become frightened, had given her up for lost, and taken to the boats. It was also clear that the leak had stopped itself in some manner—possibly when the old tub had ceased straining after the sea went down—and that if I could pump out the hull I might be able to put her before the wind by making sail on the fore, and so, with the favoring trade winds, let the *Mercedes* drift along to the port dead away to leeward.

A sailor is never idle long after laying out his work. First I emptied my boat of its water-breakers and provisions, then let it tow astern. Next I got an axe out of the boatswain's locker and chopped away the rigging that held the broken spars to the bark, then when the vessel was clear I squared the topsail-yard by the braces, ran aloft, cast off the gaskets that held the sail, descended to the deck, where I sheeted home the topsail as well as possible, and carried the halyards through a leading block to the

capstan, on which I hove away until I had lifted the yard as high as my strength allowed. Next I ran up the jib, sheeted it down, and raced aft to the wheel. I put the tiller up, and the old bucket at once answered her helm. When I got her fairly before the wind I lashed the wheel, and seeing that she would steer herself, with only a little watching, I got to work at the pumps.

By the time night arrived I had sunk the water in the hold to half its original depth. Then I settled away the topsail and let it hang. The jib I left standing, knowing that it would help to keep the vessel out of the trough, even if it did little or no good in the way of forcing the bark ahead. The weather promised to continue clear and moderate, so I built a fire in the galley range, brought a quantity of stores from the pantry, and made a hearty meal. I "turned in all standing," as seamen say when they go to bed without undressing, and slept long and heavily.

The next morning I again set my topsail, and scudded away to leeward while I finished clearing the bark of water.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. I had gone up on the little top-gallant forecastle

to have a look at the *Mercedes'* ground-tackle, when I made out, about two points on the bow, and less than a mile away, a ship's boat filled with men. They had discovered the bark, for they were pulling to get in her path. As soon as I appeared to them there was a waving of hats and a confusion of cheers and calls. By the time that I had settled away the topsail-halyards and pulled the jib down the boat was alongside, and her late occupants were tumbling over the rail. The first one to touch the deck was a fat little man, almost as swarthy as a Malay, and twice as dirty, who wore enormous gold hoops in his ears and a dilapidated red fez upon a mop of greasy black hair. He rushed up to me so wild with excitement that he kept hopping up and down like a jumping-jack, while he smote his breast and screamed something in Portuguese.

I shook my head and said, thumping my own breast, "No speakee Portuguese; me American!"

At this he yelled, accompanying his words with such a tremendous smiting of his poor ribs that I thought he would beat them in.

"Me speakee Americano! Me capitano! Me capitano this sheep! How you come? me say!"

I saw how it was. I had picked up the crew

of the *Mercedes* three days after they had abandoned the vessel to which they had just returned.

I held up my hand as a sign to the frantic, jabbering monkeys to keep silence, then I explained, partly by broken English and the rest by signs, how I had found the bark deserted, had pumped her out, and was trying to reach the coast of South America in her. I ended by telling the captain that I was glad to see him and to give him back his vessel.

He was so overpowered with gratitude and joy at such an unexpected and happy ending to his troubles that he flung his dirty arms around my neck and kissed my cheeks effusively in the fulness of his heart. I was an honored guest on board the captain's "sheep" from that time forth, and several days later when, crippled and torn, the poor old *Mercedes* staggered into the beautiful harbor of Rio Janeiro, and I took leave of the uncouth but kindly and grateful sailor, he repeated his kissing act, and forced into my hand a small bag of gold pieces, representing probably all his savings, while he said:

"You take dees. Me love brave Americano sailor who save me sheep."

VIII

A RUNAWAY FIN-BACK

An Adventure with an "Ocean Greyhound"

IT was in the second dog-watch, and the wind was light but steady over the port quarter. The ship had her stu'ns'ls on, and her three milk-white steeples of canvas loomed fair against the deep blue sky. Away forward, where the draught out of her head-sails fanned their pipes to a red glow, half a dozen young and active fellows were clustered around a sailor known as Handsome, because he looked like the figure-head of a Greek battle trireme, designed to strike terror to the hearts of foes. Handsome was so old that he was a forecastle patriarch, and had a fund of ocean experience which made every dog-watch a feast of yarns.

"Say, Handsome," said a sailor known as

Farmer Joe, because he looked like a farmer, "did you ever sarve on a whaler?"

"Yes, lad, I did," said Handsome, emphatically. "Fact is, Joe, that was my start at sea."

"Yeou 'ain't never told us about that," said Farmer Joe.

"Well, that's true, but I'll tell you now," said Handsome. He leaned back against the windlass and puffed hard at his pipe, while he gathered his memories of the early fifties together. "I was the son of a farmer, lads," he said, "and I took to reading some of those silly yarns of the sea written by men that never saw salt water. I ought to have known better, for I went to a good school and had a good home. But I thought I was badly off, and so one day I up and ran away. I made for the nearest seaport, which happened to be New Bedford. There I set about getting a berth. It didn't take me long to find out that merchant-ships had no use for a farmer's boy. They wanted sailors, not landsmen. But I learned that with whalemen it was different. An old boat-steerer, who saw me standing on a wharf looking at a whaler, came up to me and said:

"'Don't you want to ship? Good wages, and your outfit provided.'

"I told him I'd never been to sea, but he said that didn't make any difference; whalers rather liked to ship green hands. So the long and short of it was that I shipped for the voyage, and when we cleared from port I soon found out that he had told me the truth. Our crew was the meanest mixture of greenhorns I ever saw. For nearly a week most of them were half dead from seasickness, and wished they'd never seen the sea. I was one of them. Then the mates began to teach us our work. They used to stand alongside the rigging and club us to make us go aloft. It took about a week to teach us that. Then came the job of showing us the ropes. Some of the hands never did learn them. I guess I was meant for the sea, for I learned them without much trouble. Well, I don't suppose you want to hear about the early part of our voyage. What you want to know is what happened on the whaling-grounds.

"We were bound for the Indian Ocean, and it was the captain's scheme to cruise along the Madagascar coast, which in those days was a fine whaling-ground. It may be yet, for all I know. To get to the point, however, imagine the whaler *Ellen Burgee* standing on an easy bow-line in a light breeze. You know the way

a whaler covered a cruising-ground in those days was to beat to windward on tacks running from one side of the ground to the other and then run back to leeward—for the winds are mostly steady in those latitudes. Of course we were looking for sperm-whales, though we were willing to take anything that came along. All of a sudden the mast-head lookout yells, 'There she blows, and there she white-waters!' In a minute all was excitement aboard the ship, and we stood by to lower away our four boats. Some jumped to loosen the boat gripes, and others to put the line tubs in place. Lines had to be bent on, sheaths taken off the harpoons and lances, sails and spars made ready, and a dozen other things done that I thought might have been done long before.

"'There goes flukes!' yelled the mast-head man.

"That meant that the whale had turned his tail up into the air and headed for the bottom. Well, anyhow, you must know that once whales are sighted a whaler lowers away her boats, because the whales soon come up again. The whales had been sighted under our lee about two miles away, so as soon as the boats were in the water we got sail on them and began to

run down the wind. When we got to a place about a quarter of a mile from where we thought the whale was likely to come up we hove to and waited. It wasn't long before I heard a sound like a puff of a river steamboat, and our boat-steerer said, in a low tone:

"'There she blows! Pull a stroke or two, boys!'

"We started the boat ahead, and then let her run under her canvas, the idea being to come on his hulks from astern, because you can't run alongside of a sperm-whale from abeam. His eye is fixed so he can see abeam, but not astern. We soon found out, though, that the first mate's boat was a good deal nearer to the brute than we were, so we rested on our oars and watched them go in. They sailed down pretty close, and then ran alongside under oars. The harpooner stood up, and let fly his iron, and the whale hove his tail into the air and went down—sounded, as they call it. The boat began to tow ahead a little, and we were watching the performance, when all of a sudden our eyes were taken to another sight. Right abreast of us, about half a mile away, the water burst wide open, and a dark-skinned monster shot his full length into the air, falling back into the sea with a terrible

crash, and raising as much foam as a small white squall. That's what they call breaching, and it's a grand sight, I tell you, when you first see it. Well, we all braced up and gripped our oars, expecting an order to pull, but the boat-steerer shook his head.

"'It's a sulphur-bottom,' says he.

"'What's a sulphur-bottom?' says I.

"'It's one kind of a fin-back,' he answers. 'Look at him and you'll see the fin on his back.'

"'Ain't fin-backs good for anything?' I asked.

"'Yes,' says he, 'they try out a heap of oil; but they say that when they're struck all they do is to run like an express train.'

"All this time we were drifting down toward the brute, and I could see that the boat-steerer's eyes were burning with excitement.

"'Did you ever see one struck?' I asked.

"'No,' says he; 'but I'd like to.'

"'Let's have a go at this fellow,' says one of the other hands.

"'I've half a mind to try it,' said the boat-steerer.

"With that we pulled ahead a few strokes, and that settled the matter.

"'Give way, lads,' says he; 'I'll put an iron

in that fellow, and kill him, too, if he tows me to the Cape of Good Hope.'

"The boat-steerer, you must know, is in the bow of the boat all this time, and it's he that throws the harpoon. Well, he tells us that we must let the line run out at first, just as we would if we'd struck a sperm-whale, and that after a lot had run out we could check it a little and get the boat going. All right. We pulled ahead at a lively gait. Say, boys, going on to your first whale is a pretty exciting business, because you can't see him, your back being turned, but you can hear him spouting and wallowing in the sea. I stole a look over my shoulder, and I was sorry for it. I was almost scared to death when I saw the size of the beast. I turned my head away, shut my eyes, and pulled. Presently I saw the big tail in the water—right alongside of the boat, it seemed. At the same instant I heard the boat-steerer's pant of exertion as he hove the harpoon with all his might. Instantly I heard the iron plunge into the fish with a sound like a shovel going into a pile of coal. And then —well, then there was a marine circus.

"The harpoon line, you know, is coiled in a tub. You ought to have seen it go out. Mr. Fin-back put his head level with the surface of

the water, and started off like something crazy. The line went out of the tub so fast it made us dizzy, and it whizzed around the bow-chock, where a single turn is taken, so that it smoked. We threw water on it, and in a few minutes the whale slowed down. Now we got two turns around the chock and let him tow us. And that's where we made our mistake. Say, there isn't any tow-boat on earth like a fin-back whale. This one seemed to know what our idea was, and he made up his mind—if you can say that a whale has a mind—that he would give us all the fun we wanted. He'd slowed down, as I was telling you, to what you might call a little better than steerage-way. As soon as we got those turns made he seemed to know just what we'd done, and he started off again.

"At first he went along at a six-knot gait, the whale-boat dancing over the swells as if she was a fish herself. Then he opened up a little more and lifted her to an eight-knot clip. That's hard pulling for a small boat, but he steadily increased his gait till he worked it up to fifteen knots. Then he let himself out. Great bacon, how he did go! The line hummed like a fiddle-string. The bow of the boat stood right up at an angle of forty-five degrees on top of the pile

of snowy foam it made. The water hissed past the bulwarks like the boiling of a big tea-kettle. It made us all sick and dizzy, and we were half scared to death. How long do you suppose it lasted? I don't believe it was over five minutes, but I know we made two miles in that time. But it had to end. No whale-boat that was ever built would stand such a strain. Her bows seemed to bend in. Every seam in her opened. The water rushed in, and she was half full in a couple of seconds.

"'Bail her out! Bail her out!' yelled the boat-steerer.

"'What's the use?' says I, bailing all the same. 'She won't stay bailed.'

"'For pity's sake, cut the line and let the demon go!' says another fellow.

"'Yes, yes; let him go!' cried the rest.

"The boat-steerer grabbed the axe, which is always handy in a whale-boat for just such a purpose, and cut the line. He drove the blade through two strands, and the others gave way with a report like a gun. The boat came to so sudden that some of the hands fell backward off the thwarts as if they'd caught crabs. The whale just kept on going at his terrific speed. He looked like a first-class torpedo-boat as he

"'FOR PITY'S SAKE, CUT THE LINE AND LET THE DEMON GO!'"

went sizzling away through the water with our harpoon sticking out of his neck, and the line streaming away from it like a homeward-bound pennant. He was out of sight in an amazing way. Say, a fin-back whale is a real ocean greyhound, boys."

"Waal, Handsome," said Farmer Joe, as the narrator paused, "what became of you chaps in the boat?"

"I didn't know that you wanted to hear any more except about the whale," said Handsome. "However, I suppose a yarn can't end with a boat's crew adrift in a sieve on the Madagascar whaling-grounds. Well, then, as soon as the whale had vamoosed, the boat-steerer looked all around for our ship, but she was not in sight.

"'Well, boys,' says he, 'we must keep this crazy tub afloat somehow, and trust to their finding us. They're sure to cruise around and hunt for us.'

"So some of us pulled off our shirts and ripped them up to make a sort of oakum to calk the boat. I suppose some of you may know that a whaleman is the worst-dressed sailor in the world. He generally takes rags that no one else would wear, and puts patches on them till you can't tell what they were made out of at

first. So it's easy enough to pull such things apart. We stuffed the open seams as well as we could from the inside, and then we set to work to take turns bailing her out so as to keep her afloat, for she still kept on taking in a considerable amount of water. However, we did keep her on top of the ocean.

"'Now,' says the boat-steerer, 'there's no use of our rowing, because we don't know which way to row to meet the ship.'

"But the men couldn't stand sitting there doing nothing, so we just paddled along easily. Night came down on us and no sign of the ship. Toward morning the wind began to freshen, and by daylight it was blowing pretty briskly. Now we found ourselves hard put to it to keep the boat afloat. She leaked like a mouse-trap, and we were mighty glad when we sighted a dismasted wreck drifting down on us. It didn't take us long to see that it was abandoned, but we decided to board it. We did so, and found that it was likely to float twelve or fourteen hours longer. So we made up our minds to let the boat go, take to the wreck, and build a raft to float us when the wreck sank. We were working at the raft when suddenly one of the men yelled:

"'Sail ho!'

"Sure enough there was a vessel bearing down on us. She wasn't over three miles away, but we'd been so busy at our raft that we had not seen her before.

"'By hookey!' exclaimed Bill Sudds, 'it's our own ship!'

"'So it is!' cried the boat-steerer.

"Then we all set up a cheer. But it wasn't our own ship at all. It was her sister ship, the *Two Cousins*, which had sailed the year before. However, she took us off the wreck. It was six months before we saw our own ship again."

IX

HOW THE LIGHT-HOUSE LAMP WAS LIGHTED

The Tale of Nat Marble, of Mitchell's Ledge

THE cold, grim gloom of a winter night had settled on the ocean; the gray-black clouds, like shapeless forms of evil, swept over the sky with furtive, backward glances at the pursuing storm, and the shrieking wind, swooping down on the rising waves, gathered up their curling tops and dashed them over the decks of the sturdy steamer plunging its way so anxiously through the darkness.

"The Mitchell Light ought to be hereabout, pilot."

"So it ought, cap'en, but I don't get a glimpse of it yet."

"No more do I. Hark! What's that!"

The two men, standing on the steamer's bridge, leaned over the rail and listened intently. Boom-m-m! crash-sh-sh! came a distant sound faintly to their ears.

"That's dead ahead, cap'en. It ought to be off port side!" shouted the pilot through the gale.

"Something's gone wrong o' the Mitchell Light!" answered the captain, hoarsely.

Neither spoke for a moment, and the same terrible thought flashed through their minds—"Lost if we don't find the light." The steamer was crowded with passengers.

Suddenly a broad stream of light shot through the black night.

"Hard over!" shouted the pilot.

"Hard over!" answered the quartermaster at the wheel.

"Oh, I thank God for that!" exclaimed the captain, fervently, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

If the light had come ten minutes later, five hundred souls would have risen from an ocean grave.

About four o'clock on the afternoon of that same day twelve-year-old Nat Marble gazed out

of the window of Mitchell's Ledge Light-house. Under the lowering gray clouds he looked, straining his eyes to catch a glimpse of the nearest point of mainland.

