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DOG WATCHES AT SEA




STANTON H. KING

1. Sea Life

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TO SAVE HIMSELF, HE YIELDED

DOG-WATCHES AT SEA

BY

STANTON H. KING

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

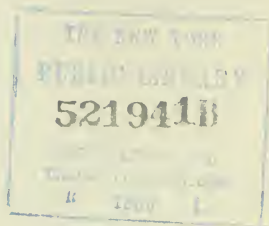


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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FRIEND

JOHN ALLAN

LATE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE SAILORS' HAVEN
CHARLESTOWN, MASS.

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF HIS
CONSTANT KINDLINESS AND FRIENDLY HELP
DURING THE FIVE YEARS I WAS HIS ASSISTANT;
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

PREFACE

I HAVE written what this book contains from memory, not having kept a diary, and in most cases I have given the real names of ships and individuals.

Conscious of my inability to undertake the preparation of a book, and fearing that I had nothing adequate to offer the public, I hesitated for a long time to attempt it, but the encouragement of my friend the Rev. Frederick B. Allen has led me to set down some of my experiences at sea. The book is in so large a measure the outcome of his friendly interest that the heartiest acknowledgments are due him. I am glad of the opportunity to make them, and also to thank my friend Lieutenant-Colonel Allan C. Kelton, U. S. M. C., for many kindnesses shown me during our cruise on the U. S. S. Alliance and since.

STANTON H. KING.

SAILORS' HAVEN, MISSION FOR SEAMEN,
CHARLESTOWN, MASS.

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Drawn by Charles Copeland

DOG-WATCHES AT SEA

CHAPTER I

OUTWARD BOUND

IT may seem ludicrous when I say I am one of twenty-nine children, and the twenty-seventh child of my father. He was married three times. His first wife bore him eleven children; his second wife, who was a first cousin to his first wife, bore him ten; and my mother, his third wife, who was a sister to his second wife, bore him eight. We were not only half brothers and sisters, but cousins all the way along.

Of late years I have been trying to find out the birthplace of my forefathers, and have so far learned that my grandparents on my father's side were from Ireland, and on my mother's side they were from Scotland. How they came to Barbados, or what business brought them there, I know not. I know that my father was a highly respected

man on this island in the Caribbean Sea. He was a commissioner of public roads and a government employee for many years.

As far back as I can remember, I was the uncle of grown-up young men and women, the children of my father's first wife's children. The family ramifications are many through the marriages of my father's children, his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His brother's children and the relations on my mother's side make it possible for me to find some blood relationship in almost every part of the globe.

Payne's Bay House, the name of our old home, was on the western slope of the island adjoining the sea. From our back windows we could see the ships sail by. This, with living so close to the wash of the waves, created a desire in all but one of my brothers to follow the sea for a living.

In those days it was a common sight to see there fully one hundred ships, among them a dozen or more East Indiamen, riding at anchor. Some were loading sugar, others awaiting orders from home; for Carlisle Bay, forming the harbor of Bridgetown, the capital city of Barbados, was, before steam took

full control of the sea, the anchorage for sailing ships bound to Europe or the United States, from ports the other side of the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn.

I can now recall the delight that entered my whole being when, as a boy, I listened to the stories told by my sailor brothers, as they by chance called at Barbados in their ships, — of foreign lands, of storms and gales, of adventure and shipwreck. A sailor's life appealed to me as the only life worth living; and with that longing to be a sailor, to have as my own some of my brothers' experiences, I told my mother that I wanted to go to sea.

I can now see the expression of disappointment on her dear face. I was her last son; and her hopes were built on having me grow up and live in Barbados. She looked forward to my being a manager of some sugar plantation, or preparing for some professional calling. Naturally she tried to persuade me to remain at school, and went so far as to promise her consent for me to go to sea when I was sixteen. Being a stout, robust lad, I felt as though I was man enough to start out in a life at sea, so I begged and coaxed, and at last threatened to run away.

I gained the victory. One afternoon a carriage drove up to our home, in which was Captain Dunscombe, of the schooner Meteor, a friend of my parents. He had that day arrived from Bermuda, and was visiting us. That evening I begged my mother to let me go back with him to his ship. At last she yielded. In Bermuda there was a friend of my mother's, an old retired sea captain, George Hill. He had proved himself a friend to my brothers; so rather than have me leave her later on to go with strangers, she consented to my sailing on the Meteor to Bermuda, where she hoped, through the influence of Captain Hill, I might be induced to continue my schooling.

Captain Dunscombe made several visits to us during his stay in port, and during that time, I afterward learned, my mother asked him to make the voyage as disagreeable for me as he possibly could without doing me any bodily harm. She thought that by the time I reached Bermuda, I would have had enough of a sailor's life.

A negro carpenter was called in to make me a sailor's clothes chest. I would not have a common trunk. I wanted one similar to

those I had seen on ships I had visited. It must have a till, or shelf, in it for needles and thread. No other would satisfy me. For two days I watched that negro plane the boards. I saw that every nail was driven in securely, and the hinges and lock put on. Then this good old negro lifted it on his head, saying to me, "Come along, Massa Harry, de ches' am finished. We'll take it to Massa John," meaning my father.

It was a great day for me. As I walked by his side, I boastfully told my playfellows, both black and white, as they looked at my chest on the negro's head, that it was mine, and that I was going to be a sailor. New clothes were made for me. Knee breeches were discarded. My trunk was packed, placed on a cart, and conveyed to town, to be sent on board the Meteor.

The day of my departure at last arrived. It was in March, 1880. I was not thirteen years old. I must confess that to-day, when I think of my mother and my early associations at home, the tears will gather in my eyes. When the carriage drove up to the door and the time came to say good-by, my mother's grief was so great that she was

thrown into hysterics. I cried and wept bitterly, not that I was leaving her, but because she was crying. For as a child I had always cried if she manifested any signs of grief. Several minutes passed before she could regain her self-control; and throwing her arms around me, bathing my face with her tears, we parted, — she to return to her daily routine of life, waiting to hear from the absent one; I, followed by a train of colored men, women, and children, some falling on my neck and kissing me, the rest shaking my hands, and shouting, “God bless you, Massa Harry,” went on my way to begin my duties as boy on board the schooner *Meteor*, sailing to Bermuda.

CHAPTER II

MY FIRST GALE

As I drew near the wharf on the morning of my departure, I was surrounded by colored boatmen, some shouting, "Here 's de Great Admiral," "Take my boat, sah, she is de Young America," "Dis way, sah, for de Undaunted," for the Barbadian boatmen, in doing their best to make a living, keep the water front in a state of constant uproar. It is their habit to tie their boats at the government landing; and as soon as a white man makes his appearance on the wharf, they gather round him like bees around a hive, shouting at the top of their voices, "Want a boat, sah?" "Here 's de Nancy Lee," "Der 's de Morning Star," each man having some such name for his boat. They will pull at his coat and tire and provoke him with their vociferous yells. If he is not strong and determined in pushing them away, they will carry him bodily to a boat. I was saved from such

a fate, for at this time Captain Dunscombe made his appearance, and taking me under his care, he ordered his boatmen to haul up to the landing-steps. We shoved off, and were rowed by two black Barbadians to the Meteor.

As the captain gained the deck, he gave word to the mate to man the windlass and heave short. While the sailors were heaving on the windlass brakes, getting in the slack chain, I was rummaging every part of the deck. On both sides of our vessel were a lot of small boats, some of them mere "dugouts," filled with naked negro boys. They were manifesting their accomplishments in diving. Occasionally the sailors would toss a copper over the side. As soon as it reached the water, the boys would jump from their boats and find the copper. At times the money would be thrown some distance from the ship, where it would seem almost impossible for it to be found. Yet the naked boys would swim to the spot where the money had sunk, and, diving, — remaining under water, going, yes, four and five fathoms down, — would bring the copper to the surface. With a broad grin showing their snow-white teeth, they

would yell, "Heabe anodder," "I'll dibe, sah."

Knowing the captain was below, I ventured into his cabin. It was a small space, where, unprotected from the sight of any one, were two bunks, one over the other, against the sides of the ship. In the forward bulkhead was a door leading into a very small room, which was the captain's. Fastened to the after bulkhead of the cabin was a table large enough to seat two persons. I was told by the captain that there was no bunk for me. The two bunks in the cabin were used by the mate and steward, and as there was only one bunk in his room, I would have to sleep in the sail locker on a spare mainsail which was stowed there. It made no difference to me. I was bent on being a sailor, and was willing to put up with anything.

The odor and steam emanating from the cargo of molasses began to take effect on my head. Feeling weak and dizzy, I made for the companionway and hastened none too quickly on deck. The mate came aft and shouted to the captain, "She's hove short, sir," to which he responded as he came on deck, "Set the mainsail and foresail." The

sails set, a few more heaves on the windlass brakes, and the Meteor was sailing past the vessels at anchor in the bay.

It being about an hour before sunset, I was afforded daylight enough to watch every detail of work necessary in getting a vessel under way. I watched with keen interest the setting of the sails, and the catting and fishing of the anchor. It was about six o'clock when supper was served. I wanted no supper, and I knew I should be sick if I went below in that stuffy hole; so I remained on deck. The captain and mate were the only white men on board; the steward, who performed the duties of both cook and steward, and the four sailors "farrard" were black Bermudians. No one seemed interested in me.

While the daylight lasted I continued my inspection of the deck. Close abaft the main hatch was a box about five feet square, lashed securely to four ringbolts in the deck. This was the galley, with sliding doors on both sides of it. In it were a stove and a box for coal. The box when covered was used as a seat for the cook while preparing the meals.

Forward, right abaft the windlass, was a

small companionway leading down to the fore-castle. I descended as far as the bottom step. What a sight! A three-cornered flat-iron-shaped hole with four bunks in it, an oil lamp giving more smoke than light. Three black men, made blacker by the darkness of the place, were seated on a bench eating something from a pan which was at their feet on the floor. There I encountered that same vile odor of bilge water and steam from the molasses.

Quickly getting on deck, I went aft, and, steadying myself on the top of the cabin, watched the fading shores of my native land. Fully two hours I sat there and thought of my loving mother, my home, and the associations I had left; then sauntered below to the sail locker, where I cuddled up and fell fast asleep.

It must have been about four o'clock the next morning when I awoke. I cannot find words to describe my feelings. There was a strong northeast trade wind blowing, which created a fair-sized swell. The schooner bobbed up and down. So did I. How wretchedly uncomfortable I felt! All the misery of seasickness was upon me. You who have

experienced seasickness will agree with me when I say, at such a time there is but little choice between life and death. I managed to get on deck. I heaved as though my heart would leave me ; then, stretching myself on the deck by the lee side of the wheel, longed to be home again. Could I have put my feet on shore at that time, it would have taken more than a Spanish windlass to get me to sea again.

When a person is seasick, his one desire is to lie down and go to sleep. This may do well enough for a short passage on a passenger steamer, but to be cured of seasickness, one must keep moving about in misery until he masters it. Cold, weak, dizzy, and miserable, I remained in that semi-conscious state until seven bells (half past seven), at which time the captain came on deck. Seeing me coiled down on the wet deck, he took hold of my coat collar and, lifting me on my feet, exclaimed in a gruff, sarcastic voice, "Yaw want to be a sailor, do ya?" "O captain, I am going to die!" "How yaw muff!" which is a Bermudian way of saying, "Close your mouth."

I do not wish to tire my readers by relat-

ing the many ways this well-meaning friend kept me moving about. He tried to teach me to steer by the compass, and did everything possible to keep me on my feet.

Soon after eight bells, at noon, a trade wind squall struck our little vessel. There was a heavy gust of wind and a downpour of rain for about twenty minutes. The gaff topsail was hauled down and clewed up. The captain shouted to me, "Git up thar and put a turn round that sail." It was a foreign language to me. I was making ready to coil myself on deck again. Lifting me clear of the rail, he stood me in the rigging, shouting, "Git, git, git! I'll make a sailor of ye." I felt sure I should fall. As I write, the horror of that moment is present with me. Holding tightly to the shrouds, step after step over those tarry ratlines, I at last reached the main crosstrees. Yet when holding on to the topmast rigging, my feet firmly planted on the outriggers, the gaff topsail slapping and banging around my head, I actually enjoyed the sight beneath and around me.

Below me the schooner, keeled well over by the force of the squall, was cutting her way through the Caribbean Sea. It was the

first time I had been out of sight of land. The vast expanse of water and the grandeur of the immense blue circle, joined to the drooping blue canopy above, made our small craft seem an insignificant object. The squall was over, the gaff topsail set again, and in the course of an hour I reached the deck wet through to the skin. Going below to the cabin, I devoured the remnants of the dinner-table. My seasickness was leaving me; I retained the food. I became accustomed to the pitching of the ship, and by night I was, with the exception of a bad headache, a seasoned sailor.

This good friend of my mother's, in trying to carry out her wishes and make me sick of the sea, made me master it. Had he allowed me to sleep and lie around the decks, I would have continued in that miserable state, and most likely would have given up all desire of being a sailor. There have been times during the first day at sea, after a long stay in port and days of dissipation on shore, that I have felt a nauseating sensation, but I have always been able to get about and do my work.

Of all the men that I have been shipmates

with during my six years in the merchant marine service, there is only one man whose name I can remember. I remember them only by their given names, or the nicknames by which they were called. Also of my shipmates for six years in the United States Navy, I can call to mind but a very few names. The names of the officers are fresh in my mind, as I was compelled to address them by their surnames, affixing the "Mister." So in writing of my shipmates, I can only name them as I did in days gone by, — the common, familiar Jack, Bill, and Tom.

My duties on board the Meteor were very easy. No longer seasick, I assisted the cook in washing the dishes, keeping the cabin clean, and also took an occasional spell at the wheel, to be perfect in my steering, — "All day on and all night in." At the close of the fourteenth day out we were close to Bermuda. It began to darken in the northwest, and at eight bells that evening our schooner was hove to under a close-reefed mainsail and fore staysail. About ten o'clock the man on the lookout shouted, "Light, O!" Sure enough, under our lee quarter was the revolving light of Gibbs Hill lighthouse.

This was my first gale. I do not know much about the hardships of the crew that night. Snugly coiled down in my cubby-hole, I could hear the voices of the men as they would wear ship, trying to keep off that dangerous coast of rocks and shoals. At two o'clock, in the middle watch, I heard the order given to wear ship. I could feel her rise to an even keel and, as though she had received some awful blow, stagger and tremble like a drunken man. In coming round, she had pooped a sea.

I thought we were sinking. The water came pouring down through the small opening in the sail locker. I made a rush for the deck, to find a stillness of death, which lasted but a moment. A small house over the rudder head, which was used as a boatswain's locker, was torn from its lashings. Jammed in the companiouway of the cabin, and trying to climb over it to get out of the flooded cabin, was the old colored cook.

It took but a few moments for the captain, who was a splendid sailor, to regain control of his ship. He got hold of me and pushed me down into the cabin, daring me to move from there. I climbed into the mate's bunk,

clear of the wash of water, and listened to the tramping of the men overhead getting the ship secured again. I had all faith in the captain, and a strong feeling that with him on deck, all would be well with us. It must have been about an hour when the cook returned from the deck, where he had been lending a hand, to begin the work of drying the cabin. I gained courage when he made his appearance. With buckets, rags, and mops we bailed out what water there was which had not found its way to the cargo.

At daylight the coast of Bermuda was clear to our view. A whaleboat, manned by six sturdy colored men, rowed out to us, and rounding under our lee quarter, they put a pilot on board. It is necessary for one to be nearing a dangerous coast on a lee shore to appreciate the sense of relief that comes over the ship when the pilot comes on board. At that time there is an ineffable satisfaction in one's security.

The pilot and his boat's crew were acquainted with our crew. They called one another by name and inquired of their friends on shore. That evening, shortly after sunset, we tied up alongside the wharf in the smooth

waters of Hamilton harbor. Every man on board, as soon as he could get ready, left the ship. Not knowing my way to Captain Hill's house, I made for the pantry. There I got hold of some hard biscuits, which I smothered with butter and sugar, and retired to my bed in the sail locker, to eat my fill and pass the night on a water-soaked mainsail.

CHAPTER III

ON A LEE SHORE

IN Barbados it is considered degrading for a white man to do manual labor. Occasionally you will find a white man working at a trade, or serving on the police force, or making a living by catching flying fish, but they are socially ostracized. They must associate with the negroes, who are expected to do all the laborious work on the island. A white man's work is to manage a sugar plantation, to be a clerk in an office or store, or to follow the profession of a minister, doctor, or lawyer. So also with the women, with the exception of a few who serve behind the counters of the largest clothing stores. They live lives of idleness, with negro servants at every beck and call.

As a boy I was impressed with the idea that sailors were the only white men who were allowed to labor aboard their ships, and were still thought respectable. Perhaps

my brothers being sailors created the impression. Howbeit, the next morning after landing in Bermuda, when I started with a letter in my pocket from my mother to find Captain Hill's house, the strangest thing to me was to see the familiarity that existed between the white and black Bermudians. Colored men meeting white men on the street would address them by their first names, without prefixing the Barbados title of "Mas-sah." Along the road I could look over the stone walls, and there see the whites and blacks working side by side in the onion and potato fields. To cap it all, after finding Captain Hill and receiving from him the welcome of his big, fond heart, I was introduced to the negro boys in that part of Port Royal Parish as only Harry King. I soon became acquainted with them, and for five weeks I worked cheerfully with them, weeding onions in Captain Hill's gardens.

One morning, when not yet six weeks in Bermuda, I went with Captain Hill to the town of Hamilton. Before we started for home, I had visited the Bermudian brigantine *Excelsior*, and had made arrangements with Captain Mayor, her master, to

sail with him to New York as cabin boy. When I told Captain Hill of my intended trip, I could see that it distressed this good old friend to have me leave him, but his knowing the captain of the *Excelsior* helped to make him yield, though he did so reluctantly.

The following day I was on the sea again, bound to New York city. There is not much to relate in a passage of this kind. It was spring and the weather was fine, with the exception of a stiff blow in the Gulf Stream for twenty-four hours. We reached New York on the seventh day out from Bermuda, when a towboat brought us safely to Pier 24, North River. Then it fully dawned upon me what activity meant in this world, and that it was honorable for a white man to work for his living.

We remained eight days in New York, and in that short time I was afforded the opportunity of visiting a sister in Brooklyn, and of seeing a few of the sights of a large city. It was the first time I had seen a steam locomotive. So that I could have the satisfaction of saying I had ridden on the railroad, I walked to the Battery, and, ascending to

the platform station of the Elevated Road, I traveled as far as my five cents would carry me. I suppose I must have been to Harlem. Anyhow, the conductor told me this was the end of the line ; and passing out of the station, I turned, and paying another five cents, rode back to the Battery.

We sailed away for Bermuda, and in two months' time we made two more such voyages to New York with onions and potatoes, on each return trip taking back to Bermuda a cargo of breadstuff. At the end of the third voyage from New York the *Excelsior* was hauled into the middle of Hamilton harbor, and there moored till the following year. I remained at Captain Hill's house for eight months, not only welcomed by him and his good wife, but treated as though I were their own son. I had no desire to go to school, so I passed the time working in the field, running errands, and trying to make myself of some service to my dear, kind friends.

Bermuda is rightly termed "The Refuge." Many vessels, leaking or dismasted or in distress of some kind, have found a refuge in the harbors of this cluster of numerous small

islands in mid-Atlantic. In the harbor of Hamilton as well as St. George, there were old hulks along the shore, washed by every tide and wave. These hulks were once fine sailing ships, but in old age, no longer able to battle with storm and gale, they are shoved heartlessly aside. There is no picture more sad to me than to see what was once a thing of life, mastering the storms and gales of ocean and sea, reduced to a skeleton, forsaken by friends, its body left in some out-of-the-way place, to be mercilessly and slowly torn to pieces by the waves on a foreign shore.

On my way to Hamilton one morning in the following March, I was surprised to see that the *Excelsior* had been moved from her mooring in the stream and was lying alongside of the wharf. Knowing it was too early for the onion season, I hastened on board. Finding Captain Mayor there, I inquired the reason of this change. He told me that his brig had been chartered to take grain from a Russian ship at anchor in a place called Murray's Anchorage, on the coast of Bermuda.

This Russian ship, bound from New York to some port in France with grain, had sprung

a leak, and had put in for repairs. Being so large a ship, the greater part of her cargo must be lightened before she could cross the harbor bar of St. George.

He wanted a cook and four sailors. I had been his cabin boy for three trips to New York, and with a feeling of confidence in my knowledge of cooking, I asked him to take me as cook. I can see the broad grin on his face and hear his merry laugh as he chokingly said, "You be blowed. You could n't keep water from burning." After coaxingly remonstrating with him, he half jokingly said, "Yes, I'll take you to help the cook." I ventured to say, "What's my pay, captain?" "Pay, is it? We'll talk that over when I see what you can do."

Of all the open roadsteads in which I have dropped anchor during my twelve years at sea, I have never found any to equal Murray's Anchorage for exposure and danger. There is a verse known to sailors,—

" If Bermuda let you pass,
Then look out for Cape Hatteras."

On a clear, calm morning in the month of March, a towboat came alongside, took the

end of our hawser, and that afternoon we were made fast alongside the Russian monster. All the gear had been made ready for hoisting the grain from one ship to the other, and the work of unloading and loading began. At sunset, when work was stopped for the day, we had taken four hundred bags of grain aboard.

It was a calm, peaceful evening. The crews of both ships had turned into their bunks for the night save one man on each ship, who was keeping the anchor watch. It was close to midnight when I felt our brig moving, and her tossing and pitching awakened me. I heard the deafening noise and uproar of timbers crashing. Hastily getting on deck, I found our ship grinding herself against the side of the Russian, and every man doing his best to save both vessels from drifting upon the rocks. A heavy gale had sprung up, a hateful "norwester" from Hatteras. With it had come a sea from the open Atlantic which seemed to take delight in crushing the ships together.

The Russian let go his second anchor, paid out all his chain, then cast our lines adrift. We quickly began to drop astern,

but in so doing we smashed a part of our bulwarks and carried with us, as we scraped and thumped along his side, the bumkin for his port main brace, and the boat hanging at his after davits. It was well the yards of both vessels were braced in opposite directions. Had they been otherwise, so that we could have entangled each other's rigging, there is no telling what the result might have been.

We kept going astern for about three hundred yards, when both our anchors were let go and all the chain in the lockers paid out. As the sternway was checked by the strain of the mooring chains, our brig began to show her antics. Up and down she bobbed and curtsied. Her bow was buried in the sea at one moment, and in another was lifted high, as though she were resting on her stern. The old-fashioned windlass began to show signs of weakness, as though it was being torn from the deck by the incessant jerking of the anchor chains.

A new coil of rope was hauled up from the lazaret, and with blocks from the boatswain's locker we rove off two long tackles. Wrapping strong straps on each anchor chain for-



WE SMASHED A PART OF OUR BULWARKS

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ward of the windlass just inside the hawse pipes, under the small topgallant forecastle, we hooked on the falls, overhauling them till the after blocks could reach the straps placed around the lower part of the mainmast. As she buried her nose we got a strain on the tackles which relieved the windlass from the severe jerking of the chains.

I was as busy as any one in this work on deck. Though a mere lad, not fourteen, I could hold a turn, pass this and the other thing, and help in many ways. We were on deck the rest of the night, clearing up the wreck and expecting every moment to see the chain tackles eased by the parting of the cables, and our ship dashed to pieces on the rocks of the shore. Fortunately we had some grain in our vessel, or surely she would have rolled over that night.

At daylight, after a night of dreadful anxiety and suspense, we made fast the English ensign under the jib boom, tying a piece of iron at the lower part to keep it hanging up and down, so that the man in the signal station on shore could see that we were calling for a tug to come to our assistance. It was blowing too hard, and too heavy a sea was

running, however, for a tug to dare to come out; so that day and all the next night we had to endure the strain until the gale moderated.

The following afternoon the wind shifted to the east and died out to a peaceful calm. We worked hard and got our vessel straightened out again, hove in one of our anchors, and passed a quiet night. Next morning a rope was passed to the stern of the Russian, our anchor weighed, and we hauled alongside the full rigger and loaded our brig to the hatches with bags of grain. The towboat got hold of us and safely docked us at the wharf in the harbor of St. George. Here the cook, through some trouble at home, had to leave the ship, and I was made cook for the rest of the time.

We made four trips to the Russian, removing cargo enough to enable her to cross the bar in safety. We were then towed back to Hamilton, and made ready for taking on a cargo of onions for New York. If ever a boy felt rich in this world's goods, it was I when Captain Mayor gave me four English sovereigns, all my own, for services during the time we were unloading the grain from the

Russian ship. Better still, I felt as though I was of some importance, when he told me I did very well.

We made a trip to New York and back again, and then loaded onions for a second trip. In saying good-by to Captain Hill this time, I told him that I should leave the *Excelsior* in New York this trip and find something to do there, as she was expected to lay up in Hamilton for another year on her return. I shall always remember the farewell words of this uncommon friend as he shook my hand. He said, "Boy, I like you. Come back whenever you want to. My home is yours." He made an impression on me that has been ever helpful in making me kindly toward young men who are friendless.

We arrived in due time at New York. I had six English sovereigns, which I changed for American money; and saying good-by to Captain Mayor, his mate, Mr. Harvey White, the colored cook and colored sailors of the *Excelsior*, I started, with my clothes chest, on an express wagon, and made my way to my sister's in Brooklyn.

The very next day, in my wanderings around the outskirts of this beautiful city,

I called at the office on the grounds of the Unexcelled Fireworks Factory, and asked the owner to give me work. Seeming satisfied with the answers I gave to his questions, he engaged me to charge Roman candles, for three dollars and fifty cents a week, which was fair pay for a green boy. It being some two miles from where my sister lived, I made an agreement with the proprietress of a German boarding-house to lodge and feed me and wash my clothes, for three dollars and twenty-five cents a week. Living at home with his parents, a boy earning three dollars and a half a week can, with his parents' help, make his way. For five months I worked merely for my board. Nearly all of my earnings were used for living expenses. I had even at this early stage of my life acquired the tobacco habit. So, with an occasional smoke, a new overcoat, and other necessary clothes, my exchequer reached a low ebb.

