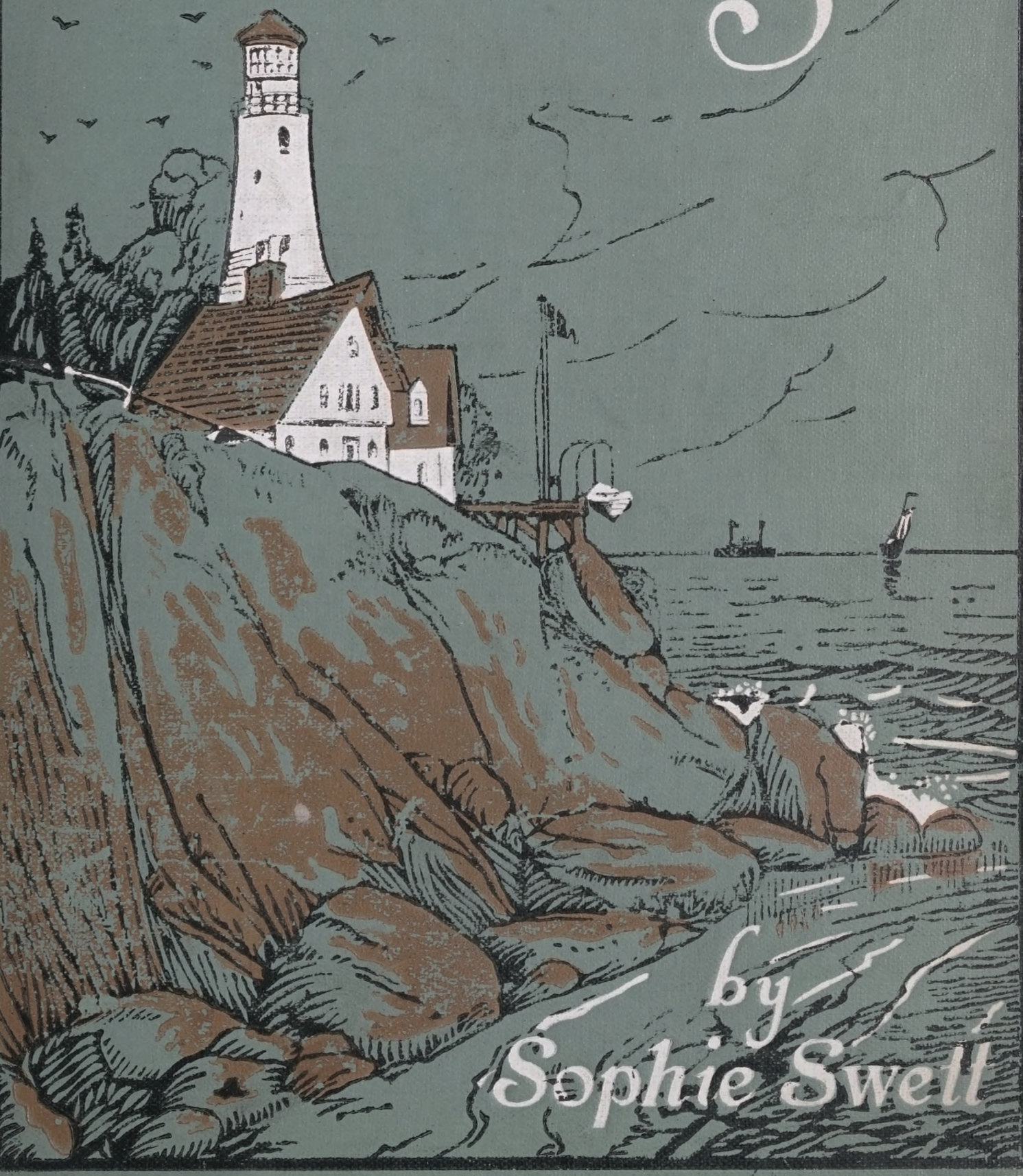


How the Pennypackers Kept the Light



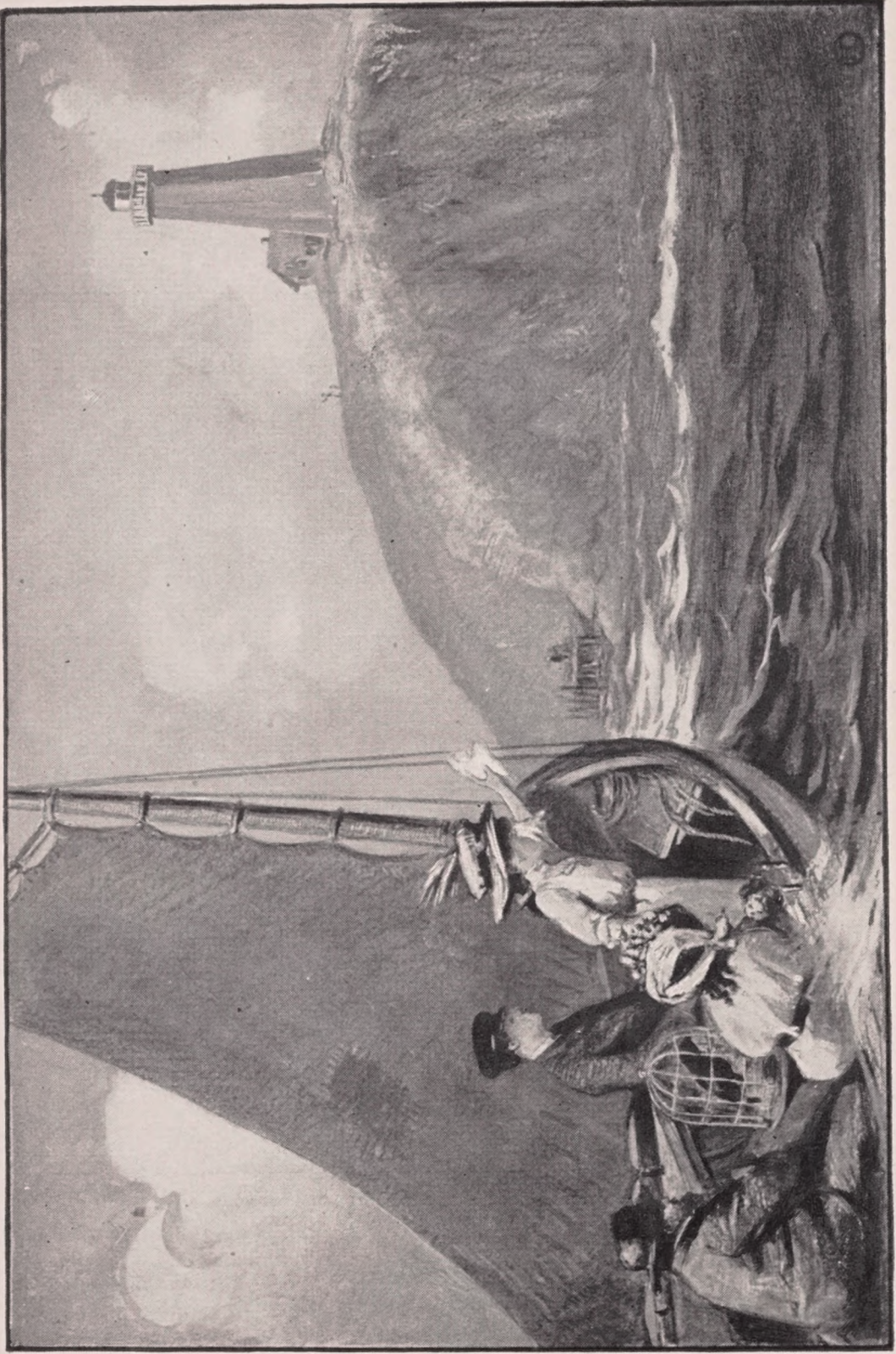
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How the Pennypackers Kept the Light



It was good to get on board the Polly Ann, their own little catboat.

How the Pennypackers Kept the Light

BY ^{Miriam}
SOPHIE SWETT

Author of "Six Little Pennypackers," "Littlest
One of the Browns," "The
Lollipops' Vacation," etc.



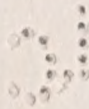
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How the Pennypackers Kept the Light

CHAPTER I

WHEN THE LITTLE PENNYPACKERS CAME
HOME. PAPA PENNYPACKER'S HANDS.
HORATIO HAS A SECRET

“**N**OW what do you suppose is going on?” exclaimed Jane Pennypacker, as the steamer rounded the Point, so that Hull Harbor was in sight. They were coming home on the steamer — Horatio and Jane and Doxy Pennypacker, — from being shipwrecked and having one of the queerest times that anyone ever did have, and Hull Harbor looked as if there were a circus or a launching — something very gay and delightful — going on there.

It was late October, too, and there wasn't a summer visitor left; sometimes it looked as

if the summer visitors had all the good times to themselves and other people were only made to work — but the Harborites knew how to kick up their heels, I can tell you, after the summer people had all gone and they had stored away the fine lot of pennies they had earned by having them there!

There was a crowd on the steamboat landing and along the shore and it stretched up the road, away beyond Mr. Tobias Clark's store!

And, between the steamer's shrill snorts as she made her way up to the landing, they heard a rat-atat-tat, a tum-ti-tum-tum and the joyous, martial strains of a cornet — the Hull Harbor band, or a part of it, anyway!

Jo Bracey began to look sheepish! He began to understand that it was a welcome home to him and his bride — who had been Pedy Ross, a little school-teacher whom everyone loved. They had gone off on their wedding trip on Jo's vessel and got shipwrecked and carried off across the ocean; and this was Hull

Harbor's way of showing how glad it was to welcome them home, all safe and sound.

Their adventures had been so remarkable that Hull Harbor had read about them in the newspapers! — just as some of you have read about them in the book called “The Six Little Pennypackers” — and it was felt to be a great thing to have had the newspapers report how brave they were — all the shipwrecked party. So it had been decided to show how Hull Harbor felt about it!

The boys and girls — who made up about half the crowd — wished especially to have Horatio and Jane and Doxy Pennypacker, who had all been in the shipwreck, know how they felt about it! It had been set down in black and white in a Boston paper, that Jane Pennypacker, aged twelve, had been especially brave! And Jane had been the one who was afraid to go! She said she had “only been brave on account of Doxy.” You must set an example, you know. When Pedy walked down the

gang plank to the Hull Harbor steamboat wharf Christopher, the tame crow that she carried in his cage, shrieked out: "If ever I *was* glad to get home!" And the crowd laughed and cheered Christopher.

Of course he must have heard someone say that and I think, myself, that it was Doxy, because Doxy lisped a little and Christopher said "wath." You never knew such a mimic as Christopher!

It must be owned that Pedy longed to get away even from the joyful reception of her old friends and neighbors to her own little house, on the Point, which had been built for Jo and her before they were married. And the little Pennypackers longed to get home to the lighthouse. They had always thought that the Little Bear Island lighthouse was the most delightful place in the world to live in and going across the ocean to London had not changed their minds. With the sun shining upon its white tower, that morning of their

home-coming and the blue waves tossing white caps upon the cliffs of Little Bear-well, you wouldn't wonder that they loved the lighthouse.

And if it is always a joy to see home when one has been long away, think how great a joy it must be when one has been shipwrecked and has known a time when one never really expected to see it again!

Papa Pennypacker had come over to the landing in his little sailboat, the *Polly Ann*, and he was in his Sunday clothes. He said that as his children had had their names in the newspapers he couldn't do any less than to dress up:— although Doxy always said he looked like somebody else and Little She cried and wouldn't go near him. (Little She was the sixth of the little Pennypackers, who, being a baby, had not counted in their good times, but was now getting to the point where she meant to!) Papa Pennypacker kept wiping his eyes, just because they might have got lost in the wreck, and he hugged Doxy so hard that she

felt great anxiety lest he should injure Pepina her French doll, that she had brought all the way in her arms.

It was good to get on board the *Polly Ann*, their own little catboat! They bade good-by — for a little while to Pedy and Jo who were going off to the Point on Cap'n 'Siah Thimble's buckboard, with all their luggage, the Cap'n having come to meet his son Nick, who had been the mate of Jo's shipwrecked vessel. The crowd had sung "Home Again" and Christopher, the crow, kept shrieking it, as the buckboard drove away.

Levi Gott helped to get the Pennypackers' luggage aboard the *Polly Ann* — (Levi had been a sailor aboard Jo's vessel and he was going home to Goose Cove, as soon as he could get there). That was why Horatio did not observe, at once, how difficult it was for his father to use his hands. But he sprang suddenly from the tiny cabin, where he had been stowing things away, to the stern.

“Let me take the helm, Father!” he cried. For the *Polly Ann* was not coming around as she should, and he saw that his father’s hands were knobby and swollen out of shape.

“The rheumatism again, and at this time of year?” said Horatio. “And you didn’t write about it! I ought to have been at home!” Horatio’s very last thought when he thought he was going to be drowned was that his father would have no one to take care of the light, when he had rheumatism.

“I expect you came just about as quick as you could, didn’t you?” said Papa Pennypacker, half joking and half tender. His eyes rested proudly on his manly fourteen-year-old son, but sadly, too — he was afraid that with his rheumatism growing worse Horatio was not going to have half a chance!

All the little Pennypackers had come home a year older than they went away — and yet they had been away but a few weeks. Doxy was proposing that fact as a riddle for everyone

to guess! Horatio, who had been thirteen when they had sailed away in Jo's vessel, was now fourteen, Jane, who had been eleven was now twelve and Doxy, who had been but seven was now eight.

It had happened, rather oddly, that each one had had a birthday while they were gone — that was all. Doxy thought it was very astonishing and she wondered how her twin brother, Jonas, at home, was standing it to be eight, without her! They were known — alas! — as the good twin and the bad one, and little Jonas was the bad one.

Horatio was not thinking of his own chances but only that it had been a shame for him to be away when his father's legs were so stiff that he had hard work to climb the lighthouse stairs and his hands so stiff that he could scarcely light the lighthouse lamp — that lamp upon which the safety of so many vessels depended!

His mother was a small woman and very plump — it put her out of breath to climb the

lighthouse stairs; and it was almost impossible for her to handle the great lamp.

He ought not to have been away! said Horatio to himself.

And he must get up early and go to bed late if he were going over to "the main" to school, with that lamp to take care of! — and they were not likely to have a teacher of their own; there seemed to be no one to have, now that Pedy was married.

Jane was to go over to "the main" to school, also, and it was expected that she and Horatio would be able to teach the smaller ones — Doxy and Jonas and little Seth; so you see that, besides all the good times they expected, the young Pennypackers were going to have something to do.

They had all come down over the cliff to the landing — Mama Pennypacker, Little She, standing on her own feet to show that she could do it — she had only just begun to when they went away — Jonas blowing the fog-horn as he

always did when great things happened, and Seth, who was still five and felt it to be a queer injustice that he hadn't "come six," since the others had got to be a year older.

They all fell upon Jonas and kissed his smudgy face (he had had to be consoled with molasses candy for the long waiting) just as if he were good.

Jonas had "come eight," although he had stayed at home; — Seth had found, as we all do, that there are many puzzling things in life.

"Pedy Woss is going to have a house-warming and I have got an inbite," he said, in an effort to make things seem more even.

And he thought of Little She who was being left out of something, just as he had been left out of being six — she had as yet no name! It was because she was, as Jane said, so special; —that meant especially pretty and bright and sweet, so that there wasn't a name in the whole round world that seemed good enough for her! Perhaps you have known how it was, at your

house! The more names they thought of and the more they argued about names the less possible it seemed to find one that was just right for Little She; so Little She the baby remained and now she was almost two — and it was quite disgraceful! So Doxy thought, and she meant that the first duty that she attended to should be the proper naming of Little She.

It was Doxy who had really named Jo Bracey's vessel, as you will remember who read about the launching, in the "Six Little Pennypackers," so it is not to be wondered at that she thought she was equal to it. In fact Doxy thought she was equal to a good deal; Horatio and Jane had privately owned to each other the fear that Doxy would grow up with "the big head." But "the big head" is likely to get cured in a large family, or at school; — unless one is a simpleton; and Jane and Horatio decided that Doxy could not really be that and be a Pennypacker!

But before she found out that she didn't know everything Doxy was going to have some pretty queer times! — You just wait and see if she wasn't!

Pedy Ross — who was Pedy Bracey, now, although it was hard to remember — had planned her house-warming on the way home and she was going to have it just as soon as possible, while it was warm and pleasant, because she wanted all the old people and all the babies to come, besides everybody in between. Because, also, everybody wished to come and hear all about the queer adventures they had had in being shipwrecked and carried off across the Atlantic.

It was sure to be a delightful merry-making and the Pennypackers seemed to be thinking of scarcely anything else; but yet Horatio had what his mother called a hard knot between his brows and that meant that he had on his thinking-cap and that it was pulled down pretty far!

He beckoned to Jane to follow him up the

tower stairs when he went to light the lamp, the night after their return.

Jane went up the stairs, with her heart going thumpity-thump.

Horatio never had any foolish, little mysteries, as the others did. When he looked and behaved like that there was something the matter!

“See here!” said Horatio. There was still daylight enough for Jane to see what was the matter.

If you have ever been in one of Uncle Sam’s lighthouses you know how beautifully the lamp is kept;—the glass as clear as crystal, the metal polished so that it shines like the sun.

And there had never been, on the whole Atlantic coast, a clearer, shinier lamp than the Little Bear!

It was not so, now — it was really dingy!

Horatio lighted the lamp. The great light flashed out, but it could not fling its beams as far as it ought through that dingy glass!

“I ought to have been at home! Father can’t, you know, with his hands in that condition! And when the rheumatism is bad he doesn’t seem to see very clearly.”

“The light shows out beyond the rocks, anyway,” said Jane, after a moment.

“There couldn’t have been any shipwreck.”

“But if the Inspection Boat had happened to come ’round!” said Horatio — and his voice shook. “Father would have lost Little Bear lighthouse!” Lost the lighthouse! Jane looked bewildered and then she gasped for breath. Where should they go, away from Little Bear? They had all been born there — every one of the children. She thought they would be like a lot of little snails without their shells! — and heart-broken little snails, as well as at the mercy of the world! For there could never be another home like Little Bear Island.

“The thing *is*,” said Horatio, in a firm

voice, "that until Father is well we must keep the light!"

"Why, of course we can keep it, just as easy as not!" said Jane; — and the rosy color that meant joyful courage rushed back to her cheeks.

Not yet, if Horatio and she could help it, were the little Pennypackers to be like snails without their shells!

"It may not be quite so easy!" said Horatio, shaking his head. "That is —" he added hastily, for he didn't like to see Jane's face grow long — "it may not be all fun!"

He knew something about it that he wasn't going to tell Jane — at least, not yet.

CHAPTER II

JO AND PEDY'S HOUSE-WARMING. "BETTER
LOOKOUT FOR LITTLE BEAR LIGHT!"

"I DON'T think I'd better go," said Horatio. They were all setting out for Jo and Pedy Bracey's house-warming — every one of the Pennypackers even down to Little She — excepting Papa Pennypacker, who must take care of the light.

They all turned and stared at Horatio — and there he was in his everyday clothes! Mama Pennypacker and Jane had had so much to do to get themselves and the little ones ready that they had not thought of Horatio, who was the kind of boy that knows where his Sunday collars are and even which neck-tie to wear.

"I mean, of course, that I'll row you over and come after you; but Father is so lame, to-

day, that I think that I'd better see to the light."

They were going by the middle of the afternoon, for that was "when the party began," as Doxy said, but they wouldn't be likely to come home until pretty far into the night, for a rousing good time like that was so rare at Hull Harbor that people wouldn't easily let go of it.

Mama Pennypacker's eyes grew a little troubled as she looked at Horatio — nobody liked a good time better than Horatio.

"I don't think there's a mite of need of your staying at home," she said. "Your father wouldn't like it and he wouldn't let you touch the lamp; you know that! And he always has been able."

"It was as much as ever, last night," murmured Horatio. But he didn't say it aloud. (It had always come easy to Horatio not to tell too much; Jane, now, would make up her mind not to tell and out it would come!)

“Your father wouldn’t like it,” repeated Mama Pennypacker; and that settled it, to her mind. She had been staying there and seeing Papa Pennypacker every day and she was not conscious of some changes in him which Horatio saw.

“You should have got dressed,” she added, somewhat severely, for her.

Mama Pennypacker didn’t believe in dwelling upon every little worry, and she feared that Horatio was going to have an anxious mind.

“Never mind your everyday clothes,” said Jane, smoothing out the creases in her pink sash. “You are only a boy.”

Jane still believed that it would be just as easy as not to keep Little Bear Light. Horatio and she had cleaned the lamp — not very thoroughly because it had annoyed their father to have them do it; he had told them sharply to keep away from the lamp. But Horatio was sure that the time was coming when he would be glad to have them do it.

