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THE GREAT WESTERN SERIES.

I.

GOING WEST; OR, THE PERILS OF A POOR BOY.

II.

OUT WEST; OR, ROUGHING IT ON THE GREAT LAKES.

III.

LAKE BREEZES; OR, THE CRUISE OF THE SYLVANIA.

IV.

GOING SOUTH; OR, YACHTING ON THE ATLANTIC COAST.

V.

DOWN SOUTH; OR, YACHT ADVENTURES IN FLORIDA.

VI.

UP THE RIVER; OR, YACHTING ON THE MISSISSIPPI.



THE GREAT WESTERN SERIES.

1836
4083

GOING WEST;

OR,

THE PERILS OF A POOR BOY.

BY

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"THE WOODVILLE STORIES," "THE STARRY FLAG SERIES," "THE
BOAT CLUB STORIES," "THE LAKE SHORE SERIES," "THE
UPWARD AND ONWARD SERIES," "THE YACHT CLUB
SERIES," ETC., ETC., ETC., ETC.

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GOING WEST.



TO

THE BOYS OF THE GREAT WEST,

This Book is Affectionately Dedicated.

PREFACE.

GOING WEST is the first volume of THE GREAT WESTERN SERIES. Though the story contained in this book is complete in itself, and may be read without regard to the other volumes of the series, yet those who may desire to follow the hero in his life career beyond the limits of this narrative, will have the opportunity to do so. He is a young sailor in this book, and if hard fare and hard usage can make a poor boy, he is certainly entitled to the designation. At first he is not a boy of much spirit, but he soon develops this attribute, under the severe discipline to which he is subjected. The story takes him to the Great West, where he finds a home in the last chapter. If there is a mystery about his birth and parentage, very little use is made of the fact in this volume. He has considerable spirit, after he "comes to himself;" but he is not a bad boy, and has a good heart and high aims. He is above vice and crime, and has an inborn desire to be good and to do his duty.

The new home of the hero is on one of the great lakes, where the remaining stories of the series will be located. During the past year the author has made several journeys to the Great West, and voyaged upon the waters of the Great Lakes in order to prepare himself for the work he has under-

taken in this series. He hopes in this new field to meet the reasonable anticipations of his young friends, whom it has been the labor of his life to please, to instruct and to elevate; and with the fifty-third book he has written for them, he presents his hearty thanks for the favor with which his past efforts have been received, and his best wishes for their future prosperity and happiness.

DORCHESTER, MASS.,

November 1, 1875.

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GOING WEST;

OR,

THE PERILS OF A POOR BOY.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. BOOMSBY AND I.

“**Y**OU stole that quarter of a dollar, Sandy!” said Mrs. Nancy Boomsby, wife of Captain Parker Boomsby, master and quarter owner of the coasting schooner Great West.

She said it to me, and I am the Poor Boy alluded to in the title of this story. Heaven knows that I was poor enough, not only in regard to the perishable riches of this world, but also in friends, hopes, happiness; in all the blessings which make life pleasant and worth having. An hour before she charged me with the theft, she had left the quarter of a dollar

on the kitchen table, intending to use it in purchasing a loaf of white bread and some crackers of the baker, for whom the signal had been made by hanging a towel out of one of the front windows. I wish to remove any possible imputation from my character in the beginning, by saying that I did not steal the money; and perhaps the reader will believe me, if Mrs. Boomsby did not.

This is how it was: I had not been in the house for three hours. It was ten o'clock in the forenoon, and I had been at work in the garden since breakfast time; *my* breakfast time, for it was half an hour later than that of the other members of the family—if I may be so presumptuous as to consider myself one of them; and my meals consisted of what was left when they had done, though often there was very little left, and hunger was by no means a strange sensation to me. The bill of fare that morning was minced, salt fish and potatoes, brown bread, and coffee; but the coffee was all gone before I went to the table, and I had none. I did not take kindly to cold water in the morning; but at ten, when I had worked in a warm April sun

for three hours, I was very thirsty. If I ventured to complain that my diet was very poor and insufficient any time, Mrs. Boomsby boxed my ears, and the captain, when at home, flogged me with a rope's end.

On this particular occasion I had suffered from thirst for two hours, before I ventured to leave my work long enough to go into the house for a drink, for I knew that doing so would be punished with hard words, certainly, and, if Mrs. Boomsby felt like it, with blows. The water was drawn from the well with a bucket attached to a rope, which passed over a wheel, in the back room. I could not get to it without going through the kitchen, for the door of the wood-shed was fastened. As I crossed the door-yard, I saw a quarter of a dollar lying on the ground. The sight of it gave me a thrill, as I thought what gingerbread and crackers it would buy at the store, to supplement my scanty diet. I picked it up and put it into my pocket. I wondered who had dropped it. I had seen no one in the yard that day but Nick Boomsby, the captain's oldest child, a boy of about my own age. He could not have lost the money,

for quarters were hardly less scarce in his pocket than in mine.

I was very thirsty then, and wanted water even more than gingerbread or crackers. I don't remember that I ever had any money but once before, and that was when I had sold a mess of cunners I had caught for ten cents. I had expended this princely sum in the purchase of six cents' worth of gingerbread, three cents' worth of crackers, and one cents' worth of candy, all of which was consumed in the secrecy of the haymow in the barn. One of the lawyers gave me five cents one day for holding his horse; but Nick who was with me, told his mother of it, and she took the money away from me before I had a chance to spend it. The quarter of a dollar in my pocket was therefore, a bigger thing to me than the discovery of America was to Mr. Columbus; but, then, early possessions pass away, and hope does not always end in fruition.

The instant I entered the kitchen, Mrs. Boomsby rushed towards me; I am not quite sure that she was not rushing after me before I went in. In her harshest treble, she demanded

if I had seen the quarter of a dollar she had placed on the table. Though I had no means of knowing, or even any reason for supposing, that the quarter I had found was the one she had lost, I had forethought enough to consider the consequences of a denial. I was the scape-goat for the sins of all the members of the family, and especially of Nick, who had inherited neither a sense of honor nor of justice from his father or mother. I knew that my tyrant would search me. I had been so often subdued, beaten, and cowed, that I had no thought either of resistance or flight. She would certainly "fish my pockets," and as certainly find the quarter. I made a merit of what seemed to me to be a necessity, and taking the quarter from my pocket, I put it into Mrs. Boomsby's red right hand. Then she made the savage remark with which I have commenced my eventful history.

"No, marm, I didn't steal it," I replied, meekly enough to have arrested her vengeance, if she had been like other women.

"Don't tell me, Sandy!" she blazed away, before I had time to say any more. "*You are a thief*, and I always knowed you was!"

The only foundation in her knowledge for this remark, was the fact that she had once caught me with a large slice of brown bread and butter, which I had taken from the buttery one forenoon, after my breakfast had been unusually short.

“No, marm, I’m not a thief. I didn’t steal the quarter; I found it in the door-yard,” I ventured to add.

“Don’t tell me!”

I knew very well that it was no use to tell her; but after having my hopes dashed down by the loss of the quarter, and after doing the fair and honest thing without attempting any concealment, I could not help defending myself in a very mild way.

“I can tell you just where I found the quarter, marm,” I pleaded.

“So can I tell just where you found it: you found it on that kitchen table, and you stole it! That’s the whole on’t!” stormed Mrs. Boomsby.

“No, marm, I didn’t find it there; I found it in the door-yard.”

“Don’t contradict me again: if you do, I’ll take a stick to you this minute!” said she,

looking around the room as if for the implement of torture.

Though I was twelve years old, and rather a stout boy at that, I knew she was able to do it, and would do it; so I did not contradict her: it was not safe to do so.

“I have not been in the house before since I ate my breakfast,” I protested, but very gently.

“Don’t tell me no more lies, Sandy! Didn’t I leave that quarter on that table? Can you tell me how it come out in the door-yard?” she demanded triumphantly, as though no possible answer could be made to this convincing argument.

“I can’t tell, marm; but I haven’t left my work this forenoon before.”

“Yes you did! You come into the house while I was up stairs making the beds, and took that money. Its just like you; and you’re go’n to suffer for’t, I can tell you! I thought I heard somebody in the kitchen.”

“I wasn’t in the kitchen before, marm.”

“Yes, you was! you must have come in. How did that money get out of the house, if you didn’t? Can you tell me that?”

“I saw Nicholas come out of the house a little while ago,” I replied.

I suppose I said this because I could not think of anything else to say; but the remark was a very stupid blunder on my part.

“Do you mean to say that Nicholas took it?” demanded Mrs. Boomsby, her eyes snapping with anger.

“No, marm! O, no!”

“Yes, you do, too! You mean to lay it to him, to cover up your own iniquity. I know you! You saw Nicholas coming out of the house—did you? He stole it and dropped it in the yard—did he?”

“No marm; I don’t mean that.”

“Yes, you did, you villain! What on airth could you mean but that? Let me tell you, Nicholas wouldn’t do such a thing! He’s my son, and he wouldn’t steal! You did it yourself, and you want to lay it to him.”

“No, marm,” I protested.

“What did you leave your work at all for? What business had you in the house?”

“I came in after a drink of water, marm.”

“That’s only an excuse to leave your work

and get into the house. You are a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow. But Captain Boomsby's coming home to-day, and he'll fix this case himself."

This meant the rope's end ; and I rather preferred that the wife should settle it herself, though I think she was quite as savage and remorseless as he was.

"Don't, marm, don't!" I begged.

"Yes, I shall ; and Captain Boomsby shall give you such a basting as you never had before. Now go to your work ; and if I catch you in the house again, I'll give you a basting myself," said Mrs. Boomsby, as she placed the quarter of a dollar on the kitchen table again. "There!" she added, turning to me ; "I'm going to let that money be just where I put it before. If you want to steal it again you do so ; that's all ! Now go 'long to your work."

There was no quarter for me in any sense of the word, and I left the house, as thirsty as I entered it, but with the assurance of a severe flogging when the captain returned. The Great West had been reported at anchor outside the Gap, or entrance of the harbor, waiting for the

tide to turn, so that she could get in. The white bread was for her commander, for none was ever bought or made when he was absent. I went to my work, but I was so thirsty I could not do anything. There was a brook which ran into Long Pond a little way from the house; and when I could stand it no longer, I jumped over the fence, intent upon obtaining a drink. Reaching the stream, I lay down upon the ground, and putting my face into the water, I drank long and deep.

When I had allayed my thirst, I hastened back to the garden, for I was afraid my tyrant in the house would miss me, as I suspected that she was watching me from the chamber windows. After the ill success of my attempt to be honest, in giving up the quarter, I wondered why I had not been smart enough to hide the quarter in the barn till the tempest had blown over. Then it would not have been found upon me; and though I might not have escaped the flogging, I should have saved the quarter, which would have consoled me for the castigation. This was worldly policy; but I had been taught nothing better. I have since learned not only that

“honesty is the best policy,” but that it is our duty to be honest, whether it is the best policy or not.

When I reached the fence and was about to jump over it, I saw Nick come into the yard. He was looking on the ground very intently, casting his eyes all about the path which led from the road to the back door. Walking very slowly, he carefully examined the space till he came to the house, and then went in. It was plain enough to me that Nick, though he was Mrs. Boomsby's son, had taken that quarter, and dropped it on his way out of the yard. He would find it on the table when he went into the kitchen, where it had been before. I concluded that he would be very much astonished to find it there, but I did not think he would have the courage to steal it again.

I resumed my work, spading up the ground for the early peas. It was very heavy work for a boy of twelve; but I hardly dared to stop and rest me at any time, lest the fiery tongue of Mrs. Boomsby should dart its stings at me. I had hardly lifted the spade before Nick came out of the house and walked down to the road.

CHAPTER II.

IN A BAD SCRAPE.

I SAW Nick walking hastily down the east road towards Glossenbury Port, where he was to meet his father when the Great West came up the bay. I was afraid he had stolen the quarter again, for I had not so much confidence in his honesty as his mother had. If he had taken the money, the consequences would belong to me, all the same as though I had stolen it myself. I was irresolute and undecided. It seemed to me I ought to do something, even while all the Perils of a Poor Boy environed me, whatever I did. Finally I determined to look into the kitchen and see whether the quarter was still on the table or not. It was a peril to do so, but it seemed to be a greater peril not to do it. If I found that Nick had stolen the money, I could chase him, and recover it. I

was even desperate enough to knock him down and take the quarter from him, for I was not afraid of Nick, as I was of his father and mother.

I ran into the house as quick as my legs would carry me. The quarter was not on the table. Nick had taken it without a doubt. I had heard the bells on the baker's horse as I crossed the yard. Mrs. Boomsby had also heard him, and before I could retreat she bounced into the room. When she saw me, she glanced at the table, and discovered that the quarter was missing again. I had decided upon a course of action, and was leaving the room to put it into execution; but the tigress intercepted my retreat.

“So you villain! you have taken that money again!” exclaimed she, seizing me by my shirt collar.

“No, marm; I did not; Nicholas took it,” I replied.

“How dare you lay it to him? You are a wicked wretch!” she added, shaking me savagely, and then hurling me from her as though I had been an infant.

In accomplishing this act of discipline, she left me between herself and the door. This would have been bad strategy on her part, if I had ever been guilty of resistance or disobedience to her authority; but I never had been, and she had no reason to consider me capable of such a movement. I had a plan, and though I astonished myself as much as I did her, I proceeded to carry it out. In a word I darted out at the door.

“Stop!” shouted she.

I did not stop, and she followed me.

“Stop Sandy! Come back this minute! Don’t you mean to mind?”

“Nick’s got that quarter, and I’m going after it,” I answered, increasing my speed.

“Come back, you rascal! You shall smart for this!”

I heard her yelling after me, but I did not make out what she said. I passed the baker just as he was stopping at the gate. It was half a mile to the Port, and, as the road was straight, I could see Nick some distance ahead. He was not running; only walking fast. I got into the road just behind the stage from Glynn-

port, and I ran fast enough to overtake it in a moment. It was down hill, and the stage was going at a rapid rate. I got hold of the baggage-rack behind, and leaped upon it. In five minutes I had passed Nick, and jumped off.

"Where you going, Sandy?" demanded he, as I confronted him in the road, some distance from any house.

"Nowhere; I'm after you," I replied, still breathing hard from the effects of the quick run I had made.

"What do you want of me?"

"I want that quarter," I answered, very decidedly.

"What quarter?" he asked; but he looked quite sheepish.

"The quarter you took off the kitchen table."

"I didn't take any quarter off the kitchen table, and didn't know there was any there."

"Yes, you did!"

"Who knows best, you or I?"

"I do; and if you don't give it up, I'll knock you over and take it away from you."

"Knock me over!" repeated he, shaking his head, while a sickly smile played upon his face.

“That’s what I said. Hand over:” and I extended my hand to receive the money.

“What are you talking about, Sandy? I haven’t seen any quarter,” persisted Nick.

“Yes you have! You took it, and your mother lays it to me. Now if you don’t hand it over to me, I’ll knock you over, and get it the best way I can, if I break your head in doing it.”

“Two can play at that game,” replied Nick, putting his hands into his pockets, as though he had some doubt about the safety of the money.

“I know it; but I’m going to do most of the playing myself. You stole that quarter twice this morning. Haven’t you got a hole in your pocket?”

“Who told you I had?”

“You lost the quarter the first time you took it, and I found it. I saw you looking for it in the yard when you came back. It’s no use of talking, Nick: I’m going to have that quarter, if I have to fight for it.”

“I tell you I haven’t got any quarter,” protested Nick. “How many more times must I tell you?”

“I know you have ; and I could prove it too.”

“Let’s see you prove it.”

“I saw you looking for it in the yard ; and it was gone after you came out of the house the second time. That’s enough ; and I won’t have any more jaw about it.”

“I won’t either ; and I am going down to the Port,” replied Nick, attempting to pass me in the road.

I let him do so ; but I instantly caught him by the back of his coat collar, and tripped him over on the grass by the roadway.

“Let me alone !” yelled he.

I meant business, and I didn’t let him alone. I put my knee on his chest in spite of his struggles, and covered one arm. I held the other arm with my left hand, while I went through his pockets with the right. He roared, screamed, kicked, and bit me ; but I held him as tight as though he had been in a vise. I thrust my hand down into the depths of the right pocket of his trousers. I turned it out. There was a hole in the bottom of it. Then I tried the left pocket, and brought up his knife,

a pencil, a piece of chalk, a button—and the quarter. The last was what I wanted, and when I got hold of it I released my prisoner. He sprang to his feet, the maddest boy of twelve, I ever saw in my life. Without an instant's pause he pitched into me.

I put the plunder I had taken from him into my pocket, and defended myself. He hit with his fists and kicked with his feet. I got some hard cracks in my shins before I could overpower him. Finally I had to knock him over; and I held him on the grass till some of his wrath had evaporated; but the whole thing was over in a minute.

“You'll catch it for this, Sandy,” howled Nick, crying with anger.

“I suppose I shall,” I replied; “but there's the quarter.”

I held it up before him.

“You stole it; I didn't,” whined he.

“But I found it in your pocket; and that isn't just where I should have put it if I had stolen it.”

“You didn't find it in my pocket! It's a trick to lay it off on me.”

I confess that I was appalled at this reply. Whatever I did, I was sure to "put my foot in it." Mrs. Boomsby would believe her son. By resorting to violence, I had certainly made my case worse. Nick was Mrs. Boomsby's son. Her son would not steal. I had tipped him over, and fished his pockets, and I realized that I must suffer for what I had done. Without saying anything more to Nick, I turned on my heel, and walked up the road towards the house. The baker's wagon was still at the gate when I arrived. Mrs. Boomsby was telling him all about the quarter, and what a bad boy Sandy was.

"So you've come back!" said she, bitterly; "you thief, you!"

"There's the quarter marm," I replied, handing her the money. "I didn't steal it, either."

"Didn't you indeed? Where did you get it, then?" sneered Mrs. Boomsby.

"Nicholas took it off the table, and I got it from him."

"You got it from him! Did he give it to you?"

"No, marm; I took it from him."

"I don't believe a word on't."

I didn't suppose she would; but it was the truth.

"I found the quarter in one of his trousers' pockets; and the other one had a hole in it, where he lost it out the first time he took it," I added.

"He didn't take it the first time, nor the second nuther. Don't tell me!" replied Mrs. Boomsby, waxing wrathful. "Did you ever hear the like on't, Mr. Stone? He says my boy took that quarter. 'Tain't like Nicholas. He never did no such thing."

Mr. Stone was the baker. Mrs. Boomsby bought bread and crackers of him once in a while: I never did. He was non-committal, but he thought the case needed looking into. He was afraid I was a bad boy. He did not seem to fear that Nick might be a bad boy; his mother bought crackers.

"Isn't that your husband in that wagon, coming up the road?" said the baker, who had been trying for some time to get away from his talkative customer.

"True as the world, 'tis!" replied Mrs. Boomsby. "And Nicholas is coming with him. Now we shall know the truth on't."

I had my doubts about this. I knew Captain Boomsby well enough to understand that I had nothing to hope for in his treatment of the case. Nick was his only son, though he had three daughters, and both the father and mother appeared to regard him as incapable of wrong. He was indulged far more than the girls, though the latter were younger, and I suppose they had high hopes of him. I tried to think what to do in this extreme peril; but it did not seem to make much difference what I did; I was pretty certain to do the wrong thing. I was morally sure of the severest flogging I had ever had in my life, whatever course I might take. I stood leaning against the gate-post when the wagon in which the captain and Nick were passengers stopped in the road opposite the house.

“Well, Nancy, how are you?” demanded Captain Boomsby, very much as he would have hailed another craft at sea.

“Nicely; how are you, Parker?” she replied.

“First rate; never better.”

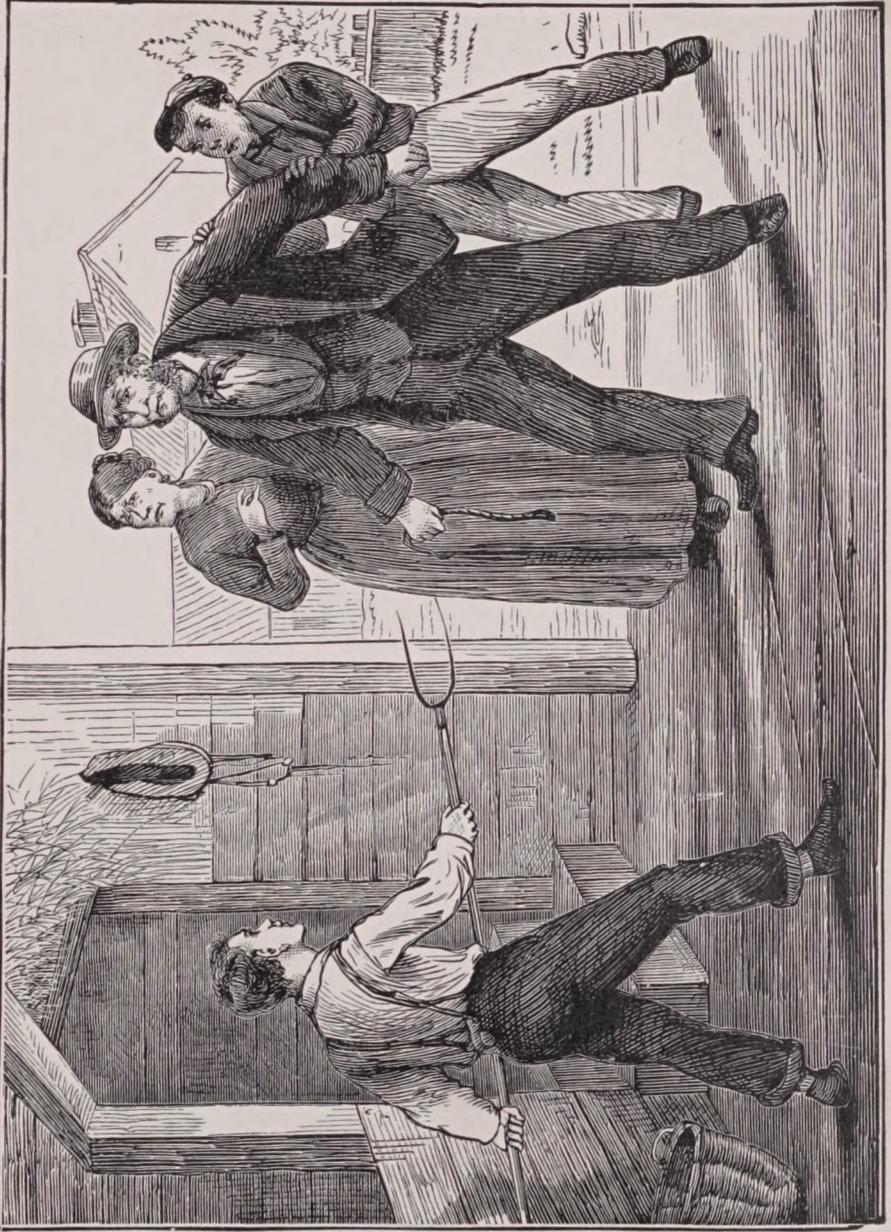
“I heard you were off shore this morning; but I didn't expect you so soon,” added Mrs. Boomsby.

“Well, I got a smart breeze of wind from the eastward, and I ran in against the tide,” replied the master of the Great West, fixing a withering look upon me. Now what’s this business with Sandy?”

The Captain and Nick had got out of the wagon while these greetings were exchanged, and the neighbor who had given them seats in his vehicle drove on. When the hopeful son of my tyrants got out, he limped, and partially doubled himself up, keeping both hands on his chest, as though he was suffering pain, and found it very difficult to move. I understood all this: Nick pretended that I had severely injured him, in order to deepen the indignation of the parents against me. Mrs. Boomsby proceeded to tell her husband what “this business with Sandy” was. She told her own story, and of course she charged me with stealing the quarter both times.

“Now, the rascal says he took the quarter from Nicholas,” said she, when she came to the end of the story.

“He didn’t take it from me, because I didn’t have it,” Nick interposed. “He knocked me



“Hold on, Captain Boomsby!” Page 83.

down in the road, stamped on me, and then pretended to take the quarter out of my pocket. I never had the quarter; so he couldn't have taken it out of my pocket."

"I knowed he didn't git it from Nicholas," added his mother, triumphantly.

"Did you knock Nicholas down, Sandy?" demanded the captain savagely.

"I did, sir," I answered; "and I took the quarter from the left pocket of his trousers."

"You knocked him down, and stamped on him—did you?"

"No, sir; I didn't stamp on him. I only held him down while I felt in his pockets. Here's the rest of the things I took from his pocket."

I gave them to Mrs. Boomsby.

"That's enough! I don't want to hear no more. You knocked my son down, and stamped on him!"

"I'll tell you how it was, Captain Boomsby," I added meekly.

"I don't want to hear no more—not another word! Bring me that rope's end!" thundered the captain.

I went to the barn for the rope.

CHAPTER III.

A STRIKE FOR FAIR PLAY.

I HAD been flogged a dozen times with that rope's end; and I assure the reader, who never had such an experience, that the operation is not a pleasant one. The rope was a piece of whale-line, about two feet long. It was not so called because it was used in *whaling* me, but because it is the kind of line attached to a harpoon, when the monster of the deep is struck. I found the instrument of torture on the barn floor, where it had last been applied to my quivering back and legs. I picked it up and looked at it. It was about half an inch in diameter, hard and tough.

I was in no hurry to go to the house again, where I had seen my tyrants enter. I was not impatient for the operation to begin. In fact, I was in a very unusual frame of mind. I actu-

ally had some doubts about taking my flogging. The world was open to me, and I could run away. I could take to the woods not far from the barn, and elude all pursuers for a time. It is said that certain wild animals, after they have tasted blood, become furious, and thirst for more. It is not unlikely that the success which had attended my assault upon Nick, encouraged me to think of such a thing as resistance. Nick had always bullied me; if he wanted to hit or kick me, he did so, and I had not pluck enough to resent it. I had never lifted a finger against him till that day. I had meekly submitted to his insults and blows, as well as to those of his father and mother, even while I was conscious that I could have torn him all to pieces, if I had been so disposed.

For the first time in my life I felt that there was a lion in me, and that I could bite as well as be bitten. I had endured hunger, cold, and other ill treatment of every shade and nature. There was nothing bright in the future, but all was as black as the past. I had done nothing wrong, but I was called upon to suffer again the penalty of an offence of which I was not

guilty. As usual, I was to be the scapegoat of Nick. I was not allowed to explain about the quarter. I say I had done nothing wrong. The violence I had used on Nick did not then seem to me to be wrong, for I had only captured a thief, and taken his booty from him. I repeat, I was goaded and stung into an unusual frame of mind. A new nature seemed to have been suddenly born within me.

I determined to resist this time, if I had to do it with the pitchfork, which stood against the haymow. Before I had time to get out of the barn and escape to the woods, or even to consider the line of defence I should adopt, I saw Captain Boomsby stalking towards the barn, with wrath and indignation apparent in every step he took. He was followed by Mrs. Boomsby and Nick, and farther back by two of the girls. I supposed they came to see the spectacle of flogging me, and I was resolved to disappoint them if possible. The great doors of the barn were open, and I fell back to a point near the pitchfork as the captain entered.

“Didn’t I tell you to bring that rope’s end to me?” demanded Captain Boomsby, in his usual savage tones when he spoke to me.

“You did,” I replied, calmly; but I felt the volcano that was grumbling within me.

“Why didn’t you do it, then?”

“I thought I wouldn’t.”

I was apparently so calm that my manner seemed to attract the attention of the captain. He saw the rope’s end on the floor, and picked it up. By this time the wife and son had come into the barn, and the girls, either more timid or less malignant, halted outside.

“You can take your licking here just as well as anywhere,” said the tyrant, moving towards me.

“I don’t mean to take any licking if I can help it,” I replied.

“You don’t!” exclaimed the captain, evidently astonished at this reply.

“No, I don’t!” I added, with more spirit. “I didn’t steal that quarter, and Nicholas did. If you hit me with that rope, I’ll give Nick the biggest licking he ever had in his life, the first time I catch him out of the house, if I have to die for it. For every lick you give me, I’ll give him two.”

“You will, you villain!” gasped Captain Boomsby.

“Yes I will.”

“Goodness gracious!” ejaculated Mrs. Boomsby; “what’s that boy comin’ to!”

“We’ll see!” cried the enraged father, as he rushed sharply towards me.

I seized the long-handled pitchfork, and in the attitude of “charge bayonets,” retreated before him for a few paces, in order to give him time to recover himself.

“Hold on, Captain Boomsby!” I shouted. If you come any farther, this pitchfork’s into you!”

He paused when he saw that he was rushing upon the tines of the fork. I did not wish to punch him with the implement; but I believe I should have done it if he had not stopped where he did. No one could have accused the master of the Great West of being a brave man. He was a brutal tyrant; and such men are generally cowards.

“Drop that fork, you villain!” he gasped, out of breath with wrath and fear.

“Not yet,” I answered, satisfied with what I had thus far accomplished, and encouraged to persevere.

“Are you going to stick that fork into me, you rascal?”

“That depends on what you do. If you let me alone, no. I’m not going to be pounded with that rope’s end any more. I don’t deserve it, and I won’t stand it.”

“Yes you do deserve it, and you shall have it too,” replied he, considerably reduced.

“If you hit me, as I said before, I’ll give Nick two licks to your one, if I have to stay up nights to do it.”

“Don’t, father,” whined Nick, who was crying like a great calf, and trembling with fear. “He’ll kill me; I know he will!”

“What on airth are we comin’ to?” groaned Mrs. Boomsby; and I had entirely convinced myself by this time that they were all cowards.

I had always supposed I was a coward myself till that moment; at any rate, I was amazed at what I had done.

“Are you going to drop that fork, or shall I take it away from you?” demanded the captain, after he had looked at me a moment, apparently unable to determine what he should do next.

“Take it from me,” I replied, making a lunge at him with it, which caused him to retreat a few steps.

“Be keerful, father,” interposed his wife. “Don’t let him strike you with that pitchfork.”

“It’ll be a bitter day for him if he does,” replied the captain.

“And it will be a bitter day for Nick, if you hit me with that rope,” I added.

“Don’t touch him father!” cried Nick, in shaky tones. “He’ll kill me if you do.”

“Do be keerful, father!” added Mrs. Boomsby.

By this time I was satisfied that he intended to be careful. In fact, I felt that for the present I had won the victory. But I knew very well that the first moment he caught me off my guard, he would “give it to me.” I felt that I had a further duty to perform.

“We’ll settle this case another time,” said the male tyrant, greatly to the satisfaction of the female, I saw, as he threw from him the rope’s end.

I was not fool enough to abandon the pitchfork which had rendered me such an important service; but I placed it in a perpendicular po-

sition, with the tines upon the floor. Thus standing like a Roman soldier, with his javelin ready for use, I proceeded to express myself a little further.

“Captain Boomsby, just as soon as you catch me without a pitchfork in my hand, you will want to give me the licking you would like to give me now. Just as sure as you do, I’ll give it to Nick the first time I catch him alone.”

“Don’t touch him father,” pleaded Nick; and I think he had had enough of me to last him for a year.

“We’ll settle this another time,” repeated the captain.

“Whenever you settle it, I’ll settle with Nick afterwards,” I added, stoutly. “I’ve had rope’s end enough. When I deserve it I’m willing to take it.”

“I’ll get the constable to take you up for stealing,” said Captain Boomsby.

“I wish you would,” I replied, eagerly; and I meant what I said. “I should like the chance to tell my story before the judge. I’ll bet he’d hear me, if you won’t.”

“The judge would send you to the house of correction,” muttered the captain.

“I don’t believe he would. It was Nick that stole the quarter; and he stole it twice too. The first time, he lost it through the hole in his right hand pocket. I found it and gave it to Mrs. Boomsby, and she put it on the kitchen table. Then Nick came back to look for it, and when he saw it on the kitchen table he took it again, and I found it in his pocket,” I rattled on, finding such a tongue as I did not know that I possessed before. “Is that the truth or not, Nick? Speak up like a man for once in your life.”

Involuntarily, and with no “malice aforethought,” I lowered the pitchfork and pointed it towards Nick, as though I meant to punch him with it. I heard his teeth shiver with terror, and the inarticulate rattle of his voice, as he attempted to speak.

“Speak out, Nick!” I cried.

“That’s the truth father. I took the quarter twice, and Sandy didn’t steal it,” stammered he, turning out the right-hand pocket of his trousers. I lost it through that hole the first time; and then I took it again afterwards. Don’t touch Sandy, father; if you do, he’ll kill me—I know he will.”

“The poor boy is skeered out of his wits,” said Mrs. Boomsby. “He didn’t steal the quarter no more’n I did, Parker.”

“Yes, I did, mother,” protested Nick, as anxious now to plead guilty as he had before been to convict me.

“Don’t be alarmed, Nicholas,” said Captain Boomsby. “Go into the house, now, and I’ll see to this villain.”

“I don’t believe Nicholas took the money,” persisted Mrs. Boomsby.

“Yes, I did, mother; I hope to die if I didn’t!” added Nick. “I took it twice. Don’t hurt Sandy, for he didn’t do it. I did it. I didn’t mean to do it, and I’m sorry for it.”

“Poor boy!” groaned Mrs. Boomsby; “he’s skeered out of his wits; and that’s what makes him say it, when he didn’t do it.”

“Yes, I did do it!” roared Nick, desperately, pulling out his right trousers pocket again. “There’s the hole it went through the first time.”

“I don’t believe a word on’t. Don’t tell me! My boy won’t steal,” added the mother, obstinately. “Now go into the house, Nicholas, and we’ll see about this business.”

Nick, was evidently glad to escape, and he followed his mother out of the barn. Captain Boomsby still kept his eye fixed upon me, and I patiently waited his next move.

“Things have come to a pretty pass,” said he, trying to maintain his old bullying spirit.

“I think they have, when I have to take the lickings for Nick and myself both. He stole the money, and I’m not going to be licked for it, if I can help it,” I replied, doggedly.

“You knocked my son down, you villain!”

“I did knock him down, but it was only to get the quarter from him. I told him I’d do it if he didn’t give it up; so it was his own fault.”

“You are a bad boy.”

“Perhaps I am; I’m bad enough; but I’m not going to take Nick’s lickings.”

“I shall have to send you back to the poor-house,” he added, when threats seemed to be scarce or useless with him.

“I shan’t be any worse off there than I am here; I shall get enough to eat there, at least,” I answered.

“We’ll see what’s to be done,” said he, biting his lip, and turning to leave.

“I’m willing to do my work, and take my lickings when I deserve them. I don’t know but I’d rather go back to the poor-house than stay here.”

“You won’t stay here long. I’ll take you aboard the vessel,” replied the captain, as he walked out of the barn.

I did not suppose I had seen the end of it; but I went back to my work in the garden.

CHAPTER IV.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE POOR BOY.

AS Captain Parker Boomsby has very clearly intimated that the poor-house had been my former home, perhaps the reader desires to know something more than this about my antecedents. I feel quite sure that this same reader is on my side of the question of the stolen quarter, not because it is my affair, but because it is the side of truth and justice. I am very sorry indeed that I am unable to give much information in regard to myself before I was taken into the family of Captain Boomsby. I do not even know how I happened to be in the poor-house. I had been told that my mother was dead, and that I was taken to the institution when an infant. Doubtless there was some record concerning me on the town books, but I had no knowledge of it then.

I was known by the name of Alexander Duddleton. I did not like the surname any better than the reader does, but it was the best I had, and I was obliged to be contented with it. I didn't like it because other boys called me "Duddy," and "Dud," for short. It was the name of an old Scotch doctor, who had formerly attended the patients at the poor-house when they were sick. He was a miserable, drunken old brute, who died of delirium tremens before he was taken from the institution, leaving nothing behind to perpetuate his name and fame but myself. I never felt interest enough in the subject to inquire into my origin until it was too late for me to do so, for it was only after I had left Glossenbury. If I could only get enough to eat, and clothes enough to keep me warm in the winter, I was not disposed to concern myself much about anything else. As I was not bountifully provided with these necessaries, they continued to be the staple of my thoughts.

While at the poor-house, I was sent to school summer and winter, from the time I was five till I was eight, simply because I was good for nothing else. I learned to read and write, mas-

tered the multiplication table, and could do easy sums on the slate. I was considered a very bright scholar, and when the school committee came in, I always did honor to my teachers, who declared that I was "fond of my books." When I was eight years old I was deemed fit to "do something," and I was kept busy all the time that I was not in school. I drove the cows to and from the pasture, fed the pigs, brought in wood and water, took care of the small children, when there were any, waited on the cook, ran of errands, and did such other chores as could be required of a small boy. I was well treated, as a rule, and I don't know that any fault was found with me. I had enough to eat of the coarse fare of the poor-house, and as I knew no better, I was satisfied with it.

When I was nine years old, I was considered a useful boy; and when Captain Boomsby came to the institution to look for such a one, I was so well spoken of by the overseers of the poor, that he took me. This was my evil day. I have already shown what Captain Boomsby and his wife were; and I have not made them any worse than they were. It is a fact, that I often

left the table hungry; because there was nothing more to eat left upon it. I do not mean to say that this was always the case, but it happened as many as six or eight times a week. About three times a week I was tolerably sure of dinner enough. These were when the family had corned-beef, salt fish, or baked beans. Sometimes, but not often, the "boiled dinner" failed me; for if what was left consisted of a nice piece, which would serve for another dinner, it was taken off before I sat down. When the burden of the bill of fare was beefsteak, mutton, lamb, ham, or poultry, the children usually ate as long as there was any left, and I fared hardly.

I had to work like a dog in the house, in the barn, and on the farm. I was permitted to go to school in the winter, or a part of it; but I think Mrs. Boomsby hated me because I always got above her son Nicholas. In the matter of clothing, I had only the cast-off garments of Captain Boomsby and his son, the former of which were much too large, and the latter much too small for me. I do not remember that anything was ever bought for me, except two or three

pairs of shoes for winter use, and I went bare-foot in summer. It became a necessity with me to learn to sew, in order to keep my ragged habiliments upon my back and legs. I had no Sunday suit, and I did not go to church and Sunday school. The captain said if he could get along without going to "meeting," I could. Whether I could or not, I did.