"Trim the wicks even, Tom—trim 'em even."

It was the light-house keeper, Nat's father, who, in the delirium of a burning fever, had his mind on his work. He lay tossing and talking on a cot-bed on the other side of the room.

"Yes, father, yes," said Nat, nervously, going over to the bed, and then, wringing his hands, going quickly to the window again.

"Why don't he come back?—why don't he come back?" he murmured.

"Good an' early, Tom—good an' early," muttered the sick man. "Better have the light early than late, Tom."

Tom, the assistant, had gone off to the mainland early in the morning for medicine, promising to be back before three o'clock in the afternoon.

The big hand on the dial crept round and round, the gray twilight faded into gloom, the gathering storm hurled the big waves defiantly against the light-house, and little Nat knew that he was to spend the fearful night with the

father burning with fever down-stairs, and the lamp cold and dull up-stairs.

He was only a visitor there, and knew as little of the lamp as he did of the fever. Was he frightened? He was indeed.

The strange, rambling talk of the father he had always known so precise and sparing of words awed him, and he sat cowering by the fire. The thundering roar of the waves, the moaning and screaming of the fierce wind, the trembling of the solid light-house—all filled him with terror.

And then he knew the lamp ought to be lighted, ought to have been lighted an hour ago. But he could not do it. How could he? He had only been there a week, and had never seen Tom light it.

But then—Nat started in horror to his feet—suppose a vessel should run ashore and lives should be lost for lack of that warning light!

Perhaps he ought to try. It might be simple enough, after all. At any rate, he could not sit still with his father's moans in his ears and his imagination filled with pictures of drowning people.

He took a lamp and climbed the winding stairs. How cold and gloomy it was up there! And how it shook at every buffet from the waves!

The great lamp was seemingly simple enough. He recalled his father's wandering words—"Trim the wicks even"—and looked to see if they were in good order. Not only they were, but it was quite plain that Tom had prepared the lamps.

Nat joyfully touched the wicks with the flame from his lamp. The wicks burned, charred, and went out. There was no oil in the lamp. But Nat thought he saw his way clearly now. The lamp was not very different from any ordinary lamp.

He rushed down-stairs for the oil-can and scissors—he had seen Tom put them away—and was back in a few minutes. As well as he could he trimmed the charred wicks to resemble what they had been before. Then he unscrewed the top, and tilted the oil-can to fill the reservoir.

The oil would not flow. The can must be full, too, it was so heavy. He shook the can. Nothing moved inside. He unscrewed the top cover and thrust his finger in. The oil was frozen! What should he do? He must be quick. It was pitch-black outside.

He thought of his father's rambling talk about the lamp. Perhaps he could pick up something

from his words. Again he tore down the winding stairs.

"Shine up the reflectors, Tom—shine 'em up."

"The oil's frozen, father," said Nat, hoping to attract the sick man's attention.

"Mitchell Light's been the talk for its clearness, Tom—eh, Tom?"

"Father, dear," said Nat, imploringly, "the oil is frozen. What shall I do? Tom hasn't come back yet."

"That was careless, Tom. Ye left a ragged edge; give me the scissors."

"Father! father! won't you hear me? The light is out. A vessel may go ashore. The oil is frozen."

"Don't get it too hot, Tom—not too hot."

Nat was wringing his hands in despair.

"Not too hot?" What did that mean? Why, it must refer to the oil. They were used to having it freeze, maybe. Of course that was it. How stupid of him! He would heat it at once.

Up the long stairs he flew once more. The can of oil he held near his lamp. He intended to thaw it slowly, so as not to get it too hot. He turned the can carefully around the flame so as to gradually heat all sides.

He thought it would take a long time, and

so it was slowly trickling out of the spout upon his clothes while he was still absorbed in turning the can. A careless wave of the lamp, a flash of flame.

Nat's trousers were blazing. He tried to put the fire out with his hands. He spilled more oil on himself. The flame spread, and Nat felt himself burning.

Beside himself with terror, he still had presence of mind enough to know that he must quickly put the fire out or burn horribly to death.

But one thought suggested itself. He dashed blindly down the stairs, the hot flames scorching his flesh. Through the room where his father lay and out into the freezing night air he plunged. Once outside, he cast himself into the snow that lay heaped up on the little sheltered spot that in summer-time was the garden. Over and over he rolled in mad agony of pain.

The fire went out, and left a seared and suffering boy lying weak and helpless in the cold snow. At first he thought only of his pain, but in a few moments the still unlighted lamp crossed his mind.

He must light that. What was his own suffering to that of the struggling, drowning crowds

that might owe their death to the unlighted lamp!

Perhaps he would have laid out there in the bitter night and gone to his own death but for the unselfish wish to save others. As it was, he staggered to his feet and crawled into the house and up the stairs. Oh, how many of them there were!

He tried the can. The oil poured out. What agony he suffered! Every movement seemed to open a new wound. He felt as if he were still on fire.

With many a groan and cry of pain he filled the lamp and screwed on the top. He could scarcely hold out long enough to light the wicks and turn them right.

The light of Mitchell's Ledge hurried through the black night just in time.

When morning brought Tom, who had been kept away by the weather, he ran hastily up the stairs, and never stopped until he reached the light chamber.

The lamp was flickering, a poor, pale thing in the bright daylight, and Nat was lying on the cold stone floor.

Tom guessed at the story, and tenderly picking the brave boy up, carried him into the warm

room below, and worked over him until he opened his eyes.

"I got it lighted, Tom," were Nat's first words.

"So you did, Nat, lad, and a sad day it would 'a' been for us if you ha'n't."

ROBIN ADAIR

The True Story of Two Cabin-boys

THE ship *Texas*, with the tow-boat alongside all ready to take her to sea, lay at the end of Lewis's Wharf, Boston. All that Captain Stearns and his officers, with the pilot, were waiting for was the arrival of the crew, who, of course, would not come aboard till the last moment.

Doddridge — known as "Dod" Billings — a strongly built, bright-faced young fellow of fifteen, was standing in the door of the "boy's room," a tiny apartment at the after or rear end of the forward house.

He was whistling softly to himself, his thoughts being divided between the parting with his mother and father in their "down-East" home a couple of days before, and a lit-

tle natural self-congratulation that after having made two successive voyages as "boy" with Captain Stearns, he was to now rate as ordinary seaman at eighteen dollars a month.

"I wonder what that young chap wanteb with Captain Stearns?" he thought, as a slender, pale-faced youth came out of the cabin. After looking about him in a bewildered sort of way, the boy finally spoke to Dod.

"Will you direct me to—the—'boy's room,' please?" asked the new-comer, who was dressed in a very new and sailorish suit of blue. His voice was pleasant, but rather hesitating and low.

"This is it," answered Dod, briefly, with a backward nod of his head.

"That — *closet!*" exclaimed the other, glancing up at Dod, as though not sure that he could really be in earnest.

Dod, who began to suspect the truth, preserved a provoking silence.

"I am Robin Adair," continued the other, knitting his brows, "and I thought, if I shipped as 'boy,' I could be alone by myself, separate from the—the common sailors."

Robin had not the slightest intention of saying anything offensive, but Dod flashed up at once.

"*I'm* a 'common sailor,' but Captain Stearns told me that I could keep my berth in the boy's room another voyage, and I mean to, too," he added, with unnecessary force.

"Oh, very well, it does not matter much," was the reply, in a manner that Dod took to mean that it *did* matter considerably. And swelling with inward anger, he looked on while Robin dragged a small sea-chest and some bedding—all very new—to the room, and proceeded, awkwardly enough, to stow them away.

"What possessed Captain Stearns to ship *that* useless specimen, and for a winter passage, too, *I* don't see," grumbled Dod, who, himself one of those exceptional boys known as "born sailors," had a secret contempt for any one aspiring to be a sailor who had white hands and a delicate complexion. For Dod, who was one of the best-natured fellows in the world, had learned to grumble a little, as became his profession, yet his heart was always in the right place.

But in the arrival of the crew, and the bustle and confusion of getting under way, the newcomer and his affairs quite passed from his mind.

Occasionally, in the scurry and confusion of making sail, Dod had a glimpse of luckless Robin

being hustled hither and thither by the busy crew, or heard him scolded sharply, for some small sin, by Mr. Briggs, the active young second mate. But it was not until the decks were cleared up and the watches chosen that Dod had any chance to exchange speech with his new room-mate.

And then the speech seemed to be all on one side. For Robin, who was naturally shy and quiet, was beginning to be a little seasick and a great deal homesick, and only replied in the briefest manner to Dod's friendly questioning. That he had lived in the country, and never was at sea before, was all that Dod could discover, and mentally deciding that Mr. Robin Adair was "putting on airs," Dod determined to let him severely alone until his reserve should wear off.

No one can imagine the terrible misery that the first fortnight as sea brought to the delicately nurtured, shy, sensitive boy. It would have been bad enough in the finest weather to have endured the coarse jokes of the sailors and the sharp scolding of the officers, but when, added to these, was a continuation of gales that almost invariably make up a midwinter passage across the Atlantic, the situation of poor Rob,

entirely unused to anything like hardship or exposure, was really pitiable. And then, too, there was no one to whom he could unburden himself, for he mistook Dod's curt speech for gruffness, just as Dod took his silence for sullenness; so the two went on mutually misunderstanding each other just as many older people have done, and will do until the end of time.

One night, after four terrible hours spent aloft in shortening sail amid terrible squalls, with cutting sleet and hail that made ropes like wire and canvas like oak boards, the port watch was sent below, with the significant warning to "stand ready for a call."

Tired, exhausted, and wet to the skin, the two boys entered the room, Rob heart-sick and sore, Dod sleepy and out of sorts. Scarcely had they pulled to the door when the latter began:

"I say, Adair, why don't you do something besides hang on and shiver when we're aloft stowing the topsails? I have to pick up my share of the yard-arm and yours, too. What a coward you are aloft!"

"I know it, but I can't help it," was the answer, in a low, dispirited tone that went straight to Dod's heart, though he was too stubborn to let it be seen. Yet if Rob had spoken again

Dod would have "taken it all back," as he told himself. But Rob, removing his wet oil-skin in silence, crawled into his bunk, with every bone in him twinging like the toothache.

Thinking how uncommonly comfortable the little stived-up room, with its wet, sloppy floor and its two berths full of damp bedding, looked when lit up by the jangling tin lamp, as contrasted with the darkness and cold without, Dod got into his own bunk, boots and all, knowing that before long they would be called out again, for the voice of the storm was waxing fiercer and fiercer, while the terrible rolling and pitching of the ship told of an increasing wind and sea.

Insensibly Dod's thoughts travelled home and motherward, as those of every true boy are sure to do at such times.

"If this sort of thing makes *me* feel bad," muttered Dod, drawing a wet sleeve hastily across his eyes, "how must Rob feel? What a pig I've been, anyway!" Leaning over the edge of his berth as he thus communed with himself, he gently touched the shoulder of his room-mate, who was lying with his face buried in his pillow.

"A little homesick, eh, old fellow?" he said,

in a tone of such kindly interest that Rob, starting suddenly up, seized his hand in both his own with a fervor that considerably surprised his more practical companion.

"Oh, if you only knew—" he began, when his further speech was abruptly checked by a great thumping at the door, accompanied by a gruff "Turn out here 'n' shorten sail!"

"Never mind," said Dod, springing lightly from his berth, feeling his heart growing very warm and tender toward the homesick boy; "there's nothing now to do but heave the old ship to, and then we'll get a whole watch below — a thing we haven't had for thirty-six hours."

Oh, the discomfort, the misery of blundering out on deck in the darkness of a December night, with a terrible gale shrieking and howling through the straining rigging! — a gale laden with alternate squalls of sleet and hail. Overhead, the partly clewed-up topsails are slatting against the yards with thunderous force; underfoot, the reeling, heaving deck is drenched with green seas; while the great ship herself goes tearing on over the tempest-tossed ocean, as though driven by the fiends of the storm. But everything pleasant or unpleasant must have an

end, and after a long struggle with the stiffened canvas and a vast amount of yard-bracing, the *Texas*, hove to under the snuggest possible canvas, began laboriously climbing the mountainous seas as they rose before her.

It was the starboard watch that was sent below after all was snug, and Dod, drawing Rob nearer to him, stood huddled under the lee of the hatch-house for such shelter as it might give them.

"Two hours longer of wet and cold," said Rob, through his chattering teeth, "and then—"

"Hold on—all—for your lives!"

Hardly had the ringing order risen above the din of the storm when a towering wall of black water, meeting the uprising ship with resistless force, crashed in on deck, sweeping everything before it.

Throwing one arm about the waist of his companion, who was helpless with fear, Dod attempted to seize one of the stanchions supporting the "gallows" where the boats were lashed; but he was too late.

The wild torrent, which for the moment threw the ship nearly on her beam ends, swept the two boys away and outboard as though they had been straws. But from the lee pin-rail,

which was completely under water, the fore and main braces were at the same moment washed to leeward in tangled, straggling coils. The two boys were held for one strange second between the outgoing and incoming wave. Dod still clung to his half-insensible companion when he felt the touch of a rope across his face.

To seize it with the strength of despair, and guide the hand of his companion to this hope of safety, was the work of an instant. And then, as the *Texas* loomed dim and phantomlike through the darkness above them, the reflex or incoming wave swept them back with lightning speed almost to the ship's rail, and in another moment the two, drenched, numbed, and half drowned, were hauled inboard by a score of willing hands.

The ship *Texas*, looking rather battered and storm-beaten, was lying in Bramley Moore Dock some two weeks later. Captain Stearns was in his cabin, and with him a tall, handsomely dressed gentleman, who had followed the old ship by steam-power, and arrived in port some time before her. He was walking nervously to and fro as he listened intently to Captain

Stearns, who had narrated, far better than I have done, the story just told.*

"It was a narrow shave for the youngsters, General Rogers," Captain Stearns was saying, "though once, in the old ship *Kentucky*, I had three men washed from deck while lying to in a gale off Hatteras, and the 'reflex wave,' as they call it, *actually swept two of them fairly back over the rail*, inboard, ten seconds later. The third, poor fellow, was lost. You would have been amused to have seen Robin and young Billings hang together for the rest of the voyage," continued Captain Stearns, returning to his original topic. "Why, they were like two brothers. Dod did his best to learn Rob a little sailorizing, but it was no use."

"I'm glad of it," was the answer, "for after this Rob will love his home all the better. There are only Robin and myself left," continued General Rogers, rather sadly, "and it was a great shock to me when my boy took this fancy to try seafaring life."

"But if anything *had* happened?" said Captain Stearns.

* This incident, with the exception of an entire change of names, is strictly true, as, indeed, are the leading features of this story.—F. H. C.

"I should not have blamed you," quickly answered the general; "and so I felt, when I informed you that I had found out from the lady of the house where he was lodging that he was going to pay you a visit in the morning, and requested you to ship him at once. I sailed for Liverpool three days after the *Texas* left, and I cannot tell you how I have watched and waited for the ship's arrival."

A sudden knock at the door startled them.

"Come in," called Captain Stearns, with a meaning smile at the general.

General Rogers slipped into the captain's state-room, leaving the door ajar. Enter Dod and Robin, looking rather embarrassed.

"Well, boys, what is it?" asked Captain Stearns, pleasantly.

Robin looked at Dod, who cleared his throat.

"If you please, sir," said Dod, twisting his cap nervously in his fingers, "Robin—hem—thinks he won't go another voyage, and won't you advance him money enough to pay his passage back to Boston in the steerage, and take it out of my advance wages; he'll pay me some day, when we get back to the States."

"What do you want to go home for, Robin?" asked Captain Stearns, in a voice of affected

wonder; "you're not tired of a sailor's life already, I hope?"

"I want to tell father how *very, very* wicked I was to leave such a good home," returned Rob, in a low voice, "and to ask him to forgive me."