From the Point where Jo lived the lighthouse tower was plainly in sight.

Horatio decided that he would stay at the house-warming until dark — and keep watch of the lighthouse.

As for his common clothes — he would have all the more fun in them; only girls noticed such things and Horatio didn't think much of girls — except Rosemary Bruce, his friend Phonse's sister, who had almost as much sense as a boy, and Lida Scatterby, who was *great* in Arithmetic. Lida had tight, red, bobbing curls over her head; the boys and girls made fun of her kinky hair but there were no kinks in her brains — Horatio would have told you that!

It was a bother just now, that he liked Lida Scatterby, for it was her father, Cap'n Hiram Scatterby, who was likely to make them trouble about the lighthouse; — that was the thing that he had not told Jane.

Jo Bracey had told Horatio — Jo, who knew how to be a friend and watched the sea that

was likely to swamp another fellow's boat, just as if it were going to swamp his own. And Jo knew what it would be to the Pennypackers to lose the lighthouse.

Cap'n Scatterby wanted more than his share — or, rather, he thought that all that he could get was his share.

He probably had not begun by playing fair, when he was a boy. Anyway, he didn't play fair, now. When he saw Uncle Sam paying anybody a salary for keeping a lighthouse — why, he wished to keep the lighthouse and get the salary himself!

And when Papa Pennypacker became ill with rheumatism he said to himself, just like an old fox, "Now is my chance!" For Uncle Sam is very particular to have only able-bodied men to keep his lighthouses.

Now Horatio would have felt just as anxious to keep the light always steady and bright, a beacon to show vessels the way into the harbor and keep them off the cruel rocks that

would grind their bones, if there had been no sly fox of a Cap'n Scatterby trying to get the lighthouse away from them; but he was more determined that everything should be shipshape and speckless, so that no one might say "Seth Pennypacker isn't fit to keep the light!"

They were fit to keep it — all the Pennypackers, together — and Papa Pennypacker's rheumatism never lasted a great while; but, you see why it was that Horatio meant to keep the lighthouse tower in sight, even if it prevented him from having any good time at all at the house-warming.

It was a pretty good pull over to the point, that afternoon, for there was a choppy sea and so many plump Pennypackers made a heavy load; but Horatio's muscles were used to oars and he said it was good to get hold of them again after being away where everything went by steam or electricity; — you felt bigger, somehow, to find out that you could still make something go, all by yourself!

The afternoon part of the house-warming was chiefly for the boys and girls who had been Pedy's scholars and they were there in full force and ready to make the most of the good time. They all looked at Horatio and Jane and Doxy Pennypacker as if they were curiosities, since they had been to London, and Lida Scatterby, who had once spent a week in Boston and gone to the top of Bunker Hill Monument, knew that she would never be asked to tell about that again!

Christopher, the crow, was excited by the sight of so many people, but he showed it chiefly by standing on one foot and making queer noises in his throat; Pedy said that he had seemed stupid and queer since they had been at home and had only muttered sleepily his old sayings that he had "had a very wet time" and "been through a lot." Sometimes she was afraid he would never say anything new!

The living-room of the cottage was made to look like a ship's cabin — Pedy said she wanted

to feel as if she had gone away with Jo even when she hadn't; and it was so exactly like a ship's cabin that if you were inclined to be seasick you would think you felt the motion of the boat when you went into it!

Christopher's cage hung there and Jo said he thought the crow was so queer because he thought himself still at sea; but moving him into the kitchen made no difference. Christopher seemed to be the only one of the party who couldn't get over being shipwrecked!

Jane was quite mortified that Horatio was in his everyday clothes, when there wasn't another boy or girl who wasn't dressed up; and Lida Scatterby kept on her work apron, that she had brought to help at the table in, just to keep him in countenance! (She needn't have troubled — Horatio didn't even know it! — but she knew that it would have made another girl feel better.)

Doxy Pennypacker had brought — carefully, in a box — her walking and talking doll, Pe-

pina, which had come from Paris. Now there had been several dolls in Hull Harbor, first and last, that had "truly" hair and could open and shut their eyes most naturally and in a way to make one's heart thrill; but a doll that could walk about, with a swish of her silken skirts and say "Papa" and "Mama" plainly, in a sweet little voice — why that was another thing altogether!

It was a thing to interest older people than Doxy Pennypacker, the doll's owner and "kids" like that. (I am quoting Dan Scatterby, aged thirteen; — Horatio had never liked Dan Scatterby as well as he did his sister Lida.)

When Pepina had walked and talked to everybody's satisfaction Doxy put her carefully away in the box again — for a doll of such attainments could not be expected to be hugged and carried by one arm and even sat upon, like poor, dear, patient Angelica Marie, now high upon the clock-shelf, at the lighthouse, out of

reach of Little She, but alas! upside down.

And when she had put Pepina into the box Doxy slipped the box under the lounge, where it would be safe until she was ready to go home.

And Dan Scatterby, with small, gray, gimlet-like eyes watched her doing it, while he pretended to be looking another way.

Dan was the kind of a boy that likes to find out what makes things go: — it is not a bad kind of boy if he only confines his curiosity to his own things. But what Dan meant, to-day, was to find out what made that doll walk and from what part of her the “Papa” and “Mama” came out!

By this time the table was being laid for supper and almost everyone was helping, even the boys, although a few were still playing games in the living-room.

Dan Scatterby had his eye on Jonas — known, alas! as the bad twin.

“Jonas is the man for my money,” said Dan to himself.

And he beckoned to Jonas, with a glittering penny held enticingly in his hand.

Now it happened that Horatio, who was just at that moment helping Lida Scatterby with the sardine sandwiches, saw Dan out of the corner of his eye and said to himself "that boy is up to mischief!" He turned to see to whom Dan was beckoning.

But just at that instant the crow set up a cry in his old shrill, startling tones:

"They'd better look out for Little Bear light!"

CHAPTER III

DAN SCATTERBY AND THE BAD TWIN. THE
DARKNESS OF LITTLE BEAR LIGHT.
WILL HORATIO GET ACROSS?

HORATIO set the can of sardines that he was opening down upon the table, pretty hastily! He tore off the apron that Lida Scatterby had tied around his neck — and rushed into the living-room. The crow seemed to have aroused from his stupid condition and repeated excitedly that they “would better look out for Little Bear light!”

It had grown dark but Horatio, reassured by his mother, and excited by the merry-making, had forgotten his fear lest his father's rheumatic legs should refuse to climb the tower stairs, or his stiff fingers be unable to light the lamp!

No one but him had seen how great was the

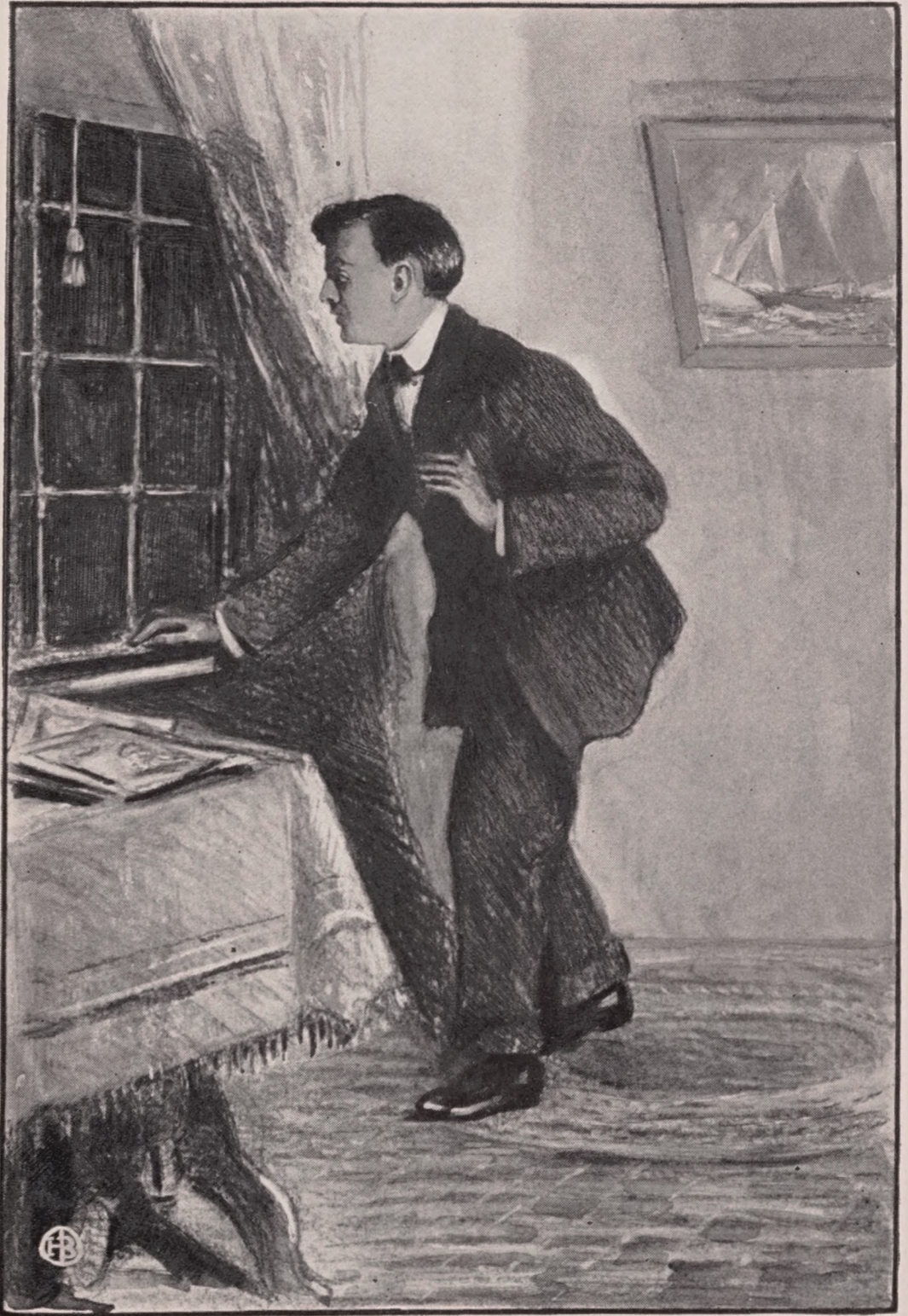
effort his father was obliged to make, no one else understood how soon he might not be able to do it at all! And he, just because he was having a good time, had let himself forget!

Of course a boy is used to depending upon his father; — but he knows that he must draw upon all the stuff in him that is going to make a man when something happens so that he cannot.

It was a dark night — pitchy dark; there was nothing but darkness when Horatio looked out of the living-room window — not a ray of light from the lighthouse tower!

Horatio said to himself that he had known it would be so before he looked out! And it was the time of year when a great many fishing vessels and coasters were likely to put into the Harbor.

I am glad to be able to say that it was the danger to those vessels that filled Horatio's mind, rather than the thought of what the neglect would mean to themselves.



There was nothing but darkness when Horatio looked out of the living room window.



He ran out of the house without a word to anyone. He wished that no one might discover that the lamp was not lighted; but of course that was past hoping for, with that crow screaming out his advice!

Queer that he should have taken it into his rusty, stupid old poll, just at this time!

He had undoubtedly heard some of the neighbors say, at the cottage, that Seth Penny-packer was in danger of losing the lighthouse! It was likely, too, that he had heard it said more than once — although you never could be sure what Christopher would pick up! Pedy said she believed he was a worse tell-tale than any parrot that ever lived!

Horatio got into his boat, at the end of Jo's slip; no one but a boy could have found his way to the end of the slip, it was so dark. There was a lantern tucked away under the stern seat, and he had matches in his pocket.

By the lantern's light he could see his compass. As short a distance as it was and as

familiar as he was with the place he could by no means have found his way without the compass. As it was it was not the easiest of things to steer a direct course for Little Bear Island, in a sea that had grown heavier since darkness fell.

It is as natural to keep rowing around and around, on the sea, as hunters say that it is to keep walking in the same manner in the woods.

He could not keep his lantern burning because the glass did not cover it tightly and the high wind made it flare dangerously; so he had to stop rowing, every little while, to light it and look at his compass.

In that way his progress was very slow; indeed, he began to fear that he was not going ahead, at all, when, suddenly, the keen, high notes of a violin struck upon his ear!

It was after supper at the cottage and Jo was tuning his fiddle and he was still near enough to hear it! And darkness all around him, like a wall, with not a sign of the

flash from the tower for which he hoped.

He bent to his oars again with a will, but he knew that if he should come again within hearing of Jo's fiddle he must row ashore — if he could find the way! — and get help to row to the lighthouse.

And that would be, he felt, giving Dan Scatterby the right to say that the Pennypackers were not fit to keep the light!

There was even a "recommendation" in the lighthouse book of instructions that no one person should ever be left alone to the care of the light; but no one had ever thought of it as meaning much. Did not Aaron Prim often stay alone at Schooner Cliff light? — and Enoch Tripp at Great Plum? But Horatio wished — oh, how bitterly he wished that he had remembered to go home before dark!

Lida Scatterby and the sardine sandwiches seemed like a nightmare!

Dan Scatterby had been trying to beguile Jonas with a penny; Dan was "up to some-

thing," thought Horatio, as he rowed on and on.

Meanwhile there was a great deal of fun going on at the house-warming. Jo and a few others who had seen that the lighthouse lamp was not lighted had looked at each other and shaken their heads gravely; but they had kept quiet. They were friends to the Pennypackers and felt that it was wise to keep it a secret, as far as possible, that the lighthouse was dark.

Could Horatio get across? one whispered doubtfully.

"Trust that boy!" Jo answered cheerfully. It really did not seem a great undertaking to get across from the point to the lighthouse and Jo kept peering slyly out, expecting at any moment to see the light flash out. And he took great pains to keep things lively so that those who had not found out that the tower was dark should not do so.

Mama Pennypacker knew it, of course; she

had looked out after Horatio when he ran off. But she did not speak of it even to one of her own brood. She was frightened but she tried to think that nothing serious had happened. Mama Pennypacker was, in fact, of an easy mind; she meant to do her best and never worry about what she couldn't help;— which was, perhaps, the reason she was so plump and all the young Pennypackers were so happy.

She couldn't help wishing that she had let Horatio go directly home, as he wished to — but he would get there pretty soon, now, any way!

Still, I do think that if Mama Pennypacker had not had this darkness of the lighthouse lamp upon her mind she would have observed the absence of Jonas from the supper, for Jonas had a wholesome regard for the pleasures of the table and liked to find himself in the neighborhood of Pedy's cream-cakes. She said, afterwards, that she thought she must have had

an impression that the small ones were coming to the table afterwards — for there were several absent, in company with Jonas.

But the Thimble twins were afterwards found in the pantry, alone with the jam and sticky. And little Nick Goddard had gone to sleep on the lounge.

There was really no one absent with Jonas, except Dan Scatterby.

Now Doxy, being the good twin, had a care over Jonas and was very apt to have her eye upon him, in society, where his badness might so easily be a disgrace to the whole Pennypacker family. But alas! Doxy's weakness for jam tarts had made her forget Jonas and his failings.

When Mama Pennypacker said, in a low tone, and only in the hearing of her own brood, Where is Jonas? it was Doxy who promptly slipped down from her seat at the table.

No thought of jam tarts, any more! A dreadful fear had gripped Doxy's small mind

— the mind that was so well acquainted with Jonas!

She went straight into the living-room, and felt under the lounge, where she had concealed the too greatly admired Pepina, in her box.

Empty space, as far as she could feel!

She lay down and rolled her plump person as far under as she could, and felt of every inch of space, while her heart went thumpity-thump, and a horrid, great lump was beginning to come in her throat.

No box, at all! — no Pepina!

Now Doxy might have thought that perhaps her mother had taken the box from under the lounge and put it away for safe keeping, but you are very apt to know just what to expect of your own family — Doxy thought of Jonas!

She had come there just as soon as she knew that Jonas was missing and she had no thought except of Jonas when she found that Pepina was gone.

She kept down the horrid lump — she had resolved that she would deserve to be eight, if Jonas didn't — she went silently through the dining-room, where the guests were just getting up from the tables, and then through the kitchen into the woodshed.

Jonas was there and Dan Scatterby was with him. They had some knives and a gimlet and a hammer on Jo's work-bench — and the doll-box, empty.

Dan Scatterby was hiding something behind him!

“ Oh, give me Pepina! Give me my doll! ” cried Doxy, with a great burst of tears, and she ran around behind Dan and tried to snatch the doll!

Dan held it above his head — its beautiful Paris gown half torn off, its golden locks all tousled!

“ She's just as good as ever, only we haven't had time to put back her walk and her talk! ” said Dan.

Doxy's temper had given way — she was the good twin but she couldn't bear everything!

“Shut up! — everybody will hear you!” cried Dan Scatterby roughly. “Now you better just listen to me, you little spit-fire — if you make a fuss about this or tell anybody that I did it, why, my father will get the lighthouse away from your father! — and you won't have anywhere to live! He can, just as easy! He's got friends in Washington and he'll go on to see them and get appointed keeper of the light! So now you'd better keep still!”

“Children!” — it was Pedy's voice calling: “Jonas hasn't had anything to eat — or Dan Scatterby, either! What are you doing here, Doxy, dear?”

Doxy had thrust her mutilated darling into the box; she tucked the box under her arm, and looked up, bravely trying to smile into Pedy's face.

“I came to find Jonas,” she said.

Pedy looked curiously at the red and tear-

wet little face. But Doxy often had trouble with Jonas — and she had no time for children's small difficulties, just then. There was still no ray of light from the lighthouse. People who were obliged to go home in boats didn't know how they were going to get there! Everyone was talking about the darkness of Little Bear Light!

CHAPTER IV

A SURE-FOOTED BOY. POOR PAPA PENNY-
PACKER. HORATIO KEEPS WATCH

IT was growing late; everyone who lived on "the main" had gone home — including Dan Scatterby, who had found a chance, before he went, to whisper, "now you'd better remember," fiercely, into Doxy's shrinking ear.

Mama Pennypacker stood gazing out at the window — where there was nothing to see but the blackness of the night — her face as woeful as so plump and cheerful a face could well be. Little She was asleep in her arms and Doxy, the box under her arm, was clinging to her dress. (It was not a habit of Doxy's to cling to her mother's dress, but there are times when one must have such a comfort — even when one has "come eight!")

Pedy had it on her very tongue's end to say:

“You’d better make up your mind to stay all night”—for even Jo, good sailor as he was, hesitated to undertake to row a boatload of a woman and children over to Little Bear, in such darkness as that—when—oh, joy!—an arrow of light pierced the darkness, then a whole quiver—full of arrows of light, and after that a great flash that made the darkness fairly curl up and creep away!—*somebody* had lighted Little Bear lighthouse lamp!

Jo’s big rowboat was at his slip and they all piled into it, and Jo rowed with a will. He said that he didn’t calculate that the light was missing more than an hour or two after dark (oh, Jo!) and he didn’t expect anybody had missed it.

He said that because Mama Pennypacker, usually as gay as a lark, was so silent and seemed so anxious.

Doxy clutched her box, wide-eyed; one could not, must not be sleepy, with such an awful secret to keep. She looked at Little She,

asleep in her mother's arms and thought how happy were such very young people who knew nothing of secrets!

Jonas — almost always captured by the Sandman, the very first one, moved from one seat to another — a thing not allowed in Jo's row-boat — to wedge himself in beside Doxy.

“I'm orfle sorry!” he whispered in her ear.

But Doxy, the tender-hearted, who was accustomed to put her arms around him at the first sign of penitence, did not even turn her face towards him.

“You'd better be!” she said, in a sharp, hard little voice.

Jonas shrank back, astonished. She might even be going to tell!

But she was not; life had changed for her, in the last few hours, but it had not changed her enough to make her even think of telling of Jonas; trials of life in the shape of spankings often came Jonas' way — it was not for her to add to them!

And Dan Scatterby she could not tell of, although she would have been quite willing to have him dealt with after the fashion of Jonas; a strangely dreadful misfortune would befall them all, if she did! They would be Pennypackers without the lighthouse! Pennypackers who didn't belong anywhere, if one could think of such a thing!

She didn't think of snails without their shells, as Jane and Horatio had done, but she was even more upset by the idea than they had been.

Dan Scatterby had made it quite sure that she would not tell!

"Perhaps her walk and talk will come back!" whispered Jonas, hopefully. (Jonas was always strongly hopeful of the results of his worst pieces of mischief.)

But Doxy was uncommonly hard to soften; she moved as far as possible away from him.

"I'm 'fraid Scatterbys are a bad lot!" re-

marked Jonas. (Like Christopher, his speeches were often second-hand.) He had been thinking that if the mischief really was hopeless it was time to remind Doxy that he had not done it!