One evening after the factory was closed I became involved in an argument with a boy of my own age and size. We came to blows, which ended for me with a pair of blood-shot eyes. This was my first real fight. Brought up tenderly by a loving mother, and unfamil-

iar with the science of boxing, I did indeed get the worst of it. I hung my head with shame as I walked away from the crowd that had gathered; not because I had fought, but because I had been so easily whipped.

I would have given anything to remain in my boarding-house until my face had lost its marks of the strife, but knowing "no money no eatie" as the coolies would say, I made my way to the factory next morning. Without asking me any questions, the owner of the factory discharged me as soon as he saw the condition of my face.

With half a week's wages in my pocket, I felt alone in this world as I stood outside the factory gate. What should I do? Oh, the refuge of a mother! I could plainly see her face before me. I decided to go home to her.

Making my way to the East River wharves of New York City, where Trowbridge's West Indian sailing vessels were moored, I found a barque called the Atlantic loading for Barbados. I reached her deck and begged the captain for a place as cabin boy. My hopes were blighted when he said, "I don't carry a cabin boy; the cook does all the work him-

self." I begged to be shipped on deck as a deck boy, and was told that he carried six sailors and no boy. I was too small to ship as able seaman.

My disappointment was so great that I could no longer keep from crying. I had surely thought I could sail home to my mother on this ship. Captain Lanfare, whose name I afterward learned, was a kind-hearted, fatherly man, and seeing my grief, questioned me as to my birthplace and parentage. I think I see him before me, as, standing erect, he took my face in his two sunburnt hands, and with a smile that filled my whole soul with joy, told me he knew of my father, and that I could go home with him.

The Atlantic was to sail that evening. I hastened back to my German boarding-house, settled with my boarding-mistress, and engaged a junk dealer to take my clothes chest to the ship for one dollar. It was about three o'clock that afternoon when I arrived at the ship. My clothes were put into the cabin, I settled with the junk man for conveying my chest on board, and then discovered I was yet the possessor of six cents, — a nickel and one copper cent. Boy-like I walked up the dock

to the water front to invest my wealth at a peanut stand on South Street.

I must have been gone an hour, when, on reaching the wharf again, I found, to my sorrow, the Atlantic was gone. Standing on the end of the pier, I could see her following in the wake of the towboat, being towed out to sea. There have been other times when I have felt the horror of loneliness in this world, but being older it was more easy to endure. What was I to do? Without clothes, without a cent in my possession, I felt the misery of being nobody in the world.

The thought came to me to steal my way across the ferry and ask help of my sister in Brooklyn. But no! At that time, and at other times in my life, I have suffered severe privations rather than ask alms of a relative. My mother, when she was alive, was the sole refuge where I felt I was sincerely welcomed. I knew her love made what was hers mine. How much suffering I might have avoided if only I had trusted in the love of relatives and friends.

It was in the fall of the year. My overcoat was gone with the rest of my clothes. Cold and hungry, I remained on the pier till

long after dark, and it was entirely destitute of human life. I then made my way up the dock into the city, whose very lights seemed to frighten me. Walking along Cherry Street, I heard the sound of music coming from the open door of a liquor saloon. I ventured to walk in. There was a bar where men and women were drinking. At the farther end of the room was a slightly raised platform, on which four men were seated, playing on some musical instruments. The open space in front of the bar, between it and the musicians, was crowded with noisy men and women, dancing. This vile, wretched den, filled with tobacco smoke and drunken men and women, was part of a sailors' boarding-house.

I must have been standing there some fifteen minutes, when a fat, slovenly, middle-aged woman approached me, and, pointing to the door, said, "Git to h—— out o' this." I could not move. Fear or something else held me as though I was glued to the floor. With a blow from her fist, I was knocked to the ground. I kept quiet, fearing if I moved worse things would happen to me. Seeing my outstretched form on the floor, she, either suffering with remorse, or thinking I was seri-

ously hurt, told two men, whom I afterward learned by experience were her bullies, to carry me to the back room. I was taken to her sitting-room in another part of the house, where I was placed on an old worn sofa.

Gradually I made believe I was regaining consciousness, and as soon as she thought I was in my right mind, in sentences of the coarsest blasphemy, she questioned me as to my right on earth. After telling her all my trouble, I merely said I was hungry. On a table close by she placed a dish of cold potatoes and a glass of lager beer, saying, "Git on the outside of that, you d—— brat." The beer, which was my first glass, and the potatoes quickly disappeared, and an agreement was made with her that I should stay in her house and work for my board till she could get me a ship. While staying within that incarnate devil's home I existed more on kicks and cuffs than on anything else.

CHAPTER IV

A STOWAWAY

STRANGE as it may seem, sailors who have been plundered by these land sharks, on leaving their ships will, child-like, forget the past and allow themselves to return to these vile resorts. The encouraging fact is that there are now in all large seaports clean, honest boarding-houses for sailors, and that the large majority of seamen patronize them. Only a small minority of the men of the sea throw away their earnings in these dens of other days.

Of late years, through the untiring efforts of philanthropic people, much good has been accomplished in eliminating from our large seaports some of the dives displaying signs as "Sailors' Homes" and "Sailors' Boarding-Houses." Still, even at the close of this nineteenth century there are left a few of these places whose whole aim is to rob and plunder seamen. Here they are overcharged

for everything, and kept plentifully supplied with the worst kind of liquor as long as their money lasts.

The sailors' resort where I had bargained with the mistress to work for my board was one of many so-called "Sailors' Homes." After my meal of cold potatoes and beer had been finished, the "boss" (the title by which the boarding mistress was known) informed me what my duties were to be. I was to be up at five in the morning, shake down the fires in the bar-room, the sailors' lounge-room, and the kitchen; fill the stoves with coal from the pen in the yard, and sift the ashes. My immediate discharge was assured if she found any good coal among the ashes. Then, if the bartender had not come down, I was to scrub the floor of the lounge-room and clean the spittoons.

After giving me this list of duties, she called a lad about sixteen years old, and told him to show me the small bed in the big room upstairs. The sailors in this house were bullied by two men. I was bullied by everybody, including this same boy. He, being a true son of this uncouth mortal and knowing how readily his mother would be-

lieve what news he brought her, took every opportunity during my stay in that house to rob the seamen when they were drunk and then accuse me of the theft.

There were a few small rooms upstairs with single beds where the homeward-bound sailors slept as long as their money lasted. When that was gone they were allowed to sleep in the large room, two men in a bed large enough for one person only. This was in hopes of an advance note paying their bills. There were seven beds in this room, not including the canvas cot which the boy said was my "dos." Being tired, I slept soundly and heard nothing until I felt the blows coming from the fists of my boarding-mistress, which quickly roused me to my feet. Curses and oaths were showered upon me. To keep warm I had slept in my clothes and shoes ; so jumping from the bed I made for the stairs, followed by this infuriated creature. She was too stout to descend quickly ; so before she reached the ground floor, I was filling the empty hod at the coal-pen. By this time her temper was somewhat cooled, and I was again instructed as to my duties and allowed to remain.

For two weeks I cleaned and scrubbed and was compelled to do the dirtiest kind of work, laboring from early morning till late at night. Then I waited until the music in the saloon had ceased and the brawling dancers had retired to their haunts for the night. Although the saloon was separated from the main part of the house and seemed part of an adjoining building, yet through the door to the sailors' lounge-room oaths, curses, and the noise of occasional fights could plainly be heard. In fear and trembling I would remain crouched in some dark corner until all was quiet and the doors were closed for the night. Then I would go up to my cot, which was covered with one well-worn quilt, and stretch myself under it until all the drunks had come up to "roost." When all were fast asleep and it was quiet downstairs, I would creep softly to the sailors' lounge-room, and on a wooden settee by the stove remain, half awake, that I might have some work done when the fiend should come below. I will credit this woman with giving me enough food to eat, such as it was, but in return I more than compensated her by the work I did. I had only my one suit of clothes, which was receiving hard

usage, and becoming more soiled and filthy each day.

I had heard the sailors talking about Thanksgiving Day, and the men were looking forward to it with pleasure. The morning of the eventful day dawned. My usual work had been done and I had taken my seat to begin my breakfast. A tooting of horns, screeching yells of children on the street, and the clattering noise of horses' feet, mingled with the rumbling of carriage wheels, made me leave everything and bolt for the street. It was a carnival. Some said they were "Greenbacks," a puzzle which has not been solved in my mind to this day. I saw a long line of carriages filled with people dressed in some heathenish manner, shouting, blowing horns, and followed by the street urchins of lower New York, their number augmented at every turn of the carriage wheels. Without a thought or care I ran with the crowd, shouting as loudly as any boy amongst them. Occasionally the procession stopped for a moment, and then off we went again.

We had reached the Battery before my mind drifted back to the boarding-house. Then with a foreboding that a volley of oaths

was in store for me, I made my way back. A sailor, a Swede who had been in the house about two weeks, rushed at me as soon as he saw me enter. But for the ready help of a kind Irish woman who did the cooking in the house, my poor body would have suffered severely from the savage blows aimed at me.

Throwing herself between me and the Swede, she made him understand that she intended to fight my battles. I had worked hard beside this queen of the kitchen, and had gained her good will. And indeed I felt grateful for the ready aid she rendered in saving me from the half-crazed creature.

Jabbering away in his broken English, I learned that, having missed his watch from his room, he had offered a reward of five dollars to any inmate of the house who would tell him where it was. Tom, the boarding-mistress's son, said I had stolen it and put it between the folds of the quilt on my cot, where indeed it had been found. Of course I believed Tom the thief, and loudly gave my opinion to that effect. No sooner said, than the boarding-mistress rushed at me, poker in hand, shouting as she applied it to my back, "You call my son a thief? You do, do you?"

Get to h—— out o' dis house!" Running to save my life, I reached the street and kept going toward the water front, till I felt I was far from the clutches of the evil one.

Not very long ago I visited New York City and walked along Cherry Street to see if perchance I might find this boarding-house. I could not locate it. The old haunts of that part of lower New York seemed entirely changed and strange to me. The building which appeared most likely to be the house is now an ordinary tenement with a small grocer's shop on the street floor.

For eight days I tramped the streets of New York, homeless and without a friend in the city. Oh, the misery of those few days! Sleeping in doorways, picking ash barrels, feeding on decayed fruit and the refuse floating between the wharves, suffering hunger and a benumbed body, my clothes filthy, and my shoes almost worn to the uppers, I existed as a homeless street dog. On the third evening after leaving the boarding-house, somewhere in the vicinity of Catherine Street I noticed several sailors going in and coming out of a building. Each time the door opened I could see that it was not a bar-room, neither

had it the appearance of a boarding-house. What could it be? Should I be allowed in there?

Lately while relating this bitter experience of my boyhood to a Christian woman, she remarked, "Why did n't you go to the Y. M. C. A., or the Seaman's Institute?" Why? Because I knew nothing of such places. Born and brought up where the church, in which people gathered once or twice a week to worship God, was the only benevolent institution, how was I to know that there were places and kind people to befriend the homeless and needy? And with whom had I associated, excepting Captain Hill, to learn that there were good people in this world who gave of what they had to help others? Personal benevolence was something unknown to me.

I meekly walked in with others who were entering, and took a seat at a table on which a few papers and books were placed. I did not want to read. I cared more to look around, trying to form in my mind some idea of the object of this room. Texts of Scripture were hung on the walls, and near where I sat was another table at which men were writing letters. Up to the time of my discharge from

the fireworks factory, I had written home to my mother, hearing from her at least once a month. Seated in this room, watching the men writing their letters, my thoughts flew back to my mother, and a desire came over me to write and let her know that I was still alive. But I supposed the writing material was their own; and as I had none, and besides was too timid to speak lest I be noticed and driven from the warmth of the place, I kept quite still and watched the faces about me as the men entered and left.

I must have been seated some fifteen minutes, expecting at any time to be sent out as an intruder, when a kind-faced woman walked into the room. Coming up to where I was seated, she bade me good-evening. After saying a few words to all at the table about the fine weather, she turned to me, and, placing her hand on my shoulder, said, "My little boy, are you a Christian?" I had been brought up to believe in God, and knew the Church catechism and Ten Commandments. Every morning at home, I said my prayers, with my brothers and sisters, at the foot of my mother's bed. I had heard that in foreign lands there were savages who knew nothing

of God, and were classed as heathen, but took it for granted that all people living in civilized lands were Christians. Therefore, the first thought that entered my mind was that she knew all about my trouble at the boarding-house, and wondered if I came from some savage land. So, instead of answering her question, I began to say, "Tom was the thief" and to apologize for being in so filthy a condition.

As I started to leave the hall, this good soul took my hand and told me to follow her. We crossed the hall and opened a door leading into some dark space. The door was closed, and for about ten seconds all sorts of wild ideas floated through my mind. The treatment I had received from people on the streets made me suspicious of everybody, and I mistrusted this well-meaning woman.

Turning to me as soon as the room was lighted, she said, "Do you love Jesus?" I meekly answered, "I do." I do not mean to convey the impression that I had any special love in my heart for Him just at that time. I had been taught something of the life of Christ in the Sunday school at home. It had never occurred to me that He could

have anything to do with my present troubles, so I answered regarding Him, as if she had said, "Do you love the Queen of England?" "I do." She then asked me to kneel in prayer with her. Any one entering the room would have found her kneeling beside a cane-bottomed chair, pouring out her soul to God for my redemption; and I, a trembling bit of humanity, kneeling at the opposite side of the chair, longing for an opportunity to get out of the place.

The whole scene appeared to me as though I were known; and believing the story of the boarding-house theft, in this way she would try to make me a better boy. I have often wondered what this kind missionary thought of me. The door of her closet was opened, and quickly crossing the hall, I opened the street door, to continue my tramping until I could find some shelter in a doorway for the night. Many times I was shaken by a policeman and told to go home, and without a murmur I would start on to find another doorway or alley.

My misery came to an end on a Friday evening, the eighth day away from the boarding-house. With no object in view I was

walking along the streets of lower New York, when I noticed small flakes of something white falling from the sky. I knew that this was snow, though I had never seen any before. I had read of snowstorms in northern countries and had seen a picture of a winter scene which had given me a vague idea of snow. So for the first hour I romped and played with the falling flakes, so glad was I that I had seen it. I forgot my misery.

My fun was checked by the familiar sounds of an organ near by, and listening, I heard the voices of people singing. Yes, within a stone's throw of where I was standing I could see a church tower. I drew near the door; the music was a strain I knew. I looked through the narrow space between the doors and saw the minister in his white surplice kneeling in his stall, and heard his voice reading the prayers — the same that were read in the parish church at home. The whole appearance was familiar to me, and with a feeling of security I entered and slipped into a seat of a vacant pew near the back of the church. In that same pew, separated from me by a wooden partition, was an elderly lady. God bless her! I was so much occupied with com-

paring the seats and other things in this church with the parish churches in Barbados and Bermuda, that I remember paying no attention to the sermon. But the rising of the people, as the minister turned and said, "And now to God the Father," brought me to my feet with the rest.

The closing hymn was announced, and as the first verse was being sung, this sweet angel of heaven moved toward the partition, and smiling, held out her book, inviting me to share it with her.

If I could pen my feelings that night, if I could tell the satisfaction and comfort it gave me to be in that house of prayer, gladly would I do it. My loving mother's face came before me; home associations were near; it seemed as though I stood once more by my mother's side in St. James parish church. I looked at the white, delicate hands so near mine; so clean, so refined, so different from those I had seen for the past three weeks. I breathed once more the holy atmosphere of my child life. Before the close of the hymn I was sobbing as though my heart would break. With a feeling of shame to be seen crying, I started for the door, there to be met

by this Christian saint. Without asking me a question, she gave me her hand, and in that blessed hand-shake took the opportunity of pressing a silver half dollar into my palm. I do not remember thanking her. As I carry my mind back to that evening, I can see her watching me from the church door as I reached the street.

Possessing a silver half dollar, a new strength entered my being. Making my way through the falling snow, I reached a cheap lodging-house. I entered and purchased a bed for ten cents, carefully tucking away the remaining forty cents in my well-worn trousers. No words of mine can describe the wretchedness of that lodging-house. In the room where I lay were about twenty beds filled with men, whose clothes, like mine, were teeming with vermin and dirt; a place a trifle more comfortable than the gutter in the street. Still, for that night I was out of the snow, away from the kicks and cuffs of the street boys and sheltered under a roof.

I resolved that I would on the following day make one more effort to find a ship sailing for Barbados. Every day during the

eight days I had walked the streets, I had visited not only ships sailing to the West Indies, but English and German East India-men, ocean steamers, canal-boats, tugs, and vessels of every description, offering my services for my board. One captain would have taken me, as he wanted a cabin boy, but, turning away, said to the steward, "He's too dirty looking," and to me, "You won't do."

Sometimes I was of service to some of the cooks, helping them clean their galley pans, and thereby earned a morsel of food. All the captains whom I asked to give me a berth on board gave me, instead, the discouraging answers, "I don't want you," or "You're too small."

On reaching the street next morning, ploughing my way through the snow, I entered a small eating-house, where I paid ten cents for a cup of coffee and a piece of custard pie. Then I wended my way once more to the wharves where Trowbridge's West Indian ships were moored. At the wharf was a brigantine, on board of which the stevedores were driving in single file a pack of mules. The animals were huddled together on the wharf near the side of the

ship. Bales of hay and other things left on the wharf were covered with snow, and the ship's rigging and furl of the sails looked as though they had been painted white.

As I stood gazing at these things and wondering how they could ever get the ship clear again, I noticed her name on the bow, though too much covered with snow to read at that distance. Drawing near, I saw in yellow letters the name *Victoria*. The sailors arrived, driven to the wharf in a wagon with their bags and chests. I saw them go on board, carry their things to the fore-castle, and watched them shaking hands and saying good-by to a man called Mr. White ; though some, made more familiar by drink, addressed him as "Dago White."

Determined to find out something about the *Victoria*, I inquired of Mr. White where she was bound. He very kindly replied, "Port of Spain, Trinidad." He was the first man I had met for three weeks who would answer my many inquiries without telling me I wanted to know too much and that I shouldn't ask so many questions. Finding him willing to talk, I got the cheering news that the *Victoria* was bound to

Port of Spain to discharge her deck-load of mules, and thence to Barbados to discharge her cargo.

I watched my chance while every one seemed busy casting the lines adrift from the wharf, and the captain was talking with the captain of the towboat alongside his ship. I jumped on the rail of the vessel between the shrouds of the fore rigging, and made my way over the mule pen down into the forecastle. Once in, I saw in a top bunk a large sailor's clothes-bag. Springing up into the bunk, I lay down between the bag and the bulkhead of the forecastle. My heart thumping and beating, I remained there for fully three hours. The galley was a small space, a part of this forward house divided off for such use. I could hear the cook coming and going, only the partition separating him from me. At times I thought he was in the forecastle, so distinct were the sounds of his rustling and moving of pots and pans.

I felt the motion of the brig as the towboat hauled her astern, the noise of the men on deck clearing up and getting things secured, the setting of the topsails, and at last

the welcome "hee-hawing" of the men as, hand over hand, they got in the towline. Then the soft rolling of the ship speeding on before a fair northerly wind told me I was at sea again.

At noon the men came below to dinner. The sailor's pot, pan, and spoon were in his bag. He moved it, and jumped back when he saw a form and heard my scream. Word was taken to the captain that a stowaway was forward. The mate's voice shouting down, "Send that fellow on deck," brought me once more up into the free open air of Heaven. I could see the highlands of the Jersey coast; vessels of all kinds were going in to New York and coming out. I was in a state of both happiness and fear as I walked aft with the mate. Happy, because I left behind me recollections of misery; fearful, because of the reception that awaited me aft.

CHAPTER V

AN EASY PACKET

CAPTAIN SPENCER, of the brigantine *Victoria*, was the sort of man with whom the children of the street would delight to romp and play, and make their friend.

Walking aft over the bales of hay which covered the top of the mule pens, I was ushered into his presence by the mate, saying, "Here he is, sir;" and the kind manner in which he asked, "What brought you here, my lad?" dispelled all fear of cuffs and oaths, which I had expected to be my reception. I felt a freedom in his presence, and readily told him I was a native of Barbados, and, wanting to go home, I had stowed away in the fore-castle when the ship was leaving the wharf. I might have kept on talking and relating my troubles to him, so full of tenderness was his face; but seeing the cook walking forward from the cabin to the galley, he hailed him and said, "Take this lad

along with you and give him some dinner." And going down the steps of the after companionway, he descended to his own meal.

I was very hungry ; the bit of custard pie was all I had eaten that day. The colored cook was both cook and steward ; and being in a hurry to get aft again, where he could be on hand if wanted at the cabin table, hastily passed up to me, where I was standing on the mule pen, a black saucepan half filled with mutton stew, a fair-sized junk of bread, and a large iron spoon which was used for cooking purposes, and told me to " sail in."

It was then the first week in December. The snow which had fallen the night before lay in undisturbed heaps upon the bales of hay. A keen, piercing northerly wind was penetrating my thread-worn garments. The cook had no sooner gone aft than a voice coming up from the fore-castle door, beneath my feet, shouted, " Come down here out of the cold and eat your grub." Holding my saucepan in one hand, the long handle of the spoon extending well over the top of the rim, and the bread in the other hand, I elbowed myself down the pieces of wood nailed

to the forward end of the mule pen, safely reached the fore-castle door, and entered.

This, like the galley door, opened on the after bulkhead of the forward house, facing the main hatch. Usually there would have been an unobstructed view to the cabin door; but on looking aft after entering the fore-castle, I could see a line of mules on each side of the ship reaching from the forward house to the cabin bulkhead. The mule pens were so close to the fore-castle that they not only obstructed the light entering the doorway, but gave the forward mule on the port side of the ship an ample opportunity to sniff at the men as they went below. He was a vicious beast; but with many slaps on the face as each time he attempted to bite at us during the trip to Trinidad, he lost considerable of his refractory spirit.

There was enough daylight for me to dimly see the appearance of the fore-castle, and the three men who were in it. It was a small, square room with four bunks; the light from a small window on the port bulk-head revealed to me a bench. Seating myself with my back against the warm partition which separated the galley from the fore-

castle, I made away with the contents of the saucepan. The sailors were busy unpacking their bags, getting their donkeys' breakfasts (straw beds) spread out in their bunks, and making their quarters comfortable.

They had finished their dinner, and were smoking their pipes, when their attention was drawn to me by the exclamation of the man nearest me. He, seeing the saucepan empty and the last bit of bread disappearing, declared in language of the strongest kind that I had the stomach of a horse. At his vehement outcry, all attention was concentrated on me. For the next few moments I was the object of their jokes. They set to to make me believe the strangest and most unheard-of stories of the captain and the ship, until the voice of the second mate shouting, "Turn to below there!" put an end to their fun.

I noticed as each man started from the forecastle door that the mule was given a slap. Omitting this, I started to follow, but when about halfway to the top of the mule pen, I felt a tug at my trousers' leg. I saw the mouth of the mule at my feet, and, in fear

of having his teeth reach my skin, I stumbled and fell, cutting the back of my head, which struck against the iron ring in the fore-castle door. It was a mere scratch, from which the blood flowed freely, but sufficient to elicit the sympathy of all. They helped me to the top of the pen, and there examined the bruise.

On account of their gathering around me, the captain came forward to see what was the trouble. This kind, good-hearted man invited me into his cabin to dress the cut ; and coming into such close contact with me there, he discovered the state of my clothes and body. That vicious mule had not only won for me the sympathy of the crew, but also given me an opportunity to be questioned by the captain as to who and what I was.

I can now see the surprise on his face when, in answer to his question if I was related to Mr. John King, of Payne's Bay, I replied that I was his son. Like many other sea captains, he had spent many an hour in my father's company in the Masonic lodge, and knew him very well. Oh, the joy of that moment when he told me my father was his friend ! Only a few moments, and my clothes

were floating far astern in the wake of the vessel, and I was being put through a thorough process of scrubbing and cleansing. After he had administered to me this much-needed bath, he entered his room and returned with a bundle of clothes, socks, and shoes which he had taken from the ship's slop chest.

It was not long before I was on deck again, my shoes many sizes too large and my clothes having every appearance but that of fitting. At any rate, I was clean and warm, even though I appeared, as the mate remarked, like a scarecrow, fit to be hung in the corn-fields to frighten away the crows. I knew every rope on board, and readily discovered that the *Victoria*, had a throat and peak mainsail instead of the mutton-leg mainsail and ringtail gaff topsail of the *Excelsior*. With this exception, in build and rig, she was exactly like the old Bermudian. It seemed to please the captain when I told him of my observation of the rig of his ship.

About four o'clock that afternoon I was told to come below with him. On reaching the cabin, he opened a door leading into a room with two bunks, and told me that this

was my state-room. Left alone in the room, I tried the bottom bunk. How soft and luxurious! My back had not touched so comfortable a spot for days. I fell asleep and did not awaken until the next morning, when the scrubbing of the men overhead, as they washed down the top of the cabin, roused me from my peaceful sleep.

I went on deck, and watched with exquisite pleasure the bubbling water along the side of the ship and the foaming wake she was leaving behind. The wind was dead aft, which made only the square sails on the foremast of any service in speeding us along. There was not much deck to wash down; only the top of the cabin and forecastle head, which being done, the pumps were manned. There were only three men on deck, the mate and two sailors, which was the whole of the port watch. One of the sailors was at the wheel, the other sailor and mate were jerking up and down, clankety bang, the one-arm handle of the pump. It was a mean, clumsy contrivance at its best, but more so at this time, for it was buried beneath the mule pen close abaft the mainmast. I could see the back of their heads as they bobbed up and

down at each bang of the pump handle, "Spell, O!" and "Another try for a suck." I squeezed myself down on the ship's deck where I could get a hand on the handle, and then I exercised myself enough to win a pleasant, "That 's the boy," from the mate.

