

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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NEW YORK, OCTOBER 28, 1903.

Price 5 Cents.

JACK WRIGHT AND HIS ELECTRIC SEA GHOST; OR, A STRANGE UNDER WATER JOURNEY.

By "NOINAME."



Jack flashed a steady stream of light upon the wriggling mass of mackerel, and sent the boat flying toward them. Fritz had on his diving suit and hastened out. The fish darted off, and the doctor obtained a momentary respite.

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JACK WRIGHT AND HIS ELECTRIC SEA GHOST

OR,

A Strange Under Water Journey.

By "NONAME."

CHAPTER I.

A MYSTERY OF THE OCEAN.

Not many years ago the daily newspapers were discussing one of the strangest themes that ever agitated and mystified the public.

It was the probability of a sea ghost existing in the Atlantic Ocean in the form of a spectral craft of peculiar design.

The captains, crew, and passengers of numerous vessels that passed a section of the coast extending from Cape Henlopen to Nantucket Island solemnly declared that they had seen the phantom craft during their passage up or down the coast.

At first doubting individuals ascribed the matter to superstition, optical delusions, overwrought imaginations, and, in fact, downright lies.

Evidence of the fact kept coming in, however, and with each report the excitement increased, for the descriptions given by reliable, unprejudiced and practical witnesses tallied exactly regarding the ghostly looks and singular movements of the strange boat.

Consequently it was admitted that there was something in the mystery, although nobody could give a common-sense explanation of it.

Among the numerous places into which this startling report was carried was a small fisher village on the coast, named Wrightstown, which was located at the head of a beautiful bay.

The place was named after an inventor of submarine boats, who had since died and left behind him an orphan son, to whom he had bequeathed a wonderful talent for inventing strange marvels.

Jack Wright was a dashing boy with dark hair, flashing black eyes, a symmetrical and muscular figure, and a disposition remarkable for its goodness and indomitable courage.

He lived in a very handsome dwelling, with an old sailor and a fat Dutch boy for companions, for Jack had accumulated a princely fortune by the use of his inventions.

A creek that came in from the bay bordered the foot of his garden, and upon its shore he had erected a great workshop, wherein his wonderful inventions were created.

In the afternoon of a summer day the boy sat upon the broad piazza in front of his house, when a newsboy came along with his newspaper, and opening out the sheet, the first item his glance fell upon was a prominently headed article, couched as follows:

"THE SEA GHOST.

"Further Particulars About the Apparition—Wonderful Escape of a Ship's Crew From Contact With It—No Explanation yet of the Mystery.

"The ship, Yankee Sally, of 1,500 tons burden, laden with a mixed cargo, and bound from Galveston to New York, in command of Captain Ben Bunker, and a crew of ten men, reached port this morning.

"To a reporter the captain said they had encountered fair weather from the time his ship cleared at Galveston, until she entered the Harbor of New York. He is also willing to swear that neither he nor his crew drink intoxicants, and will vouch for the fact that every one on his vessel saw the Sea Ghost last night.

"The captain's story is substantially as follows: The sea was clear and moonlit when his craft was passing the highlands of New Jersey, and, when the Sandy Hook lightship was upon his port, he saw the sea open, athwart his course, and up from the depths there arose a most singular-looking vessel. It was not more than one mile distant, and had a white, misty, and transparent appearance from bow to stern, that stamped it with a weird and uncanny flavor. It remained in sight perfectly motionless for a few seconds, and then suddenly vanished again, much as if the sea swallowed it up. Every one was filled with wonder and alarm at this peculiar manifestation, and at first imagined they had not seen the spectral craft.

"Their doubts were soon set at rest, for a few moments afterwards the mysterious craft suddenly appeared again, directly in front of the Yankee Sally, and as the ship was making ten knots with all sails set the terrified crew were sure a collision with the ghostly boat was inevitable. The ship rushed toward the Sea Ghost, but just as she reached it, the white object vanished like magic and was not seen again. As Captain Bunker made his report without knowing that other similar reports had been made to the port authorities,

and swears that he never heard of the phantom ship before he saw it, it is evident that he told the truth. His description, like all others of the boat, are very vague. In substance it is like this: She seemed to be about one hundred and fifty feet in length, with a slanting bow and long, overhanging stern, while the deck was crowned by a turret fore and aft, and a long house in the midship section joining the turrets. This description, and her singular actions, accord with the reports made by others who have seen her. But unfortunately no solution of the mystery has yet been made."

When Jack Wright finished reading the foregoing article, which was much like other reports he had perused, a thoughtful expression flitted over his clear-cut face, and he muttered, softly:

"This mysterious boat seems to have created a terrific amount of excitement. I wonder if Tim and Fritz have heard of it yet?"

The two people he referred to were the sailor and fat boy who resided at his house, and the comment had scarcely passed his lips when they came up the street, arm in arm.

There was a striking contrast between these two individuals, for Tim Topstay, the old sailor, was a tall, thin man in sailor's costume, and had a glass eye and a wooden leg, his weatherbeaten face was framed in a sandy beard, and he was celebrated as a good navigator, a tremendous liar, and a large consumer of plug tobacco.

Fritz Schneider, on the contrary, was a little, fat Dutch boy, with a big stomach and a squat figure arrayed in a suit that he brought with him from the fatherland.

He had yellow hair, a smooth, fat face, bulging and watery blue eyes, and a strong proclivity for fighting, cooking, and accordeon playing, with which he coupled an expertness as an electrician, and had as fearless a nature as Tim possessed.

The old sailor had been a friend of Jack's father in the navy, and had left Sailors' Snug Harbor to go and live with the young inventor, while Fritz had been picked up in the village in a destitute condition by the boy, and was given a home with Jack.

Both of these individuals always accompanied the young inventor in his perilous voyages for fun, money, and adventures in the past, and sharing in the profits, had become very rich.

As they came in at the front gate, the old sailor waved a long envelope in his hand, and approaching Jack, he cried: "Ahoy, there, my hearty, I've stopped at the post-office and shipped a letter for ye, wot's werry likely from the government."

"Very likely a reply to my letter accepting an offer of \$50,000 to put my new boat in commission for the navy, and wipe out of existence the gang of wreckers who are infesting the Jersey coast," said the boy, taking the letter from his friend and opening it.

"Shiminey Christmas, don't dot vas pulley if dot gommisions ve vas got alretty?" chuckled Fritz. "A long dimes it vas dot some cruises ve didn'd dook for dot goferments, und sooner as miss dot shob, I vun hundert tollars would lose mine-selluf."

Jack Wright's boats had frequently been utilized by the government before, as they were particularly adapted to warfare.

A remorseless gang of wreckers had for some time been ravaging the coast of New Jersey, and as most of the government's boats were otherwise engaged when a demand for protection came from the ship owners of the United States, the authorities had made an effort to impress Jack and one of his wonderful boats into its service.

He was asked to exterminate the lawless wreckers, and having agreed to do so, he now found that he had received the authority of a commission to proceed, and details of what he was to do.

This fact he communicated to his friends, and they were

delighted at the prospect of a cruise hunting down the wreckers.

The boy had invented a new submarine boat, which was specially qualified for the work in consideration, and it pleased him to find that he could put it to practical use.

As soon as the boy had imparted the contents of the letter to his companions, he picked up his newspaper with the intention of speaking to them about the phantom ship, when he was suddenly interrupted in a most startling manner.

A furious uproar arose in the street, in front of the house, and glancing up, the young inventor saw the people who were passing scatter right and left in the wildest alarm.

"Horse run away!" was the shout that arose in many voices.

"Stop him, or the man will get killed!" came another cry.

Electrified by the cry, Jack rushed down to the street, and saw a saddle-horse come flying towards him, with starting eyes, distended nostrils, and flying mane and tale.

The beast was maddened with fright apparently.

A young man had been riding it, but in trying to dismount, one foot had been caught in the stirrup, and he was dragged along, with head and body on the ground, beside the beast.

Every step the horse took the poor fellow was bumped, torn and bruised, and he then had relapsed into unconsciousness.

No one dared to stop the beast and save the man's life until Jack saw it, and then the boy muttered:

"I'll stop that horse if it kills me!"

He waited until the thundering hoofs were close to him, and then, with a panther-like spring, he reached the bridle, and grasped it at the bit ring with one hand.

CHAPTER II.

THE FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE.

A shout arose from the people in the street who witnessed Jack Wright's daring feat, and they saw the plunging horse drag the boy along some distance and then swerve to one side.

The young inventor hung on grimly to the bridle, and the flying hoofs of the brute struck him several times, but failed to force him to relax his grip, until he brought the beast to a pause.

Seeming to realize that it had met its master, the horse finally came to a stop, and a tremendous cheer arose from the relieved spectators as the boy hastened to release the senseless man from his perilous position.

Up rushed a crowd, surrounding them, and while an excited babel of voices arose from all sides, one of the men held the panting and sweating beast, while a couple more picked up the senseless man.

"Hurrah for Jack Wright!" yelled someone in the crowd.

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" cheered everyone.

The boy bowed his acknowledgments.

He then addressed his admirers with the question:

"Are any of you acquainted with this poor fellow?"

No one seemed to know who the man was, and several remarked that even the horse was strange to the village.

Finding that the rider was friendless, the boy said to those who held him, as they stood as if undecided how to act:

"Carry him into my house, gentlemen. Someone get a doctor!"

While a willing lad ran off to summon a physician, the injured man was taken into Jack's house and laid upon a sofa in the parlor.

In a comparatively short space of time a doctor arrived, and

when he went in to see the patient, Jack's coachman took charge of the runaway horse and stalled it in the boy's handsome stable.

The doctor examined the stranger and revived him.

He had no serious injury, but was somewhat cut and bruised by the rough treatment he underwent.

Dressing his wounds and leaving him revived, the doctor soon took his departure.

The stranger was a slender and delicate-looking young man, with a light mustache and brown hair, sharp, sunburned features, and wore a costume like that of a ship's officer.

He had a haunted look in his gray eyes, and a nervous and frightened look about him that was absolutely painful to see.

Springing to his feet, upon his recovery, he glanced at Jack, Tim, and Fritz with a terrified look on his lacerated face, and gasped:

"The horse! Where is it?"

"Do not alarm yourself," said Jack, quietly.

"Where am I?" demanded the stranger, uneasily.

"In my house. I saved you from the runaway."

"Ah! Now I remember. I was approaching a town—the horse took fright at a passing locomotive—he ran away—I lost my grip on the bridle rein—attempted to dismount—fell—my foot caught—and I was dragged along by one leg, when my senses left me."

He covered his face with his hands for a moment, and when he removed them there was a haggard, woeful look delineated there.

"You are a stranger in Wrightstown, I infer," said Jack.

"I am," answered the stranger, gloomily. "In fact, I'm an outcast."

"What do you mean by that?" queried Jack, in some surprise.

For a few moments the stranger fixed a searching glance of his piercing eyes upon the young inventor and seemed to be studying him.

"I think I can trust you," he muttered. "You have an honest face. I am grateful to you for saving my life—very. My story is a strange one. I am a victim of circumstances. Perhaps you may not believe me. Anyway, it will relieve my mind if I confide in someone. My name is Howard—Harry Howard, and I am a ship's surgeon by profession, living in New York. I was one of the crew of the wooden steamer, Lady Violet, but I am now a fugitive from the law, with a price upon my head, and a gang of detectives trying to hound me down on a charge of murder!"

Everyone was startled by this confession.

Harry Howard paused a moment and glanced at his listeners to see what effect his words had upon them, and Jack exclaimed:

"You are criminating yourself by that confession, sir!"

"Not in the least," replied the stranger, earnestly. "I am accused of killing a man whom I never injured, yet the circumstances were so strongly against me, that I can never hope to vindicate myself."

"You are placed in a trying position," said Jack, pityingly. "Perhaps the case may not be so desperate as you imagine, Mr. Howard."

The doctor shook his head hopelessly.

He had no faith in human ability to clear him.

"Cheering and comforting as your words are, Mr.—"

"Jack Wright."

"Mr. Wright, then, I see no salvation."

"The affair must then be dreadful."

"Let me explain it," said Harry Howard, grimly. "You will then agree that there isn't much hope for me. On our home-ward trip, aboard the Lady Violet, both Tom Driggs, the first mate, and I fell in love with Fanny Forrest, the captain's daughter. The girl favored me. It aroused Drigg's bitterest

hatred, rivalry, and enmity. One night I entered the captain's stateroom, and asked his daughter's hand in marriage. He flew in a rage and refused, saying he would permit no man to have her. We quarreled, and he drew a pistol on me. Unfortunately I uttered a threat to get even with him, and a sailor heard it. I meant to square accounts by eloping with Fanny. A different interpretation was afterwards put on my words. The mate, profiting by my experience, wisely refrained from asking the captain's consent. A storm arose when we were one day from port. The vessel sprung a leak, and the crew deserted in the boats, leaving the captain, mate, Fanny and I on board the steamer. She did not go down, as she carried a cargo of lumber in between decks, and it floated her. In the midst of the storm Fanny was in the cabin, and we three men were on deck. I heard Driggs have angry words with Captain Forrest, and as a flash of lightning darted across the sky, I saw the mate draw his sheath knife. It was a handsome weapon, presented to him by a friend, and had his name engraved on the silver handle. He plunged it into the captain's heart, and leaving the deadly blade sticking in the corpse, he dragged the body over to one of the staterooms on deck, flung it inside, and closed the door. Then he went down a companion-way. I rushed over to the stateroom and opening it, knelt down and examined the body to see if it were alive.

"While so engaged the treacherous mate came up with Fanny, and carrying a lantern, he pointed at me, and I heard him shout: 'He swore to get even with your father. See! Howard has murdered him!'

"Oh, how those words yet ring in my ears and sear my brain! The horrified girl believed me guilty. She fainted ere I could protest, and I sprang to her side, lifted her tenderly in my arms, and as I was carrying her away toward the cabin, I saw the mate lock the body in the stateroom again and fling the key overboard.

"A short time afterwards a passing steamer rescued us. The first thing Driggs did was to accuse me of murdering the captain. Believing me guilty, Fanny corroborated him. I was locked up. I saw through the mate's scheme. He wanted to make me pay the penalty of his crime. He wanted to lower me in Fanny's estimation so he could win her himself.

"Soon after we left the Lady Violet she sank in the Gulf Stream till her deck-house was flush with the top of the sea, and was drifted off, a dangerous derelict for ships to encounter.

"Buried under the water lies the proof of Driggs' criminality, floating at the mercy of the elements out of my reach, unless I could show the captain's body, with the mate's knife, as evidence of my innocence and his criminality, no one would believe I didn't murder Captain Forrest.

"Suffice it I was brought to New York, tried for the crime, and committed to await the action of the grand jury. The sailor who heard me threaten the captain had been saved, and was there to condemn me.

"Anyway, as I saw no hope of escape, I resolved to break jail and get away. Aided by my mother, I last night accomplished the feat successfully; and, as she had a saddle horse and some money ready for me, I left the city and came this far, pursued, no doubt, by the officers of the law."

Harry Howard paused. Evidently he trusted Jack to thus betray himself.

His remarkable story was finished, and it relieved his mind wonderfully. Jack and his friends felt sorry for the poor fellow.

"You are to be pitied," compassionately said the young inventor, "and I think I can offer you a chance to vindicate yourself."

"You can?" eagerly asked the young physician, flashing a quick look at him.

"It is one chance in a million."

"No matter what it is, I will gladly accept it."

"Then come with me on a cruise I am about to take in an under-water boat I have invented, and we may run across the derelict, when we can, perhaps, secure the evidence of your innocence."

Electrified by this offer, Harry Howard sprang to his feet.

Tears gushed from his eyes, and grasping Jack's hand, he cried emotionally:

"God bless you! Fate threw me in your way. You inspire me with hope, which I never felt since my trouble began. I will go with you, and may Heaven grant that we meet with the wreck."

At that moment there came a furious ring at the doorbell. A servant's angry voice was heard expostulating in the hall.

"Bad cess ter yez fer two onmannerly divils!" she cried, shrilly. "Don't be afther rushin' inter a man's house that way! Shure, it's announced forst yez should be, or me master won't like it at all, at all!"

"We want to see Jack Wright at once," gruffly replied a man. "We've just come in on the police patrol boat Black Bird from New York, and we've heard that a fellow we are after rode in town on horseback, was hurt, and was carried in here."

"An' what if he wuz?" sharply demanded the girl.

"Well, if he is we'll arrest him, for he is an escaped murderer we are after."

Harry Howard turned as pale as death, and staggered back in dismay.

"They are detectives who have been following me!" he groaned. "I am lost—lost!"

CHAPTER III.

BAFFLING THE DETECTIVES.

Jack was very much startled, for he heard the patter of footsteps in the hall, and springing toward the trembling fugitive, he caught Howard by the arm and swung him behind the doorway portieres.

His prompt action screened the man from observation, for the next instant two very eager-looking individuals rather suddenly ran into the parlor and confronted the boy, Tim, and Fritz.

Both were stylishly dressed, and rather flashy in appearance.

With a look of haughty indignation on his face, Jack turned upon the newcomers and demanded, with extreme asperity:

"What do you mean by forcing an entrance into my house this way?"

The two detectives, for such they were, abruptly paused, exchanged glances of deep significance, and one of them replied coolly:

"Oh, don't get uppish about it, young fellow; we ain't going to steal your house, or break your furniture. We're here on business, understand; and we ain't stopping on the rules of politeness, understand. There's a jay escaped from jail in New York. We've been told that you are sheltering him here, and we want him—understand."

"Have you got a search warrant with you?" demanded Jack, coldly.

"Lor', no! We don't stop on such trifles as them, understand. All's we've got is a warrant for his arrest. That covers the ground, understand. If he's in here, just show him up, and we'll snap the nippers on him, and save you expense of boarding and lodging him, understand."

"But I am aware that it is necessary for you to have a search warrant, to authorize you to trespass upon my premises," exclaimed Jack, curtly. "Since you are not so armed, I want you to clear out of here just as fast as you can go."

A crestfallen look overspread the faces of the two minions of the law, and they flashed a glum look at each other.

The most brazen of the two expostulated, however, in injured tones:

"Now, say, young fellow," he began, "this isn't any way to act, interfering with officers in the discharge of their duty, understand, and I don't like it nohow. A dozen of us fellows were sent out on his trail. We heard he was headed for Wrightstown, and came up in the boat. Some people in the street described the fellow whose horse ran away with him, and we know he's our man, and we want him—understand. Now, if he's in here, produce him, or we'll make it hot for you."

"That is quite sufficient," interposed Jack, coldly. "There's the door—go!"

"I'll be blamed if I will," stubbornly said the brassy detective. "I'm not going to budge a step out of this house until I lay my paws on that jay, understand, and if you don't like it you can lump it."

"In that case I'll have you fired out!" said the boy, frowning, and turning to Tim and Fritz, he added: "March those fellows into the street, and if they kick up a muss have them arrested."

The chagrined detectives saw that Jack would brook no trifling.

"It's quit!" said the one who had not spoken before.

He plucked his companion by the sleeve, and before the sailor and Dutch boy could reach them they passed out, one of them swearing at the boy, and the other exclaiming violently:

"You're a mean little duffer to come between a criminal and an officer in the discharge of his duty, understand. We'll get a warrant, and when we come back we'll turn your shebang inside out."

Angrily slamming the door after them, they went out.

Night had fallen by this time, and lights were flashing up all over the village, but none was lit in the parlor, in order to keep the movements of the occupants hidden from the view of passing people who could look in at the windows.

"Baffled!" exclaimed Jack, triumphantly.

"Saved from prison!" Harry Howard muttered gratefully, as he emerged.