I had three tyrants when Captain Boomsby was at home, for Nick ordered me about, and bullied me quite as much as his parents. When he got mad with me, he kicked and hit me at his own discretion, for it would cost me a whipping to resist him. I only got out of his way when I could. Sometimes I had to take it for not obeying the contrary orders of Nick and his mother, and my excuses were of no avail. I was so cowed I dared do nothing. In the affair of the quarter, my resistance was unpremeditated, and I cannot explain to this day how I happened to assert myself.

The Boomsbys had considerable property, though they were regarded as very prudent and careful, if not mean, in their dealings with others. The captain owned the place on which he lived, and a quarter of the schooner he com-

manded. Before I went to live with him, he had a fit of the "western fever," and made up his mind to emigrate with his family to Michigan; but he could not sell his farm for what it was worth; and this alone prevented him from carrying his plan into effect. He did not abandon the scheme; only postponed its execution. The owners of the vessel he sailed at that time did not like to part with him, for he managed the interests of his vessel very well. They induced him to remain; they offered to build a new schooner, in which he should have a quarter interest. When she was ready to launch, the other owners objected to the name "Great West," which the captain proposed, for they thought it would tend to keep alive in his mind the scheme he had postponed; but they finally yielded the point, and the Great West slid into her proper element.

Perhaps the very hardness and parsimony of Captain Boomsby, fitted him for his occupation as the master of a vessel. It is certain that none of the "likely young men" of Glossenbury would sail with him, because he was so brutal; and his crew were always far below the average

of those who man our coasters. He worked them hard, fed them poorly, and treated them like dogs. He could obtain freights when there were any to be had, for he could afford to carry them at lower rates than better men. During the months of March and November and the greater part of April and October, there was not much for me to do on the little farm, for we did not plant much besides the garden. Doubtless the captain thought that even a little idleness would be injurious to me, and during these slack times, he took me on board of the vessel.

At the time the story opens, I had made six voyages in the Great West. Occasionally she got a freight of lumber or fish from Glossenbury to New York, or of lumber from an eastern port. If she could not obtain a cargo in New York, she went to Philadelphia, and carried coal to Boston or Portland. At first I liked my life on board of the schooner, for it enabled me to see something of several of the large cities of the nation; and then, of the poor fare served out to the sailors, I had all I could eat. On the first trip, I was cabin boy, or steward; but on the

second, I was sent forward among the sailors, where I soon found that a man's work was expected of me. The Great West was a topsail schooner, and my work was to shake out and furl the top-gallant sail. During my last two trips, I took my trick at the wheel; and though I could not lift, or pull and haul, as much as some, I was able to do everything which any other hand could do. I was worth about as much to the captain as any sailor on board; and I have no doubt he charged the owners full wages for me.

I could not well make six voyages, doing active duty, without knowing all about a vessel. At the first, if I did not obey an order because I did not know a brace from a buntline, I was kicked and abused for my ignorance, and I found that it was my best policy to learn the names of all the ropes at once. Though the crew were hard men, the pride of knowing more than I did, made them willing teachers. I was a swift scholar for the sake of my bones. Through hard discipline I learned my duty well.

The crew of the Great West did not live in the cabin, with the captain, as in some coasters, but

in a "house on deck," the after part of which formed the galley. It was a small, dismal, dirty coop, containing six bunks, one of which was not occupied, for the schooner had but four hands and a cook. I was in the mate's watch, so that the captain could have two full hands in his own; and for this reason I was glad I was not "a full hand," though the temper of the mate was not much better than that of the master. I ate with the crew, and bunked with them. They were ignorant, coarse, profane men. Though the reader may smile at me, I wish to say I felt above them, or, at least, above their vices. In the poor-house, I had had some religious instruction, and I had read a few good books. I can truly say that I never used a word of profane language in my life. Neither the example of Nick, his father, the sailors, nor any one else, influenced me in this direction. Though I cannot understand it myself, I felt above vice and crime. Even in my filth and rags, I was above most of the wickedness around me. I know not whether this pride was born in me, or whether I got it from the teachings of those good ladies, who came to the poor-house

on Sundays to break the bread of life to the inmates, the children as well as the old paupers. I never saw the day when I was not ashamed to lie, swear, or steal, though I have sometimes told a falsehood.

When Captain Boomsby threatened to send me back to the poor-house, that institution had no terrors to me, for I had been fed, clothed, and instructed there. When he spoke of taking me on board the vessel, I was not alarmed, for I understood my duty there, and fared better than in the house of my tyrants. As I said, I went to work in the garden again, after the scene in the barn. I felt very strangely, for it seemed to be almost incredible to me that I had fought a battle and won the victory; or, at least, I held the field. I had never before even raised my voice against the oppression which bore me down, and now I had actually raised both hand and voice.

I had no ambitious thoughts. Though I regarded myself as a conqueror, I was not disposed to take advantage of the victory I had won. I was willing to work as before; in fact, I was at work. I did not intend even to stipulate for

more and better food and clothing. I had not rebelled against my condition; only against the rank injustice of being flogged for Nick's sin. Still I felt that I had something now which I had not before. It was Pluck. Possibly, if I had wanted a drink of water at that moment, I should have gone for it without any of the fear that possessed me half an hour earlier in the day. As I spaded up the ground, I cast an occasional glance at the back door of the house, in order to obtain the earliest intelligence of the approach of the enemy. I was in momentary expectation of an earthquake, an avalanche, a thunder-bolt, or some other fearful outbreak.

Nothing happened; nobody came out of the house. I knew that the family were talking over the great event in the house. I had frightened Nick half out of his wits, and in him I was sure of a voice to protest against any violent measures at present. After the experience of the forenoon, he knew how easily I could handle him; and perhaps he wondered that I had not shaken him up before. Possibly the fear of harm on his part might save me. I worked away as hard as usual till half past twelve, when

Mrs. Boomsby shook a cow-bell very snappishly at the back door; it was the signal that my dinner was ready; and I may add that I was as hungry as a bear after his winter sleep.

CHAPTER V.

A REMARKABLY GOOD DINNER.

I WAS fully aware that going into the kitchen to dinner on that occasion was one of the Perils of a Poor Boy; for, if I did not actually confront my tormentors, I was in danger of having them pounce upon me at any moment. Like a prudent general, I determined to keep a look-out in every direction, and not allow myself to be surprised. Very cautiously I approached the back door, so as not to fall into any trap. I am willing to confess that I was always hungry; but I was particularly so at this time, for my breakfast had not been of a satisfactory character. Though it was hashed salt fish, it would have been satisfactory if there had been enough of it. Perhaps, if I had not been hungry, I should have gone into the house when I had the opportunity, for I was rather curious to know what was to be done with me.

To my astonishment, I found no one in the kitchen but Mrs. Boomsby; but I was not to be thrown off my guard by this circumstance, for the enemy might have laid an ambush for me. I could neither see nor hear any other member of the family. My female tyrant looked uglier than usual, if that were possible. She was washing dishes at the sink, and she continued her occupation after I entered. She did not speak to me, or look at me. Seeing that I was in no imminent peril, my stomach began to assert itself, and I glanced at the table. Like the political economists, I was interested in the "food question." I was curious to learn whether I was to be punished for my rebellion through my digestive organs, by saving them any present labor.

Possibly I started back with surprise when I saw what was on the table; if I did not, my immobility belied me. I was astonished almost to the degree of being confounded, for on the platter was a very large slice of beefsteak. It was thick, just a little rare, and the steam rising from it indicated that it was actually hot. Besides this, three large potatoes, also smoking hot, were in a bowl by the side of the platter;

and, positively, the white bread had not been removed from the table. Slices from the very loaf Mrs. Boomsby had bought of the baker with that miserable quarter of a dollar, which had made such a row, were left on the plate. Wonder of wonders, as I continued my survey, I discovered the quarter of an apple pie.

I could hardly believe my senses; in fact, I would not believe them at all; at least, I could not believe that these viands were intended for me. Mrs. Boomsby had evidently been guilty of a blunder, and such a blunder as I had never known her to make before, in failing to remove these things before I came in. I had never been permitted to partake of such a dinner as that which now adorned the board. It was clearly an omission, a piece of neglect on her part. I was embarrassed, and I feared that if I ate those delicacies I should be deemed guilty of an unpardonable offence. The lady took no notice of me, bestowing not even a glance upon me; and I was not quite willing to take the responsibility of eating that dinner.

While I was at work in the garden, before I found the quarter on the ground, the butcher had driven into the yard. I heard Mrs. Boomsby

say that the captain was coming home, and she wanted a very nice steak for his dinner. The meat-man answered that he would cut a slice out of the finest rump he had. I saw it, hooked on his steelyards, when he held it up to weigh it. How it made my mouth water! But I did not dare to hope that I should get even a taste of it. The salt fish left from dinner the day before, or the hashed fish which would not have been left if it had been set before me at breakfast, would be served at the second table for me. Therefore I had no vital interest in that large slice of rump steak which looked so tempting.

I could not get over this feeling, as I surveyed the table. It must be an oversight that this beef-steak was there, or else the "old woman," as Nick feelingly called her, had entirely changed her plans and purposes. I could not understand it. I dared not eat that dinner. I coughed, to excite Mrs. Boomsby's attention; but the attempt was a failure. She would not look at me, or, what would have been more to the purpose, at the table. What could I do? She had tinkled the cow-bell at the door for me to come to my dinner; but I had never before come to such a

dinner as that. Ordinarily I could not have stood there ten seconds without being "blowed skyhigh;" but I did not get a word from her. At last, rather than do a deed which could not be expiated or atoned for, I concluded to speak to her. She could not any more than bite my head off for doing so.

"Is my dinner ready, Mrs. Boomsby?" I asked, timidly.

"Yes, 'tis!" she snapped, as short as pie-crust — not as *her* pie-crust, let me say.

"Is this beefstake and this apple pie for me?" I added.

"Sit down and eat your dinner, you rascal!" was the amiable remark she jerked at me.

This sounded more natural, though the dinner still had a sort of supernatural look to me. I never was so willing in my life to obey her. I sat down and ate my dinner. I worked lively, because I was interested in the operation. The beefstake was absolutely magnificent! It was hot, juicy, and reasonably tender. I must do Mrs. Boomsby the justice to say that it was well cooked. It was broiled over the live coals of hard wood, in the great fireplace in the back

room, which served as a summer kitchen. I did my best, but I could not eat the whole of that steak, though I hardly reserved the necessary space for the apple pie, which was a very unusual luxury to me.

As long as I could eat, I did not cease to wonder at the quality and the quantity of my dinner. I had read Sinbad the Sailor, and if my tyrants had been cannibals, I could have suspected, as that great and reliable voyager did, that I was to be fattened for home consumption. I had read, in an old newspaper which fell into my hands, about a villain who was to be hung, and that he had been supplied with a princely feast before he was swung off. Possibly this first-class dinner was the forerunner of something terrible; perhaps it preceded an immense flogging. However, these thoughts did not disturb me much, so long as I was not to be eaten myself. I had had my dinner, and I was entirely satisfied with myself.

I sat at the table, regretting that I had not the ability to consume the rest of the steak on the platter. I was really waiting for the next act in the drama, for I felt sure there was another.

But Mrs Boomsby still rattled her dishes, and nothing happened. I was about to rise from the table, when the back door opened, and the commander of the Great West entered the kitchen. I made haste to place the table between him and me, so that he could not cut off my retreat, before I saw that he was followed by Cyril Pentatook, one of the constables of the town, who lived near the Five Corners.

“Don’t you do it, father!” whined Nick, from the outside of the house. “He’ll kill me if you do!”

“You hear that, Pentatook—don’t you?” said Captain Boomsby, in a tone of triumph.

“Yes, I hear it,” replied the constable, glancing at me.

“Don’t you be alarmed, Nick,” I added, addressing my third tyrant, as he crept timidly into the room. “I won’t lick you, unless your father licks me.”

“You see, Pentatook, he has scared my boy half out of his wits,” continued the captain. “He has actually made Nicholas own that he stole the quarter, when he didn’t do it.”

“Yes I did do it, father!” protested Nick,

earnestly; and he was evidently more afraid of me than he was of his paternal parent, who had never shaken him up as I had that day.

“Well, that’s sort of cu’rous,” added Pentatook, with a broad grin on his face.

“It was Sandy that stole the quarter, whatever Nicholas may say,” interposed Mrs. Boomsby, beginning to be excited.

“’Twan’t Sandy!” yelled Nick. “’Twas me!”

“Don’t you mind what he says, Pentatook,” said the captain. “Sandy’s a bad boy, and Nicholas is afraid of him. Don’t you heed what either of ’em say.”

“I’m not a go’n to try the case, Captain Boomsby; and it don’t make no difference what either on ’em says to me,” added the constable, with a broad grin again, as though he intended to make it pleasant for his prisoner. “I’ve got a warrant to take up Alexander Duddleton, for feloniously beatin’, poundin’, and maltreatin’ Nicholas Boomsby, and for assaultin’ Parker Boomsby with an armed weapon called a pitchfork.”

Cyril Pentatook evidently quoted the “slang”

of his warrant from his memory, and did not hit it in every instance, besides mixing therewith some of the terms used in a formidable indictment. I understood enough of what he said to comprehend the situation. My punishment was not to be sent back to the poor-house, or to be taken on board of the Great West, though either of these penalties might follow the present scene in the play. I was not alarmed. I tried to smile, and my impression now is, that I succeeded.

“Sandy’s a bad boy,” continued the captain, “He’s dissatisfied with his living. Why, only to-day, he hinted that he didn’t have enough to eat.”

Of course, Cyril Pentatook, in the face of this charge, could not help glancing at the table, if he had not done so before. Probably he had seen me rising from the table as he came in, and he could not help noting the piece of juicy steak, the third potato, and the slices of white bread which remained on the board. As the matter now stood, I could not fail to realize the purpose for which I had been so lavishly and richly feasted on this occasion—the constable

was to see what and how much I had for dinner.

“He seems to have had dinner enough to-day, anyhow,” grinned Pentatook.

“I have had a first-rate dinner to-day,” I replied, with energy and with enthusiasm.

“The dinner’s nothing to do with this case,” said the constable. “I’m here arter Alexander Duddleton.”

“Here I am, Mr. Pentatook; and I’m ready to go with you,” I added, promptly, for I was really glad of an opportunity to tell my story before one of the justices.

“But I want you to look into the case a little, Pentatook.”

“I don’t try the case, I tell you. Squire Bucklemore will do that for you,” answered the constable. “The squire wants Nicholas to go down too.”

“Nicholas ain’t a goin’!” said Mrs. Boomsby.

“Yes, he is; I’ve got a supeny for him,” replied the officer.

Nicholas began to cry, and his parents protested. It was no use; Mr. Pentatook was firm, and we all marched down to Squire Bucklemore’s office.

CHAPTER VI.

WHOSE FINGERS WERE BURNED.

I AM confident that I was the least disturbed of any person in the procession which marched down the east road to the office of the justice who had my case in charge. As Nick was going, I had nothing to fear, for he still clung to the truth. I had always heard Squire Bucklemore spoken of as a fair and just man, who was not afraid of anybody or anything. That was all I wanted; and I did not ask any favors of anybody. I concluded that Nick did not know I was to be arrested till the arrival of the officer. When Captain Boomsby had gone to Squire Bucklemore's to make the complaint, I could not tell. It might have been before dinner or after; but certainly it had been arranged that Mr. Pentatook should find me at my dinner—at that royal dinner, such as I had never known before.

The captain must have struggled to make it appear that I was a very bad boy, and that I was even bad enough to complain of my food. Since there can be nothing meaner than scrimping the food of a growing boy, it is quite likely that Captain Boomsby was more afraid of what I might say on this subject than on any other. All I could make of the case was that my tyrants—excepting Nick—were afraid to punish me, and intended to have me sent to the house of correction. A walk of a few minutes brought us to the squire's office. On the way, my tyrants improved the time in showing the constable what a bad boy I was. I walked ahead of them, and Nick dragged some distance behind, groaning and blubbering like a great calf.

“Which is the Duddleton boy?” asked Squire Bucklemore, when the constable had ushered us all into the office which was the forum of justice for small cases.

“This one,” replied Mr. Pentatook, placing his hand on my head.

“That one? I supposed it must be the other,” added the squire, smiling.

“The other's the Boomsby boy.”

“Come here, my lad,” said Squire Buckle-

more, beckoning to Nick with his finger. "What are you crying for?"

"Sandy has skeered him almost to death," answered Mrs. Boomsby.

"Let the boy speak for himself," added the justice. "What are you crying for, my lad?"

"I didn't want to come here," whined Nick.

"Why not? I shall not hurt you, if you have been a good boy."

"I haven't been a good boy," groaned Nick, with a convulsive start.

"He's skeered of Sandy," said his mother.

"Madam, this is a court of law, and you must speak only when you are spoken to," added Squire Bucklemore, majestically. "Now, my lad, you are brought here only as a witness; no one prosecutes you; and all we want of you is to tell the truth. Alexander Duddleton is charged with assaulting you, my lad."

"He didn't hurt me any," blubbered Nick.

"Why, Nicholas!" exclaimed Mrs. Boomsby; "you know you couldn't hardly walk a step arter it was done."

"He shall tell his own story in due time," added the squire, turning to me. — "Alexander Duddleton."

"That's my name, sir," I answered, cheerfully, stepping up to the justice.

He rehearsed the charges against me, and asked me to plead guilty or not guilty. The whole thing was a mystery to me, and I did not know what the squire meant. But he spoke so tenderly to me, that I could not help feeling that I was in good hands. He explained the matter to me.

"I did give Nick a h'ist this forenoon," I replied.

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Boomsby; "I told you so!"

"Do you mean to plead guilty, and let the matter end here? or do you want the case looked into, Alexander?" asked the squire.

"I don't mean to tell any lies. I'm willing to tell just what I did and what I did not do," I replied.

"Pleading 'not guilty' is not telling a lie; it only means that you desire a trial; that you wish to have the case looked into."

"I should like to tell my story," I added.

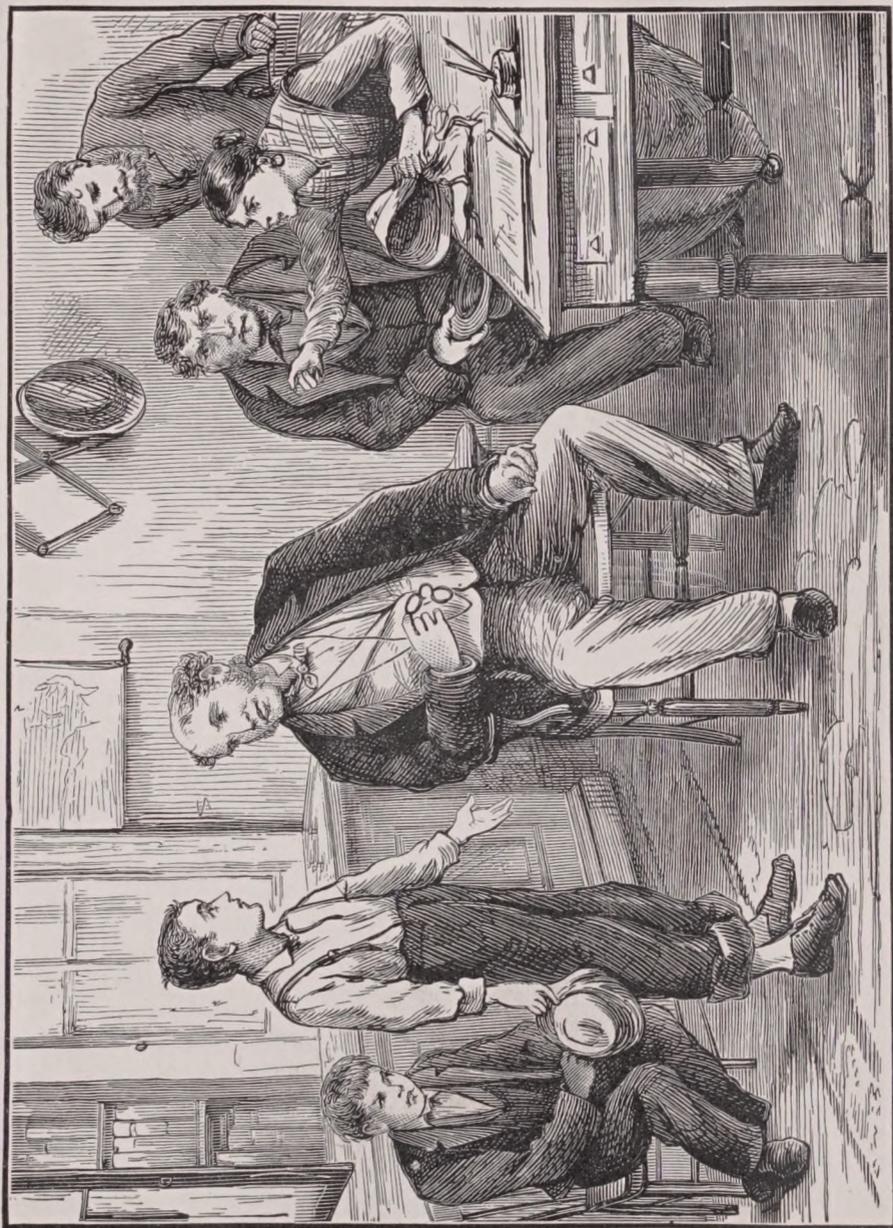
"Very well, Alexander; tell your story, and you shall plead afterwards," said the squire, very kindly.

I told my story, from the moment I started to go into the house for a drink of water, till the moment I was arrested on a full stomach, after that glorious dinner; and I did not withhold my meed of praise from that royal feast of beefsteak and apple pie; whereat the justice smiled very perceptibly. I may as well add here, though I did not know it at the time, that the Boomsbys did not stand very well among the good people of Glossenbury, and it was currently reported that the boy taken by them from the poor-house, was ill treated and half starved. For this reason Squire Bucklemore had a great deal of sympathy for me, and was particularly careful that I should have fair play. The squire told me this himself, a great many years afterwards.

While I was telling my story, to which the justice listened with the closest attention, I was frequently interrupted by Mrs. Boomsby. When I related that I had taken the quarter from Nick's pocket, she broke in—

“That's an awful lie!”

“Mrs. Boomsby, if you interrupt the proceedings again, Mr. Pentatook shall turn you out of the room,” said the squire, sternly and decidedly.



SANDY TELLING HIS STORY TO SQUIRE BUCKLEMORE. Page 72.

By this time I was satisfied that both of my tyrants wished they had not brought the case before the justice.

“Now, my lad, how will you plead?” asked the squire.

“I don’t know, sir. I have told the whole truth,” I replied.

“Very well. When a prisoner declines to plead, we enter it as not ‘guilty,’” added the justice.

I was willing to let it go so; and Nick was called. The squire told him to hold up his right hand, which Nick did, shaking all the time like a man with the ague. His father and mother were called and sworn at the same time.

“Nicholas Boomsby,” said the squire; and Nick stood up before him. “Now, my lad, you are under oath. Do you know what that means?”

“Yes, sir—no, sir,” blubbered Nick.

“It means that if you don’t tell the truth in this case, you will be guilty of perjury; and for perjury you may be sent to prison for any length of time less than twenty years.”

“I will tell the truth,” protested Nick.

“Very well. Now tell me how it happened that Alexander assaulted you,” continued the squire.

“It was just as Sandy said, sir,” replied the witness.

The justice required him to tell the story, and he told it. It was the “whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” Mrs. Boomsby could hardly contain herself, and several times she attempted to make a remark; but Cyril Pentatook had placed himself by her side, and kept her still. Nick confessed that he had taken the quarter twice, and that I had “tipped him over” only after he refused to give it up. Mrs. Boomsby was called and she was solemnly reminded that she was under oath. She told how the quarter had been twice taken from the kitchen table; but when she said that I had taken it, the squire again reminded her that she was under oath, and that she was to tell only what she knew herself. All the evidence she gave of any value, was the fact that I had twice handed her the quarter; and this only confirmed the truth of Nick’s story. After this, the testimony in relation to the affair in the barn was taken.

I was permitted to testify in my own behalf, after my rights were fully explained to me; and I told my story over again, under oath, exactly as I told it before. Then the justice gave his decision.

“This case ought not to have been brought into a court, for it is only an affair of family discipline,” said Squire Bucklemore. “But, as it has been brought before me, I am obliged to settle it. It does not appear that there was any assault in the barn upon Captain Boomsby. The boy Alexander was threatened, and an attempt was actually made to flog him with a rope. The defendant resisted by retreating and menacing the plaintiff with a pitchfork. It appears now, as it appeared then,—for Nicholas confessed his error,—and the defendant was not guilty of the offence with which he was charged. He was to be wrongfully punished; and some discretion should be used in considering his conduct. Though his act may be considered as a technical assault, I think, under the circumstances, the defendant is entitled to his discharge on this count.

“In regard to the assault upon the boy Nicho-

las, the charge is clearly proved, and not denied by the defendant. It was only a boy quarrel, though I am compelled to regard it as something more serious. Alexander certainly assaulted Nicholas, and threw him upon the grass at the side of the road; but it does not appear that he used any more force than was necessary to obtain the quarter which he needed for his own vindication. As a matter of equity, it would almost seem that the defendant was justified in what he did; but the law does not so regard it. Alexander had no right to take the law into his own hands, for such a course is always dangerous to the rights and liberty of the citizen. Alexander ought to have come to me and complained of Nicholas for stealing the money. A warrant would then have been issued for the arrest of the thief, and it would have been the duty of the constable, in a legal manner, to search Nicholas.

“ Thus Alexander would have vindicated himself. But he appears not to have had any knowledge of the legal remedy in his case, and he committed an offence against the peace and dignity of this commonwealth. The charge is

proved, and I am compelled to sentence him to pay a fine of one dollar and costs of court, amounting to three dollars and forty-five cents, and to stand committed until paid."

Long before the squire finished his speech, I saw that the Boomsbys were thoroughly disgusted with this sort of law. It was not the kind they wanted; but it exactly suited me, though I was a little startled when I was condemned to pay the fine and costs. Of course I could not pay it; and I had not the least idea what "stand committed" meant. It soon appeared that Captain Boomsby was not much better informed.

"But who is to pay this fine and costs?" asked he. "The boy can't pay the bill."

"As I understand the matter, you are his legal guardian, Captain Boomsby; and it devolves upon you to pay his fine," replied the justice; and I saw the twinkle in the corner of his eye.

"Upon me!" gasped the commander of the Great West.

"Certainly; as you pay for his board, clothes, and other expenses," added the squire, quietly.

"Who on airth ever heard of such a thing?" shrieked Mrs. Boomsby. "We persecute him

for assaultin' our boy, and we have to pay the fine and costs!"

"Certainly, madam. A man complained of his wife for beating him over the head with a broomstick; and he only had to pay her fine, or lose her services as housekeeper for three or four weeks. He had his choice, and he paid the fine. You can do the same, or not, as you please."

"What if I don't pay it?" asked the captain.

"Then Alexander will be committed to the lock-up for three or four weeks. Mr. Pentatook is responsible for his prisoners; but I believe in these small cases he takes them home, boards them in his own house, and lets them work in the garden to pay for their board," chuckled the squire.

This arrangement exactly suited me, but it did not suit the Boomsbys, who wished me to be shut up in jail. I was quite sure that I should fare as well at Cyril Pentatook's as at my old home. The captain and his wife were perplexed and confounded. They evidently did not know what to do.

"There is one other view to be taken of this

affair. It appears that a crime has been committed; a quarter of a dollar was stolen from Mrs Boomsby by her son; but a son has no right to steal from his mother. The law makes no distinction in regard to the person upon whom the theft is committed. Alexander has been the sufferer by this theft; and if he should enter the complaint against the thief, I should be obliged to grant a warrant for the arrest of Nicholas," continued the squire, very mildly.

"I'll pay the fine and costs," groaned Captain Boomsby; and he did so.

I was discharged and sent home. Mrs. Boomsby and Nick soon followed me; but the captain did not return for over an hour. I suspected that Squire Bucklemore had a talk with him but nothing was said to me about it.

CHAPTER VII.

MY WARDROBE AND OTHER MATTERS.

I RESUMED my work as soon as I returned home. I was much better satisfied with the results of the trial, than my tyrants. I hoped the events of the day would tend to improve my condition, and make the future more hopeful for me. I had clearly won a victory, and, while I did not intend to do anything to provoke my oppressors, I hoped to reap the fruits of my victory. But I had not been at work long, before Captain Boomsby walked into the yard, looking as sore and as savage as though I had robbed him of the hope of a lifetime. He marched directly towards me, and every step he took indicated the depth of his wrath.

“I s’pose you think you’ve got the best of me this time, you rascal,” said he. “But you haven’t seen the end of this business yet.”

“I don’t think you have any reason to complain of me. I haven’t done anything, as I know of,” I replied.

“Don’t tell me you villain,” roared he.

“Squire Bucklemore didn’t think I had done anything wrong.”

“I don’t care what Squire Bucklemore says or thinks,” growled the captain savagely.

“I am willing to work, and do all that’s wanted of me; but I don’t think it’s just the thing to lick me for what Nick does.”

“No matter what you think. I don’t want you to think at all,” added Captain Boomsby, gruffly.

I thought this was rather a hard case; but it was just what he meant, whether he had said it or not; and I did not venture to make any reply. He wished me to be like a dog—come when I was called, and pick up my own living. However, I did not purpose to resist anything short of actual violence. I looked on the ground, so that even my “stare” might not be considered impudent, and awaited his next move.

“We are going to teach you what you’re good for,” he continued, in threatening tones. (6)

"I know I'm not good for much," I answered, meekly, for I did not wish to bring about another row.

"You ain't half so big a man as you think you are," he added, glowering upon me like an ogre. "You shall know your place."

This was a favorite argument of the captain—to get all his subordinates into their proper places. He seemed to be afraid some of them would aspire to reach his lofty level; but I acknowledge that I had no such towering ambition.

"I think I know my place now," I ventured to add.

"I'll let you know you ain't the equal of my boy."

"I don't pretend to be his equal, or anything of the sort."

"Yes, you do. You put on airs as if you didn't come from the poor-house. You've got to be too big to take a lickin' when you deserve it; and it's time sunthin' was done."

"I'm willing to take my own lickings."

"I'm not goin' to ask you whether you are willing or not."

“I don’t think it’s right for me to take Nick’s lickings as well as my own,” I added; and it seemed to me that a proposition so clear and plain, needed no demonstration.

“What do I care what you think?” sneered he. “You’ve gone just as far as you’re goin’ on this tack. ’Taint no use to talk any more about it.”

I didn’t suppose it was, and so I made no reply. I think he wanted to provoke me to make a saucy answer, in order to find an excuse for pitching into me, though he did not generally trouble himself to look up excuses for what he did. I half suspected that Squire Bucklemore had said something to him about me, for the justice had certainly been on my side during the trial. He had really seemed like a friend to me, and I was very grateful to him.

“I reckon I’ll take you on board the vessel, when I go off again,” he continued, looking savage enough to bite off a board nail. “I guess I can manage you there, without no judges nor constables.”

“I’m willing to go in the vessel,” I replied, wishing to avoid all appearance of opposition.

“Don’t tell me you’re willin’,” said he, fiercely. “I don’t care whether you are willin’ or not;” and he seemed to be mad because I was willing.

Certainly I wished to conciliate that man. But I might as well have attempted to make peace with a hyena or a boa-constrictor. He was always ugly to me, and I cannot remember that he ever spoke a kind word to me. Rough and hard as Captain Boomsby was, his wife was as rough and hard as he was. It really made no difference to me, whether I went to sea or staid on shore; I was sure of more kicks than coppers on land or on the water. It seemed to me that I fared just a shade better on board of the Great West than I did on the farm, because the captain spent most of his time in the cabin and on the quarter-deck, so that, on the fore-castle, I was out of his sight. However, I had no doubt of his power to “make it hot” for me, wherever I was. I was not aware that I could do anything to better my condition, and I had no thought of anything but submission. This world seemed like a very cold and dismal place to me, and the future was exceedingly dark and forbidding. Though I had been guilty

of no offence, I realized that I was to suffer because I had rebelled at the rankest injustice.

Captain Boomsby turned on his heel, and walked into the house. I continued my work, but I was in no very pleasant frame of mind. I was almost sorry that I had not permitted Nick to retain the quarter, and taken the consequence for stealing it—not quite, for the satisfaction I had derived from asserting and maintaining my rights was a sufficient offset to half a dozen floggings. Stealing was an awful crime to me, and I do not know that anything less than charging me with such a crime, when I was innocent, could have induced me to lay violent hands on the sacred person of the captain's son, or to level a pitchfork at the captain himself. I had done it, however, and now I was to take the consequences.

While the captain remained at home, I was treated in about the same manner as before; that is, I had plenty of work, with just what the rest of the family left me to eat; and it seemed to me that they left even less than before the tempest in the barn; certainly that glorious dinner of beefsteak and apple pie was

not repeated. In a few days I had finished planting the early peas, and had prepared the ground for the other vegetables, so that there was no more steady work for me to do. The Great West was taking in a cargo of fish, and was to sail for New York in a few days. I had no doubt that I should go in her; and, to tell the truth, I was not sorry to do so, for at sea I should at least reduce the number of my tyrants.

“Sandy, pack up your duds, and go aboard the vessel,” said Mrs. Boomsby, about a week after the trial.

My female tyrant said this as though she had condemned me to a terrible fate. Though I did not think it would be then, it proved to be more terrible than I had anticipated; and the events of the voyage became one of the turning-points of my existence.

“I don’t know that I have any duds to pack,” I replied; and perhaps it was impudent for me to make such a remark, since it was an imputation upon my tyrants for the meagreness of my wardrobe; but somehow, I could not help it, for the lady spoke as though she had given me an extensive job to do.

“Don’t give me none of your impudence,” snapped she. “You’ve got more clothes than you deserve. I suppose you want to be dressed up like a gentleman now — don’t you?”

“If I am going to sea, I should like rags enough to cover my back.”

“Don’t be sassy.”

It was saucy to ask for anything to eat or to wear. I was the proprietor of a few old rags, which were wholly insufficient to keep me warm, and I went up stairs to the attic to gather them together. Nick’s overcoat, with the skirts cut off, served me for a jacket; the captain’s trousers, “razeed” at the bottom, were my nether garment; and my hat, or cap, was anything I could pick up about the place. I confess that I was vain enough to desire something better than this wardrobe. Mrs. Boomsby evidently thought I intended to become a dandy, because I spoke rather disrespectfully of this suit. It was not enough to protect me from the cold blasts of the ocean; not enough to keep me from shivering while on my watch in the fog and rain; and certainly not enough to enable me to make a decent appearance in the streets of Glossenbury.

or New York, whither I was bound. I had an extra woollen shirt, — one of a pair which had shrunk so that the captain could not wear them, — and a second pair of socks, which I rolled up in my jacket, for I seldom wore the latter garment, except in the coldest weather on shore. My trunk, therefore, was soon packed. I was ready for the voyage. I went down stairs with my bundle, and waited for the moving of the waters.

“What do you sit there for, gawpin’ like a sculpin?” demanded Mrs. Boomsby, frowning at me as though I had done something very naughty.

“I’m waiting for further orders,” I replied, rising from the chair where I had seated myself.

“Didn’t I tell you to go aboard the vessel? How many more times do you want me to tell you?”

“Once will do; but I didn’t know’s you was ready to have me go yet.”

“Yes, I’m ready, and glad to git red of you. Git out of the house as fast as ever you can; and I hope it will be a long day before I see you again.”

“This was her parting benediction; and it *was* a longer day than she or I anticipated before she saw me again. I made no reply, and indulged in no good by. I left the house, and in the yard I met Nick.

“Where you going, Sandy?” he asked; but he had entirely lost his bullying tone and manner towards me; and, since the affair in the road a week before, he had not ceased to be afraid of me, though I would not have harmed him for the world, except in self-defence.

“On board of the vessel,” I answered.

“It’s none o’ my doings, Sandy,” he added.

“I know that.”

“I didn’t know but that you thought I was the means of having you sent off. But I wasn’t. I never said a word about it.”

“I don’t blame you, Nick; and I shouldn’t care if you had been the means of sending me off. It don’t make much difference to me where I go.”

“Do you want to go to sea?” he asked.

“I had as lief go to sea as stay on the farm. I shall have hard fare wherever I go.”

“The old woman’s pretty rough on you, any-

how," continued Nick; "and so's the old man, for that matter."

"That's so."

"I shouldn't wonder if the old man made it hot for you on board of the vessel."

"I should wonder if he didn't."

"You got about even with him a week ago, in the barn, you know, Sandy. Why don't you try it on again?"

"What do you mean, Nick?"

"Don't you remember, Sandy?"

I was not quite ready to believe that the son meant to counsel me to resist the father, and I did not comprehend him; but there was no more feeling of parental love or respect in him, than there was in a brickbat.

"I don't understand you," I added.

"Didn't you face the old man with the pitchfork out to the barn, a week ago?" asked he, chuckling as though it was a good joke.

"Well, what if I did?"

"Why don't you try it on again? You got the best of dad that time."

"I don't think I made anything by it," I added gloomily. "It would have been just as

well, if not a little better for me, if I had let it go that I had stole the quarter, instead of putting it on you, where it belonged."

"I didn't mean to get you into a scrape, Sandy," he continued, rather sheepishly.

"It's all the same now."

"Well, good by, Sandy; and when you come back, we will be better friends."

"I'm agreed. Good by, Nick," I replied, resuming my walk towards the wharf where the Great West lay.