The captain had just come on deck, and calling me to him, he gave me a pair of trousers which he had worked on himself during the night, telling me I would find them short enough to move around in. I then learned from him that, against his wish, I must work during the trip, as it would displease the owners to know he had made a passenger of a stowaway. I wanted to be of service, and asked to be allowed to work on deck and not in the cabin with the cook. Accordingly, I was detailed to wash the mules' faces and be around the deck, "All day on, and all night in."

Every morning I was called at half past five to begin the day with pail and rag, going from mule to mule, washing the faces of all and sponging their eyes, while the mate or second mate, whosoever watch it might be, with the sailor of the watch, would follow with water and hay. This was my morning's

duty while the mules were on board. I would finish cleaning their faces by breakfast time, and the rest of the day would at times take a trick at the wheel, hold a turn of a rope, and lend a hand cleaning paint-work, doing whatever a boy of my size could around the deck. I then learned a deck-load of mules is not a very desirable freight on a small vessel in a heavy sea.

On the third morning out we were in the Gulf Stream. The fair northwest wind was increasing in force, and by dinner time it was blowing a gale. Running before a large swell and burying her rail at each roll on a line with the sea, our brig would at times receive the top of a following wave, which made it very risky as well as uncomfortable for the mules. If our decks had been clear, we could safely have run with the gale. After the watch had gone below and had eaten their dinner, all hands were called to heave her to. The foresail was clewed up and furled; the mainsail close reefed and set, and the fore-topmast staysail flattened aft. The helm put down gently, main sheet and lee braces manned, our brig pointed her nose to the wind, and laid to like a duck.

About seven o'clock that evening a noise as though the heavens were falling made our ship tremble from head to stern. It seemed as though we were a toy in the hands of a giant. Standing by the side of the man at the wheel, I heard the shout, "Fore-top-mast staysail carried away, sir." The "old man" (title of all captains by virtue of their office and not because of their age) came rushing on deck, shouting, "Call the watch!" Following the mate forward to the fore-castle head, I could see the dark sail against the darkened sky, slatting and banging like some wild monster that had been just set free. The sailors were "hee-hawing" and pulling at the down haul, trying to haul down to the boom the struggling, resisting sail. The whip which had been rove through a block in the pennant, the whole forming a sheet for the sail, had parted. The slatting of the sail, after it had been hauled down to the boom, had twisted the pennant round and round the bobstay. Bellying out like a balloon, it was impossible to get the sail secured.

I was standing with the mate, both of us holding on to the capstan on the fore-castle head, watching the men on the boom doing

their best to smother the sail. Being of no service, and realizing that I would be safer aft than on the forecastle head, I started to grope my way aft. Just then she buried her bow under. I felt myself scraping along the forecastle head, and, like falling in the descent of a waterfall, I was washed under the feet of the mules. Pulling myself out without a scratch, I met the mate going aft, shouting, "The boy is overboard!" How those five men held on to the bowsprit that night has ever been a mystery to me. The mate had a good grip on the capstan, which saved him from being washed along with me. Soaking wet, I went below, and missed the seamanship of that night.

Next morning I got into my half-dried clothes, which had been hanging by the cabin stove, and went on deck to begin my work as nursemaid for mules. The gale had moderated, and we were again running before a good-sized sea, making good weather of it. One of the mules had died during the night, so after breakfast a few of the planks were taken up from over his stall, and the dead carcass was hoisted up through the open space, and with a lee roll of the ship, his

body was let go, and went splashing into the sea, a feast for sharks. During the forenoon watch I learned from Bob, one of the sailors, how the fore-topmast staysail was secured. The brig was put before the wind so that the clew of the sail could be reached, the fouled pennant unhooked, and the weather pennant and whip hauled over the stay and used as a lee sheet. While this was being done, the brig was making better weather running than she had been at noon, when first hove to, which made the "old man" decide to continue on his course. Going forward and looking over the bow, I could see the fouled pennant of the staysail dragging from the bobstays. The moderating gale carried us quickly across the Gulf Stream, and on the fifth morning pea coats, mittens, and mufflers were left below, being no longer needed in the warm southern latitude.

For three days we sailed through masses of gulf weed. During my meal hours and in the evening after the day's work was over, I would take my seat on the jib-boom end and watch our brig cut her way through the beds of green stuff. The whole ocean resembled a corn-field. The blue water of the ocean

could only occasionally be seen. We picked up a strong trade wind, which carried us well into the tropics and then died out to a calm.

On the eighteenth day out we made the land of Trinidad, and that night dropped anchor in the peaceful waters of Port of Spain harbor. Next morning, after a good night's rest, all hands were called, coffee was served, and the word "Turn to!" came from the second mate. A purchase was rigged for getting the mules over the side into the empty lighters which were to carry them to the shore. A canvas apron was passed under each mule; a pull on the fall, and he was in mid-air, kicking all four heels until landed in the lighter. This was the work of only a few hours.

That night, Christmas Eve, we weighed our mud hook and sailed for Barbados. Although it is only a day's run from Barbados to Trinidad, it took us until the night of the twenty-eighth before we dropped anchor in Bridgetown Harbor. It is a dead beat to windward against the northeast "trades." We sailed full and by the wind, making St. Vincent and St. Lucia on our weather bow.

Then using the "trades" as a leading wind, passed between Martinique and St. Lucia, headed straight for Barbados, and dropped our anchor in Carlisle Bay.

How happy I felt as I looked once more on my native hills; on the windmills on the sugar plantations, their four large points revolving round and round, grinding the juice from the cane; on the boats sailing into the wharf with their freight of flying fish, and on the white sandy beach along the shore. The joy made me restless. The captain had gone on shore, and had told me to remain on board till he returned. I could not, so anxious was I to reach my home. I hailed a flying-fish boat to take me on shore, and bargained with its captain to give him for his trouble my thirty cents, the remnant of my good angel's gift. Shouting "Good-by" to the mate and to all on board, and promising to be back the next day, I got into the flying-fish boat, and in a little while I was standing once more on my native soil, after an absence of twenty-two months.

Once landed, I kept along the western side of the town, doing my best to shield myself from the eyes of the people. I felt ashamed

to be seen in the clothes which had seen much service and were hanging so loosely upon me. The peaked cap which the mate had given me the first day out from New York was pulled well over my eyes. So, shunning everybody, I reached the sand beach outside the town. When within a mile from home I was forced to leave the beach and take the highway, as the rocks along the shore extended to the water's edge. Before I could pass this stretch of rocks and reach the beach again, a negro from Payne's Bay, driving home in his donkey cart, recognized me. Whipping his donkey, he hurried along to carry the news of my coming to my mother.

At last the old house hove in sight; I reached the street, walked quickly up the gap, and was once more in the fond embrace of my loving mother and father, and in the company of the dear ones at home. That evening, until bedtime, the friendly natives from all parts of the village called to shake hands and welcome me home. From the time I saw the Atlantic towing down the East River until I arrived at home, it never occurred to me that my clothes chest would be sent home to my parents. Within the past four years

to this time, my mother had received word of the death of two of her foster children, whom she loved as her own. These two brothers of mine were sailors. One had died at sea, his body committed to the deep; the other had passed away in a hospital in Savannah, Georgia, and was buried on a foreign shore. Within a few weeks of my arrival she had also received the sad news that her firstborn had been washed off the flying jib boom of the schooner *Ella Francis* while on a passage from Jacksonville to New York.

She was just recovering from this severe blow of the loss of my brother, when Captain Lanfare of the *Atlantic* called, bringing my clothes with him. He told her of my putting my clothes aboard his ship, and that no one on board could tell what had become of me. After the towboat had left his vessel, he thought of me, and the ship was searched from stem to stern, trying to find me. The only hope he could hold out to her was that I might have gone ashore again, unobserved by any one, and missed the ship. When the negro brought word that I was coming down the road, she left her bed, forgetful of her neuralgia, and with the rest of the family at

home watched eagerly for my appearance. It was some minutes before it dawned upon me what her tears of joy meant. Everybody thought I was at the bottom of the sea, excepting my mother, who through those three weeks of suspense hoped that I might yet be alive and be spared to her.

I soon got into a suit of my own clothes which had been aired and put away. Once more in a rig that fitted me, breathing the hallowed atmosphere of home life, I related my experience to my mother, keeping from her and all the family the bitter experiences of my stay in New York City, which they never knew.

Next morning I kept my word and was again on board the *Victoria*. Captain Spencer seemed annoyed with me for leaving the ship before he had returned aboard. The day we arrived, as soon as he had entered his vessel in the Custom House, he went into De Costa's clothing-store and purchased a suit of boy's clothes for me, and on arriving aboard, found that I had left. I gave him a letter from my mother inviting him to take dinner with our family on Sunday, which he accepted, and in a few moments we were good

friends again. I wanted my mother to meet the sailors of the *Victoria*, and therefore induced Captain Spencer to have them row him down to our house in his ship's boat, a distance of five miles. When Sunday comes after a week of toil, sailors expect to be given that day for rest. So when Captain Spencer said his men would growl if he had them row him that distance on Sunday, I readily told him I had talked it over with Bob and the rest, and they wanted to do it. Before seeing the captain when I got aboard that morning, I had told these kind men my mother wanted them to come, and put my plans of rowing the captain before them.

Sunday noon, Captain Spencer, rowed by his four seamen, made a landing on the beach at our back door. What an afternoon of pleasure for me ! I can now call to my mind the picture of this good captain walking between my father and mother, the four sailors, with my sisters and myself, following close behind them on our way to evening service in the old parish church. Late that night they bade us good-by, and loosing their boat from the beach, they rowed back to their ship.

At this time of my life my father was well on in age, entering his seventy-fourth year. His eyesight was rapidly failing, which forced him to resign his position. What money he once possessed had been lost by trusting too much to others, and it meant a struggle to meet the home necessities and maintain his dignity on the pension he received from the government for his faithful services. I remained at home restless, not wanting to go to school, and too young to be of any real use in the business life of Barbados. So with a feeling that I could earn some money and send it home if I were at sea, I expressed a desire to travel again.

One afternoon, eight weeks after I had reached home, Captain Darrell of the schooner Maggie drove up to the door and spent the evening with us. He had arrived from Bermuda and had called to see us. That night I secured from him the promise of a passage on his ship to Bermuda. My mother was grieved, but her grief was mitigated by the thought that as I had pulled through for nearly two years without any accident befalling me, I would, now that I was a little older, get along safely. Had she known of my ex-

perience and of the habits I had acquired during my stay from her, I should not have gained her consent to leave her again. She, like many other good mothers, had not the faintest idea of what a sailor's life is, or what the temptations are that are placed in his way in the seaports of the world.

On March 3, 1882, not then fifteen years old, I again said the sad good-by, and with my chest well packed with clothes, joined the Maggie as a passenger, sailing away to visit my old friends in Bermuda. It was late in the evening when the schooner got under way. Captain Darrell kept close to the shore, and about seven o'clock, to my surprise, he brought his vessel to, right opposite our old home, and dropped anchor about a stone's throw from the beach. Then lowering the boat, he, with his mate, Mr. Johnny Hill, who was a nephew of Captain George Hill, and myself, pulled for the shore, leaving the ship in charge of the cook and sailors.

It was an evening that will ever be fresh in my memory. It was the last one I spent with my mother. What thoughts of danger, of storm, and of sickness will enter one's mind when we have to say good-by to dear ones,

who are leaving us to cross the sea! Though steam has lessened much of that fear and dread, we still have to put forth every effort to dispel the gloom by making ourselves believe "all will go well." I had said good-by in the morning, and now as the early morning hour of another day was dawning, I was saying good-by again. It was close to midnight. The stars were shining brightly overhead. The whole family were standing on the beach, the boat rocking in the easy surf and wash of the waves. We could see the black hull of the schooner riding at anchor.

My mother held in her hand a large, old-fashioned candlestick, and the light of the candle cast its rays upon her face. Can a boy forget his mother's face? No, never! All through life that face has lived in my memory. I will confess that in days gone by, when indulging in most every kind of sin, whenever she would enter my mind, a desire to be better came also, and I must say that it was an effort to think of other things and to drive all such noble longings from my heart and mind. Her presence, always with me, mingled with the thoughts of home, gained the victory as

I launched into manhood, creating in me a desire to live as she would have had me live. That night, filled with grief because of my departure, she kissed me her last good-by.

Bermuda has for many years been a strong naval station in Great Britain's western possessions. There is always at least a regiment of soldiers there; sometimes two regiments, stationed on the different parts of the island. The North Atlantic fleet spends considerable time each year at the government dock-yard. These soldiers and sailors are socially ostracized by the inhabitants of the island. While the white native Bermudians will work by the side of their fellow colored countrymen, they still maintain a certain social distinction. But all classes, both white and black, regard the English soldier and man-of-war's man as a loathsome object, whose company is undesirable. It may have been the conduct of these men that gave rise to this feeling. However, it was so. No respectable man will invite an English soldier to his home. The social law of the island forbids it.

After I had arrived at Bermuda I wanted to be at work where I could earn some money instead of wasting my time at Captain Hill's

home. The onion season was over, and there was no freight for ships. I visited the dockyard one day, and there heard that an engineer's mess servant was wanted. I applied for the position, passed the doctor's examination in the sick bay of the guard ship *Irresistible*, and donned the uniform of a mess steward of Her Majesty's Navy for a service of five years.

I wrote to Captain Hill telling him of my enlistment. He did not reply, and when I called to see him, I noticed that he was displeased. I learned from him that as a servant in the navy I had cut myself off from my friends in Port Royal Parish. To do an honest day's work in the field or shop, or to be a sailor on a merchantman, or any employment in civil life, was considered respectable, but an enlistment in the army or navy was degrading. I lived through six months of flunkyism on the *Irresistible*, and then, to please my old friend, I asked for my discharge, which was granted me as soon as I found a boy to take my place.

Arrangements were then made with Mr. Thomas Grier, a blacksmith in Hamilton, to teach me his trade. I remained with him

long enough to learn how to pump the bellows and remove an old shoe from a horse. At that point I was sent on board the bark Ruby, of Shoreham, England, with some iron-work which had been made for her. The Ruby, had brought a cargo of coal from Cardiff, and was taking on ballast for Hayti, where she was chartered to load logwood for Antwerp. During that visit with the iron-work I met the captain, and arranged to sail with him as deck boy for the glorious sum of one pound and ten shillings a month.

Captain Hill did his best to induce me to remain. I can now see him parading the floor of his dining-room, and can hear his voice bewailing my foolishness. "What will your mother say? Of all places for you to go to, a pest-hole of yellow fever and small-pox!" "I don't mind that," I replied. Saying my last good-by to this dear old friend, who since then has rounded his old ship into the land-locked harbor of rest, I made my way on board the Ruby. I was a boy not sixteen years old when, for the first time, I was to sail among strangers, to begin on my own resources the life of a sailor.

CHAPTER VI

A STARVING "LIME-JUICER"

DURING my few visits to the Ruby with iron-work from the blacksmith shop, I had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the crew. The captain, a native of Norway, whose name was Olsen, wore a large piece of blue ribbon in the buttonhole of his coat. He was known to be a temperance man, and for being so strict an abstainer was nicknamed "Joe Water." Mr. Moore, the mate, was a rugged old chap with gray curly locks and beard, resembling Santa Claus. He was a true "shell-back." He had followed the sea all his life, and had served in every position on board ship. He had seen better days. Although for years master of large East Indiamen, he was now in old age glad to make the best of it as mate on an old hooker like this.

The colored cook, who was both cook and steward, with the captain and mate, were the

only occupants of the after end of the ship. Three able seamen, — Mike, a native of Ireland, Frank, who hailed from Germany, and Edgar, a negro from the west coast of Africa, — with Harry and Moses, two strapping young ordinary seamen, comprised the whole of the forward crowd.

As soon as I reached the deck, the old mate came up to me, and in a fatherly way advised me to go on shore again. "Look at me," he said. "See what an old sailor is like, — an old sailor, an old dog!" Seeing that I was not willing to take his advice, he jumped on the wharf, and, seizing one end of my clothes chest, which was on a cart there, called me to get hold of the other end. We got the chest aboard, and all the way to the fore-castle door this ancient mariner, mumbling in an undertone, repeated to himself these two lines, —

" Rattle his bones all over the stones ;
He's only a pauper that nobody owns."

Once in the fore-castle, I slipped into a suit of working-clothes and went below into the hold of the ship, where I found the mate and sailors trimming the stone ballast which had

been dumped down the main hatch. My work of moving the stones from the heap in the hatchway and carrying them out to the wings of the ship was interrupted by the darky cook, who, bending his head over the hatch coamings, shouted, "Dinner below!"

I had always eaten in the cabin during my few trips to sea, where the food had been served in a reasonably clean manner. But now on reaching the deck, I saw Moses go to the galley and take two large pans to the fore-castle. One pan contained junks of boiled beef, the other, soup. On placing the pans on the floor of the fore-castle, the men formed a circle around them, each man taking his turn at holding the beef with one hand, while with the other he cut off what he wanted with his sheath-knife. Then bailing the soup from the large pan with a small tin spoon, he filled his tin dish and moved away to eat his meal.

In a locker in one corner of the fore-castle a square box, known as the bread barge, was kept. It was filled with hard biscuit, and of all the biscuits I have seen aboard ships, these were certainly the hardest. They were about four inches in diameter, and fully an

inch thick, and almost as hard as a bit of soft pine wood. So full of weevils were they that when soaked in the soup, or in the "boot-leg" coffee served us, we could skim the former off the top by the spoonful. The coamings of the main hatch were used by the men as their dining-place, and as each man made his way on deck, he would help himself to the bread in the barge, then taking a spare belaying-pin or using the corners of the hatch, he would break the "Liverpool pantiles" into bits.

It had not occurred to me that a pot, pan, and spoon were the principal articles of a sailor's outfit, therefore I waited until the first man had finished and then borrowed his. So I ate my first meal on board this ship. The towboat was waiting to take hold of us, and thus there was no time for me to buy these much-needed articles. We let go our lines, and in about an hour's time dropped anchor in the sound at the mouth of the channel, awaiting a favorable wind.

The cook of the Ruby had died at sea on the way to Bermuda, and the present cook had been taken from the fore-castle to do the duties of cook, which consisted in keeping a

fire in the galley, as there was very little to cook. He, hearing that I was in need of a pot, pan, and spoon, and also that I had forgotten to provide a donkey's breakfast, came forward and bargained to sell me his fore-castle outfit for one pound and ten shillings. I had only eighteen shillings; so as though he were doing me a special favor, he sold me his donkey's breakfast, a leather belt, a sheath and knife, and a pot, pan, and spoon, for my little store of money. I believe I could have bought a new outfit in Hamilton for half the sum, but not knowing the ropes, I must pay for experience.

For two days we waited for a favorable wind. At last it came, a stiff "nor'-wester." The windlass brakes were shipped, "up one side and down the other," and the slack chain was gathered in. "She's short, sir," brought the captain's command to loose the topsails and foresail. Here was my opportunity to show what I could do aloft. Up I went on the mainmast, and from yardarm to yardarm. I cast off the gaskets as quickly as Moses did on the foremast, and won the admiration of all. The lower topsails were sheeted home, the upper ones mastheaded, a

few more heaves on the old windlass brakes, and we were running with square yards along the north shore of Bermuda, bound out to sea.

During the two days we had been at anchor in the sound, we were visited twice by two corporals of an English regiment. They came alongside in a government steam launch and desired to search our vessel. A soldier was missing, and he was suspected of being hidden in our ship. They overhauled every part of the vessel, and after a second search left, convinced that he was not on board. We were no sooner clear of the pilot than a wretched-looking mortal made his appearance on deck. He was not only miserable from the effects of seasickness, but was almost black with dirt from the bottom of the ship, where he had been hiding for three days under the stone ballast. Until the coal dust had been brushed from his clothes, you could not have dreamed he had on the uniform of an English soldier.

Mike and the two ordinary seamen were responsible for his being on board. They had met the soldier while on a visit to the barracks, and had promised to conceal him. In the night they dug an opening in the for-

ward end of the ballast, and placed by the side of the keelson two empty beef barrels. Taking the heads out of the barrels, they made a tunnel into which the soldier crawled feet foremost. Then, placing a bottle of water and a few pantiles in his safe retreat, they barricaded the entrance so that it looked like other parts of the ballast; but the stones were so thrown together that a current of air might pass through them. The corporals had walked over his hiding-place without suspecting that he was buried beneath their feet. He had expected to be in concealment one day only, but unfortunately the adverse winds kept him cramped and hungry for three. As the pilot left the ship, Mike went below and, removing the stones from the mouth of the barrel, set the soldier free.

Captain Olsen appeared as though he were annoyed, but we knew he was glad to have the man on board. We were then one hand short, and here was an opportunity to have the labor of a man for nothing. Bill, the English soldier, worked hard, but, with the exception of a few old clothes the "old man" gave him, left the ship at Antwerp destitute.

We welcomed him, for after his seasickness left him, his Irish wit made him the life of the ship and brought him into favor with all on board. There were two empty bunks against the side of the partition dividing the galley from the forecastle. I had the upper and Bill the lower one. He had no bed, but with a coil of old junk for a pillow and the contents of the shakings barrel spread out on his bunk boards, he made a comfortable "dos" for himself.

The Ruby had been in cold weather crossing the Atlantic and also in Bermuda; but now that we were away to the southward where it was warmer, the "night disturbers" began to annoy us. The second night it was impossible for me to sleep. I thought the small things crawling over me were waterbugs, but, no longer able to endure the misery of being eaten alive, I lighted the fore-castle lamp; and to my horror, not only were my clothes and bed alive with bedbugs, but they seemed to play peekaboo in the cracks of the wooden partition. Far preferable is the death of being torn quickly to pieces by tigers, to being slowly eaten alive by bedbugs.

That night Bill and I slept on deck ; our bunks were too warm for us. The rest of the men were too far from the heated partition of the galley to be disturbed. But the next night all hands slept on deck and gave the bugs full control of the place. In the morning every donkey's breakfast was taken out of the forecastle and the place given a thorough cleaning with potash and hot water. My donkey's breakfast, bought of the colored cook, had to be thrown over the side. I hated to part with it till, upon opening the tick, I saw the wood shavings with which it was filled alive with vermin. Then I gladly committed them all to the deep. Although we scrubbed and cleaned, still there were vermin. They were in the clothing and beds ; they were everywhere. Until weeks afterward, when we sailed into cooler weather, there was no rest inside the forward house.

On the eighth day out we sighted the coast of Hayti, and the following afternoon brought our ship to anchor in Acquin Bay. This is a mere anchorage ; the town is situated about two miles from the sea, at the end of a V-shaped bay. There are no docks

or wharves. Along the shore stacks of logwood were piled up ready to be conveyed in lighters to the ships. Three French barks were riding at anchor, loading logwood. These seemed clean and neat aloft, very different from our old, poverty-stricken, patched-up washtub.

Shortly after coming to anchor, the boat was lowered and Moses and I were detailed by the mate to row the "old man" on shore. As we neared the shore, we jumped aft at the last stroke of the oars, which raised her bow and let her slide well up on the mud. While the captain was gone in search of his agents, we had a chance to see the town, — three or four pathways between rows of native huts, plenty of half-naked negroes speaking a dialect which was a mixture of French and Spanish, and an open square where the natives sold their produce. This was the town of Acquin. Small herds of huge black pigs that had no visible owners could be seen in every so-called street. Grunting and squealing, they ran from place to place for filth to eat, for they were the scavengers of the place.

Near our landing-place was a wooden house filled with soldiers, who were continu-

ally beating a drum. It matters not where a sailor may be, there will also be some one to sell him rum. Moses had eight shillings belonging to the old mate, who wanted liquor in exchange. These native soldiers soon understood what he meant when he showed them the money and raised his hand to his mouth as though in the act of drinking, for in a few moments they returned with four filled bottles.

We shoved the boat off, and pulled for the ship, hoping to return before the captain wanted us. But on reaching her the mate began to drink freely, and in a short time mate, cook, and all hands had emptied the bottles and were forgetful of all troubles and cares. I confess that I joined in and forced myself to drink with them, and to accept the gift of the mate. I knew it was wrong, but it seemed that the more I could drink and swear like the others, the more of a sailor I would be.

Next morning I listened to the men relating to each other the story of the "old man's" coming aboard in a boat belonging to a French bark and finding all hands drunk. If there was any real goodness in our cap-

tain, it was in keeping sober. But everybody thought him too stingy to drink. It was known that he owned the greater part of the vessel and, to be saving, kept her in a wretched state, besides half starving his men.

The mate seemed much depressed. He had been severely censured for his night's debauch, and tried with a will to redeem the past by working like a slave, getting the stone ballast into the lighters alongside the ship. At breakfast the cook told me the captain wanted me aft. On reaching the cabin I received a lecture on temperance and the meaning of the blue ribbon in his coat. I felt ashamed while in his presence, but forward among the men all feelings of shame left me and I again fell in with my surroundings.

In less than a week the ballast was gone, and the ship's hold ready for logwood. Saw-horses and buck-saws, which had been bought in Bermuda, were brought on deck, a stage was rigged over the side, and the work of loading began. Labor was cheap, and for a small sum natives could easily have been hired to load the ship. The crew might have been well employed in the rigging. But no; the

captain was too mean to hire, so we were forced to do the loading. Two men in the lighter passed up the sticks of logwood to the two on the stage. These in turn passed them on the rail for the two ordinary seamen and myself to carry to the main hatch and drop below. Whenever we came to a crooked stick, it was laid on deck, and during the time there was no lighter alongside, we were busy sawing these crooked pieces and stowing the cargo below. The straighter the sticks, the more the ship could hold.

From the time we took on board our first lighter of logwood until about half across the western ocean, we were forever in fear of being bitten by the many scorpions, centipedes, and tarantulas which had been brought in the decayed sticks of logwood. They got into the forecastle, and the running rigging which was stopped to the shrouds; indeed, they were in every corner of the ship. No one, not even Edgar the colored sailor, who did not mind a few bedbugs, could sleep in the forecastle. Bill the stowaway, with the three A. B.'s, slept on the forecastle head, while Harry, Moses, and I bunked on top of the forward house.

