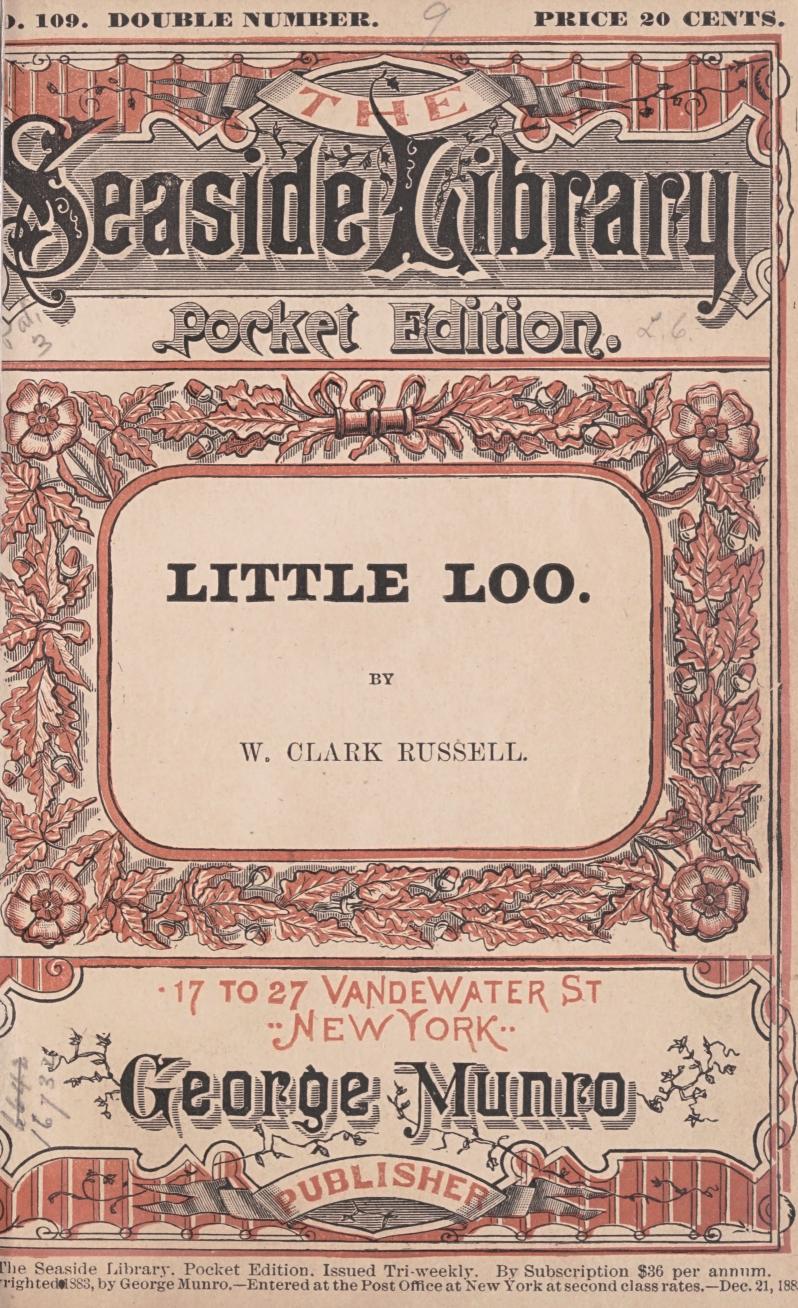








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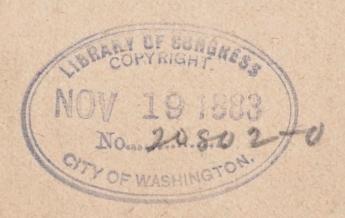




LITTLE LOO.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

Horis



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PREFACE.

"LITTLE Loo" was written in 1875, but not printed until after "The Wreck of the Grosvenor" had been published. In one volume, and at a moderate price, it may find its way to many people who love to hear of the sea, and who are not insensible to the poetry that lurks under a ship's hatches because of the rough abode of the seamuse and the queer, salt, grimy figures who squat, smoking and chewing, around her. I was nearer to my old ocean-life than I am now by several years when I wrote this tale: and for that reason I venture to conceive it a truer likeness of existence afore the mast than I should be able to draw now; though I have nothing to say about it as a piece of literature. The people in this book are men I have known, whose yarns I have laughed at, whose labors I have shared. If then they do not seem to be alive to the reader, it is not because they are imaginary persons, creations of the brain imperfectly conceived, but because they have sat to an unskillful artist.

W. CLARK RUSSELL.

LITTLE LOO.

CHAPTER I.

A SHORT INTRODUCTION.

THE sea has its romance as well as the land; and many things have befallen sailors which, could they be related with but half the skill that is exercised on land would furnish the freshest and most fascinating reading in the world.

Although the Royal Navy has supplied themes to most English sea-novelists, from Smollett to the most brilliant of the genial line, Michael Scott; I am not sure that the Merchant Service would not yield materials more pregnant with romance and more lively by variety. The slave-chase, the pirate-hunting, the ocean duel, the heavy seabattles, the carousing on shore,—have not all these things been told? the white-haired, copper-faced admiral, the post-captain and his "six dozens," the jokes of the gunroom, the groans of the cockpit, the fok'sle yarns with their rather tiresome "howsome-devers," have not all these things been described?

these things been described?

And being written, what remains? One fight is like another fight: one set of officers and midshipmen very much the counterpart of another set of officers and midshipmen. And if, twenty years ago, as a well-known writer complained, romance was being squeezed out of the service by the ligatures of red tape and the monotony and sameness of man-of-war discipline, shall we hope to find it now in those vast, floating, shapeless machines and structures of iron, savoring largely of Birmingham hardware, in guns big enough to berth a ship's company, in the roaring of steam, the convulsions of engines, and the sharp-shooting of that dastardly invention, the torpedo?

That romance should be found in small merchantmen, among crews of black-visaged seamen, with lips stained by tobacco-juice, their mossy breasts and burnt arms overrun with horrid devices in India-ink and gunpowder, their language a gibberish of dock-oaths and Yankee slang and nautical abbreviations, seems rather absurd, especially in the face of those pretty volumes of love, yachting, picnics, and descriptions of country scenery, which threaten to become our only literary aliment.

Yet if you doubt the existence of romance amid such outrageous conditions of slush, tar, and tobacco junks, read—not the fresh and faithful pictures of Herman Melville, not the incomparable descriptions of Dana (alas! for the honor of British mercantile enterprise that the apotheosis of the merchant sailor should be the labor of love of two Americans!), but the prosaic depositions of master mariners, just as they are reported in the London

shipping paper.

There, told in simple language, with never a hint of self-consciousness in the plain narratives to deform by doubts of accuracy the impressive poetry of truth; there you will find the real romance of the sea, as related by masters of smacks, of brigs, of little schooners, of big ships, of homely tug-boats; stories of fire, of shipwreck in furious gales and in dead calms, of lonely men face to face with hideous death for days together in fragile boats in mid-ocean, of starving companies on desolate islands, of mutiny, of murder; and there you will find the pathos of

stirring deeds and noble bravery.

Such true romance there is then, and much of it, God knows (and surely it should not be left unsung for the want of a poet)—to be found in little forecastles black as coal-holes, in small groaning cabins whereof the seams and crevices are dark with cockroaches; in brown and dingy vessels, toward which the eye would disdain to glance an instant from yonder paramount lord of the deep, that tower of iron, interpreted to mean an English manof-war by the streamer at the masthead, with the brass work shining like gold, and the red-coated sentry at the gangway, and the spruce midshipman with the operaglasses on the delicate-looking bridge.

Poor little merchantmen! yet my sympathies are with you. Those coal-dusted faces looking over the bulwarks

belong to men who have verily and indeed gone down into deep waters, who have been so long near death that its presence is as real a condition of their lives as any faculty of theirs that makes up the sum of their moral being. Go among them and hear their yarns. These shall be the true ancient mariners to hold you sitting and listening. Yet they sail under a red ensign, their cargo is coal, and

their discipline is their inclination.

The sea has its romance as well as the land; yet those who best know the sea might well be the most reluctant to make it their theme. The mind the most experienced in its beauties and its perils would be the quickest to feel the impotence of word-painting to compass and depicture the wonderful majesty of the deep in tempest or at peace. And to those who do battle with it, few men can do justice by description. It is one thing to sketch the shell, to color forth the rough husk and make it diverting or tragical by marine pigments; but to gauge to the heart of the sailor, to delineate in his conversation, his actions, his character, his intemperance, his follies, his superstitions, the subtle admixture and inspiring intermingling of the marvelous and eternal circle of heaven and water in which he lives-much genius is wanted to do this. Let loose the albatross in midland woods, and the crow is the better bird. Jack, like the dolphin, is alive with color which few artists can paint. Pin him down on the cork of literature; he is a wriggling commonplace, comical through the force of attitude and oath, but innocent of the forecastle, and freed from that soul of brine and tempest and the hoarse poetry of the sea which makes him-let him be the veriest swab so that he is a sailor—something which only a great pen can express.

So much in deprecation of my self-imposed task. And maybe I am writing this little prelude with an eye to some who have a trick of lugging in the flowing breeches and tarpaulin headgear without the smallest knowledge of the

true thing they cover.

Just another word before we get under weigh. It may happen that I shall have to introduce you to a crew whose morals and ways of doing business you won't like; but let me tell you nevertheless that Jack (though he may have a rogue for a brother, like his betters) is himself an honest, big-hearted creature, whom you would love in spite of his

beard and drink, if you knew him well; with a mind pretty nigh as big as the horizon he is always sailing in the middle of; with mystery, poetry, and religion in him too, believe me; no matter what kind of craft he serves aboard of, nor what the color of the flag he is afloat under, so long as it is British or American; and by this time quite deserving of a proper introduction to the public who know nothing, and consequently care nothing about him, though he is the hardest worked of all that public's servants; so that he may no longer be confounded with the cockneys and tailors and fresh-water shell-backs, who clap on his overalls and sicken their stomachs with his quids, and scrape to us, from the stage or in novels, under the patronage of largely advertised reputations.

I leave the job of introducing him to the man who shall know how to do it; and so now for my story, begin-

ning fair at the flying-jib-boom end.

CHAPTER II.

MY WELCOME HOME.

ONE June I returned home after having been absent two years and four months. As fourth mate, at a pound a month wages, I had twenty pounds to take up, clear of dues, which, sailor-like, I considered a large sum of money; but a portion of it I had to expend immediately in clothes, my attire, when I quitted the ship at the docks, being rather more picturesque than decent; consisting of a pair of well-caulked breeches patched in various colors, no waistcoat, an old pilot jacket, two odd shoes, and an old billycock hat which I had fished out of the water with a boat-hook when lying off Hong Kong.

The truth is, when I had provided for this last voyage, I had never contemplated a longer journey than a run to Madras and home again. But on our arrival out, the ship was chartered as a transport, and for eleven blessed months we lay at anchor in the Bay of Pe-chi-li with nothing in sight but a slimy horizon; so that no clothes were to be had for love or money, not even a Chinese smock, for the village rogues had nothing to sell but poultry and eggs. Hence bit by bit my slender outfit got

worn down to the stump of an old coat, half a shirt (front and sleeves), and a tight sou'-wester; so that I had to get what clothes I could from the crew at a heavy expense of rum and tobacco, my silver watch, two good pipes, and

four pounds in silver dollars.

However, with twenty pounds in my pocket in London, I soon rigged myself out in proper land-going trim, fit to get married in; and stowing some other respectable investments in my chest, I started by train, two days after the ship's arrival, for my home in Bayport, by which name I artfully disguise a flourishing seaport on the south coast.

After twenty-eight months of sea and sky, diversified here and there by glimpses of blue distant shores or a spell off a tropical town, where the broiling days are consumed in getting in cargo, and the nights in drinking Yankee concoctions in sultry hotels, the sight of the rich English country, the glorious green fields and lanes, the waving corn, the brown laborers leaning on their forks and scythes, is a blessing to the eyes. One cannot see enough of so much remembered yet novel beauty. My head was so long out of the carriage window that I had nearly lost my sight from the grit and dust. God knows what sweet memories the homely landscape awoke in me; recollections of my mother who had been dead ten years; my school days, the books I used to read, my boyish hopes and ambitions-a thousand tender pretty thoughts shining out upon the past like spaces of blue heaven on a gray sky.

It was above fifteen months since I had heard from my father, but I never considered that much may happen in fifteen months—enough to put a man's life awry, to change his fortune and his character too, to set him walking east after his having steered west all his life. Young sailors are not often troubled with speculations of this kind.

It was evening when the train reached Bayport. The setting sun was shining aslant over the red roofs of the town, on the gray walls of the church tower, making beams of light of the gilt weather-cocks on the flag-posts and house-tops; while the stretch of sea between the two hills, on one of which the coast-guards' house looked like a flock of sheep, was a motionless surface of deep dark blue.

I had written to my father from the docks, to tell him the ship had arrived and when he might expect to see me: and looked round, when I got upon the platform, hoping that the old man would have made shift to meet and welcome me after my long absence.

However, no one that I knew was there; so calling a stout lad to carry my sea-chest, I walked out of the station and down the familiar street at the bottom of which was

my father's house.

By this time the sun was gone, and the shadows of the houses nodding at one another at no great distance apart made the street dusky; there was plenty of people abroad, smacksmen gallivanting with their Sukeys, servants out on errands, foreign sailors belonging to vessels in the harbor, staring into the pastry-cooks' or jewelers' shops and talking loudly.

Followed by my porter, I reached the old home, turned the door handle as I had done scores of times in past days, and walked in. The boy put my chest in the passage, and I stood listening to catch my father's voice and waiting

for the parlor door to fly open.

There was a dead silence in the house and I felt uneasy. Thought I, "Jack, the governor has left the old shop, and here you are an intruder in another man's castle. Better

clear out, mate, and make inquiries."

Was there no servant? I coughed, but that did no good. I pushed open the parlor door, and the first squint satisfied me that my father still lived here, for I remembered the furniture, the old silver-faced clock with the wild tick, the queer oblong looking-glass over the chimney, the model schooner under a glass shade, my father's picture and—no, not my mother's. That was gone; in its place hung a bit of badly-done framed tapestry work—" Moses in the Bulrushes."

I returned to the passage and sang out, "Ship ahoy!" at the top of my voice. No sooner done than somebody upstairs screamed. Then a woman's voice called back, "Who's there? I see you, sir. You had better be off!

I'm a comin'."

"Bear a hand then and come on, whoever you are!" I shouted, and went back again into the parlor, where I helped myself to some sherry from a decanter on the sideboard, by way of consoling myself for this disagreeable reception.

It was too bad to be met in this way after so long a

spell of absence. Where was my father, and what was he about? did he receive my letter? Not so much as a cup of tea prepared for me, by heaven! I had looked forward to a hearty grip of the hand, a cheerful supper, a long yarn, and a good bed. Why, I had got a quantity of prime honey-dew, a Chinese purse, and half-a-dozen other knick-knacks for the old man in my chest. I had not forgotten him; and this neglect of me, that odious voice upstairs, this deserted parlor—lord! it was like a bucket of water poured down my back.

I threw myself angrily into an armchair, and waited for some one to come in. Anon I heard the flapping of loose slippers on the attic stairs, and at the same moment the house door was opened, there was a scrubbing of feet on

the mat, then a silence, then a loud whisper,—

"OH! HE'S COME!"

Hereupon I got up and walked into the passage. A bit of a wench stood at the foot of the staircase, and she suddenly said, "Is that you, missis?"

"Who else, you owl?"

Near the house door and close against my chest were a man and a woman. It was too dark to distinguish faces, but I saw that the man was not my father.

"Pray," said I, as politely as I could speak, "does Mr.

Chadburn live here?"

"Why, don't you know?" cried the woman.

"Know what?" I answered.

There was no answer.

"Mrs. Chadburn!" exclaimed the man. "we shall converse with more satisfaction to our feelings and less risk to our shins in the parlor. My dear, may I suggest that you step upstairs to remove your bonnet, and leave to me

the affecting—the painful—ahem!"

At the mention of the name "Mrs. Chadburn" I fell back a step with such hearty astonishment that I was within an ace of rolling over the servant, who, probably in her anxiety to satisfy her doubts of me, had crept close alongside, and was staring round under the lee of my back into my face.

The man had a large hand and a smooth voice. He laid his large hand on my arm, and exclaimed, whilst he contrived somehow, without shoving, to edge me out of the

passage into the parlor,-

"My young friend, Mrs. Chadburn is not in the enjoyment of what may be called a robust constitution—"

I interrupted him vehemently.

"Who the devil," I shouted, "is Mrs. Chadburn? Who are you? Whose house is this? Where is my father?"

He gave his head a melancholy shake, and I could now perceive that he was a long-nosed man with small black eyes and a close-shaven face, dressed in black, with a white neckcloth, as ample as a dinner-napkin and twice as long, around his throat. He applied himself with a mournful air to the sherry, using the wine-glass I had drunk from, and then seating himself, crossing his thin legs and making an arch of his hands by pressing the finger-tips together.

I was much exasperated by his coolness, and was about to repeat my questions with proper sea-emphasis, when he

said,—

"Young man your father is no more."
"Do you mean to tell me he is dead?"

"Dead and buried, my poor young friend."

"When did he die?"

"Yesterday was ten months."

I was quite stunned, and held on to a table near the door, tilting it up by my weight and capsizing a tumbler of water in which a rose was stuck. The water poured on to the carpet, and down dropped my long-nosed friend on his knees, and began to swab it up with his pockethandkerchief, crying out,—

"The carpet will be injured—a valuable brussels—a five frame!" and whilst he rubbed the carpet with his handkerchief he continued, "He died happy. A monument of piety and virtue was at his side, and received his

last breath, and closed his eyes."

I managed to get my feelings under control and asked him if the woman that was upstairs had been my father's wife. He got off the carpet on to a chair and answered,—

"Yes. Mrs. Chadburn had been Mr. Chadburn's wife. She was now his widow. But," and here he let me see the black fangs that ornamented his gums as he spread his great monkey-shaped mouth in a grin, "he might inform me—not in confidence, for I was at liberty to publish the news—that Mrs. C. was not likely to remain the late Mr. C.'s widow very long."

"So I should think," said I; "and I reckon, by the way you swabbed that carpet, that you are to be skipper here?"

He waved his hand affirmatively, but did not answer, though there was something enormously provoking in his

slow complacent grin.

I was now at a dead stand, and remained staring on the fellow, thinking what I should do. The fact of my father having married a second time, unknown to me, and choosing a woman capable of transplanting her widowed affections into such a weedy, ill-favored soil as that before me, had brought my grief up with a round turn, and canted my feelings into a decidedly unfilial channel. I turned my eyes upon the wall where my mother's picture used to hang, and the sight of the abomination of wool and tapestry work that hung in its place put my blood into a heat.

"Where is the widow gone?" I shouted. "Doesn't she mean to see me. Just call her down, will you. I

want to ask her some questions."

"Any questions you may wish to ask, young man, I am quite in a position to answer," said the fellow, through his nose.

"What do you know about it?" I cried scornfully.

"About what, sir?"

"I want to know if my father left any property?—whose house this is?"

The man turned up his eyes until they looked as blank

as a couple of bird's eggs in a nest.

"Young man, these are very worldly views for you to take in a hurry," he droned. "Have you no regrets for

the dead? no sighs to heave?"

"You had better not continue calling me young man," I said, "or I shall have to talk to you in a fashion you won't like. If I have any rights, here I am to assert them; so stand by. Where is Mrs. Chadburn?"

And as I said this, I swung round on my heel, meaning to sing out to her from the passage, when she stepped into the room. I think she had been listening at the

door.

She held a parcel in her hand, but I took no notice of that, and peered down into her face to see what sort of a figure-head she carried. However, Mr. Longnose was considerate enough to light a pair of candles at this point,

whereby I saw that the lady was about forty years old, with thick eyebrows and mere streaks of eyes, very stout all about the bows, with three chins; and with down enough upon her cheeks to make me think that were she to sit to a barber she would do her beauty no hurt.

As she did not offer to speak, I gave her a bow, and

said, "I hear you are Mrs. Chadburn."

"Yes, that's my name, sir, at present," she answered,

with a look at her friend.

"While you have been upstairs, ma'am," I continued, "I have heard some news. But I am not so surprised to learn that my father is dead, as that he married a second time."

"Oh, indeed!" she exclaimed, tossing her nose as though

she expected I was going to be rude.

"I should be glad to know," said I, "if he spoke of me before his death, if he gave you any message for me."

"Nothing that I am aware of," she replied, "but this, which were in his will, and I now hand it to you, as you can testify of your own eyes, Mr. Lickwater."

The long-nosed man answered, "I witness."

She gave me the parcel, which I opened, and I found in it my father's old gold watch, chain, and seal. I wrapped the things up again, and put them in my pocket. Just then I was in no mood to be sentimental.

"That was all, Mrs. Chadburn?" said Mr. Lickwater

interrogatively.

"That's all, as this gentleman may find out for himself if he prefers, by calling on my solicitor, Mr. Henson, of Mulberry Road, No. 9."

- "I came here," said I, "to see my father, and I find that he is dead. I thought I might take his old hand again, and tell him about my last voyage. Whose home is this now?"
- "Mine!" cried Mrs. Chadburn quickly, and bridling up. "This was my father's house—I mean his own freehold."
- "Young man," groaned the execrable Lickwater, "I may spare Mrs. Chadburn's sensitive feelings, and save time by stating that the departed, whose death we all lament, left everything by will to his relict."

"Which were his house and furniture!" exclaimed the

relict; "for he had nothing else but his annuity, and that died with him, and lord knows that wouldn't have given him.half the comforts he had, if they hadn't been paid for by my own savings. He never could have loved me manly-like," she bursts out, "or he'd have insured his life!"

I was quite aware that my father had had only an annuity to depend upon, and did not doubt that his relict

and Lickwater spoke the truth.

Not being asked to take a seat, I remained all this time standing; which inhospitable attitude began now to operate on my temper again. I wished to see if my step-mother would ask me to sleep in the house, or invite me to take supper, and held my tongue for a spell; but finding that she would not break silence nor do more than examine me out of the corners of her eyes with every manifestation of suspicion and fear, I broke forth, "It's pretty plain that I am in the road here, and had better clear out."

"Do you purpose remaining any length of time in Bay-

port?" asked Mr. Lickwater.

"Not long enough to forbid the banns, nor to put this faithful relict to any expense in tea and soap," I answered contemptuously. "Eat the widow's bread and butter in peace, respected friend: no fear that I shall try and get a bite out of your slice!"

"Really, young gentleman, I am not accustomed!" he mumbled, very red in the face, and getting up and buttoning his coat, while Mrs. Chadburn cried, "Oh, the

wretch!" and hustled up close against him.

"What would you be at?" said I, willfully misapprehending his lamb-like gesture, and throwing my cap on the

table as though fully prepared to fight it out.

There was a brass coal-scuttle just behind him, and in stepping away from me, he struck his heel against it, and down he went. But this was not all. In falling he grabbed at the relict's gown and ripped it beautifully off her waist, and, what was worse, brought her neatly into the fender. Such a hullabaloo! she pounding the fire-irons, and he the coal-scuttle, the edges of which skreeked against the wainscot. I heard him d—— my eyes as clearly as ever I heard that familiar objurgation delivered at sea, while she shrieked "murder."

However, a little of this went a long way with me, and having said my say, I walked into the passage with a sail-

or's blessing on the house, laid hold of my chest, and slung it and myself on to the pavement, closing the door behind me with a bang that made the windows rattle as though a

gun had exploded in the street.

I waited some moments to see if old Lickwater was disposed to follow. I then signaled to a porter in a white blouse, who was passing on the opposite side of the street, and bidding him catch hold of my chest, I led the way to the White Hart Hotel, which was a house I well knew.

CHAPTER III.

I AM TOLD SOME NEWS.

THE landlord of the White Hart was a respectable young fellow, decently connected in the town, and the owner of a yacht of five tons, in which I had often taken a cruise with him around the Bay.

We knew each other perfectly well, and when he spied me coming up the steps of his hotel, he ran out and gave me such a hearty welcome that it went a good way to

compensate me for the relict's treatment.

His name was Transom. He was busy over his ledgers, he told me, just now; but he would join me by-and-by, and let me have the news of the town for the last two years; and meanwhile he might hint in a friendly way that there was a splendid cut of boiled beef in the house, and that I would find the waiters streaks of lightning in their movements.

I trimmed myself up a bit in a bedroom and came down-stairs. The coffee-room was empty, which suited me very well, as I was in the temper to be alone. The bay-window of this room hung over the pavement, and looked right on to the harbor and the long stretch of sea beyond. There was a fair number of vessels of different rigs and sizes in the harbor, with a sprinkling of screw steamboats and river craft. Swarms of persons moved about under the window and along the wharves; not far off a company of negro minstrels were regaling a thick crowd of sailors and women and others with songs; different kinds of music—strains of the concertina, flute, and fiddle came up on the light sea-breeze out of the harbor, mingled now and again

with the clanking of capstan-pauls, the overhauling of

cable ranges and the chorusing of seamen.

I felt very low-spirited, and the merry crowds outside and the music only served to give an edge to my melancholy. I sat thinking of my father, and wondering what he died of, and if they were kind to him when he was ill, and what put it into his head to marry Whiskers (as I called her), and who she was when he made her his wife.

Presently Transom came in, and asked me to smoke a pipe and take a glass with him in his private room, which invitation I gladly accepted; and now behold me in an armchair at an open window looking on to a pretty garden,

smelling of roses and honeysuckle.

After conversing awhile, Transom told me the story of

my father's marriage.

"I know more about it," said he, "than any man in this town, and I'll show you how. Your father, after you had sailed on your last cruise, used often to come round here and sit smoking by himself: that was in the winter when there was but little business doing, and when the smoking-room was empty night after night. One evening we were smoking a pipe together, when he said, 'Transom, do you ever notice me in church?"

"'Always,' said I, 'Mr. Chadburn, when I chance to

look your way.'

"Do you observe,' says he, 'that I sometimes sit in

company with a lady?"

"I have seen Mrs. Parsons in your pew now and again,' I answered.

"'Quite right!' says he, closing one eye.
"'I suppose she is Mrs. Parsons,' I said, looking at him hard.

"' Nobody else. Mind that, my boy. Nobody else." "'She's a dressmaker, isn't she, Mr. Chadburn?' I

asked him.

"'Yes, and she can turn out a satin waistcoat neatly flowered, and stitched strong in the back, my boy, warranted not to burst on the stoutest man alive, better than any tailor I ever met,' he answered. 'She presented me with one the other day, and I wore it in church. Very kind of her, wasn't it?'

"Seeing his eye twinkling and winking, I burst into a laugh, and he laughed too. I never saw anybody laugh like he did. His face swelled up, and then he swallowed some tobacco-smoke, which pretty nearly did for him.

"When all this was over, he asked me, with the water trickling over his cheeks, what I thought of Mrs. Parsons.

"I told him that I knew nothing about her.

"You can't say she isn't a fine woman,' says he. What's said of good wine, I say of her,—there's plenty of body. I was always partial to stout females myself. I was partial to them very young.'

"I waited to see what he was aiming at, and after smoking a bit with his eye thoughtfully fixed on my face he asked me what I should think if he married her.

"I told him it was no business of mine, but that I did not fancy you would much relish a dressmaker for a step-

mother.

"'That's just it,' said he. 'Jack won't like it.'

"I don't suppose you are in earnest, are you, Mr.

Chadburn?' I said.

- "I want to be advised,' he answered. 'She seems particularly fond of me, and I am dull enough, the Lord knows, at home, when Jack's away, and he's always away. I should like to have your opinion, Mr. Transom. You're a sensible young man,' and here he paid me some polite compliments.
- "Then I should keep single if I were you,' I said. I thought this would annoy him as being contrary to his wishes, but I was determined to speak like a friend. To my surprise he jumped up, shook my hand warmly, said that he was quite of my opinion, that he was pretty sure Mrs. Parsons only wanted him for what she could get, and that it was not becoming for an old man to be marrying; and after talking for twenty minutes to this effect, during which he called the woman some unpleasant names, he went away; and I'm blowed, Mr. Chadburn, as true as I sit here, if I didn't find out next day from old Tarns, the pew opener at St. Michael's, that he had been married to the woman a week!"

"And what sort of wife did she make him?" I asked after a silence.

He replied that, so far as he had heard, she had behaved herself pretty well: there had been some gossip about her liking the company of a long-nosed man named Lickwater, who is a small schoolmaster hereabouts, and that she would have him more often to tea and supper, Transom believed than my father relished or understood. "However," continued he, "though your father used now and again to stop round to the White Hart for a quiet smoke, I never heard him complain of his wife nor mention Lickwater's name; and I really think, on the whole, he had a middling easy time of it, though his friends could never make out what attraction an old gentleman like your father could find in a vulgar twopenny dressmaker."

This was pretty well all I learnt of my father, his marriage and his death: and was, for the matter of that, all

I had need to know.

My goodnatured companion then led the conversation away to other topics, and told me some of the changes

which had taken place since I was last in Bayport.

Lizzie Harris, a sweet little brown girl I was once desperately in love with, was married to old Corkendale the wine merchant. Frank Hawkins a cashier in the bank and the Beau Brummel of the town, had bolted with five hundred pounds, had tried to cut his throat in Switzerland, and was now carrying a cropped head in some jail. Young Dick Swift, a drunken scarecrow, had come into two thousand a year, and had married into or out of an ancient titled family. One was dead, one was bankrupt, one was in California, one was in the Divorce Court—such changes, by heaven! may two pitiful years effect!

Little Jenkinson, who was all chest, animal spirits, and red hair, the cheeriest of creatures, whom, when I quitted the town, I would have wagered good for a hundred years of life, was dead of diphtheria, the weak man's disease; while old Samuel Gorman, who was aged ninety-two years when I went away, and whose death was hourly anticipated by the parish authorities, for he was a miser who lived alone in a broken-down house, this old man was still alive, and might be daily seen, active and intoxicated, in

the market-place!

I told Transom of my reception at the old home, that I had inherited nothing from my father but his watch and chain, and that certain hopes I had ambitiously conceived must be knocked on the head and stowed away for the present, as all my worldly goods consisted of a sea-chest

and a few clothes, and my fortune in money just eight

pounds fourteen shillings.

"What I had meant to do," I continued, "had I found my father alive, was to remain on shore for three months, and read for examination as second mate. But that will be impossible now," said I. "I cannot afford to remain on shore; I must go to sea again immediately. It's a hard alternative after twenty-eight months of salt water: but there is no remedy for it."

"Then you will go as fourth mate again?" said Tran-

som.

"I shall go before the mast," I answered.

"After being an officer!" shouted Transom.

"A fourth mate is not much of an officer," said I with a shrug. "If he is anything in particular, he is steward-in-chief to the crew, pumps up the rum and weighs out the stores. Those were my jobs. I don't mean to say that if I had inherited a fortune I should ship before the mast, or even go to sea again," I continued with gloomy sarcasm. "But just now I'm a beggar, without choice, do you see, Transom; and must eat and drink somehow. And, on the whole, I'd rather go to sea in a forecastle than sweep a crossing, which I am inclined to think is pretty nearly all I am fit for ashore, or at least the only employment I am likely to get."

"Well, well, there's no hurry," said the good-natured fellow. "Mix another glass of grog. Something may

turn up."

"I've touched bottom at all events this blessed day," I groaned; "and there's comfort in knowing I can't go deeper."

CHAPTER IV.

BAYPORT HARBOR.

I SLEPT soundly that night in the clean hotel sheets, and when I awoke in the morning I lay in bed for half an hour, thinking; but finding that no good was likely to come of that amusement, I tumbled up, and putting a couple of towels in my pocket, walked along the quay to the sands, undressed, and swam a mile.

When I got out to a buoy that marks a channel for the

smacks, I perceived a man's head, and found I had a com-

panion. He bawled to me, "I'll race you back."

"I'm your man," I answered. And when in a line we started. It was a glorious morning, the sea smooth as a lake—but I soon found that the fellow swam two feet to my one, so I sung out to let him know that I was beaten, and took it leisurely.

That swim, and the sight of the old cliffs shining like pearl in the morning sun, the red-topped houses all grouped in a lump down to the left, and the forests of masts rising, so it seemed, under the town, did my spirits more good than lying in bed and thinking.

When I reached the sands, I found my swimmer running to and fro to dry himself with the wind—an excellent towel. He came to his clothes presently, and said some civil commonplaces whilst we dressed, but I took no particular notice of him, though I guessed he was a seafaring man by his sunburnt face and throat, and his abrupt way of speaking.

By the time I had returned to the hotel and put myself into proper trim, I was in a right temper for breakfast; but, somehow, my appetite—instead of being a pleasurable sensation, as physiologists tell us young appetite ought to be, and, as I have reason to know, very often is—struck me with dismay; it was like a finger pointing to my purse; it was a voice groaning in my ear, "Jack, hunger is expensive. Your means are slender. Look to yourself, shipmate, or you'll be finding yourself hungry without the wherewithal to caulk your want."

Still I managed to find my way to the coffee-room, and to order a meal that owed not a little of its relish to my swim.

By way of company I got hold of a local newspaper, and read some County Court news—Joseph Leech sued Michael Dove for thirteen shillings, being the interest on one pound sterling lent to the said Dove by the said Leech for seven weeks—children of Israel, glorify Leech!—and was reading away like clock-work, when the glass folding-doors, opened and in stepped my swimmer, followed by a lady.

There was nobody else in the coffee-room to look at, so

I looked at them.

It was now easily seen that the man was a seaman by twenty little signs in his clothes, walk, and tricks, which, perhaps, only a sailor would take notice of. His face was colored with that reddish tint of sunburn which suits good-looking men, and suited him; ruled right off in a clean athwartship line across his forehead where his cap fitted, and showing his upper brow as white as a woman's. The lower part of his face was partly concealed by a beard and mustache. On the whole, with his brilliant blue eyes and handsome nose, tawny hair, and upright, well-built figure—not stiff like a soldier's, but graceful, with the easy, slightly rolling seaman's step—he struck me as one of the best-looking men I had ever seen.

But his companion took my fancy most, and I am afraid that I stared at her somewhat longer than good manners

would have justified.

A sweeter-looking little woman never lived. Little she looked, to me, at least, who stood within an inch and a half of six feet. Her hair was brown, and she wore it coiled down upon her bead and hitched over a comb. Her eyes were a fine melting brown, alive, they seemed to me, with the small fire of demure good spirits, and over them were dark well-defined eyebrows. Her complexion was dark and soft, dark enough to induce one to look for the place of her birth in latitudes nearer the sun than those of our island, and a warm rich blush on either cheek.

No wonder I stared. For over two years the prettiest faces I had seen were chiefly yellow or black, with flat

noses and oval eyes and high cheekbones.

They seated themselves at a table fronting the one I occupied, the man with his back and his companion with her face toward me. I pretended to read my local paper whilst they breakfasted, but most of the time I was furtively admiring this pretty woman, watching her white teeth shining when she smiled or spoke to the man, wondering who was the happy rogue that had succeeded in lighting up her glorious brown eyes with love, for I could not question that the sweet rarity was pledged or done for —I mean engaged or married. But I did not think that the fellow with her was the fortunate man; no, his manner was neither that of lover nor husband—it was what I cannot express, for the reason that I could see what it was not, without understanding what it was; whilst her be-

havior was just sportive and full of easy, pretty familiarity, and that's about all I can make of it in this place.

I left the coffee-room presently, and putting a pipe in my mouth—for is not this one of the privileges of the seaside?—I sallied forth into the brilliant hot morning, to have a look at the old place and see what ships were in the harbor. Not that it had entered my head to ship from

this port.

Willing, as necessity had made me, to go to sea, for a spell, before the mast, my dignity was still proof against the notion of serving on board anything smaller than a thousand-ton ship. I pretty well knew the sort of craft that traded to Bayport, or touched here; that they were steam or sailing colliers, or grain or timber vessels; that the forecastles were moldy abodes of gloom and dirt; and that for work, what time was not spent in the hold or up aloft, was devoted to pumping.

But a man's thoughts always stand a better chance out of doors than in. Something meets his eye and suggests an idea; or he gets into conversation, and a new turn and spirit is given to his views. Staring lonely at the ceiling, or pacing a carpet, may do very well for poets, but a man who must get bread by other means than his imagination can't do better than put himself in a crowd, and reflect

with an elbow in his ribs.

The wharves were large, and the piers stretched a good distance into the sea, and furnished a fine harbor of refuge in bad weather. The quays near the town were chiefly occupied by colliers discharging coal or taking in ballast. There were steam-cranes at work here and there, and a crowd of vessels three deep lying against the south pier, with lighters alongside the outer ones. A couple of steamers were getting up steam and discharging dense volumes of smoke into the pure blue; some smacks were warping out of the harbor, their little winches rattling merrily.

The whole place was full of business; and from where I stood, midway up the western pier, the eye surveyed such a brisk, cheerful, and sunny picture, so full of color and movement, as must have raised up the most depressed

heart with thankfulness and hope.

I looked at the old town with a fond gaze; it was my native place. I could see the top of the building where I

went to school. Off that wharf I used to fish on half-holidays, sitting through a soaking afternoon, and happy if I caught but an eel. Not a stone but had some memory to endear it to me. As I looked at it now, I remembered how often the vision of it would rise before me at sea; how in the dark night-watches I would wander in fancy among its narrow streets, push on to the sunny meadows, and he basking on my back among the buttercups—pleasant reveries indeed, from which I have been aroused many a time by the swoosh of a sea over me, or a hoarse order to shorten sail.

I was looking at the different vessels in the harbor with a critical and I daresay a contemptuous eye-my last voyage had been made in a vessel big enough to have shipped any one of these crafts as a long-boat; and large ships have a tendency to make one who is used to them look somewhat irreverently on topsail schooners and threehundred-ton barks with stump topgallant-masts-when I caught myself observing with admiration a brig that lay close in against the headmost part of the opposite pier. She was certainly one of the handsomest models I had ever seen afloat: quite faultless, I thought, -her bows clean and sharp, her cutwater a graceful curve; with a lovely sweep aft, and just enough swell of the sides to promise stability. She was painted black with a white streak, and there were some pretty tracings of gilt-work converging to her figure-head, which was a mermaid, painted white; a contrast to the hideous figure-heads of the other vessels, most of which were vile representations of women colored so as to resemble life—the very eyes painted-and one of them a man in a bright blue coat and a tall black hat! Assuredly the French are our masters in designing figure-heads.

I was pretty sure that Bayport was not her destination. I noticed that she had carried away her foretopgallant-yard; some hands were now aloft, sending the wrecked spar down on deck. This accident had most likely happened in a collision, and I daresay she had scraped her side at the same time, for a boy was over her port bow on a short stage, painting. Barring the disfigurement of this yard, which had snapped off clean as a carrot, midway between the bunt and starboard lift, her rigging and spars were as finished and taut as a man-of-war's. Indeed she had

somewhat the appearance of a Navy brig; her tops were large, she had short royal-mastheads, and she carried the old-fashioned channels, which gave her lower-standing rigging a wide spread, and whole topsails with a long hoist to the masthead, and a great breadth of yards.

I thought, under full sail, she would make a beautiful picture, and imaged her under all canvas on a tropical moonlight night, every sail full and quiet, standing like marble, and nothing audible but the wash of water at her

sides.

I turned my eyes from her, and walked away. In a few moments I had forgotten her existence.

CHAPTER V.

LITTLE LOO.

Before that day was over I had made up my mind to start for London on the following Monday, and find a berth on board some vessel bound to India or China. I was quite qualified to serve as able seaman: I was tall and strong, smart up aloft, and knew the work to be done as

well as I knew the alphabet.

There was a chance of getting three pounds fifteen shillings a month, so that at the end of a twelve months' voyage I might have earned enough money to keep me on shore for a few weeks; in which time I might hope to have passed an examination, and obtained an appointment as second mate. Having settled this matter in my mind, I felt easier.

I killed the afternoon in walking about the town, and visited the churchyard where my father lay buried. The widow's grief was expressed in a very unhandsome manner; the stone was mean, and the grave neglected. But why should not Lickwater divert any flowers that might be intended for the grave to his own button-hole; or represent that, as the dead were no longer capable of gratitude or feeling, the cost of tending a grave was wasted money, which was to be much more profitably and comfortably spent at the butcher's and the publican's?

I may have wished, perhaps, as I left the churchyard, that I could meet Lickwater at sea. I should have liked

Lickwater to swing his hammock under the same deck

with myself.

As I was walking in a sentimental mood toward the harbor, an incident occurred which dispersed my melancholy. At the corner of a street leading out into the main thoroughfare was a public-house of goodly exterior. Four negro minstrels had taken up a position opposite the door. One had a flute, two had fiddles, and the fourth a banjo.

The flute and one fiddle were the worse for drink, and the drunken fiddle happened to be a real negro, whereas

the others were white men blackened.

I stopped to listen to the entertainment, and a crowd of sailors who were drinking at the bar blocked up the doorway of the public-house, whilst a number of persons stood in the road.

The negro screwed his fiddle into his neck, but being drunk played out of tune and without time; and the flutest, likewise drunk, fingered his flute vaguely, with sense enough to know there was no tune in what they were about, yet not perceiving how the proper tune was to be come at. There was something richly absurd in the expression of their faces, and in the angry looks which their companions darted at them.

"Why don't you keep time, you thief?" shouted the

second fiddler to the negro.

"Who you call teef?" responded the negro, keeping his fiddle posed, but suspending the movements of his hand, and gazing sideways at the man with his rolling

white eyes.

A quarrel instantly ensued: the negro struck at the man who had insulted him with his bow: whereupon the banjoist instantly roared out in a fine brogue, "What, you villyan! would ye moorder me brother?" and crash! brought his banjo down on the head of the negro, whose

woolly pate shot clean through the skin.

A moment after, fiddler number two let drive his fiddle at the luckless black's head: the fiddle broke and jammed hard on the nigger's skull: and now behold the negro with the remains of the banjo round his neck and the fiddle firmly lodged, like a new-fashioned hat, on his head. But the least vulnerable part of his body had been attacked! in a moment he had stooped his head and sent the fiddle into

the Irishman's stomach, then worked round smartly and pitched his formidable crown into the breast of the second fiddler. Down they went, but up they got again and all four fell to, amid the howls of laughter from the crowd, and broke their way into the public-house, and then followed, as you may believe. a pretty smashing of glass.

The landlord stretched forth his body from an upper window and roared for the police; the crowd squeezed into the door of the public-house to see the fun, but were scattered like water by the negro rushing out with the fiddle on his head and the wreck of the banjo round his neck, chased by the other minstrels and a score of sailors. The pack fled along the street and were out of sight in a moment.

I had no fancy to call upon the people I knew in Bayport. Two reflections made me sensitive: first, that my father had married a vulgar dressmaker, and, secondly, that I was as good as a beggar and about to turn Jack Swab, which things when known (and I was no craft to sail in the wind's eye) might earn me that detestable joint the cold shoulder, and frighten people with the notion that I had a particular motive in calling.

Indeed, sailors are the most sensitive people in the world, for reasons which it would be scarcely worth while to enter into a rigmarole here to explain, and I was no

exception to the rule.

So I returned to the hotel, meaning to kill the evening in the smoking-room; and next day I would turn to and lay in a proper forecastle outfit, and be off to the East-end

Docks by Monday.

On nearing the White Hart I observed the brown beauty, whose eyes had fascinated me in the morning, sitting in a balcony that ran in a line with the coffee-room window. Her arms were upon the balcony-rail, and she was looking out to sea with pensive, dreamy eyes. Her soft, dark hair was stirred by the summer wind, and her parted lips and fixed gaze showed her deep in thought.

I would have given a good deal for leave to join her. There was a tender, womanly expression on her face at this time infinitely seductive. I seemed to crave for the delight of hearing her voice, to win her eyes to my face,

and talk to her about myself.

A landsman would have known how to go to work to

get an introduction. I was too shy even to admit to myself that an introduction might be practicable if sought. One feels one's social wants deplorably after a long spell at sea.

There is nothing more dismally awkward than a sailor, newly-returned from a long cruise, among ladies. No wonder seamen are not popular with girls, when the man who can control a ship and feel (as the spider along his line) the life of a thousand tons of bulk in the slender spoke of a wheel cannot hand a cup of tea a yard, without capsizing it over a dress, or sliding down with it upon the carpet. This is no caricature of the truth. The favorite yarns among sailors are those which tell of their embarrassments and awkwardness among ladies.

I asked Transom (whom I found perched behind a

glass bulkhead) the name of the lady.

"The lady with brown eyes and blushing cheeks, Transom—the English beauty charged with the spirit of an Indian goddess, my dear; whose companion is a hand-some man with a reddish beard."

"I know," says Transom; but he had to find the name in his entry-book before he could deliver it. "MISS

FRANKLIN."

"Who is her friend?"

"Captain Lucius Franklin."
"Ah! brother and sister?"

"No doubt. He's too young to be her father. I rather admire her myself, Mr. Chadburn. But, lord! when a fellow is trying to make a hotel pay, he hasn't much time to trouble himself about the faces of his 'arrivals.' It's their orders that concern him."

"Have you got her Christian name?"

"No," said he in his matter-of-fact way; "but I rather think it's Louisa. I may be wrong—but I fancy I heard him call her Loo when they came here and asked for rooms."

I should have liked to put some more questions—how long they had been at the hotel, where they came from, who they were?—but I felt I might easily make myself ridiculous, without justification to myself, and that, perhaps, his business instincts would not much appreciate my curiosity.

CHAPTER VI.

A BERTH.

THAT night I was in the smoking-room, my legs on a chair, and pulling drowsily at a pipe. I had been much

about in the day and was tired.

Three men, all strangers to each other when they had entered the room, had chummed, and with chairs drawn close, sat smoking cigars and discussing business. (Eight and an 'arf per cent. was mentioned more than once.) I found out by their talk that they were all three commercial travelers; and vulgar creatures enough; loud in their laughter, sweetly ungrammatical, and great boasters.

They talked as if they knew I was listening, as if they wished me to listen that they might affect me by a sense of their consequence. I was never so modest, but that I could express contempt for people of this kind, and ostentatiously slewed my chair round, and gave them the benefit of my back, hoping they would take the hint and restrict their brag to each other's ear by lowering their voices.

Whether they acted upon this hint or not, I do not know, but to my great comfort they got up presently, drained their glasses, lighted fresh cigars, and after examining their faces in the looking-glass, with various speeches at me, though to each other, to the effect that the girls who had followed them about that afternoon and almost forced appointments upon them—they were as handsome as monkeys, the coxcombs! and one of them had a broken nose—must not be kept waiting any longer; they slouched out of the room, leaving behind them such an effluvium of cheap cigar that I put a chair to the window to keep it wide open.

As they went out, the man whose name I now knew was

Captain Franklin, came in.

"That's right!" cried he, seeing me handling the chair at the window; "here's an atmosphere that wants breezing. Bad as the hold of a ship freighted with phosphate manure."

He spoke with a slight nasal twang. I had not noticed

this when he addressed me on the sands. He looked hot and tired as a man who had been hard at work all day. He drew an armchair from the corner, pulled a bell, and housed his legs along another chair.

"Do you drink?" said he, as the waiter came in. I said I would take some cold brandy and water.

"And bring me-but you'll forget it-so I'll write it down," he exclaimed; and pulling out the blank leaf of a letter and a pencil, he wrote a prescription, which he read aloud with great emphasis to the waiter, and a wonderful dose it was: "Half a gill of rum, half a gill of Scotch whisky, a small glass of curaçoa, one thin slice of lemon with the peel on, a jug of cold water, and be hanged to the teetotalers, a lump of ice, and some white sugar."

The waiter took the paper with a lively face of bewilder-

ment, and left the room.

Captain Franklin now produced a large wooden pipe, and while he loaded it from a capacious bag, he exclaimed, eving me attentively,-

"Were you the man I swam with this morning?" Yes," said I.

"I thought I had met you elsewhere; but I remember now. You're a sailor, I should think."

"That's what I am, sir."

"Have you been about the harbor?"

" Yes."

"Taken notice of the shipping?"

I nodded.

"I suppose you saw nothing to please you?"

"There's a brig with a white figure-head down against the pier that delights me. A smarter-looking vessel I never saw," said I, pretty well guessing what was coming.

"She's the Little Loo, and I command her."

"Oh, indeed?"

"Yes, and own her too."

"I should like to be you, sir."

"I daresay you would," cried he with a loud laugh.

"Come," thought I, "you're pretty self-satisfied, and in consequence ought to be a goodnatured man; but that may not be, either."

"I had a nice bout of it the other night," said he, lying back and smoking leisurely, evidently pleased to find himself in company with a listener, and a man who could un-

derstand his nautical lingo. "A lumping French ship to windward of me suddenly starboards her helm, and runs right down as if she would cross my bows. I roared out to her to mind her helm, and keep the brig away, thinking she would go under my stern. Not she! in a few minutes she had the wind out of my sails, and when her jibboom is not a cable's length off, round flies her wheel, and she ranges alongside. She lost me my fore-top-gallant yard; a little more, and she would have lost me my brig. Why are Frenchmen allowed to go to sea? They're worse sailors than the Chinese, and infinitely more dangerous, because the junkers stick to their own waters, but your Frenchmen shove their noses everywhere. I understood a fellow, who looked to be skipper-a hulking, yellow-faced gommeril, with mustaches like marlin-spikes, sing out that it was all my fault. 'Your fault, sare, sacré tonnerre!' If I had carried guns I should have swept his decks. I was in a temper to enjoy the sight of his dirtybreeched crew hopping to a broadside!"

"Is the Little Loo outward bound?" I asked.

He answered in the affirmative, and inquired what ship I belonged to. I replied that I belonged to no ship at present.

"What sort of ships are you used to?" said he.

"Big ships."

"You have no fancy for small vessels?"

"Why, I have no fancy for Geordies, but I think I could put up with the command of a vessel like the Little Loo. But to speak the truth, just now I have a fancy, I think, for anything I could get."

Here he seemed disposed to let the conversation drop. I don't think he understood my small joke about putting up with the command of his brig.

"What are you?" he said, after a pause, and speaking

abruptly; "a mate?"

"Yes," said I; not much caring to own that I was only a fourth mate. "Does your brig want a mate, sir?"

"No. If she did, how long do you think she would be without one? We're all mates and masters nowadays. What I want is men—able seamen—not mates. I must ship a couple more hands in the forecastle."

"What pay?" said I.

He looked hard at me and answered, "Three pounds ten shillings a month. The Little Loo's not a teetotaler."

I fixed my eyes on his face, closely considered the cut of his jib, recalled the beautiful model down in the harbor, swallowed some brandy and water, and said to myself, "Shall I offer to ship? Here is a smart vessel; there may be worse skippers than this man." I added aloud, "Where are you bound to, sir?"

"Sydney, New South Wales."

"If you want more hands, I am willing to sign articles

for the voyage as A.B."

"I thought you were coming to that," he said coolly, taking me in from head to foot with a twinkle of satisfaction in his eye. "But what's your object in coming down to this work? want to pick up seamanship?"

"Not quite that, sir. I'm your man if you'll have me."

"All right."

"When do you sail?"

"The day after to-morrow."

I told him that I would sign articles, but could not turn out next day—I had clothes to get; but I would bring my chest on board in the evening.

He asked me if I should require an advance. I told him no; I was going to sea to earn some money, and did not want to spend any part of my wages before I sailed.

He seemed well pleased to have got me as one of his crew. I was young, strong and hearty, and might hope, I trust, to be superior—not indeed in seamanship, but in conduct—to the general run of men who form small ships' crews; and no man knows better than a shipmaster the value of sober, educated men in the forecastle, where their example often operates as a restraint upon their mates. whilst their good sense serves them better than enforced habits of discipline.

For fear that I might change my mind, for I daresay my resolution puzzled him, and he might reasonably distrust my inclinations after a night's reflection, he made himself good company, ordered in more drink, and related some lively yarns, being sagacious enough to imagine that as I would now look upon him as my skipper, his freedom and bonhomie would be duly appreciated by me. However, though his manner pleased me well enough, it did not succeed in making me feel quite sure that he was the

warm-hearted, easy-going man he represented himself to be in some of his stories; his eyes were too blue and cold, his handsome face too wooden, not to take a little of the

persuasiveness out of his words.

But I had not the slightest wish to draw back. The position my father's death had placed me in was precisely the kind to inspire just such a reckless, adventurous spirit as would lay hold of the first chance that offered. One part of the world was a good as another to me then; and it mattered little in which hemisphere I kicked my heels; since I had no ties to bind me, no home to refer my hopes and ambition to. The world was all before me, indeed, and my star could scarcely be paler and lower on the horizon than it was now.

CHAPTER VII.

I SIGN THE SHIP'S ARTICLES.

THE clothes and linen I had purchased in London were very good wear for the poop or quarter-deck, but would not do me much service in my new station forward of the mast.

Accordingly, next morning, after breakfasting without meeting Captain Franklin or his sister, I repaired to a slop-shop up in the town, where I witnessed a scene which may be worth repeating, as it is a sample of the treatment

sailors meet with from harpies ashore.

The shop was kept by a man named Aarons, a new-comer during my absence from Bayport. A rough English sailor was having an altercation with him when I entered. Behind a counter stood a youth, who might be Aarons' son. All around were suspended coats, waistcoats, and the like, with piles of colored shirts on shelves, boots and shoes, tarpaulin gear, belts, caps, in short, every kind of article held necessary by the outfitters to the equipment of Jack.

Aarons stood in the middle of his shop: he was a little man with a beautiful lisp, and every limb quivered with excitement. The sailor towered opposite, and was cursing him for a common thief.

"Here let him decide!" he shouted as I entered.

"Mate, here's a" (something) "furriner as wants to make out I owe him seven pound for three days' lodgin' in a shanty where the gals does nothen but fry fish all day. He's got an advance note o' mine, and offers wot he calls a pound's worth o' breeches as change. Why, you little comber!" he roared, suddenly turning on Aarons, "do you mean to tell me them breeches are worth a pound?" and he pointed with indescribable disgust to a pair of secondhand trousers which dangled on Aarons' arm.

"Now, thir, will you listen?" said Aarons, coming up to me insinuatingly. "I can thee that you're a gent, and fair's fair vith gents, and a bargain's a bargain. Here's a

thailor as comed to my pooty little house-"

"Wot do you call it, you villain?-pooty! you mean

footy, and be—etc.," cried the sailor.
"I says pooty, thir," replied Aarons with dignity; "rale geraniums in the vindies, I give you my vord" (this to me), "and picturs as vould be vorth their veight in gold, if they vos framed in iron, hung in the parlor and bedrooms. Do I tell liesh, or is this true, Izzy?"

"True! if the gent doubts he can go and look. There's nothing to pay," replied the youth behind the counter.

"You hear wot my son says, thir," continued the excited Aarons; "vell, this man comed civilly and axes for lodgings—vell, I give him my terms. Vell, he is very pleashed. He eats and drinks like a king -biled and roast fowl for dinner, heggs and fish for breakfast, proper puddens every day—the cookin' up to the hammer, thir. Vell, he gets drunk once, twice, four times, seven times—that's all—seven times vilst he lives in my house, thir; my girl Rachel grows veak in the knee-caps vith vaitin' on him vith liquor-the best o' liquor-proper French hodeevee, bloomin' Jamaikey rum, and 'Ollands from the right place—the thailor don't know vat he drinks, for he's drunk ven he drinks, and ven I speak o' the cost, he kicks over the table, and says, 'Damn the expense!' But" (lowering his voice to a key, the singularity of which is not to be put on paper) "ven I show him my bill—hevery charge so shmall that it's ruination to look at 'em; and offer to let it stand at eight pound and throw in a first-class article at a price that's like givin' of them avay—he calls me vicked names!" Here he stopped to take breath.