"Ay, but they'll tack back, an' foul yer," said Tim.

"Ach, ve needn'd led 'em in alretty," averred Fritz, vehemently. "So soon dot vun ouf dem fools der door obens, I hit him by der kopf mit a glub, und his prains oudt knock me vonct."

"A plan has suggested itself to me, by which you can very easily escape your pursuers, and send them off on the wrong track," said Jack. "I will put on your suit. Tim can order the coachman to have your horse in readiness at the gate, and I'll mount and lead the officers off on a wild goose chase under the impression that they are in pursuit of you."

"Good!" eagerly assented the fugitive; "but they may shoot at you."

"I can guard against that," said Jack promptly, "by first putting on a metal suit of aluminum armor, which is perfectly bullet proof. While I am gone Fritz will lead you out to the lighthouse standing yonder upon the headland of the bay, and there you will find a safe hiding place with the keeper of the light. In two days I will be ready to start on my cruise, and will provide everything necessary for your comfort. When the boat reaches the headland, you can put off in a skiff for her, we will take you on board, and you will then be safe from further molestation."

"Excellent!" said Howard, delightedly. "Begin."

Tim went out to have the horse in readiness, Jack put on a metal suit, exchanged clothing with the physician, and Fritz went to the window, and saw one of the detectives watching the house while the other one went to get the warrant.

A few minutes afterwards everything was in readiness, and by that time the talkative officer was seen approaching with the legal authority, and a look of determination in his actions.

"Now's my time, boys! Get ready!" said Jack.

He went out the side door, and passed swiftly across the lawn to the gate where the saddle horse stood in readiness, and in the gloom the suit he wore made him somewhat resemble Howard.

The lynx-eyed detectives saw him at once.

Instantly they came after the boy at a run, yelling:

"There he goes now!"

Away ran Jack, and reaching the horse, he mounted.

"Halt!" roared the second detective. "Halt where you are!"

Jack waved his hand defiantly, and rode away with the two officers running on in hot pursuit.

The moment the two detectives were gone, Fritz hastened from the house by the front door with Harry Howard, brought him undetected to the lighthouse, and making arrangements with the keeper of the light, he left the doctor there in security.

Jack drove the horse like the wind out upon a country road, and as the moon was just rising and shedding its red glow down, the boy saw his pursuers draw their revolvers.

A moment afterwards two sharp reports rang out, and one of the bullets struck the boy squarely in the back.

The armor he wore was certainly proof against bullets, however, as the leaden messenger glanced off without doing him any harm whatever.

Along the road thundered the horse, the men keeping up the pursuit, despite the fact that they were rapidly being distanced, and the exciting chase continued.

A woods leading over to the creek loomed up ahead, and just as the horse dashed into it the detectives fired again.

This time they shot at the horse.

It fell dead under the boy.

He alighted with great agility, and rushed off into the woods, while the detectives, uttering a yell of delight, came running ahead at full speed, sure now of capturing him.

Not far away from where Jack was stood an old boat-house on the embankment of the creek, in which dwelt an old man who rented his skiffs to anyone who wanted to row or fish.

Heading for it, Jack reached the house.

Here he took off Howard's clothes, and hid them under an old oar box, after which he unceremoniously untied one of the skiffs in which laid a pair of oars, and getting in he took off his suit of armor and rolled it up in a bundle.

Laying it under the thwarts he seized the oars and rowed downstream toward his own grounds about a mile away.

But half of this distance had been covered when Jack heard a crashing in the bushes lining the edge of the stream, and a moment afterwards the two detectives appeared.

They stood glaring down at Jack a few moments in great surprise, and then one of them cried:

"By thunder, it's Jack Wright!"

"What the deuce is he doing here?"

"I'll find out. Say—you—stop—understand!"

"What do you want now?" coolly asked Jack, pausing.

"I want to know what brought you up here?"

"Begging your pardon for brevity, it's none of your business."

"Don't get sassy now, young fellow, we're onto you, understand!"

"I fail to catch your meaning."

"Well, I see through your plan to help that convict. He was to double on us here, and you was to carry him downstream in that boat."

"Is that so? You're a good guesser, but you'd better guess again!"

"You'd better get out of this," growled the detective, mortified by the boy's cool indifference to him. "If we catch you aiding or abetting that convict to escape we'll pull you in, too, understand."

"I have no desire to stay here listening to your gassing."

"Come on," grumbled the other detective, impatiently.

"While we are wasting time our bird may fly the coop."

"Remember, we'll keep an eye on you, young fellow, understand."

"You'd better keep both on me if you want to win this game of hide-and-go-to-peek!" softly muttered Jack.

He rowed leisurely away down the creek, leaving the two detectives beating about in the woods in search of a man who was not there, and finally reached his workshop.

Close by the big brick building there was a flight of marble stairs leading down from the top of the stone walled embankment, and tying the boat to a ring bolt mortised in the wall, the boy shipped the oars and gathered up his suit of armor.

He then ascended the stairs, walked over to the house, and going into his library he found Tim and Fritz there laughing heartily over the success of their work to baffle the officers.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SEA GHOST EXPOSED.

On the afternoon of the second day after the foregoing events occurred, Jack Wright's new submarine boat was thoroughly equipped for a long journey, and nothing remained to be done but to start.

The boy and his friends had been working hard to perfect this strange vessel after a model the young inventor had devised, and having finished the boat, she had been tested and tried so that all faults in her construction might be detected and repaired.

She was now as near perfect as it was possible to make her, and well satisfied that she could perform the work he had undertaken, Jack left the workshop clad in a white duck suit and cap, and returned to the house.

There he found a Government official in the reception-room who had come on from the naval department in Washington with his final instructions.

"Your orders," said the caller, as he gave Jack some documents, "are to cruise along the coast for a space of three months in quest of the wreckers, and if you encounter their ships or rendezvous, you are to capture or kill them, as the gang must be broken up."

"In which section of the coast have their worst depredations been made?" queried Jack, as he put the papers in his pocket.

"From Cape May to Atlantic City. The course they adopt is usually to raise false beacons along the highlands, leaving the outlying bars in gloom, upon which passing vessels are lured. Sometimes the coast guards have succeeded in rescuing the crews. But before the vessels are floated again it has been found that the wreckers have swooped down upon them in their boats and plundered them."

"Do you know who the wreckers are, or the name of their ship?"

"No. All I can find out is that they have a craft that is furnished with sails and a propeller besides. Consequently she can navigate in all sorts of weather. Her crew is very large and well armed. The ship also carries guns. That they are fearless ruffians is shown by their daring rascalities. It remains for you to wipe them out."

"And I have just the sort of a craft to do it," grimly said Jack.

"I have frequently heard of your marvelous boats," said the man, "and I would like very much to see this one."

"We are all ready to depart now," said Jack. "If you will excuse me a few minutes, I will settle my affairs here and take you on board. You can then run down to New York with us."

"Nothing would gratify me more," said the man from Washington.

Jack then left the reception room.

It did not take him long to finish what he had to do.

He then led his guest out.

As they crossed the garden the official suddenly said:

"I forgot for a moment one of the most important subjects I had to mention to you, Mr. Wright, in connection with my mission here."

"To what do you allude, sir?" the young inventor inquired.

"The Sea Ghost."

"Ah, indeed!"

"The Secretary of the Navy wants you to make an effort to discover what foundation there is in the story and report to him."

"Oh, that can be done very easily," assured Jack, opening the door of his workshop and leading his caller in. "See—there's my boat."

"Great heavens!" gasped the gentleman, recoiling with a startled look upon his face, as he eyed the boat floating in a flooded basin in the floor of the building, that was surrounded by a metal platform and opened into the creek by two massive doors in the end.

"You are startled," laughed Jack.

"I have cause to be."

"Why?"

"Because your boat is the Sea Ghost!"

"Yes, you are right," laughed Jack. "This is really the ship about which everybody is so much excited. While testing and trying her, she startled everyone who saw her to such an extent, that I resolved to keep up the mystery about her identity."

"A wise resolution," commented the official.

"It was for the reason that I can use her with better advantage against the wreckers, who now will fear her. It remains for you to maintain the utmost secrecy of her identity."

"You can depend upon me keeping silent, Mr. Wright."

"Then come aboard and I will show you what a sea-ghost is like."

The vessel was, in truth, a most singular-looking craft, and it was no wonder that she had made herself famous as a phantom.

She was about 150 feet long, twenty foot beam, and ten foot draught, built of silvery white, thick aluminum plates, and shaped from the water-line upward much like most cruisers in the hull.

A turret, with half its front made of toughened, heavy plate glass, crowned the forward deck, with a small railed deck on top, above which arose a small, portable flag-pole in back, the turret being pierced by doors.

The inside of this turret formed a large room, and the windows were furnished with sliding shutters of metal to hermetically enclose the glass.

Through these glasses could be seen a steering wheel, a compass binnacle, a rack containing numerous maps, charts,

signal flags and nautical instruments; upon the wall were arranged a series of small boxes with dials in front, connected to insulated copper wires; beneath them there hung a number of meteorological instruments of a peculiar design adapted to use under water, and several racks held up a number of arms, binoculars, etc.

The room was carpeted and furnished with settees, chairs, and rugs.

From the back of the tower a long, oval-topped deck-house ran aft, with four windows and a door on each side, above them a row of bull's-eyes, and the roof was filled with several valves, and a glass cupola in the center in which glared a circle of powerful electric lights.

This deck-house terminated in a round tower aft, which was pierced by a number of gun-ports that could be closed by shutters that worked by automatic springs, sealing up the apertures tightly when in disuse.

A staircase ran to the top of it from the deck at one side.

There was but little else upon the oval deck, save a capstan up forward, a short hand rail in the bow, an anchor fastened to each of the projecting catheads, stanchions along the scuppers and several trap-doors and deadlights in the deck plates.

Below the water line the boat presented a most curious appearance.

She was flat-bottomed, and being divided into two longitudinal sections, the lower part, shaped concavely amidships, tapered at each end to sharp points, the bow receding and the stern projecting several feet beyond the upper stern, with a rudder on the end.

Two great grooves were cut along the cross section of the bottom, each containing a propeller of great size and strength, while another exactly like them was set in the top of the lower hull.

A metal post ran down from the overhanging stern to the lower hull on which a horizontal screw was fastened to accelerate the downward, or upward movement of the boat under water, for the three other wheels were merely driving screws.

In the sides forward of the lower hull were two water doors for giving egress to the crew into the sea when submerged, while along the sides aft were water-valves for shipping or letting off ballast.

Everything was made of the silvery white aluminum.

From the cupola on the midship deck-house, from the bull's-eyes along the sides, from the lamps in the pilot-house, and out of the dead-lights that showed along the runs, there now gushed the most blinding glare of electric lights that contained a force of thousands of candle power, and lighting up the white vessel all over, lent it a weird and ghostly aspect.

It was no wonder that the strange looking craft had been dubbed a sea-ghost, for she was so named, and her appearance was most spectral to the greatest degree.

The official from Washington followed Jack over a gang-plank to the deck of the vessel, and there saw Tim and Fritz clad in white duck suits, working about the various parts of the boat.

Saying a few words to his friends, the boy went into the pilot-house with the officer, and passing through a door in back entered a stateroom that contained half a dozen berths, adjoining which there was a combined kitchen and cabin, furnished completely and magnificently.

The following chamber was a bare room lined with metal, and used for exit into the sea; in back of it was a storeroom for water and food, the next apartment contained an assortment of diving apparatus, tools, duplicate parts of the boat, and other necessities, while in the after turret stood a swivel gun of the pneumatic, magazine type, and a large stock of arms and ammunition.

A staircase in the cabin led down below, where the boat was divided into three compartments, those in the bow and stern being great air reservoirs, and the midship section containing a dynamo and oil engine, a peculiar machine for working the boat by electricity, and hundreds of accumulator cells of storage battery from which there ran a network of wires up to the pilot-house, from whence all working parts of the boat were controlled by a series of levers on a switchboard set in the wall near the wheel.

There was an immense water chamber for ballast occupying two-thirds of the lower hold, designed to submerge the boat, while the after part was honey-combed with spiral pipes, and air and water pumps, injectors, air-purifiers, and automatic valves.

As soon as Jack had shown the officer these complicated wonders, which but few besides himself could have understood, they returned to the pilot-house, and saw a monkey and a parrot there, which were owned respectively by Tim and Fritz, who had once captured their pets in Africa.

The mooring lines had been cast off, some of Jack's workmen pulled in the gangplank, and the creek doors had been swung open.

"Everything is ready. We will start," said Jack.

He managed the wheel, and turning one of the levers on the switchboard, he put the machinery in motion, and as the screws revolved, the boat glided out of the shop into the creek, and ran down toward Wrightstown bay.

CHAPTER V.

CHASED BY THE POLICE PATROL BOAT.

The gloom of night had fallen upon the earth when the Sea Ghost ran out into the creek, and all the lights were put out, as Jack had no desire to have anyone see his boat at that time.

He was bent upon a secret mission, and meant to keep his movements screened as much as possible until his object was attained, after which it mattered little who knew about the boat.

Before the Sea Ghost reached the bay, he turned to the government official, and pointing ahead at some boats, he said:

"We must conceal our movements from those people who are moving about the bay in those sailboats and skiffs. I am going to submerge the Sea Ghost."

"But why such secrecy now?" asked the man, in surprise.

"You will see in a little while. No, I may as well tell you now. In yonder lighthouse there is a man who, for a potent reason, wishes to avoid observation. I have, for another good reason, offered to take him on this cruise with me. We are to pick him up when we reach the headland."

"Oh," said the other, with a perplexed look upon his face.

"Tim!" cried the boy, turning to the old sailor.

"Ay, ay, my lad!" was the cheery response.

"Are all the doors and windows closed for a descent?"

"No, but I'll fix 'em in one minute," replied Tim, stumping away.

"Fritz, how were the battery connections?"

"I dit look me dem ofer all mine selluf, und dey all right ras."

"Are you quite sure it will be safe to go under?" queried the official.

"Positive," replied Jack. "I have tested the boat so frequently that there can be no mistake about it, sir."

"But how are we to breathe when the air in this room is used up?"

"Do you see those valves in the ceiling?"

"Yes. What about them?"

"When I turn this lever, marked W, it starts the injectors working, and fresh air is pumped up through the reservoirs and distributed through the boat, while those other valves in the floor carry the air which is used up off into the sea in bubbles."

"You must carry plenty of air in the reservoirs?"

"It is compressed into them hydraulically, so that the amount is considerably more than the bulk were it expanded," explained Jack.

"What is it that causes the boat to sink down?"

"There is only one method of gaining that result. To descend I pull this lever marked C. It opens the water valves and causes the sea to enter the lower hold. At the same time the pumps compress the air, which is distributed through the water chambers into the reservoirs. By compressing the volume of air into a small compass, the weight of sufficient water overcomes the buoyancy of the air. Then the boat sinks. When she has gone to any desired depth I stop the influx of water, and her descent is checked at any depth I want to attain."

"And to rise?"

"Why, I merely reverse the table. That is to say, I start the pump lever marked with letter P. The water is emptied from the hold in any quantity I wish to lose; the buoyancy of the compressed air in the reservoirs assumes its functions, and up we go to the top of the sea, or to any desired altitude."

"Can you navigate under water easily?"

"Just as well as upon the surface. The horizontal screw at the stern is spun, and that curves the stern down and the bow up at the angle, graded according to the rapidity of the revolutions; by reversing the screw the stern comes up and the bow slants down. You can realize what the effect is when the driving screws are then started."

"Wonderfully ingenious."

"I've got a number of cute little inventions with me of my own make, which I intend to utilize during this trip," said Jack. "Ah, here's Tim!"

The old sailor came stumping in at this juncture with a beam in his good eye, and taking a bite of navy plug, he gave a hitch at his baggy white pants, saluted, and said:

"All ready, Jack; she kin go down."

The boy inventor lost no time in submerging the boat, and without the least sound she sunk gradually, until the water closed over her turrets and the densest gloom surrounded them.

Jack then started the glow of an incandescent light, and glancing up at the dial of one of the gauges he watched the needle go around until it reached a figure registering their depth at twenty feet.

He then stopped her descent and sent her ahead.

The Sea Ghost plunged on as straight as an arrow, and, assured that no one on the surface could now distinguish them, the boy started every one of his electric lights.

A tremendous glow burst out from the boat and radiated all around her, illuminating the dense waters a great distance.

Of all Jack Wright's singular inventions he never had one carrying so much, and such strong lights as this one.

Gloomy as the water was in the distance it was now as bright as if bathed in a glow of rare sunlight in the immediate vicinage of the Sea Ghost.

A cry of amazement burst from the lips of Jack's guest.

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" he cried. "Look, Wright, look!"

"This sight is no novelty to us," laughed the boy, who enjoyed the excitement and wonder of the man.

Peering out the glass front of the pilot-house, the Government official stared ahead with all his might.

Attracted by the light, thousands of fishes from an inch to five yards in length of all kinds and appearances came gliding through the pale green fluid toward the boat.

Magnified by the water, their staring eyes glared like balls of fire, and as the electric glow fell upon their gleaming scales they flashed back scores of brilliant colors beautiful to see.

Tangled vines shot up from the bottom, among the moving and interlacing tendrils of which there squirmed the most repulsive water snakes and eels.

Here and there the rugged crests of black, slimy rocks cropped out of the gloom, crusted with myriads of barnacles, covered with crabs, mussels, queer-looking bugs, and patched here and there with beautiful mosses and tufts of sea grass.

An animated forest of gigantic eel grass thirty feet in length was gone through, over which floated the soft, pulpy bodies of various kinds of jelly fish, and passing on to level plains of sticky mud and rolling hills of gritty white sand, the Sea Ghost encountered myriads of denizens of the deep, that filled the mind of the eager spectator with the liveliest interest.

In this manner the beautiful bay was crossed and the boat drew near the opening in the headland, upon the left hand side of which there arose the stately lighthouse Jack had caused to be erected within the walls of which poor Harry Howard had taken refuge.

Assured that his boat was then free from observation, Jack pulled the pump lever and the ballast was forced out of the Sea Ghost, and she rapidly arose toward the surface.

The official turned away from the window, uttering a regretful sigh, for the scenes he had been watching had absorbed all his interest.

"That was the most wonderful sight I ever witnessed!" he exclaimed.

"Lordy, is that so?" queried Tim, with a grin. "Why, that ain't nuthin', sir."

"Probably not to you, but it's a good deal to me."

"I've sighted stranger scenes on ther surface."

"It is utterly impossible. Tell me what there is more wonderful than this."

"Why, bless yer heart, when I wuz in ther navy, aboard o' ther ole frigate Wabash," said Tim, "we wuz a-lyin' at anchor off the coast o' Chiny, an' ther night set in dark an' gloomy. All at once ther sky busted open, an' it begun ter rain shootin' stars. Down they dropped inter ther sea all aroun' us, an' sot ther water a-bilin' till it steamed. Up came hundreds o' biled fishes, an' ther cook laid in enough for a week's rations. Her crew lit thar pipes wi' them stars, an' ther lights on board was put out, an' we sot on deck a-readin' by their blazin'. Pretty soon, as ther ship went along, we came to a point about two miles east o' ther Sandy Hook lightship, an'—"

"Hold on!" interposed the officer, entreatingly. "That will do."

"Wot! Don't yer believe me?" queried Tim, in injured tones.

"No! Didn't you say the ship was anchored off the Chinese coast? Then how in thunder did you sail along off the New Jersey coast of America? Why wasn't your ship set afire—and, confound it, why wasn't you killed?"