For six weeks we rode at anchor in Acquin Bay, sleeping on deck and finding in the morning the only dry spots were those where our bodies had rested. The heavy dew wet our dungarees through. At half past five we were called. We would then wring out our clothes, drink a pot of colored water called coffee, have a smoke, and wait for four bells to strike. This was followed by the word "Turn to," from the mate.

At breakfast time our clothes had become partly dry, but as soon as we began to handle the logwood sticks passed up from the bottom of the lighter, where they had rested in a foot of water, they of course would be as wet as ever again. When I think of those days, it seems a mystery that no one was made sick, for we spent them wet through by the water dripping from the logwood, and at night we were covered with the heavy dew.

One night, shortly after I had stretched myself on the forward house, I heard Mike shouting, "Oh, kill me before I die!" He ran aft, and walking abaft the cabin, I saw the mate quieting him by giving him the contents of a bottle. It must have been the

worst kind of "chain lightning" (rum), for Mike drank, choked, fell, and groaned himself to sleep. He had been bitten by a scorpion. Next day his arm was swollen, but with warm applications he was soon able to resume his work. Shortly before we sailed Edgar began to shout and yell with pain, howling like a dog who had seen a ghost. He, too, had felt the piercing needle in a scorpion's tail, and again the old mate's rum proved a ready relief.

Every night we swept the decks and made a careful search for insects before lying down to sleep. After we had reached cool weather on the mid-Atlantic we got into a heavy gale, and shoveled the dead insects, which had been washed out of the logwood secured on the top of the main hatch, into the sea. Even then, on going below we turned over our beds and hunted for scorpions and centipedes.

The "grub," or food, on shipboard is one of the chief factors in a sailor's life. The saying is, "An old sailor, an old growl." Well! I believe a sailor has a right to growl, and as a rule the more he growls, the more he will work. It makes no difference how

wretched his last ship may have been, what poor food or how much abuse he may have received, his conversation at every growl is a eulogy on the virtues of that last ship and the good times he had on her. This, even though she may have been a "Yankee slave-driver" or a starving "lime-juicer."

The few months I was on this ship I existed on the bare pound and pint of the British Board of Trade. At almost every meal I joined in with the crew in a "good all-around growl." Not only was the captain blessed to the skies, but the whole Board of Trade, every shipowner, and every man who owned a nail in a ship. Every Sunday morning we were mustered aft to the cabin door. There the captain watched the cook as he weighed to each man a separate pound of sugar and a pound of butter, his "whack" for a week. Our allowance of tea and coffee was weighed in one lot and kept by the steward, who had to use ingenuity to make it last the week. Pea soup and salt pork, and very little of it, was our bill of fare one day. The next we had "salt horse" and "duff" (flour boiled in grease skimmed from the meat).

Our breakfast consisted of a "Liverpool

hook-pot" of black coffee and a good supply of pantiles. At night more pantiles with a pot of tea was all we were given for supper. You could have seen our anchor in fifteen fathoms of this tea. No meat for breakfast or supper: the allowance for the day was barely enough for the noonday meal. My teeth were strong, so having an abundance of "Liverpool pantiles," I grew fat and strong.

A sailor's bunk is his "sanctum sanctorum." He not only sleeps there, but puts up shelves and nails canvas pockets to the head or foot of it, where he keeps his fork, spoon, pot and pan, and whatever trinkets he may possess. It is the one place on board ship where he can feel absolutely out of the way of others. The crew of the Ruby kept their sugar and butter in their bunks, and woe to the man caught stealing his shipmate's whack. My butter and sugar never lasted longer than Wednesday; Frank could make his hold out till Friday; but during the last two days of the week, every one was forced to drink the "boot-leg" coffee and wretched tea without sugar, and eat the pantiles without a taste of butter. There was no milk on board, not even in the cabin; and although

the mate and cook were not on their allowance, still they, too, growled for more food.

It may seem strange to some seamen when I tell of our freedom with the mate. He was a fatherly old fellow, whose weakness was drink. We all liked and respected him, and we knew he could not help us or himself. Being well on in years, he did what he must to hold his position, and made the best of a bad matter.

I came to consider it a treat if, at the close of a day's work, the colored cook gave me some skimmed pork grease. I would put a layer of this between two pantiles and bake them in his galley oven, to eat with my tea. Our ship was not only "parish rigged," but fed far worse than a parish almshouse. I remember one evening I saw a part of a loaf of bread floating past. It had drifted down from a French bark, and, heedless of sharks or anything else, I was over the side and swam for it. Though soaked with salt water, it tasted heavenly to me. It was the first bit of soft bread I had eaten since coming on board. We had very little salt beef or pork; and as none could be bought in Acquin, our stock had to be preserved for sea use. Cap-

tain Olsen saved considerable in this boat, for he fed us on shin-bones from the Haytian market.

Boiled bones, with a bit of the very toughest beef attached, made our diet ; and except on Sundays and Thursdays, when a few yams or sweet potatoes were served in lieu of duff, there was no change in the miserable Board of Trade scale. We got what the articles called for, — the allowance of beef, pork, peas, flour, tea, coffee, pepper, salt, and vinegar ; but having no scope for variety nor skill in cooking, our diet was not only meagre, but wretchedly monotonous. This treatment culminated in a mutiny, the story of which I will leave for another chapter.

CHAPTER VII

FISHING FOR SHARKS

AT last our hold was filled, the seams of the hatches caulked, the tarpaulins hauled over and securely battened down ; only a few more lighters of logwood to be stowed on deck, and we would be ready for sea. It was a great relief to know we were drawing near the day when we should steer our course to another port. The only break in the monotony of work and sleep was the recreation of sailing around the bay on Sunday afternoons. The captain gave us the use of the ship's boat to go where we pleased. He knew there was no danger, as he had stubbornly refused to advance a cent to any one on board.

Although the old mate had no money, after spending his eight shillings, he still found means of having a supply of liquor on hand. No one knew how he did it until we were some days at sea, when we discovered that he had n't a change of clothing. The lighter-

men in Acquin had taken his clothes in exchange for liquor. Every man forward had shared his rum, and all, therefore, willingly allowed him to use their clothes.

Our water supply had to be replenished. The two large iron tanks, secured to the deck, were empty; and as I was the smallest person on board, it was my lot to go, feet first, through the manholes in the top of the tanks and clean them out. With an old corn broom I stirred up the rusty water from the bottom, and sluiced and scrubbed vigorously to get the thick coating of rust off the sides. Then, bailing out the dirty water, I gave the tanks a liberal coat of whitewash. This took all my strength.

I had just finished the second tank when, feeling that I was losing consciousness, I put both hands up through the manhole and begged the mate to haul me out. I could stand it no longer. The hot sun pouring upon the tanks had made them like two heated ovens. Wet through with rusty water and whitewash, I crawled forward under the forecastle head, too sick to do any more work that day.

Next morning I was myself again, and at

“turn to” helped to get our large clinker-built boat over the side. We were making preparations to water the ship. The midship thwarts were taken out and two large casks lowered into the boat. Frank, Moses, Bill, and I were told to get in and drop down to the gangway. With a jug of water, a can of roast beef which was kept for the cabin Sunday dinner, and plenty of pantiles, we hoisted our mainsail and shoved off, with Mr. Moore on board, in search of water.

Our captain had told Mr. Moore to keep close to the land or he would miss the small inlet where the spring of water was to be found. Unfortunately, the mate had a bottle of rum, and no sooner were we clear of the ship than he shared it with us. The effect of the liquor was to make each man desirous of singing a song. The old mate finished his “ditty,” then keeled over and fell asleep in the stern sheets, while we kept running on before the breeze.

We must have been sailing for fully three hours when we saw a cluster of houses and huts on a projecting part of the coast. We roused the mate from his stupor and steered for the beach. When we were about a quarter

of a mile from the village, a boat filled with soldiers armed with rifles rowed off and met us. Jabbering away in their distracting "lingo," they ran their boat against ours and, jumping aboard, made us their prisoners.

At first it seemed a huge joke. The scarecrow uniforms of the soldiers caused Bill's Irish wit to flow freely, and we roared with laughter at the queer remarks he made. But when we were brought before a negro, dressed in an old black suit, a faded, well-worn cocked hat with a band of dirty gold lace on it, and felt the handcuffs on our wrists, we ceased our ribaldry and tried to explain who we were. When we said we were English they would sneer, shrug their shoulders, and yell "Americano."

A guard marched us through the streets to the house of an old black man who we afterwards learned was a general. He gave orders to his men, who marched us to the "calabozo." It was well for us it was not the hottest season, or I believe we would never have left this lockup alive. The miserable hole, a prison for men, was teeming with filth and vermin. It was a mere inclosure of stone walls, with no covering to

protect us from the heat of the sun or the dew at night.

As we reached the door, the soldiers on guard began their jabbering. They slapped their hands, shrugged their shoulders, twisted their bodies, and carried on a full "Portuguese argument" while they exultantly examined our clothes and removed our tobacco and knives. In the "calabozo" the irons were removed from our hands, and we were prisoners with about a hundred poor unfortunate blacks.

For three nights and two days we lived in this pest-hole on cornmeal mush. It was impossible to rest. The incessant tum-tum of a drum and the shouting of the guard would have kept us awake if the place had been most comfortable. On the second morning we were taken to the foot of a hill near the market-place. Again they called us "Americano;" and standing a number of the black prisoners in a row, the soldiers fired and shot them dead. We felt shaky. It seemed as if our turn was next, but we were greatly relieved when they marched us back to the lockup.

On the third morning a wrinkled Mexican

came in, walked up to the corner where we were huddled together, and said, "Good-morning. You English, eh?" We gladly told him our story. Then we learned that we were supposed to be the crew of an American filibuster who had been secretly selling arms to the rebels. The republics of Hayti and St. Domingo were at war, and this American steamer had been successful in landing arms. They thought that we were the crew of this ship and were seeking a landing-place on the coast, using our search for water as an excuse.

This old Mexican was very friendly. He could speak English enough to make himself understood. He had been a sailor in his younger days, but now was settled about four miles outside this town of St. Louis. That morning he had heard of our plight; he cheered us up and left us, promising to be back soon.

Hardly an hour had passed when back he came and told us to follow him, for we were free. We walked with him to the general's house. The old soldier, through our benefactor, told us how sorry he was for causing us so much distress, and asked what he could

do for us. We expressed a desire for a bath and some clean clothes. Water was plentiful, but clothes were scarce, so he offered us each a dungaree soldier's suit, which we accepted, and, throwing our filthy garments on the beach, we enjoyed a splash in the sea. After scrubbing each other with sand, we got into the scarecrow suits of the Haytian soldiers.

The old soldier was more than kind. He forced upon us all we could eat, fruits of every kind, and all the liquor we wanted. The sneers and jeers of the soldiers and natives were changed into expressions of kindness. We could do as we pleased. Our water casks had been filled by them, plenty of fruit stowed in our boat, and late that night we were able to throw off the debauch of the day and make for our ship.

All that night we rowed, relieving each other at the oars, and shortly after daybreak we reached the ship, to be the laughing-stock of the rest of the crew. Our shipmates had been anxious about us. At first they thought we were on a spree on shore; but when the third day passed with no tidings of our whereabouts, the captain had decided to make a search for us. We quickly shifted into our

own clothes, and after a pot of coffee were ready to help hoist the water casks on board. Not a word of the old mate's drinking and how we came to miss the watering-place was ever divulged to the cook or captain. We kept our secret forward, where it belonged.

For a few days our experience in the "calabozo" was kept fresh in our minds by the painful itching of the chigoes which infested our feet. It seemed strange to me that neither Mr. Moore nor the other men knew about them. As soon as I felt the itching, harassing sensation in my toes, I examined them for chigoes. Although we had been going barefoot for weeks, and our feet were hard and rough as an alligator's hide, these tropical sand fleas penetrated the flesh and made their nests.

I was the doctor, for I had seen the negroes in Barbados remove these insects from their feet. I once saw a boy thrown on his back by the village constable, while another man removed the host of chigoes from his feet with a sharp penknife. I alone knew it was necessary to make sure of getting out the black flea with the bag of eggs, or next day there would be another installment in the same place. I

knew that after extracting the chigoes, you must fill the cavity with snuff, — a harsh remedy, but a sure cure. Therefore, as doctor, I ground some bits of tobacco to dust, and rubbed it into the sore spots till my shipmates and I fairly yelled with pain.

We needed more water, so the next day Captain Olsen hired four natives to row him to the watering-place, towing behind him a lighter with three empty water casks. He returned that night with his casks filled, but had to make another trip before we had enough.

The day before sailing the mate told me to get into the boat with Harry and Moses and row the captain to the shore. Instead of steering for our usual landing-place in the mud, he kept across and made a landing in the small bushes on the side of the bay. Harry and Moses went with the "old man," while I was left to watch the boat. In a little while they hove in sight, leading a cow along. How were they to get that stubborn animal into the boat? She seemed large enough to fill all space.

The thwarts were unshipped, the boat turned stern into the bushes, and the fore-

legs of the cow were placed in the stern sheets. I hauled on the rope around her neck, while the captain and two ordinary seamen pushed behind, and so we made her land, with a thump on her belly, in the bottom of the boat. The weight of the animal sunk the boat deep into the mud, and to get her afloat we had to dismiss our fear of alligators and wade in up to our waists. Then we shoved and pulled with all our strength, while the captain stood on a stump and shoved with an oar. An inch, then another, and gradually we floated.

Now came the time to get the captain into the boat. The two ordinary seamen formed a chair with their hands, and the captain sat between them, putting his arms around their necks. Whether it was intentionally done or not, I cannot say, but Moses slipped, and with a splash the "old man" was buried in mud and water. Oh, how he raged! All four of us, soaking wet, got in and, with some pushing and shoving on the oars, started for the ship.

There was no room to row, and no clutch aft for sculling, so we were forced to stand up and paddle. The water was as quiet as a mill-pond, and it was not far to the ship. We

should have reached there safely, but for a ripple caused by an empty lighter rowing ashore from a French bark. As soon as we reached the ripple, the boat began to rock, the cow got on her feet, stumbled, and fell with a splash into the bay. As soon as she came to the surface, we hauled her head up to the stern of the boat, and, shipping the oars, hastily made for the ship. A stout strap was sunk and the bight hauled up with the boat-hook under the cow, the fish tackle lowered over the bow and hooked on. Then with a few lively heaves around the capstan, we lifted her dangling in the air, and landed her on deck.

I shall not jar the sensibility of my readers by relating the cruel way in which the cow was killed. It is enough to say that penal servitude should be inflicted in any community for such cruelty to a dumb beast, even though it was done in ignorance. Captain Olsen did the butchering. He kept every one busy, some cleaning empty beef barrels, others with coarse salt and water, making the pickle. It was, "Cook do this," and somebody else do the other thing. I do not remember how many barrels there were,

but with the exception of the few pieces for immediate use, the whole cow was pickled and stowed in the lazaret.

Our ship was loaded; the logwood piled high on the main hatch and lashed securely to the ringbolts in the deck; our sailing day had come. It was Good Friday. The two remaining French vessels and a Spanish brig cockbilled their yards in honor of the day. Their yards and mast formed an X, which was meant to represent the cross.

It was a dead calm; not a breath of air was stirring. While we were at breakfast, an officer in a boat, the only one in Acquin, came off to us and requested our captain to cockbill our yards. If there had been any wind, I think we should have had to man the windlass. It was so calm we tipped our yards and remained at anchor till early the following morning, when we were called to "turn to" and man the windlass.

The cluck and bang of the windlass pawls, "Heave, heave, my hearties," from the mate, "Down our side," "Lift her out of the mud," and many such expressions from the men, — and our anchor was lifted to the hawse pipe before a sail was touched. The headsails

were run up, and away we headed before the breeze for the open sea. All sail was made, the yards trimmed, and at daylight we were steering to the westward, making a course for the Windward passage between Hayti and Cuba.

The next morning, Easter Sunday, we were in the passage. I was at the wheel from eight o'clock until ten. I saw the cook come aft with a pan of meat which he held at arm's length. Strutting along, he reached the cabin door and shouted, "Cap'n, this meat has an obnoxious odor, sah!" Sure enough; not only that piece, but every bit of the pickled cow had to be thrown over the side. As the first bit struck the water there was a splash and an upheaval, and it disappeared. In a very few moments we were surrounded by a school of man-eating sharks.

The only benefit we derived from the cow was amusement for Easter Sunday forenoon, and one meal of fried shark. We baited the shark hook, a hook about ten inches long and a quarter of an inch thick, with about three feet of chain attached. As fast as we could put it overboard we had hold of a shark. A tailblock was made fast to the

backstays, a rope rove through it, a running bowline slipped down over the hook and around the shark, and hand over hand we flopped them on deck.

Oh, the superstition of an old "shell-back"! It was the first time I had been in such close quarters with sharks, and with the others I enjoyed the fun of belaboring them with capstan bars and belaying-pins, until we thought them dead. The barbarism and superstition of sailors' hatred for sharks were cruelly manifested in this slaughter. Pieces of wood were pierced through the jaws of some so that they could open their mouths no more, and they were thrown over the side to have their misery prolonged. Others were cut open and cast overboard to suffer until death should end their fate. Many were cut to pieces and their backbones hung up to dry. These were afterwards polished, to be used as walking-sticks.

The forenoon watch below remained on deck and joined in the sport till dinner time. Then, having had enough shark fishing, we threw the remaining lot of meat over, cleaned up the mess of blood and skins, and washed down the decks.

We must have been out about two weeks when the small supply of salt beef and pork was all eaten. For days we had been beating against a strong easterly wind, but were now well to the eastward and northward of Bermuda, steering for the English Channel. From the day we threw the beef overboard we had been on short allowance. The captain had promised to buy provisions from the first vessel we met. We had passed close to two steamers and a schooner, but he had made an excuse of holding on till we sighted Bermuda; then he would signal for a tug to bring off some provisions.

In some way the men knew we were far to the eastward of Bermuda; so all hands went aft and demanded the equal use of the canned roast beef and good hard bread, which were kept for cabin use. The captain showed signs of fear; the mate and cook remained neutral, listening to our heated conversation. I do not know who struck the first blow, but every one rushed for the captain as he and Mike rolled over on deck, clinched in each other's arms. A word from Mr. Moore, who had power to control us even with a look, released the captain from Mike's embrace.

We gained this victory, as it was agreed that we should have our share of the cabin beef and biscuits.

The day's trouble did not end then, however. Late that afternoon we sighted a bark steering westward. As we drew near, she hoisted a Norwegian ensign. Without any warning we jumped to the braces and threw the main yard aback, shouting to the captain to signal and buy some food. He threatened to log us all, and ordered the yards braced round again. I felt afraid. The captain had lectured me for being led into wrongdoing by the men, but what was I to do? I did what I considered right; I stood by the forward end, where I belonged. Anyway, I was glad to do anything that would give us something to eat.

In the strongest of sailor language Mike told "Joe Water" that not another rope would be touched by any of us. Furthermore, he was given to understand that he would have to pay us for the food which was due us, and that he would be reported for not carrying side-lights at night. Several nights we had passed close to vessels, and they had not seen us till we were very near.

There was kerosene oil on board, but the captain was too stingy to use it. He would have the side-lights put in their boxes ready for use in an emergency. He thereby risked the lives of several men to save a few gallons of oil.

To save himself, he yielded. We signaled the bark, lowered a boat, and the two ordinary seamen rowed the captain to the Norwegian, who had brought his vessel to the wind and was head-reaching, waiting for our boat to come alongside. No one knew what arrangement had been made, but soon the Norwegian filled away and our boat returned well laden, — a barrel of beef, a barrel of pork, two barrels of flour, a small sack of coffee beans, and a barrel of tar. We welcomed the provisions, but hated to see the tar.

There had been very little work to do. Most ships, making a port of discharge, would be all day painting, cleaning, and making the ship respectable for entrance into harbor. With us there was no such work. There were no stores; hardly enough old rope yarns to make a roving for the head of a sail. We passed the watches trimming the yards, a

spell at the pumps, a trick at the wheel, and a lookout at night, and we had a very easy time. The sea lawyers forward were too many for the captain. Through fear of our demanding money for the food due us, or for some reason unknown to us, he gave us "full and plenty."

The troubles of that day, however, had not yet ended. Frank, Moses, and I, with the mate, made up the port watch. It was our watch below from eight to twelve that night. We had hardly gone to our bunks, when we were called to get on deck and reef the topsails. The wind had hauled due east and was blowing a heavy gale.

The light sails were hauled down and clewed up, and away we went to stow the topgallant sails before we began to reef. On reaching the fore topgallant crosstrees I saw that Frank had taken the lee topgallant yard-arm. As I lifted myself into the weather footrope I heard a scream, and looking abaft the topgallant mast, saw Frank falling to the deck. I quickly made my way below, and found Mr. Moore weeping over the bruised and bleeding body of our dead shipmate. With the help of the cook we carried it to

the cabin, and hastened on deck to help get the canvas off our ship. It was midnight when the old hulk was hove to, under reefed topsails.

It makes no difference how much a man is liked or hated on board a ship; when death comes, all wrongs and grievances are forgotten. A gloom is cast over all. Frank had been well liked, and every soul on board was disturbed and grieved. It had been only a few days since we had begun to feel safe in the forecastle, and now we discovered a half-crushed dead scorpion between the folds of Frank's shirts.

Meeting cooler weather, we had moved into the forecastle, thinking the scorpions were all dead. Frank had hurried on deck and, leaning against the yard trying to gather up the sail, his body had pressed the scorpion against the yard. It turned its tail and stung him, and with pain and fright he fell to the deck. This was the verdict on finding the scorpion. Frank's body was too bruised to find the mark of a sting, and it may have been heart failure. At all events, we were on the watch for the logwood pests the rest of our voyage.

The next morning the body was brought

on deck, sewn in a tarpaulin, with some old stove grates at the feet; and while we stood with caps raised, the captain read from a Testament. Then to the roaring waves of the Atlantic we committed the body of our shipmate. His clothes were taken aft and stowed in the lazaret. Bill kept his bed. If I had been strong enough to contend with the Irishman for Frank's donkey's breakfast, I should have done so. I had been sleeping on the top of the forward house, and this lump of straw on the bunk boards would have made me a luxurious couch.

I had been told I was a "cheeky boy," and had had several scuffles with Moses about his cleaning the forecastle and bringing the food from the galley. He had whipped me more than once, but now I was able to hold my own, and he had to do his share of cleaning. Bill was in the starboard watch. I kept friendly with him, and in my watches below he allowed me to share Frank's bed with him during the rest of the voyage.

CHAPTER VIII

ORDINARY SEAMAN

AFTER the gale we had fair winds and fine weather the rest of the voyage. The tar barrel was opened and the work of blackening the bleached and rotten rigging was begun. There was no material for repairs, not even enough seizing stuff to straighten the old ratlines. This was my first experience of "tarring down." I rather enjoyed it. The very fact of having my hands black made me feel I was a sailor.

The footropes on the forward yards and the headstays were my portion. As soon as I came on deck, if it was not my wheel, I would sling the tar pot around my neck and up I'd go and straddle the yards. Beginning at the end of each yard, I would hold on the jackstay, and with my foot get the footropes on the yards and give them a rub of tar. Seated on the yards, I could look the ship over from the man at the wheel to the shark's tail

on the end of the flying jib boom. At times the old mate's voice calling me to wake from my dreams would rouse me from my reverie and bring my mind back to my work. The port watch had finished forward and the starboard watch had completed the work on the main. It was decided that both watches should blacken the mizzen.

I was at the wheel from twelve to two one afternoon enjoying a hearty laugh at the captain's expense, when he landed a cuff on the side of my head which changed my joy into grief.

When in Acquin, Frank had exchanged a pair of trousers for a large, black, ringtail monkey. He was really more tail than monkey. At first the old man objected to having him on board; but when made to understand that Jacko should be fed from our pound and pint, and would therefore cost him nothing, he allowed the monkey to remain. Jacko and the captain were sworn enemies, and many a time the old man had applied a rope's end while chasing him forward. He seldom went abaft the mainmast. It was his delight to be around the forecastle and galley catching the myriads of cockroaches that swarmed there.

I have noticed that most Scandinavian and Dutch seamen who have but lately left their homes have two feather-beds. They sleep on one and use the other as a covering. Captain Olsen had two feather-beds, and on this day had taken advantage of the fine weather to give them an airing. Occasionally a few drops of tar would fall from the hands of the men in the mizzen rigging, so he spread his beds on the fife rail around the mainmast, out of reach of any falling drops of tar. I could not see the beds, but noticed a host of feathers ascending and lodging on the freshly tarred shrouds and ratlines of the main lower rigging. I let go the wheel and took a few steps forward on the top of the cabin, and saw Jacko pulling the feathers from the old man's bed. He had discovered a hole in the tick, which he had enlarged till he could get his paw inside.

The mate was forward giving the anchors a coat of coal tar, Moses was in the mizzen rigging enjoying the fun, and I took an occasional run from the wheel to watch Jacko in his glory. The old man came up while I was away, and, when he saw what caused so much laughter, gave me the blow on the side of my head.

Walking forward to the forecastle where Jacko had found a refuge, he coaxingly called, "Hey, Jacko, boy, hey, Jacko," till he was near enough to catch him. Then with a pounce he grabbed poor Jacko by the back of the neck, got him under the forecastle head, dipped him in the tar barrel, and started aft with him.

It was not so easy a task as the captain thought. Squealing, squirming, and twisting himself about, Jacko managed to get a turn with his tail around the captain's neck, besmearing his face and clothes with tar. To release himself, he inflicted several blows on the monkey's head. Then, opening the bed-tick, he jammed Jacko in amongst the remaining feathers, and, swinging the bed over his head, gave it a lively shake. Oh, what fun! I had n't enjoyed anything like it for a long time. When Jacko was finally shaken out, he resembled a Thanksgiving turkey. At four bells the wheel was relieved, and I went forward for my tar pot. There I saw Mike with a slush pot giving Jacko a bath of grease to remove the tar and feathers. By dinner time the monkey was himself again, ready, if need be, to empty another bed.