In a short time I reached my destination, and went on board of the vessel. Captain Boomsby was on the quarter-deck, and, tossing my bundle into the fore-castle, I hastened to present myself for duty.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON BOARD THE GREAT WEST.

“**W**HERE have you been laggin’ all the mornin’, you rascal, you?” demanded Captain Boomsby, as I showed myself in the waist.

“I came on board as soon as I was told to do so,” I replied: but I might just as well have held my tongue.

“You’ve been foolin’ by the way, as you allus do, you villain! Now, grab that peak halyard, and look alive!” blustered the captain.

I took hold of the rope with one of the hands. I knew my duty, and I was willing to do it. I worked with a will, for I wanted to know whether or not it made any difference how faithful I was. I put forth my whole strength,—and for a boy of twelve, I had a great deal. When the mainsail was set, we were ordered

to hoist the foresail. My place was at the peak, as before, and I exerted myself to the utmost.

“Why don’t you pull, you lubber, you?” said the captain with an oath.

I had done the best I could, but it was of no use. However, I determined that, if I was abused, it should not be my fault, and I continued to do my best. I was not heavy and slow-moulded, as one might have judged by the way Captain Boomsby talked to me; on the contrary, I was quick and lively. Among the hands with whom I had sailed before, I had the reputation of being a smart boy. I did not make as much noise as some of the men, but I did almost as much work, even in hoisting the heavy fore and aft sails; and in the light work of shaking out the topsails, I was so nimble, that I could beat most of them. As I have said before, only the meanest class of men would ship on board of the Great West, because her captain was a brute; and those who were at work with me at this time, were all so drunk that they could hardly stand. Captain Boomsby swore at them, and swore at me; but I think I received more than my fair share of his blasphem-

mous abuse. If I had been disposed to use profane language, his disgusting example would have prevented me from doing so.

“Now, lay aloft and shake out that to’gal-lant-sail, you young cub!” shouted the captain, pointing to me. “Look alive now, and don’t be all day about it.”

I ran up the fore-shrouds as swiftly as though the safety of the schooner depended upon the celerity of my movements. A young fellow, who had been on a spree for a week, was sent aloft to loose the topsail; but he was too tipsy to do anything more than keep himself from tumbling off the yard; indeed, I was afraid he would fall. When I had loosed my sail, I slid down on the halyard to the topsail-yard, then dropped upon the foot-rope, where the drunken tar was trying to cast off the gasket. I loosed the rope and removed it from the sail.

“Mind your eye, Dick Blister!” I called to him, as I let fall the sail. “Don’t tumble off the yard, my hearty.”

“Aloft there! What are you about, Sandy? Who told you to meddle with the topsail?” hailed the captain, from the deck. “Lay down from aloft, this minute!”

I scampered down the rigging as fast as my legs would carry me. As I leaped from the rail upon the deck, I received half a dozen cuts over my arm and shoulder with a rope's end, in the hands of Captain Boomsby, who had gone forward to meet me as I came down. The blows were as heavy as he could comfortably make them. To say that "it hurt," would not cover the case, for my flesh was lacerated by the operation.

"Who told you to go on the topsail-yards?" demanded my tyrant, savagely.

"I was afraid Dick Blister would fall off the yard," I pleaded.

"It's none of your business if he does fall. By and by, perhaps you'll learn to obey orders, if all the ropes' ends don't give out," growled the captain, panting with the exertion he had used in running forward, and in flogging me.

I retreated to the forecastle, rubbing my wounded arm, but determined to profit by the lesson I had just received. The halyards were manned, the yards hoisted up, and the sail sheeted home. The captain ordered me to take the stops off the flying-jib, and Dick Blister those of the

jib. I went out on the flying-jib-boom, and Dick followed me as far as the jib-stay. My work was done in a minute, and in the ordinary course of duty, I should have helped Dick out, for his job was a bigger one than mine; but I knew better, in the present instance, than to do anything of the kind; at least I thought I knew better. I stood on the jib-boom, holding on at the stay, for I could not pass Dick. Presently I saw that the ugly eye of my tyrant was fixed upon me. I was standing still, and I knew that this was a crime. My tipsy shipmate was fumbling over the jib, and not likely to finish it in the next hour; so I slid down to the cathead on one of the guys, and leaped in on the deck. I was not a moment too soon, for the skipper was after me. He was as savage as a meat-axe. If I had let the vessel broach too with the wind on the beam, he could not have come at me more furiously.

“What are you about, you lazy villain? Don't you know any better than to stand there, with your hands in your pockets, when we're getting the schooner under way?” roared he, choking with wrath.

"I've done what you told me to do," I answered, with all the humility I could summon to my aid. "I have loosed the flying-jib."

"Is that all there is to be done?"

"That's all you told me to do."

"Why didn't you help Dick loose the jib, you lazy cub?"

"You didn't give me any orders to do so."

"Didn't I? Well, I'll give them now," he continued, beginning to pound me with a rope's end he carried in his hand for the purpose.

* "Just now you flogged me for helping Dick shake out the topsail, without orders; and now you flog me for not helping him, when you haven't told me to do so," I cried, running up the fore-rigging a short distance, to get out of his way.

I had permitted him to give me but one blow this time, and his injustice was so glaring that I could not endure it. Perhaps the remembrance of the scene in the barn stimulated me to resistance, but nothing save the grossest cruelty could have fired me to do so.

"Come down out of that rigging, you villain!" gasped the savage tyrant, flourishing the rope at me.

“Not just yet,” I replied; and I was determined that I would jump overboard before I would submit to any more castigation. My “ebenezer” was up; I did not deserve it, and I could not stand it.

“Will you come down out of that rigging, or shall I go up after you?” demanded Captain Boomsby, foaming with rage.

“I’d rather you’d come up after me, if it’s all the same to you,” I answered, saucily, for I had become desperate, and did not care a straw what became of me.

Captain Boomsby leaped upon the rail, but he might as well have attempted to chase a red squirrel up an oak tree, as to follow me. I ran up the ratlines like a cat, and he after me. By this time, the gaze of all hands, as well as that of a small crowd on the wharf, was fixed upon me. When I reached the mast-head, I decided that it was not prudent for me to go any higher; for, if I did, he could cut off my retreat. Leaving the foremast, I ran out on the spring-stay, which extends horizontally to the mainmast. This movement on my part called out a laugh from the spectators, which did not tend to

improve the temper of the captain. I will not soil my page by transcribing the string of oaths my tyrant uttered, when he discovered what I intended to do. If there was ever a man insane with passion, Captain Boomsby was the one.

“Stop him, Barnes!” screamed the captain, hoarse with wrath, when he realized that I was in a fair way to reach the deck first.

Barnes was the mate ; but he was a new man on board of the Great West, and was not inclined to do anything out of the strict line of his duty. He was standing near the foot of the foremast, and he moved rather leisurely towards the quarter-deck, as though he did not care to obey the order of the skipper. Possibly the laugh of the crowd, who appeared to rejoice in the discomfiture of the captain, had some effect upon him. Nobody likes to run in opposition to the multitude. Evidently the sympathies of the spectators were in favor of the “bottom dog,” and I was not much afraid of the interference of any person.

But I deemed it prudent to make a halt on the main-rigging, in order to determine what opposition I had to expect from the mate. His

lazy movements assured me that I had not much to fear from him. If he was not a friend, he was disposed to be neutral, and I did not care to place him in an awkward position before his superior officer. For this reason, I retained my position about half way between the deck and the mainmast-head.

“Why don’t you go aloft and bring him down, Barnes?” yelled Captain Boomsby. “Can’t you hear me?”

“I hear you, replied the mate, in a low, dogged tone. But he made no movement to obey.

“Why don’t you go up and bring that boy down, then?” demanded the tyrant, apparently astonished at the apathy of his subordinate.

Barnes seated himself on the fife-rail, at the heel of the mainmast, looking as though he had not the least interest in anything on the earth below. I was intensely solicitous in regard to his future action, and I was pleased to find that he had drawn off the attention of the crowd from me to himself. For the moment he was the hero of the scene, for his silent refusal to obey his superior indicated a greater disturbance

than the mere disciplining of a boy. The mate made no reply to the last question of the captain; instead of being properly impressed by the mandate of the master, he even had the impudence to take out an old black pipe, strike a match, and light it. Very leisurely he puffed away, and surveyed the crowd on the wharf with a mighty indifference.

Captain Boomsby was apparently amazed at this conduct, as soon as he realized its meaning. He descended from the fore-rigging, and walked aft to the quarter-deck, where he confronted the cool mate. Barnes was a stout, heavy down-easter, weighing nearly two hundred, and a person of good judgment would not have selected him as a suitable man with whom to make a fuss. The skipper looked at him; Barnes returned his gaze with something like a look of supreme contempt on his bronzed countenance.

“Do you command this vessel, or do I?” demanded Captain Boomsby, shaking with anger.

“That’s a conundrum, and I ain’t good for guessing ’em,” replied the mate, with a smile.

Barnes did not appear to be disposed to talk, but rose from his seat, and went down into the

cabin. In a moment he re-appeared with an overcoat on his arm, and a valise in his hand. Without a word to the captain, he moved towards the wharf.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MATE'S ADVICE.

FROM my position on the main-rigging I could see and hear both parties in the strife, and even note the expression on their faces. Captain Boomsby was apparently confounded by the demonstration of the mate. He looked up to me as though he had just discovered that he had made a mistake. The Great West was all ready to sail, and the mate was on the point of leaving. Barnes had the reputation of being an excellent mate, and people wondered that he had shipped with such a man as Captain Boomsby was known to be; but he was out of a job, and this was his only excuse, as he expressed it himself.

“Hold on a minute, Barnes. Where are you going?” said the skipper, in a rather subdued tone.

“I’m goin ashore,” replied the mate, stopping, and turning round to confront the tyrant.

“What do you mean by that?” asked the captain. “I thought you shipped for this trip.”

“So I did; but I’m not going to help you grind that boy—not if I know myself, and I think I do,” answered the mate, in good, round, noble tones, which went to the right spot in my heart, and I wanted to applaud him, as I had heard the people do at the political meetings.

“Grind that boy! What do you mean by that?” inquired the skipper, with a sickly smile.

“I mean just what I say. It’s bad enough to have to see it done, without being called upon to take a hand in the business,” added Barnes; and I could see that he had the sympathies of the crowd.

“God bless you, Jacob Barnes!” I wanted to say. The thought was in my heart, but I did not deem it prudent to utter a word.

“The boy is a young cub, and don’t mind,” pleaded the captain, who evidently did not wish to lose the mate. “He’s a good-for-nothing young rascal, and wants to make all the trouble he can. He don’t know how to mind, and he

won't work unless you kick him. That's the whole on't."

"I don't want to come between you and the boy; but you licked him the first time for doing something without orders, and the next time for not doing anything without orders," answered Barnes, very mildly, and not in the manner of a retort. "I knew it's none of my business; at least, till you call upon me to help you grind the boy. I've got some bowels in my soul, and I don't like that kind of a job."

"Well, well, Barnes, you and I needn't quarrel about a little thing like this," laughed Captain Boomsby. "I'll take care of the boy after this, without any help from you. I rather think I can manage him alone;" and the tyrant glanced up at me.

"I don't like to meddle with what don't consarn me; but that boy took hold sharp and smart, and I thought he was a good deal handier about a vessel than boys average. He went aloft, shook out that to'gallant-sail as spry as ever I saw it done. You can catch more flies with molasses than you can with vinegar, cap'n."

"I ain't in the fly-catching business just now, Barnes," chuckled the captain.

“But you’re in sunthin’ a mighty sight smaller, and that’s grinding down a poor boy that hain’t got no one to stand up for him.”

“Come, Barnes, put away your traps, and we will get the vessel under way,” added the captain, in a coaxing tone. “I’ll tell you all about the boy when we have more time.”

“I shipped to help navigate the vessel, and I’m not going into the grindin’ business.”

“All right Barnes. We understand each other now,” continued the captain, in wheedling tones; for, like other bullies, he had hardly a particle of self-respect.

Jacob Barnes had a family to support, and I suppose he did not feel able to sacrifice his bread and butter to his humanity. Putting his overcoat and valise on the booby-hatch, he walked forward into the waist, and then looked at Captain Boomsby for further orders.

“All ready to h’ist the jib!” said the skipper, comprehending the action of the mate.

“All ready,” replied Barnes.

“Cast off that hawser!” shouted the captain to the men on the wharf.—“Come down here!” he added, turning to me.

He seemed to have forgotten me for the moment; but I concluded to obey this order, for I saw that he had no rope's end in his hand. I leaped down upon the deck, and darted into the waist, before he had time to arm himself with another implement of torture.

“H'ist the jib!” shouted the skipper, taking no further notice of me.

Captain Boomsby took the wheel, and I went forward to help hoist the jib. The breeze filled the sails of the Great West, and she stood out from the shore.

“Hi'st the flyin'-jib!” continued the captain, when the vessel was well clear of the wharf.

I took my place with the men at the hal-yards, and hauled like a good fellow, for I was intent upon justifying the good opinion the mate had formed of me. Though I had hardly expected Barnes to take any active part in my favor, after the vessel got out of the harbor, I felt that he was friendly to me, and that was a great deal, in my estimation. The captain soon called a sailor to take the helm, and I watched my tyrant's movements with no little anxiety. However, I did not expect him to begin upon

me immediately, for I thought respect for the opinion of the mate would keep him quiet until the vessel was in blue water, where it would be a serious affair to dispute any order of the master. On the high seas it would be mutiny to resist him; and I had no doubt Captain Boomsby would break out again as soon as we were well off the land.

“Ready, about!” said the captain, when it became necessary to tack, in order to pass out through the narrow opening of the bay.

My place was at the braces, and they led down the mainmast, so that I had to go upon the quarter-deck, where the tyrant stood. He scowled at me as I approached him, and I kept my weather eye wide open, on the lookout for squalls.

“I’ll settle your case for you before you are many days older,” growled he, in a low tone.

I made no reply, for nothing could be said to better my case. The prospect was very dark and discouraging; and the worst of it was, that I could not do anything to help myself. If I had done anything wrong, I would have confessed it, and begged my tyrant’s pardon. There was no

way for me to make peace. I could only wait for whatever the future had in store for me, and then bear it with all the patience I could command. The Great West went in stays, and then stood out to sea through the Gap. At noon Captain Boomsby went down into the cabin to dinner, leaving the mate in charge of the deck. I walked by him several times, hoping he would speak to me, for I felt that a single kind word would do me good; but he did not notice me. At last I stepped up to him, and he could not help seeing that I had something to say to him. But he was a prudent man, and he attempted to avoid me. It was wrong in me to try to commit him to my side of the question; but I did not understand the matter then as well as I do now, or I would not have done it.

“What shall I do?” I asked of him in a low tone.

“Run away the first chance you get,” replied he, with his hand over his mouth, as he turned and walked away from me, unwilling to continue the conversation even a moment.

I must do Jacob Barnes the justice to say that he had some knowledge of my case, and he

understood it perfectly. He had given me bold advice, and his remedy for the ills of my situation was rather startling. Strange as it may seem, I had never thought of it before; at least, I had never given it any serious consideration. Run away! Where should I run to? Run away from Captain Boomsby! What a daring deed it would be! What if he should catch me? The idea seemed too tremendous for me to master it. Was it possible that I could get away from my tyrants? that I could live in peace away from them? I would at least think of it; and I felt that if it was not the proper thing for me to do, Barnes would not have advised the step. The mate had sons and daughters of his own, and he would not be likely to give me bad advice. The idea of living away from Captain Boomsby and his wife, seemed to be too blissful a thought to be realized; and I wondered what it would be like to live, even a single day, without being kicked and jawed from the rising to the setting of the sun.

When the captain came on deck, I felt guilty. I had harbored a thought of treason against him, and I dared not look him in the face, lest he

should suspect what was in my mind. Just at this moment the "grub" of the sailors was served out by the "doctor," and I was going forward to obtain my share. Here I secured enough to eat; and this was to me the only advantage of going to sea.

"Sandy!" called the captain at this interesting moment.

"Sir!" I replied, respectfully.

"Come here!"

I went there; but I was careful not to go too near him.

"Take that swab, and wash up the quarter-deck," said he; and his eye twinkled with the malice that was in his heart.

I had no alternative but to obey; and I did obey. I worked two hours, swabbing up the decks. Dick Blister, who was tolerably sober by this time, attempted to help me; but the skipper sternly ordered him forward. I had had but little breakfast that morning, and I was quite faint for the want of food. At last I finished the job; or, at least, I stopped work when I had been over all the deck abaft the mainmast. Captain Boomsby was in the cabin

at the time, or, doubtless, he would have ordered me to swab the rest of the deck. Of course this was only a trick to cheat me out of my dinner. I went forward quite exhausted.

“Sandy,” whispered Dick Blister, as I approached the little group of sailors on the fore-castle, “you’ll find some grub in your bunk.”

“Thank you, Dick,” I replied.

“Don’t let the old man see you eating it,” added he, cautiously.

“I won’t.”

I went to the house on deck, and in my berth I found a large junk of corned beef and half a dozen sea-biscuit, which Dick had saved for me. Seating myself on the deck, I gave myself up to the delightful occupation of filling my empty stomach. Only one who has been half starved, as I had been, can appreciate my satisfaction. I was so pleasantly employed that I forgot the promise I had made to Dick, and ignored the fact that it was a crime for me to eat my dinner on that particular occasion. Suddenly the door of the fore-castle was darkened, and Captain Boomsby stood before me.

CHAPTER X.

A NIGHT IN THE HOLD.

FORTUNATELY, I had eaten all I could of the beef and bread when my tyrant opened the door, which I had taken the precaution to close, so that, whatever else he did, he could not rob me of my dinner. This was a great consolation to me, though I hope the reader will not think I was a glutton because I have had so much to say about my food, or rather about the want of it. With a growing boy, hunger is the great affliction of life, and I had been a constant sufferer. Captain Boomsby looked very ugly as he confronted me.

“What are you doing in here?” demanded he.

“Eating my dinner,” I replied, trembling in my shoes.

“How come that grub in here?” was the next conundrum he proposed.

I could not guess it. It would have been meaner than toad-pie to betray Dick Blister, on the one hand, and I was not willing to lie, on the other. I repeat that I was above the meanness of lying. It was not virtue; it was an in-born hatred of the vile and low; and as I knew nothing whatever about my parents, I have no idea where I got it. I made no reply to the hard inquisitor, but I looked out for the best way to escape from his presence. The situation was not very hopeful, for he stood between me and the door.

“Why don’t you answer me, you villain?” said he, savagely. “Are you dumb?”

“No, sir, I’m not dumb,” I answered, rather to say something than to meet the question.

“Answer me, then.”

“I haven’t anything to say.”

“I’ll find something for you to say, then,” he added, fiercely, looking about him.

I understood that he wanted a rope’s end; but, fortunately, there was nothing of the kind in the fore-castle, and when he retreated to the deck to find what he sought for, I jumped up and crawled out at one of the windows. He saw

me as soon as I touched the planks, and rushed towards me. I ran aft, and succeeded in keeping out of his way. I went for the main-rigging, and, leaping upon the rail, I scampered up the ratlines. When I was in a safe position, I stopped, and contemplated the scene below me. When I was surprised by the captain, I had a piece of beef in one hand, and a biscuit in the other. Involuntarily I had thrust the food into my pockets, as I got out the window. I had nothing better to do in my present situation than to finish my dinner, for the captain did not attempt to follow me, knowing very well that he might as well chase a streak of lightning. I took out my beef and bread, and began to eat them. Of course, this act aggravated him; but I saw that the mate and the other hands were amused by it.

“Come down, you rascal!” shouted the skipper.

“No, I thank you,” I responded.

“Won’t you!” and he turned upon his heel, and went down into the cabin.

In a few moments, he returned with his gun in his hand. The situation was beginning to

look serious, for the captain was a noted gunner, and had the reputation of being a dead shot. I deemed it prudent to go up higher, and I soon placed myself at the mast-head. I confess that I was alarmed, for, hard as my lot was, I had no taste f̄or being shot. I saw Barnes walk up to my tyrant; I could not hear what he said to him, but I judged, by the shaking of his head, that he was remonstrating with him. I could not make out the reply of the captain any better, but he immediately pointed the gun at me.

“Come down!” shouted he. “Come down, or I’ll shoot you!”

But before he had got the words out of his mouth, I had placed the mast between myself and him. He retreated towards the taffrail, still pointing the gun in the direction of my locality. Somehow I did not believe that he would dare to shoot me, and he often threatened me with terrible things, so that I did not take much stock in his threats. Besides, I did not believe that the mate would let him do such a deed. He was not afraid of him, however it may have been with the rest of us.

Like an ostrich in the desert, I kept myself

where I could not see him, and this satisfied me that he could not see me. Well, we played this game for half an hour, and the gun was not discharged; the captain did not get a sight of me. The crew were rather chuckling at the fun; and the skipper became weary of the game. Seating himself on the companion-way, with his gun in his hand, he appeared to be watching his opportunity, which I was careful not to afford him.

The result was, that I remained in the rigging all the afternoon, though not in one place, for I deemed it prudent to keep the mast between us. After supper, the captain, perhaps fearing that the night air would injure his gun, carried it into the cabin. As he did not return to the deck, I made haste to descend from my lofty perch.

“Bully for you!” exclaimed Dick Blister, slapping me on the back. “You didn’t blow on me, and I’ve saved some supper for you. You will find it in the bunk in the forecastle.”

“Thank you, Dick,” I added, feeling very grateful to him for his kindness.

He followed me into the forecastle, keeping an eye on the cabin door to make sure that the captain did not surprise me again.

“I wouldn’t eat it here,” said Dick.

“Where shall I eat it?” I asked.

“Come with me;” and he led the way to the fore-scuttle, just abaft the bowsprit bits. The sailors were all in the waist, so that they did not see us. Dick raised the scuttle.

“Jump down,” said he, excitedly; and I promptly obeyed him. “Go well aft, and hide yourself.”

“But how long shall I stay in the hold?” I asked, wishing to obtain a better idea of Dick’s plan, so that I might not get him into any trouble, for I had the feeling that it was better to be shot than betray a friend who had aided me.

“Till we get to New York,” he replied, hastily. “I will see that you have grub enough.”

“I’m very much obliged to you, Dick,” I added, wondering why he risked his own head for my sake.

“Never mind that,” said he, hurriedly. “Now go aft, and stow yourself away as well as you can, for the old man may be down to look after you in the course of half an hour.”

He closed the scuttle, and I was in the dark-

ness, which was only slightly relieved by the light coming through the cracks of the scuttle and the main hatch. But after I had been in the hold a few moments, I could see well enough to move aft, as the hatch was not secured for bad weather. The hold was about half filled with barrels of mackerel, and packages of salt fish. Where the pumps extended down into the well, an opening had been left, through which I crawled down, till I came to the ballast. The dead odors of the fish and the bilge water would have choked a fastidious person; but I was used to this sort of thing, and did not mind it much.

After a careful survey of the place, I found that I could make my way forward in a kind of channel which had been left over the keelson, to permit the water, coming into the vessel through any leak, to flow aft into the well. It was not a pleasant place in which to spend three or four days, or possibly a week; but to me it was better than being pounded half to death. I ate my supper in peace, and in almost total darkness. On board the *Great West*, the bill of fare was always substantially the same—beef and bread. But I was satisfied with this, if I

could get enough of it. When I had finished the meal, I stretched myself on the packages of salt fish, as forming the softest bed, and gave myself up to my own thoughts. I chose a place near the well, so that in case a search for me was ordered, I could escape to my den on the keelson.

I had a plenty of time to think, and I gave myself to a consideration of the plan of running away from my tormentors. It was quite impossible to endure life, as it had been for the last week, and I was satisfied with any change that could be made. I was confident that I could find work of some kind, which would enable me to earn my daily bread. For two or three years, I had heard a great deal about the great west,—not the vessel of that name, but the vast region beyond the Alleghany mountains. Captain Boomsby and his wife had often talked about it, for he desired to sell out all that he had in the east, and remove to the new country, where he was assured he could make his fortune. I had heard others speak in glowing terms of the western Land of Promise, where Indian corn was so plenty that it was used for fuel,—which seemed

a shameful waste to me. I was strong and hearty —too hearty for the diet allowance —and I was sure I could earn a better living than my tyrants were willing to give me. I must go to the great west! I must realize the dream of Captain Boomsby even before he attempted to do so himself. If the west was a good place for him, it was a good place for me. At any rate, for the present, if I went there, it would put a long distance between him and me; and this was what I desired more than anything else.

How I was to get there was a question I could not answer; but I knew that if I kept walking towards the setting sun, I should reach my destination in time, though it might be a very long time. However, my first and principal business was to get out of my present scrape. I felt reasonably secure in my hiding-place; for when a search was made for me, I could retreat to my hole under the cargo, where I knew that the skipper could not follow me. While I was thinking of the situation, I dropped asleep.

My bed of fish was very hard, though scarcely more so than the one on which I slept at home; and being very tired, I did not wake during the

whole night. When my senses came back to me, I saw the light through the cracks between the hatch and the coamings thereof, and I knew it was daylight, for the hold was as dark as Egypt when I went to sleep. The Great West was jumping like a galloping steed, and I realized that it was blowing very hard. Occasionally she heeled down till I was afraid the cargo would shift, and bury me beneath its weight. My first care, therefore, was to secure a safe position, far up on the weather side.

An hour later, a sudden flood of light penetrated the forward part of the hold, and as suddenly disappeared. I understood from this that the scuttle had been raised, and I crawled towards the bow, to see if Dick was waiting to communicate with me. But I heard nothing of him, and the door was not again raised. On the barrels under the opening, I found a large quantity of beef and hard tack, wrapped up in an old newspaper. Even with my ravenous appetite, there was enough to last me all day; and I was afraid my confederate had been overdoing the matter. Certainly, there was provender enough for the breakfast of all the sailors. I concluded

that Dick must have bribed the "doctor" in order to obtain this large supply. I ate all I wanted, and put the rest in a safe place.

By this time I had become so accustomed to the dim light of the hold, that I could see tolerably well. I made a careful survey of my prison, for such it was, though my confinement was voluntary. About one half the height of the cabin was below the deck, and the other half was raised above the deck in the trunk—it was a trunk cabin. From the forward part of it, a door, not more than four feet in height, led into the hold. It was very seldom opened. But now I was in momentary expectation of seeing Captain Boomsby present himself at this aperture; indeed, I could not understand why he had not already done so. While I lay on the fish, near the well, ready to retreat as soon as it should be necessary, the fore-scuttle was again opened, and then instantly closed. I was presently aware that some one had descended into the hold; but I was confident that it was not the captain, for he would not close the scuttle behind him.

CHAPTER XI.

SHORT-HANDED.

I HEARD footsteps on the barrels, near the forward part of the vessel. It was not easy to walk while the schooner was pitching so heavily, and the person who was approaching me did not "make very good weather" of it. I could just distinguish a form in the gloom, but I could not determine who it was. Just as I was about to seek safety in my lower den, the person spoke, and recognizing the voice, I waited his coming.

"Sandy," called Dick, — for it was he, — "where are you?"

"Here I am," I replied.

"Where?" demanded he. I can't see a thing down here. It's darker than ten thousand black cats."

"You will be able to see in a few minutes, when you get a little used to it."

“I don’t think I should like to live down here more than a week,” added Dick, groping his way towards the place where I was seated.

“I like it better than being pounded with a rope’s end. What’s the news on deck, Dick?” I asked, wondering that no search had yet been made for me, though I thought it possible that the heavy weather had prevented it.

“Great news, Sandy,” chuckled Dick. “The old man thinks you have tumbled overboard, or committed suicide, because he used you so bad. He looks as blue as a red herring.”

“What makes him think I fell overboard?”

“I guess the mate told him so; at any rate, Barnes is as much tickled as any of us. He hates the old man worse than poison, and he would fight your battle, if it were safe for him to do so.”

“Barnes is a good fellow, and I don’t want him to hurt himself for my sake.”

“He knows enough to take care of himself,” laughed Dick. “We have all told lies enough to load a schooner, if every one was a barrel of mackerel.”

“I don’t want you to do that,” I added, not

wishing to have these falsehoods on my conscience, for just then it seemed to me that I was responsible for them.

“What *do* you want, Sandy? Shall we tell him you are in the hold?” asked my confederate, apparently not pleased with my remark.

“I’m very much obliged to you, Dick, for all you have done; and I shall never forget it,” I continued, warmly; “and I’m only sorry to oblige you to tell so many lies for me.”

“Don’t worry about them; it’s nothing but fun to cheat the old man.”

“Do all the men know where I am?”

“Every one of them.”

“Where did you get such a lot of grub?”

“The doctor boiled a double quantity this morning, on purpose for you.”

“I didn’t think he liked me well enough to do that,” I answered, astonished to find that I had so many friends, and especially to learn that the cook was one of them, for he had been rather noted, in former voyages, for taking sides with the captain against me, when there was any trouble.

“You are the bottom dog just now, Sandy:

and all the men are on your side; so that it was not exactly safe for him to do any other way."

"He will tell the captain where I am."

"I should like to see him do it."

"I shouldn't."

"He won't dare to do it."

"Well, I hope he won't."

"Don't you worry about that, Sandy," said Dick, confidently. "The doctor is more afraid of Barnes than he is of the old man; and he won't go back on him, if he does on you."

"Hasn't the captain asked about me, or tried to find me?" I asked, beginning to think I was a person of even less consequence than I had supposed.

"Asked about you!" exclaimed Dick. "I'll bet he has."

"When did he first miss me?" I inquired.

"The old man must have turned in as soon as he ate his supper," replied Dick, "for he did not come on deck till eight bells, when our watch went below. Then Barnes told him you hadn't been on deck all the evening, and he couldn't find anything of you. The old man

seemed to be a good deal struck up, and wanted to know what had become of you. Barnes didn't know, and of course I didn't; but I said I had heard a splash in the water. He wanted to know why I hadn't given the alarm, or said something about it. I told him I didn't think anything of it at the time, or till I found that you were missing. I said that I didn't know but that Sandy might be in the cabin, as he was a member of the skipper's family."

"That was rather thin, Dick," I suggested.

"I don't know but it was," laughed Dick; "at any rate the old man was scared; and that was all I wanted."

"But what's to come of all this, Dick?" I asked anxiously.

"When we get to New York, you can go ashore as soon as the old man is out of sight. Then you can take care of yourself—can't you?"

"If I can get anything to do, I can."

"O, well, you can get enough to do," said Dick, cheerfully; and as the case was mine, and not his, he could afford to be cheerful.

"Is the captain on deck this morning?"

“Yes; it’s his watch now, you know, or I couldn’t get off. It’s blowing pretty heavy, but we’re logging over ten knots, and we shall make a short run of it at this rate.”

“The shorter the better.”

“The old man says we are going to have a big gale—a reg’lar muzzler; and it looks like it, I can tell you.”

“Don’t the captain say anything about me this morning?” I asked, curiously.

“I haven’t heard him say anything; but he was talking to Barnes for a long time after breakfast,” answered Dick, rising to go.

“If anything turns up, let me know—will you, Dick?”

“I will, Sandy,” he replied, going forward to the scuttle.

I followed him as far as the foremast, and saw him raise the door. As he did so, a huge wave boarded the forward part of the vessel, and poured down the aperture into the hold. The scuttle seemed to be wrenched from Dick’s grasp, and I heard a sharp cry from him, as though the sea had carried him violently down to leeward. For aught I knew he might have washed

overboard. I felt that I had a duty to perform, whether I was seen by the captain or not. I leaped up through the scuttle-hole, covered the opening, and hastened to the assistance of my companion. The sea had carried him very rudely against the bulwarks, and disabled him; at least for the moment, though I hoped that he was not seriously injured. I picked him up, and dragged him into the house on deck, the door of which was just abaft the foremast. Though the captain was on the quarter-deck, I was confident that he did not see me, because the house was between him and me. By this time Dick appeared to be able to help himself, and I assisted him to get into his bunk.

“Are you hurt, Dick?” I asked anxiously.

“Not much, I guess,” he replied, somewhat feebly. “I got a hard crack on the head—that’s all, I believe.”

Before he or I had time to say any more, the mate and a seaman rushed into the forecastle; but as the captain did not come with them, I concluded that he had not observed the accident.

“What’s the matter?” demanded Barnes.

“A sea took me off my legs, and spilled me

over to leeward," groaned Dick, evidently in great pain.

"Where are you hurt?" continued the mate, with much feeling.

"My head feels better; but I believe my ribs are stove in," answered the sufferer, with an effort.

"On deck, there!" yelled the captain from the waist.

"Tumble into a bunk, and keep out of sight for a while," said Barnes, turning to me. "Don't let the captain see you just yet; but I don't think we can get along without you much longer, for it's beginning to blow great guns, and Dick's used up."

"I'll do anything you say, Mr. Barnes," I responded. "I suppose the captain will kill me when he sees me."

"No he won't. Don't you be alarmed."

I hastened to obey the mate, in substance, though, instead of tumbling into one of the bunks, where the skipper might discover me if he came into the forecastle, I crawled under one of the spare berths, where he could not see me without placing his head quite near the deck.

"What are you about here?" demanded

Captain Boomsby, angrily, as he confronted the mate at the door of the fore-castle.

“Attending to the wounded,” replied Barnes, coldly. “Dick Blister was knocked against the bulwarks by that sea, which boarded us forward just now; and I’m afraid he’s badly hurt.”

“Another hand lost!” exclaimed the captain, evidently troubled by this reduction of the working force of the vessel. “Sandy lost over-board, and Blister disabled!”

“That’s just how we stand,” added the mate: “only Jones and Gillfield are left.”

“The gale is freshening every moment, and we ought to have shortened sail before, as I should have done if I had supposed we were short-handed; but it is time we were about it,” said Captain Boomsby.

I noticed that the schooner was still carrying all sail, when I was on deck, and she was making very heavy weather of it. It was clear to me that the storm was increasing in violence more rapidly than the captain had anticipated. And now the vessel was laboring badly in the heavy sea. I had noticed, when I was on deck, that the top-gallant sail had not been furled, and

it occurred to me that I should not have been surprised if the captain had lost his top-mast. I judged by the tones of the skipper, that he was somewhat worried by the situation, as I thought he had good reason to be, for Jones and Gillfield, though they were able seamen, were too old to be very efficient, and were seldom required to go aloft. Captain Boomsby believed in cheap help, and Dick and I were depended upon to do all the light work above the deck.

“Let go the to-'gallant sheets!” I heard the capain yell, a moment later, in the waist. “Clew up!”

As Gillfield was at the helm, I concluded that Jones had executed this order, if it was executed at all. He was stiff and heavy with rheumatism, and no more fit to go to sea, than he was to “walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours.” Presently I judged, by the feeling of the vessel under me, that the helm had been put down, and then I heard a roaring sea break in over the weather bow, which was followed by a fearful yell from the captain.

“Sandy!” shouted the mate.

I crawled out of my hiding-place and hastened on deck.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MATE EXPRESSES HIMSELF.

AS I had suspected, the captain had ordered the helm to be put down, when a heavy flaw came, and as the Great West threw her head up into the wind, a big wave had spilled itself on the forecastle, and knocked poor old Jones off his pins, while he was trying to clew up the top-gallant sail. Barnes had gone to his assistance, and I instantly joined him. We bore the old man to the forecastle, and placed him in his bunk. He groaned heavily, but complained of no particular injury, only of a general shaking up of his bones. As he was in the habit of groaning a great deal, on even a small provocation, we formed no judgment of his case, from the noise he made.

“Come, Sandy; we must get those topsails in, or the masts will be taken out of her,” said Barnes, hastening on deck.

I followed him, and together we clewed up the topsails. By this time Captain Boomsby had taken the helm, and sent Gillfield forward.

“Now, Sandy, can you go aloft and furl the to’-gallant sail?” asked the mate.

“Certainly I can,” I replied, cheerfully; “that’s what I’m for.”

I ran up the fore rigging with all the haste I could make, and Barnes followed me, instead of sending Gillfield, to furl the topsail. I was quite at home on the yard, even when it was blowing very fresh, and in a few minutes I had carefully secured the sail for the coming storm. Sliding down the halyard to the topsail-yard, I helped the mate furl the topsail. It was not an easy job for a man and a boy; but in time we accomplished it. While we were thus engaged, Gillfield, by the order of the captain, had hauled down the flying-jib; and the vessel, thus relieved, went along considerably easier. We laid down from aloft, and both of us went into the fore-castle to ascertain the condition of the sufferers. Gillfield was called to the helm again, and presently the captain joined us.

“Where have you been, Sandy?” demanded

he, as savagely as though he had been under no apprehension concerning me; and I am not sure that he had suffered any anxiety on my account.

“In the hold, sir,” I replied, placing myself in such a position that I could escape in case he attempted to flog me.

“Skulking from your duty,” growled he, scowling at me. “All these things have got to be settled up, before I’ve done with you.”

He and the mate examined into the condition of Jones and Dick Blister. It was not thought that either of them was seriously injured, though both declared they were unfit for duty.

“Ain’t Dick shamming?” suggested Captain Boomsby, as we all left the forecastle.

“I don’t think he is,” answered the mate.

“It’s just like him; he’s smart when he’s half full of rum, but he’s a lazy dog when he’s sober.”

“Dick’s better than they average; but Sandy’s worth two of him,” added the mate, maliciously, I thought.

“Humph!” grunted the captain, scowling at me, as though I had praised myself, instead of

another praising me. "Do you want to spoil the boy, Barnes? Don't get off any such talk before him, if you don't."

"I'm inclined to think he isn't fed with much of that kind of talk; and a little on't won't hurt a boy, especially if he's as smart as Sandy is."

"You keep it a-going! I tell you, I don't want such talk before the boy. It ain't true. The boy isn't smart, only when he's a mind to be. He skulked off last night, and didn't show himself again till this morning. Who said he was lost overboard?"

"Nobody said so. Dick said he heard a splash in the water; and I think it's very likely he did," replied the mate, indifferently.