Tim gave a guilty start, for he saw that his yarn didn't hang together very well, owing to his forgetfulness of details.

"Le' me explain?" he pleaded, in a desperate effort to get out of the pickle.

Before he could do so, however, Fritz seized an old accordion he was accustomed to playing, and began to grind out a mournful tune.

Tim stopped, gnashed his teeth, and glared at the Dutch boy fiercely, for he abominated this instrument, and it always got him angry to hear it.

"Belay thar, yer lubber!" he yelled, "or I'll smash that 'e thing ter pieces."

The fat boy chuckled, and continued to tease the old sailor. With a roar Tim made a dash for Fritz.

But before a row could ensue, the Sea Ghost shot out of the surface of the sea, and Jack uttered a startled cry and pointed ahead.

"Great heavens, see there!" he cried. "The police patrol boat, Blackbird, and as I live, there are the two detectives aboard of her, and they are pursuing a rowboat with Harry Howard and the lighthouse keeper in it."

The black steamboat was rapidly bearing down upon the lighthouse keeper's skiff, which the two men were rowing away with all their might.

CHAPTER VI.

OFF AFTER THE WRECKERS.

It was very evident to Jack that the two detectives had remained lurking around Wrightstown in search of the doctor, although they had not come near the boy's house to look for him.

Moreover, he saw that they must have been departing in the police patrol boat, when they had run across the skiff in which Harry Howard had been waiting for the Sea Ghost to appear and pick him up at the time Jack had appointed to meet him there.

It was an unfortunate combination of circumstances.

The skiff was about half a mile from land, the *Black Bird* was not more than one hundred yards behind her, and the Sea Ghost was an equal distance behind the police boat.

It therefore looked as if the detectives would overhaul the fugitive before Jack could reach him to lend his assistance.

Still the young inventor did not despair.

He was too full of pluck and ambition to give way to fear. "I'm going to make a dash for that skiff!" he exclaimed, as soon as he saw the situation, and he pulled one of the levers.

"You can't reach it before the other boat," doubtingly said the official, who, although ignorant of the circumstances of the case, realized that Jack designed to rescue one of the skiff's occupants.

"That remains to be seen," the boy answered, as his boat rapidly increased speed and swiftly overhauled the *Black Bird*.

"How fast can she travel?"

"Forty knots an hour."

"And the *Black Bird*?"

"She isn't making over fifteen."

Tim and Fritz had ceased hostilities, and as the Dutch Boy glanced ahead and saw the Sea Ghost swiftly creeping up to the police boat, a broad grin overspread his face, and he roared:

"Donner und blitzen! Ve vin!"

"Hurrah!" cried Tim, "we're a-passin' ther lubbers!"

Like a streak of lightning the submarine boat shot by the police steamer just as it arrived within fifty yards of the skiff.

A shout arose from the men on the *Black Bird*, as they saw the silent and swift phantom boat go shooting by.

"The Sea Ghost!" yelled a dozen voices.

A moment afterwards the pilot of the police boat turned his craft off at an angle, and Fritz rushed out on deck.

"Howard!" he cried.

"Yes!" came the doctor's glad voice.

"Catch dis rope!"

"Let it come!"

"Whiz! went a coil of stout manila line across the skiff, as the Sea Ghost dashed along within a yard of the lighthouse keeper's boat, and the physician caught it.

On went the underwater boat like a race horse dragging the skiff along astern, and the lighthouse keeper made the snapper fast to the painter, when Fritz hauled in on it.

As soon as the skiff reached the side of the Sea Ghost, the young doctor shook hands with the lighthouse keeper, and, wishing him a hearty goodby, he got aboard of the boat.

The tow line was then cast off.

Leaving the skiff drifting astern, the Sea Ghost opened up the headland, and passed out upon the sea, all aglow.

Observing that Harry Howard had been rescued by the crew of the mysterious craft, the pilot of the police patrol boat started his vessel after her.

Under a full head of steam, the Black Bird raced out on the ocean, and went flying after the Sea Ghost.

Fritz led the rescued man inside and introduced him to the official, and the young inventor turned to him with a smile.

"You came near falling into their hands again," he remarked, "but I was a little too quick for them a second time!"

Every one burst out laughing over their success, and Howard said:

"You still keep me under a life-long obligation. I thought the ship was lost. We rowed with all our strength. It was all up with us but the shouting when you appeared. I didn't know this was your boat until the lighthouse keeper told me so."

"The blamed land sharks is atackin' arter us."

"Fools!" contemptuously cried the young inventor. "I'll put an end to their pursuit; bolt the door, Fritz."

As soon as the fat boy did so Jack sunk his boat, and as it disappeared under the sea so rapidly that the crew of the Black Bird could not, at the distance they were away, see just exactly what became of her, they reluctantly abandoned the pursuit and were forced into the general superstitious belief that the craft was supernatural.

The Sea Ghost descended to a depth of thirty-two feet ere Jack brought her to a pause, and then drove her ahead.

Their strange position excited Harry Howard's curiosity as much as it had the government official, and he and the latter individuals spent most of their time at the window, staring out at the submarine scenes they were passing.

The boat ran down the Long Island coast within a league of the outlying sandbars, and finally reached the entrance to New York harbor, up into which Jack turned her.

Here the bottom was sandy in places and muddy in others, the powerful tides having worn the configuration of the bottom into the most uneven outlines.

From the point of Coney Island out across the channel the bottom slanted downward, and showed a depth of over a mile at one spot—this awful channel having no doubt been excavated by the strong currents eddying around there.

Having extinguished his lights, Jack ran his boat up to the surface and heading her for the Battery he ran up to one of the nearest docks, parted with the government official, and that gentleman went ashore, highly pleased with his trip.

"You have had a practical demonstration of what my boat can do," said Jack, when he shook hands with him, "and now when you return to Washington you can properly explain to the secretary of the navy what my chances of success shall be if I happen to fall in with the coast wreckers."

"Mr. Wright," was the earnest reply, "I have not the slightest doubt but what you will accomplish what you have undertaken to do, and shall take great pleasure in giving the secretary an account of the boat. My own impression of the Sea Ghost is that she's the most wonderful craft in the world, and I appreciate the honor of my acquaintance with

a youth of such extraordinary intelligence as to invent such a marvelous craft."

He then took his departure, wondering what the mystery was surrounding Harry Howard, and the young inventor sunk his boat beneath the water and ran her out to sea.

It was midnight when they reached the ocean's heaving waters, and Jack divided his crew into two watches, with Tim and Fritz in one, and himself and Harry in the other.

"We will run down the coast sunk till half the turrets are buried and show no lights," planned the boy. "You can keep on an easy power of amperes, Tim, and our first course will be to head for the rendezvous of the wreckers. Incidentally we can keep a continued lookout for any signs of the Lady Violet, and try to get Howard out of his scrape if we can."

"Ay, ay," assented Tim, with a nod.

"If the wreck of the Lady Violet was caught in the Gulf Stream in this vicinage she would be drifted along at the rate of about three miles an hour," said the boy, thoughtfully, "and it would carry her out on the ocean, and possibly across to Europe. On the other hand, if she got out of the stream and still floats, she would go knocking about at the mercy of the wind and tide, and heaven only knows what would become of her then."

"In that case," said Harry, anxiously, "we have some hope of finding her yet if she has remained in the Gulf Stream, for it is an easy matter to trace the course of this strange current through the sea, wherever it goes, isn't it?"

"Very easy," assented Jack, and after some further discussion of the matter, he and Harry turned in, leaving Tim and Fritz on duty.

The old sailor held the wheel and drove the Sea Ghost along submerged till there was only enough of the glass front of the pilot house above the water to give him a view of the top of the sea.

Fritz felt full of mischief that night, and as Tim dared not leave the wheel to interfere with him, he amused himself by blackguarding the old sailor until he was furious, and then bombarded him with a dozen wet sponges which he had found in a locker.

In the midst of it the monkey and parrot came in.

The bird was a big handsome creature named Bismarck, which Fritz had taught to talk outrageously and very slangily.

Whiskers, as the old sailor had named the little red, howling monkey, was also a cunning rascal, full of tricks which he learned from the old sailor, and naturally as mischievous as most monkeys are.

The moment Fritz saw them, he incited his bird to attack the monkey, and with a harsh, grating screech Bismarck flew at Whiskers and buried its beak in the monkey's tail.

A howl escaped Tim's pet, and it grabbed the bird as quick as a flash by one of its claws into which it sunk its teeth.

The next moment a terrific fight began between the two, during which the night air was made hideous with monkey howls and parrot's oaths, while the air was filled with flying fur and feathers.

CHAPTER VII.

SAVING A DISTRESSED VESSEL.

On the following night the Sea Ghost was plowing her way along the New Jersey coast, not far from Delaware bay, still almost buried under the water, and the sky above as black as ink.

Jack stood at the wheel, and, turning his glance upon the

barometer, he saw that the mercury had made a fall of half an inch within an hour.

"We are going to have a heavy storm pretty soon, Tim," he observed.

"Ay, ther weather looks as foul as ever I see it," returned the old sailor.

"See how riley the sea has become, and how the white caps are rolling."

"Unless we goes clear ter ther surface or deeper down inter Davy Jones' locker, ther waves'll soon git a-heavin' so high it won't be no ways comfor'ble aridin' whar we is now," said Tim, in dubious tones.

"Hold on! What's that? A rocket, by jingo!"

The boy pointed off to the leeward at a bright streak of fire that suddenly shot up from the sea into the gloomy sky.

It was followed by several more in quick succession, and with an anxious and troubled look on his face, the boy exclaimed:

"A signal of distress, Tim."

"Ay, ay, an' pretty close on ther lee, too."

"Tim, we had better run over there and find out what it means?"

"Heave ahead, my hearty. I reckon ye know what we is."

"Close upon the stamping grounds of the wreckers of the coast."

"Then I reckon as we'd better keep our weather eye on ther craft as sent that signal up," was the old man's significant warning.

Jack shared in his friend's suspicions and steered the boat south by west, and a few moments afterwards the faint, dull report of firearms reached their ears, coming from the direction in which they had seen the rockets shoot skyward.

They listened and Jack shook his head.

"The minute guns of an imperiled ship!" he exclaimed.

"Blow me, but that proves as we're on ther right tack, Jack."

"Call Fritz and Howard to quarters, old fellow."

The sailor seized a gong string and vigorously jerked it, when a clang of alarm rang through the Sea Ghost, and a few moments afterwards the doctor and the fat boy rushed in from the cabin in which they had been eating a mess.

By the time matters were explained to them the boat had made such rapid headway to the leeward that Jack heard the rumble of breakers on the starboard quarter.

"There are some dangerous bars running along this shore," he remarked, as he changed the course of the boat.

"Why didn't you light up?" asked Howard.

"No. My suspicions are aroused. If any of the wreckers whom we are in search of were to see us coming, they would take care to keep out of the way."

Boom! Boom! came the dull roaring of the minute guns, much nearer now, by which they knew that they were drawing closer to the object of their search.

Fritz had taken up his position at the window with a night glass to his eye, and he cried excitedly:

"Lights ahet!"

"Where away?" asked Jack.

"Off to der leeward."

"Can you make out where they are?"

"Id looks like a ship on a bar."

Upon a nearer approach the boy saw the glow of several lanterns, and then observed several more moving lights to the windward of those that were stationary.

He slackened the speed of his boat, and a few moments afterwards the breeze bore to his ears the shouts of men, and the reports of firearms from where the stationary lights were.

It was very evident to Jack that there was trouble of some kind or other going on over there, and he exclaimed:

"There's no use of us hoping to learn anything in gloom. I've got to start the lights. Stand by for busiflow now, boys."

He then turned the electric light lever, and the next light stant a blinding glow flashed up all around the boat. The

Jack sent the Sea Ghost to the surface.

The water was vividly lit up for a great distance Leav around, and they saw a large sailing vessel with a smanks stack on deck, lying hauled to, a cable's length ahead. By

Several boats were leaving her, filled with men, and woom being rowed toward a schooner which laid listed to one s'W upon a bar half a mile off shore.

Upon the schooner's deck a fight was going on until the Ghost so suddenly appeared and startled every one.

The bow of the ship with the smokestack was marked w'In the name Night Hawk.

Everything was plainly revealed in the glare of the elect lights, and as Jack's glance wandered off further to the hill? ward, he beheld a tall tripod, formed of tree trunks, rais' on a small sandbar, a lantern swinging from its apex in a moaning wind.

The sight of this device caused the boy to start.

"Wreckers!" he exclaimed, as the truth flashed across fou mind.

It was very evident that the schooner had been lured up the outlying bar by the false beacon, and the fact of the ship's crew rowing over to the stranded schooner and attacking her, sufficed to show Jack what the character of the m was.

His words startled all his friends.

But they now took in the whole situation, and realized ho matters stood.

Their first impulse was to arm themselves.

"Tim," take the wheel!" exclaimed Jack.

The old sailor complied, and the boy went out on deck and saw the ship's company leave the schooner and row back their craft, uttering cries of affright at the Sea Ghost.

"Schooner ahoy!" hailed the boy.

"Ahoy there!" came the reply.

"What is the matter here?"

"We have run aground on a bar."

"Do you need any assistance?"

"Only to reel the wreckers of that ship."

"Did they attack you?"

"Ay, and they have wounded several of my crew."

"How came you to run ashore?"

"Yonder false beacon deceived me into thinking I was between the bar and the main. Those wreckers must have put it there."

"I shall call them to account for this. Fling me a stern line."

A line fastened to a hawser was thrown to Jack, as Tim had caused the Sea Ghost to drift as close as possible to the bar.

The boy hauled the hawser in, made it fast to a stanchion aft, and, running up forward, he cried to Tim:

"Steer due east, and put on full power."

"Ay, ay! East'ard she goes!" was the reply.

"See if we can haul the schooner afloat."

"How about them 'ere wreckers? They're a-steamin' away."

"We can easily overhaul them. Let her go, Tim!"

The Sea Ghost swung around and started off until the hawser became taut, when she suddenly came to a pause.

She tugged and strained, and Jack, having gone aft again, leaned over the taffrail and eagerly watched the stranded schooner.

For a moment the tenacious clutch of the sand upon her keel caused her to resist the pull, but as there was an enormous force brought to bear upon her she began to slip.

Slowly but surely she slid back into the sea, and a few moments afterwards she was hauled afloat again, and a cheer of light burst from her crew.

The moment she was afloat the Sea Ghost pulled her far from the bar into deep water, and Jack cast off the hawser. Leaving the schooner adrift, and heedless of the grateful thanks of her crew, Jack hastened back to the pilot house.

By the time the ship had disappeared from sight in the room beyond the rays of the powerful electric lights.

"We have succeeded. The schooner is off the bar!" said Jack.

"Donner vetter! But dot wreckers vas gone!" cried Fritz, and I tought dot ve a fight mit 'em might haf hat alretty."

"In which direction did she go?" queried the boy, eagerly.

"Due east'ard," said Tim, resigning the wheel to Jack.

"Well we'll soon overhaul her, boys. Did you notice her hull?"

"She a gombination ship und steamer vas," said Fritz.

"Yes; and her appearance tallies exactly with the description I received from the government official of the vessel which had been haunting these waters so long and disastrously. That boat is our prey, boys, and now I know my game, I'll catch her yet."

Leaving the lights glaring, he sent the Sea Ghost flying in the direction taken by the fugitive, and they presently sighted her.

Sending Tim into the after gun turret, the boy drove his boat up to within one hundred yards of the wreckers' craft, and saw a score of her crew leaning over the bulwarks staring back at the Sea Ghost.

Prominent among them was a rough clad man with a fiery red beard.

"Great heaven, Wright!" cried Howard, upon catching sight of this individual, "there stands Tom Driggs among those scoundrels, dressed in the costume of an officer."

"Which one is he?" quickly asked the boy.

"The man with the red beard."

"He is ordering the crew. He must be the captain or mate."

"Then the murderer of poor Captain Forrest has turned wrecker!"

"But he will soon pay the penalty of his crimes," said Jack, grimly, and he sent his boat flying up to the Night Hawk.

CHAPTER VIII.

DRIVEN DOWN IN THE SEA.

Jack was just about to hail the crew of the wreckers' ship when the wind came roaring up to the Sea Ghost, sweeping a wall of white mist before it with the fury of a cyclone.

The waves were heaped up in a boiling and hissing mass, and a heavy shower of slanting rain came pelting on ahead of the squall that was sweeping down upon them.

"Look out! Ther gale's a-breakin'!" shouted Tim, warningly.

"By Jove! I didn't see that squall coming," said the boy.

He spun his wheel around, for they were in too dangerous a proximity to the Night Hawk at that moment to get caught there by the tempest in all its fury.

But he was too late.

With an appalling roar the squall struck the Sea Ghost.

Up on the crest of the bellowing wave she was flung and then she was hurled forward toward the wreckers' ship, as if she were but a wisp of straw in the clutch of a giant.

The Sea Ghost had hit the ship.

A terrible shock followed the collision.

Then came a sudden rebound which flung every one to the floor, and then a deafening report down below.

Something had happened to the submarine boat.

Before any one could realize what had occurred the advance wave burst with a roar like thunder, breaching clear over the Sea Ghost, burying her in tons of foamy, flying water.

The wreckers' ship was swept away in the gloom.

Rolling in the maddened waters, the submarine boat was hurried along and gradually began to sink.

One of the pilot house doors was unfastened and swung open.

An enormous mass of brine rushed in, drenching the inmates of the room, and Jack staggered to his feet.

He saw what happened, and, rushing to the door, he closed it.

"We are sinking under the sea!" shrieked the boy.

Every one realized that some accident had befallen the boat when they saw her going under, and to save his friends from smothering, the boy started the influx of air.

One of the windows was open, and Jack just had time to close it when the Sea Ghost became entirely submerged.

Down into the depths of the sea she sank on a level keel, and, leaving the wild confusion of the storm raging upon the surface, she went into a reign of peace and quietness.

By this time every one had arisen.

Not one had escaped an injury of some kind or another, but of so trifling a nature that no attention was paid to it.

The boy stopped the screws.

He then rushed into the cabin and down into the engine-room, where he turned on an incandescent lamp, lighting up the place.

Casting a hurried glance at the machinery, the boy observed that the shaft of the pump which was connected with the water chamber in the lower hold had been broken in two.

He had no sooner observed this when he detected the sound of rushing water beneath his feet, and realized the fact that the hold was rapidly filling, which was carrying them to the bottom.

A look of dismay swept over his face.

He did not know into what dangerous depths they might descend.

Above the sea everything sustains an atmospheric pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch, and every thirty-two feet down under the sea an additional fifteen pounds is added.

In a depth of a greater extent than that which the boat was tested to stand, she was pretty sure to be squeezed and crushed to pieces by the heavy volume of water she would have to support.

That meant death to her crew!

Yet there was no way to prevent the boat sinking.

Jack slid back a panel in the floor, and, pressing a button on the wall, he started an electric light down in the hold.

Beneath the sliding panel a thick plate of glass was set in an opening, and, peering through, the boy saw a stream of water pouring into the boat and filling the compartment.

Where the water came from was a mystery to the boy until he suddenly saw, by shifting his position, that one of the exhaust pipes ran in at that point.

It became evident that this pipe had been broken inside of the hold, and as the sea had free access to it through the valve apertures in the face of the lower hull, the water was thus carried into the boat.

There was but one way to stop it.

That was to plug up the mouth of the pipe on the outside of the boat.

Upon seeing this, Jack put out the light, closed the panel, and, rushing upstairs, he glanced at the depth dial.

It registered twenty feet.

This depth was attained in fifteen minutes.