A few more days and old England was in sight. I had heard so much about her; now I could see the soil which my Barbadian countrymen considered sacred, next to Heaven. The pilot boarded us as we entered the Channel, and the third night after making the land, we were crossing the North Sea, leaving the Foreland lights astern. We entered the river Schelde, and put the Channel pilot ashore at Flushing. Taking the river pilot on board, we proceeded to Antwerp. With a fair wind we moved briskly along, and dropped anchor at the quarantine station, some twenty miles from the city.

No sooner had the doctor left us than fully a dozen men from the small boats waiting alongside boarded our craft and formed our acquaintance. I soon learned that they were runners from the sailors' boarding-houses, and each man brought a good supply of rum, which was readily consumed. I accepted a drink from a runner who represented a house called the Prince of Wales, which I promised to patronize. I remember no more till I awoke from my stupor in the sailors' boarding-house. I felt somewhat uneasy, but, seeing Mr. Moore and the cook near me, regained my usual fear-

lessness. I then learned that the runners had furled the sails and docked the ship, so that they might be sure of their prey. Late in the evening we obtained a few francs from Mr. Murphy, the boarding-master, and went in search of our other shipmates. Of all seaports, there is none more vile and demoralizing than the sailors' district, "the rag," of Antwerp.

The Prince of Wales was a liquor saloon and boarding-house, situated between two dance-halls, where seamen caroused all the night. Mr. Murphy was proprietor of these as well as of the boarding-house. A continual stream of humanity of the most degraded kind flowed between these places. It was the resort of the greater number of the seamen entering the port. I stop here. I want to cast from my mind the memory of the time spent in these places while waiting an official discharge from the ship.

On the third morning Mr. Murphy accompanied us to the British consul's office. The place was crowded with boarding-masters, runners, tailors, and shoemakers, every one of whom had a bill awaiting settlement. As soon as each man was paid, these land sharks

demanded payment of their bills. When a bill was repudiated, the reply was that the coat or shoes were bought and the money loaned while we were drunk. "Where are these things?" "Oh, you lost them, or sold them for rum." Mike was the first to question the bills. A blow from his boarding-house bully, and the advance of others to render this one aid, revealed to us that our best policy was to submit to this wholesale robbery.

When we left the consul's office, the men had very little money. I was in debt to the boarding-master. The three pounds two shillings due me from the Ruby was not sufficient to cancel my bills of forty-eight hours. My shipmates soon forgot their troubles for that night and threw away their few remaining francs in the liquor saloon and dance-halls. I was then in my sixteenth year. My greatest desire was that the seamen should think me a full-fledged sailor. With this thought in my mind, I joined in the reckless carousal.

A kind-hearted lady once asked me, "Why do sailors frequent such places?" Why? Because the humdrum monotony, the misery,

and wretched surroundings on shipboard create a desire for some exciting change. The restraint of ship discipline is removed. The man does not appreciate liberty. Unsuspicious, and unfamiliar with the ways of a foreign shore, he puts his trust in others, believing them to be friends. He is robbed, both of soul and body. Why does n't he associate with the right kind of people? Because "the right kind of people" will not associate with him. He is a stranger to everybody, known only as a common sailor, which means banishment from respectability. This kind-hearted woman of whom I spoke opened her doors in welcome to a few respectable mariners, and the neighbors threatened to move away. Why does n't he attend sailors' missions and make his headquarters there? Well, in a way sailors do. Missions are not what they were twenty years ago. Then they were tame and unattractive; places where seamen thought men were made "goody-goody." Seamen steered clear of them then. To-day the missions have excellent concerts, full of healthy fun and frolic, to influence the sailor and to satisfy his social nature; pool and billiard tables, games, and a smoking-

room. All these things are as good there as in a bar-room. He meets women of good character, who occasionally admit him to the sweet, helpful atmosphere of their homes. Next to an evening in a Christian home is the refining influence of the women workers in a seamen's mission. I speak from experience. I believe I should still be at sea to-day, but for the help given me when a sailor in being allowed to visit a Christian home. I rejoice that many good people are now inviting the seamen who desire to live and do better to enjoy an hour of real home life with them.

I remained in the boarding-house for two weeks, the target for curses, cuffs, and kicks, not only from the boarding-master but from the drunken seamen. One afternoon some "homeward bounders" came in. They had arrived that day from San Francisco on the ship *Three Brothers*. Every attention was paid them. I was called on to lend a hand in getting their bags upstairs. While trying to carry a bag much larger than myself up the flight, I stumbled, the bag rolled to the bottom step, and knocked a half-drunk "homeward bounder" over. There was a

scramble to get at me, but I was out of the door and away down the street, leaving my clothes behind me. Once free, I resolved never to lodge in a sailors' boarding-house again, and I have kept my resolution.

Passing the cathedral, I noticed a company of ladies and gentlemen entering. They were conversing in English. I went behind the group and with them to the top of the high steeple. It was a magnificent view. As far as my sight could reach, I could see the distant fields and the winding river covered with craft of every description. The large granite docks seemed near by, as though I could reach out and touch the forest of vessels' masts. I took advantage of the chance given me to escape to the street while the guide continued his explanations to the tourists.

I could speak no Flemish, so wandering from street to street, I made a long journey before reaching the docks. Then I gazed in astonishment at what seemed a floating world, — a full-rigged ship, her hull high out of water, and her mast towering in the air. I examined her rig closely, — five topgallant yards, double on the fore and main and single on the mizzen, and a main skysail yard which was as

large as the main topgallant yard of the Ruby. She seemed a wonder to me. I drew close to the stern and read the name, "Hagarstown, Richmond." I did not know where Richmond was, but could tell by her fine lines and rig that she was a "Yank." I had heard stories of the brutal treatment of sailors on a "Yankee deep-water man," and was somewhat timid, but necessity compelled me to mount the gangway.

As soon as I spoke to an elderly gentleman who was walking the half-deck, my fear and timidity were dispelled. I meekly inquired if the captain was on board. He kindly replied, "I'm the captain. What can I do for you?" He listened attentively to my story, then, running his fingers through his hair, said, "My boy, stay right here. We sail for Philadelphia in the morning. I'll put you on the articles as an ordinary seaman at ten dollars a month." The mate, a long, wiry gantline, came along just then, and Captain Boyd turned me over to him, saying, "Here's an ordinary seaman for you."

The Hagarstown had been in port several weeks. She had brought a cargo of grain from San Francisco, and was now loaded with

empty kerosene oil barrels. The riggers had bent the sails, and everything was ready for our departure. The jib boom was in on the forecastle head, and all the head gear seemed an inextricable mass. There was a large forward house on deck. About half of it was used for two forecastles, one for each watch. The other half was divided into rooms for the galley, carpenter shop, donkey engine-room, boatswain's locker, and boatswain's room. The cabin was large and spacious. A partition divided it in two, the after part elegantly furnished for the captain's use, and the forward the dining-room. The mate's room was at the port and the second mate's at the starboard entrance to the cabin. As no work had been given me, I passed the time looking the ship over. What a size! I longed for the hours to go by, that I might be at sea and witness this monster fill her sails and speed along. I felt proud of being an ordinary seaman on so fine a ship.

No notice was taken of me till the mate spied my antics at the wheel. I was moving it back and forth, imagining we were at sea. "Put that wheel back amidships, and get forward and sweep the fo'c'sles out!" was

his command. Forward I went, and swept out the two dens, — old worn shoes, tin pots and pans, and some well-used donkeys' breakfasts left by the last crew. I selected the best bed from the lot, and then tumbled the accumulated rubbish on the dock. It was supper time, and I ate the leavings of the cabin, — dainties of several kinds, the most enjoyable meal for months. That evening the mate, Mr. Montauk, told me that a young friend was joining the ship as ordinary seaman. He was to be in his watch, and I in the second mate's watch. Knowing this, I put the second-hand donkey's breakfast in the best top bunk of the starboard fore-castle, and there passed the night.

Next morning a shake and a rough, coarse voice calling, "Come, get out! Do you think you're in a hotel?" made me jump from my bunk. It was Mr. Kane, the second mate, a "bluenose bucko greaser." He, the boatswain, and the carpenter had brought their things on board the previous day, but had returned on shore, as their duties did not begin till the sailing day. They had come on board in the night, to be ready to receive the crew on their arrival in the morning.

Breakfast was just over when the crew landed on deck, — eighteen men, a motley crowd of all nationalities; some stupidly drunk, others drunk enough to be noisy. They came swearing and cursing the boarding-masters, tumbled their “dunnage” on board, and lugged it forward to the fore-castle. I saw Mr. Murphy, my boarding-master, on the wharf, — some of the crew were from his house; so I hid myself till we were away from the dock. When the last man was forward, Mr. Attersley, a red-headed “Yank” from the State of Maine, better known as “bo’s’n,” began to exercise his lungs. The first yell I thought a thunderclap. Such a voice! enough to raise the crown of my head. It took most of his time to get the men from the fore-castle. It was the Fourth of July, and they were finishing the rum they had brought on board. One man seemed to lord it over all the rest. He had “cleaned out” the dives on shore, and had a fighting record. He claimed to be an American from San Francisco. While they were on deck getting the hawser up from the fore peak, the mate and second mate went through their “dunnage” and cleaned out the rum. I heard the mate

say to the boatswain, "Take it easy, bo's'n, just humor them. We'll soon be clear of the dock gates."

I had every opportunity to imbibe with the men, but as the drink habit had not yet fastened its grip upon me, I refused the liquor. I went aft to relieve the man at the wheel, who was glad of the chance to go forward. There was another large American ship, the *Patrician*, following close behind us. She was bound to Australia. On her forecastle head, hustled around with the rest of her crew, was my old friend, the mate of the *Ruby*. I shouted, "Mr. Moore!" He saw me, and in a drunken, brawling voice replied, "So long, King. Rattle his bones all over the stones." I heard no more, for he was pushed roughly off the forecastle head. All the way through the docks these half-crazed creatures had things their own way. The large towboat had hardly tautened our hawser, when the "music" began. It was the time for the after end to assert its authority. Every man, with the exception of the captain, a quiet, fatherly gentleman, who, on seeing I was a proficient helmsman, had gone below to transact some business with a man from shore, was keeping step to the waltz.

The jib boom had to be rigged out, the gear set up, and the headsails bent. The first man the boatswain tackled was "Frisco," the "cock of the walk." It was wonderful how four men, — the two mates, boatswain, and carpenter, — sober and armed with authority and belaying-pins, could sail in amongst a drunken crowd, and in a few minutes, by spilling a few drops of blood, subdue the lot and make them "hop light and come a-running." I was glad I was a boy, as very little attention was paid me.

It took the greater part of the forenoon to get the boom out and everything forward straightened out, but it was accomplished with cuffs and kicks, mingled with such oaths as would make one tremble. By night the men were a sore-looking lot. The day's work of getting the jib boom out, lashing of spars and water casks, cleaning up decks, and getting secured for sea, with the hot Fourth of July sun, had banished all their pugilistic feelings.

I will say, in justice to the deep-water American ships of other days, that, although I have seen men brutally abused, for no reason, by some of the cruel "bucko mates,"

whose only delight is to misuse their authority, it is necessary, at such times as I have been describing, to assert authority by means of violence. The seamen are partly to blame. They come on board under the influence of drink, disobedient and obstreperous, and thereby compel the officers to force them into submission. Generally, the man who is a competent sailor, who does his work quickly, and implicitly obeys the officers' commands, keeps clear of abuse. I soon learned this lesson, and thereby saved myself many a thrashing.

That evening, under a magnificent spread of snow-white canvas, the Hagarstown was running before a strong east wind, bound out the English Channel. At eight o'clock all hands were mustered aft and the men selected for the watches. The mate stood on the port side and called a man to him, while the second mate did the same on the starboard. The second mate's watch, which according to custom is the captain's, had the eight hours on deck. The wheel being relieved and the lookout stationed, the port watch was told to go below. Now that the men were sober, they proved excellent seamen ;

all except one Joskin, and he was a Belgian farmer who had paid a boarding-master a small sum for a chance to do a little work, and earn his passage to America. He could speak no English, but the poor fellow did his best to make himself of use. As the mate had the first choice in picking the watches, the unfortunate Joskin was left for the starboard watch.

About ten o'clock it began to rain and the wind increased. The royals and mizzen topgallant sail were clewed up. Away we went to stow them. I started for the mizzen royal, which was as much as I could handle. I had a hard struggle to get it smothered, but I did it. On my way down I expected to find the topgallant sail furled. But no, not a man had been on the yard. Standing in the cross-trees, I heard a groan on the side of the doublings. On looking, I saw the Belgian seated on the weather side of the crosstrees in the throes of seasickness. Mr. Kane was bawling and shouting, "Hurry up there with that topgallant sail!" I was a stout, strapping fellow, but not strong enough to smother that sail. I could not make the second mate understand, as the howling wind carried my

voice forward, so down I went and told him the Belgian farmer was dying in the cross-trees. He called a man, and sent us up to furl the sail.

The wind held its own ; it was a moderate gale. A small vessel would have reefed her topsails, but we kept on with no further shortening of sail. The second mate bawled at Joskin to come down, but he remained there till eight bells, when Mr. Montauk sent up a couple of men to help him. Before we reached Philadelphia, the Belgian had faithfully earned his passage. He was kept on the move from early to late, scraping and pounding iron rust, cleaning and scrubbing paint-work, and holystoning decks.

CHAPTER IX

BURYING THE "DEAD HORSE"

WHILE the Hagarstown was being hauled through the docks, the attention of one of the sailors was fastened on me. He was a tall, raw-boned, kind-hearted Irishman; a thorough seaman, who, although under the influence of the "firewater," did his work and conducted himself in a manner satisfactory to the officers. He had been an officer on American sailing ships, and knew what to expect. With two others like himself, he kept out of the way while the after end was subduing the pugnacity of the forward crowd. He was sent aft to get some seizing stuff; and standing in the lazaret, his head visible above the small hatch coamings, he looked at me so closely as to make me uncomfortable. I kept moving the wheel, and steered in the wake of the towboat.

"What is your name, boy," he asked. "King," I replied. "Where were you

born?" "In Barbados, in the West Indies."

My answers seemed to please him. That night he was called by the second mate for his watch, and during our first watch on deck we became friends. He knew the sailors' boarding-house where I had left my clothes, and spoke of it as the worst dive in Antwerp. When we went below at twelve o'clock, he overhauled his bag and fitted me out with a dry shift of clothing. During the passage my kind friend O'Brien made over some of his western ocean wardrobe to fit me. He could use a sewing needle as skillfully as he could a marline spike; so with what he gave me and the few things I drew from the slop chest, I was comfortably supplied.

The bad idea that boys were slaves prevailed on this ship. The ordinary seamen of the port watch, like myself in the starboard watch, were soon made to understand that the dirty work of keeping the forecastles clean fell to us, while the men stretched themselves out in their pews. Besides this, we were expected to trim the oil lamp, bring the food from the galley, and return the empty pans and kettles.

I expected to do this menial service all the trip across; to take uncomplainingly all ill treatment, and to speak only when asked to do so, but fortune favored me. On the evening of the seventh day out, O'Brien told me I need not bring the breakfast to the fore-castle in the morning. "My boy, you have had your spell of flunkysim for us flatfoots. To-morrow, I will get the breakfast, and I will clean up the fo'c'sle for a week. Every man for'ard will take his turn at it, and we will be in Philadelphia before your turn comes again."

At seven bells we were called to get our breakfast, to be ready at eight o'clock to relieve the watch on deck. Instead of going to the galley for the food, I waited, knowing that O'Brien had gone for it. In the fore-castle was a Russian Finn, who struck me on the side of the head with the flat of his hand, and ordered me to "fetch the grub." O'Brien, entering with the pan of cracker hash, was just in time to witness the blow. He put the pan down, and with one blow felled the Russian to the deck. Then standing erect, filled with anger, he declared that he was "flunky for this week, and every mother's son would

have to take a turn at keeping the fo'c'sle clean." Turning to me, he said, "King, if any man in this ship imposes on you, let me know, and I'll settle his hash." O'Brien proved a friend in many ways. He was my protector. He taught me to handle a marline spike, and had promised to take me along to the weather earing of the topsail, if an opportunity to reef her down was given.

We must have been halfway across when the tail end of a West Indian hurricane reached us. This was the opportunity I had longed for. Both watches were on deck to get the muslin in. While going aloft I kept close to the heels of my friend. With the wind howling and screeching through the rigging, we reached the main topsail yard. Out to the yardarm I followed, and holding on to the lift, swung myself into the Flemish horse.

Seated astride the end of the yard, bracing my body against the lift, I took my first lesson in passing a reef earing. The noise and shouting of the men "hee-hawing" while hauling the sail out to windward was sweet music to me. Having turns enough on the earing to hold it, O'Brien whispered, "Shout,

Haul out to lo'ard." Filled with pride, I shouted, "Haul out to lo'ard." I could see the contemptuous expression on some of the men's faces. They thought I was being spoiled by O'Brien's kindness, and that he allowed me to be "cheeky." The sail was reefed, and word came from deck to make it fast.

The gale was of short duration. The heavy force of it lasted about six hours, but during that time both watches were kept busy getting the upper topsails and mainsail stowed. When it began to moderate and the sails were set, it was a revelation to hear how much noise a few men singing a chorus could make.

At the topsail halyards Frisco led off the first chanty, "Blow the man down." As the others joined in the refrain, "Whey, hey, blow the man down," they threw the weight of their bodies back and joyfully mastheaded the yards. Much has been written about chanties, and some writers have joined words to the music, but I have never heard two men use just the same words. The "chanty man" leads off, and if he is good at rhyming, will make one about the virtues and failings of ship and officers. All the men were good at

singing and shouting, so we seldom hauled on a halyard, bowline, or sheet without some one starting a chanty. Even at the pumps we would "suck her out" with "Storm Along," a woeful dirge, that runs somewhat after this manner: —

"Stormy is dead, he'll storm no more.

To me weigh, hey, storm along!

Old storm is dead, he'll storm no more.

To me aye, aye, aye, mister, storm along.

"We'll dig his grave with a golden spade.

To me weigh, hey, storm along!

We'll dig his grave with a golden spade.

To me aye, aye, aye, mister, storm along.

"We'll lower him down with a silver chain.

To me weigh, hey, storm along!

We'll lower him down with a silver chain.

To me aye, aye, aye, mister, storm along."

One evening when we were just twenty-nine days at sea, near the Banks, and although it was midsummer the night was cold, my good friend came up on the fore-castle head where I was stationed on the lookout, and wrapped his warm pea jacket around me. We walked the fore-castle deck together. I had often wondered why he did so much for me. This night we talked of Barbados. He said he knew my parents, and related this incident:

“ About three years ago I deserted from an English bark in Barbados. We had brought a cargo of general merchandise from London and were taking back sugar. There was very little to eat, and the old tub was in a wretched condition. I sold some of my clothes to the negro stevedores for rum. As is always the case, ‘when rum is in, the man is out.’ I stowed myself in a lighter and reached the shore. I made for the country when I sobered up, and hid myself in the cane-fields till I thought the old bark had sailed away. Then I wandered about until I was ragged. Not even the negroes noticed me. One day I was walking on the white sandy beach; I saw several trees with fruit that looked like apples on them. I ate one. It blistered my mouth; the juice blistered my hands; it got into my eyes and blinded me. It was the poisonous manchineel berry. It rained, and the drops falling from the leaves of the trees blistered my body. I should have died, but your mother, hearing of my distress, sent out her servants and brought me into her house. She gave me every care till I was able to be around. She clothed and fed me and gave me a letter to her friend, the American con-

sul, asking him to aid me in getting another ship. Although you have changed a little, the first day I came aboard I thought I knew you. I remembered telling you stories of the sea. It is for her sake, lad, I have befriended you. I could not see her son acting as servant to any of us. When you write home, give my regards to your good mother."

The first opportunity I had in Philadelphia I wrote home, relating my meeting with O'Brien and the kindness he had bestowed upon me. In my mother's next and last letter to me, she wrote, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

When the crew was shipped, an advance note of one month's wages was granted each man. These notes were kept by the boarding-masters, who took every precaution to have the men sail in the ship. Then, at the expiration of forty-eight hours after sailing, they could get the notes cashed. A donkey's breakfast, a pot, pan, and spoon, and a bottle of rum was the outfit most of the men received for their month's advance. The Belgian had n't that much. Besides his advance note he had paid a small sum of money

for the privilege of becoming a slave for a few weeks. Now that we had been at sea a month, every man felt that this, a day of all days, was a fresh starting-point in his career. Now he began to work for himself; no longer did he toil for the boarding-master.

I heard the men talk about "burying the dead horse," and watched with keen interest their work of stuffing the animal. They secured some old grain sacks which were in the fore peak, cut out the figure of a horse, and sewed the parts together. Each man gave a bit of straw from his donkey's breakfast, and this, with some old yarns from the shakings barrel, they stuffed into the gunny-sack horse. Although it would have suggested any other animal just as readily, it answered the purpose and created the desired merriment.

During the six to eight dog-watch they brought forth the beast. Then some kicked and others scrambled to get a hit at him. This representative of the month's wages given to the boarding-masters was hauled up on the fore-castle head, and here we had the fun to ourselves. The men entered so heartily into the frolic that I would have given the

boarding-master a month's advance so that, like them, the horse might have had a real meaning to me. No crowd of schoolboys could have appreciated the fun of the hour more than they did.

I cannot remember the words of the trial, nor the verdict of the court, nor the sentences of the funeral service. I have witnessed a few "dead horse" scenes, but have never heard the same words. Standing in front of the horse with a book in his hands, Frisco occasionally rolled his eyeballs upward, and in a comical memorized rigmarole expatiated on the virtues and failings of the beast. For a few minutes he kept the crowd convulsed with laughter. When he finished the sentence with "So you must die," he struck the stuffed horse a blow on the head with a serving-mallet, and began the burial service. After this bit of facetiousness, we carried the horse to the lee cathead and roared out the chanty, "Poor old man, your horse is going to die." Frisco, the life of the crowd, and always to the front, led off, —

"Poor old man, your horse is going to die.

And I say so, and I hope so.

Oh, poor old man, your horse is going to die.

Oh, poor old man !"

Here are other verses, though my pen cannot do justice to the vigor of the rendering.

“ For thirty days we ’ve ridden him,
 And I say so, and I hope so.
For thirty days we ’ve ridden him,
 Oh, poor old man !

“ When he ’s dead we ’ll tan his skin,
 And I say so, and I hope so.
When he ’s dead we ’ll tan his skin,
 Oh, poor old man ! ”

At the conclusion of the chanty he was tossed over the rail, and thus ended the celebration of the end of the days of toil for the boarding-master.

The food was plentiful and substantial. We had splendid hard bread, and a cook who could make a variety from the beef, pork, and other stores. All sorts of names were applied to the different kinds of food. For instance, rice was known as “ strike me blind ; ” oatmeal porridge, or burgoo, was “ stirabout ; ” molasses was “ long-tail sugar ; ” salt beef, “ old junk ; ” hard biscuit soaked in pea soup, “ dog’s body ; ” this, with a little molasses added and baked in the oven, was “ dandy funk.” In most ships the same terms are familiar to seamen.

My hands and finger-nails were beginning to whiten from the tar of the previous ship when the work of tarring down our rigging began. What a difference there is in ships! The Hagarstown, unlike the Ruby, had an abundance of tar and ship stores. With plenty of seizing stuff, the ratlines were straightened, and considerable "sailorizing" accomplished. O'Brien took pains to teach me, and I learned rapidly from the seizing on of a Scotchman to the making of a sword mat, a Flemish eye, and a paunch mat.

We reached the Banks and were enveloped in fog for several days. Ever on the alert for the sound of a steamer's whistle or the toot of a sailing ship's foghorn, all the sail the ship could carry was set to hasten her through it, and every precaution was taken by keeping a bright lookout, and constantly sounding the foghorn.

On one of these nights of fog the starboard watch was below. I was awakened by some one pounding on the side of the forecastle, and a voice at the door yelling, "Get on deck and save yourselves." In a moment the watch was on deck. The fog was dense. It was impossible to see **twenty feet** ahead. Close

to us was the white side of a mountain of ice. For a moment I held my breath and anxiously watched the iceberg fall astern. It was a close call. The man at the wheel quickly obeyed the order to "starboard your helm," which saved us from striking head on to the ice. At last we sailed out of the fog, no danger having befallen us, and kept on for the Delaware Capes.

Standing off a lee shore in a heavy gale is a trying time for the captain of an "ocean greyhound," even though he has steam at his command to keep his vessel to the wind and sea. With a sailing ship it means "carry on" and beat your way off, or be dashed upon the rocks. Running before an easterly gale and a heavy sea, we were in close proximity to the Capes. It would have been a great relief to make the land before dark. Failing this meant a beat off the lee shore all night. It was a great strain on Captain Boyd; he was compelled to carry on sail and drive her through the seas. Every two hours the watch was called to tack ship, and then ordered to stand by ready for another call.

The old man was on deck all night, and took command in putting her about. "Call

the watch," "Ready about," a noise and a yell, "Get on deck and get her round," brought all hands to their stations. It took every man to haul the mainsail up. At the command, "Main topsail, haul," it seemed as though the mast would be wrenched from the deck. The violent swing of the yards would sway them almost back again before the slack of the main braces was hauled in. The gale filling her canvas, she would plunge and bury herself; then, trembling and shaking, would rise on the crest of another wave. There was no room to wear, so all night she dove through the boiling seas with lower top-gallant sails set, drenching herself fore and aft. At daylight a pilot boat hailed us and put a pilot on board. We were in sight of land. A large ocean tug steamed out and bargained with our captain to tow us in.

At such a time the sailor feels at his best. The voyage is drawing to a close, and his heart is light and filled with cheer. Though he may have no friends on shore, no one to greet and welcome him, still he is happy in the expectation of a change, and a run on shore with a few dollars to spend. Hand over hand the hawser is hauled up on deck

and paid out to the tug. In a few minutes we are aloft like birds in a tree, and each watch is doing its best to put a snug harbor furl on the sails.