The sailor then began afresh; Aarons answered, and, to improve the shindy, Izzy stepped in with a shrill voice. So, to save my hearing, I bolted out of the shop, paying no heed to Aarons' shrieks to me to shtop, that he was the cheapest man in Bayport, and gave beautiful value for money. I could render the sailor no help; he was in wily hands; besides it was a sample of a standing nautical

grievance which is not to be redressed.

In all probability the case stood thus: Aarons was a crimp; i.e., a person who keeps a lodging-house for sailors, and furnishes men to ships in want of crews. sailor had doubtless come to Aarons' house without money in his pocket. In a day or two Aarons gets him a ship, offers to cash the advance-note, but finds that the sailor's score at the lodging-house is something less than the money thus obtained. The sailor is made drunk with poisonous distillations, and there are Aarons and Aaronesses in plenty to swear to his orders, whether he gave them or not. No use, thinks Aarons, in giving the sailor a sovereign change, so he offers him a pair of second-hand breeches instead, and secures the going-on-board of the sailor (for if the sailor did not ship, the advance-note would be worthless) by privately conveying the plundered man's poor clothes to the vessel.

In a word, the system of advance-notes is at the bottom of the robberies perpetrated on sailors, and is as great a curse to Jack as drink. Until those notes are done away with, slop-sellers and crimps must do a roaring trade.*

I made my way to another slop-shop—there were a dozen such stores in Bayport—and rendered cautious by the bit of sailor plucking I had just witnessed, drove some hard bargains, and succeeded, I verily believe, in persuading the shopkeeper that I was in his own line and deeply versed (though reticent) in wholesale prices.

A sailor's wants, in the shape of wearing apparel, seem few, and are few if one may judge from the extent and quality of the wardrobes with which many of us go provided. Some things there are, however, which there is no getting on without at all; i.e. the belt and knife, the sea-boots, the woolen stockings, the sou'-wester, and the

^{*} Since this was written, they have been done away with—but to no purpose.

stout shirts to wear next the skin. Yet I have known men to ship without more clothes than the shirt and trousers on them, being as destitute as any pauper out of

a workhouse, and more naked.

These men have to depend on the kindness of their mates (who are often badly off for clothes) for the loan of a coat or a pair of breeches and boots in bitter weather; and more than once I have seen a man go aloft with naked feet and in loose canvas trousers when the rigging has been hard and black with frost, and my own hands aching even in the shelter of stout mittens; not because the man "did not feel the cold," but because he had no boots and drawers to put on. However, I am bound in justice to admit that the sailor who is reduced to this condition has

most times only himself to thank.

Having signed articles, my next business was to board the brig to have a look at her. The water was high in the harbor and the vessel's bulwarks level with the pier, so I could have a good look at her before stepping over the side. She had more beam than I imagined; her deck was flush fore and aft, and very white for a merchantman. Her deck fittings, such as the galley, companion, skylights, &c., were plain, but sound and solid. Her boats were also good, and, what was the real miracle, her long-boat was stowed clear of all spars, the live stock, which consisted of hens and ducks, not being kept in, but under the boat in coops.

They had crossed a new fore-top-gallant yard and were bending the sail, two fellows being astride at the yard-arms. A square-built man, in a straw hat and a loose suit of serge stood aft with his hand over his eyes, looking at the men aloft. This, thought I, must be the mate.

As I stepped on board, he sang out in a rough voice,-

"Hallo! what do you want here?"

"To have a look at the brig," said I.

He stared and asked me what I was. I answered, "An able seaman."

"D'ye want to ship?" he inquired.

"Oh, said I, "I've signed articles for this brig."

He looked surprised, and took in my dress from head to foot, and was going to say something; but just then the captain came out of the cabin, which, from the glimpse I could catch of it through an open skylight, looked to

be a comfortable interior, carpeted like a room, with a swinging lamp from the deck, a table traveling on stanchions, and a short row of berths on either hand. There was every suggestion of a good comfortable sea-parlor and bedrooms, though certainly, after being used to the long handsome cuddies or salons of India and China passengerships, this cabin, or as much as I saw of it, at least, did not greatly impress me.

But good or bad it was all the same to me; for my berth

was forward.

"Oh, here you are," said Captain Franklin when he spied me. "We shall tow out to-morrow at four. Was it you who said you couldn't be aboard before to-night?"

"Yes, sir."

"Infernally awkward, there's a heap of work to be done. I have got another hand coming, and I reckon he wants nothing but spectacles and a choker to make him fit for a chaplain," he said with a grin. "Now take your last look aft, you belong forrard, my man, and there are no misters there. You'll pick up a deal of useful knowledge in this brig; and if you show yourself smart, depend on it we sha'n't quarrel."

I took a turn round the deck and a peep down the forescuttle. The mate stared at me hard as I went to the vessel's side, and sung out, "Hi, you! have you signed?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bring your chest along then, for there's work to be done."

"I'll come when I'm ready, and that'll be this evening," I answered, to let him know that I was no ship's dog yet. He scowled, but bullying me was of no use, and might lose the brig a strapping young seaman. So he said no more, and I went over the side on to the pier.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON BOARD SHIP.

WHEN it was evening I went to my bedroom in the hotel and there figged myself out in my forecastle rig. This consisted of a pair of coarse cloth trousers, a colored unstarched shirt, a belt and knife, a jacket and a cap. All

these clothes were new, but happily for me they were the integuments of no greenhorn. I was fresh from a longer voyage than perhaps Captain Franklin himself had ever taken in his life; and though my hands were not so rough as they ought to have been for a forcastle man's, yet they had done their share of work on board ship in their day. "Rouse up your spirits, old boy!" I said to myself. "You're not about to start on your first voyage, and you'll show them that you know something more than the difference between a marlin-spike and a pair of sea-boots."

I went downstairs to pay my bill and say good-by to Transom. I found him in his old quarters behind the glass bulkhead. He looked at me with a comical expression of astonishment, and shouted, "Hallo! are you going to a masked ball?"

"Yes," said I. "I have received an invitation to one to be held in the Pacific, but I reckon upon having enough dancing before I get there." And I then told him I had

signed articles for the forecastle of the Little Loo.

"Well!" he cried, smothering his surprise, "a man must live. I suppose the sea's your taste: but give me a yard of dry land before the biggest ship in the world. A happy voyage to you, Mr. Chadburn. I don't doubt that your pluck will win a happy reward."

I shook his outstretched hand warmly, and asked what

I owed for my accommodation.

"Nothing but a letter when you are in the mind to write, to tell me you are well," he answered.

I was much affected by his liberality, and felt it the more keenly through my being about to quit my native home, and having never a friend in all the wide world (if I except this honest fellow) to care twopence whether I returned or not. But I saw that expostulation would be wasted, so with a hearty "thank you" I parted from him. However, on my way to the brig I stepped into a jeweler's shop and bought a scarf-pin, which I desired the man to send to Transom with a card on which I wrote: "To be ept until Jack Chadburn asks for it."

On reaching the brig I found the decks washed down, all running gear clear, and the hands below cleaning themselves. I had hired a fellow to bring my sea-chest and

bedding along, and these being got on deck, I jumped on board and took a squint down the forecastle-hatch.

"Hallo!" roared a voice directly under me. "What sort of stuff is this here bull's eye made on? You can't

see the sky through it, I'll swear."

This was a delicate hint to me to get out of the light, and came from a man combing his rope-yarnish locks in a fragment of looking-glass.

"Give us a hand with my chest, will you?" said I.

"Pass it along, pass it along!" growled he; and having

slung my traps below, I followed.

I was now in the brig's forecastle. No English reader will require to be told that the forecastle of a ship embraces all that forward part of the deck which lies about the bows. In many ships top-gallant forecastles are used; these are pratically deck-houses; they are entered by doors on the main deck as well as by the scuttle above, but are scarcely more lightsome than the forecastles of flush-decked ships owing to the windlass, foremast, galley, long-boat, and other such things obstructing the light.

The Little Loo's forecastle was below the deck, with a floor economically pitched to an altitude above the hold (so as to leave a good depth of fore peak and stowage-room abaft). A lamp burned day and night, swinging from an already-blackened beam, and by the misty flare I observed four or five sailors trimming themselves up for a couple of hours' liberty ashore, whilst others lay in their bunks

smoking, waiting for their mates to clear out.

Fortunately there were no hammocks slung, so we could get about without doubling our backs in halves. There were bunks enough and to spare for the men, for the carpenter and sailmaker (who, I afterward discovered, did duty as second mate and boatswain—a nautical Jack-of-all-trades) lived with two apprentices and the cook in a house

abaft the galley.

I shipped my bedding in a spare bunk, and hoisted myself into it and had a look around. It was not easy to see what the men were like by the smoky light of the lamp, but I thought that the heel of a windsail let down the scuttle would do the atmosphere no harm, for what with the steam and heat from the men washing themselves, the smell of the burning oil, the aroma of tarpaulins, old bedding, slush, junk, and stale salt water,—upon

my word it was more than a seasoned cockroach could have stood.

The men bantered each other and hammered away with their tongues in many queer dialects. Some of the names they called each other by, and which, no doubt, had been appended to the ship's articles, the men making a cross against the signature (for how many of them could write?), were curious. One was Lucky Billy, another Little Welchy, probably through his being a Welshman, another Liverpool Sam, another Snoring Jimmy, and another Beauty Blunt. That their mothers and fathers had given them such names was scarcely to be supposed.

The truth is, sailors of this description frequently ship, in the first instance, under assumed names, for no reason that ever I could make out. Mental or physical peculiarities afterward obtain for them nicknames from their shipmates; these they adhere to, eventually forgetting the

names they were born with.

I cleared out of the forecastle presently to get some air, and watched the men go ashore. It was the last night they would have for many a long day, and the order was to be on board again at half-past ten. Three of them were going to the theater, and with their well-soaped faces, oiled hair, hands which no extracts from the slush-pot would cleanse from the tar, clean shirts and Scotch caps, looked very brilliant specimens of sea dandies.

All hands went ashore with the exception of myself, the cook, and a boy. As for me, Bayport offered me no further temptations to leave the vessel. Besides, in the absence of the men, I could get my sea-chest snugged and my bunk rigged out, and have a look about me to see into

When I had made myself snug below, I got on to the deck again, and here the cook, a fat, pale London man, known to me now and for ever afterward by the single appellation of Scum, joined me, and we yarned together. I asked him questions about the skipper and mate, but he either had no decided opinions about them, or was incapable of expressing what he knew. He told me that the brig sailed well, and that she wanted all the hands she carried, for everything was new, and the running gear worked heavily, and that the skipper was a regular New England man for, "carrying on," by which is meant driv-

ing the vessel with canvas. I found out from him that the brig was freighted with a general cargo, among which were some cases of rifles and cartridges for the Australian market. "So stand by for a blow up," said he consolingly.

This was a lovely evening, with a moon in the south, and the heavens beautiful with stars. As the twilight vanished, the masts and rigging of the brig grew indistinct, and looked like a delicate cobweb stretched under the sky, the yards forming massive dark lines against the stars.

The lights of the town glittered in the tranquil water of the harbor, and the houses formed a shadowy rugged pile over them. The voices of men crying their wares in the streets, the rattling of wheels, the plash of oars, the sounds of a band of music a long way off, combined to fill the calm air with a strangely-pleasing and melodious undertone.

I remained on deck until half-past nine, and then bethinking me that sleep would be valuable since we were to be knocked up at four next morning, I was about to go below, when I observed a man coming along the pier, staggering wildly as he walked, and so drunk that I every moment expected to see him pitch headlong into the water.

If the man belonged to the brig, there was a large chance of his going overboard as he came down the steeply-inclined ladder that stretched from the pier to the bulwark, for the water in the harbor was low, and we lay some twelve or thirteen feet under the pier.

I stayed to watch, and lend him a hand if need should

arise, and well I did.

He came lurching along, talking to himself in a thick, drunken voice, and stopped close against the head of the ladder, swaying his body, and evidently not sure that the brig was his vessel; perhaps he saw two brigs, and was puzzled to know the right one.

I sung out to advise him not to try the ladder alone, that I would go and lend him a hand, and walked to the

gangway; but he muttered back,— "Who are you? Mind y'rs'f!"

And seeing me advancing, he put his foot over the side, missed the ladder and fell. I saw his body whiz down, and heard the heavy splash as he struck the water, and shouting to the cook, who was in the galley, that a man

was overboard, pulled of my coat, flung down the coil of the main-topsail halyards, paid out the end overboard,

belayed, and slipped down the side of the vessel.

My fear was that the man would strike his head as he fell, for the brig lay close to the pier, at a distance of not more than six feet; but as I dropped into the water, he rose against my feet. I grabbed him by the collar, and

kept his head out of water.

Luckily he was so stupidly drunk that he made no stir, but lay like a dead man in my hold. I bawled to the cook to send down a running bowline, which I contrived to slip under the fellow's arms; I then told cookee to haul taut and belay, by which the man was supported in the water breast-high. There we should have been serving him properly to have left him for an hour. However, I regained the deck, and assisted by the cook and a boy, fished him up.

We rolled him forward and let him lie all dripping. The cook, as he bent down to look at the man, just said,—

"He's the new hand as shipped this morning. He's got enough water in him now to soak the rum he's been stowing," and walked to his deck-house, to turn in.

A man never gets any compliments at sea, and no pity.

CHAPTER IX.

UNDER WAY.

I GOT into my bunk and fell asleep much sooner than I had thought the oppressive atmosphere would have permitted me.

What time the men came aboard, and in what condition, I did not know: I don't suppose they were very punctual, but they made no noise; and in this respect a forecastle is as well governed by the internal and tacit understanding that subsists among the hands as a congregation in a church or any assembly where silence is maintained. The watch below, or men whose turn it is to sleep, are jealously guarded by their mates from disturbance.

This is quite reasonable and for the general good; for at sea no man can tell how long his sleep is to remain unbroken during the four hours he is suffered to stay below, whether days and nights may not pass before he shall close

his eyes again.

When I awoke I heard the harbor clock strike two, and four bells tolled on some large vessel in the harbor. The forecastle resounded with a deep chorus of snores and gasps, and by the doubtful light of the lamp I might see the men lying in their bunks, some with their legs dangling over the sides, some with their heels higher than their heads, their bearded faces glimmering like corpses in the gloom of the cribs. One man sat upon the deck Lascarfashion, his back against a sea-chest, his arms folded and his head supported on his knee-caps, sound asleep.

This was the fellow who had fallen overboard, and the trumpeting through his nose resembled the groaning of fenders scraped by a ship's side against a granite wall.

A man needed to have served an apprenticeship to the sea to sleep amid the crash of this nose-orchestra. Luckily for me I had been shipmates and in the same watch with an apprentice whose snore was as the blowing of a whale alongside a ship on a dead night. I could therefore present a pickled ear to this morphean clamor, and with little ado closed my eyes and fell asleep again.

Bang! bang! overheard, followed by a voice like a gale of wind shouting down the forecastle, "Be-low there! All

hands! up with you, my lads!"

Life had begun in earnest, and in a few minutes the

crew were on deck.

It was broad daylight, with a fresh wind blowing off shore and a breezy sky. The smoke from the tug that was to tow us clear of the bay was blowing sharp off from the funnel away to sea. Some of the pier watch were on the look-out to give us a hand if help were wanted; otherwise no living creature was to be seen about the harbor. The early light lay cold and gray upon the town, but the sun was already on the horizon and the sky in that quarter was growing splendid with the kindling silver brilliance.

The brig's hawser was ready forward, and presently the tug came backing up to us, and a line was thrown, to which the hawser was bent and drawn on board the tug. It was a short job to liberate the brig from her moorings alongside the pier, and then the tug forged ahead, canted our bows out, and sent us gliding into the middle of the

harbor with our helm hard-a-starboard. Round we came and our bowsprit pointed seaward with the tug ahead. "All ready!" The paddle-wheels splash, the warp strains and sings, and in a moment the piers are moving past on

either hand and the open sea is before us.

As we are swept forward, the foam from the paddles frothing up against our bows and the brig dancing in the quick tide-race, the order is given to loose the jib and stay-sails. The lacing slides up the stays and the canvas flaps cheerily. These are followed by the top-sails, and as I go aloft to loose the foresail, sailors and idlers man the topsail halyards and masthead the yards with a hearty chorus.

Here from my perch I had a good view of the land to starboard and the blue water of the English Channel. The soaring sun had now kindled all manner of glories about the still slumbering town, making every sea-fronting window a blazing beacon; beautiful were the green slopes of the shore, the pale yellow sands, the visionary amber distances, and the rocky outline of the coast fining down into the west. The fresh warm wind sung in my ears; it was impossible not to feel the exhibitantion of the gay windy morning.

As our top-sails and fore and aft canvas drew, the hawser connecting us with the steam-boat slackened into a bight. It struck me that, were we to set our courses and top-gallant sails, we should run the steam-boat down. It was like spurring a willing horse to tow the brig in such a

breeze; but this was the skipper's business.

The tug left us when abreast of a three-mile sea-mark, and as she steamed out of our road and headed for the harbor, she gave us a cheer, which we returned. No time is allowed for sentiment at sea, or the departure of this last link that held us to the old country would have set me thinking, with my arms on the forecastle rail and my eyes on the blue land.

All plain sail was now to be made, and the crew had a handful in sheeting home the royals and top-gallant sails and setting the trysail and outer and flying jib. The cook had spoken the truth when he complained of the running gear; the sheaves traveled hard; we had to clap on watch-tackles to bring the topsail leeches taut, and I, being used to full-rigged ships, found myself a little bothered as to

the leading of some of the rigging of this two-masted concern.

With the main tack aboard, and the wind a couple of points abaft the beam, the Little Loo began to exhibit her sailing qualities. She raised the soapsuds on her weather bow pretty nearly as high as the cathead, and it was like looking out of a railway window to glance over her lee bulwarks and see the freth and strings of seaweed rushing past, and the wind of her lower canvas scurrying in darting, irregular lines along the water.

The decks having been cleared, the crew mustered aft to be divided into watches. I was in the port or chief mate's watch (the starboard watch was in charge of the boatswain and carpenter), for which I was sorry, as there was some-

thing in the cut of the man's face I did not like.

Let me describe him. He had one of those heavy mouths which the mind instinctively appropriates to bully at sea and the prize-fighter and ruffian ashore. One point I quickly took notice of was that there was a permanent reference in all he did to the opinion of the skipper. From this one had a right to infer an amount of zeal that might be found very disagreeable by the crew; besides, if the skipper was a bully, here was a man who would take a special delight in topping his views and dealings. He was scarcely a man that a romantic young lady would fall in love with. His right eye had a cast, and the man called Lucky Billy hinted that the reason of it was, he was in the habit of sleeping with that eye open and always looking to windward with it, whereby he at once got the nickname of Old Windward among us, though his real name was Nicholas Sloe.

For the rest, his figure was altogether out of proportion; he was all body and no legs, measuring, I daresay, fifty inches round the chest, and when his arms hung down, his fingers reached below his knees. A quantity of dry, stout, red hair grew upon his throat, but none upon his face; his nose was just a pair of nostrils protected by an irregular outline, and he had large, sound, white teeth, such a brilliant set that, had not they been too big to be artificial, I should have believed them false. Such was Old Windward, sometimes Old Nick, first mate of the Little Loo.

We were now set to wash the deck down, scrubbing-brushes were routed out, the head-pump rigged, and

buckets passed along. The captain had gone below, leaving the deck in charge of Old Windward who prowled about with his hands in his pockets, squinting at me more often than I liked, watching how I scrubbed, and plainly on the look-out to give me a taste of his politeness. took care to thwart his kind inclinations by doing my best; but as I scrubbed, watching anxiously for the sluice of water as it was delivered out of the buckets along the deck, and pounding away with my scrubbing-brush, now in the lee-scuppers, now against the cable-range, now along the main-hatch-coamings, I say I could not help reflecting on my insanity in choosing a calling that divorced me from all shore comforts, from all intellectual and social pleasures, which put me face to face with such coarse and rough labor, as, were it introduced into jails, would excite the pity of philanthropists for felons, and produce a revolution in prison-discipline, and which had brought this additional misfortune with it-hardly the fatality of any vocation you can name—that it left me totally unfitted for any other pursuit.

So my little manikin, you who are rushing from Marryat's novels to your papa, to entreat him to let you be a sailor, take my advice—stick to Mother Earth! She is kind, she is no lover of strangling, she suffers you to sleep at night, she offers you choice of a hundred occupations, of all kinds of company, of all sorts of civilized amusements. But the Sea! here is a divinity that will drown you if she can—who will never cease trying to achieve her fell purpose whilst you remain her servant; who will introduce you to bad food, a bitter servitude, long weary terms of imprisonment, and leave you but a poor man in the end, if you have the luck to escape the sand mattress

she has prepared for you among the hungry fishes.

CHAPTER X.

A SEA-PARLOR.

THE hands went to breakfast at seven bells—half-past seven. This meal consisted of fresh shore-bread (for that morning) and tea, a queer-looking liquor, liberally thickened with pale yellow stalks. Some of us who had a sweet tooth spread molasses over the bread and ate it thus;

others preferred pork-fat, which was perhaps a more

presentable subsitute for butter.

It was observable that the man had laid in no small comforts, no inexpensive sweeteners to the hard bread and stiff junk that was to be their daily fare. Surely in the grub-locker one might have hoped to find something brought from the grocers' and provision merchants'; but you would have starved soon, had you been furnished with no other sustenance than what the men themselves had purchased. In truth they would prefer to spend in an evening's debauch money it would take them twelve months to earn, rather than purchase a single convenience for a long voyage.

"Let us be happy for to-night, What care we for to-morrow?"

is the motto of such men.

Figure your humble servant seated in a bunk, with his head well against the upper deck, his legs over the side, a pannikin of tea standing on his mattress, a tin dish be-

tween his knees, and a jack-knife in his hand.

Here was now an interior rich with glimmering details; a wooden cavern resonant with human voices, and the ringing song of the frothing bow-wave. The bunks were built one above another, and ranged in a double line either side the forecastle; some of the men ate their breakfast as I did, in their bunks; others used the chests lashed to the deck as tables. Some who had made a short meal in order to get a long smoke blew clouds of tobacco vapor, which mingled with the steam from the tea, and created an atmosphere like a London fog.

Omitting the oaths, which, however, is like extracting the spice out of a French comedy, whereby the flavor thatmakes the thing characteristic is ruined, I here present

you with a fragment of our forecastle conversation.

"Mate, twist that ugly scrubbin' brush o' yourn out of the road. How's a man to see if there hain't worms in

this winegar, with your mop in the sun's eye?"

This from surly old Liverpool Sam, who heads the starboard watch, and addressed to a man who had got his head too far advanced into the daylight that came down the fore-scuttle.

"Billy," shouts a man from a corner bunk, "did ye

see that bloomin' gal's break-down last night. Talk o' hornpipes!"

"Well, talk o' them, and wot then?" grumbles a man

in the bunk beneath.

"Wot then? why, I say it warn't dancing—it wur like makin' sennit out of air with her feet. Something beautiful!"

"It was the comic song about the kangaroo that took my fancy," answers Billy, talking with his mouth full. "Did you take notice of that cove jumpin' as them hanimals does with their tails? Larf! I nearly died of larfin'. Some of them persons sings uncommon well. But I haven't got much respeck for them myself. I don't reckon singing what you may call manly work. Wot do they do with theirselves all day? Lays abed, I suppose."

Jimmy, give us a draw," cries Little Welchy. And Jimmy, removing a sooty pipe from his mouth, politely dries the stem of it upon his sleeve and hands it to his

mate.

"I'm blessed if this brig hasn't got the right sort of sea-heels!" says a man. "D'ye hear how she hums, mates?"

"Billy!" exclaims the man in the corner bunk, "I took a notion in my head, watchin' that gal dancin' last night, that if I wur to turn to and put on the right kind o' shoes. I might get a decent livin' by dancin' at the theayter."

"Ay, ay, you'd make a fine show in tights, you would," growls old Liverpool Sam. "You're too much down by the stern, mate, to keep time to the fiddles. No trapdoor'd hold up under your weight, and you'd be drivin't through the scenery and destroyin' the pictures at the back. To say nother of your being allers in liquor."

Liverpool Sam being an old bear, and held in awe by

the crew, is not answered.

"The most wonderful bit o' dancing as ever I see was by a chap named Young Alf, aboard a Scotch bark," here puts in a sandy-haired man called Suds, which I believe was his real name.

"Young Alf! why, I knew him. A little fellow, with a large wart over agin his right eye, an' he had lost his little finger, and was always swoppin' his brigs for drink, and then gettin' drunk and goin' maudlin about, swear-

ing his brigs had been stole," here interrupts a hitherto silent man.

"No, it ain't the same. The man I mean warn't little. His toes was so light that I'm blowed if he wouldn't turn to and dance on a man's breast without wakin' of him up. Well, I'll just tell 'ee what happened. We overhauled a whale one evening. It fell a dead calm, and then there was we and the whale alongside o' each other. Well, I reckon the whale was sound asleep. Wot does Young Alf do but runs aloft with a spare line, makes it fast to the foreyard arm, comes down agin, stands on the bulwark, and slings hisself clean on to the whale's back. Then he sings out to the bo'sun's mate to tune up with his fiddle. The bo'sun's mate he plays a jig. There wur the whole ship's company lookin' on-skipper an' mates and passengers aft burstin' with laughter-and Young Alf goin' at it toe and heel, and the whale sound asleep. Alf, he keeps hold o' the rope's end, so there warn't no danger of his getting drownded. Well, presently one o' the crew-a dammed Portugee, he gets a bit o' holystone, and lets drive at the whale. Then look out! Nothen seen but froth and tail—tail as big as this bloomin' fok'sle, mates; and there was Alf coolly climbin' up the rope, where he reaches the yard-arm, and comes down and bows to the skipper and passengers. That's what I call proper dancin'."

"Vith a lump o' green in the corner of it," shouts Billy. "Wot's the use o' spinning them yarns here?

D'ye think we're Califoornians?"

"There never wos a truer yarn," cries Suds, and he

takes oath upon oath that's it's no lie.

"He must ha' been a con-nexion of the chap as took the parler-floor in the whale's belly for three days," says Little Welchy.

"Who was he?" asked Suds, eager to establish his

veracity by any collateral clew.

"Moses, warn't it?-blessed if I know!" answers Welchy.

"Young Alf was no Jew," cries Suds. "He was from Limerick."

Here one of the hands, who hasn't learning enough to put them right, but has a notion that they are talking nonsense, sings out,-

"Hold your gab! or I'll haul you out of your bunk."

"You'll have to take your legs to the windlass and pipe

all hands to do that," shouts Suds.

"What's that you say?" cries the other, and up he jumps and grasps Suds by the feet. A struggle follows; Old Sam backs out of their way, cursing their tomfoolery. In a few moments Suds, together with his mattress, pannikin, tobacco-box, and a pair of sea-boots, comes down with a thump upon deck.

There the two men pound away at each other, getting mixed up with the bedding, and provoking shouts of laughter from the others, who survey and enjoy the scrim-

mage from the secure ambush of their bunks.

Presently eight bells are struck, and the riot terminates

by the crew going on deck.

Such scenes are frequent enough, but rarely any thing comes of them, and they are forgotten as soon as over.

CHAPTER XI.

A SURPRISE.

On reaching the deck we found the brig bowling along, lying well down to the stiff breeze, heading a good southwest, with the English coast a pale blue haze on the horizon. It was my trick at the wheel, and I walked aft and relieved the man who had been there since six o'clock, and who happened to be the new hand whom I had fished out of the water on the preceding night.

Old Windward was at breakfast with the skipper; and the carpenter, Mr. Banyard, as he was called, walked the weather-deck like a pendulum, his eyes always to windward, his half-open hands swinging athwartships, and his

whole aspect brimful of ludicrous importance.

From my position I commanded a good view of the whole vessel, besides being able to glance from time to time right and left of me at the sea, whereon was a sight

or two worthy of admiration.

The brig, though under a large pressure of canvas, steered easily and with a light helm, owing to her masts being stayed perpendicular to her keel, instead of that rake aft which all landsmen somehow or other associate

with speed, and that rake forward which is the true sailor's abomination; the first of which by crowding sail aft obliges you to give her a lee helm, which is always a heavy rudder; whilst the second merely improves the ves-

sel's tendency to pitch and fall off.

From the wheel the brig looked a handsome object, with her graceful amidship swell fining down to a point at the bowsprit. The yards were well trimmed, and showed grand spaces of well-stretched squares of convex canvas along the slanting masts. The royals soared like clouds at the mastheads, and the sense of swift movement was wonderfully stimulated by the permanent foamy uproar at the bows, and the seething of the froth alongside, and the crackling and bubbling of the water in the long wake astern.

The sea was a space of luminous leaping water, each wave with a flaky head to windward, while to leeward the waters poured away in rounded elevations smooth as oil. There was a full-rigged ship astern of us under all plain sail. Against a craft of her size and build we could scarcely expect the Little Loo to hold her own, the more especially as this ship was not nearly so deep as we in proportion to our relative tonnage, and she was making a fairer wind than we, that is, heading to leeward of us. She was of iron, painted green, and probably had emigrants on board, for her forecastle was crowded. I do not think the whole world could have shown a sight more picturesque, more delicate, more levely in color and grace than this vessel; her sails were as white as the driven snow; her fore and aft canvas bellying out in beautiful rounded forms to the eased-off sheets; her little sky-sails topping the great tower and volume of sail, the whole moving stately and swift under the blue sky, across which the clouds, gilt-edged by the sun, with here and there a rainbow in their skirts, were driving in groups. Abreast of us on our starboard beam was a steamer steady as an island, and almost as big as one; the huge form inexorably carving a line along the sparkling water, urged by that amazing, secret, controlled power which no man, even in this age familiarized to the miracle, can contemplate without admiration and wonder.

Some half-hour after I had taken the wheel, I was

astonished by the uprisal of an apparition.

Up through the companion, holding on to the brass rail with a white hand, came a lady—a dark-complexioned woman with a rich color on her cheeks, with fine pensive brown eyes and cherry mouth—no less a person indeed than Miss Louisa Franklin—the skipper's sister—my beauty of Transom's hotel. Her black silk rattled harmoniously in the wind, as she stood looking at the gay ship now well up on our lee-quarter, and the feather in

her pretty hat streamed softly.

That she was accompanying her brother to Australia and had come round in the brig from London had never crossed my mind when I saw her at Bayport. Perhaps I had not given her a second thought since I came on board. Now, I was as pleased to see her as if she had been an old friend. I felt somehow that the mere knowledge of her presence in the brig would make my rough forward life more endurable, just as a band of music lightens the most wearisome labor, and makes the dullest mechanical routine gay.

She must have found her sea-legs, as we say at sea, off the Forelands, for she left the companion and took a turn along the deck with as easy a step as any sailor's, recurring again and again with her fine eyes full of admiration to the ship to leeward, that had slackened her weatherbraces, and was making the same course as ourselves,

though sailing faster.

Pendulum Banyard, as I nicknamed the carpenter, squinted at her out of the corner of his eyes, and dodged her with many an awkward lurch as her movements about the deck brought her near him. She went from side to side, was here and there incessantly. I likened her to a butterfly blown out to sea, and haunting a ship's decks.

At last she came aft and peeped at the compass; up to this moment she had not looked at me; now, as she lifted her eyes to my face when she was about to move away, I observed a puzzled look come into them; then she smiled, and her face lighted up with the richness of her merry expression; she walked to the skylight, and then glanced at me again and again, perhaps trying to remember where we had met, being incapable of identifying me in my present forecastle rig with the young fellow who had watched her with unequivocal admiration in the coffeeroom of the White Hart.

Presently Captain Franklin and Old Windward came on deck. The skipper joined his sister, who must have asked him at once about me; for he turned, looked to see who I was, and then said something to her which, whatever he

may have intended, made her glance at me again.

Old Windward now gave the crew a specimen of his manners as mate. Finding the men idling (as well they might, for Banyard had put them to no jobs), he went among them and lashed up a shindy forthwith, just as a shark newly-hooked froths the water with its tail. His voice was a lion-roar (though nothing at all majestic was suggested by it), and with the fierce cast in his eye, and a trick of whacking his leg so as to produce a smart report, he cut a very formidable figure. The anchors were to be left fished as they were until we were clear of the channel, but there were a hundred jobs for the hands to turn to upon, from greasing the royal-mast-heads down to serving the lower rigging with chafing-gear.

Old Windward, at all events, soon got the men busy, and throughout that day all hands were kept at work, though after we had cleared the channel it was watch-and-watch, that is, one division of the crew on deck whilst the other division was below; all hands being kept

at work during the afternoon.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FRENCH SCHOONER.

WE carried the spanking breeze into the second dogwatch; it then fell light, and shifted ahead, with every promise of a calm. We braced the yards to the masts, and drew faintly through the water with our head at south; but so far we had little to complain of, for I should say we had not run a less distance than one hundred seamiles in the thirteen hours.

On this, our first evening at sea, we met with an adventure, a sample of the thousand incidents which enliven the

prosaic story of "La Vie Maritime."

It was one of those mild, delicious evenings which visit the English latitudes only—a radiant atmosphere, sweet as the spring's, and a sky all midsummer in its deep and tender blue.

At sundown all the greasing, reeving, worming, parceling, scrubbing, and polishing had ended—a long day's work well over. The port watch were on deck, some of the others below, and some on the forecastle sprawling about with their pipes in their mouths. Miss Franklin was seated aft near the binnacle; the skipper alongside of her, smoking a cigar. Old Windward walked the lee side of the deck impatiently, glancing aloft and around in search of wind, and an excuse to shout out orders; while Banyard furtively blew a cloud with his back against the mast, sheltered from the observation of those on the afterdeck.

This was one of those sweet intervals at sea when the heavens are pure and the water calm, when the aroma of tobacco is rich to the palate, when the roughest voice catches a melody from the soft flapping of the canvas on high and from the liquid murmur of the sea about the bows and under the counter of the vessel. With my legs striding the forecastle rail, I watched the stars dropping like flakes of silver into their appointed places; from them my eyes traveled to that more earthly and accessible star -to wit, Louisa Franklin. We were both to the windward, and I had a clear view of her; I think she was watching the stars too; her pose was full of thought, and though in that evening light she was too far off for me to distinguish her features, yet so deep was my admiration for her that memory served me as effectually as the real presentment would have done, and perhaps did her more justice by furnishing an ideal coloring, and making her even sweeter than my imperfect physical eye would find her.

Old Liverpool Sam, who was leaning with his two stubborn arms over the head-rail, looking ahead with his growling face, in the midst of which was stuck an inch of jetty

pipe, suddenly grumbled,-

"What's that out there? A ship, ain't it?"

I turned to have a look; my sight was strong, and I made out, about four miles distant, a small brig or topsail

schooner-which, I could not tell.

At eight bells the watch below went into the forecastle. There was a light air aloft, just enough to keep the royals full, and the brig made imperceptible way through the

water. At this rate of traveling we could hold our present

course all night, unless the wind shifted.

The moon came out of the sea red as a furnace, but sailing upward into the refined heights, changed her copper into silver, and paled the hemisphere of sky with her delicate light. Glancing into the silvery distance forward I perceived that we were bringing the schooner close down upon us.

"A sail right ahead!" I sung out.

"I see her!" responded the skipper, and the helm was starboarded, which brought the schooner large on the starboard bow. The skipper and Old Windward now came forward, one with a telescope, the other with a night glass.

"Her nose is cocked in the wind's eye, and she don't

look to be manned," said the mate.

"Let her come to again!" sung out the captain to the man at the wheel. "So—steady! keep her at that." He had evidently a mind to see what was the matter with the schooner.

We swam to within easy hail of her, and then, as if the wind had exhausted itself in a final spurt to accommodate Captain Franklin, it died right out; the sea turned oil smooth, and the huge cone of silver light buried in it by

the moon shone without a blur.

"Ship ahoy!" roared Old Windward in a voice that you would have thought could be heard half-way to Penzance. All was still. Never was such an unearthly stillness at sea. The very sails of the brig seemed to cease their faint flapping to catch the reply; the only sound was the tinkling of the water gurgling at the cutwater.

Once again the mate sounded his lion-roar; and then, "I'll be boiled," says he, "if there's anybody aboard of

her."

"Lower away the port-quarter boat and overhaul her, Mr. Sloe," exclaimed the skipper, first casting his eye all around the horizon to observe if there were any signs of a breeze. Not a breath. The stars around the water-line were big and round, and blue as diamond light.

"Aft, some hands," calls out the mate; and a batch of us make the decks ring with our boots as we hurry to the quarter-boat, every man eager to form one of the boarding-party. It was my fortune to get an oar. Three of us

possessed the thwarts; Old Windward squatted in the sternsheets, shipping the rudder as we were lowered; down we plumped on the water and shoved off.

The brig had fallen becalmed not a quarter of a mile

from the schooner.

"A sight too close," growled old Windward, "if this

calm holds." And so our pull was a short one.

The schooner was a low, black-painted craft, about one hundred tons burden; we could read the words "Marie —, Brest," painted in large white letters on her stern, quite distinctly in the broad moonlight; all her canvas was set, but without trim; throat and peak halyards slack, topsailyard braced to port, and topgallant yard to starboard, jib all in bights from the hanks—as slovenly as a woman in ill-fitting clothes half-laced, and the skirt dragging.

The light was so strong that one might have read a newspaper by it; the schooner's deck was distinctly discernible,

and no living creature was to be seen on it.

"Easy," cried the mate, as we came alongside, and the bow oar hooked on.

"Hark to that!" said Little Welchy.

What was it? Nothing more nor less than the sounds of a man's and a woman's voice raised apparently in hot warfare.

We listened for some moments, and the mate burst into a hoarse laugh.

"What in the devil's name is that lingo?" he shouted.

"French, sir," I answered, having caught some words. "Up with us!" he bawled, "and let's see the fun."

Little Welchy stopped behind to mind the boat, and the

three of us scrambled on to the deck.

There was a skylight just abaft the mainmast, and this standing open right over the cabin enabled us to see what was going forward below. A hand-lamp burned upon the table; on one side stood a little famished-looking yellow man, whose whole vitality appeared to have been spent in the production of an enormous mustache. A red night-cap adorned his head, earrings about three times as thick as ordinary wedding-rings twinkled in his ears; his chest lay exposed under a shirt open from the throat to the waist, and this, with a pair of trousers and a red sash around his waist, completed his attire. Facing him was

a stout dark woman, whose immense fan-faced cap had gradually been worked by the convulsive movements of her head over her forehead. She was dressed—well, I will be discreet; enough if I say that a flannel petticoat and a chocolate-colored shawl formed her exterior covering.

The noise they made, now that our ears were down to it, was astonishing. Their language was a torrent of words, quick, fierce, running one into another with a tremendous rattling of r's, and larded with patois; and as they both hammered away together, not the faintest no-

tion could I get of their meaning.

Nothing less than a thunderbolt could have made its noise distinguishable above theirs. It was not possible to watch their gesticulations without laughter, and the first to explode was Old Windward, whose roar we immediately echoed.

The man started back and looked up; the woman shrieked and stood stock-still, her waving arms arrested.

"What's all this noise about?" bawled the mate. "What schooner is this, and where's the crew? and why

the blazes didn't ye answer when we hailed?"

"They are English!" cried the man in French to the woman. Then catching hold of his hair, he exclaimed, "Who ere you? Vere you comb?"

"Why, we thought this craft was abandoned, and we boarded her to see what was wrong, and here we find you and your friend kicking up row enough to prevent any crew within forty-mile hail from getting to sleep," shouted Old Windward.

At this point the woman took a look down her figure, and uttering a yell, she smothered herself up in her arms and fled.

"Vait! I veel comb to ze deck," says this poor little Parlez-vous; and setting his cap on his head, and hitching up his sash, he went to the companion-ladder, and emerged presently, cutting the quaintest figure in life in the moonlight. As he advanced, he made us a profound bow, and looking round him spied the brig, on which he exclaimed, "Ah, zat is your sheep?"

"Yes, that's it," answered the mate; "where's your

crew? are they all turned in?"

"I do not comprehend," says the little fellow, shaking

his nightcap.

"Are they all gone to bed? your men, I say; are they here?" roars the mate, pointing to the forecastle.

"Ah, ze men! Non. Zey ere not here. Zey ere gone."

"Gone!"

"Mais oui, in two boat," and he held up two fingers and pointed to the davits where the overhauled boatfalls hung to the water's edge.

"What made 'em go?" asked Old Windward.

"We did bomp, vonce, twice, tree time, and zey cry, 'Ve zink! ve zink!" and left me and my vife. Mais mon Dieu! Vat did it mattaire? I say, you go—by gar, you no comb back, allons!" Here he shrugged his shoulders to such an extent that his head was buried between them and his nightcap stood up like an inverted flowerpot.

"What's your name?" asked the mate.

"Alphonse Duprés, sare; I am ze capitaine."

"Where do you come from?"

"Douvres."

"Doove!" shouted Old Windward. "Where's that? in Afriky?"

"He means Dover," said I.

"And where are you bound to?"

"Brest."

"And do you mean to say you are going to work this schooner to Brest by yourself?"

"Mais oui. Vy not? dere is my vife-strong as two man

—and dis is summer-time."

"Well, hang me if ever I heard of such a thing before!" cried the mate, staring at the little figure, amazed. "But you'll be cutting each other's throat afore you get to Brest, won't you?"

The Frenchman drew himself up and waved his hand

with a dignified gesture.

"Ve dispute a leetel-all ze ladies dispute: messieurs,

vill you drink som vine?"

"No, thank ye, sir," said Old Windward, stepping toward the vessel's side. "If we can lend you a hand in any way we shall be glad." Monsieur thanked him profusely, assured him that he and his wife were quite capable of navigating and working the vessel to Brest, and held his red cap in his hand, bowing, with his hand upon his naked breast, to each of us separately as we scrambled over the side and dropped into the boat.

Half an hour later a breeze sprang up from the North; the brig's yards were trimmed, and we stood once more on our course. We lost sight of the little schooner in the haze of moonlight in a short time, though when the breeze came, I heard the skipper, who was looking at her through a night-glass, tell the mate that the Frenchman and his wife had got the square yards trimmed and were heading a proper course for Brest.

This adventure furnished many a joke to our forecastle, and it was a long time before the men who had manned the boat ceased to talk of the mounseer and his wife found quarreling in the cabin, and the coolness with which he talked of carrying his vessel to her destination.

CHAPTER XIII.

OLD WINDWARD.

After we had been to sea a week, we began to find out what sort of men our skipper and mate were. Old Windward I had never any doubts about; his cocked eye full of malevolence, his grim face, the skin of which was as coarse as the grain of mahogany, the whole looking as if it had been put to pickle in brimstone and saltpetre, and his loud oaths, when Miss Franklin was out of hearing, were unmistakable testimonials of his character as one of that class of sea-dogs for whose origination we have to thank the Nova Scotians. But it took me a week to make up my mind about the skipper. It was no good sign that he allowed the mate to swear at and bully us without putting in a word to soften his strong mouth; still, this was but a negative vice. But one day he hoisted his colors, and a regular black it was.

This was the occasion for it.

The watch on deck were washing down. This duty was performed by one man pumping, another handing

the buckets along to a third, who sluices the decks, whilst the rest scrub with their brushes. The man who sluiced the decks was Little Welchy; and it was his business to

souse every nook and corner effectually.

The hen-coops under the long-boat were caulked with battens to prevent the dirt from rolling on to the deck; these battens, when the decks were washed, were removed to allow the water to be thrown under the coops, and then replaced.

Old Windward stumping about the deck, irritating us with ceaseless exordiums to "bear a hand," "not to stand grubbing at the muck like a crew of pigs, but to swish it smartly into the scuppers," and so forth, came to the hencoops, and sung out, "Here's a batten wanting. Ship it, and do your work properly. What's the meaning of this skulking, blubberhead?"

The skipper, who was on deck in galoshes, came forward

to the main rigging and stood looking on.

Little Welchy was responsible for the batten, and cast his eye round to seek it.

"D'ye hear what I say?" roars the mate.

"Hear yer? yes," grumbles Little Welchy, "and I'll ship it fast enough when I finds it."

"Find it!" shouts Old Windward. "By thunder, Mr. Dough-face" (in genteel allusion to the paleness of Welchy's skin), "if you have lost it, look out!"

All this bawling, however, could not restore the missing batten. We dropped our scrubbing-brushes to hunt for

it, but it could not be found.

"I expect it's gone overboard," says Little Welchy.

On which Old Windward made a spring at him, shouting, "Wherever it is, you shall look for it. If it's over-

board, you shall go arter it!"

Welchy, not knowing to what extent Old Windward was in earnest, threw himself into a sparring attitude when he saw the other jump, and shouted out, "Hands off! don't touch me! it's no fault o' mine. Nary man shall slosh me!"

"We'll see about that, you smock-faced barn-burner!" cries the mate; and in the twinkling of an eye he had flung down a coil of rigging, seized the end, and was hitting at Little Welchy.

The sailor, as his nickname might suggest, was no coward.

The blood of Taffy became as fire. With a scream he ran at the mate, and closed with him. Now the little fellow would have stood no more chance with Old Windward, hand-to-hand, than a goat in the embrace of a boaconstrictor. The skipper might therefore have safely left his officer alone to accomplish the job he had set himself. Instead, he ran upon the sailor, seized him by the scruff of his neck, slewed him round and pinned his arms to his side, thereby exposing his back to the castigation of Old Windward, who neither spared his own arm nor the man's breech.

Whack! whack! it was like beating a carpet, and at every blow the mate sputtered out, "I'll teach ye to show fight, my bantam! I'll learn ye to lose the ship's furniture, my weather-cock!"

At last Little Welchy, by a vigorous twist of his body, writhed out of the captain's hands, and fell away some steps, boiling with rage over the indignity and pain of this cow-hiding. The skipper then walked aft, first scowling at us severally, and the mate flinging down the rope's end ordered us to go on with our scrubbing.

It was typical of sailors' reckless, unheeding character that Welchy got no sympathy from the crew. On the contrary, most of them thought this flogging fair material for "chaff," and merciless by their frequency were the allusions to it.

"Don't sit down, Welchy, you ain't healed yet!"
"Didn't it hurt, Welchy? I guess you thought you was in the union agin, and that the old Beadle was layin' it on for the good o' your morals!" "Here, Welchy, give us twopence, and you shall have my 'lowance of bread to soak for a poultice." Banter of this kind was incessant. Welchy bore it all very well: only once did he fire up and let us know that the rope's end had penetrated deeper than his skin, when Liverpool Sam said that he ought to have shown more fight when the skipper laid hold of him.

It happened that when the watch I was in came on deck again at twelve o'clock it was my turn to take the wheel. This was the job I best liked. It not only kept me clear of Old Windward, but away from the disagreeable and

often the dirty work to which the hands were put in the

intervals of trimming yards.

The brig was under fore and main-topmast studding sails, the sea smooth and the weather very fine. Indeed ever since we had left Bayport we had enjoyed a succession of fine days, and the royals had only been off the vessel once.

As I stood at the wheel I daresay I looked a very proper Jack Swab in my duck trousers, striped shirt, shoes, and cap well astern of my head. Indeed, the prospect of being under the immediate observation of Miss Franklin made me always pretty careful in my trim when it fell to

my turn to steer the brig.

Must I tell you, madam, whether I was dark or fair? Perhaps it may improve your interest in this forecastle story if I briefly hint that I was fair in the sense of having hair colored to the complexion that flatterers would call auburn, but that my face had been cooked to the color of the breast of roast turkey by the tropical suns I had lately come from under and my more recent exposure to weather. I had gray eyes. You may not like that color; but pleasing or not, my eyes were very good to see out of, as keen as binocular glasses over some men's noses. As for the rest, if a sailor has only a decent figure, he cannot well help being tolerably graceful; the perpetual tumbling of his ship is an enduring dancing lesson, and teaches him a livelier step and an easier mien than any fiddling instructor of fandangos could impart in a lifetime, let him scrape and slide with all the art in the world.

Miss Franklin was on deck when I relieved the wheel; on the skylight, her favorite lounge, a rug over her feet

and a book in her hand, which she was not reading.

She looked hard at me as I passed—I may tell you (and may justify my egoism by and by) that on other occasions I had caught her glancing at me when the work brought me near her, but I knew my place and kept my eyes well to the front as I walked by. If I thought her face pretty and was in love with her beauty, that was my business and secret. I was not going to put it in her power to complain to her brother that one of his crew stared rudely at her—the person they had met at Bayport—and that he was impudent enough to think himself on a level with the people who lived aft, for all that he went with his arms

bare, and scrubbed the decks with his trousers rolled over his knees.

In a moment Old Windward came on deck, and sent Mr. Banyard forward. Poor Pendulum Banyard! I was always sorry for him. He was neither officer nor forward man: consequently he was despised at both ends of the brig, and subjected to many mortifications. I shall have to tell more about him later on.

It was droll to see Old Windward's uncouth efforts after a polite and easy exterior when in the presence of Miss

Franklin.

There was no doubt that he heartily hated the sight of her on deck, as she was not only a restraint upon his unceremonious adjurations to the men, but very often put him to the agony of a conversation with her. Seeing her on the skylight he made her a Calibanesque bow, then cocked his eye aloft to see how the sails were drawing. But we were heading our true course, and all the canvas was round and hard: not a brace required touching, nor was there an idler to be bullied.

The watch had dropped into their employments speedily: some at the spun-yarn winch, others sail-mending, others again at that eternal job on board ship, overhauling the

chafing-gear.

"What is my brother doing, Mr. Sloe?" Miss Franklin

asked.

"Think he is laying down, ma'am," answered the mate in a voice that might sound shipshape enough in a gale of wind, but resembled the groaning of a hinge when heard with the girl's. She looked at her book, and Old Windward was slinking off, when she exclaimed,-

"When are we going to have a storm, Mr. Sloe?"
"There's no telling?"

"There's no telling."

"I want to see the waves running mountains high. Do

waves ever really run mountains high?"

"Well, I've read of such things in books, but never seen 'em with the naked eye," he replied with ill-concealed impatience of such questions.

He was about to sneak away again, but she brought him

up with,—

"Oh, Mr. Sloe, I have often wanted to ask you if you are married?"

And there was a twinkle in the witch's brown eyes that

made me suspect she found something to divert her in

asking Old Windward questions.

He looked at me. The expression which the fierce cast in his eye gave to his face, coupled with the train of ideas suggested to me by his asociation with any sentiment in the smallest degree resembling love, made me laugh. I nearly choked myself in my effort to swallow the explosion, but the guffaw had gone forth, and Miss Franklin turned to look at me, and seeing my red face, laughed merrily herself.

She would hardly suspect that her innocent fun might make Old Windward my deadly enemy, and expose me to every ill that can befall a sailor under a tyrannous officer.

"What are you sniggering at, you there?" he shouted to me. "You had better mind what you're about.

How's her head?"

I reported. He scowled, and was about to move away, when the inexorable Louisa challenged him once more.

"Mr. Sloe, you haven't answered my question."

"What do you want me to tell you, ma'am?" he growled, scarcely able to answer her civilly, and no doubt heartily wishing she was a man, that he might give her the benefit of his mind.

"I asked if you were married?" she said with a charming smile. "I like to think of the pleasure a sailor feels when nearing home, at the prospect of meeting his wife, and hugging his little ones, after a long voyage."

Old Windward stared and answered slowly,-

"I'm married, for one: but there's no particular pleasure as ever I heard of in reaching home, unless it is for the sake o' laying in bed all night, and nothing to fear

from a falling barometer."

"Aren't you always delighted to get back to your wife?" she cried with well-feigned surprise, but with enough subtle diablerie in her face to make me think that she knew more about Old Windward than he suspected—her brother had been shipmate with the man elsewhere.

Old Windward stared hard at her again, and I risked another choking fit to stifle my mirth. He moved his jaws as though he were burying a secret quid of tobacco with his tongue, and then broke into a vague rumbling laugh, and said,—

"I don't know that my missis is always glad to see me

home. Maybe she don't jump for joy when she gets my letter saying I'm a-coming. Some wives there is as go and see their husbands off. Some meets 'em. Mine sees me off. I've been married on and off twenty years, ma'am. How many boots have I wore out in that time? If marriage wears better than boot leather, it's a good job."

With which vague illustration he marched forward, and fell foul of an apprentice for talking with one of the men. Miss Franklin watched him walk away with a smile, and then came to the binnacle, at which she looked for some

moments in silence.

"Now," thought I, "it's my turn."
"Is it difficult to steer?" she inquired.

"Not very," I answered, with my heart beating a trifle quicker at being addressed by her.

"I should like to learn," said she.

"I should be glad to teach you, if the captain would

give me leave."

She turned to look at me, and I was struck by the way she did it; by the stare that was certainly cool, and yet with nothing of insolence or contempt or boldness in it—just a clear, determined bit of scrutiny. Her beautiful eyes brought the color into my cheeks—have I not said that Jack is a bashful man?—and I have no doubt that I looked an ass in my desire to seem easy and unconscious of her observation.

"I wonder a person like you," says she, "can belong to the forecastle." (She pronounced the word in two distinct syllables.) "Mr. Sloe is bad enough, but if he, as an officer, is vulgar, what must be his inferiors, as common sailors are?"

Old Windward happened to look aft at this moment. He frowned furiously to see us talking, but could say nothing. The captain's sister might converse with anybody she pleased, and it was no fault of mine that she addressed me.

"Are common sailors his inferiors?" I answered.

She smiled, and said,—

"A man was flogged by him this morning, I hear."
"Rope's ended," said I with a glance at the sails.

"So my brother told me. How can men submit to be flogged?"

"We common sailors," I replied, "are the eels who are

used to being skinned."

"I wouldn't be a sailor: no, not to be Queen of England after five years of it. To think of the beautiful summer country, the hay-fields and flowers, and new milk, I am leaving for-for the chance of being drowned."

I did not like to ask her why she left them.

"What shall I do when I get to Sydney?" Here she sighed. "Are they all convicts there?"
"I believe not," I answered gravely.

"Thank goodness I am to come home again. I should never have sailed in a boat like this if my brother hadn't said it would do me good. Oh, here he comes. Pepperbox, I hope your sleep has refreshed you."

He evidently didn't relish this form of address before me; but he had tact enough to smile, and then said in a

soft voice, -

"You should not talk to the man at the wheel."

"But it is stupid. There is no one to talk to except--" and she made a grimace in the direction of Old Windward.

He took her arm, and led her away; I think he scolded her, but not very harshly. It was clear that whatever stuff his heart was made of, it was soft for his sister.

And as for her—what did I think? Did she talk to others of the crew as she talked to me? I have said that I thought her pretty-more than pretty; and such eyes, such silky hair, such a mouth, and a figure round and lovely to behold, could hardly fail to make me think her enchanting, let her talk as she would. She went below shortly after she received her scolding, and I had an hour of free undisturbed thinking to bestow on her.

The conclusion I arrived at was, that she was a fresh country girl, quite unsophisticated, probably an orphan, with a watch-dog of a brother, who had taken it into his head that he was no longer justified in leaving her alone and unprotected ashore. Perhaps he was right, assuming my theory to be correct; but did he mean to carry her with him on his voyages until he himself quitted the sea?

CHAPTER XIV.

DEACON, A.B.

UP to this point I have omitted to notice with attention a man who nevertheless plays a conspicuous part in this narrative.

When I had signed articles, the captain had spoken to me with derision of a new hand who had shipped at Bayport: "Who," said he, "only wants spectacles and a

choker to fit him for a chaplain."