Losing no time talking, the boy hastened back into the storeroom and rapidly put on a diving suit made of aluminum scales that fit his body like a glove.

The aluminum helmet was furnished with an incandescent lamp and reflector on top, and a metal cylinder containing the battery that supplied it and enough compressed air to last several hours was secured to the back of the suit.

Weighting himself and taking a rope and a screw cap that was intended to fit over the valve hole, the boy passed into the central water chamber and opened the sea door partly.

The water rushed in, filling the tiny apartment, and pushing the door open all the way, Jack strode out on deck.

Going aft, opposite the gun turret, he hastened his line to a ringbolt and, dropping the other end over the side, he slid down until he reached a spot opposite the valve opening.

He turned a thumb screw in his belt, which started his electric lamp, and reflecting its rays upon the opening, the boy screwed the cap over the aperture, stopping the waters influx.

Then he climbed up to the deck and hauled up his rope.

By this time the descent of the boat stopped, and she floated like some strange sea monster in a depth of fifty feet.

Jack stood for a moment watching the effect of his work.

"She seems to be all right now," he muttered. "She don't go down any further, consequently she isn't shipping any more water. So far, so good. But how are we to get upon the surface again? It can't be done till we lighten the boat by pumping out the water she has shipped, and we can't pump it out with the pump-shaft broken. Nor have we any means of repairing it. My only hope is to find a piece of driftwood, and extemporize a shaft to get to the surface. Then we can run into the nearest port and get a new one forged."

He turned to retrace his steps to the pilot house, when an enormous, rope-like arm suddenly squirmed over the top of the deckhouse, and twined itself around his body.

He felt himself being dragged upward with irresistible force, and instinctively grasped a handrail running along against the deckhouse, and then turned around to see what held him.

Jack's amazement knew no bounds when he observed the pinkish-white object that coiled its folds around him like a snake.

It looked like the feeler of an enormous squid.

The boy made a desperate effort to release himself from the deadly grip, but found his strength unequal to the task, and, acting upon the spur of the moment, he twisted the rope he held around his body, and took a turn with the ends around the railing.

He was thus better able to resist the strange monster.

The young inventor felt very much alarmed over his situation, for the powerful arm held on tenaciously, and he had forgotten in his haste to cap the valve opening, to arm himself.

Nor could he hope for any help from his friends, as they were blissfully ignorant of his jeopardy, in consequence of being located at a spot where they could not see him.

As he hung onto the rope with both hands, it occurred to him that he might rid himself of the monster by utilizing his battery, and he used one hand to release his helmet-lamp wire from its binding post.

This, of course, extinguished his light, but there was plenty coming from the boat to let him see what he was doing.

The monster's body was yet invisible on the other side of

the boat, and the boy could see nothing of it but the arm that held him.

He took the bared end of the insulated wire from which the electric current was running into the water and jabbed into the soft, pulpy flesh of the great feeler.

The result produced was magical.

There came a terrific muscular contraction.

Then the arm relaxed and began to squirm and twist and lash the water all around the boy spasmodically.

For one moment Jack breathed easier, and he was just about to loosen himself and hasten away when suddenly the body of a gigantic squid shot over the top of the after turret and landed on the deck close by him. Its body was forty feet long and its arms twice that length.

Fastening its big glaring eyes upon the boy, it thrashed the water furiously with its tentacles, and sprang for him.

Its movements were as swift as lightning.

In a twinkling it had its long arms twined around the boy, tore him from his fastening and went rolling and squirming along the deck with the prostrate boy in its embrace.

A shudder of horror passed over Jack, for he was utterly helpless.

CHAPTER IX.

ADRIFT UNDER THE SEA.

"Och, Himmel! Was iss dot?"

It was Fritz who uttered this startled remark.

He had donned a diving suit, and, following Jack out on deck to lend the boy his assistance, if it were needed, he just saw the squid.

The fat boy was very much startled at the horrible creature, and more so when he discovered that it had Jack in its tentacles and threatened to carry the boy overboard with it.

In the condition the Sea Ghost then was in, it would have been utterly impossible to follow the creature to rescue the boy, and as the depth was unknown, there was every chance of the boy being killed if the squid carried him to the bottom.

Fritz was cognizant of this.

He pulled a knife out of his belt, fearlessly rushed at the monster just as it reached the edge of the deck as if about to roll off into the water, and attacked it.

Gash upon gash was inflicted by the desperate fat boy, and he dismembered several of the tentacles which drifted away squirming yet with life, and caught hold of Jack's arm.

Spasmodically writhing from the effect of its wounds, the enormous beast now relaxed its grip on the young inventor and went squirming away in the sea, bunched in a heap at one moment, spreading out, and whirling around the next, and finally disappearing in the gloom bathed in a discoloration of black fluid which it emitted from its body.

Protected from its cup-suckers by the metallic suit he wore, Jack was uninjured and got upon his feet at once.

He saw who had saved his life and shook Fritz's hand heartily, after which they both entered the water chamber, drove out the fishes which had swam in, closed the door, and pulled a lever on the wall that started a small independent pump, emptying the room.

As soon as all the water was out of the chamber they opened a door, passed into the storeroom and took off their suits.

Proceeding up to the pilot-house, Jack ascertained that they hung suspended at a depth of little over fifty feet from the surface, and, leaving Fritz to describe their adventure with the squid, he went down into the machinery compart-

ent, and there ascertained that the influx of water had abated.

For the time being they were safe.

There was enough air in the reservoirs to last them five days, and by the expiration of that time the boy expected to raise his boat upon the surface again.

He joined his friends and explained the situation.

"It is useless to remain here," he remarked, in conclusion.

There is, according to Lawry's chart of the Atlantic, a depth probably 2,800 feet beneath us. A submarine plateau extends to the north, the east, and a little to the east of Newfoundland, terminating in the latitude of New York in an abruptly steep shore along the escarpment of which flows the Gulf Stream."

"Suppose we run in nearer to shore then, which will bring the keel of our boat closer to the bottom," suggested Howard.

"An excellent plan, and we will follow it," coincided Jack. The Sea Ghost was thereupon headed for the westward, and a lookout was maintained while the electric lights in the upolas were turned to reflect down into the abyss below.

In this manner the boat went ahead, and in due course of time the bottom of the sea was discerned athwart their course.

The boy brought his boat to a pause and examined the barometer.

It showed a pressure of 81 centimeters; the hydrometer marked 85 degrees, the inside thermometer 70, and the outside one 42.

The sea pressure gauge gave a depth of 51 feet, and the air gauge 16,000 atmospheres, or enough for five days for the four, as each one only consumed 32 feet an hour.

Satisfied, the watch was divided and Jack and Fritz turned in, leaving Tim and the doctor on duty.

Supplied by Jack with all the comforts he needed, Harry Howard, like the rest, was now clad in a white duck suit, and, lighting a cigar, he sat down near the window and glanced out.

He never tired staring at the manifold wonders of the deep and glanced reflectively at the sea weed drifting past, the waving vegetation that hung suspended with its roots above ground, the fish that came and went like ghosts and the peculiar formation of the sand and rocks, living plant-like animals and numberless shell-fish strewn around.

"How calm, quiet and peaceful it is down here compared with the raging storm that is passing over the surface," he remarked, finally, breaking the monotonous silence and facing Tim.

The old sailor gave a start and quietly rubbed his good eye, or he had been relapsing into doze.

With commendable quick wit, however, Tim presented his glass eye toward his companion to give the impression that he was very wide awake, as that particular eye always was staring open with an animated expression when Tim was sleeping or waking.

"Ay, now," assented Tim, repressing a yawn, "but yer never should judge by appearances o' ther sea as I've found out."

"To what deceptive look of the ocean do you allude?" queried Howard, wishing to engage Tim in conversation to pass away the time and prevent himself getting sleepy.

"Why," replied the old salt, with some animation, "d'ye ever see this wooden peg?"

"Quite plainly. What about it?"

"How d'yer s'pose I lost it?"

"I haven't the remotest idea."

"Trustin' ter ther looks o' ther ocean."

"You don't say so! How did it happen?"

"I'll tell yer," gravely replied the old sailor, taking a fresh chew of tobacco and leaning upon the wheel. "It happened

when I wuz in the navy, my ship—ther frigate Wabash—wuz a-cruisin' in ther West Indys. One bright summer day out comes one o' ther naval cadets in tights, an' ses he, 'I'll race yer a-swimmin' aroun' ther wessel,' ses he. Now I took a powerful pride in my swimmin', and blowed about it so much to my messmates, I didn't dare to refuse. 'I'll go yer,' ses I. Then I stripped. Ther youngster laughed, an' dived overboard wi' a splash, an' I follered. But blast my timbers if I'd been in ther water more'n a minute when up comes a shark an' swum fer ther lad. He gave a yell, an' swam fer his life. I seen as he wuz a-goner onless I helped him, so arter him I went, an' overhaulin' ther shark, wot should I do but grab it by one o' its flippers an' holdin' it fast, I prevented it swimmin' arter ther boy."

The doctor shot a quick glance of surprise at Tim.

But the old fellow never flinched, and went on glibly.

"Thar I wuz, a-hanging ter ther lubber's tail——"

"Flipper, you said," reminded Howard, gravely.

"I mean flipper," hastily corrected Tim, "an' ther young lady swam fer ther dock as fast as she could go, when——"

"Didn't you say it was a naval cadet from the man-of-war?"

"Ay now, so I did, come ter think o' it," admitted Tim, trying to recall the threads of his narrative. "Ther cadet swum fer the frigate, an' my messmates hauled him aboard. But thar I wuz left stabbin' ther sword fish, an'——"

"You said it was a shark, Tim, and if you was naked, where did you get the weapon to stab it?" asked Howard, in surprise.

"Say now, my hearty, if you're a-goin' to interrup' a cove that way every minute, how'll I ever spin my yarn?" Tim growled. "I am a-goin' ter gi' ye no details, I ain't. I said it wuz a sword-fish in the start, an' that settles it. Now, I'll jist finish up by a-tellin' yer that while I held ther lubber so's he couldn't swim away, that ere boy wot I saved aimed one o' ther forty-pound guns at it from ther spar deck o' ther ship an' fired at ther fish wot blowed it inter mince meat."

"While you held it for him?"

"Ay, an' wot's more, when I swum back ter ther ship an' got aboard, ther surgeon didn't even find a scratch on my body."

"But you started in by saying you lost your leg in that adventure," mildly suggested Harry Howard.

Tim's face lengthened considerably, for he had forgotten that, too.

"Waal, we'll let it pass," he grumbled, "'cause by interrupin' my yarn yer drove all ther facks outer my figgerhead, an' a feller can't tell no sort of a story if he's interfered with that way."

The doctor smiled, but wisely held his peace.

"He's a terrible old liar," was his mental reservation, though.

Returning his attention to the scene outside, he finished his cigar and observed that the boat was drifting with the current, and had now drawn near an immense wreck.

It was a monster iron steamship, with a hole stove in her stern from being run down by some other craft recently.

She laid keeled over upon her side, in the midst of a great jungle, and, pointing at her, the doctor said:

"See that wreck, Tim?"

"Ay, an' a recent one, too."

"Do you notice how we are drifting up to it?"

"Ter be sure. I reckon we'd better drop anchor."

He turned to one of the levers and pulled it, this action drawing a wire that connected with the huge sister-hooks that held the anchor on the port side up to the catheads, and the hook opened.

Down sunk the anchor, and, catching, held the boat stationary.

"Why did you anchor here, Tim?" the doctor asked, watching him.

"So's we won't drift inter deep water again, an' beside I wanner go aboard o' that wreck an' inspect her."

CHAPTER X.

MEETING THE SCHOOLSHIP.

After breakfast on the following morning Jack, Howard and Tim put on their diving suits, armed themselves, and leaving Fritz on guard in the Sea Ghost, they sallied out to inspect the wreck.

The submarine boat was floating within ten feet of the shell-strewn bottom of the aquatic jungle, and they dropped an accommodation ladder over the side and descended.

On the Sea Ghost the electric lights still burned brightly, and showed them their surroundings, while by glancing upward they could see that the sunshine of a clear day upon the top of the sea was streaming down, lighting the water.

Everything combined to let them see plainly, and they walked over to the big steamer and saw that she was named the Rosamond, of Boston, and was a recent wreck.

There were numerous dangling ropes from the broken rigging hanging over the side, and by the help of these they managed to pull themselves on board, despite their heavy weights.

This buoyancy of the water is easily accounted for, as a pound of coal will not weigh more than three or four ounces in the sea.

Upon reaching the slanting deck, the three adventurers crept up to the deckhouse, passed into the saloon, went down the stairs into the spacious cabin, and found most of its furniture floating up at the white and gold ceiling.

Everything was racked, wrecked and disordered, there was not a whole pane of glass left in the ship, some of the partitions and bulkheads were torn to pieces, the floors were broken in places, and everything was bent and twisted out of shape.

Dispersing, with their helmet lamps blazing, Howard and Tim each followed the gangways to examine the rooms, and Jack made his way down into the flooded engine-room.

Most of the machinery was intact, and he carefully looked over the different parts and found a bar which he could easily convert into a shaft for the Sea Ghost's broken pump and mend it.

The boy was delighted with his discovery.

"There's a way out of my dilemma at last!" he muttered.

Returning to the cabin, he found Tim and the doctor there, and, resorting to the deaf and dumb alphabet, he explained what he found.

"I've done nearly as well," replied the doctor, when he finished.

"What did you find?" queried Jack, the same way.

"The specie room, and it contains several boxes of gold."

"Good! We will carry it aboard of the Sea Ghost."

"And I," gestured Tim, "found a lot of dead bodies."

"Where?" queried Jack.

"In the steerage, floating about the room. As soon as I opened the door the fishes swam in and began to devour them."

The others shuddered.

Led by Howard, they proceeded to the ship's treasure room, and there found several small heavy boxes, which they carried up on deck and dropped overboard.

The old sailor and the doctor then left the steamer and carried them aboard of the Sea Ghost, with instructions to

return with some tools, with which to get the metal bar Jack wanted.

In the meantime the young inventor found an empty water-tight water cask floating in the storeroom, and, securing a long, light chain firmly to it by one end, he fastened the other end to a ring-bolt in the steamer's deck.

He then sent the cask up to the surface, there to float as a buoy, to mark the spot where the steamer had gone down.

"She only lies in sixty feet of water," he muttered, "and when I return home I can apprise her owners of the fact, that they can recover her. The buoy will mark her location."

Tim and Howard returned with the tools, and they all went down in the engine-room, and set to work upon the bar.

They spent several hours of hard work upon it before they managed to get it away from the machinery, and it was so heavy that they were forced to rig tackle to hoist it up on deck.

The bar was finally gotten aboard of the Sea Ghost and taken into the engine-room, when our friends dismantled the broken one, and, preparing the one they had picked up, they secured it to the pumps.

The whole day was thus occupied.

But when Jack tried it the bar worked like a charm.

The broken bar was flung overboard, the water was then pumped out of the Sea Ghost's hold, and she arose to the surface of the sea and floated within two leagues of the land.

The doors and windows were flung open by the joyous inmates of the boat, and a flood of moonlight streamed down from the starry sky upon them once more.

The broken pipe was then mended, and the valve opening cap was taken off.

Close by floated the buoy Jack had sent up, and the boy marked down the bearings of the place and started his boat away on her cruise in quest of the wreckers.

They saw the tripod where the false beacon had been hanging, but the light was out, and they saw the bar upon which the luckless vessel had run, but the schooner was gone and not another craft was in sight.

"We will go up the coast again," said Jack, grimly, "for I shall not rest until I have run down the Night Hawk, if I have to cross the ocean to do it!"

The Sea Ghost was accordingly headed northward again, and the rigid discipline of a man-of-war kept up, a lookout being posted continually.

At sundown an American frigate was sighted coming from the east, and they soon made her out to be the schoolship St. Mary's, returning from a cruise in the Mediterranean where she had been all summer.

Jack was going to submerge his boat to avoid observation, but unfortunately for this plan his boat was sighted, and as it aroused the curiosity of the frigate's crew, they signalled the boy to haul to, and he reluctantly obeyed.

When the training ship reached the Sea Ghost a quarter boat was lowered, six sailor boys tumbled in, followed by the commander, and the boat was rowed over to the submarine craft.

Jack met the commander respectfully, and in answer to his surprised questions the boy gave him an account of his boat and his mission, and a tour of inspection followed.

The commander was delighted, thanked the boy warmly for his courtesy and was about to depart, when Jack asked him:

"Have you ever heard of the wreckers of the Jersey coast?"

"Frequently," was the reply. "Barnegat was once a great resort for them."

"But the Night Hawk, I think, is new in the business."

"Night Hawk, did you say? Is she the wreckers' craft?"

"Yes, sir."

"A large ship, furnished with sails and steam?"

"Exactly so. You are familiar with her description, sir."

"Confound it, I spoke that craft two days ago crossing the ocean by following the Gulf Stream," cried the commander, in chagrined tones. "Had I known the character of her crew I would have seized upon her. Instead, I thought they were very polite persons and wished them God-speed on their way to Europe."

"They fooled you, sir."

"So they did, blame my stupidity, and now they must be hundreds of miles away on their course, and almost beyond your reach."

"Since I am convinced of their guilt," said Jack, "and you have apprised me of the course they have taken, as my vessel can make twice the speed theirs can, I may overhaul them in a long run and mean to make the effort."

"Well said, my lad. I admire your pluck."

"Those rascals," replied Jack, earnestly, "have had ample proof that our government is at last aroused to action against them, and have fled at the first note of warning. That is evident. However, I have proof of their guilt. I will fetch them back. Moreover, I am in search of the derelict of the steamer Lady Violet, which I have reason to believe is floating in the Gulf Stream toward Europe. By following this current I can kill two birds with one stone."

The commander laughed, shook hands with Jack and departed, his sailor boys rowing him back to the St. Mary's, which thereupon departed for New York, while Jack went eastward.

His gallant craft soon struck the dark waters of the mysterious Gulf Stream that were plainly outlined against the lighter hue of the sparkling ocean through which it flowed, and, plunging into the warm current, Jack sunk his boat.

"We will run along under the water," said the boy, "to avoid meeting ships, and wasting time answering idle questions. Moreover, we can then see better in our search for the Lady Violet. I'm glad after all that I met the St. Mary's, for without the information her commander gave us we would never have known where to look for the Night Hawk."

Down went the boat under the dark water, and the boy grasped the lever to reverse it, when they were submerged to the turret tops, so as to keep the Sea Ghost at that depth.

Unfortunately a strong current suddenly lurched the boat and gave Jack a jerk, when there sounded a sharp snap and the lever broke off in his hand close to the bolt.

It was impossible to stop the descent of the boat now with the lever until the damage was repaired, and down she went, plunging into the depths, while a cry of alarm pealed from her crew.

CHAPTER XI.

DRAGGED INTO A STRANGE SUBMARINE CAVE.

The Sea Ghost was embarked upon a strange under-water journey now, and the four inmates of the boat glanced at each other, wondering what the result would be.

A powerful current had caught the boat, and was then dragging her swiftly along under the Gulf Stream as she kept descending, and Jack fastened his glance on the depth register.

"How far down can she go without destruction?" asked Howard.

Probably five hundred feet, but no more," replied Jack. "You know what water pressure is? At that depth she would have to stand a compression of five hundred and seventeen and one-half pounds to the square inch. Imagine the

number of square inches of surface presented by a boat one hundred and fifty feet long by twenty feet beam and eighteen feet depth."

"Oh, Lord!" gasped Tim, "ain't thar no way ter stop her?"

"No, but we can modify her descent till we fix the lever."

"Why yer don't do id den?" reproachfully asked Fritz.