O'Brien told me he was going to New York as soon as he could get what money was due him. He advised me to ask the captain's permission to remain on the ship; so I went aft and made my desire known to the old man.

"Certainly, my boy. Don't leave the ship, and when the boarding-house runners come aboard, give them a wide berth." This I did.

We were a long distance from Philadelphia when the "sharks" clambered on board. Rum was plentiful, every man was tagged for some boarding-house, and when we tied up near Chester, where the empty oil barrels were to be discharged, the sailors with their "dunnage" were tumbled into a tug and carried to the city.

The Hagarstown remained at the oil wharf for some days, and when we were towed up to the city the crew had been discharged. I tried to find my good benefactor, but learned from Frisco, who was "holding up" the dives

of Philadelphia, that O'Brien had left for New York.

Captain Boyd was very kind. He allowed me to remain on the ship, and when paying me my wages, advised me in a fatherly manner to take care of my money and to keep clear of the sailors' district. He promised to take me with him to San Francisco, and intended to put me on the ship's articles on his return from a trip "down East." While this good friend was on his vacation, Mr. Hanscomb, the old watchman, and I had the ship to ourselves. All the crew, officers as well as seamen, were discharged. The stevedores were loading a general cargo for San Francisco, and as there was plenty of work a strong boy could do, I engaged myself with them for fifteen cents an hour. I earned enough to buy a snug outfit of shoes and clothing, and enjoyed the little I spent while visiting the old ship-keeper.

Mr. Hanscomb and his family were members of a Baptist Church. I attended service with them, and under the influence of that good home, resolved to fight against the temptations that are put in a sailor's way.

I wrote home to my mother, telling her of

the friends I had made. I felt a new spirit enter my being. Good influence held me back from the downward path for a while. When the old man returned, he was pleased at Mr. Hanscomb's report of my good behavior, but to my great disappointment Captain Boyd told me he was not going on the Hagarstown. My hopes were blasted, as I had intended asking him to ship me as able seaman. I lost all desire to sail on her without Captain Boyd. Accordingly, next day I strolled over to Point Breeze on the Schuylkill River, and there saw several ships loading oil. Among these was an American, the St. Augustine, of about two thousand tons register, loading for Kobe, Japan.

The stevedores were sliding the cases of oil down the hatches. Everybody seemed busy. There were two well-dressed men on board, who were, I learned, captain and mate. I had set my heart on making this trip, so I approached, and lifting my hat, inquired if the captain was on board. The elder of the two replied, "Yes, I'm cap'n. What do you want?" I told him, and in a few moments was on my way to Mr. Hanscomb with good news. I was to make a voyage to Japan with

Captain Thomas on the American clipper *St. Augustine*. I was to go as ordinary seaman, at twelve dollars a month.

It was not necessary to take my things to Point Breeze, as the *St. Augustine* was to be towed to the wharf at the old navy yard where the *Hagarstown* was moored, to get her stores and crew on board. I was glad, on landing my things on her deck, to be told by Mr. Parker, the mate, that I was to put them in the boatswain's room, as I was to bunk it with him. The *St. Augustine* was much smaller than the *Hagarstown*. Single topgallant sails and no sky sails; her cabin and forecastle were the same, except that instead of a forecastle for each watch, there was a large, undivided space with sixteen bunks in it. In a place where ten men could, possibly, move with comfort, sixteen were expected to eat, sleep, and smoke while they were on board.

The sailing day came. My life seemed full. I had heard of the knowledge in seamanship gained by rounding the Cape of Good Hope. Now I was on my way to accomplish such a feat. The boarding-masters brought the men down, tumbled them and their "dunnage" on deck, and kept a care-

ful watch lest any man should leave the ship. Three months' advance had been granted the crew, and the land sharks intended that none of their prey should escape. Some less drunk than others helped haul the lines in. The towboat took hold of us; I made for the wheel, and steered in the wake of the tug till we dropped anchor a few miles down the Delaware. Beside the sixteen men forward, there were eight others on board, — Captain Thomas and Mr. Parker, the mate, a young man about twenty-two years old, bright and active; though a mere boy he was a competent sailor, and a good boxer and wrestler. The second mate was a middle-aged man, who abused his authority by constantly cursing and swearing at the men. The boatswain was a strong Liverpool Irishman, who fought all the battles of the ship and made my existence wretched.

Chips, the carpenter, a Norwegian who had sailed for years in deep-water American ships, was now so Americanized that he delighted to apply the term "Dutchmen" to the Scandinavians forward. He considered his position of so much importance that it was a condescension to speak to the men. His rank, like

the boatswain's, was a step from the fore-castle, where they had both lived, so that they knew what a sailor's life is. But they were the haughtiest and most overbearing of our after-superiors. If they gave us a kind word, their manner clearly showed it was a voluntary descent from their dignity. The cook was an old negro. He had his wife with him, a bright mulatto, about twenty-five years old. She was rather a pleasant-featured woman, down on the articles as stewardess. It would have been better for him had he left his wife in Philadelphia. The ship would have had a steward. She could not then have roused his jealousy and suspicion. As it was, he was made miserable, and through the inconstancy of his wife he lost his life.

There were two bunks in the boatswain's room. He took the upper and left me the lower. There was a table about two feet square in the room, and at it I ate my meals. The boatswain, carpenter, and second mate ate aft at the second sitting of the cabin table.

The first night on board, the bulky Liverpool Irishman took a dislike to me. We had turned in, but I could not sleep. I have heard loud snoring, but none has ever

equaled in volume the blast of the boat-swain's foghorn! I was restless, and hoping that he might change his music to some other tune, bumped my knees against the bottom of his bunk boards. At last he roused himself, and swore at me for disturbing him. I ventured to tell him that his snoring kept me awake, whereupon he jumped from his bed and inflicted a thrashing which I shall never forget. If there had been a chance to skip out, I should have done so, but I went to bed again, knowing my best plan was to keep quiet and submit to this abuse.

The men were allowed to sleep away their dissipation, but at three o'clock next morning, sick and fatigued, they were put to work filling the empty water cask on deck from the Delaware River. It was cold, and the October winds pierced their vitals. Sparks began to come from the galley stove-pipe, and at five o'clock old Wilson, the cook, served hot black coffee. Why do I say "black coffee"? I have never seen any other kind served to seamen; generally, it is sweetened with molasses, which gives it the flavor of a quack "blood and nerve tonic." Now came the word, "Man the windlass." Up and

down went the windlass brakes; the hot drink gave new life to the men. One, with a voice like a bull of Bashan, led off with the chanty, "Sally Brown."¹ Although wet and uncomfortable, the others, like true "shell-backs," joined heartily in the chorus. The clank of the pauls sounded clear and distinct between the chorus and the song of the chanty-man. As one finished another man would start a different chanty: "Poor Paddy works on the railroad;" "We're all bound to go," till the mate shouted, "She's short, sir."

Now was the time for Mr. Williams to give free play to his vile vocabulary, and for the

¹ "Sally Brown was a Creole lady,
Weigh, aye, roll and go!
 Sally Brown was a Creole lady,
Spend my money on Sally Brown.

"Seven long years I courted Sally,
Weigh, aye, roll and go!
 Seven long years and she would not marry,
Spend my money on Sally Brown.

"Sally Brown, I now must leave you,
Weigh, aye, roll and go!
 And do not let this parting grieve you,
Spend my money on Sally Brown."

(And so *ad infinitum.*)

boatswain to exercise his strength. Curses were heaped on the men loosing the sails, while a constant uproar was taking place on deck. The riggers had rove the running rigging through the wrong fair-leads, which elicited a blessing from Mr. Williams on every man that ever handled a rope. The topsails set, the strong tide and wind in our favor, we started the anchor from the mud and headed for the open sea on our way to Japan.

CHAPTER X

A "HOT" SHIP

THE first day out was spent in securing every movable thing on deck, stowing away hawsers, and cleaning up the ship from the wretched condition in which the stevedores had placed her during her stay in port. That evening there was not much choice for the mates in making up the watches, for every man forward had proved himself a competent seaman.

"Portuguese Joe," a native of Peru, a man almost as round as a ball, was the only small one among them. The others were strong, well-built, robust fellows. These sixteen men were representatives of half the globe; for besides "Portuguese Joe," there were two Norwegians, one Hollander, a Swede, one Frenchman, three Germans, two each from England, Ireland, and Scotland, and Chris, a native of Denmark. In selecting the watches, the mate had given an equal

number of Anglo-Saxons to each. Joe was unfortunately placed in Mr. Williams's watch. I was in the mate's, under the eye of my evil genius, the boatswain. He was my room-mate below and my master on deck; indeed, my only relief from his presence was when he was snoring in his bunk. After a few watches below I became accustomed to the rasping noise of his nasal organ, and could fall asleep; but I cursed the luck which put me in his room. Far easier would my lot have been in the fore-castle. I was told never to mingle with the men forward except when on duty. As I wanted to know more about the crew, I would watch my opportunity to steal forward, listen to their yarns, and become better acquainted.

“Different ships, different fashions,” as Paddy said, when he rove the fore sheet through the lee scupper. On my other trips I had been in the fore-castle and envied the after-end. Now I was between the two and would have changed to either gladly. On the other ships my stay had been so short that I had taken little interest in the crew, but now, unless some accident should befall me, I was in for a year's voyage. I should cross “the line” four times, round the Cape twice, and

be a seasoned deep-water sailor on my return.

Although we had signed the articles with its scale of provisions, we were not confined to that. Old Wilson could make a dish of anything. He was kind-hearted, and took a delight in seeing the men satisfied. As long as the potatoes lasted we had a portion, "duff" twice a week, and canned beef on Sundays. No one complained while Wilson was alive.

In the Gulf Stream we encountered a gale which kept us hove to under reefed topsails and foresail for four days. The fore topsail was well worn. As it felt the force of the gale, it started at the head and whipped itself into ribbons. All that was saved were the pieces that had wrapped themselves around the mast and topmost rigging. The seas flooded the deck, and some of our water casks were washed from their lashings and swept over the rail. Though it was no easy matter to haul a topsail along the deck and get it aloft at such a time, yet we did it.

There was a suit of sails in the lazaret. A topsail was hauled up, taken into the forward cabin, spread out, and reefed ready for bending. Head and reef earings, rovings, and

clews clear, we tugged the long roll of canvas on our shoulders, sliding from side to side till we got it forward. Then, bending on the end of the gantline, which had been rove for this purpose, we hoisted it aloft, abaft the yards, guying it out to windward. The mate remained on deck to slack away, while both watches, with Mr. Williams and the boatswain, bent and reefed it.

The heat of the lazaret and the work of hauling the topsail caused the perspiration to flow freely. Oilskins were discarded, and we were wet through with the salt spray. Before we started aloft, a roaming wave left its turbulent head on our deck, and for a moment it seemed as though we were in the surf at a seaside resort. Up we went, dripping wet, and mounted the "rocking horse." Jack was next to me. Together we passed the weather earing and shouted, "Haul out to lo'ard." Oh, how delightful! Seated on the yardarm, I could see the heavy seas tumble against the ship, the running rigging flying loose and curving like coach whips. The whole scene aloft and below was wild and awe-inspiring.

We were fully four hours bending the top-



TOGETHER WE PASSED THE WEATHER EARING

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sail. During this time the men were grinding away on their tobacco. Those on the lee yardarm could enjoy their weed ; they could let fly the juice and watch it safely pass to leeward. Not so with us on the weather yardarm. We must watch our opportunity to spit in the sail when Mr. Williams was not looking. Or we might bend our heads under the yard and hope a back draft would not lift it to windward and drive it into some fellow's face. A spatter of tobacco juice fell full on the second mate's face. Immediately he opened his dictionary and put his vocabulary to use. Now most seafaring men use tobacco. I suppose they would chew less if they were allowed to smoke when they felt like it ; but it is a great breach of discipline for a sailor to smoke while working, so they form the chewing habit, which they can indulge in while on deck.

No greater blessing is bestowed on a sailor than his pipe. It makes him forget his cares, breaks the humdrum monotony, keeps him from mischief, and helps him build castles in the air. Why, then, deprive him of it? I know there are times when it is inconvenient to have a pipe in one's mouth, but is it any

more disrespectful, or will it lessen ship discipline any more, than having a mouth full of the weed? I think not. The best-natured seaman becomes a grumbler when in need of tobacco, and a ship short of it is a very uncomfortable place in which to dwell. I have seen old salts dry their old "chews" and smoke them; yes, smoke dried coffee-grounds and tea-leaves.

After the gale, a few rousing chanties made the work of spreading the muslin an easy matter, and we were "by the wind" in the northeast "trades."

Many people think sailors have nothing to do but watch the ship sail along, except in stormy weather when they are forced to work the sails. Can a housekeeper find work to do in a home which is properly looked after? So in a ship. No matter how long the voyage may be, there is always some work to be done. What with cleaning paint-work, preserving the rigging from being chafed, scraping the bright woodwork, and pounding iron rust, a good mate is never in need of something for his men to do. Watch and watch we were kept busy doing things, both necessary and unnecessary.

At night, as the men came on deck, both watches mustered aft and were counted by the boatswain.

"Relieve the wheel and lookout, and keep on your pegs by the main hatch." There were many 'nights when the watch on deck could have dozed on the main hatch with perfect safety. But no, it meant the loss of an afternoon's watch below to be caught napping while on deck. "Portuguese Joe" found it a hard matter to keep awake on a fine night. Mr. Williams caught him napping, and made him take the canvas draw-bucket, haul water, and throw it over himself. Could he have resented? Yes, he did; but the "greaser" was too much for him. Why did n't the other men help him? They knew it was best not to kick against the supreme authority of the after-end. Least said, soonest mended is a safe motto aboard ship, as there is no unity in so mixed a crowd.

I grew fat on the kicks of the boatswain rousing me from stolen naps on deck. Somehow, the more I tried to keep awake, the more drowsy did I become. The one method used by the boatswain which kept me awake was to break the stops of the buntlines, and

to glory in his spite while I was climbing from yard to yard overhauling and stopping them again.

Our yards were painted black. Scrapers were made from old knives, the grindstone brought on deck, and every man called on to use his sheath knife to scrape the paint from them. As soon as the watch came on deck it was, "Perch yourself aloft and get at the scraping." This work lasted for several weeks. The ordinary scraping of mast and yards is tiresome, but to remove a thick coat of paint from a pitch-pine stick is tedious and wearisome to the fullest extent. Even when the paint is off, there must be another scraping to make it bright and clean.

For days and days we were by the wind. When we entered the "trades," great was the old man's disgust. Driven to the southward and westward, we edged along to the Brazilian coast. The compass might have been over the side for all the use it was to the man at the wheel. Our guide was the clew of the mizzen royal. The yards braced sharp up, the course was full and by. At the close of the two hours' trick at the wheel my neck would be stiff from the constant upward gaze at the sail.

When we drew near the equator, the scraping had to be stopped. The trade-wind squalls were frequent and severe, and gave us a steady drill in taking in the light sails and setting them again. With the squall there came a downpour of rain, so that we filled our cask from the water falling from the roof of the cabin. Though the scuppers were free, still it poured upon us faster than it could leave the deck.

Leaving us ankle-deep in rain water, hardly a breath of air stirring, the force of the squall passed, and over our heads the sails flapped against the mast. As the ship rolled, the wash of the water tumbling from side to side felt as though we were standing in the stream of a fast-flowing river. This was a tropical shower; it seemed as if the ocean were over us, and the bottom had fallen out.

Water-spouts were visible at the horizon. These dangerous funnel-shaped black clouds emptied themselves upon us. Two of the monsters crossed our bows less than half a mile away. We could see the whirlpool and upheaval of the water, as they swept along trailing their tapering stem, filling the mighty reservoir above.

Our old man was grumbling and discontented. We were now nearing the close of our second month, and had barely crossed the line; but a change came, and we bowled along "full and by" through the horse latitudes with a stiff southeast trade wind. The work of scraping was resumed. While on the fore topsail yard, I noticed what seemed to be a black cloud to leeward which I concluded to be land. I shouted, "Land, ho." "Where away," yelled the boatswain. "About two points on the lee bow." The old man, hearing the shout, came on deck. He was frantic when he saw the mountain-peaked, church-steepled island of Fernando Noronha blocking his headway. It was "ready about" and beat our way clear of land.

The chronometer was "out," as the previous day's reckoning had made the ship one hundred and sixty miles to the east of this Brazilian convict island. We kept twenty-four hours on the starboard tack, which enabled us to weather it. Still there was an uncertainty which worried Captain Thomas. He was not sure of weathering Cape St. Roque. Keeping the yards pointed sharp to the wind, we cleared the cape and bowled along to the southward.

One afternoon we were surrounded by a school of bonitos. These creatures feed upon flying-fish and squid, and delight to follow a ship, gamboling around her bows and darting in and out around the cutwater.

The mate was soon seated on the jib-boom end with a line and gunny sack, ready to haul them in. We were sailing fast, which aided him in his fishing. With a bit of white rag on his hook, the line curved out by the force of the wind dragging well to leeward, Mr. Parker kept us busy passing in the bonitos and dumping them on deck. Our headway was too swift for the bonitos to study the appearance of the bait, so as it skimmed along on the crest of the water they would think it a flying-fish and nab it. Although not large, — I suppose about eighteen inches long, and weighing from twenty to thirty pounds, — it took a skilled man to haul them up to the boom. It was a splendid pastime, a feverish excitement. Standing on the forecastle head we could feel the ship tremble with the jerking of the fish on the line. The forward end of the ship was besmeared with blood. We did n't mind that, for the fun was immense, and the expectation of a feed of fried fish

fully compensated for the work of washing down.

That evening old Wilson cooked enough bonitos to satisfy all hands, and a delightful meal it was. Next morning our disappointment was great when our breakfast was the usual "lobscouse." We had pickled a barrel of the fish, but in that moist atmosphere they did not take the brine. They were putrid, filled with maggots, and had to be tossed over the side.

The day came at last when we could check in our yards. With a fair wind from the westward we steered a course to the southward and eastward. As we crept along south, the wind gradually increased. We sighted the towering mass of Tristan d'Acunha far above the clouds. Here the ocean was covered with long patches of kelp, and their cable-like stems heaving in the restless sea made the rolling waves look like the furrows of a newly ploughed field. Here the westerly wind gathered in force and volume, and settled into a gale which lasted quite as long as we wanted it. For three weeks we ran before it with square yards till we reached the island of St. Paul. I suppose it is blowing a westerly gale

there now. There was no let up; we sailed out of it when we shaped our course to the northward from St. Paul.

Day and night we ran our longitude down under our topsails and foresail, covering between two hundred and fifty and three hundred miles each day. Spreading the snowy foam from her bows like an open sheet, she glided fishlike through the sea. When abreast of the Cape, it seemed as if the "old gal" would roll herself over, for, burying the rail at each roll, she scooped up the sea and flooded the decks. It was dangerous as well as uncomfortable to get forward or aft. One had to await a favorable opportunity and then wade through the foaming lather. At times a heavy rolling sea would overtake us and dash on our poop-deck. We managed to get some of the cases of oil from the fore hatch. Piercing holes in the cans, we hung them over the taffrail where the oil might drip in her boiling wake. In the hollows of the waves the albatross and cape pigeons could be seen. Disturbed by us in our mad rush, up they would fly, to return to rest again after we had passed.

One morning I went below at four o'clock;

the port watch had the eight hours in. I found the boatswain's room afloat. A sea had rolled in, and the wash of the water was making havoc of everything except the bed in the top bunk. My clothes and bed were wet. The boatswain turned in, and left me to clear up the wreck. I sneaked forward to the fore-castle and climbed into a top bunk belonging to Peter, one of the Norwegians. I must have been asleep about an hour, when I felt a wet hand on my ankle, and without a word of warning, I was dragged from the bunk and kicked and cuffed by the second mate till I reached the cabin door. Opening the door of his room, he told me to use his bed rather than one in the fore-castle.

“Don't you ever let me catch you there. If your bed is wet, use mine.”

Between the rolls of the ship old Wilson waded aft, and invited me forward to his room, which was partitioned off from the galley, where I was soon fast asleep between his warm, comfortable blankets. Then this kind-hearted negro mopped up the boatswain's room and hung my wet clothes by his galley fire to dry.

For several days we had been drinking the

vilest kind of water. We had not yet opened the iron tank between decks, and the casks were filled with rain water, which had become putrid, alive with animal matter, and emitted a disgusting odor. The men complained and the big tank was tapped for our use. Rain water, when barreled up, will become rotten, but after some time will regain its freshness and be excellent for drinking. It will rot twice over, and each time it is sweeter for the change. While undergoing this process, it will breed swarms of mosquitoes.

Each day to the northward brought us into better weather. The sunshine and warmth gave us new life and energy. Our clothes were white, and the decks and rigging were bleached, with salt. In two weeks we had forgotten all about the gales of the southern latitudes, and were basking in the tropical sun in sight of Sandalwood Island. We were now sailing through miles of floating pumice stone, which had been ejected from the volcanic islands in the Indian Ocean. Worse luck for us, the mate had us scoop up fully half a ton, and between the squalls of the "trades" and the bad weather in the China Sea, we were ever pumice-stoning the paint-work.

Although Barbados is known as the only regular flying-fishery in the world, I think the natives of Sandalwood Island might compete with them. I have seen swarms of these fish flying from the jaws of the dolphin and bonito, but never so numerous as they were here. The flying-fish leaves the water with such force that with one prolonged leap it skims and skips along the surface. I have seen it stated that they do not fly. My native fishermen say they do. I have seen a swarm headed for our ship, and as they drew near they have turned at right angles out of the way.

In Barbados the natives live on flying-fish six months of the year. I have seen the market filled with them, and at a late hour in the evening they are sold fifty for a penny, although usually the price is a penny for two or three. Ice is a scarce luxury, and as the fish will not keep till the next day, the negro fisherman gladly disposes of them for any sum. A half-dozen fish will make a hearty meal for a fair-sized family.

The fishermen start out at dawn and reach the grounds before the sun is high. With mast unstepped they cast decayed fish over-

board, and while the flying-fish are feeding they scoop them in with circular nets of small mesh stretched on wooden hoops. The largest kind (the Guineaman) are caught with hook and line. Occasionally, at night, a flying-fish will fly on board, in the tropics. Once, as punishment for sleeping during my watch on deck, I had to spend an afternoon's watch below over the side in a bowline, scraping the scales and brains of the flying-fish from the black painted side of the ship. Often I have watched them skim through the air, skip along for about two hundred yards, and then seen the splash of the dolphin that had traveled as fast as they and was ready to receive them. Then making another leap, away they would dart, only dropping when the drying of the wing membrane compelled them.

Within a week after sinking Sandalwood we raised the island of Timor. The space between these two islands must be the home of the porpoise. All day in their clownish fashion they rolled and tumbled around the bow. A snatch block was hung at the end of the bowsprit, a line rove through it, and then bent on to the harpoon. At first the

mate did the harpooning, but soon grew tired of it.

With a strap securing him to the martingale, a man would stand on the back ropes, and with harpoon ready, await the opportunity to stick them. In a little while the harpoon would be raised, the point following the track of a rising porpoise till its back was clear of the water. Then the iron fell, and hand over hand we lifted the struggling pig to the boom. Then bending on a rope's end, we hauled him on board as another man slacked away on the harpoon line. Many times we hauled these kicking, trembling sea-pigs on deck. Occasionally a porpoise would tear himself from the harpoon and fall back into the sea, streaming with blood. I am told that the others chase and devour him in his weakness. This may be so, but it is a fact that when a wounded porpoise falls from a harpoon, the whole school disappears for a time.

The blubber was boiled, and we all had oil enough to grease our sea boots. "Chips" had what he wanted to oil his tools, and some to spare for the donkey engine. The beef was fine. We cut it in flakes and spread

it out in the sun to dry. It was a treat, after being at sea so long, to have so plentiful a supply of fresh meat.

Several days after, the dried meat made as delicious a dish as one could desire. The longer it is kept, unlike any other fish, the more tender and sweet it becomes. Any man, even though it was his watch on deck, was allowed to pin a porpoise, as when they were on board the harness cask was kept locked and unused.

We passed Timor and entered the Gilolo Passage. For days we were becalmed, surrounded on all sides by islands. For over a month we tried to get through into the open Pacific. The old man grew impatient and irritable; his only relief was to keep box-hauling the yards around, and trying to make a breeze where there was none. It was a continual "Haul on this" and "Take a drag" on the other thing. Every effort was made to take advantage of the least puff of wind.

We had been told these islands were inhabited by cannibals. One afternoon a canoe full of black natives paddled to us. They came shouting and bawling, the outrigger of the "dug-out" trailing in the water, and

stopped about fifty feet away. The old man had his rifle, the mate a revolver, while we were armed with knives to defend ourselves. But instead of coming to eat us, as we had supposed, they had shells and matted material to exchange for tobacco. The captain had to coax them to come alongside. Hideous-looking mortals they were, naked, and with skins streaked and rough, like alligators, where the sun had dried the salt water on them. They would not come on board, but holding on to a rope's end, showed us their curiosities, and shouted, "Tobac, tobac." Mr. Parker descended to the canoe, and in exchange for a few pounds of tobacco, emptied it of its contents.

The ship's slop chest was stocked with high-priced "dog's wool and oakum," clothing, soap, matches, and tobacco, every article costing about twice its market value. Now tobacco was a dollar and a half a pound, yet this high price did not hinder us from negotiating with the blacks for their useless curiosities. A light breeze was carrying us along about four knots, so the mate climbed up the rope ladder, and the blacks paddled for their native soil.

While sailing between these islands we caught several large albacores, weighing between forty and fifty pounds each. We salted and hung them under the boat skids. They were good eating, but where they were hung to dry, the full moon shone on them. A few days after, we had albacore for dinner. I ate heartily, and within an hour was suffering with a violent headache. For over twenty-four hours after that I was unconscious. My head was swollen. When I regained consciousness, I learned that like myself, half of the crew had been poisoned by the fish.