Doxy turned to him at once.

“Do — do you think Cap’n Scatterby is very bad?” she whispered.

Jonas nodded darkly.

Cap’n Scatterby began to seem to Doxy like the ogre in her fairy-book, who cut off the king’s head and set up housekeeping in his palace.

Later, she would sob herself to sleep over her mangled doll, but as yet she could only think of Dan Scatterby’s threat.

Horatio had rowed on and on, often stopping to light his lantern and look at his compass, finding out sometimes that he was quite out of his course.

As long as he lives he will remember how like a nightmare that long, long trip seemed —

only just across from the Point to Little Bear Island!

His boat grazed one of the great rocks, on the side of the island that was far from the landing:—that was the first he knew that he had really got there!

He tied the boat to a projection of the rock and scrambled up the steep side; it took a sure-footed boy to do it and a resolute one, at that!

He called “Father!” as he lighted a lamp in the kitchen; a feeble call, mingled with a groan answered him; it came from the tower stairs and there he found his father, caught by so sharp a grip of pain in the back that he could not put one foot before the other!

“It seems to me I’ve been here a week, and I know there’s been time enough for half the shipping in the Bay to be stove up on the rocks!” he groaned, as Horatio rushed up the stairs, past him.

He heaved a long, long sigh of relief as the light flashed out, under Horatio’s hand.

“ I ought not to have stayed, Father! ” said Horatio, as he came downstairs. “ That’s the last time I’ll go, until you get all over the rheumatism! ”

He helped his father down the stairs; it was not impossible, on account of pain, for Papa Pennypacker to go down as it had been for him to go up, but still he was a burden that taxed all Horatio’s boy-strength.

When the other Pennypackers came trooping in—Jo with them to find out what was the matter—Papa Pennypacker was in bed, comfortable, and as cheery as if his old enemy rheumatism had not beaten him outright, on the tower stairs.

“ Tisn’t as if I hadn’t a good, strong boy of my own to depend upon — ” he said to Jo; and Jo, who was a big, brawny six-footer looked a little doubtfully at Horatio. Fourteen seemed young to him — you know there is everything in the way you look at the matter!

—and Horatio was growing tall so fast he had no time to grow broad.

“He’s good and strong inside, anyhow!” said Jo heartily. And he knew Horatio as you only know people after you have seen them have a chance to show whether there is good stuff in them or not.

“I’ve got a girl, too, that could clean the lamp and light it, at a pinch!”

(Jane colored high with pleasure, at this praise; as was natural, they thought it was one of the *great* things of life to take care of the lamp; and, considering all that depended upon it, I don’t know but they were right.) But in spite of his cheerful courage Papa Pennypacker was looking wistfully at Jo, as if to find out just what he thought. He was conscientious, was Papa Pennypacker, and not for worlds would he have kept the lighthouse to prevent loss and trouble to himself if it would have brought danger upon the ships.

Jo understood; he read in his face what he

had suffered on the tower stairs the night before. Horatio knew it too, and could not forgive himself for being away — but he knew that the only thing to do, now, was to make up for it the best way he could! That lamp would never remain unlighted again because Horatio Pennypacker was not on hand! There might be other times in life when he would remember that darkness of the Little Bear light and be sure nothing happened that Horatio Pennypacker was to blame for!

“We always said, you know, that it wasn’t one Pennypacker but the whole of us that kept the light!” continued Papa Pennypacker, still with his eyes on Jo’s face.

“Who says that the six little Pennypackers couldn’t keep the light, all by themselves?” said Jo gayly; but he looked serious; when he felt so it would always show in his blue eyes — which usually held a twinkle.

“The *Grace Clark* went off fishing, yesterday, off Penguin Rock — she wouldn’t be coming

back; and the *Twin Brothers* went off to Philadelphia, Monday." Papa Pennypacker told off the vessels, absent from Hull Harbor, on his worn and knobby fingers. "Link Scatterby took a load of stone from the quarry up to Boston about a week ago, but he wouldn't be loaded to come back by this time —"

"It isn't likely he would," said Jo, positively. "Link doesn't hurry himself when he gets up to Boston."

Papa Pennypacker's face brightened at this assurance of Jo's, and Jane, who was in the habit of looking at Horatio, to see what he thought of such things, saw the knot untie in his forehead.

Link Scatterby was Cap'n Scatterby's brother; if his vessel should have been coming into the Harbor when Little Bear light was dark he would be a very bad witness against the Pennypackers!

Horatio went hastily back to the tower-room; — there must always be a watch there, after

the lamp was lighted: — it was so set down on the printed regulations that the Inspector had hung up at the foot of the tower stairs.

He peered out into the darkness, as far as the dazzling light shed its rays. There was no sign of any shipping. He could hear the surf pounding on Gridiron Ledge; some birds dashed themselves against the glass of the tower, as they do in furious winds and storms.

“It’s going to blow and there’ll be a heavy sea,” said Horatio to himself.

He had been obliged to bind up his hands before he dared touch the lamp; they were torn and bleeding from his struggling climb up the rocks; — but who would mind a little thing like that, now that the lamp was lighted?

Jo came hurriedly up the tower stairs.

“You go to bed and let me take the first watch,” he said.

The watches must be only four hours long — according to Uncle Sam’s regulations — but Papa Pennypacker, having no assistant, had

been in the habit of keeping the watch himself, the whole night through — with the Inspector's full knowledge and consent.

Horatio had meant to keep the whole watch, to-night.

He said, hesitatingly, to Jo that Pedy would be worried.

Did he think that Pedy was a fresh-water girl? Jo asked scornfully. He rather thought that Pedy knew how to be a sailor's wife!

Horatio yielded; — there comes a time to everyone when he needs a good friend!

If there should be a complaint of the darkness of Little Bear light it would be well to be able to prove that there was someone else there, for the rest of the night, besides a boy!

So Jo sat in the tower room and Horatio set his alarm for two o'clock and went to bed and to sleep; Doxy slept with poor Pepina's draggled head tucked under her chin — for, in the excitement no one had thought to tell her that

she must put the doll away in the parlor cupboard — and the great, unwinking eye of the light showed the way to all ships safely past the rocks, into Hull Harbor.

CHAPTER V

LINK SCATTERBY'S STORY. DAN SCATTERBY
LOOKS CROSS-EYED. JANE TREATS
WITH THE ENEMY

LINK SCATTERBY'S schooner, the *Pem-etic*, came into the Harbor in the middle of the next forenoon, with a fair wind. The last night's gale seemed to have gone off to sea, carrying with it a heavy fog bank, that had lurked about the horizon.

But Link Scatterby had a doleful tale to tell! He had tried to make the Harbor in pitchy darkness, the schooner had barely missed boring a hole in her side off Gridiron rocks, and finally he was forced to anchor off Cottle's Island till daylight! The vessel dragged at her anchor all night, and he expected nothing but to be drifted upon the rocks, where nothing



There was quite a crowd in Mr. Tobias Clark's store.

would have saved him from being ground to pieces!

What was the matter with Little Bear light? That was what Link Scatterby wanted to know!

There was quite a crowd in Mr. Tobias Clark's store, as was often the case when a vessel had just come in, and all were listening to what had happened to Link Scatterby, on account of the darkness of the Little Bear light.

Jane had rowed over, to get Little She's shoe, which had been lost off at the house-warming, the night before, and which Jo had said he would leave at the store. (Horatio was sleeping off his four hours' watch.)

And Jane heard all that Link Scatterby said about having a light-keeper that would allow such a dreadful thing as that to happen!

Once in a while someone would nudge Link, with a nod in Jane's direction; but what did Link Scatterby care? — he said it was time that

everybody knew what folks thought about the slackness over to Little Bear light!

A parcel of young ones were keeping it as much as anybody, and he should like to know if folks were going to put up with that!

Jane shrank away — to the very threshold of the door. Hull Harbor people had always been so kind to them! They felt as if they and the light belonged to Hull Harbor and the Harbor to them — almost like one big family!

And now it was plain that some people were ready to listen to Link Scatterby, if not to agree with him!

“They’re an uncommonly handy lot of youngsters, over there to the light,” said Mr. Tobias Clark. “And you can trust ’em,— every one of ’em!”

Oh, how Jane loved Mr. Tobias Clark! — she quite forgot that he always refused to sell peppermints by the cent’s worth!

Link Scatterby said he had yet to know that the United States government appointed kids

to keep a lighthouse and that if Inspector Littlefield had got used to having Seth Penny-packer over there at Little Bear and wasn't willing to take the trouble to turn him away — why, there were folks that had spunk enough to go to Washington, to see if something couldn't be done about it!

Dan Scatterby had been hanging about the store, but it had seemed to him wise to keep shy of Jane. She might feel called upon to attend to that little matter of the doll.

He had found out, before now, that people who imposed upon Doxy were likely to have to reckon with Jane.

But Jane only looked at him as if she were thinking of something else.

His small, shrewd eyes began to look at the end of his nose; — the school-teacher knew that when Dan Scatterby began to look cross-eyed he was up to mischief!

“My pa won't go to Washington to get the lighthouse away from your pa — because I

won't let him," he remarked amiably, as they two stood together just outside the store door. "I'll set up a yell! — when I do that they all have to give in! Ma won't let him lick me because I might have St. Vitus' dance. I don't want to live at the old lighthouse!"

Jane only half heard him; she was still listening to the voices in the store.

Dan, growing bolder, drew from his pocket a queer assortment of screws and springs, held them out in his hand before Jane's eyes, and looked at them, reflectively.

"I guess you don't know what those are, do you?" he said, impressively. "You would be mad enough with Jonas if you did!"

That remark really did take Jane's attention from the talk going on in the store! — If Jonas had been "up to something" she ought to know what it was!

"You couldn't guess! — you never saw anything like them, did you?" said Dan, provokingly.

Jane looked disturbed; — you could never be quite sure how troublesome Jonas might be.

“It’s a secret but I’m going to tell you because I know you’ll feel bad about it and I know how to make it all right again! — these screws and springs and things are the walk and the talk out of Doxy’s doll!”

Doxy’s doll! — the color actually fled from Jane’s cheeks — in spite of the more serious things she had on her mind. That doll had been so wonderful a thing and Doxy so happy to have it!

“Jonas hooked it and cut it open to see what made it do it — but I know just how to put the walk and talk back again — you see I’ve got all the things — and I’ll go home with you, now, and do it!”

“How did Jonas get it? — when was it?” asked Jane.

It didn’t suit Dan to tell anything that would show how great was his share in robbing Pepina of her remarkable gifts.

“He just hooked it — somehow — when he had a chance,” he answered easily, “to find out what made it walk and talk; and when he had found out — why, he couldn’t put these things back again — so — so I told him I would. But Doxy has got her doll back again, so I’ve got to go over to your house to do it!”

It was on the very tip of Jane’s tongue to say that he shouldn’t go over to Little Bear in her boat but the sudden thought of Doxy restrained her — brave little Doxy, who had never said a word! — who was always protecting bad little Jonas from the consequences of his mischief!

“Doxy knows it of course,” she said, half to herself.

“Well, yes, she does — and she was pretty mad with Jonas,” said Dan, candidly.

“You couldn’t expect a kid like her wouldn’t be — with a doll like that! But I told her I would come over, some day, and make the doll

walk and talk again, same as ever. And I'll go right over, now."

He was, in truth, afraid of what Jonas might tell of his share in the mischief — he knew that he had the whip-hand over Doxy! — but he was willing to risk much to get hold of that doll again!

He was even now in disgrace at home because the kitchen clock would not go again after his experiments with it; but the Pennypackers were in too much trouble about the light, just now, to be making a great fuss about a small thing! — and of what account was a doll, anyhow?

Jane hesitated. She remembered how strained and pale Doxy's face had looked when she went upstairs, her doll-box under her arm, the night before,— how the corners of her mouth had drooped! Jane had thought, then, that the child was only tired and perhaps frightened about the light, as they had all been — but, poor Doxy! — she was the sort of child

that has the feelings of a mother for her dolls.

So Jane was divided between a desire to tell Dan Scatterby just what she thought of him — for she had no doubt but that he had led Jonas into the mischief — and to forbid him from ever setting his foot on Little Bear, and a longing to ease Doxy's mother-heart by the making whole of her doll.

She thought it more than likely that Dan could do it; he had a real faculty for putting machinery together — in spite of his late failure with the kitchen clock; — caused, possibly, by his absorption in the newer problem of the walking and talking of dolls.

The recollection of Doxy's sorrowful little face conquered.

“I know just what kind of a boy you are, Dan Scatterby,” said candid Jane. “And I don't think Jonas would ever have touched the doll if it hadn't been for you. But if you're sure you can undo the mischief you've done — why, you can get in.”

He had been following her down to the landing, as they talked.

He was not proud — except with the pride of carrying his point. It didn't make any difference what Jane Pennypacker said! — she wouldn't even keep the light much longer! It was a pretty lucky thing that his Uncle Link had come so near to losing his vessel, since he hadn't lost it — for it would now be easy for his father to be keeper of the Little Bear light!

He jumped nimbly into Jane's rowboat and took an oar.

CHAPTER VI

DAN SCATTERBY AND JONAS IN THE WOODSHED.
HORATIO HAS A LETTER

DOXY was down at the Little Bear landing when Jane and Dan Scatterby pulled the rowboat up there; when Doxy needed especial comfort she was always on the lookout for Jane — there were always Seth and Little She to want their mother; when you have come eight you mustn't expect her any more.

But when you have a Jane,— oh, happy you, *if you have a Jane!* Someone has written a pretty poem about wanting nothing better in heaven than “to be a little sister there,” and it surely is a bit of heaven to have a big sister of the right kind! — Doxy could have told you so!

Doxy's face looked blue and scared when she saw Dan Scatterby. He stood up in the boat,

as he tied her to the slip, and paused in his occupation to look cross-eyed at her. (It was quite a thrilling experience to have Dan Scatterby looked cross-eyed at you.)

“I’ve got your doll’s walk and talk in my pocket,” he said. “I came over to put them back, for you, and make her just the same as she was before Jonas took them out!”

Doxy looked startled but not yet hopeful; she was, as Jonas said, “a great one to believe in fairy stories” and Pepina had seemed to her as if she came out of one. Dan Scatterby was just like the ogre that one might expect!

But the ogre never offered to make things right!

Her mouth quivered as she raised inquiring eyes to Jane’s face.

“You didn’t know about — Pepina, did you, Jane?”

Jane cuddled her. “I think you were a brave little girl to keep it to yourself,” she

said. "And if you think, Dan Scatterby, that I don't understand that you had as much or more to do with hacking that doll to pieces as Jonas had — why, you can't know how well acquainted with you I am!"

Jane wasn't afraid of Scatterbys! — she didn't know that they could turn them out of the lighthouse! thought Doxy.

Dan Scatterby made a threatening gesture behind Jane's back, scowling fiercely and still looking cross-eyed. Doxy felt that the ogre must be pacified. And — oh, joy! — what if he could make Pepina herself again?

"Are you sure you can mend the doll?" asked Jane — reading Doxy's small, snub-nosed face, as if it were a book.

"Honest Injun — cross my throat — hope I may —" Doxy, wide-eyed, watched the queer antics that Dan performed in proof of his good intentions.

"You can come up to the house, and if Doxy will trust you with the doll you can repair it in

the woodshed; but don't you get Jonas into any more mischief!" said Jane crisply.

Jane was of a peaceful disposition and not revengeful; but Scatterbys lay heavy on her mind. All the people of Hull Harbor were their friends — except the Scatterbys, whom they would have reckoned upon as surely as any.

Dan and Jonas were in the woodshed; Doxy had brought Pepina, but the operation was quite too much for her motherly eyes to bear. She took Seth out upon the rocks — so far that they could not hear the sound of the hammer in the woodshed.

Jane went in search of Horatio, who was just up, after the sleep that had made up for his night watch. She had brought him a letter from the postoffice — and the handwriting was Phonse Bruce's.

Phonse Bruce was Horatio's very greatest friend. His story was about as queer as any of those in Doxy's fairy-books, for once he had been only Phonny Bee, living with Grandfather

Bee, in a little house up on the Sound, bare-footed and with scarcely enough to eat; and now he was one of the richest boys in the world!

The way of it was that he had been wrecked at sea and picked up by Grandfather Bee's son, who adopted him; then his sister Rosemary and her governess had happened to come to the lighthouse and had seen and known him.

So it was the Pennypackers who had brought him to his own again, and they were very happy about it.

You who have read "The Six Little Pennypackers" know all about their friends the Bruces, of course, but as they have a good deal to do with this story, everyone must be made acquainted with them. The Pennypackers themselves would tell you that no story about them would be worth telling if it left the Bruces out!

Jane decided to tell Horatio of the complaint that Link Scatterby was making, that he had been obliged to anchor outside because of

the darkness of the light, before she gave him Phonse's letter. In Jane's experience the pill went before the jelly, and the jelly made you forget the pill — sometimes.

She led the way to the parlor, with a beckoning finger; there was privacy in the parlor, because there was a beautiful spun-glass ship there and many shell ornaments, which the younger ones were allowed to look at only on Sundays or as a reward for good behavior.

Then, with the door shut, she told about the *Pemetic*, straining at her anchor all night, close upon the Gridiron rocks, because there was no light to show the way into the Harbor.

Horatio's forehead tied itself into a hard knot — but it always did that now at the mention of the Scatterbys.

“So Link Scatterby said that, did he?” said Horatio, after a whole minute.

He was thinking of the moment when he had looked out along the shaft of light that flung

itself far out beyond the Gridiron rocks and Cottle's Island.

“ Must have anchored on the lee side of Cottle's, of course,” he said reflectively — “ well, I just don't believe it, that's all! ”

Jane fairly gasped with astonishment. You always expected *something* of Horatio, and Jane had always felt that he was brighter than she was — although the school-teacher said it was a pretty even thing — but this idea had not even occurred to her.

Jane never told lies herself and she never expected other people to do so.

Horatio never told lies, either, but he knew perfectly well that there were people who did; so he had made up his mind that it was a good way, when you heard anything new to consider whether it was true or not.

Many people standing in a lighthouse tower when the lamp is lighted are so dazzled by the blaze, that they can see but a very short distance outside; but Horatio's eyes were so ac-

customed to the condition that they were scarcely dazzled at all. He felt sure that there was no vessel off Cottle's Island — at least off that side of Cottle's Island where a vessel must have lain for safety — the night before.

“Everybody in the store seemed to believe it,” said Jane slowly.

“Hull Harbor people will believe any kind of a yarn! — they don't know the world!” — and Horatio wagged his head very wisely. (That sounded a little as if Horatio had got “the big head” from going to Europe; — that does happen, you know! But he was so sensible he was sure to get over it soon!)

“How are you going to prove that Link Scatterby's vessel wasn't lying off Cottle's Island, last night?” asked Jane — who had a very straightforward way with her.

“That's another thing!” admitted Horatio, looking down, and tracing the pattern of the yellow parrot on the home-made rug with his

foot. "But there's one thing sure — I shan't give up without trying!"

"And the light was out! — we can't deny that, anyway!"

Sometimes Jane's straightforwardness seemed pretty severe! — especially when you were the one to blame!

Horatio had a knot in his forehead that looked as if it might never come untied!

Jane wished she hadn't said it — and that made her think of the jelly after the pill; she put her hand into her pocket and drew out Phonse's letter.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT HORATIO BELIEVES PHONSE AND HE CAN
DO. A PUFF OF SMOKE

HORATIO'S face flushed with delight and the knot in his forehead smoothed itself out, in a twinkling.

Jane was very glad that the letter had come just when Horatio was troubled but she said to herself that she didn't see what even Phonse Bruce could do to help them in just such a difficulty as this — as we all know, Uncle Sam hires his light-keepers because they faithfully keep the lights — and rich friends can't help them if they don't!

You see how it was — Jane had a very practical mind; sometimes it made her think that everything was going wrong; in her own family they thought it was because her hair grew in a widow's peak; but one thing they all knew —

if things did look hard to Jane she could be depended to do her best about them, and she had proved — in a shipwreck! — that she wasn't a coward.

In fact, Horatio hadn't thought of any help at all; haven't you had things seem right, all at once, just because you saw the face of a friend?

Phonse's handwriting had just that effect upon Horatio.

His face was beaming like a full moon when he turned to Jane:

“What do you think? — Phonse has got a steam yacht, already!” he said. “You know he said he would surprise us when he came down! He's coming down here in it!”

Steam yachts were common enough in the waters about Hull Harbor, in the season, and yet it did almost take Jane's breath away to think that a boy like Phonse, not yet quite sixteen, could own one, all by himself!

Phonse had owned a circus tiger, which

might be thought to be about as astonishing a possession as a boy could have — and he had been able to build Jo a new vessel when his other one was wrecked, but somehow, that he should have a steam yacht and be coming down to Hull Harbor in it seemed to Jane the most wonderful thing she had ever known about Phonse!