Jack started the pumps going, and they emptied out about half as much volume of water as came in.

By this means the speed of her descent was checked.

"I am going to see what the horizontal propeller will do for us now," said Jack, and he turned the last lever on the board.

The next moment the propeller revolved from left to right, forcing the stern down and sending the bow up at a slant.

As the driving screws were going, the Sea Ghost curved upward for a moment and our friends imagined she would run to the surface again.

However, in this they were disappointed, for the powerful current that had hold of the boat dragged her down again, stern foremost, and she sank to a greater depth than before.

"It is useless here," said Jack, in disgust, as he stopped the screw. "The current is stronger than the propeller."

"Can you mend the broken lever?" asked the doctor, anxiously.

"Yes, but it will take an hour or more to do it, and in the meantime what is to become of the boat, I'd like to know?"

Every one began to feel uncomfortable.

"Gief me dot lefers and I fix dot vile you der poat menages," said Fritz.

Jack did so, and while the fat boy hurried away to repair the bar, the boy turned his attention to the management of the boat.

He glanced at the water gauge again.

It now registered a depth of one hundred and five feet, and he turned on the spray of quick-lime and potash mixed with water to purify the air of the carbonic acid gas thrown off from their breathing.

The reason Jack had his exhaust valves for vitiated air in the floor was because the carbonic acid from their breathing was so much heavier than atmospheric air that it naturally sank to the bottom of the boat by its own weight to escape.

The running water attracted it and carried it off, as water and carbonic acid unite together like spirits and water, and do not stay separate like water and oil will.

Fifty feet further went the boat.

Tim now drew all the shutters over the windows to protect them from breakage, for they were at the greatest depth a diver can descend to in an ordinary suit without perishing.

Outside they could see through the second panes of glass set in the shutters that the water had begun to change color.

The surface always presents a reflected blue mingled with white light, and as the water of the sea so rapidly absorbs the rays of light at no degree of depth it becomes opaque, while deeper down it appears of the color reflected from the bottom.

Jack had turned on all the electric lights, as the color of the Gulf Stream seems to be darker than the rest of the sea, but the lights did not illumine the warm water as brilliantly here as it did in other parts of the sea.

From the storeroom came the sound of the hammer Fritz was plying as he worked away with all his might at the lever.

The boat continued to descend, and the indicator marked 253 feet.

By this time an oppressive feeling in the confined air began to visibly affect the inmates of the boat, as it was slow work to accustom themselves to the changed condition of the atmosphere.

They grew faint and dizzy, their temples throbbed, their ears rang, their sight became strained and blurred, their

nerves tingled, a weight seemed to press on their lungs, and they gasped for air.

These physiological conditions did not last long, however, as Jack modified the pressure by starting a flow of the outside water through some pipes running through the boat.

The air had been growing hot under the pressure they had been getting into, for under only a pressure of fifteen atmospheres, or 480 feet depth of water, sulphurated hydrogen is liquefied.

The circulation of the outside water through the boat rapidly cooled off the air and our friends recovered.

Harry Howard peered out one of the windows and recoiled. "Look out!" he cried, excitedly.

"What's the matter?" demanded Jack.

"We are rushing straight toward a cliff!"

"I can't stop her!" said Jack, reversing the screws.

"Then we are lost!"

"No! No! See there—a tunnel ahead of us!"

Jack pointed out, and Tim and the doctor rushed to one of the windows and glared into the sea.

The boat had been dashing headlong at a rough cliff that arose from the bottom, and they now observed that she was caught in a mass of driftweed and other things that were being drawn swiftly into a yawning opening.

It was very evident that this tunnel caused the swift current that caught them, for the next moment the boat was sucked into the opening and swept rapidly along.

At first they proceeded with extreme velocity, against which the reversed screws were perfectly powerless; but gradually, as they proceeded, this force diminished, and after a quarter of an hour the boat went along quite sluggishly.

The gauge now indicated a depth of 290 feet, and to Jack's surprise he saw that the descent of the boat for some reason was stopped, which indicated that the ballast pipes must have been so choked up that the water could not enter as fast as it was pumped out.

This was but a poor consolation, however, for the temporary stoppage might give way at any moment and leave them as bad off as they were before.

Still it gave them more time to repair the broken lever.

The radiation of the electric lights showed Jack that they were in a rocky passage which had narrowed down to a height of about thirty feet and a width of twenty yards.

It was too small to turn the boat around to retrace their course; moreover, the boy was satisfied that there was no possibility of the Sea Ghost forcing its way through the awful current at the entrance to the tunnel, even if he did manage to turn her around and send her back.

There was but one course to follow, and that was to go ahead.

He had no fear of the depth they were in.

His diving suits were gauged to stand a depth of 300 feet, if they wanted to leave the boat, and they were not as deep as that.

Below the boat about five feet he saw the bottom of the tunnel, and presently he observed that it began to slope upward gradually, so that to prevent his wheels striking he had to start the horizontal propeller and force the Sea Ghost to ascend to a height of a few feet further as they advanced.

The walls of the passage were worn as smooth as glass by the continued flow of the water for ages, and he therefore had no fear of his boat striking any projections.

Within fifteen minutes the passage gradually began to get higher and broaden out into a mammoth cavern, and soon afterwards they floated in a sluggish current in a submarine cave that rivaled the great terrestrial cave of Kentucky.

The top plateau was hollow, and the water pouring into the vast series of passages and caverns which he had so acci-

dentially penetrated, probably gave the stream its eastern flow.

The Sea Ghost had scarcely penetrated this enormous cavern, when Jack suddenly became aware that the warm warms of the stream and its encasement in the cavern had given creation to a singular vegetation and form of animal life that were never before known to the sight of mankind.

Everything grew to a gigantic size, the fishes were enormous, and the colors were of the most singularly brilliant ever seen.

They were in a submarine world of wonders.

Scarcely had the boys observed this when Fritz returned, bearing the lever in his hand, repaired, and he cried, delightedly:

"Here she was, Shack, and now we soon out of dis troubles got!"

"I'm afraid not, Fritz," said the young inventor, gravely, as he took the lever and began to adjust it in its position. "We are entombed under the ocean and we may never get out here alive."

CHAPTER XII.

BATTLE WITH A SEA GIANT.

The lever was reset into its place after a little work, and the pumps were stopped, when the boat sunk to the bottom a few feet below and settled on a bed of crimson sand.

Jack saw that the gauge indicated a depth now of 200 feet from the surface of the sea, and the outside thermometer gave a temperature of 80 degrees, while the one inside registered 70 in consequence of the water circulating through the pipes and other reservoirs for cooling.

"The lever works all right now," said the young inventor, "but the pipes are clogged up and we cannot use them till they are cleared."

"What's der matter mit goin' out und glean dem?" suggested Fritz.

"All right. Get out two diving suits and you can go with me. Don't forget some weapons. This place is filled with the biggest fish I ever saw in my life. Tim, you guard the boat."

In a few moments the Dutch boy had the suits in readiness and they put them on and left the boat.

Alighting alongside, the two divers approached the end of the water pipes, which were screened by wire sieves, and saw that the interstices had become clogged with slimy seaweeds.

They quickly cleaned them out and then glanced around at the sea monsters that came floating from all directions toward the Sea Ghost, attracted by her brilliant lights.

At the first movement made by the boy divers these fish, some of which were over seventy-five feet in length, with a proportionment girth, swam timidly away.

They only remained at a short distance, however, from which they eyed the boat, as they switched their tails and moved their fins, keeping themselves in suspension.

Any one of these deep sea monsters looked as if they might devour the divers in one mouthful.

"If these are the sizes of ordinary fish here," muttered Jack, as he watched them, "to what size must any whale develop in this strange place?"

Sea cabbages festooned the crimson sand that grew to the size of small houses; vines trailed over the ground with stems as big around as a man's thigh, and leaves several yards wide; mosses and lichens covered the rocks deep enough to bury a boy in, and a great forest of trees were seen off at one side with a girth as great as the California

monarchs, the tops so high from the bed of the cavern they were lost to sight a hundred feet above.

Although a phenomena of the ocean, there was nothing at all maraculous in the matter, as the temperature of the water and the isolation of the place from contrary currents and the ruinous conditions permitted everything there to develop to an extraordinary size.

In fact of these gigantic growths of animal and vegetable life in deep seas has frequently been shown by the hauls of the Sylonese and other fishermen.

It was evidently dangerous for a diver to expose himself to the attacks of these leviathans of the deep, Jack thought, as he viewed his singular surroundings, and he started back for the ladder to get upon the boat.

The boy did not design to remain there any longer than was absolutely necessary, as they had planned to raise the boat and go ahead to find an outlet from the cavern.

What such an exit existed there was no doubt, for as the boat ran into the place, it had to go out again somewhere. But where?

It was a question which they could only discover by exploring the place, and the sooner it was done the better. Jack had not taken two steps forward, however, when he was suddenly startled by a terrific commotion in the sand directly in front of him, and he recoiled.

The red sand was so violently stirred up that it filled the air surrounding the boy like a cloud.

For a few moments everything became obscured from the boy's view, and he began to retreat, when an enormous lobster arose from its burial place in the sand.

This creature, like the rest in the cavern, was of an extraordinary size, and measured at least ten feet long.

It was armed with two great nippers, and before the start the boy could get out of its way the creature shot one of its claws toward Jack, and with a fearful snap the white-knobby pincer caught him by the stomach and back.

The boy was held so fast that he could not budge an inch, and he observed the great protruding eyes of the monster roll out, and fix a glare upon him that was far from pleasant, while the great whip-like feelers projecting from over its eyes curled and uncoiled all around him.

Apparently only satisfied with what it seized, the pugnacious creature now grasped the boy with its other pincer, which was serrated and a great deal more powerful than the knobbed one.

The next moment, using its powerful tail-fin, it sprang through the water toward a hole in an adjacent heap of rocks, which it lived, carrying Jack along with it.

Its claws—four on each side—were armed with saw-like teeth, and as it moved along through the brine they rasped and scraped gratingly against the boy's metal suit.

Although the creature had a vise-like grip on the boy, his strong armor protected him from getting hurt, but he feared that the beast might break his glass visor, let in the water, and drown him if the pincers caught it.

The movements of the giant lobster were so rapid that it carried Jack a dozen yards away before Fritz saw what had happened, and observed its bluish-black body.

Horrorfied to see the peril Jack was in the Dutch boy went to his aid as rapidly as the density of the water would permit, but he could not possibly have overtaken the creature on a long run, had it not paused at its hole in the rocks.

The moment it saw Fritz coming it darted into the aperture through which the young inventor, and doubled itself up, as the hole was only large enough to admit its body and Jack's.

Enveloped entirely by the creature, Jack now felt it trying to tear him apart with its pincers, and although it clenched his limbs, owing to the flexible joints of the suit, it did no damage.

By this time Fritz came gliding up to the hole, and quick to observe his presence, the lobster cunningly laid quiet in the evident expectation of avoiding being seen.

The Dutch boy was armed with a pneumatic revolver of Jack's invention, capable of firing ten shots.

The projectiles fired from this weapon were long conical bullets, hollowed out inside and the hole filled with a high explosive powder called horrorite, covered at the base with white wax.

Fritz saw that the creature might do the young inventor some serious, if not fatal, injury, if he were left long enough in its power, and he aimed his pistol close to its hard shell.

Then he pulled the trigger.

Driven into the lobster's body the ball exploded there with the force of a bombshell, and half of the monster's back was torn to fragments and precipitated from its den.

The boy was not injured, as Fritz had taken care to fire at that part of the creature farthest removed from him.

A convulsive movement of the nippers followed, and then they relaxed, the young inventor tore his body free, and the next instant Fritz pulled him out of the rocky aperture.

The lobster was killed outright, and the explosion had frightened away all the fishes that had been hovering around.

"Was you hurt?" pantomimed the Dutch boy.

"Not in the least," replied Jack, the same way.

"Let us back to the Sea Ghost go."

"All right, come on."

Leading the way back to his own boat, Jack boarded her, followed by his friend, and going inside they took off their suits.

Going into the pilot-house, the boy said to Tim:

"You can start her off now, old fellow, as we have cleared the water pipes, and the boat ought to work all right."

"Wot's our course, lad?" queried the old sailor, nodding.

"Follow the current as near as you can."

"Ay, ay," said Tim, and raising the boat ten feet, he sent her ahead.

"What was the trouble outside?" queried Howard, curiously.

Jack explained what had happened, and then took up his position at one of the windows to keep a lookout.

Bathed in an effulgent electric halo, the Sea Ghost glided ahead over the enormous aquatic vegetation among the most peculiarly shaped fishes, and finally ran among some rocks.

She did not proceed far, however, when Jack was almost blinded by a terrific flash of fire suddenly flying up through the water ahead of the boat.

It died away as quickly as it appeared, however, and was succeeded by an appalling report, and a rumbling roar that shook the sea to its very foundations.

The Sea Ghost was rocked and shaken like an aspen, and the next moment she was struck in a hundred places by a bombardment of rocks and stones.

"Stop the boat!" shrieked Jack, recoiling from the window.

"Wot's the matter out there?" tremulously asked Tim.

"A submarine earthquake or volcano!" gasped the boy.

Filled with dread, the old sailor brought the boat to a pause.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAUGHT IN A QUAGMIRE.

For a moment Jack could apprehend nothing but inevitable destruction for the Sea Ghost, and he shouted:

"Back water! Back water, on your life, Tim."

"Ay, ay," replied the old sailor, reversing the lever.

Fritz and Harry Howard stood looking on with pallid faces, for they did not know how near they were to the submarine earthquake or volcano, which had just startled them.

The Sea Ghost was not broken, fortunately, by the fierce bombardment of stones and rocks blown up ahead of her, in the great cave under the Gulf Stream, but was badly dented.

She glided back among the black rocks, among which she had been going, and the fusillade of stones stopped, as the up-cropping rocks screened her from the bombardments.

Here she came to a pause.

The commotion in the water continued for some time before a lull came, and by that time the boy realized that the disturbance, whatever its cause was, must have ended.

Perhaps they could go ahead with the current again that ran through the mammoth caves of gigantic plants and monsters.

At any rate, the boy was anxious to go on, as the boat was now all right, and they had been submerged half a night.

By that time it must have been daylight above the sea.

Jack was sure there was an exit somewhere ahead, which he could reach by following the current.

"Drive her ahead, Tim!" he exclaimed presently. "If we stay here five days our air supply will give out."

"Is it safe yet, lad?"

"Yes. The disturbance has subsided. We must reach the surface, and go on across the Atlantic after the fugitive wreckers on board the Night Hawk, which the commander of the St. Mary's told us was following the Gulf Stream. Remember they have two days' start of us with steam and sails in their favor. Besides, we can't find the floating derelict of the Lady Violet down here, to prove Harry Howard's innocence by finding the dead body of Captain Forrest locked in the stateroom on her deck with the silver-handled knife engraved with the name of the mate Driggs."

"I must vindicate myself in the eyes of Manny Forrest," the young doctor muttered. "She believes me guilty of killing her father."

Tim started the boat ahead.

They then saw that a submarine earthquake had taken place ahead of their course, as the rocks were split and tumbled, and the utmost confusion prevailed.

Buried two hundred feet under the sea as they were, they hoped that the shock had opened a means for them to escape from the great cavern.

But in this they were disappointed.

No such opening appeared.

As soon as they had passed the center of volcanic disturbance, they found that the cavern was increasing in size.

When this fact became apparent, Jack said:

"By trying to steer the boat on our own judgment, we will simply get deeper into trouble down here, boys."

"What else can we do?" asked Harry Howard.

"Let the current carry the Sea Ghost, and simply steer her along with it, or out of the way of obstructions."

"Ay," assented Tim, "an' if thar's a outlet anywheres ahead o' her course, we are bound ter git token out o' it by this current."

"Dat indigadors only tree mile a hours vos rechistered," said Fritz, glancing up at the log-dial, "und exactly dose amount ouf speeds ve along vill peen dooken. If dis gives vos more as tree dousan miles long, und ve don't more as tree miles a hour make, how long ve vill take to got outd alretty?"

This was a problem that made everyone wince, for they realized that if the Dutch boy's words were true, their air supply would be exhausted before they got out of the cave, and they very likely might smother where they were.

This was a menacing danger they had now to fear, until

they finally discovered whether they were to get out or not. Upon leaving the region of the earthquake, they ran over a most singular-looking desert of sand.

In some places it contained patches of bright crimson sand in other places, yellow, gray, blue, green, pink, and black.

It resembled a most curiously wrought carpet spread out beneath them of a singular design, and the moment Jack's glance fell upon it he saw that this peculiar effect was from some internal disturbance at some past period of the bed of the sea.

"At the time of the great earthquake which nearly destroyed the city of Charleston," said Harry Howard, "the vessel upon which I was surgeon was in the bay of that city. I went ashore after the shock, and was shown an effect very much similar to this outside of the city. Several springs of different colored sands like these gushed up from holes in the ground."

Down in this profound depth, where the light of day never penetrated, it seemed strange to the inmates of the boat that the fish swimming around them should shine so brilliantly, even when out of the influence of the electric lights.

Moreover, gloomy as their surroundings were, they could see clearly enough, for they made light for themselves.

They were phosphorescent.

All around the Sea Ghost the light which they produced changed rapidly from a reddish to a greenish color, at certain intervals the darkness was illuminated by radiant points running into starry feathers, and so great was the number that they appeared like metallic discs heated to whiteness.

Here and there they formed beautiful bouquets, made up of glittering points; again they consisted of myriads of globular and elongated meteors of burning and flashing sparks.

Grouping and mingling, separating and approaching, ascending and descending, these wonderful wreaths of fire described a thousand capricious curves.

They would gradually fade away or seem to be extinguished in the surrounding gloom into which they melted, only to be suddenly rekindled the next moment, and again pursue the same fantastic courses they had been following.

The star-fishes created the flashing splendor of myriads of fireflies resembling the sparks flying from a great conflagration.

It is well known that the inhabitants of the greatest depths, like those of the greatest heights, are most uniformly distributed.

Near to the common surface in regions swept by winds and subject to every variety of temperature, is where the sea denizens exhibit those diversities of character which fit them either for the torrid zone or the frigid regions surrounding the poles.

"A current of warm water is as effective in keeping the distinct faunæ apart as a rampart of flames," said Jack, Howard.

"The Gulf Stream nourishes beings to which the neighboring waters would prove fatal, while on the other hand its oceanic boundaries are impassable to species that are accustomed to the cold northern seas."

"This place is like a fairy grotto," replied the doctor, he watched the play of the fishes outside. "I can hardly realize that I am not dreaming, so enchanting and yet so natural is the scene that lies before us. The domain of the sea has so long been denied to mankind that the novelty of this unparalleled sight is hard to be believed in as real."

The boat soon passed through the location occupied by these phosphorescent fishes and variegated sands, and reached a dense jungle of coarse grass that arose from the bottom to a height of fifty feet.

Into this dark, dense jungle she drifted with the current.

and shoving the mighty reeds aside as if they were nothing, she forced her way along for over an hour, Jack keeping his hands upon the wheel and keeping her steered eastward.

The jungle seemed to be interminable.

It was chiefly inhabited by ferocious sticklebacks that preyed like cannibals upon other venturesome fishes that soon fell into their voracious maws, while down along the ground there were thousands of fighting crabs of prodigious size, creeping along through the roots.

When the Sea Ghost finally emerged from the great jungle she ran over a stretch that was barren of fishes and vegetation.

The ground was as black as ink.

Here Jack resolved to stop for awhile and find out how the current ran, as he had lost it, and figure the best way to proceed.