This was the man who had fallen drunk into the water. His name (apropos to the skipper's sneer) was Deacon; but the crew, thinking the appellation too polite and high-sounding, changed it to Sniggers—a forecastle skit upon the man's trick of making faces to himself when in reverie. But I will write of him in his proper name.

He was, in truth, a remarkable person: a very good sailor, active and venturesome aloft; certainly in all respects the smartest hand among us all, and yet looking the least like a mariner of any sailor that ever I met. His complexion was an unhealthy white; his forehead open and large; his hair black and parted down the middle, which was always a phenomenal object to me, for, never seeing him use a comb, I was as much puzzled to know how the parting got there as King George was to know how the apple got into the dumpling.

Rigged in black, with a white cloth round his neck and his nose reddened, Deacon would have furnished perfectly a caricature model of a class of men who preach in the open air and groan to small congregations in Bethels.

Yet, despite his sanctified face, he was on occasions as pofane as a beach-comber, and for one week after leaving Bayport he was repeatedly in liquor, though not so intoxicated as not to be able to do his work on deck. None of us could guess where he got his drink. Some of us imagined that he knew of a secret road through the cargo to the rum-casks aft, and Snoring Jimmy watched his movements eagerly, but without avail. Beauty Blunt suggested that he was built after the lines of a camel, furnished with a bag to carry grog inside him, as camels

carried water, with which he regaled himself whenever athirst.

However, one night, when the forecastle was ringing with snores, I saw him creep to his chest, pull out a bottle and drink. Next day I related what I had seen; his chest was forced open, seven bottles (four empty and three full of rum) were found snugly stowed away under his clothes, and his health was drunk with applause, not a drain being left, "in order," as Liverpool Sam said to him, "that he mightn't any longer be tempted to hinjure his health on the sly."

Deacon took this spoliation of his secret comfort in very good part; he said that he was glad that Jack Chadburn had made the discovery; I had saved his life from drown-

ing and was welcome to all he had.

"Then why didn't ye whack the lush with him?" cried

Beauty Blunt.

"Because I wasn't going to make enemies of all hands by choosing a chum," answered Deacon promptly. "Besides, Jack Chadburn doesn't care enough about rum to make my giving it to him a favor."

"True for you, Sniggers," said I.

"Ain't this petty larceny?" says Little Welchy, looking

into the red liquor at the bottom of his pannikin.

"Of course it is," answered Deacon. "I could bring you up before a magistrate, and get you served, every one of you, with a fortnight's gruel, free, for this joke."

"Oh, lord! here's a sea-lawyer!" shouts Lucky Billy.

"Wot's a hinterim junction, Sniggers?"

"I know something about the law," answered Deacon, smoothing his hair and speaking gravely. "I once made four hundred pounds by the law, mates."

I looked at him as he said this, for I found that he

was addressing me.

"Did you?" said I, wondering that I had never before taken particular notice of his curious face.

"Yes," he replied; "and if you'll hold your jaw, Billy,

I'll tell you how I did it."

"Fire away," cries Billy, lighting his pipe.

"Well then," he began, "I was able seaman aboard the Eastern Monarch, an Indiaman full of valuable cargo and passengers. There was a trick of mine which I had learnt, I can't tell you where, of jobbing with my knife—

not so much whittling as the Yankees call it, but carving my name and all sorts of figures on woodwork whenever I came across it. See here! I've begun already."

He pointed to the head of his bunk whereon was the

name "Jas. Deacon" neatly carved in the wood.

"Well," he continued, fixing his piercing eyes on old Liverpool Sam, who shifted uneasily under the steady gaze, and looked for relief at Scum (for the cook had been called down to participate in the plundered rum), "one afternoon I was at the wheel—we were in the doldrun.s—the ship becalmed, no steering was wanted, and nobcdy looking, and not thinking of what I was about, I out with my knife and began to nick the wheel. When the skipper saw the condition of the wheel he swore I should pay for a new one; and true enough ten pounds of good money out of my wages was stopped. But instead of shipping a new wheel at Calcutta he stuck to the old one, and the ship was steered home by that. When I got home I went to a lawyer, and after telling him the story I said,—

"Can't I bring an action against the owners for using

my wheel—the wheel I've paid for?"

"'Of course you can,' says he.

"'You see,' I said, 'that if they hadn't had that wheel they couldn't have steered the ship—no one would have put cargo on board, and no passengers would have sailed in her.'

" Quite right,' says the lawyer. Leave the case

to me.'

"Well, the lawyer brings an action for one thousand pounds against the owners, and the judge, after turning it about and saying that he sees the ship would have been lost without a wheel, and that it was my wheel as saved her, he leaves it to the jury, and they gave me a verdict

for the sum I told you."

I give this anecdote as a specimen of Deacon's language. He was not a vulgar man in the sense that the others were; a knowledge of life, or rather of shore-habits and the ways of cities, such as is seldom met with among common sailors, to whom the world is a forecastle as it is a stage to the philosopher, was frequently apparent and even strongly so in his conversation. He had been to sea in all sizes and kinds of vessels, starting as a smack apprentice, the very bottom of the nautical ladder. Nor had he served only under English colors; he knew what

life was on board a French man-of-war, and often made us laugh with his dry descriptions of French sailors, their prayers to the Virgin in storms, their valiance in calms, their mustachios, their kissings, their tears, their soup,

and their vin ordinaire.

When my attention was once called to him, it became fixed. I mean that he excited much interest in me, and whenever he had anything to say, I caught myself listening and watching him. With the others he made himself felt more slowly. Nor was the effect he produced upon them comparable to the effect he produced upon me. I was struck by him as a puzzle: something magnetic in the expression of his eyes and face kept me

often quietly watching him and speculating.

Sometimes he talked so well, that I thought the grammatical blunders he made, and the slang and cant seaphrases he mixed up in his speech, were an assumed vice, adopted for some motive of deception. The crew, on the other hand, were impressed (I refer to a time subsequent to this period) by the more obvious points of his character, by his excellence as a seaman and by his "larnin'," for he wrote, spelt, and read well, had a knowledge of French, and, barring myself, was the only man in that

forecastle who could sign his name.

He had some books in his chest, and would lie in his bunk reading when the others were sleeping or yarning together in the forecastle. Sometimes he would lie with the book open before his face, but his eyes away from it, fixed with unwinking lids, and his lips moving rapidly, as though he were getting a lesson by heart. I once asked him for the loan of a book, and he threw me the volume he held in his hand. It was an old book, printed a hundred years before, containing a history of witches, with a monstrous frontispiece representing an old woman skinning a cat. One of the men looking over my shoulder roared out.

"Hallo! here's Old Windward's wife, makin' a rabbit

pie agin the brig gets home!"

On which Deacon exclaimed,—
"Pass us that book along. If the day of judgment were to come, there'd be men to joke over it.

He spoke with so much passion that I pitched him the book at once to save a quarrel.

One strange freak of his was his habit of making diagrams on paper or with chalk on the deck; which, when executed, he would immediately obliterate with his foot, or tear the paper into minute pieces. His face at such moments was a real study; his frowning forehead, pursed-up mouth, bright excited eyes and whispering lips, suggested a degree of engrossment quite incomprehensible.

One morning, seeing him with a stump of pencil at work on a fly-leaf (he possessed a blank log-book, and obtained paper by tearing out the leaves), I crossed over to his bunk, and asked him to let me see what he was

drawing.

He covered the paper with his hand, and looked at me angrily, then around to see what attention my remark had excited. In a few moments, however, the angry expression went out of his face, and he said,—

"You saved my life, Jack, and I ought to be yours,

body and soul."

"Oh, stop that! I don't want your body nor soul either," I answered. "I only wish to know whose portrait you are always taking on the sly?"

He appeared to undergo some internal struggle, looking at me intently meanwhile. My curiosity was red hot, and

I stuck by him to see what he would do.

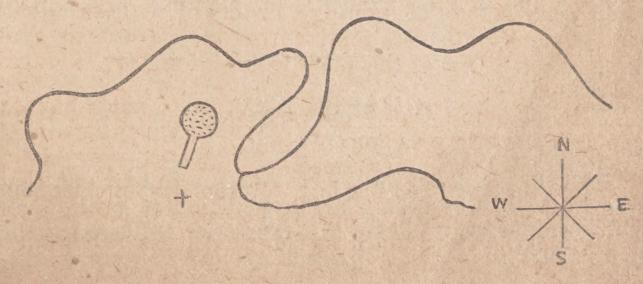
"There!" he sings out, "you can look." And so saying, he handed me the paper.

Up starts old Sammy, who was smoking on a chest

with his eyes closed, and roars out,-

"Let's look, mate, let's look!"

"No, no," I answered; "fair's fair. This is for me." I took the paper to the light, but all that I could see was this—



Sam, however, unheard by me, had crawled to my back, and catching sight of the scrawl, roared out,—

"It ain't a likeness; it's a bit o' gee-ography!"
"Let me see, Sniggers!" cried Little Welchy.

"And me! and me!" chorused the others.

"Pass it round, and be hanged to ye!" shouted Deacon,

lifting his legs into his bunk, and lying down.

It was comical to see the men fingering it with their rough hands, twisting the paper about, cocking their heads at it, and turning it upside down.

"There's a mariner's compass up in the corner," says

Lucky Billy.

"Yes, that's right enough," cries Beauty Blunt; "but what's the meaning o' that thing like a plum-duff atop o'

a pole with a man's mark underneath?"

"Tain't some new-fangled notion o' a man-o'-war, is it, Sniggers?" says another, in an insinuating tone of voice, noping thereby to receive a solution of the enigma.

No answer from Deacon.

"I say it's a piece o' gee-ography," shouts old Sam, "like wot the skippers steers the brig by. Ain't that right, Sniggers?"

No answer.

"You're a scholard, Jack," Beauty says to me. "Tell us what it is, matey."

"I have no notion."

"I'll lay Sniggers don't know what it means hisself!" growls Sam, returning to his seat with a face of contempt, which, however, but thinly masks his flaming curiosity.

"When you've done, hand it up," says Deacon.

I passed it to him, and he immediately tore it up, and turned his face toward the ship's side. The subject was dropped, and in a few moments the men had forgotten all about it.

CHAPTER XV.

A DEAD CALM.

It was not long before the crew began to find out that Miss Franklin was a "reg'lar, proper kind of gal," to use their own phrase. I heard this expression delivered by the man named Suds with a spasm of gloomy jealousy and dis-

appointment, for with it was coupled a long wandering statement of how she had come up and yarned with him when at the wheel; and this was a condescension I had thought it my privilege only to invite and obtain. Others likewise had experiences to relate of pleasant sentences addressed to them by her. In fact, she was wonderfully popular forward, merely through the force of a word and a kind smile.

"It must ha' been a rum fowl as laid them two heggs," Suds observed thoughtfully, referring to the brother and sister. "In my opinion they're as alike in feelin' as a man-eatin' savage is to the priest as tries to convart him."

Somehow work became a pleasure when she was on deck; she would follow us about with her brown innocent eyes, and tremendous were the exertions of the younger among the crew when ordered aloft if she happened to be looking on, and frequent the backward glances they would throw at her half-frightened, half-admiring face, as they hung on by their eyelids or disdained the footropes for the lifts.

Old Windward did all that he dared to prevent the men from answering if she spoke to them: and he soon made them understand that a penalty must attend the pleasure of a word from her; by singling out the man she had last accosted for a spell of hard work and a bitter dressing. It was the Princess and the Ogre in the fairy-book: every wretch the Princess spoke to the Ogre devoured. As for the skipper I never particularly noticed that he interfered with her in this respect: perhaps he had charged the mate to see to it. I was the only interdicted one so far as his express orders to her went: of this I had no doubt: for whereas (as I would hear from the men) she continued to speak to others of the crew, me she avoided, though often when she fancied I was not looking, I would find her watching me over the top of her book.

For three weeks we carried strong, favorable winds; the days all blue sky and white clouds rolling steadily athwart our mastheads: the nights filled with the stars and the

sea with fire and lines of foam.

We were now, as nearly as I could calculate by scoring up the time and speed, near to or abreast of the Cape de Verde Islands. The north-east trades, which we had picked up a few days before, had brought us fairly to this point, and then they failed.

This loss of these regular gales, which extend from about 30° N. to within a few degrees of the equator, was not likely to be permanent; but their intermission chafed the skipper to the heart, and I heard him speaking about it to Old Windward in the concentrated tones of a man whose cold, insane passion would prompt him to curse heaven itself for thwarting him.

The calm fell at about four o'clock in the afternoon. How the barometer stood I did not know; but I had been to sea long enough to witness signs in the color of the blue sky, from which every cloud had vanished, to make me think it would behoove the skipper to keep a sharp

look-out that night.

There was a long, heavy swell rolling up from the westward, and the brig, steadied no longer by the weight of wind, wallowed in it like any old barge, the water gurg-

ling up to the level of her bulwarks.

The discomfort of a gale of wind at sea is slight compared to the discomfort of a heavy swell in a calm. The jerk upon the rigging is tremendous, and it seems miraculous that the sudden lurch which inclines the heavy masts and spars to an angle of 40°, and makes the shrouds and backstays shriek like the uprooted mandrake, should not draw the chain plates as though they were wire.

But the worst part of the business is on deck and below. Whatever is insecurely lashed carries away: whatever is movable runs from side to side: if heavy, look out for your shins and head: if light, you have all your work

to eatch it, and, when caught, to hold on to it.

The forecastle lamp swung with its flaming spout against the deck, and we had to bend on a new lanyard to prevent the fire from scorching the planking. Old Sam's chest carried away, and before he could catch it, it was hurled against one of the lower bunks and burst open: out popped its effects, like a tribe of liberated rabbits—a miscellany fit to furnish the magazine of a rag and bottle man; we all turned to, to lend him a hand to recover his property, but whilst we groped the lamp went out; at the same moment Suds, who was sound asleep in a top bunk, was pitched out upon us, and there we sprawled in a heap in darkness, groaning and laughing and panting, dragging at each other to regain our footing, while Old

Sammy called all the sea-blessings he could think of upon

the brig.

The man the most to be pitied, however, was Scum, the cook. It was not enough that the swell had converted his galley into a band-box rattling with cooking utensils; a pot of cold pea-soup, well whitened atop with settled pork-fat, had capsized over his head and down his back, between his shirt and skin, while he was stooping to collect a discharge of spoons and forks; the chilly slime had completely turned his stomach, already disordered by the unusual rolling, and there he lay, sea-sick among his saucepans, his face, like a pumpkin, upon the deck. I was rendered incapable of helping him for some moments by a fit of laughter, after which I hauled him out of his troubles, and put him with his back against the outside of the galley, where the fresh air revived him.

The order having been given to take in the fore-topmast studding sail, I and Lucky Billy went aloft to rig in the

boom.

I was used to climbing masts very much loftier than the Little Loo's, and laying out on yards as thick and as long again, and handling sails big enough, each of them, to have furnished a whole suit for the brig; but never since I had been to sea had I made an ascent so difficult, uncomfortable, I may truly say perilous, as the one I now adventured. In a breeze or gale of wind a vessel never rolls far to windward, consequently the weather rigging is always at an angle more or less sharp, with the sea, and offers therefore a ladder well adapted for climbing. But now the brig rolled as heavily to port as to starboard, so that when she heeled over on my side she threw me, so to speak, on my back—like a fly on the ceiling—and several times my feet slipped off the ratlines and left me swinging clear for the water from my hands.

As to Billy he was very nearly shot out of the foretop, When we got upon the yard we found it a regular seesaw; one moment we were hoisted to the heavens, the next we were depressed to the sea. We had only one hand apiece to use, for with the other we clung to the jackstay; and it took us longer to rig in the boom than it would have taken us, in smooth water, to send down both

All this time Old Windward was roaring at us for a pair

of lubbers, glad of a chance, I dare say, to humiliate me before Miss Franklin, as he would remember the stifled laughter with which I greeted her question to him about his being married. However, he might roar to us as he pleased, we would not hasten, nor in the smallest degree imperil our salvation to please him.

I took a look around me from the fore-top. Nothing was in sight, and the sky was a dome of blue; but the horizon was narrow with a deceptive haze, and there was everything in the color of the cloudless sky to make me still strongly forebode a change of weather before the sun

came again out of the sea.

The aspect of the rolling hull from this elevation was striking. She plunged her channels into the water, and lifted them, pouring like cataracts; now the deck sloped far away on my right; now it was under me; now away on my left. The hull groaned under this straining, and the hard canvass striking against the masts filled the air all around with reports like endless discharges of musketry.

The mainsail was hauled up and made as snug as buntlines and leech-lines could make it, to save it from chafing; the jib-sheets were flattened in, the trysail brailed up, the great boom steadied, and the vangs roused taut. But all the rest of the canvas, to the royals, was left standing.

As I went forward I looked at the sea, and was struck with the wonderful majesty of its appearance—at the mighty swell, gliding, noiseless, but with a force incalculable and irresistible, under a surface like oil, one immense volume succeeding another, now lifting the brig so that the ridged horizon could be seen for leagues, now letting her sink until the glimmering green of the mountain tops on either side was alone visible.

We had a job in getting our tea along from the galley, Snoring Jimmy (as one of the men was unjustly called, for in respect to the faculty that won him his nickname, he was in no degree superior to the rest) scalding himself severely in the hand, whereupon he set up such a cry that some of us darted up the scuttle in the persuasion that a

man had tumbled overboard.

Once settled down to meals, however, we made no trouble of the rolling, though Old Sam, whose opinions were respected as emanating from a mariner of fifty years' standing, observed that "there never wos a general cargo

that didn't stand a chance o' displacement by such rolling as this, and if it did shift, why the sooner we went to

prayers the better."

"I don't owe the old cuss no grudge myself," says another: "but if she dew go, I hope she'll take Old Windward and the skipper along with her, and leave me behind to see 'em drownded."

"Do ye know," cries Little Welchy, "that I reckon Old Windward's the ugliest man as ever went to sea, barrin' none. And yet his mother wur a handsome woman,

too," he added reflectively.

"What do you know about his mother?" calls out Old

Sammy.

"I'll tell you. Old Windward's father were a Sheerness man, he wur. He had one eye, a mouth on one side like a hole in a dead-eye, a nose that wur drawed out by drink as long as a carrot, and everybody said he wur the ugliest man in the world. Women used to run avay when they saw him a comin'. My mother did, and fell down a cellar and broke her leg, and had me a sight out o' her dead reckoning, all in consequince."

"Thought you was a Welchman?" says Suds.

"Well, and can't a Welchman have a mother as lived in Sheerness?" cries Welchy; "you're always interruptin' a man, Suds. One day he made bold to orfer to a pertik'ler handsome woman—an out an' outer, Sammy, vith hair two fathom long, and everything ship-shape and proper.

"Says she: 'You caravan-monkey you, wot do you want

o' me?

"Says Old Windward's father: 'My dear, I've got an idea. You're bootiful, but ain't got no sense. I'm ugly, with tons o' brains. If we marry, our young 'uns 'll have your loveliness and my hintellects—and, vith such a fort-

une, they'll be the fust people in the world!'

"Well, missis wor struck with this notion, gave a teaparty, a proper blow-out o' muffins an' radishes—talks the notion over, an' marries. Now, Sammy, wot happens? They has children—no, they has one child, Old Windward; and wot the father says wur correct, only it warn't accurate; the son got the father's mug and the mother's stoopidness. And so that's the true and genu-ine history of Old Windward, boys."

This anecdote, though strictly founded in Little

Welchy's imagination, and at the same time recited in an idiom that inspired me with grave doubts of his *Leek*-ish paternity, met with great applause, the crew by this time detesting the mate, and welcoming any kind of abuse of him.

CHAPTER XVI.

A STORM.

I LEFT them abusing the mate and took my pipe on the forecastle. In a few moments I was joined by Deacon. He settled himself down alongside of me, and, after looking hard at the sky, said that there was a gale of wind in it or some bad change: "It was no fine weather sky. It's just the color of the blue I have seen in women's eyes whose natures it's death to trust."

"I cannot see the use of keeping a pile of canvas on a vessel during a rolling bout like this," I exclaimed, almost startled just then by an exceptionally heavy lurch of the brig, and the furious smacking of the canvas against the masts and rigging. "I should let go all halvards, haul out the reef tackles, and clew up fore and aft ready for setting again. See how that would save the chafe, and ease the strain on the spars."

"This is your first voyage before the mast, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Do you know navigation?"

"Certainly."

"All about finding the longitude by lunar observations, and the time at any given meridian; and I suppose you can work out the latitude by double altitudes?"

"You question me like a nautical examiner," I said, looking at him surprised. "Probably you know more

navigation than I do."

"Don't believe that," he answered with a laugh. "I'm a bad hand at figures, and never could make top nor bottom of logarithms. Could you navigate a vessel to any part of the world?"

"I think I could, with a good chart. I might not feel very comfortable, perhaps, in the China Seas, about Loo-Choo, for instance, and the squattering islands.." "Who wants to go so far North?" he interrupted, The Pacific is the ocean for me—there's room to move there—adventures to be met—new lands to be discovered, with gold in their hearts, gold, new, shining—and ready manufactured, too, eh! who knows? Do you know anything of the weather off the Horn?"

"I rounded the Horn in April, running before a strong

westerly gale."

"How high does the ice come in August?"

"I don't know. My later voyages have been to India and China, and I was too young when in the Pacific to re-

member much about it."

At this moment, Suds, who played the concertina, emerged from the scuttle, and began to tune up on that delectable instrument. Nothing more dismal than Suds's performance could be conceived by human imagination; one tune, which I never hear to this day without sceing the brig's forecastle and smelling again the smells appertaining thereto,—one tune, I say, to wit, "Dublin Bay," he knew through, and played it over and over again; other tunes he was acquainted with in part only, and his invention furnishing him with completions to them, the compounds were truly villainous. Dismal was the effect produced upon my nerves when some one of the crew, hearing the concertina, would begin,—

"We-hee sailed er-way-hay From Dub-ber-lin Bay-hay,"

a challenge which others, even less musically gifted, would accept, and generate a clamor compared to which the orchestra of a dozen cats performing on walls and housetops were pure melody. The crew, however, found his execution very pleasing and skillful, and watched his fingers, their pipes in their mouths, with very steady admiration; nor could any amount of repetition weary them.

These hurdy-gurdyish strains silenced Deacon. I thought a little over his questions, and then they went out

of my mind.

We were in latitudes where the twilight is a brief luxury. The sun went down without a cloud to augment or reflect its glory; it sank a round, clean-edged shield of fluctuating purple; but whilst its setting light lay on the sea, a picture magnificent beyond words to convey was submitted

by the mighty ocean-swell rolling beneath it, each liquid mountain as it swept through the blood-red reflection changing from blue to gold.

The gloom gathered quickly when the upper limb of the sun, like a live ember on the rim of the sea, disappeared, and the few stars that twinkled overhead glimmered sparely.

There was every promise, indeed, of a black night, even

if no change came, for we had lost the moon.

It was my look-out forward, when eight bells were struck and the starboard watch came on deck. The heavy rolling of the brig was distracting, fatiguing the body greatly by the work it enjoined upon one to preserve one's perpendicular, and I looked with as much anxiety probably as the skipper himself for a show of wind.

The sea was now a space of profound shadowy black, yet somehow impressing the sight with a sense of its transparency so that its blackness had a distinct character amid the general gloom. I cannot describe the awe that filled my mind when I contemplated the vague, indefinite space that stretched for miles and miles around; its movements invisible, yet the wonder of its mighty strength gathering an element of horror out of the blackness that enveloped us each time the brig was hove high on the invisible swell, and dropped into the hidden abysm.

There were phosphorescent glancings all around the vessel, but none beyond her; each time she raised her sides out of the sea the water poured from her chains in streams of fire; and to the depth of many feet below the surface her chopping stem, as the swell buried her nose and laid the flying jib-boom level with the sea, cut the water into foam seething with light, and outlined glittering forms wherein a far less imaginative mind than mine might have witnessed many weird and fantastic images.

Liverpool Sam, who it seems could not rest below, came groping his way up to me, and grumbled at the skipper for not shortening sail when there was light to see by.

"It's just a sort of night to fall overboard," growled he. "Who's to tell where ye are and who it is? When I was a youngster, if a man tumbled into the sea at night, they'd send a flaring life preserver arter him—something as 'ud show us where he was, and him what to catch hold

on. But these times are too knowin', I s'pose, to use such things as them. It 'ud be a fat splash to sound above the rattle them sails kicks up."

"I suppose there's a barometer on board," said I, "and the mercury knows more about the future than you or I. It may have told the skipper to hold on with his canvas, though I didn't like the look of the sky much this evening, and don't understand the meaning of this swell."

"Mercury!" exclaimed the old man in a voice of disgust. "What's mercury got to do with the weather? I'm for lettin' of it be as physic. Why, there are men as'll tell you what the weather's goin' to be agin all the baromayters that wur ever made. I've been shipmates with skippers who've said, 'glass is fallen, that means foul weather, but my eye is risen, and I'll hold on all.' And right they was. Give me the eye afore all your glasses. Mercury! if there warn't better signs nor that to tell ye what's going to happen, I reckon the shipwright's 'ud have a bloomin' time of it." By which he meant that there would be many wrecks.

Sam was one of those conservative sailors who hold sternly on to the past, down to about their grandfathers' time. They taboo all innovation, they accept no improvements. If they do not cry up Noah's ark as the only sort of craft fit to go afloat in, it is because she was built a little before their time; but be sure that, if Noah had been their grandfather, his ark would have been the model hull, from whose lines all departure must be rank heresy.

As a rule these men are good sailors, but never work without grumbling. Any sort of improved gear, any patent apparatus of what kind soever, the fruits of genius and patience, and a mighty boon to mariners, will furnish them with a grievance for a whole voyage. They stubbornly turn their quids and talk of "fifty year ago, when skippers was fit men to take command, afore steam came in to turn sailors into colliers, when him as couldn't read made the smartest captain, and when men wanted no Board o' Trade larnin' to sail a ship properly."

I was about to say a few words in humble mitigation of his contempt of mercury when he suddenly shouted,-

"Swaller me, mate, if there ain't a composant!"

I looked up and beheld what I had never seen before, though a sight familiar to most sailors, a small globe of blue flame hovering over the end of the fore-topsail yard-arm.

It remained for some moments stationary at this point, though one would have thought that the rolling of the vessel would leave it above or below the end of the spar, and then it vanished; but in a moment or two it reappeared, or another was kindled, on the fore-yard arm just about our heads, on which old Sammy, sputtering out,—

"Don't let it shine on ye; the devil's luck is in its light!" hurriedly groped his way to the scuttle and dis-

appeared.

Not sharing the old man's superstitious fears, I fixed my eyes on the exhalation and examined it attentively. In luster it was extremely pale, though it diffused a circular area of glimmering mist. It looked to me to be ignited air, though why it should be localized, neither extending nor diminishing, I could not understand. It was an extremely interesting phenomenon; and, as the familiar will-o'-the-wisp is due to the gas generated in marshes, so I assumed this exhalation to be the spontaneous firing of electricity in the air. They are attracted chiefly by the upper iron-work about a ship, and burn steadily in gales of wind. They superstitiously affect sailors, the notion being that they are supernatural prognostics of good or ill, according as they rise or fall from the spot on which they first show themselves.

Suddenly Old Windward hailed me. "Where's that compressant gone?"

"Out, sir."

"Where did it go from the fore-topsail yard arm?"

"On to the fore-yard arm."

After a short pause, he bawled,-

"Clew up the fore and main royals. Let go the flying-

jib-halyards!"

These orders, immediately following the appearance of this ghostly light, excited a feeling of awe and mystery among the men, in which I could not help sharing. A couple of hands went aloft in silence to stow the royals, and I could picture them in the darkness goggle-eying the

^{*} Sometimes so pronounced. The word, I believe, is derived from Corpus Sancti, or rather it is sailors' pronunciation of the Latin.

faintly-glimmering spars and rigging around them, on the look-out for the spectral light.

The next order given was to clew up the fore-topgallant-

sail.

"Ain't that like Old Windward?" croaked one of the men. "When it wur light, nothen was to be touched. Now that the brig's a hurrah's nest for the darkness and

you can't see to feel your nose, it's shorten sail!"

Certainly, work under the circumstances was extremely laborious and unpleasant. A vapor was now drawn across the sky which completely shut out the feeble starlight, and the darkness was absolute. It was a positive relief to turn the eye upon the binnacle, the lamp in which diffused a glow upon the black air around and shone upon the man standing at the wheel, thowing out his figure in ghostly relief upon the Cimmerian background.

Having stowed the jib and upper canvas, we—the watch on deck—squatted in a body on the forecastle waiting

further orders.

"This is a proper kind of night for a fire on board ship," said the raven notes of Deacon. "God, what a sight! the sea and sky red with the flaming hull! it would look more like the Last Day, the Day of Judgment, mates, than anything that ever was imagined."

"For the Lord's sake stow them notions o' yourn, Sniggers!" whispered little Welchey. "Always talkin' o' the Last Day, you are! If you mean it for a lark, I say it ain't fair to men who've heerd o' compresents afore now, and

know what they sinnifies."

"If there's e'er a man as is willin' to sneer at them corpus lights, I'm agreeable to tell him summat as'll make him think twice afore he speaks again about 'em," said Lucky Billy. And without being asked to relate his

experience, he proceeded: -

"Fourteen year ago come next month I shipped aboard a bark; we was in the North Sea, and it came on one night to blow hard. A man named Jim Herring, stanning close alongside o' me sings out, 'Strike me blue, Billy, if there ain't one o' them bloomin' compressants; and though they looks to be made o' fire, I've heerd they don't burn, and blast me if I don't go and catch him!' Well, up he goes and lays out along the fore-topgallant yard, and just when he's close to it, and like as you might say grabbin'

at it, the blessed thing it drops to his feet: down he squats upon the foot-rope, and the light goes up and shines over his head. Up gets Jim upon the yard, but the light it rolls over to port, and away goes Jimmy arter it. He might as well ha' tried to catch a shootin' star.

"I heard him swearing up in the dark, tho' it warn't so dark as that we as was watchin' couldn't see him; and presently the compressant shines out upon the fore-royal truck. Up goes Jim, lettin' fly his temper as never I heard the like, when wot do you think? just when he got his hand as high as the truck, I see with my own blessed eyes the figure of a woman with vings hanging over the masthead, just as if she were a wane, whilst the compreesant vent and burnt upon her forehead. I heard Jim cry out, and then, mates, as I live to speak, he fell, for I see him toss up his hands, and I roared out, 'From under! He's a dead man!' but though we all waited to hear his body strike the water or deck, with the sweat pourin' like rain down our faces, blowed if there wur any noise at all. 'He's caught in the riggin'!' sings out some one, and up we ran to give him a hand. But he was nowheer's in sight. We looked into the tops, we sarched the crosstrees, we called to him at the top o' our voices. I tell ye, mates, he wur gone; he hadn't fallen into the water and he warn't on deck. Where was he?"

A dead silence followed this question.

"I say, where was he?" cried Lucky Billy.

"Tell us, Billy," said Little Welchy, in a tremulous voice.

"Why, carried off, speerited away by the woman as the compressant belonged to. What else?"

"What use was he to her?" inquired Suds.

"I never met her to ax the question," rejoined Billy contemptuously. "Wot becomes o' the dead? I suppose there's nary man here as don't know that them compressants are specific as can grow into figures o' their own wills? Didn't I know a man as took his dying oath that one o' them specific with a compressant shining like a eye in her forehead tried to knock him off the foot-ropes, and that thinkin' he must go, and that there warn't no use in holding on against a specif's arm, he calls over the Lord's Prayer by way o' recommendin' himself, that psalm bein'

all he knew in that way, ven hinstantly the speerit disap-

peared."

Here Little Welchy exclaimed restlessly, "It's murderin' dark. I never could see the use o' darkness, myself.
I'll swear it warn't invented for men. Wot were eyes
given to us for, if half the time we aren't able to see out
of 'em?"

But dark as it was, I could perceive a thicker stratum of darkness growing in the west. It was not to be seen by looking at it, but by looking away from it, on either hand.

"That's where the storm will come from;" I said.

"Well, half a pipe o' baccy afore it breaks, says I," ex-

claimed Suds, and he went into the forecastle.

At midnight the starboard watch was relieved. By this time the blackness in the west had overspread the whole of the sky, and it was easy to distinguish this new enveloping shroud of stooping, motionless cloud from the higher thickness that had first blotted out the stars.

The state of suspense in which we were kept by this sullen, brooding blackness, this Egyptian opacity of atmosphere was disagreeable and painful. It was impossible to gaze round upon the overwhelming midnight without awe and an eager longing for any change from the death-like stillness and the mighty, voiceless heaving that

made a toy of the brig.

None of us thought it worth while to undress, as we knew not but that the next instant would summon us on deck. I lay down in my bunk, and more than at any other period of my time at sea did I feel the insecurity of the sailor's life. I figured to myself the insignificance of the vessel in comparison with the world of waters on which she was rolling, the immensity of the storm-charged heavens, and the speck that we presented under them.

Is not a miracle wrought by every ship that reaches port after a voyage? When we consider the astounding forces opposed to vessels, the treachery of the seas in their shoals, currents and waves, the fury of the gales which waste their whole streugth on them, the wonder surely is not that a few of them are wrecked, but that one of them lives to revisit the port from which she sailed.

The heat was so oppressive in the forecastle that I could not rest. The electric condition of the atmosphere, more-

over, had put my nerves out of tune, and I found myself listening anxiously for any sound that should denote the

coming of the storm.

Presently I heard Banyard's voice; rigging was thrown upon the deck, and I gathered that the watch were taking in the main-top-gallant sail. Shortly after this was done, the order was given to double reef the fore-topsail. The jib-halyards were also let go, and the watch had their hands full of work.

Suddenly the fore-scuttle turned into a square of livid blue, followed, though at a long interval, by a rumbling of thunder. Again came another flash of lightning, brilliant enough to illuminate the whole forecastle, and ghastly was the momentary effect, for the bearded faces

around looked like decaying corpses in the glare.

"All hands shorten sail!" shouted Banyard down the scuttle, accompanying the call by some heavy beat-

ing

Scarcely had I reached the deck when the heavens flew open from north to south, rent by a flash of lightning, the terrific near streaming of which caused me to cover my eyes with my hand. Then such a shock of thunder followed as no tongue can express; it was a sheer headlong roar, as of a world hurled Lucifer-like down the vault of the sky. The brig trembled as though she would fall to pieces, and the very ocean-swell that raised and depressed her seemed to fall under the echo and shock of that astounding volley.

The rain began in a few warm drops; but liberated by another flash, that threw up the whole compass of the sea to the horizon, it came down in a sheet; the decks thundered under the fall, and the water rushed roaring

and foaming through the scupper-holes.

"Let go the main-topsail halvards! double reef the sail! up with the foresail—up with it, men, before the wind comes! Rouse out your reef-tackles there! The lightning won't hurt ye! chock a block with it. Hands

aloft now!"

Such were the commands howled out by Old Windward, scarcely audible amid the rushing of the rain, and drowned by the rattling of the thunder. We worked in silence and in awe, no man knowing but that the next flash might rive the masts or set the brig on fire. The illumination

of the lightning gave us no help; on the contrary, its frightful lancings, glittering blue an instant only, left our eyes the blinder, and the darkness the more impenetrable for them.

The thunder, exploding overhead like parks of artillery, stunned and bewildered us, and prevented us from catching the orders screamed out in duettes by the captain and Old Windward. Wherever there was iron—at the yard-arms, on the anchors, ties, cables—there was the electric fluid writhing like serpents. We were soaked to the skin, and such was the torrent of rain that fell, that the water in the waist was up to our knees, and as the vessel rolled, it fell like a cataract against us, and swept some of us on our backs.

The skipper, not satisfied with double reefs, ordered the topsails to be close-reefed. By the time we had snugged the canvas and coiled down ready for running, the storm had diminished. The lightning darted only at long intervals, and the thunder muttered like some wounded fugitive beast all round the horizon. The rain fell steadily, but as yet there was no sign of wind, and the night remained as black as ever it had been.

"Go below, the starboard watch, but stand by for a call," sung out the mate, which was a hint to us not to

turn in.

We took advantage of this interval to put on dry clothes and get ready our oilskins; and now behold Jack Muck in his true character: with a terrible danger scarcely passed, and for aught they knew a yet more terrible danger in the shape of a sudden tempest of wind at hand, the men could still pass their jokes, light their pipes and "skylark," as though the brig were sailing along an azure sea, wafted by breezes as soft and warm as a woman's breath.

Stripped to his drawers, and drying himself on whatever came to hand, Suds found his chest upside down. Then came some practical joking. Beauty Blunt, a big, square-jawed, heavy, ugly man, seated himself upon the chest and defied Suds to dress himself. Suds, thinking that his chest had been put wrong side up in malice, lost his temper. Hard thumps were exchanged, and Suds was driven against Snoring Jimmy, who tipped over and swallowed some hot ash from his pipe, on which he kicked at Suds, and drove him into Beauty's arms.

Beauty, believing that Suds was attacking him in earnest, started up, and a serious encounter was threatened; but some unseen foot tripped Suds over, who in falling brought down Beauty; a heavy lurch of the brig tumbled a third man over the prostrate couple, and Little Welchy, singing out that Suds' chest was all right, raised it off the lid, and out rolled the contents.

In the midst of this confusion a heavy hissing, roaring sound, such as one might imagine is uttered by the Niagara Falls when heard at a distance, made itself audible above the uproar in the forecastle. I listened a moment, and then shouting out, "The gale is upon us, boys!" darted upon deck.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GALE.

As I gained the deck I was nearly knocked down the forescuttle by Banyard, who was rushing to call all hands. It was, however, no longer pitch-dark; for in the west the stars were shining, though there were clouds among them like long arms, and these were arching right over toward the brig, out of the horizon.

This was the only feature of the night I noticed, for within a dozen seconds of the time I reached the deck the

hurricane struck the brig.

Figure yourself transported from the calm of a cloister into a den of wild beasts, every one of them bellowing its loudest. But such an illustration conveys no idea of the uproar and horrible confusion of a sudden squall striking a vessel, even when she is prepared for it; for the furious wind is no single voice, but a pealing orchestra that runs the whole gamut, from hollow, thunderous, deep-toned bellows, to screams as shrill, eerie, and awe-inspiring as the shrieking lamentations of mad women.

The tempest struck us full abeam: and down went the brig to it, squattering with bulwark level to the sea, whilst the water, torn up in bucketfuls by the wind, just as you would tear up a weed by the roots, was hurled against her leaning side, and ran high into the air in a sheet of froth. The black sky lowered overhead, and clouds like the

shadows of worlds swept across it furiously.

Would the brig right? She lay like a log under the howling wind, and every moment seemed a year. I, standing on the weather side of the forecastle, felt the full force of the gale; and assuredly, had I let go my hold of the rail, I should have been blown overboard like a piece of paper.

If Old Windward gave any orders, all that I can say is, I never heard them. What human voice could have made itself distinguishable above the din that was pealing along the lacerated surface of the sea, and among the rigging of the brig, every rope of which was a gigantic harpstring, with a note of its own for the Titan fingers of the

storm-fiend to play his devil's saraband upon?

Suddenly I heard a report which made me think that a thunderbolt had fallen upon us; and looking up, I perceived that the main-topsail had blown in halves. For one moment the divided sail stood, the amidship rent open like a yawning mouth; the next instant the canvass was a mass of rags flogging the wind in whips from the bolt-

rope.

This was taking the sail off the brig with a vengeance; but I am not sure that the accident did not save us. The brig paid off rapidly and righted. Now the wind brought us the sound of the mate's voice; we manned the weather-forebraces and squared the yards, and like an arrow from a bow we were flying before the gale, crowding the sea into a pile of foam at our bows, through the force with which the hurricane drove us.

This was the heaviest gale I had in my own experience of the sea encountered. Once in the Bay of Bengal we had caught the fag end, or outer circle, of a typhoon, and a desperate gale we all thought it; but it lasted only an hour, and, severe though as it was, it was no more than a strong breeze when compared with the storm before which

we were now sweeping.

Captain Franklin stood aft at the binnacle watching the compass, to ascertain which way the wind veered; for in that way alone could he tell in which direction the storm was working. The worst of these sudden gales is, they will sometimes lull, spring up right ahead with redoubled fury, and catch you aback.

Meanwhile, Old Windward had sent a batch of men aloft to stow what remained of the maintop-sail. The

gale was blowing due west; hence we were rushing headlong due east. By the time the men were off the yard, the skipper, I suppose, had made his calculations; the starboard braces were manned, the gale brought on the port quarter, and the brig headed east north-east.

There was now a short pause. The wind being well astern, its force was not comparable to what had been felt when the brig lay at a standstill under it. She was racing under a close-reefed foretop-sail and foretop-mast stay-

sail.

As yet there was no sea to speak of. The wind appeared to have leveled the swell, and the sea creamed like an ocean of milk—one mighty extent of whirling

foam showing ghastly white in the gloom.

In a few minutes the mate roared out to us to clew up the foretop-sail and furl it. We fell to the work desperately. Something there was in the uproar and violence of the tempest that astonished the most experienced amongst us. But the furling of the sail was a terrible job. With the bunt-lines, clew-lines, and leech-lines snugging the clothes as effectually as could be done by a whole watch on each rope, it nevertheless took all hands half an hour to roll it up. The canvas bellied from the yards like globes of iron, and we stood to it pounding with our fists and hauling upon the gaskets until we were almost disposed to give up the job as hopeless.

No sconer was this sail furled than the order was given to set the reefed mainstay-sail. The fore and main yards were then checked, and the vessel's course made more

northerly, bringing the wind abeam.

The sea was now rising fast; the heavy waves came pouring down upon us in quick succession, and our decks were soused with the lumps of water which the wind chopped out of the leaping heads and flung at us, making the planking sputter under the hard discharges as if we were being raked with small shot.

"Now," thought I, "if this wind holds, Miss Franklin will see what people mean when they speak of the sea

running mountains high."

Presently it was "down foretop-mast stay-sail!—tally on there to the lee main-braces;" the helm was put down, and the brig hove up close to the wind with nothing on her but the reefed stay-sail.

By this I reckoned that the skipper had got hold of the right direction of the hurricane, and was heading out of it. There we lay, lifting heavily to the seas that now came booming against the bow and shooting columns of foam into the darkness, sagging dead to leeward, fore-reaching not an inch, and the hurricane in the rigging

screeching like a thousand steam-engines.

A little after four the dawn broke almost astern, so that our bowsprit now pointed directly to the quarter whence the hurricane had first rushed upon us. Melancholy, indeed, was the picture of the gray, foaming, mountainous waters under the pallid light, still black and sinister, away in the west. Anon the sun rose, a pale and watery phantom, with no warmth in its light, and kindling no glory in the hurling waste. All hands were still on deck and fagged out, looking like drowned mariners, vivified for the nonce to work a beaten vessel through a howling tempest. Soaked to the skin, our trousers and shirts (such of us at least as wore no oilskins) clinging to our flesh and delineating the bones in our bodies, most of us capless, with our dripping hair sticking streakily upon our foreheads, we looked as dismal and half-perished a crew as ever trod shipboard.

Half the chickens under the long-boat were drowned; the lashings of one of the scuttle-butts had carried away, and what remained of the cask was in the scuppers, a pile of staves; the deck was littered with rigging, amid which the water leaped and hissed to the roll of the brig; aloft, everything looked piteous, the ropes black with the wet, blowing to leeward in semicircles; the sails, which had been furled in the dark, lumped up on the yards anyhow, bits of the rent main topsail still whipping the wind,

everything slack, soused and wrecked-looking.

Old Windward whom I rather suspected, from the expression in his eyes, of having fortified his soul with several drams during the hours of darkness and tempest, now began to bawl out afresh; the well was sounded, and a foot of water being made, the pumps were manned and plied until they sucked. Then some hands were sent aloft to snug the sails whose bunts looked doubtful, while others were set to clear up the decks, to clap tackle upon the backstays, and in other ways to make the brig's spars secure. Indeed, at one time I thought the mate meant to send the

royal yards down, by the way he cocked his eye at them; and glad was I that the order was not given, for it was a job I, for one, assuredly would not have relished, so complete-

ly was I worn out.

However, we showed ourselves to be a good erew, and worked heartily. I remember thinking to myself that if ever I got command of a vessel, I should never ask for a more willing and active set of men to deal with. Yet our heartiness found no favor in the mate's eyes; for now that he could see us, he cursed us all for a pack of lazy blackguards, stamped upon the deck, shook his fist at us, and threatened Little Welchy with a belaying pin. Such treatment was enough to produce a mutiny out of hand, and, from the temper of the men, I have little doubt that the mate's impolitic brutality would have had a very disastrous sequel before the sun was half-an-hour above the horizon, if we had not been restrained by sheer weariness of body, supplemented by the knowledge of the dangers that menaced the brig in the furious gale still blowing, and the huge vortices into which she plunged her bowsprit down to the heel of it.

At seven bells, nothing remaining to be done on deck, we were sent below to get breakfast. Tired out in body and soul, drenched through and shivering—for, though we were in warm latitudes, the wind blew cold and struck a bitter chill through our streaming garments—the men

went into the forecastle sullen and muttering.

The tyranny of the mate, abetted by the skipper, was beginning to operate upon us all; the buoyancy of spirits which had been proof against more bullying in a few weeks than any of us could remember having experienced in as many voyages; the natural light-heartedness of sailors which rises superior to dangers, and finds them cheery in the very face of grim death itself; were being crushed by

the despotism of our commanders.

We ate our breakfast, changed our clothes, and smoked our pipes in silence, some of us stretching our wearied limbs in the bunks for a brief interval of repose. No man, however prejudiced against sailors, but would have pitied us, I think, had he beheld us in that gloomy forecastle, the water slopping down in pailfuls through the scuttle, the miserable lamp swinging under the blackened beam, our meal, after a hard night's work, being such fare as no

workhouse pauper would look at, some of us without dry clothes to exchange for our dripping garments, and the "castle" itself, in which we sat or rested, silent and wearied, tossed now to the heavens, now plunging with a mighty roar of water into the abysms between the seas, making our bones ache to the marrow with the tremendous, never-ending movement.

At eight bells the watch was called, contrary to our expectations, and it being the port watch's spell below, we turned in and slept away our weariness until dinnertime. To our great surprise, on going on deck, we found blue sky, a lively breeze abeam, and the watch employed in making sail. No vestige of the tempest that had nearly sacrificed us was to be seen save in the still tumbling green seas with frothing caps, over which the brig went gracefully, looking like herself again in the bright sunshine, and bending to the trade winds blowing freely.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

A FORTNIGHT of fine winds, and we swam out of the fresh trades into those equatorial latitudes where baffling catspaws rule, and thunderstorms, and calms, the sailor's curse.

The captain and his mate now gave us no rest at all. From morning until night we were bousing the yards about, sending up studding sails and taking them in again, sweating the running gear until our hands were in blisters. If but a catspaw was beheld on the glassy surface of the deep, the cry rose to man the braces, though it could have been seen that the air was no more than a passing sigh, and that the next that came would probably streak the horizon in a contrary direction.

The murmurs of the men were frequent and deep, but

as yet they had not penetrated aft.

Pendulum Banyard, however, fared badly at our hands. His instructions from the skipper were, on no account to lose the least breath of air; and between his fear of the captain and his fear of the men he suffered miserably.

It happened that one middle watch there was a calm

that showed no signs of a break. The yards were braced anyhow, the brig lay like a log, her white sails glimmering faintly in the darkness, and the lucent surface of the sea emblazoned with the mirroring of stars. A hand dozed at the wheel; forward both watches lay on the forecastle, the interior being an oven of which the atmosphere was not to be respired without risk of asphyxia.

Banyard, seated upon the skylight with his cap off, bent his head down to hear if the captain was stirring, then pulled out his pipe, filled it, and lighted it at the binnacle lamp. This done, he resumed his seat and smoked solemnly. But it was a night laden with mesmeric influences; the faint wash of water under the counter, just tweaking the rudder so as to make the tiller chains rattle harmoniously, was like a mother's soothing hush in her baby's ear; the starlight poured drowsily upon the eyelids, and the faint stir of the light canvas in the gloom fell like a whisper bidding the listener sleep. The pipe dropped out of Banyard's mouth; he did not pick it up; presently he was broad on his back, snoring.

At this moment a low whistle sounded from the wheel. Instantly two dark figures rose up from the prostrate crowd on the forecastle and went sneaking on tiptoe aft. One of these figures carried a coil of rope, with which he sprang into the main rigging. All this I beheld from the forecastle, and wondered what mischief was brewing. Anon the figure came down and stationed himself at the foot of the mainmast; presently he was joined by the other who had been busy about the unconscious form of

Banyard.

There was a short pause, and then a loud yell, and up went the body of Banyard. The two men came rushing aft.

"What have you been doing?" I shouted. "The

rope's not round his neck, is it?"

They made no reply and shuffled headlong down the scuttle, smothering groans of laughter. The rest of the men were now awake, asking one another the meaning of this disturbance. I sung out,—

"Some of us have been hanging Banyard, and his body swings at the gaff," and off I ran to lower him down, the

others following.

A glance, however, sufficed to let me know that it was

not a case of sus. per coll. Pendulum swung to a block strapped to within half a dozen feet of the throat of the gaff; the rogues had slipped a running bowline under his armpits whilst he slept, hoisted him up, and belayed him. This was nautical practical joking; had they made him fast by the heels and left him to swing head down, the humor would have been thought more exquisite by the crew.

"Here, lower away, some of you, gently!" shouted the poor victim. "Who's served me in this fashion, I should like to know? D'ye mean to lower me down, I say? why, I weigh thirteen stone, you blackguards, and if a strand

parts I'm a dead man!"

There was just enough movement in the sea to keep the old fellow slewing and swinging round and round like a leg of mutton on a roasting-jack; but what tickled the crew most was the fright ludicrously expressed in the man's attitude—his face, of course, was indistinguishable; he held himself rigid, thinking this would make him a lighter weight, and hung like a scarecrow.

"Give us a song, Banyard—you know the one we likes, Mr. Second Horficer!" shouted one of the men, and he

began to sing,

"Oh, the King of the Fleas by the Red Sea dwells, Sing prickatee, hophigh, jumpo, scratch! He lives in a city of ruins and smells, Sing ho! for a candle and strike me a match!"

"Give us the chorus, Banyard, you villain!"

"From Scotland he came, did this King o' the Fleas, Sing prickatee, hophigh, jumpo, scratch! And journey'd to Lunnon by vay o' the seas, Sing—"

Here some one whispered, "The skipper!" and we skurried forward on tiptoe, and hung about the shadow of the galley to hear the result.

The Captain came on deck, and went to the binnacle,

looked about him, and missed the "officer on duty."

"Where's Mr. Banyard?" he shouted.

"I'm up here, sir!" cried Pendulum. "They've hoisted me up, sir. I'm in danger of my life, Captain!"

The Captain raised his eyes, and evidently under the

impression that the poor man was "skylarking," he called

to him furiously to come down.

"I can't come down, sir! they've hitched me under my arms, Captain Franklin! For the love of God, lower me down, sir! I heard something snap—yes, by the Lord, something snapped, sir! If I fall I'm killed!" cried Banyard in ghostly tones, not daring to raise his voice, lest the exertion should make him heavier!

At this juncture Snoring Jimmy (one of the guilty two) burst into a loud hysterical laugh—something betwixt a yell and a sneeze. The Captain, seeing how matters stood, roared to us to come aft, and lower Mr. Banyard down. But nobody stirred; the fact was, nobody liked to show himself for fear of being charged with having had a hand in the matter.

"Is this a mutiny?" shouted the Captain.

"It ain't no mutiny!" responded Suds, disguising his voice. "Some one's bin and taken a rise out o' the car-

penter, that's all."

"If wind comes," groaned poor Pendulum out of the gloom, "they'll be lettin' go my rope by mistake. Is this a becomin' position for one o' your horsifers, Captain Franklin? For the Lord's sake, lower me down, sir!"

The Captain accordingly approached the mainmast, and groping among the belaying pins for Banyard's line, he slackened away. Irrepressible explosions of laughter from the men saluted Banyard's descent, and these swelled into a roar when the skipper (meanly angry enough to wreak his immediate passion on the innocent, rather than obtain no satisfaction) let go the rope when Banyard was some four or five feet above the deck, whereby the poor old fellow dropped with a thump that had like to have broken his back.

"Bring down that block, one of you!" exclaimed the skipper, turning away to let us know that no further notice would be taken of the matter that night.

Banyard now came rushing among us, sputtering with

rage.

"Where are the blackguards that triced me up?" he bawled. "If there are twenty on 'em I'll gi' 'em a thrashing one arter the other! If there are forty on 'em, I'll fight 'em! the murderin' sons of sea-cooks! Was it you

as did it, Billy? or you, or you, Jim? . ." and he champed

the question at us all round.

We all indignantly denied that we knew anything about it, and loudly expressed our disgust at his impudence in questioning us. The most indignant of all were, of course, the two guilty men. Old Sam, however, really got into an honest passion when he was questioned.

"You had better not say as I did it!" he cried, running

his eyes up and down Banyard's figure. "Who did then?" shouted Banyard.

"Who did? foind out! Think I'd be muckin' about aloft this time o' night? If you say I did it, you're a liar, and the truth isn't in yer!"

"You call me a liar agin!"

"Call ye a liar agin!" sailors have a queer trick of repeating what is said to them. "Why shouldn't I? Who's afeard o' you? I could eat a better man nor you for breakfast, and never know that I'd had a meal o' food."

"Now then, Bully Well-Sounder, you'd better get aft, and mind your dooty," said a voice. "There's a gale o' wind in the skipper's cabin, and the keel wants squaring,

or the brig'll be foul o' one of the poles."

This sally was immediately followed by a chorus of what is called "chaff" ashore, though a mild name for the rough banter of sailors, against which poor Pendulum manfully held his own for a short time, but at last turned,

overwhelmed, and shambled aft.

Next morning Banyard thundered with a handspike on the scuttle and sang out, "Lay aft, all hands. Skipper wants ye." We pretty well understood that this summons referred to the joke played off on the carpenter, and feeling innocent, marched to the main deck jauntily and defiantly.

The skipper, standing near the skylight, looked at us with a frown which, I dare say, he thought very intimidating, and exclaimed, "Which of you triced Mr. Banyard

up last night?"

No answer.

"The men who did it had better speak," said he. "I'll

find out who did it, so look to yourselves."

Still we kept silence, He put the question to us all, one after the other, "Did you do it?" and the invariable reply was, "No," delivered in a variety of keys, and

rendered irresistibly comic by the countenances of the men.

"Very well," said the captain, pale with anger, "not another ounce of stores shall be served out to you until I am told who triced up my second officer."

To the surprise of us all, out dashed Little Welchy.

"Look here, Captain Franklin," he shouted. "I mean to speak you civil, and it'll be your fault if I don't. There's me and others of us as knows nothen about this here job, and if you're goin' to stop our 'lowance for bein' innocent, I say it ain't fair."

"Hold your tongue, and go forward," exclaimed the captain, looking darkly on the little fellow. "Do you

want another cow-hiding?"

This allusion to a subject inexpressibly distressing to Welchy's feelings put him into a passion. He flourished a naked sheath-knife in the air and burst out, "By the Lord, I'll promote some one to the command o' this brig—I will, if you touch me, skipper. Hands off! we ain't coolies!"

The captain, no coward, although a bully, made a rush upon the man; the uplifted knife glittered, but in a second some of us threw ourselves between the men, and the knife was wrenched out of Welchy's hand.

"Put that man in irons!" shouted the captain. But none of us stirred. He ran to the skylight and bawled for Old Windward, who in a few moments came running up on deck in his drawers and shirt. "Help me to put that scoundrel in irons!" cried the captain, pointing to Welchy, and he shouted to Banyard to fetch the irons.