"It's all right, Rob; I think you've learned your lesson," said a familiar voice, at the sound of which Rob gave a great cry, and rushed into his father's arms, after the most approved method laid down in story books.

When Dod Billings came home after the next voyage he displayed to the admiring eyes of friends and school-mates a remarkably handsome gold hunting-case chronometer, on which was engraved:

PRESENTED TO DODDRIDGE BILLINGS

As a reward for kindness and a tribute to heroism

BY HIS FRIENDS

GENERAL J. G. ROGERS, U. S. A., AND ROBIN ADAIR ROGERS

When he again returned from a longer voyage —this time as second mate of the *Texas*—he found hanging in his room an oil-painting repre-

senting the ship *Texas* hove to in a gale of wind, in one corner of which was the artist's name, but not in full—"Robin Adair." * And I hardly know which of the two gifts he values more.

* Poet

XI

THE SAVING OF THE *OSCEOLA*

Lighting the Buoys

A GREAT crowd of people stood shivering on the solitary wharf of Barhaven: women with pale faces and anxious eyes, their shawls hugged close around them against the chill of the September night; grave-visaged men in reefers and oil-skins, their strained gaze turned seaward and striving vainly to penetrate the driving gray mist enveloping the upper bay, the surrounding shores, and the dangerous narrows nearly a mile away, through which the great side-wheel excursion-steamer *Osceola* must shape her devious course in order to make the Barhaven wharf.

She had put out in the early morning with several hundred of the town's summer visitors

aboard, all eager to avail themselves of the rare opportunity for an ocean trip, and none anticipating the direful change of weather that came before evening.

"It's as nasty a night as Cap'n Finback well could have, so it is," vouchsafed one old salt, gravely shaking his head.

He was standing near the end of the pier, gazing out over the rolling ridges of dark water. A signal-lantern on the tall piles near by shed a feeble and haggard light upon the scene, and faintly illumined the drops of mist covering his gray beard and blue reefer. An aged woman drew nearer him, asking, anxiously:

"D'ye think there's great danger, sir? My Cynthia's aboard, she and Tim Boxam."

"They'd be safer ashore, ma'am, so they would," was the discouraging reply.

"Still, she's a big steamer, sir, and—"

"And there's the very trouble, ma'am," interrupted the seaman. "If she were a small craft she could make the narrers more easy, and keep the channel atween Pine Island and the main. But them same narrers, ma'am, is only a cable's-length across, and the channel only half o' that, with a red buoy to the east'ard and a black buoy to the west'ard, 'tween which

she must shape her course or run upon the rocks. 'Tain't easy, ma'am, to sight the island and the buoys on a night like this, and Cap'n Finback don't put in here over often, ma'am, that he's much at home with the course."

"You don't see anything of her yet, do you?"

"See her, ma'am? I should say not! You'll hear her long afore you see her, so you will. She'll whistle steady arter rounding Gull's Ledge light, ma'am, and that's four miles outside the narrers, so it be."

"Hark! there she blows, now!" cried another, and every ear in the intensely anxious throng was strained to listen.

The foregoing, and much of like tenor, was overheard by a sturdy lad of about fourteen years. To him the scene was a strange and impressive one. While he was not unaccustomed to the sea and the smaller crafts alongshore, the great steamer was an unusual visitor, and the danger menacing her and her many passengers awed him. It is at such times that the boldest and bravest in manly natures is called into play—those natures in which noble aspirations, a love of the heroic, a desire to emulate grand deeds and worthy achievements, are inherent and easily moved.

Suddenly he slipped away through the crowd and hastened up the wharf. An acquaintance called after him:

"Where away, Reggie!"

"Up the shore a piece," he answered, over his shoulder, and then his boyish figure was lost in the mist and darkness.

The words of the old salt had given him an idea—one to which he eagerly and valiantly responded, yet from which broader experience and a knowledge of nautical matters would have warned him.

Having gained the land, he turned from the wharf at a sharp right angle, and hurriedly picked his way along the rocky shore. The tide was high, and the coursing waves, surging shoreward in great, white-capped ridges, broke and thundered upon the beach just below him, casting into the air great clouds of spray, which the wind seized and hurled about him in blinding showers, drenching him to the skin.

Yet he did not falter. It was no new experience, that of being drenched by the salt sea; for the uncle with whom he had passed his season's outing was a fisherman, in whose company he had weathered many a wet day afloat. Never pausing, steadily hurrying on through

the darkness, stumbling at times over the rocky shore, he presently approached a small boat-house a quarter-mile or so above the wharf. There, under the lee of Pettet's Neck, which rose across an inlet making westward, the sea was less ragged and the wind less fierce.

At the door of the house he briefly halted, wiping the salt spray from his face and eyes, and vainly listening for the distant whistle of the imperilled steamer. Only the ceaseless swash and break of the waves sounded in his ears; only the driving clouds of fog and mist met his searching gaze seaward.

"They were mistaken! She's not yet passed the light," he said to himself, half-exultantly. "I shall have time to make the narrows!"

Inspired with his heroic purpose, without a thought of himself and the danger he was about to embrace, he unhooked the door of the boat-house, his uncle's, and entered. It was pitch dark inside, yet he knew the place well. On a shelf in one corner were matches and several lanterns. Two of the latter he carefully lighted, and to the bail of each attached a strong piece of marlin, some four feet in length. These preparations having been quickly made, he bore the lanterns and a pair of oars to the beach.

A light skiff was moored by an endless line to a stake off shore. He drew her, tossing and pitching on the waves, to the beach. Carefully stowing the lighted lanterns in the bow, he loosed and boarded the skiff, and after several vain attempts succeeded in working off shore and getting under way.

The words of the old salt still were sounding in his ears:

"'Tain't easy to sight the buoys, ma'am, on a night like this!"

They had given the lad the cue to which he so bravely, yet so blindly, was responding. Heedless of personal peril, imbued with a brave desire to do and dare for those endangered, he was about to undertake the very last measure to have appealed to an experienced seaman, yet not unnaturally, perhaps, the very first to seem feasible to him.

Shaping a course across the inlet, to avail himself of the shelter of the neck, he bent to his oars, and to a task which might have daunted older and wiser hearts than his—that of rowing seaward through the mist and darkness till he should gain the narrows.

It was a long, hard pull for a lad of his years, yet he had learned to handle a skiff with dex-

terity. At the end of ten minutes he had crossed the inlet, and for a half-mile his course lay in the calmer water under the lee of the neck. Skirting the land with sturdy strokes, he soon neared the extremity of the rocky promontory, beyond which rolled a broad stretch of wild waters, the narrows, with grim and dark Pine Island looming in the distance.

Hugging the lee of the bleak shore for a few moments, he rested on his oars to regain his breath. The signal-light on the distant wharf had long been lost to his view. Only the ebon darkness of a starless, stormy night met his gaze in that direction. Far away over the rugged rocks he could faintly discern the light on Gull's Ledge, gleaming like a haggard, solitary eye through the driving mist. The thunder of the breakers on the windward shore of the neck was wellnigh incessant, yet even while he waited and listened the lad heard a deep, dull, distant whistle, like a long-sustained cry for help from out the impenetrable gloom.

"The *Osceola!*" thought he, spurred again to action. "She has passed the light and is headed for the narrows!"

Again he resolutely settled himself to his oars. His jacket bound his shoulders, and, despite

the chilling wind, he stripped it off. With a few sturdy strokes he sent the light skiff clear of the promontory and entered the rougher waters of the narrows. Then, when the boat met the swollen seas, pitching and plunging like a feather in a gale, he was briefly impressed with his own imminent danger.

The impression was but momentary, however. He thought of the people on the wharf, their pale faces and anxious eyes; he thought of the great throng on the imperilled steamer, and of what he yet might accomplish for their sakes should his strength and courage but hold. Setting lips and teeth together, he urged the skiff onward, farther and farther from the shore, into the deeper water and wilder waves. There the wind and tide seized him, sweeping faster and faster toward the channel—and the open sea!

But he knew the course as well as the entrance into his own front yard. A hundred times he had pulled out there to fish under the black buoy. Though every muscle of his sturdy arms seemed strained to its utmost, though every nerve was pulsing and throbbing with pain, he urged the tossing boat upon its course until the long, black spar, anchored on the west edge of

the channel, met his searching gaze. Then he shipped his oars, like the doughty little seaman he truly was, and springing to the bow, caught the heaving spar ere the skiff was swept by.

Again that long, deep, appealing whistle!

Winding an arm around the buoy, the lad caught up one of the lanterns. The marlin was clear. A double hitch was dexterously made about the buoy. The skiff swept on. The lad again sprang to the oars, and, as if for life itself, pulled across the narrow channel, and gained the other spar.

Half a minute later both skiff and lad were swept seaward out into the awful solitude and darkness, and both buoys were left far away astern. But swinging from each, heaving this way and that as the long spars yielded to the wild surge of the waves, was the gleaming lantern which the lad had attached. In his boyish ignorance, in his blind heroism, it was the best that he could do—and, alas! it was the worst he could have done.

Again that long, deep, resonant whistle.

It sounded nearer now. Like a huge leviathan with countless glowing eyes the great steamer, slowly approaching, loomed up against the darkness. Hoarse voices were calling back

and forth from the pilot-house and the forward deck.

"Can you make them out, there, forward?"

"No sir, not yet."

"They look like signals from shore."

"Ay, ay, sir! They wave so steadily."

"We then must be close under Pine Island, or the neck."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Something very like a deep growl sounded from the pilot-house; then the vociferous command:

"Stand by to drop anchor!"

"Belay a bit, sir!" shouted the mate. "There's a skiff under the lee bow, sir, with a man or boy aboard."

"Hail him, and heave him a line."

The line was cast, and grim old Captain Finback, descending to the forward deck, stared amazedly at the figure there presented to his view—a shivering, bare-headed lad, in dripping blue shirt and knickerbockers; a boy with pale cheeks, awed brown eyes, and quivering lips.

"Well, who are you?" gruffly demanded the captain. "And what brought you out here?"

"Please, sir, I am Reggie Dalton," replied the half-frozen lad. "And I came out to hang the

lanterns on the buoys, sir, so you could see them!"

"What!" roared Captain Finback, nonplussed. "The lanterns on the buoys!"

"Yes, sir, please you."

"Well, I'll—"

The gruff old seaman abruptly checked himself. He saw a change come over that boyish, upturned face, and heard a sob from the chilled, trembling lips. They told him what had been dared and done, and he stooped suddenly and took the boy in his brawny arms.

"So you thought you would light the buoys for us, did you, my boy?" he asked, rather huskily.

"Yes, sir. I thought perhaps it would save the steamer and—and the people."

"Get under way again, pilot, and bear straight between the lanterns."

The voice was choked that issued the command, and there was a suspicious moisture in the keen gray eyes of the captain as he said:

"You've done both ill and well, my boy! I can't exactly say that you've saved the vessel—but you've done what many a man of years would have shrunk from attempting. You're a brave lad!"

And the boy felt amply repaid.

He gazed proudly down at the swinging lights as the majestic steamer ploughed her way between them. Then they were left astern, and the signal-light on the wharf came in view.

"A brave boy, Reggie Dalton," repeated the captain.

I am Reggie—or, rather, I was Reggie. Since I attained to six feet and a beard I have lost the childish name. Yet, seeing with the eyes of a boy, hearing with the ears of a boy, I have pictured in the language of a man this incident still so vividly impressed upon my memory.

XII

HOW SHE WON THE MEDAL

And the Colonel's Part in Winning It

IT was on the east coast of the island, where the sandy beach stretched along at the foot of bluffs so steep that it seemed at first glance as if it were impossible that man or beast could descend them.

Two girls walked down to the verge and peeped over. One gave a little shriek and pulled back upon the hand of the other.

"Oh, don't! It makes me dizzy. Did your father *really* ride down there?"

"Yes, really. I know mother was so frightened I thought she would die. I was only seven years old then, but I remember it all so well! Mother stood perfectly still, with her hands pressed tight together, and her face and lips as

white as my handkerchief. I hung on her, and cried, and cried, but she did not seem to know I was there. Then suddenly she fell on her knees and said, in a choked voice, 'Thank God! thank God!' and then she began to cry. It was all over in a minute. I knew father was safe, and I saw him helping the poor wretches on the beach. Now mother appeared to know I was with her. She pulled me closer as she knelt, and kissed me over and over. I shall never forget it if I live a hundred years."

The girls now stood silent for a long time looking out over the water. They were not far from sixteen years old; they were cousins, and bore a certain resemblance to each other. They turned and walked arm in arm away from the water, back through a wide field that sloped up toward a white house on an eminence. This house, behind a thick apple orchard, was where Captain Wetherly had made his home.

Captain Wetherly had jocosely put his wife and baby into Gertrude's care until his return.

"You're the only boy I have, and the head of the family while I'm away. Your mother's such an invalid she doesn't count," he had said, as he kissed her good-bye. "Now don't let either of them get into mischief. You know

how likely mother is to go wrong"—with a laugh that had a tremor in it in spite of his gayety.

"Neither of them shall take a step without my permission," Gertrude had answered, laughing also, though the tears were undisguisedly running down her cheeks as she stood with her hands clasped over her father's arm, while her mother was on the other side of him, her grave, sweet face looking graver and sweeter than ever.

So Captain Wetherly had started on his voyage, and it was now almost half a year since then, and Gertrude was in high spirits about his return.

"What if he should come to-night, and your mother and the baby away?" said Carrie Somers, as they climbed the hill toward the house.

"But he won't, and mother's sure to be home by nine o'clock."

"Of course she'll come by the tri-weekly," remarked Carrie, referring to the steamer which came from New Morris, and stopped three times a week at the wharf down below there on the beach.

"She didn't say, but I'm sure she will."

"We'll have plenty of time for a canter before we shall expect her."

Do you know what it is to go cantering about on a horse when you are a girl of sixteen? If you do, you have felt a glory, a wild exultation which cannot be put into words.

The household on the hill at this time consisted of Gertrude and her cousin, the housekeeper, and a half-grown boy who did the chores, which included the care of the horses and a Jersey cow.

Mrs. Wetherly and the baby had been away on a visit for two weeks. This was the night when they were expected to return. The boat was not due until half-past eight.

The cousins were soon mounted and away. Gertrude rode the carriage-horse, and gave up her own mare to her friend.

The sun had been shining brilliantly all day. It was late in September, and the wind was blowing steadily from the east, rippling up the water and making the old savins and cedars crouch over more than ever toward the west.

It was the night of the full moon, and it rose in a faint film, which caught Gertrude's eye as she galloped over the quiet old road.

"That's a mean kind of a sky," she said. "Somehow it frightens me. It has such a deceitful look."

The two horses swept on side by side, the eyes of their riders bright as fire, their cheeks red, stray locks of hair flying back from their close caps. Something had come over their spirits.

Behind them, in the west, was a ridge of thick cloud which spread but slowly, for it was kept down by the pressure of the east wind. This cloud was greenish-black.

"What a queer time!" cried Carrie, speaking after a long silence.

Gertrude flung up her hand with an involuntary motion, and her voice was sharp, as she exclaimed: "Oh, I hope the steamer 'll be all right. Mercy! what does this mean?" They reined in their horses. The wind had suddenly stopped blowing, and there was so strange and startling a stillness that the two girls held their breath and listened as if expecting to hear some terrible sound.

The long-drawn whistle of a steamboat sounded shrill and clear in the strange silence.

"That's the *Indian Queen* coming round Lantern Point," said Gertrude. "She won't get up to the wharf for half an hour. Let's go on slowly. Jake will be there with the carriage and the farm-horse, and we shall have plenty of time."

In the few moments since the wind had died that green cloud in the west had risen rapidly, and as it rose its shape changed. The thick mass sent out a giant arm, grotesque and terrifying, ending in a huge hand with black fingers outspread, ready to clutch—at least, so Gertrude thought. She glanced back and up, and her face grew pale as she looked. She was thinking of the boat which was rounding Lantern Point.

Carrie looked back also, and cried out, shrilly, "Let us dismount"; and before Gertrude could stop her, she had slipped off the saddle and was standing with the bridle in her hand, trembling and staring up at the sky.