He accordingly took on ballast and lowered the boat.

She sank down ten feet and touched the ground.

But the boat kept on sinking.

The black ground was composed of sticky mud, and the boat sunk down in it until she was half buried before the boy discovered the danger she was in.

Jack then hastily tried to raise her, but she would not budge.

The mud tenaciously clung to her and held her down in a vise-like grip, out of which she did not have the power to rise.

CHAPTER XIV.

AGROUND IN A CIRCULAR POOL.

"The boat is sinking in a bed of soft mud!" shouted Jack, as he found his efforts to raise the Sea Ghost unavailing.

"Good Lord! Pump out ther ballast, so's ther air'll lift her!" cried Tim.

"I've done so already, but the mud has got such a tight hold on her she won't arise," said Jack, in dismayed tones.

"Shiminy Christmas, den she vas sinkin' by her own weight?" gasped Fritz, as he peered out the window.

"If once she gets buried in it," muttered the doctor, "I'm afraid we will never emerge alive."

Jack pondered for a moment.

He turned their situation over in his mind.

It was very evident that the tenacity of the ooze would have to be broken in order to give the air a chance to assert its natural buoyancy and lift the boat.

But how was this to be done?

One plan suggested itself to the boy, and he resolved to try it, and as there was no time to lose, as every moment saw them sinking deeper and deeper, he cried:

"Come—Fritz—Howard! Follow me—quick!"

"What now?" questioned the doctor, as they hurried after him.

"Each of us must put on a diving suit and go out on deck. I'll lay a train of my explosive compound in the mud around the boat and discharge it. There's a chance to blow the stuff away from around the Sea Ghost, and thus release her enough to give her natural buoyancy a chance to raise her."

With this understanding they rapidly put on their suits, and securing some of the powder, a long piece of rubber tubing, and an insulated copper wire, they went out on the deck, which was now flush with the muddy surface.

Here, between them, they filled the tube with the powder, as the water did not affect it, and then began to lay it in the submarine quagmire all around the boat.

Within a few minutes they had the tube surrounding the

Sea Ghost, and connecting the copper wire to one end of it, they retreated within the water chamber.

All the windows had been covered by the shutters by this time, and the deck of the boat was rapidly going under, when Jack connected the electric wire he carried with his battery.

The next instant there followed a tremendous upheaval of the mud, dying the water as black as ink, and the boat gave a sudden lurch and shot up in the water.

Within the pilot-house Tim stood ready, braced for the shock, and ready to counteract the movements of the boat.

As soon as he found the Sea Ghost flying upward he instantly pulled one of the ballast levers, and water poured into the hold, weighting the boat so that the speed of her upward flight was diminished.

A fearful force had upheaved her, however, and she did not pause until the top of the cavern was reached.

Here she struck the top of her pilot-house with a bang that made the old sailor imagine for a moment that it was going to break in upon his head.

The railing surrounding the small hurricane deck on top of the pilot-house, and the small flag pole, were smashed to pieces by the contact.

A rebound followed.

The boat rapidly began to drop.

She was likely to sink deeper in the mud than she had been before if once she went down into it again.

But Tim did not lose his presence of mind.

He had heard Jack telling his companions how he intended to blow the mud away from around the boat, and as the old sailor anticipated just what had happened, he was ready and equal to the emergency.

No sooner did he find the boat sinking again when he started the pumps at full speed, emptying out the water he had shipped, and this gave the buoyancy fair play.

The downward plunge was resisted.

Before the boat could reach to the bottom again she came to a gradual pause, and then began to ascend.

Equal to the occasion, Tim now regulated her height to suit himself, and bringing her to an even keel about twenty feet from the bottom, he started her ahead.

She rushed along rapidly for a quarter of a mile, and finally left the discolored water far behind and came out upon a deep hollow in which a swift current was circling around.

By that time Jack and his friends had returned inside of the boat, and had taken off their diving suits.

They passed into the pilot-house.

"Horroar!" yelled Tim, with a grin. "We're free!"

"My plan certainly was successful," said Jack, smilingly, "but I am not sure that the explosion did not injure the hull. Fritz, will you make an examination of her?"

"Yah vohl," replied the Dutch boy, starting off.

"For goodness sake, where are we now?" queried Howard, peering out.

"In a circular current, atackin' aroun' a holler," said Tim, "an' we wouldn't a-been here if it wasn't for my good management."

"I give you credit for meeting the emergency with judgment," said Jack.

"Gosh a'mighty, that wuzn't nuthin'," loftily replied Tim, as he rolled his good eye upon the doctor and took a chew of plug. "I reckerlect when I wuz in ther navy, ther old frigate Wabash had floated over a enemy's mine in ther bay o' Portsmouth. At any minute she might hit a torpedo an' get blowed ter glory. Wot did I do? 'I'll save ther frigate, messmates,' ses I. 'Go ahead, Tim,' answered ther commodore. So I launched a boat an' I took two men an' a swivel gun an' rowed ahead o' ther ship. Every time I see a torpedo I fired at it an' blowed it up. In this way I cleared a passage out ter sea for ther raft, an' she——"

"You said it was the Wabash," corrected Howard.

"Ay, now. That wuz a slip o' ther tongue when I ses raft jist now," hastily said Tim. "Waal, when she got 'bout on ther sea ther enemy opened fire on me from Fortress Monroe. Ther frigate had got carried along by a gale o' wind afore she could pick me up. Thar I wuz all alone in that boat, an' ther enemy's cannon balls a-flyin' aroun' my figger head like rain——"

"You said you had two men with you," cried the doctor, sharply.

"So I did," assented Tim, recalling the fact to mind, "but ther lubbers had got their heads blowed off by them cannon balls, and that left me alone, didn't it?"

And a triumphant grin overspread Tim's rugged face.

"Well?" impatiently asked Howard.

"Several o' them shots nigh hit me. But I rowed on, a-dodgin' 'em as fast as I could, an' pretty soon——"

"Oh, come off!"

"Don't interrup' me," growled Tim.

"Sure, Mike!"

"Can't you stow yer jawin'-tackle, doctor?"

"I didn't say a word," asserted Howard.

"Ha, ha, ha! You're a liar!" chuckled the same hoarse voice which had spoken before, and glaring across the room Tim saw Bismark standing on a chair, ruffling up his feathers.

"Blast that 'ere bird," growled Tim, shaking his fist at it. "Ther lubber talks so like a human critter as ter fool a cove. If I git my flippers on it I'll twist its neck."

"Vell, I guess no, also," remarked Fritz, coming in just then from his tour of inspection. "Ouf dot barrots you make foolishness mid, I wit bleasure vill knock dot odder eyes outd ouf you alretty vonct, und don'd you forgot id neider, Dimody Dopshdays."

His report now interrupted all further remark.

He said he could not find the least damage done to the boat by the explosion, although he examined her all over.

Everyone was rejoiced to hear this good report, and Tim slackened the speed of the boat, and let the current carry her around in its vast circles.

It was very evident that the boat had lost trace of the main current flowing through the cavern, by following which they hoped to find an exit.

In case they could not find it again they were lost.

Jack glanced out the window, and to his surprise he saw that the great hollow basin underneath the boat was filled with the wrecks of many ships, and the general water-logged debris which had been carried into the caverns from the outer sea by the currents.

"You had better lower the boat on the hard white sand below us, Tim," said the boy. "I am anxious to study this place, and make a personal examination of the outside shell of the boat, to see what the damage was."

Howard and Fritz offered to accompany him again, and as he was glad to have them, they went out with him.

Tim lowered the Sea Ghost upon a firm, sandy bottom, among the debris, and a few minutes afterward Jack and his companions were clad in their diving suits, and left the boat.

A moment later they left the Sea Ghost, and strode off among the wreckage.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BIGGEST FOE YET.

The three divers made a most minute examination of the outer shell of the Sea Ghost, but beyond finding the dents in

her hull inflicted by the shower of stones, and the crushed railing and flagpole of the hurricane deck, no new damage was seen.

Jack had been troubled by the fear that his boat had sustained more injury than he dared admit to his friends, but now his alarm had dissipated, and with the assurance that she was yet in first-class condition for continuing her strange underwater journey, he signaled to Fritz:

"We need have no cause for alarm. She is as staunch and seaworthy as ever she was. I am satisfied."

"Let us this place explore already then," replied the fat boy.

Just then Harry Howard touched them to attract their attention, and pointing off in the direction from whence they came at a mass of debris that drifted in a steady stream from there and whirled around with the current, he spelled out:

"We have not lost all trace of the current yet that we were following. Watch that drift. It shows where the current flows. Observe it advancing here. At this point it goes around in a circle, owing to the shape of this hollow basin. Now, when the winding of the circle is ended, where does it flow?"

"In a case like that," replied Jack, using the deaf and dumb alphabet, "the current cannot shoot off at an angle with the circle. It must either go up or down from the axis of the rotoscope. The ground under this whirl is solid. Hence the current must fly upward, and when out of the influence of the circle, dart off in some direction."

"I agree with you," assented Howard.

"Den ve der poat vill haf to lift to go on," Fritz spelled.

The debris floating in the circle was going around around them, and gravitating to the bottom as fast as it reached the middle of the axis.

In this manner an immense mass of drift had been deposited in a mound, in the middle of the basin, upon which tons of sand was strewn.

Molluscs, barnacles, and weed covered everything to which they could attach themselves in such profusion that everything presented a most singular appearance.

The rotary motion of the water precluded the possibility of animate or inanimate objects living in that vicinage, and the sand was occasionally stirred up in clouds that blurred the brine so densely that the powerful lights of our friend's helmet lamps failed to penetrate it at times.

The gaunt skeletons of ships protruded from the bottom.

Water-logged timbers were strewn around, intermingled with broken chains, rusty iron-work, and great anchors.

Casks filled with sand and water projected from amid the wreckage, over which floated pieces of frayed rotten rope and here and there reposed the different parts of various ships.

Yet everything was bestrewn with sand.

Among these relics, which had, of course, been washed in by the powerful submarine currents, the boy found the stern of a great freight ship upon which the lettering remained intact designating it to be a craft which had mysteriously disappeared and never was heard of again.

By the time the trio had finished their examination of two hours had passed by, and glancing back at the Sea Ghost from over the pilot-house windows of which Tim had withdrawn the shutters, they saw the old sailor sitting on a chair playing with the monkey.

The lights from the wonderful boat penetrated the gloom of the water to a great distance, and being assured that they could very easily discern them as a beacon, Jack gestured:

"Fritz, I want you to go ahead to the right, and see if the current we have got to follow branches off from the circle. Make a quarter circle and then return to the boat."

"Yah," motioned the fat boy, and he glided away. "Howard," continued the young inventor to the doctor, "you go off to the left and do as I told Fritz. I will then retrace my way to where the current runs into this circle. In this manner we can establish the fact of our need to go above to look for the course we are to follow."

The doctor had been intently watching Jack's fingers while he was spelling out Fritz's directions, and knowing what was said, he signified assent, and complied with his orders.

Jack then returned past the boat, to the direction from whence they had come, and took up his search on the outer rim of the vast whirl of brine.

The moment he got beyond the influence of the whirlpool he found that Harry Howard had made no mistake in saying that the current they had been following and the whirl were one current, and he was satisfied.

It was very evident that every gallon of water that passed through the mammoth caves had to undergo the whirl before it continued on its way.

Satisfied with this, the boy strode back toward the boat, when suddenly the gloom seemed to take on an animate form, at one side, and resolved itself into a great monster.

Jack paused and riveted his glance upon it attentively, when it came gliding into the sheen of light reflected from the electric lights, and a cry of surprise escaped him.

"A turtle!" he gasped.

But such a leviathan!

It was enormous—the largest he ever saw or heard of.

It was one of the species called hawk's-bill, but of such an abnormal size that it must have weighed at least two tons.

Trunk turtles usually attain half that weight, and they are generally supposed to be the largest in creation.

The variety of this creature was the kind from which tortoise shell jewelry is made, the shell being heart-shaped plates pointing backward and overlapping each other.

Long ago in ancient Rome, the carapaces of these shells were used as cradles and bath-tubs for children, and shields for warriors.

Like all other living creatures entombed in these caves, the creature had attained a tremendous size.

It moved rapidly toward Jack with its oar-shaped legs, and catching sight of his glittering armor, came to a pause.

Fastening the glance of its dull, expressionless eyes upon the boy, it surveyed him for a moment, and then, before Jack fairly realized its threatening intention, it suddenly shot toward him and spread open its huge mouth.

"War!" muttered Jack, and he flung himself prostrate.

He saw the turtle's parrot-like beak snap together over his body, and saw the reptile fly past like an arrow.

It continued on for some distance, and upon finding that it had missed the boy it turned its tail like a rudder, ceased paddling with its right-side legs, violently swam with its left-side legs, and craning its head and neck around, it turned in a circle and aimed straight at Jack again.

The next instant it began to swim violently.

Propelled like a pile-driver, it darted straight at the young inventor again, and just as its beak came within a foot of his body, the boy ducked to one side.

Active though Jack might have ordinarily been out of the element he was then in, he soon discovered that his heavy weights, metal suit, the resisting water, and his shoe weights were excessively detrimental to rapid movements.

The beak of the turtle missed him again, it is true, but the point of its shell struck him a blow on the shoulder with the force of a cannon ball, and knocked him down.

On went the giant turtle, again passing over his body, and as soon as the boy recovered his wits he arose, and seeing his enemy turning again he ran for the boat.

He saw that he was no match for his foe.

His weapons were useless against such a thick, hard shell as it was armored with; he could not move as rapidly as the reptile, and the formidable size and strength of its jaws made the boy fear for the ability of his armor to withstand a bite from the creature.

Jack saw Tim watching him.

He gestured to the old sailor for help.

Continuing on toward the boat, with the great turtle swimming after him and fast overtaking him, the boy soon reached the accommodation ladder and mounted it.

He was yet a dozen feet in advance of his foe, and saw that the turtle, from repeated defeats, was now more determined than ever to overhaul and snap at him.

Reaching the deck, Jack looked for Tim again, but the sailor had disappeared from the window.

Across the deck started the boy, but he had not taken two steps when the turtle came after him.

To try a new maneuver the boy faced it, unbuckled and dropped his shoe weights rapidly, and sprang forward just as his foe reached him, and his body safely passed its head.

But its jaws closed upon his foot, and he fell prone upon its back, when the creature swam off with him.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LIGHT OF DAY.

Despite every effort to release himself, Jack found it was utterly impossible to wrench his foot away from the turtle.

He glanced back at the boat, and saw Tim come out on deck, clad in a diving suit, to lend his assistance; but he was too late.

As the hawk-bill swam away with Jack the boy withdrew a knife from his belt and cut and gashed at the turtle's head, for the pressure of its jaws upon his foot was very painful, despite the strength of the armor.

For several moments the wounds seemed to make but little impression, but as soon as they were felt, the turtle suddenly withdrew its head and neck into its shell.

It did not relax its grip on Jack's foot, however, and its action would have broken the boy's leg, had he not slid down to the edge of the shell and fallen to the ground.

The turtle had stopped swimming now, and sunk to the sand.

There it laid with its head and claws drawn into its armor, and the boy laid on his back, utterly unable to help himself.

At this juncture Fritz suddenly appeared, and seeing what was occurring, he drew a pistol and hastened up to the boy.

Fritz knew very well that nothing short of a cannon ball could have pierced the strong armor of the turtle, and, therefore, did not waste any valuable time trying to injure the turtle in that manner. The fat boy had another point in view.

He reached the place where Jack laid, and seeing the turtle's beak still clutching the young inventor's foot, he aimed his pistol between the two shells, and fired several shots.

Exploding within the monster's body, the bullets created an effect that was magical upon the situation.

Out shot the turtle's head and claws.

Jack was released.

With part of its body blown out of its armor, the turtle swam away and disappeared in the gloom.

Fritz helped Jack to his feet, but the young inventor's foot was so badly wrenched that he could scarcely stand upon it.

The Dutch boy assisted him back to the boat, and getting him inside, they found that his ankle was sprained.

It was carefully doctored, and Jack exclaimed:
 "By Jove, it's lucky I didn't lose the foot entirely."
 "Himmel! vasn'd I mad dot de durdles away vas got mid-
 outd even dot I kill it," grumbled Fritz regretfully.
 "Where's Harry Howard?"
 "I didn't vas seen him yet."
 "Did you find out anything?"
 "Der don't vas a pranch gurrend."
 "I think my plan to ascend was right, after all."
 "Dash me, lad," said Tim, "if I'd a-got a shot at that ere
 turkle wi' one o' ther guns in ther after turret, I'd a-hushed
 it."

Half an hour passed by.
 Nothing was seen of the doctor, and our friends became
 uneasy.

"I'll bet he has lost himself," said Jack, limping over to
 the wheel, "and I'm going to start off in search of him."
 "Better wait awhile longer, my hearty," advised Tim.
 "He should have been here as soon as Fritz."
 "I tink so, neider," coincided the Dutch boy, nodding.
 "Then I'll start. He may be in trouble and need us, boys."
 And with no further remark, Jack started the boat off and
 headed her in the direction which Howard had taken.
 They reached the outer circuit of the current, presently,
 and searched all over for the missing man without avail.

An hour slipped by.
 "He hasn't got more than enough air left in his cylinder to
 last him an hour longer," said Jack gravely. "If we don't
 find him before it's used up he will be asphyxiated."
 "Holdt on! Shtob der poat a leedle!" cried Fritz just then
 in excited tones.

"What's the matter now?" demanded Jack, complying with
 alacrity.
 "Looker ower dere!" responded the fat boy, pointing out the
 window.

"Great heaven, it's the doctor besieged by fishes."
 A strange and terrible sight now met their view.
 Only fifty feet away they saw a school of what might have
 been mackerel at least a yard in length.

They were swarming in a bunch around the doctor, so
 that only an occasional glimpse of him could be caught
 through the squirming mass.

There were thousands upon thousands of these fishes gather-
 ed in a ball as big as a house around the man, every one of
 the creatures desperately striving to get in at him.

Of course, they could do him no bodily harm, but it was
 very clear that such a dense mass prevented the doctor mov-
 ing as he wished to, and there had been every prospect of
 these voracious fish pinning him there so long that his supply
 of air would become exhausted and cause his death.

They had already been surrounding and attacking him
 ever since he left Fritz, and being of a persevering nature,
 they would very likely have remained an indefinite period
 had the Sea Ghost not appeared just at this crisis.

Jack flashed a steady stream of light upon the wriggling
 mass of mackerel, and sent the boat flying toward them.

Fritz had on his diving suit, and hastened out. The fish
 darted away, and the doctor obtained a momentary respite,
 and hurried to the boat.

Fritz assisted him on board, and they then passed inside,
 took off their diving suits, and joining Jack and Tim, the
 doctor said:

"Did you ever see anything like that before?"
 "They didn't hurt you, did they?" laughed the young in-
 ventor.

"No, but they were trying hard to devour me."
 The boy found that the doctor had not seen any continu-
 ance of the current, and driving the boat into the whirlpool

he raised it until it was out of the influence of the rotar
 motion.

His prediction was now proved correct, for a swift curren
 was found flowing away to the eastward, and letting th
 boat drift into it, the current carried her swiftly away.

A cliff loomed up ahead, and in the escarpment a large an
 rugged opening was seen, into which the Sea Ghost was ca
 ried.

It was a round tunnel that wound up in a zig-zag man
 for a distance of over two hundred miles, and they followed
 slowly along without accident, dining at regular interval
 sleeping as the watch was changed, and the next day dawned

There was no difference for them between day and night
 though, in that fearful gloom, and they took special care
 the lights, for if they should have given out it would hav
 rendered them helpless.