Before you could have counted ten there was a violent struggle: Windward had knocked one man over and was himself sprawling with his nose bleeding like a fountain, struck down by Beauty Blunt. He regained his legs and rushed in among us like a mad bull. But what could two do against a whole crew? The unequal combat lasted a minute, and the skipper and his mate turned and ran aft.

The blood of the men was up: the worst passions working in undisciplined breasts. Bethinking me more of Miss Franklin than of anything else, I exclaimed, "Enough has been done: the mate is well punished, and the skipper has get his least."

has got his lesson. Let us know where to stop."

"I'm not going forrard without my breakfast." said

Liverpool Sam.

Just then Banyard emerged with the irons. The crew rushed upon him with a howl, the irons were pitched overboard, and the old man pummeled upon the deck. Then we all remained in the waist in a body, whilst the skipper and his mate talked together aft.

Presently Old Windward came forward and shouted out, "What is it you want now, that you're all hanging

together?"

"We want our breakfast," was the answer.
"Who run the carpenter up? will ye tell the skipper

"We don't know, an' if we did we shouldn't tell," cried

back Little Welchy, looking at him piratically.

"I don't want no words from you!" bellowed the mate, foaming with rage: and a pretty picture he made, with the cast in his eye and his shirt blood-stained and his short flannel drawers. "Go forward, all of you. Not a sup nor bite do you get until vou've told the captain who swung

Mr. Banyard."

He was walking away, but we all ran after him, on which he whipped out an iron belaying pin, stopped short, and faced about. We were all spokesmen for ourselves now, and saluted him with a hurricane of yells. He brandished his belaying pin, and shouted that he wouldn't hear us. "Who swung the carpenter? tell the skipper that, or no breakfast, no dinner, no smell of food if you wait a year!" "If you mean what you say," cries Beauty Blunt, step-

ping forward, "then I'll just give ye our meanin': either we gets wot we signed articles to receive, or we'll seize the

brig and carry her back to Lannon."

"Ha! that's what you'd be at, is it?" cried the mate; and he was beginning to rave at us for a parcel of pirates when the skipper called to him, and bidding us go forward, added that he would send his decision to us pres-

ently.

We obeyed this order; only, as we walked toward the forecastle, I heard some of the men swear that if the breadbarge wasn't filled and the tea served out within a quarter of an hour, they'd seize the brig and help themselves to what they could find in her. There was no question but that they were in the temper to carry out their threats,

and heartily glad was I when, a few minutes after we had assembled on the forecastle, Banyard came limping for-

ward to tell us that we might go to breakfast.

So peaceably terminated a disturbance that was hard upon being a mutiny, and in all probability a bloody one, seeing the character of the crew and the sort of men they had to deal with in the skipper and mate.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE FIRST WATCH.

A LIGHT breeze sprang up from the north-east shortly after breakfast, and the brig began to move. All sail was crowded on her, lower, top-mast, and top-gallant studding sails set, and the most made of the small slant of wind. The men showed no disposition to sulk, and the captain, for that day at least, was a little more moderate in his way of directing us. However, for twenty-four hours Old Windward carried about with him a reminder of the riot in the shape of a puffed eye, and keen was the satisfaction with which the men observed it, and hearty their congratulations to Beauty Blunt on the weight of his fist.

Miss Franklin only showed herself on deck for a short time that day. I dare say her brother had frightened her

with an account of the behavior of the crew.

At eight bells we sighted a vessel hull down on the starboard beam. We hoisted the ensign and she showed her colors, which, I understood, were Danish. She was, however, too far off to speak; but so light was the wind that we had her topsails in view all the afternoon, and it was not until the close of the second dog-watch that her royals sank below the rim of the sea directly astern.

The sun was scorchingly hot, and the decks so burning that it was scarcely possible to walk about with naked feet. The pitch in the seams of the planks was as soft as wax, and if you grasped a shroud or backstay, your hands came away from it black with the tar. One feels the want of steam in these latitudes. Nothing can be imagined more tiresome than the stretch of sea, white with the glaring sunshine, heaving placidly under a dome of copper sky, not a break upon the horizon, and only here and there the

shadow of a breeze that dies in its efforts to reach the vessel.

They kept the cabin cool by an awning and by sluicing the decks with water; but the forecastle was more than a Hindoo could have stood. In consequence, we almost lived on deck, lying in the shadow of the foresail or the long-boat, or close against the bulwarks, and taking our

meals in this way.

I had noticed for the last three or four days that Deacon had been more engrossedly employed upon his eternal diagram than I had ever before observed; also I had caught him looking at me with a meditative expression in his eyes, though he would avert his gaze immediately on being detected. I had not hitherto paid close attention to what I considered an unintelligible caprice of his; but when I found him, as now, incessantly tracing his diagram on paper and poring over it, I began to wonder seriously what he was at, and to recall the outline and conjecture its meaning. That it was a bit of geography I was disposed, with Liverpool Sam, to believe; but whether he was designing a new Utopia, or sketching the outline of some unknown coast, or elaborating some new theory with respect to the physical structure of a coral island, I could not guess. My curiosity, however, was repressed by his manifest disinclination to take me or any of the rest of us into his confidence. I looked upon him, as did the others, as a queer sort of man, though I was willing sometimes to suspect that in the heart of all this study, lip-whispering, and odd reading, was a motive which might make me see him in a new light could I fathom it.

On the evening following that whereon Pendulum Banyard had been piratically run aloft, I found myself on my back on the forecastle, my head on a coil of rope, survey, ing the stately height of white sail that towered above, wind enough in each square of canvas to keep it quiet, and the royals pale as the moon in a morning sky, making glimmering clouds under the rich, full-lighted tropical stars.

The silence of the sails was a blessed reprieve; pretty well all day the canvas had been slapping the masts, and we were getting tired of this side the Line. A delightful draught blew upon me from out of the foot of the foresail,

and I lay, luxurious as a monarch, enriching the wind with white puffs of tobacco smoke, and thinking—I could not help it: the beauty of the night, the hush upon the brig, and the high trembling stars brought her into my mind—of Louisa Franklin. When the skipper bullied the men, did he remember that he had his sister on board? That morning bloodshed and crime had been nearly provoked; and if the crew turned upon the people aft, how would it fare with the girl? This had come into my head when I saw the naked knife in Little Welchy's hand, and the mutinous fire in the eyes of the men around; it came into my head again now.

A man came out of the forecastle and stood looking around him. Others lay about as well as myself, men out of both watches, and some two or three talked in low tones with the cook at the door of the deck-house. The skylight aft was wide open, with a windsail down it; there was just enough swell to keep the figure of the man at the wheel rising and falling to the length of his body against the stars; one star held true on his port hand—a token that the brig had good steerage way on her, and was sail-

ing a steady course.

The fellow looking around him from the scuttle stepped up to me.

"Asleep, mate?"

"No; I'm studying astronomy in the attitude recommended by the Dutchman."

Deacon, for it was he, squatted himself on the deck close against my head, with his legs under him like a tailor.

"It's hot enough for spontaneous combustion in the forecastle," said he, lighting a pipe. "There are some cartridges, among the cargo, they tell me, and I shouldn't be surprised to hear them popping away like a lot of fiends opening soda-water bottles. Talking of cartridges—there's a connection between the subjects too—I'm cursed if there won't be a mutiny aboard if the skipper and mate don't mend their manners. Beauty let fall some words this afternoon which brought such queer looks into the faces of Welchy and Suds and Old Sam and others—and may be into mine, but I won't swear, for there's no looking-glass to see into—that would make me feel anything but comfortable if I was skipper here. Who's going to stand that swab Sloe? Did the Almighty make us in His image

to submit to such a man's foul-mouthed insults and cursing, with our heads dropped, as if we should say, 'Fire away, my angel; we were only sent into the world for

lovely gentlemen like you to kick and slang!"

"I hope there'll be no mutiny whilst I'm aboard," said I. "No good ever comes of mutineering. Quite true is the saying that if a sailor resists his commander he resists the law, and piracy or submission is his only alternative. If rights are denied, let us insist upon having them, and get them if we can; but when it comes to flourishing knives and looking blood and murder, I'm for walking off. You can't oblige men like the skipper and Old Windward

more than by putting yourself in the wrong box."

"You're quite right; no bloodshed, say I. But has any mortal man the right to try human patience too far? Look at the stuff that the crew of a vessel like this is made of; a body of ignorant, undisciplined men, without a fragment of interests ashore to keep them straight, careless of to-morrow, as all sailors are, requiring a firm but a kind hand—the sort of treatment that makes a dog lick vour boots. Careless of to-morrow, I say, they are; and that is the quality in them which skippers should fear, for such men act without reflection, turn with a rush, and never think until the deed is done, and when they are asking each other, What next, mates?"

"Dashed if I don't think you're a schoolmaster in dis-

guise. Where did you learn to talk so neatly?"

"Can't a decent headpiece go along with dirty hands and tarry breeches? I've met cleverer men than ever I am in the forecastle, God bless you! chaps with warm poetical imaginations, good grammar to stow their thoughts in, and enough philosophy to fit 'em for a chair of morals at a Scotch university."

Here he came to a dead lugubrious pause.

"Can you keep a secret?"

"What now?"

"I'm in earnest."

"Lord!" I shouted; "your voice sounded like a Malay parrot's. What's your secret?"

He made no answer for some moments, and then whis-

pered with extraordinary earnestness,-

"If I tell you the secret of my life, swear on your word as a messmate that you'll never repeat it."

I raised my head out of the coil of rope to have a look at him. He leaned toward me, and his eyes shone like a cat's, taking no luster from the starlight without, but glowing from some illumination within.

"If it's murder, my beauty," said I, "keep your ghosts to yourself. I want to hear nothing horrible."

"Murder! why, confound it, that's a nice notion to take against a man who asks leave to tell you something! Murder! you want thumping for saying it." He pulled back his head and sucked hotly at his pipe.

"How do I know what you've been?" said I; "what you've done?-whether your mind isn't like Bluebeard's attic-full of trunks. Here are you talking about moral philosophy and chairs at Scotch universities, and the deuce knows what else; learned in navigation-"

"That isn't true."

- "In navigation terms, then, a French scholar—a wise man in a dirty shirt. Haven't you got a history? of course you have. Is it a bad one? Then I don't want to hear it. None of your beach-combing gammon-veracious yarns dished up out of the lying history of Black Dan the smuggler, and Blue Jim the bold buccaneer. If you've got an honest story to tell, I'll listen to it; if it's a murdersome thing, bestow it on Suds-his mouth was made to hold wide open, and he told us the other day that his favorite dish was black pudden."
- "Talk of mouths!" said Deacon sepulchrally; "I never heard such a twister as yours. Don't think I'm in a hurry to tell you my story. Why, it's occupied me all the weeks since we left Bayport to make up my mind to take you into my confidence. Do you ask me why I choose you? -then it's for two reasons; you saved my life, and secondly, you're an educated man, and our united heads will bring it about."

"Bring what about?"

"You shall hear."

"I should like to look at your face by lamplight before

you begin. I can't see you. Are you grinning?"

"I swear I never was more in earnest!" he cried in a voice of tragic intensity. "You are making a joke of it; but let me tell you that my resolution to bring you into my secret has cost me a heavy struggle."

"Well, fire away. I'll respect whatever you may tell me, mate."

"Come with me first into the fo'c'sle," said he; "we'll

return presently."

He got up and went to the scuttle. Banter him as I might, I could not doubt his seriousness. My curiosity revived, and stepping over the bodies of the men, I followed Deacon into the forecastle.

Liverpool Sam sprawled on a chest, sound asleep, his sooty pipe in his hand and his mouth open; Snoring Jimmy, with one thin leg dangling out, sputtered through his nose in an upper bunk. The rest of the crew were on deck. The gentle movement of the brig made the lamp swing slowly, and the timbers now and again creaked. I kept under the scuttle to get the air—after the sweet draughts from the foresail, this atmosphere tingled upon my cheeks; and that Sam and Jimmy could sleep in it was only accounted for by understanding that pickled sailors can exist everywhere, and endure all

things.

Deacon went to his chest and rummaged. After turning about his clothes, he fished up a queer old pocket-book, or rather an old leather case tied with a rope yarn. He brought the thing to the lamp to loose the knot, and his hands shook in a way surprising to see. In fact, what with his tremor and his yellow face, and eyes blinking near the flame, and the queer look which his black, lank hair gave him, my mind was fully prepared to receive some sanguinary disclosure, and I looked earnestly at the leather case, expecting to see him produce, perhaps a blood-stained handkerchief, or a clot-rusty jack-knife—I don't know what—something he could flourish under my nose whilst he rolled his eyeballs and whispered hoarsely, "This did the deed!" or "Behold the proof of the bloody affair!"

However, what he took from the case was a single sheet of newspaper tied up with a bit of faded green or blue ribbon; he slipped this off, opened the paper, and putting his finger upon a passage, desired me, in a whisper, to

draw near the light and read.

"What the deuce are you shaking about?" I said.

"Read!" he muttered, with a queer flashing in his eyes.

The newspaper was a copy of the London Times, dated in February, 1840. It was yellow and greasy with age and fumbling. I cannot express how amazingly that sheet of newspaper suggested the countless times it had been opened and folded.

The passage he pointed out was down in the corner,

and was headed:

"THE Royal Oak.—All hope of this ship's safety is abandoned; she is now overdue eleven months. This fine vessel, owned by Messrs. Spiers, of Liverpool, and built at Sunderland in 1838, left Sydney on the 1st of December, with a cargo of wool. She was bringing besides, twenty thousand sovereigns, and bar-gold to the value of forty thousand pounds. The number of souls on board were sixty, of which ten were first-class and nineteen steerage passengers. She was signaled by the New Zealaud bark Emily, four days out, in lat. 40° 15', long. 160° 3', and has not since been heard of."

"Have you read it?" whispered Deacon.

I nodded and handed him the paper, which he care-

fully restored to the depths of his chest.

He then scrambled through the scuttle, and I followed him, much impressed by his mysterious behavior, and wondering what on earth he was going to tell me.

CHAPTER XX.

DEACON'S SECRET.

I WENT back to my place on the forecastle. There was a little more wind, the sails fuller, a sound of gushing waters under the bows, with a sensible slanting of the pillar of pale canvas. This was proper sailing: a few days of this, and the south-east trades would be whistling through the rigging.

"Did you read the name of the ship?" asked Deacon.

"The Royal Oak."

"I was boatswain's mate aboard her."

"You!"

"Yes, me. Why not? I was twenty-four years old."

"The newspaper says that she was never heard of after

being signaled by the New Zealand barque. You were saved, then, and never reported to the owners?"

"That's my secret," said he solemnly.

"A shipwreck! is that all?" cried I, disappointed; for this surely was the mountain and the mouse.

"Who says that's all? I say it's a shipwreck and some-

thing besides."

He held up his forefinger, and began his narrative in that imposing attitude. I listened, like the wedding

guest in the poem.

"I was bo'sun's mate aboard of her. She was a ship of 1500 tons registered tonnage, frigate built, painted ports, poop and t'gallant fock'sle, and the handiest vessel to steer that ever I met. She'd look right up into the wind, masts straight as a duchess in a queen's ball-room. How she came to grief, God alone knows. Colliers built eighty years ago outlived her, and are carrying their coals now. But the sea is a ship's providence—"

"Very fine," said I, "but it's no story."

- "We left Sydney on the 1st of December, and stood from the Heads under all plain sail, and I remember looking astern at that hollow in the cliff to the left of the Heads, thinking how the bit of flat rock there would wreck a ship that should mistake the light they had stuck over it to warn vessels away. We carried the breeze till sunset, and then it failed us and drew ahead, and we beat against a light wind; and a few days after sailing we exchanged signals with a little barque coming up from New Zealand.
- "It was known to all hands that there was a deal of money on board—money and gold stowed away somewhere aft—but how much none of us got to hear; but reports and talk exaggerated the amount, and you'll guess we thought it a lump, when it was said that if the money and gold was divided equally among passengers and officers and crew, each person would have 40001.! So we made the value of that bit of freight 240,0001. But, as you have seen by the newspaper, we were a long chalk out of our reckoning.

"All went well with us until we had come to somewhere about 120° of west longitude; but what our latitude was I don't know. We were middling high, I think. The course given me one day when I was at the wheel was

S.W., but then we were close-hauled, and, the wind promising pretty steady, the second mate might have thought it better to fix a heading than to tell me to keep her full and bye."

"That's rather queer, isn't it?" said I.

"So it may be. But every man has his own way. Men learn rules to pass an examination, but fall back on their own methods when the charge of a ship comes into their hands."

"There's something in that."

"A little before two o'clock one morning the wind veered round to the south'ard, and came on to blow moderate strong, but so cold that it seemed to stick fangs of ice in your cheeks. We braced the yards to it, but it freshened toward the morning watch, and at day-break we were laying our port channels under water with royals and

mizzen-topgallant sail stowed.

"The skipper not liking the look of the weather sent down royal yards-a queerer sky I never saw; just like looking at blue through a sheet of ice; bit by bit the wind freshened, and bit by bit we reduced canvas, until at two o'clock in the afternoon we were lying-to under a closereefed maintopsail, a hurricane blowing from the south-'ard, and a regular Cape Horn sea running. Is there anything to beat a Pacific sea? they say that the highest waves aren't more than thirty feet high; but if the waves in that gale weren't as high as the mizzentop you shall call me a liar. When the ship rolled to windward in the hollows, there was just a wall of green waters on both hands, looking as tall as Dover cliffs-enough to turn your hair gray; and I thought the ship would burst to pieces under the tremendous hammering from the seas, and the pressure of the jammed-up wool-bales in the hold.

"The gale blew a whole week, sending us surging due north, or rather to the west'ards of north. The skipper tried to put on a bold face, but though he was a pretty good sailor, he had not much bottom; and you could see by the color of his skin that his blood was gone wrong. They had special prayers in the cuddy, and a poor lookout it was for the steerage passengers, battened down in the 'tween decks in darkness, the galley fire out, and no

cooking to be got.

"When the gale fell, we found ourselves some hundreds of miles to the nor rard of our course, not by dead-reckoning, for what will the log show you when you're making nothing but lee way? The skipper got observations at the end of the week, and made the latitude something like 46° or 47°. A tremendous drive, wasn't it? but the send of those seas, traveling at forty miles an hour, will be carrying you across the world, while you're fancying that the vessel's reaching with no more than four or five points leeway."

"Come to your story," said I. "It'll be eight bells

before you get me out of this storm."

"I want to show you how it all came about. You'll be staring at me presently, and if I skip small particulars, you'll say I've invented the yarn. No sooner did we think that the gale was done, and were thanking God for the privilege of being able to dry ourselves, when up it sprang again, this time more from the westward; and for nine whole days it roared fit to blow us out of the sea. The Royal Oak was a good ship, but if she had been an island something must have happened to her from such weather.

"On the seventh day of the second gale, the carpenter reported five inches of water in the hold. We got the pumps to suck, but next day we could only keep the water level; the day after, it gained upon us an inch every two hours. Then the gale broke, but what with all this wind and the pumping, the crew were used up. The first thing that happened was, we refused to pump; we said that we couldn't keep the ship afloat, and meant to take to the boats. The captain lost his wits, and ran about like a madman; then there was a panic; a crowd of us rushed to the quarter-boats, and we fought like wild beasts. Some one struck me over the forehead, the Lord knows what with, but down I dropped insensible.

"It was dark when I came to. Where I was I couldn't remember for some minutes, but feeling the water coming down upon me, just as if I was lying under a hose, I got up and looked around. It was raining fit to drown a whale, and a strong wind blowing, I can't tell you from what quarter, the main-topsail was aback, and the ship driving stern on. Faint as I was, the fear that overcame me when I thought I was alone on the sinking ship put a pretty strong voice into my throat, and I bawled out,—

"'Is there anybody left?"

"'Yes, one man,' says a voice, and close up against the poop ladder was a figure.

"'Who are you?' said I.
"'Tommy Leech,' he answers, on which I dragged

myself up to him, feeling strangely comforted.

"The thought of perishing alone in that ship would have driven me raving mad; but the trouble seemed small enough when I found that I shouldn't go down alone."

Here he paused and fell into a reverie.

"Tail on, Deacon," said I; "come to your story."

"Well," he continued, raising his head; "it turned out that all hands had left the ship in the quarter-boats and pinnace. One quarter-boat, with some women in her, capsized alongside, and Tommy was in her. He, of them all, was the only one that managed to save himself. He was thrown by a sea into the main chains, and scrambled on board; the other boats drifted away like smoke, and

disappeared.

"What was to be done? the ship was rolling heavily, showing the weight of water in her; the only boat left was the long boat, made as good as a fixture by the spars stowed atop of it. Should we turn to and build a raft? We were both too weak to do that. However, we got something to eat and drink to put life into us, and let go the lee mainbraces and squared the yards, and got the ship before the wind, and lashed the helm amidships. We trusted to drive among some of the Pacific islandswe didn't know where we were; but we knew it would be better to head north than south, and so we let the ship go.

"When this was done, I missed Tommy. I was worn out and fell down, and went to sleep like a baby. When I awoke it was daylight; I had slept right through the night; a fresh wind was blowing, and a lumping sea on, and the ship was all aback again, but no deeper in the water. This discovery made me frantic with joy. I rushed about the decks seeking Tommy, and found him in the cuddy lying among a litter of bottles. He was insensible with the drink, and all my hauling him about put no more life into him than had he been dead. I went on deck again and put the wheel hard over, and the ship, having stern way on her, rounded; the topsail filled, and

away she went sousing over the running seas. Are you listening?"

"Yes, yes. Go on."

"What had stopped the leak I don't know. The weight of water in her may have calked the hole with sodden wool. For two days we drove before the wind. We sighted no ships, and saw no land. But hope was strong in us both, for the ship lived stoutly, and any hour might bring about our rescue. We stood watch turn and turn about. Tommy didn't get drunk again. He said he thought the ship would founder that night when he took the liquor from the pantry, and made himself insensible that he mightn't suffer when the ship went down. That was his excuse, and no blame to him. People ashore take chloroform to meet pain, and a man has a right to kill his feelings before he drowns, if he has time, for it's a cold, strangling, ugly death, is drowning; you can't say your prayers with the salt water burning in your throat."

He paused to see if I had anything to say to this; but I was impatient to hear his secret. An argument would have been tiresome, besides, he was quite clever enough to anticipate all that could be said against this logic of

brutes.

- "On the evening of the fourth day the wind went down and left a mild breeze. The ship appeared scarcely to move to it. As the sun sank the horizon stood out clear: I said to Tommy, 'Is that a fog on the port bow?' Well, he thought it was a cloud. But hoping it might be something else, I took the telescope and went aloft and saw land. It was plain enough, and I gave a shout and came down hand over fist. I ran aft and took its bearings before it fell dark, and stood to the wheel heading for it. I steered for three hours, and then Tommy steered; but I couldn't rest, though I laid down on the stern gratings, for fear that Tommy should head the ship away from the land.
- "When the morning broke the land lay close ahead, not two miles off. I consulted with my mate as to how we should act. The bower anchors were stowed; we couldn't hope that the kedge would hold her, even if we could have made shift to get it out of the fore-chains. So we resolved to run the ship ashore on the beach that lay gleaming like pearl.

"Well, good luck favored us, for the breeze astern freshened with the sun, and to give us more headway Tommy loosed the foresail, and then stood forward looking into the water (which was clear as crystal) to pilot me clear of rocks. But the beach shelved into good soundings the ship, gathering fresh way, and helped by the long rollers, took the ground, burying her cutwater into the sand, and there stood—"

"Who the devil's that growlin' away like a dog in a kennel?" here said one of the men who lay at a short distance from us, raising himself on his elbow. "Never in all my life heerd such murmurin'! one'd think as nightmares was growin' cheap. Is that you, Sniggers?"

"All right—all right!" answered Deacon: he drew a little closer to me, and subduing his voice proceeded: "We had all day before us to think over what we should do. First we made a good breakfast, and then we searched about for weapons, and found a pair of revolvers in the skipper's cabin. I then climbed on to the main-topgallant yard, and striding the yard with my back to the mast, I took a long look through the glass all around. There was a middling high hill covered with bushes and trees at the after end of the island, but between that and where the ship lay was flat, with plenty of green stuff upon it, and a small river-well, it was an arm of the sea shaped like a river, and it shone like steel between the trees. The whole island wasn't above a mile broad and three long, and from the masthead I could see the ocean all beyond.

"I came down and told Tommy that the place was a desert, and that there was no other land visible, and from the top-gallant yard I ought to be able to see land thirty mile off.

"We then agreed to turn to and get all the provisions and water we could take ashore, in case the ship went to pieces; likewise we resolved to get the long boat out, and all that was proper to furnish her. Tommy spoke to me about the gold; I told him to make no mistake, I hadn't forgotten that: but that we should be fools to waste precious time in landing what wouldn't keep body and soul together if the ship broke up. First let us collect what was necessary for our preservation, then buckle to the

long boat, in which we might sail away and make inhabited land or be picked up: and when this work was done, then

we could take the gold out of the ship.

"Well, we spent all that day in landing stores; and next day we rigged up tackles with jiggers upon the falls, and took the ends to the capstan, and hove the spars clear of the long boat, and slung the boat into the water. We rowed her round to what I call the river, and moored her securely, and then returned to the ship and went on landing everything we could think of that might be necessary for the preservation of our lives. This cost us a week of hard work, starting at daybreak, and never knocking off until it was dark; but the climate was beautiful; I could do five times as much work there as I could anywhere else, and besides, we were working for our lives. All this while the weather remained fine, with light winds and sometimes dead calms.

"We found the gold stowed away in cases thick as a house, lined with sheet iron and clamped with iron bars. There were two of them. The first box we prized open (it took us a whole morning to do it) contained the sovereigns in canvas bags, each bag holding a thousand, so it was an easy job to lug the bags on to the forecastle and pitch them on to the beach. There were just twenty of these bags. In the other box was the bar gold, packed like bars of soap, one atop of the other: they looked like copper, dull, and dingy, but it was the weight of them that told the story. One by one we pitched them on to the beach, until they all lay in a heap on the sand, and the

chest was empty.

"Now what was to be done with this money? Well, I had made up my mind before ever I had seen the cases that contained it. I told Tommy we must bury it, and that if we managed to come off with our lives, we must hold together, shipping always in the same vessel, and waiting our chance to fetch the money away and divide it. I brought a Bible out of the skipper's cabin, and we each swore that we'd keep the secret of this money; that we'd stick together, and never play false to each other; and that if it should come to our having to run off with some small vessel, we'd do it, so as to bring the money to England under cover of any freight we could pick up. Next morning we turned to and chose a place for burying the

gold. We chose the head of the river, which was well in the middle of the island, and we dug a big hole against a cocoa-nut tree, the biggest thereabouts, which I reckoned would be standing there a hundred years hence, we knocked off lumps of coral, and collected bits of stone and rock, and bricked the hole inside as well as we could, to prevent the gold from settling, should there come a spell of wet, and stowed the bars and the bags on top, and

filled up the hole, keeping the tree as our post.

"Well, a few days after we had got the gold out of the ship a strong wind blew right on shore; it raised a heavy sea, and so ground the vessel upon the beach that she went to pieces. The bales of wool lay all along the shore, and made a regular breakwater; but most of the stores we had left aboard of her were damaged or carried away to sea. There was nothing to eat but cocoa-nuts on the island, and we determined to put out to sea before all our provisions should be gone; so we loaded the boat, fitted her with a mast and sail, and got under way, steering due N.E. by the compass we had. This course would bring us to the South American coast, well to the norrard of Patagonia. We lost sight of the island by the evening, and were blown north by a fresh gale of wind which raised a sea that would have swamped us out of hand had I had the steering of the boat. But Tommy was a Deal man, used to the luggers, and kept the boat to it properly.

"Well," he exclaimed, taking a long breath, and passing the back of his hand over his forehead, "the secret's out, and there's no use in my keeping you listening to what befell us in the boat. We knocked about a whole fortnight, never seeing such a thing as a sail; the water ran low, and Tommy fell ill. He lay in the bottom of the boat moaning all through one night; God knows what ailed him, but next morning he died. I kept his body for the companionship of it until it grew so ugly that it gave me the horrors, and then I dropped it overboard. I drifted about anyhow, growing weaker and weaker, until I could scarcely make shift to crawl to the breakers. I believed I was dying, and lay down trying to meet death like a man. After this I remember nothing until I awoke and found

myself aboard a whaler bound to Boston."

Here he came to a stop. His eyes glowed as they fixed themselves on mine, and he bent so far forward to see into

my face, that by the misty starlight I could remark the enthusiasm and eagerness that lighted up his.

"It's a curious story," said I, turning it over, and finding it likely enough. "The sketch, then, you are always

drawing, is the island?"

"The north end of it. We beached the ship on the western side, and rowed the long-boat round to the east to fetch the gully where we moored her."

"What object have you in constantly making the same

sketch?"

"Well, it's one way of thinking—one way of lessening the chance of my forgetting it, should I get a fever or meet with any accident to injure my memory. I look at it in this way; suppose my memory should go; yet my hand would fall to work mechanically at the sketch, and it would all come back to me."

"Do you believe the gold is there now?"

"Hush!" he whispered, looking hastily round him. "Of course it is. There were only two that ever had the secret, and Tommy died, I told you."

"What account did you give of yourself in the whaler?"

"When I came to and began to think, I was afraid they might have got to find out by the boat, or in some way that I had overlooked, the name of the ship I had been wrecked in, and this I didn't want living man to know. So to learn how much they had discovered, I pretended to have lost my memory, and said I couldn't recollect the name of the ship. Now they didn't tell me, and so of course I knew that nothing about me or the boat had furnished them with a clew. They told me they had come across the boat in latitude 35°, longitude 92°, and that the boat was half-full of water. Ashore they reported that my memory was gone. I soon got a ship and left Boston."

"Whereabouts is this island?"

He answered in a low tone full of mystery,-

"I have settled it to within the compass of the horizon by dead reckoning. Nearer, I don't suppose, my calculations have made it; but I would lay half the money that's there that it would heave in sight somewhere to port or starboard from the foretopsail-yard when the ship reached the place I believe it to be in. Do you understand?"

"I suppose you mean that if you're wrong in your

reckonings you're not above a dozen miles out. Where do you make it, then?"

"Three degrees west of Teapy Island, true on the

parallel of 30° south."

"Where the deuce is 'Teapy Island? The name has a

twang of the China seas about it."

"No, no, I'm right. Teapy is in the South Seas. Any south seaman would tell you where it is. You'll find it on the chart."

"Is your island on the chart?"

" No."

I was silent, and I dare say he thought that the non-existence of his island on the chart made me incredulous

of the whole story.

"There must always be a first discoverer," he exclaimed eagerly. "What a vast stretch of sea is the Pacific! will anybody tell me that every vestige of land in it is known and charted?"

"I was not thinking of that. Why didn't you report to the owners when you got home? You might have sold your secret for a good price; besides, I should say you had a substantial salvage claim."

"Why," he cried excitedly, "should I surrender the

whole for a part, when the whole was mine?"

"But what's the use of money stuck in a pit in the middle of an island in the Pacific ocean? Perhaps the cannibals have unearthed it by this time, and are wearing your gold in their noses."

"No, no! it is there. It will be there a thousand years

hence if I don't fetch it away."

"How do you propose to recover it?"

"If I was not a very poor man I should know fast enough. I should hire a small craft. But I never could get the money—get enough to save, I mean—to pay for the hire."

"You told us the other day that you made four hundred pounds by an action against some shipowners about a

wheel."

"I was robbed of the greater part of it by a woman in a lodging-house in Liverpool. If I had kept it, do you think I should be talking to you here, in this twopenny brig—an able seaman? Not I. I got that money two voyages before I shipped in the Royal Oak. I never

guessed I should want it. What is money in a sailor's

pocket ashore?"

"But what makes you open your heart to me? How can I help you? Of the two, I dare say I am the poorer man. I'd make a thundering long board out of my course, you may be sure, to get a fortune: but here's an undertaking that wants finances to carry out."

He shook his head and leaned back, gazing first at the

silent sails and then around him.

"Here's the vessel," he whispered, "to carry the money home."

"Are you thinking of taking the skipper into your confidence?"

"He! I'm thinking of getting you to take command of the brig, and navigate her to my El Dorado."

I burst into a laugh, but soon grew grave again, for the fellow was as serious as a judge pronouncing sentence of

death.

- "Do you mean," I exclaimed in a low voice, for we were now using words which no man in his senses would wish overheard, "that you and I should seize the brig?" " Yes."

"By the holy poker, as Pat says, you're a cool hand. What do you mean to do with the officers and crew?"

"The crew would come over at a word. Offer each

man five hundred pounds."

"And the skipper and mate?"

"Send them adrift."

"Which of us two is mad, I wonder?" said I, looking at him hard.

He laughed, and answered,—

"There's plenty of time to think over it. We've got the whole of the South Atlantic before us yet."

"Lay aft, and man the port braces!" shouted Old Wind-

ward.

We jumped up and tumbled aft, and in a few moments the deck was echoing to the sound of our voices and the squealing of block-sheaves.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RISE.

NEXT day brought a change of fortune to me, and for

awhile drove Deacon and his island out of my head.

We were on deck, washing down, the handle of the head pump flogging to the arm of an apprentice, and Welchy swirling buckets full of water about our feet. We had picked up a warm, fresh breeze right aft, and the brig was running quietly before it over a calm sea, with studding sails swelling on both sides of her, fore and aft canvas in, and mainsail hauled up.

Old Windward watched our operations from the skylight. Presently he bent down his head, answered some

one within, and called me up to him.

"Here," said he, "the captain wants you in his cabin. Pull your breeches over your legs, and cock on your boots

and bear a hand."

Secretly disturbed by this unexpected summons, and turning my past behavior over in my mind to see what I had done to merit a railing and logging, I tumbled into

the forecastle, put myself square, and went aft.

Old Windward watched me with his malevolent eye. It was an eye not calculated to inspire self-confidence in the man on whom it squinted, and I went down the companion ladder with my nerves all askew. I walked to the skipper's cabin and knocked on the door.

"Come in," said he, and in I went. I found him at a table, writing; he put down his pen, and turning smartly

upon me exclaimed,-

"Are you fit to serve as second mate?"

"I think I am, sir."

"You think you are; but I want to know."

"Yes, certainly. I hold no certificate; but I can do the work."

"Why didn't you say so at first!" he cried pettishly. "I hate men to shamble when I ask a plain yes or no. Banyard's a fool—I suppose you know that?"

"I'm not in his watch, and don't know," I replied.

"The men take liberties with him; and the man who

allows himself to be joked upon and laughed at by a crew is not my sort. The imbecile shall breed no mutinies aboard my vessel for the want of being able to use his fist. Can you take sights?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you a sextant?"

I replied that I had, which was true enough, though I should not have brought it with me had I had a home to leave it at.

"What wages did you ship at?" he inquired, laying his

hand on the log-book.

"Three pounds ten shillings a month."

"Well, Banyard gets four, and you shall have four. I expect you'll make yourself look decent when you come aft. and no napping, no jawing with your mates. If I

catch you at that I shall break you again right off."

The manner was even more offensive than the matter. I bit my lip to keep down my temper, but the blood was in my face, and I looked away, that he might not see the rage and contempt in my eyes, for pride is of no earthly use on board ship, and anger serves a man nowhere; a man at sea must stand to things as he finds them, and I should have been a fool to forfeit a stroke of luck by resenting the way in which it came.

Having scribbled down a memorandum in the logbook, he told me to go forward and send Banyard to him.

"Where's my bunk to be, sir?" I asked.

"Why, in the deck-house. Banyard takes your place,

I tell you."

"The cook is no company for the second mate of a vessel like this, sir," I ventured to say. He looked up with a frown, but I proceeded nevertheless. "If I am to keep the men under control, I ought to be away from them. A crew won't respect the officer that the Captain doesn't respect; and no Captain who respects his second mate would put him to live with the ship's cook."

He seemed struck with this, to my surprise, and looking at me with an expression that recalled his civil manner

at the hotel, he said,-

"Well, you're a gentleman, and can live aft. There's truth in what you say, and after yesterday's business I must look for support. Get your things to the port-cabin against the pantry, and send Banyard to me."

So I quitted the cabin.

"Which is her berth?" I thought to myself, and I felt a thrill pass through me at the prospect of being near her henceforth, of sitting at the same table with her, of leaving the dirty work of the brig to cut in her eyes the respectable figure to which assuredly I had a more rightful claim than Old Windward. A woman, they say, is at bottom of everything that happens ashore; but it's queer to find her influence at the Equator in mid-Atlantic, to hear of it in the forecastle of a little brig, animating poor Jack Swab, and putting him out of conceit with his honest sphere of slush and marlinspikes.

I walked forward, Little Welchy and the others looking hard at me as I passed, probably having expected to see me reappear with a black eye and a broken nose, and going into the deck-house, laid hold of the hammock in

which Banyard swnng, for here were no bunks.

"Turn out, Banyard. The skipper wants you in his cabin."

His weather-battered face popped up like a spring Jack. in-a-box.

"Skipper wants me, d'ye say? What's the row now?" "Well, if you're innocent of it, you needn't mind."
"What's that?" he shouted.

"If the skipper thinks you've been trying to scuttle the ship, Banyard, it's of no consequence, always supposing that Suds and Old Sammy aren't waiting to swear they saw you go below with an auger," I answered, and walked out to save an explosion of laughter, for never was anything more ridiculous than the expression on Pendulum's face. He was rushing aft before I reached the forecastle, to vindicate himself. Joking of this kind was unfair in the face of his coming let-down. But one falls into heartless ways at sea.

With the help of Scum, the cook, I transplanted my chest from the forecastle to the after-cabin. I then re-

turned to bring away my bedding.

All hands went to breakfast shortly before eight, and it was near that time now; everybody was awake, and the watch on deck, having completed the washing-down, came tumbling below to hear my news, and find out why I had taken my chest aft.

"Why, Jack's goin' to be second mate," cries Beauty

Blunt, in response to Suds' inquiry. "Banyard's broke, and he's to take Jack's place. It's a rum start, I call it; though I'm not saying nothen agin Jack's fitness for the. dooty."

"I hope ye ain't goin' to make too much o' your post," growled Old Sam. "Ye knows wot it is to be dancin' a fundango to the braces, with nary breath o' vind in the sky. I've seen these here kind o' promotions afore, and can't say as I thinks well o' them."

"Now, mates, let's know what you're grumbling at," said I. "It's no fault of mine that I'm put aft as second mate. Don't call it promotion. This is not a man-ofwar. Had I been turned into ship's cook, I should have cleaned out the coppers and said nothing. A man must do what he's told on board ship. Sam may have his growl, of course, but don't let him talk nonsense. There's no promotion in leaving a forecastle to be second mate of a small brig."

"Jack's a gentleman," here interrupted Deacon; "and I'd rather have him over me than an illiterate carpenter."

"Who's saying he ain't a gentleman?" grumbled Old "Not that bein' a gentleman's any recommendation. The skipper calls hisself a gentleman, I dare say, and a pretty blusterin' specimen of them shore-boobies he is. "

"Why, Sammy, which side is your liver this mornin'? Blowed if I don't think you're wanting to come Old Vindvard over the foc'sle," cried Little Welchy. "I'm for leavin' Jack's rise alone. 'Tain't the fust time he's been a hofficer, and if he'll only elber the mate over the side some dark night, I'll sail round the world with him."

"I'll not say good-by," I exclaimed; "for there may be a shindy aft before a dozen hours are gone, and I shall be here again. But if I keep aft, you shall never want an extra hand for a long pull. If I can't teach the others better manners, you shall never grumble at mine, and I hope you won't make my work harder to me than it's likely to be, that's all."

This bow being executed, I shouldered my bedding and

went away to my new quarters.

CHAPTER XXII.

IN THE CABIN.

It took me but a snort time to put my new berth to rights. I borrowed a looking-glass from the cook, and guessing that I should meet Miss Franklin at breakfast, I turned to and gave myself what Jack elegantly calls "a

regular tip-top, knock-me-down polish-up."

Happily for my conceit the voyage was still young, and my clothes in consequence pretty good; my foppery would have carried me to the extent of furnishing my waistcoat with my watchchain, had I not dreaded the mate's sinister eye; so I steered clear of jewelry, and kept to the unadorned sea-attire of black-cloth trousers, pilot-coat and fly-away silk handkerchief.

By this time it was eight bells; so out I turned to relieve the mate. He stared at me with an ugly grin, and after giving me the vessel's course, he asked me where I

was to take my meals.

"In the cabin," said I.

"Lord save me, you'll be wanting a cocked-hat, you've grown so fine," he exclaimed, his smile crumpling up his face, so that it looked, what with wrinkles and color, like the shell of a walnut.

"It's enough to make a common fellow like me conceited, to have such a thoroughbred gentleman as you for

a brother officer," said I.

"Perhaps I could teach you manners, too," he cried

with a sneer.

"I'm sure of it," I replied; "and as I am very fond of ladies' society, I'll ask you some of these days to give me a lesson in that kind of polished behavior which pleases them, and which your face, and figure, and language, assure me you have the secret of."

He gave me a sullen scowl, but said no more, and was

going below; but I stopped him by saying,-

"I've not breakfasted yet, Mr. Sloe; perhaps you'll re-lieve me when you've done."

"Who are you mistering?" he shouted. "You're giving yourself airs a taste too early, my lad! I'm mate here, and your master, Mr. Snob! don't give me no orders, siree!"

"I merely asked you a civil question," I replied, doing without to conceal my contempt. "I suppose your my utmost to conceal my contempt. "I etiquette here is the same as in large ships."

"D- your hetiquette! talk English, can't ye? You'd know what I mean if I ordered you aloft with a slushpot!"

And down went the brute in fury.

As I flattered myself I had mortified him, I felt no anger, nothing but prodigious disgust. I was quite in my element aft, a very great deal more so than when forward, and paced the deck, glancing now aloft, now at the compass, and putting the watch to work with all the ease imaginable. There need surely be no vanity in saying that my assumption of new duties was no effort on my part. And what was involuntary and unconsciously performed served me the purpose of a stroke of policy; the men at first watched me keenly, they addressed me familiarly, they spoke of me one to another, with here and there a loud laugh, as if this would excite a reciprocal grin in me, and lead me to tacitly suggest my sense of my fellowship with them, and of the whole thing as a good joke.

But herein were they much mistaken. They found me quite alive to my new dignity, social enough to hold me free of their derision. but sufficiently reserved to let them appreciate the change of our relatious. The long and short of it was this: my sea-training had been in large ships, where good discipline is maintained. The old traditions operated in me in my new sphere: I imitated in my dealings with the men certain models I had in my mind; and so I believe I did Captain Franklin and Mister Sloe a deal of harm by unconsciously furnishing the crew with a strong contrast to the cold despotism of the one and the

vulgar brutality of the other.

I return to the moment when the mate went below. Glancing through the skylight as I paced the deck, I perceived Miss Franklin seated at the table, Old Windward fronting her, and the skipper at the head. I heard my name mentioned by the mate, and presumed that he was regaling the skipper with an account of my new fine airs.

A glorious tropical breezy morning was this, the fierce

heat tempered by the wind, the sea swelling under the splendor of the sun, and a lively creaming wake stealing out in an ever-widening tape of glittering foam from under our dancing counter. This was a morning to stir life to its innermost sources. The decks, soon dried by the sun shone white as bleached canvas; the brass-work flashed to the movements of the hull; the sails stretched black lines athwart the planks under the climbing orb whose meridian altitude would crowd our shadows under our feet; the hens under the long-boat crooned to the warmth. Nor were the men engaged about the decks the least picturesque details of the gay, moving picture; Beauty Blunt, with his black face and red shirt, Old Sam, with his iron hair and tarry breeks, Jimmy in serge and a Scotch cap; others with bare arms, and mossy breasts disclosed by open shirts; all with naked feet, their hairy arms black with the sun, their sheath-knives strapped to their hips; filled the eye with color, and submitted figures as quaint and old-world-like as the queerly-dressed people you see in ancient Dutch sea-pieces.

After the mate had been below half an hour, he came

on deck again, and with him the skipper.

"You can go down and get your breakfast," said he; "and just remember that its your watch, and that I've been on deck since four o'clock, will 'ee?" A gentle hint

that I should not linger over the meal.

Down I went with rather a fluttering pulse, I may as well own, for I fancied Miss Franklin was still at table. Her place was vacant, however, and the cook, who acted as steward, was clearing away the plates and broken victuals. He brought me a rasher of bacon, and that, with a cup of cocoa, and some good white biscuit, furnished me with the sweetest meal I had enjoyed since my last bite at the hotel in Bayport.

In the middle of this Miss Franklin came out of the cabin alongside of her brother's. I instantly rose and bowed, charmed afresh with her rich beauty and dark eyes sparkling under the shadow of her hat. She looked both

pleased and amused to see me.

"Pray forgive me for asking your name," said she.
"Jack Chadburn," I replied, falling to my breakfast again, for Old Windward was not to be kept waiting.

"My brother said it was Chadwick."

"Burn, not Wick," said I.

This conjunction of terminals set her laughing.

"I suppose you would rather be here than among the men," she exclaimed.

"Yes," I replied emphatically, with a glance at her

brown eyes.

"They must be a dreadful set of persons; just fancy their knocking Mr. Sloe down and making his nose bleed, and threatening my brother with knives! I wonder he has the courage to proceed any further. I begged him to turn back and go home. I wish he would, Mr. Chadburn; I am quite sick of the sea. Don't you think you could prevail upon him to go home?"

"No," said I, shaking my head and wondering if she

expected me to laugh at her simplicity.

"But I am frightened to be in a ship with such men. My brother says they are dreadful characters—the worst crew he ever sailed with."

"You have no occasion to be afraid of them, Miss

Franklin."

"But I am afraid. It is dreadful to hear of drawn knives."

I made no answer. After a little silence she said,

beaming one of her rich smiles on me, -

"I am very glad my brother has removed you from the forecastle; I told you the other day that you were not in your proper place there."

"You will make me conceited enough to think so."

Here the skylight was darkened by Old Windward's head, and his hurricane voice roared down,—

"Now then! how long am I to be kept here?"

I instantly rose and walked to the companion; but in passing I said to Miss Franklin,—

"It is not the crew of this vessel whom you have to

fear, but the men who command the crew."

"You are quite right," she answered promptly, and with a gravity that surprised me in her; "I have said the same thing to my brother. If the patience of educated persons is limited, how narrow must be the patience of such men as those in the forecastle?"

I wished, as I went on deck, that the Captain would borrow a little of his sister's sense. He hung about the deck for the rest of my watch, to see, I presume, how I dealt with the men. This was rather annoying, for Miss Franklin was on the skylight, and I had been looking forward to a chat with her. The luxury was not to be indulged in with the skipper's eye upon me.

Strangely enough, however, an opportunity occurred to me to show him my qualification in one essential respect

as an officer.

The breeze gathered strength as the morning advanced, and under swelling studding-sails the brig rode swiftly along her course. Just about ten o'clock, without a warning, without the smallest hint in the sky of the capricious change, the wind veered to the south'ard, and in the twinkling of an eye we were all aback, booms buckling, the brig a log on the water, and a smart wind whistling over our heads.

Here was a chance to distinguish myself, to exhibit my smartness to the admiration of Miss Franklin, who looked about her alarmed. The skipper could not give an order that I had not anticipated; all hands were routed out, the port fore-braces manned, the lee studding-sails got in, the main-braces checked, trysail brailed up, head sheets flattened in, and the brig sent spinning on her heel like a top. I tallied on with the men and hauled with the best of them, sent up the briskest hands in my watch (inspiring them with a spirit of rivalry by sly asides respecting "Old Windward's duffers") to rig in the lee studding-sail booms, and within a quarter of an hour of being taken aback, I had got the yards braced to the masts, the main tack down, and the brig close-hauled buzzing under royals to a strong breeze that crested the sea, and arched a rainbow at our bows.

The skipper gave me no praise—that was not to be expected. But by the jealous scowl Old Windward (who had tumbled up with the others) bestowed upon me, I might be sure that a word had been whispered in his ear in my favor. 'Tis an ill-wind that blows nobody any good, and the effect of this southerly start was to satisfy the skipper that I was competent to discharge my duties: a happy impression, for he left the brig in my hands after this, and bequeathed me a clear deck to do my work on.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SOFT CONFESSION.

No time passes so quickly as time passed at sea. Monotony makes quick dispatch of days. It seemed but yesterday that we had been towed out of Bayport; now we were across the Line, rising new constellations every night, and sinking those heavenly signs which are dear as life in

the eyes of the homeward-bound mariner.

I may as well own here—for the confession cannot be delayed much longer—that I was beginning to fall desperately in love with Louisa Franklin. Heretofore her dark eyes and sweet face had proved but a harmless fascination-provoking honest, impulsive admiration, but no deep feeling. That was, when I was forward and she was aft, when the whole length of the brig separated us. Then the humbling sense of my position, the work I had to do, the bullying I would often receive from Old Windward, acted as a restraint upon sentiment: I thought of her as something extremely distant, and the tar that covered me, the men I consorted with, the meanness of my duties about the deck, were as a covering of ridicule under which, with my perception of the absurd, love could no more exist than a candle could burn in the hold of a live codfish.

But now there was a new adjustment of matters. First and foremost, the change of position had freshened up in me the conceit that the forecastle had doused; the conceit, I mean, which keeps a man's nature salt and sweet, putting him on good terms with himself. I could assume with perfect propriety that natural character of mine which in the forecastle would have earned me abuse and kicks from such of the men as would have made a trial of their toes with my fists. I was no longer Jack Slush, feeling it his duty, when Miss Franklin condescended to ask him a question, to answer her with a "Yes, mum;" I was once more Jack Chadburn, gent., rough in manner and speech, a sea-dog, but no sea-puppy, I believe, capable of talking with the girl from her own level, and quite self-possessed enough to tackle Old Windward's brawling

coarseness in a way that left me none the worse for the encounters, in her eyes, at all events; and her good opinion was all I cared about.

Moreover, I saw a great deal of her. Many a quiet talk with her would I have in the first watches, when Old Windward was snorting in his bunk, and the skipper below, and the men quiet forward, and the brig sailing calmly over the sea. She grew upon me, she became a fixed and generous and tender thought in me. In our conversations I had told her all about myself, my home, my mother, my father's second marriage, my voyages, my poverty. Her brown eyes, with the starlight on them, would be on mine; her sweet face, pale in the gloom, turned toward me; her silence lovely with the sympathy and interest it expressed.

And bit by bit I got to know all about her; how she was an orphan (as I had suspected); how her brother, having built this brig, and christened her the Little Loo in honor of his sister—"whom he loves sometimes, and sometimes hates," she would say with a pout—had induced her to take a voyage with him to Australia and back; and how, feeling dull in the little Kentish village, where she had a house of her own, she had consented, not imagining that a long sea voyage in a small vessel was a dismally dull affair, quite different from the stories she had heard of the doings of passengers going to India and other parts of the world, when playing the piano, and raffling, and dancing, and singing and acting made the time pass merrily.

And how was it on her side? I could not quite tell. She liked my society, nothing was surer. Often she would linger at the table to receive me when I came below. She was rather inscrutable, a dark-eyed witch, sometimes grave, sometimes gay, sometimes talking the simplest nonsense, sometimes conversing wisely—a delicious puzzle for me to divert and torture myself over when alone.

Sometimes I would break from my fancies: "Pooh! she likes you because you are somebody to talk to. She is bored to death by the voyage: her brother is no company, the mate is a bear; she pays you no compliment, friend. Let her get ashore and she'll only think of you to laugh over the awkward Jack who admired her, and whom she will for ever associate in her mind with the

slush-pot which she once beheld him greasing down the

main-royal mast with."

Whether she suspected that I was in love with her I could not guess. I suppose such fancies as she filled me with would leak out in our nocturnal chats, when the darkness conferred on me the license of soft words. But I was tolerably reserved. I gushed to myself, and the safety-valve blew only when I was alone. I am at least positive that the skipper had not the faintest notion of what was in my mind, neither he nor Old Windward. I could not err here.

This piece of rambling brings the brig well to the south-'ard of the Line, and on August 5th you may fix our latitude at 6°, drawing hard upon the drift of the South-East Trades.

One middle watch found me sitting on the skylight, watching a tendency on the part of the royals to "lift," and waiting for a more decided manifestation of the veering of the wind to clap the watch upon the braces.

We were having all this time what we call at sea "ladies' weather," smooth water, light breezes, and a broadening moon o' nights, which flung a mist of silver over the universe of waters and transformed the brig's canvas into spaces of mother-o'-pearl.

The night-glass lay at my side, for not long ago I had sighted a sail on the starboard beam, a mere fleck of white to the eye under the moonshine, but when deciphered by the glass, a full-rigged ship standing north; and now she was gliding into the shadow beyond the cone of ruffled silver in the sea. Such a night as this was would make a money-lender sentimental. It was a pure romance of nature—an idyl of heaven and ocean: a dome of ether, black at the horizon, pale at the center, where the moon hung, phosphorescent with configurations of pallid stars which grew faint as their disks drew near to the central veil of moonlight, and an under surface of ocean glittering with the restless shivering by the wind of the mirrored splendor of the moon, dim beyond the shine, then darkening into ebony at the rim, where sea and sky are one.

A figure came stealing along the deck and up to me. It was easy from his walk to tell who he was, and failing his walk I should have known him by his shadow, which

sprang from his feet upon the deck as if done in black paint.

"Is that you, Deacon?"

"Yes; isn't this something like a beautiful night?"

"Very fine indeed. But how is it you are not turned in?"

"Well, you see, I can't sleep. Somehow, I'm restless-

like to-night."

"It isn't the moon, is it?" said I, laughing, at the same time going away from the skylight, as I did not want the

Captain to overhear me talking.

"The moon doesn't trouble me," he answered. "I have been on the look-out some time to have a talk with you about that matter I mentioned the other night. There is no harm in my speaking of it to you now, is there?"

"It's your island that's on your mind, is it?"

- "Why, look here! I told you my secret because I reckoned on getting your help. It's a big thing to put into a man's power, if he don't mean to stick fast to me, and whack the difficulties, and bring the money away," said he, with his eyes on the deck, and his face looking odd enough in the clear, yet modifying revelation of the moon.
- "Your secret is safe," I answered impatiently, "whether I lend you a hand or not."

"A man ought to trust nobody!" he exclaimed, eying

me with a very troubled expression.

"Well, you have trusted me, and it is too late to bother now."

"What do you know?"

"What do I know!" I echoed. "Why, what you told me."

" What was that?"

"Confound your bad memory! Do you want me to tell you the whole yarn?"

"I ask, what did I tell you?" he cried irritably.

I looked askant at him, and pulled my hands out of my pockets, as I answered,—

"You told me of some island in the South Sea, in which you had buried sixty thousand pounds' worth of money and gold; that this island was three degrees

west of Teapy, and true on the parallel of thirty degrees south."

"Well, you have the secret of my life at your finger's

end!" said he, breathing quickly.

"And a rich man I am in consequence! As rich as the fellow who stands upon the Goodwin Sands at low water, and says, 'Under my feet lie centuries of wrecks, with

bullion enough to pay off the National Debt."

"What's the use of such comparisons!" he cried excitedly. "The wealth under the Goodwin Sands is lost for ever—of no more use than a gold mine in the moon. But my money lies ready as any bonded goods in a dock-vard to be shipped and carried home."

"It's a queer story," said I, impressed by his earnestness. "My advice to you is to let this secret go no further. Since you saved the money yourself, keep it. It may as well be in your pocket as at the bottom of the

sea, where those it belongs to believe it."

"Now," he exclaimed, folding his arms, "what were my reasons for choosing you out of the ship's crew to tell this yarn to—?"