"Why did you do that?" demanded Gertrude, impatiently. "Now you can't come with me. It may not be anything, after all," she said, trying to speak cheerfully.

Although there was no wind, there gradually arose a sound, growing louder and louder—a dull, deep sound as of waters far away rushing with fury. And now they heard the steamboat whistle again.

"Let us go home quick!" pleaded Carrie, and turned her horse, walking with her arm on his neck. "Aren't you coming?" looking back.

"Not I; I'm going to the wharf."

Carrie's mare at this moment threw up her head and jumped away, running toward home. Gertrude's horse tried to follow, rearing and pawing. But his rider had her way, thanks to the heavy curb and her own firmness.

"Now what will you do?" she asked her cousin. "How silly of you not to stick to the saddle!"

"I'll stick to you, if I couldn't to my saddle," said the girl, "though what on earth you're going to do I don't know, and I don't know whether there's going to be an earthquake, or a deluge, or what."

Gertrude was looking hesitatingly at her companion.

"You needn't think of me," said Carrie. "Go on; I can run after. If I can't, it's good enough for me."

Gertrude rode on. She was mounted on a large, spirited horse whose great stride devoured the road. But she had ridden since she was ten years old, and had no fear for her seat. Carrie ran behind, bewailing to herself her foolishness. She soon knew that her cousin was making for the head of the highest cliff overlooking the sea, below which the wharf lay.

Suddenly, with no more warning than a flash of lightning gives, that cloud hand, which had been widening every moment, flung itself over the world. A wind that was not like air, but like blows from a heavy object, beat and raved over the island.

Involuntarily Carrie fell to the ground and flattened herself out on the grass, tearing her fingers into the sod, with no thought in her mind but the instinct to struggle for her own safety.

And Gertrude? She had reached a part of the bluff where she could look off and down. She had seen the little steamer sliding across the water, not more than half a mile from the wharf, with Redman's Ledge behind it to the left. The moon was at the moment cloudless; the twilight had entirely gone.

A lady on the deck, where half a dozen passengers for this landing were waiting, had seen that figure of a horse with its slender, girlish rider suddenly appear in the moonlight on the height, and she had waved a handkerchief, a dimness of pride and love coming to her eyes as she looked at her daughter. Gertrude saw the handkerchief and felt sure the salute was for her.

It was at that very instant that the cloud burst.

Gertrude's horse crouched down and then lay flat on its side, fortunately leaving the girl free. She bent over and clasped her horse's neck, holding on with all her might, and feeling even then as if she would be caught up like a dry leaf and whirled in the air. Where had the moon gone? How could it be so black with that moon somewhere in the sky?

Gertrude, as she clung there in the gale, felt her brain reel and burn with intensity of dread. The steamboat?—her mother and the baby?

In a few days her father would come home. She would have to tell him that they were drowned before her eyes. She would have to live without them. She *could* not live without them. Her mind traversed all the years to come as a lightning flash glares in a dark night.

She had all the time clasped her horse's neck. Now she wondered if she could make him rise with her on his back. She would cling like a monkey if he would only get up. Without knowing why, she shrank from leaving him.

The horse began to move, and then lay still, apparently feeling that he must not rise with the girl in the saddle. She urged him, but he

would not obey. Desperately Gertrude drew her foot from the stirrup and crept to her horse's head. Directly he gathered his legs under him and stood on his feet.

"Now I am helpless," she cried out, the tall horse standing close to her and trembling violently from fright.

Oh, when would the moon shine again! Holding on fast to the stirrup, the girl swung herself forward, trying to peer out over the cliff. But she could not see; only a dark maze, with vague white foam tossing where she knew the edge must be.

A high, quivering voice sounded close to her.

"Where are you?"

"Here!" she shouted, in answer.

She knew the voice, and directly she was aware that her cousin was creeping toward her on her hands and knees.

"This gale can't last!" she cried out. "I must get on my horse again."

The two stood in the shelter that the horse gave, holding hands, and trying to see each other.

"Let me try to put you up," said Carrie. "Get a good grip of the horn."

The clouds above began to part and float

away, leaving large space of star-lighted blue, and the moon shone, full and yellow, up in the east. The wind no longer struck hard blows as with a furious hand, but it blew so that the girls could hardly stand. The landscape and the sea came out vividly like a new scene. Gertrude shook the rein on her horse's neck, and he started forward toward the cliff. Carrie ran after them, staggering and plunging, thinking of that boat which had rounded Lantern Point.

What had really happened she did not know until later.

The small steamboat had been lifted almost bodily out of the water, as though it were a toy, and turned over, splashing down on its decks, all the human beings on board who were not shut in the cabins being turned into the sea, as one might turn a bowl of helpless insects into a pond.

The girl's eyes went swiftly to and fro. Soon they saw the steamboat's bottom glistening in the moonlight, tossing, sometimes almost righting itself. A moment before her mother and sister had been gayly coming toward her. In what horrible foam of water were they now?

"Gertrude!" whispered Carrie, who had crept up to her.

It was near the full of the tide. The beach was very wide and very shallow along this part of the coast.

As they looked, a small boat went out from the shore toward the steamer, and now the girls could see heads in the water, floating garments, clutching hands.

The boat bounded from wave to wave. In a moment the man in it had picked up some one. He was reaching out for another hand stretched toward him, when the boat flew round like a live thing, threw its occupants out, and then went dancing off in the moonlight with a kind of gay motion that was dreadful to see.

Two objects on a plank came drifting by. Gertrude gazed steadily at these last; then she turned to her cousin and said, resolutely:

"Do you see them? I am going."

She gathered the reins in both hands and braced herself firmly back. The horse started at touch of the spur.

Down they went, scrambling, sliding, leaping, the girl sitting as if nothing could unseat her, her eyes of fire fixed on that plank that tossed in the glitter of water.

She was down the bank; she did not pause. Her horse — noble fellow! — galloped into the

breakers which rolled up the shallow beach, the water growing deeper and deeper until it swashed across his heaving chest.

Close by, but just out of reach, floated the plank. Gertrude leaned forward.

"Mother!" she shouted, her voice ringing out sweet and clear amid the whistling of wind and the dashing of water.

Mrs. Wetherly, with one hand grasping the rope which was twisted about the plank, held with her other arm more firmly yet the baby of a year old.

"Take the baby," she said, mechanically, and tried to hold out the child to its sister.

"Both of you! both of you!" returned Gertrude, almost with command. "Here, let me have her." The girl caught the baby by its skirts and pulled her up, then wound her right arm firmly about her. "Mother, you must climb up behind me. Catch hold of the saddle — any way; only do it. There."

Mrs. Wetherly, without trying to think for herself, did as she was bidden. She was a lithe and slender woman, or even the love of life might not have enabled her to scramble up as she did.

As Gertrude felt her mother's clasp about her

waist she turned her horse back. By the time the shore was reached many people had gathered. Helping hands were held out.

When she saw her mother and sister safely taken from her she went back. The big, strong horse was far more useful on such a beach than the boats. The girl worked with a sort of glorious fury. Besides her mother and sister, she saved that night five people, of whom three were children. The last time she came up from the water, bearing a little boy and girl with her, just as they gained high-tide mark, the horse staggered and fell, utterly worn out for the time. He lay as if dead. The people took Gertrude from the saddle, exclaiming and questioning.

Then she saw her mother come trembling toward her, and she put out her arms and began to sob convulsively. She swayed over, and fell in a dead faint upon her mother's breast.

The next day her father returned. He came into the parlor where she lay on the lounge, still so exhausted that she did not wish to move. His face was white like ashes. She held out her hands to him and whispered, "You know you put mother and the baby in my care."

He began crying like a woman, saying, amid

his tears, "Oh, my child! oh, my child!" holding her in his arms, and repeating those words again and again.

Of course the story got into the papers, and they called her "the bravest girl in the United States." She blushed painfully when she first heard those words, but at last, as she said, she "became hardened to them."

When the medal came from the Humane Society her impulse was to push it from her, as she exclaimed, "This belongs to the Colonel more than to me."

The Colonel was the name of the horse she had ridden that evening, and on all holidays thereafter he wore on his broad chest, suspended by a scarlet ribbon, the medal given for the saving of life.

XIII

HOW ST.-REGIS LOST HIS NAME AND FOUND IT AGAIN

Stranded off Porto Rico

THE four or five men who were at work on the deck of the steamship *Dumbarton* were all smiling and making mysterious signs to one another. Something had happened that tickled them very much.

"Did you see it?" one of the men asked, in a low tone. "If you tell me what it is, you can have it."

"It's a real out-an'-outer," another replied. "I never saw a real dude at such close quarters afore."

It was late in a December afternoon, and the British steamship *Dumbarton* lay at her pier in the East River, with all her cargo on board,

ready to sail for Porto Rico next morning. She was a tramp steamship, and she had been chartered by the Porto Rico Steamship Company for the season, to run between New York and that Spanish island in the West Indies. Captain Rowland was in his room making out his papers, and the men on deck were giving the ship the last touches to make her ready for sea.

What had happened that had pleased the sailors so much was the coming on board of a very stylishly dressed young man, who had asked for the captain, and had been shown into the captain's room. Never before had so stylish a boy set foot on the deck of the *Dumbarton*. He was at that moment seated upon the captain's sofa, and Captain Rowland was treating him with great politeness, thinking that nothing less than the best cabin in the ship would suit such a distinguished-looking customer.

The boy was a handsome young fellow of about seventeen, tall and slender, with bright, black eyes and wavy, black hair, and his appearance would have been altogether pleasing if his clothes had not been *quite* so fine, his hat *quite* so stylish, and his hands and face *quite* so white and delicate. But his clothes were of the very latest fashion, his shoes were of patent-

leather, the points of his standing collar were turned down till they almost touched his four-in-hand scarf; and when he took off his gloves, which he did after laying his cane on the sofa beside him, he disclosed a large seal-ring on his left hand which shone as brightly as the gold chain that crossed his vest from pocket to pocket.

"I came to see whether I could get something to do on board your ship, captain," the young man said.

"*You!*" the captain exclaimed, angrily. He was disgusted to find that he had been using the wrong set of manners; for every sea-captain keeps two sets of manners, one for his cabin passengers, the other for his crew. "*You* get something to do on board ship? Why, you're a—you're nothing but a young dude!"

"Perhaps my clothes make me look like one, but I'm not, sir," the boy replied, blushing. "Don't let them stand in the way, for they're easily changed. I'm ready to do any work I can get."

"Got to get out of the country, have you?" the captain asked. "I've seen boys of your kind before. What is it this time—embezzlement or only petty larceny?"

"No, sir, nothing of that kind," the boy answered, blushing harder than before. "I am not running away, for I have no occasion to. My uncle, who is also my guardian, would not take the trouble to look for me. He is satisfied as long as I look stylish enough to live in his house. I have a good home there, and everything I need, but I am not satisfied with that kind of a life. It is not my fault that I wear these fancy clothes, for I have to take what is given me. It is time for me to be doing something for myself; but I have never been taught any business, and I must begin at the bottom somewhere. I hope you can give me something to do, sir."

"What's your name, young man?" the captain asked.

"Arthur Granville St.-Regis, sir," the boy replied.

"Indeed!" said the captain. "Fine name that. Sound well in the fo'castle. Now, Mr. Arthur Granville St.-Regis, you seem to have a grain or two of sense about you, and I'll talk business with you. There's only one place vacant on this ship, that's the cabin-boy's. They've sent me four cabin passengers at the last minute, and I want a boy to wait on them.

That means doing dirty work, wearing rough clothes, and drawing twelve dollars a month. If you want that place you can have it, but I give you fair warning that you'll soon have all the dude knocked out of you."

When St.-Regis said that he would take that or anything else that offered, the captain gave him another warning.

"I suppose you have a heap of book-learning," he said, "but I don't want to hear anything of it here. It's no use on board ship. You're not to know anything but how to do your work. That's all. Be on board at seven o'clock to-morrow morning, and leave your fine clothes and your education ashore."

When St.-Regis went on board next morning he was a much finer-looking boy, dressed in a blue flannel shirt, common blue trousers, and canvas shoes.

Until the ship was outside of Sandy Hook the captain had no time to give to cabin-boys; but when she was steaming down the New Jersey coast he called young St.-Regis into his state-room.

"May as well put him in his place at once," he said to himself, with a half-smile.

"Come in here and shut the door!" he ordered,

when St.-Regis appeared. "Do you see that broad crack in the floor? Toe that line and look me in the eye. Now, what's your name?"

It was new to the boy to be ordered about in this way; but he had made up his mind that he would have to stand a great many disagreeable things, and he quickly did as he was told, and repeated his name, "Arthur Granville St.-Regis, sir."

"No, it's not!" the captain thundered. "We don't have any swells on the *Dumbarton*. While you're aboard this ship your name's Sam. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," the cabin-boy replied.

"And you're the cabin-boy," the captain went on. "Don't make any mistake about what you're here for. You're to wait on the four passengers and the captain—make beds, black boots, carry water, do whatever you're told. You're not to know anything but your work. School-learning's no use in a cabin-boy. The more you've studied, the worse cabin-boy you'll be, unless I knock it out of you. I never went to school ten weeks in my life, and I don't want any college professors about me. Now you know your place, get about your work."

From that minute the cabin-boy answered to

no name but Sam; it was better suited to his position than his real name, which he had not mentioned to anybody on board but the captain; and he was not alarmed by Captain Rowland's gruff orders. It was necessary, he knew, for the captain to be the master, and to treat him like any other cabin-boy. His work was light enough, for the four passengers did not require much attention, being men, and used to making sea-voyages. But what he had to do he did so well that the captain could find no fault with him.

Being good-natured and ready, "Sam" was soon on good terms with all his shipmates. It was easy for them to see that he had been used to better things; but he made no mention of his past life, put on no airs, and was so ready to wait on any of them that they all agreed that the *Dumbarton* had never had a better cabin-boy.

"What a fool you are to go to sea!" the first mate said to him, one day. "You spend time and money getting a good education, and then ship for a cabin-boy, where your education's no use to you."

"Oh, you can't tell about that!" Sam good-naturedly replied. "I suppose knowledge might be useful even to a cabin-boy, sometimes."

"Not a bit," the mate retorted; "no more use to you than six fingers."

"Well," Sam laughed, "I don't expect to be a cabin-boy always. Maybe what I've learned will come useful some day."

But even Sam had no idea that his "book-learning" and his good manners were to be useful to him so soon. The *Dumbarton* was loaded with cargo for nearly every seaport in Porto Rico. First she was to go to San Juan, the capital, and land her passengers and some of her cargo there; then to Arecibo, twenty-five miles down the coast; then on to Mayaguez, and Ponce, returning to San Juan for her homeward-bound cargo.

On the sixth day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the mountains of Porto Rico were sighted—dull banks of mist piled up like clouds in the dim distance. By five o'clock they were plainly outlined against the sky, not more than ten miles away.

"You have given us a safe and pleasant voyage, Señor Captain," one of the passengers said at the supper-table. It was the last meal on board, he thought; in two hours more he would be at home in San Juan.

"No voyage is finished till the ship lies in

port, señor," the captain answered, prophetically.

The captain left the table when the meal was half finished to go on the bridge, for he was a careful captain, and his ship was nearing land. There was a storm cloud nearly overhead, and the sky was growing black. With the caution of an old commander he pulled the bell that reduced the engines to half speed. Having finished their supper, the four passengers joined the captain and first mate upon the bridge.

"There you are!" Sam heard the captain say to one of the passengers. "There is San Juan in that hollow between the two mountains. Do you see the castle, there on the left? There are the two light-houses, on the right and left of the harbor mouth."

"How far are we from shore, captain?" the passenger asked.

"About four miles I should say," the captain answered. "In an hour more you will be at home."

At that moment the storm burst upon them—a real tropical storm, black, sudden, and alarming. Rain poured down in torrents, the sky was black as night, thunder rolled amid the mountain peaks, lightning played about the

iron masts, a hurricane of wind howled through the rigging.