“His tutor has come too, and he will come down, with him, on the yacht,” said Horatio.

Now Horatio thought a great deal about having a chance to learn something and had been greatly interested in the fact that Phonse was to have the brother of his sister Rosemary's governess come from France to teach him; — but you could see that even Horatio didn't think much about the tutor, compared to the steam yacht!

But with their father so ill and all the care of the lighthouse upon them Jane didn't see how Horatio — or any of them — could have much fun with Phonse and his yacht.

If Horatio were like *some* boys there would be danger that he would forget all about the lighthouse!

But that Horatio was in no danger of forgetting that he was now head-keeper of the light was shown by his very next words:

“ I rather think Phonse and I, together, can take the wind out of Link Scatterby’s sails! ”

That cheered Jane’s heart, because it sounded hopeful and courageous; but yet she said to herself that she couldn’t quite see how Phonse, because he was rich and owned a steam yacht, could help to prove that the *Pemetic* didn’t spend the night, straining at her anchor, off Cottle’s Island!

And he certainly couldn’t prove that the Little Bear light wasn’t out!

But she didn’t say these things because she knew that, if she did, Horatio might say the same dreadful thing that he said when she sat upon their crate of blueberries while the

steamer that was to have taken them whistled and went off!

“Jane, you are slow!” was what he had said. Slow in her mind, he had meant; and sometimes Jane was afraid she didn’t think as quickly as the others. So she said to herself that she would better wait and see what Horatio, with Phonse’s help, could do to “take the wind out of Link Scatterby’s sails.”

“Phonse says his yacht can beat anything on the coast!” Horatio continued excitedly. “It was built for a racer. The owner had to go off to Egypt for his health, so a friend of the Bruces got it for Phonse. He said he was going to have one but I didn’t think it would be until next summer.”

“The tutor must be nice if he is Mademoiselle Picot’s brother,” said Jane, thoughtfully. For Mademoiselle had been much at the lighthouse, when the Bruces had had a summer cottage on the Sound, and had taught the little Pennypackers some French and a good

deal of dancing; and they had all had most beautiful times together.

But Horatio,— although he was a boy who loved his book — couldn't think anything about the tutor, but only of the steam yacht.

He went and got the spy-glass and took it up to the tower to look off; Phonse had written that they were to set out from Boston soon after his letter was posted; who could say how soon a yacht that could beat anything on the coast might arrive?

Jane suddenly remembered what was going on in the woodshed.

She could not feel that Dan Scatterby and Jonas were a pair wholly to be trusted, even when their work seemed to be the repairing of previous mischief.

There was no hammering in the woodshed, now, but Doxy, standing not far off, on a rock, with little Seth beside her, had not found out that the noise had ceased, for she had her

fingers in her ears. To hear them hammering away at Pepina had been too much to bear and yet she could not stay far away.

There was a glow of satisfaction upon Dan Scatterby's face that made him as Jane said to herself, "almost a good-looking boy."

"I've got the walk back into her," he said triumphantly. "But the talking part is broken."

He set the doll on her feet and she walked — but it was not with the tripping, clicking lightness of her old gait; she hitched and hobbled as if she had suddenly grown old and decrepit.

"If that's what you call making her walk again!" said Jane scornfully.

"Well, I guess you'd think it was something if you'd done it! You'd better believe 'twas a job!" said Dan, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "And if you'll let me take her over to the Harbor I'll get Tilbury Gott to make

a new talker — he's awful handy." Tilbury Gott was the blacksmith!

Doxy thrust her small, tear-stained face in at the door.

"See, Doxy, she can walk," said Jane hopefully, "and perhaps she'll do it better after a while!"

Doxy looked at the doll, hitching herself, pitifully, like a lame old woman, over the woodshed work-bench, and with a burst of tears she snatched Pepina and hugged her to her heart.

"I've got her most fixed so she'll talk, Doxy," said Dan persuasively, "and if you'll let me take her over to Tilbury Gott —"

"No, no! — you've made her worser and worser and you shall never take her any more!" cried Doxy. "You're a dreffly wicked, cross-eyed boy —"

"Well, now, you'd just better quit calling names!" cried Dan hotly. "My uncle Link that you 'most shipwrecked is going to turn you out of this lighthouse. Your father

has got rheumatic fever and he's a great light-keeper! They were talking about sending for the Inspector, anyway,— they'll do it right straight off, when I tell 'em that your father has got rheumatic fever!"

Dan was off, with a backward, cross-eyed look that was enough to terrify the stoutest heart.

"What does he mean by saying that father has rheumatic fever?" asked Jane severely (people were apt to speak severely to little Jonas when anything unpleasant happened).

"Papa kept calling to me to bring him a glass of water and I just said he was awful hot and thirsty; and Dan said he must have rheumatic fever — that's all!" Jonas' scared blue eyes were full of conscious innocence.

"That's enough to give the Scatterbys another *handle!*" said Jane, with a great sigh. "I ought not to have let him come over!"

Jane went up to the tower to find Horatio and consult with him about some way to let

everyone know that their father was not ill with rheumatic fever. She thought there was no need of worrying their mother about the Scatterbys and their unfriendly doings just yet.

But Horatio would not listen to anything about Scatterbys! He could think of nothing but Phonse, who was coming on his steam yacht.

What that little rascal of a Dan Scatterby told was of no account, he said; couldn't Jane, looking through the spy-glass, see a puff of smoke, away off to leeward of Great Goose Island?

He didn't see what that could be except Phonse's yacht!

CHAPTER VIII

A STEAM YACHT IN THE HARBOR. ONLY
PHONNY BEE TURNED INTO SOME-
BODY ELSE

DAN SCATTERBY found the old row-boat at the slip which anyone was welcome to use, when it was there and not at Hull Harbor. It was really the ferry-boat, without a ferryman, between the Harbor and Little Bear Island. If you were alone in it you had to row and bail, at the same time — but that was no inconvenience to Dan who wouldn't have hesitated to go to sea in a bowl, like the Wise Men of Gotham, if that form of navigation had ever come into fashion, at Hull Harbor.

The only objection he felt to rowing and bailing, at the same time, was that it was slow work and he was in a great hurry to get to the Harbor and spread the story that

Papa Pennypacker had rheumatic fever!

When people heard of that, as well as of the danger that his Uncle Link had been in because of the darkness of the light, they would understand that the Pennypackers ought to be turned out of the lighthouse!

Even the people who thought so much of the Pennypackers that they wouldn't sign the letter to be written to the Inspector would change their minds, now!

What would Uncle Sam say when he knew that one of his lighthouses — on a very rocky coast, too! — was kept by the *Little* Pennypackers?

Who could keep the watches when Papa Pennypacker had rheumatic fever?

(Dan thought it quite likely that he had. It wasn't needful to look too closely into the matter. Dan had not, at the best of times, "a taste exact for actual fact.")

Mama Pennypacker was having about as much as she could do to take care of Little

She, who had barely come off safely from a struggle to get seven teeth, in her second summer; could Mama Pennypacker be expected to take night watches?

Everything depended upon Horatio and Jane! It was Dan's opinion that Jane was a good deal of a girl, although he didn't like her; but of what use would a girl be in a lighthouse tower? Of course she would go to sleep! The flame of the lamp must be kept up to a certain number of inches — he had read that in the directions hung up inside the tower door; could a girl be trusted to attend to a thing like that?

He decided that when his father kept the light his sister Lida would better be taught to keep the lamp clean — a fellow might get tired of too much scrubbing —

It was when he had got just as far as that in his plans that he caught sight of a thin little smoke wreath, far off against the horizon.

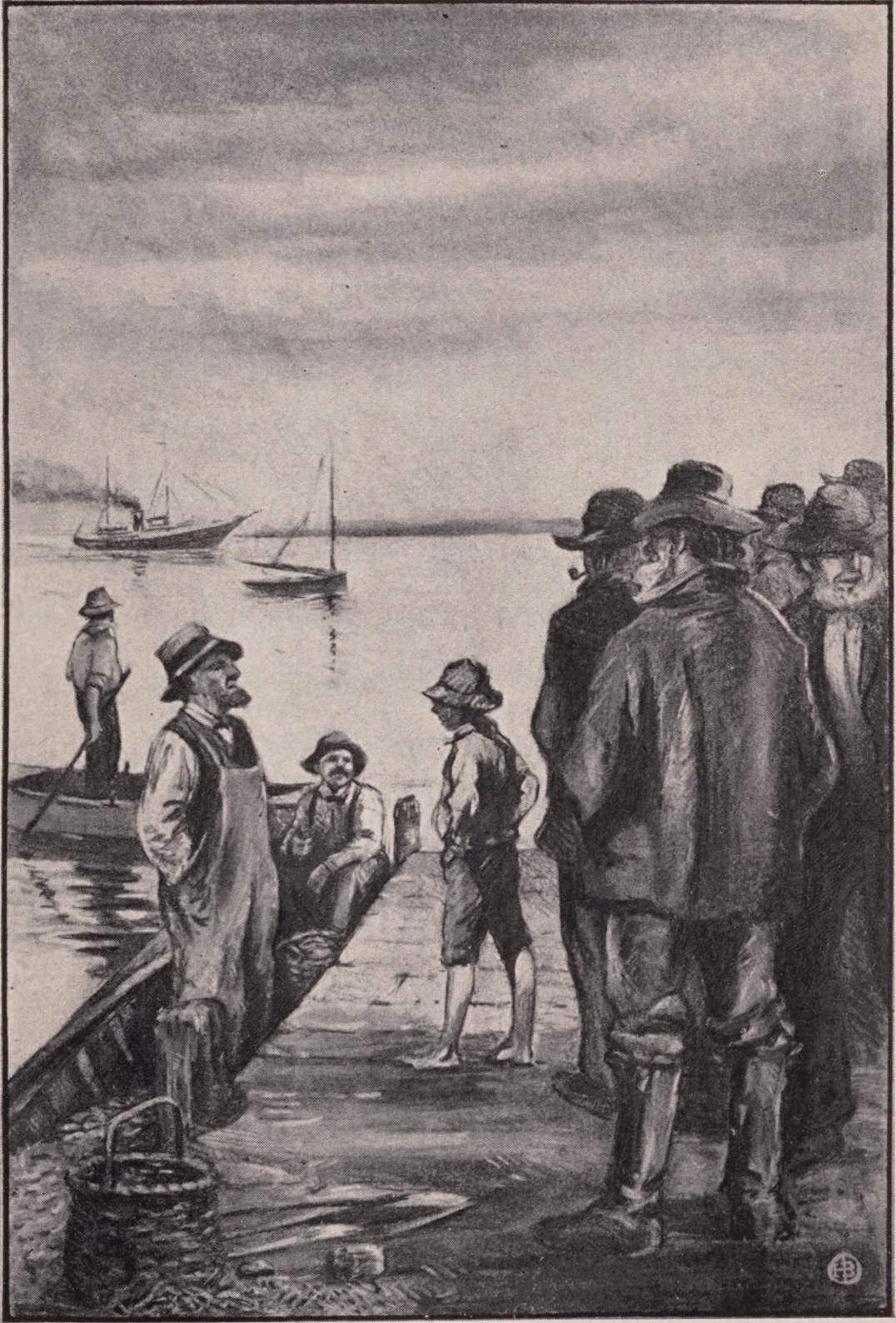
It wasn't steamer day! — it must be a steam yacht — a pretty big one — bound for Eden, where some of the cottagers stayed late in the season.

She wouldn't come much farther towards Hull Harbor but would steer her course around the other side of Cottle's Island, out into the Bay.

Dan pulled the old rowboat up to the landing and ran to Mr. Tobias Clark's store. When you had something to tell that you wished everyone to know, just as soon as possible, you told it at Mr. Tobias Clark's store.

There were not so many people in the store as there had been earlier in the day but there were enough to speedily spread the news, from one end of Hull Harbor to the other, that Mr. Seth Pennypacker, over at the light, had rheumatic fever.

And more than one old fisherman looked anxiously out to sea, with a thought of the fishing



A fine new steam yacht was steering straight for Hull Harbor.

vessels and hoped that "it would never get so that they couldn't feel to depend on Little Bear light!"

A good many who had refused to sign that letter to the Inspector, lest they should do Seth Pennypacker an injury, decided then that it was their duty to sign!

But before the matter had been thoroughly talked over, at the store and the steamboat wharf, there was a new sensation.

A fine, new, steam yacht — she was big and a beauty! — was steering straight for Hull Harbor!

Could she be putting in for supplies? At the store they got out the big feather duster and tried to freshen up the looks of the stock a bit. She surely was not putting in for repairs; she was too trim and jaunty and new for that!

A rowboat was coming over from Little Bear — so someone whose eyes had been for a moment turned away from the yacht had dis-

covered. That must be Horatio Pennypacker going for the doctor!

But what did Horatio Pennypacker do but row directly out to the stylish yacht that was lying a stone's throw off the wharf. The tender was just putting off but the tall boy who was getting into it changed his mind and got into the Little Bear rowboat, instead, and came rowing ashore with Horatio Pennypacker.

“Well, I snum if that ain't Phonny Bee!” cried Cap'n 'Siah Thimble, who was just going out to look after his lobster pots; — and from the fishing vessels and the canning factory a crowd began to gather, almost as suddenly as it gathers in a city street.

Although he had turned into rich Phonse Bruce, almost as if a fairy had tapped him with her wand, and had been away for more than a year, he was still Hull Harbor's Phonny Bee, a motherless boy, who had fished and dug clams, gone to school when he could get a

chance and very often felt the weight of Grandfather Bee's crutch.

"Gee! Don't I wish I could turn into somebody else!" murmured Dan Scatterby, who was still engaged in spreading the news from Little Bear around the wharf.

"It appears as if we ought to do something or other to show him honor!" said Tilbury Gott, the blacksmith. There was a little talk here and there and then, before you would have thought it could be done, up went the flag on the tall pole that stood on the bit of a green in front of the schoolhouse, and instantly the thunder of a cannon acknowledged it from the yacht.

"Just because he's rich," muttered Dan Scatterby, scornfully.

But that was not the reason! — nor was it because Phonse and his sister had given good gifts to Hull Harbor — a bell for the schoolhouse and a building for the library — but only just because he was their Phonny Bee, a real,

up-to-everything boy, with a heart in the right place!

Horatio stayed in the rowboat. The flag and the cannon warmed his heart but it was a heart that was a little sore about the way things were going at Hull Harbor.

Of course what Dan Scatterby said was not always to be believed but danger to the ships scared people — you couldn't wonder at that! — and Link Scatterby's story of his peril had influenced them. Horatio felt pretty sure that they were going to send a letter to the Inspector. He thought that people who had known Pennypackers for so many years ought to have a little more faith in them!

Seth was tooting the fog-horn, over at Little Bear! — it was his way of showing people that Little Bear had a share in this affair!

“I am going visiting to the lighthouse,” said Phonse, taking off his cap to the crowd, with the graceful manners that he had learned abroad — although Hull Harbor would have

told you that he had pretty good ones before he went away! “ I shall be over another day and I shall hope to do the honors of my yacht to all of you! ”

Everybody cheered — but Dan Scatterby muttered:

“ That’s the last time you’ll go visiting *Pennypackers* at Little Bear light! ”

And yet I think the time may come when Dan Scatterby will show that he is not altogether a bad boy!

CHAPTER IX

DAN SCATTERBY HAS AN ADVENTURE. THE
SCATTERBYS DO SOMETHING THAT
THEY ARE ASHAMED OF

DAN SCATTERBY felt that, although he was in a hurry to get home and tell about the rheumatic fever at the light, he must have a closer view of that yacht.

It wasn't every day that you saw such a steam yacht as that lying off Hull Harbor!

He got into the leaky old ferry-boat and pushed off, towards the yacht.

Dan loved a fine boat and he knew more about one like this than would have been expected — more than a "fresh-water" boy could ever learn from books!

Fresh water boys know electric cars and motor cars, and, nowadays, even flying ma-

chines; the Hull Harbor boy knew everything that floats!

Dan began to row around the yacht, wide-eyed, taking in every one of her beautiful lines, from her bow, with her name, *Mermaid*, upon it, to her slender stern that *fitted* the water just as a swan does.

Now he had rowed that old Bear Island boat dozens of times and had bailed just as naturally as he rowed, but he had never before happened to have his eyes and his mind fixed upon something else besides rowing and bailing. He didn't know that he wasn't bailing until he felt the water around his ankles!

He fell to bailing with a will but there was too much water for the old tin dipper to have much effect upon; the boat was beginning to sink!

He flung himself over the side into the water, still clinging to the side but he pulled her over and she filled. He let go and clutched an oar to save himself. He could swim — of

course, being a Hull Harbor boy — but he wasn't used to doing it in his clothes — and the waves were uncomfortably big — and his left leg which their old horse had kicked the week before was pretty stiff, and — you wouldn't believe a rowboat like that would *suck* and make a kind of whirlpool when she sank, like a big vessel, but that's what that rowboat did! — and Dan Scatterby, clinging to the oar and striking out as well as he could, cried "Help! help!" at the very top of his voice.

The lame leg wouldn't work at all! — he knew he was going to sink, when he was seized by the collar of his jacket and drawn into a shining white rowboat, with glittering brass mountings, which was not heaven, as for one dazed moment it seemed to Dan as if it might be, but only the tender of the *Mermaid*.

"That might have been a pretty close shave!" said the young man who had pulled him into the tender.

Dan picked himself from the bottom of the

boat and shook himself like a water-soaked dog.

“ See here! — perhaps you’d better save some of that water till you get ashore,” exclaimed his rescuer, trying to shield himself from the shower. “ And the next time you go to sea in a tub better see that the seams are tight! I was looking at you from the yacht and I couldn’t see what kept that thing afloat, at all! ”

Dan’s shrewd eyes looked suddenly at his nose; he was not too dazed to have an idea!

“ It was that old boat they kept at Little Bear for folks to go back and to in! It’s a wonder that somebody hadn’t got drowned! You’d think they’d be ashamed of themselves, wouldn’t you? My getting ’most drowned will show that Pennypackers ain’t fit to keep the light, won’t it? ”

The young man looked curiously at him. Even in the excitement of his new idea Dan was

conscious of a hope that he should be taken on board the yacht, but he was being rowed steadily ashore and did not feel encouraged to ask any favors.

“ I know the fellow that owns that yacht,” he said, after a while. “ He’s nobody but Phonny Bee.” No answer; a little amusement was added to the curious look in the young man’s eyes.

“ But I expect he’ll stick up for Pennypackers, every time! Anyhow you’ve got to be a witness that I ’most got drowned, ’long of Pennypackers being so slack as to keep that old rowboat! ”

They had reached the landing, by this time, and Dan was obliged to scramble out of the tender.

“ You’d better get into some dry clothes, just as soon as possible,” said the young man seriously. “ If anyone demands damages of you for the loss of the rowboat I’m willing to testify that it wasn’t worth anything.”

And he rowed away — as if that were all there was to it!

Dan suddenly remembered some things that his sister Lida was in the habit of saying about manners. You didn't want to be girly but neither did you want a fellow like that — who thought he was *some!* — to suppose that a Hull Harbor boy didn't know anything!

“I'm much obliged to you! — I'll do as much for you sometime!” he called — somewhat gruffly, because manners were an effort.

“It's not worth mentioning,” replied the young man, politely. He touched his hand to his cap and Dan attempted to respond — Lida would have been encouraged! — but there was no cap upon his head.

“Floated off into the Bay by this time,” muttered Dan — “and ought to be charged to Pennypackers!”

He ran all the way home; — partly on account of his wet clothes but chiefly to report the new evidence against Pennypackers.

There were several families of Scatterbys in Hull Harbor and they all lived on the edge of a swamp, known as Scatterby's swamp, near Arrowhead Lake, a great, beautiful sheet of water, which the summer visitors had named because of Indian relics they had found there.

Cap'n Hiram Scatterby, Dan's father, lived in the house nearest the village but it was a long run in wet clothes and Dan dared not accept a lift from Laban Hull, on his buckboard; he did stop, however, to tell Laban Hull of the new evidence of the Pennypackers' unfitness to keep the light.

"Well, the Inspector ought to have seen that there was a new rowboat, over to Little Bear, sure enough," said Laban Hull — which was not placing the blame where Dan thought it belonged. He looked at his nose and scowled at Laban Hull, as he ran on.

At home, his mother hugged and cried over him, for the dangers he had passed and they all agreed with him that the blame belonged to

the Pennypackers — all, that is, except Lida. She was a queer girl, in Dan's opinion. She wouldn't stand up for her own side unless she was sure it was the right side!

Now Dan, I fear, believed in standing up for his own side, right or wrong!

Perhaps there are some grown people like that.