The full moon of the tropics makes the night almost as bright as day. I remember reading "Barnaby Rudge" by moonlight during my watch on deck. Men dare not sleep in its glare, for it will distort the features and blind the eyes, so powerful is its light.

That experience guarded me more than once. Not only was I careful after that never to hang fish or meat where the moon could shine on it, but I also was sure to keep my face covered when stealing a nap on a moonlit deck.

CHAPTER XI

'ROUND THE CAPE

MRS. MARTHA WILSON, the stewardess, was a woman who feared no man. She could defend herself. Once she happened to hear a sailor speak of her as "Dinah." For this impudence she rolled up her sleeves and thrashed him. At times she was very religious; then she was greatly pleased if we joined in the refrain of her favorite song, "I 'se gwine for to walk the narrow road, and I want you all for to follow me." Old Wilson stood in fear of her. So she did as she pleased, and her will was law. While we all spoke of her as "Dinah," no one dared address her except as "Mrs. Wilson," or "Stewardess."

On leaving Philadelphia she slept in her husband's room, but when we sailed into warm weather she grumbled and complained about the heat of the galley, and expressed a desire to have one of the staterooms in the

forward cabin for her own. Captain Thomas consented to the change, but old Wilson tried every means to keep her forward with him. For peace' sake he finally yielded, and Dinah shifted her traps aft. She became warm friends with Mr. Parker. Together they walked the deck evenings, thereby arousing her husband's jealousy.

Early one morning, as we were emerging from the Gilolo Passage, the cook walked aft and listened at the window of his wife's state-room. In a few moments, crazy with rage, he was clinched in strife with the mate. The boatswain came to the latter's aid. Together they put handcuffs on Wilson, and hooking a "handy billy" to a strap on the mizzen stay, they then hooked on to the hand-irons, and lifted him clear of the deck. They kept him there till he was unconscious, when they lowered him. In less than an hour he was dead. The verdict was that Wilson died of heart disease. Captain Thomas was very much disturbed.

The following day the body was sewn in canvas, with bits of old iron placed at the feet. The main yard was hove aback, and the old cook was launched into the deep. I

looked over the side and watched the white canvas bubble and sink in the clear transparent water, till it disappeared under the bottom of the ship.

“Brace up the main yard!” Away we headed on our course for Japan. There was much talk about the death of the cook, but no man dare openly give his opinion of the matter. Dinah seemed to be happy. Her husband’s death was evidently of no consequence to her.

That afternoon I was standing by the main hatch when Captain Thomas shouted from the cabin door, “Harry, come aft here.” It disturbed me when he said I was to help the stewardess in her work till we reached Japan. The boatswain was cruel, but I was used to his ill-treatment. But not knowing how to frame an excuse, I stood still and looked at the old man.

“Well, what’s the matter with you?”

“Please, sir, don’t send me into the galley with the stewardess.”

“Get for’ard, and do what I say.”

I put on my best rig and reported to Dinah for duty. For two weeks I was her orderly. It was “Harry do this and that,” till I was

tired of being ordered about by this woman. One afternoon Dinah started to fill two small jugs with yeast. She was on deck near the galley door, and I was in the galley. In a very domineering tone she said, "Harry, go aft and get me the corkscrew from the pantry. I want to draw this cork."

I looked at her, and then replied, "Get aft and get it yourself."

The words were hardly out of my mouth when the full jug of yeast came tumbling at me. I dodged it. It struck the stove and broke in pieces. The yeast spilled all over the brick-paved floor of the galley. Dinah rushed at me, screaming, scratching, and biting. We rolled over and over in the yeast, for it was impossible to get a footing. I was a strong lad, but no match for this tigress.

I shouted, "Help! Murder! Come to me!" The second mate, the carpenter, and three seamen came to my assistance. It took all their strength to release me from her embrace. Bleeding and crying, I ran to the old man, who, hearing the rumpus, had just come on deck.

"Oh, cap'n," I cried, "I can't stand this any longer, sir!"

“Dry your tears, my boy. Go for’ard and clean yourself. You have done very well. You’ve stood it longer than I thought you would. You deserve a leather medal, and I’ll cut one out for you in the morning. Go for’ard.”

Then he turned to Dinah, who had been roughly handled by the men. They hated her, and had used the chance to get in a few sly knocks. “I’ve had enough of your humbug. Go to your room, and never let me see you for’ard of the mainmast, or on deck at all after sunset.” So she was subdued, and kept confined to her room. Bill was made cook, and I steward; a fine team. We had ample opportunities to play tricks on Dinah, and I availed myself of them. But she behaved as she should, and in less than twenty-four hours after we had reached Japan, was on her way to San Francisco, via Yokohama.

Old Wilson was sadly missed. We were now in our fifth month at sea. Dinah had not taken the same interest as her husband in making the most of a little, and neither Bill nor I knew how. The duff was heavy, the food poorly cooked, and everybody grumpy and discontented.

To stiffen the ship, the stevedores had stowed two hundred tons of coal under the oil cases. Now our supply was nearly gone, so it was necessary to move the cargo that the coal-bins might be replenished. We began the tedious and ungainly work of passing the cases of oil up the lazaret hatch. Only one man could work in the hatch, so we labored two days before the coal was reached. Then we hauled it up in buckets, and filled the bins on deck.

To force the ship along, a "bull ringer" was rigged.

This is the only time I have seen such a sail used. A spare staysail was set under the lee of the jib boom. The head was hauled out to the boom end, the tack to the lee cat-head, and the sheet to the end of the martingale. This sail may have helped our progress, but it certainly was a nuisance, for at every squall it required the whole watch to take it in. At last all hands had to be called to get it inboard. In diving, she had filled it with water, and to save the boom, the sheet and outhaul were let go, and the sail trailed under the lee bow till we could haul it aboard.

We were favored with a strong monsoon, and so ploughed our way along through the China Sea. Scurvy began to show itself. "Portuguese Joe" was the first victim. He was in a miserable state. His teeth were loosened from his soft, spongy gums. He could press his finger into the flesh of his limbs and leave an indentation as though in a lump of dough. Although exhausted, weary, and fit only for his bunk, the cruel second mate forced him to keep the night lookouts.

Nearly all the men were in misery with salt water boils. At twelve o'clock each day the captain mustered all hands aft and served a drink of lime juice to us, to check the scurvy. Discontent was supreme, but at last, after a wearisome passage of one hundred and sixty-seven days, we dropped anchor in the harbor of Kobe. Labor is cheap here, so the Japs were engaged to work the cargo while we were busy scraping the black paint off the hull. The first trip the old man made on shore he brought back a Japanese steward and a Chinese cook, and with a good supply of fresh beef and potatoes, the ill-will of the men vanished.

Dinah left without a parting farewell. She was taken in a sampan and placed on the mail steamer for Yokohama, on her way to San Francisco.

The first Saturday night in port the men went aft to demand liberty. The mate said the captain was on shore, but that he intended giving the port watch liberty till Monday morning. They were advised to await his return, so that they might have some money to spend. Seven o'clock came and went. There were no signs of the old man's return, and their patience was exhausted. They went aft and asked leave to go without the money. The mate consented, and two sampans were hailed. Taking it for granted that I was to have my liberty with the port watch, I partly secreted myself in the sampan, and we were sculled to the shore.

Previous to this, the captain had agreed to allow each man to incur a debt of fifteen dollars with a clothing merchant in Kobe. As we landed, hordes of Japanese men gathered round us, pulling at us and shouting, "Takee me jinrikisha." They knew where this merchant lived, and hurriedly pulled us in their perambulators to his store. We stormed the

place, and threatened not to purchase one cent's worth of clothing unless he advanced us some money. After much pressure he gave us five dollars each, and had us sign our names on his books, as having bought seven dollars' worth of clothing from him.

Now was shown the fallacy of keeping me away from the fore-castle. Not allowed to mingle with the men in their quarters on board, here was I, in a strange place, without a cent in my pocket, allowed to go and do as I pleased. For although I had left the ship stealthily, both the mate and second mate noticed me when the sampan shoved off, and they could easily have intercepted us and made me return on board. Naturally I kept with the men, and, like the others, hired a jinrikisha. Kobe, although in the far East, is poisoned like every seaport by the presence of some Anglo-Saxon who establishes himself as a liquor-dealer. There was an old American man-of-war's man who kept a rum-shop, and dared to insult his country by naming the vile den the "American Eagle." The jinrikisha men knew their business, and were familiar with the work of hauling sailors through the city. Therefore, they headed for Tom Kelly's dive.

Mrs. Kelly was a Japanese woman, and both she and her husband welcomed us. Here we met the crew of an English square-rigger, the *Undaunted of Glasgow*. At first we were as friendly as brothers, but after the drinks began to take effect, the crews settled an argument on the battle of Bunker Hill by fighting it over again. Tom Kelly was an ex-pugilist. He joined in, and for a few moments blood was as plentiful as the liquor behind the bar.

We became separated in the fracas. My Jap hustled me into the jinrikisha, and away he dragged me through the lower part of the town. They must have had similar experiences with seamen, as they knew just where to take us. My man stopped at a place where some Japanese women were seated in a large window playing on their samisens.

"Go in, John, go in. Welcome all the same." In I went, and found the greater part of our port watch and some of the *Undaunted's* men. Forgetting the rupture of the evening, they were enjoying the "chonkino" dance with some Japanese girls.

My visit to Kobe consisted in being hauled round the city in a "baby carriage" between

these "chon-kino" houses and the "American Eagle." Only once did we emerge from this district, when the Japs, to gain our goodwill or our money, drove us to the top of a hill where there was a waterfall, near which several tea-houses were located. I suppose it was too quiet and peaceful here, and too much attention was shown the officers of the British warship *Dido*, for us to be comfortable.

My reader may imagine that there were other things to attract a lad beside carousing with a crowd of sailors. I suppose there would be for one who had not been confined on a ship for so long a time, and who would have been received in places of refinement and respectability. Japan is no different from other parts of the world. The respectable amongst the Japanese, Europeans, and Americans, in Kobe, would not think for a moment of associating with a common sailor. Debarred from respectable resorts, he enters where he is welcomed. Glad to be away from my tyrant, and as a sailor, though a young one, I remained in my shipmates' company while on liberty.

On Monday morning it was a sore-looking

crowd that reported on board. It had been decided on the way off to refuse duty, and to demand an interview with the American consul regarding the death of old Wilson. I made up my mind to defend myself against the assaults of the cruel boatswain, who began to bully us as we came over the side.

The men refused to "turn to," and asked to see the captain. I kept with them, thereby showing that I, too, desired to see the old man. Perhaps I might have acted differently if I had been free from the effects of the recent debauch.

The boatswain, grabbing me by the coat-collar and quickly twisting me around, kicked me, and ordered me forward. I pulled a belaying-pin from the rail, and landed a blow which stunned him. In a moment both he and the second mate were at me, and all hands were involved in a violent struggle. I did not witness the end, for, beaten into a state of unconsciousness, I was put into my room. This trouble was much help to me, for while it was in progress I had told the boatswain I intended to defend myself at the peril of my life, if he or any man tried to take advantage of me. My life was my own. They could

have it if they wanted it, but beware how they took it. I suffered punishment by being kept on deck at arduous labor, but received no more blows or kicks.

I learned from the men that Captain Thomas and Mr. Parker quieted the disturbance, and after listening to the men's demands, the old man satisfied them by taking three on shore with him. The consul gave them no reprisal. He ordered them aboard, and when they refused, they were put in jail. When the news of their confinement reached us, most all the crew refused duty, were lodged in jail, and Japanese hired in their places. Gradually one after another succumbed under this treatment, and returned to their work on board.

From daylight till dark we were busy scraping the outside of the ship, and on Sundays it would be dinner time before we finished polishing the brass-work. Long strips of copper were nailed on the after part of the topsail yards to prevent them from chafing against the backstays when the yards were braced up. After the deck had been scrubbed and cleaned, and every bit of copper below the rail polished with pumice stone and ker-

osine oil, we were sent to polish the copper tips on the ends of the lower shrouds, and the copper on the topsail yards.

The St. Augustine became a very uncomfortable ship. The boatswain proved to be a drunkard, spending several days on shore on a debauch, and thereby losing the good-will of the mate. Mr. Parker and Mr. Williams quarreled, and, beginning aft, revenge and hatefulness passed to the forward crowd. A strict watch was kept to prevent any one leaving the ship. The oil and the coal were discharged, and we were ballasted with gravel. After a stay of about five weeks in Kobe, we raised our "mud hook," and before a strong northeast monsoon, scudded for Manila Bay.

Now we may be termed a "hot" ship. The afternoon and dog watches below were no longer a reality. With the exception of a given time for eating, the watch that came on deck at eight in the morning remained there till twelve that night. The pumice stone was put in use. During the day we scrubbed and cleaned, and at night, by the light of a lantern, we polished the boltheads between decks and gave them a coat of red lead.

On the eighteenth day out from Kobe, we anchored in the quiet harbor of Manila Bay. Here, again, the crew demanded an interview with the American consul, but on the captain's return from shore we were told that the consul had refused to see us.

The natives did the work of discharging the ballast, and loaded us with sugar and hemp. We were not idle. In the hot sun we were continually scraping or doing labor, some necessary and much that was not. The Chinese cook was not in favor with the forward crowd. He was not only filthy in his habits, but insolent and sullen. He became involved in some trouble aft, and to be rid of the ship, plotted with Bill and Jack to destroy her.

We were all loaded for Boston, with the sails bent, when about two o'clock of the night before we were to sail the man on anchor watch reported that the ship was on fire. Sure enough, the smoke was ascending from the fore peak. The ship's bell was rung. The crews of the vessels in the harbor gave their aid to quench the flames; but it was of no avail. By daylight the *St. Augustine* was ablaze and burning freely.

The ship's stores and a new suit of sails were brought on deck and hung over the stern. Every effort was put forth to save something, but it was an unprofitable task, as the next day the harbor officials went from ship to ship and confiscated everything that was saved.

Although it was a sad sight to see so fine a ship absorbed by the lapping flames of fire, yet I rejoiced to see her burn. But the ships in the bay were in imminent danger of being set on fire by the flying sparks. It was impossible to go forward to pay out the chain. A Spanish gunboat steamed out from Cavite and tried to shoot a hole in the ship's side below the water line. The aim was poor, so they accomplished nothing, though they shot away our bulwarks. The last resort was to send a diver to the bottom to bend on a rope to the anchor. While at the bottom he managed to unshackle the "jew's-harp," after which the gunboat hauled the old St. Augustine clear of the shipping. Entirely enveloped in flames, she was beached on the shore near Cavite.

Bill, Jack, and the Chinese cook were put in jail, but I never knew what became of

them. The rest of us were huddled in a native hotel. We demanded our discharges, and our request was granted. I had sixty-two Mexican dollars, more money than I ever owned before. For nine days, with others of the crew, I indulged in all the wretchedness Manila affords a sailor. Having had enough of the Philippines, I shipped as able seaman with Captain Dodge, of the American clipper *Oleander*, sailing for New York with sugar and hemp. I signed the articles in the consul's office and was rowed out to the ship, where I found three of my late mates on board ahead of me. The *Oleander* was in need of four seamen, and so completed her complement of men from the "beach combers" from the *St. Augustine*.

Hardened and fearless, and quite competent to do the work of an able seaman, I would have been pleasantly situated among strangers. Instead of being glad to have me with them, my shipmates of the *St. Augustine* did their utmost to bully me, and to have me do the work of a boy in the fore-castle.

The first day out from Manila I asserted my rights, when Oscar cursed me, and told me in very strong language that though down

on the articles as able seaman, I would have to care for the forecastle. The question was soon settled. He was a fat, ungainly fellow. I felt quite sure I could tucker him out at a stand-up tussle. So I offered to fight, providing the other men would not allow him to clinch me. They were in for the fun, so they jeered at my opponent and spurred me on to thrash him. Their attitude incited me to conquer. From chest to chest I leaped at him, rained on blows, and gained the victory. For some time after this I was unmolested by any one forward.

We had our afternoon watch below, but no dog-watch. From four to six all hands were on deck. We entered the Straits of Sunda. The natives from Java visited us in canoes loaded with yams, sweet potatoes, monkeys, and parrots. The deck of the *Oleander* was like a menagerie. In exchange for a piece of clothing, every man secured a monkey or parrot. While they were on board they were a constant source of amusement, but as soon as they reached cold weather in the southern latitudes, they sickened and died.

Java Head passed, we bowled along before a strong southeast "trade." If we could have

rounded the Cape and kept up our pace, no steamer could have made a quicker passage. But the almost invariable westerly wind greeted us, and for seventeen days we were trying to weather the Cape. Most of the time we were head reaching from one tack to the other. Rainy and blowing, it was a most favorable opportunity to "soogee-moogee." There was no end to our misery; wet and cold, we forever rubbed the white paint with sand and canvas. It was no use to complain. "Growl you may, but work you must."

One morning while we were close in to the land, the wind died out to a calm; then a soft southerly wind sprung up which carried us around the Cape. We left the outlines of Table Mountain astern, and rolled along down to the tropics. Now the overhauling and refitting to which every homeward bounder is subjected began in reality. Fine weather prevailed, the "trade" being so steady that for days we never touched a brace. Mr. Clifford, the mate, naturally took advantage of the weather. With the exception of two men in each watch to steer and keep the lookouts, all hands were on deck all day, splicing, serving shrouds, fitting new running gear, and setting

up the lower rigging fore and aft. At night, the man at the wheel, the lookout, and the officer of the watch cared for the ship.

With a blue sky overhead and a steady breeze on our quarter, two weeks flew rapidly past. Then one morning we sighted the shores of St. Helena, rising above the sea like a great black cloud on the horizon. That afternoon we sailed close in to the shore and anchored in Jamestown harbor.

During our few hours' stay here, five square-rigged homeward bounders following us came to anchor close to us; for St. Helena lies in the track of all vessels homeward bound from the Cape to Europe or the United States. Jamestown is situated in a valley between two lofty hills, and from where we were at anchor we could see the winding roads on each side of these hills. On the top of one, Ladder Hill, is a fort with barracks for the English soldiers. At the extreme top is a signal station. From the town to the flagpole is a ladder with three hundred and sixty-five steps. It is not necessary to take the road to the top of the hill. If you are strong enough, you can ascend the steps.

Several bumboats surrounded us, well

stocked with fruit, eggs, curios, and photographs of Longwood and Napoleon's grave. The old man had engaged one man as purveyor to the ship, and allowed us to contract a debt of five dollars each. The men anxiously sought for rum, but the bumboat man knew the unwritten law prohibiting the sale of liquor to seamen. He also knew he would forfeit his license besides losing his payment for the goods supplied us.

Five dollars is a small sum for a deep-water sailor to dispose of at such a time. Without questioning the prices, we expended the allotted amount on fruit and curios. That afternoon a water-boat came alongside. We filled our tanks, the old man returned bringing a barrel of tar with him, and at twilight we were leaving behind us the black, high hills of St. Helena.

CHAPTER XII

“HARD UP AND HARD DOWN”

WHEN a sailor sights a square-rigged vessel with a stumped fore topgallant mast carrying no fore royal, he will remark in a scornful manner, “No fore royal, no coffee in the morning.” I do not know how this saying originated, but we carried a fore royal, and we were served with coffee when called at five, and after coffee, began to tar down the rigging.

Each day brought us nearer home. The very thought that the voyage would soon end was conducive to a contented spirit. For several days we were blackening the shrouds and stays, and when that was finished, the painting and holystoning began. We were restored to our usual watches. Bad, squally weather had set in, so the holystones and sand were put into use. Until we entered the Gulf Stream, it was a constant push on a holystone, and as we came on deck the word

was, "Get your prayer books and say your prayers." Clothed in oilskin trousers we would kneel and rub the stones on the deck with water and sand. The friction caused by the rubbing of the holystone removed the dark surface of the wood, and revealed its bright natural color. At the end of the voyage our decks were as bright and clean as a newly planed plank.

Even at night the process of cleaning the deck was carried on. When a holystone has been used till the hand has grown accustomed to its shape, more work can be done with it than with a new one. Each man was given a certain amount of deck to clean during his watch, and this induced us to hold on to our stones. We therefore took them below and placed them under our heads to have them ready for use when called on deck.

Early one morning we had just relieved the watch. Our portion of scrubbing had been allotted us, and we had already begun, when Chris, a heavy built Dane, one of the St. Augustine men, accused me of having his holystone. It was too dark for him to see, but as I was the smallest of the crowd,

and he must growl with somebody, he said, “King, you have my holystone.”

“No, I have n’t.” We were in a heated argument when the boatswain shouted, “Stop your Portuguese argument and go ahead with your holystoning.” Chris said no more. At eight bells we went below to breakfast. We had helped ourselves to “lob-scouse” and a pot of coffee, and retired to different corners of the forecandle to eat. I took my seat on the doorstep of the forecandle with my portion. Chris renewed the holystone difference. We abused each other in strong language, which ended by his rushing at me with his sheath knife. I checked his progress by dashing the contents of my “Liverpool hook pot” in his face, and thereby saved myself. It frightened me when I saw the skin shrivel from the scalding effect of the hot coffee. Then the mate came forward and threatened to throw me over the side.

“Mr. Clifford, will you listen to me, sir,” I said. I then told him of my narrow escape from the sheath knife. Great was my relief when he said, “You did right, King; pity you had n’t poured the whole kettle on him.”

Chris was oiled and greased, and was forced to remain in his bunk for several days. I felt sorry for him ; still it gave me prestige among the others. I had been taken advantage of by most of the men during the whole trip. I had endured their railing and invectives. Now they knew I was likely to protect myself from their bitter and sarcastic taunts. After this I was not only unmolested, but on an equal footing with all forward.

Without any incident worth recording, we raised the Highlands of the Jersey coast, and took a pilot for Sandy Hook. A towboat took our hawser and hauled us rapidly along. The sails were unbent, made up, and stowed in the lazaret. It took the boatswain most of his time to keep us clear of the boarding-house runners. They not only interfered by wanting to converse with us, but also watched their opportunity to give us their flasks of "fire-water."

I was determined to have no intercourse with the "sharks," and not to implicate myself by accepting their liquor. As they approached me, I evaded their stubborn persistency by saying I had friends to stay with in New York.

I had written home from Manila telling my mother to send her next letter to New York. As we tied up at the wharf, a representative from Fred Colcord's clothing-store, on South Street, boarded us, bringing our mail. Can I describe my feelings, the fright, the quick pulsations of my heart, when a black-edged envelope was passed to me? I could see by stamps and postmark that it was from Barbados, but the handwriting was strange. I opened it, and drew from the folds of the inclosed letter this card: —

Died.

Yesterday, 1st August, at Payne's Bay, St. James,

ISABELLA LEWIS,

Aged 54 years.

Wife of John King.

Her funeral will take place this Saturday

at 3.30 o'clock, from St. Thomas' Church,

2nd August, 1884.

I quickly replaced letter and card in the envelope, and struggled hard to make myself forget it, and to cast from my mind the thought that death had taken from me my mother. As the tears gathered, I sought another channel into which to divert my thoughts. There was plenty of work to do. Even after the crew had left for the board-

ing-houses, I was assisting the boatswain to coil the gear of the courses in the tops.

Assured that no one was in the forecastle to witness my grief, I took out the letter and read the sad news of my dear mother's death. My father, unable to see sufficiently to write himself, had one of my sisters write for him. I had planned to look for a ship sailing to Barbados, and to take her a portion of the wages due me. I had built my castles in the air. Now there was no mother to welcome me home. The boatswain, ready to leave the ship, came forward to lock the forecastle door and saw me in my distress. His heart softened, and in his sympathy I was invited to go home with him.

I would have fared as well in a sailors' boarding-house, for although there were no sailors among the inmates, this lodging-house was as vile and pernicious in its influence as any dive could be. The lager beer can was ever on the go between the house and the saloons.

In two days we were officially discharged. I had about thirty dollars due me, so after buying a few articles of clothing and paying a week's board in advance, I "blew to

the winds” the little money I had, and was stranded again.

I learned that Captain Painter of the brigantine Pearl had arrived. As he was an old friend of ours, I had no trouble in securing a berth as able seaman on his ship. Just ten days after leaving the Oleander I was outward bound to Port of Spain, Trinidad, with him.

The Pearl was an easy ship. I made four trips to the West Indies, and the captain’s home was my headquarters while in New York. Those were pleasant days. On his vessel there was plenty of well-cooked food, and with watch and watch there was ample rest below for his seamen. The only discomfort was the lack of heat in the forecastle. The forecastle on the Pearl was a very small space, with four bunks. In the centre, between these, was the foremast, so that there was hardly room to stand. These four trips to the West Indies were made in winter, and I endured enough suffering from cold and exposure to fill me with rheumatism. Working cargo in the heat of the tropics made us especially susceptible to the cold weather on reaching the American coast.

It does seem strange that shipowners when building their ships never seem to think of having the sailors' quarters large enough to contain a stove. And should there perchance be room enough, there is still no stove or means of making the place warm.

Many a time I have felt it colder in the forecastle than on the open deck. To keep warm, we would turn in clothed in our stiff, frozen oilskins and our wet sea boots. The heat of the tropical sun opened the seams on top of the forecastle, and the falling spray would drip and form icicles over our bunks. In such icy caves many seamen have endured the bitter cold, and have suffered the effects of such treatment years afterwards, lingering on sick beds with frames racked with rheumatism.

I had heard that the American coasting vessels were comfortable "homes," so I decided to enjoy some of this home life on board ship, and agreed with Captain Jacobson to sail as able seaman on his three-masted schooner, the *Bella Armstrong*, taking a cargo of sulphur to Wilmington, North Carolina. This vessel proved to be a home while

we were in American waters, but once clear of the coast, she was the warmest craft I had ever sailed in. In Wilmington the sulphur was discharged some five miles up a creek, where nobody lived. For fear of contracting malaria, we were conveyed each evening to the city in a towboat with the stevedores, and housed in cheap lodgings, returning each morning to the ship.

Malaria, or any kind of fever, would perhaps have been less hurtful than the influences of the vile and contaminating surroundings along the water front of Wilmington. Numerous saloons and dance-halls, overcrowded, not only with black women, but also with the lowest “corn-crackers,” were the only open doors wherein to while away the evenings of our two weeks’ stay in this port.