When the following day dawned upon the sea above the
 mates of the boat were awakened by a terrific uproar in th
 pilot-house, and when Jack, Howard, and Tim rushed up int
 the turret they heard Fritz yell excitedly:

"Go for him, you son-ouf-a-sea-gooks. Bull der tail outd
 him! Vhitskers, you pandy-legged galoots, leaf go dot ba
 rot's neck. Holy Moses, vot's der medder mit yer, Bismarck
 Vhy yer don't scratch der map ouf Shermany all ofer h
 faces?"

There were high jinks to pay in the room.
 The monkey and parrot were fighting furiously, and mi
 gled with the doleful howls of Whiskers every time he got
 scratch and the ear-splitting shrieks of Bismarck every tim
 he got a bite arose the voice of Fritz exciting them on.

Always hating each other, the bird and beast fought wit
 such rage now that the place was full of fur and feathers, an
 the combatants were covered with wounds and glory.

"For goodness sake stop the row," cried Jack as he dro
 the monkey into a locker and the parrot back in the stac
 room.

"Ach, vot did yer vant to spoil der circus for?" asked Fri
 as a broad grin overspread his face. "I vos bet ten dolla
 against mineselluf dot Bismarck vould knock dot mong
 outd."

"Well, it was time for us to turn out anyway. Where
 we?"

"Yust outd ouf dot dunnle going," replied Fritz.
 "Everything all right?" asked Jack, looking out the wa
 dow.

"Fer sure, Mike," grinned Fritz, "only dot Dim's mon
 vas half ouf ids dail got chewed off alretty."

Jack saw that the boat was emerging into another cave
 in which water was bubbling and gushing up from many s
 marine ice-cold springs from the bottom that soon chang
 the temperature of the boat at least twenty degrees.

The water was lighter, and he saw a strange change in s
 color of the marine plants distributed around the place.

He knew that they were very sensible to the action of l
 and are of different colors according to the depth at who
 they grow.

These plants are divided into three prevailling sections, e
 green living near the surface, floating and found in la
 quantities in the grassy seas, the red are in small depths
 rocks near coasts, and brown which constitute the great
 part of submarine forests grow at greater depths.

In this cavern the vegetation was red.
 No sooner was this distinguished by Jack when a dull
 gleamed ahead in the gloom, and he cried excitedly:

"See there—a streak of light—an avenue of escape!"

"Tim, drive the boat surfaceward."

"Ay, ay, my lad!"

The old sailor seized the lever and pulled it, but to
 blank astonishment of everybody the boat failed to ascend

CHAPTER XVII.

THE END OF THE CAVE.

It was very evident that some accident had occurred to prevent the Sea Ghost from rising, and Jack sent Fritz and the doctor flying to different parts of the boat, while he went to another, in an effort to discover what had happened to her.

Tim, in the meantime, had brought the Sea Ghost to a pause, and saw, by peering ahead, that the current they were in had now taken an upward swing at an abrupt angle.

It evidently poured out of an opening overhead, through which the faint ray of light slanted down on the boat.

Fully half an hour was spent examining the boat from one end to the other, yet the searchers could not find anything broken.

Jack was very much perplexed.

He returned to the pilot-house with his two companions.

"Puzzling as it may be," said he, "we can't find a break anywhere."

"Wot perwents ther boat arisin', then?" queried Tim.

"All dot machineries in good order vas," said Fritz, emphatically.

"Nor could I find anything wrong about the hull," added Howard.

"You can depend that I made a critical examination of the batteries," Jack chimed in, "and I found them perfectly intact."

Completely at a loss to understand the cause of the trouble, they turned the matter over in their minds, and were about to discuss it again, when suddenly all the lights went out.

Utter gloom now filled the boat.

Venting cries of amazement, the four stared around in the darkness that suddenly enveloped everything, and Jack exclaimed:

"Mercy! what caused that?"

"Were the batteries all right?" asked the doctor.

"Positively. I made a special examination of them," answered Jack.

The electric fan wheels had been busily buzzing on the wall, and a moment afterward they began to slacken speed and after awhile stopped revolving altogether.

"Everything seems to be giving away!" exclaimed Jack in alarm. "Yet the pumps, the lights, and the fan-wheels are all independent of each other. I am sure the batteries are all right, and as the three things divide their power from them, there can be but one solution to this mystery."

"To what do you allude!" questioned Howard, nervously.

"The wires."

"How so?"

"Every controlling wire of the various parts of this boat is gathered into one bunch, and this bunch runs up from below the floor, and is brought into this room, from which point they are carried to the switchboard, and branched off to the levers."

"Vell?" demanded Fritz, impatiently, as he knew this already.

"It is my opinion that the trouble lies in the wires."

"How is we a-goin' ter prove it without no lights?" growled Tim.

Before Jack could vouchsafe a reply, a most unearthly mothered yell pealed through the turret.

It startled every one so that it made them jump.

"What's that?" demanded Jack.

"Not me, my hearty," from Tim.

"Und me, neider," from Fritz.

"I didn't utter a syllable," from Howard.

"Nor did I," began Jack, when

"W-o-w! Ho-o-o-o-o!" came the yell again.

This time it was louder than before, and so intense, pathetic, and full of misery, that it sounded like a man screaming in the stress of some unbearable pain.

But it was followed by a volley of other cries.

"Whiskers—ther monkey!" shouted Tim, recognizing the voice.

And so it was, but they could not locate where it was.

The cries continued, and as an idea flashed across Jack's mind, he suddenly cried to his friends:

"Why, he's in the closet where I locked him after separating him from the parrot, with whom he was fighting."

"Dot settled it, den," said Fritz, struck by an idea.

"What now?" demanded the boy.

"Vhy—gief me a match, und I show you vot."

Tim handed the Dutch boy a lucifer, and he groped his way to the closet door, guided hither by the prolonged howls of the monkey, and finding it finally, he unfastened it, flung it open, and out sprang Whiskers.

He scampered away.

There was scarcely any need of the match.

The closet was blazing with electric sparks, snapping, crackling, and flying from the ends of three wires, which the monkey had somehow broken in two.

Here was the key to the puzzling mystery at last.

The wires came up bunched through the closet from below, and Whiskers had broken three of them, when the electricity leaked out, burned and scared the monkey into a stunned condition, and when he recovered he began to howl.

"Dere vas der cause of dot droubles!" triumphantly cried Fritz, pointing at the flying blue sparks. "A leetle more, und dot ring-tailed son-ouf-a-sea-gooks would der Sea Ghosts on fire haf seted! Now you see, don'd you?"

"Fritz, you're a jewel?" cried Jack. "Get me a pair of rubber gloves, and two pairs of pliers. In five minutes I will have those live wires repaired, and we will have power, light and air again from the fans!"

"Dot was easier done as said," growled Fritz, as he groped his way to the storeroom to comply.

He soon returned with the tools, however.

Jack thereupon put the gloves on his hands to insulate them and make joints on the wires.

As soon as the light wire was joined the incandescent lamps flared up, when the fan wheel wire was connected the little brass propellers affixed to the walls began to fly around buzzing, and the wire set the pumps throbbing.

"Hurrah!" cried the doctor, delightedly, as the boat began to arise. "Fritz is an electrician—every bit of him!"

"Dere vas vun brincible mit electricity," said the fat boy, tickled at this praise. "Und dot is if a eledric machines don't vork, for sure dere someding der medder mit it vas."

"We're a-nearin' ther surface, lad," said Tim, eyeing the water-gauge dial with his good optic. "See thar?"

"The registers mark a depth of twenty-five feet," said Jack.

"And here's the opening at last!" exclaimed Howard.

The boat had reached the place through which the light of day slanted, and they were all upon the tiptoe of intense expectation, when the boat paused.

The opening was a long slot in the roof of the cavern.

It was too narrow to let the boat pass through!

A cry of intense disappointment pealed from every lip.

"Baffled!" cried Jack.

The rest made no reply.

They were too disappointed to speak.

For several minutes the most intense silence prevailed in the Sea Ghost, and then several sighs were heard emanating from the lips of the rest of her crew.

With blank faces, and a downcast feeling at heart,

glanced piteously at each other, and Tim stopped the expulsion of water from the reservoir, and cried bitterly:

"There's no escape for us yet, my lads."

"Ach Gott! vot luck," groaned Fritz.

"Perhaps," suggested Harry Howard, in chagrined tones, "if we were to follow this slot it might lead us to an opening wide enough for the boat to get through."

This ray of hope was eagerly accepted by all.

Jack turned to the old sailor, nodded, and said:

"Lower her a few feet, Tim, and try it."

Shipping a small enough quantity of brine to carry the boat down ten feet from the rocky roof of the water cavern, Tim pulled the lever to start the Sea Ghost ahead slowly.

She kept within plain view of the opening as she went along, and in this manner covered several miles when they saw that the slot, instead of widening, had grown narrower and narrower, until at last it became a mere crack.

After this daylight vanished entirely.

The feelings of Jack and his friends were of the most hopeless kind now, for they found as they proceeded that the water ahead of the boat was utterly tideless and still.

It seemed to indicate that there was no outlet ahead, and coming to a wall obstructing their course, the boat paused at the extreme end of the water cavern.

They could go no further ahead.

As soon as Jack ascertained this he said:

"Turn the boat, and run back to the opening, Tim."

"I can't, my lad. We're in sich a narrow tunnel now thar ain't room enough ter turn ther Sea Ghost around."

"Very well—run her backwards then."

"Sta'rn'ards she goes," replied Tim, suiting the action to his words.

"Vot you vas goin' ter do now, Shack?" queried Fritz.

"Force our way out of here," resolutely said the boy.

"By what means?" asked Howard, in surprise.

"You will see in a few minutes."

CHAPTER XVIII.

UTILIZING THE GUNS.

In the course of a very short space of time the Sea Ghost reached the slot in the roof of the great cavern, and Jack put on a diving suit, procured a long rod, and having given Tim some directions, he passed out on the deck alone.

The boat now arose until its towers grazed the opening, and Jack ascended the stairs to the top of the after turret.

From here he began to carefully measure the thickness of the wall of the roof, and studied the kind of stone it was composed of.

These thicknesses varied every way from five to ten feet, and the stone of which the cavern roof was formed he found to be one of the hardest that grew under the sea.

In this manner he secured a number of measurements, but in no place found the thickness to be less than five feet.

Indeed, this only occurred in one spot, and he had very carefully located it, and when his examination was all completed he went up to the pilot-house window and signaled Tim to run the boat back to that particular spot.

It was reached after some delay, and the boat paused under it, when the boy passed inside again.

Having unscrewed his visor, Jack said to his friends:

"This is the place where we must commence operations, for the wall above for a distance of ten yards is no more than five feet thick, and I can see daylight above, and shells below."

"Why, how can you see below, as it's over a hundred and fifty feet?" demanded the doctor, incredulously.

"My dear fellow, shells are distinctly visible in some parts of the Arctic at a depth of 460 feet," replied Jack, "and at 940 feet is still of sufficient intensity to permit objects to be seen dimly. This also applies to the West Indies. Absolute darkness only prevails 1,000 feet down, or about one-tenth of the average depth of the seas, and the rays of the moon penetrate 40 feet. So why shouldn't I see shells only 100 feet down?"

The doctor said no more, and Jack passed into the after turret, and presently shouted through a speaking-tube:

"Start the boat ahead about eighty-eight feet, Tim."

"Ay, ay!" came the sailor's reply.

The Sea Ghost glided forward the required distance, and when she came to a pause the boy opened the breech of one of the guns, thrust in a long brass cylinder, and locked it again.

Within this cartridge there was a leaden bullet of the bomb pattern, filled with the young inventor's high explosive.

He then capped the muzzle of the weapon, and turning a crank, caused it to glide forward and protrude through a split rubber disc set in the port hole, until it reached a ring of felt encircling the gun barrel, which prevented the ingress of water.

The boy peered through a glass-covered loophole and sighted the gun to bear upon the stony roof at the edge of the slot.

He then fired the gun.

No detonation ensued—only a thud.

But as soon as the projectile struck the rocks it burst, and the effect of the impact could be felt in the boat.

There was a flash, a terrific bubbling in the water, and then a shower of flying stone which had been blown off.

When the agitation of the water subsided the boat had recoiled fully fifty feet, but the powerful electric light showed plainly that the destructive shot had torn out an immense piece of the stone overhead.

A smile of satisfaction crossed Jack's face.

"Just two more such shots will tear a breech open plenty large enough to give us egress," he muttered.

Then he loaded another shot, and roared up to Tim to return the boat to where she had recoiled from.

As soon as this was done Jack fired again, and more of the stone was blown away.

At this juncture Harry Howard sauntered in.

"What are you doing, Jack?" he asked in surprise.

"Blowing a hole in the roof to get through," the boy replied.

"Good! Can I assist you?"

"No. I'm almost through."

A moment later a third shot was discharged, and there followed a tremendous upheaval of stone as it flew through the breech and left an opening fully thirty feet wide.

A faint cheer came through the tube from Tim and Fritz.

The way to the open sea was open!

"Send her up!" yelled Jack.

"Hold fast!" answered Tim.

"All right!"

"Here she goes!"

And as the stern horizontal screw spun around, Jack and the doctor grasped the guns to keep their balance, for the stern of the boat went down until she laid at an erect angle, and shot upward.

Straight as an arrow dashed the gallant boat for the opening, and she passed through it, grazing the sides.

Up she flashed, and so great was her force that when she reached the surface of the sea she sprang half her length from the water and fell with a bang.

A shower of spray splashed up all around her.

The horizontal screw was stopped, and when she settled down upon the sea on an even keel again, Jack and his companions cried with one accord:

"Saved!"

It was not expected so soon.

The joy they all felt defies description.

But they were soon recalled to a sense of their surroundings by Jack, who had flung open the windows.

"A steamship," was his cry.

"Where? Where?" asked the rest.

They rushed to the windows and peered out.

It was then later in the afternoon, for the sun was setting and not ten yards away there floated an enormous line in the easy swell, heading for the east.

Upon her upper decks a crowd of officers, sailors, and passengers were crowded along the railing, looking down upon the boat, which had made such a wonderful appearance to them from beneath the sea.

The halo of electric lights lent a weird aspect to Jack's boat, and she called forth exclamations of the most intense astonishment from the spectators upon the steamer.

Under ordinary circumstances Jack would have tried to conceal his singular craft from view by submerging her as soon as he beheld the steamer; but now he was so glad to get upon the surface again he did not feel at all disposed to go under at once, so she floated on the surface.

Scores of people were staring down at her.

At first they imagined that she was some great deep sea monster, but as soon as Tim shut off the electric lights, and they caught sight of the crew of human beings clad in white duck suits upon her, they realized that she was a submarine craft of some sort.

"Ship ahoy!" yelled the captain of the steamer presently.

"Steamer ahoy!" replied Jack, going out on deck.

"What craft is that?"

"The Sea Ghost, of Wrightstown."

"Where are you bound for?"

"Across the Atlantic."

"Didn't you come up from under the sea?"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Then that is a submarine boat?"

"It is."

"Who commands her?"

"I do."

"And who are you?"

"Jack Wright."

"Confound it, give us an account of yourself."

"I have given you all I intend to, captain."

The boy laughed at the perplexity of the other, and returned inside, leaving the crew and passengers on the steamer wondering who and what he was, where he came from, and where he was bound for, what sort of a boat the Sea Ghost was—and, in fact, a thousand similar puzzling questions.

Tim had taken their bearings as near as he could by the sun, and figured out their latitude and longitude.

It was then discovered that they were nearly a thousand miles out at sea from Cape Hatteras.

"Submerge the boat, Tim," said the boy. "The longer we remain upon the surface the more we will arouse the curiosity of those people, and—"

"Hull on dere!" interposed Fritz, warningly.

"Wot now?" queried Tim, with his hand on the lever.

"Someding vas habben by dot steamers."

He pointed ahead, and they heard the alarmed cries of the passengers and crew, saw them hurrying to and fro across the deck, and saw the steamer haul to.

"Don't submerge her! Something has gone wrong with

them!" hurriedly cried Jack. "Start her off for the steamer instead, Tim, and we will soon find out what the trouble is with them."

The old sailor nodded, and sent the Sea Ghost flying toward the other vessel.

CHAPTER XIX.

ACROSS THE OCEAN.

"Ahoy, there! What's the trouble?"

"We have run down a wreck."

"Did you injure your craft any?"

"No, but the passengers were frightened."

"Where is the wreck?"

"Floating under the water half a fathom."

"A derelict?"

"Yes."

This dialogue passed between Jack and the steamship captain as the Sea Ghost dashed up to the big vessel.

Upon finding that the steamer was uninjured, Jack went inside, closed the doors and windows, and submerging his boat, he turned on the electric lights, illuminating the water.

Hardly had this been done when he saw the wreck which the steamer had struck floating in the water a cable's length distant.

She was buried about five feet from the surface, and was a large wooden steamer bearing the name of the Lady Violet.

"Great Lord!" cried Harry Howard, as he observed her name.

"It's the craft we are searching for!" exclaimed Jack, suddenly.

There was no mistake about it being the vessel the doctor had been wrecked on, and he eagerly cried:

"Wright! Wright! My salvation is at hand."

"This is the work of Providence!" exclaimed the young inventor.

"Oh, who expected such luck as this?" cried Howard, delightedly.

"I'll run the Sea Ghost over to her."

"Yes, yes. We can board her now, burst in the door of the stateroom, and I'll show you the evidence of Tom Driggs' crime."

"The very fact of that rascal being in league with the wreckers is quite sufficient to convict him, anyway," said Jack. "And if it should ever prove to be our good fortune to fall in with the Night Hawk and capture him, there will be no trouble to convict the rascal, Harry Howard."

The Sea Ghost ran up to the drifting wreck and Jack and Harry put on their diving suits, went out on deck, and made fast to it.

As soon as the hawsers held the two boats together, the boy and the doctor, armed with an ax, crossed over on the steamer's deck.

She had not been damaged much by her voyage under the sea in the current of the warm Gulf Stream, and crossing her deck with the light of the Sea Ghost blazing upon her, they reached the upper staterooms.

Going along these and examining the numbers over the doors the doctor presently came to a pause in front of one and spelled:

"Here is the room."

Jack raised his heavy-headed, short-handled ax, and rapidly rained a shower of blows upon the door, with the result that it flew open, revealing a flooded room.

Within this apartment there floated the bloated cor

Captain Robert Forrest near the ceiling, and Jack drew it down.

A most repulsive sight was presented to his view, but he stifled his sickening sensations, and saw that there was a silver-handled sheath knife buried in the bosom of the corpse.

Jack withdrew the weapon and let the body float away.

Upon the haft of the knife he saw the name of Tom Driggs engraved.

Satisfied with his scrutiny the boy handed the blade to Howard.

"Here is the proof of your innocence," he gestured.

"Thank God you are a witness to the fact," returned the doctor.

"Ay, and willing to swear to what I have seen in court."

"There is nothing more we can do here, Jack."

"In that case I will blow up the derelict."

The boy fastened a bomb with a wire attached to the wreck, and driving his vessel away exploded the bomb, blowing the wreck to pieces.

Soon afterwards the Sea Ghost arose to the surface.

In the gathering gloom of night they saw the big steamer fast disappearing in the distance, and then sat down to supper.

Fritz remained on duty while they were eating.

"The question now," said Jack, "has reduced itself to finding the Night Hawk, and making a captive of her."

"Dash my toplights if that ain't easier said than done," Tim remarked. "We don't know where ter look fer her, lad."