"Sandy," said the skipper, turning sharply to me.

"Sir."

"Did the hands know you were in the hold?"

I made no reply.

"Do you hear me?"

"I hear you," I replied, in a respectful tone.

"Answer me then."

I was still silent.

“Have you lost your tongue, you villain?” roared the captain, looking about him, apparently for a rope to enforce his authority.

The one he had used the day before was unfortunately at hand, and he picked it up. I began to retreat, but my tyrant was too quick for me this time, and before I could get out of the way, I felt the rope on my back and shoulders, cutting into my flesh, just where it had lacerated me before. At the same time he seized me by the collar, and held me so that I could not escape.

I felt that I was to receive a brutal pounding; but sometimes things turn out differently from what we expect, as it happened in this instance, very much to my satisfaction.

“Hold on, Captain Boomsby!” yelled Barnes, shaking his clinched fist in the face of my persecutor. “Hit that boy again, and I’ll hit you, if I have to hang for it.”

There could be no doubt that the mate was in earnest; and the captain suspended operations. He looked at Barnes, and I saw that his lip quivered with fear, or some other emotion.

“This is mutiny!” gasped the captain.

“I don’t care what it is,” replied Barnes.

“If you touch him again, I’ll knock you into the middle of next month, and take the consequences, whatever they may be.”

“This is mutiny,” repeated the captain, apparently because he had nothing else to say.

“You said that before,” added the mate, quietly. “Don’t you strike that boy again.”

“Do you command this vessel, or do I?”

“That depends upon circumstances. If you give that boy another blow, you will not command anything more than five seconds longer. I can’t stand this thing any longer, and I won’t. The boy has done better than nine out of ten would do; and I won’t stand by and see him abused.”

“This case must be settled in court,” said Captain Boomsby, releasing his hold of me, in evident disgust.

“I don’t care a straw where it’s settled; but as long as I stand on my pins, this thing shall go no further.”

“Will you justify that boy in hiding in the hold, skulking from his duty?” demanded the

captain, who seemed disposed to argue the matter.

“Yes, I will,” answered the mate, squarely and doggedly. “You chased him with your gun, and he hid in the hold, to keep from being shot. You know, as well as I do, that the master of a vessel has no right to shoot one of his crew.”

“I told you at the time of it that the gun was not loaded,” pleaded the captain; and he answered more like a culprit than as the superior officer, for guilt “makes cowards of us all.”

“Sandy didn’t know that the gun was not loaded, so it was all the same to him.”

“You know very well, that I didn’t intend to shoot him.”

“It was an assault with a deadly weapon; and you told the boy you would shoot him. He had a right to suppose you meant just what you said; and if this case is going into court, every man on board will testify that you flogged the boy for nothing, and abused him badly. I think Sandy has the best case.”

“I suppose he has, if you all mean to side with him,” growled the captain; but not a little

of the bully spirit seemed to be taken out of him.

“All we want is the truth and fair play,” added the mate.

“You don’t know the boy as well as I do.”

“You licked him for nothing yesterday, and that was enough to place the men on his side. I can swear that Sandy obeyed every order that was given to him, promptly, and did his work well; and if we are going to court, I should like to swear to it.”

“You haven’t seen as much of him as I have.”

“I have seen enough of him to convince me that, with any sort of fair play, he will be a good and smart fellow.”

“Captain Boomsby, I’m willing to do my work, and obey all orders,” I ventured to interpose, for I desired to set myself right before the mate, though I did not believe that anything I might say would have any influence upon my tyrant.

“I don’t care what you are willing to do,” retorted the master of the Great West, in the most ungracious of tones, and in the most surly

manner. "You will do what you're told to do, whether you are willing or not."

After this rebuff I did not deem it prudent to say anything more. Turning on my heel, I started to walk forward.

"Stop, Sandy!" sternly called the captain, perhaps hoping that I would not obey, and thus proving what he had said.

"Sir," I replied, returning to the place where he stood.

"If you think you have seen the end of this, you were never more mistaken in your life," growled the skipper. "As near as I can make it out, you have got on the right side of the mate and the men, and you have hatched up a conspiracy against me. I don't know how you've done it, and I don't care. But if we ever get into port, things will be different, I can tell you! There will be a new deal about that time."

"I shall do my duty as well as I know how," I answered.

"Go forward, you villain!" he replied, pointing towards the bow, with as much vim as though I had actually refused to obey him.

I walked forward. That was the kind of a man Captain Boomsby was. He seemed to be angry because I would give him no provocation for abusing me—or, at least, except that of escaping when he struck me and threatened to shoot me. Barnes talked with him a while longer, but the conversation did not seem to be very animated, and I thought it likely they were patching up a peace, for the captain was wily enough to keep on the right side of a man whom he feared. I was satisfied that the case would never go into the courts; the captain had law enough in the trial of my case in the court in Glossenbury. He would punish the mate by cheating him out of his wages, or by some other mean trick, and me by beating or starving me at some convenient time, when no powerful friend was at hand to take my part.

I assure my sympathizing reader that my only fault or sin, was in turning the tables upon his son Nick, in self-defence. I had done absolutely nothing to deserve a blow, or even a word of reproach. My tyrant was punishing me for proving that Nick was a thief, though his son had confessed the crime. Presently the mate

came forward, and I spoke to him about the matter, for I wanted his advice.

“What can I do, Mr. Barnes?” I asked.

“I don’t see that you can do anything, Sandy,” he replied. “You have behaved very well, but if you had shied a belaying-pin at his head, I don’t know as I should have blamed you very much, though I don’t think that’s always the best way to do in such cases.”

“I wouldn’t do that,” I added. “I don’t think I’ve done anything to deserve a whipping or a jawing.”

“I guess he won’t meddle with you again on this voyage; and as soon as the vessel gets to New York, why, all you’ve got to do is to look out for yourself,” said the mate, significantly. “If you are ever caught in such a scrape again, it will be your own fault—that’s all.”

I understood him perfectly, and his words gave me new strength and courage. I thought if I did not know what to do when I got to New York, it would not be the mate’s fault.

CHAPTER XIII.

A HEAVY BLOW.

THE gale increased in violence every moment, till the Great West labored as badly as before her topsails had been furled; and the captain gave the order to take in the foresail. By calling in the doctor, who is liable to do duty on deck when occasion requires, and luffing up the vessel, we got the sail in without difficulty. I visited the sufferers in the fore-castle, and found them both more comfortable, though they were in great pain. As the schooner was going along tolerably easy now, Barnes brought some liniment from the cabin, and while he attended to the case of Jones, I rubbed the aching bones of Dick Blister. But neither of them was able to leave his bunk that day. The mate told me that the captain asked him several times, if the sufferers were not shamming.

“That man has no more soul in his carcass than there is in a brickbat,” added Barnes, with disgust apparent on his honest face. “He believes that all the rest of the folks in the world live for the sole purpose of cheating him.”

“I know it; and he don’t give anybody credit for honesty,” I replied. “I have heard him tell his wife, that he didn’t believe there was an honest man in the world, except himself.”

“Except himself!” exclaimed the mate, smiling at the absurdity of the proposition.

“That’s the biggest fraud of the whole.”

“That’s so; but his wife’s worse than he is himself, if that’s possible.”

“Hardly possible, I should say.”

“There is more vinegar in her, any way.”

“Sandy!” shouted Captain Boomsby, at this point of the conversation.

I hastened aft at the call. I think that the captain, seeing Barnes and me talking together, suspected that our conversation related to him.

“Here, sir,” I answered, reporting to him.

“Take the helm,” said the skipper, crustily.

“That boy?” said old Gillfield, interrogatively.

“I don’t believe he’s stout enough to handle the wheel while it blows as hard as it does now.”

“Give him the wheel, you old fool!” roared the captain. “I believe this crew is in a state of mutiny. If I give an order, somebody has something to say, or wants to dispute it.”

“I don’t want to dispute you, Captain Boomsby, or make any talk; but I didn’t think you knew just how hard the vessel steers, in this gale—that’s all,” answered the old man, giving the wheel to me.

“Mind what you’re about, Sandy,” added the captain.

“I’ll do the best I can,” I replied, struggling to throw the wheel over, so as to keep the vessel from coming up into the wind.

“If you let her come too, I’ll give you the rope’s end!” stormed the tyrant.

With wind in the quarter, blowing a gale, the Great West carried a strong weather helm. I exerted my utmost strength, but it was not enough; and when the craft once got the better of me, it was utterly impossible for me to hold her. Suddenly the wheel flew over, and knocked

me down to leeward. The vessel broached too, the jib and mainsail shaking in the furious blast. She worked very lively in the gale; and when she got to swinging she did not seem to be inclined to stop, but turned till she took the wind on the starboard side, so that her jib filled on the other tack, which helped her around at a rapid rate. Just as I was trying to pick myself up, the mainsail went over with tremendous force. The captain had been talking for some time of having a new main sheet, for the old one was rotten and shaky. He now received the penalty of his neglect,—or mine, as he would certainly insist,—for the rope snapped as though it had been a piece of woollen yarn, when the boom bore upon it. The helm was hard up, and the schooner continued to swing, till she was on the other tack, and then the boom went over again.

The captain was evidently alarmed, and did not know what to do. The wheel spun around as though it were geared to a steam engine. Barnes came running aft, but it was as much as his life was worth to touch the wheel before it was entirely over; and the mate, keeping himself

in a safe position, awaited the captain's orders. None were given, however; and again the vessel whirled about, and the boom banged over against the main rigging.

"What's to be done?" screamed the mate, in order to make himself heard above the noise of the thrashing sail.

This seemed to be a conundrum which Captain Boomsby was not able to answer, and he made no reply. In the mean time the situation was becoming worse and worse. The blasts of wind came more fiercely than ever; and when, for the fourth time, the boom went over, the mainsail was split, up and down, in the middle, for a distance of twenty feet.

"Why don't you do something, Barnes?" asked the captain, trembling with terror, and entirely upset by the calamity to the mainsail.

"You told me you were the master of this vessel," replied the mate, coolly. "I'm ready to obey orders."

"What's best to be done?" demanded the skipper, desperately. "Do anything you think best," he added, as a fierce blast completed the ruin of the mainsail, and carried more than half of it out of the bolt-ropes.

“Here, Gillfield,” called the mate; and at a favorable moment the two men seized the wheel, and threw it over till they obtained control of the schooner.

Before anything could be done with the mainsail, the rest of it had been blown away. As soon as the canvas was all gone,—and it could hardly have been removed any cleaner with a knife,—the savage tossing of the boom parted the topping-lift, and the end of the spar dropped into the water. It was only the work of another moment to finish it; and at the next roll of the vessel it went by the board.

“You’ll have no more trouble with that stick,” said the mate, as coolly as though he had been in his own house on shore. “Now take the helm, Captain Boomsby.”

“Who put you in command of this vessel?” demanded the skipper, haughtily enough, now that all immediate danger was passed.

“Well, I thought you did,” replied the mate. “But it’s no matter. I’m ready to obey orders.”

“What’s best to be done, Barnes?” asked the captain, when he had vindicated his dignity.

“As you are the master of this vessel, I’m

willing to leave that to you," answered the mate.

"I only asked your opinion," added Captain Boomsby.

"I think we had better put a reef in the foresail, and set it."

"She will carry the whole of it."

"It will make too much head sail; besides, it's going to blow harder than it has yet," said Barnes, coldly. "But I'll do just what you say."

"Put a reef in the foresail, then," replied the skipper, thus proving that he placed more confidence in his subordinate's judgment than in his own.

"Come Sandy," called the mate to me; "we'll get the foresail up, if we can."

I had stowed myself away under the lee of the trunk of the cabin, in order to avoid the thrashing of the broken sheet, and I limped out to obey the order of the mate. My shoulder was quite lame from the effect of being thrown against the bulwarks, and I was not in the best condition for duty.

"Do you see what you have done?" growled

the captain, as I passed the wheel in crawling up to windward.

“I couldn’t help it,” I answered, with becoming humility. “I did the best I could.”

“No you didn’t, you villain; you let her broach too on purpose; and I’ll pay you off for it as soon as I have time,” snarled the old man, shaking his head at me to emphasize the threat; and I had no doubt he would attempt to do all he said, at a favorable opportunity; and I had no more doubt that I should resist, for I had begun to feel that I had some rights that ought to be respected.

“Don’t you be alarmed, Sandy,” said the mate, kindly. “I’ve got my hand in, and I may as well be hung for an old sheep as for a lamb. I’ll stand by you as long as there’s anything left of me.”

“Thank you, Mr. Barnes. I mean to do my duty as well as I can; but I couldn’t help the vessel’s coming too,” I replied.

“Of course he couldn’t,” added Gillfield: “it was just all I could do to hold her, and I was just thinking of asking the cap’n for a hand to help me. I should have done so afore, if we hadn’t been so short-handed.”

“It wasn’t your fault Sandy. It was stupid in the old man to send a boy a dozen years old to the helm, in such a blow as this,” added the mate; “and if Boomsby’s owners don’t break him for this, they deserve to lose their property.”

We took off the stops, and put a single reef in the foresail. After exercising a while, I got some of the stiffness out of my bones, but I was rather sore, for several days. When the sail was ready, we attempted to hoist it, but without success, for the Great West was going almost before the wind, and the sail got jammed in the fore rigging.

“The old man’s trying to make it as hard as he can,” said Barnes. “It’s no use for us to attempt to get this sail up while he does so; and I’m not going to wear myself out for nothing;” and the mate suspended his labors.

We followed his example, and left the sail banging against the fore rigging. It was impossible to accomplish anything, as Barnes had said.

“Come, lively there!” shouted the captain. “Up with that sail.”

"Luff her up, Captain Boonsby!" cried the mate, impatiently.

"Up with the sail!" repeated the skipper, imperatively. "There's no need of luffing."

"The sail is jammed, and forty men couldn't hoist it," retorted Barnes. "If you don't luff her up, you'll lose your foresail; that's all I've got to say about it."

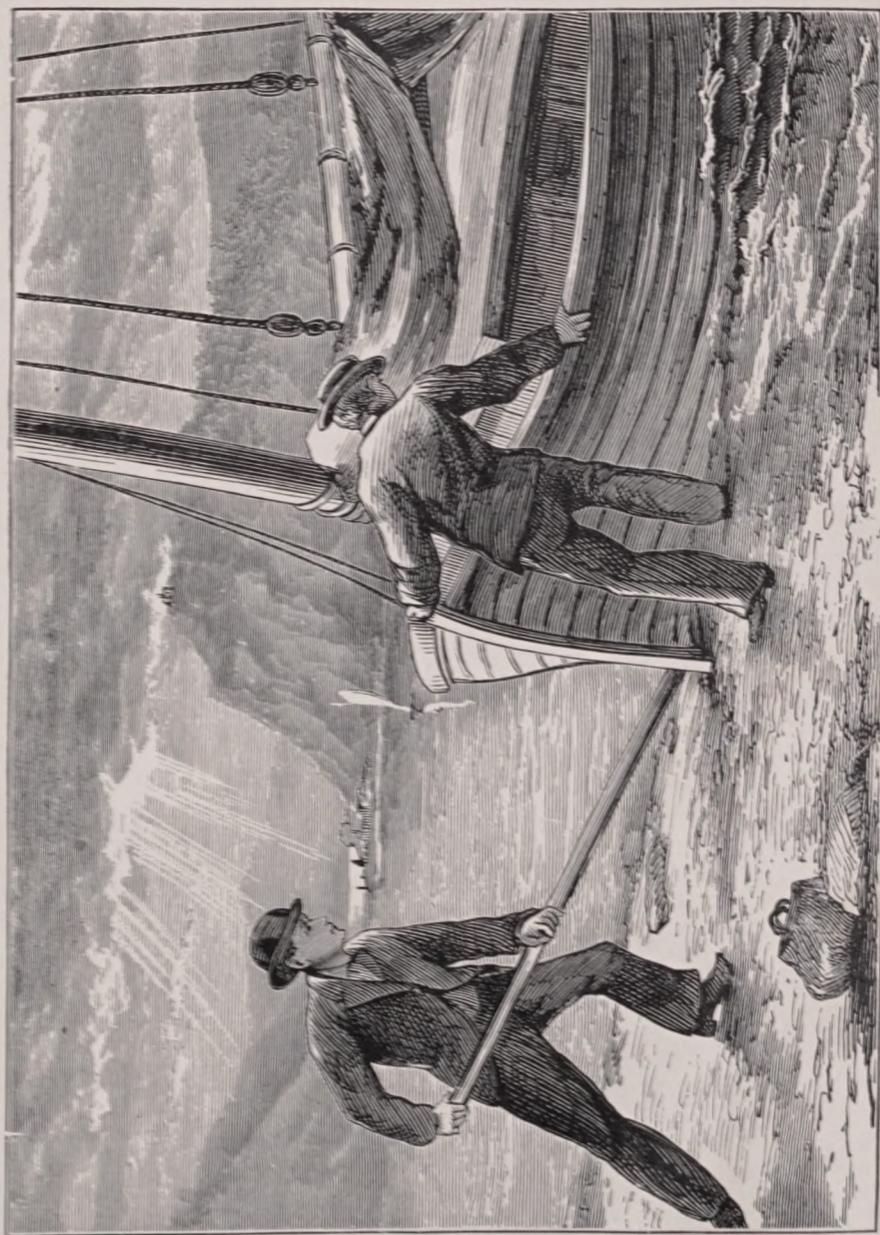
This announcement brought the captain to his senses, and seemed, for the time, to neutralize the ugliness in him. He put the helm down, and we hoisted the sail without any further difficulty.

"All right now!" shouted the mate.

We trimmed the sail, as the captain filled away again. She worked very well under the jib and foresail, as our course was nearly before the gale. Both Gillfield and I were ordered to take the helm, though the vessel did not steer so hard as when the whole mainsail was set, my companion at the wheel said.

"Make him do his share of the work, Gillfield," said the captain.

"He's doing it now, sir," replied my shipmate.



“I WORKED THE BOAT DOWN TILL HER STERN WAS AFLOAT.” Page 254.

“He’ll shirk all he can,” added the tyrant, as he went down into the cabin.

“I guess he feels consider’ble sore about losing that mainsail, and I should think he would,” added Gillfield.

“I suppose I shall have to bear the blame for that,” said I, thinking of the probable consequences of the affair.

“It was no more your fault than it was mine. No boy could have done a thing with the wheel, as it was then. Reckon he did it on purpose to git you into a scrape. But, Sandy, you needn’t steer none now. I can handle her without any help.”

“The captain told me to help steer, and I’m going to do it as long as I can stand up,” I answered, stoutly. “He shall have no fault to find with me for not minding him.”

“I guess you are about right, Sandy.”

We saw nothing more of the captain till after dinner, and he probably slept off the forenoon. In the mean time, the gale increased in fury; and Barnes, without consulting his superior officer, took the bonnet off the jib. I helped do this, and then returned to the helm.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE END OF THE VOYAGE.

THE mate relieved the helm, while Gillfield and I ate our dinners; but we took our places at the wheel again after the meal. In the afternoon Barnes declared that he was strong enough to steer alone, and wanted to take our place; but Captain Boomsby would not permit him to do so. We kept the wheel—relieved only at supper—till eight bells in the evening, when the captain came on deck to take the first watch. The gale had moderated somewhat, but the rain poured down in torrents. As Gillfield and I were the only hands able to do duty, we both wondered whether we were to be kept at the helm all night or not. For my part, I was so tired I could hardly stand, and my veteran companion was not in much better condition.

We had spoken to Barnes on this interesting question; but he was no wiser than we were, though he said one hand could steer very well, since the gale had diminished. Gillfield was in the captain's watch, and I was in the mate's, so that, by right, I ought to be permitted to turn in; but it was bad weather, and my tyrant could make this an excuse for keeping all hands on deck all night—if he thought it worth his while to resort to an excuse.

“Well, Captain Boomsby, how are we to manage to-night?” asked Barnes, as the skipper came on deck.

“Just as we have all day,” answered the captain, glancing at me.

“One hand can steer well enough now; there's no need of keeping two at the wheel,” added the mate.

“I don't think so,” said the tyrant, scowling at me. “If you'll attend to your business, Barnes, and obey orders, I'll take care of the vessel.”

“The weather is moderating.”

“I s'pose I can see that as well as you can.”

“Gillfield and Sandy have been at the helm all day,” suggested the mate.

“Well, what if they have?” growled the captain.

“Men can’t stand everything, let alone boys.”

“I guess they won’t give out just yet,” sneered the master.

“We don’t want them to give out at all, especially when there’s no need of working them so hard.”

“You have said enough, Barnes,” added the captain, turning on his heel, and showing his back to the mate.

“No, I haven’t, and I’m going to say one thing more; and that is this: if you lose this vessel, it will be your own fault.”

“What do you mean by that?” demanded the skipper, apparently a little startled by the remark.

“I mean that no vessel was ever handled any worse; and if she is lost, I shall not make no bones of saying so,” replied Barnes, emphatically. “You lost the mainsail when there wasn’t the least need of doing so, as I shall be ready to swear in any court.”

“It was that boy’s fault,” pleaded the captain.

“That’s all nonsense ; and you know it is, as well as I do,” said Barnes, as decidedly as though he had been master, and not mate. “Now you are trying to work up what hands you have left, out of mere spite ; and if we have any more bad weather, you’ll lose the vessel, in my opinion. That’s all I’ve got to say ;” and Barnes turned on his heel, and walked forward.

I was astonished at the freedom of the mate, and more astonished at the manner in which the captain received this plain talk. Doubtless the truth of the remarks impressed him ; and this was the only explanation I could imagine. Captain Boomsby walked the deck for a time, thinking of the lesson he had received, I suppose. Presently he called the mate, and said something to him which I did not hear. A moment later, Barnes came to me and told me to turn in. I was too glad to do so to ask any questions. I was soon sound asleep, and knew nothing more till I was called at eight bells for the morning watch.

The mate was at the wheel when I went on deck, and I met Gillfield on his way to the fore-castle. The weather was still cloudy, but

the wind had come around to the southward, and was blowing very fresh again. The Great West was close-hauled, and making very little progress through the water, under her short canvas.

“We haven’t seen the worst of it yet, Sandy,” said Barnes, rather anxiously for him, I thought. The wind has chopped round to the south’ard, and it looks nasty ahead.”

“What does the captain say, Mr. Barnes?” I asked.

“He hasn’t said anything. I don’t believe he has any idea that it’s going to blow again.”

In less than an hour the prediction of the mate was fully verified; the wind began to come in sharp squalls, and the first one nearly knocked the schooner over. I took hold of the wheel with the mate. With so much head sail, she steered badly.

“Do you think you can get the jib down alone, Sandy?” asked Barnes.

“I don’t know; I’ll do the best I can,” I replied.

“I don’t want to call Gillfield if I can help it, for the old man is about used up. He has

been at the wheel sixteen hours on a stretch ; and the captain was crazy to keep him there so long."

"I guess I can get the jib down alone," I added, willing at least, to break my back in the attempt.

"You may try it ; and if you don't make out, we must call the captain."

I went forward, and let go the jib halyards. At this moment a heavy flaw struck the schooner. I grasped the downhaul, but I could do nothing. The vessel heeled down till her rail was submerged ; and I thought the jib would be blown out of the bolt-ropes. But the squall lasted only a moment.

"Now, luff her up, Mr. Barnes," I shouted to the mate.

He complied with my request ; and as the pressure was removed, I succeeded in hauling down the sail. The water poured in over the bow when I went out on the bowsprit to secure the wet canvas ; but I did the job, and I was very well satisfied with myself, for it was a big thing for a boy to do. I went aft, and reported to the mate.

“You did well, Sandy,” said he. “I was afraid, when that puff came, that you wouldn’t be able to fetch it.”

“I couldn’t till the flaw was over. I watched my time.”

“She’s all right now, and goes along easier. She works very well under a reefed foresail; and we’ve got just slant enough to lay her course. Things look better than they did.”

“Can’t I take the helm, Mr. Barnes?” I asked.

“I think not; it’s rather too much for you.”

“I’m pretty strong, sir.”

“I think I won’t risk it, Sandy. I’ll tell you what you may do: stow yourself away under the lee of the trunk, and go to sleep,” laughed he.

“I’m not sleepy.”

“It’s best for youngsters to sleep, when they can, on board of this vessel, for there’s no knowing when they’ll get another chance. Stow yourself away, Sandy.”

I did not very strongly object to this arrangement, and I stretched myself on the wet deck. Though I was not sleepy, I went to sleep in a

little while. I had been to sea enough to take my nap as I had the opportunity. When I woke, it was daylight, and Captain Boomsby stood over me. In fact it was a kick from him that had waked me.

“Let him alone!” were the first words I heard; and it was the mate who uttered them.

“That’s just like him,” exclaimed the captain: “asleep on his watch!”

“Let him alone. If you want to kick anybody, kick me, for I told him to go to sleep,” added Barnes.

By this time I was on my feet, and out of the way of any more kicking. The skipper jawed for a while, but the mate did not make any answer, after I was in a safe place. He ordered me to call Gillfield, and I did so. The weather continued as it was when I went to sleep, but the sea was a great deal heavier, and the Great West jumped wildly on the waves. Still, it was nothing worse than I had seen many times before, and I was not at all disturbed by it. After breakfast, Dick Blister came on deck, and reported for duty, though he was still quite sore. Jones was not able to leave his bunk during the rest of the voyage.

I do not purpose to follow out, in detail, the incidents of the remainder of the trip to New York. I think I have related enough to justify the course I adopted, after the arrival of the Great West. On account of the loss of the mainsail, we were another week in reaching our destination. We hauled in at a pier on the North River, ready to discharge the cargo.

“My cruise is up,” said Barnes, as soon as the vessel was secured at the pier. “I have had enough of this craft.”

“Didn’t you ship for the trip out and home?” demanded the captain.

“I did; but I shouldn’t have any soul left if I should go back in her.”

“I won’t pay you, if you don’t carry out your agreement.”

“Wages are no object to me, to go in that vessel. I’m willing to throw up what’s due me, rather than have anything more to do with such a man as you are, Captain Boomsby. Them’s my sentiments, and I express them freely.”

“I don’t think it’s just the thing to leave me here, without any mate,” growled the master of the Great West. “I don’t know as I’ve done you any harm.

“Captain Boomsby I don’t think it’s safe to sail with a man that lets his spite get the better of his judgment, as you do. You lost your main-sail in trying to grind Sandy. You have used him worse than a dog; and I won’t sail with such a man. It’s no use to talk about it. I shall take the next steamer for home.”

The mate went below, but presently came up with his valise and coat. He shook hands with me and the other hands who were on deck, and then left the vessel.

“You have made all this trouble, Sandy, and you shall pay for it yet,” said the captain, grating his teeth with wrath, as he dived down the companion-way into the cabin.

I had no doubt that I should have to pay for it, if I remained on board of the Great West, which I did not intend to do. While I was considering what I should do, a large steamer, which had just started from the next pier, was crowded in upon the schooner by a ferry-boat. I have no idea how it happened, but one of the boats struck the other, and at the instant of the collision I saw a young girl deliberately leap from the large steamer into the water.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HUDSON RIVER STEAMER.

WHY the young lady had jumped overboard I could not tell; and it seemed to me the most foolish act that ever came under my notice. I am older and wiser now than I was at the time this act occurred, and I know that even full-grown men and women will do the strangest and most foolish things possible, when they are frightened. I suppose this girl was insane with terror, and did not know what she was about. At any rate, she leaped into the water when there was not the least need of her doing so. Perhaps she thought the two steamers were to be blown up, sunk, or smashed by the collision, and believed that her only safety was in the water.

I only knew that she was in the water. She went over just astern of the Great West, and I

saw her floundering in the waves which the steamer had created. I was a good swimmer, and there seemed to be no excuse for my keeping a dry shirt on my back. I was not romantic, or anything of that sort; but, without considering the matter then, as I have now, I leaped into the water, and swam to the young lady. In a moment I had her in my arms. Though she did her best to sink us both, my pluck and strength enabled me to overcome her obstinate resistance to being saved. I got hold of her in such a way that she could do nothing. I should think she was not more than ten years old; at any rate, she was a child, and I have only called her a young lady, because the people on the steamer called her so.

In order to prevent any misapprehension, I wish, at this early stage of the case, to state that I did not marry this girl in after years, and that she is not the heroine of my story. I never even saw her again after she was recovered by her friends, though I do know that she expressed a desire to see her deliverer. There was really no romance at all in the affair. I think I had not held her up in the water more than half a

minute, before a boat came to our aid from the steamer, and my burden was taken from my arms. I noticed a woman on the deck wringing her hands, and occasionally screaming. I supposed she was the mother of the girl; but I did not see her again. By her side was a gentleman who seemed to be very much disturbed, though he was trying to quiet the lady.

The boat which had picked us up conveyed us to the steamer. The girl was seized by the eager crowd, as though each one of them wanted to have a hand in the rescue, while very little attention was paid to me. I leaped upon the deck as soon as the people got out of the way and swarmed aft with the heroine of the occasion. I was not thinking much about the girl, or the event which had just transpired. I was as wet as a drowned rat, and I began to shiver with the cold; but even my frigid condition did not prevent me from walking to a point on the steamer where I could see the Great West. The huge boat appeared to be drifting in towards the dock, and Captain Boomsby was holding a fender over the taffrail, to save the stern of the schooner from being smashed.

“Where’s that boy?” shouted he, vigorously.

“What boy?” I heard some one on the deck above me ask.

“The boy that got the gal out of the water,” replied the captain.

“On the main deck,” added the man above me.

“Send him back—will you?” said my tyrant, anxiously.

“We must go ahead now, or run into you; but we make a landing at Twenty-Third Street, and he can come down in the horse-car,” replied the person on the upper deck; and, as I heard the big gong in the engine-room sound at this moment, I concluded he was the captain of the boat.

The great wheel of the steamer splashed in the water, and the boat went ahead. I did not believe, just then, that I should go down in the horse-car to the Great West. It seemed to me that the affair I have described had given me a good start; and I did not intend to be sent back if I could help it. I meant that it should be my fault if I went back.

“Stop, stop!” yelled Captain Boomsby.

“We can’t stop,” answered the captain.

“Don’t carry that boy off!”

“He will be all right; he can come down in half an hour,” added the captain, as the steamer passed out of hailing distance.

I saw Captain Boomsby through the window of the starboard fire-room; but I took care that he should not see me. As soon as the boat had passed the pier where the Great West lay, I went into the fire-room, seeking the warmth which my wet condition rendered so agreeable. I walked up to one of the open doors of the glowing furnaces—for they had been opened when the boat stopped. I had on only my trousers and a woollen shirt, besides my stockings; I had kicked off my shoes before I leaped into the water. My old hat was gone, and my wardrobe, always meagre, was very much reduced, for a young man about to set out on his travels.

“No loafers allowed in here!” said one of the firemen, gruffly, as I took my place in front of the furnace. “Out of here!”

“Won’t you let me dry myself?” I asked, humbly, and shivering with cold.

“We don’t allow loafers in the fire-rooms.

Out with you!" he added, in the most uncompromising of tones.

"I'll keep out of the way, if you'll let me stay a little while," I pleaded. "I'm wet and shaking with the cold."

"What makes you so wet?" he asked, bestowing upon me a good look for the first time.

"I was overboard just now."

"How came you overboard?"

"I went over after that girl," I replied, with a heavy shiver.

"O! are you the lad that saved that girl?" he inquired, opening his eyes very wide.

"I am; and that's what makes me so wet and cold."

"All right! Then you may stay here all day, and get into the furnaces, if you want to," he added, with a smile on his smutty face.

"I don't care about getting into the furnace; it is rather too warm in there."

"I should say so," laughed he. "You were a smart boy to pick that girl up."

"It wasn't much of a job."

"It was a good job for the girl, any how; and it ought to be a good job for you, if her

father and mother have any souls. It was a brave act."

"I don't know's it was. I would have gone over any time for five cents; at least, when the weather isn't quite so chilly as it is this morning."

"Do you belong to that schooner?"

"Yes; I did belong to her; but I don't care about going back to her," I answered frankly.

"Don't you? Wasn't the man who was yelling after you your father?"

"No; no relation to me, I'm glad to say."

"Don't he use you well?" asked my new friend, who seemed to be a very intelligent man.

He was not a fireman, as I first supposed, but an oiler, or greaser, as they are sometimes called. I explained to him as briefly as I could, my relations with the Great West and her captain.

"I wish Mr. Barnes were here; he could tell you what sort of a fellow I am," I added.

"Who's Mr. Barnes?"

"He was the mate of the schooner; but he left her as soon as she hauled in at the pier. He wouldn't even make the trip home in the vessel, the skipper was so mean."

At this moment the great gong in the engine-room sounded again, and the wheels stopped. I supposed the boat was going to make her landing at Twenty-Third Street, as I had heard the captain say.

“I don’t want to go ashore here,” I said to the oiler. “I shall freeze to death in the cold wind.”

“Don’t go ashore then,” replied he. “You can go up the river, and come down with us to-morrow.”

“Thank you; I should like to go up, ever so much,” I added, delighted with the idea, though I doubted whether I should come down in the steamer, if I once got to Albany, whither she was bound.

“Where’s the boy that saved the girl?” shouted some one on the main deck; and the inquiry was repeated several times by different persons, as I judged by the voices.

I was afraid the captain of the boat would consider it his duty to send me back to the Great West; and in order to save him all trouble of this kind on my account, I dodged out of the fire-room, while the oiler was engaged in doing

the work which had called him into the place. Those who were looking for me had gone forward. I saw several doors on each side of me, and I opened one of them. It was the lamp-room, hardly larger than a closet, and full of lamps and lanterns. I went in and shut the door. It was so near the boiler that it was intensely hot, when closed, so that I did not suffer from the cold. The call for the boy who had saved the girl was continually repeated; but at last I heard some one say that he must have gone ashore.

“But the father of the girl wants to see him,” I heard a man say, near the door of the lamp-room.

“We can’t find him anywhere,” added another. “If the girl’s father wants to see him, he will find him on board of that schooner.

I thought not; but I did not care to take a part in the discussion; so I did not open the door to dispute the point. The steamer did not stop over five minutes; and as soon as I heard the splashing of the great wheels, which followed the stroke of the gong, I left my oily den, and returned to the fire-room. My friend was no

longer there ; and the fireman told me he had returned to the engine-room, where he belonged. I did not care to see him again at once ; so I attended to the drying process upon my scanty apparel. The room was so hot, in spite of the open window, that the perspiration poured from the faces of the firemen. In this atmosphere my clothes were soon dry, and I was quite comfortable.

I must pause to say that I was a very hard-looking boy, at that particular moment when I began to feel like myself again. My trousers, which were well worn out when they came into my possession, and had fallen into a state of hopeless dilapidation from long use, had suffered badly while I was in the water, struggling with the girl, or in the process of being hauled into the boat. They were terribly tattered and torn, and scarcely answered the purpose required of such a garment. My woollen shirt was in no better condition, and had also been badly shattered in the struggle with the little maid in the water. In a fragment of looking-glass, nailed up in the fire-room, I had a chance to see my face. It was covered with "real estate," and streaked

by the action of the dirty water of the dock, which at the place where I went in, was black with filth. My hair was matted with dirt and salt water; and even among the "wharf-rats" of New York, it would have been difficult to find a more unpromising specimen of humanity. I did not like the looks of myself at all.

I asked one of the Irish firemen if I could not have a chance to "clean-up" a little. He drew a bucket of water from the river, and gave me a piece of soap, with which I thoroughly washed my face and head. I felt better then; and, with two or three pins the fireman gave me, I closed up as many of the worst rents of my trousers as I could. Still, I was far from being in presentable condition, though I wished to call upon the oiler in the engine-room. Some of the hands had told him where I was, and he had sent word for me to come to him as soon as my clothes were dry. I had done all I could to improve my personal appearance; and, hatless and shoeless, I went to the engine-room.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. BUCKMINSTER AND OTHERS.

“WHAT’S this, Locke?” said the engineer on duty, as I entered the room, addressing the oiler who had befriended me.

“That’s the boy that saved the girl,” replied the greaser, placing his oil-can in the rack, in front of the machinery.

“When did he escape from the rag-bag?” laughed the engineer.

“He’s a good boy, Bennett, in spite of his looks. The man he lived with used him badly, and didn’t half clothe or feed him,” added Locke.

“He certainly didn’t half clothe him.”

“And I know what it is to be hungry,” I said.

“Where have you been, my lad? I heard them say you had gone on shore,” inquired Locke.

“I didn’t go ashore. I was afraid the captain might want to send me back to the schooner; so I stowed myself away in the lamp-room,” I replied. “I don’t intend to sail in that vessel any more, if I can help it.”

Locke and the engineer asked me a great many questions relating to my history, all of which I answered frankly and truthfully, till they knew my whole story.

“What’s your name?” inquired the oiler.

“Alexander Duddleton.”

“Duddleton!” exclaimed Bennett.

“I don’t like the name any better than you do,” I added: “and I mean to change it some time.”

“I would,” laughed the engineer: “such a name as that is enough to ruin a boy.”

“I think it’s very likely it did ruin one man, for the old Scotch doctor they borrowed it from, for my use, died drunk,” I explained.

“Captain!” called Bennett to a gentleman who passed the door of the engine-room at this moment.

“What have you got there?” asked the captain, stopping at the door of the engine-room, and bestowing a scrutinizing glance upon me.

“This is the boy that saved the girl,” answered the engineer. “He’s like a singed cat—better than he looks.”

“That?” queried the captain; and he seemed to me to be so great a man that I ought to tremble in his presence, though I did not shake, unless it was with the cold, for out of the fire-room I felt the need of my razeed jacket, which I had left on the deck of the Great West.

“He’s the very one,” added Locke. “I was in the fire-room when he first showed himself, and he was as wet as a drowned rat.”

“He behaved like a good fellow in the water,” said the captain, bestowing a patronizing smile upon me. “But how happens he to be here? I thought he went ashore at Twenty-Third Street.”