Dan's father and his Uncle Link came home before Dan had his dry clothes on. Link had the letter to the Inspector, with all the names signed to it that he could possibly get.

And he immediately sat down at the queer old desk, that was all banged up from having been, so many years, to sea, and added to the letter all about Dan's narrow escape from drowning, on account of the "gross negligence" of the light-keeper!

Link Scatterby had more than once been the school-master and his learning was much respected.

"It's almost time for the Inspection Boat,

anyway," said Lida; "why don't you wait?"

Lida was peeling onions for the chowder, for dinner, and there were red rims around her eyes; it may have been the onions that caused them but Dan had observed that Lida always looked like that, when they talked about trying to get the light away from the Pennypackers.

"The Inspector may send the mate along with the supplies; he does, sometimes for this season's trip; and we want him to know just how things are, himself," answered Link.

"The rheumatic fever and my getting 'most drowned will fetch the Inspector," said Dan triumphantly.

Lida was looking directly at him; she could look things and make them just as plain as if she said them! She *looked*: don't you remember what good friends we've always been with Horatio and Jane?

And besides that she looked: "What would the Pennypackers do without the light?"

But Dan only stared fiercely at her, with his eyes fixed on his nose; — Lida hated to see that cross-eyed look of his!

What did girls know about business? — she'd better keep her looks to herself!

Wouldn't Uncle Link know what was right?— Uncle Link, who had been to the Normal School, and would have gone to college if he could have kept away from the sea? And how could you do any business if you kept thinking of the other fellow? Lida hadn't been in the store when the vessels came in, nor heard the summer visitors talk — big guns, who owned mines and railroads — as he had.

Link went out hurriedly, with the letter to the Inspector in his pocket. Cap'n Hiram Scatterby followed him more slowly.

At the door he turned and looked at his wife; — she had been looking at him a little as Lida looked at Dan.

“Seth Pennypacker never was rugged enough to keep a light!” he said.

“It isn’t as if he hadn’t some smart youngsters to help him,” said his wife.

Cap’n Scatterby only made a little growling noise in his throat for answer — as if he were angry.

Haven’t you ever been secretly angry with yourself for something that you had done or were doing, and had it make you feel as if you were angry with everyone else?

That was exactly the way that Cap’n Hiram Scatterby felt when he answered his wife by a growl!

CHAPTER X

PHONSE AND HORATIO PLAN TO "TAKE THE
WIND OUT OF LINK SCATTERBY'S SAILS."

CAN THE TUTOR BE TRUSTED WITH
THE LIGHT?

WHILE Dan Scatterby was being saved from drowning by the young man from the *Mermaid*, Phonse Bruce and Horatio were up in the tower-room at the lighthouse, trying to decide what had better be done.

They had shared their troubles and their joys when Phonse Bruce was Phonny Bee, and it seemed just as natural to do so now.

The great, delightful difference to Phonse was that he could do helpful things, now, that he couldn't have done if he had still been Phonny Bee. Papa Pennypacker had hobbled out of his room to see Phonse in the living-room. He had no fever and was not likely to

have one, although he had been thirsty and called to Jonas for water, while the doll was being repaired. But it was easy to see that he would not very soon be able to climb the tower stairs or take even a share of the watch.

Jane longed to take her share, turn and turn about, with Horatio, but Phonse joined with Horatio in head-shaking over that idea.

He fully shared Dan Scatterby's opinion that Jane was "a good deal of a girl," but he thought that was hardly the thing for a girl to do.

Besides, although Jane would undoubtedly keep awake, people might think she wouldn't.

And Phonse had been told about that letter that was probably going to be sent to the Inspector, asking for the removal of Seth Pennypacker from the position of keeper of Little Bear light.

"Your father will have to ask for an assistant," said Phonse.

"You see it's a pretty bad time to do that,"

said Horatio, knotting his forehead. "The pay is so small that the right man can't be found to come here, especially at this time of year. And it would seem like owning up to what Scatterbys claim — that the Pennypackers are not fit to keep the light!"

"I see!" said Phonse, wagging his head as wisely as Horatio had done.

"Uncle Sam likes to have a keeper who has boys," Horatio went on. "You know red-headed Rufe Scatterby is almost a man — he's off fishing now, but he would like to stay at home this winter and keep the light — and Dan Scatterby thinks he could run two or three lighthouses and the store, too!"

It was plain that Phonse had on his thinking-cap; he looked just as he did when he was Phonny Bee, planning how he could get the very best price for his catch of mackerel!

They couldn't say a word about this difficulty to Papa Pennypacker because it made his rheumatism worse to be worried. He did not

yet know that Link Scatterby had been on his way home when the Little Bear light was dark, and had never heard a whisper of the petition that had been gotten up for his removal.

After he had looked out at Cottle's Island, for a full minute, absent-mindedly, Phonse said:

“The very first thing to do is to prove that Link Scatterby wasn't anchored off Cottle's when the tower was dark! They can make a good deal out of that! — and if you're sure his schooner wasn't there —”

“I'm as sure of it as anybody can be of what he sees with his own eyes,” said Horatio. “But I've thought it over and over and I can tell you it's one thing to know it and another thing to prove it!”

Phonse's face suddenly glowed. He had been rich only a little more than a year and he didn't always realize how much he could do with his new possessions. And down here, he had begun to feel just like Phonny Bee, who

wouldn't have any supper unless he had caught some fish!

“We'll just go along in the *Mermaid* in Link's tracks, and find out where he put in! — or if he didn't put in anywhere, just what time he got along. Everyone knows the *Pemetic* and she couldn't have come along the coast without being seen!”

Horatio's face had brightened but it darkened again — suddenly.

“Perhaps you think I can go off and leave the light, just as well as not!” he said. He was thinking, for the first time since Phonny Bee had changed into Phonse Bruce, that it made people thoughtless to be rich! — it's always well to wait, at least a minute or two, before you think hard things about your friends!

“It's easy to make that all right!” said Phonse. “My tutor, Monsieur Edouard Picot, will come over here from the yacht and stay while we are gone. (You must remember to call him Mr. Edward Picot, because he means

to stay in this country and be an American.) It will be a high time for him! — no, I don't mean because it will be in a tower, I wasn't thinking of making a pun, but because — well because of something I'd better not tell you just now — not until I hear from my mother."

You might think that Phonse was going about in the world doing exactly as he pleased, but very soon found out that he deferred in everything to his mother.— Having been brought up without one he realized what a happy thing it was to be able to do that! He always said "my mother" so proudly and happily!

"Does he know how?" said Horatio, seriously. For he still thought that Phonse failed to realize what a serious crisis there was in the affairs of the Pennypackers.

"*Know how?*" echoed Phonse, with a scornful accent — "you'd just better believe he does! — though there's something about his knowing how that I'd better not tell you just yet!"

It was not like Phonse to make unnecessary

mysteries of simple things, so Horatio was contented to accept his word for the fact that his tutor understood a lighthouse lamp.

But it still seemed to him not quite the safe thing to leave a stranger like that in sole charge of the light.

“ I suppose you could go and follow up Link Scatterby’s tracks without me,” he said.

“ But then we shouldn’t get any fun out of it! ” said Phonse. “ We can leave all safe here and get some fun out of going! ”

When he was Phonny Bee he had always got all the fun he could out of things and perhaps that was why he had been able to take the weight of Grandfather Bee’s crutch, and all his hardships, so lightly.

But the more Horatio thought of it the stronger was his feeling that Phonse was taking the light-keeping a little too easily.

“ You see, Phonse, you have to keep a light to know how much there is to it! ” he said anxiously. “ And there’s been a fog-bank hanging

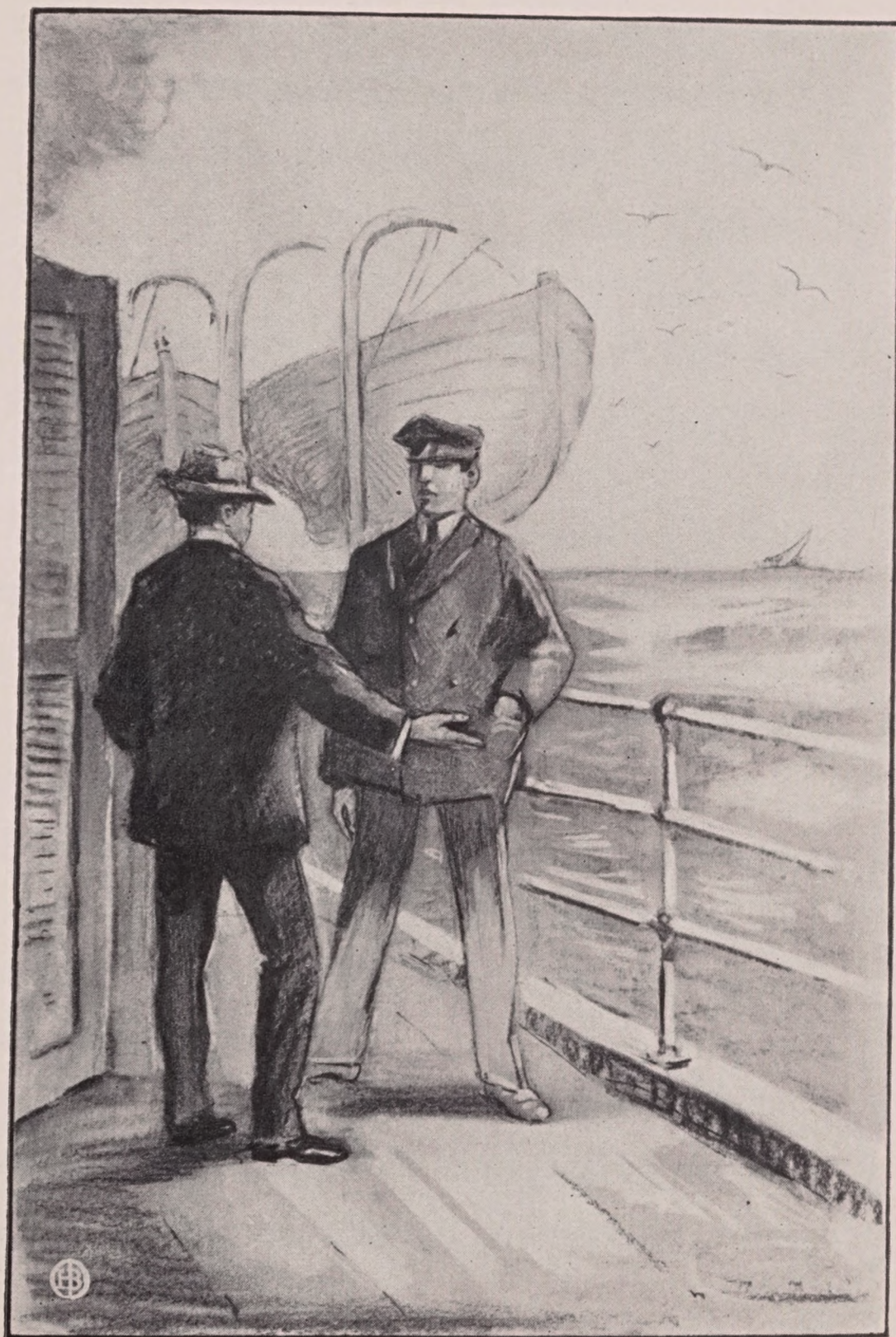
off, down to the east'ard, for a day or two. It takes a man that has kept a watch all night to keep awake —”

“Edward Picot *has!* Now are you satisfied?” said Phonse, but he didn't offer any further explanations, although he could see by the look on Horatio's face that he was not.

“Well, I've heard people say that the light-keeper always thinks no one but himself can keep the light!” — he added jestingly.

“But you see, Phonse, the light has been out once — just once, in all the time my father has kept it — and that was really my fault. When that has happened a fellow feels pretty scary about leaving the light!”

“We'll be gone only one night and we'll get Jo Bracey to stay over here! How will that do?” asked Phonse. “I was thinking it would be a good plan to ask Jo to go along with us; he knows all the places where Link would have been likely to put in, and he's acquainted with about all the craft we shall meet, when we steam



“ But you see, Phonse, the light has been out once — just once, in all the time my father has kept it.”

along, hailing everything with "Who saw the *Pemetic* last Monday night?" "

"It would be a good thing to have Jo," said Horatio. He was beginning to feel pretty faint-hearted about this task of proving that the *Pemetic* had not been anchored off Cottle's Island, in the darkness of the night, as her owner declared.

But there was only one thing to do and that was to leave the light safely taken care of and go steaming along over Link Scatterby's usual course, calling out, as if it were some game, "Who's seen the *Pemetic*?"

It would be a good thing to have Jo Bracey go with them; Jo and his fiddle — he had fiddled them over many a heart-ache, far away from home!

Jo was going off "coasting," as far as Philadelphia, soon, but now he was putting the finishing touches to the cottage, and making things snug for the winter.

"I was thinking of asking Jo to stay and

share the watch with your young man —” said Horatio; “Jo’s the only one that I would trust, just now.”

“Try that, then,” said Phonse.

But after all the planning this was what happened.

Papa Pennypacker said he could hobble upstairs by to-morrow and Phonse’s young man could come and help, if he had a mind to, but he calculated to take care of his own light!

Horatio said he didn’t know but he ought to be told what was going on — all about Link Scatterby and the letter to the Inspector. But Jane shook her head positively. Didn’t she count for anybody? asked Jane. Couldn’t she stand between her father and some hard things when he had rheumatism? Of course it would be well for the young man who knew how to keep a light to come over from the yacht, since her father was ill, but she wished it to be understood that the Pennypackers *could* keep the light!

In fact she, Jane Pennypacker, would not be afraid to be left all alone with the light, a whole night long; nor when she knew that the Inspection Boat was coming!

Mama Pennypacker said she was sure she didn't know what was the matter with Jane since she was shipwrecked! She didn't seem to be afraid of anything! And Horatio quoted, grimly, a proverb from the parsing part in the back of the grammar: "They that know nothing fear nothing."

Jane *was* likely to think of her boasts again, before long!

But yet — you couldn't help liking Jane! — it is so much better to be over-confident than to shirk and run away!

CHAPTER XI

THE MERMAID IS OFF. DOXY'S OPINION OF DAN
SCATTERBY. THE INSPECTION BOAT
IS ON HER WAY

HAVING made up his mind to go, Horatio was on hand bright and early the next morning.

Jo had accepted the invitation that Phonse had given him, and was at the landing when Horatio reached it — with Jane and the twins to see him off. He had on his Sunday clothes — you have to wear them oftener when you have a wife, so Jo had found out! — but he meant to get out of his Sunday coat just as soon as possible and take a hand at the management of that yacht, if possible — at least to find out how the thing was done! He had learned almost everything there was to know about an

ocean steamer when he had crossed the Atlantic.

That yacht was a delight to Jo's eyes; he loved the sea and ships; he would have written a poem like "The Liner She's a Lady," if it had not happened to him to be a rough sailor, who lived poetry instead of writing it. He had his fiddle; the sea and Jo's fiddle were used to keeping company and as big as the noise of the sea was it never seemed to put Jo's fiddle out! And he had the crow, in the same cage in which he had crossed the Atlantic! Chris had cried out that he wanted to go, and Pedy said he would make a lot of fun.

The tender of the yacht came over for the party, a long, slender, white boat, with four sailors rowing, their eight long, slender blades making the spray fly and sparkle in the morning sunshine.

A small crowd had gathered to see them go.

It was only a jolly little trip, everyone thought, and natural enough that Phonny Bee

should like to take his friends out — and show off a bit! He wouldn't be a boy if he didn't!

No one even guessed that the *Mermaid* was going to try to find the tracks of the *Pemetic* when she came down from Boston and was so nearly wrecked because Little Bear Island light was dark!

Link Scatterby, himself, who was on the wharf, didn't think of such a thing as that, although he was feeling a little uneasy, most of the time, now.

Link was a careless fellow, without much thought about what was right or wrong — that kind can sometimes do a very bad thing which they would not have believed they would beforehand!

He had said to himself that here was a chance to put his oar in to get the keepership of the light for his brother. There was no troublesome question of right or wrong about the matter for Link — until afterwards.

Doxy had Pepina under her arm — Pepina

who was an everyday doll, now, because of her misfortunes, and no longer kept in a box in the parlor cupboard. Her complexion was ruined, and her gait was limping; the air might do her good.

She clutched the doll tightly when she saw Dan Scatterby.

But Dan's mind was not upon dolls.

He had kept out of Horatio's way since that little affair of the doll, and being at the edge of the wharf, he had heard Jonas Gilkey, down in the water beside it, in his lobster boat, call up to Nick Thimble that the Inspection Boat was down at "the Light." Now "the Light" was a very large lighthouse, far out upon a great rock; it was named for the Island of which Hull Harbor was one of the villages, but the name was seldom given it by the people on the coast; when you said "*the* Light" everyone knew what you meant.

"Levi Gott was off the rock in his motor boat and he saw her," explained Jonas Gilkey.

“She’s four or five days ahead of time — ’twon’t be November till next Sunday; but maybe she had an emergency call — supplies run out or something; — anyhow she was there yesterday and it’s likely enough she’ll get up here to Little Bear to-day or to-morrow.”

“Seth Pennypacker’s in kind of a fix,” remarked Nick Thimble. He hasn’t got rheumatic fever, any more’n I have, but he’s too helpless to be alone there with the light: — and with all the complaint there’s been — And Horatio has gone away —”

Horatio had gone; the *Mermaid’s* smoke was a trail that extended almost out of the harbor.

Dan Scatterby, privately, behind the lobster factory, turned a somersault to express the joy of the victor. Surely, now, Pennypackers had lost the light and Scatterbys would have it!

But even as Dan came upright he saw, on the wharf, the young man who had rescued him from drowning. The yacht’s tender must have

brought him over, while Dan was lurking out of sight of Horatio. He was all in white clothes, like the cook and steward, and some of the other fellows on board the yacht; — pretty queer business for this time of year, thought Dan.

He thought he knew something about the doings of rich people, at least in the summer and early fall, but he couldn't make out what this fellow *was!*

He caught Dan's eye and called out to him gayly that he looked drier than when he saw him last.

Dan felt that he ought to look grateful; but he did look cross-eyed and fierce; — the queer young man was getting into the Bear Island rowboat, with Jane and the twins!

Perhaps he was going to stay and pretend he belonged there, when the Inspector got along!

Dan felt a sudden, strong desire to go over to the light, now that Horatio was away.

He called to Doxy, as the young man took

the oars from Jane and pulled out with strong, even strokes.

“ I’ve got your doll’s talker, all mended, in my pocket! I’ll come over and put it in, if you say so! And I’ll make her walk same as she used to! ”

Jane shook her head, severely, frowningly at him, but Doxy, who couldn’t help having the feelings of a mother, called out eagerly:

“ Oh, yes, come over and mend Pepina! You used to be a good boy, Danny Scatterby! ”

Dan grew red to the very roots of his reddish hair — all the Scatterbys had a hint of red in their hair. He couldn’t think when it could have been that he was a good boy; he doubted whether anybody but Doxy Pennypacker had ever noticed it; he made up his mind that he would really mend Doxy Pennypacker’s doll, if it was a possible thing!

I think, myself, that it was at that very moment that Dan Pennypacker began to be a better boy! — although it must be owned that

the effects didn't begin to show until some time after!

By this time everyone on the wharf had heard that the Inspector was on his way. There was a general hope that things would be found in satisfactory condition at the lighthouse.

Even the signers of the petition began to look at each other doubtfully.

"It would come pretty hard on Seth Penny-packer to get turned out, this time of year!" said Nick Thimble to Cap'n Hiram Scatterby.

Cap'n Scatterby mopped his forehead with his big red handkerchief, although the day was cool.

"I don't know, Link, as we ought to have sent that letter! Folks seem to be thinking 'twas kind of mean! I don't expect the Inspector has got it anyhow, do you? He must have started out before 'twas sent!" The Cap'n said this privately, in his brother's ear.

"He's got it fast enough, somewhere along the route," said Link.

But Link didn't seem to be very much pleased that the Inspector would have received the letter; he made hasty preparations and went off for a day's fishing in the *Pemetic*, just as if the Inspection Boat were not on the way!

The truth was Link didn't like the way people looked at him; they looked as if they didn't believe him!

In fact no one had thought of disbelieving him, except Horatio, who had looked out and seen, or thought he had, that there was no vessel off Cottle's Island.

Link was really feeling that most wholesome thing that gets hold, some time or other, of almost every boy and girl — *shame*.

But he had not reached the very best stage of it yet, for he still thought that it would be the worst of anything to be found out.

“Thank fortune,” he said to himself, “nobody can say the *Pemetic* wasn't off Cottle's Island that night when the light was dark and nobody's likely to find out where she was! If

the Inspector asks any questions — well, he isn't going to make much by asking them of me! The light was dark, anyhow — nobody can make out that Scatterbys were mean for saying that!"