Sam had never seen a tropical storm before, and he was appalled by its fury. Standing on the main-deck near the companionway, almost beneath the bridge, he sheltered himself as well as he could, and held fast.

Suddenly he felt a grating, grinding beneath the ship's bottom, and the vessel stopped with a shock. In an instant he knew that she was on the rocks! The quiet deck was all confusion; bells rang; hurried orders were shouted; the increasing waves picked the vessel up boldly, and let her drop again upon the rocks—thump, thump, thump!

"Heave the lead!" he heard ordered; and a moment later the first mate was telling the passengers to go below, as the iron masts might thump out of her at any minute and crush everything when they fell. There was nothing for a cabin-boy to do but keep out of the way; and Sam crouched in a sheltered corner and watched.

It was all a mystery how the ship could have struck, running into a broad, deep harbor, until the captain shouted to the first officer:

"We've made the wrong port, Mr. Trumble.

This is not San Juan; this is Arecibo, and we're on the White Bone Reef!"

On the dangerous White Bone Reef, where the ribs of many a lost vessel lay! Still the ship thumped, as though she must go to pieces. While Sam watched, great fires sprang up along the shore, and one up in the neighboring hills. The ship's agents on shore, seeing her standing in for a harbor where there is no harbor (for Arecibo has only a roadstead), had hastened to warn her off by signal-fires, but they came too late. On the beach, not more than a mile away, hundreds of people could be seen gathered about the fires, waiting to see the ship go to pieces.

All the usual measures for floating a stranded ship were hastily taken. Boats were lowered, soundings were taken fore and aft and amidships, and anchors were got out astern, with their cables put on the steam-winches. Once she started, but brought up with a crash; her stern had bumped into the ribs of an old wreck, and they could feel the propeller give way; it seemed as though her whole stern had been crushed in.

Still she floated aft, for the reef was under her middle. The anchors were carried astern again, and this time she cleared the reef. Once more

she was afloat, and the engines were backed and backed till she was well out to sea.

What damage had been done the *Dumbarton* no one could tell till she reached port. By sounding the wells it was found that she was not taking in more water than could easily be pumped out. The propeller was undoubtedly injured, but it was impossible to learn how badly. At any rate, there was enough of the screw left to give her some headway, and the captain determined to steam slowly along the coast toward San Juan, which he hoped to reach by daylight.

Although the immediate danger was over, Captain Rowland was in a great state of excitement. Calling Sam into his state-room to find the cable-code book, he locked the door to keep every one else out, and began to smoke an empty pipe, forgetting to fill it.

"A pretty day's work!" he exclaimed to himself. "Must have been the refraction, to fool me like that. But it may cost me my master's certificate, stranding this ship. It means six months' suspension, at the least."

The captain had forgotten to send Sam out of the room, and Sam could not help hearing what he said.

"Perhaps *I* could be of some use to you, captain," he said.

"You don't know what it means to strand a ship, boy," the captain burst out, glad to have some one to talk to. "The fuss only begins when you get her off. When we reach San Juan I have to send a cipher cablegram to my owners, saying that I've been aground. Then I have to report to the British consul, as she's a British ship, and ask him to appoint a board of survey. He appoints three shipmasters, and they make their survey and report. They can do just as they like with us. I think we're able to proceed on our voyage, but if they say go into dry dock, we've got to do it. The nearest dry dock is in St. Thomas, and that means sending to Liverpool for a new propeller, which will take a month or two, and cost us a pretty sum. Everything depends upon keeping on the right side of the board of survey. You don't think you can get me out of *that* scrape, do you?"

"I think I could prepare the cipher telegram for you, sir, at any rate, if you tell me what you want to say."

"I want to say that I stranded on a rocky bottom at Arecibo, was aground thirty minutes, damage unknown; proceeded to San Juan, and

requested a board of survey," the captain growled.

Sam began to study the code-book, and soon found that he could say all these things in very few words, for such emergencies are provided for in the cable code. In less than ten minutes he had this despatch ready:

"Agreed Arecibo donate flash dared San Juan builder."

"Humph!" said the captain, when he looked at it. "Sounds well. Read me off the words till I see what they mean."

Same read out of the code-book: "'Agreed'—stranded on rocky bottom at; 'donate'—aground thirty minutes; 'flash'—damage unknown; 'dared'—proceeded to; 'builder'—requested board of survey."

The captain was pleased to have the troublesome despatch prepared for him, but he only said: "Very good. Now get out till I call you. I've got to struggle with that miserable board of survey yet."

It was not till late in the night that Sam was recalled to the captain's room.

"Sit down there, young man," the captain ordered, much to Sam's surprise. Indeed, it

was astonishing to see how friendly the captain's manner had become. "I've got a notion you can help me out with the board of survey, after the way you wrote the cipher despatch; and if you can, it won't do you any harm."

"I'm sure I hope I can, sir," Sam replied.

"Yes; but this time you must do more than I tell you," said the captain. "You must use your own brains. I don't mind telling you that my own fate depends very much on the report of that board of survey. If they send me to St. Thomas, I'll lose my certificate for a year, sure. But I think you can help me out of the scrape. The board will all be masters of vessels, and shipmasters are not very good writers. I'll manage to let them know that you are, and they'll ask you to act as clerk, to write out the report. You can put on your good clothes, so they'll think you're a cabin passenger. You must know just what I want in the report, and when they hesitate and don't know what to say, you must suggest things. I've seen such boards before. The chief thing I want is a report that the ship is seaworthy and fit to continue her voyage. You're a smart boy. Do you think you're smart enough for that?"

Sam was sure of it, and he spent a great part

of the night with the captain concocting such a report as the captain wanted the board to make. Next day, when the ship lay in San Juan, he was with the captain so much that the crew began to call him the assistant captain.

When the board of survey came and heard what the captain had to say, and looked carelessly over the ship, and had the engines turned, it was Sam who was asked to write out the report. It was Sam who suggested such phrases as, "We find the ship seaworthy, and able to proceed on her voyage"; "no material damage to the hull"; "three blades of the propeller gone, but motive power still sufficient." It was Sam who politely handed the report to the board for them to sign, and who made out the duplicate copy for the British consul.

The board of survey had no sooner gone ashore than Captain Rowland called Sam into his room. "What's your name, sir?" the captain asked, gruffly enough, but he was smiling.

"Sam, sir," the cabin-boy replied, wondering.

"No, it's not," the captain retorted. "Your name's Arthur Granville St.-Regis, with a Mister before it. You're the purser of the *Dumbarton*, for I'm not going to sail this ship any longer without a purser. You did that work well, my

lad, and deserve all I can do for you. Book-learning *is* some use, after all, even on board ship. I'll always have a dude for a cabin-boy after this."

"Thank you, sir," the new purser said.

"Get out about your business," growled the captain. "Hold on, Mr. St.-Regis," he added; "you can keep on your Fifth Avenue clothes now, if you like."

XIV

THE WRECK OF THE *MARIA HELENA*

A True Story of the Hawaiian Coast

ON December 20, 1848, I sailed from Honolulu, where I had been naval-store-keeper for many years. My vessel was the Chilean merchant-ship *Maria Helena*, and she carried as passengers several others who had long resided in the Hawaiian Islands, and who were now returning for a definite stay at home; among those were my wife, another lady, and two small children.

It was somewhat melancholy to bid farewell to the friends among whom we had lived so long, and whom we never expected to meet again, but never did a ship leave port under more favorable auspices. Wind and weather combined their happiest influences, and over the smooth water we sailed, until the island of Oahu,

with its pleasant valleys and bold, romantic scenery, was lost to view. The next morning we saw Hawaii, with Kilauea breathing fire and smoke from its lofty crest, and Maui a cloudy speck in the distance. They also were soon lost to view, and nothing remained for the eye to rest on but the heaving ocean and here and there a solitary sea-bird. After losing sight of the islands, nothing of interest occurred until January 3d, when a large fish was harpooned, the liver of which was to have afforded a fine breakfast for the inmates of the cabin the next morning.

At one o'clock that night the captain, supposing that we would pass Christmas Island about that time, took two observations of the stars for the latitude. These put us in the latitude of the island, but, as there was no indication of land, and as the chronometer put us forty miles to the eastward, the skipper felt secure, and turned in for the night. The cabin lights were put out and all was quiet; nothing disturbed the stillness of repose save the deep breathing of the tired skipper, dreaming, perhaps, of the native land that he hoped to see so soon again. Suddenly a startling and alarmed voice was heard from the lookout on the fo'c's'le: "Breakers ahead! Hard alee! Hard alee!"

Like an electric shock that sound passed through the souls of the sleepers, spreading consternation and rousing them to a sense of dreadfully imminent danger. With one impulse all rushed on deck, to behold through the darkness of the night a long, uninterrupted line of breakers, and to hear, above the stern words of command and the tread of hurrying feet, the wild, angry roar of the surf. But even in that time of dread, hope was with us, and as the ship, still obedient to the will of her master, came slowly to the wind, there yet remained a chance of escape. The awed stillness of all on deck proclaimed how deep was the suspense. One brief moment more and the ship will be headed to sea; but suddenly she strikes; she trembles through all her strong timbers, and then resigns herself to her fate, and the breakers wash around her decks.

All hope of saving her was now at an end, and preparations were immediately begun to get the gig and whale-boat alongside in readiness to receive the women and children. Some delay occurred before this could be accomplished, and it was fully an hour before the boats were ready. During this time no expression of fear escaped from either of the ladies.

Notwithstanding the violent shocks that the

"THE MEN LAY ON THEIR OARS"

ship received as she rose and fell upon the rocks with the heave of the sea, the children slept soundly, and when the boats were reported ready, with a small quantity of provisions, water, and clothing, they and their mothers were passed into them without the smallest accident, although the exploit was attended with much danger, as the ship had by this time been driven close on to the roughest water about the reef.

As soon as the whale-boat had her full complement of passengers, I among them, she was hauled astern of the ship, which was lying parallel to the shore, and pulled seaward. When about a hundred yards away, the men lay on their oars, and all waited anxiously for the dawn to reveal the full extent of the danger.

Half an hour after we left the ship we heard an awful cracking of timbers above the roar of the breakers, and could just make out through the gloom of night the falling masts as they tottered one by one, and fell over to leeward. We immediately pulled toward the ship, and hailed her to inquire if any one was injured and how they were getting on. Some one replied that all was well, and that the vessel was lying much easier.

About half-past four the waning moon rose,

and we supposed that day was about to break, and that the sun would soon appear to show all the circumstances of our perilous position; but although we were in a condition of the most trying nature—our ship ashore on a frightful coast, and ourselves tossed about on the open sea in a leaky boat, totally ignorant of the character of the island and its extent—no one despaired.

At last the day dawned, and revealed to our anxious eyes a line of low coast twenty or twenty-five miles in extent, making out in a considerable point to the north and west, the shore bounded, as far as the eye could reach, by a line of sullen breakers. In the indistinctness of the twilight some imagined that they could see houses, but these proved afterward to be clumps of low bushes scattered here and there upon a sandy and uninhabited island.

Soon after sunrise the captain joined us in the gig, and, upon consulting together, we concluded to pull around the point referred to, and seek a landing under the lee side of the island. Had this plan been carried out we must all have suffered very much before we could have procured relief, as we had but a small breaker of water and a few biscuits in the boat, and would

have had to pull a long distance before finding a suitable landing-place. After pulling about a mile to the westward we reflected on this want of provisions, and decided to return and try to land under the lee of the ship.

Preparatory to making the attempt, the gig was sent alongside to get a full crew, and then to land before us; but in attempting to board the ship she got into the rollers, and was capsized before she could be pulled clear. Some of the men were injured, but they finally reached the shore, although with a badly stove boat.

This was poor encouragement for us, but having come to the conclusion that there was only one course for us to take, we made all necessary preparations, and confiding the steering-oar to an experienced hand, waited for a smooth time to make our effort.

After waiting a few moments a favorable time came, and the boat was headed for the seething breakers. As we approached them all conversation ceased, and the compressed lip and rigid features showed our painful appreciation of the approaching crisis. Soon a huge roller lifted the little boat far above the surrounding water, and she sped on like an arrow. Scarcely had we begun to feel the swiftness of our flight be-

fore we struck the beach, and the ladies and children were landed and out of present danger. During the whole of the day they remained on the beach, with nothing but two small umbrellas to shelter them from the rays of a tropical sun, while the gentlemen, captain, and crew were engaged in saving provisions and baggage from the wreck. This work continued until four in the afternoon, when the sea became so high and the surf so violent as to render further efforts impracticable.

We also saved some sails and spars, by means of which we erected a commodious tent for the ladies and passengers, and another for the men.

Shortly after being installed in our new quarters dinner was served, and was enjoyed by every one, as it was the first food we had had for twenty-four hours.

Before this, Mr. Christie, one of the passengers, had come in and announced that he had seen two sails in the offing, and without rest or refreshment he, the captain, and a couple of sailors started off to make an effort to communicate with the welcome strangers. The rest of us retired to rest upon rude couches made from the wreckage, and after the fatigue and excitement of the day our sleep was sound.

About eight in the morning the exploring party returned with the news that they had found the wreck of the ship *Mozart* upon the eastern end of the island, that from a slip of paper they had found that she had gone ashore on the 7th of the previous December, and that the supposed sails in the offing were a couple of tents erected for shelter by her crew. Although our disappointment regarding the supposed ships was great, we were glad to learn from the note left that the crew of the *Mozart* had been taken from the island by a passing vessel within a week of her misfortune, and that therefore there seemed a reasonable prospect of our own early rescue.

Meanwhile we had to consider the necessities of a food and water supply. The water of the island was brackish and almost undrinkable, and food was scarce in the extreme, consisting mainly of the scanty stores taken from the *Maria Helena*, and some biscuits found aboard the *Mozart*. Sea-birds were plentiful, but difficult to capture.

The captain and I soon overcame the water famine, however, by constructing a distiller from a rusty musket barrel and the remains of an old copper boiler.

About a week after the wreck the *Maria Helena* went to pieces during a storm, and in a short time her broken and ragged timbers strewed the shore. Soon after this the whale-boat, with Mr. Christie, the second mate, and four sailors, started off to a low promontory about fifty miles away, to erect a signal for the attention of any passing ship, and to learn something of the character of the island.

In three days one of the men returned with the news that the boat had been upset in the breakers about forty miles away, and two seamen so badly injured that the rest of the party had been compelled to leave them behind with all the water that had been saved. The uninjured ones then started to return to the ship, which they reached after incredible difficulty and hardship, and a few days afterward the wounded men were found and brought back.

In the mean time the long-boat of the *Mozart* had been found and decked over for sea-service. We intended to send her to Honolulu to give intelligence of our precarious situation, and to beg for relief. During the time occupied in her refitting we passed many long hours in writing to our friends. At last the letters were finished, the boat ready, and we only awaited a smooth

time for her launch. This came on a Sunday, but we all felt that our situation justified a seeming violation of the day.

The word was given to shove off, and with lusty strokes the little boat was impelled forward. Breaker after breaker followed each other in quick succession, like the sturdy blows of the smith; yet she rode safely. But like a stealthy thief in the night was the insidious wave that began to form beyond the breaking waters. At first but a barely perceptible undulation, it acquired volume and power as it approached the reef, and came thundering on as though conscious of its fearful majesty and might. Nearer and nearer came that dreaded enemy, rearing its horrid form aloft, until it struck the boat, and its work was accomplished. We watched the receding wave with straining eyes, and were right joyous to see all the crew clinging to the capsized boat or striking out manfully for the shore. All but one landed safely, and four or five of the watchers dashed in to his rescue. At last the captain succeeded in hauling him ashore, but although for two hours we made every effort to restore him to consciousness, all our exertions failed.

After this fruitless attempt we were obliged

to wait a fortnight until the surf was moderate enough to warrant another trial. On February 7th the boat was launched again, placed in charge of her crew, which consisted of the first mate and four men, and anchored outside the reef in safety. The rest of the day was passed in provisioning her for her cruise, and on the morning of the next day the little vessel weighed anchor, made sail to the northward and eastward, and went gallantly on her way amid our cheers and blessings.