Locke told him how it was I happened to be there, and added some particulars of my former story.

“Who was the old man that hailed me from the schooner?” asked the captain.

“That was Captain Boomsby,” I replied.

“I should judge by the looks of him that he

was capable of ill-using a boy. He was very much opposed to my carrying you off, even as far as Twenty-Third Street."

"Perhaps he was afraid I should run away," I suggested.

"Very likely."

"I don't want to go back to him," I continued, rolling up the sleeve of my shirt, and showing him where the captain of the Great West had hit me with the rope's end.

"What did he flog you for?"

I told the story of the last voyage of the Great West; but I was careful not to make Captain Boomsby's treatment of me any worse than it was, for the simple truth was bad enough.

"Didn't you have any shoes?" asked the captain, glancing at my feet, the toes of which were sticking out through my socks.

"Yes, sir; I had some, but I kicked them off when I went into the water, so that I could swim," I replied.

"Can't you raise a pair of shoes for him, Locke?" asked the captain.

"Locke on the Understanding," chuckled the

engineer, who seemed to enjoy his little joke. "He ought to be able to get an understanding for this boy, if anybody can."

"I'll see what can be done," replied the oiler. "His foot is almost as big as Bennett's, but I hope I shall find a pair large enough for him."

"But Mr. Buckminster wants to see you, my boy," added Captain Rowe.

"Who, sir?" I inquired.

"Mr. Buckminster; he's the father of the girl you saved. I told him you went ashore at Twenty-Third Street."

"Where is he, sir?"

"He has a drawing-room on the saloon deck; but, my lad, you are hardly in condition to go up among the passengers," added the captain, glancing at the scantiness and the filthiness of my dress.

"I don't want to go up, sir," I protested, not wishing to be stared at, and perhaps made fun of, by the elegant people I had seen on the promenade deck, before I jumped into the water.

"He can come down and see you; and that will do just as well. He was very much con-

cerned about you, and was afraid you would think he had not treated you very handsomely, because he did not see you before you left the boat, as he supposed. He was so busy attending to his daughter, that he thought of nothing else, till the boat made her landing. I gave him the name of the schooner—the Great West—and the number of the pier where she lay, and he was going back to New York by train to-night, in order to see you and your father, as he called the master of the vessel.”

“I’m thankful that Captain Boomsby isn’t my father,” I added. “I don’t care about seeing this Mr. Buckminster.”

“You don’t care about it! Why not?”

“I’m afraid he’ll send me back to the Great West.”

“Perhaps he will be able to do something for you,” replied Captain Rowe. “He’s very grateful to you for what you did, as he ought to be, for the girl might have sunk before the boat reached her. Mr. Buckminster is a very wealthy man, though he has the reputation of being not a very open-fisted man.”

“I don’t know’s I want anything of him,” I added, indifferently.

“He want’s something of you,” laughed the captain, as he left the engine-room; and I saw him go up the stairs to the upper deck.

“Very likely you have made your fortune, my lad,” said the engineer. “You have saved the daughter of a rich man from a watery grave, and a very muddy one at the same time; and he ought to come down handsomely.”

“Down from the upper deck?” I queried.

“Shell out, I mean,” laughed Bennett.

“Is he in the shagbark business?”

“Not exactly.”

“What’s he going to shell out, then?”

“You are a harmless infant—aren’t you, Alexander Duddleton?”

“I never hurt anybody, if I can help it,” I replied. “We shell out walnuts and shagbarks down at Glossenbury, where I came from; but I don’t know what Mr. Buckminster is going to shell out.”

“Money, my lad! He ought to pay you well for what you’ve done; and if he isn’t a heathen, he will do so.”

“I don’t ask anything; but if he has a mind to give me another jacket to keep me warm, I won’t say anything against it.”

“He will do more than that; but here he comes.”

I looked out of the window of the engine-room, and saw Captain Rowe approaching, with a gentleman of about fifty, who looked something like a Quaker. It was the one I had seen trying to quiet the mother of the girl, when the child was struggling in the water.

“This is the boy,” said the captain, making a gesture towards me.

“I am very glad to see you, my young friend,” added Mr. Buckminster, grasping my hand. “You have done me a very great service, and I shall never forget it.”

“I don’t mind that,” I answered, looking on the floor.

“I mind it, for we might have lost poor Rosalie if you had waited even a moment before you jumped into the water. I saw it all, and it was a very noble deed, whatever you may say of it. I am very sorry to learn from Captain Rowe that you have not led a very happy life.”

“Not very happy, sir,” I answered. “When a fellow don’t have enough to eat, and not

clothes enough to keep him warm, to say nothing of being licked half to death, he isn't always happy."

"Poor boy!" sighed the rich man. "But I shall do all I can for you."

"Take him into my room, Mr. Buckminster," interposed the captain. "You can talk it over with him there till you get to Newburgh."

Captain Rowe showed us to his state-room, which was fitted up handsomer than the minister's parlor in Glessenbury, I thought. Mr. Buckminster sat down, and placed a stool for me, which I took. He wanted to know all about me, and I told him as frankly as I had told Locke, what I knew of myself. I showed the manner in which I had been treated by Captain Boomsby and his wife. I dwelt strongly upon the deficiency of my wardrobe, because I hoped the gentleman who was so thankful to me for what I had done, would give me a jacket and a hat or cap. As he was rather a small man in stature, it occurred to me that one of his old coats, with the skirts cut off, would not be a worse fit than the garments I had been accustomed to wear. I intended to suggest this idea to him, if he did not offer to furnish me with a jacket.

“Then you did not wish to go back to Captain Boomsby?” said Mr. Buckminster, when I had finished my narrative.

“No, sir; I did not, and I don’t now. I intended to leave him as soon as the vessel got to New York,” I replied, very decidedly.

“Run away?” he queried, with a very troubled look.

“Yes, sir, run away; that’s the idea.”

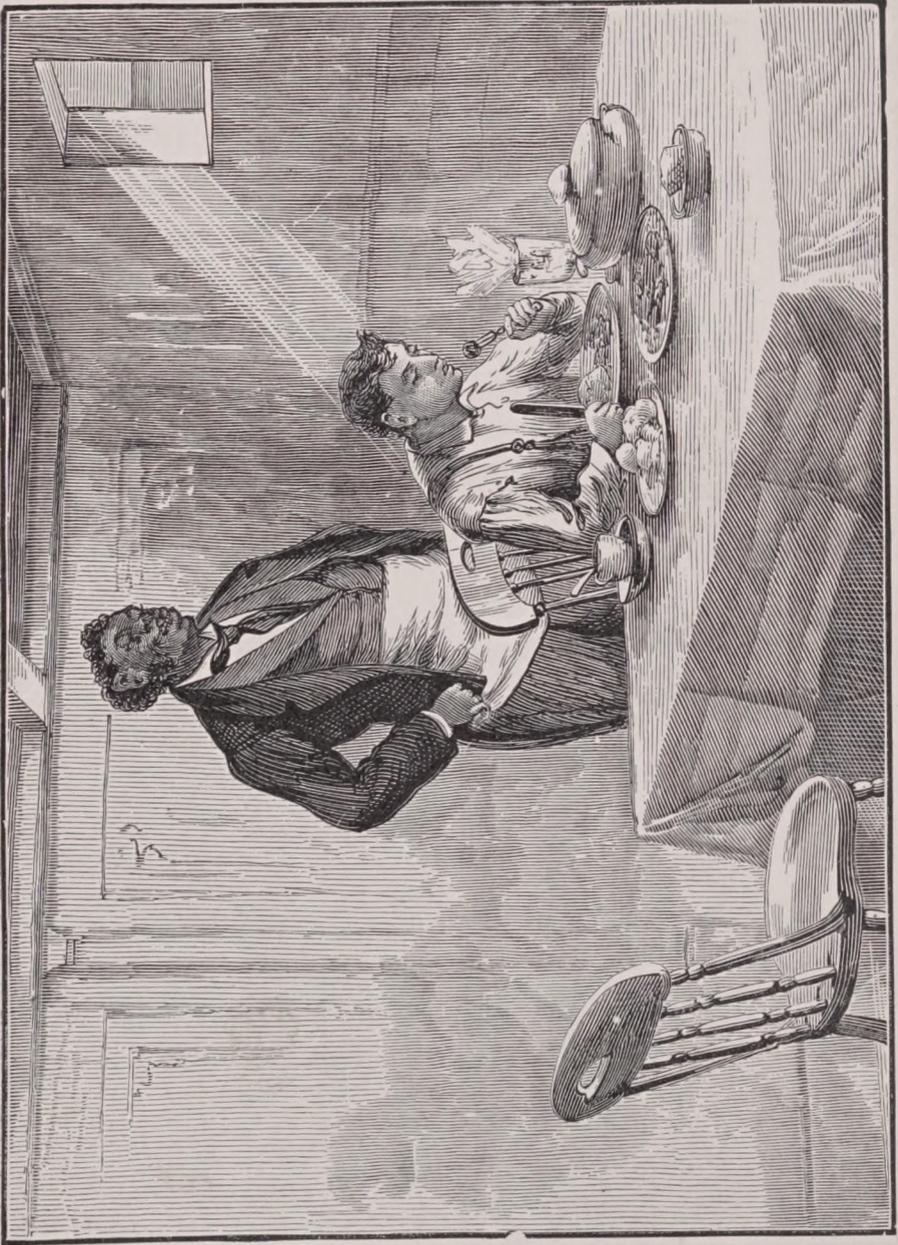
“But it’s bad to run away, Alexander,” added Mr. Buckminster, shaking his head.

“It’s not half so bad as not doing it, when a fellow is treated like a dog, as I have been,” I pleaded. “If Captain Boomsby was my father, or treated me half as well as he does his pigs, I wouldn’t run away, any more than I would hang myself.”

“Perhaps I can see this Captain Boomsby, and induce him to let you go to a good place, which I will find for you.”

“It’s no use; he wouldn’t let me go; he would keep me, if it was only to grind me down.”

“Well, we will consider this matter in the future. I live in Newburgh, where we shall arrive about noon.”



“A BLACK WAITER STOOD BEHIND MY CHAIR.” Page 186.

“About grub time,” I added, remembering that I had not yet been to breakfast, for we had been at work hauling in the vessel at the dock at the time for the morning meal.

“Dinner time, I suppose you mean,” said Mr. Buckminster, with a smile.

“It will be breakfast time with me, for I haven’t had anything to eat since four bells in the dog watch yesterday afternoon,” I added, laughing.

“Poor boy! Why didn’t you say so before?” said my friend, rising from his chair. “I will see that you have something to eat instantly. But I want you to stop with me at Newburgh; and you shall have some clothes as soon as we land.

“Bully for you!” came to my lips, but no farther.

Mr. Buckminster called the steward, ordered the best meal that could be served for me, while Locke was reproaching me for not telling him I had had no breakfast.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SHOPS OF NEWBURGH.

I WAS not as hungry as I had been at times before ; but I never saw the time when a nice breakfast or dinner did not taste good ; and I was not sorry when a waiter summoned me to the officers' mess-room, where I found a hot beefsteak, potatoes, and hot coffee on the table, awaiting me. It reminded me of that glorious dinner on the day of the trial, which was put on the table for the constable to look at, rather than for me to eat, though I had the pleasure of eating it, as a part of the farce. A black waiter stood behind my chair, and the fellow often treated me to a grin, as he saw me make way with the dishes before me. I must add that he treated me very kindly, though there was nothing about me to inspire respect in men of his calling, for he certainly did not

expect to get a "quarter" out of me. I ate all I could, as usual; and when I had finished the meal, I was told that the boat was at Newburgh, and that Mr. Buckminster wished to see me.

"The engineer and the oiler took me in charge, and told me that my grateful friend would be after me in a few moments. It seemed that he had gone to put his wife and daughter into a carriage which was to take them home, while he attended to my wants. Bennett and Locke bade me a very kind adieu, and told me that if I ever wanted help, to come to them. I thanked them warmly, and assured them that I should do so. While they were shaking hands with me, Mr. Buckminster came after me.

"Well, my young friend, are you ready to go with me?" he asked, as tenderly as though I had not been a ragged and friendless boy.

"Yes, sir; I'm all ready," I replied, warmed by the kindly smile of the benevolent gentleman. "I'm very much obliged to you for the nice breakfast I had. It was the best meal I ever had in my life, except the one that was got up to show off to the constable."

"Indeed; how was that?" he asked, as we walked upon the wharf.

I told him how it was, as he led the way up the street. He listened to me with attention while I told him all about Nick's stealing the quarter, and laying it to me, which had been the beginning of all my later troubles.

"There, I think we will stop here," said Mr. Buckminster, pausing before a clothing store.

We entered the shop, and my friend told the salesman what he wanted—a suit of serviceable clothes for a boy of my size. Mr. Buckminster seemed to know all about the goods, for he promptly rejected several suits that were shown to him, though at last he was pleased with one of dark, mixed cloth. He asked me if I was satisfied with it.

"I never had anything like so nice a suit of clothes in my life," I replied, with the utmost enthusiasm. I should say those were good enough for any minister in our town. I never had anything but the old clothes of Captain Boomsby and his son."

"Not for Sunday?"

"Sunday! All days were alike to me."

"Didn't you go to Sunday school and to church?"

“No, sir; I never had any clothes fit to wear to meeting, or anywhere else.”

“That’s too bad!” exclaimed my good friend, shaking his head, with a sad smile.

“I don’t know but I’ve been to meeting two or three times,” I added; and I would not have told him a lie for all the world. “I got in behind the stove once; and I stood behind the door another time. That’s all I can remember now, though I went to what they called a lecture once, in the school-house.”

“Your spiritual welfare seems to have been neglected.”

I thought so myself, though I was by no means so ignorant of religious matters as, perhaps, he supposed. By this time the bundle of clothes was done up, and it was handed to me. Mr. Buckminster intimated that I was to follow him, which I did. We next visited a dry goods store, where my companion purchased four pairs of socks and two woollen shirts, besides, some white collars and a neck-handkerchief. The latter articles were something I had never worn; and I had always thought they were a foppish luxury.

“See here, Mr. Buckminster; am I going into the dry-goods business?” I inquired, amazed at the extravagance with which he was fitting me out.

“Why, no, my lad,” he replied, laughing heartily, as he led me into a hat store. “Why do you ask such a question?”

“I never had so many clothes before in my life.”

“I’m sure you are not overstocked yet.”

“What am I going to do with them? I can’t carry them all.”

“We will see about that when we have bought all the clothes you need,” added Mr. Buckminster.

“I’ve got all I need now,” I protested.

“Don’t you want a hat?” laughed he.

“I forgot the hat,” I answered.

“If you’ll leave it all to me, Alexander, I will see that you have all that you need, but are not overburdened.”

“I didn’t mean to find any fault; only I didn’t want you to buy out all these stores for me.”

“We shall not exhaust their stocks just yet, my young friend.”

In this store he bought a kind of soft hat, which, he said, would become me well. Before this, I had worn a hat to keep my head warm, and not to "become" me. That was a new idea to me, though I had heard Mrs. Boomsby talk about such trifles. I had never suspected that anything would become such an outcast as I was. I did not suppose that such words had any application to me. While I was considering this new revelation, I saw my princely benefactor looking at some small travelling bags. I wondered if he was going to buy one of them for me. It did not seem quite possible that he could think I needed such a thing. A travelling bag for me! What would Captain Boomsby think of that? Why, he hardly thought such a thing was necessary for himself; and certainly he would think it was utter folly for me to have one.

"How do you like this bag?" asked Mr. Buckminster, holding the article up to me.

"I like it first rate," I replied. "Are you buying one for your own use?"

"No; not for my use, but for your use."

"I never had such a thing in my life, and I

don't know as I need it," I answered, doubtfully. "I'm nothing but a poor boy; and I have no idea of setting up for a gentleman just yet; and I suppose that none but big folks have traveling bags."

"They are just as necessary for poor folks as for rich ones," laughed my benefactor. "A little while ago you said you couldn't carry these clothes if you had them; and I thought you needed a bag. I really don't think it is a very aristocratic affair, and it seems to me to be a useful, if not a necessary, thing for you to have."

"I always carried my clothes in a bundle, when I had any to carry."

"This is better. Now put your shirts and socks into it; and whenever you find it is an encumbrance, you can, no doubt, give it away."

"Give it away! catch me!" I added, as I proceeded to stow away my goods in the bag. "I think it is the best thing in the world; in fact, too good for such a fellow as me."

"You must learn to think a little more of yourself, my young friend."

“Captain Boomsby licked me because he supposed I thought I was as good as his son; but I didn’t think I was.”

“Perhaps you were,” suggested Mr. Buckminster, as he led the way out of the shop.

I only wondered what captain Boomsby would have said if he had heard that. I thought he would have been mad enough to pitch into my Quaker-looking friend. Then I tried to imagine what Mr. Buckminster intended to do next. Inflated by the rich store of goods in my bag, it seemed to me that he had pretty much cleaned out the stores of Newburgh, and I wondered if he could think of anything else that I needed. He led me into a shoe store next. Locke had found a pair of old shoes for me, which were better than anything I had worn before for a year, and I thought it a piece of extravagance to invest any money in shoes. It is true, the toes were out, but the soles were not more than half gone, and in my former home they would have stood me for six months, for I should have been obliged to wear them as long as they would stay on my feet. However, I did not think it my duty to object to anything my

Samaritan wished to do; and in his present line of conduct I was even willing to let him have his own way.

He did have his own way, and without any protest on my part. I was fitted to a pair of stout shoes, or a pair was fitted to me, and I don't know which, for my toes were considerably pinched before a pair was found which were big enough for me. My friend told me to put them into the bag for the present. I did not believe that my ingenious conductor could think of anything more that I needed, though I wondered if he would not buy me a cane and a pair of kid gloves, such as he had himself. If he attempted to do anything of this kind, I was determined to protest with all my might, for I well remembered the sentiment of disgust excited by a young fellow who came to Glossenbury to pass the summer. We country boys actually hooted at him, till he found it convenient to leave his gloves in the house. But Mr. Buckminster did not attempt to inflict these articles upon me, and I was spared the pain of protesting. Somewhat to my astonishment, his next visit was to a barber's shop, over the door

of which was a sign whereon was painted, in large letters, the word, "Baths." I knew what the barber's pole meant, and I understood the signification of "bath," though in this connection it was a mystery to me. What were we in this place for? Surely, my charitable friend did not intend to have me shaved by the silky man in a white apron, who was rendering this service to an elderly person in the chair. I was conscious that I had a little white down on my upper lip, but I did not dignify it by the name of beard. Possibly I knew that barbers cut hair; if I did, the fact had no application to me, for Jim Bucks, who sheared sheep in the season, sheared the heads of most of the men and boys on the east road, where I lived.

But the object of this visit was speedily apparent, for as soon as the elderly man rose from his chair, the barber bowed obsequiously to my benevolent conductor. Mr. Buckminster told me to seat myself in the chair, which I did, whereat the barber seemed to be dismayed. I confess that I did not blame him, for he might well have been appalled to see such a bundle of rags in his nice, stuffed chair. My

friend told him to cut my hair; which was certainly long enough to be improved by such an operation.

“His head was thoroughly washed this forenoon, and he is cleaner than he seems to be,” said Mr. Buckminster, with a pleasant smile.

“I was just going to dinner as you came in,” added the barber, apparently much embarrassed.

“Were you? Well, I wanted the boy to have a bath; and if you wish to go, we will find another shop,” replied my Samaritan.

“O, no, sir! I was only going to say that I would lock the shop door, to prevent any more customers from coming in, if you don’t object,” pleaded the barber.

“I don’t object; though I would rather have you say outright that you do not wish any one to see such a ragged boy in one of your chairs,” laughed Mr. Buckminster.

“It would injure my business.”

“Then lock the door.”

After the barber had cut my hair, a bath was prepared for me, and both he and Mr. Buckminster went away, leaving me, locked into the shop, to make my ablutions in the bath-room.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BATH AND THE BARBER.

THOUGH I had always been in the habit of going into the water every Sunday in warm weather, a bath, as it was revealed to me in the barber's shop, was a new institution. It seemed to me that rich people, with such appliances as this, ought to keep clean. The water was warm and pleasant, the soap was soft and fragrant, and the long-handled brush was the best thing in the world for reaching the point on the spinal column between the shoulders. I enjoyed the bath hugely, and I was in no hurry to get out of it. I soaped and scrubbed myself to my heart's content; and I don't know that I should have come out till dark, if the pleasure of putting on my new clothes had not been still before me. I dried myself carefully, and felt like a new being.

I put on one of the new woollen shirts, and found that it was a good fit. The trowsers could not have been better if they had been made for me. I discarded the old rope-yarns which had served me for suspenders, and put on the gayly-colored ones purchased at the clothing store. Already I began to feel like a dandy; and I thought that it would not be safe for me to walk through Glossenbury in this rig, for all the boys would hoot at me. The socks and shoes were next added to my person, and the effect was entirely satisfactory. The linen collar and the neck-handkerchief gave a finish to my appearance which I had never understood before, for I had not before worn anything on my neck, unless it was a condemned comforter when I went out in the coldest weather.

I put on the vest with a feeling that this garment was a piece of useless extravagance. I had never worn one before, and the wonder was, that I did not get it on upside down, or "hind side afore." I capped the climax when I donned the coat, which was a kind of bob-tailed frock, with the skirts reaching just be-

low the hips. Then I looked in the large looking-glass in the bath room, and I was quite unwilling to believe that I was Alexander Duddleton, late of the schooner Great West, and formerly of Glossenbury. If I had not recalled the events of the last few hours, I should not have recognized myself in the nice-looking fellow before me. I did not believe Captain Boomsby would know me, if he saw me; and this was a great comfort. I even thought it would be safe for me to go back to New York, and walk the streets of that village.

I put the hat on my head; but, somehow, something seemed to be wanting. I took it off again. I had neglected to comb my hair, after the scrubbing I had given it in the tub. The barber had not left much of it for my use, but what there was stood up like the bristles on a pig's back. My hair was not very coarse, and did not naturally seek this position. I combed it down straight, as I had been in the habit of doing, when I did anything to it. I tried the hat again, and the effect seemed to be complete.

“How are you, Sandy?” I said aloud to the

figure in the glass, which did not yet seem to belong to me.

While I was examining myself, I heard the door of the shop open, followed by the footsteps of the barber, for they were too rapid to be those of my benefactor.

“Well, my lad, how do you get along?” he asked.

“First rate,” I replied, unfastening my door and throwing it open. “I feel as though I was somebody else just now.”

“I should think you would,” laughed the tonsorial artist, surveying me from head to foot. “You look like another man.”

“I feel like one,” I added, taking off my hat.

“Here, sit down in the chair, my lad, and let me polish you off a little on the head.”

It did not seem to me possible that anything more could be done to improve my personal appearance, even if it were desirable; but I seated myself in the chair. The barber oiled my hair, and squirted fragrant compounds upon it till it seemed to me that an “essence peddler” had been upset upon me. Then he rubbed my head till the bones of my skull cracked under

his vigorous operations. I did not exactly understand what he was driving at; but I submitted without a murmur to the discipline. While my head was still snapping, and the stars were twinkling before me, he applied the comb and brush. In the glass before me I saw that the oil and compounds had made my rebellious hair so pliant that it would remain in whatever position the barber placed it. He parted it on one side,—this seemed to me then to be a feminine vanity,—and “topped up” the ends, till I fancied I looked like the dancing-master who came to our town in the winter, to give lessons in his art to the sons and daughters of the rich people.

At last he finished his operations, and to me the effect was “stunning.” I was on the point of asking the barber to introduce me to Mr. Sandy Duddleton, when Mr. Buckminster entered the shop. He looked at me, and gave way to a hearty laugh. I blushed, and wanted to rub the kinks out of my hair. I should have done so if the barber had not been present, for it did not seem to me just the thing to undo the work he had so laboriously accomplished.

“I am delighted to see you looking so well, Alexander,” said my kind friend. “You have made a wonderful change in yourself.”

“I feel like a cat in a strange garret,” I replied, much embarrassed.

“You will get used to it in a few hours. You look like another person; and I don’t think your best friends would know you.”

“I don’t quite know myself in these togs.”

“The clothes must feel a little strange to you,” laughed Mr. Buckminster, as he looked me over again. “Now, where is your bag?”

“I left it in that room,” I replied, pointing to the bath-room. “What shall I do with my old clothes? I can’t get them into the bag.”

“You don’t want to get them in the bag. If you do anything with them, throw them into the river: they are good for nothing.”

“You can throw them into the dirt-barrel,” said the barber, pointing to the back door of the shop.

I gathered them up and put them into the barrel—everything except the pair of shoes Locke had given me. I put them into the bag with the rest of my extra things, for I thought

I might wear them when I obtained a place to work.

Mr. Buckminster paid the barber for the bath and for cutting my hair, and I followed him out into the street, wondering what the next step was to be.

"I should be glad to take you to my house, for my daughter wants to see you very much," said my benevolent friend.

"I don't want to go there," I replied, bluntly.

"You don't? Why not?" asked Mr. Buckminster, with evident surprise.

"I'm not used to going among such nice people, and I should be scared," I pleaded.

"You need not be alarmed, for my wife and daughter will treat you very kindly. We all feel that we owe you a debt we can never pay; and you must let my daughter see the one who saved her."

"O, I'm willing to see her some time; but I don't want to go among any great folks. I shouldn't feel at home," I added.

"I was going to say that I wanted to take you to my home, and have you stay there; but

my house is now undergoing repairs, and my family are staying at the residence of a friend of mine for a few days more," continued Mr. Buckminster. "I shall have to lodge you at a hotel until my house is finished, and then you must come and see us. I have engaged a room and board for you."

"Thank you, sir; you are very kind to me, and have done more for me than I deserve."

"I have done nothing for you yet, Alexander, compared with what I intend to do."

"I think you have done enough, sir," I added, glancing at my fine clothes.

"Here is the hotel," he continued, leading the way into a small but neat house not far from the river.

It looked very nice to me, though it was by no means a first-class hotel. The landlord bowed low to Mr. Buckminster, and I had already come to the conclusion that he was a gentleman of considerable dignity and importance in the place. We were conducted up one flight of stairs to a small, neatly-furnished room, whose only window overlooked the Hudson.

“This is your room, Alexander; and you will live at this hotel for a few days,” said my friend. “I shall see you every day, and you can amuse yourself by looking over the city, and seeing the various craft in the river.”

“I shall do first-rate here, sir,” I replied, with the feeling that I was quartered in a palace. “I have had to work hard always, and I shall not complain of a rest of a few days.”

“Very well; and to-morrow, I hope, my daughter will be able to see you, for to-day she is quite ill from the effects of the affair of this morning,” said Mr. Buckminster, seating himself in one of the two chairs the room contained. “Now, as we are alone, I want to talk with you a little about the future. What do you want to do?”

“I don’t know, sir. I expect to work and earn my own living,” I replied, seating myself at the window in the other chair.

“But what do you desire to do—learn a trade, or go into a store?”

“Go into a store!” I exclaimed. “I don’t know enough for that.”

“Then perhaps you had better go to school for a while.”

"I should like that first-rate," I answered, with enthusiasm.

"Can you read and write?"

"Yes, sir; and I have studied arithmetic, geography, and grammar a little. But I can't afford to go to school: I must earn my own living."

"Perhaps we might manage that in some way," said Mr. Buckminster, with a smile. "But before we make any plans for the future, we must consider that your manner of leaving your late employer was not quite regular."

"I meant to leave him, any how," I added.

"Were you bound out to him?"

"Not's I know of."

I could give him no information in regard to my relations with Captain Boomsby, except that I was taken from the poor-house, to work for him for my board and clothes.

"I think he has a claim upon you for your services; and it is better to look the matter fair in the face. Don't you think, if I should pay him a few hundred dollars, he would release you?"

"Perhaps so; but I don't believe he would.

If you let Captain Boomsby know where I am, it is all up with me."

We talked for an hour on the subject; and when he left me, I was very much alarmed at the course he intended to pursue, which was, to see my late tyrant, and, for a sum of money, induce him to release me.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

I HAD no faith in Mr. Buckminster's plan. I had experienced enough of the malice of Captain Boomsby's nature to realize that, if he thought I was living comfortably anywhere, he would not be satisfied. I had resisted him, and this was the most serious offence of which I could be guilty. I had made his son confess that he stole the quarter; and this was laid up against me. I had received the sympathy of Barnes, and all the crew on board of the Great West, for which I was held responsible. I had seen the evil in the captain's eye, and I feared that no appeal my friend could make would have any effect upon him. I was well aware that the tyrant loved money, but I had my doubts as to which was the stronger in his nature — avarice or revenge. I could not tell,

and being well out of the fangs of the monster, I was determined not to trust him again. While I was thinking of it, Mr. Buckminster returned to my room.

“I forgot something,” said he.

“I am sorry to have you take so much trouble on my account,” I replied.

“Since I went out, I bought this for you,” he added, handing me a very neat yellow wallet.

“What’s this for?” I inquired, taking the gift.

“To put your money in, of course.”

“I don’t think I have any use for it. I never had any money in my life but once; and then only ten cents. I have no more use for a wallet than I have for a razor, though I may want both one of these days.”

“I was thinking, as I walked up to the house where my family are staying, that I should not be able to see you again to-day, for I have an engagement which may keep me till a late hour this evening; and I didn’t know but you might want this wallet.”

“I haven’t any use for it, except to remind

me how good you have been to me, sir," I replied, "and I don't believe I shall ever need it even for that."

"It seems to me, Alexander, that you talk altogether, above your condition. Nothing could be better expressed than the sentiment of your last remark," said he, looking at me with something like astonishment on his face.

If I did speak more fluently or more high-flown than I ought, I either inherited my speech from the parents I had never known, or learned it from the cultivated ladies who used to come to the poor-house to instruct the children. I could not explain it, and no one had ever mentioned it to me before. I had a considerable vocabulary of sea and other slang, which I could not help using at times, and it is more than possible that I do not now accurately report my own speeches, as made at this early period.

"I didn't know that I talked different from others," I replied.

"There is something about you that I don't quite understand," he added. "Do you like the wallet?"

“Yes, sir; very much indeed.”

“But you have not looked inside of it; perhaps you will not like it so well when you have examined it more carefully.”

Rather because he suggested it, than because I cared very much for the useless toy, I opened the wallet. In one of the pockets there were several bank bills, and in several others a quantity of small money. I blushed — why I have not the least idea. I had been accepting gifts from this gentleman all the afternoon, without hinting at an objection; but somehow the money looked different to me, and I did not feel quite satisfied with myself.

“There is money in it,” I said; and I think my embarrassment was apparent to him.

“Yes, I put a little money in it, so that in walking about the town, if you saw anything you wanted, you might buy it,” replied Mr. Buckminster.

“I don’t like to take any money, sir.”

“Don’t you, my lad? Why not?”

“Somehow it don’t seem to me to be just the thing.”

“But I assure you it is just the thing,”

laughed my friend, as he walked towards the door. "I may not be able to see you till nearly noon to-morrow, and I was not willing to leave you so that you could not buy an apple or a stick of candy, if you wanted such things."

"I want to do something for you, sir, for all these things," I added. "I should like to work for you."

"You have already done ten times as much for me as I can ever do for you. One of these days, when you are older, you will understand me better. I must go now; the money is but a trifle, and I wish you to spend it as freely as you please; and when it is gone, you shall have some more. Of course, I mean that you should spend it in a proper manner. I hope you never take any strong drinks."

"Never, sir."

"Any beer or wine?"

"No, sir; I never tasted of anything stronger than coffee, and never mean to," I protested.

"You may spend it freely for nuts, candy, and fruit, and go to any show there is in town. By the way, I believe there is a circus some-

where about here ; at least, I saw some hand-bills of some kind of an exhibition.”

I had heard of the circus, but had never been to one, and the prospect of seeing such a show overcame all my scruples about taking the money. I put the wallet in my pocket ; and as Mr. Buckminster left the room, I promised not to use one cent of the money for anything bad. Telling me to be at the hotel at eleven the next day, my generous friend took his leave of me.

I got up and walked the room after he had gone. I looked at myself in the looking-glass. I thought my clothes were very fine ; but what astonished me most was my hair, parted at the side and frizzled at the ends. My face was very brown from exposure to the sun and the sea air ; but, thus improved by art, I was willing to believe that I was not a bad-looking fellow. Then I walked across the room with my hands in my trowsers pockets—a very bad habit ; but then it was not often that I had pockets to put my hands into, and I think I was excusable. Of course I could not help feeling the wallet. I had money in my pocket ;

and this gave me a sensation I had never before experienced—for the ten cents I had once earned, I dared not carry with me for a longer period than thirty minutes.

I did not know how rich I was; and seating myself in my chair at the window, I proceeded to inquire into my financial condition. I had seen at least one bank bill, and I was sure that I had as much as one dollar, besides the small money. I took out the large bills first. I was almost overwhelmed when I saw that one of them was a five-dollar bill. Five dollars was a vast sum to me, and I began to feel as though I was in condition to scrape acquaintance with the New York *millionaires*, of whom I heard some of the sailors on the wharf tell big stories, on my former voyage to the metropolis. But five dollars was not the total of my worldly wealth, and I continued the investigation. I found a two-dollar bill, and three ones, making up a grand total of ten dollars! Ten dollars! Astor, Vanderbilt, and Drew were beggars compared with me!

In the other pockets of the wallet I found three dollars in halves, quarters, and smaller

money. Thirteen dollars! I had heard of such sums, but had never seen anything of the kind before. Surely Mr. Buckminster was made of money, if he could afford to scatter it in this reckless manner. I was not a Poor Boy any longer. The skies had opened and rained down wealth upon me. What would Captain Boomsby say if he could see me at that moment! What would he say if he could look into that wallet! I was very glad he could not see me, and could not look into that wallet.

I am afraid a great many vain and silly thoughts passed through my head, as I sat at the window, occasionally glancing out when a steamer or other craft passed on the river. Then I wondered what Mr. Buckminster was going to do with me. He talked of my going to school, learning a trade, or taking a place in a store. I was willing to be disposed of as he thought best, but the thought that he intended to see my old tyrant, and make a bargain with him to release me from his service, filled me with alarm. I was not willing that it should be done, and I had said so as plainly as I

could speak. My new protector—though I can hardly call him a *new* one, for I had never had a protector before—was firm on this point. He was evidently opposed to a boy's running away under any circumstances; but he had not my experience to enlighten him, and I believed that, under the same conditions, he would do as I had done or intended to do.

He told me he could not countenance a runaway; it was wrong for him to do so; but he would pay even a thousand dollars if Captain Boomsby would release me. Though a thousand dollars was a mint of money even to my tyrant, I had heard him speak of such a sum rather coolly, and without manifesting any especial awe or reverence. I was afraid he had not the same respect for a thousand dollars that I had, or that he would not have it if called upon to abandon his anticipated revenge. The hands on the Great West were paid an average of about twenty dollars a month, at the time, and I was the equal of almost any one of them. It would be nine years before I was twenty-one, and at man's wages on the vessel I should save him over two thousand. I went over this cal-

culatation several times, for I was much interested in it.

Even at half wages—and I could earn that, besides my board, working on a farm—the captain would make more than the thousand dollars out of me, always providing that I staid with him till I was of age. It did not seem to me that Captain Boomsby would release me, even for the largest sum Mr. Buckminster had named. I was really alarmed as I considered these matters. I was confident that my Newburgh friend would insist upon negotiating with the tyrant, and I was quite as sure that no bargain could be made. I was utterly dissatisfied with the prospect, for it seemed to me almost certain that I should be restored to Captain Boomsby, if I did not take the matter into my own hands.

Mr. Buckminster was conscientious, and intended to do only what he considered right and necessary. Certainly his intentions were highly honorable, but he did not know my tyrant as well as I did. I may as well confess that I had it in my mind to take my bag in my hand and leave Newburgh at once, without even bid-

ding my good friend adieu. This would save him all trouble on my account. According to his own showing, he had not paid me a tenth of what he owed me, measured by his own standard of gratitude, so that I should not leave in his debt. But going off in this manner seemed to me very mean, and I could not reconcile myself to the step at that time. Still, I was determined not to be made the subject of negotiation with the captain, for that would involve the telling him where I was.

I decided to do nothing till the next day when I met Mr. Buckminster; then, I would talk with him again on the subject, and if he persisted in carrying out his plan, why, I must look out for myself. Having come to this conclusion, I thought I would go out to walk. My room seemed to be very warm, or a super-abundance of clothing heated me, and I opened the window to let in the fresh air from the river. I had hardly done so before the door of my chamber was suddenly opened by the landlord, and at the same moment Captain Boomsby stalked into the apartment, looking as ugly as when I had last seen him on the deck of the Great West.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TYRANT ON THE OFFENSIVE.

I NEED not say that I was startled at the unexpected appearance of my tyrant. It seemed to me more like an apparition than the real presence of the man whom I had so much reason to dread. Up to this moment I had not doubted that I was entirely clear of him, for I had no suspicion that he would follow and attempt to recover possession of me. How he came here was then a mystery to me, though I was able to solve it a few days afterwards. As this explanation will interest the reader more at this point than at any subsequent time, I give it now. As I did not obtain it from Captain Boomsby, I could only conjecture his motives and movements.

It was not difficult for me to imagine how the master of the Great West felt when he saw the

steamer moving off with me on board of her. Doubtless he feared that I might forget to return. He saw what I had done in saving Miss Buckminster from the muddy waters of the dock, and might well suppose that the act would make some friends for me. I can readily imagine that, after waiting a reasonable time for me to come down from Twenty-Third Street, he went down into his cabin, "slicked up" a little, and then made his way to the upper landing of the steamer. It is quite possible that he consulted the wharfinger, or other experts at the pier where his vessel lay, and even visited the office of the day-line of boats to Albany.