So Link went off fishing, feeling pretty sure of not being found out, while the *Mermaid* was speeding out of the Bay, bound not to turn back until she had found out where the *Pemetic* really was that night when Horatio *knew* that she wasn't anchored off Cottle's Island, in the dangerous darkness.

CHAPTER XII

DAN GETS OVER TO THE LIGHT. JANE HAS
HOUSEKEEPING TROUBLES. APRONS
AND MOPS

WHILE Dan Scatterby was standing on the wharf, trying to think how he should get over to Little Bear, to find out what that young man from the yacht was there for, who should come along in a rowboat, but Liberty Trull. Mama Pennypacker's mother, old Grandma Gilkey, who lived at the Sea Wall, was very ill, and Liberty had been sent to Little Bear to bring her daughter over to her.

Dan beckoned Liberty to come near and nimbly dropped himself into his boat.

Liberty silently gave up one oar to his passenger — it was Hull Harbor manners to take anybody along with you who was going your way. And Liberty was silent, anyway; —

some people said that his hair curled so tight that it made him tongue-tied; — but that seems doubtful, because his cousin Angenette had the same kind of hair and the liveliest of tongues.

Dan, as he rowed, kept turning his head to peer out beyond the Ledge, for a glimpse of the Inspection Boat's smoke.

It would be pretty queer, at the lighthouse, with Mama Pennypacker away, when the Inspector came!

Of course Mama Pennypacker didn't keep the light, but she kept things spick-and-span about the house, as Uncle Sam expected everything to be kept; — it was said that Inspector Littlefield looked into the corners, like a woman, and wouldn't believe the light was well kept if the house was not.

Now, Mama Pennypacker might be ever so nice a housekeeper, and yet with Papa Pennypacker so ill and Little She still having a bout with her teeth, she might have "let things go." — Dan knew how it was at his house!

He wondered whether Liberty had heard that the Inspection Boat was coming, and would tell her; — she would have to go when her mother had sent for her, anyway!

Nobody could blame him for not telling her, — not even his sister Lida, who was such friends with the Pennypackers — for she had got to go, anyway!

That fellow from the yacht was probably going to stay; he looked as if he thought he was “all hands and the cook”; — made him think of a verse Lida had spoken at the Junior Club:

“For I am the cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig;
And the bo’sn tight, and the midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig!”

But a fellow might think he was all that and yet not know how to keep a light!

The Inspector would soon give him his walking ticket!

As for himself he had an excuse for going

over and he expected to find out all he wanted to know; he had that doll's "talker" in his pocket, and when Doxy had tears in her eyes he knew that every Pennypacker — even Jane! — would give in!

Liberty took jaw-breakers (very hard and dark candy), two for a penny, from his pocket, and proffered one to Dan — Liberty's heart was more open than his mouth — and, while they rested upon their oars and refreshed themselves, Dan's sharp eyes descried a puff of smoke, far off against the horizon — so far off that it might be the St. John's steamer, a very little out of her course.

He hoped that Liberty would think it was the St. John's steamer; — of no use for him to carry to Little Bear the news that the Inspection Boat was coming! But Liberty wasn't looking, anyway; his "job" and the jaw-breaker filled all his mind.

When they landed Liberty went directly up to the house door, as became a person who had

proper and urgent business, while Dan went out behind the woodshed, where he could keep one eye on the rapidly advancing smoke, and watch for Doxy with the other, that he might have an excuse for staying; — Jane had an abrupt way of saying good-by, sometimes, that was very unpleasant.

He peered around the corner of the shed and saw Mama Pennypacker, her plump and rosy face looking pale and disturbed as she hurried off with Liberty. Little She cried after her mother on the doorstep and Jane comforted her.

Nobody at the lighthouse except Jane and the smaller ones when the Inspector arrived — unless you counted that stuck-up young man from the yacht, who, of course, knew nothing about a light!

On came the Inspection Boat — a trimly-built black steamer with yellow lines — she was called the *Coreopsis*, after Uncle Sam's fashion of giving flower-names to his business boats —

closely followed by the tender, also a steamer, which could bring the supplies up to the landing.

The Inspection Boat was out of Jane's sight as she stood on the doorstep but when she blew her whistle — so shrill a whistle that from all the mountains that stood guard around Hull Harbor there came an echo — then Jane jumped.

She picked up wailing Little She — who was too heavy for her to carry — and ran around the front of the house, until she could see the whistling steamer.

“Oh, my soul and body!” was what Dan heard her say.

Jane was apt to be overcome, at just the first minute; when she “buckled to business,” as Horatio said, you could count upon Jane!

The young man from the yacht came running out; he had evidently been up in his room changing his clothes — just like a visitor! Instead of the queer white clothes, he wore a blue flan-

nel sailor-like suit — but it was Dan's opinion that he didn't look in the least like a sailor.

“Everything is all right,” he said to Jane — with a slight foreign accent.

“Your brother keeps the lamp beautifully.”

“I never thought of being afraid about the tower,” said Jane, and she said it proudly, with her head well up,— Pennypackers wouldn't keep the light unless they could keep it safely and well, was what the high head meant.

“But — but you don't know Captain Littlefield!” stammered Jane. “He — he just makes himself at home — and — and sees everything! And Little She has been so cross I haven't done the chambers!”

The young man looked as if he understood perfectly how serious it was and just how Jane felt.

“I'll take a look into the tower — just to be sure,” he said. “Then you give me an apron and I'll help you!”

Dan pushed himself forward as the young man hurried off to the tower.

“ You — you give me an apron, too! I’m awful handy! ” he said.

He wished to stay and see what was going on — that was one reason why he said it, of course; another reason was that it didn’t seem so pleasant to see Pennypackers get caught in that way as he had thought it would!

Jane looked so queer, and her lip trembled.

Someway that made Dan remember all the times when Jane had been good to him! — molasses candy and corn-balls — and not telling the teacher of him — and inviting him to her party —

Jane, on her side, certainly thought “ Scatterbys! ” and felt doubtful of Dan’s good intentions. But she needed all the help she could get — and to help always made Jonas a better boy! — it might have that effect on Dan. And even while these thoughts were racing through

her mind she was tying an apron around Dan's neck.

At home Dan would not wear an apron; he felt it to be a "girly" thing; but we all forget our small notions when great things are happening.

Jane's hands were trembling when she tied the apron around his neck; Jane was of the kind that begin by being afraid and make themselves get over it — a very fine kind, by the way, because self-control is just about the biggest thing in the world!

And when Jane spoke her voice trembled, although what she said was only: "I wonder where Jonas and Doxy are!" It was habit to find out whether the twins were presentable when company was coming.

It was just at that moment that the young man opened the kitchen door and a sound of weeping and wailing was heard. He pushed the children into the room before him, both of them dripping molasses, as they walked. And

Doxy, the good twin, was far more thickly besmeared than Jonas, the bad one; her hair, pinned into little bobs, was dripping with it, so that it ran down into her eyes.

“This isn’t the worst,” said the young man, hurriedly, but with an awful calmness; “a large jug of molasses is smashed upon the tower stairs! There is molasses from the tower-room to the lowest stair!”

“Jonas said he could make my hair turl forever,” wailed Doxy. “But the jug was so heaby that he poured out too much — and den — and den he dwopped it —”

There came a thin, shrill screech from their own Little Bear landing. It was the voice of the tender which brought the supplies and in which the Inspector came over.

“Show me where I can get a mop and a bucket of water!” said Mr. Edward Picot.

But Dan Scatterby seized the pail of water from the sink and the apron from his neck, for a mop, and was first upon the tower stairs.

CHAPTER XIII

LIDA SCATTERBY TO THE RESCUE. THE STICK-
INESS OF THE TOWER. THE IN-
SPECTOR COMES

DAN had no time to wonder at himself, as he fell to work upon the light-tower stairs, with the mop — although he did feel a little like the old woman on the king's highway, who cried out, "Oh, lawk 'a' mercy on me, this surely can't be I!"

He hadn't come over to help Pennypackers out of a scrape that might lose them the light! He had hoped they would lose it, so that his father might get it! And — now see what he was doing!

I think it must have been because his better impulses had got the upper hand — and they wouldn't have, if they hadn't been the stronger ones!

“ This needs a scrubbing brush! Get one! ” called the yacht young man.

He had passed Dan upon the stairs and taken the tower room for his share of the cleaning.

“ He thinks he’s *some!* ” Dan muttered to himself, grumbingly; but he went for the brush.

Jane was flying about, setting the living-room to rights. She had taken what she described as the first coat of molasses off the twins and sent them out, with strict charges to keep away from the path and the landing.

Little She, worsted by the Next Tooth and all uncuddled, was weeping softly, in a way that tore Jane’s heart.

Captain Littlefield seemed to be lingering at the landing, to give directions to the mate about the unloading of the supplies from the tender.

Dan would have liked to see the unloading — but he went stoutly back to the tower, with the scrubbing brush.

Dan never had been the kind to leave a job after he had undertaken it! This was the

kind of a time that brought out Dan's virtues!

Jane felt very grateful to him, even while she admitted to herself that she "didn't quite know what to make of him."

She didn't know what she should have done if he had not been there; Mr. Picot could not have repaired the mischief alone, in time.

It was a terrible thing to have happened! No such thing had ever happened before, in all the fifteen years that Seth Pennypacker had kept the light.

The twins were never allowed to go into the tower alone; bad little Jonas had worked upon Doxy's vanity, which was, alas! her besetting sin, and induced her to go there — where there was privacy, since Horatio had cleaned the lamp and gone away — and let him stick her hair into curls and make her beautiful "foreber."

Just for the sake of being made pretty Doxy, the good twin, had fallen into this dreadful mischief!

Jane heard her father stirring, in his room,

off the kitchen. He had been sleeping soundly, after a sleepless night, but the whistle of the Inspection Boat's tender had awakened him. He looked startled and inquiring. "The Cap'n has got along, hasn't he?" he said, as he opened his bedroom door. "Do you suppose there's been any complaint that made him come ahead of time? There's no fear but the light is all ship-shape — you can trust Horatio for that! There's no time when I'm afraid to have anybody see that tower! But I don't see why he's come ahead of time!"

"He's come up from 'the Light,'" said Jane. "Perhaps something was needed there."

"You slick me up, a little, Jane — get me a collar and brush me up! Where's your mother? — well, it's pretty bad — pretty bad that she's gone! She always got the Cap'n a bite; he gets sick of victuals aboard ship —"

"That's what I want to do!" said Jane eagerly. "There are clams — Horatio dug them last night and they're in Indian meal — they're

fine, big ones, and the Cap'n likes them steamed! — and it takes only a very few minutes, you know!”

What Jane was thinking was that it would take much more than a few minutes to clean all the molasses stickiness from the tower room and stairs; — if she could only detain the Inspector until it was done!

A flood of sticky molasses in the tower room itself! — close to the precious lamp! — it would be as bad, to the Inspector's mind, as the darkness of the light, which, as Link Scatterby testified, had almost wrecked his vessel!

“ If you'll only brush yourself, as well as you can, Papa dear! — oh, you precious Little She, sister will take you just as soon as she can —”

Jane ran to the woodshed for the clams; — there was a step at the door, and her heart thumped in her ears — the Inspector, of course! she thought. Oh, what a relief when Lida Scatterby's eager, jolly, friendly face looked in at her!

Every picnic at Hull Harbor depended upon Lida, every club supper, and every surprise party — although her hair was not yet done up!

“ I was going over to the Point, to see Pedy — and I saw your mother go away — and then I saw the Inspection Boat — and — and — ” stammered Lida.

Then the two girls looked in each other's faces and remembered that Pennypackers and Scatterbys were no longer friends — at least Lida remembered it and feared that Jane would not be glad to see her.

Jane thought of it only just enough to half wonder and be wholly thankful that Lida had come!

Lida! — why, she could do half a dozen things at once — as you have to learn to do to be a good housekeeper.

And in just about a minute — for Jane's tongue could run! — Lida understood all the demands of the situation.

The first thing she did was to pull off the lit-

tle worsted shawl she wore under her summer jacket and deftly tie it into a doll. Little She dried her tears to watch the deed and clutched the fascinating thing with an April smile when it had surely turned from a shawl into a doll; the Next Tooth knew itself beaten and allowed Little She to go to sleep, upon the lounge, the treasure hugged to her heart.

Jane hurried to help her father while Lida put on the clams — a blazing hot fire and not a drop of water in the great kettle, because there was water enough in the clam shells; there was no Hull Harbor girl, whether she had her hair done up or not, but could have told you that!

Just as Jane finished helping her father to “slick up” the two workers appeared from the tower; the young man ordered the outer door of the tower left open until the Inspector came in sight.

Dan offered to keep watch; — he and the young man had been making friends, and Dan had not once looked cross-eyed.

“It’s as clean as a whistle and now we want it as dry as a bone,” said Dan, and he said the *we* quite proudly. This young man was evidently one who naturally made people like him. Jane felt quite at home with him, because his half-sister was Mademoiselle Picot, Rosemary Bruce’s governess, who had actually been there at the lighthouse, and taught them a little French and a good deal of dancing.

But Jane thought it was queer — and she knew that not even Horatio understood how Phonse’s tutor happened to know so much about a lighthouse!

The Inspector was coming up the path; Dan importantly closed the tower door — it does not look well for light-tower doors to be standing open.

Papa Pennypacker tried to hobble to the door and was not able; he sat down upon the foot of the lounge where Little She was lying with her shawl-doll and felt that all was lost.

For fourteen years he had met the Inspector

at the landing; now load after load of supplies was coming up to the storehouse, behind the woodshed, and he could not look after them; he was sitting there helpless!

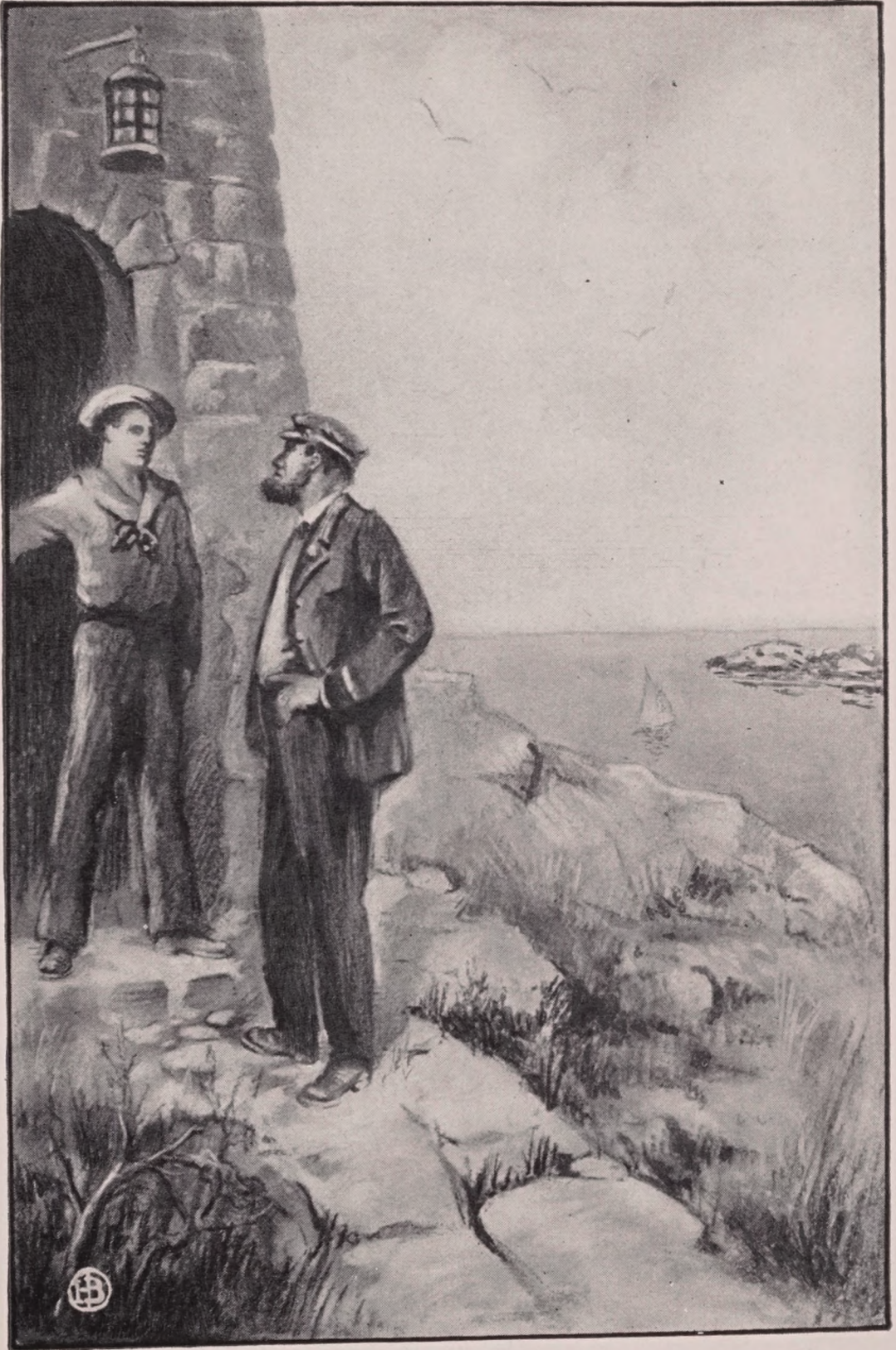
That young man, Phonse Bruce's tutor, was at the door to meet the Inspector if he only had not let Horatio go away!

Horatio might be young, but the Inspector must know that it was in the Pennypacker blood to keep a light!

It was indeed Mr. Edward Picot who met the Inspector at the door and explained that Mr. Pennypacker had rheumatism — and Horatio was away.

“Horatio!” echoed the Inspector; — and it sounded — to Jane at least — as if he meant that Horatio was only a boy, and didn't count, anyway.

Captain Littlefield was a big, florid man, who looked as if he might particularly like steamed clams; but he had keen eyes and a firm mouth that looked as if he meant to have things just



It was indeed Mr. Edward Picot who met the Inspector at the door.

right about all the lighthouses that he inspected.

Edward Picot said modestly that he was the assistant, for a day or two, in Horatio's absence.

"The assistant!" echoed Captain Littlefield. And that sounded, to everyone who heard him, as if Uncle Sam had no assistants in that lighthouse that he, the Inspector, hadn't appointed!

Jane's face grew red and Dan Scatterby looked fiercely at his nose; — it was queer, but, since he had scrubbed the molasses off those tower stairs, Dan felt as if he were bound to stand up for Scatterbys!

Edward stepped near to the Inspector and said a few words to him in so low a tone that no one else could hear them.

The words had a very astonishing effect!

The grizzled old captain took off his hat, and held out his hand to the young man, as if he felt honored to make his acquaintance, and they went into the house together.

“He thinks he’s *some!*” repeated Dan to himself, rather wonderingly than scornfully, this time — “and I rather guess he is!”

CHAPTER XIV

TRYING TIMES AT THE LIGHT. DAN DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HIMSELF.

WILL THE PENNYPACKERS
KEEP THE LIGHT?

“**H**E can't be any great gun, for he isn't more than twenty!” Dan continued, to himself. “But to see the Cap'n dowse his peak!” (To dowse one's peak, meant, in the language of the Hull Harbor old sailors, to suddenly drop a proud manner.) “I'd give something to know just who he is! B'longs to the navy, most likely! — they're the biggest swells.”

“Sorry to see you in this condition, Penny-packer,” said the Cap'n. “Rheumatism is apt to grip us sea-dogs, sooner or later; — it's had hold of me, before now! How's your wife? Away, to-day? — ah — h!”

There was a slight frown upon the Captain's brow and his "ah — h!" sounded to Jane exactly as if he were saying: "Nobody taking care of Little Bear light except a helpless man and a lot of children — and a strange young man, who has no business here!"

"I want just a word with this young man," added the Captain, and he went into the living-room with Edward Picot and shut the door behind him!

Could he mean to appoint Picot the keeper of the light? wondered Papa Pennypacker. They had been appointing younger and younger men all along the coast!

Jane's face was so red you would scarcely have known that she had a freckle; — and it was not all the heat of the stove.

It was a relief to have Lida as brisk as a bee and behaving as if nothing were the matter.

The Cap'n had not even seemed conscious of the delicious sea-tang of the steaming clams, which was very unlike him!

“But then he probably didn’t smell the molasses, either!” Lida said, consolingly, when Jane spoke of it.

“Let Dan make the sauce for the clams,” she added. “He has a knack; he makes it at every clam-bake, you know.”

While Dan melted the butter at the stove, and later, when he added vinegar, drop by drop, working in the pantry, by a window that looked out to sea, he kept thinking how queer things were!