A long period of suspense was now passed, but on the morning of March 16th a sail hove in sight, and soon proved to be the French frigate *Sarcelle*, which had been despatched to our assistance by the French consul at Honolulu as soon as he heard of our disaster from the first mate. The long-boat had made her perilous journey in twenty-two days.

The surf was too rough to attempt embarkation the morning after the *Sarcelle* arrived, and we sent a message off to her by a Kanaka, who was the only one of the party that could be trusted in the heavy sea—which no boat could have lived through. He was furnished with a small surf-board, and the note was hung in a bottle, which he tied around his neck. He then

walked out to the edge of the breakers, and waited for a favorable opportunity before he attempted to breast them.

The enterprise that he was about to undertake was hazardous in the extreme, and his every movement was watched intently by all hands standing on the beach. The quick succession in which the rollers followed each other, their irregularity, and the sharp coral rocks just below the surface made the surf here particularly dangerous. Skill and courage were necessary to pass safely through the boiling waters.

For ten or fifteen minutes after the boy was ready he stood silently watching the breakers, waiting for a lull, and then sprang forward, keeping his surf-board extended before him. The skill and ease with which he ascended the perpendicular rollers as they came towering on, and the courage which he displayed throughout, were the admiration of all. As some huge breaker, more formidable than any that had preceded it, formed outside and came thundering on, all expected to see him thrown back before its tremendous power; but with his board raised perpendicularly before him, he climbed to the lofty crest, and was lost to view behind the conquered wave that came rushing on to

break sullenly on the shore. Again and again he encountered his enemy, again and again to succeed.

In returning, the surf-board was thrown away, and awaiting a good opportunity as before, he swam boldly into the rollers, keeping his face toward them, and diving whenever they threatened to break. In this way he reached the shore without a single bruise, bringing an answer that the *Sarcelle* would go around to the lee side of the island, where we could embark in safety.

The next morning our caravan started, and after much suffering from fatigue and thirst we reached the French camp at 11 P. M. of the second day.

We were treated with the utmost kindness and courtesy, and on March 26th got under way for Honolulu. By ten o'clock Christmas Island, the resting-place of so many weeks, sunk below the horizon, and in sixteen days we stood once more on the wharf at Honolulu, surrounded again by our welcoming friends.

XV

A CREATURE OF CIRCUMSTANCE

By Morgan Robertson

HE was Scotch from crown to toe—Scotch in his name, character, and virtues (vices he had none, unless the national acquisitiveness can be so characterized), and Scotch, above all, in his religion. The Scotch Presbyterianism is considerably bluer than the rest of the brand, and of the bluest of the blue was the theology of Angus MacNab. As a boy he had won prizes at Sabbath-school, walked through youth in the straight and narrow way, and on coming to manhood, tall, loose-jointed, and solemn, found himself with but two definite incentives to future action—an ambition to acquire wealth and a dream of saving souls. Parsons were poor, and money-making ungodly, and for a while the two conflicting passions prevented his choosing a career; but he learned in time of the possibil-

ities in missionary work among the heathen, and with much prayer and pious thought took his way toward this calling.

An outward-bound ship took him, primed with zeal and commissions, as far toward heathendom as the River Plate, where an easterly gale wrecked the ship and drowned half her people. His baggage and credentials were lost, and the enforced companionship with seamen in the open air until they reached the settlements roughened him, and prepared him to work his way as a foremast-hand to Buenos Ayres. Here he found no occupation congenial to his creed—the Roman Catholic Church attending to the needs of souls—and he shipped before the mast for the Gold Coast, where, he was told, there were missionaries. This trip determined his life. With his small endowment of spirituality reduced to intolerant dogmatism, and his clothing to tarry rags, he presented so unpromising a front to the local missionaries as to fail him of encouragement, or even their efforts toward his discharge from the ship, and he finished the voyage, shipping again in the same craft, again and again in others, wandering around the world, and drifting with each voyage farther and farther from the calling he aspired to, while he

acquired money and knowledge in the one forced upon him.

At thirty he was a competent chief mate and navigator, with a master's certificate and a bank account; at forty, a shrewd, successful commander, with three or four bank accounts, and a reputation for piety and integrity that attracted to him all that was God-fearing in the seafaring element at the home ports, and repelled the opposite. Indeed, no irreligious sailor would or could make the second voyage with him; and at the time this story opens—in the early forties—he possessed a following of thirty hard-headed, Sabbath-keeping, money-saving Scots, who had signed with him and sworn by him—figuratively—for years, and who mustered at his call into an office at Cape Town, where they formed a stock company, subscribing their savings and services, and electing Captain MacNab, the heaviest subscriber, president, and his officers directors—which company bought for a song a fast-sailing bark that had lately climbed high and dry on the beach and been abandoned to the underwriters.

Hard work and good seamanship floated her, and after a few repairs and internal changes she departed, with a new name and an empty

hold, for the Guinea coast, where she took on an unsavory cargo, the purchase of which used up the last shilling of the company's capital, and sailed for a Brazilian market.

At daylight of the seventh day out Captain MacNab squared away to the southward, sent up stu'n'-sails, and a silent prayer to Heaven that the way of the ungodly might perish, and called his first mate, Sandy Anderson, for charging across his stern from east to west was a white brig, yachtlike in her symmetrical beauty, and showing, as she heeled to the fresh northerly breeze, a shining incline of yellow deck, on which were twelve guns and a Long Tom, while a mile astern of her was a pursuing topsail schooner, black, but equally yachtlike, with a long pennant at the main-truck, the tricolor at the gaff end, and on her forecastle a vicious bow chaser which occasionally spoke.

"It 'll be ane o' the ten-gun schooners the French have sent doon to police the coast, I'm thinkin', Sandy," said Captain MacNab, as he took his glass off the pursuer. "Send that the brig holds him to it till we're oot o' range."

"Ay," answered the mate, as he reached for the glass. "We can run awa' from any schooner afloat, wi' the wind free, e'en a French

bottom; but yon brig 'll be meat for the froggies; she's makin' but twa feet t' the schooner's three! Save us! what's that?"

"A shell, Sandy! a shell! a shell! Oh, the inhumanity o' man—the inhumanity! To drop a shell on a cargo o' human creatur's!"

An explosion had occurred on the deck of the brig a few seconds after a heavier puff of smoke had left the schooner and coincident with the louder boom of a shell-gun. The brig's maintack and main staysail sheet were evidently cut, for these sails thrashed in the wind and were taken in, while the schooner, which had luffed three points or more to fire this shot from a bow port, paid off to resume the chase, which now gave promise of a speedy end.

But the brig was observed to luff, though with no backing of yards to indicate surrender. Around she came until her weather leaches trembled, and lay steady at about forty-five degrees from her course, while a cluster of men could be seen working at the Long Tom amidships.

"She's hittin' back—hittin' back!" murmured Sandy, excitedly, as he handed the glass to his superior. "Losh! but it's a hangin'

matter! Confiscation's bad enough, but they'll hang—they'll hang for piracy!"

The brig heeled visibly under the recoil of the gun, and a roar like a clap of thunder came down the wind. "Double-shotted," thought Captain MacNab as he heard it. "Chain-shot!" he exclaimed, as he saw the jib-topsail, fore topsail, top-gallant sail, and main gaff topsail of the schooner sink to leeward in a tangle, while two shattered stumps showed above the cross-trees. The brig paid off, set her mainsail and stay-sail, and sailed on. The race was indeed ended.

The schooner's rigging became black with men securing the wreck, and she wore around to an easterly course, while the brig kept on to the westward, and the bark to the southward. At noon, with his quarrelling neighbors reduced to specks on the horizon, Captain MacNab hauled back to his course, and said to his mate: "'Twas a fair good shot, Sandy, but what is she? Chain-shot is obsolete, and all men-o'-war paint black. An' would a war-brig of any country run from a French schooner? France has na quarrel wi' nations. Is she a slaver, Sandy, or ha' the days o' piracy come back?"

Sandy could not answer, but next morning the question was answered by the brig herself.

At midnight, though the weather was fine, the light sails had been furled, for the coming day was Sunday, sacred to Captain MacNab, to be remembered religiously in meditation and prayer, undisturbed by the trimming and shortening of sail. Riding along on a course which nothing but threatening disaster was to change before the following midnight, the bark found herself, as the gray dawn stole over the sea, a quarter-mile to leeward of a shadowy fabric, which, as the tropic day opened up in all its sudden brightness, resolved itself into the white brig, graceful and menacing, humming down with yards square, ports open, and guns run out.

"Save us!" muttered the mate, who had the deck. "Put your wheel up, mon," he said to the helmsman—then in a roar: "Call all hands, forrard there! Loose royals an' t'-gallan'-sa'ls for an' aft!" While the men sprang to obey the orders the mate tapped on the Captain's window, and hoisted the British ensign.

As though in defiance of the red emblem of maritime supremacy, a bow gun belched forth and sent a solid shot ricochetting ahead of the bark; then a trumpet voice from the brig called out, "Put your wheel down and back your main topsail."

Captain MacNab reached the deck in time to hear this, and growled between his teeth: "We'll see you further first, ye children o' the deil! Gi' her the canvas, Sandy. Steady your wheel, there," he added; "dead 'fore the wind keep her. Weather braces, m' laddies. Square in. Lord forgi' yon Philistines—Lord forgi' 'em if they fire on us, wi' three hunder misguided an' unprepared creatures in the hold."

But the brig fired no more. She squared in her yards and followed the bark, sending up stu'n'-sails on the fore with all the quickness and precision of a government craft. Then began a race which, had the bark been in anything else but Sunday dress, might, other things equal, have resulted in her favor; but it takes a little time, even with a frantic captain shouting, to loose and set top-gallant sails and royals, and before the first was hoisted the brig had the wind of her quarry, and was gaining, half a length a minute. Up she came, "hand over hand," showing, as she lifted to the seas, occasional glimpses of bright copper between the white bow and whiter turmoil of water beneath, every sail in the pyramid of canvas standing out in rigid convexity, every rope taut and in place

—a beautiful picture to any but anxious Scotchmen.

As she drew near, Captain MacNab made out with his glass clusters of men on her forecastle deck, and in the fore-chains men with red shirts, nondescript caps, black faces, and gleaming teeth and eyeballs. Amidships a gang worked a fly-wheel pump, and aft near the helmsman stood a slim-built young fellow, black-faced and red-shirted like the rest.

"Niggers, niggers, Sandy!" groaned the Captain. "What d'ye want, aboord that brig?" he roared. "Keep awa' from me! Sheer off!"

There was no answer, though the young fellow near the wheel sang out something in French to the crew as the brig drew up on the bark's starboard quarter. Wild thoughts flitted through Captain MacNab's head at this juncture—thoughts of putting his wheel hard-a-port as the white bow lapped his stern, and carrying away the brig's jib-boom and head-gear with his mizzenmast, then escaping the crippled pursuer by bracing sharp up on the starboard tack. But he looked at the black guns and Long Tom, he had seen the brig's gunnery—and he hesitated.

The brig, answering a slight twist of her wheel,

drew in, and a scowling negro on the rail reached out and cut the hauling part of Captain MacNab's main brace, which unrove with a whir of sheaves and trailed astern as the yard-arm canted forward. The brig's stu'n'-sails came in like folding wings; men who had sprung aloft rigged in the booms; men on deck braced the yards to port, and the white craft slid forward with lessening headway—the negro cutting the bark's upper braces as he came to them—and with skilfully thrown grappling-hooks was checked, stopped, and fastened, with her nose abreast of the bark's mainmast, and her fore royal stay lifting the foot-rope of the swinging main-yard. Captain MacNab, wrathful but helpless, gave no orders to his unarmed crew; the helmsman steered faithfully on before the wind, as last directed, and the two craft, locked together, charged along, while a black horde to the number of forty crowded over the rail, each red waist encircled by a broad belt studded with little brass cylinders, each belt supporting, besides a long knife, a brace of heavy pistols with revolving chambers, curiously contrived and newly invented—Colt revolvers.

No resistance was offered by the Scotch crew, and no violence as yet by the blacks; they

clustered amidships, while their commander, who had leisurely followed them, walked aft and up the quarter-deck steps.

He was about thirty, armed and dressed like his crew, and with equally gleaming eyes; but beyond this gleam of the eyes—fighting eyes they were—and a deep scowl in the forehead, his featurs were of almost Caucasian regularity and refinement. It was the face of a dreamer—a brooder. Such faces are seen in forlorn hopes, in the sanctums of turbulent weeklies, in legislative minorities, reform pulpits, lunatic asylums, and political prisons. They and the minds behind are of the future, and are decidedly incongruous and displeasing in an age of the present.

"Which is the captain of this bark?" he asked, in purest English, as his eyes wandered from Captain MacNab to the mate, and back.

"Myself—Angus MacNab; an' this is my mate, Alexander Anderson; an' this is the bark *Dundee,* o' Cape Town. An' noo will ye tell us wha ye are, an' what's your flag, an' why ye fire on an' boord a British craft on the high seas i' this arbitrary manner?"

"All in good time. I doubt, however, that an appeal to your flag or government will avail you. You have slaves aboard."

"An' how do ye ken sa much?"

"I judged of your conscience yesterday when you fled from French powder; to-day I judge by the odor surrounding your craft. Open those hatches, men," he called to his crew.

In a trice this was done, the blacks shouldering the white men out of their way; then all, white and black, drew away from the openings to avoid the stench which, with the sound of groaning, came from the decks beneath.

The brig Captain stepped down, peered into the hold, and called out something in an unknown tongue. After a moment's silence, outcries began from under the hatch, extending along the 'tween-deck, descending to the hold below, increasing in force and volume as the word was passed along, until the clamor became a humming, inarticulate roar. It was a tribute to liberty which all could comprehend.

With an additional sparkle to his eyes and a deeper scowl on his forehead, the young negro came aft, followed by a few of his men, one of whom went to the wheel, motioning the Scot in charge away with a significant and effective flourish of his long knife.

"How many?" demanded the negro Captain, tersely.

"Three hunder."

"Shackled in pairs or in gangs?"

"I' gangs o' ten."

"A poor plan," said the negro, in a tone of mingled scorn and bitterness; "they live longer when shackled in pairs. I will thank you for the keys of the shackles."

"An' will ye loose yon irresponsible heathen?" asked Captain MacNab, excitedly.

"I will, to the last soul, and lock you and your fiendish crew in their places. I give you a choice—to hand me the keys and submit quietly, or be tossed overboard in the next five minutes."

"An' what then—if we submit?" asked Captain MacNab, his solemn face working.

"Ask that of the people you meant to sell into slavery. They will decide your fate on the Cameroon coast."

When you have been forced by unkind fate to stifle for half a lifetime all the instincts and spiritual yearnings of your better nature, to limit the soarings of your soul to the fog of a mercenary career; when at last fate has relented, to a degree, and permits a compromise by which devotion to God and Mammon need not conflict, whereby, instead of enlightening

the heathen in his darkness, you may take him out of his darkness to the enlightenment of civilized life, and at the same time that you obtain credit in heaven for the saving of his soul realize a handsome profit on the sale of his body—such a pair of alternatives, instant death and the mercy of liberated slaves, as was offered by this misguided obstructionist is, to say the least, discouraging. The savings of twenty years and the approval of Captain MacNab's long-accusing conscience (for he was genuinely sincere) were concerned in the success of this voyage. He looked at his anxious crew, from whom he was now separated by the blacks, at his stolid first officer, at a distant rack of hand-spikes—potent in argument—into the bore of a long six-shooter, and over it at the deadly, gleaming eyes of the black Captain, and lastly he looked up to the heavens.

"Thy will be done, O Lord," he groaned. "Gi' him the keys, Mr. Anderson." The mate nodded and descended to his room, returning with a bunch of keys, which he handed over. "An' if ye ha' na objections, ye maun tell us what flag we surrender to, an' wha ye are," continued the Captain as the pistol was tucked into the other's belt.