Prepared by this information for prompt and decided action, doubtless he went to the Twenty-Third Street pier, and learned that no ragged, hatless, shoeless fellow like myself had landed there when the steamer stopped. The man in charge of the interests of the line, on the pier, would certainly know it, if I had landed. His next step was to take the express train on the Hudson River Railroad at half past ten, to Poughkeepsie, the only stopping-place of this train, where he arrived in advance of the boat in

which I had taken passage, at ten minutes before one. Of course he was very confident that he should be able to head me off at this point. When the steamer arrived, he hastened on board of her, and confronted the captain. I considered Captain Rowe my friend, and I knew he was interested in me. He understood enough of my story to see that my pursuer was not kindly disposed towards me, and it seemed like treachery for him to tell my tyrant what had become of me.

Captain Rowe looked like an honest man, and I have no doubt he was one; but he must have told Captain Boomsby what had become of me. I was sure that neither Locke nor Bennett would tell, if they had been steamed to death in their own boilers for not doing so. I suppose, however, that Captain Rowe believed Mr. Buckminster was fully able to take care of and protect me, and it was possible that my kind friend had explained to him his plans in regard to me, so that the captain supposed he should only help the business along by telling the simple truth. I cannot believe that the noble commander of that magnificent steamer was wilfully guilty of

anything like treachery to me, for I know that he would have been glad to administer a little wholesome discipline to Captain Boomsby himself.

It is possible that some other person told my tyrant what had become of me; but, as a matter of fact, Captain Boomsby ascertained that I had landed at Newburgh. If he had not, he would not have gone there, and found me at the hotel. At twenty minutes past three, he took the train for Fishkill, which is on the river nearly opposite Newburgh. Crossing by the ferry, he had arrived soon after four. Doubtless the spectacle of an influential gentleman like Mr. Buckminster, conducting a dirty, ragged boy, such as I was when I landed, attracted the attention of all the loafers and hangers-on about the pier; and there was a multitude of them, as I had observed myself. Very likely some of these idlers had taken interest enough in my affairs to follow us to the stores and to the barber's shop. There were enough of them hanging around to collect and put together the different parts of the transaction, if no one or more of them watched it to a conclusion. How-

ever this may be, I had abundant proof in the presence of Captain Boomsby to assure me that he had been able to trace me to my present abode.

As I have remarked before, he looked ugly ; but there was also a gleam of triumph in his sunken eye, such as I had often seen before in his expression, when he thought he had me in a particularly tight place. After chasing me all day, and investing several dollars in the search, I have no doubt he experienced a very strong and malignant satisfaction in the act of finding me. It would have been no more than human for him to have such a sensation, though it belonged only to his low type of humanity. He looked at me ; he frowned, and a kind of diabolical smile played on his lips.

I did not like the looks of him, and from his ugly face I glanced at the window I had just opened. Beneath it was the roof of a low piazza, which surrounded the hotel, and afforded a very pleasant resort for loafers that smoked, and loafers that did not smoke. My bag lay upon the foot of the bed, within reach of the window—and I was a sailor, used to going aloft, and

climbing in all sorts of difficult places. Though I did not immediately jump out at the window, I could not help considering the possibilities of the time and place. Desperate as the situation seemed to be at first, a second thought saved me from despair.

The landlord had shown my tyrant up to my room. As soon as he opened the door, Captain Boomsby, as I have said, stalked into the room. But Mr. Van Eyck, the host, did not seem to be quite satisfied with the movements of the visitor. Perhaps he thought it was a shade too familiar for him to walk into my chamber without an invitation from the occupant thereof. It is probable that the landlord did not suspect anything wrong till the captain unceremoniously pushed by him, and stalked into the room; I say "stalked," because he came into my apartment with a very haughty and offensive air; at least, it must have seemed so to Mr. Van Eyck, who had not seen me in my dirt and rags, and had treated me with respect and consideration. Doubtless he believed the visitor had exceeded the bounds of propriety, and was getting ahead of him. In order to restore the proper relation

between himself and the captain, and place himself in a position to command the situation, in case of need, he stepped into the room, and halted between my tyrant and me.

“You are cutting it fat here,” said Captain Boomsby, surveying me critically from head to foot, as I stood by the window.

I had the opportunity to guess what my tyrant thought of my personal appearance in my new rig, and the effect was full as tremendous as I had imagined. By this time I had collected my thoughts, and braced up my nerves, as we used to brace up the yards, to meet the shock of whatever might come. I had learned by hard experience that nothing was to be gained, but much lost, by quailing in the presence of this cowardly tyrant, and I tried not to quail, though I had been “taken all aback” by his sudden appearance.

“I have found some good friends,” I replied, commanding myself so as to give an easy, quiet answer.

“That suit of clothes will just fit Nicholas after he has grown another year,” continued Captain Boomsby, still studying the material and finish of my new suit.

“It will depend upon how much he grows in a year,” I answered.

“I didn’t expect to find you all prinked up like this, Sandy; but I don’t object,” chuckled the tyrant. “Them traps can all be put to a good use. I suppose you have plenty of money in your pocket.”

“I have some,” I replied, with dangerous candor.

“Perhaps you’d better hand it over to me before you lose any on’t,” said the captain, extending his hand; whereat the landlord stepped up a little nearer to the scene of action. “I thought whether or no you wouldn’t get something for picking up that gal, so I should git enough to pay my expenses, if I came up here after you. Fork over, Sandy.”

“I think not,” I answered.

“Won’t do it, eh? Barnes ain’t here now,” chuckled the captain.

I was painfully conscious of the fact, though I had some hope of the landlord, who was a wiry, if not a large man; and I thought he meant business, as he watched the interview.

“What I have was given me for my own use,” I ventured to suggest.

“Sandy, I’m your lawful guardeen, and what’s yours belongs to me. You hain’t got no right to a single cent you make, without I give it to you; so hand over the money.”

“No, sir; I won’t do it,” I replied, decidedly, for I knew it was no use to temporize with him.

“Then you are go’n to make me take the money away from you,” added Captain Boomsby, pulling up the sleeves of his coat.

I took my bag from the foot of the bed, in readiness for the next movement of the tragedy, or farce, as it might turn out to be. Whether the tyrant thought I had a knife or a pistol in this bag, I know not, but he stepped back a pace, and looked at me.

“Got a travelling bag—have you, Sandy?” said he, with a sickly grin. “Well, all them things will come in handy for my wife or the gals, for that’s altogether too fine for a feller like you.”

“It will answer for me very well.”

“I don’t believe it will!” sneered he. You’ve got fixed up pretty nice; had your hair ’iled and parted and smell like an essence peddler! A

clean shirt and a white collar! A neck-han'-kercher like the bos'n a man-o'-war! Well, if these things won't fit Nicholas this year, they will next. He'll grow to 'em. I shouldn't wonder if that han'kercher'd go round my neck."

"One made of hemp would suit you better," I replied, incautiously and improperly; but I was stung by the cool expression of his intention to rob me of my new clothes.

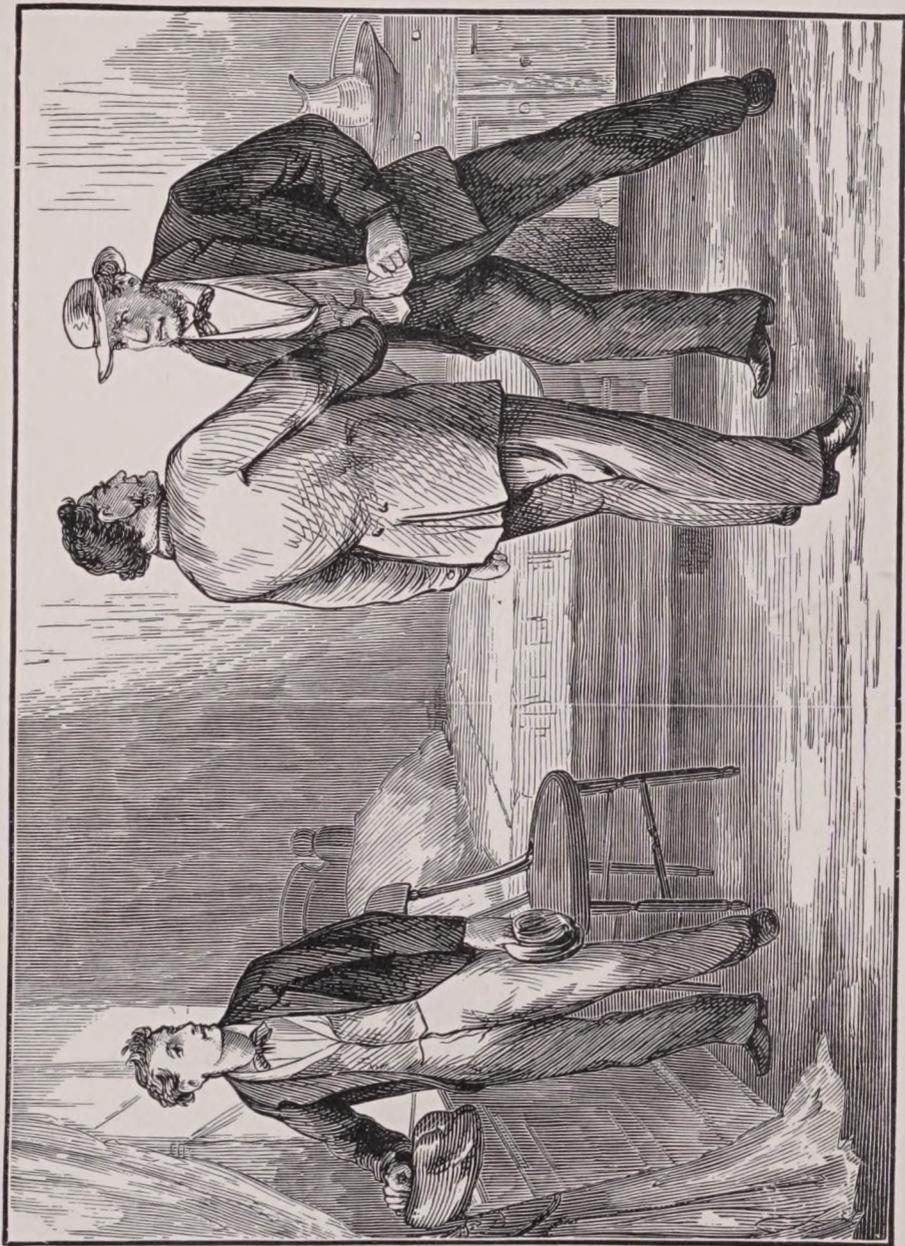
"That's sassy," said Captain Boomsby, hardly disturbed by the smile on the face of the landlord. "But no matter; we'll settle all that by and by, with the rest of the recknin'. What you done with your old clothes, Sandy?"

"I put them in the dirt barrel, with the rest of the dirt."

"So much the worse for you, for you'll want 'em. You may not be able to git any again as good as them was."

"I shall not be likely to get any worse."

"Now, may be you will; and you was a wasteful critter to throw them trousers away, and it's lucky for you that you left the coat on the deck of the vessel. But I guess we are wastin' time. We shall have to take the train



"STOP, SIR!" SAID THE LANDLORD." Page 231.

on t'other side of the river about eight o'clock. I suppose we can git some supper here — can't we, landlord?"

"We have supper at six o'clock," replied Mr. Van Eyck, coldly.

"How much money have you got, Sandy?" asked Captain Boomsby, turning to me again.

"What I have belongs to me," I answered, evasively.

"I guess not," said the tyrant, shaking his head. "If you won't tell me, I'll count it for myself;" and he made a movement towards me.

"Stop, sir!" said the landlord, stepping between us, as I was on the point of going out the window. "If you intend to rob this young gentleman in my house, there's going to be a fight before you do it."

Barnes was not there, but Van Eyck was plucky enough for the occasion, and I put my bag on the chair by the window, in readiness to take a hand in any conflict that might ensue. Captain Boomsby looked at the landlord, and appeared to be surprised at his interference.

CHAPTER XXI.

A USELESS DISCUSSION.

I HAVE no doubt that Captain Boomsby honestly believed that he owned me, body and soul; that all I had, all that was given to me, all that I earned, all that I wore, or had in my possession, however I came by it, belonged to him. The suggestion of the landlord that he intended to rob me, the captain considered as absurd as it was startling, beyond a question. I think the captain really believed that I had no rights of any kind which he was bound to respect. Possibly he did not consider himself at liberty to kill me, at least not for any ordinary offence; but anything short of this, in the way of discipline, was entirely proper. With this view of my relations to him, Captain Boomsby was evidently surprised at any interference from the landlord; and I knew that he had no taste

for a fight with any one, except a boy or a cripple.

“Rob this young gentleman!” exclaimed the captain; and the charge of an attempt to rob was hardly less offensive than calling me a “young gentleman.”

“It seems to me that is what you were going to do,” added Mr. Van Eyck. “You were going to take his money away from him by force. You can’t do anything of that sort in my house. The young gentleman is under my protection.”

“The young gentleman!” gasped my tyrant; and, on the whole, I think that this term applied to me was rather worse than being accused of an attempt to plunder me. “Do you mean that boy?”

“Of course I do: he was the one you were going to rob.”

“Do you call him a young gentleman?”

“I do. He behaves like a gentleman; and that’s more than I can say of you.”

Captain Boomsby winced. The idea of contrasting his conduct with mine!

“Do you know what that boy is?” demanded

he, his indignation beginning to get the better of his surprise.

“I only know that he is a guest in my house, and he shall be treated like a gentleman,” retorted the landlord.

“A gentleman! Why, he is a hand before the mast in my vessel—the schooner Great West.”

“Perhaps he is; I don’t care anything about that. If he looks like a gentleman and behaves like one, he is just as good as the governor of New York, in this hotel.”

“That boy belongs to me,” added Captain Boomsby.

“Belongs to you! Are you his father?”

“No; I’m not his father; but I’m his guardian. I took him out of the poor-house; and he’s to work for me for his board and clothes till he’s twenty-one.”

“I don’t know you, sir.”

“That boy knows me, if you don’t.”

“I don’t know anything about the case, and don’t care. If the young gentleman wants to go to New York with you, I don’t prevent him from doing so,” said the landlord.

“But you want to prevent me from taking him with me,” growled my tyrant. “He’s got a lot of money that b’longs to me.”

“Did you give it to him?”

“That don’t make no difference. What he’s got belongs to me.”

“I don’t know you; and all I’ve got to say is, that you can’t meddle with the young gentleman in my house.”

“But I tell you I’m his guardeen,” protested Captain Boomsby.

“Can you prove it? Have you any papers to show for it?” demanded the landlord, rather impatiently.

“Of course I don’t carry my papers with me, for I didn’t know he was going to run away.”

“It’s no use to say anything more about it. I don’t know you; and I shall see that no harm comes to the young gentleman while he is in my hotel.”

“I’ve come up here after this boy; and I’m not going back without him,” added my tyrant, obstinately; and I did not believe he would, if he could possibly avoid it.

“You can do as you like about that,” said the

landlord. "The young gentleman was brought here by Mr. Buckminster, one of the richest and most influential men in Newburgh; and I'm responsible to him for the young gentleman."

"I don't know nothin' about Mr. Buckminster; and I don't care how rich he is. He ain't rich enough to tread me under his heel," blustered the captain.

"He wants to see you, Captain Boomsby," I interposed.

"Who wants to see me?"

"Mr. Buckminster."

"What does he want of me?"

"He would like to pay you something for releasing me."

"Do you hear that?" demanded Captain Boomsby, turning to the landlord. "Don't that look as though the boy belonged to me?"

"I don't pretend to settle the rights of the case," replied Mr. Van Eyck. "You can't meddle with the young gentleman in my house. If Mr. Buckminster wants to see you, I'll send for him to come down here and meet you."

"I don't want to see him: I've nothing to

do with him. The boy belongs to me, and I want him — that's all."

"Perhaps he will buy out your interest in the young man," suggested the landlord, taking his cue from what I had said.

"He will pay you a lot of money to release me," I added, hoping to reach him through his cupidity.

"Don't talk to me, Sandy," said he, fixing a savage glance upon me. "I don't want to sell out! After what's happened this man hain't got money enough to buy me out. We hain't settled up old scores yet. It's got out all over Gloss'nb'ry that my boy's a thief through your going's on, you rascal."

"He stole the money; I didn't do it; and it's his own fault. You had me arrested for it, and Nicholas confessed before the justice that he took the quarter," I replied, more for the information of the landlord than because I wished to provoke my tyrant.

"It was all your doin's, any way. Then folks say you got the better o' me, and made me let you alone. I don't let you go till I get even with you," said the captain, shaking his head to emphasize his wrath.

This was a new revelation to me. I was not aware that my tyrant was suffering from "the speech of people," on account of what had transpired in the court and in the barn; but what he said was a sufficient key to his savage treatment of me on board of the Great West. His involuntary explanation, made in his anger, only increased my repugnance to return with him to the vessel. I was determined not to do so, and I was confirmed in my opinion that the negotiation which Mr. Buckminster proposed, would result in no good to me.

"Don't you be impudent to me, Sandy," said the captain, in reply to my plain and simple statement of the facts. The day of reck'nin's comin', and the more you pile up, the wus it will be for you."

I had no doubt of this, if he succeeded in getting me away from my new friend; and I made no reply.

"This thing has gone far enough," interposed the landlord.

"You have heard what he says, landlord, and you can judge from his talk that he's my boy," replied Captain Boomsby, considerably excited.

“I want the money in his pocket that belongs to me, and then I want him.”

“I must go down stairs and attend to my business, and I don't want to hear any more of it,” added Mr. Van Eyck.

“You can go,” sneered the captain.

“This room belongs to the young gentleman and you must leave it,” said the landlord, very decidedly.

“Leave it? Leave that boy to get away from me? Not if I know myself,” protested the captain.

“Well, sir, if I know myself, you don't stay here more than one minute longer,” retorted the landlord, rolling up his sleeves, with a very decided indication of business. “If I have to put you out, I shall hand you over to the police for disturbing my house.”

“That's rather rough,” added Captain Boomsby, more mildly.

“Mr. Buckminster has the charge of the young gentleman. He brought him here, and I don't know anybody but him in this business. If you want to see him, I'll send for him; and that's all I can do,” continued Mr. Van Eyck, placing himself directly in front of my tyrant.

“Well, I guess I’d better see him,” added the captain, unwillingly adopting the only safe alternative, and backing out of the room.

“You should always lock your door, young man,” said the landlord, significantly, as he followed the visitor out of the room.

I immediately locked the door, and realized that I was alone again. Though I was now well dressed, and had money in my pocket, I felt that I was still a poor boy, and never in greater peril than at this moment, for nothing could possibly be more terrible to me, than being carried back to the Great West and the miseries of my former home. The landlord would send for Mr. Buckminster; but, as that gentleman had told me, he had an engagement, and the chances were that the messenger would not find him. Even if he did, I had no hope that any good result would come of the interview. What should I do? This was the most interesting question I could put to myself. I was under the impression that Captain Boomsby had the legal right to take me away with him, though I knew little or nothing about law.

I had already said enough in the presence of

Mr. Van Eyck, to satisfy any one that I had lived with the captain; and I was afraid he would be able to make out a case against me, in spite of Mr. Buckminster and the landlord. Though I could not understand how the case was to be brought to an issue, I had the idea that it was to be settled somewhere, and by authority. If Captain Boomsby insisted upon taking me away by the eight o'clock train, a row was inevitable, for the landlord was plucky enough to interfere. He had spoken of the police, which suggested the course of proceeding, and my tyrant might be able to make out his case. I did not like the situation, present or prospective.

But I had not been alone five minutes before some one tried the door and found that it was locked. I wondered who it could be. The knob had not been rudely grasped, as Captain Boomsby would have done it; and I concluded that it was the landlord, who had come up again to see that I was still secure. I waited a moment, and then I heard a gentleman knock on the door. My tyrant would not have knocked so softly as that; he would have hit the pannel

as he chopped wood. He would have done it in the imperative mood. I thought, therefore, that it was the landlord, coming to tell me what to do next. Very likely he had come to take me to some secure place, where Captain Boomsby could not find me. He could lead me down the back stairs, and send me to the house of some friend, until Mr. Buckminster and my tyrant had settled the business. I was so sure I had correctly divined the intentions of Mr. Van Eyck, that I put on my hat and took my bag in my hand, so that there should not be an instant's delay on my part in carrying out his plan. I opened the door.

I had made a wretched blunder. It was Captain Boomsby. I had forgotten that he was as cunning as he was cruel and malicious. Though I opened the door very cautiously, and only a few inches, the great cow-hide boot of the captain was instantly placed against it, so that I could not close it again. In spite of my efforts to prevent him from doing so, he pushed the door open, and I was compelled to retreat towards the window. My tyrant entered the chamber, closed and locked the door behind him ;

then he paused and bestowed upon me a glance of malicious triumph.

“Sandy, you are going back to New York with me to-night,” said he.

“Do you think so?” I replied, not knowing what else to say.

“I know it. The landlord has gone off somewhere, after that Mr. Buckminster, I reckon. You won’t be here when he comes back. You’ll go down those stairs, and out the front door, down to the ferry. If you don’t do it, I’ll choke the life out of you!” he added; and I never saw him look quite so savage. “Will you do it, or shall I shake you up a little first?”

I concluded neither to do it nor to be shaken up. I sprang out the window upon the piazza, and ran upon the roof to the farthest end of it. I did not stop to see whether Captain Boomsby followed me, for I turned a corner and lost sight of him. I heard him call upon me to stop, but I did not heed him.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE YOUNG BOATMAN.

I HAD turned two corners, and reached the rear of the hotel. From the piazza I jumped down two feet upon a shed, the eaves of which were not more than six feet from the ground. I dropped my bag, and was preparing to follow it, when I heard a tremendous crash of pine boards, as though the whole piazza, over which I had just passed, had been broken down; but this was not the case, for what I could see of it was still in position. I did not deem it prudent, however, to delay my escape; and, sliding off the eaves of the shed, to the great peril of my new clothes, I "hung off," reaching the solid earth in safety.

I found myself in the back-yard of the hotel, where the wood-pile, the swill-tub, and the dirt-barrel were kept. I had no business with these

things; and, assuring myself that no one had followed me on the piazza, I hastened to the gate in the board fence, which opened into the street running at right angles with the one on which was the front of the hotel.

It was a narrow thoroughfare, and appeared to be deserted. I stepped out at the gate, and crossed this street. I saw that quite a crowd had gathered in front of the house, and the first person I had recognized was the landlord. He was excitedly pointing to the roof of the piazza, and, looking up, I saw what had occasioned the crash I had heard. In the roof was a great ragged hole, beneath the window of my room.

When I walked over that piazza it had occurred to me that it was a very shaky structure, for the boards creaked and yielded under my feet, as though I had weighed a ton. It was evidently built in the frailest manner, and only to keep the sun off the people below. It was simply boarded up and down, with battens over the cracks. In the crowd I saw Captain Boomsby, in whose face the landlord was shaking the fist of his left arm, while he pointed at the break above with the other. It was plain to me then

that my tyrant had followed me out of the window. He was heavier than I, and had probably stepped less gently. The slender roof had caved in beneath him, dropping him upon the platform below. I inferred that the landlord had not gone away, as the captain said he had, doubtless intending to deceive me.

I was so interested in this scene, I forgot, for the moment, that I was a fugitive. No one noticed me, for everybody was listening to the animated dialogue between the landlord and my late visitor. Among the crowd I saw a man whom I supposed to be a policeman. I wanted to hear what was said, and I crossed the narrow street again, in order to secure a position at the corner of the hotel, where I could beat a hasty retreat if necessary.

“I tell you that was my boy. He belongs to me!” said my tyrant.

“You broke into his room, and tried to rob him of his money!” replied the landlord, warmly. “You had no more business there than you had in my chamber.”

“The boy belongs to me, and that’s enough,” retorted the captain. “’Tain’t no use to talk

of robbing him. But while you're jawing here, he's getting away from me."

"Don't let him go, officer," protested Mr. Van Eyck, as the captain attempted to break through the crowd.

I saw the policeman, or whatever he was, put his hand on my tyrant's shoulder.

"Are you going to take me up?" demanded Captain Boomsby.

"You broke into that room in the hotel," said the officer.

"No, I didn't; my boy let me in."

"He would have taken the young man's money away from him by force, if I hadn't interfered," added the landlord.

"I had a right to take it from him," answered the captain. "I want the boy; he'll tell you how it is."

"I don't want my guests driven out of the hotel by people who have no right in the house. Mr. Buckminster brought the boy to me; and he's the one that saved his daughter when she fell overboard in New York this morning," continued the landlord.

"Mr. Constable, you'd better look up the boy,

and then you'll find it's all right," persisted the captain.

Though I was very much interested in the dispute, I did not consider it prudent for me to remain and hear any more of it. I retreated up the narrow street leading away from the river. I soon came to a broader avenue, in which a considerable number of people were passing to and fro. They took no notice of me, and did not seem to suspect that I had just escaped from a great peril. I did not tell them, but taking my place in the crowd, I walked along towards the north. I was not going anywhere in particular, my only motive being to get as far away as possible from Captain Boomsby. I travelled at a rapid rate, looking behind me occasionally, to assure myself that the captain of the Great West was not following me. I did not see either him or the landlord, or any one who appeared to be the least concerned about my affairs. It seemed to me Mr. Van Eyck had made out so good a case that the officer would have to commit Captain Boomsby for "breaking and entering," though he had certainly broken out rather than in.

I did not worry about what would become of my tyrant. I was satisfied that, if arrested, Mr. Buckminster would procure his release, in the morning, if not before, for there was no malice in his nature, and he would know that the captain's story was true, as the officer seemed to suspect it was. I was sorry not to see my kind friend again; but I dared not attempt to visit him, or to wait till he came to the hotel for me the next day. I had been compelled to take this decisive step, and I felt that my only safety was in flight. After I had walked a while, I saw that there was a road on the bank of the river below me. I was out of the central part of the city, and the houses were now quite scattered. I crossed to the river road, and continued to walk towards the north.

I could not help comparing my condition with what it was when I found myself on board of the steamer, after I had saved Miss Buckminster. I was neatly and comfortably clothed, with shoes on my feet, a hat on my head, and a bag in my hand. I had thirteen dollars in cash in my pocket, and, as long as I was out of Captain Boomsby's reach, it did not make much difference

to me that I was a fugitive. I had no crime on my conscience.

But I could not remain long without a purpose; and as I trudged on my way, I could not help thinking that I was headed towards Albany. I thought of the Great West — not the schooner, but the country; and very soon it was impressed upon my mind that I was GOING WEST. I had had this region in my mind when I first thought of breaking away from the cruel slavery in which I had lived from my early childhood. I was “going west,” and this idea was soon so firmly fixed in my mind that I thought no more of the events which had transpired in Newburgh. Forgetting the past, I looked forward to a bright future in the land of promise.

I had gone but a short distance after I realized that I had a new purpose, when my attention was attracted by a sail-boat which appeared to have been thrown almost out of the water, on the gravelly shore of the river. By her bow was a boy, about my own age, who seemed to be greatly perplexed, and I concluded that he had run her ashore by accident. He was very well dressed, and his face was so

white and delicate, I concluded that he was some gentleman's son. I stopped in the road to look at him for a moment, and conjecture what his trouble was, if I could. I saw him put his shoulder to the bow of the boat and try to push her off, but she was too heavy for his strength. I was out of talking distance of him, and I walked down the slope to the shore.

"What's the matter, my boy?" I asked.

"I can't get my boat off," he replied, with an anxious glance at me.

"She's almost high and dry; how did you get her so far out of the water?"

"I suppose I got frightened," he answered, with rather a sickly smile. "The wind was blowing very hard, and I thought she was going to tip over. I steered for the shore; and when the boat began to grate on the bottom, a big steamer came along, and her swash carried me up here. She stuck and I can't move her."

"If the wind blows too hard for you, why don't you let her remain where she is?" I suggested.

"It don't blow quite so hard as it did, I think; but I wish I had some one with me that knew more about a boat than I do."

“Why do you come out in a boat if you don't know how to manage her?”

“I do know how pretty well; but somehow she didn't work just right to-day. I don't think I was ever out when it blew so hard as it did half an hour ago. I have sailed the boat up and down the river a great deal, and thought I knew all about her.”

“Where do you live?”

“In that white house down the river,” he replied, pointing to an elegant mansion on the other side.

“What's your name?” I continued, perhaps with more “Down East” curiosity than I ought to have manifested.

“Ellis Dykeman. What's yours?”

“Mine's Alick Duddleton,” I replied, choosing a new short name for myself; but I was sorry a moment later that I had given my name.

“Where are you going, Alick?” he asked, apparently ready to make friends with me at once.

“Up the river,” I replied.

“Are you going on foot?” he inquired, with more interest than I thought the occasion required.

“I was going to walk till I came to a ferry.”

“You will walk a long way before you come to one, going in that direction.”

“If you want to put this craft in to the water, I’ll help you, my boy,” I added. “Between us both, I guess we can float her.”

“I was going to get her into the water, and then wait till the wind didn’t blow quite so hard as it does now,” said he, rather doubtfully, as he looked at the white caps on the river; and it seemed to have breezed up a little more since I joined him.

“It don’t blow hard at all, my lad,” I replied.

“It blows too hard for me.” he added, shaking his head. “But the tide is going out, and I want to get the boat into the water before it is any lower.”

“All right, Ellis, my hearty,” I continued, putting my bag on a rock. “Have you an anchor on board of your craft?”

“Of course I have; I wouldn’t go to sea without an anchor.”

“Go to sea! Do you call it going to sea to sail on this river?”

“It’s all the same thing.”

He threw over the anchor, and I stuck one of the flukes into the gravel, so as to prevent the boat from going adrift when she was launched.

“Is your cable fast?” I asked.

“My what?”

“Your cable, the anchor rope.”

“O! Yes.”

We placed our shoulders at the bow of the boat; but she was too much even for both of us. I found a piece of joist on the beach, and using this as a lever, I worked the boat down till her stern was afloat; and then we easily shoved her off. The shore was very bold, so that we could step into her from the dry ground; and I was the first to do so, for I wanted to examine the craft.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A GRAND EXPEDITION.

THE sail-boat was a finer craft than I had ever seen before. She was sloop-rigged, about twenty feet long, and eight feet beam — rather too large for a boy of Ellis Dykeman's strength to handle easily. Forward she had a good-sized cuddy, or cabin, in which were two berths, with regular beds all made up in them; and this seemed like a piece of nonsense to me. The standing room was rather small for a craft of her length, the space which properly belonged to it having been given to the cuddy, where it was less needed. She was lined with hard wood of different colors, and richly ornamented with brass work. I liked the shape of the boat very much, for she looked as though she would sail fast, and keep right side up.

When I had looked her over on deck and in

the standing room, I crawled into the cuddy. Though it took up so much of the boat's space, it was still not very large. Pursuing my investigations, I found this cabin was filled up in every locker and vacant space with provisions and stores. Paper bags filled with ship-biscuit, crackers, and baker's bread, bundles of beefsteak, mutton chops, fish, ham, and vegetables, were deposited in every available space. Forward of the mast were an open furnace and a keg of charcoal, which might be used on shore or on deck for cooking, but not in the cuddy without stifling the steward. On one of the berths were an overcoat and a shawl, and under it was a pair of rubber boots.

It seemed to me that the boat was provisioned for a three weeks' cruise; and I could not imagine for what purpose all these eatables were provided. The young boatman was almost within hail of his own home, and did not dare to sail her in even a tolerably stiff breeze. However, the boat was a beautiful craft, and I could not help admiring her. Small as she was, she had a little horizontal wheel for steering apparatus, which was a new thing to me, and so strange that I spent some time in examining it.

“Well how do you like her, Alick?” asked the boatman.

“First rate; nothing could be better,” I replied.

“Who owns her?”

“I do.”

“You? You mean your father.”

“No I don't. My father gave her to me last summer, as a birth-day present.”

“Do you sail her yourself?”

“Sometimes I do; but the boatman is generally with me.”

I thought so, but I did not care to undervalue his ability by saying so.

“Why do you come out without him when the wind was so fresh?” I asked.

“I didn't know it blew so hard. Don't you think it blows too hard for her now?”

“Not a bit of it! I'll sail her for you if you like,” I volunteered.

“Do you know how?”

“Do I? I'm a sailor.”

I might have added that all sailors were by no means boatmen; but I was both, for I had had considerable experience in managing sail-boats, and I believed I understood the business as well as any yachtman.

“All right, Alick; I should like to have you very much,” added Ellis, coming on board of the Seabird, for that was her name, though there is not much pickle in the Hudson above West Point.

I took off the stops of the mainsail, which were tied up in “granny knots,” and, with the assistance of Ellis, hoisted the sail. We got in the anchor, and while the boatman was stowing it forward I hoisted the jib, and got under way. The boat darted off like a race-horse, under the influence of the fresh breeze. The wind was north-west, and I let off the sheet till I had the Seabird before it. The way she spun along astonished me, for I had never handled one of these fast boats or even been in one.

“I don’t want to go this way,” said Ellis, vehemently, rising from the cuddy, where he had been stowing away the anchor.

“Didn’t you say that white house was your father’s?” I asked, pointing to the mansion on the other side and down the river.

“That’s my house; but I don’t want to go home,” he protested warmly.

“Don’t you? Where do you want to go?”

“Up the river.”

“But, my hearty, it’s almost dark, and you won’t get home till late, if you go up the river,” I remonstrated.

“I don’t care ; I want to go up the river,” insisted the young boatman.

“All right, my lad. This boat is yours, and you shall go where you please in her,” I replied, putting down the helm, and hauling in the sheet.

“That’s what I want,” added Ellis Dykeman.

“I’m bound up the river.”

As the river bears a little to the eastward above Newburgh, I found I could lay a course, and still have the Seabird go tolerably free. As the wind was flawy, I held the sheet, with a turn over the cleat, in one hand, and managed the horizontal wheel with the other. I got the hang of the steering gear in a few moments, and liked it very much. It was nothing but fun to handle that craft ; and it seemed to me that I could do it all night without winking.

“She works like a top,” I said, as the boat dashed rapidly on her course up the river, the spray flying over her bows.

“She is a nice boat,” replied Ellis ; but I

suspected from his tone and manner that he did not feel quite at home in her.

It was simply lively sailing, yet to one not much accustomed to a boat, it was too exciting to be enjoyable. The Seabird jumped a little, and tossed considerable water about her forward deck; but it was nothing to what I had seen many a time off Glossenbury harbor.

“Don’t you think we are going it a little too fast?” asked Ellis, after he had watched the motion of the boat for a while.

“The faster the better,” I replied, with a laugh.

“She was doing it this way when I ran up to the shore,” he added, rather timidly.

“She is going along first rate: she couldn’t do any better.”

“But she is so uneasy, and jerks so! And see what a lot of water is pouring over her!”

“That’s nothing: every good boat picks up some water when she is on the wind, or nearly so,” I explained. “I shouldn’t ask for anything better than this.”

“You say you are a sailor?”

“Of course, I am; I have been out of sight of land most of the time for the last week.”

“All right; go ahead. I suppose if you can stand it, I can.”

“This is nothing but baby-sailing, Ellis. If you are going to run the Seabird, you mustn't mind anything of this sort. Your boat will stand twice as much weather as she is getting now. She is a good sea-boat, too, and won't make much of a row in a heavy swell.”

“She's a life-boat,” added the boatman.

“How's that?”

“She has five copper air-tanks, so that she would not sink with six men in her, if she were full of water.”

“Then I should be willing to cross the ocean in her. I shouldn't care if it was a little damp, as long as I had something under me to stand on.”

“You can't sink her.”

“I shall not try. She is the prettiest boat, by all odds, that I ever handled,” I replied, though that was not saying much. “You are bound up the river, Ellis; but where are you going?”

“To Albany,” replied he decidedly; and I realized that my talk had fully reassured him in regard to the boat.

“To Albany? Do you mean so?”

“Of course I do.”

“Did you intend to run this boat to Albany yourself?” I asked, amazed at the imprudence of the boy, when he was afraid of a white cap, or the easy jumping of the boat.

“I did; but I intended to anchor or lay up at the side of the river when it blew as hard as it does now.”

“You are a rough old salt,” I added, laughing.

“Perhaps I am; but I’m glad I fell in with you. I think you are a first-rate sailor.”

“Thank you, Ellis. A fellow needn’t be very salt to handle a boat on this river.”

“I’m not going to stop on this river.”

“I should have thought a bold fellow like you would go the other way, and head your craft out to sea.”

“The salt water don’t suit me very well. I’ve been studying geography this last winter, and when I had to tell my tutor how a boat could go from New York city to Chicago, I wanted to try it myself; and I am going to do so.”

“Do you mean that you are going to Chicago in this boat?” I asked, confounded by the enterprise of the young boatman.

“I’m going to try it, any how.”

“Which way are you going?”

“Through Erie Canal, to Lake Erie, and by the great lakes the rest of the way,” he replied, coolly.

It seemed to me that Ellis Dykeman was a juvenile lunatic. I was afraid the study of geography had turned his brain. But I remembered that I had imagined just such a voyage myself while I was studying geography. I had thought that I should like to go in a boat from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, through the rivers, lakes, and canals to the Gulf of Mexico; but the idea had never entered my head except as a kind of vision, a freak of the imagination.

“How long will it take you to go to Chicago?” I asked.

“I don’t know; all summer, I suppose. I started in the spring, so as to have time enough for it,” answered Ellis, in a matter-of-fact tone, as though the project was entirely real to him.

It was evident that he was “going west” as

well as myself; and as I had plenty of time to spare, the idea of accompanying him was delightful. But the scheme appeared to be too wild to be real, and it did not seem to me that his parents could consent to such an expedition, especially as the boy was anything but a skillful boatman.

“What does your mother say to this voyage?” I asked, carefully approaching the delicate subject, for by this time I began to suspect that there were two runaways on board of the Seabird, instead of one.

“I haven’t any mother,” he replied, rather stiffly, as though he comprehended the leading of my question. “My mother died six years ago.”