"I know, I know," I interrupted.

- "I want a vessel to fetch this money away," he continued irritably, "and men to work her. You're the first living man I've opened the secret to, and I've asked you to become my partner in this job. There's sixty thousand pounds' worth; twenty would satisfy you, twenty would do for me, and there's twenty left to be divided among the men."
- "But the notion you wanted to put into my head was a thundering piratical one. You talked of seizing this vessel. Do you think I'd help you in such an undertaking?"

"Why not?"

"Because I'm not a villain."

He stared at me with flashing eyes, whilst his fingers worked upon his folded arms as though he were playing the piano. Then, softening his face with a smile, and lowering his voice, he said,—

"I reckon the Captain has spoilt you by bringing you

aft."

" Not a bit."

[&]quot;The brutality of the mate, and the skipper's cold-

bloodedness, don't make your heart savage any longer.

It's the girl that's working the oracle, Jack."

"Keep her name out of our talk, mate," said I sternly, though a little startled by his allusion to my secret, which, if unknown to the skipper, under whose nose it flourished, was surely unsuspected by the crew. "I can dislike the skipper's and mate's treatment just as much now as when I lived among you. But let me fill any post you please on board ship, you'll never find me making one in a mutiny, so I tell you."

He hugged himself tightly, and his chin dropped on his bosom. In this posture he remained, motionless and silent, for so many moments that, growing impatient, I

was about to quit his side, when he exclaimed,—

"Suppose we let the matter rest for the present?"

"With all my heart."

"Something may turn up when we get to Sydney. If I put a good scheme before you there, perhaps you'll come into it?"

"Providing it's honest, I may."

"Oh, leave your morals to me. I'll do them no harm.

Mind, you are sworn to secrecy."

"Yes, yes," I muttered impatiently, and without another word he glided softly forward.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MURDER.

I could not quite make up my mind as to Deacon's story. A man has sometimes two senses at work in him, one that accepts and one that rejects. I believed him because his narrative was a probable one, with an essential voucher for its authenticity (in one material respect) in the newspaper paragraph, and because he could have no motive in inventing a tale of the sort. I doubted him because I did not quite understand his character, nor liked what I knew.

A shrewder man than myself, placed in my circumstances, with all to win and nothing to lose, would have turned the story over, questioned Deacon closely, and, being satisfied with the man's truthfulness as regards the gold in the island, would have dealt with the matter as a

speculation—if the gold is there, have it; if not, why, then, nothing is lost but the hope of getting it—and schemed with him to reach the island, and carry away the gold from under the cocoa-nut tree. But Jack is proverbially a reckless fellow: and partly because I did not like Deacon, and partly because I bestowed my thoughts elsewhere, and partly because of the subtle instinct of doubt which I could neither justify nor demolish, I gave Deacon's secret no more of my attention, which perhaps would not have been the case had I remained in the forecastle, and in the same watch with him.

A fortnight after crossing the Line two incidents oc-

curred, both illustrative of life at sea.

It had happened that one of the apprentices, a pale, delicate-looking lad, but a favorite with the men for his obliging nature and cheerful disposition, was called aft by Old Windward to scrape some grease-spots out of the deck, just abaft the starboard main rigging.

I was on deck at the time, a little before midday, making ready to take "sights;" for the skipper, having found me smart at figures and well acquainted with navigation, had commissioned me always to be in attendance with my

sextant at noon.

The lad, scraping away on his knees and doing his best, was told by the mate that he was mutilating the deck. He answered that the spots were deep, and that he had to scrape hard to get them out.

"I tell you you're wounding the deck; I'll rope's-end you within an inch of your life if you give me any of your

sauce."

"But come and see, sir;—the deck's hard, sir, an' I can't get the marks out without scrapin' strong," responded the boy, raising his pale face and looking plaintively at the mate.

"You will answer me, will you, you cub!" shouted the mate, going up to him. "You've larned your tricks from the mutineering dogs forrard, have ye! I'll teach you to

hold your tongue!"

And forthwith he struck the lad with his clinched fist on the side of the head. The boy fell like a piece of lead on his side, the blood gushing from his nose, mouth, and ear.

There were some men in the waist of the brig at work

upon a sail, and they groaned like dogs when they saw the blow given and the boy fall.

The mate looked around upon them, and standing over the boy ordered him to get up and go on with his work.

"No skulking! up with you! I know your tricks. On to your knees and at it again, or I'll trice ye up by your heels, head down, and you shall scrape at that." And he gave the boy a kick.

This was more than flesh and blood could stand.

"Hold your brutal foot!" I cried. "Don't you see the boy's stunned?"

"Who are you addressing?" shouted he, looking fury

and murder at me.

The Captain stood by impassive, sextant in hand.

"You have knocked the boy insensible," I said; "and

your kicking him now is sheer brutality."

"I'll fling you overboard if you talk to me, you snob!" velled the mate, frantic with rage. "I'll have the handling of your body, you land-booby, you!"

I put down my sextant and pulled off my coat.

"If you come within a yard of where I stand, I'll not leave you a whole bone in your body," said I.

By this time the men had left the sail, others their work

forward, and were crowding aft.

"Captain Franklin!" shrieked the mate, "order him to be put in irons, sir. Don't ye see what his meaning is? If you wink at this, the brig'll be seized. He's the ringleader, curse him!"

I had posed myself to receive him, and my fist was ready to swing into his face. But the ruffian who could strike

a boy had no fancy to put his heart against mine.

"On with your coat and take up your sextant," said the skipper to me. "Mr. Sloe, we've had enough of this. Here, you" (to the men) "what are you doing? get away to your work. One of you carry this boy forrard, and

bring a swab."

I obeyed the Captain's orders, and the mate walked right aft. Scarcely had the boy been carried forward, quite insensible, when Miss Franklin came on deck. Seeing the blood she stopped, looked at it with open eyes of horror, then at me, then backward at the mate, and ran to her brother. Some hurried words passed between them, and she returned to the cabin.

It might have been the swarming of the men aft that eaved me: that, and the memory of the scene when the men had struck down the mate; perhaps a sudden disgust of the mate's brutality, and fear of the consequences of the blow on the boy, had held the skipper inactive; certain it is, that had the incident I have narrated taken place prior to the first outbreak among the men, I should have had both the Captain and mate upon me in a hand-to-hand fight, I should have been confined with irons on my legs and biscuit and water for my allowance, and ultimately charged at Sydney with mutineering.

The worst blow to the mate was the Captain's tacit taking of my part. He said nothing to me afterward about my interference, but the scowling glances he threw at me, the hate in his eyes when his glance met mine, were good tokens that he was "biding his time," and waiting for an opportunity for revenge. This sullen behavior made me vigilant to guard against any cowardly attack.

I had charge of the brig during the first dog-watch on that same day, and about a quarter of an hour after coming on deck I spied smoke upon the horizon, right ahead. There was a brisk wind blowing abeam, and the smoke rolled along the sea-line athwart our hawse. I concluded at once that it was a steamer, homeward-bound, and that we should shortly be abreast of each other, and under that impression I went aft to see that the signal-halyards were clear, and the signals ready in the flag-locker.

Signaling a homeward-bound ship at sea is always a notable event to an outward bounder: you think of home and the good tidings of your safety which the stranger will carry away with him to those you love. I smiled mournfully, however, at my own impulse in running aft to see all clear for signaling. Whom had I to send tidings to? was there a single pair of eyes in the whole of England that would brighten for my sake over the intelligence that the Little Loo was spoken in such and such a degree of latitude, and that all was well with her?

I kept the glass pointing to the spot whence the smoke took its start: but we were so long in rising the funnel or spars, that I began to think she was a steamer heading as we were, and that we were slowly overhauling her. Presently the thickness of the horizontal column of smoke put

a notion into my head.

"It looks like a vessel on fire, sir," I said to the Captain, who had come on deck, and was leaning over the bulwarks watching the smoke.

"That's what it is," he replied curtly, without looking at me. This had been his manner, on and off, since the

quarrel with the mate.

A whole hour passed before the hull of the burning ship came into the field of the glass. As well as I could make out she was a big black vessel, a North American built ship, to judge by the cut of her bows. She looked like a small volcanic island, the smoke pouring away in dense volumes, black as ink, and swirling along the horizon like the shadow of a coast. I swept the water around her in search of her boats, but not a speck was visible. To clear the smoke, or to see her more plainly, the wheel was put down a spoke or two, the braces manned, and the burning vessel brought on the lee-bow.

The hands all turned out to have a look, and with their awestruck faces, their frowning foreheads, their motion-less attitudes, their low voices, as they spoke one to another with their eyes transfixed, they seemed the fittest audience in the world for the terrific spectacle. The sun was low upon the rim of the sea when we had brought the ship abeam, our mainyards were laid aback and the vessel hove-to. Miss Franklin came up to me, and asked, in a whisper, if I thought there was anybody on aboard the ship. I answered that I thought not; that nothing could live in that smoke, and no part of the deck was free of it. The boats were gone, and in all probability the people belonging to her had put off long ago.

The setting sunshine streamed upon the dense smoke and colored it a hideous red; such stifling, belching, monstrous-colored smoke one might think streams from the pit of hell. Though a long mile to leeward, the crackling of her spars, the hissing of the blazing sails and rigging and yards, as they fell piece-meal into the water, was quite distinct. Every now and then the smoke would thin, and yield space for tongues of flame, which ran up into the sky in shape of corkscrews, and as these drew down, the smoke would gush forth again, no longer column-shaped, but in a series of gigantic balloon-shaped volumes. It

was a sight to madden one; for there was something human in a sailor's eyes in the helplessness of the vessel, licked up, tortured, and slowly devoured by the murder-

ous, slavering, ravenous beast, fire!

The sun went down and the darkness followed fast, and in the gloom the horrid grandeur of the spectacle stood out; as the hull rolled this way she showed her incandescent interior, a great shell filled with crimson lava, with huge flames amidst it, burning blue and green, whilst, now and again a fork of fire, brilliant as lightning, whizzed up and cleaved the smoke like a spear. For miles and miles the sea was illuminated, whilst the gigantic flare was made doubly grand by the vivid reflection of the fire in the water. The Captain was as fascinated as the rest of us, and not a sound escaped him whilst the blaze held in sight; up till nine o'clock the hull was burning furiously, the fires then waned, and we were thinking that the ship was sinking, when she blew up; the heavens were gashed with fire; it was a vast upheaval and rapid vomiting up of the whole body of flame, casting a noon-tide effulgence far and wide; high on the wind the sparks winked and hurried in a broad sheet; to right and left fragments of the wreck went whirling, like huge torches streaming in the hands of flying spirits; they fell quickly, and as they struck the water were instantly extinguished. Like a vision the blazing scene passed away, and the desolate sea was once more a blank, the stars throbbing brightly overhead. .

"There must have been a tidy lot of gunpowder in her," I heard the mate say to the Captain. The main-yards

were then swung, and the brig stood on her way.

Miss Franklin lingered on deck after the Captain and mate had gone below, the first for his grog, the second to get his sleep before he relieved me at midnight. For a long while she remained staring at the dark water, as though her mind had not received all the dismal grandeur and picturesque horror of the scene just enacted, and was trying to realize it. Then, looking around her and finding her brother gone, she peeped through the skylight and was about to go below when her eyes lighted on me.

"I never thought," she exclaimed in a subdued voice, and with the air of a person profoundly impressed, "when I used to read stories about burning ships, that I should one day see the reality! Is it not shocking to think that, only a few hours ago, that ship was a beautiful form, moving with white sails, across the sea, with men on board of her, who, perhaps, sang to their work with light hearts, and thought of the homes they had left or were returning to? Where is she now? Oh, such sudden extinction is dreadful!" There was a moving, wistful tremor in her voice that made its tones as musical as a lute's. "Could you feel positive, Mr. Chadburn, that no one was left on board of her?"

"I judged so by the sure indication of her boats being

gone.

"Where would they go?"

"They would probably run before the wind."
"When do you think they would reach land?"

I stared at her.

"The nearest land is the coast of South America, many hundreds of miles away. They would not think of making the land. Their idea would be to get in the track of

vessels, and be rescued in that way."

She looked toward the dark expanse of running waters, and shivered: drew her shawl around her, and, with a whispered "Good-night," went into the cabin. Hardly had she gone when Pendulum Banyard, who still swung his hammock in the deck-house, came, in his shambling way, along the deck, and said,—

"Young Joey seems downright queer-headed, and taking on, truly. The skipper ought to look at him. It's

all along o' Windward's fist."

I walked forward, followed by Banyard, and put my head into the deck-house. The door slided in grooves, and stood pushed back as far as it would go. Light was yielded by a swing-lamp fixed to a bracket. The chests of the occupants of the house were ranged under the hammocks which swung athwartships, and on them sat the cook and the apprentice named Hardy. In the hammock at the extreme end of the house, close against the galley and the furthest removed from the door, was the apprentice called among us, Young Joey, the lad whom Windward had struck on the head that morning. He was not to be seen, for he lay deep in his hammock, but he could be heard. The dry, moaning voice, the low, delirious wailing, struck a living pain in the ear.

"It's damned hard upon me to be kept awake," said the cook. "Who's goin' to turn in with that infernal row goin' on all night agin a man's ear? I sleep next to him. He ought to be carried aft. Wot I say is, let them as brought it about have the benefit o' the shindy."

"We must get him down out of that," said I. "Why, the heat is suffocating, and here you have him swung close against the hot galley, and clear of the little air that comes through the door. Lend me a hand to get him

down."

In order to do this it was necessary to cut the lashings of the hammock away from the eyebolts in the roof; we lowered him as he lay, and stretched his hammock along the chests. A painful sight was now disclosed; the boy had been hoisted into his hammock, dressed as he was lifted from the deck; his trousers and shirt were stained with blood, so was the coarse pillow on which his head lay, showing that he had bled afresh after having been got into his hammock. In fact, he was bleeding now from the ear, and the froth upon his lip was ensanguined.

His face was deadly white, and his fair hair was dabbled with the blood. He moaned and talked incessantly, but

his words were quite unintelligible.

I directed Banyard to wipe the slaver from his lips, and put water to them, and hurried aft to report to the Captain. He was sitting under the skylight, and I hailed him from the deck. "I think Young Joe, the apprentice, is dying, but it would be as well for you to see him."

"Who?" he answered, looking up.

"The boy Mr. Sloe struck this morning." He instantly jumped up and came on deck.

"Where is he?"

"In the deck-house."

He went hastily forward, and I followed him. My eyes were on his face when he looked at the boy, and I saw him turn pale as a sheet.

"What's the matter with you? Are you in pain? Where do you feel it?" he exclaimed, with the awkward

manner of a man unused to address kind words.

The boy mumbled and wailed, and rolled the whites of his eyes. Though Banyard had wiped the froth from his lips, more had come, bloodier than before; and now the pool was black under his ear.

"If the skipper don't promise to get the mate swung for this, by —— we'll lynch him for it," growled a deep voice behind me.

I glanced behind and saw three of the men belonging

to my watch peering through the door.

The skipper did not turn his head.

"Will a little brandy revive him, do you think, Chadburn?" he exclaimed. "Go and get some at once. Here, give me that cloth," and he took the cloth from Banyard's hand, and wiped the boy's mouth, whilst I ran aft.

Miss Franklin was standing near the table when I

entered the cabin.

"What is the matter?" she exclaimed.

"The lad struck by Mr. Sloe this morning is dying," I answered.

"Dying!" she cried, with a look and in a voice of inde-

scribable horror.

I hurried back to the deck-house with the brandy, and the skipper put some to the boy's lips. The glass shook in his fingers to such a degree that he spilt some of the contents over the lad's throat.

"It's hard upon a boy to be killed for doin' his work," said the lad named Hardy. "He told me his mother died a week before he shipped; he was made soft by that, he says, and I heerd him praying to her t'other night. He was a kind mate to me—he guv me this shirt." Pointing to the old bit of worsted upon him, he burst into tears.

"Stop that blubberin'!" cried Banyard; "reckon there's water enough i' the hold without you fetching us into an

extra spell o' pumping."

And not untenderly hooking his fingers into Hardy's collar, he jumped him through the door on to the deck outside.

"Lucius, the boy is dying; he must be taken to the cabin. Look at the froth upon his mouth! Unbutton the collar of his shirt!"

This voice, after Banyard's, was like the notes of a flute

following the bay of a watch-dog.

Miss Franklin pushed past me and went up to the lad, and her white fingers were busy at his throat in a moment.

"Go back to the cabin—this is no place for you," ex-

claimed the Captain in a low, passionate voice.

"Why may not I help him?" she cried, drying the boy's mouth with her handkerchief. "Look at his poor face! look at the blood upon his pillow! Oh, what a heartless monster to strike so young a boy! I will not go!" she exclaimed, struggling in the grasp which her brother had laid upon her arm. "Do not you see he is dying? Why do you allow your mate to act so cruelly? Moisten his poor mouth; dip this in water, and press it to his forehead."

She turned her eyes appealingly on me and extended her handkerchief. I pressed forward to obey her, but as I was about to apply the saturated handkerchief to the sufferer's head, a volume of blood rushed thick from his mouth. "Take the cold off my breast!" he shrieked, and stiffened his legs and lay dead.

The girl put her hands over her eyes, and a fierce shudder passed over her; with a face of death she turned on

her heel and went out of the deck-house.

The Captain was preparing to follow her.

"Skipper," exclaimed a low growling voice, "what d'ye mean to do with the murderer of that lad?"

The voice was Beauty Blunt's, and close behind him

were half-a-dozen of the crew.

"It was no fault of the mate's," answered the Captain hastily. "I don't believe the boy died from the blow given him. Chadburn, get the body sewn up: if you think he's dead we'll bury him now."

"Ye shan't put us off, skipper--what do you mean to

do with him?"

"What do you want me to do?" replied the Captain, standing in the light thrown by the lamp in the house upon the deck, and facing the men.

"It's blood for blood wherever men is civilized," was

the answer

"Do you expect me to hang the mate?" said the Captain in a low voice, made peculiar by the intensity and fierceness of the utterance. "I tell you, men, this was an accident, no murder! Go forward, now."

"Is that your answer?"

"Yes," with a stamp of the foot, and, wheeling about, he walked aft.

The men hung together for some moments in breathless silence. One of them then stole to the door of the house.

"Come and see him," he said in a whisper, and they

advanced in a group and stood in the doorway.

After looking on in silence, they went away forward. I listened to hear them speak, but no other sound reached my ears than the sobbing of the dead boy's messmate, Hardy, weeping unrebuked in the shadow of the foremast.

Banyard and I sewed the body up, securing some lead at the foot of the hammock; this done, I went aft, and reported all ready to the Captain. He leaned in a sullen

posture against the companion.

"Sloe will bring me into trouble if he uses his fist so freely. Let him hammer the dogs into civility, but he should have kept his hands off the youngsters," he muttered, looking at me, but scarcely seeming to know whom he addressed. He polished his forehead with his handkerchief; meanwhile I repeated what I had said.

"Then drop it overboard!" he exclaimed.

"At once?"

"At once? of course. This instant."

"Is no service to be read?"

"Who's going to read the service at this hour of the night? Get the thing out of the brig. If it lies all night, it will keep the men plotting, and unless you want to see the decks a shambles, you'll obey my orders."

Then, subduing his voice, he said almost caressingly,—

"Rid me of this quietly, like a good fellow. Get it to the port gangway, don't let the men see you, and make

no more splash than you can help."

I did not all like this precipitate and sacrilegious disposal of the still warm corpse; but my duty was to obey orders: so calling Banyard, we sneaked the hammock and its pale freight on to the deck, and dropped it overboard. Nobody came forward, nor challenged the job.

All through the rest of my watch, the skipper hung about the deck, once or twice going below, but returning to flit here and there. A little before eight bells, he said

to me,—

"If there's a mutiny among the men, I hope I may count upon your services?"

"I will help you to the utmost to maintain discipline, but the men shall know that I do not justify Mr. Sloe's

brutality."

"You had better keep your opinions to yourself, if you value your own interest. Your duty is clear, and, as a gentleman, I don't suppose you'll abet the crimes of a gang of men who are felons at heart."

He walked away, giving me no opportunity to reason

with him.

CHAPTER XXV.

I AM NEARLY DROWNED.

EIGHT bells had been struck some time before Old Windward relieved me. No doubt the Captain had been telling him about the death of the boy. He came up to me with a swagger, and exclaimed, striking his breast-pocket,—

"There's the brains of six blackguards under this coat."
(And the brains of the biggest blackguard of them all

atop of it, thought I.)

Pretending not to understand him, I inquired his meaning; for answer he exposed the butt-end of a revolver.

"There's one at your sarvice in the Captain's cabin, if you're nervous," said he. "If they attack me, they'll not spare you."

"I must take my chance," I answered coldly, and went

below.

I scrambled into my bunk, and lay there with an anxious heart, for, knowing what sort of spirit slumbered in the breasts of the men, I was prepared at any moment to hear a scuffle, and find the brig in the hands of the crew. Moreover, I was much affected by the death of the lad, and shocked when I reflected upon his unceremonious consignment to the deep. The outrage of which the mate had been guilty came forcibly home when I thought of the boy's youth, and his innocence of any deed to justify such murderous brutality. I pictured the men discussing the subject in the gloomy forecastle, the oaths with which their passion would make their language wild and fierce, and their sinister threats one to another to avenge the lad.

Sentiment would seem to have no footing among sailors: vet does a certain rude species of it color their thoughts, and they are often deeply moved by it. In the case of a pleasant shipmate falling overboard and losing his life, I have seen the crew subdued in manner, discarding their songs at the ropes, speaking in low tones, and whispering superstitious stories in the forecastle—this for a whole day together. They break from this useful mental attitude from fear of each other's ridicule, and fly into an opposite extreme of coarse chaff, foolish oath, and loud laughter. But all this is more forced than you would suspect. When a boy goes to school, to save himself from being jeered as a girl, he will swallow his sobs and talk with manly contempt of the mother, the sister, the kind old nurse, whose tenderness he will silently cry himself to sleep over when the friendly darkness comes. Sailors are schoolboys, and to understand them you must recall the time when you were a little boy and got a reputation for manliness from your companions by pretending to despise

things which are now your best memories.

I began to hope, however, when next day came, and the men proceeded to their work without further challenge of the skipper's intentions toward the mate for the murder of the boy (for murder it was, as heartless as a stab from a knife could have made it), that the matter would blow over, and the natural character of sailors assert itself in absolute heedlessness of all doings save those transacted in the passing minute. I watched them closely, but found no signs to interpret. Could I have gone into the forecastle and talked to them there, I might have been able to corkscrew a few of their ideas out of them; but that was forbidden ground to me now: forbidden, I mean, in the sense of that blunt understanding which subsists between officers and crew: "You're free to come into the fok'sle, mister first or second mate, but if we knock you over the head, or strip and hoist you naked through the scuttle, or belay you to a chest with a nail through the seat of your overalls, you'll understand it's a way we have, and a privilege as old as the first English ship's company that ever went to sea." Though the men liked me, I was not going to risk their tender fooling. It was one thing to hail them from the scuttle: another to drop into their den.

Still, though I hoped for peace, I cannot say I felt sure of it. I did not much understand the passivity of the men. The most harmless fellows at sea are notoriously the loudest growlers. Now here were all hands obeying orders without a murmur, unpleasantly quiet among themselves, and asking the Captain no questions.

I thought Banyard might be able to tell me what they

were talking about in the forecastle.

"I don't reckon they're on their knees askin' blessings

on Old Windward and the skipper."

"They're taking Young Joe's death more coolly than I thought they would after the growl they gave the skipper last night."

"So they are, so they are; and it's the most sensible

thing they can do."

"Providing they do it."

"True enough. Providing they do it."

Whether because he was stubborn or not, Pendulum was a difficult man to talk to. I believed him an honest man, however, and the only reliant hand on the brig.

"Banyard, I'm thinking of the girl in the cabin. shouldn't like any harm to come to her. I hope there'll

be no mutiny, for her sake."

"Mutiny's always a bad look-out. It runs agin all ship-

shape notions, and never does good."

"I don't like to see the men so quiet. I'd rather they would come aft and raise a hullabaloo, and blow off the steam in that way."

"Well, it 'ud look better."

"Is the cook much in the forecastle?"

"Well, he is. He's pretty often there."

"Just sound him, will you?"

The turned his eyes slowly on me, and shook his head.

"You take my advice; don't consarn yourself with That ain't your business. I ain't goin' to sound no man. And my advice to you is, keep yourself to yourself. If a rating comes, let them as brought it on take the consequences. Nother to do with me, and don't let it be nother 20 do with you, mate."

So saying, he shambled away from my side, after bestowing another ominous shake of the head on me. That was all the satisfaction I got out of Banyard, who, stupid as I thought him, had nevertheless given me enough advice

to make me thoughtful for myself.

Miss Franklin remained in her cabin all day. I took it that she had quarreled with her brother, or was too much upset by the painful scene of the boy's death to care to come to the table. The Captain was quiet, but the sinster impassiveness of the men seemed to cause him no alarm. This gave me a poor opinion of his judgment. The mate, on the other hand, blustered loudly. I heard him, when I was on deck, boasting, as he and the Captain

at at dinner, of his power over ships' crews.

"They think to frighten me at first," said he, and he spoke loud enough to be overheard by Beauty Blunt, who was steering; "but one taste of my fist is a dose of physic they never care to swaller twice. Lord save ye, Captain, it don't do to be frightened. I didn't mean to kill the boy, but since he's gone, let it stand for a good job, say I. It's like hanging up a scarecrow—it's a caution to 'em—it's teaching of 'em my motto, death or obedience—do what I tell ye, or I'll break your head! That's the talk for them to understand, and I reckon they know my meaning by this time. They're as brisk as fleas this blessed day, and quiet as alligators asleep on mud."

I did not catch the skipper's answer to this speech, but there was certainly no reproach, no reprimand in the tone

of his voice.

"The blood is on your own heads," thought I, turning away, after stealing a glance at Beauty, who stood looking at the compass with a dark scowl upon his ill-favored face

We had now got the S.E. trades broad on our portbow, and with the yards hard against the lee-rigging and the leeches of the royals shivering like flags in a breeze of wind, we breasted the crested rollers of the South Atlantic.

A few days after the death of the apprentice, an accident befell me—an occurrence often chronicled at sea, but rarely related by the man who experiences it, for a

very obvious reason.

The Captain was walking to windward, a hand nicknamed Savings was at the wheel, and Miss Franklin turned the pages of a book on the lee side of the companion. The watch were occupied aloft, and about the decks. Though the brig walked well, with the wind shaving her, she was not looking up into it this day as I considered she should. The main sail was choke full, a white hemisphere, curving a graceful semicircle from the tack to the yard-arm; but the royals rattled overhead as if the brig were incessantly on the point of going about and thinking better of it. Before tallying the men on to the braces, I sprang on to the bulwark, holding on to the main royal back-stay, and ran my eye up the leaning pillar of sail. An accident at sea happens in an instant. A man stretches from the rigging and swings himself by some running gear: the end is not fast, and, with the rope in his hand, he falls smash upon the deck. Or he lays out along a yard: a sudden jerk scrapes the footrope from under his feet, and he whizzes through the air, and is gone forever.

What happened to me was effected so instantaneously that I have no notion how it came about: one moment I was poised upon the bulwark, looking aloft; the next I was under water, with an uproar of thunder in my ears.

It was curious that whilst I remained under water my sensations were a profound conviction that I was in a dream. I had no fear, for I did not believe in the reality of my position. Whether I was slightly stunned by the blow from the water, or that the mind is incapable of immediately receiving the sense of an abrupt change of condition, it is certain that my feelings were as I describe. I rose to the surface, and, with the first breath of fresh air, I took in all the horrors of my situation. The waves, which looked moderate enough from the deck of the brig, were so many hurling mountains all around me. Lifted on the summit of one, I could see the brig hove-up, her jib-sheets flowing and bow-lines let go; and a group of men near the lee quarter-boat. Then down I went into the (to me) immeasurable hollow between the seas, with the green water like the walls of a house sloping away on either hand, and the sky a dim vague space of light overhead. What made my heart sick and almost paralyzed my arms was the distance at which the brig stood. Just now I was on board of her; and there she was, so far off that the men at the quarter-boat were no bigger than my

Could I keep myself affoat until the boat measured the

interval that separated me from the brig? I was a fair swimmer, yet the sense of the profound depths over which I hung, the roaring of the foaming waters, now over my head, now around me: my own littleness in the wide world of moving green and froth, were so dismaying, that my will failed me, my energies expired, nothing but the mechanical instinct of life kept my arms swaying and my head above water. Swung suddenly to the height of a tall sea, I spied, not fifty yards away, a circle of yellowa life-buoy, which some one must have flung overboard a few seconds after I had fallen. As I sunk from the roaring height into the horrible chasm, my mind, vivified by the sight of the life-buoy, went to work, and I plotted how I should reach it. It was to windward; every sea that lifted it would bring it nearer: no longer, therefore, swimming with my face to the brig, I confronted the buoy, and struck out with all my power, not with the intention of swimming up to it, but in order that I might lose as little ground as possible from the powerful send of the seas. Sometimes the crest of a wave broke over me, smothering me in a whirl of froth in which I sputtered and squattered and sank; breathless, and shaking the hair and water out of my eyes, I buckled to the steadying process again, and after five minutes of agonizing labor, I caught the buoy as it came rushing down upon the top of a sea. In a second I had slipped my arms through it, and rode safe, breast high out of water.

By this time they had lowered the quarter-boat and were pulling steadily toward me. I watched her with dreadful anxiety as she was now raised high, with the foam standing around her, now disappearing from my sight, now emerging again, the face of the man steering her growing more distinct every moment. I saw him wave his hand; but if he saluted me with any encouraging shout I no more heard him than had I been leagues below the horizon: the boiling of the water all around was deafening, and the spray that constantly broke over me filled my ears and mouth, and kept me spitting and choking so violently that a very short

time would have found me a corpse.

The boat approached, rising and falling to windward, Some careful maneuvering was now required: but, half-dead as I was, I had still sense enough to exult over the skill with which Little Welchy, who steered the boat,

handled her. He put her head to the sea, and let her drive stern on down upon me, helping her now and again

with a dip of the oars.

In a few moments she was alongside; the same sea let us fall into one hollow. As we rose together I was grabbed by four pairs of hands, and hauled, sobbing, retching, and streaming, into the boat where I lay, as weak as a kitten.

The regaining of the brig was a nasty job, and an arduous one, as the boat was to leeward, and had to be rowed in the face of the tumbling rollers. At times she was pitched half-out of water, and then it seemed impossible that she could escape being swamped by the arch-

ing wave that ran like a steam-engine at her.

It took the four men, rowing their hardest, half-anhour to bring the boat alongside: and here again it was touch and go with us all, for when the boat was hoisted midway, a sea struck her and started a couple of her bottom planks, and in another instant would have unhooked

the bowtackle and left her hanging stern down.

Too weak to walk, I was assisted by a couple of the men to my cabin: my clothes were removed, my body rubbed dry, and a caulker of hot brandy administered. Snug in my bunk, I offered a solemn thanksgiving to God for my preservation, and fell fast asleep. When I awoke two hours afterward, I was hearty enough to get up and go on deck.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MY PRESERVER.

At sea no fuss is made over an incident of this kind. The sole comment uttered by the skipper upon it was, "For the future, get a better hold; I'm not going to risk my masts for greasy hands, and as the rigging isn't limed, you'd better double up your fingers next time you catch at it."

The mate offered no observation at all. Had I fallen overboard in his watch, probably he would have given me a carsing for giving him the trouble to stop the brig and lower a boat.

Such manners may seem incredible, or mere exaggeration, to many; but no man who has been to sea in all sizes of vessels will dispute the truth of my picture. However, if the accident impressed nobody else, it affected me. Indeed, I was much nearer being drowned than was supposed, or than I liked to admit to myself. A life-buoy will not keep a man alive long when seas are breaking over him, and I was pretty sure that another ten minutes would have settled my account with this world. In consequence I was as serious as a ghost, and when I came on deck at eight o'clock in the evening to stand my watch till midnight, I was in as melancholy and sentimental a

temper as ever I remember being troubled with.

"But for that life-buoy, where would you have been now?" thought I to myself, looking at the dark water astern, throbbing near at hand, with the white play of the wave-crests, and fading into gloom under the starry heavens. "A corpse, Jack! a pale, floating, dressed-up phantom, hanging midway in a thousand fathoms of water, butted by the noses of fish, large and small, surrounded by vague circles of luminous eyes wondering at your ugliness and smelling to your flavor-all about you a dead calm. God, what silence! deep as that which reigned ere this globe of earth was wrought out of chaos, with never an echo to reach you of the mightiest gale that should swirl and harass the roof of the transparent dominion in the heart of which you lie!" Pleasant reflection! I looked up at the stars. "Thank God for the privilege of seeing you still!" whispered I, à la Manfred, only with reverent gratitude.

Miss Franklin came out of the cabin, and advanced

straight to me.

"I have not had an opportunity before now of telling you how grateful I am that your life is preserved. I was on deck when you fell overboard—indeed, I was looking at you when you fell. Was the shock greater to you than to me, I wonder? It was a dreadful thing to see, and the cry the man at the wheel gave was an awful sound!"

"A sailor has as many lives as a cat, Miss Franklin."

"If he had ninety-nine lives he would have none to spare. I thought the sea tiresome at first: but I find out that it is rather too exciting. You must have wonderful strength and nerves to be keeping watch and talking

lightly after such an accident. Are you obliged to be on deck?"

"I have to keep my watch," I replied.

"But if you do not feel equal to it, I will tell my brother, and insist upon his allowing you to remain in

your cabin all night."

"You are very good and thoughtful; but I am really none the worse for my ducking. Perhaps I am a little depressed; most men are apt to be so after a wrestle with death. But then I own to you what I would tell nobody else. We are not supposed to have hearts or feelings at sea. If one is killed, there's an end. If not killed, then a miss is as good as a mile, and one is laughed at for referring to the escape."

"Why are sailors so hard-hearted?"

"I don't think they are hard hearted. The vice is an assumed one. They overstrain their ideas of manliness. But the softest among them is but a rough creature, and I don't wonder at ladies disliking them."

She was silent, keeping her eyes fixed on the deck;

presently,-

"I thought the boat would never reach you. Oh, how

madly impatient I felt whilst watching them!"

"I should have perished if it had not been for the lifebuoy thrown to me."

"I did that!" she exclaimed, looking up at me.

"You!"

"Yes. There was one on what you call the grating. I loosed it, and threw it overboard almost as soon as I saw you fall."

"Then I owe my life to you."

"To me!" she cried, with a note of glad surprise in her voice.

"Most surely to you; for had the life-buoy been thrown a minute later, it would have fallen out of my reach—I should not have had the strength to swim to it against the heavy seas."

"Thank God, then, for my presence of mind!" she said. I was touched by the thought that my salvation was

owing to the hand I loved; to the brave smartness of the girl who had come into my heart. Actions and silence will express thought, and inspirations may be delivered by a gesture, a movement of the head, by vehicles the

most unnoteworthy. I believe at that moment, without opening my lips, I told her that I loved her; and I am persuaded that at that moment she discovered my love. How was this effected? how could I be positive? how could I read her thoughts, and she mine, by no better light than the pale glimmer that fell from the stars?

She turned away and looked at the sea over the stern. I took a turn along the deck and met her as I came back.

"Mr. Chadburn," said she, "what do you think will be the result of Mr. Sloe's bad treatment of the men?"

"I will answer you frankly. If Mr. Sloe does not reform, the men will mutiny."

"You mean they will refuse to work?"

"That is one kind of mutiny."

"What do you fear?"

I made her no answer. She put her hand in a childlike way on my arm, and drew me from the skylight.

"You frighten me!" she exclaimed. "What do you

fear?"

"If the men turn, they will say, 'We may as well suffer for much as for little."

"How are they to be won over?"

"I scarcely know how to answer you. Undoubtedly, Captain Franklin is acting injudiciously in passing over the mate's murder of the boy."

"That is what I told him!" she exclaimed in a breathless voice. "I said, 'The mate has acted with shocking cruelty—the men expect that you will punish him;' and his answer was, 'I do not care for the men. Mr. Sloe is the proper man for them, and more competent than I am to keep them in order."

"You will understand, Miss Franklin, that I feel some

delicaey in discussing your brother's conduct-"

"But why?" she interrupted. "You have a right to express yourself. We are not all to be frightened into holding our tongues."

"The captain of a vessel can do what he likes. Nobody

must question his authority,"

"Do you mean to say that he may kill boys, if he likes?" she cried, opening her eyes.

I could not help laughing as I answered, "Of course he is amenable to the law ashore; but I don't know what is

to stop him from killing boys at sea, if the crew don't rise against him."

"Oh, Mr. Chadburn; what can you see to amuse you in such cruelty? You ought to reason with my brother."

"And were I to do so, to-morrow you would see me a forecastle man again, singled out for the hardest and dirtiest jobs. No remonstrance on my part, believe me, would do any good."

"Don't you think you could get the men to patiently endure Mr. Sloe's bad treatment until they arrived in

Sydney?"

"If any good can be done by putting in a word now and then, you may trust me to do so," said I. "I wonder that Captain Franklin does not consider the perilous position he may place you in by allowing his mate to exasperate the crew."

He came on deck as I spoke these words. Standing at

the companion, and peering at us, he cried out,-

" Who is that?"

"Are there other ladies on board, that you cannot tell who I am?" she answered pettishly.
"Come into the cabin!" he exclaimed angrily.

She wished me good-night, and walked leisurely to the companion. I heard her say, with an indignant sob in her voice,—

"You address me as if I were one of the crew." Directly she had gone below he marched up to me.

"Haven't you been to sea long enough to know that you have no right to be gossiping when you are on duty?"

"Miss Franklin was congratulating me on my escape

to-day."

"What's that to do with it? I leave the brig in your hands, and expect you'll attend to your work. What else did Miss Franklin say?"

"Why, since you ask me, sir, she agrees with me that the safety of the brig is imperiled by Mr. Sloe's brutal-

"ity."

"What's that to do with you or her?" he thundered. "Did I bring you out of the fok'sle to discuss my affairs? By-- if there's a mutiny, I shall know who's at the bottom of it: I don't like your tricks, sir! You were among the men when that mutinous little hound drew his knife upon me the other day, and having done your work forrard, you have brought your d—— spirit of mischief aft, have you? Be careful!" he shouted. "The voyage isn't done yet. All you have to do is to mind your business, and obey orders, d'ye hear? If you don't, you'll find me a clever rascal! I'll haze you! I'll make you sing out!"

He came rearing and swelling himself so close to me that involuntarily I threw myself into a defensive posture. However, all this abuse was mere stilt-work; he towered it over me in the hopes of making me afraid of him. But I had a strong motive to remain aft, and this kept me silent; seeing which, and perhaps imagining that he had produced the impression he meant to make, he crossed the deck and lighted a cigar. There he remained in solitary state, pacing the deck regularly up to half-past eleven o'clock.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TO LEEWARD OF THE GALLEY.

THE days passed, and the brig drew to the southward, new temperature marking her progress, new stars climbing from the horizon across her bows. In the regular trade gales, one day was like another, the brig dragging her channels through the water, all sail on her, the upper leeches quivering, the lee-rigging slack, and to windward taut as bars of iron. The sloping deck, the hoarse rushing of the water on the lee-side, the lee portholes glimmering green in the water that buried them, the long grumble of the timbers as the brig strided the regular seas, were familiar matters, like the grinding of the screw in a steam-ship. No change of weather varied the scene; overhead were always the white clouds rolling away to the north-west, over a deep blue ground, and the sea, an eternal space of green, covered with rushing waves breaking to windward in lines of snow far as the horizon.

Now and again the trades freshening into a gale set us clewing up the royals, and once or twice we stood by the top-gallant halyards, but never let them go. Both skipper and mate packed it on the brig; and such a sea-jockey was old Windward that, when the extra puffs came, and the vessel was burying her chain-plates so that you could have

touched the water to leeward by hanging your arm over the bulwark, he would stamp about the deck like a madman, chafing his hands, casting his malevolent eyes aloft, and erying out in his ecstasies all sorts of applause to the rushing vessel—"Trip through it, old bucket!" "Creak and hold, old frother!" "Smother and burst, sweetheart!" precisely as if she were a live thing and would sail the better for his compliments.

The skipper, less excitable, was nevertheless well pleased with the progress the vessel was making. Nothing that I ever was on board of spanked it more smartly, close-hauled, than the Little Loo. She was a brig to creep to windward with the sureness of an iceberg and the speed of a bird. Such runs as we were making told heavily on our southing; we dropped parallel after parallel, averaging

a full two-hundred-and-fifty sea miles every noon.

Meanwhile all was quiet with the men.

One second dog-watch I came on deck to smoke a pipe in the waist. It was not possible to get a match to burn in the draught that rushed slanting from the mainsail, so

I stepped into the galley.

The galley is the kitchen of the ship. Here in the coppers are cooked the pork and the beef served to the men, each mess of meat simmering along with the label of the watch to which it belongs. Here you see the cook at dinner-time pronging the coppers and bringing out the "duff"—the sea-puddings—with which the men are regaled on alternate days, sometimes once a week, for all crews do not fare alike. These "duffs" are flour and water, as hard as chalk, and as nice: the compound is boiled in canvas bags, but I have seen stockings do duty in the absence of proper bags, and the "duff" forked out of the boiling water in the pleasing shape of a foot and leg.

The cook was on the forecastle: a bit of fire lived in the grate, and lighting my pipe at it, I was going away, when I heard the voices of some men sheltering themselves from

the wind on the lee side of the galley.

The voice then speaking was Deacon's: what he was

saying arrested me.

sixty thousand, I tell you. Did you ever see sixty thousand pounds' worth of gold, Jim?"

- "See it? no."

[&]quot;I opened one of the bags to have a look. There was

only a thousand in it, but that's a sum to make a wise man squint like a lunatic when it's all before him in naked sovereigns. Think of dipping your hand in, far as your wrist, and feeling the hard yellow-boys slippery and clean against your skin. The Australian pound's yellower than the English sovereign. It looks real gold. It hasn't such a handsome stamp, but I like the color, Jim."

"Just you fill my pockets wi' 'em. I reckon I'll not speak agin the color."

"But the bar-gold, mate! did you ever see a bar of

"You ax'd me that afore! I said no. Where the blazes should I see bar-gold? d'ye think I wur born in a mine?"

"When we carried them away from the beach, I put them into Tommy's arms, eight of them at a time-neither of us could hold more. When I put one more on to try him, his arms gave, and down they dropped; Tommy was a middling strong man too."

"I'd like to keep as many as I could carry away; I lay there'd be a trifle missin'," here said a third voice, the

surliness of which betokened it as Liverpool Sam's.

"Let me git hold o' some o' them bars-I'll tell you what 'ud happen," said voice number two: "I'd keep a That's bin my notion o' livin' proper ever since I wur three footstall. Ildon't want no blazin' glass and flowers, and gals with curls on their foreheads neglectin' of customers vilst they vastes their time up in a corner o' the bar along with gents dressed up to the hammer in a ha'porth o' finery. Snugness is my principle, with a free-an'-heasy every night, where sailors can drink and sing without hinterference."

"There's too many clean shirt days in that kind o' life to please me," growled old Sam. "My notion o' comfort is a house without a staircase, a feather bed, a harm-cheer which draws out for the legs, with a public handy up the street, a garden behind to sit in on Sundays, and some

'spectable sailors to converse with ven you're dull."

"Sammy's notions ain't bad," exclaimed voice number three; "but give me the theayter. If there's any brass to come to me, see wot I'd do: I'd buy a theavter; the music in it 'ud be all done by fiddles; no d- trumpets and long-vinded toones for me, mates; you'd hear nothing but proper nautical music, somethin' as 'ud

keep your feet agoin' vilst you listened, and bring your voice into your mouth with with lawful excitement. I'd hire tip-top gals to dance, and dance myself—see if I wouldn't. There'd be no actin'; nothin' but dancin'. And if there wur any sailors in the pit, or elsewheers, as could dance, they should be velcome to jine. That's my notion. I knows wot it is to sit and watch the gals dancin', and long to jine 'em, and afeared to move. Only, no d—trumpets—nothen but fiddles for me."

"It's all possible," said Deacon.

Afraid that one of them might step round for a light and catch me listening, I left the galley, rather surprised, after the fuss Deacon had made over his secret when telling it to me, that he should now be taking the crew into his confidence.

Perhaps the whole yarn was a fabrication after all. Only, lies presuppose a motive, and here was none to be discovered at all. This was the consideration that shook

my confidence in my own judgment.

I said to myself, "There is no reason why this story should be a lie; he can have no motive in propagating it, and acting up to the character it imposes. If it be true, his behavior is consistent, and it is reasonable that he should cast aside his reserve and take his shipmates into his confidence, because he cannot remove the gold without help, and the best men for him are the first at hand."

But all this was nothing to me: my thoughts went further. He had proposed to me to seize the brig. Suppose he made the same proposal to the men? Bad treatment had made tinder of their souls; and here was a live spark to eat deep, a reason for rising, a brilliant end to be attained, and the means sweetened by the revenge it

involved.

But it was all a speculation, these thoughts of mine. I was not a man to harass my mind with mere possibilities. I knocked the ashes out of my pipe and regained the cabin, on the whole more amused than alarmed by the conversation I had overheard.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MUTINY.

On the 20th of August our Longitude was 82° 4' E.,

and our Latitude 29° 17, S.

The brave Southeasters had failed us, and we were now to carry any slants we might catch round the Cape of Good Hope, and pray for what following winds should be sent us to breeze the Little Loo along the eight or nine thousand miles of Pacific Ocean that remained to be traversed before the Sydney coast rose gray and desolate under the flying jibboom.

At noon, on this day. the brig's course was altered to

E.S.E.

Whilst the crew were squaring the yards, the men who tallied on the main braces were signaled by Deacon from the wheel: he held his finger up. The gesture was instantaneous, but my eyes were on him by chance at the moment. I went aft, under pretense of examining the compass card.

"What did that signal mean?" I inquired in a low

voice.

"What signal?"

"You put your finger up to the men."

" Did I?"

"What did it mean?"

"Would you like to know?"

I glanced askant at his face, and detected a lurking grin.

"This is not the course to Teapy," said I.

"Yes it is," he answered, "if we hold on long enough. But what has that got to do with my finger?"

"The movement excited my curiosity," I replied care-

lessly.

"I was feeling the wind," said he; "didn't you see me put my finger into my mouth first?"

"No."

"Then before you judge of things, see all that belongs to them, or you'll go astray."

There was no positive rudeness in the way he said this,

though the least alteration of tone would have made the

speech insolent.

"I hope," I exclaimed earnestly, "that you'll think twice before you act. There's no wealth in this world that may not cost more to get than its worth."

"You have no cause to fear any want of reflection in me," he answered, as I moved away, noticing that he

strongly accentuated the word "you."

As the afternoon advanced, the wind grewfaint. Studding sail-booms were rigged out, and the sails set, and under a cloud of canvas the brig swam quietly forward, rolling grandly over the large swell that came gleaming up from the south'ard.

A little before four o'clock a vessel hove in sight on the starboard bow: I examined her through the glass, and found her a large screw steamer, apparently a man-of-war, her topgallant-mast housed, no canvas showing, her hull black, and the column of froth at her cutwater shivering in the sunshine like a jewel on an Indian's forehead. She drew close rapidly: spots of red on her forecastle spoke her a troop-ship-if from India, then giving the Cape a wide berth.

There is always something delightful in a sailor's eye in the neatness, strength, and finish of a man-of-war's spars and rigging. The wide spread of black shrouds, the massive yards, the big tops, the white line of hammocks, the great looming bows that seem to lift themselves above the sea, as if in disdain of the challenge of waves, and the churning of foam under the counter, formed a noble

picture.

We hoisted the ensign, ready to dip to her as she passed -for this is the way ships bow to each other, and the merchantman is bound to pull off his hat (in this fashion), to every British man-of-war he meets on the high seasand up, in response to our courtesy, ran the milky folds of the glorious St. George's Cross, symbol dear to Englishmen, and one that gives a leaping pulse to his blood, as the strains of "Rule Britannia" do, or the hearty tune of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer." A fellow in the main top danced a hornpipe to our honor as we passed, and the sight of our red ensign set the soldiers flourishing hats and handkerchiefs; and just as she had drawn on our quarter, her band struck up a waltz-a fine clashing melody came across

the water to us, thinning and fining down as her hull grew narrower, her mast smaller, until silence fell on the sea

again, and she was a black spot on the horizon.

For the first time that day Miss Franklin came on deck, and lingered, gazing wistfully at the ship, until miles of water had been put between us; she then went below again. Our eyes met, and she smiled, but had nothing to say. I concluded that her brother had forbidden her to speak to me; I further believed that he had prohibited her from coming on deck when he was absent from it. Certainly her actions tallied with these conjectures, but then her pride would not permit her to own that her brother was only a little less despotic to her than he was to me. So even the small credit I had given him of having a soft heart for his sister I now withdrew. I thought him as great a brute in his own cold fashion as Old Windward was in his demonstrative one, and much I hated him, believe me, for denying me the only happiness that kept me fresh under a system of discipline as tyrannous as ever came under the notice of a Liverpool police magistrate in the shape of a Yankee skipper and the men he had maimed for life.

When I came on deck at twelve o'clock that night, a dead calm had fallen. There was no moon, and yet so splendid was the glory of the stars, that the light of them in the double beauty they shone with from the heavens on high, and in the sweeping silken surface of the sea, filled the air with a mild luster, so that the furthest reaches of the ocean were discernible, and the loftiest rigging of the brig plain as the interlacing boughs of a tree in moonlight. The Southern Cross hung in all the serene silver beauty of its orbs over the horizon, an emblem of the Christian faith planted by God's own hand over the secret lands of the Pacific.

Now and again the silence was broken by the melodious gurgle of water as the brig sank her stem to the hollowing swell; the sails flapped faintly, and the wheel-chains rattled upon the iron sheaves of the blocks. There was a muffled murmur of voices forward—an unusual sound at such an hour—and I was half tempted to creep to the scuttle to hear the subject that kept the crew awake and gossiping; but Pendulum's dull recommendation to me to keep myself to myself held me to my quarters.

A feeling of uneasiness was excited in me, nevertheless. These dead and solemn nights at sea strain the nerves; the surrounding immensity strikes a supreme sense of loneliness into the heart; you seem to hear mysterious undertones in the air, mutterings indefinable by the material ear, yet sounding upon the exquisite retina of the fancy, breathing like the vexed echoes of vanished gales.

I went to the quarter and looked over. A curious midnight visitor had oozed out of the caverns of the deep to take the air and have a look at the weather. A whale—like the hull of a ship, keel up—had blown his water not a biscuit's throw from the brig. No words can express the dreary, gasping, panting, hollow noise made by the leviathan as it discharged its liquid burden against the stars. Presently, close under the bows, another whale blew; then close under the stern another, then two more away on the right. Had they mistaken the bottom of the brig for a kinsman, and risen to disgorge their juices en famille? - Here was sport, had we been a whaler. Soon these harmless monsters of the deep had blown their last: they sank out of sight, and I and the man at the wheel were once more alone.

This individual was Savings—a derisive nickname for a man who had shipped the most poorly provided of us all with clothes, and had as easy a trick of borrowing and forgetting as any Irish major. He was accounted a stupid man by the crew, and often joked upon, and sometimes

pommelled.

For instance, he was caught asleep one night with one leg of his trousers off and the other on; the men cut the off leg short at the knee, and stitched it up; then, banging on the scuttle, they called all hands: and great was the mirth when Savings (who had a lively fear of the mate), finding that he could do nothing with his trousers, pitched them away, and sprang on deck in his shirt tails. A practical joke is like a stone set rolling down-hill: start it, and you shall never foresee the adventures it shall effect before it comes to a stop. So in this case: Old Windward, catching sight of the semi-nude seaman, conceived that he had shown himself in this figure to mock him; he gave chase; Savings flew round the deck, and barely preserved himself from a kicking by tumbling headlong through the scuttle.

"What's keeping the men awake in the forecastle, do you know?" I asked him.

"Talkin' o' their sweethearts, p'r'aps," said he, grinning in my face, and then expectorating behind his hand.

"And what else, I wonder?"

"And I wonder. Master, could 'ee lend us a chew o' baccy? Thought I had a quid i' the lining o' my cap when I come to the wheel, but Jimmy must ha' stole it."

I handed him a pinch from my pouch, and he thrust

the delicacy into his cheek.

"What's keeping the men jawing at this hour, Savings?"

"I'll lay it's Sniggers spinning his yarns."

"About the island and the gold?"

"Why, yes! has he been aft with it? Ain't it a bloomin' fancy? If I wur made o' blubber, master, I'd turn to and swim to that island."

"And much you'd get by the voyage. Why, you don't

believe what Sniggers says, do you?"

"Yes, I do, then," he answered emphatically: "every word of it. Why, I see the noosepaper in which it's all wrote down. Sniggers read it to all hands."

"Do the hands believe it?"

"Rather! it ain't so rum a thing as that it couldn't ha' happened. Look what things is found in sharks. I don't take no account myself o' buttons and boots and pannikins, and the likes o' that; but I seed with my own eyes a bag o' Merican dollars drawed out of a shark's inside, once, rale coin, and every man got one for hisself, and there was more left for the passengers to keep as curios."

"Are the men going to help Deacon to recover the

money?"

"I know nothen about that," he replied, with a quick

change of manner; "ye'd better ask 'em."

I dropped the subject and left him, not choosing to press more questions, lest he should go and tell the men I had been trying to pump him. Much as I hated the mate, I thought I would give him a hint when he came on deck. Accordingly, on his showing himself at eight bells, I said to him, "There's mischief brewing forward, I think, and it will behoove you to keep a sharp look-out."

"What's doing there?" he asked, receiving my state-

ment in a less offensive manner than I had expected.

- "All hands have been awake and talking together throughout the watch."
 - "And what more?"
 "That's all, sir."
- "Are you afraid of that?" he shouted. "What the deuce odds if they talk together all through the night? the whelps are not obliged to turn in! there's nothing in the articles to compel them to sleep, is there? Let 'em growl among themselves and welcome: but if they bring their cheek aft, then it's this and this for em!" and he struck the palm of his left hand heavily with his fist.

"You shall know more about them than I, if you please," thought I, as I went below; but it occurred to me, all the same, that the long conference that had been going on was too unusual to be worthless as a suggestion.

The cabin in which I lay was close against the pantry. Scum, though a tolerable cook, was a bad butler, and illadapted to the storage of crockery. Constantly, therefore, was I subjected to the nuisance of the jingling of plates and dishes as the brig rolled. When I turned in now, I found this jarring and clatter detestable, for it played upon my irritated nerves and upon my ears, which maddened at so paltry an obstacle to clear hearing.

To speak the truth, I flung myself into my bed with a fluttering alarm upon me that deserves my contempt. My imagination made a fool of me. The droning that had been going on in the forecastle all through my watch was basis enough for fancy to pile its agony on. Then there was that mysterious signal made by Deacon to the men. Then there was a sullen and reserved attitude exhibited by the crew ever since the night on which the apprentice lad had died. Then there was that story of Deacon to be remembered, an undermining, influencing agency, potent in its eloquence of gold, working among the men like a decisive voice to give uniformity to their moods, that first condition of successful rebellism.

All these things were in my mind, and kept me think-

ing hard and listening hard.

Something was at hand, I believed. No man's instincts rear their heads and fork their tongues, like disturbed serpents, in one direction in the gloom of conjecture, unless some enemy be there to attract them. Yet sleep was

heavier than apprehension, and I was presently snoring,

with no part of my dress removed.