"I have no objection whatever. You surrender to the brig *La Guillotine*, which sails under no flag. Her Captain is Paul Arcand, who owes allegiance to no country, and to no cause but that of liberty. For this cause *La Guillotine* works, like her namesake of old, but having no present quarrel with men-of-war, she avoids them and only strikes in self-defence. Is your position plain to you?"

"It's plain that we're i' the hands of a bloody-minded pirate," retorted Captain MacNab, in a tone of disgust and aversion. "I take it ye're one o' these intriguin' free niggers o' Hayti, educated i' France, only to be kicked oot o' your ain country."

"My position depends on the view-point," rejoined Captain Arcand, quietly. "No country on earth is free enough to own me. Oblige me by stepping down on the main-deck and joining your men." But in spite of this definition of his freedom, the half drawing of his pistol and the ugly look of his face proved that Captain Arcand was not emancipated past the reach of an insult.

Fifteen minutes later, Captain MacNab and Sandy, fastened near the end of a thirty-foot chain, were watching the shackling on, to this

and two other chains, of the complaining crew, while the clean upper deck was filling with successive arrivals from below of naked, filthy, emaciated, and half-dead creatures of both sexes. Some were lifted to the deck; others could climb and walk, assisting the weaker; and all, strong or weak, old or young, cried and rejoiced, and grovelled persistently at the feet of their red-shirted deliverers, whose pitying eyes only gleamed now as they rested on the white men.

"We're i' the hands o' the Lord, Sandy," said Captain MacNab, devoutly, as he looked at the rusty bracelet encircling his left wrist. "We ma trust to Him."

"We're i' the hands o' robbers an' thieves," rejoined Sandy, irreverently. "What's to be the final disposeetion of us?"

"Landed wi' the niggers, I judge. To think of it, Sandy—to think of it—three thoosand poonds' warth o' niggers ta'en from us—ta'en from us to be cast back i' their ignorance an' darkness, to be robbed o' the blessed tidings. Oh, the sinfu'ness o' man!" Captain MacNab groaned in anguish of soul.

When the last miserable wretch was above the deck, and a half-dozen corpses were laid out in

the scuppers, the three gangs of prisoners were conducted to the lower hold, where each chain was stretched out and the ends shackled to stanchions; then, with the clank of the never-resting fly-wheel pump ringing in their ears through the walls of the two craft, and the unintelligible orders of Captain Arcand and the shouts of the liberated blacks mocking them, the hatches were closed, and in darkness and filth they were left to themselves.

To those unacquainted with the horrors of a slaver's hold it is enough to say, without grewsome details, that nearly half of the blacks die in transit, and that the profits of the voyage are made on the survivors. This large mortality is due, no doubt, to the impoverishing treatment endured on the march to the coast, and to the initial weak physical endowment of the negro race. The thirty-one strong, hardy Scotchmen immured in the foul hold did not die—not one of them. They suffered in another way. The first day was used up in complaining and criticisms of Captain MacNab's management, ending at last, toward evening, by the lifting of the hatch and lowering into the hold of three tubs of corn mush and three buckets of water. Men followed, and placing a bucket at the end of each

line, carried the tubs along and dumped out the mush on the filthy balast flooring in more or less even piles.

Those who could eat did so, grabbing the food with their disengaged right hands, and by passing the buckets along, all but those at the further end secured a drink of water. The cheated ones had a grievance and voiced it, but without avail, as the hatch was again closed on them; but next day the buckets were started at the other ends of the lines, and the grievance shared. In this manner, as the two vessels sailed eastward and the closed-up hold became a hot inferno under the tropical sun, they were fed and watered once a day on the leavings of the slaves, who, free to come and go as they pleased, slept and ate in the 'tween-deck above them.

On the second day some prayed, some yelled for fresh air, some sang hymns and crooned, others cursed and swore—to the scandal of the patient Captain—and a few fought, one-handed, over the chain. Through the third day there were less praying and singing, more profanity and fighting, and a great deal of screaming for fresh air. On the next day there was some laughter—horrid to hear—more singing, very

little praying, and less intelligent shouting. And thus day by day the symptoms aggravated, until two weeks had passed by; then, shortly after the sounds of shortening sail from the upper deck and the renewed throbbing of that never-resting pump alongside, the hatch was lifted again, and, guarded and controlled by as many red-shirted men as could clap on to ropes led through the end rings of the chains, they were dragged up the ladder to the deck and fastened to the rail, where the crowding black slaves peered at them, and drew away, shuddering.

Thirty-one strong, healthy, level-headed men had gone into that hold two weeks before. Thirty-one lean, unclean wrecks came out—parodies on manhood—partly covered by shreds of clothing, mottled with black and blue spots, streaked with angry red scratches and tearings of finger-nails, scarred on hands and arms with teeth marks—all, with one exception, laughing, hissing, chattering, red-eyed wild beasts—stark, raving mad. The exception was Captain MacNab. His strong abiding faith had saved his reason, though his hair was white as the topsides of *La Guillotine*.

Cleansing his poisoned lungs with gasping in-

halations of the sweet, fresh air, and closing his eyes against the blinding sunlight, he lifted his haggard face to the heavens. "O God o' mercy," he sobbed, "I thank ye for this reprieve. O God o' vengeance, gi' me light an' strength a little longer, an' courage."

The two craft had been grounded side by side, the brig inshore, near the left bank of a muddy river. About a hundred yards distant on the muddy river. About a hundred yards distant on the marshy beach was high-water mark, from which the water was now receding. Downstream, the ebbing tide split upon the river-bar of a high, cone-shaped island, past which the two streams rushed to the open sea, visible in blue patches over the undergrowth of the low shores. Inland, the marshy river-banks merged into a hummocky, wooded slope which stretched up to a distant mountain range, and sprinkled here and there among the trees were clusters of mud-brown huts, or small villages, from which a population was coming, black and naked, but active and apparently well fed.

Aloft, some of the red-shirted crew were stowing the sails of both vessels, while others coiled up gear below. On the deck of the bark was the horde of released slaves, huddled as far

from the white men as they could get; aboard the brig the pump gang still worked, wearily; and aft, leaning against the quarter-rail, was Captain Arcand, conversing with one of his men and watching the three lines of chained maniacs.

With his sunken eyes glowing like smouldering coals, Captain MacNab reached out his free arm in his direction, and called, hoarsely, "An' are ye satisfied the noo, ye monster o' ineequity?"

Captain Arcand walked forward, climbed over the rails, and proceeded slowly down the lines, peering into each distorted face and shuddering palpably at the outbreak evoked by his near presence, and stopped in front of Captain MacNab.

"No," he said, quietly, "I am not satisfied. This is the result of my mate, who sailed the bark in, misunderstanding my directions. I am in favor of a clean, healthy vengeance on slave-traders, but not this." He looked regretfully at the gibbering Sandy, who was trying to reach him. I had destined you and your men," he went on, "to the same fate that you had arranged for my people. You were to take their places in the hold, receiving the same fare

and treatment, including daily exercise on deck, and later were to become the property of my colony ashore here, every member of which I have rescued from slavery. Ashore, you were to be killed—worked or whipped to death, or allowed to run and die in the swamps, as your masters determined. This last will probably be the fate of your men, as my people in their native state will have no dealings with the insane. And on the whole," he added, his face hardening, "their punishment may be lighter than yours."

"An' your punishment, ye black deil, is to come," growled Captain MacNab, in impotent rage; "it'll be better, I'm thinkin', could ye so balance account, that ye loose my daft laddies and let them rend ye limb from limb."

The other turned away with a shrug of the shoulders, and returned to the brig, while Captain MacNab cooled down a little in the endeavor to soothe the agitated Sandy, and in the reflection that in the seven days of the voyage he had not once exercised the slaves.

Three hours later the pump had ceased its clanking, and the outpourings of the huts had walked on the slant of mud to the brig, welcomed noisily the new recruits, and departed with

them, after a subdued and awe-struck inspection of the white men. Captain Arcand and his crew were over the side, examining the hull of the brig, and the prisoners, under the influence of the fresh air and a bountiful repast of mush, and possibly from the absence of the blacks, had quieted down and sunk to the deck, each manacled left wrist raised to the taut chain. Some were sleeping. Captain MacNab looked sorrowfully down the line, and muttered: "Sleep, laddies, sleep. I ha' led you into this An' what 'll but craze a sensitive white man kills a nigger. Did I right? I meant right. Lord forgi' me if I was wrong." His terrible ordeal had brought doubts to Captain MacNab's mind as to the civilizing and humanizing influence of the slave trade, but his communings with conscience were soon interrupted by the approach of Captain Arcand and his men.

"I find," said the negro Captain to him, "that my brig is badly damaged by the explosion of a shell down the hatchway. She is old and slower than the bark; so, instead of burning your craft, as is my rule with prizes, I shall transship my stores and guns, and go to sea in her. And as it will take the people ashore some time to decide what to do with you and your

men, you will, meanwhile, occupy the deck of the brig."

Outcries and violence began afresh as the madmen were pitilessly hauled over the rails and moored to the inshore bulwarks of the brig; but, as Captain MacNab noticed, they subsided when the blacks left them.

The nauseous task of cleaning up the slaver's hold need not be described beyond saying that it required the labor of the entire colony ashore in the burning of wood and lime-rock in the hills and transporting the wood-ash and lime to the bark, and the labor of the black crew in removing, cleansing, and replacing ballast and scouring and whitewashing the hold, for ten days before Captain Arcand decided that the bark was a fit habitation for human beings. Then began the transfer of the stores and dunnage, and the cutting of ports in the bulwarks. The guns were left to the last because, on account of the increased draught such weights would give the bark, she would need to float before taking them on.

During this time the demented crew had eaten, slept, and occasionally raved at the black workers on the deck of the brig; and Captain MacNab had become soul weary of the unsettled

question of their fate, for the natives, apparently coming to no decision in the matter, avoided the brig's deck as they would a place of contagion, and the others, beyond feeding them, paid them no attention whatever.

All at last being done but the transfer of the armament, the bark was kedged off at high tide, and with spring-lines to the now sunken brig, and taut cables to anchors up stream and down, she was shored at the ends of the brig's fore and main yards, sent down for the purpose, while preventer lifts were rigged to the main-yard of the bark—seamanlike manœuvres these, which Captain MacNab professionally commended. Then they hooked a strong tackle from the brig's top-mast-head, and another from the bark's main-yard-arm, to the heavy Long Tom, and were about to heave away, when a man aloft on the bark sang out something in the French *patois* used by the negro crew.

Captain Arcand sprang into the rigging with a glass, and from the topmost cross-trees directed it seaward and looked for a moment; then slinging it over his shoulder by its strap, he slid to the deck on the back-stay, and called out order after order to his men, while Captain MacNab looked on in wonder, and his unfortunate crew in increasing excitement, at the effect produced.

The men aboard the brig unhooked the yard-arm tackle and threw the block overboard, then ran aboard the bark on the shores and joined their hurrying ship-mates as they raced about the deck, out forward, and up aloft, loosing and hoisting all fore-and-aft canvas, slipping first the down-stream, then the upstream cable, casting off the spar lashings—allowing their ends of the shores to drop overboard—and, finally, the spring-lines to the brig.

There was a brisk breeze down stream, and the bark, leaning gently to port, swung around, and under stay-sails, spanker, and jibs, headed for the southern out-let, her square sails dropping as fast as the crew could loose them.

"Losh! but the scoondrel's a seaman!" muttered Captain MacNab; "not a hitch or a blunder, an' he's awa' in five minutes. But what's the occasion?"

A bullet sang by his head. He barely heard the report above the screeching chatter of his fellow-prisoners, but saw, however, a thinning cloud filtering through the bark's mizzen-rigging, while below it was Captain Arcand, resting his long revolver on the quarter-rail, about to fire again. A second puff of smoke arose before

Captain MacNab could move, and Sandy's crazed laughter ended with the sickening "chug" of the bullet as it sped through his brain. He fell to the deck, and the Captain, though he had no doubt that he himself was the target, felt such an increment of horror to his already overshocked and benumbed sensibilities, as to make him entirely reckless.

"Fire awa', ye deil's dog!" he roared, standing up to his full height and shaking his fist. "Fire awa' an' finish the job, ye killer o' dafties!" A fusillade of bullets from the black crew answered this, but all flew wide, and in a few moments they were out of pistol-range; then, in a burst of rage and grief, Captain MacNab apostrophized the dead mate. "Ye were a good man, Sandy," he said, "an' a good friend, an' a good officer; an', Sandy, though I ha' felt doots o' the integrity of our ain position, I am past doots o' the falsity o' his. He is marked for the vengeance o' the Lord, for I that ha' seen him and suffered by him ha' been spared my sanity an' memory."

By the time the bark had entered the head of the channel the reason of the sudden antagonism was apparent. An upper corner of a square sail appeared over the northern slope of

the island, then the whole sail with part of another below, and a gaff-topsail behind—all patched with new canvas and mounted on top-masts whose bright straw-color indicated their recent acquaintance with carpenter's tools; and Captain MacNab did not need the sight of the rest of the fabric—the lower sails and the glistening black hull—to recognize the French schooner that had chased the brig. She was beating up the channel against the young ebb, and the outgoing bark, charging down the other channel with all sail spread, was in a position to avoid observation for some time, as the high cone of the island would hide either craft from the deck of the other.

If the schooner saw the bark she paid no attention to her, but with long legs and short ones reached up the river and skimmed over toward the brig on the last tack—her tricolor flying, her crew at quarters, ports open and guns run out, and in each fore-chains men heaving the lead. As she came within hail an officer on her quarter-deck shrieked out in French, which Captain MacNab did not understand; but divining the portent of the hail, he ripped off a fragment of his one-time white shirt which had escaped the ravages of Sandy's clutches, and

waved it, shook the chain up and down, and pointed to the bark, now under stu'n'-sails, just disappearing behind the island. The brig lay on her port bilge, and the whole deck, with its manacled occupants, was visible from the schooner. A few orders were given, she luffed, lost headway, and dropped an anchor about a hundred feet away; then, as she settled back on the cable, her blue-jacketed crew, without starting sheet, halyard, or brace, lowered four boats, into which they tumbled, each man armed with cutlass and pistol.

Fifteen minutes later Captain MacNab was explaining matters to a group of French officers, through the medium of one who understood English, while a carpenter's mate filed at the bolt of his shackle (the keys were in the bark), and his men declaimed at the line of bluejackets. The officers were much interested in the account of the colony ashore, and laughed somewhat unsteadily at the horrid spectacle lined out on the deck.

"It is—what you call it?—ze poetree of justice, is it not," said the interpreter, "zat you take ze place of ze slaves? But it is horreeble—horreeble!"

Captain MacNab made no response, and after

a short conference with the others, the officer said: "We haf come for fresh vegetabel—for yams—for anysing. We are long time on ze coast. Our men get scurvy. We find no vegetabel where we get our topmast—we come here. We haf already report zis pirate brig, and get ordare to capture and bring ze crew to St.-Louis. We find you. We take you up ze coast to St.-Louis, and on ze way we put you, ze commandare, on parole; but your men—ah, your men"—he glanced down the line—"we mus' keep your men prisonare."

"Ay, mon," answered Captain MacNab, as he shook his wrist out of the divided shackle, "we can clear oursel's o' the charge o' piracy; an' slave-tradin' canna be brought home to us. But will ye no pursue yon bark? There's the pirates ye want. Lay her alongside, loose my laddies, an' gi' us arms, an' we'll get the de'ils an' our barky."

What was logical or practical in this proposition was ignored by the French officers. They had accomplished something, and perhaps wanted to return to civilization; but they acknowledged Captain MacNab's claim on the brig in lieu of his bark, and beyond spiking the guns, did her no harm. And to aid him in any

future adjudication of his claim, they also good-naturedly gave him the latitude, which he remembered.