“Well, what does your father say?” I persisted.

“He don’t care; he don’t say anything.”

“Does he know about it?”

Ellis bit his lip, and looked vexed at the inquiry.

“He don’t care what I do.”

“Don’t he? Honor bright, Ellis, does he know you are bound to Chicago, by the canal and great lakes?”

“No, he don’t,” he replied, sharply, as though he felt above a lie.

“Then you are running away from home,” I suggested, mildly.

“I don’t know that I am running away. My father don’t care where I go; he lets me go anywhere I please,” replied Ellis, pouting like a school-girl.

“This won’t do, my hearty,” I added, putting the helm hard up, and easing off the sheet.

“What are you about, Alick?” demanded the young boatman, when the boat had come about, and was headed down the river.

“I am going to take you back to your father’s house, for I don’t help any young fellow, who has a good home, to run away from his parents,” I answered, virtuously.

One runaway taking another back to his father’s house! It was rather odd, but such was the truth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ANXIOUS FATHER.

“ I DON'T want to go home, Alick,” said Ellis Dykeman, very decidedly. “ I'm not a baby.”

“ I don't think you are, my hearty ; on the contrary, I believe you have pluck and enterprise enough for a full-grown man.”

“ What do you want to take me home for, then ? ”

“ Keep cool, Ellis, and we'll talk it over.”

“ I'm cool enough ; but you are not going to take me home,” protested he.

“ Now, perhaps I am ; ” I replied, laughing.

“ It's mean, if you do.”

“ It would be mean if I didn't.”

“ I was a fool to tell you what I was about.”

“ That may be. Now, let us look at it. It would be mean for you to run away, Ellis.”

“I don't think so; I'm able to take care of myself.”

“Very likely you are; but you will find taking care of yourself is a different thing from what you think it is. You live in that fine house, you showed me — don't you?”

“Of course, I do,” he answered, rather groutily, but apparently interested in what I was saying, in spite of himself.

“Very likely you have a nice room in that house.”

“I have two; one to sleep in, and the other for a play-room, when I can't go out.”

“You have enough to eat and drink, I suppose?”

“Enough to eat and drink? I guess my father lives as well as any body in this country!”

“And you sit at the table with him?”

“To be sure, I do.”

“Who looks out for you at home, if you have no mother?”

“I look out for myself. We have a house-keeper, but she has to do what I tell her, or she'll catch it.”

“Then she uses you well.”

“Yes; and I like her very well. She lets

me do what I please, and I don't find any fault with her. I used to go to school in the city, but now I have a tutor."

"Then I think you must be an only child."

"No, I'm not. I have two sisters, but they are younger than I am."

"And your father gives you every thing you want, even to a handsome boat like this?"

"Yes; and I have a nice row-boat, a pony and a phaeton. My father has a steam yacht which I can have when I like. I suppose I can get any thing I want."

"Your father must have piles of money," I added.

"I suppose he has: he has retired from business."

"Does he lick you?"

"Lick me?"

"Flog you, whip you?"

"My father?" he queried, giving me a look of blank astonishment.

"Yes; does he, or any body, flog you?"

"My father never whipped me in his life, and I'm sure he would never let any body do so."

“You don’t look like a boy that has been abused.”

“Of course I’m not abused, and never was.”

“Then what do you want to run away for?” I asked, with energy; and it seemed to me the absurdest thing in the world, that he should wish to leave such a home as he described.

“I want to take the trip I told you about,” he replied, as if this were a satisfactory explanation of his conduct.”

“Don’t you think your father will worry about you to-night, if you don’t come home!”

“I don’t know; I didn’t think of that. My father don’t care what I do.”

“If he don’t, I would not run away.”

“I want to go west.”

“Going west in that way isn’t the thing, Ellis. I wondered why you had such a quantity of stores on board of the Seabird.”

“I bought them over at Newburgh this afternoon. I didn’t know but it might take me a week to get up to Albany. It is about eighty miles, you know.”

“What were you going to do with all that beefsteak, ham, mutton-chop, and other provision?”

“ I must have something to eat.”

“ Do you know how to cook them ? ”

“ I never did cook any, but I know I could do it. Our boatman used to cook for us when we went out with parties, and I’ve seen him do it enough to know how it’s done.”

“ But how were you going to get through the canal ? It must be over three hundred miles long.”

“ It’s three hundred and sixty-three,” added Ellis, who had evidently learned some of his geography very well.

“ That’s a long trip. How were you going to make it ? ”

“ I don’t know ; but I can find a way.”

“ You have to pay for going through.”

“ I’ve got plenty of money, and it would be first-rate fun to go through the country in this way.”

I did not doubt it, but I thought it would be the kindest thing in the world for me to return this enterprising boy to his father. The Sea-bird flew so rapidly before the wind that by this time we were off Newburgh, and but a short distance from the elegant mansion on the opposite side of the river. Very much to my

surprise, Ellis made no further objection to returning home. Whether he was afraid of the boat, or thought it useless to resist so stout a fellow as I was, I don't know; but in a few moments more, I rounded up at the pier in front of Mr. Dykeman's house, and leaped ashore with the painter in my hand.

"There is my father in the steam yacht," said Ellis, pointing to a beautiful little screw steamer, which was approaching the wharf.

I dropped the Seabird astern, so that the steam yacht could come up at the pier; but Ellis kept his place in the stern.

"What are you going to do now, my lad?" I asked.

"I'm not going to do anything," he replied, moodily. "The game seems to be all up with me, and you have spoiled my fun."

It was nearly dark, and I would have left my charge, if I had not been afraid he would start again in the boat before his father landed. To my mind, running away from such a home as the mansion on the shore was an awful thing. Presently, the steam yacht touched the wharf, and a well dressed gentleman of forty leaped briskly upon it.

“ Ah, Ellie, been out sailing? ” said he, walking over to the side of the pier where I was holding the painter of the Seabird.

“ I’ve been up the river a little way,” replied the young man, coolly.

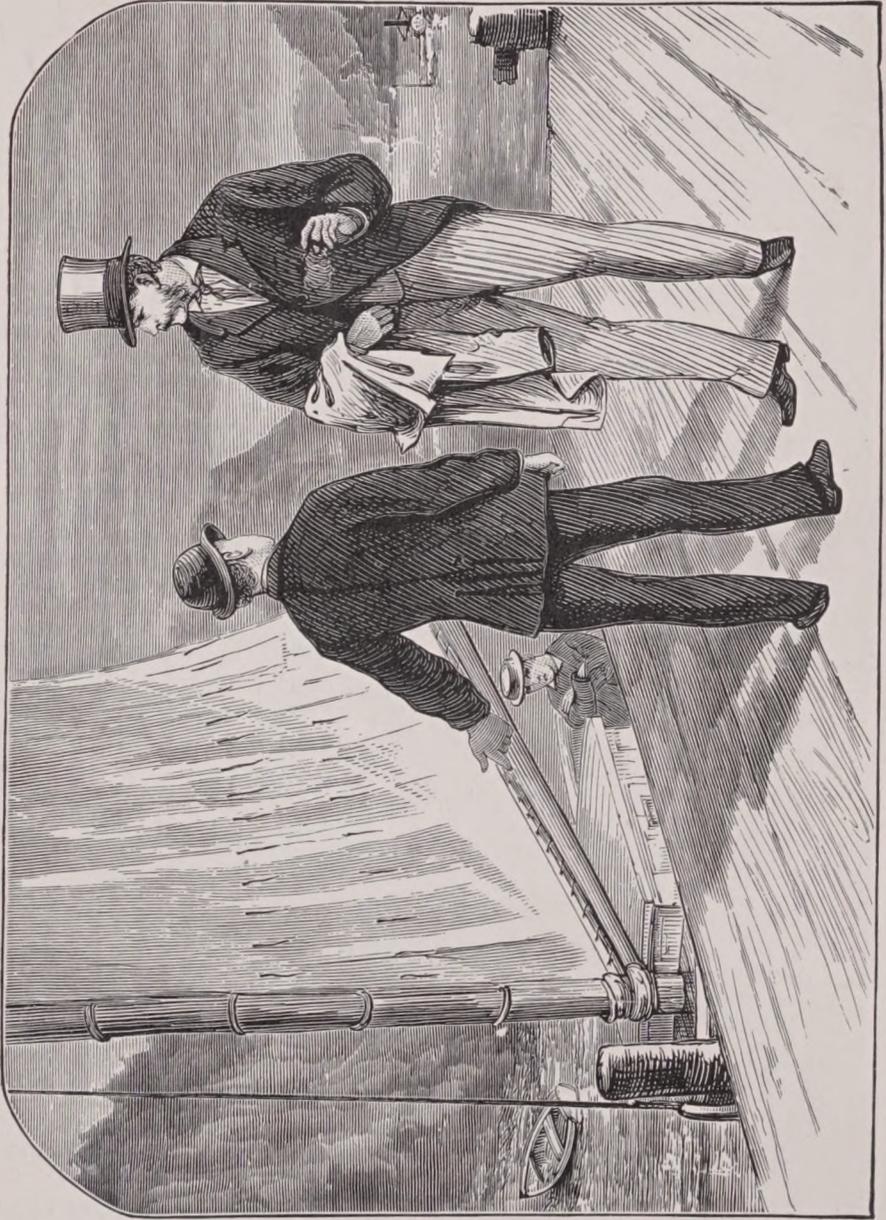
“ It blows rather too hard for you to go out without the boatman, my son,” added Mr. Dykeman. “ Who is this young man with you, Ellie? Why don’t you introduce him? ”

“ I picked him up on the other side of the river,” answered Ellis, still coldly; and he did not seem to be well disposed towards me.

“ I don’t know whether he picked me up, or I picked him up,” I interposed, laughing. “ I found him with his boat nearly high and dry just above Newburgh, and I helped him off with her. If you don’t object, I’ll introduce myself. My name is Alick.”

“ Glad to see you, Alick,” added Mr. Dykeman, heartily, and with a generous flow of good nature.

“ It blew rather fresh, and Ellis was somewhat afraid of the boat. He said he was going up the river, and I run her for him, till he told me he was going to run away.”



“ELLIE!” EJACULATED THE ANXIOUS FATHER. Page 273.

“Run away! Ellie run away!” exclaimed the father, laughing very heartily.

“That’s what he was about,” I continued. “He didn’t find any fault with his home, or any body about it; but he was going to run away. I thought you might worry about him, and so I brought him back.”

“I’m sorry you took so much trouble about the matter, Alick,” laughed Mr. Dykeman.

“He had planned a long trip,” I added, taken all aback by his answer. “He was going to Chicago by the Erie Canal and the great lakes.”

“Ellie?” ejaculated the anxious father.

“That was the plan.”

“Is it possible that my son got up such an enterprise as that?” added Mr. Dykeman, who seemed to be delighted with the intelligence, and not at all angry or grieved that his son had attempted to run away.

“It’s a fact, sir; and if you will look into his boat, you will find that she is provisioned for a three weeks’ cruise,” I continued, utterly amazed at the conduct of the father, and wholly unable to understand him.

Mr. Dykeman stepped into the boat, looked into the cabin and lockers, and then seated himself in the standing room opposite his hopeful son.

“Capital, Ellie!” exclaimed he. “You are a boy after my own heart. I am sure, now, there is some enterprise in you.”

“I only wanted to follow up one of my geography lessons,” added Ellis.

“That is right! I like to see boys reduce theory to practice.”

“Well, sir; I’m sorry I meddled with the young gentleman,” I interposed, sheepishly.

“So am I,” laughed the father. “But you meant just right, and I thank you all the same.”

This was some consolation, but not much. It seemed to me incredible, that a wealthy gentleman should be willing his son should run away, and even commend him for doing it.

“It don’t hurt boys to rough it; and if my son had got to Chicago in this boat, I should have been proud of him,” added Mr. Dykeman.

“I don’t think there was any more chance of his getting there, than there was of his

getting to London on the same tack. He doesn't know much about a boat."

"Experience would teach him," replied the father, rubbing his hands. "He can't upset this boat, and he would be safe in her even in the middle of Lake Erie. The boy has pluck and enterprise, and I have some hope of him now. I was always afraid I should spoil him by too much indulgence; and I am really glad to see him strike out for himself. He will make something one of these days."

"I didn't think you would like to have him run away," I suggested. "I didn't know but you would worry about him."

"Certainly I would rather know where he is; and I think he would have written to me within a few days."

"That's what I meant to do, father," added Ellis, taking from the stern locker a portfolio, which he opened, exhibiting paper and envelopes. "I thought I should have to send to you for more money."

"That's it! Don't you see how thoughtful the boy is, Alick?" chuckled this strange parent. "I should have sent him all the money he wanted to carry out his enterprise. Ellie

is a good boy, and he would not have let me worry long. But I'm very much obliged to you, Alick; and, perhaps, after all, its better as it is."

It seemed to me that it was a good deal better; but I doubted whether I should feel like doing my own thinking after this event.

"I always said if a boy of mine wanted to run away, I should let him run," continued Mr. Dykeman, chuckling all the time, as though he enjoyed the situation exceedingly. "If he found any thing that suited him better than my home, I was willing he should have the benefit of it. I wouldn't run after him, as a man over at Newburgh is doing."

"Who's that, sir?" I asked, not a little alarmed.

"I don't remember his name, but he called the boy Sandy. He followed the runaway up the river, and found him at Van Eyck's hotel."

"Did he catch him, father?" asked Ellis, interested in the story.

"No, he didn't; the boy was too much for him," laughed Mr. Dykeman. "When the man got into the room, the boy jumped out the window on the roof of the piazza, and then

got down into the street. The man leaped out the window after him, but the flimzy piazza broke down and let him through."

"The man?" queried Ellis.

"Yes; the boy was all right by this time. Van Eyck accused the man of breaking and entering, and trying to rob the boy of some money he had; and the constable took the man up and put him in the lock-up."

The rich man gave way to a fit of laughter, so much was he amused at the mishap of Captain Boomsby.

"Is he in the lock-up now?" I asked.

"No; it seems that Mr. Buckminster, for some reason or other, got him out. I wouldn't have done it, and I hope the boy will get off. He has pluck enough to make a man of himself. If that boy comes in my way, I'll help him along."

"So will I, father!" exclaimed Ellis.

I felt grateful for their sympathy, but I did not deem it prudent to declare myself. If the captain and Mr. Buckminster were both on the lookout for me, it was hardly safe for me to go to the station and take the train for Albany, as I had thought of doing.

CHAPTER XXV.

UP THE HUDSON.

MR. DYKEMAN continued to laugh heartily at the misfortune of my late tyrant, as he discussed the event of the afternoon at the hotel. But Ellis was soon tired of the story.

“I’m not going to back out, father!” exclaimed he, suddenly. “I’m bound for Chicago.”

“Bravo, my son!” added Mr. Dykeman, clapping his hands with delight.

“I’ve made up my mind to go, and I’m going.”

“Capital, Ellie! You’ll be a man one of these days.”

“I don’t believe I shall be wrecked on the canal,” added the young boatman, beginning to bustle about his craft, as though he meant business.

“And it will be fine on the lakes at this sea-

son of the year," said the father, taking himself out of the Seabird, as he did not intend to be a passenger in her, and as though he were ready and entirely willing that his son should start at once on his long and perilous journey. "How much money have you, Ellie?"

"About fifteen dollars, I think. I haven't counted it since I bought my stores," replied the boatman.

"That won't do; you need more than that."

"I was going to send for more when I got to Albany."

Mr. Dykeman handed him a roll of bills, which Ellis put in his wallet without counting. The anxious father asked no questions and gave no directions. The only faith he had, or seemed to desire, was that the boat would not sink if she was upset by a squall.

"I'm all right now, father," said Ellis.

"Well, good by, my boy. Let me hear from you every day, if you can, for I shall be anxious to learn how you are getting on."

"I'll try to write every day, father. I shall certainly do so when I get short of money," answered Ellis, lightly. "Come, Alick!"

“Am I to go with you?” I inquired.

“You needn’t go if you don’t want to,” replied the boatman, very independently, I thought, for a fellow who knew so little about a boat as he did. “I thought you said you wanted to go to Albany?”

“I did; I should like to go.”

“Come along, then.”

“Go with him, if you can, Alick, for you seem to be used to handling a boat,” said Mr. Dykeman to me, in a low tone. “Take good care of him, and I’ll pay you well for your trouble. He will want to come home in two or three days, at the most.”

I made no reply, though I thought the gentleman had some original ideas about the management of boys. After his last remark to me, I came to the conclusion that he was not entirely wanting in parental love, and it was possible he understood the character and temperament of his own son better than any other person could. I stepped into the boat. The jib had been lowered, but the mainsail was still set.

“Well, skipper, I’m under your orders, and I

will do what you say," I continued, presenting myself before the boatman.

"I'll steer, myself," he replied, grasping the main sheet. "You may hoist the jib."

I passed the painter over the eye of a ring-bolt in the pier, and run up the jib. Casting her loose, I went into the standing room, and hauled aft the jib sheet. The fresh breeze caught the sails, and as Ellis had trimmed the mainsail altogether too flat, or had let her off too much, the first puff knocked the boat down till a bucketfull of water came in over the wash-board.

"Be careful, Ellie!" shouted Mr. Dykeman, as he observed this careless management.

I saw that the skipper was startled, for he was not used to this sort of thing; but he did not seem to know what to do.

"Luff her up, Ellis," I said to him.

Instead of luffing, he put the helm up, which made the matter a great deal worse. He evidently did not know what I meant by luffing her up, and turned the wheel the wrong way. Another flaw struck her, and, I verily believe she would have gone over, if I had not cast off the main sheet, and let the sail run out.

“ You take the helm — will you, Alick ? ” said he, almost choking with terror.

“ You are all right now, my boy, ” I answered, still holding the sheet. “ Luff her up ; put the helm down ! The other way. ”

“ She'll upset ! I don't understand it, ” pleaded he.

“ You'll do now ; sit down, and run for the steeple of that church on the hill. Don't let your father think you don't know what you are about. ”

I hauled in the sheet, as he shifted the helm, till the Seabird was close hauled on the starboard tack.

“ I don't know what I'm about, whether my father thinks so, or not, ” replied Ellis, frankly but timidly. “ I never sailed the boat when there was wind enough to ruffle the water, unless the boatman was with me and told me just what to do. I never was out when it blows as hard as it does now. ”

“ What were you going to do when you got out on one of the great lakes, where the storms are worse than they are on the ocean ? ” as I had heard a sailor on the Great West say.

“ I don’t know ; I expected to learn all about it before I got to Albany. I thought I should hire a man to sail me on the lakes,” replied the boatman. “ I think you had better take the wheel, Alick.”

“ Don’t you be scared, Ellis. You can’t upset her if you try, while I have this sheet in my hand,” I answered, encouragingly.

“ I’m afraid of her.”

“ Don’t give it up till you are out of sight of your father.”

A sharp flaw had struck her again, and she tilted far over to leeward ; but I eased off the sheet and let her up.

“ I’ve had enough of it, Alick ! ” he exclaimed, rising to give me the wheel.

“ Don’t you see she’s all right now ? ” I added, hauling in the sheet till the sails filled again. “ You can’t learn how to do it if you don’t try ; and this is the right time to get the hang of her.”

“ I would rather learn when it don’t blow as hard as it does now. It’s a great deal worse than it was when we came down,” pleaded Ellis.

“ Do take the wheel, Alick.”

“Don't let your father think you are a baby; he's looking at you.”

“I don't care if he is. I can't handle her when it blows as it does now.”

“Try once more, and if you don't do better this time I will relieve you. You don't mind your helm, Ellis, half close enough. You let her fall off eight points from the course I gave you. Where is that steeple now?”

“I forgot all about the steeple.”

“You might as well forget to breathe, as forget what your course is in a boat. She has fallen off so much now that you can't fetch the steeple. Run for that house with a cupola, on the hill. Keep your eye on it all the time. Don't lose sight of it for an instant. That's the way to do things in this world. She will jump a little when you bring her up to it, but that won't hurt any thing. Now mind your eye!”

I trimmed the mainsail, and the Seabird went along very well. As Ellis said, the breeze had freshened considerably, but it was nonsense to reef on a life-boat. The boatman kept his eye on the house I had designated, and I soon found

that he was an apt scholar. When he knew what to do, he was able to do it. The boat jumped, and tossed the spray over her fore-castle, but no harm came to her, and she did not offer to heel over unreasonably while she was well steered. As she was going along so well, I made fast the main sheet to the cleat on the boom, where it was always within my reach.

“ You are doing first rate, Ellis,” I said, as we were nearing the Newburgh side of the river.

“ But she tips so when the flaws come ! ”

“ Never mind that ; keep your eye on the house.”

“ I do ; I am headed right for the cupola. Now she tips.”

“ Not much ; she is safe enough till the water comes in over the washboard. When the liquid pours into the boat, it is about time something was done.”

“ I should think it was ! ” exclaimed the boatman. “ And you have fastened the sheet ! ”

“ You can cure the tipping without touching the sheet, my lad. When you think she is going over farther than feels good to you, just

touch her up a little, and you will be all right."

"Do what?"

"Touch her up; that is, put your helm down about half a spoke; not too much, or you will cramp or throttle her."

"I don't understand what you mean. There! She is tipping more than I like now!"

"Pull the wheel towards you, just a little—not too much."

"Half a spoke; that's it."

The hull of the boat immediately came up, and the sail began to quiver slightly near the mast.

"Well, now, that's odd," said Ellis, with a smile. "I never knew how to do that before."

"Mind your helm! Let her off again! When you do that, you must be careful to let her off as soon as the flaw eases up, or you'll broach her too and have all your sails shaking. But it's about time to go in stays."

"Go in what?"

"In stays; to go about on the other tack."

"How shall I do it? I'm afraid I shall upset her."

“No, you won’t. Give her a good full; push the wheel from you one spoke.”

She got a good full and began to heel down to an extent which was trying to the nerves of the untrained boatman.

“Now you are all right! Hard down your helm, Ellie! Pull the wheel towards you!”

The effect of this movement of the horizontal wheel was to crowd the tiller over to leeward; and as soon as it was done, the jib and mainsail began to shake and bang furiously. But the Seabird worked very lively in that breeze, and in an instant the sails began to draw on the other side.

“Meet her with the helm, my lad,” I called, as I cast off the weather and hauled on the lee jib sheet. “Go the other side of the wheel, and draw the spokes towards you. Lively, or you will get a big tip.”

She got it, anyway, for Ellis did not shift the helm at just the right moment.

“She’s going over!” cried he.

“No she isn’t, Ellie. Let off the wheel a spoke. That’s it! Now she rights!”

“I thought she was going over,” said he drawing a long breath.

“ You musn’t think so. When the water begins to come in over the board, I can ease her off in a second, with the sheet. Don’t keep her up too close ; you cramp her so that she don’t go ahead. You must learn to handle her by the feeling, just as you do your pony.”

“ It takes about all my strength to hold this wheel,” added Ellis.

“ That’s a good sign ; she carries a strong weather helm, as she ought. Do you know what that is ? ”

“ I’m sure I don’t.”

“ I’ll tell you. You have to pull on the wheel to keep it in place — don’t you ? ”

“ I’ll bet I do ! I have to pull hard.”

“ If you should let go, which way would the wheel turn ? ”

“ Right away from me.”

“ That is, the tiller would go down to leeward. The boat has a tendency to come up into the wind and spill the wind out of the sail. When a vessel carries a weather helm, the tiller has to be kept a little up towards the weather side. Now if the boat tips too much, you have only to let the wheel turn a spoke, or less, and

then the wind won't bear so hard on the sail. You should steer by the feeling; and when you are used to it, you can keep her going all right with your eyes shut."

"I see it now," replied Ellis; and for the next half hour, while the boat was on the port tack, he steered very well.

I watched him with interest all the time, but when it was almost dark, I suggested that it was supper time. The skipper of the Seabird was of the same mind, and I ran the boat up to one of the bold shores where we could easily land. We were not more than three miles above Fishkill, and though Ellis proposed to stay here all night, for reasons of my own, which I did not care to discuss with him, I did not wish to do so.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN THE NIGHT AND STORM.

“WHAT shall we have for supper?” asked Ellis, turning to me.

“I don’t know; you are the captain of this craft, and you ought to say,” I replied, laughing. “I know something about cooking, and I will get up any kind of a supper you wish.”

“Don’t you call me captain, or anything of that sort, when you know ten times as much about a boat as I do,” he replied, in a deprecatory tone; and I must say, that for the son of a rich father, pampered and indulged as he had been, he was very gentle to his social inferiors. “What would you like for your supper, Alick?”

“I am not very particular. A beefsteak and potatoes are about as good as anything we can have.”

“All right; they will suit me as well as anything.”

I took the furnace on the shore, while he got out the provisions. I make a fire in it, and then returned to the standing-room to pare and slice the potatoes. While I was thus engaged, Ellis brought an awning, which he proposed to spread on the boom, over the standing-room, in order, as he said, to enlarge the cabin accommodations; but I objected.

“I don’t think we want that to-night, Ellie,” I began.

“Why not?” he asked. “I had it made on purpose to put over the standing-room at night, to keep the cold and dampness out.”

“I don’t think we need it. Do you really mean to stay in this place all night?”

“Isn’t this place just as good as any other?”

“I don’t want to stay here, so near Newburgh, if it makes no difference to you,” I continued, doubtful whether it was safe to trust a mere boy with my secret.

“What odds does it make how near we are to Newburgh?” he asked, evidently very much surprised.

“It might make a great deal of difference to me. You won’t tell any one what I say to you — will you?”

“Why, what have you been doing, Alick? Have you been up to something bad?”

“Not very bad.”

“What have you done?”

“Do you remember the story your father told about the boy at Van Eyck’s hotel?”

“Of course I remember it.”

“Well, I’m the boy.”

“You?”

“I am, the very one.”

“But my father said his name was Sandy.”

“My name is Alexander; and everybody called me Sandy. Alick is also used for Alexander, and I like it better than Sandy.”

“Are you really that fellow?”

“I am, without the ghost of a doubt,” I replied, laughing at his astonishment. “Captain Boomsby and Mr. Buckminster are on the look-out for me; and the farther I get from Newburgh, the safer I shall be.”

“That’s so; but can we sail the boat in the night?”

“Just as well as in the daytime,” I answered, confidently, though I knew no more about the navigation of the Hudson than I did about that of the Polar Sea. “But you may turn in as

early as you like, Ellie, and I will keep the Seabird going all night. You have a good bed in the cuddy, and you can sleep as well there as you could at home."

"Where shall we be in the morning?" he asked, as though the idea was quite exciting to him.

"That will depend upon how hard the wind blows."

"How far, if it blows as hard as it does now?"

"What time is it?"

Of course Ellis had a watch, and he told me that it was half past seven o'clock.

"If it blows as fresh all night as it does now, we shall be within five or six miles of Albany at this time in the morning," I replied. "At this rate, we shall be there by half past eight o'clock."

"I should like that first rate," said Ellis, as he lighted the lantern and swung it to the boom. "I should like ever so much to write to my father from Albany in the morning, and tell him that I got there before nine in the forenoon. He thinks I don't amount to much, and keeps tell-

ing me I shall never make a man. I have been wanting to do some big thing for a long time, just to prove that I am not a ninny. He is always telling me what great things he did when he was a boy."

"We may not be able to get to Albany in the morning, or even by night, Ellie; but we will keep her spinning while there is any wind."

"I hope it will blow fresh all night."

"So do I, as well for my own sake as for yours. But we must hurry up the supper, for we are wasting time," I continued, as I cut off some slices from the piece of pork which Ellis had brought out of the cuddy.

In a short time I had fried the potatoes, and then I broiled the beefsteak. We ate the supper as fast as we could, for both of us were in a hurry to be moving towards our destination. The boatman declared the meal was as good as he had ever eaten at home; but I thought that hunger was the sauce which improved the cooking. Leaving the dishes to be disposed of after we got under way, I hoisted the sails and shoved off from the bank. I took the wheel, for Ellis

preferred to put away the things himself. It was now quite dark, and clouds were rising in the southward and westward. The wind had sensibly abated, and I thought from the appearance of the sky that we should have a decided change of weather. I had been to sea enough to know something about the indications, and I thought we should have a southerly storm before morning. I concluded not to say anything to my companion, for I did not care to alarm him ; and I might be mistaken.

Ellis was hard at work, putting things to rights in the cuddy. He had a very high idea of order ; and by the light of his lantern I could see that he had put everything in ship-shape condition. But his light bothered me about steering, and I had to ask him to put it out. When he had done so, he joined me in the standing room. He gaped fearfully, and I saw that the day's excitement and labor had about finished him.

“I think you had better turn in, Ellie,” I suggested, after he had gaped, yawned and stretched a few times. “I guess you are not used to much hard work.”

“No, I’m not; and I’ve been on the jump all day. I am as tired as a dog,” he answered, with a heavy yawn.

“Turn in then.”

“Turn into what?” he asked, sleepily.

“Turn into a sleeping boy; in other words, go to bed.”

“I think I will; but can’t I have a light?”

“Not a light, Ellie.”

“Why not, Alick? I’m not used to going to bed in the dark.”

“The light blinds me so that I can’t see where the shore is,” I explained. “Don’t you know that you can’t see out the window on a dark night, when you are in a light room?”

“Yes, I’ve noticed that. But, Alick, there isn’t hardly any wind now.”

“Very little.”

“I’m really sorry for that, for I would give a good deal to be able to write to my father from Albany, in the morning.”

“Perhaps you may do so yet; for, though the wind is not so strong as it was, it is shifting to the southward and westward; and we can get ahead faster with a fair wind, if it is

light, than with a head one that is strong. Go to sleep, Ellie, and I will do the best I can; and I shouldn't be at all surprised if you woke up in Albany, to-morrow morning—if you don't wake too early."

Ellis undressed himself and went to bed, like a sensible boy, just as if he had been at home. I knew that he was tired enough to sleep; and in a few minutes I heard his heavy breathing. Securing the wheel with the end of the jib-sheet, I went to the cuddy and carefully closed the doors, leaving the slide open enough to afford him proper ventilation. I was satisfied that nothing but a very wild commotion would awake him.

Having thus disposed of my companion, I was practically all alone in the boat. I knew nothing at all about the navigation of the river; but, as it was in the spring of the year, I had every reason to believe that the water was high. The Seabird was a centre-board boat, so that, if she took the ground, I could easily work her off into the deep water. I had let out the sheets several times, as the wind shifted to the southward, and I judged that it was

now blowing from the south-west. Passing a village on the right bank, I heard the clock on a church strike nine. The river was full of steamers and sloops, and I had to dodge them every few minutes; but there were not so many as there had been before dark. As I had anticipated, the wind freshened till it blew almost a gale. I had it nearly aft, and the Seabird seemed to fly before it. At one time I thought I was keeping up with a train of cars on the bank of the river, but this was an illusion, for the train was going almost at right angles with me; and when it came to move in the same direction as the Seabird, it soon shot out of sight.

I could not tell how fast the boat was going, but, judging by the rate at which I passed objects on the shore, it seemed to me that I was making eight or nine miles an hour. I went by several tug-boats, towing a score of barges and other craft. At one time I actually kept abreast of a small side-wheel steamer for more than half an hour. I had the highest opinion of the sailing qualities of the Seabird; and certainly I had seen nothing like her before

for speed. Half a dozen clocks saluted me, striking the hour of ten, when I passed a large town, which, I have since concluded, must have been Poughkeepsie. The wind blew rather more than half a gale all night; but it was fair, so that I had nothing to do but steer. I had served in the middle watch on board of the Great West, the night before; but Barnes had permitted me to sleep most of the time, so that I was quite fresh, though I had several fits of being sleepy. When these came upon me, I ate some crackers which I had saved out at supper. Eating waked me up, and I did not give out during the night.

Towards morning it began to rain, and it came down good during the rest of the trip. I was much concerned about my new clothes; but I found a rubber coat in one of the lockers, which entirely protected me. A cap with a cape kept my head and neck dry, and I suffered no discomfort from the storm.

Ellis slept as sound as a log, and I did not hear anything from him, except his snoring, till seven o'clock in the morning. At this time I

was approaching "a city set on a hill." The river was full of islands, but I followed other boats, and did not once get aground during the trip.

"What place is this?" I asked a man who was rowing a boat across the river.

"Albany," he replied, as the Seabird shot out of hailing distance of him.

"I did not know where to find the entrance to the canal, so I ran the boat into a quiet place, and let go the anchor. I lowered the jib and mainsail, and then opened the cuddy doors.

"Time to write your letter," I called to Ellie.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CAPTAIN BOOMSBY'S SPECULATION.

ELLIS DYKEMAN had slept remarkably well, for he had not waked, so far as I knew, during the night; but then I could not see any reason why he should wake. His bed was as good as any in his father's house, and though the Seabird had been flying all the time, the position of the sail had not been changed, and there was no noise except that of the pattering rain on the deck, and the swashing water against the bow.

“Time to write your letter, Ellie,” I repeated, crawling into the cuddy.

The young boatman opened his eyes and looked at me. He did not at once comprehend the situation. I took off my dripping coat and cap, and threw them out into the standing-room.

“I have slept like a log,” said my companion, rubbing his eyes.

“I think you have,” I added, laughing. “I don’t think you could have done any better, in the way of sleeping, if you had been at home. But you had better turn out and write your letter, Ellie.”

“What letter?” he asked, blankly.

“You said you wished to write to your father this morning.”

“Not till we get to Albany. Where are we now?” he inquired, jumping out of his berth, and looking through the door of the cuddy.

“We are in Albany.”

“In Albany? You don’t mean so!” exclaimed Ellis.

“I never was here before; but I asked a man what place this was, and he told me it was Albany.”

“It is Albany!” he added. “I have been here before, and I know the city by sight. How it rains!”

“It has been raining since early this morning. It is after seven now, and if you will write your letter I will take it to the post-office.”

He dressed himself, and took out his portfolio ; but he could not write till I had told him all about the voyage up the river after he retired. When his letter was ready, I put on the rubber coat and cap ; but I found it difficult to get ashore. A man who witnessed my efforts to swing the boat in to a position where I could land, advised me to take her into the canal basin ; and, following his directions, I did so. I hauled the Seabird up at a pier, near the foot of State Street.

“What shall we do about breakfast, Alick? We can't cook here,” said Ellis.

“We can take a cold bite,” I suggested.

“I don't like cold bites for breakfast,” he replied, turning up his nose. “I will go on shore with you, and we will stay at the Delavan House, to wait for fair weather.”

I did not object. I gave him the rubber coat and cap, and he produced an umbrella for my use, for I did not care to spoil my new suit. I wished to buy a pair of overalls and a cheaper coat than the one I wore ; so I took my bag with me. We went to the Delavan House, where Ellis registered his name in due

form, and called upon me to do the same. I did not think I should add to the perils of a poor boy by writing "A. Duddleton" in the book; and I did so. The clerk seemed to be a little doubtful about us; but when my ship-mate told who his father was, it was all right.

We had a famous breakfast, and I was beginning to feel quite at home, unused as I was to such princely fare and surroundings. I went to the office to inquire where the post office was, at the same time showing the letter addressed to Mr. Dykeman. The clerk took it and dropped it through an aperture in the counter. As he did so, I happened to glance at the open register before me.

To my astonishment, not to say horror, I discovered, near the top of the page, the names of Captain Boomsby and Mr. Buckminster. It did not seem to be possible that my pursuers could be in Albany; and I thought I should sink through the floor, I was so utterly confounded. I had made a very quick run up the river, and I failed to consider that the train made the same journey in three hours. I asked the clerk for my bag, which was in the office;

for the Delavan House, or even Albany, was no place for me. He declined to give me my baggage till I paid my bill; and I thought that a dollar and a quarter was a monstrous price for a breakfast; but I paid it. In going through the hall to the side-entrance of the hotel, I saw Ellis Dykeman in the reading-room.

I did not like to leave him without a word at parting; and, as there was no one else in the room that I knew, I went in. My shipmate was reading a newspaper, and he seemed to be deeply absorbed in its contents.

“Here we are, in the newspaper, Alick!” said he, with a glow of pleasure on his face.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Here is a full account of the saving from a watery grave of Miss Edith Buckminster, by a brave sailor boy.”

“What paper is that?”

“It’s a Newburgh morning paper. It says the steamer brought you to Newburgh, and Captain Boomsby, of the schooner Great West, believing the young sailor intended to run away from his guardian, followed him up the

river by train. It tells all about the row at Van Eyck's hotel; that the captain was arrested and discharged, after an explanation by Mr. Buckminster. But the sailor boy had disappeared by this time."

"I want to know if all that's in the paper!" I asked, greatly astonished at the enterprise of the reporters.

"Yes, and more too. That was as far as I had read when you came in; and I will go on with the rest of it."

I listened with breathless interest to the rest of the narrative, the substance of which was that the "bright and enterprising son of Mr. Lyman Dykeman," had started upon a pleasure excursion up the river, in his yacht, the Seabird. "Just before he started, the adventurous young navigator picked up a youth who answers to the description of the missing sailor boy, whom Mr. Buckminster and the young man's guardian are so anxious to find; and they went on to Poughkeepsie, in order to take the night express. They will be in ample season to intercept the Seabird on her arrival at Albany."

“I can’t stay to hear any more of it, Ellie,” I interposed, nervously. “Mr. Buckminster and Captain Boomsby are at this hotel now.”

“Where are you going?” demanded he.

“I don’t know; but I am going to get out of the way as fast as I can,” I replied, retreating towards the door.

“But I want you to go with me in the Sea-bird.”

“I can’t go, as things are now,” I added, edging towards the door. “I will try to join you, for I am going west.”

“Hold on, Alick! What am I to do?”

“If you can’t do any better, you can hire a man to sail your boat —”

That was as far as I got with my remark, for at this moment Captain Boomsby darkened the door through which I intended to retreat; our eyes met, but I fancied that he did not look so ugly as when I saw him last.