I must have fallen asleep with my nerves exposed, as in wax models of the human conformation, or what less noise than the crash of the brig's bottom upon a rock, or a thunderbolt smiting her, could have sent me flying sheer out of my slumber on to the deck.

What was it? a pistol shot?

In a moment came a loud cry and groan close at hand, immediately followed by a shrill scream. That sound upon me was like touching a nerve-pulp with caustic. I

sprang out of my cabin.

The morning light lay broad on the glass of the sky-light. Some three or four men were surging and swaying half in and half out of the captain's cabin; and close to my own cabin stood Miss Franklin, cowering and shivering and stooping—looking like a corpse in the act of falling prone.

I seized her by the arm, and not until she felt my hand did she remove her fascinated eye from what was going

forward in the captain's cabin.

"Come with me!" I cried, and half carrying, half dragging her, I conveyed her to my cabin. "Stop here until I come to you. Here is the key of the door. Lock yourself in."

"They have killed my brother!" she shrieked.

I closed the door upon her, and ran to the men. They were coming out of the captain's cabin, and bore the skipper's motionless body among them. Beauty had him by an arm, Jimmy held his legs, and Old Sam clasped him round the waist; a fourth man pushed behind; and they were all as silent as executioners.

"In God's name!" I cried, what have you done, men? what bloody work is this that your madness has brought

you into?"

"Out of the vays!" exclaimed Beauty; "we'll talk to you presently."

And they proceeded to carry their burden up the com-

panion-ladder.

I ran after thom. The morning was further advanced than I had imagined; the sun was high, but the sky cloudy, and light threads of air from the south-west were

burring the burnished surface of the sea. I stood at the

companion and glanced swiftly round.

The first object I saw, placed upon the skylight, was the mate, bound hand and foot, with blood upon his face. He was anything but dead, however; his eyes rolled restlessly, and whilst my gaze rested upon him, he strained his powerful limbs in his bonds until the strands of the rope creaked again.

A body of men, amongst whom was Deacon, were clearing away the starboard quarter-boat ready for lowering. Those who had hauled the captain on deck laid him down, on which Deacon looked round and jumped off the bul-

warks.

"You haven't killed him, I hope!" cried he. "I told

you we wanted no murder done."

"He's not dead," replied Beauty. "But d'ye think I wur goin' to let him shoot me? He levels his pistol at my head, an' if I hadn't ducked, there'd be a ball i' my brains now. Then I guv him a back-hander, and down he goes; but he ain't no more dead than I am."

"Deacon!" I cried, going up to him, "for God's sake,

tell me what is the meaning of all this?"

"The meaning!" he shouted; "why, the brig's ours!

To h— with the murderers of Young Joey."

"I say that we ought to hang him!" shrieked Little Welchy, darting out from the group near the quarter-boat at this exclamation from Deacon. "It 'ud not take me a minute to strop a block at the yard-arm there, and reeve a line through it, and hitch the end round his neck. I'll have the hanging of ye yet!" he yelled, dancing up to the mate, and shaking his fist into his face.

The mate grew black in the face, and his eyes started out round and white with his superhuman struggles to

liberate his arms, but not a word did he utter.

I clutched at Deacon, and brought him some steps away from the men who were congregated round the

skipper.

"Answer me one question—you're the ringleader here, I see. I once saved your life—as you have often reminded me—and if you're not a bloody-minded villain, you'll discharge the debt."

"What is it?" he answered, with a stubborn, savage,

piratical glance.

"Is Miss Franklin safe?"

"Yes. Let go my arm; you're squeezing me like a carpenter's vise."

"What are you going to do with those men?"

"Send them adrift in that quarter-boat."

I was beginning to plead, but he stopped me with an oath.

"Look here; don't you interfere! We're all mad, mate, and 'll not know you for a friend if you stick up for those murderers. It's a short way of getting rid of them, and it leaves our hands clear of their blood."

He turned away, and bawled to one of the men to cut a couple of fathoms of line off the signal halyards and take a turn over the skipper's arms, and then incited the others to bear a hand and get the quarter-boat ready.

"There's wind coming, boys, and we must be clear of

this place before it breezes up some vessel upon us."

I returned to my place at the companion, and planted myself against it, looking on. I had been tempted more than once to address them; my wild and horrified feelings would have given my tongue power, but something there was in their faces—in the hard, fierce grins upon them, the furious eyes which they turned ever and anon upon Old Windward, and the pale, still form of the captain; in their coarse voices, made frightful by the unspeakable blasphemy of their oaths, sometimes breaking into a hoarse shout or screech of passion when Deacon (the archdevil of this conspiracy) sent a new fire into their blood by clever references to those actions of the two prostrate men which would most infuriate the crew to hear—which held me silent.

I had need to be cautious. Miss Franklin's preservation might be dependent on mine. In me one man, at all events, there would be to sell his life for her. But whilst all appeals to them on behalf of their victims would certainly be vain, they would assuredly jeopardize my own safety, and it was with a deeper shock of horror than words can express that I contemplated the feelings which would possess me when, flung into the boat to share the fate of the captain and mate, I should behold the brig gliding away into the far reaches of the Pacific, bearing in her the girl I loved, with men more dangerous to her than wild beasts as her sole companions.

Every man belonging to the brig was aft; and greatly astounded was I to see Old Pendulum as busy as the rest of them at the boat; for he, of all the ship's company, should I have put down as the very last man to thrust his hand into a mess of this sort. They had stowed water in the bows, and some biscuit in the locker in the stern sheets of the boat, and this evidently was all the provisions they meant to let the two men have. When they had got as far as this, and were beginning to handle the falls and look at the victims, the skipper heaved a sigh and opened his eyes. His consciousness came to him immediately, and, like a thunder-clap, the perception of the tragical plight he was in rushed upon his mind. He gave a loud cry and tried to sit up, but could not put himself erect, owing to his wrists being secured.

"Let me go, men! let me get my feet! what are you about to do with me?" he cried, and he gave so wild a leap by striking the deck with his heels, that Little Welchy rushed like a blood-hound upon him and knelt upon his chest.

"Lie still!" he cried in that vehement rasping voice of his, which lent a most consistent note to the horror of the scene. "I'll be the death of ye! my hand's ready for your throat! I'm smartin' still, you dog, you, from that cowhidin'! Lie as you are!" and he held his fist suspended over the captain's face.

"Now then, the boat's ready!" shouted Deacon. "In with them; there's wind coming, and we're all aback! Pass along old blood-and-thunder first!"

Half a dozen men instantly surrounded the mate; he kicked and struggled like a raging madman, as he was lifted from the skylight, cursing the men, foaming at the mouth, and black in the face. They flung him into the boat as though he were a sack of potatoes, and in a few moments the captain was alongside of him, and a hand at each fall ready to lower away.

I now ran forward, crying,-

"Their arms are fast! cast off their lashings before you send them adrift."

"That's right enough!" exclaimed Deacon. "Jimmy, jump into the boat and pass your knife over their lashings."

"Cursed if I'm going to do it!" replied Jim, drawing

back. "The moment they gits their arms free, they'd knock me overboard."

"Out of the vay!" shouted Little Welchy, and he dashed into the boat, his knife gleaming in his hands. The lashings severed, he bounded on to the bulwarks before either of the men had time to clear themselves of the line, and the boat was lowered rapidly into the water.

"Unhook them blocks, Mr. Sloe!" cried Beauty, while the men hung over the brig's side, looking down into the

boat with grim, pale, savage faces.

Neither of the men moved; they had both arisen and seated themselves on the thwarts: and once the captain looked up at us—the expression on his face will haunt me to my death-bed; but, as if conscious of the vainness of all pleas, of all passion, they remained dumb and stirless.

"If you don't let go, by thunder, we'll tow ye under water!" shouted Savings, who looked to be heartily en-

joying this murdersome interlude.

"Cut the falls!" I cried, dreading to see the men capsized and drowning alongside; "and let them drift away."

This was promptly done, and the tackles fell with a

splash.

"Stand by, Welchy, to prevent them getting on board!" shouted Deacon. "Now then, mates, let's get the yards round. Billy, catch hold of the wheel. Here comes a breeze, bullies! Over with the wheel—over with it! Tail

on here, my lads!"

The cold, small breeze that had been darkening the surface of the water in the south while the men were at work on the quarter-boat, was now on the brig! and flattening the sails. Amid stamping of feet, and hoarse choruses, mingled with loud laughter and curses, intended to reach the ears of the two hapless men, the yards were braced round, and headway got on the vessel.

"Bring her head west, due west!" shouted Deacon.

"Ay, ay!" was the response from the wheel.

I went aft and looked at the boat. The mate sat staring stonily at the brig; his face clotted with blood, his dress torn, his hair wild upon his head, and the wonderful expression in his countenance—a compound of his diabolical passions, hardened and fixed by the hopelessness that had penetrated his heart of iron—made him a picture which only a Fuseli could do justice to.

The captain leaned his cheek on his hand, and looked down into the bottom of the boat. Bitterly as I disliked him, I could not view him, as he sat there, drifting away in miserable helplessness, without imprecating my own craven spirit for not prompting me to make one struggle for his salvation. In vain I reasoned, in the quick rush of thought that passed through me, that nothing I could have done would avail him, that I was one man opposed to many, that on my life might depend a life dearer to me than my own, that for her sake I was justified in taking a neutral stand in this vile affair: I say, in vain; for the cowardice that could dictate so inhuman an act as the sending adrift of two human lives in a small boat, to live, perchance, for a brief hour in the wastes of the mighty deep, fired my blood as I watched the motionless, miserable men, and I called myself the meanest of wretches for suffering the commission of the barbarous deed, without one word of protest, one syllable of exhortation!

The boat was now dropping astern fast. The men had manned the yards, and the brig was slightly heeling to

the little breeze that filled the upper canvas.

The crew came aft in a body to watch the boat, on which I turned away, overcome with remorse, and the pitiful pathos of that helpless figure, with his cheek in his hand. Somehow I felt only for him; the mate had no part of my sympathies.

"Chadburn, I want to have a talk with you. Step into

the cabin."

I turned and confronted Deacon.

"You are the promoter of this mutiny," I said fiercely. "The blood of those poor wretches is on your head!" and I pointed to the dwindling boat.

He stared at me furiously, and exclaimed, in a low

muttering voice,—

"Don't provoke me! Don't give me any humbugging sentiment! I mean well by you. I owed you my life, and I am no scoundrel to recall that to you now in the

face of your insults."

"Was there no other way of keeping those men under, without sending them adrift—one of them wounded—to meet a slow and miserable death? You expose them in a small open boat, without sail or compass, with a poor stock of provisions and water, to struggle in the midst of

a great ocean! Shame on you! I have had no hand in this, bear me witness! I have cursed myself for my cowardice in not striving to stay your murderous scheme. Is the gold in your island worth one drop of human blood?"

Several of the men had drawn near whilst I stood

shouting, in my wrath, to Deacon.

"What's the matter with Jack?" demanded Beauty. "Why, damme, Sniggers, you said he wur one of us! Here, I say," addressing me angrily. "we don't want no jaw from you. There's another boat handy, mate."

I took a glance at the angry faces that now surrounded

me, and my thoughts rushed to the lonely girl below.

"Deacon, you asked me just now to step into the cabin. What is it you want?"

"Come to your senses, man," was his answer. "Do you mind that day when the mate knocked over Little Joey? You were savage enough then. Do you mind when the lad died? I say there was no man in this brig that wouldn't have choked off the mate more willingly than you. I've seen the blood in your face when the skipper's been cursing us for doing our work like seamen. We've taken the law into our own hands, and given them back in one dose what they've been giving us ever since we left Bayport. If you're quit of the job, be it so. We'll take the blame and welcome. Only there's one thing you must do!"
"What?"

"You'll navigate the brig to the South Seas?"

"Yes, I'll do that."

"Why, curse me, Jack, if you aren't been trying to come the hactor over us!" cried Beauty, fetching me a thump in the back.

"We'll put the brig in your hands and trust you," ex-

claimed Deacon.

"I accept the charge on one condition."
"What now?" growled Old Sam.

"That no harm comes to the captain's sister."

"Wot harm's like to come to her from a 'spectable body o' men like us?" said Suds, with a grin.

"The girl's safe enough, you may take your affidavy o'

that!" cried Jimmy.

"She's yours, Jack: we'll give her to ye!" exclaimed a

third voice; and Deacon, with a fine, patronizing air, said, "I'll marry you. Billy, fetch us a night-gown, and I'll read the service. Jimmy's got a proper snoring nose on him, and'll stand for clerk to say amen!"

At this there was a roar of laughter.

"You pledge yourselves to leave her to me, do you?" said I.

This inquiry provoked a chorus of yeses.

"Tain't the gal as we wants—it's Sniggers' island."—
"We don't want no more wives—it's the money to set us

goin' as gents that we're arter,"—and so forth.

"Now, Deacon," said I, "you're spokesman, and head of this crew, so I'll just give you my meaning, plain and above board, before all hands. If you respect the lady, and leave her to herself, and behave like men to her, I'll work for you honestly; I'll do your bidding, and if Deacon's island is anywhere in the neighborhood of his dead reckoning of it, I'll put you right ashore there, and won't ask for nor take a halfpenny of the money. The girl is my fortune, mates, and I'll give you up my share of the gold for her, do you understand? But if you offend her, and don't respect this arrangement, look out! I'll play you some devilish trick, for the man who injures her injures me, and so you'll understand me without further jawing."

This said, I held out my hand to Deacon, and shook hands with several of the men around; I then told Deacon I was ready to confer with him below. Banyard remained on deck to keep a look-out, and Savings stood at the

wheel.

By this time the boat astern was a mere speck.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WE SETTLE OUR COURSE.

I TOLD Deacon to step into the Captain's cabin where the charts were, and that I would follow him after having

said a few words to the girl.

With a heavy heart I turned the handle of the door of the cabin in which I had left her. She was seated on my chest, in an attitude of eager expectation, her beautiful eyes lustrous with fear. She shrunk when I entered, but started up on seeing me, and without speaking, clasped her hands tightly, and looked at me with wild and painful anxiety.

"You have no cause to be alarmed," I said to her. "I may truly say that you are safer now than you were when

your brother and the mate ruled the vessel."

"What have they done with him?" she asked in a

feverish whisper.

"They have put him and Mr. Sloe in a boat to find their way to the Cape of Good Hope, which is not many miles distant," I answered, packing the first poor bit of comfort that came into my head into the tragical fact.

"Then they have not killed him?" she cried.

"No; he is as much alive as I am. And let me assure you that he stands a better chance of preserving his life in that boat than he did on board this brig, amid the men whom his treatment and the mate's had rendered capable

of any crime."

"I thought they had killed him!" she moaned. "I heard the men go into his cabin, and I ran out, and I saw one of them strike him down. Oh, it was his own fault!" she cried. "He brought it upon himself. Again and again I told him that the men would rise and turn upon him if he did not treat them better. And now it has happened!—What will become of him?"

"I shall be able to reassure you presently," said I, thinking it impolitic te exercise the patience of Deacon and the crew. "I cannot remain with you now; but I will ask you to give me your whole confidence, and to meet this dreadful occurrence with the courage I am sure you possess, and I count upon your remaining cool and

trusting to me. Will you do so?"

"Yes, yes," she answered, grasping my hand, "I will do everything you ask me. But, oh, Mr. Chadburn, it is enough to drive me mad to think of my being left alone with this crew."

"You are left alone with me. Try to think of your

position in this light. You do not fear me?"

"No, no!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears; "I

know you will protect me from the men."

I closed the door upon her and returned to Deacon. He was overhauling the books in the Captain's cabin, and held one of them against his nose, goggling it ludicrously.

"Here I am, at your service," said I.

He dog-eared the page, and put the volume in his pocket, saying,—

"I shall have a good read by-and-by. There's no one's

leave to ask, is there?"

"No, we enjoy burglars' privilege for the present," I replied, getting down the chart of the South Pacific, and laying it upon the table.

He laughed oddly as he exclaimed,—

"You never thought I should bring all hands over to my notion, including yourself. You were pretty obstinate against it; and, to quote the fag-end of a famous conqueror's speech, "I had to seek for sympathy among the mob, away from the incredulous educated classes."

The impudence of this illustration made me smile in spite of myself; nor should I have been able to preserve my gravity had he held his tongue, so absurd was the con-

sequential smirk that ornamented his face.

I looked at him steadfastly, attracted by his whole appearance, which I seemed to behold in a new light now that he was out of the forecastle and talking to me in the Captain's cabin, and as the leader of the mutineers. Certainly he was a singular person, with refinement in the upper part of his face, and coarseness and animalism in the mouth and jaws.

He turned to the chart, inspected it for some moments, and asked me where we were. I pulled out the log-book

and gave him yesterday's sights.

"Our course is south-west, then," said he.

"Where do you want to go?"

"You know; you've got the place in your head pat. You frightened me with your exactness t'other night."

"You want to get to this island of yours, near Teapy. You have already altered the brig's course. You mean to round the Horn, then?"

"Certainly," he answered, with his eyes on the chart;

"it's the shortest road."

"Do you know how much fresh water there is left in the brig's hold?"

"I dare say there's plenty," he answered coolly.

"Supposing there isn't?"

"I can't be bothered with such considerations," he replied; "I have weightier matters to think of."

So saying, he struck his forehead with his hand.

"And pray what do you mean to do with the brig now

that you have seized her?"

"That's no concern of yours," he answered, with his smirk upon his face. "You say you've had no hand in this business. It's nothing to you, then, what our plans are, so long as we stick to our agreement with you."

I was nearly telling him that this answer would not do; but on reflection I considered that I should be able to find out all I wanted to know by waiting a little, and so changed the subject by inquiring why he had asked me to come

below.

"Just to settle the brig's course," he answered, and rolling up the chart, he went on deck with it, I after him.

The men hung about in groups. They had, I thought, an undecided manner, and seemed at a loss. But this would be merely a temporary embarrassment, the sense of novel power creating a feeling of awkwardness which would

pass in a short time.

Meanwhile the breeze had freshened, and was now blowing smartly dead abeam, rending, without scattering, a heavy mist that had come up with it, and which narrowed the horizon to within a cable's length of the brig. The mist, swarming through the rigging, was just like so many white lace veils blown along, and over among them the pale blue sky opened and closed, as the sunshine comes and goes upon a windy day.

I looked at the compass, and found the brig's head due

west.

The tumbling waters set me thinking of the little boat—miles astern now—and her wretched occupants. Would the cockle-shell keep afloat until some passing ship descried her? It was a cruel doom to consign the men to, and my heart fired afresh at the thought of it as I looked toward the crew coming aft, in response to Deacon's hail.

He spread the chart on the skylight, and sang out to the men to draw near, and motioned to me to approach with his head. We made a tolerably sized crowd as we stood in a circle, and an ugly one certainly. Most of the men had pipes in their mouths, and those who weren't smoking were chewing; in a very short time the deck was black under their feet.

"Now, mates," said Deacon, "as it's my duty to spout, I may as well put myself amidships, where all hands can

hear and see."

So saying, and with his self-satisfied grin, he got upon

the skylight and squatted there cross-legged.

"Don't give us no fine words," said Old Sam. "Languidge must always be close-reefed to suit my book."

"There's the chart," continued Deacon, putting his finger upon it; "and there's the South Sea, and there's Teapy. Here's Cape Horn, and here's the brig."

The men crowded and hustled each other to see.

"The way to the island, according to my way of thinking, is round by Cape Horn. If we sail east, we've got all this stretch of sea before us, all Australia and New Zealand to coast, no end of islands to run down, and a big spell of water at the end. If we sail sou'-west, we've only the Horn to double, then we head north-west, and a fort-night's sailing 'll bring us to where we're bound."

"Right you are," cried Jimmy, nodding in a knowing

way.

"Those who are for standing sou'-west hold up their hands."

Every man raised his arm.

"That's settled!" exclaimed Deacon, addressing me.

"Very well," I replied.

"The course is sou'-west," he continued; "but before we brace up, let's settle upon the officers. Jack Chadburn is skipper—that's agreed. Who's to be first mate?"

"You," cried several voices.

"I'm quite agreeable," he exclaimed with an air of magnanimity that would have been laughable but for the very depressing element of tragedy mixed up in the business. "But if I'm chief mate I'm no longer Sniggers. I'm Mr. Deacon, and shall expect to be called sir."

I looked at the men, to judge from their faces whether

they considered this man cracked.

Old Sam cried, "It's dogs as we call sir, chief-ly."

"Curse me, if I'm goin' to say sir to you, old ram-

shackle!" exclaimed Beauty. "We'll call ye Deacon, if you like, and shove Mister afore it on Sundays. But there ain't no sirs aboard this wessel."

Here, growing impatient, I stepped in by shouting,—
"It's blowing up tidily, and there's more behind this
fog. Whilst we are jawing here we shall lose our spars.
There's work to be done, so let's come to a settlement
smartly."

"Jack's as true as a hair!" grumbled Sam, looking to windward. "Who's to be second? sing out."

"Give it to Banyard," said Deacon.

"Banyard it is," echoed several voices, no one coveting the berth.

"We must finish this business by-and-by," cried I. "Clew up the royals, let go the flying jib halyards—smartly, my lads. There's plenty of sail to shorten."

And it was quite time the job was attended to; for the wind, under cover of the driving fog, had been freshening whilst we talked, and was now puffing hard enough to smother the channels in froth, and raise a yelling chorus up aloft. The men dashed about briskly, enough; the royals and top-gallant sails were handed, jibs and mainstay-sail furled, and we held on for a spell under whole topsails and courses. But as we should bring the wind on the bow to head our course, and the weather to windward looking as dark as a pocket, I gave orders to knot a single reef in both topsails. When the men came down I sent them to reef the mainsail, the main tack was then boarded with a rousing chorus, the yards braced sharp up, and the brig sent surging and reaching through the rising sea.

All around us the fog stood like a wall of wool, the waves running into it and disappearing. The wind was bitterly cold, a forecast of the weather we were now heading for.

I was looking to leeward, when a voice from the fore-

castle roared out:

"Hard down! hard down!" and before I could have found time to scramble to the wheel, a big ship oozed out of the fog on the weather quarter. She passed so close under our stern that her main top-mast stunsail-boom was over our gaffend. You could easily have jumped from her towering side on to our deck, and, as she rushed

by, the thunder of the water at her bows, and the gale in

her rigging roared in our ears.

In a few seconds she had dived into the fog and vanished, leaving on my eye a hurrying, rolling image of lofty masts and huge iron hull, two men at the wheel, and a deckhouse, gleaming with the moisture of the fog.

A moment sooner, and she would have struck us full amidships, and down we should have toppled, for the

whole length of the keel of her to scrape.

How many ships are rammed out of existence in this way, and all hands drowned? A vessel, newly arrived, reports having been in collision with a ship in such and such a place, name of ship unknown; and months after they report at Lloyd's that the *Tom Jones*, which left the port of Jericho on such a date, has not since been heard of. No; and she will never be heard of again, and her fate remains a secret of the sea.

The men were somewhat awestruck by this "squeak," as they called it, and stood staring into the fog, where the

ship had vanished.

The impression produced, however, was very shortlived, and they were soon tumbling aft again, in a lively, reckless way, to finish the interrupted conference with Deacon and me.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SAILOR'S CURSE.

It was now agreed that, as I was to be skipper, I should stand no watch, but come and go as I pleased. The watches were to continue as they were, Deacon to have charge of the port, and Banyard of the starboard.

Questioning the cook, I ascertained that there was still a good stock of fresh water in the hold, and enough ship-

stores to last all hands for another six months.

"Now, mates," said I, "as we are all masters here, who's going to talk to us about the cabin provisions?—are they going to be divided among all hands, or reserved for the use of the lady?"

"Wot sort o' appetite has the lady got, and how long are we going to be making Deacon's island?" asked

Beauty.

"The run will take us all two months and more good

sailing," I replied.

"I've got nothen to say agin the fok'stle rations. The beef's good eating! my notion is, we'll swop them fowls, and whatever else is intended for cabin use, for the rum. Is that it, boys?"

I turned to Deacon, and said,-

"If you want to reach your island, the course doesn't lie through the rum cask. You must clap a stopper on that notion, or the brig will be hell afloat."

"I'll tell you what it is," exclaimed Deacon, looking round him, "the rum is ours, and we can do what we like

with it. How much of it is there, Scum?"

"Why, not over much," answered the cook.

"How much?" roared Beauty.

"There's a cask full."

"Is that all?" groaned Old Sam.

"Boys, we must allowance ourselves," said Deacon. "Two tots a-day till it's all gone."

"Ain't there more sorts of grog than rum aft?" de-

manded Welchy.

- "Yes, there's brandy and whisky in bottles," responded the cook.
- "It must all come for ard, rum and all," said Beauty, with an oath, striking his hands together.

"That's not fair," said I. "A portion should be left

to us who live aft."

"Well, we'll share and share alike," cried Old Sam.

"Let's get some breakfast first," I exclaimed. "Afterward two men out of each watch can come along with the cook, and we'll count the bottles and divide them."

This proposition was accepted, and the men went forward, cutting capers, some of them waltzing, singing and laughing at the prospect of the drink, and chasing each other in and out of the galley and around the long boat.

I went forward under the pretense of inspecting the fore tack, and sneaking into the deck-house, smartly extracted a small gimlet from the tool chest and returned aft. Knowing where the rum casks were stowed, I glided below while Deacon was in the forecastle and Banyard marched the deck, and took a small hand lamp from the

captain's cabin, with which I descended into the steerage. The rum casks were close against the hatch, though the darkness was so profound that, without the lamp, I should have groped for an hour without finding them. Sounding the first cask, I found it empty: but the second cask was full.

I set the point of the gimlet at the lowermost part of the bilge, and twisted the steel in several places through the wood: when I withdrew it the rum followed in a thin but steady stream. This job accomplished, I withdrew cautiously, gained the cabin unperceived, and dropped the gimlet through a porthole into the sea. Now, thought I, let them find out who did this if they can; and, at all events, Miss Franklin is menaced with one danger the less.

I knocked on the door of the cabin in which I had left her: and found her looking through the porthole at the passing water, with her arms on the side of the bunk. I at once told her of the arrangements the men had come to among themselves, that she would not be interfered with, that, in fact, they had resigned her wholly to me. She had been crying bitterly, poor girl; her eyes were red, and tears still glittered on the lashes of them: but she smiled when I addressed her, and locking her hands upon my arm, she exclaimed, "You are the only friend I have now

-you will not let the men harm me!"

"I will make no grand promises," I answered, touched to the quick by her appeal, and the pleading sweetness and simplicity of her action. "You shall judge me by what I do." And so saying, I led her out of the gloomy cabin, and made her sit upon one of the cushioned benches at the table. Here I told her that the men had made me their captain; and in the briefest terms possible I explained to her the leading motive of the mutiny by relating Deacon's story of the island. I added that the men desired me to carry the brig round Cape Horn to the South Seas, and that we should probably be nine or ten weeks in completing the voyage. I next spoke to her of her brother, and though I felt the mockery of the hopes I undertook to impart, I managed to cheer her up somewhat with the notion that his rescue was very possible. Indeed, she was so ignorant of the sea that I might have spun her any story, and she would have believed it.

"How are we to get away from these dreadful men?" she wanted to know.

I told her I could not answer her that question yet.

"It seems a dream to me!" she cried, with a violent shudder. "I want to be brave, but my courage dies in me when I think of being alone with this crew, and the dreadful uncertainty of my future."

And she looked up at me with a wistful smile, while her

eyes were as soft as a lamb's seeking its dam.

"You have nothing to fear from the men," said I, "they heartily like you. When I was in the forecastle they often spoke of you with admiration and pleasure. And be sure they will think twice before they affront you, for I have made my meaning quite clear to them. Besides, there is 'honor among thieves.' They think they are going to fill their pockets with gold: I have told them I will resign my share for you. So you see, you are my share of the booty, and they will not attempt to take you from me."

Enough had passed between us, days before, in many a quiet chat together, to lend a significance to this speech

which no tone I could employ could deprive it of.

In spite of her misery and fear, a blush stole into her cheek, and her rich beauty broke out through her sorrow.

"I am quite content to have fallen to your share," she answered naïvely; "we have always been good friends."

"Only give me your full confidence," said I, "and you

will give me heart to talk to you."

At this moment Deacon came into the cabin. He descended the ladder jauntily, but looked confused and awkward when he saw Miss Franklin.

She rose and drew close to me.

"Here is an innocent lady," said I, addressing him, "whom we have frightened in a way not very honorable to English sailors. As an educated man you will respect her, both because she is a defenseless woman, and because she has always shown the right kind of feeling toward the crew."

He made her a bow, and exclaimed,—

"You're quite safe with us. Jack Chadburn will look after you, ma'am. We have no quarrel with you. But your brother was—"

"You're quit of the skipper, mate," I interrupted.

"There's no use talking about him. Fasten upon Old Windward, if you want somebody to sit upon; his memory is respectable game; and Miss Franklin will hear you out if you will control your tongue when you think of strong words."

He grinned, and said,—

"I hope the lady don't believe I'm a rascal. Leave her to me, and I'll see that she chinks enough in her pocket to fit her out with something bigger than a doll's house."

She tried to say something to him, but could not find her voice. I took her hand and held it. Mine is a pretty large hand, and I thought it would comfort her to feel the

protection of it.

"Deacon," said I, "we've been making arrangements on deck which concern the men. Let us now agree to some arrangements which shall concern us who are to live aft. First and foremost, I propose that Miss Franklin occupies that cabin," pointing to the skipper's, which was the best.

"She's welcome to it," he answered.

"I'll take the cabin she's been using, and you and

Banyard can choose from the others."

"That'll suit me," he answered, pointing to mine, and Banyard will stow away snugly enough in the one

opposite."

"After breakfast," said I, addressing her, "I'll tell the cook to put your things into your new berth. There's a table there where your meals can be served; as it is arranged between me and Deacon and the men that you are to do as you please, take your meals at the table here or in the cabin, and no one will interfere with you. That's so, isn't it?" said I, with a significant look at Deacon.

"Right enough," he answered. "Your duty is to navigate the brig. Stick to that, and we'll keep our

promise."

Her hand pressed mine; not choosing to let her remain under Deacon's inspection any longer, I conducted her, with as much ceremony as a Jack Swab like me could throw into his manners, into her cabin, so as to impress the man with an idea of her consequence, and my own opinion of her.

CHAPTER XXXI.

REVELRY.

ALL this time the rum was running out of the cask down in the steerage. It might take a half-hour to leak empty, and I wanted as long a time after that as could be got to let the smell of the spirit dry out; though not much was to be feared on that head, for the place was full of strong smells, quite enough to drown the fumes of rum, or give them an unrecognizable character.

I went on deck, and found the fog clearing away, and the wind blowing a strong, steady breeze, whilst the long seas now and again ran a sheet of water over the weatherbow, and made the forecastle shine like ice under the

white windy sunlight.

The men were in the forecastle getting their breakfast, Welchy at the wheel, and Banyard marching to windward.

I sung out to Deacon, through the sky-light, to come on deck and order the cook to get breakfast for us, as the fellow was down in the forecastle, and we stood a chance

of getting nothing to eat.

"Shake it out of her, Welchy!" I cried, as the brig chopped the water with her martingale, and took in a smotherer, right over the head, like a cloud of steam; "we'll have the main-t'-gallant sail on her presently. It's a long drive to the Horn, mate, and we must make a run for it. I'll square the old bucket; the devil's got the tow-rope, and I warrant she'll walk."

"That's the style," he answered, looking a regular little pirate in his fur cap and loose dress and rollicking movements, as the wheel-spokes swept through his hands; "we'll drag her through it. I lay it'll take Old Windward some hard rowin' to come up with us! I dessay they're pretty sea-sick by this time, aren't they? I reckon they're trying to remember their prayers!"

The most vindictive delight gleamed in his eyes as he

looked astern.

"I say, Welchy, all this business happened whilst I was

asleep. What are we going to do with the brig? If we are to ship the gold in her, where are we to carry it?"

Here Banyard joined us.

"Blessed if I know," answered Welchy, with an indescribable air of dare-devilism about him. "Let's reach the island fust, and have a spell ashore. We'll settle it there. That's what the crew means."

"Suppose we should find a man-o'-war there?" sug-

gested Banyard.

"Suppose we don't. Hang your supposin's. Suppose your aunt wur a grampus, what a rum uncle she'd make!"

"If the island is uninhabited, there's not much chance

of our finding a man-of-war there," said I.

"Besides," cried Welchy, "who's going to say you aren't skipper, and that we're bound to—to—"

"Vancouver's Island," said I, seeing him wanting.

"Blowed out o' our course! wot's more natural? Leave Jack alone!" he shouted; "he warn't born last night."

"True for you, you villain," thought I, "and if I don't

beat you all yet—"

So now I was satisfied that the crew had formed no plans. I ought to have judged so from 'Deacon's refusal

to enlighten me.

Presently the men began to push their heads through the scuttle, and came aft, and hung about the waist and main-deck, plainly requiring by their mauner that the

grog should be divided forthwith.

"Let's get the topgallant-sail on her, my lads," shouted I, rubbing my hands, and pretending to be heartily in the spirit of the affair. "A hand up aloft and loose it. Loose the main staysail. We'll make the old girl creak. Hurrah for t'other side of the Horn!"

Stimulated by my cries, they went to work smartly; in a few moments canvas flapped heavily overhead, and down came a voice, "Sheet home." The men buckled to with a chorus, roused aft the staysail-sheet and mast-headed the

topgallant-yard.

The brig felt the extra pressure immediately, and the foam spat and rushed along in a broad sheet on the lee side, as if a paddle-wheel churned it up; while the deck sloped like the side of a hill, and the lee lower yard-arms hung close to the water.

It was more to my interest than the crew's to get rid of

this part of the voyage. Heading as we were, we had to expect strong contrary winds and heavy seas, all this side of the Horn, and no chance of a rescue, nor of making the mutiny known; whereas, to the westward of the iron Cape, on the summer waters of the Pacific, a calm might put us near enough to a vessel to communicate with privily, or we might come across a man-of-war.

I was sincere enough then in my promise to Welchy to "squeeze the old bucket." Whilst there was wind the brig should carry all the sail she could stagger under, and if I had not rounded the Horn by that day month, it should not be for the want of what sailors call "drag-

ging."

The work I had put the men upon took time. When everything was belayed, and the ropes coiled down, I ordered them to man the pumps. Some of them looked rather surprised and black at these orders, but nevertheless they fastened upon the handles and kept the pumps working until no more water came. Indeed, there was little enough in the brig. She was as tight as a soup and bouilli tin; and what little water was in her had no doubt drained into the hold from above.

"Now, then," exclaimed Beauty, when the pumping was over, stepping forward, "what about the liquor?"

"We've not yet had breakfast aft," I answered, "you're in a tremendous hurry, mate. Deacon," I shouted, "wake up the cook, will you? here's Beauty, who has just swallowed a bucketful of tea, says he is choked with thirst, and wants to be at the marines."

My good humor, mingled however with a tone of authority, put the men off. I told them to light their pipes, and when the cook had served our breakfast the drink should be distributed. In course of time the cook came aft with the breakfast; as the men had been served with bacon, no jealousy was excited among them by the hissing rashers as they were carried along the deck.

Banyard and I went below, leaving Deacon in charge; and the men came aft and lay upon the skylight, or squatted on the deck, using both ends of the brig as it pleased them, and leaving only the cabin, though I was

not sure that they would not penetrate to this presently, and disregard their compact with me in the fiercer spirit of mutineering that would follow the first stage of revolt.

With my own hands I prepared a breakfast tray for Miss Franklin and carried it to her. She shook her head when she saw the food, but thanked me for my kindness in bringing it to her, though in a tone of humility that was extremely painful to me to hear.

"I am afraid I have not yet succeeded in winning your confidence," I exclaimed, lingering near the cabin door.

"You have, indeed!" she cried earnestly.

"If you could read my heart you would find I deserve it," said I.

"Do not misjudge me," she said, starting up and extending her hand. "I cannot help my cowardice. From one moment to another I do not know what is happening on deck, and when the handle of the door was turned I trembled lest anybody but you might come in."

"Patience and courage will put all things right for us," I answered, cheerily. "It is an anxious, hard time for me as well as you, but I can look at it with a light heart;

for I am sure all will be well in the end."

However, though I put on this easy manner to reassure her, her trouble and fear cut me deep: I could not fully hope that she would think me as honest and devoted as I was; and I mourned over the agony of heart her thoughts must give her when she reflected upon her brother, and on her own helplessness, and the shame and death which her maidenly terrors would, in their paroxysms, body forth as her future.

As I sat at breakfast with Banyard, I asked him how it chanced that he was in the mutiny. "I should never have thought you a man willing to jump into a mess of of this kind," said I.

"I dessay not," he replied in his stolid fashion.

"You were as active as any of them in clearing away

the boat, and I was amazed to see you at work."

"Wherever I goes, mister, I'm always to be found in the biggest crowd, whether my notions is among 'em or whether they ain't," he replied.

"I have called Deacon to witness that I took no part in this murderous business!" I exclaimed.

"I don't see wot good that can do," said he.

"Perhaps not, but there's no reason why I should be hung or locked up for life along with the rest of you,

because Deacon has an idea that he hid a heap of gold in an island——"

"That yarn be jiggered!" cried Banyard, with remark-

able emphasis.

"You don't believe it, then?"

"Believe it! should think I don't! I told 'em so. I

aren't afeard. Deacon knows I don't believe it."

"So you helped the men to seize the brig in order to carry away a treasure which in your opinion has no existence?"

He looked at me with his mulish wooden face and said,—

"Do you believe in it?"

l answered cautiously: "I have thought very little about it."

"Was you on deck when the skipper and mate wur chucked into the quarter-boat?"

" I was."

"Why didn't ye fight for 'em?"

"Because I'm not a match for all hands, booby."

"Neither am I," he shouted, "and that's why I'm

become a murderin' pirate."

I burst into a laugh at the grimace with which he accompanied these words; at the same moment Deacon sung out to him through the skylight to bear a hand and come on deck:

"The men are wanting to get at the grog, and are

only waiting until the cabin breakfast's done."

In a few minutes Banyard left the table, and Deacon came below and fell to his breakfast. His eyes shone with a peculiar brightness, and a smile baffling description, so odd was the admixture of subtlety, cunning, and self-importance haunting his pale face.

He began to eat in a great hurry, and asked me where

Miss Franklin was.

"Where she ought to be," I answered, "and that's my business. You stick to your gold and don't trouble yourself about my earnings."

He burst into a loud laugh, and cried,-

"Lord, what a thing is jealousy! It is the green-eyed monster that doth mock the meat it feeds on. . . . Do you know, mate, that reading isn't correct? It ought to

be make, not mock. It makes the meat it feeds on. D'ye see the sense now?"

"You'll be having Beauty upon you if you keep the men waiting for their drink," said I, passing over the

first part of his speech.

"Why don't you let me marry you?" he exclaimed in a stage whisper, dropping his knife in order to put his finger against his nose. "You never heard me read prayers, did you? There's never a hand in or out of the pulpit could beat me at unction. The capstan on the quarter-deck will make a first-class altar: nothing to do but spread the ensign over it. We'll hoist every scrap of bunting, and we'll have a regular sailor's ball. Suds will find the music, and we'll give Mrs. Chadburn some regular sea-pleasure—hornpipes, polkas, songs, and proper laughable tomfoolery, eh?"

He started from his chair in his eagerness, but I laid a

heavy hand on his shoulder, and made him sit again.

"My answer is, No!" I said, looking at him sternly. "You have made me a promise—if you break it, look out for yourself!"

He recommenced his breakfast without answer.

I went on deck to tell the men to depute four of their mates to come below and divide the grog. There was no chance of diverting them from their resolution to get possession of the liquor, and my policy was to appear to fall

readily into their wishes.

They chose Beauty, Welchy, Jim, and Old Sam, as representing each watch. With them came the cook. In solemn file we repaired to the cabin. They were for slinging the rum cask out of the steerage first; but I advised them, before doing this, to overhaul the bottles—my reason being to delay the visit to the steerage as long as possible, that the smell of the evacuated rum might pass.

All the spirits for cabin use were in the pantry. Four cases, each containing a dozen and a half bottles, were all that was left of the original stock. The cases contained

rum, brandy and hollands.

Here was stock enough to finish the voyage upon to Sydney without stint, it having been designed for the moderate use of three persons only.

When the cases were opened, and the men saw the bot-

tles, they made a great noise. It was a fine show of drink, they thought, and loudly they congratulated the row of faces at the skylight, which were looking down upon us with eager expressions on them.

"Here's lush enough to drown all me-lan-choly!" shout-

ed Little Welchy.

"Ay!" roared Jim, "and there's ten times as much

agin below, bully-boys!"

The bottles were then counted. I divided the quantity by the number of persons on board, taking care to include Miss Franklin, so that the men might have some bottles

the less to carry forward.

The cook then proceeded with the distribution. Beauty sprang on to the table and handed the bottles to the men on deck. It was intensely unpleasant to witness the wild eagerness with which they stretched out their hands, their blind, mad fondling of the bottles against their breasts. The men in the cabin stuck the bottles that fell to them into their pockets and bosoms. Misers snatching at lumps of gold would not exhibit a more disgusting anxiety to retain the precious stuff about their persons.

This done, I ordered the cook to lead the way to the rum cask. He lighted a lamp, and we followed him into the steerage. The fumes of the rum would be strong enough in my nostrils, quickened in their faculty of smell

by conscience; but the others noticed nothing.

"Here's the cask, boys," exclaimed the cook, giving it a kick. But echo answered, "Where?" Never was an emptier sound. The fellow started and peered at the cask, holding the lamp above his head.

"Why-what the blazes!" he muttered, and gave it an-

other kick. The sound was unmistakable.

"They aren't shifted, sure-ly!" he cried, giving the other cask a kick.

That, too, was empty.

"It's leaked away. It's all gone!" he shouted.

"Out of the road!" bawled Beauty, and he struck the two casks heavily with his clinched fist, and with an oath

exclaimed, "They're empty, sure enough!"

I remind me of the picture of the steerage at this moment, dimly lighted by the flickering lamp-flame: the faces of the angry men, their different postures and pictures que attire; the vague shadows cast by the solid stanch-

ions, the massive beams across the deck, the impenetrable blackness of the further corners, while the groaning of the timbers, as the brig worked in the seas, mingled with the muffled murmur of the frothing water that roared outside.

I pretended to be as much staggered and disappointed as the rest, and administered an experimental kick to the casks, as though I could not believe in any other echo than my own; and turning smartly on the cook, I asked him if he suspected any foul play.

He rolled his eyes upon the others, who stood glowering on him, and swore that he knew nothing about it; the cask was full yesterday, and that was all he had to

say.

Hereupon Beauty snatched the lamp from his hand, and bawled to the others to slew the cask round and find the leak.

This was soon done, and the gimlet-hole promptly discovered by the sugary black stain which the oozing rum had left around it.

"It's clear enough!" shouted the cook. "The skipper was here yesterday morning. He sprang the rum; he guessed the meanin' in the crew's minds."

"That's it," said I. "It has been a long time leaking away. Can't you smell the fumes still?" And I sniffed

violently.

Bestowing hearty curses on the Captain, the men scrambled up through the hatchway, after satisfying themselves there was no third cask secreted.

When the sad news was repeated on deck, how the precious liquor was all wasted and gone, thanks to the skipper's malice, deep were the oaths and furious the disappointment of the crew.

But rage would not fill the casks afresh; besides, every man carried a special solace and comfort in his shirt

bosom or breeches pocket.

"Here's more than ever I signed articles to swaller at one gulp!" shouts Welchy, holding his bottles high, and

capering about the deck.

"Bile the kettle, Polly!" cries Suds, fetching the cook a thump in the back; "I'm for a bloomin' bowl o' punch right away off. Skipper," shouting to me, "put us ashore before eight bells where we can pick some lemons, as I'm growed uncommon dainty, and can't think o' tak-

ing my punch without the correct flavorin'!"

Tumbling about the decks and roaring with laughter, they scrambled forward and vanished in the forecastle, amid the fog of a heavy sea which the brig took over her at the moment.

I looked with grave forebodings to the effects of the spirits upon the crew. Maddened by their libations, they might come tumbling into the cabin, where Miss Franklin would be at their mercy. Moreover, the safety of the brig might be imperiled by their inability to work her should the wind freshen or shift.

Deeply anxious, I stepped below, and entering Miss Franklin's cabin, I briefly related this last freak of the crew, and urged her, should the men come aft, to preserve her courage, and meet them good-naturedly and with no show of fear, and even to fall into their humors, leaving it for me to draw the line for them and protect her from any insult.

The poor girl was greatly scared, and ran up to me and clung to my arm, imploring me not to leave her, and declaring that if the men came into her cabin she should die

of terror.

I loved her all the better for her fear, and felt myself the bolder for it; but in case the men broke out, as I dreaded, her timidity would make my task of keeping her clear of them very difficult; as, knowing their character, I foresaw that they would consider themselves insulted by her terror, whereas a little tact on her part would easily conciliate them.

Yet, when I looked down into her meek, white face, I knew there was no courage there I could depend on. I must fight for her, and do the best I could, and that best would certainly involve the shedding of my blood for her; for, not to say that she was a lonely, helpless woman, and as such, demanding my protection by the foremost appeal in the world, she was my love.

I looked into her mild and swimming eyes, and swore to her, with my tips to her ears, that no harm should befall her whilst I had a hand to raise; then, leading her back to a chair, with a whispered entreaty to hold up her heart, I progred her heard between mine, and left the achie

pressed her hand between mine, and left the cabin.

When I got on deck I was not much reassured by Old

Banyard telling me that the men were going to make a

day of it.

"That means," said I, "they will sleep in to-night, and leave the wind to shorten sail for the brig if a squall comes."

"There's certainly quite enough liquor among them to

make them tipsy," he answered.

Here the cook came aft, and said the men wanted a plum-duff boiled for their dinner.

"A rouser it's to be, as'll take a whole bottle of brandy

to make a flare of."

"Well," I exclaimed, "you know where the flour is. Trundle a cask of it for'ard, if you like. I'm only their

servant. Don't come to me for orders."

I asked where Deacon was, and Banyard told me he was in the forecastle, having added his allowance of liquor to the common stock. For my own part, I preferred that he should be there, and made up my mind to stand his watch if he did not come aft, as I did not at all relish the notion of his going drunk into the cabin. And sure enough he remained forward, either for the purpose of currying favor with the men, by drinking with them, or more probably because he saw a chance of obtaining more drink by adding his share to the common stock, than by keeping his bottle in his cabin.

The men was quiet throughout the morning; now and then some of them emerged through the scuttle! to have

a look around them, and then dropped below again.

The wind held steady, but the long ocean rollers made a wet berth of the forecastle deck, and as far as the main hatch, the deck shone under the constant slucing of the bow wave, whilst the water bubbled and surged and frothed, like a small swollen river in the lee scuppers.

It turned out that the crew were reserving their forces, for after dinner the singing began. The chorusing was pretty steady at the first start, but it soon grew wild and disorderly, marking the development of the intoxicating

element.

Banyard had gone below at eight bells, and I remained on deck, leaving it only for ten minutes when the cook brought our dinner aft, to prepare and carry the meal to Miss Franklin. For the present, at all events, I was determined that nobody but myself should intrude upon her.

I hurriedly told her that all was safe so far, and excused my hastening away by explaining that I was in charge of the brig, and wished to keep my eye on the men's doings.

They were shouting and singing at the top of their voices when Old Sam came aft to relieve the wheel. He brought an inflamed eye with him, but his step was steady, and if his brain was rather muddled, his sailorly instincts were lively enough, for he steered the brig faithfully, meeting the sea in true style, and, indeed, devoting more attention to his work than he probably would have done had he not been drinking. This was one anxiety the less for me.

Shortly after Old Sam had taken the wheel, the scuttle was pushed back and the whole of the crew came on deck. The brig at that moment dished a sheet of spray, which fell upon them like the roof of a house. Amid a volley of oaths, loud laughter, and a heap of queer scuffling, they shook the water off them. But the salute made them pause and look around them, evidently undetermined.

Four of them were badly intoxicated, rolling about, with pale faces, their hair over their eyes, and their dress disordered. The others had arrived at various stages, and now one might see the different dispositions of men under the influence of what is proverbially favorable to the expression of truth.

Beauty, ugly and scowling, savagely thrust away the tipplers whom the movements of the brig, or their own unsteadiness, rolled up against him; Welchy screeched out songs with wild flourishes of his arms and fantastic movements of his legs; Suds incessantly grinned; Deacon harangued with his arms extended; Jimmy laid down and wept. The others variously interpreted, in fashions more or less maudlin, their own amiable characteristics.

It now appeared that they had come up to dance. Suds, with his imbecile grin, steadied himself between the knightheads and began to maul his old concertina, making the thing shriek like a tortured cat. But drunk as they were, the ducking they had received, the sloping, slippery deck, and the strong wind chilling the water against their skins, were irresistible arguments against the diversion.

So, after shouting to each other, they went below again,

first knocking Suds and his concertina down the scuttle, and following pell-mell, hastened by another drenching sea which, to my infinite satisfaction, poured down upon them like a cataract.

What happened after this among them I do not know. Closing the slide of the scuttle, they shut out all sound. I waited until four o'clock, then roused out Banyard, and desired him to take the wheel while Sam went forward to call the watch.

The old man advanced to the scuttle, pushed back the slide, bawled at the top of his voice, and hammered violently. To no purpose. He then dropped below himself, on which I sent Banyard forward to find out the condition of the men, while I held the wheel. He peered through the scuttle, but not being able to satisfy himself by inspecting the darkness, he boldly adventured below, was lost to my sight for some minutes, and then returned with a broad grin ornamenting his wooden face.

"They're all drunk and asleep," said he; "lying one a'top o' the other—never see the like! There's broken bottles everywheres; not a whole bottle to be seen. They've even cribbed Old Liverpool's 'lowance, and there he is cussin' of 'em for robbers, and gropin' about for any sort o' drink he can lay his hands on, and there ain't a drop to

be found."

"Is the lamp all safe?" I asked.

"It's out," he answered.

"Then, old fellow," said I, "we shall have to work the brig ourselves until the brutes come to. Thank God, there's no more drink left for them."

"And I says the same," exclaimed Banyard, pulling

out his pipe.

As Old Sam, however, was sober enough to lend us a hand, I insisted upon his coming out of the forecastle and standing his trick at the wheel; and in this manner we kept watch, turn and turn about, until midnight, at which hour the wind drew right abeam, and the sky shone out clearer than I had ever before seen it—not a shadow to stain its brilliant midnight blue, and the stars burning as fiercely as electric sparks.

As the braces wanted manning, and we could afford to carry more sail, I went forward, and, seizing hold of a

capstan bar, hammered on the scuttle with a note of thunder, at the same time roaring at the top of my voice for the starboard watch to come on deck.

This gentle appeal was not made in vain. In a few moments three or four men came up yawning and muttering out of the forecastle, and without offering them any apology for disturbing their refreshing slumbers, I tallied them on to the braces, and then sent them aloft to shake the reefs out of the topsails.

I then advised Sam to jump below with a bucket of water and rouse up the rest of his mates, as here was a slant of wind on no account to be lost. The brig could carry royals and topmast studdingsails, and these, I told him, I meant to pack on her, as it was not my intention to pass my life, like the skipper of the phantom ship, in trying to double the Horn.

He at once undertook to produce the rest of the sleepers, and, after much free splashing of water and an immoderate expenditure of oaths, all hands came spluttering and shivering on deck, some of them half-blind with the fumes in their brains, and knocking against each other like a

pack of sheep.

Their appearance was proof to me that the orgy was over, and singing out that we had now got a rattling beam wind, and that we should be madmen not to take advantage of it, when any moment might bring up a gale out of the westward to screech in our teeth, I clapped them on to the topsail halyards, then set the royals, spanker, and flying jib, and sent up the topmast studdingsails.

Under this great increase of pressure the Little Loo hummed through the water like a blue-bottle through the air; she bounded from sea to sea; every shroud sang, the weather-braces stood like bars of iron, and from under her counter such a whirl of froth spat sheer into the darkness astern, that it was like looking at steam blowing off from an escape-pipe.

The men, however, were altogether too much capsized by their excesses to take notice of the speed, and the splendid gain in reckoning which would be produced by it; when the work was done, I sang out to the port watch to go below, and away they ran, while the starbowlines gathered themselves to leeward of the galley and snoozed off the vapor that still kept them half-witted.

So ended this eventful day.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DEACON'S HONOR.

WITH the exception of the few bottles that had fallen to our share who lived in the cabin, there was no more drink left in the brig; though of this I was not sure until a rummaging party headed by Beauty had explored every

accessible part of the vessel.

There was more to gladden me in this than meets your eye. I do not speak of the men not being able to intoxicate themselves any more. The great gain was that, deprived of drink, they would be eager to end the voyage. This would certainly improve my authority, and strengthen

my hands to keep them clear of Miss Franklin.

Few landsmen can imagine the fascination drink has for most sailors. Artful skippers will reconcile crews to the hardest labor by the administration of an extra dram a day. Deprived of his "tot" Jack finds life a burden. He becomes a skulker, and will eyen turn pirate to recover his beloved draughts of pisco, rum, or the liquid fire man ufactured by the Chinese.

The strong wind blowing from the south held to us for a whole week. As we dropped the latitudes, making equal gains in longitude, the seas grew longer and heavier, and the wind colder. Pilot jackets, sea-boots, and mittens were now in demand, and the watch on deck haunted the

warm air of the galley throughout the day.

Dispensing with the royals, I clung manfully to the rest of the canvas, and made some splendid "runs," though at an expense of "sweating" spars, gear, and timbers

which no owner would have commended me for.

A sight it was, on the dark nights, with the frosty stars twinkling overhead, the Magellan Clouds a haze in the heavens, and the Southern Cross beaming its bright jewels upon the weltering sea, to stand aft near the wheel (which usually kept two men gripping with muscles like eggs under their sleeves, and the perspiration thick on their foreheads), and watch the Little Loo ripping it through

the water, leaping from wave to wave, kicking up her heels to the splashing roar of froth like the bold and saucy jade that she was, plunging her figure-head into the foam which she heaped up into an acre of seething white before her, while every timber groaned, every shroud screamed, every sail shouted under the tide of wind volleying into its belly, and rushing with an extra swoop of fierceness from under the foot of it.

I was as much on deck at this time as if I had been the lawful and responsible commander of the brig, timed for a special run, with a heavy wager at stake if I sprung a

spar or lost a sail.

The men appeared perfectly satisfied with me, and chuckled as they looked over the vessel's side and up aloft. Clear signs in their conduct showed me their eagerness to get this part of the voyage done; and now and again cautiously sounding them as they stood at the wheel, I gathered the existence of an element of anxiety, the reaction following their lawless exploit. They had, for all they could tell—and their intention stood for the deed in their coarse understandings—murdered the Captain and mate; they were in possession of the brig, but they had no plans, and in the future was the uncertainty that worried them.

And in this, though my thoughts had quite another

meaning, I sympathized with them.

My future was as uncertain as theirs; nevertheless, I was not quite barren of projects, and would unfold them,

as they came into my head, to Miss Franklin.

The arrangements I made for her safety were systematic enough, so far as they went, and my scope was very limited. Every night I locked her securely in her cabin. A loaded revolver, which I had found in the skipper's locker, was always in my pocket by day, and under my pillow when I turned in; and this weapon—though I made no talk of my intention to her, as God knows the poor girl was filled with enough fancies to keep her in a constant state of terror—I was prepared to draw upon the first man that should touch the handle of her door or attempt to force himself into her presence. I further took care that no one should approach her but myself; her meals were regularly taken by me to her cabin, so that she remained as secret and buried as any harem damsel.