Instead of hoping that his father would get the lighthouse away from the Pennypackers he and Lida were trying to help them to keep it!

And it wasn’t because the Pennypackers had done anything, any great thing for them — as Dick saved his enemy’s life, in “Coals of Fire,” his Sunday-school book — but only because they had a chance to help the Pennypackers! — that seemed to make all the old neighborliness crop up!

And he hadn’t taken to that yacht fellow at

all because he saved him from drowning, but he was so sociable when they scrubbed up the molasses together that now he quite liked him!

Life wasn't like what you read about, mostly, in books nor what you thought it was going to be — but here Dan found himself getting so deep into things hard to understand that he looked cross-eyed at the clam sauce and was sure of only one thing — that he hoped the Captain hadn't that petition in his pocket!

He wished he hadn't told that story about the rheumatic fever. He wished that his Uncle Link hadn't told that story about the *Pemetic*; — it *might* be true! — but the ease with which he had told his whopper made him feel that such things might run in the family!

He could see the men from the tender still bringing things up to the storehouse, and Doxy and Jonas had ventured near enough to look on.

Doxy's eyes were still red-rimmed and her small, smeary face was pale; Jonas was quite

cheerful — even gay; he was, alas! — so used to being bad!

Doxy's small soul was bowed down with the thought that instead of keeping Jonas out of mischief, which was her mission in life, she had fallen into it along with him.

She might even be spanked, that awful operation to make people good to which Jonas was so accustomed, but which had never fallen to her lot!

Dan's new benevolence extended even to Doxy.

He opened the window and called:

“Don't you care, Doxy; — I've seen worse people than you!”

This was not comforting to the good twin; it only made her mouth quiver.

“I'll make your doll just as good as new — only give me time!” declared Dan.

Doxy looked wistfully up at him; but her face did not brighten; faith in Dan Scatterby was dead.

A great, choking sob tore its way from her throat.

“I want Jane and my dinner!” she said — just as in a nightmare one longs to have things “come natural.”

“You’ll come in to the second table — with batter cakes — and everything! And see here!” — Dan seized a loaf of cake which Jane had placed, ready for cutting, upon the pantry shelf and cut two thick slices from it, and held them out of the window.

As Doxy’s small, uneven teeth showed themselves in a comforted grin Dan rushed into the kitchen with his sauce.

But there was no hurry; Captain Littlefield and young Picot were still closeted together. And Jane and Lida feared that the clams would be cold. But the Captain was his old, hearty self when, at length, they came out. And he did ample justice to the clams, served in a milk pan — it may as well be told! — and with the table set in the kitchen.

But it was a big, airy kitchen and as clean as clean could be.

Edward Picot sat down with the Captain, and so did Papa Pennypacker but he could not eat. The girls waited upon the table — Jane feeling, all the time, as if she could hear the rustling of that dreadful letter, with the petition, in the Captain's pocket!

Captain Littlefield went up to inspect the tower and the light, as soon as the meal was over. Edward Picot went with him, always talking glibly, with his queer, little French accent.

Papa Pennypacker stood at the foot of the stairs; he could not even hobble up!

It seemed to him that he was no longer the keeper of the Little Bear Light. Jane said to herself that he looked just as he had done the night of the frightful storm when they had expected that the house would be torn from the iron staples that held it to the rock!

He had held his head up firmly then, although his face was white.

The Captain found no fault when he came down; he seemed to have found everything satisfactory.

“I shall be here for a day or two,” he said when he went away; “and I’ll be over again. I want to have a talk with you.” That was to Papa Pennypacker,—who knew nothing about the petition and yet seemed to know what was coming! — thought Jane.

But the second table was gay, in spite of the fear.

Jane absently washed the rest of the molasses off the twins’ faces, forgetting to scold them.

Dan had, for some time, felt a sense of emptiness, beneath Jane’s apron, tied about his neck, which not even the sense of good deeds had been able to allay. Now that his time had come he felt a right to be jovial.

Young Picot sat down again, for the sake of

the good company, he said, and finished the diminished loaf of cake.

Papa Pennypacker hobbled out to take a look at the supplies.

Little She slept through everything, comforted by the shawl-doll and unconscious of her foe the Next Tooth.

Jane tried to be jolly — you must, when you have company, you know!

She tried to think that Phonse in sending his tutor over must surely have meant to help them — in spite of the mystery about that young man.

Phonse said that was what he was rich for — to help his friends!

But Phonse was not so rich or so powerful as Uncle Sam, who must have his lighthouses well kept for the sake of his people who go down to the sea in ships.

Lida went off without her shawl, because she would not disturb Little She.

Dan declared, shamefacedly, at parting, that

he was coming over to — honest Injun! — make Doxy's doll as good as new.

Jane went out to the cliff, after the children were in bed, and Edward Picot had lighted the lamp, and was on the watch.

The *Coreopsis* lay out in the stream, her lights beginning to gleam through the twilight.

Mama Pennypacker did not come.

Jane feared that Grandma was worse; even that Mama might not come home until — until perhaps there was no home to come to! Until someone else was keeper of Little Bear light!

CHAPTER XV

HUNTING FOR A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK.
MIND YOUR MANNERS. THE CROW
HELPS ALL HE CAN

WHILE they were having this exciting time at Little Bear lighthouse, the *Mermaid* was steaming gayly along, in the bright October sunshine and her party of boys — and a crow — (Jo was as much a boy as either of the others) was having as jolly a time as if jollity were all the business it had on hand.

But not one of the party forgot, for a moment, that the object was to find the tracks of the *Pemetic*, when she came down from Boston, and Link Scatterby, her owner, said that he was obliged to anchor outside the harbor, and was exposed to great danger, because of the darkness of the Little Bear light.

If Horatio could trust his eyes there had

been no vessel off Cottle's Island, that night! — but of course it was easy to say that Horatio could *not* trust his eyes in the glare of the great light.

The plan was to hail every craft that they came near to and inquire if the *Pemetic* had been seen on the way home to Hull Harbor, the Tuesday before.

Chris, the crow, heard it talked over until he got excited and cried out shrilly, when even a fisherman's dory hove in sight, and before the yacht slackened speed:

“Seen the *Pemetic*? Where was she when you saw her?”

One old fisherman, from the French settlement on a little island, was scared at the bird's sharp question, and protested, in broken English, that he had never done any damage to the *Pemetic*.

On a lumber-laden schooner the captain's wife was hanging out her clothes and she answered Chris snappishly that she “had enough

to do to mind her own business, without playing fool tricks; and she wished that other people had!"

"We must keep him still — they think we're making fun of them!" said Phonse. Jo covered Chris' cage with a sailor's cotton jacket. In that seclusion the crow muttered savagely:

"Link Scatterby lied — he lied!"

Someone must have spoken very frankly of Link Scatterby in the crow's hearing! And Christopher would not hesitate to say that anywhere.

Horatio almost wished that he hadn't been quite so positive! — or, at least, that he had expressed himself more politely!

Pedy might well say, as she did, that that crow was a real schoolmaster for language and manners! When you heard him repeat your remarks you knew just how they sounded.

When they saw the *Aurelia Gott* ahead of them they began to have hope of finding out something. The *Aurelia* was a Schooner Cliff

vessel and her captain knew the *Pemetic*.

But what they found out was that the *Pemetic* had unloaded at the same wharf in Boston with the *Aurelia Gott*, and had left for home at just about the time when, with a fair wind — as there had been — she would reach Hull Harbor as Link had said she did. There wasn't much satisfaction in that!

A little screeching po'gy boat — Tom Jarvis', of Goose Cove — was hailed, and they were told that Link Scatterby was at home, now, for Tom Jarvis had seen him on the Hull Harbor wharf; — they could easily find out by him!

The next thing was to stop at Manchester's Landing — or as near to it as the yacht could go — and Phonse and Horatio went off, in the tender, to interview Solomon Manchester, who was storekeeper and post-office keeper and general manager of the place.

Mr. Manchester was willing to answer questions — after his concerning the yacht had all

been answered; but he "didn't take much notice of vessels without they stopped to stock up with provisions, and he didn't know as he knew the *Pemetic* by sight."

"I didn't think it would be so much like hunting for a needle in a haystack to look for somebody that had seen the *Pemetic* come down from Boston — over the old beaten track, where so many ships come!" said Horatio, gloomily. "You see it was several days ago, — and the vessels that Link ran across are somewhere else —" said Phonse reflectively. "And perhaps Link didn't come home by the beaten track."

"He wouldn't have gone off it — unless he had some special reason for doing that," said Horatio.

Jo got out his fiddle after that, and Phonse had the table set for luncheon. They might as well have a good time out of it, if the search was a failure, he said.

(They met the *Elizabeth Lynam*, bound for

Eden, after that, but she had come direct from Baltimore and, of course, she hadn't met the *Pemetic*.)

Horatio said that he had never come along that way before without coming across every old coaster that belonged on the Bay. He thought it was pretty hard luck!

Jo said you never could tell what *was* hard luck, in this world! — that was because some “luck” that had seemed very hard to Jo — such as being shipwrecked — had proved to be his very good fortune!

But neither the philosophy, nor the fiddle nor the luncheon consoled Horatio.

In fact, there were so many fashionable French dishes served at that luncheon, and there was so much ceremony about the serving that neither Horatio nor Jo found it very appetizing.

Now, when Jane and Horatio had dined with Phonse and his sister Rosemary, at a great London hotel, Jane had enjoyed every bit of the

ceremony and the style! She knew she had it in her to be stylish, though she *had* been born on Little Bear Island!

Horatio said, scornfully, that that was the way with a girl!

He got very red in the face and didn't know how to behave when the waiter stood at his elbow with queer dishes and a look that made you think of the minister at home. And he thought you couldn't be very handy with your fork if you had to have half a dozen to eat with!

As for the fine dishes at this luncheon on the yacht — it was some fun to try to find a French word that he knew among the names, but he thought that if one had ever tasted the plum duff that Miguel, the little Portuguese cook on board Jo's vessel, knew how to make, he wouldn't think much of this stuff!

In Horatio's opinion you had to be born rich or a girl to like such foolishness.

Jo was feeling very much like Horatio but he was trying hard not to disgrace Pedy, who

was like Jane and approved of such things!

Pedy had warned him not to behave as if he were in the habit of sitting down to a table with all the eatables upon it and helping himself; and Jo was trying his best, but the perspiration came out upon his forehead with the effort, and he felt thankful enough that Pedy and he didn't have to live that way!

Phonse, who, when he was only Phonny Bee, had cooked his own fish and eaten it upon a table against the wall, in Grandfather Bee's tumble-down cottage, simply seemed to think it didn't matter.

He had got used to the fashionable ways, since he had lived with his mother, but he liked, just as well as ever, to eat off the lighthouse kitchen table.

You didn't have to pretend you were stylish on Phonse's account — he didn't care! — it was those waiters that made a fellow feel so queer and miserable. He could stand shipwreck, — as Horatio had done — or having the

Hull Harbor minister and his wife come to supper, or speaking a piece, exhibition day, before all Hull Harbor and summer cottagers, too! — he could remember that he had a back-bone and was going to be a man! — but those waiters just simply made him feel like a jelly-fish!

Perhaps it wasn't a relief when Phonse, the only one calm enough to look out upon the water, exclaimed that they were abreast of Fawn Island, and the Fresh-Air Camp, that he had seen when he came down, was being broken up. He had gone over, then, in the tender and got acquainted at the Fresh-Air Camp! — that was exactly like Phonse!

The camp had been kept there so late in the season for the benefit of two boys from a city hospital, whom the sea air had benefited but who were still too weak to be moved. Now they were being taken off.

“They've got to go over to Buck's Harbor to take the Boston steamer that stops there, this afternoon,—and see! they are going in that

clumsy old dory — and its three or four miles — it looks to me as if the Fresh-Air Fund had about given out!” Phonse was very much excited.

He gave some hasty orders and the yacht, with one of her clearest whistles, steered straight for Fawn Island.

CHAPTER XVI

A FRESH-AIR CAMP. THE MERMAID LENDS A
HAND. WHERE LINK SCATTERBY
KEPT A WINTER SCHOOL

“**W**HAT is he up to now?” — this inquiry came hoarsely from the crow’s muffled cage. Chris had been taking a nap and was aroused by the commotion as the *Mermaid* changed her course to go in shore. (Chris had a stock of sayings which he had heard and never forgot and to which he was constantly adding; he certainly showed astonishing brightness in selecting the right one for the occasion.)

Phonse would have said that what he was “up to” was having some fun out of his yacht. The two invalid boys would have been taken across the Bay in the old dory, and she would have had to beat, because the wind wasn’t in her

favor; and nobody could say how long it would take!

Phonse had the boys on board the *Mermaid*, in a space of time known to Hull Harbor as a "jiffy," with the nurse who was to go with them to Boston. One of them, who was inclined to sea-sickness, was amusingly grateful.

He said it had looked to him "an awful stunt" to get across that Bay; he had lain awake nights thinking of it.

The vacation in the sea air had so helped one of them, who had been an elevator boy, that he expected to soon go back to work. Then he would be able to take care of the other, a newsboy, who roomed with him.

There had been a dozen boys at the camp, which was a "settlement" charity; some had gone home cured, a few had been too delicate to stay so late in the season; these two were the only ones left.

Delicacies from that unsatisfactory luncheon and a fresh supply of coffee did not come amiss

to the new passengers. Chris, released from his seclusion, complimented them upon their appetites, and ordered Jo to get out his fiddle.

When they had eaten their fill the passengers' tongues were loosened; — no diffidence about these waifs and strays of humanity.

They talked about the life of the slums and their business prospects like men of the world. In fact Horatio afterwards said that he had learned more of the world in that sail across the Bay with those boys than he had done in going to London!

Jo quietly removed the crow's cage to another part of the deck; — he feared that Christopher might learn slang that Pedy would not like!

But there was, after all, no harm in the slang, — Phonse said it was “picturesque”; — his mother called it so, when it was the slum boys who used it — but she wouldn't have thought it was “picturesque” for him to talk in that way!

The nurse was a nice, fair, young woman,

like cleanliness personified; you wouldn't have thought that dirt had ever come near her white apron, nor slang near to her ears! And yet she lived in a slum settlement.

She invited Horatio and Phonse to visit the settlement, when they parted at the Buck's Harbor wharf, and Phonse took down the boys' names in his notebook, with the air of being fifty instead fifteen — or, at least not quite sixteen.

Buck's Harbor! Horatio tried to think what he had heard about it, after the Boston steamer had carried their passengers away, and they were about to return to the yacht. It was an out-of-the-way place, from the Hull Harbor point of view — that is, Hull Harbor was not obliged to pass it, on the way to the great world — but stay! there was a way in which Buck's Harbor was known to fame.

“Don't you remember? — Link Scatterby kept the winter school, up here, once! — two or three winters ago.” Jo said this as if it

were not of much consequence — but it gave Horatio an idea!

“ Yes — and I know he comes up here a lot! ” he said excitedly.

What more likely than that the *Mermaid* should have gone a little out of her regular route from Boston, to stop at Buck’s Harbor?

Horatio turned back on the way to the yacht and went into the large store a little distance from the wharf, in a building which seemed to contain most of the business of the little place. Phonse followed Horatio, and Jo, too, seemed to decide, after a moment that it might be worth the while to inquire if anyone at Buck’s Harbor had seen the *Pemetic* — although it had begun to seem to him only fit for one of the crow’s cacklings! — what those slum boys would call “ a fool stunt! ” Horatio walked up to the proprietor of the store — a tanned and grizzled man with a sailor’s gait, whom you called “ Captain ” as naturally as if his store were a ship.

He would be sure to know all about the vessels that put into that harbor! "Good-day, Cap'n Hardy," said Horatio — Solomon Hardy was the sign over the store door. "Do you happen to know whether the *Pemetic* put in here, on her way from Boston, last Monday or Tuesday?"

Cap'n Hardy stroked his stubbly chin reflectively.

"Le's see — when was it, Luke" — to a boy filling a jug with vinegar, at the back of the store — "that the Neptunes had their dance? That was the night that Link Scatterby stayed over here. Tuesday night! — that was it. He got off about daylight the next morning — to catch a good fair wind. He must have got home to Hull Harbor in the course of the forenoon."

They were getting all the information they wished for, just because Cap'n Hardy liked to see strangers and to talk! — liked especially to see people from a yacht, be-

cause they might want to stock up a little.

Youngsters! — but there must be men about — besides the sailor standing in the door. (He didn't know Jo — who had generally been in too much of a hurry to get off his beaten track.)

“Link Scatterby stayed here over Tuesday night, did he?” said Phonse.

“Why, la! yes, he often does put in here,” said Cap'n Hardy easily. “Used to keep school here, and he's been courting Lura Pettingill, ever since.

“She's a terrible nice girl, Lura is, and I don't know whether she'll have him or not! — why? — what makes you ask?” The storekeeper had suddenly seen that his questioners were looking at each other in some excitement, and that the sailor at the door was listening as eagerly as the boys.

“There hasn't anything happened to Link, has there?”

“No — we only wanted to prove that he

wasn't somewhere else last Tuesday night," said Horatio. "Will you just give us your statement in writing that he was here last Tuesday night and sailed for Hull Harbor early in the morning?"

The old storekeeper adjusted his glasses high up on his forehead and stared.

"That's what's called proving an alibi — a-l-i-b-i — it's some foreign language that the lawyers use — I expect to make out they know more'n anybody else! If I'm going to do that I want to know first whether it's going to help Link or hender him!"

"He told a lie — !" began Horatio, hotly. Phonse had his hand on his arm, but it was of no use — Hull Harbor manners are hasty! "He said he was outside the Harbor all night Tuesday night, and couldn't get in because Little Bear light was dark!"

"Oho! — Oho!" cried Cap'n Solomon Hardy, exactly like the ogre in Jack the Giant Killer. It sounded like "now, I've got you!"



“ He told a lie — ! ” began Horatio, hotly. “ He said he was outside the Harbor all night ! ”

And both Phonse and Jo looked as if they thought there had been no need of telling!

“The Little Bear light *was* dark that Tuesday night! — a thick and squally kind of a night! I heard of it clear’n up here! ’Twas dark till most ten o’clock!”

“We never said it wasn’t,” said Horatio calmly — though he was so pale that he looked very freckled indeed — “we only say that no harm was done because there happened to be no ships outside.”

“And Link says he was outside trying to get in, does he?” — the storekeeper chuckled, as if it were only a joke!

“Off Cottle’s Island, with the *Pemetic* straining at her anchor, all night — because after the lamp was lighted it was too thick to see it!” Horatio explained indignantly.

Cap’n Hardy chuckled again.

“Lura Pettingill won’t have Link if he’s been lying!” he said — just as if Link’s side of the affair were the only important one.

“Will you give us your affidavit that Link Scatterby was here last Tuesday night?” asked Phonse, with dignity.

(It is not really certain that Phonse, although he was generally pretty sensible, didn't like to say “affidavit,” to show that he knew as big a word as “alibi.”)

Solomon Hardy rubbed his stubbly chin — just as if his puzzled brains were located there, instead of in his head where they ought to be.

“What's wrote is wrote,” he said, “and Link is a friend of mine, as you might say, and he's been considerable of a customer — off and on —”

“I wouldn't stand up for my friends or my customers when they told lies — to hurt other people!” cried Horatio.

By which it will be seen that Horatio's methods were hardly business-like.

“See here, who be you two youngsters?” demanded the storekeeper. “It ain't anyways common for boys like you to be around in a

yacht-it, all by yourselves as you might say, as you appear to be!”

(They do say yacht-it, on that side of the Bay; only the very old seamen at Hull Harbor do; but it doesn't really seem so very superior to say yot!)

“Did you ever know the Bees, at Hull Harbor?” asked Phonse quickly.

“Well, I rather guess I did!” exclaimed the storekeeper. “I sailed my first voyage mate to Alphonso Bee —”

“I was his adopted son; — then I found my own people —”

“You don't say you're that boy! — Land's sake! 'twas in the papers! I guess there ain't anybody 'round these parts that hasn't heard that story! — sounded to me like a story-book yarn when I first heard it. I rather guess some of it *was* pretty far-fetched — they told about a tiger licking the boy's hand! It was a circus tiger and some said the boy had been in a circus — but la! when a boy that's been adopted

turns out to be great things there's no end to the stories folks will make up about him!"

"It's true about the tiger — it was my old Gungo — I think a lot of him," said Phonse. "He doesn't work for his living, in a circus, any more. He's in a Zoo and he has plenty of liberty and a good time."

"Liberty and a good time! — good land! — I'm glad that Zoo ain't round in this neighborhood!" exclaimed the storekeeper. "There's different tastes in this world — but I don't want any tigers in mine! I expect you're putting your money into yacht-its now, and squandering it just as fast as you can!"