“Well, Sandy, here we are again,” said my tyrant, walking briskly up to me, as though he did not intend that I should give him the slip again.

It was no use for me to attempt to run away

in so public a place; and it seemed to me just as though "my pipe was out."

"Here we are, Captain Boomsby," I added, rather because it was my turn to speak, than because I had anything to say.

"I want to see you, Sandy," continued he, looking about the room, as if in search of a safe place for an interview.

"I can't say that I want to see you. Is Mr. Buckminster with you?"

"He is in the house. He was up all night, and I reckon he's turned in for a nap. We didn't expect to see you yet awhile."

He did not talk like my tyrant, and I began to think Mr. Buckminster had made some arrangement with him.

"I should like to see him," I replied.

"You shall see him by and by; but I want to talk with you first. Who's that boy?" asked the captain, glancing at my shipmate.

"He is the boy I came up with."

"Come over here and sit down, Sandy," he continued, leading the way to the farthest corner of the room.

As I was rather curious to know what he had

to say, I followed him, and sat down by his side. From his manner, I was confident that he had made a bargain with my Newburgh friend or that he intended to do so.

“Sandy, I guess we can be friends, after all,” he began, in a tone such as he had never used to me before. “It ain’t for your interest nor mine to quarrel.”

“Have you made any trade with Mr. Buckminster?” I asked, wishing to know the whole truth at once.

“No, I hain’t; but I cal’late we shall make a trade. He seems to think a heap of you, Sandy.”

“He was very kind to me,” I replied, disappointed to find that nothing had yet been done.

I shall not follow the conversation which succeeded into its details; but, as I suspected, Captain Boomsby had something on his mind. Possibly he believed I was both a knave and a fool, though he complimented me by gradually approaching the subject. It appeared that Mr. Buckminster had offered him as high as a thousand dollars in cash, if he would release me from the service I owed him; and he had

declined the offer, evidently because he thought my friend's gratitude would induce him to give more.

"Then he said, if you'd rather live with me," continued the captain, "he would do something handsome for you, every year."

Mr. Buckminster knew very well that I would not live with my tyrant if I could help it; and I could not see why he should make such a remark. I doubted whether he had said any such thing.

"I know my wife and I've been rather hard on you, Sandy; but if you'll go down to New York with me, you shall live in the cabin of the schooner, and I'll use you as well as I could use my own son," added Captain Boomsby. "At home you shall eat with the folks, and go to school all the year round, if you want to. I don't believe Mr. Buckminster'll do any better by you than I shall."

"What will he give you for using me so well?" I inquired.

"I don't know just what he'll do. I heard in Newburgh that he was a very rich man. I want to raise about three thousand dollars this

summer, and I think he'll help me to it. If you live with me; it will make it all right," he answered; and a cunning smile played upon his face.

I could not tell then what Captain Boomsby expected to accomplish through me, and I know no better now; but I realized that he expected to extort large sums of money from Mr. Buckminster on my account. Of course he did not disclose his plan to me; but he had probably come to the conclusion that the rich man's gratitude to, and interest in me would be a gold mine to him, if he worked it right. It would be easy to get money out of so liberal a man for my sake. I need not say that I did not like the plan. It seemed to me that, if Mr. Buckminster disbursed any money on my account, it should be for my benefit, not for that of my tyrant. I suspected, too, that the whole plan was a trick to get me back to the Great West.

"I'll think of it," I replied. "I want to see Mr. Buckminster."

"Well, we'll go up to his room," said the captain, rising and leading the way.

I did not wish to see my kind friend in the

presence of my tyrant. A servant was called to show us the way. On the second floor the hall was rather dark ; and, seeing a chamber door open, I thought my opportunity had come. Captain Boomsby followed the servant, and I was behind both. As we came to the room, I slipped in, and gently closed the door. A guest had probably just left the apartment, and I found the key on the inside. I locked the door, and took out the key. I had hardly accomplished this, before I heard the voice of the captain, saying that I must have gone down stairs again. He moved as though he was in a hurry.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SICK MAN.

I HAD plenty of time to think, after I had secured the door and removed the key. I had a general purpose of escaping from Captain Boomsby, but I did not think of carrying it out at once, until the open door of the chamber suggested the means of doing so. The hall was carpeted, and I was walking about three feet behind the captain. We had turned a corner near the head of the staircase, and the chamber I had chosen for my hiding-place was only four or five doors beyond this corner. What I had done was on the impulse of the moment, without any consideration of the chances of success; only I had a definite idea that my tyrant would think that I had retreated down the stairs.

What I heard in the hall convinced me that my hastily-formed plan had worked as I intended

it should. I had the room to myself, and the door was locked with the key in my hand. Probably Captain Boomsby supposed he had made an impression upon me with his liberal offer to let me live with him in the cabin of the Great West, and "eat with the folks at home," so that he did not suspect that I would attempt to escape, at least, before I had seen Mr. Buckminster. I am sure if he had had any suspicion of my purpose, he would have compelled me to walk before, instead of letting me go behind him.

How I was to get out of the hotel was a difficult problem for me to solve. If I showed myself in the halls I should be seen by somebody, and if I staid in the room I was just as likely to be discovered. I did not know what to do. In the course of the day the apartment would probably be assigned to some guest, and my hiding-place would be exposed. When I had been in the room about half an hour, as near as I could judge, I heard the voice of Captain Boomsby in the hall.

"When we were along here somewhere, he gave me the slip," said he, in an excited tone.

“You mean that you missed him here,” replied the person to whom he was speaking; and I recognized the voice of Mr. Buckminster.

“I know that he was behind me when I turned that corner, because I saw him,” added the captain. “When I got to your room, on the other side of the entry, I missed him.”

“My room is only half a dozen doors from the stairs. He must have gone down.”

“I’ve looked all about the house, and I can’t find hide nor hair of him. Nobody down below saw him come down. He may have gone up stairs instead of down.”

“I’m afraid you said something that alarmed him,” suggested Mr. Buckminster.

“No, I didn’t; not a word;” and the captain recited the tempting offer he had made me.

They passed on, so that I could not hear anything more they said. They did not suspect that I was within six feet of the spot where I was said to have disappeared. Probably Mr. Buckminster caused the house to be thoroughly searched; but I am only sure that I was not found. I was very nervous and uneasy, but I dared not leave the room. Hour after hour I

sat in a chair, or walked the room, trying to think of some way to get out of the scrape. At one time I thought of giving myself up to the captain, and taking my chances under the new order of things; but my inborn sense of honor and decency would not allow me to become the means by which Captain Boomsby was to extort money from my kind friend. Besides, I had no faith in the good intentions of my tyrant, who wanted to "raise three thousand dollars." I was afraid he would get the money, and then abuse me, as he had before. In a word, I could not trust him, and I was determined to risk everything rather than return to the Great West. Then my mind was so deeply impressed with the glories of the other Great West, that I could not abandon the thought of seeking my fortune there. I had started with the intention of going west, and I intended to carry out the purpose. I desired to go with Ellis Dykeman; but it would be adding another to the Perils of a Poor Boy to attempt to join him again; and I gave up the idea. If I could only get out of the house, I had money enough to pay my fare as far as Buffalo; and I hoped I might work my passage from there in some vessel bound up the lake.

The bed in the chamber where I had taken refuge was all made up; and probably the last guest who had occupied it had only used it to change his dress, for the towels were soiled, and the wash-bowl was half full of dirty water.

After I had been in the room several hours, I heard some one inserting a key in the lock. On the impulse of the moment, I seized my bag and crawled under the bed. The person at the door "fussed" some time with the lock, so that all was quiet when an entrance was effected. Then I remembered that I had left the key on the table; and I felt a chill of apprehension when I realized what a blunder I had made. The bed was covered with a large white spread, which effectually concealed me from the observation of the person who had invaded my retreat.

The visitor was one of the chambermaids, who had come to put the room in order. She was singing merrily at her work, and banged the bowl and pitcher as though they were the property of the hotel, and not her own. In a few minutes she finished her task there, and I heard her lock the door as she retired. I left my hiding-place, hoping she had not taken the

key from the table, for I knew she must have had one of her own, or she could not have entered the chamber. I felt another chill when I discovered that it was gone. As the matter stood now, I had to stay in the room till it was assigned to a guest, or ring the bell, and surrender at discretion. For hours I could not make up my mind to face either of these alternatives, and I hoped that some chance would favor my escape.

The only window in the room opened into a large area, between the wings of the house. The blinds were closed, but I opened them a crack, and judged by the sun that it was about four o'clock in the afternoon. Though I had eaten a heavy breakfast, I was in condition to do justice to a dinner. I had plenty of money in my pocket, but I felt as much like a poor boy as ever, for it would not procure me the meal I needed.

While I was thinking of it, I heard voices in the entry, and a key was inserted in the door. I was not yet ready to give up the battle, and I crawled under the bed again. My worst fear seemed to be realized, for the room

was assigned to a guest. I stretched myself on the floor, and was careful not to breathe so as to be heard by the invaders, as I regarded them.

“I’m very sick,” said the guest, as I judged him to be, in a feeble tone.

“Can I do anything for you, sir?” asked the waiter.

“No; I only want rest now. I’m afraid I shan’t live to get home,” added the stranger, with a gasp and a groan.

“Won’t you have a doctor, sir?”

“Doctors can’t do nothing more for me. I’m going to stop over one train; but I must start again about one o’clock to-night,” continued the traveller, in a kind of hoarse whisper which appalled me. “Night and day are all the same to me.”

“Shall I send any one up to see you, or get you anything?” inquired the waiter.

“No; I don’t want anything but rest. You may leave me, and have me called in time for the train.”

I heard the waiter depart, and the sick man locked the door after him. Then he undressed

himself and went to bed. I hoped he would go to sleep, and afford me an opportunity to escape. He groaned and breathed heavily, and I was afraid he would die in the bed above me. Hour after hour I listened to his moaning and his long-drawn sighs, till the room was dark. Then he seemed to grow much worse, and my blood ran cold in my veins. I heard him trying to get out of the bed, as I thought.

“O, dear; I must die here all alone!” he cried; and I heard something like a sob.

Whatever became of me, I could stand this no longer. My pity for the sufferer overcame my fears, and, as cautiously as I could, I crawled out at the foot of the bed from my retreat. It was too dark for him to see me, and I moved so carefully that I was confident he did not hear me.

“How do you feel?” I asked, placing myself near the head of the bed.

“I’m almost gone,” he replied, with difficulty.

I lighted the gas; but the sick man did not seem to be surprised at my presence in the room.

“Can I do anything for you?” I added.

“Yes: open my valise,” said he, unable to say anything more.

The valise was locked; but I fished his pockets till I found a bunch of keys, one of which fitted the lock. On the clothes was a vial and a teaspoon.

“Is this what you want?” I asked, holding up the vial.

“Yes; twenty drops in water,” he replied, with a gasp.

I dropped the medicine into a glass, and put a little water with it. He swallowed the dose. It must have been a powerful remedy, for in ten minutes he was better. He ceased to groan and gasp; and I wondered why he had not taken the medicine before. He did not look like a very sick man; he was pale, but not much emaciated.

“You have saved me,” said he. “I never was so bad before that I couldn’t get up to take my medicine.”

“I think you are too sick to travel,” I added.

“I have been sick a year, and the doctors say I can’t get over it. I want to get home.”

“Where do you live?”

“In Michigan, twenty miles from Detroit,” he groaned. “You may give me another dose of that medicine; I feel it again.”

I complied with his request, and in a little while he was better again. By his watch, that hung on the bureau, I saw that it was nine o'clock. On his valise was the name of “Amos Brickland.”

“Why didn't you take your medicine before, if it does you so much good, Mr. Brickland?” I asked, using the name on the valise.

“I don't like to take it unless I'm obliged to, for the stuff has a bad effect on me afterwards,” he replied. “It always helps me right off; but sometimes it makes me almost crazy. I put it off too long this time.”

We talked for an hour. He told me all about his sickness and his business. He was a man of forty, and had a farm; but he had been unfortunate in some speculation, and had been obliged to mortgage his property. He had been to the east to see his friends and obtain relief, but without success. He was going home to die; and he wept as he added that he did not know what would become of his family after he was

gone. This confidence induced me to tell my own story in full.

“Come with me. I want some one to work on the farm. I will pay your fare,” said he.

The result of this interview was that we exchanged hats, and I put on his shawl, when the porter called him at midnight. In this guise I left the house without being challenged by any one, for the reason that a different set of men were on duty in the hotel. We took a sleeping-car; and when I awoke the next morning I realized that I was actually going west.

CHAPTER XXIX.

GOING WEST.

“How do you feel this morning, Mr. Brickland?” I asked, when I saw that he was awake.

“Very badly,” he replied. “I have passed a terrible night. That medicine made me feel horribly. It affects my head.”

While he was telling me about it, the train stopped at Syracuse. He knew that I had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, and he gave me a dollar to pay for my breakfast. The proprietor of the restaurant did not make anything out of me, for I ate my dollar's worth, and felt like a new man.

When the train started again, Mr. Brickland was suffering intensely with what he called “the strange feelings in his head.” We arrived at Buffalo about one, and he declared that he could

go no farther that day. He had a relative in the city, to whose house we went. The invalid immediately became much worse; and it was three weeks before he was able to leave his chamber. I assisted in taking care of him, and worked part of the time with Mr. Brickland's relative, who was a carpenter. I am sure that I earned my board. The invalid's wife was sent for; and when she arrived I had nothing more to do in the sick-room.

The carpenter was so well pleased with my work, that he offered to give me three dollars a week, besides my board, to learn the trade. I thought I could do better in the great west, and I had agreed to work for Mr. Brickland.

One day, as I was walking along the bank of the canal, on my way home from work, I was not a little surprised to see a sail-boat, drawn by a very small specimen of a horse. I was surprised, because I promptly recognized in her the Seabird. Her mast had been taken out and lashed to the deck, while a short pole was inserted in the mast-hole, to which the tow-line was attached. A boy of fourteen was driving the horse, and Ellie was steering the boat.

“Halloo, Ellie!” I shouted, when I was abreast of the Seabird.

He looked at me, but did not seem to know me. I wore a palmleaf hat, a pair of overalls, and a thin sack, which doubtless changed my appearance very much.

“Who are you?” demanded he, apparently offended at my familiarity.

“Don’t you know me, Ellie?” I replied, taking off my hat.

“Is it Alick?” he asked.

“Yes, of course it is.”

He called to his driver to stop the horse, and ran the boat up to the tow-path, so that I could jump on board.

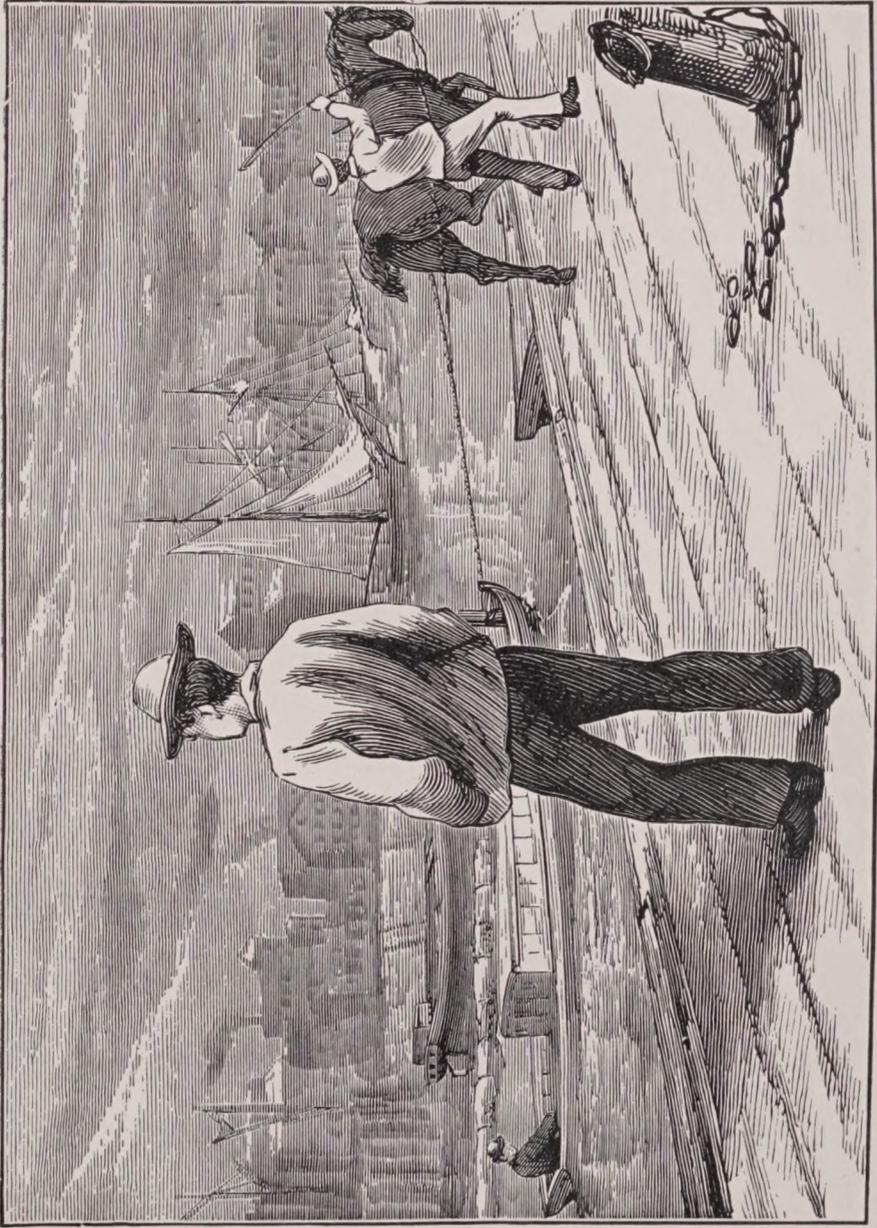
“How are you, Ellie?” I cried, seizing him by the hand. “I no more expected to see you out here than I expected to see the Emperor of China.”

“You knew I was coming through the canal to Buffalo,” he replied.

“I had my doubts about your patience holding out long enough for you to get through.”

“Here I am, any how.”

“I’m glad to see you, Ellie. You had lots of pluck to get through.”



“HALLOO, ELLIE!” I shouted. Page 326.

“Of course I had. I intended to come through, and I’ve done it. I wrote every day to my father, and have had several letters from him. He kept hinting in them that I had better come home; but I wrote him that I didn’t intend to back out.”

“Don’t you write him that you have seen me—will you, Ellie?” I continued, almost regretting that I had made myself known.

“He was real sorry that he told anybody in Newburgh about you; but he didn’t know who you were then. If I should write to him about you, he wouldn’t say a word to any one.”

“I don’t know whether any one chased me or not, but I haven’t seen or heard a thing from Mr. Buckminster since I left you that morning at the hotel.”

“You fooled them nicely, Alick,” laughed Ellie. “How did you do it?”

Before I began my story, he started up the horse, and when I had finished it, the Seabird had reached Buffalo Harbor. The horse was then sent to a stable, and I seated myself in the standing-room with Ellie.

“Mr. Buckminster called in the police, and

searched the city of Albany all over for you," said he. "They looked for you all that day and all the next day. But Captain Boomsby had to go back to New York that night; and he was the ugliest man I ever saw when he left the hotel. He declared that Mr. Buckminster must know where you were, for you could not have got off without some help."

"That's just like him," I added. "He bites a friend as quick as a foe."

"The captain said he would find you, if he had to look the whole world over after you."

"I hope he will have a good time looking the world over," I replied, laughing. "Now, how did you get through the canal, Ellie?"

"O, I had a first-rate time, and I only wished you were with me. I had to steer all the way myself."

"What little horse is that you had?"

"My horse," he replied, with dignity.

"Where did you get him?"

"I bought him, of course. When I told Mr. Buckminster what I was going to do, the day after Captain Boomsby left, he helped me. He knew the canal people, and did all the business

for me. I paid my bills, bought the pony, and hired the boy."

"What did you give for the horse?"

"Thirty dollars," laughed he. "He isn't good for much; but we made from twenty to forty miles a day with him. The poor brute had been starved; but I gave him all the grain he could eat, and that made him as lively as a grasshopper on the tow-path."

"What did you do with him nights?"

"Sent him to the best stable I could find. We kept agoing as long as we pleased, and stopped at the large towns. I went to the best hotels myself, and let the boy shift for himself, for I paid him a dollar and a half a day, and he 'found himself.' I'll tell you what it is, Alick, I enjoyed it awfully; and if you had only been with me, I should have been as happy as a king."

"It wasn't safe for me to show myself."

"I think that Boomsby was a villain."

"He was all of that."

"But now, Alick, you must go with me up this lake," added Ellie.

"I don't know as I can."

“You must!” exclaimed Ellie, with energy, “I don’t know of anybody that can sail a boat as well as you can, Alick. You beat our boatman all to pieces. At first, Mr. Buckminster wouldn’t believe that we came up the Hudson in the boat, when I told him about it, and said it blowed a gale all night.”

“It did blow hard; but the Seabird is the best boat I ever sailed. She is as stiff as the Great West; and I wouldn’t mind going out in any weather in her,” I replied, saying no more than I believed to be true. “I should be very glad to go with you, Ellie; and I will if I can.”

“You must go, Alick. I can’t get anybody that I am willing to trust out here; and you know how well I understand about a boat; I could get along first rate in the canal. You must go!”

“Must is a big word, Ellie. Mr. Brickland is going to start for Detroit in a few days, and perhaps he will be willing that I should go with you as far as that. I will talk with him about it to-night.”

“I will pay you, Alick, and be ever so much obliged to you besides. By the way, that re-

minds me that I owe you a dollar and a quarter, which you paid for your breakfast in Albany," said Ellie, tendering the money to me.

I took it because I thought I had earned it by my night's work.

"What are you going to do with your horse, Ellie?" I asked, as I put the money in my wallet. "Shall you take him with you?"

"In the boat? I guess not. That pony is for sale," laughed he.

"That reminds me that Mr. Blockley was talking about buying a horse, the other day. What do you ask for him?"

"Fifty dollars."

"You are in for a speculation, Ellie."

"I think he is worth it."

"I will speak to Mr. Blockley about the horse; but I'm afraid he isn't heavy enough for him," I added.

"When shall I see you again, Alick?"

"To-morrow. Shall I come down here?"

"No; I shall be at the American Hotel."

We parted, and I walked towards Mr. Blockley's house. I confess that I was delighted with the idea of sailing the Seabird the whole

length of Lake Erie ; and after supper I spoke with Mr. Brickland about the plan. As his wife was with him he did not object, but he did not think it was safe to make such a voyage on the lake in a small boat. I answered that the Seabird was a life-boat, and I did not think there was any particular danger.

The next day Mr. Blockley wished me to help him in the forenoon, and I did so. After dinner we went to see the pony. He was rather small, but so was the price. I found that Ellis Dykeman was quite sharp at a trade ; but he finally sold the horse for forty dollars, making ten dollars profit, besides the use of the animal for four weeks. The bargain was closed, the money paid, and the horse delivered. The carpenter led him away, leaving Ellis and me at the stable.

“ I will go with you as far as Detroit, Ellie,” I said.

“ You must go farther than that ; you must go to Chicago,” he replied. “ I will give you a dollar a day, and pay all your expenses besides.”

“ I can't go any farther than Detroit, for Mr.

Brickland wants me to go to work on his farm."

"Bother his farm."

"He and his wife have been very kind to me; and I agreed to work on the farm this summer. I can no more back out than you can."

"We will see about the rest of the way after we get to Michigan," replied he. "Now come to the hotel with me, and I will show you the charts of the lakes I have bought."

I went with him and looked over his charts, of which he had three. The chart was not a new institution to me, for I had often examined them, on board of the *Great West*, while cleaning up the cabin. I was sure I could find my way by them; but I told my skipper that he must have a compass in a binnacle, a pair of dividers, and a parallel rule, the use of which I had learned by seeing Captain Boomsby operate with them when I was cabin boy. He promised to procure everything I desired, and then we made out a list of provisions and stores for the voyage.

In the course of the afternoon we purchased

everything we needed for the trip, including a three-day's supply of cooked provisions, and carefully stowed them away on board. Before night we had stepped the mast and rigged the boat.

"I shall only dread the nights," said Ellie, when we had finished our work.

"We can make a port at night, if you wish, but I shall feel as much at home at night in the boat as in the day. If we have a breeze, we shall not be out more than two nights, perhaps only one, if we start early in the morning," I replied.

It was agreed that we should sleep on board, and sail at daylight in the morning. I went up to Mr. Blockley's, bade my friends good by, and was in the boat by nine o'clock.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAST PERIL IN GOING WEST.

ELLIE was on board when I reached the boat, and had lighted the lantern in the cabin. He had unrolled the chart of Lake Erie, and spread it out on the carpeted floor. I studied this chart for an hour, using the dividers to get the distances from the scale, and the parallel rule to obtain the courses. As fast as I obtained them, Ellie wrote them down. I dictated to him the names and descriptions of the points we were to make, and the bearings and distances of the light-houses, so that, if no mistake had been made, I could sail the boat to Detroit without looking at the chart again.

“What time is it, Ellie?” I asked, when we had finished the work.

“Five minutes of ten,” he replied, looking at his watch.

“Not so late as I thought it was,” I added.

“Which way is the wind.”

"I'm sure I don't know. I don't keep the run of the wind?"

"You should if you are going to be a sailor, Ellie," I added.

"Do you know?"

"I do; I can't help keeping the run of the wind. It is a little east of north; and it makes me feel bad."

"The wind makes you feel bad?"

"No; it makes me feel bad to lie here while the wind is east of north."

"Why so?"

"Because it is fair for our first course; and it is blowing quite fresh, too—a seven-knot breeze for this boat."

"You don't want to sail in the night—do you?" demanded Ellie.

"I had just as lief sail in the night as the day, if the weather is clear. In a word, Ellie, I don't like to lose this breeze. It may be calm or we may have a head wind to-morrow."

"But I don't believe I can steer in the night," my shipmate objected.

"It will be a good chance for you to learn to steer by compass," I suggested.

“All right; let us start, then. If you are satisfied, I ought to be.”

We hoisted the mainsail, and cast off from the shore. Then I run up the jib, and took the wheel. The Seabird darted off at a satisfactory speed, though she did not yet feel the full force of the wind. But in a few minutes we were fairly out on the lake. I had lighted the two lamps inside of the binnacle, which contained the compass, and placed it in the standing-room, before we started. A couple of hand-screws secured it to the floor, so that the motion of the boat could not disturb it.

“Now we are abreast of the light-house. What time is it, Ellie?” I asked, wishing to make this the point of departure.

“Just half past ten,” he replied.

“Write it down on your paper. You must keep a proper log, if you are going to know where you are.”

He went to the cabin where the lantern was, and made the entry. I laid the course, south-by-west, by the compass; and the Seabird went along as though she meant business.

“It blows, out here,” said Ellie, coming from the cabin.

“Just a nice breeze,” I replied. “If we can get such weather as this all the way, we shall be in Detroit inside of two days.”

“But it is rough.”

“There is a little chop sea; but you mustn’t complain of this. I think it is splendid. Now, if you want to learn to steer by compass, you can’t have a better time to begin.”

“I don’t believe I can do it,” said he, looking into the binnacle. “I don’t know the first thing about it.”

“I didn’t when I began to learn; but I have steered the Great West by night and by day; and if I made any mistakes I got a crack over the head, which you won’t get. Now take the wheel, and try your hand.”

I gave him the wheel and placed myself on the lee side, where I could see what he did, and check him if he made blunders.

“Sitting on the weather side of the wheel, where the helmsman ought always to be, you pull the tiller towards you for starboard, and push it from you for port,” I began.

“I know all about that,” said Ellie. “I steered the boat three hundred and sixty-three miles through the canal.

“Very well; but this isn’t a tow-line breeze. If you want to luff, port the helm; and it will tend that way all the time; and you have only to let the wheel off to go the other way.”

“I understand that.”

“The tiller moves in the direction opposite that you turn the wheel.”

“Of course it does.”

“Now look at the compass,” I continued.

“It keeps whirling to the right and left; it won’t hold still.”

“Yes, it does; it is the boat that don’t hold still. The needle always points to the north, and the disk or circle on which the points are marked, keeps still all the time. Our course is west-by-south. It is the next point south of west. Do you see it, Ellie?”

“I see it—W. b. S.”

“Now, do you see that notch outside of the disk?”

“Yes.”

“You are to keep the point west-by-south on that notch all the time. That’s the whole thing in a nutshell. The notch is the boat, and it moves; the point don’t move; and you must

bring the notch up to the point, and not the point up to the notch. When the notch gets on the port side of the point, port the helm — bring the wheel towards you.”

I let go the wheel, and the strong weather-helm of the boat caused her to luff. As I supposed he would, he turned the wheel the wrong way. I corrected him a dozen, if not twenty times before he got the hang of the movement. When he could do it, he became fascinated with his occupation.

“I like this first rate,” said he, with enthusiasm. “It is a good deal better than looking ahead all the time.”

“But you must do both; that is, you must look all about you, every few minutes, to see that you don’t run into some other craft.

“Of course I shall do that. You may turn in now, Alick. I can do very well without you.”

“Not yet, Ellie,” I replied. I will lie down on the seat, and by and by, if you get along well, I will turn in.”

I stretched myself on the cushioned seat of the standing-room, and watched the stars for a

time. I had done a hard day's work, and was very tired; and before I knew it, I fell asleep.

"Alick!" shouted the skipper.

I sprang to my feet, and asked what the matter was.

"Land ahead, and we are running ashore."

"Keep her away a little — starboard the helm!" I replied, after glancing ahead. "You are all right, Ellie. I suppose the current towards the river set us in shore a little. That land is Point Abino and it sticks out about two miles into the lake. Run as close to it as you can."

"I thought something was the matter — that the compass had given out, and we were going the wrong way; for, while I kept her west-by-south, I couldn't see any water ahead."

"The sail shut it out from you. Now we are off the point. What time is it, Ellie?"

I took the helm, and he went to the cabin, where he could see his watch.

"Twenty minutes past twelve," he said.

"We have come eleven miles; that's six miles an hour."

"Do we run over any more points?"

“No; we don’t go within five miles of any land till ten o’clock to-morrow forenoon.”

“All right, then. I am going to keep the helm the rest of the night. It’s fun to steer by compass.”

“It will be rougher than it is here in an hour or two,” I added.

“I have got used to that, and I don’t think I shall mind it,” replied Ellie, with his gaze fixed on the compass.

I was tired enough to sleep, and I turned in. I slept like a log, and when I waked, the sun was shining brightly through the little glass window in the trunk of the cabin. I sprang to my feet; but the boat was moving along very well, though she jumped and yawed a little more than when I turned in. Ellie was still at the helm.

“Why didn’t you call me, Ellie?” I asked.

“I didn’t want you.”

I found him as contented as ever, only he wanted his breakfast, for it was seven o’clock. I had slept eight hours in all. We had a shallow box, lined with sheet iron, which I put on the forward deck, and, placing the furnace in it, lighted

a fire. I made a pot of coffee, and with this we breakfasted upon cold meat and bread and butter. Ellie soon began to gape fearfully, and finally consented to turn in.

I found that my sailing directions had been correct, and at half past eight I had the end of Long Point to the southward of me. At half past eleven the Seabird was well up with the light-ship; I jibed her, and went through New Channel, out into the broad lake again. I was in doubt whether to run for Point aux Pins or Point Pelee; the former course keeping the boat a little nearer the north shore, but the latter was the more direct. As the weather was fine, and the breeze steady, I decided to run for Point Pelee, distant one hundred and eighteen miles. The course was west south-west. The Seabird went along at the rate of six miles an hour, and it was the same thing all day. Ellie did not show himself till two o'clock in the afternoon; and after dinner he had the wheel the rest of the day. I slept till dark, when my shipmate called me to get supper.

While we were eating, we agreed that each of us should steer half the night, and I took

the first watch. During the evening the wind hauled more to the eastward; and when I called Ellie, at one o'clock, the Seabird was going nearly before it. It did not blow very hard, though it had freshened considerably; and I turned in and slept as well as usual.

“Alick!”

This was the cry that roused me, and I sprang up. The boat was jumping and yawing fearfully. I heard the wind whistle, and the water beating upon the deck above me and pouring into the standing-room. I rushed to the helm, where poor Ellie was scared half out of his senses; and I could not blame him either.

“I called you twenty times, Alick,” moaned he. “We are going to the bottom, and I don’t know what to do.”

“Don’t be alarmed, my hearty,” I replied, as cheerfully as I could; but it was up-hill work to be cheerful then. “She won’t sink, whatever happens to her.”

“I’m wet to the skin, and I was afraid I should be washed out of her,” added my companion, in trembling tones. “You won’t catch me in a boat after this.”

“Don’t give it up yet, Ellie. Here, take the helm again!” I called, sharply.

“I can’t take it! I can’t manage her!” he pleaded.

“Keep her just as she is. Don’t be scared,” I added; but I was frightened myself.

I compelled him to take the wheel, while I stood at the main-sheet myself. I directed him to put the helm hard down, and I hauled in the sheet as he did so. In the trough of the sea the boat rolled herself half full of water. Securing the sheet, I went forward and let go the halyards. With much difficulty, I got the main-sail down, and furled it. Taking the helm again, I let her come about, and ran her before the wind. I set Ellie to baling her out with a bucket, and he worked like a good fellow. But the jib was too much head-sail for her; it carried her bow under, so that the water came in faster over the forward deck than Ellie could throw it out. I gave him the helm again, and put two reefs in the mainsail. Bringing her up to the wind again, I hoisted this sail, and furled the jib. Once more I got her before it; but she was almost full of water, and if she had

not been a life-boat, she would have gone down.

I found that the reefed mainsail lifted her over the short savage seas, so that she took in but comparatively little water. Ellie could steer her now, and I baled her out. For an hour, I could take up a pailful at a time in the standing-room; and then I worked the pump, which discharged into the centre-board casing. All this time, the Seabird was jumping and rolling fearfully, but we succeeded in keeping most of the water outside of her.

“I see a light!” exclaimed Ellie, “Dead ahead.”

It was a long way off, but I knew it was the light on the northern end of Point Pelee Island. It was as dark as Egypt, but the white caps and the frothing seas relieved the gloom. Looking to the north, I listened for sounds in that direction. I heard the roar of breakers. I saw the sheets of foam they caused, and kept a sharp lookout ahead. I was sure the light ahead could not be more than six miles distant, which assured me we had passed Point Pelee. Taking the helm, I braced her up, and headed her to the north. In half an hour more, to the amaze-

ment of Ellie, who did not understand what I was doing, we were in smooth water, and I let go the anchor.

“I never was so frightened before,” said Ellie, when we had furled the mainsail.

“It was the roughest time I ever saw; and if the Seabird had not been a lifeboat, she would surely have gone down,” I replied.

We baled out the standing-room again. The water had not risen above the bulk head, under the cabin door, and we had a dry place to shelter us from the rain, which was now pouring down in torrents. We took off our wet garments, and turned in. It was three o'clock in the morning when we came to anchor, and it was nine in the forenoon when we turned out. I found we were less than a hundred feet from the shore, under the lee of Point Pelee; and at least a dozen vessels were at anchor outside of us.

The day was cloudy, but the gale had subsided. After breakfast we started again, with a stiff breeze. Ellie's “back was broken.” He persisted that he had had enough of boats, and never would sail in one again. At nine o'clock

in the evening we reached Detroit, and hauled in at a wharf. We went to the Russell House, where Ellie was confounded by meeting his father in the office. Mr. Dykeman had become very nervous about his son, after reading his last letter from Buffalo, and had hastened to Detroit to intercept him. Ellie did not need any intercepting. He was ready to go home at once with his father. What to do with the boat was the next question, and it was discussed for some time; but it was finally settled by handing the Seabird over to me, as a gift. Though the boat cost over five hundred dollars on the Hudson, I was not clear that she would not be an elephant to me, for a boat is not a good thing to have, unless one lives near the water. However, I was very grateful, for if I could not use her, I could sell her. Ellie had already paid me for two days' services, which I offered to return to him; but he refused to take it; and Mr. Dykeman said he did not know what would have become of his son if I had not been with him.

In the morning, I parted with the father and son, but Ellie promised to write me as soon as

he reached home. The steamer which arrived in the middle of the day, brought Mr. Brickland and his wife. The sick man was quite comfortable, and with no little interest and anxiety I asked him where his farm was, in order to determine whether or not I could keep the Seabird. I was delighted to learn that he lived on a river, only a few miles from Lake St. Clair. I carried my charts up to the hotel, and he showed me just where his farm was located. Then it was agreed that I should sail him and his wife to their home in the boat, and we arrived in safety before sundown.

I had found my new home. I was in the Great West. And here this story properly comes to an end, for all I intended to do in it was to describe my going west, and explain the Perils of a Poor Boy which induced me to go there. As soon as I was settled in my new home, I wrote to Ellis Dykeman, and in reply received a letter full of news. He did not want another boat; he had come to the conclusion that boat-ing was not his vocation; and he did not wish to follow it, even if he could steer by compass all the time. He had been to see Mr. Buck-

minster, and had a long talk with him about me, though he would not tell him where I was. My good friend in Newburgh had made diligent search for me, and had even been to Glossenbury to see Captain Boomsby about me. He found that my tyrant had been deprived of his command of the Great West, the other owners buying his share. Barnes had been made captain of her; and this information afforded me the most intense satisfaction. Captain Boomsby, disgusted with the conduct of the owners of the Great West, was going to seek the other Great West, whether he could sell his place or not. Mr. Buckminster had seen him, but the interview was very unsatisfactory, for the captain still insisted that my friend had got me out of the way in order to cheat him out of the value of my time.

I was entirely willing my tyrant should make a home and a fortune in the Great West, if he did not settle near me. As it was, I thanked God that I had escaped some of the Perils of a Poor Boy, by GOING WEST.

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