Old Banyard had my confidence, but I distrusted Dea-

con. He had a trick of asking after Miss Franklin, and once importuned me to let her sit at table with me, saying that the sight of her pretty face made the voyage pleasant, and that he thought it was hard upon her that I should keep her locked up as if she were my prisoner.

He said this with a queer expression in his eyes, and

the oddest look that I ever saw on the human face.

I answered him very shortly, and, as was usual with

him when I addressed him stormily, he was silent.

However, this determined me to transplant him to his native soil, the forecastle, if I could possibly find an excuse for so doing. It was enough that I did not think him in his right mind. Sundry hints had been given me of this by his eyes and his laugh, and his engrossed air at

moments when all about him was astir.

I had partly resolved to put it to the crew that he was not seaman enough to be trusted with the safety of the brig, and to leave it with them to choose a first mate in his stead. But I did not care to act precipitately. He was high in their favor, the arch-conspirator, the pioneer of their fortune; he had always professed gratitude to me for saving his life, and I should be acting insanely to make him my enemy for the want of carefully considering how to edge him out of my end of the brig.

At the end of eight days the gale, which had given us the magnificent run of sixteen hundred and twenty-eight miles, dropped slowly, beginning to decrease at ten o'clock in the morning, and leaving the sea silk-smooth and unruffled by a breath of air at five o'clock in the afternoon.

Calms in these oceans last, as a rule, for so short a time, that the sea has never time to go down. We lay rolling upon a glassy swell that ridged the horizon all around with mountains, the vessel being under command of neither rudder nor sails. It was not possible to walk a pace upright and without holding on: it was dip, dip, first this side and then that, the lower yard-arms alternately sipping the salt, and the water washing to a level with the bulwarks. Overhead was a steel-colored sky, and in the south lay a fog-bank, hanging dead as a mountain mist low upon a lake.

Finding the quicksilver "pumping" in the barometer, and distrusting the calm as you would a couchant tigress, I snugged the canvas down to single-reefed topsails, and

had cause to congratulate myself on my foresight: for a little before eight o'clock it came on to blow from the north-west, and in an incredibly short time the wind increased from a moderate breeze to a heavy gale, which,

raising a cross sea, set the brig laboring furiously.

We were now braced sharp up on the starboard tack, topsails close-reefed, and reaching under these and reefed foresail, and not another inch of canvas could the brig have carried. Heavy clouds came up with the gale and drenched the decks with alternate storms of hail and rain, accompanied by several vivid flashes of lightning. However, the strength of the wind mastered the south swell, and gave us a less sloppy berth on the great north-westerly rollers, and as we could lie our course, and were making fair way, I had not great cause to grumble.

All hands went below to change their clothes at eleven o'clock, the watch to turn in, two hands being on the look-out, and Banyard in charge. In one sense this rough weather was helpful to me: it not only kept the men quiet, but made them understand my importance. In a word, had I refused to work the brig, there was not a man on board who would have known whether he was heading her right twelve hours after I had given up charge.

Tired and drenched through, I quitted the deck along with the rest of the men, meaning to have one advantage over them in a pull at the brandy bottle. On going below I glanced in the direction of Miss Franklin's cabin, the door of which I had not yet locked, owing to my detention on deck. It was open, and swinging from side, without

banging, with the rolling of the hull.

I thought this odd, the more especially as her cabin was in darkness; and was going to shut the door, but it occurred to me first to light a lamp and look round the

cabin before turning the key.

Her sleeping-place was a sacred object to me, and it was only the overwhelming fear of danger lurking near that vanquished the scruples which held me back. Holding the lamp, I approached and called her name softly. She did not answer. I advanced another step and stood in the door, and beheld her sound asleep, her sweet face slightly smiling in her slumber, her rich dark hair, partly gathered up and partly loose, lying on the pillow.

There was something exquisitely touching in the sight

of her sleeping: in the appeal put forth to my manhood for protection by her closed eyes and soft, unconscious smile. There she lay at rest while the cabin groaned to the plunges of the brig, and the foam of mighty waves roared their thunder under the counter almost beneath her.

I held the lamp over my head, and beholding a shadow behind the arm-chair, in the corner of the cabin, darker than the chair would project, I crept up to it, and in a

second my right hand was on Deacon's throat.

The sight of him there put the strength of a giant into my arm. One stifled, choking sob he gave, as I hauled him out through the door; speak he could not, for his windpipe was flat between my fingers. I looked at Miss Franklin—she had not stirred. Still holding my man, I put the lamp on the table, closed the door, then let the villain go. He fell flat at my feet.

I trembled from head to foot. I was mad with rage. Such was my fury, had he stirred, I should have fastened upon his throat again, and never let go my hold till my

strength was wasting on a corpse.

Entering my cabin, I seized some chest-lashings, and bound the man's legs and arms. I then dragged his senseless body to his own cabin, tossed him into his bunk, tipped over his face a bucket half full of water, which stood at hand in the pantry, and which, I believe, the cook had used for washing up his dishes, and closed and locked the door. Then, going to the foot of the companion ladder, I hailed Banyard,—

"I'll stand Deacon's watch to-night. Rouse me up

when the time comes."

He asked no questions, and taking good care this time to lock Miss Franklin's door, and looking to my revolver before I put it under my pillow, I threw myself down and went to sleep.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

I HARANGUE THE MEN.

NEXT morning, when the crew were at breakfast, I told the cook to send them aft as I had something very particular to say to them. They arrived speedily, wondering what on earth was the matter, and casting their eyes round suspiciously. It was a hard job to talk to them, for the motion of the leaping brig kept one reeling like a house in an earthquake, and the wind being well forward, the spray, as the seas burst against the vessel's side, blew aft like a squall of rain, and kept the eyes smarting with the salt.

Standing among them, I stated that Deacon had acted traitorously to me, and was proceeding, when, finding that the man next to me could scarcely hear my voice, I

desired all hands to step into the cabin.

"First," said I, addressing the rough audience as they squatted, some on the benches, and some on the table, letting fly their tobacco juice on the carpet with great unconcern, "Deacon must be produced to hear the charge I have to make against him; and, pointing to his cabin, I directed a couple of men to fetch him out of his bunk.

Now I had no notion of the effect my squeezing of his windpipe had produced, and could not imagine, therefore, whether his body would be hauled out dead or alive.

Beauty and Jimmy went to fetch him, and very much astonished were all hands when he was brought forth, bound hand and foot. His eyes were wide open, however,

and when he saw me, he shouted,—

"Of all cursed, inhuman tricks! think, mates, of his having left me sweltering in my bunk since twelve o'clock last night—half suffocated with grease, my circulation stopped—nothing but cramp upward! Cut me adrift!"

"It's lucky for you," said I, waiting until they had freed him, and he had beaten his breast, and stretched himself, "that I didn't stop your circulation for good and all. The crew are here to listen to my complaints, and they shall judge."

"Did ye lash him yourself like that?" inquired Welchy.

"Yes, I did," said I.

They seemed greatly amused and astonished, and were beginning to banter Deacon, when I silenced them by beginning my story.

Having narrated how I found the scoundrel skulking in

Miss Franklin's cabin, I appealed to them:

"For the last eight days, mates, I've been your skipper, and done my work like a man: been up through the night. looked after your safety, and carried you a long stretch

toward your island. What was your agreement with me? That the lady was to be left to me, and all hands swore they'd not interfere with her. All of you, with one exception, have kept your promise like men. And I have kept my promise, haven't I?"

"That's right enough," they answered.

"You only," I thundered, turning upon Deacon, and holding my clinched fist toward him, "have broken your word—you, whose life I saved, and who ought to be more my friend than any other man aboard the brig. If I throw up my charge, and say to the men, 'The promise you made me is broken; I'll not navigate the vessel another foot!' if I say this, and she comes to harm, and the crew are seized, and hanged or imprisoned for life for piracy and murder, who will they have to thank? You!" and I stared into his white face amid dead silence.

"Now then, wot's all this?" cried Beauty. "Wot's

Deacon been doin'?"

"Didn't I tell you that I found him skulking behind a

chair in the lady's cabin last night?" I shouted.

Here Deacon sprang up, and waving his arms melodramatically, cried out, "I own Jack Chadburn caught me in his wife's cabin."

"Sink that foolery!" I exclaimed, furiously. "I've got

a clear meaning, and you shall know it in a minute."

"I went there," he continued, "not to touch, but to admire. Mates, I'm a lover of beauty. When is beauty more divine than when it's asleep? Lord! I'd give my right arm for a pint of rum! Curse you, Chadburn, you've made my mouth as dry as a baked sponge. Come, hand us a swig from your private collection, and let the past be buried."

Some of the men began to laugh, others to grow impatient, and old Sam growled that he wanted to finish his breakfast, and "would never ha' left it, had he known he wur called away to listen to nothen but blazin' nonsense!"

"It may seem blazing nonsense to you," said I; "but I'm in earnest, and I'll give you my meaning in a few words. If Deacon remains aft I shall refuse to navigate the brig. He has broken his promise, and if you don't make him clear out of this, I'll burn my log-book, and he shall carry the brig round the Horn himself."

Deacon looked hard at me, but did not speak. The

men examined my face, and seeing my temper and earnest-

ness, grew restless.

"Look here," cried Welchy; "the question is, who's of most consequence—Chadburn or Deacon? I say Chadburn is."

"Sniggers, ye haven't acted fair," shouted Suds; "Jack's

kept his word to us, an' I'm for backin' him."

These two voices were sufficient to make all hands unanimous.

"We'll leave ye to manage this here business as you like," one of them cried. "Fair's fair."

"Choose a mate from among you, then," said I.

"Understand this," exclaimed Deacon: "I'm not going to fight against what you consider right. If you think Jack has been wronged by me, because I had a mind to see what a pretty woman looked like in her sleep, then I'll shut up. I'll own fast enough that we can't do without him. Let any man be chief mate in my place. I say, hang the berth! I like sleeping in all night."

"You hear what he says, mates. Choose your man, and let's make an end of this," I exclaimed.

"I calls upon Beauty to take orfice," said Sam.

But Beauty bluntly refused.

Then Suds was hit upon; but he politely informed them that "He'd see 'em blowed fust! he wur an able seaman, he wur, and never wanted to be nothen else."

The offer went round, but was flatly declined by one and all. Alarmed lest they should fall back upon Deacon,

I said.—

"I'll be mate as well as skipper, if you like. I'll keep watch and watch with Banyard."

"Right you are!" they shouted.

This matter settled, they went tumbling up the ladder in high good humor, the whole affair, so significant to

me, being treated by them as a joke.

I caught hold of Deacon, and detained him until the cabin was cleared, and then, towering over him (I was half a head taller than he), I exclaimed, in the fiercest tone I could assume,-

"You may bless your stars that I didn't kill you last night. Understand this, you rascal, and gather your brains together to take in what I say: not a hair on that girl's head shall be injured whilst an ounce of power is left

in this fist," thrusting it under his nose. "You no longer belong here, and will have no business to enter the cabin. So, if I catch you aft, I shall put your presence down to some foul motive, and shall deal with you with about as much compunction and tenderness as you dealt with Captain Franklin."

"I never knew a man with such a temper as your's," he muttered, trying to meet my eyes, but quite failing to do so; "don't pester me with any more of your murderous threats. You nearly choked me last night, and you left me to live or perish, just as it might happen, alone in the cabin there. That wipes out your score against me for saving my life. We're quits now, and I owe you nothing."

"So much the better. My compact with you and the men is clear; they are willing to abide by it, and I'll serve them. But you... I know you! I have looked deeper into you than you imagine, and have discovered what your mates don't guess at. There's a secret behind your story!"

This was a bold thing for me to say; it was putting my suspicion of his madness into words. But it was forced out of me by my temper, and being said, could not be recalled.

He looked at me with a queer and dangerous expression in his eyes, and something like a spasm contracted and hardened his mouth. Then out went this look from his face, and an air of horror replaced it. He glanced around him and asked me what I meant.

"If you can't imagine, I needn't explain," I replied. "Come, go forward now, and leave me to do the work you've brought upon me, and above all, let there be no interference there!" and I pointed to Miss Franklin's cabin.

So saying, I turned away, and he went up the companion-ladder slowly, pausing midway to look round upon

me with an utterly absorbed air.

His manner quite decided my conclusions. I might indeed have judged him "touched" by signs as old as the earliest part of the voyage, had I not been a heedless observer. It was a queer discovery to make, and now I had made it, I did not know what to do with it.

When Banyard went on deck, I knocked on Miss Franklin's door to take her breakfast to her, and learn how much she knew of the danger she had been in. My punctuality had taught her to be ready for me; I found her dressed

and waiting.

She greeted me with her rich smile, that threw a light all over her face, and asked me what had brought the men into the cabin. She had tried to hear what they said, but what with the door being shut and the heavy creaking going on all around, she had only caught a few words, and these had given her no ideas.

I preferred to leave her in ignorance of the matter, little loving to see the delicate bloom fade off her cheeks and her eyes grow wild and swimming; and by help of a white lie, I left her to imagine that the men and I had

been discussing navigation.

"But," said I, "one good thing has happened; Deacon has thrown up his post and gone forward. So now you will have only Banyard to meet at table, and he will not hurt you."

This piece of news heartened her up, for she thought Deacon a fiend, having heard me speak of him as the

ringleader of the mutiny.

"I have been thinking and thinking," she said, leaning her chin on her little hand, and fixing her lustrous eyes on my face, "how we are to escape from these dreadful men. If they were to put you and me in a boat, could we reach the land?"

"Not easily," I answered gravely.

"Where are we now, Mr. Chadburn?"

"Edging away for the southernmost point of South America, called Cape Horn. When we round it, we shall sail into calm seas and beautiful weather; and then, and not till then, I will help you to think how we are to get back to England."

She clasped her hands and cried,—

"There is happiness in hearing you speak those words. Dear England! What would I give to be there!" and then, hiding her eyes, she exclaimed, in her flute-like voice of trouble, "Every time the vessel rocks I think of my poor brother. Oh, Mr. Chadburn, tell me you believe he is safe!"

This was a consideration I never liked to tackle, objecting to the hypocrisy of the answers it forced from me, and because (to be perfectly candid) it did not weigh so

very much on my mind, seeing the ugly fix we ourselves were in.

I answered her as a parson would, and went to the next

point at full speed, to get away from the subject.

"Do you know," said I, "I have discovered that our friend Deacon is mad?"

"Mad!" she echoed, rounding her eyes.

I nodded emphatically.

"Not wholly mad. He never rages. There's a flaw in

his wheel-work: he keeps unearthly time."

"He is certainly a very odd-looking person; quite ugly enough to be mad," she said, with the delicious simplicity of tone that always made me smile.

"Do you believe in his story about the gold?" I asked.

"I have never thought about it," she replied. "I have

been too frightened to think of anything."

"Old Banyard doesn't believe it, but all the rest of the men do, I fancy. True or false I shall steer them to this island, providing it has an existence."

"And if it does not exist?"

"Then I'll put them ashore somewhere else, if they'll let me."

"How could they stop you?"

"Oh, if, on the land we make, they see a house, or a flag-pole, or the spars of a ship, or any sign of civilization, they would soon oblige me to sheer off. I do not reckon upon our escaping them in this way: they will watch me too narrowly. A desert island would suit my hopes better than a populous one."

She looked at me with a terrified expression which I could not account for, until it flashed upon me that she might think—

"Not for us to stay upon," said I. "Were you think-

ing of Paul and Virginia?"

She blushed rosy, but looked very sad.

"Ah, Miss Franklin," I sighed, "some of these days you'll be looking back upon these cruel times, long after I have utterly vanished out of your sight, and then, maybe, you'll recall me just to mildly reproach yourself for refusing the confidence which that young sailor chap, called Jack Chadburn, begged you to give him."

She looked at me earnestly, exclaimed, "some of these

days"—stopped and whispered, "I am a foolish little coward"—and stopped again.

"Here am I keeping you from your breakfast," said I.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OFF THE HORN.

For some days we battled with a strong gale blowing from the west. Then it veered to the old quarter that had given us our famous run. We shook the reefs out, and packed on all plain sail that the brig could carry; and with our coppered stem smiting the great green waves, we danced like a bounding ball along our course.

The cold o' nights was now intense, and it was bitter enough in the day. Heavy snowfalls would encumber our decks, and the touch of iron was like a burn to the skin. The rigging froze hard as steel; fakes of the coils of the running gear were glued together, and were thrown hard

upon the deck to break them adrift.

Exempt from the duty of going aloft, I could nevertheless appreciate the sufferings each journey into those bleak, exposed heights entailed: the pitiless gale howled with an edge of pain through the desolate black rigging: the ratlines were slippery with a glaze of ice; the reef-points were frozen into toughered wire: and the very sheaves in the blocks were rigid on the pins, and required extra purchase, extra hands, and now and again a spell of winch or eapstan work to set them revolving.

Whatever might have been the disposition of the men, these were not the latitudes for them to air their humors in. The cold numbed their passions as it froze their fingers. They cursed the want of rum, and compensated themselves, when the weather permitted—for often no fire could be lighted in the galley for a couple of days

together—by boiling coffee.

In this wise we drew near Cape Horn, the albatrosses poising themselves over our wake, and the boobies flap-

ping their awkward wings over us.

Paying close attention to our dead-reckoning, I was, nevertheless, fortunate enough to obtain frequent sights. The chronometers in the cabin were fine pieces of me-

chanism, and the charts were new. Indeed, nothing about the brig and her furniture but would have silenced the most critical.

The longer 1 commanded her, the better 1 grew acquainted with her many fine qualities, the more I loved her. The notion of saving her from the men who had seized her, and sailing her home—my sweetheart on board, and the freight in the hold uninjured—became a passion in me.

Here was an honest dream of sea-romance!

But it was all an idle hope in those days-that, and

more which concerned my heart nearly.

One Thursday afternoon, an incident occurred which, whilst it fully confirmed a conjecture of mine which is written in the last chapter, should threaten, one might think, to give an entirely new character to the undertaking which the crew, in their madness, had imposed on themselves.

Up to this day we had sighted no ice; we were now in latitude 57° 30°. For the last week I had stationed a couple of hands, day and night, on the look-out; keeping a sharp look-out myself in the darkness, and directing Banyard to do the same. At midday it was blowing strong from the westward of south, the brig close-hauled on the port tack, under double-reefed topsail, lying up with shivering leeches, for I wanted no northing, with Cape Horn likely to expose its desolate, broken ice-girt rocks on the lee bow. A very high sea was running, and never did the ocean look more melancholy and wild; the torn clouds, hurrying like smoke over a pale sky, a single albatross astern, gleaming upon the pouring green, swooping in raids upon the hurling waters, and falling and rising on the wing in rhythmic evolutions, corresponding with the foam of the waves.

Ever and again the seas burst in mountains of spray over the brig's bows, high as the foreyard, and fell with a voice

of thunder upon the hollow decks.

Suddenly the wind dropped, and left us rolling furiously. The sky cleared up, and the wintry sunshine sparkled crisply on the soused decks. What did this betoken? I looked anxiously round, but the horizon was unbroken. The pitching and rolling were frightful. I called the watch, and hauled taut everything, but I every

moment expected to see the top gallant masts snap off, and heartily regretted that my objecting to set the crew to any work they were likely to resist had prevented me from sending down the royals a week ago.

Half an hour after the wind dropped, a black cloud rose in the south-east. I watched it for a few moments. It soared rapidly, extending its black length, and looking.

like Night herself coming down upon the brig.

I shouted for all hands, ready to man the braces and stand by the topsail sheets: and scarcely had they tumbled up when the squall was on us, screaming like a tornado. With it came hail heavy as musket-balls; hurled by the fury of the wind, they struck us upon the head and face with a force to deprive us of breath and almost to stun us. Not a man could face the discharge, and it rattled upon the oil-skins and sou'-westers of the men at the wheel until the sound was like the pouring of shot into a tin pan. It was now as dark as night. With the hurricane on the port quarter, the brig drove like a vision through a fog of hail and sleet and spray.

This was true Cape Horn weather; the tears squeezed by the cold out of our eyes freezing on the eyelashes, and the pain in the fingers sharp enough to keep one groaning.

As if the darkness thrown by the pall of cloud were not sufficiently discomfiting, the snow, taking the place of the hail, fell furiously. So thick was it, that the two men on the forecastle were not visible from the wheel.

Nothing could exceed the wonder of the spectacle of the snow as the driving tempest churned it up; whirled to right and left, it filled the air with fantastically shaped masses, and we seemed to sweep through an ocean of steam, or in the spray from a cataract, the smoke wherefrom was vast enough to fill the heavens.

Both topsails still spread their canvas to the wind, and under this the brig flashed through and over the tremen-

dous seas like the albatross that still sped after us.

I sent the men below, but told them to hold themselves in readiness for a shift of wind, or for heaving the brig to, and I roared to the two hands forward to keep a sharp look-out ahead.

After a bit the heavy snow fall thinned, the sea opened around us, but not many ship's lengths. The sleet and rain, and the spray lashed up out of the water by the

wind, heavily fogged the atmosphere, and added to this was the early night flung upon the deep by the somber expanse of cloud.

All on a sudden there came from the forecastle a loud

and fearful cry.

"Hard up! hard up! for God's sake! ice right ahead!" I never stopped to look—indeed there was no need to look; my scent was keen, and I could smell the ice per-

fectly.

I shouted to the men to put the wheel hard over. The spokes flew round like an engine-wheel—and not a second too soon; for on the port bow there leapt out of the mist and snow an iceberg, the dimensions of which, magnified by our own amazement and the whirling atmosphere through which we surveyed it, seemed as colossal as a cathedral.

In sober truth it was a terrific pile, with pinnacles burying themselves in the mist, with huge ravines and nodding rocks bleached with snow. The mountainous seas thundered up its sides, dislodging, as we rolled past, a gigantic side of ice, which fell, crackling like heavy explosions of mining powder, into the sea, and shut up a solid column of foam as high as our foretop; the tempest of wind wreathed the snow in wild, rushing, eddying circles all about the fearful brow and peaks of the berg. The whole mass rocked like a leviathan vessel to the action of the sea, and every instant portions were detached from it, whilst it creaked with sounds as though it were yielding to some internal convulsion, and were about to split in a thousand pieces.

The roaring of the sea at its foot, and the broad sheets of foam hurled upon it, were the finishing touches to a picture, the sublimity of which appealed to both eye and

ear.

As we staggered past it, the floe, consisting of the lumps that had been detached and floated in its neighborhood, pounded against the brig's bows and under her chains, and one piece we ran foul of was of such formidable dimensions that the blow resounded throughout the brig, and brought all hands out of the forecastle, thereby saving me the trouble of calling them.

Scarcely had we escaped this frightful peril when again

came the dreadful cry, "Ice right ahead!"

If ever I stood in need of a cool head I wanted it then; and yet, as if this were a crisis destined to test my presence of mind to the uttermost, scarcely had this cry reached my ears when one of the men at the wheel, suddenly shrieking out: "There's the island! there's the island!" leapt across the deck, and sprang into the main rigging.

The wheel was jammed hard over, and to keep it in that position the fully exerted strength of two men was required. When, therefore, Deacon—for he was the madman who had jumped from it—let go of the spokes, it spun round, carrying the other man with it, and before I could have drawn a breath, it had dashed him bleeding and senseless against the bulwarks.

I had caught hold of the spokes, however, before the wheel could revolve a second time: and some of the crew

rushing aft, the wheel was jammed hard up again.

The second iceberg was now right abeam. The brig had been flying round on her keel, and here she was with her topsails thundering overhead, her way gone, rolling frightfully, every huge sea that came rushing up threatening to bury her.

"Port your helm!" I shouted. "Man the lee forebraces. Rouse aft that foretopmast staysail sheet!"

Our position was indeed critical, and not a man on board but knew it. Happily I could discern no more ice to leeward, and the two great bergs were now some distance to windward. The one imminent danger was that the brig would be overwhelmed by the waves. But brave Little Loo! she topped the seas like a cork. Then, feeling the pressure of her headsail, she fell off, and her topsails filled again.

The weather now cleared up a bit, sufficiently so to enable us to see the two looming icebergs to windward. Everywhere else the sea was clear. There could be no danger in heading our course whilst we could see a couple of miles ahead; so we squared the yards once more to the favorable gale, and in a few minutes had dropped the deadly danger of the icebergs behind the thickness on the horizon.

Meanwhile, Deacon, after shouting himself hoarse in the main rigging, had come down, and stood leaning against one of the pumps, with his eyes fixed upon the deck, and his arms folded. The man who had been knocked insensible had come to, and been led forward.

I went up to Deacon and asked him what he meant by leaving the wheel? "You sojer!" I roared in my anger, "do you know that the brig was within an ace of being

lost by your mad trick?"

Some of the men, hearing me shouting, came round me. Deacon raised his eyes, and I observed that they were bloodshot, and that his face was just the color of a corpse dead of the dropsy. He made no answer, but there was such a broken-down look about the wretch, such a helpless, abject, bewildered air, that in spite of my rage a feeling of pity came across me as I looked at him.

"What made ye leave the wheel, you idiot?" exclaimed Beauty, in his coarse, brawling voice. "You'd be a fine un to take charge, you would! it were as bad as mur-

derin' Jimmy to leave him alone at the wheel."

"It wur as bad as murderin' of us all!" shouted Sam. "If the brig hadn't put that second iceberg well to

vind'ard, where should we be now?"

A sudden look of madness—unmistakable even to me, who knew but little of the signs of such a disease—gleamed in Deacon's eyes as he cast them round. He pressed his lips closely together, folded his arms tightly, and uttered not a word.

"Let him be for the present," said I. "Go forward, boys, and get your tea. If it comes on thick I shall

heave to to-night."

"We'll soon make him answer," I heard Beauty exclaim, as I turned away: presently, glancing back, I perceived they had got him by the arms and were running him, apparently unresisting, toward the forecastle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN THE CABIN.

I HAD, in a sense, lost sight of Deacon since I had succeeded in getting him out of the cabin. He had gone into Banyard's watch, and was therefore generally below when it fell to my turn to be on deck. Nothing, therefore, had fallen under my observation to prepare me for so decided an exhibition of his madness.

Perceiving old Liverpool Sam crouching under the galley and warming the blue tip of his nose with a pipe, the bowl of which glowed directly under his nostrils, I called him aft.

Surly by nature, the intense cold and the sense of sinister recklesness induced in him by the mutiny had molded his face into an expression the sourness of which exceeded anything that ever I saw of the kind in caricature. With a shawl round his throat, his sou'-wester jammed over his ears, his crabbed and battered face looked upon the brig with bad temper in every wrinkle. The want of rum was likewise a permanent sore on the old sailor's mind, and this was just the weather to make the deficiency a standing anguish.

"Sam," said I, when the old man stood before me, his hands deep in his pockets, "did you see Deacon spring into the rigging just now, and call out that the iceberg was his island?"

He nodded gloomily.

"What do you think of such behavior?"

"Think of it?" he answered, in his rumbling old voice;

"why, he's half-witted, that's what I think."

"That has been my notion all along; and don't you begin to fancy that he's started us all on a fool's errand?"

He drew powerful whiffs, expectorated, and replied,— "That may be as it is. Wot's put that into your head?"

"His madness,"

"Yes, yes," he growled; "that's all very well, but it warn't his madness as wrecked the gold ship, mate. I reckon he showed hisself sane enough in buryin' of the money."

He fixed his angry old eyes upon me and smoked hard. "But this may be a delusion of his," I exclaimed, struck by the old fellow's stubborn faith. "Madmen are full of fancies."

"I don't know nothen about that," he replied. a good time ago since the wessel wur wrecked, and if he's mad now, then wot I say is, he's gone mad since. my notion. Wot you call de-lusions is pretty often correct, master; more truthful they is than wot's swore to as truth. I'll just tell 'ee a tale that's come into my head. There wur an old woman as lived next door to my mother.

She wur called a miser, and got her livin' by scrapin' up bones and such muck, and sellin' of them. One day a little gell come in and told mother that Mrs. Lobb, that wur her name, was took ill and wanted to see her. Well, mother found her dyin'. Says she, 'Mrs. Lobb, if ye've got any savin's hid, let's know, and I'll get ye handsomely buried.' And Mrs. Lobb she says, 'I ain't got a halfpenny saved,' and she turned to and took so many 'orrible oaths upon it that the devil hisself 'ud ha' been conwinced. Well, the old woman dies, and when they sarched the house, blowed if they didn't find an old sea-boot under the fireplace chock full o' sovereigns and bank-notes. Two hundred pound worth. That wur a delusion, do you see; but the sea-boot wur full all the same, mate; an' that's my way o' lookin' at Deacon's yarn.'

Having delivered himself of which, he thrust his chin under his shawl and returned to the galley, his legs rounded

under him like the hind legs of a bulldog.

The brief conversation satisfied me on one point, that whatever I might believe, I had no arguments sufficiently sound to prove my convictions to the men. And might I not be wrong myself in assuming Deacon's story to be a falsehood? Suppose, instead of his madness originating the notion of the buried money, it was the fact of the money, its inaccessibility, the weight of it as a secret, and the long brooding over it, that had generated the madness?

My doubts brought a new consideration with them. Whilst the men remained convinced of Deacon's truth, should I be acting wisely in striving to discredit it? No, and for this reason: they might take it into their heads that I wished to draw them away from the treasure in order to possess it myself. To inspire such an idea as this in their turbulent, reckless minds would be to imperil my life, and effectually end any scheme I might hit upon for the final rescue of myself, Miss Franklin, and the brig, from their criminal hands.

This is a plain story that must go straight to the end. One can't be lowering a boat and rowing away from a ship's side in search of new matter. At sea the stage and scenery are always the same; nothing changes but the weather and the stars. And yet it is not over tiresome work, either. It is not all sitting on the windlass and sailing. When

I turn this story over in my mind, I find it exciting enough, I assure you, whether it pleases your fancy or not

-some parts of it, especially.

At tea time that day I made Miss Franklin come out of her cabin and sit with me at the table. This bringing her out of the dreariness of her prison gave her more heart; it was like old times, and made her feel less afraid of the men. How sweet and fair she looked in the lamplight, like alabaster, with crimson shining through her cheeks, and her eyes deep and luminous. She had heard the men tumbling about on deck, and felt the new kind of pitching of the brig when she had rounded-to and snouted the pouring seas; but, dear heart, she had no notion what it meant—that death, ghastly and clamorous, had been under our rushing bows.

What good to horrify her with what had passed? so I gave her a description of the icebergs, leaving out the danger, and kept her open eyes riveted on me, and her

hands clasped.

I was in no hurry to lie down whilst I had her to talk to; Old Banyard marched the dark deck, and as the stars were shining when I came below, I had no fear of the men on the look-out not sighting any more icebergs until we were almost into them.

"The brig's course was above my head in the tell-tale, and I did not want to look over her side to know that she was frothing the mighty rollers which, volleying at her quarter, raised and rattled her onward at such a pace, that, two more days of such sailing, and we should be heading for calm waters and warm latitudes.

To hear her voice and my own, above the creaking and groaning in the cabin, I went round to her side of the table. She drew her dress aside that I might sit close to her, and there was a smile in her eyes when she found me

alongside.

"I am happy when you are near me," said she. "I

only feel safe then."

"When you saw me at the hotel in Bayport, how little either of us guessed what experiences we were to share together."

"Only once let me get to England, and never, never will I go to sea again!" she exclaimed, with charming

vehemence.

I got her to talk of England and her home in Kent. It was strange to watch her beautiful face, and hear her sweet lips speaking of her garden and the flowers in it, her books, her birds, her occupations, a hundred trifles forming a delightful picture of calm, innocent country life, and feel the floor on which we sat rising and falling in heavy, sweeping movements, and think of the wild and desolate seas on which we tossed, the melancholy and ice-bound Horn within a half-day's sail, the frightful danger we had just escaped, the perilous society of the men forward.

These thoughts were in me as I looked at her, and listened to her soft prattle, glad that she should even for a short spell sink all present anxiety in calm and happy

memory.

But the old dismal topic of her brother came up again. Was there any chance of his being saved, she wanted to know? and if he reached the Cape of Good Hope, what would he do? Would he send a ship of war after us to rescue her and me, or would he go home to England?

Now, whether Captain Franklin and Mr. Sloe were actually drowned or not I cannot positively assert; but this much I say here, and I shall be anticipating no portion of what interest this book contains by recording that neither Captain Franklin nor Mr. Sloe was ever heard of from the moment they were sent adrift from the side of the Little Loo down to the present hour.

But then I was pretty certain, even in those days, that the skipper had perished on the very first night they had been set afloat; for the sea that had risen would in my opinion have swamped the boat had she been three times the size, and even if she had been furnished with a sail

to enable her to run before it.

However, I could not muster up courage enough to tell her what my belief was: yet I thought it proper to bring her to see the thing in a right light, and understand the nature of the few chances for, and the thousand chances against, the two men, so that by degrees I might win her away from those hopes of hers, founded in ignorance of the dangers of the deep, and reconcile her to the certainty that her brother was a dead man—I don't think she took more account of the mate than I did. So I explained to her the peril men stood in who were left to float in an

angry sea in an insignificant quarter-boat: how, though it did sometimes befall that such poor wretches were rescued by passing ships, and that they sometimes managed to effect their own deliverance by reaching dry land, yet beyond all question the majority of persons so circumstanced perished.

But we were in God Almighty's keeping, I said, and it was fit that we should pray for the Captain's safety, and hope the best for him: but too much confidence would be a blunder, and since the cruel deed was committed beyond recall, she would be acting wisely to let all thoughts of it lie aside for a while, as no speculations could do more than make her heart ache, and occupy herself instead with her own perils, which, Lord knows, were bad enough.

This sermon brought us to new matters, and for a whole hour we sat whispering hopes and schemes in each

other's ears.

It was the prettiest hour I had yet passed. I had never ventured to bestow so much of my company on her before: and to-night she was more tranquil, more brave in

her thoughts, more herself again.

I heard Old Banyard's regular tramp overhead. Sometimes he would stop, and though I could not see him, no doubt he took a squint at us through the skylight. Wasn't I a numskull, I dare say, in his opinion, for preferring a cold yarn to the warm climate of blankets!

Truly, indeed, that "cold yarn" was as pleasant to me as a flash of sunlight is to the mariner who has been sailing for days under thick, raw skies. My memory pictures us together: she, snug in a thick jacket, her white chin deep in the dark fur, mittens on her as high as the fingernails, and the gleam of rings under the knitted wool, her dark hair coiled down upon her head; and poor Jack Swab, leaning forward to have her whole sweet face in his eyes, the water drying on the shoulders of his rough pilot jacket, his face stiff with the salt, and his hands so red and horny that for very shame he hides one in his pocket and disguises the other by burying it finger deep in his hair. Now and then the pounding of the waves on the brig's quarter sets the bench on which we sit vibrating like a railway carriage; all around us the cabin-doors creak; above swings the lamp, making wild angles with

the varnished beam: and through all and over all thunders the steady roaring of the gale through the rigging on high, and we hear the deep hum of the froth piled in a heap at the bow, and spreading out to form the broad wake that rises and falls upon the hills and in the valleys of water astern.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WE LOSE TWO MEN.

It is time to turn in. I am thinking so because she muffles a yawn.

Hark!

The sound of men's boots stamping along the deck make an echo distinguishable from all sounds that wind and water can fling into a ship's hollowness. The tramping rattled aft, and as it approached I sprang to the companion-ladder, to bar the way to the cabin, my hand in my breast-pocket.

"Here's Deacon stabbed Jemmy!" roared a voice. "He's bleeding like a pig. Come for'ard and bind him

up afore he's dead and gone!"

"To your cabin!" I exclaimed to Miss Franklin.

"Turn the key in the lock."

I watched her enter and close the door, then, putting on my sou'-wester, I ran on deck. The moment I emerged, three men began to shout at me. All that I could make out was their oaths. The wind howled furiously through the rigging, and the waves roared a full-toned thunder round the brig's sides as they chased her and foamed under her, and rushed past her, bursting into acres of froth.

The night was clear, yet dark. Overhead was the scud whirling across the frosty stars; the wind cut the skin like a knife, and to right and left were the towering black

ridges of the Capa Horn sea.

"Silence!" I cried. "One of you speak! What is it?"

The man who answered was Suds.

"Jimmy and Deacon had a row about Deacon's leavin' of the wheel. Jimmy turned to and struck at Deacon, and he outs with his knife and let's drive at Jim's heart. He's bleedin' to death!"

I broke away from them and ran forward, they after

me, as fast as the slippery, swinging deck would allow. Gaining the scuttle, I thrust my head into the fætid air and shouted,—

"Am I to come below?"

"Come on, come on, for God Almighty's sake!" came an answering cry.

Planting my hands on the combings of the hatch, I

dropped into the forecastle.

All the men were broad awake. Legs dangled over the edges of the bunks. In full tarpaulin rig, some of them leaned, white and sick, against what support was to hand.

On the deck, with his head on a pillow, sopping wet with water, and his breast open, with a black wound on it, and his shirt stained red as the ensign, lay the wounded man. And doubled up against a sea-chest, his white teeth showing as he snarled under his arm at the men, rolling his eyeballs frightfully, was Deacon, his legs lashed together in such a way that his feet were swollen and black with the strangulation of the blood there.

What could I do? the wounded man was stone dead. I had only need to glance at his white eyes and dropped under-jaw to know it. His fingers were clinched, and his face was an ugly mask of horror and despair and pain.

It is difficult to realize the picture this forecastle pre-

sented by mere imagination.

You may figure, indeed, the men looking down with white fear on the murdered corpse, their faces swart as Spaniards', rolling their eyes in the glimmer of the forecastle lamp on the maniac who snapped his teeth at them; but what shore-going fancy can hear and behold those accompaniments to the scene which deepened the tragic horror of it: the roaring of the sea at the bows, those vast quivering risings and plunges which swing the lamp fore and aft like the pendulum of a clock, while every plank and beam and stanchion utters a separate groan or shriek of its own, and the deck overhead resounds to the thumping of the tons of water falling heavily on to it?

I told the men there was nothing to be done, Jemmy was stone dead.

"Look where the wound is, right over his heart."

To help them, I pulled the bedding out of his bunk, and a couple of men put the corpse into it, and we rolled

it up and handed the ghastly parcel through the scuttle

to lie until the morning on the forehatch.

I then called them round me and pointed out that Deacon was raving mad, and had murdered his mate in his madness, and that he was not responsible for his acts. What should be done with him!

Some of them were for bending on a tripping line to his neck, running him upon deck, and flinging him over-

board.

"Is not one murder enough?" shouted I. "I'll sanction nothing of that kind. Human blood seems as cheap as water among you. You called me forward to help you, and here I am, willing to do what I can—but don't take

the law out of my hands."

They assailed me with furious cries, shouting that ashore it was blood for blood, and it should be the same at sea. What was the use of that howling madman among them? I knew the reckoning of the island, and could carry the brig there: and they were for tossing him overboard, right away, before he stabbed the rest of them.

A couple of the men, however, took my side, and called upon the others to let me have my way. Singing out to these to give me a hand, I caught up a piece of lashing stuff, and threw myself upon the madman and made his wrists fast, whilst the others held his head down to prevent

him from biting.

We then stretched a strip of convas over his mouth, to keep his teeth out of our skin and silence his screams, for mad as he was he thought we were going to drown him. With infinite trouble, we got him on to the forecastle and carried him to the deck-house, where we found young Hardy, whom I told to clear out and get away into the forecastle, if he didn't want to be locked up with a madman all night. Then, loosening the bindings round his swollen legs, and removing the canvas from his mouth, we left him, effectually pinioned, as we believed, drew the door upon him, and padlocked it.

Having reassured Miss Franklin, I turned in and slept till twelve, at which hour I was routed out by Old Banyard, and went on to the black and blowing decks with

my teeth chattering in my head.

The wind had drawn abeam, and was still a whole gale, though less furious than what it was when I left the deck

last time. Resolute to give the Little Loo all the wings she could carry to take her out of this maritime inferno of wind and ice and wave, I set the main staysail and foresail, with the reef tied in it, and down she squatted under the pressure, making milk of the sea to leeward, while the stars flashed through her rigging as she fled up, and went boiling down the black and foaming mountains that raged along her course.

So through the whole dreary four hours, during which my eyes were occupied in looking out for ice, and my thoughts in wondering what on earth was to be done with

the madman in the deck-house.

I was out again at seven bells—half an hour before eight—and found the gale broken, a high sea running, and both topgallant sails set over the reefed topsails. The lee scuppers were all afroth with the water that came tumbling over the forecastle. Away to windward, about three miles off, was a lumbering black bark, hove-to under a small storm trysail, her foretopgallan; mast and jibboom gone. She was pitching and rolling in such a style as no illustration could at all come near to express. The Dutch flag was seized to her lower mizzen rigging, the height of a man above the poop-rail, and there it stood like a board. It was scarcely worth our while to hoist the ensign, for we were passing her like smoke. She was not in distress, but had this not been the case, we could have rendered her no help.

I called to some of the men and requested them to stand by me while I opened the deck-house door and looked at Deacon. I hoped to find him quiet through exhaustion, perhaps sane again. After I should have inspected him, I proposed to confer with the better disposed among the men who had helped me to lock him up as to what we

should do with him.

We accordingly approached the door in a body. Unhappily, there was no window to see into the house through. Before applying the key, I put my ear to the door, but heard no sound. I then withdrew the padlock and pushed back the door, stepping aside as I did so, thinking it as likely as not that he had liberated himself in the night and would fly out: in which case, stand clear! a madman's bite is a horrid wound, and from such teeth as Deacon snapped last night the Lord preserve us.

Welchy, more reckless than I, put in his head, and

yelled out.

We all rushed in, and found the madman hanging dead from the roof, the rope that had bound his legs around his throat, and the end hitched into an eyebolt between the hammocks. His feet were a hand's breadth above the deck, his head upon his shoulder, and his face—phew! we'll just say nothing about that.

"Cut him down, Welchy," cried I: and as the sailor's knife parted the rope the corpse slipped into my arms, and

I let it drop upon the deck quickly.

So here were two men of the brig's company gone out of life in less than twelve hours.

The news was borne breathless to the scuttle, and aft

tumbled all hands, and filled the house to have a look.

"See here!" cried Suds. "He's cut his wrists to pieces in gettin' 'em out o' the lashin's."

"He knew the trick o' doing it!" exclaimed Beauty. "He jumped, d'ye see, from this chest. He warn't mad enough not to know how to break his neck."

"Hide his ugly mug! 'tain't a sight for men," muttered

Old Sam, turning away.

Throughout the night the other body had lain upon the forehatch. And now a couple of the men, taking palms and needles and twine from the sailmaker's chest, turned to and stitched the bodies up. I brought my Church Service out and read a few passages from the proper Office as the bodies were tilted off a couple of planks into the boiling water alongside.

It was all done in a hurry, and may God forgive the lack of ceremony. I wanted the brig cleared of the ugly load, so that I might brace my nerves up again to deal with the dangers of the sea and the crew. What is the fate of the very best sailor who dies at sea but a toss? Here were two mutineers, with blood on their souls, gone to eternity, and what claim had they upon my sympathy?

Indeed, awed as I was by the manner of Deacon's death, by the unexpected extinction of a life rendered positively fantastic by its odd admixture of culture, villainy, and madness, I considered his ending a fortunate occurrence. Had he lived, my humanity would have been taxed to preserve him from the crew. I should not have known

what to do with him: how to feed him, where to confine him.

And now, would his death disturb the intentions of the crew? But it was eight bells, and too bitterly cold to be standing, Church Service in hand, and the water up to my ankles, on the maindeck.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A SEA PARLIAMENT.

WE had lost five hands since we left Bayport, counting the Captain and mate. This reduced the number of souls in the brig to eleven in all, and they may be catalogued thus:—

Able seamen: Sam, Suds, Savings, Beauty, Lucky

Billy, Little Welchy.

Apprentice: Hardy.

Cook: Scum.

Officer, carpenter, boatswain, and sailmaker: Mr. Ban-yard.

Captain: Jack Chadburn.

Passenger: Miss Louisa Franklin.

We were thus somewhat short-handed. Old Windward had never disdained to add his weight to a pull, and sometimes went aloft. Consequently he was as good as an able seaman gone. Five make a great gap in a small company, and it behooved me to drag the brig out of these ice-bound dirty latitudes as soon as ever I could, lest sickness should still further impoverish our diminished stock of available labor.

After breakfast I had a conversation with Banyard,

and asked him a plain question.

"I consider you an honest man, Banyard, and shall deal with you openly. It is my intention to save the brig if I can, and carry her into port. Are you for casting in your lot with the crew, or will you stand by me?"

All his old shrewdness came into his eyes as he looked

at me.

"If you can save the brig," said he, "it'll be a good job. But I should like to know how you're agoin' to manage it."

"May I count upon your help," I exclaimed, "when the opportunity arrives?"

"Look here, mister," he said slowly. "I don't want to get knocked on the head. You and me aren't no match for the men."

"I shall not make a hand-to-hand affair of it," I interrupted. "I have got a scheme working in my mind, which I hope will rid us of the men without a blow; when the time comes I'll unfold it to you. What I now want to know is, at which end of the brig is your heart?"

"Why, aft."

"That'll do," said I.

"Stop a bit. I 'splained to you before why I joined this business. I goes where the mob's biggest. But I'm no pirate. I'm for peace and 'spectability. There's a bit o' money in a savin's bank belongin' to a man as signs his name vith a cross, and that man's me. It ain't pirates as saves up their money in savin's banks agin the calls of old age. Get me out o' this mess, mister, and let the magistrate know as I had naught to do with it, and this here arm is at your sarvice and welcome."
"All right," said I; "and now all you have to do is,

hold your jaw and wait for those blessed things called

circumstances."

Banyard should have been a Scotchman. Never was there so cautions an old hunks. He had not yet forgiven the men for their practical joke upon him, and the general contempt in which they had held him, and this was one guarantee of his sympathy with me; not to speak of his real anxiety to get away from the mutiny and its consequences.

In a word, I had watched and sounded him for some days, and was well assured of his inclinations; otherwise I should have been a madman to put myself in his power, and risk my life on the chance of his keeping my inten-

tions hidden from the crew.

It was worth my while, however, to see what thoughts Deacon's death had excited in the men, and what ideas they now had respecting the island and the gold in it. So, going forward, I put my head down the scuttle and asked them to lay aft, and confer with me in the cabin.

In truth, it was too cold to stand and talk on deck. All the wrappers in the world would not have kept your flesh from freezing unless you kept your legs violently exercised.

Arrived in the cabin, they seated themselves round the table, and, to put them in good humor, I produced a bottle of rum—one of the bottles that had fallen to my share—and served the liquor round in a wine-glass. Their eyes danced in their heads at the sight of it; thirsty ship wrecked mariners could not have looked more gloatingly and lovingly upon a spring of water.

I took the head of the table, and glancing along the row of grimy faces, innocent of soap, their heavy black

hands and rough attire, I opened the debate.

"Now that Deacon has proved himself a madman by stabbing Jimmy and hanging himself, what notion of his island have you still got among you?"

Beauty answered after a silence.

"We've talked it over, and we've agreed along with Sammy, who reckons that Deacon's yarn needn't be none the less true because he went mad."

"I told ye that," said Sam to me.

"So you'did," I answered; "but that was before Deacon went raving mad."

"Tell him that yarn about old Mrs. Lobb, Sam; it's

fust-class, and reg'lar to the p'int," shouted Suds. "I have heard that too," said I. "What I want to know is, have you still, all of you, so much faith in Deacon's story that you are determined to prosecute the vovage to the South Sea?"

"Look here!" cried Beauty; "just tell us where else we're to go to, will 'ee? We want the gold, and we mean

to get it."

"And supposing it's there, and supposing you get it,

what are you going to do with it?"

"Why, sew it up in our clothes, and turn to and be shipwrecked," replied Beauty. "That ain't impossible, is it, master?"

There was a shout of laughter, Beauty looking tri-

umphantly round.

"You'll excuse me," said I very politely, "for asking so many questions; but you see I am concerned in this business as well as you, and want to know what's to become of us all when I've brought you to the end of your journey?"

"Oh, you're quite at libbuty to ax questions," growled Sam, sucking the rim of his wine-glass: "we'll tell ye all we know."

"Suppose there's no gold, no island even: what then?" This was evidently a consideration they did not like to entertain, for they began to shout altogether, angrily, one of them saving,

"If there's no island, we'll not take it that it ain't

there, but that it don't suit ye to find it."
"If it's there I'll find it," I answered coldly. "You have no right to talk to me like that, Billy. I've not deceived you yet."

But I thought to myself, even whilst I was answering the fellow, "Whether it's there or not I'll find it for you,

which was the bull on which my scheme rested.

"Supposin' matters to be as you say," observed Suds, "and there ain't no gold in the island, and it's all a lie, why then we'll turn beachcombers, which is my notion o' proper sailorin'-shippin' for the cruise a pocketful o' silver dollars to tassel the ends o' your handkerchers with when ye sign articles, plenty of lush, lovely gals soft as pudden as sweethearts ashore, and warm winds and nothen to do but to smoke rale tobacky."

"There ye go with your murderin' supposin's agin!" shouted Old Sam in a fury. "Supposin' there's no gold! supposin' the sea ain't salt! supposin' this brig's at the bottom o' the hocean, and we're all barnacles! wot I say is, before we go humbuggin' about with supposin's, wait

till we find out wot's wot."

And in his wrath he smote the table violently with his fist.

"Master," here interposed Savings, gently addressing me, "there ain't such a thing as another bottle o' rum

knockin' about in one o' the lockers, is there?"

"No," replied I shortly, "there isn't. If your stomach wants staying, here's the empty bottle; clap your nose to it, and sniff, and when you're satisfied you'll owe me nothing. Now," I continued, turning to the others, "I suppose Deacon told you that his island is not on the chart?"

"Yes, yes, we know all about that," cried Beauty.

"If the fellow was wrong in his reckoning, I shall be at a loss, of course, when I come to the place where he

fixes his island. Now, since his story, if true, proves that there is one island in the South Sea which is not marked on the chart, there may be others that are not charted either. Are you following me?"

"Yes, yes-go on!"

"It might happen that we should sight an island that may prove not to be Deacon's."

Old Sam nodded.

"I shall not be able to see if the coast corresponds with Deacon's sketch without running the brig close to the land and bringing up. This would be extremely dangerous, because we might find out that the island was inhabited, that there was a man-of-war lying in a harbor, or cove, or creek, hidden to us, and we should be in the position of the man who, leaving his bundle in a cave, went back to fetch it, and was set upon by the lion that had slipped in, when he had gone away, to get a spell of sleep."

"Go on," cried Billy, "all hands is listenin'."

"My meaning is this: to save our necks we must be sure that the land we sight is Deacon's island, and that it is uninhabited, and no vessel anchored near it, before bringing up. Is that right?"

"Why, I don't suppose that's to be contradicted," re-

plied Beauty.

"We must take every precaution to guard against the brig's being boarded. If that comes, I must tell you plainly I sha'n't be able to help you. I can't forge fresh ship's papers; suspicion must be excited, whatever yarn I may invent; we shall be detained, taken on shore, examined, the truth twisted out of some of us, and then, hurrah for Jack Ketch and Woolloomooloo jail!"

"It'll be a bad look-out if it comes to that," muttered

Beauty, scowling around him.

"Just tell us what your plans are, mister: you've got a long head; we look to you," said Savings.

"I have thought the matter over, mates, and this is my proposal," I replied, looking with a great air of thought at Beauty's square-jawed face: "the first bit of land we sight that is in the neighborhood of Deacon's reckoning, we'll approach to within three miles, no nearer. We'll heave the brig to at that, and lower away the quarter-boat with a couple of empty water-casks in her. Five of

you must then jump in and row for the shore. Should the island be inhabited, it will appear that you have come to fill your casks. If it is Deacon's island, you will take soundings, find out a good mooring spot for the brig, come back and let us know."

The men looked at each other, and there was a tolerably

long silence.

"That'll be a safe way o' doin' it!" exclaimed Beauty. "Who's to come along in the boat—who's to be the party?"

"Choose your own men; I'll go along with you if you like," I replied. "Whoever takes charge of the boat must be a man we can trust: some one with ready invention, and good cheek to answer questions should the island prove a tartar. It is for you to say if you will trust me."

There was another pause. I was throwing them right off the scent. They were bad tacticians, and not liking to own in speech that they would not trust me, admitted

it by their silence.

"There is one point, however," I continued, pretending not to notice the obvious meaning conveyed by their silence, "to which I must direct your attention. If you depute me to go in the boat, my presence there will be out of order. It is not customary for the skipper of a fine vessel like this to go ashore along with a watering party. It would be the duty of one of the mates or the boatswain to take charge of the boat. A spark will blow up a powder ship: and a small hint may lead to no end of trouble in this case."

"That's my way o' viewin' it," said Sam, with an ap-

proving nod.

"Old Banyard's an honest man, but he's a mule," I proceeded. "They'd whip the truth out of him like a shot. I don't advise you to choose him as coxswain."
"You're supposin', of course, that the island we sight

turns out to be inhabited?" said Beauty.

66 Yes."

"And if it ain't?"

"Then we shall run no risk."

"But if we wur to see houses or people movin' about,

we'd come away without landin'."

"And run the risk of being pursued! That won't do, mate. You'd have to pull straight ashore, fill your casks, tell your story, and come away again like an honest boat's crew."

"Ye must be blind as a pig under water, Beauty, if you don't see that," cried Suds.

Beauty was silent.

"Who's to take charge then? Some one as can talk and bounce, that's sartin!" exclaimed Savings. "Beauty is your man," said I.

He looked at me.

"Let him pretend to be bo'sun and second mate. I'll tell him what to say when the time comes."

"I'll do it fast enough," he replied defiantly. "I'm not afeared. I'll talk to em, if any questions is ax'd."

"You have plenty of time to think these plans of mine over," said I, getting up. "There's no hurry. Talk them over: and if you can hit upon some better way of securing this mutiny against the chance of detection through our blundering too near the wrong island, why, come aft with it to me, and we'll discuss it. Gold is a first-rate thing, and I hope you may get it; but the hopes you have of lining your pockets must not lead you into quod, or hand you over to the hangman."

I was trembling all over when they left me, so heavy had been the excitement under which I labored, and arduous the task of suppressing it. But I was never more exultant in my life, for only let them carry out my project, and my sweetheart would be safe, and the brig her

own ship for me to pilot her home in.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN THE SOUTH SEA.

Doubling the Horn from the east'ard is one of the disagreeablest jobs a sailor can undertake. The gales which, at seasons of the year, prevail from the west, the high seas, the dangerous icebergs which swarm up from the Antarctic regions, and the piercing cold, combine to make the journey one long perilous hardship.

In our case we were fortunate enough to meet with southerly gales chiefly, and, wherever possible, I made the difference between a breeze and a gale of wind by cracking on the main-topgallant sail, often setting it over a treblereefed topsail.

Twice, however, the gale went round to the westward, and blew right in our teeth with such frightful violence, that each time I had to heave the brig to under bare poles.

On the last occasion the sea was the wildest and the most terrific I had ever beheld, and ever want to behold, unless from the land. The wind veered round in the afternoon, and, piping its hardest all in a hurry, obliged us to clew up and furl every stitch of canvas upon her. With foreyards checked and main sharply braced, the brig rose and fell upon the gradually increasing seas. When the night fell, the moon, a mere phantom, danced windily among the rushing clouds, and just shed enough light to give a startling brilliancy of whiteness to the foaming crests of the waves.

Some small shelter was afforded me by the high bulwark, but so bitter was the cold, that, every time the wind struck the face, the sensation was precisely as if one's

cheek had been laid open by a blow from a hatchet.