"Very true," assented the boy, "but as she can't be more than four hundred miles ahead of us, if she is crossing the Atlantic, I am positive we can overhaul her if she is now following the regular beaten course of trans-Atlantic vessels."

"How do you figure that out?" questioned the doctor.

"In this way," replied Jack. "That craft don't make much more than fifteen knots, and this one can go forty—a gain of twenty-five knots an hour. In twenty-four hours we gain 600 miles. Consequently we ought to overhaul them pretty rapidly."

"That's so," assented the doctor.

They arose from the table now, Jack's sprained ankle feeling almost well, and went up into the pilot-house to Fritz.

Jack then put his boat under full speed.

Tim busied himself bandaging up his monkey's burns, Fritz went to get his supper, and Jack put out all the lights except one in the cabin.

Harry Howard had gone into the latter compartment, and taking out the boxes of gold which they had taken from the wrecked steamer he opened them.

The boxes were filled with specie to the amount of \$100,000, but it was with a feeling of disappointment that the doctor realized that when they reached home, and the Boston ship owners were notified of the whereabouts of the wreck, they would have to turn this princely fortune over to them.

Having replaced the gold in a locker, Howard returned to the pilot-house, where he found Jack in charge of the wheel, and the boat flying past the steamer which had collided with the Lady Violet.

He told the young inventor what the result of his investigation was, and when he finished Jack remarked, dryly:

"It's very nice for us if we had the gold to divide between us, but as it wouldn't be honorable to do so, and as the girl who owns her, it must, of course, revert to her owners upon our return to port."

"All the next few days the boat plowed its way through the water, and on the fourth night fell on the sea and passed

With the dawn of day there loomed up in the far distance a dim outline of coast line, and several ships were seen.

Jack closely scanned them with his glass, and shook his head.

None of them were the wreckers' craft he was in search of, and he called the attention of his friends to the European shore.

"I'm afraid our journey has been in vain," he muttered.

"See thar, Jack," said Tim. "One o' them 'ere ships is a-signalin' to us ter approach."

He pointed at a large brig flying the American flag, and observing her flag-signals summoning him, Jack at once steered his boat toward the vessel, wondering in the meantime what was wanted of him.

Within a short time the Sea Ghost reached the brig, and the boy hailed her crew, asking what they wanted.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TWO LOVERS.

When the Sea Ghost ranged up to within a cable's length of the brig, Jack and his companions observed a terrific row going on aboard the vessel, and stopped their boat.

The crew of the brig was evidently drunk.

In the stern stood the captain, mate and a couple of men, when the staggering crew came rushing aft brandishing a number of various kinds of weapons, intent upon attacking them.

"Halt!"

It was the captain's stern voice that rang out.

But the frenzied men kept right on, heedless of the cry. "Remember, this is mutiny!" roared the captain, angrily. "Down with him!" yelled one of the crew, brandishing his weapons furiously. "He ain't agoin' ter work us ter death, is he, boys?"

"No!" roared the rest, fiercely.

"He ain't agoin' ter cut off our allowance o' grog?"

"No!" came the emphatic shout.

"Nor he ain't goin' ter lock us up!"

"Down with him—throw him overboard!" cried the rest.

"I did nothing unjust," shouted the captain. "You were all an unruly gang of drunken, lazy vagabonds, and I was forced to use strict measures to keep you down."

"Kill him! Kill him!" was the fierce yell.

"Cowards! we are defenseless!"

"So much the better," was the retort.

Halfway across the deck they ran, when suddenly the cabin door was flung open, and out on deck, between the frenzied crew and the captain's party, rushed a beautiful young girl.

She was dressed in a feminine sailor suit, and her long, golden hair was waving in the wind as she rushed between the contending parties with her hand upraised, and cried, thrillingly:

"Stop—stop, you cowards! Would you harm a defenseless man?"

The crew paused.

The moment Howard caught sight of the girl he turned as pale as death, staggered back, and cried hoarsely:

"My God, it is Fanny Forrest, my sweetheart!"

"They need our help!" cried Jack. "Tim, run up to the brig."

"Ay, ay, my hearty."

"Fritz, procure our rifles."

"In vun minutes!"

Over to the brig glided the Sea Ghost, when Jack, Howard,

the Dutch boy rushed to the railing, and covering the inous crew with their weapons, the young inventor shout-

"Stand back there, or we'll fire!"

brought to a realization of their peril, the crew recoiled.

"Down into the forecabin with you!" screamed Jack, as he his friends sprang over the bulwarks upon the brig's

attering cries of alarm, the drunken crew hastened to obey.

Down into the forecabin they scampered, and the moment y disappeared the captain dashed forward, and closing the npanionway, he locked them down in their quarters.

"Thank Heaven, we were saved just in time!" he cried. Meantime the brave girl had faced the newcomers.

Her face turned as white as snow when she beheld the doc- and gasping for breath, and her eyes distended, she reeled ck.

"Harry!" she gasped hoarsely.

"Fanny!" cried the doctor, eagerly.

He sprang toward her with outstretched arms.

But she recovered her self-possession instantly, and bring- g him to pause, by a motion of her hand, she cried:

"Stop! You have escaped from prison, I see!"

A pained expression crossed the doctor's face, a deep flush erspread his features, and he hung his head.

"I am an escaped prisoner," he muttered.

The girl drew herself up haughtily.

"And you forget," she cried bitterly, "that you are my ather's murderer. You dare to address me this way. Oh, a hame!"

The doctor raised his glance to hers and met her flashing ook of scornful indignation unflinchingly.

"I have asserted my innocence before," he exclaimed, "and ou disdained to believe me. Now I will prove it!"

"What!" she cried, with a violent start.

"In this submarine boat I found the wreck of the Lady Vio- let, and recovering the body of your father, the owner of the boat found implanted in the heart of the corpse the tell-tale blade that vindicates me and stamps Tom Driggs the real murderer of your unfortunate father!"

"Great heavens! Can this be possible?"

"You shall soon have it proved, I tell you."

The girl burst into tears and turned away.

Jack and the captain met and held a conference, in which the man heartily thanked the boy for helping him.

"I did not discover until too late what a ruffianly crew I had shipped," explained the skipper. "Only the strongest measures kept them suppressed. But they broke out into an open mutiny to-day. I signaled you for help. They have broken into the liquor locker and most are drunk."

"What port are you bound for?"

"We came from New York and are heading for Havre."

"And now?"

"It is but two days' sail from here."

"Indeed! How will you get along?"

"Oh, we can easily work the boat without them."

"Good. You have them safely caged, I presume?"

"Yes, and when we make port I will have the scoundrels locked up and ship a new crew to return."

"Where did you get the young girl from?"

New York; she is a passenger. Her father was an old nd of mine. She had trouble with her lover, who mur- ed her father, and being very nervous, she resolved to take is voyage to recover."

"Ah, I see. That young man is her lover."

"Indeed!" was the surprised rejoinder.

"Let me give you the facts," said Jack.

He thereupon told the captain all that had occurred, and when he finished the girl joined them and said to Jack:

"I am afraid to remain on this ship with those desperate ruffians any longer. Will you take me for a passenger?"

"But they are locked up and harmless now," replied Jack.

"I don't care—I'm afraid."

"Besides, I'm soon going back to New York, and as I am bent upon a very dangerous cruise I think you had better remain."

"No, no!" exclaimed the girl, glancing furtively at Howard.

She had reason to believe now that she had acted too hastily and unreasonably in condemning him for the death of her father, and dreaded the idea of him going away in the Sea Ghost and leaving her perhaps forever.

It was evident that she yet loved Harry Howard, and the young inventor saw through it, and understood that her flimsy pretext for not wishing to remain aboard the brig was actuated by her desire to be near the doctor.

He did not want the girl with him particularly, but at this juncture the doctor turned to him and said:

"Will you take her, Wright?"

"Very well, if she wishes to come," assented Jack, smilingly.

The girl was so eagerly anxious to be united with her lover, now that she understood him to be guiltless, that she did not hesitate a moment to board the boy's boat.

Her trunk was also carried aboard.

"That settles it," laughed Jack. "They'll come together again."

"I'm glad of it," said the captain, "for she is a splendid girl, and was pining away over the supposed brutality of the doctor."

Jack now asked the captain about the Night Hawk, and received the information that they had spoken her not less than an hour ago, and she was headed for Gibraltar.

Jack returned aboard the Sea Ghost and started in pursuit.

He then went into the cabin, where he found Harry Howard explaining everything that had befallen him, and the doctor called upon Jack to substantiate his story which he did.

The poor girl piteously begged Harry to forgive her for condemning him of the hideous crime for which he had been arrested.

The doctor loved the girl too sincerely to harbor any malice against her and readily assented.

Jack then left the happily reunited pair to plan out how the doctor would vindicate himself in the eyes of the law, and went up into the pilot-house with Tim and Fritz.

Several hours afterward a sail was sighted ahead.

Jack leveled his spy-glass at it, and closely scrutinized her.

"By thunder, it is the Night Hawk!" he exclaimed a few moments afterward, as he lowered his glass.

CHAPTER XXI.

AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

The coast wreckers' ship was close to the lee, and was making fairly good headway when Jack discovered her.

It was obvious that she was bound for the Mediterranean, and the boy at once began making preparations to attack her.

The first thing he did was to lower the Sea Ghost under the water out of sight of the crew on his enemies' ship.

He next instructed each of his companions as to how they were to act, and then he drove the boat ahead.

Miss Forrest went into the saloon, saying she would stay there until they had ended the affair.

Jack went ahead until he was directly under the Night Hawk, when Fritz was sent out on deck with a coil of rope,

to the end of which was a suction cup, and as soon as Jack raised the Sea Ghost within arm's reach of the ship's hull he pressed the sucker against the planks.

It adhered to the Night Hawk so firmly that nothing but loosening the valve would have liberated it.

This being done, Jack pumped out the ballast, and the boat suddenly arose from the sea alongside of the ship.

Fritz fastened the other end of the line to a ring bolt in the deck.

Flinging open one of the windows, Jack hailed the ship with:

"Night Hawk, ahoy!"

His unexpected hail caused a sensation.

Every one on the deck had seen that there was not another craft in sight, and upon observing the submarine boat suddenly rise up from the depths, the sight startled them very much.

Rushing to the bulwarks, they glanced down at the boat.

Chief among them was Tom Driggs, his naval cap bearing the word "Captain" in gilt braid.

It was therefore very evident that he had succeeded to the command of the ship by some means, and as soon as he beheld the boat he recognized her.

"The Sea Ghost!" he cried, in startled tones.

"Haul to!" shouted Jack, authoritatively.

"What for?"

"I wish to board you."

"We want no strangers here."

"You know I've chased you across the ocean," retorted Jack, "and I don't intend to return without you."

"Keep off!" warned the man hissing, as he caught sight of Harry Howard. "To board this craft means death!"

"I'll risk it," said Jack.

The wrecker turned to his men, and yelled to them to repel boarders, when like magic every one drew a pistol and fired at the crew of the Sea Ghost, Jack just having time to close the blinds of the window when a rain of bullets rattled against the metallic boat in various places.

Fritz stood the fire like a metallic statue.

Scores of the bullets struck his armor, but failed to pierce it, and he drew a pistol and returned the fire.

Jack pressed the signal button.

"Tim!" shouted Jack, through a speaking tube.

"Ay, ay!" came the reply.

"Sweep her decks!"

Out went one of the guns, and a shot was discharged.

It struck the taffrail of the ship and burst with a terrible explosion, knocking the woodwork flying in all directions.

A yell from the crew of the Night Hawk greeted the shot, for several of the miscreants were wounded by the flying missiles.

The next moment a battery of masked guns were shown at the ports of the ship, but before any of them could be fired, the boy sunk his boat.

In sheer rage the wreckers discharged several shots at the water where the Sea Ghost went down, but none of them struck the boat, as she had gone straight under the Night Hawk out of the way.

Unfortunately, the line became twisted around the axis of one of the propellers of the submarine boat, and to Jack's disgust he found that he would have to stop her machinery to save it from being broken.

The moment this was done the line became taut, and the Sea Ghost was dragged along by it backwards.

It retarded the speed of the Night Hawk, however, and as Fritz came rushing across the deck to the pilot-house window Jack signalled out to him:

"Haul in on the line till we fasten another. Then uncouple the first one from her hull."

"All right," assented the fat boy, walking away.

"Howard, put on a diving suit and bring Fritz another like the one he had."

"Very well," was the reply as the doctor hurried off.

"Tim—hello! Hello, Tim."

"Ay, ay!"

"The first chance you get fire a shot at the rudder of Night Hawk and blow it off."

"I'll try to, my lad."

Fritz now got the end of the line around the capstan, using one of the bars to turn it, he soon had the Sea Ghost drawn up close to the ship's hull.

By that time Harry Howard joined him with the rope, and the fat boy secured it, and opening the valve the first sucker he uncoupled it from the ship.

Jack now signaled him to approach, and when he was near enough the young inventor motioned:

"Try to get the entangled line unfastened from the screw."

"But I under the boat to do so must go," spelled Fritz.

"It can't be helped. Howard will assist you."

"All right. I do the best I can already."

Fritz went away and made his preparations, and the boat swung around and was towed along by the Night Hawk.

Tim did not get a chance to get in a shot yet, and a short time afterward between Fritz and Harry the line was disentangled from the propeller and coiled up.

As soon as the boat was manageable, Jack swung her off at an angle with the Night Hawk, and shouted:

"Now's your chance, Tim!"

"Here she goes!" came the reply.

The next moment a shot flew from the gun, and so true was it aimed that it struck the rudder.

Away went the wood in a thousand pieces, and the Night Hawk swung up into the wind badly crippled.

She was now unable to proceed, and almost wholly at Jack's mercy, as she could not navigate.

The boy stopped the Sea Ghost, and both vessels drifted along for awhile, when Jack signaled to Fritz to take off the cup sucker again, as the line was no longer needed.

The Dutch boy and the doctor then came inside, and the young inventor sent his boat to the surface once more.

She laid but a cable's length from the Night Hawk, and the crew of the ship were hastily furling sails.

As soon as the Sea Ghost arose from the depths, an excited babel of voices arose from the crew of the wrecker, and they ceased working.

An interval of silence passed by, during which the Sea Ghost drifted along near the wrecker, with their guns pointed toward each other.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

As the two vessels drifted along, broadside to broadside, and none of them showing any open hostilities, the crew of the Night Hawk crouched down behind the bulwarks.

Jack kept a sharp watch upon the wrecker.

He knew that one shot from his gun could blow her out of existence, and he resolved to await action on the part of his enemies before he wantonly would sacrifice their lives.

For some time nothing occurred.

Then Tom Driggs appeared and approached the bulwarks with a flag of truce in his hands, and yelled:

"We'll surrender!"

Jack did not reply at once.

He turned to Fritz and Howard.

"Victory!" he exclaimed. "An almost bloodless battle!"
 "Shimney Christmas, vot luck!" said Fritz, as if he re-
 ted it.

"What are you going to do about it?" asked Howard.
 "Manacle the whole gang, strip their ship of her canvas,
 tow her back across the herring-pond," replied Jack.

"Ahoy, there!" impatiently yelled Driggs.
 "Well?" calmly asked Jack.
 "I tell you we surrender."

"Let your men come aboard one by one, every two min-
 utes."

"All right," was the surly reply.
 "Howard, bring up one of the chain handcuffs."

He referred to a long chain on which were a score of
 manacles, and when the doctor brought it he stationed Fritz
 and Howard at the side door, and as fast as the crew of the
 Night Hawk came aboard they were fastened by the wrists.

In this manner the whole crew left the ship.
 Tom Driggs was the last one to leave the vessel.

He was secured hand and foot.
 "Now put them aboard of their craft!" said Jack.

"No, no!" cried Driggs in alarm. "Don't do that."
 "Why not?" sharply asked the boy.

"Because I have fired the powder magazine to destroy the
 ship, and thus conceal any proof you might find aboard of her
 to convict us in the courts."

"Rascal!" cried Jack.
 Fearing injury to his boat, he sent her flying away as fast

as she could go, and she had scarcely gained a distance of
 half a mile from the Night Hawk when she was blown up.

"Take those prisoners into the water chamber," said Jack.
 Tim and Fritz attended to this part of the programme, and

as soon as the sullen rascals were disposed of the man who
 murdered Captain Forrest stood before Jack and Harry How-
 ard, crushed and humiliated.

"You have lost the game," said the boy.
 "Ah, but only on account of your superior power."

"Blowing up your craft won't save you from conviction, for
 there is ample evidence of the fact that you are guilty."

"No doubt; yet the worst evidence is gone."
 "Ah! Perhaps you may remember this doctor?"

"Harry Howard? Yes—the murderer of his captain—a
 rascal whom I convicted. He must have broken from jail to
 be here with you—"

"Hold! You perjured yourself to convict this innocent man
 of a crime you yourself committed."

"Never!"
 "Look at this!"

Jack held up the knife taken from the corpse.
 As soon as Driggs' eyes fell upon it he gave a guilty start

and stepped forward, taken off his guard for a moment.
 "My knife!" he cried.

"Ay! We found the floating wreck of the Lady Violet, and
 myself drew this weapon from the bosom of your victim."

"Great heavens! I'm exposed!"
 "Miss Forrest, do you hear that admission of guilt?" cried

Jack, to the murdered captain's daughter, who had just come
 in and heard the foregoing dialogue.

"Pitiful Heaven!" cried the girl, in horror.
 Now she knew for a certainty how she had wronged her

unfortunate lover, and it made her feel very bad.
 The captain of the wreckers started violently upon hear-

ing her voice, wheeled around, and turned as pale as death
 when he so unexpectedly saw her there.

"Fanny Forrest!" he cried, tremulously.
 "Yes, and I now know how guilty you are!"

"I am lost!" groaned the wretched man.
 "And she believes in my innocence!" exclaimed Harry.

"With all my heart!" asserted Fanny.

"And when you, Tom Driggs, are convicted in my stead,"
 continued the doctor, "she has promised to become my wife."

This crushing blow told on the culprit.
 "Take the viper away, Tim," said Jack.

Delighted over his success, Jack steered his boat back
 across the Atlantic.

An uneventful journey followed, and in due course of time
 the gallant Sea Ghost arrived in New York, and the prisoners

were set ashore and put in jail.
 Fanny Forrest had inherited a large fortune from her

father, and could have gone ashore and lived in comfort and
 luxury, but she preferred to remain aboard of the Sea Ghost
 until her cruise was completed.

The boy sent word to Boston to the former owners of the
 wrecked steamer, to put them in possession of the location

of their craft, but to his surprise, he learned that the com-
 pany had gone out of existence.

The result was that the gold reverted to the finders, and
 it was evenly divided among the four.

The Sea Ghost then continued her cruise down the coast,
 and remained away two months, fulfilling her contract, but

nothing more was ever seen of any wreckers in that vicinage
 ever afterward.

From this the boy inferred that the crew of the Night Hawk
 were the sole guilty parties, and when the time of his cruise

expired, Jack returned home.
 From here he made his report to the authorities, and upon

the conviction of his prisoners he received the promised re-
 ward.

This he also divided up among the four.
 Harry Howard and Fanny Forrest were duly married in a

pretty church in Wrightstown soon afterward, and Jack and
 his friends witnessed the ceremony.

Then all hands proceeded to New York, and putting Harry
 Howard's case in the hands of a prominent lawyer, the crime

with which he was charged was fastened upon Tom Driggs.
 But Driggs did not live to suffer the penalty of his crime,

for after writing a confession of his guilt, the unhappy
 wretch committed suicide in his cell.

His companions, the crew of the Night Hawk, were sen-
 tenced to a long term of imprisonment for their many mis-
 deeds.

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 to Wrightstown.

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