He had no thought except for Phonse, now, which was exactly what that shrewd young person wished, for he thought it would seem to him that he was being asked to take sides directly against Link, if he knew that Horatio was one of the Pennypackers.

Phonse now turned away, with an indifferent air.

“ If Link Scatterby was here at the Neptune’s dance, last Tuesday night, of course there are plenty of people by whom we can prove it! ” he said.

Horatio and Jo followed him to the door.

“ Hold on! ” called the storekeeper.

CHAPTER XVII

PHONSE TRADES WITH CAP'N HARDY'S OWN
COIN. A QUEER "AFFIDAVIT." THE
FUNNIEST THING PHONSE
EVER HEARD OF

HORATIO "held on"; it was going against his grain to go back to Hull Harbor without being able to prove where Link Scatterby had been on that Tuesday night when the tower was dark.

It was one thing to say that he had been at the Neptune's dance, at Buck's Harbor and another thing to prove it! They might get some people whom nobody knew to make a written statement, but that wouldn't be like getting one from Cap'n Solomon Hardy, who was known to everybody!

He thought Phonse was taking things a little too easily.

“ You see, Link Scatterby being an old customer, so — ” said the storekeeper. “ He never puts in here without provisioning some — ”

Phonse turned back with a twinkle in his eye and cast a glance at Horatio’s anxious face.

“ I see you have a fresh lot of canned goods, ” he called to the storekeeper; — “ I’ll send my steward over from the yacht. ”

“ A-a-hem ! ” coughed Cap’n Hardy; — “ I expect maybe I was a little mite too particular about that writing — seeing, as you say, there’s a lot of other folks knowing to Link’s being here — and when your steward comes over I’ll have it wrote out that Link was here to the dance, sure enough — ”

“ All right ! ” said Phonse easily — and drew Horatio away, with an arm around his shoulder, to prevent him from showing any eagerness.

“ You — you’ve learned a lot since you went away from Hull Harbor ! ” said Horatio, looking a little shame-faced.

“I like Hull Harbor ways better! — straight from the shoulder!” said Phonse.

“But when you come across a fellow like that you have to trade with him in his own coin! We’ve nailed Link Scatterby’s lie! — and it’s going to be a glorious moonlight night and we’ll steam out into the broad Atlantic a bit, and it won’t matter if we don’t go home till morning!”

Jo kept laughing about Solomon Hardy and his business bump.

“Lura Pettingill won’t have Link if he’s been lying!” he quoted, and threw back his head and laughed — one of his great, hearty, sailor laughs.

That was when they were again on the deck of the *Mermaid* and the steward had been sent to the store with orders to buy all that they could use from Solomon Hardy’s stock.

Chris became excited while the interview with the storekeeper was talked over, and kept muttering to himself.

They took no notice; Chris seemed to have nothing to do with this affair; but they were to find out, afterwards, that Chris thought he had!

The steward returned with the tinned goods and this document from Captain Solomon Hardy:

“I run of an idea that I saw Link Scatterby up here to the Neptune’s dance, last Tuesday night. Of course it’s easy for folks to be mistaken, and I am some near-sighted; but I calculate that if you ask Link he’ll tell you he was here — for I never knew Link to tell a lie.”

“SOLOMON HARDY.”

That gave Jo a chance to laugh again. He said Cap’n Hardy was like a cat that tries to keep its paw on one mouse while it catches another!

Buck’s Harbor people had always been famous for knowing on which side their bread was buttered.

“It’s enough to show the Inspector that Link’s story was false,” said Phonse. “Any-

one can see just why he didn't like to say it right out. And it will show everyone that signed that petition that they were fooled!

“ But if you want to stay here another day, Horatio, we can get every man Jack of the Neptunes — that hasn't anything to sell! — to testify that Link was here! ”

But Horatio decided to be satisfied with Cap'n Hardy's “ affidavit. ” He thought that if the Inspector had received that letter he would be likely to get along, any day. It was almost time for him to come, anyway. They had found out just how the *Pemetic* came down from Boston and Link Scatterby would never dare to deny that he had gone out of his way, to Buck's Harbor, to stay over for the Neptune's dance.

When the *Mermaid* steamed out of Buck's Harbor, early the next morning, Phonse had a salute fired, and the flag was flung out over Cap'n Hardy's store, in response, and there

was a great cheering and waving of handkerchiefs on shore.

Jo said that Cap'n Hardy didn't deserve any salute, but Phonse said it was "all for the fun of it." When two boys were managing a yacht, to suit themselves, it couldn't be expected that they wouldn't do some things "just for the fun of it."

Cap'n Hardy was saying, at about that time, that it was the beatermost thing he ever saw for that young chap that used to be Phonny Bee to be owning a yacht that was fit for the President and taking it as easy as if it wasn't anything but a lobster dory!

He had a head-piece — that little feller had — that was one thing sure!

As for the other boy — some thought he was Seth Pennypacker's son, that kept Little Bear light; if he was, Seth Pennypacker was pretty likely to go on keeping the light, if there *was* talk of his being turned out! — it was kind of an up-and-coming generation, this latest one!

The old sailors 'long the Bay had got to hustle to keep up with it, yacht-its, and all!

The *Mermaid* put on all steam, after Horatio had expressed that fear about the Inspector. He was a careful man, this Inspector, and he would be likely to take a look at Little Bear light pretty soon after he had heard a complaint.

Sure enough, before the *Mermaid* got around the Point, they saw the old *Coreopsis*, with her great tender, lying off Little Bear!

“That’s the first time he ever got around before he was due,” said Jo.

Horatio’s freckles all looked very brown — which meant that he had turned pale — in spite of the comfort of Cap’n Solomon Hardy’s “affidavit” in his pocket.

No one had been injured, no vessel in danger — as it had happened — but the Little Bear light tower *had been* dark.

Horatio could not get over that!

And Captain Littlefield, the Inspector, was

not just the man you would like to have look you in the eye and think you were to blame for it!

Horatio began to think that he ought not to have been away when the Inspector arrived.

“ Phonse, you’re sure that tutor of yours knows something about a lighthouse, are you? ” he asked anxiously. “ Yes, I do know I can trust you — ” (this was in answer to a question from Phonse which had a little heat in it) — “ but I do want to know who he is! Would the Inspector think he knew enough to be left alone with the light? ”

Phonse laughed!

Since he had been so awfully rich Phonse did seem to take some things lightly — just as he had taken Cap’n Solomon Hardy! That was the only change that the great wealth had made in him, so far as Horatio could see.

But surely nobody would think he could take Uncle Sam lightly! — nobody, that is, who had any sense!

“ Now, you just wait till I hear from my mother! — and there’ll be a letter at the post-office, I’m pretty sure. Then you shall all know who Edward Picot is and whether it’s safe to trust him with Little Bear light! ”

The *Mermaid* was going into the Harbor in pretty good style — steam well on; Phonse was only a boy and he liked to do it!

When Phonny Bee had been mackereling he brought his old dory into port in as good shape as he could and if he had had a poor catch he said but little about it!

Phonse Bruce was only Phonny Bee, who had had a chance to give Aladdin’s Lamp a rub and he had the same little pride that he had before — as well as the same sturdy courage and the heart of gold!

I am not sure that there was much but sturdy courage in the pride of appearance and, anyway, small weaknesses don’t count when the heart of gold is there!

There were a good many people on and

around the wharf — more people than generally gathered there at steamboat time, even in the height of the season — that was apt to be the case when the Inspector came, and never, within the memory of any Hull Harborite, had there been such excitement about his coming as now.

Even the yacht was of minor interest, although the boys gathered around Phonse and Horatio, when they reached the wharf, and inquired whether she had ever raced for a prize and doubted whether she could beat the Vanderbilt yacht that had been at Eden. Hull Harbor knew what was going on, you see, but in season and out of season were two different lives.

Jo went into the store, which was also the postoffice, to see if he could get some mail to take home to Pedy, and had to push his way through a crowd.

“The letter that they wrote to the Inspector — with a petition in it — has been following

him around and it has just got here!" explained Liberty Trull. "And the very ones that got it up and those that signed it, don't want him to have it! — they're trying to keep Tobias Clark from giving it to him! — and of course he's got to give him his mail because he's the postmaster! And they're making a great row!"

Horatio looked over at the *Coreopsis*; her tender was setting out for the wharf.

He looked anxious; he felt for the "affidavit" in his pocket. But Phonse laughed.

"If that isn't the very funniest thing I ever heard of!" he said.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE INSPECTOR AND THE CROWD. LINK SCATTERBY TELLS THE TRUTH. A "GREAT GUN" TO HELP AT THE LIGHTHOUSE. PHONSE MAKES MORE PLANS. CHRIS SPEAKS FOR EVERYONE

L OUD and angry voices came from the store as Phonse and Horatio followed Jo into it.

Link Scatterby stood on a box, a little apart from the throng, his arms folded across his chest, and his head thrown back. He looked like a statue of the American Sailor, on a high pedestal. Link didn't seem to be saying much but he looked very scornful.

It was Cap'n Hiram Scatterby's voice that arose above all the others. "You just give me back that letter, Tobias Clark!" he de-

manded. "When a man has wrote a letter, feeling kind of worked up in his mind, and doing what he was sorry for, when he come to think of it, and — and saw what most other folks thought of it, why he has a right to say that that letter sha'n't be given to the person it was wrote to!"

"As I understand it other people besides you signed their names to this letter — it's a petition," said Mr. Tobias Clark, in the thin, squeaky voice that was a very queer voice for a fat man to have.

"All them that signed it want to take it back!" cried Cap'n Scatterby.

"I wa'n't thinking but what business was business, but folks are terrible down on me for wanting to get the light. And most of them that signed the petition live over to the Sea Wall and Grandma Gilkey she's been pretty sick — Grandma Gilkey that has took care of everybody when they were sick or in trouble — and her daughter, Eudoxia Pennypacker, is the

same kind! Folks think a sight of them! And my wife is down sick because I did it —”

“That letter has been clear’n down to Winter Harbor and back! — I haven’t got any more right to touch it than nobody at all!” said the postmaster, excitedly. “That letter is directed to Cap’n Littlefield, Inspector of Lighthouses, and anybody else that opens it lays himself liable to twenty years imprisonment!”

There was a murmur of voices all over the store. Chris, being carried home by Jo, always liked to lift up his voice in a clamor:

“Mean piece of business!” he shrieked, above every other sound.

(Chris certainly had a wonderful knack at selecting the right thing to say from the remarks which he heard around him.)

“I don’t want to open it! I only want to chuck it into the fire!” said Cap’n Scatterby, in a voice that shook. “And it’s my letter! — and more’n once I’ve known folks to take back a letter after they’d dropped it into the mail!”

“Not after it had been stamped and carried round two or three postoffices!” insisted the postmaster.

Phonse caused a slight pause in the excitement by asking for his mail, in a great hurry.

He eagerly tore open his one letter.

“There! — now it’s all right, I’m sure!” he whispered eagerly to Horatio, as soon as he had read a few words. “My mother is willing Edward Picot should stay! — and I may take your father with me on my Southern cruise — six weeks leave of absence! — I’m going to ask the Inspector! He won’t refuse when he can have — oh, I’ll tell you who Edward Picot is, as soon as I get a chance!”

Dan Scatterby was listening — Dan had ears that stood out from his head, like a ship with sails set wing-and-wing.

“I knew he was some great gun that time he yanked me out of the water!” he murmured.

The shrill whistle of the Inspection Boat’s steam tender was heard at the wharf.

“Cap’n Littlefield is talking to Arad Blinn about the repairs on the tender,” said Liberty Trull, rushing into the store. (Arad Blinn was a ship’s carpenter.) “He’ll be in here in a minute or two!”

“Tobias Clark, will you give me that letter to the Inspector that I wrote with my own hand and have got a right to take back — and there ain’t a soul that signed it but what wants it back?”

Cap’n Scatterby said this almost fiercely, yet his voice trembled and he wiped his forehead with a very big red handkerchief.

The postmaster held the long, thick letter, addressed to Cap’n Littlefield, Inspector of Lighthouses, in his hand, and shook his head firmly.

“It’ll be the ruin of Pennypacker to have the Inspector get it — and of me, too!” groaned Cap’n Scatterby.

“You ought to have thought of that before, Hiram!” said the postmaster sternly. “I

couldn't give you the letter, anyhow. It's a state's-prison offense!"

The crow's cage stood on the counter close beside the postmaster. Chris could be as quick as a flash!

He thrust his head between the wires of his cage and seized the letter in his long, sharp beak!

Jo instantly seized it by one end; but Chris held on; his sharp beak tore through envelope and letter as Jo pulled.

Cap'n Scatterby was at hand to grab the other end of the envelope — and Jo's end, also, as they were separated by the crow's beak and Jo's pull. The astonished Christopher had only a beak full of torn paper, while Cap'n Scatterby thrust the remains of the petition into the stove, upon the embers of the fire that had heated the stove in the late October morning.

The Cap'n mopped his forehead again, but now with a great sigh of relief. "I don't ex-

pect anybody will try to put the crow into state's prison!" he chuckled.

The blaze still showed in the stove door as the Inspector came in.

"Any mail for me, Mr. Clark?" he asked.

The postmaster's face was red, anyway, so perhaps no one would have observed that it was redder than usual; and his high, squeaky voice was no higher and no squeakier than common as he answered:

"Not a thing for you, this morning, sir!"

"I've got to be off in half an hour, now," said the Inspector, looking at his watch. And then he looked about him at the throng of people.

There had never been quite so many people gathered together before when he made his appearance.

"I understand that there has been a complaint that the Little Bear light was not lighted — one night last week — until nearly ten o'clock," he said.

Horatio's heart beat like a trip-hammer in his ears! He and Phonse made their way around to the box upon which Link Scatterby was now sitting, somewhat hidden by the crowd.

"It is reported that Captain Lincoln Scatterby's vessel was in great danger outside the Harbor."

The Inspector had keen eyes beneath great, shaggy eyebrows; he was looking all around the store with them now.

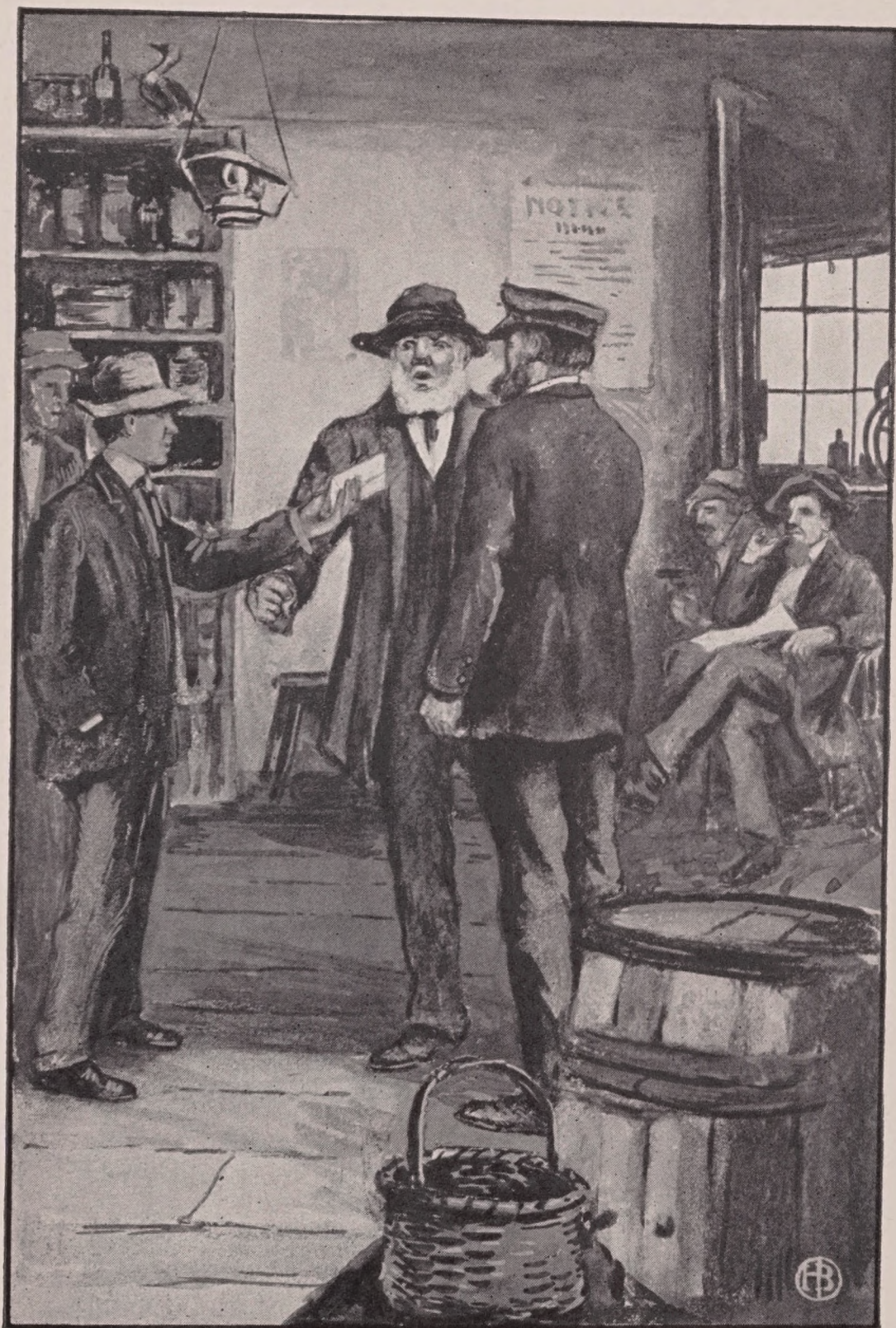
There was a dead silence. The crowd saw his chance and screamed out:

"Lura Pettingill won't have him if he lied!"

There was a titter all around the store. The Inspector, who took his responsibility seriously, looked bewildered and didn't even smile.

Link Scatterby sprang to his feet, looking startled and angry.

"Did you have a good time up at Buck's Harbor, at the Neptune's dance?" asked Phonse, easily, in a low tone.



Horatio took Cap'n Solomon Hardy's "affidavit" from his pocket.

Horatio took Cap'n Solomon Hardy's "af-fidavit" from his pocket and held it, silently, before Link's eyes.

Under its sailor coat of sunburn Link's face showed that it was pale. But he walked forward with a jaunty air.

"That was only kind of a joke," he said. "If I'd come right along there's where I might have been, in the dark, so I thought I'd kind of scare them at the lighthouse!"

"Too serious a thing to joke about!" said the Inspector.

("It's a state's-prison offense!" shrieked Chris, excited by the attention his former remark had excited.)

"There has never been a darkness of the Little Bear light before in the fifteen years that Mr. Seth Pennypacker has kept it. And that was caused by serious, unexpected illness. Pennypacker has needed an assistant for some time; he has one, now, and I hope will have for some time, of very unusual ability and learn-

ing. He is familiar with most European lighthouses — a hydrographer and member of the Hydrographical Society! —”

Whew! — what words, for Hull Harbor! No one dared to breathe! Even the crow was silent and subdued: — Chris almost always had the sense to know what was entirely beyond him!

If there was all that for an assistant over there it was no wonder that Cap'n Scatterby was ashamed of trying to get the light!

“He has got two or three medals from that society with the big name,” said Phonse, aside to Horatio. “He was only going to tutor me, for a while, to be with his sister. It will be a lark for him to stay here a while, he says; and we'll get your father leave of absence long enough to cure him! And I want to take him South on the yacht. And you can come along to the launching of Jo's vessel, in New York!”

But Horatio shook his head firmly at that.

Jo's ship was one that Phonse had had built

for him when his was wrecked, and it would soon, now, be ready to be launched; but Horatio was going to stay at home and help to keep Little Bear light: — he was going to make up, somehow, for letting that light be dark!

Phonse and Horatio were about to put off, in the *Mermaid's* tender, for Little Bear.

Lida Scatterby came running to beg to be carried over, because she wanted to help Jane; — Mama Pennypacker had not yet gone home, although Grandma Gilkey was better.

Dan Scatterby said he must go, because the talker of Doxy's doll was now all ready to put in — you could hear it talk, in his pocket, if you cared to listen!

What he really wanted, now, was to make that doll “come right”; he said to himself that if he couldn't turn into a rich feller or be a great gun, he would make a good thing of it to be Dan Scatterby!

Jo, with Chris, was getting into his own row-boat as Link Scatterby set out for the *Pemetic*,

lying at her moorings. The crow caught sight of Link and called out hoarsely:

“Lura Pettingill won’t have him if he lied!”

There was a chorus of laughter from the wharf; but Link, red-faced, only rowed a little faster.

“Good-by — come over to the Point before you go, Phonse!” called Jo, as he pushed off in his own rowboat.

“Good-by — give my love to everybody!” screamed the crow. “Glad the Pennypackers kept the light!”

THE END

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