That night I never turned in. Going below for five minutes at a time to draw some whiffs of tobacco, and recover my circulation in the warmer air of the cabin, I would return on deck, too anxious to remain absent for any lengthened period. The weight and magnitude of the waves made the situation of the brig very perilous. Lifted helpless one moment to the summit of a sea, which, breaking under her, would bury her high as her upper dead-eyes in the froth of it, down she would rush into an abysm that looked immeasurable in its pitchy blackness, her masts slanting hard into the shrinking gale, as if with her yard-arms she would stave off the monstrous impending wave, whose black summit looked level with her maintop, and whose imponderable wall built a brief calm of stagnant air all around her, amid which we, clinging with desperate hands to the sides, stood breathless, deeming it impossible that the brig would lift in time to escape the shattering tons of ebony-colored water which looked to be running right over us.

However, it would have been hard fortune indeed if weather like this lasted. We drew out of it gradually, sighting no ice until we were in long. 80°, when the brig's

course was shaped N.N.W., and we headed with thankful hearts for the mild waters of the Pacific.

The heavy load of anxiety that had weighed down my mind had neither benefited my health nor my appearance. My face was thin and care-worn, and my nervous system was sadly out of tune. Had I "given way," as old women call it, I should have taken to my bed and gone through a bad illness. But indisposition was a luxury I could not afford. I put forth all my will, and kept myself in health by hard resolution, which was a complete triumph of mind over physics, and a satisfactory proof to myself that nature is sometimes to be controlled and awed into complicity with the mind's desires by resolute defiance of her hints.

The crew had worked for their lives in coming round the Horn, and hard work it was for a company weakened by the loss of five pairs of stout hands. The cold weather passed, they did nothing beyond steering the brig and trimming yards. The neglect of the vessel was apparent in her aspect; her standing rigging was slack, her masts dirty, chafing-gear in tatters, sides rusty and brown, paint-work filthy: she might have been a whaler on her return home after three years knocking about among the

South Sea Islands.

However, as we were now approaching the latitudes of which the men had been dreaming for the last ten weeks, I recommended certain preparations, and got them carried out. Banyard, as carpenter, thoroughly overhauled the quarter-boat, and made her tight and sound, polishing her off with a coating of tar and slush. The fish tackles were rigged up, and, working very leisurely, the men got both anchors over ready for use; the kedges were looked to,

and a hawser coiled down forward.

These and other preparations for bringing up, all which I superintended with a zeal under which no one who watched me would have supposed lay a motive directly at variance with the ostensible object of all this work, put a kind of new spirit into the crew, and brought decisively home to them a sense of the reality of the undertaking on which they were engaged. They began to cut some of their old capers again; every day brought us into a softer and more delicious climate; the decks gleamed white in the sun, and behind and before us in the deepening blue of the water frolicked the albicores and bonitas.

One glorious morning I induced Miss Franklin to accompany me on deck. She shrunk at first from the idea: her horror and dread of the men were deep-rooted; however, I succeeded in overcoming her alarm, and led her up the companion-ladder.

She clung to my arm when her eyes met the scowling countenance of Beauty, who happened to be at the wheel, and then she threw her scared glances forward, where some of the men lay broad on their backs, smoking and conversing, on the lower studding-sail, which they had pulled open and spread for the softness of it.

When her first fears passed off, it was one of the tenderest sights imaginable to see her looking round upon the broad blue sea and up at the white sails, with child-like rapture in her eyes, and her sweet nostrils quivering to the glory and the freshness of the breeze. For six long weeks had she remained below, for ever hearing the sullen grinding of the vessel's timbers, the port-hole closed, and no fresh air coming to her, and all the world of heaven and water outside cramped down to the circumference of a pane of glass, which was as often under the green seas as out of them.

The men looked at her hard, and that was all. I had her arm in mine, and in this way we stepped the deck; and when she was for pulling her hand away more for fear that the men would call out a rough joke to us, than because she was unwilling I should have it, I said, "I have earned this privilege, and you must tell me I deserve it."

Her manner was all the answer I wanted, and to and

fro we paced, gravely as any admiral and his wife.

The calm seas, the warm wind, the lazy movement of the sails, and the society of Louisa Franklin given, I should have been content to see the brig turned into the Flying Dutchman: and that should mean that we should remain always young, and the sun warm, and the water calm.

Having once broken through her fear, she came on deck often. The sailors never approached her, nor appeared to take any notice. Perhaps they knew where my heart was, and what sort of hand I should raise to defend her. Yet a better reason was, they were heartily sick of the voyage, wanted to be ashore, lining their clothes with the money,

and clear of the danger of the mutiny.

Here, indeed, was a distinct alarm among them, manifested to me in a most pointed fashion one day when we sighted a vessel steering down upon us. The moment "Sail ho!" was cried, they tumbled aft, the glass was passed from hand to hand, and the most uncomfortable anxiety shown.

Was she a man-of-war? they asked me. I thought not, by the cut of her; yet she proved to be a man-of-war—a Brazilian brig-rigged steamer under canvas, standing S.S.E. She passed us at a distance of two miles, with

her colors drooping at the gaff-end.

On this same day I called Beauty to me and inquired if the crew had come to any fresh arrangements respecting

our movements when land should be sighted.

"No," said he; "we're going to carry out your plan. Sammy wur sayin' that he thought three mile wur too fur off to heave the brig to. It 'ud be a six mile pull there an' back. A mile off 'ud be fur enough; then with the glass we'd be able to see if there wur any houses ashore, and save us the trouble of lowerin' the boat.

"We can easily make it one mile," I answered; "only as to sighting houses from the deck, remember this—we may chance to make a portion of the land where no habitations are visible; to bring the brig up on the supposition that there is no population, without first carefully recon-

noitering, would be madness."

"That's right enough!" he exclaimed. "I'm for sending the boat to have a look round, only we don't want to

set rowin' six mile when two'll do."

A distance of one mile would not answer my purpose so well as a distance of three; I pretended to yield to his

wishes, but all the same I meant to have my way.

To no living creature as yet had I unfolded my scheme. Once I had it on my mind to tell it to Miss Franklin, but the mere thought of whispering it alarmed me. On the absolute unsuspicion of the crew depended the success of my scheme, and on my scheme depended, in all probability, Miss Franklin's life and mine, and certainly the safety of the brig. You may readily believe, therefore, that I scarcely presumed to let my own thoughts dwell upon it, lest it should so mold the expression of my face and in-

fluence my manners as to excite doubts of me among the men.

Indeed, my life, my love, my whole future fortune were embarked upon the hazard of a stratagem. God knows how I contrived to act the part that held the men satisfied with my integrity, themselves sullen and suspicious, scanning the horizon with doubting eyes, often creeping aft to inspect the compass, and calling upon me to produce the chart and show them the brig's whereabouts.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DEACON'S ISLAND.

THURSDAY, the 15th of October-this day made the one

hundredth since we had left Bayport.

Yesterday's sights had shown us to be one hundred and twenty miles to the southward and eastward of the spot where Deacon placed his island. At the pace we had been sailing during the night, we ought to make the land some time in the afternoon.

Yesterday I had deceived the crew by indicating our position wrongly on the chart. They had, therefore, no idea that we were within a few hours' sail of the actual

spot where Deacon had placed his island.

Among the wonders of the sea are its climates. The mariner, standing to-day under the shadowless equatorial sun, thinks with amazement, as he wipes the sweat-drops from his brow, of the few brief days that have passed since he was battling amid the snow and ice and storms of the Antarctic confines.

Looking over the brig's side at the clear blue water that ran with a glint and tinkle of froth away from the cutwater, while the sun lay warm on my back, and the soft breeze was heavy with the smell of oakum and paint and pitch, it was difficult for my mind to believe that only a few short nights ago the sea was pouring its mountains under a midnight blackness, the furious gale was driving hail and sleet against our faces, while the intense cold froze the tears as they streamed from our eyes.

Though all my thoughts concerned the preservation of

Miss Franklin and the brig, I will own that I was extremely curious to discover whether that madman Deacon's island really had existence or not. If we should sight any land this day, when the chart gave us nothing nearer than Teapy, which was another day's sail distant from the spot we had reached, I should probably find myself disposed to believe in the gold. So you will see, in spite of my arguments with the men, my mind was not yet satisfactorily made up on the matter.

Under all plain sail the brig eat her quiet way along the smooth, long-rolling sea, and at noon I made her out to be, to use Deacon's own words, "true on the parallel of thirty degrees," and one hundred and eighty-five miles to

the eastward of Teapy.

Beauty, who had evidently been appointed or constituted himself leader of the men in the room of Deacon, came aft with Welchy, and demanded to know where I made the brig's position.

I replied that we were about one hundred and fifty miles

to the east of the place we were making for.

"When do you reckon to be there?" asked Welchy.

"With this light wind, to-morrow afternoon."

This appeared to satisfy them, and, after some further questions they went forward. I approached Banyard, who was sitting on the skylight, and said to him in a

low voice,-

"If Deacon's island is anywhere, it is hereabouts. For reasons of my own I have just told the men we shan't reach the place we're bound to till to-morrow. Keep your weather-eye lifting, and if you sight anything that looks like land, sing out."

"What do you expect to sight, mister?"

"I don't expect to sight anything to-day. But if land should show anywhere upon the horizon, let me know instantly."

There is no land belonging to these here parts of the

sea as is wrote down on the chart, is there?"

" No."

"Then in the Lord's name what am I to look for?"

"Deacon's island," I replied, smothering a grin at the old fellow's wooden face.

"Deacon's island!" he groaned, in a voice of disgustful contempt. "Ye'll have to invent a new kind o' spectacles

for me to look out of, if that's what I'm to watch for. I ain't given to cussin' much myself," he continued, with stubborn gravity, "but I'll be damned if there's e'er a pair o' eyes aboard this wessel as'll see that island this side o' the universe. It's one of them places you'll find vere the Flyin' Dutchman puts in for water. They're mostly made o' clouds they are, vithout soundings."

I left the old skeptic, and brought Miss Franklin on deck. I made a comfortable seat for her on the skylight, and, looking into her pensive, beautiful eyes, I whispered, "This time the day after to-morrow, Miss Franklin, yonder bowsprit, if it please God, will be pointing in a

directly opposite direction—for home."

She started, and looked at me with a sudden passionate eagerness.

"Are you in earnest?" she said.

"Assuredly I am. I would not deceive you on such a matter, even for the sake of making your eyes brighter and happier for a little while."

"Where will the men be?"

"Hush!" I whispered with a glance aft at the wheel. "The very decks may have ears for such a secret as this. Only one man," intimating Banyard by a slight movement of the head, "is in my confidence, and he has no idea yet of the stratagem I am going to adopt to save you and the brig."

"Tell me," she pleaded, in her sweet voice: "you

may trust me with all your heart."

"A little patience. I am holding my tongue, not from a foolish love of the mystery of silence, but for a reason you will appreciate when you hear the story. I am now

going to climb the mast to have a look round."

So saying, I went forward and sprang into the fore-rigging. The men, hanging indolently about the fore-castle, stared at me hard and inquisitively as I went aloft. I ascended as high as the fore-royal yard, from which elevation I commanded a view of miles and miles of sea. The horizon all around was perfectly unbroken, a clean, clear line, girdled by a heaven of brilliant blue. Right away down in the south was a tiny white spot—a minute, lustrous fleck—a ship: that was all.

Deacon's words to me had been, "I have settled it to

within the compass of the horizon by dead reckoning. It would heave in sight somewhere from the foretopsail yard when the brig reached the place I believe it to be in."

Those had been his words to me, as well as I could re-

collect them.

From the summit of the fore-royal yard I should be able to see land, unless, indeed, it was a mere flat coral island, fully seventy miles distant, so transparent was the air. Yet no shadow to indicate land stained the crystal clearness of the water line, taking the whole circle of it. I drew a deep breath. In the exquisite uniformity and color of the horizon was the surest conviction of Deacon as a liar to be found. Not a liar, perhaps; a madman, or, more truly still, a monomaniac.

Was it the reading of the newspaper paragraph that had first put the notion of this tale into his head? had he really been shipwrecked in the Royal Oak, and, through the flaw in his brain caused there by the danger, imagined he had saved the gold and buried it?

The secret was at the bottom of the sea. Who can explain a human craze? All the consistencies of his story, all the artful details of it, the perfect likelihood of such a thing, above all, his own profound belief in the fancy—here were just the sanities required to prove the madness, now that the miles of blue sea gave his yarn the lie.

The men below watched me with steadfast upturned faces. They looked no bigger than dolls down there. The ripples on the sea were invisible, and the surface was like an unbroken convexity of blue glass. On this lay the brig's hull, a narrow streak of white deck glistening with the brasswork here and there, with rings of water breaking from the bows.

I swung myself on to the topgallant rigging to shin down into the cross-trees. A thin reed of a voice trebled up,—

"D'ye see anything?"

"Nothing!" I shouted back.

This was no disappointment. It was not until tomorrow, they believed, that they were to sight the island. I reached the deck and went quietly to my place alongside Miss Franklin.

"I have made a discovery," said I, smiling to see the

welcome her eyes gave me as I seated myself, "and will tell you a secret."

"What?" in a thrilling voice.

"Deacon's island is on the chart where Lilliput, Utopia, and the New Atlantis are."

"I do not understand you."

"I mean that Deacon's island has no existence."

" Ah!"

- "He was a madman, and imagined a lie and believed it true."
 - "I never thought it true."
 "Neither do I now," said I.

"And all for a wicked delusion they turned my poor brother away from his ship to perish in a little boat," said she, in that musical moaning voice of her sorrow, which

was softer than the plaining of a dove.

"Not for that entirely, but we will not speak of it now. Let us pray that those sails up there may continue round all night. If they do, then this time to-morrow you will see a blue island coast upon the horizon out yonder," and I pointed to the sea on the port bow.

CHAPTER XL.

ON THE EVE.

As the time approached for the execution of my scheme, my anxiety was correspondingly heavy. All through that afternoon, and in the dog-watches until the night fell, the men were constantly throwing their glances ahead, and sometimes going aloft, exhibiting much restlessness in their manner, and conversing in low tones. There was an entire absence of the familiar boisterous laugh and "skylarking" among them.

I had only to put myself in their place to understand the state of mind they were in. The voyage, in one sense, was nearly at an end; it was no longer possible for them, on this eve of the day that was to terminate one essential portion of their journey, and fulfill in some shape or other one particular object of the mutiny, to possess the feelings of reckless indifference that had animated them so far, They were fully sensible of the magnitude of the crime they had committed, and the thought of it, stifled heretofore by the feeling of security bred in them by the immensity of the seas they had traversed, a desert on which crime might wander for ever undetected, was now a power, strong as conscience, to keep them subdued, to hold them anxiously watchful, and to fill them with fretful speculations as to the issue of the adventure.

The night passed quietly. It was a night of surpassing beauty, the stars so thick that the sky was a space of throbbing light. So peaceful was the motion of the brig, that she seemed to sleep upon the placid sea; yet, gentle as was the wind, each time the log was hove we were found to be gliding through the water at the rate of seven miles

an hour.

It was my intention to regain, if possible, possession of the brig without bloodshed. This would be practicable if the men did not alter the programme I myself had sketched out to them. I will own this, that underlying all my honest detestation of their piratical and murderous actions was a sneaking kindness for the crew. They had been my messmates. I had shared in their jokes, laughed over their yarns; we had gone through much rough work and rough weather together, and I had suffered equally with themselves under an odious and insupportable tyranny. The way in which they had revenged themselves upon the Captain and mate had been inhuman-altogether too barbarous; yet, even here, consideration of their rough, uncultured natures, their ignorance, and passions undisciplined by kindness, their lives a series of beggarly hardships, hard words and poor pay, would incline the most rigid to view their mode of recrimination with mercy, if the wanton and cruel provocation they received were taken into consideration.

Is it not as criminal to provoke crime in others as to perpetrate it yourself? The Captain might have kept his men honest by kind dealing. He made them murderers, and surely the sin was as much on his shoulders as on theirs.

When Banyard came on deck at midnight to relieve me, I stayed talking with him for half an hour. Planting myself where no syllable of our whispered conversation could be overheard, I laid before him my plans, and rep-

resented the share I required him to take in them. The ingenuity of the scheme awoke a small glow of enthusiasm in the old fellow.

"You may count upon me as if I was yer shadder," said he. "Only there's one part o' the business you and me must agree on first. Wot's going to become o' me when the brig's got hold of agin, and we goes ashore?"

Under the impression that he expected to receive some

reward for helping me, I exclaimed,-

"Why, confound it; man! won't it be enough for you that you are brought safely out of a hanging mess, and restored peacefully to your money in the savings bank?"

"Ay, ay, that's right enough; but wot sort o' a charac-

ter am I to go ashore with, I wants to know?"

"The best character you could obtain—the character of having assisted me in rescuing valuable property from

the hands of a gang of lawless mutineers."
"That'll do," he said complacently. "That'll satisfy me. I shall be able to get another ship with that character. You stick to that, mister, and you'll find me your

shadder when you wants me."

This terminated the conversation, but before going below I took the night-glass into the foretop and swept the pale space of sea carefully; then descended and desired Banyard to keep a bright look-out, and to instantly call me should any appearance of land heave in sight. One can never be absolutely sure of one's reckoning. The smallest inaccuracy of chronometer, compass or sextant, may throw one out by some miles; and it would be a poor job for me to let the island of Teapy give me the slip in the dark.

Four hours' sleep was all the rest I promised myself for the next twenty four hours; and even this brief spell was denied; for so great was my anxiety, so busy my brain, that it was four bells before I closed my eyes, and I was

on deck again two hours afterward.

The wind had veered round to the north; the brig, close-hauled, slanted her masts over the still, smooth water, and was rippling along like a steamer, a wake of bubbles astern, and a line of froth shooting away from each bow like a swimmer's arms.

I paced the deck until the stars waned and the eastern horizon grew gray. Presently the sun sailed up into a heaven of silver, the wind grew sweeter and fresher and warmer with the early splendor, and our sharp stem chipped the white foam out of water as mild and blue as a lake. All astern the sea was a spacious hall of light, with the columns of fire sunk into it by the magnificent sunrise.

Seeing Beauty bending over the head-rail, with his eyes on the horizon, I hailed him to come aft and take the glass and carry it on to the foretopgallant yard to see if land was in sight.

After a long and careful inspection he shouted, "There's nothen like land that I can make out!" I called him down, and we hove the log and made the brig's speed seven knots. Summing up her run as I found it out on the log slate, I informed him and Billy, who had come aft to hold the glass, that we should sight the land, if the breeze held, at about two o'clock.

"You mean the island?" said Beauty.

"Certainly," I answered; "what other land do you expect to make?"

"And if it ain't there?" exclaimed Billy shortly.

"I don't expect to find it there, as it is not laid down

on the chart," I replied.

"Don't let's have no more ifs," growled Beauty. "You're headin' true for it, I 'spose?" looking at me under his scowling brows.

My answer was to bring the chart from the cabin.

"Attend to me," said I. "Here is the present position of the brig. This pencilmark is the spot where Deacon fixed his island to be. How does that mark bear from the point occupied by the brig? lay this ruler upon it and roll it up to the compass there in the corner—what is it?" West nor' west," answered Billy, who could read the

compass, though printed words were beyond him.

"How's her head?" I sung out to Suds, who stood at the wheel.

"West nor' west," he replied.

The men were quite satisfied, and talked together in low tones.

Some small fleecy clouds were rolling down upon us from the north, and this furnished me with a kindly sign of the breeze holding. "After breakfast," said I to Beauty, "the crew had better come aft and get the quarter-boat ready for lowering, and stow the empty water-casks in her. There's never any harm in being too soon, mates. What's more, I may have overrun my distance, or Deacon's reckoning may be out by some miles, in which case we may raise the island at any moment. Who's to go away in the boat?"

"I'm to take charge of her," responded Beauty. "Have you got Deacon's drawing of the island?"

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"You can't go without it. How will you know it is his island unless you have his sketch of the shape of the beach with you?"

"Hanged if I should ha' thought o' that," cried Billy,

looking at the other.

- "I'll see to it myself presently, and give you full instructions," I continued. "Who are the boat's crew? Understand this-I want the pick of you-the most sensible. We who are left behind will be at your mercy. If the island is inhabited, and one of you gets jawing, we may have an armed crew aboard of us."
- "It'll be a bad look-out for the man who jaws," said Beauty in a low voice, putting his hand upon the handle of his sheath-knife, while his eyes kindled.

"Who are your crew?" I demanded.

"There's me, and Welchy, and Billy. If Jim wur alive, he'd be our man," answered Beauty. "But Sam may be trusted, and now we want another." Savings?"

- "No, we'll have Suds."
- "That's arranged, then," said I. And, throwing all the solemnity I could into my manner, I exclaimed, laying my hand on Beauty's arm, "We, who are left behind, look to you as skipper of the boat to guard us against treachery. My life, even more than that of the others, depends upon your honesty. If you're questioned, and one of you blabs, I shall suffer first, for they'd hang the captain elected by the mutineers, if they hung nobody else. Mates, I leave myself in your hands. I have acted fairly by you, done my best, and brought you in safety to your destination. I look to you now to protect me."

"See here, Jack," shouted Beauty in his hoarsest voice,

"if there's e'er a man in the boat's crew as should turn sneak, I'd feel his heart with my knife, if a thousand sogers should be around him! He shouldn't know what hurt him! I'd do it, if I had to jump down a precipice to catch him! My life's as good as yourn, an' the man as 'ud turn upon me, I'd kill if he carried a hundred lives in his body!"

The energy with which he declaimed this speech was made singularly wild and ferocious by the blasphemous oaths he crowded into it. It impressed me more deeply than he imagined, for it gave me a good idea of the sort of mercy I might expect at the hands of the men if my scheme failed, and left me in their power.

CHAPTER XLI.

MY STRATAGEM.

AFTER breakfast, in accordance with my suggestion, the men came to prepare the quarter boat, and stow the empty water-casks in her. When the casks came to be rolled aft, however, it was found that they were too big for the boat. The other boat at the davits remaining was the dingey or gig, smaller still; therefore we should have to get the long-boat out.

Accordingly, tackles were sent aloft, falls led along, and

everything made ready for slinging her.

There had been some murmurs when the quarter-boat was found too small for the casks. Suds exclaimed that he couldn't, after all, "see wot partickler reason there was for goin' ashore: it 'ud be a bloomin' long pull, and all for wot?" But Beauty struck in with a sea-blessing on his limbs and eyes, observing that it was too late in the day to be capsizing arrangements that had taken them no end of thinking to arrive at.

For the general edification I recapitulated all the reasons we had for dispatching the boat on an inspection trip, and receiving her report before bringing the brig up close to the land; after which I recommended Beauty to get a sail and mast in the long-boat, and ordered Suds and Billy to

go forward and bring Deacon's chest up out of the forecastle.

In a short while they returned, the chest was placed

upon the skylight, and opened.

If all had been honest and straight with us, the "personal effects" of Deacon and Jimmy would have been put up to auction and sold on the same day the men were buried. But among us mutineers there was no discipline or law to regulate our procedure; the dead men's chests were left to knock about the forecastle, the crew using what they found inside as they happened to want the things.

Deacon's chest was therefore nearly empty of clothes. What I required, however, was still in it, i.e. the old leathern case and various sheets of paper over-scrawled with rude sketches of the imaginary island coast. In addition to these were his books (a wormy, greasy library), some odd shoes, broken tobacco-pipes, and such odds and ends of rubbish as sailors love to store.

Extracting the newspaper from the case—that news-

paper which was, like Goldsmith's muse,

"The source of all our joy, and all our woe,"

I read aloud the paragraph relating to the Royal Oak, in order to kindle afresh the enthusiasm and desires of the men, and make them a more willing boat's crew. I then folded the paper, and, turning to them with an air of great gravity, addressed them as follows,—

"Whether the land which, if Deacon's reckoning be true, we should make some time this afternoon, be his island or not, the passage I have just read to you out of the newspaper proves that a ship with sixty thousand pounds in gold aboard of her was cast away and never heard of more; and, unless the dead man told a useless lie, the money is safe for you to handle. What I want to say to you is this: my share of the treasure we've all turned mutineers to get hold of is the girl; I agreed to touch no part of the money if you left her to me. That arrangement I'll stick to, as you've stuck to yours, like men of henor, by never interfering with her. You mean to wreck the brig, I take it, when you've got the money, so as to come off with it without raising suspicions. That's a busi-

ness I shall have to do for you, and it will require thought and judgment to do it properly. Your promise to me now is, then, to render me all help to save the girl. When the brig is wrecked, I suppose I may count on your not leaving me and the girl in the lurch, turning upon us as people likely to tell tales, and therefore safest at the bottom of the sea?"

"Lord bless ye! is that wot you're afeared of? Why, you're as safe with us as if every one on us wur your own mother!" shouted Beauty, thumping me on the back with a show of heartiness that set the rest of them echoing his

affectionate outcry.

It was impossible that such speeches as this could fail of the effect I designed they should produce. Without a shadow of confidence in the honesty of their intentions toward me and Miss Franklin, I looked round upon them with a congratulatory, cheerful countenance, and then, taking up one of the sketches of the island, I handed it to

Beauty.

"You will take a boat's compass with you," said I, "and see how the point of land which you first approach bears. We shall make the land from the eastward. Sail or row the long-boat round to the north end, and see if the coast corresponds with the drawing. If it does, then, mates, the island is Deacon's. When you've got your boat snug, jump ashore and see if there are any people about. Then take the boat up this creek here," pointing to the sketch, "and log the soundings, and let us know is there's room there to moor the brig. That'll be all I shall want to know—the rest you can leave to me. Only, when once you've started, boys, make haste, and don't keep us hove-to all night waiting for you."

The men came around Beauty to have a look at the

sketch.

"There's the mark as sinnifies where the gold lies!"

shouts Billy.

"I reckon I'll have some nuts off that cocoa tree!" cries Welchy. "I've heerd say the milk'll ferment into first-

class liquor, if ye knows how long to expose of it."

"How much gold'll my pockets hold?" exclaims a third. "Lord, if the London gals only knew the cargo some of us'll be comin' ashore with, I lay there'd be a smilin' face or two at the dockyard gates, bullies."

I left them laughing and jabbering, and went up into the foretop-mast cross-trees. It was now half-past eleven. The wind was just fresh enough to depress the brig's side to the level of the chain-plate bolts. The water stretched perfectly blue and smooth beneath me, and over it the vessel was running softly and steadily, marking her speed by the great length of her wake.

The horizon was not so brilliantly clear as it had been on the preceding day. Sweeping it carefully, I thought a shadow lay directly over the flying jib-boom end. I gazed attentively, conceiving it might have been a cloud: but it neither rose nor fell, nor departed from the fixed point

indicated by the steady steering of the brig.

To satisfy myself, I shinned up the topgallant rigging, on to the royal yard, and stood upon it, with my arm

around the mast.

From this increased altitude one look was enough. I put my hand to my mouth, to fling my voice backward,

and shouted, "Land ho!"

No sooner did my voice reach the deck, than I perceived a commotion among the men; one half of them sprang into the fore, and the other half-into the main rigging, and a race took place among them for the first sight of the land.

With my heart beating and my mind deeply agitated by the excitement of seeing this island, I descended to the deck by the lee rigging, leaving the weather side to the men, who shouted and hurrahed as one by one they caught sight of the blue shadow right ahead.

"Is it truly land?" cried Billy, who stood at the wheel.

"Truly indeed," I replied.

"Hooray!" he roared, throwing up his cap.

I went over to Banyard, who hung across the bulwark, with his eyes on the sea ahead.

"We sha'n't see it from the deck for another hour,"

said I.

"What land is it?" he asked in a low whisper.

"Teapy."

"Are ye sure?"

"Perfectly sure; there is no other island hereabouts."

"And they're lookin' at it, thinkin' the gold's there!" he exclaimed, glancing aloft, while a smile went twisting over his mulish face like a catspaw upon water.

I went below to get my sextant, and met Miss Franklin. "Why were the men crying out and running about just now, Mr. Chadburn?"

"There is land in sight."

"Land!" she cried, with her eyes firing up into their

old beauty of gladness.

I laid my hand on her arm and whispered, "It is the island marked Easter Island, or Teapy, on the chart. The men have no idea that we are near it. They believe that we are in the neighborhood of the island invented by Deacon, and that this is it. That island is going to free you from this long trial, and restore you, please God, to your home in England. There is one part you will have to perform—not a difficult one."

I stopped, looking at her with a smile.

"Do not ask me to be brave," said she, with her sweet lip quivering, and caressing my hand.

"You will have to keep hidden in your cabin. Can you

do that?"

"Oh, Mr. Chadburn, you make me feel a weak, silly, little woman."

"At all events," said I, laughing at her cast-down face -for she thought I ridiculed her cowardice, when God knows I loved and admired her all the more for it, so perverse is the heart in these matters-" you may come on deck now. Stop till I get my sextant."

I brought a chair with me for her, and then proceeded to "shoot the sun." My calculations, as I had expected,

confirmed my belief: the island ahead was Teapy.

I called to Beauty, who came to me.

"Is the long-boat ready?"
"All ready."

"Any fresh water in her?"

66 No. "

"How can you call her ready, then? Put water and a bag of bread aboard. You may be detained, or have to beat back. Never put off, if it's only for a ten minutes' row, without water and bread. Tell the cook to see to it, will you? That island is low, and we shall fetch it sooner than you think."

He went forward promptly, but, to make sure, I watched until I saw the water and bread stowed in the boat. then hove the log and made the brig's speed over eight knots. With all plain sail set, every sail full, and the water like a mill-pond, there was nothing to stop her.

The men went to dinner soon after twelve; when they came on deck they stood forward waiting for the island to heave in sight. At one o'clock its dim blue outline was visible half way up the main rigging. At two o'clock

it was to be seen from the deck, clear ahead.

The wind slightly freshened: our wake ran off to the horizon astern, to lines of froth, like locomotive rails, glistening white on the blue sea; the water swept by faster than a man could run, and you might hear the humming noise of the cutwater chipping and peeling the sea like a plane along a deal board. The men were silent, gazing forward intently, sometimes turning their heads to look back and up aloft; Old Banyard walked the deck like an automaton, his face immovable, his eyes looking straight in front of him.

At three o'clock the island was a distinct piece of land, the shadows plain upon it: it looked no bigger than the hull of a ship. I told Miss Franklin to go below and turn the key upon herself. She looked at me eagerly, for my manner was brimful of suppressed agitation, but rose without a word and quitted the deck.

Examining the island with the glass, I recognized the coral formation of the beach: there was verdure upon the higher slopes of it, and trees. But at that distance it was impossible to detect signs of human habitation, if any

there were.

The men came aft, and in a subdued manner asked to look through the glass. The telescope went from hand to hand. One of them said he saw something that looked like the masthead of a vessel behind the point there to starboard. This set the others staring, and I helped out the notion by pretending to see the mastheads clearly.

"How close do you want me to carry the brig?" I asked them. "I stick to my opinion that three miles is near enough. In this breeze the long-boat will sail the distance

in a half hour."

"Let's hear your reasons agin for keepin' three mile

off," said Beauty.

"If there should be a man-of-war hidden behind there, she might send her cutter aboard of us if we came close. But if we keep a good distance off, they'll find their curi-

osity not worth the trouble of a long pull against a head wind. That's one reason."

"Let Jack have his way," interrupted Suds, with an oath. "He's got the long head. Let him heave to where he thinks best."

"We'll fill, and run down and pick you up on your re-

turn," said I.

"Very well," cried Beauty: "say when."

"Stand by to clew up the royals," I shouted: "we'll

furl those sails. See your flying-jib halyards clear."

The men went into the waist. In about ten minutes' time I gave the order. We were drawing quickly upon the island; those points which resembled the mast-heads of a ship had sunk behind the rugged line, leaving the men still in doubt as to whether there was a ship there or not.

At four o'clock, by my watch, I sung out to the men to man the lee-braces; the maintack and sheet were hauled up, the yards swung, and the brig's way stopped. The island lay broad on our lee bow looking a tiny fairy realm in its delicate verdure and white base and tender shadowings, upon the deep blue sea and under the glorious sky, across which the small fleecy clouds were sailing.

"Now then, my lads," said I, "let's get the long-boat over. Bear a hand, and you'll be back by four bells, and

it's not dark till eight."

The tackles aloft being ready, nothing remained but to hook on to the slings. All hands tailed on, the boat rose out of the chocks, and was presently floating alongside.

"See that everything is right in her," I called to Beauty, who, with Billy, had jumped in, and was stepping the mast. "Got your compass?"

"Ay, ay!"

"Lead and line?"

"Right."

"In with you, boys," I exclaimed, turning to the rest. They lowered themselves into the boat, one after the other. The boy Hardy and the cook came to the gangway to watch them, Savings stood at the wheel; Banyard stumped the deck to and fro, appearing to notice nothing.

"If it should fall dark before you get back, we'll burn a flare," I cried. "Be as brisk as you can. If it comes on to blow, we're too short-handed, with you away, to handle the brig. Now, then, up with your sail—cast that line adrift there."

The boat's head was shoved off, the sail run up, and the

boat glided away.

"Hurrah for the gold mine!" little Welchy shouted, tossing his cap in the air.

"This'll do for the savidges if there is any," yelled

Billy, flourishing his sheath-knife.

Sam and Beauty sat together in the stern-sheets, smoking, and steering the boat. She ran pretty nimbly, and raised a little wave on either quarter, and was soon out of reach of hail. I watched her until the men's faces were no longer distinct: I then went up to Banyard, and whispered:

"Tell the cook I want him in the cabin, and as he

comes below, be at his heels."

"Him to be fust?"

I dropped my head, and went down the companion. Standing at the table I waited until the cook's naked feet showed themselves on the companion steps; then laying hold of his legs, I pulled him down. He fell on his nose, and hit the deck a thumper, so that if he had not been too astounded to cry out, he would have had no breath to sound his voice with. Putting the cold barrel of the revolver to his temple, I swore in the most terrible voice and look I could command, that if he stirred or uttered the least sound I would kill him; and whilst he lay motionless with terror, his eyes half out of his head, and his hair erect, Banyard, in his dogged way, secured his hands and feet.

"Now." said I to Banyard, "for Savings. Come you alongside of me, after I have been talking to him a few moments."

I ran up on deck, and after glancing at the boat, whose sail was now a mere square patch of white on the sea, I went up to Savings. He was a medium-sized man, with a rather foolish expression of face, and pale eyes, and a red beard.

"How is it that you are not in the boat?" I asked,

"Wouldn't they trust you?"

"Trust me? I dunno. But I'll have my share of the swag though—Beauty can't keep me off that."

"There's no swag, as you call it. Deacon's tale is a lie. That island there is Teapy—and my object in deceiving the men is to get them out of the brig, in order to recover her and carry her home. Down with you for a murdering mutineer!"

Banyard was emerging through the companion as I thundered out these words. Before Savings had time to gather my meaning, my whole weight was upon him, and he was under me. He yelled out and fought like a madman, but whilst I knelt upon his chest Banyard lashed his legs; his arms were then pinioned, and dragging him to the sky-light, we propped him with his back against it.

The apprentice, Hardy, a strapping lad of some seventeen years old, stood looking on from the gangway. When I had done with Savings, the young fellow ran up

to me:

"Mr. Chadburn, I see your meaning, sir. I'll help you, he called out. "I had no hand in the mutiny, and will work like a man to get away from it all, sir."

"Right you are, my boy," said I. "Run to the wheel and put it hard-a-starboard. Banyard," I shouted, "let's

get the yards round."

He came running forward while Hardy revolved the wheel. The mainyards wung easily, and the sails filled; the moment way was on the brig she began to pay off; in a few minutes the island was on the port quarter, the yards braced on the port tack, and the brig headed east.

CHAPTER XLII.

MY SHARE.

This, then, was the scheme I had formed for rescuing Miss Franklin from the mutineers. It had progressed far more satisfactorily than I had dared to hope. Had the wind failed, I should have had to invent an excuse for postponing the departure of the boat; and the delay of a day, by reason of the capricious character of the men, or a change of weather, might have proved fatal to the undertaking.

I was passing the skylight, intending to look at the boat through the glass, when I heard the cook's voice calling to me. I went below, and the moment he saw me he implored me to give him his liberty, swearing that he would

serve me faithfully.

"I'm too young a man to go to prison, sir," he whined.
"I ain't in a fit state o' mind to perish slowly, sir. It's
no fault o' mine that I'm a mutineer. The others, they
set me on; they was one too many for me, sir, and I
should have fallen a wictim to their fury if I'd refused to

cut in along with them, sir."

"If you will act honestly by me," I answered, "and help to bring the brig to port, I'll release you. You have now a chance of becoming a respectable man again by assisting me and Banyard in working the vessel. If you do your work faithfully, I will represent your character to the authorities ashore in a favorable light, and by this means you will escape the heavy punishment you have incurred by your lawless behavior."

He thanked me in the most humble tones for my goodness, swore that he was heartily glad that the men were out of the brig, and that I had regained her, and implored me to cast his lashings adrift and give him a fair trial,

and if he deceived me, might hobe, etc., etc.

However, we could do without him for the present, and it would do him no harm to be kept for a little while in a state of suspense; so I told him he must lay there for a bit until I had discussed him with Banyard, and made up

my mind as to what should be done with bit.

I had no time yet to see Miss Franklin. I prang on deck again, and found the brig sailing well, and Hardy steering her excellently. Yonder was the long-boat far astern, so mere a speck that I could not believe we had put all that distance between us already; examining her through the glass, I found that they had lowered the sail. This meant they had discovered we were running away from them, and were waiting to see what the action signified.

They would hardly yet suspect that they were betrayed, and under the impression maybe, that a man-of-war had hove in sight from the deck, they would be sitting

Here nothing to me now.

Every moment we were fining down the little island into a more delicate and ethereal vision upon the boundless blue, and in half-an-hour's time the long-boat would be out of reach of the telescope itself, though leveled at her from the mast-head.

These men were not cruelly sent adrift; land was near them, they had water and bread, and a boat big enough to fetch the Paumota cluster, if Teapy proved desolate, with little risk.

I dismissed them from my thoughts, and turned my

attention to our own position.

Banyard, leaning against the bulwarks, smoked his pipe with a stolidity that excited my wonder and envy. Savings watched me with a steady gaze, and thinking he wished to address me, I approached him; but he at once lowered his eyes, while a dogged look came into his face. "You were one of the men," said I, "who joined in

"You were one of the men," said I, "who joined in the mutiny with a good will. You're guilty of the captain's death, and must therefore make up your mind to be

hanged for murder."

"Do it at once, and be ——!" he answered in a fierce growl. "Only it 'ud ha' been kinder had ye let me go away with the others. Two to one's one too many, and I'se done ye no wrong that you should take my life."

I mean to kill you? All that I want from you is your promise to help me to work the brig into port. If you'll do that, we'll shake hands, and never a word shall be said against you ashore about you being in the mutiny. That will be my comise, if you stick to yours."

This was something so entirely different from what he had expected, that for some moments he could only stare at me with astonishment. When he found his voice, he

cried out:

"If that's what you want, take the turns off my legs

and arms, and see if I'll work or not!"

Perceiving now that his mutinous ferocious manner had been owing to his belief that Banyard and I thirsted for his blood, I at once cut his hands and feet adrift; considering that my giving him him him by promptly would produce a good effect upon him.

He jumped up, stretch

and cried out:

hands

"Tell us what to be at now, sir!"

"You'll do!" exclaimed Banyard, stepping forward and dealing him a friendly blow on the back. "Any color's better nor the black flag to sail under, mate."

"That's right, Pendulum," said I; "talk in that way, and let Savings agree with you, and there'll not be an

honester brig afloat than the Little Loo."

I then stepped below, and walked up to cook, who lay on his back, secure as a mummy in the middle of a pyramid. He immediately began to renew his entreaties to me to liberate him, protesting that his arms and legs were bloodless, and that if the cramp took his stomach I

should have to bury him.

So, to put the poor wretch out of suspense, I cut the lashing off his legs and wrists, and bluntly informing him that his future was in his own hands, and that it would depend entirely upon his own conduct whether he was hanged (cheerful encouragement to his morals) for the murder of Captain Franklin and Mr. Sloe, or let off scot free to start honestly in life again, I bade him go on deck, report himself to Banyard, and tell him and Savings he meant to give us all the help in his power.

Up he tumbled, as briskly as the cramp would let him, and I heard him (through the open skylight) run up to Banyard and exclaim "that the skipper (meaning me) had no occasion to knock him down and make him fast; he was never over-friendly disposed toward the mutiny, and was heartily grateful to be brought out of the mess so

easily."

Savings made some reply which I did not catch, but the tone of both men satisfied me that they might be

depended upon for the present.

In a jubilant frame of mind which was not to be impaired by the physical weariness under which I labored, I approached Miss Franklin's cabin. She knew my knock, and instantly opened the door and stood looking at me

with bright eager eyes.

The sight of her stirred my heart to the center with the great love I bore her; the heavy anxiety that had been caused me by my thoughtened labor for her safety, the feeling that she was safe is a right of perils unscathed, unaffronted, as free from the was the cabin she tenanted

were her own dear Kentish home—all these thoughts and emotions crowding upon me prevented me from speaking to her for a little. I put out my hand and she took it, but mistaking my silence, she asked me in a frightened whisper if my scheme had failed.

"No," I exclaimed, "you are safe—the brig is going

home."

And so she was, in one sense, though the course would not be a direct one. No sooner had I said this than she uttered a little cry of joy. The rapture of the news covered her face with a deep flush. She came close to me and leaned her head against my breast, exclaiming, in her wonderfully sweet voice:

"Going home at last! going home at last!"

"You have had confidence in me, and I have not deceived you," I answered, looking down upon her beautiful hair and longing to stroke it; and then feeling my knees trembling under me, I sank down upon the locker close against the door, pressing my hand to my forehead to keep back the sudden feeling of faintness that came over me.

She left my side, and has few moments was holding a wineglass of brandy to my lips. The draught was a comforting one, and the thing I stood in need of. I thanked her, and kissed the hand she extended to receive the glass.

She fetched her pillow and placed it on the locker, and

begged me to lie down.

"I have some toilet-vinegar," she said, "and will bathe your head. I will soon make you well. You have watched over me for a long, long time—it is my turn now."

All her curiosity to hear what had happened was repressed or gone; she thought I was ill, and for the first time I had real assurance that my love for her was returned, by the wistful eagerness, the mournful, beautiful, anxious

look with which she regarded me.

You who read this, who are thinking of the long-boat with its freight of mutineers astern, of the questionable reformation of the two men on deck, of the difficulties that still beset me in my undertaking to navigate this brig of three hundred tons, with only three men and a boy to do the work—you will think this no very favorable moment for making love in. But I was under the spell

of an impulse that takes no account of opportunity. She stood near me, looking at me with her wistful eyes, and with no thought to inspire the action and the words, I took her hand and held it in both mine.

"You were to be my share of the treasure, little Loo," I whispered to her, "when we reached the island, and divided the gold. We have reached the island, but there is no gold, and the men are disappointed. Is my share in the undertaking to be a failure? do I deserve my treasure? is it to be mine, by her own consent, as it has long been mine by consent of my own heart?

"I was your treasure before the men gave me to you!"

she answered.

And what then happened? I will tell it to you in a single sentence; she lay folded in my arms, and my lips were on her cheek! And so, God bless us. I had won

her, and she was happ to be won.

Well, you always kn this would happen, from the moment my little Loo how sight in the coffee-room at Bayport. But I didn't. A n who knows the end of a yarn is apt to work at it crab-walk: the finish comes leaking right away throus room the last into the first, and his book, spic of his fancying is cunningly putting you off the scent, becomes lof those little fish that are caught, I don't know in whose transparent bodies you may see the bloo lating and the heart beating.

I never could have sworn that she loved me unta hurry it came out: and then she was in my arrows was kissing her. Gratitude working upon truckers her impulse: and true love fermenting under the of her eyes and the sweetness of her presence was my im-

pulse.

Reversing the arithmetical rule, we added one to one,

and made the product one.

"Now for business, my darling," said I, holding her hand, and I brought her out of the cabin on to the deck.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LAST.

THE island was a bare, faint shadow on the horizon astern: the sun was shining low in the sky over it: in the east, where our bowsprit was pointing, the heavens were a deep violet, and all around us was the boundless ocean of the Pacific. We were sailing fast under the warm, steady breeze, though the mainsail was still hauled up, and both the royals and flying-jib in. On a bowline the Little Loo would walk away from a steamer: what chance, then, would the short, broad-bowed long-boat have, were her occupants to take it into their heads to chase us?

Banyard, the cook, and Savings conversed together near the mainmast; they were all three of them smoking pipes, and looked peaceable enough. I called them up to

me.

Well, now, Savings, what do you think of this job?

you glad you are out of the mutiny?"

not say no to that, master," he replied, pulling his t of his mouth, and looking first at me and then le Loo, "but here's Banyard and me can't agree eacon's yarn. Banyard, he says that there ain't nd, and my argeyment is—wot's that there?" y to the island astern.

I easy to see from the simple observation that the can was chafing under the notion that we were leaving the gold, of which he was to have had a share, and resigning it all to the lucky rascals in the long-boat. It was quite likely that the cook took this view of the matter too; and it therefore behooved me to take some trouble to clear the nonsense out of their minds.

I accordingly sent Banyard for the South Sea chart, whereon the brig's course was pricked. Desiring them to take notice of the track there delineated in pencil, I pointed out that there were ninety-nine chances in the hundred that, had Deacon's island really had existence, it would be marked on the chart: but for argument's sake, I was willing to assume that the countless ships that had

navigated these latitudes had overlooked it. Now, according to Deacon, his island should be somewhere here, and I pointed to the place on the chart; but the brig had sailed right over the spot, and it was all sea. I had stood on the fore royal yard and swept the horizon all round, and no land had hove in sight. One could not dispute the evidence of one's own senses and the hydrographers, and in the total absence of all land hereabouts, we were bound to believe that Deacon's story was a lie.

I need not weary you by repeating all the arguments I made use of. I laid particular emphasis on Deacon's madness, and proved by parallel instances (one of which was true and the rest invented) that he was a monomaniac who, having got the notion of the island and the gold into his head, believed in it heartily, dreamed or imagined a yarn to account for his knowledge of the money, which was consistent enough to appear perfectly possible, and by fully believing in his own crazy imagination, easily obtained the belief of others.

The cook appeared fully satisfied with my arguments, and said that for his part he had never known whether to think Deacon's yarn true or false:

"It was all accordin'; ven the men talked about the fine doin's they'd have ashore ven they'd got the gold, then his feelin's were excited and he believed in the yarn; and ven he was alone in his bunk, then he didn't. He never liked Deacon much himself. There was summat wrong in his right eye, to his way o' thinkin'. It didn't look like a man's eye—it wur more like a dog's. He was glad enough to get quit o' the whole job, and " (looking at little Loo) "all he could say was, he hoped we'd all have a prosperous woyage."

Savings merely said:

"I don't doubt you're right, master. If there ain't no island, there can't be no gold."

But he did not appear quite satisfied, though his opinion was of no consequence. Now that the cook had given in his adhesion we were four to one; besides, what good would it have done him to turn villain and murder us, if we gave him the chance? He would be a lonely wretch on the brig, and that was all.

I now explained to the men that it was my intention to

where dwere. If Savings liked, he could leave the vessel there, and not a word should be said to him. This was just a promise to make him good tempered; he grinned, and dashed his head about, crying:

"I'll do your work! I'm as good as two men when I choose for to be. You'll see me use my legs, master."

There was no more to be said, so I told the cook to go forward and light the galley fire and get tea ready, and desired Savings to come aft and relieve Hardy at four bells.

"I sha'n't put all the work upon you, mates," said I. "I'll do my share along with the rest. There are five of us, and we'll each stand our two hours apiece at the wheel, so you'll have sleep enough if the weather holds, and we're in the right part of the world for fine weather."

The moment the men were gone, my little Loo jumped up and put her hand in my arm, and made me walk with

her about the deck.

For the first time for many a long day something like real happiness sparkled in her eyes. She glanced up at me with strange, sweet looks of triumph, and if she were not proud of her sailor-sweetheart, she must have been an arrant little actress, for she fully made me believe that she was proud.

After all, the perils we had lived through had made us very dear to each other. Had we not been lovers, we were bound to be affectionate friends. We had equal claims on each other: she had saved my life, and I had rescued her from God knows what future.

She drew me about the deck with many a fond pressure of her hand, making me look at the water sliding crisply by, then at the compass (where Lardy would turn his head aside to smother a grin), and prattling the softest nonsense all the while.

Indeed—and this is the long and short of it—she was a born romp. A dreadful coward in danger, saucy and bold as brass when there was nothing to be afraid of, with a temperament like mercury in the thermometer—very low when the wind blew cold, very high when the sun shone bright; impressionable to the misery or joy of the moment, with a natural heart of light and song in her which was to be eclipsed and silenced only for a time, which would

shine out and make melody again the moment the clouds had rolled away.

And was she a sweetheart to be trusted, do you ask?

Yes, mate.

That evening a glorious sunset made the western sky magnificent with color. The rose-colored clouds stood upon the horizon like the peaks of some magicall wrought continent; through them the sun darted converging beams of light, which, striking the sea, shivered into separate floods of gold.

The clouds went down with the sun, and left the sky a pure and spotless dome of blue, which, as the darkness gathered, was enriched with stars until it was ablaze with these points of brilliance from the furthest reaches of it.

Old Banyard was at the wheel, his face as immovable as the brig's figure-head, steering the vessel with dogged attention to his work, now glancing at the compass, now up aloft, giving the spokes a twirl sometimes, and sometimes discharging tobacco-juice.

Little Loo and I were upon the skylight, our hands locked; and now and then she would lay her head upon my shoulder, and demonstrate her love and happiness by such caresses; and Banyard took no more notice of us than had we been deck-fixtures, like the pumps or the knight-heads.

At the galley-door the cook, his shirt-sleeves rolled above his elbows, Savings near him with his arms folded, Hardy leaning against the bulwark. The low murmur

of their voices scarcely reached us.

The soft wind kept the sails full and silent, and all was still aloft; the sea was quite smooth, and only a tender tinkling of water indicated the furrow which our coppered stem was nimble cutting into the darkling, star-laden surface of sea.

It was like a dream to glance along the deck and see the three figures there, and note the stillness, and then look back and think of the scenes that had been enacted

upon it.

With my eyes fixed on the little white hand that lay like a flake of snow on my palm, I fell into a reverie, from which little Loo aroused me by putting her lips to my ear and asking what my thoughts were.

- "I was thinking of Bayport," said I; "of a little hotel there with a balcony in it; of a sweet little woman I once beheld in that balcony."
 - "You mean me?"
- "And nobody else. What a poor creature I was then. There was not a soul in the whole wide world who cared two straws for me, whether I came or went, whether I was shipwrecked, drowned, or murdered. I looked more earnestly at that little woman than she imagined. thought her face a sweet one, and her eyes beautiful, and I loved the expression of goodness in her face; so much so, little Loo, that had I had a landsman's cheek, I would have forced myself upon her merely to hear her voice, and get warmth into my bothered mind out of the sympathy I was sure it was musical with. Little I guessed that that sweet woman and I would be fellow-travelers, sharers of a great danger, that it should be my privilege to watch over and protect her, and on one beautiful night in the far-off Pacific Ocean, to find myself sitting with her on the deck of a little vessel, happier in my heart than ever I have known myself to be, because her hand is in mine and her love is my own. Those are my thoughts, little Loo."
 - "And very pretty thoughts. Tell me more."

"It is your turn to tell me something."

"I will ask you a question: Shall you get tired of me before we reach England?"

"Now that shows how little you understand the char-

acter of sailors."

"Indeed," cried she coquettishly. "I know that sailors are the most fickle creatures under the sun. Doesn't one of the songs they are so fond of singing say that Jack has a wife at every port? and, not only are they fickle, but they are mutineers and murderers. Go away! I hate you!"

Out flew her hands, and she gave me a saucy push: the next instant she was nestling against me, piping melodious

laughter against my coat.

Then over her came one of the sudden changes—the April cloud of the English sky—that always took me unawares, like the veering of a breeze. She hid her face in her hands, and shook her head and sobbed.

"Here is Captain Lucius again," thought I; and I was quite right.

"My poor, poor brother!"
"O Lord!"

Well, it was very hard. If he was drowned, why, then, he was at peace—he had met a sailor's death. He was taken from her, but one fonder, and truer, and dearer, and in every respect sweeter than a brother, had taken his place. And if the men had not sent him away in the boat, would little Loo be sitting here, hand in hand with me, betrothed, deeply affectionate, two tender lovers free as birds to bill and coo?

Here was the right nail struck. Her eyes peeped mournfully at me over her finger-tops, and she moaned:

"No, he would not have allowed me to love you."

Which melancholy reflection was a source of comfort after all, and so she was presently chattering, and laughing softly again.

Shall I stop here? When I look at those two lovers yonder on the skylight, at the silent sails stretching their dim spaces and canvas into the gloom, at the stolid old figure steering, and the pale, still, vacant decks, I hardly think I could choose a fitter time for dropping the curtain, and leaving the Little Loo to sail calmly into the mist and thickness that lie outside knowledge. hero of a story bound to talk of his marriage, and what kind of house he occupies, and how much a year he has to live upon, and the character he got with his last cook?

These surely are matters which lie on the other side of love-making, and ought to find no place in the yarn which keeps to the courtship part, to the whispers, and kisses, and the starlight. I was a poor man when I shipped on board the Little Loo, but I found my fortune in her, and came off, maybe, a richer man than ever Deacon in his madness contemplated making me in his first crazy overtures.

But I'll not leave you on the high seas.

The Pacific, famous for its calm seas and lovely climate, did not fail us. Fortune had lost her spite, and was now our friend. During the whole of the three weeks we were occupied in making the run to Valparaiso we never let go a halyard nor furled a sail. A touch at long intervals at the braces was all our work—that and steering. Well it was that this was so; the cook was of no earthly use aloft—it turned him sick, he said, to look down, and he could do nothing but hold on—and a squall or a gale would have found the brig with only four available hands to shorten sail.

One ship only did we signal during this run—an American whaler, I took her to be by the chubby boats hanging to her full sides, like infants at a mother's breast; her round matronly bows, short topgallant masts, and rusty rigging. She was hardly like to put any hands on board of us, even if we had signaled our wants; but we hoped to be able to manage without her help and passed her with the ensign at our peak, blowing over our quarter with as much haughty independence as if our forecastle had been full of men.

We arrived at Valparaiso early one Saturday morning, three weeks and one day after we had turned our back upon Teapy. They were firing guns from the fort as we swam lazily in, and the thunder and smoke seemed like a salute in honor of our adventures and final triumph.

Going ashore, I inquired for the residence of the English Consul, and found him a very polite, civil gentleman. He returned with me to the brig, where I introduced him to Miss Franklin, whom he insisted should make his house her home whilst she decided upon her plans for reaching England.

What were those plans to be?

He suggested that she should proceed by steamer to Rio, and thence home.

And the brig?

Why, there was nothing to prevent her from shipping a crew and proceeding to Sydney, to which port her cargo was consigned, in charge of a certificated captain.

"I must go with her," said I.

"To be sure," answered the Consul.

"And you mean that I should go home alone?" cried little Loo.

"You will be perfectly safe, madam," said the Consul.

"But I am going to marry Mr. Chadburn," exclaimed my brave little Loo, "and wherever he goes, I will go."

"Your resolution is honorable to you both," replied

the Consul, with a polite bow.

"If you will permit a perfect stranger to offer a suggestion—let me propose that you get married here before you sail, and you may command me for any capacity you may think me qualified to officiate in on such an occasion."

The notion was a grand one. That day week little Loo

became Mrs. Chadburn.

THE END.

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