The body of the mate was taken ashore and buried, and the grieving Captain offered a hurried but heart-spoken prayer over the grave, while the others, still chained, were given a washing down with the deck hose—which, in their way, they seemed to enjoy—and conducted to the schooner's 'tweendeck; then, after the return from the landing upshore of a well-laden provision-boat, the anchor was tripped, and they sailed down the channel, making out, as they opened up the broad Atlantic, a small speck on the western horizon, which before dusk was out of sight.

A long passage it was across the gulf and up the coast to St.-Louis, and before it ended the last shackle was filed from the tranquillized prisoners, who, dressed in the working-ducks of the French navy, were allowed to walk the deck free of restraint and duty, though nominally prisoners accused of piracy. At Captain MacNab's request the English-speaking of the French crew made no reference in their hearing to the cause of their trouble, or to even the negro race; and once, after the sudden and viol-

ent relapse of three—the only ones awake—early in the morning of a wash-day, which Captain MacNab traced directly to the sight of a line of red under-shirts hung up to dry, the decree was issued from the quarter-deck that red under-shirts were not to be worn or displayed while the prisoners were aboard.

The three soon recovered; the physical condition of all became much improved; and though not what could be called sane men—lacking even a natural curiosity as to what had happened—they were tractable, and, with a few exceptions, gave no promise of further violence of temper or action.

They entered the Senegal, sailed up the river, and about nightfall anchored off the island city of St.-Louis, where, with French exuberance of spirits, the sea-worn officers and crew went ashore, leaving their pirates in the care of a small anchor-watch. The apathetic Scots lounged about the deck, looking at the lights of the town and the native craft darting to and fro in the half-darkness, and might in an hour or so have turned in for the night, had not one of the native craft—a bumboat—dropped alongside, and the occupants climbed aboard. After the manner of bumboatmen, they came dressed

up—each in a single garment. Two wore soldiers' coats minus the tails, one a woman's print dress, the rest bandannas. The color of all was red, and pandemonium broke loose.

Twenty-nine maniacs, shouting and screeching, charged on the poor blacks, who leapt overboard to save themselves. Captain MacNab, talking to the quartermaster in charge, heard the uproar, and sprang forward to quiet it, but was helplessly caught in the howling mob and borne forward to the bow, where two French sailors ran out on the jib-boom, and being hotly pressed, dropped and swam.

Back they came, bearing their Captain, and on the way gathered up the cook and his mate, the carpenter and the officers' servants, who had come from below to see what was the matter, and who, after some rough handling, in which their clothing was torn from their bodies and most of their hair from their heads, only escaped immediate death by risking it in the shark-infested river. The last Frenchman aboard, the quartermaster, followed, and the schooner was in the hands of lunatics. For a matter of ten minutes they busied themselves in undressing, yelling the while, and where buttons were obstinate the garment suffered; then a naked

master-spirit of them slipped the cable, the schooner dropped down with the ebb, and Captain Angus MacNab arose to the situation.

" 'Tis the act o' God," he muttered. "I am to carry oot His wark. I am to be a destrawin' angel o' the Lord. Loose fawrs'l an' jibs!" he added, in a roar. They answered and obeyed, the instinct of obedience overtopping their insanity. The mainsail and fore-topsail followed, then the light sails, and with Captain MacNab at the wheel, and the naked, screaming crew flitting about the deck and rigging, the floating Bedlam crossed the bar and went to sea.

"I've the latitude," said the Captain, "an' the longitude is the coast of Africa. Praised be the name o' the Lord!"

Crazy or sane, these men were sailors, and obeyed orders when given in a tone of authority; but it was three days before Captain MacNab dared to leave the deck or attempt to guide them into other tasks than handling sail. By that time they were quiet enough to sleep and take turns at cooking. He chose a mate and divided the watches, then, as they sailed to the southward, impressed on their unsteady minds the wisdom of practice at the guns. His own experience embraced a voyage in a man-of-war, and

some of the men had also worn the blue. He made these men gun-captains. In a week they could run them out and in, and go through the motions of swabbing, loading, aiming, and firing. When they became violent he isolated and soothed them; when lazy or indifferent, he excited them by cautious reminiscence. They wore no clothes—nor needed them in the tropical weather—slept and ate when and where they pleased, fought one another occasionally, practised at cutlass drill, with ofttimes bloody effect, and as they sailed across the Gulf of Guinea, with powder, and solid shot, and shell, everything was done to arouse their combativeness; nothing to improve their minds or morals.

Captain MacNab continued the log-book, thus keeping the day of the month, and with the officers' sextants and a French almanac, in which figures if not words were understandable, worked out the latitude as he needed it, and one day sailed into the river with the island at its mouth, up the north channel, and across to the sunken brig, where he looked at the deserted and gunless yellow deck, then put to sea.

"The de'ils ha' come for their guns and drilled the spikes, na doot," he said, "an' I'm thinkin' it'll be a sea-fight—yard-arm to yard-

arm. Send that I raise her to windward. The barky's best before it, but the schooner's best on a bowline."

And to windward the bark was when he finally "raised her." After a month's cruise in the neighborhood, during which he astonished several slave-trading bark-captains by chasing and then inconsistently dropping them, he was blown far to sea by an easterly gale; and on his return, close-hauled on the skirts of the faint trade-wind, he sailed one midnight into a fog-bank, which, dissolving at noon of the next day, revealed the bark he was looking for heading southeast on the other tack and about five miles ahead.

The black schooner was of too distinct a type of craft to fail of being recognized by a man who had disabled her once and fled from her twice, and Captain MacNab was surprised, though agreeably so, to find that the bark made no effort to escape, either by clapping on sail or by falling off to a better sailing-point. She lay nearly upright, with royals furled, while the schooner put about on her lee quarter and crept up—her lunatic crew excitedly bringing up shot and shell, and scattering the contents of arms-chests about the deck. Captain Mac-

Nab placed the steadier of them in charge of the powder-supply, and his mate, the steadiest of all, at the wheel.

A white flag arose to the gaff-end of the bark, her main-yards were backed, and a boat was lowered, which, as it drew near, showed to them the red shirts of the black rowers and a small white flag flying from the stern.

"We'll e'en respect the etiquette o' war," said Captain MacNab, as he went among his men and admonished them. The fatal color had nearly rendered them uncontrollable.

The boat stopped about twenty yards distant, and Captain Arcand arose to his feet in the stern.

"An' ha' ye foond a flag to sail under?" inquired Captain MacNab, as he glared at him. The other scanned the line of twisted faces and naked shoulders appearing above the rail in unrepressed astonishment.

"I had expected," he answered, "to meet the officers of a French schooner-of-war, explain my position, and come to a compromise. As I have told you, I have no quarrel with men-of-war. But I did not expect to see you."

"I ha' na doot—na doot o' it. But you meet a mon an' a crew mair efficient to deal wi' ye.

I want na explanations. Take my boat back, an' looer my tablecloth fra' the gaff o' my bark, an' do it in ten minutes, or I'll sink ye."

"What is your wish—to fight? I have no fears of the outcome; but it would be extremely repugnant to me. I am satisfied that your men are more than punished."

"Back wi' ye! Back wi' ye!" roared the enraged Captain MacNab. "Ye're sawtisfied, are ye? But the vengeance o' the Lord is not."

The boat was back and up to the davits in less than ten minutes; then the bark paid off, headed south across the schooner's bow, and set the royals. But the white flag remained at the gaff, and only fluttered down when, the ten minutes being up, Captain MacNab sent a shot from the bow-chaser, the only gun that would bear, skimming under the bowsprit.

The Long Tom, mounted amidships on the bark, now flashed out, and with the report came a pair of singing, whirling chain-shot toward the schooner, cutting away the main-topmast, as had happened before, and depriving them of a useful gaff-topsail. Then Captain MacNab, who had paid off to nearly a parallel course, answered with a broadside, which brought one from the bark, and a running fight began. But while

the guns of the bark were aimed high to cripple the spars of the pursuer, the lunatic avengers swept the deck of the bark with the iron missiles, and the shells from the forward gun, aimed by the Captain himself, did mighty work. It was at close range, and the sea being smooth, he planted those shells where he wished—against the plank-sheer or above it.

Each at the lower edge of a cloud of smoke, the two vessels approached on converging lines, while cannon roared and maniacs gibbered and rigging above became tattered shreds; then down came the schooner's fore-topmast with the three sails supported by it, and the bark, with still intact canvas, crep ahead. Excepting the schooner's barking bow-chaser, which still killed men, and the terrible Long Tom of the bark, which sent its binary messengers hurtling through the sail and rigging, the guns of both craft were now silent—unable to bear. The schooner, in the wake of the other, was barely moving, but still with steerageway, and Captain MacNab decided on a change of tactics.

"Up wi' the wheel," he called. "Gybe her, an' steady when she's abeam. Down wi' all breech-screws, laddies. Aim high, an' bring down his spars." They obeyed him in their

way, and as the booms swung over and the schooner lay across the wake of the bark they fired again with elevated muzzles. The result was a shattered main top-gallant mast and a dismounted Long Tom, which was struck by the falling spar. Again and again they loaded and fired, and when the bark's main-topmast sagged forward and fell, taking with it the yard with some dotting red spots on it, Captain MacNab decided to go on. He paid off, gybed again, and in the face of a fusillade of pistol-shots took the schooner up to the starboard-quarter of the bark, exactly as the negro Captain had done with his brig. The pistol-shots were directed at him, and at him alone, but beyond a few grazing wounds he was unhurt. Throwing a grappling-hook, he bound the two craft together.

"Over ye go, my bairns," he shouted, as he grabbed a cutlass. "Pikes, handspikes, or cutlasses, as ye will. At 'em in the name of an outraged God."

Wild-eyed, and shrieking from the close proximity of their enemies, the naked men followed the frenzied Captain to the corpse-strewn deck of the bark. Then a strange one-sided struggle took place. Red-shirted negroes were cut down with pikes and swords, felled with handspikes

and stamped upon; bullets sang around Captain MacNab, and some entered his flesh, as he, nearly as insane as his men, fought and endeavored to reach the negro leader, who was coolly discharging shot after shot at him, only pausing to reload; but not a crazy Scot was injured.

In the midst of it all the twanging blare and drone of the pibroch was heard rising over the din, and marching aft from the forecastle hatch where he had fought his way and descended, came the half-naked mate of the schooner. He had remembered his treasure, the companion of many a dog-watch, secured it, and now, mounting the disabled Long Tom, played, cheerfully and consistently, the wild, inspiring tunes of his native land, while his countrymen fought and shouted, and black men fell and died. The negroes, bleeding and patient, merely defended themselves by dodging, feinting, and retreating, and fired only at Captain MacNab at such times as they could do so without hitting the others.

"Cease firing!" suddenly called out Captain Arcand. "He is as mad as the rest. Disarm them, if you can—and knock that bagpiper off the gun."

The latter was done with the butt end of a pump-brake, and the musician climbed back

to the schooner with his precious pipes. Disarming the others was not so easy, and the fight raged hotter from the added offensive action of the blacks. Captain MacNab sprang through a gap in the struggling crowd and lunged at Captain Arcand.

"Mad, be I?" he yelled. "Possibly." The lunge was parried, and a sword combat, offensive on one side, defensive on the other, took place on the bloody deck. The white Captain roared inarticulately as he cut and slashed; the other cool, impassive, and silent, merely parried, though he occasionally pricked the sword-arm of his adversary, and retreated. It was English navy cutlass drill against the French school of fencing, and in a short time ended by the white Captain's blade flying overboard. He was close to the handspike-rack on the mainmast, and seized one. The French school of fencing has no guard for the sweeping blow of such a weapon, and Captain Arcand was stretched on the deck with his skull crushed in.

"Thus saith the Lord," growled Captain MacNab, as he turned to join the struggle still going on among the men. At this moment the drone of the pipes arose from the forecastle-deck of the schooner, where the musician, from the top

of the capstan, was again discoursing. But the music he gave them now was soft and low, and it somehow appealed in a different manner to the disordered understanding of these Scotchmen. They swarmed after him—the battle-weary remnant of the negro crew allowing them to go peaceably—and seated themselves on rail, cathead, and bitt, and listened, silently or with weeping or accompanying crooning, according to their several moods, while the quaint melodies of home rose and fell on the tropic air.

Captain MacNab was alone, surrounded by angry gleaming-eyed men, who sent bullet after bullet into him. Their leader had fallen, and evidence as to Captain MacNab's sanity was conflicting; for though his eyes blazed with maniacal fury as he whirled the hand-spike and cleared ground, he was calling to his men, objurgating and beseeching them, to come back and finish their work. He gained the rail, bleeding from a score of wounds, climbed aboard the schooner, and with a flourish of his six-foot club sent the bag-pipes flying from the arms of the player and over the side. The musician stared vacantly at him and wept.

"Hooray noo, lads! Follow me back! Awa' wi' ye all!" he shouted, and turned to lead them;

but in the brief time of his absence the negroes had dislodged the grappling-hook, and ten feet of open space now separated the two craft. Dashing the blood from his eyes, Captain MacNab sprang to the main-deck, and swabbed out, loaded, and depressed the port shell-gun till it pointed at the water-line of the bark. Then he fired.

A solid shot fired at this angle would have come out through the opposite bilge and made a dangerous leak. A shell would presumably have exploded on impact, and made a worse leak at the water-line. This shell produced heavier results. Following the roar of the gun by the merest fraction of a second came a louder roar—a crashing, crackling riot of deafening sound, containing every note in the chromatic scale. The deck and black sides of the bark amidships rose and bulged, separating across the planks, and from the interior of the hull belched up and outward a burning, blinding sheet of red which hurled Captain MacNab and his men to the deck hairless, blistered, and writhing.

Captain MacNab arose a few moments later, dragged himself painfully to the rail, and looked over at an agitated turmoil of water, on which appeared at intervals boxes, small spars, slivers

of planking, and an occasional red-shirted body or part of one. The bark was gone. Broken in half by the explosion of the powder-magazine, she had sunk to the bottom, and of the half-hundred men comprising her crew at the beginning of the fight not one came to the surface alive. They were martyrs to a chivalry not known in the ethics of civilized warfare.

Raising his blood-smeared face and outstretched arms to the blue cloud of smoke above, Captain MacNab groaned, hoarsely, "Thou didst blow wi' thy wind, the sea covered them, they sank as lead i' the mighty waters." Then he fell to the deck.

Twenty years later a French corvette appeared off the mouth of the river with the island at its mouth, and was boarded by a Krooman, who could speak English but not French, and who offered to pilot the ship in for a consideration. As the Captain understood English, he was available, and was engaged. Conning the ship up the north channel, the pilot pointed out to the Captain the remains of a ten-gun battery on the island which covered all approach from the river above, and explained that a long time ago, before he came to the town, a black

schooner with torn sails and no topmasts had come in and grounded on the river-bar. Then her crew had unloaded stores and guns, built a house, set fire to the schooner, and lived for many years on yams they grew and fish they caught. Whenever the natives above would come down in their canoes to visit them, they were fired at by one or more of the guns, and they decided at last to let them alone.

One day a white-haired old man, all scarred and shrivelled of face, had come over from the island, explaining that all his comrades had died, and this white-haired, gentle old man had lived with the natives many years more, nursing them when sick, and teaching them of the white man's God, until, as the town grew up and traders arrived, he went away to the interior, while those whom he had taught wept and prayed for him. But he never came back, and while with them had not told anything of himself, so they did not know to this day who the white men were, or why they had burned their vessel and lived on the island.

While the ship took in water and yams that day the Captain called his gig and visited the island. He looked closely at the half-mired and dismounted guns, and nodded his head. Then

he stood over a square of ground up from the beach, and counted two rows of ten and one of nine head-stones. Around this plot was a fence of chain stretched over the trunks of young trees planted at its edge; every three feet of which chain was marked by a shackle.

"Ze chains bind—in death as in life," mused the Captain. "Twenty-nine here, ze mate ovare on ze beach, and ze Captain? Ah, ze Captain, he turn missionary to ze natives. It is ze poetree of justice, but it is horreeble."

THE END