The sulphur discharged, we were towed down the river bound for Fernandina, to load heavy timbers of pitch-pine lumber for La Guayra, Venezuela. Without a pound of ballast this flat-bottomed schooner could travel and not imperil our lives. Having a centreboard, we were constantly hauling it up and lowering it down.

We reached the half-dead, forsaken city of Fernandina and tied up at one of the wharves. Stevedores were engaged to stow the lumber while we sauntered around the decks hardly doing a thing. Mr. Gillespie, the mate, was taken sick with malaria and sent to the hospital. I called to see him, expecting to see an institution of comfort for the sick. Instead, I found him stretched on a cot in a room at the top of a house kept by a "corn-cracker," who made a living by providing such a shelter for sick seamen. She was well paid for her services, but the only benefit the patient derived from being at her home was his freedom from the stings of mosquitoes, as she kept the windows screened.

Nowhere have I seen these pests more numerous or venomous than in this town. We were nightly in a state of torment with their hateful singing and troublesome bites, drawing the very life-blood from our faces, arms, and legs, till we were in a condition approaching madness.

After a stay of three weeks, timbers all stowed, and the mate recovered from his illness, we were towed out of the river. We were minus one man, for a sailor had de-

serted, and it was almost impossible to secure another's service. But Mr. Gillespie had visited a schooner moored close to us, and had offered tempting inducements to a German to desert his ship and sail with us. So, about eleven that night, the mate and I rowed our small skiff under the bow of the schooner, clandestinely met the German, and rowed him to our craft.

Next morning we tripped our anchor and started for La Guayra. We were no sooner clear of land than our easy times vanished, and the “mule-driving” began. No afternoon or dog watch below; constantly at work, with only two men in a watch, we were either at the wheel or lookout when on deck at night. The food was meagre, and it was useless to complain, as the cook was a bully who sided with the after-end. Mr. Hanson, the second mate, though more lenient than the mate, was forced to work his watch to carry out Mr. Gillespie's orders. The poor German cursed the day he left his ship to join the *Bella Armstrong*.

On the afternoon of the nineteenth day from Fernandina we came to anchor in the middle of the roadstead, about half a mile

from the town of La Guayra. Preparations were immediately made for discharging the cargo.

An iron spike (dog) with a ring in it was driven into an end of each timber before landing it over the side. When a quantity of timbers were lashed together, they were cast loose from the ship and allowed to drift to leeward with the wind to a projecting point of land. One afternoon the dog in a stick of timber fouled on the rail, and was hauled out as the timber went shooting overboard. Away it went floating astern. Knowing that I could swim well enough to bring it back, I jumped overboard and reached it. I had just taken hold of it when I felt something rub against me, and on looking, saw a monstrous shark at my side. I quickly jumped on the stick of timber. Fortunately, it was buoyant enough to keep me out of the water away from the shark's mouth.

Anxiously watching every motion of my would-be destroyer, I lay flat on my stomach and yelled for help. One of the native stevedores saw my predicament, and pointing at me, yelled to the mate on deck, "Pronto! Hombre! Pronto!" Jumping into a native

"dugout," the second mate paddled to my rescue, but I had drifted about forty feet from the ship before he reached me. It was with a great sense of relief that I rolled myself into the canoe. Then together we paddled, and pushed the timber back to the raft alongside the ship.

There were days when, on account of the heavy swell rolling in, it was impossible to work the cargo. To roll and tumble about in such an unpleasant fashion, worse than if we were under way, is anything but cheering. As the days went by, we took advantage of what favorable opportunities we had, and at last our sticks of timber were all hauled up on the sandy beach.

Again without any ballast we were under way for Maracaibo to load fustic wood for Boston. On Sunday we were allowed to visit the shores of this slow-going place. We tramped miles up the beach for the sake of an hour's surf bathing, but ever on the alert for sharks. The bay was alive with fish, both small and large, and when night came, we would sit on the forecastle head watching them dart through the water. Upon some evenings the dusky men and

maidens would row around our ship and serenade us, playing Spanish fandango airs on their guitars.

The fustic all in, we started early one morning to beat our way out of the gulf. A strong wind and tide being against us, we made very little progress ; only when the tide was in our favor could we gain any headway. The second afternoon we were drifting on a mud-bank. To save ourselves the starboard anchor was let go. There must have been a flaw in a link of the chain near the anchor, for while we were heaving on the windlass the chain parted. Fortunately, the foresail and mainsail were set. With the then favorable tide we edged our way along, clear of the mud-bank, and let go the port anchor in deeper water.

Now the work of finding our lost anchor began. Both our boats were lowered. With a grappling-iron and a new coil of rope we rowed over and over the location of the lost anchor, hoping that the grappling-iron might hook on to it. Tired and hungry, we were kept in the hot sun dragging the bottom of the gulf. To be continually towing a grappling-iron, with the fear that your efforts

may be in vain, is, to say the least, depressing exercise. But Mr. Gillespie did not lose hope. He stubbornly held to the opinion that the anchor would be found.

On the next morning we began another day's search, and that afternoon our efforts were successful. The grappling-iron hooked on to something which proved to be the anchor. We brought the rope attached to the grappling-iron between the two boats, and rigged a Spanish windlass. A boat's mast was placed over the gunwales of the boats so that the two ends extended outside the two outer gunwales. Then the grappling-rope was secured to the mast between the boats. A small crowbar was lashed to each end of the mast to be used as levers in revolving the mast. As the mast revolved, it wound up the grappling-rope, and by holding the strain on the crowbars, we lifted the anchor under the bottom of the boats. A lashing was passed through the shackle, and our prize secured to the stern of the larger boat. I had heard of a Spanish windlass, and although tired and weary, the experience of having to rig one was compensation enough. Once more we were under way

for home, and with strong trade winds we bowled along.

It was midwinter (January) when we reached the American coast. For three days we sailed wing and wing before a stiff southwest gale. The old man was determined to make Gay Head with this favorable wind, and he drove the *Bella Armstrong* through it.

To heave a ship's wheel over when she is racing and griping as we were is no child's play. It was necessary for two men to be at the wheel. "Hard up, and hard down. Look out you don't jibe her." At times the wheel would get away from the helmsman and spin around like a buzz saw. Once she came to with a vengeance, and smothered herself as she dove under a monstrous sea. Staggering like a drunken man, and dripping like a half-drowned rat, she would answer her helm and wear her nose before it. She steered so badly that, although it was bitter cold, the two men would come from the wheel dripping with perspiration, as though they had been hoisting sugar hogsheads in the tropics.

We passed Gay Head, and anchored in Tarpaulin Cove. For eighteen days we tried

to reach Cape Cod, but could not accomplish it. Whenever we started, all the schooners at anchor would follow suit, and that night we would be at anchor again in some part of Vineyard Sound. At length a southwest wind lasted long enough to run us inside the cape. Minot's Light was passed; a towboat took hold of us and hauled us to an ice-packed berth at an East Boston wharf.

I had told my shipmates of my determination to keep clear of the sailors' boarding-houses, and they had agreed to do likewise. As a consequence, the land sharks soon left us. While tying up the ship, Mr. Rose, a junk man in search of old rope and the contents of the shakings barrel, visited us. We learned that he had room to board us with his family, so we put our traps in his boat and went across the river with him to his home on Tileston Street. For two weeks I breathed the demoralizing atmosphere of the North End of Boston. My money was exhausted. The weather was severe. The very thought of having to go to sea, to suffer cold and the hard usage like the experience on the *Bella Armstrong*, was painful.

During my ramble around the sailor dis-

trict I formed the acquaintance of one of "Uncle Sam's blue shirts." From him I learned the whereabouts of the Navy Yard, and that both seamen and ordinary seamen were wanted on the Wabash. Next morning, February 10, 1886, I entered the Navy Yard gate. After being questioned as to my business by the marine on guard at the gate, I was directed to take the path leading to the Wabash, and pass my examinations.

The sight of the big guns, officers in brass buttons, everything having a military appearance, made me somewhat timid. I reached the scow, and was conveyed to the guardship. I told the officer of the deck I wanted to enlist as ordinary seaman. I might have enlisted as seaman, but on account of my age I was afraid of being rejected. I was eighteen years old, and one of the qualifications was that the applicant should be twenty-one. No one but an apprentice could enlist under that age. Being questioned regarding my age, I said I was twenty-two. I suppose I looked that old, as there was no hesitation on the part of the officer.

After examining me upon sending aloft mast and yards, the use of the lead line, and

the various points of the compass, I was turned over to a stout, good-natured boatswain's mate, Bob Wilkes, for his examination in seamanship. He had me make a few splices and serve some marline on the iron rail around the hatch coamings, and passed me as a qualified ordinary seaman.

I knew I was color-blind in red, green, and brown, and feared the doctor's examination. Many a night at sea I had seen a light while on the lookout, and had shouted, "Light, O." At the word from the officer of the watch, "Can you make it out?" I would guess, sometimes correctly. At other times I would be subjected to his abuse, and called a "thick head" for not knowing a red from a green light. Whenever I was sent to put out the side lights I would have to read "port" or "starboard" on the lamps, to know which was which. Or I would wait till one of the watch had taken a side light, and then I would take the remaining one and put it in the box opposite his. Sometimes on seeing a light, as the officer would say, "Can you make it out?" I would, if near him, shout, "There it is, sir," and so keep him from discovering my color-blindness.

It was afternoon before my turn came to meet the doctor. Away in the fore peak was the sick bay, and here he "overhauled" my frame. He had me perform the antics of a circus clown, and satisfied that I was sound in body and mind, passed me over to the apothecary, "old Doc Warren," to test my color-sight.

"Doc Warren" was in a hurry to leave the ship. He produced a box filled with skeins of different-colored wool. Had he taken a bit of green, red, or brown I should have guessed, as between these I cannot discriminate. As it was, he drew a skein of blue from the box, saying:—

"What color is this?"

"Oh, that's blue."

"I guess you're not color-blind."

"I guess not. I can see your nose is not red." This remark produced a smile, the box was closed, and I was declared a qualified ordinary seaman in every way.

The ship's writer brought us before the executive officer, and we who were to enlist that day swore a faithful allegiance to Uncle Sam. The paymaster's clerk and his yeoman, with his ever faithful Jack of

the Dust, Bill Griffin, served us our clothing, beds, and hammocks, and I with seven others donned the blue uniform of the American Navy. Then I sent word to Mr. Rose to take my citizen's clothes away. They were kind people. I liked them, and gave them every stitch I owned, thereby severing all connections with the garb of civil life.

CHAPTER XIII

MAN-OF-WAR'S MAN

I WAS a novice on board a man-of-war. As soon as I reached the spar deck, I was buttonholed by a petty officer wearing an eagle on his shirt-sleeve, who said I was in the foretop, his part of the ship. This was foreign to me.

We were piped to supper. The ship's corporal showed me my mess table, and I relished my first meal on a man-of-war. It was a pleasant discovery to find that I no longer had to care for my pot, pan, and spoon, and to hustle around for my food at meal times. Here, a man was detailed to care for the mess gear and clean up after meals. All I had to do was to sit at the swinging table which was hooked to the deck above, and eat my fill. At supper I formed the acquaintance of a "blue shirt," Tommy Pavor. From him I learned that an officer or petty officer could not abuse me, and I should be punished if

caught fighting with a shipmate. But if at any time I was forced to fight, I could go down to the stoke hole or the bag room in the fore peak out of sight of "Jimmy Legs" (the master at arms) or the ship's corporals. These secluded places were constantly used by the men in which to settle disputes.

Shortly after supper Bob Wilkes blew his whistle, and like a roaring lion yelled, "Foretop men, fill the scuttle butt." The captain of the foretop hustled his men below to the fresh-water pump. Here we relieved each other at the pump handle till the scuttle butt (a large cask used to contain the water supply for the day) on the gun deck was filled. Then came another blow of his whistle, and that vociferous shout, "Stand by your hammocks." Knowing that mine was on the berth deck, I watched the antics of the boatswain's mate and the men. All hands gathered by the hammock nettings, an opening along the top of the rail extending from the brake of the poop to abreast the foremast. A toot from the whistle sent a man from each part of the ship into the nettings. Then the officer of the deck, standing by the mainmast, said, "Pipe down," a long shrill whistle,

and the men in the nettings shouted the numbers on the hammocks and passed them to the men.

Every man on a man-of-war has a ship's number, which is marked on his hammock, and a paymaster's number, which is stamped on his bag.

I went below to the berth deck and took my hammock from among those belonging to the men who had enlisted that day. I hooked this to two hammock hooks on the gun deck. After removing the lashing, I lifted myself and tried my new bed. No sooner was I in than out I came on the opposite side. My hammock clews had been fastened so unevenly that as I jumped in the thing careened, turned bottom up, and dashed me and my bedding on the deck. This created a laugh. Tom Pavor came to my rescue, and taught me how to sling a hammock, and how to fasten the clews so that it would swing evenly. During this time I was delivering a harangue to the few who were indulging in contemptuous merriment at my expense. I loudly declared that although unaccustomed to the ways of man-of-war life, I could show some of them what "sailorizing" was, and that I was able to guzzle any one of them.

One of the recruits, a farm hand from Vermont, who had enlisted as landsman about two weeks previous to this, thought he knew it all. Tom Pavor whispered in my ear, "Choke his luff." I did. I jumped at him, and we struggled in each other's embrace till Pavor dragged me bodily from the crowd, saying, "Cheese it! here comes the marine sergeant."

I saw that the only way to gain prestige among these men was to fight and win a battle. Accordingly, I followed my man from Vermont to the door of the head in the eyes of the ship on the spar deck, and, hidden by the carpenter shop, clinched with him again. We pounded each other till he cried "Enough." I was as badly used up as he was, and was glad to let it drop. This engagement sufficed to show the others that I could defend myself.

There were between two and three hundred recruits on board. That night the spar deck of the old Wabash resembled an immense caravansary, — a warlike world by itself. Her spotless deck swarmed with sailors, many, like myself, raw recruits. Some were landsmen who had never seen a ship till they landed

here, and therefore knew nothing of ship life. Others, old man-of-war's men, "big discharge fellows," who knew the ropes, kept by themselves. These old stagers took good care to see that we, the greenhorns, did the work of answering calls and cleaning decks. In the gun ports and other parts of the deck the men grouped in cliques. By being friendly with Pavor, I was welcomed to a gathering of old-timers, and watching their movements and questioning them, I soon entered into the spirit of man-of-war life.

A crowd forward on the spar deck engaged in a game of cards called "Honest John," anything but honest. It was manipulated by a few, who had control of the game and knew the private marks on the cards. Seeing others haul in their handsome stakes, I put my money down, and within an hour, with other fools like myself, lost our month's advance. When "Honest John" is played fair and square, no one envies the banker. But when, with the aid of marked cards and accomplices, he defrauds, they consider it dishonest. While the banker was handling the cards he had sentinels on the lookout for the master at arms, the ship's corporal, the sergeant of

marines, or any other person in authority, who would stop the game and report the banker. Until two bells, nine o'clock, above the general din of merry-making around the decks, the game was undisturbed. At this time the boatswain's mate trilled his whistle in piping down.

Occasionally Brady, the ship's corporal, walked forward, but the sentinels gave the signal as he showed his head above the fore hatch coamings. In the twinkling of an eye cards and money disappeared, and the wash deck locker, used as the banker's table, was a rest for a checkerboard. The scene presented was of a crowd enjoying a song, or engaged in some frolicsome sport.

After blowing his whistle, the old boatswain's mate shouted to a few stragglers who were slow in turning in to keep silence. In a few moments the old ship was as quiet as a tomb. That night I slept soundly. Next morning the trill of the boatswain's whistle roused me; old Bob Wilkes, standing by the side of my hammock, yelled, "All hands." Then blowing another call and shouting, "Up all hammocks," he almost deafened me. I sprang from my hammock and began to lash

it for stowing in the netting, but did not haul the turns taut enough. When I reached the deck, it was baggy and loose. The blankets were bulging out, and the whole thing resembled an ungainly, slovenly bundle. As I reached the spar deck, Bob Wilkes saw me. Taking hold of my hammock, he twisted me around and said in a gruff voice, "My grandmother could lash a hammock better than that! Go below and give it a respectable lash." Looking at him, I answered, "Yes, your grandmother must have been a man-of-war's man to produce such a fine specimen as you." "What's that you say?" I repeated my statement, and meant it.

He was a splendid sailor, an old war veteran, with fully a dozen bullet-holes in his body, cheerful, and liked by every man. He believed I was earnest, and was rather pleased at my remark. Following me to the gun deck, he taught me how to fold the blankets and place them on the mattress; how many turns to take with the lashing around the hammock, and how to expend the end of the lashing. Unhooking the tied hammock, he stuck the clews between the turns of the lashing, and patting the whole thing with his hand, said, —

“Young man, that’s the way to lash a hammock. When I was a young man in the navy, we had to lash our hammocks so they would pass through a hoop made for that purpose, before we could stow them in the nettings. Things have changed now. Any old way will do.”

That morning, after the decks were mopped and cleaned, at three bells we mustered for quarters. Now I was put through my first drill in facing about and marching. I learned rapidly, and within a week I was taken from the awkward squad and drilled with the others. As the days rolled on I was trained in the usual routine of big gun drill, rifle drill, single stick exercise, and marching. The men out of debt to the government for their clothing, and on the first-class conduct list, were granted liberty.

In April came the day when I could muster aft on the quarter deck with the liberty party. Although I had no friends except the ones in the boarding-house, I felt a real sense of gladness to be once more outside the Navy Yard gate. It was springtime. No pea coat was needed. As I wended my way along in my blue sailor uniform, I was con-

ceited enough to think every person I met was noticing me. The Rose family welcomed me. Having no money to spend, I remained in their company that evening, and at ten o'clock returned on board clean and sober. When the liberty party returned, some of the old stagers smuggled whiskey aboard.

The Navy has changed. The battleship, with its complicated machinery and numerous improvements, has given positions to men of skill. To-day, instead of the earlier type of man-of-war's man, our navy is more largely manned by young men from good homes. They maintain their self-respect, and much of that planning and scheming to smuggle liquor on board is becoming a thing of the past.

Before the war with Spain, the man-of-war's man was seemingly shunned by people on shore. Now he is welcome in many places, and his company is acceptable. His conduct on shore has noticeably changed. Instead of the open door of vile resorts, healthy places of amusement and recreation are frequented by him. Reading-rooms, where the men can smoke, play games, and purchase a cup of

coffee, are established for their sole use, and here they enjoy an atmosphere of comparative refinement.

Many seamen who are far from home take advantage of their opportunities to see the best of the world, visiting places of historic interest, and thereby gaining knowledge of inestimable value to them.

Once, while at the wharf at Hampton Roads, Virginia, as stroke oarsman in the captain's gig of the old Kearsage, I saw the officer of the boat enter the Hygeia Hotel. I followed him, thinking it would be easy to gain admission; but a colored boy sneered at me as he said, "No enlisted men allowed in here," and motioned for me to leave the premises. I suppose the worst rascal in civilian's dress would have been welcomed. Simply because I wore the blue uniform of the navy, I was considered unfit to enter a hotel.

It would require a book of itself to tell of the many schemes, the plots and plans, the queer devices, used by the old man-of-war's man to smuggle liquor aboard. The men with whom I "chummed" were all "big discharge men." Under the impression that

they were the ideal tars, I adopted their ways and habits.

A small discharge is not dishonorable. The difference is that a big discharge is a continuous service certificate, whereby an enlisted man, if he conducts himself so that at the expiration of his enlistment his marks in seamanship, gunnery, sobriety, etc., average a possible twenty out of twenty-five, he is given a continuous certificate. This entitles him to three months' pay, providing he reënlists three months from date of discharge, and besides this, one dollar a month is added to his wages for every such discharge.

The liquor these men brought on board with them was of the vilest kind. Two restricted "old-timers," who had not been on shore for nearly a month, were in a heated dispute, which developed into a fierce struggle. The disturbance was soon quelled, for the master at arms took them to the mainmast, where all offenders are brought before the officer of the deck. They were put under the sentry's charge on the berth deck to be brought before the commanding officer next morning.

The police duty on a warship is executed

by the marine guard. Dressed in a soldier's uniform, they guard all prisoners, and watch the scuttle butt that no water is taken except for drinking. They take their place on the forecastle head and gangways to hail all boats, to prevent any one from leaving the ship, and to hinder citizens coming on board without permission from the officer of the deck. At sea the post on the forecastle head is removed and a marine stationed aft at the life buoy.

At nine o'clock every morning, the master at arms, who is the chief of police, brings all delinquents to the mast; the officer of the deck sends word to the commanding officer that "the delinquents are at the mast." He appears abaft the fife rail, and in company with the executive officer, the officer of the deck, the ship's writer, and master at arms, listens to the charges brought against the men.

Punishment is meted according to the offense. The man may have overstayed his liberty, been insolent to an officer or petty officer, or may have struck a shipmate. The different modes of punishment are as plentiful as the offenses. An enlisted man

may be reduced a class or four classes in the conduct list, which stops his liberty on shore, taking a month to regain a class on the list. He may be given several hours' extra duty, which means that he must work while his comrades are idling about the decks. If the offense is serious, he may be sentenced to ten days' double irons, both hands and feet, on the berth deck under a sentry's charge, or to five days' bread and water in the "brig," a small room used as a cell for solitary confinement. The offense may require the trial of a general or summary court-martial. Then if the offender be found guilty, he must suffer from one month to five years' imprisonment. Generally, the punishment of a summary court is carried out on board ship, while that of a general court is executed in the naval prison in some United States Navy Yard.

At the forward end of the berth deck on the Wabash there are four "brigs," with a small porthole in each.

Next morning my two comrades were sentenced to five days' bread and water in solitary confinement. Not realizing the need of strictest discipline on a war vessel, and that, for being drunk on duty as these men had

been, their punishment was light, it seemed to me very cruel to keep them confined and hungry for five days. So I decided to feed them. At meal hours I would collect pieces of meat and bread, and a beer bottle of coffee. Fastening the end of a ball of spun yarn on the parcel of food, I would await a favorable opportunity, and secreting myself in the fore chains, would lower the food on a line with the portholes in each brig. The men expected it, and quickly drew the parcels into their cells. The beer bottles were concealed in the cells, and when the prisoners were taken on deck, which happened every four hours, I removed the empty bottles.

I knew that if detected my punishment would be worse than theirs, but I was not discovered. When the sentence was served and the men returned to duty, we became close friends. From them I learned much of a man-of-war's man's life. As they had no liberty, but money to spend, they gave me a portion of their store to waste for them, in return for which I was to smuggle a bottle of liquor on board. While this is not an offense on a merchantman, it is a very serious thing if detected on a warship.

The bottom of the trousers leg is wide enough to conceal a flask securely fastened to the limb above the ankle. These old salts showed me the exact place to lash the bottle so that the corporal at the gangway would not feel it when searching me on my return. Fortunately, there were several men returning from liberty when I mounted the gangway. The corporal was hurried in his search. He felt the folds of my shirt and ran his hands along the outside of my trousers. Then he passed me on to report my return to the officer of the deck. I walked forward, and gave my first smuggled bottle of liquor to the two "old soaks."

As the spring opened, we began to clean the old ship. The rigging was tarred and the mast and yards painted. Then orders came from Washington to dismantle her. Rigged as a full-rigged ship, lower and top-sail yards crossed, although roofed over, the old Wabash had a dignified, warlike appearance. Standing on the shore at night, the lights on deck shining through her gun ports resembled the lights of a distant city. Some of the old sailors growled at the work of dismantling her. Others thought it sacrilege to dismantle so fine a ship.

For two weeks, attired in white working clothes, we wore off that lazy, tired feeling that comes from doing nothing, by stripping the old "warrior" to her lower mast. It would have been easy work but for the wooden roof covering the whole spar deck. As it was, we had to rig a purchase from the shore to the ship, and haul the heavy yards clear of the eaves to get them over the side. All the gear aloft was stiff and rusty for want of use. Still, she was stripped of her beauty without an accident; the decks were holystoned and cleaned, and the routine of drill and loafing around the decks was resumed.

The method of holystoning the deck of a warship is easier than that on an old "wind-jammer." Here, instead of kneeling and rubbing a small stone on the deck, a strap is fastened around a large stone, two pieces of rope are spliced to the strap, and a man on each rope's end hauls the stone backward and forward. A third man guides it along the deck with a long stick.

During the early part of May, orders came to transfer all the recruits to the guard-ship Vermont at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. We

hustled and made preparations for leaving. The paymaster's accounts were signed, and we were put on board the tug and conveyed to a landing near the Old Colony Depot. The old Wabash seemed deserted. Only a few men were left, those who had enlisted for one year to do special service on that particular ship.

Some of the men had friends in Boston who had come to the station to see them off. Though the marines and officers vigilantly watched every movement to prevent any one from obtaining liquor, yet several men were amply supplied. Seated at the car windows before the train started, the splendid catches of the men as they stopped the speed of the bottles thrown them would have qualified them as "catchers" on any baseball team.

With no disturbance except the heavy rolls of a few old tars who were doing their best to hold up with their load, we reached the deck of the old Vermont. There were several warships at the cob dock.

Just before sunset I was on the dock close to the U. S. S. Juniata. I heard the whistle of the boatswain's mate, and then his loud voice yelling, "All hands down to'gallant and

royal yards, and to'gallant masts." She was bark-rigged. In a moment every man was at his station. The executive officer stood on the poop deck and gave his orders. First, "To'gallant and royal yard men on the sheer pole." At this the light yard men were in the rigging. Then came the order, "Topmen on the sheer poles. Aloft, to'gallant and royal yard men. Aloft, topmen." Like monkeys in a forest these nimble fellows ran up the ratlines till they reached their stations aloft.

It astonished me to see how quickly they ran aloft. When the executive officer said, "Stand by," and the drummer boy was told to "roll off," the whole manœuvre was more than my slow-going sailing-ship experience could grasp. The shrill whistle, the roll of the drum, the sound of the bugle, mingled with the voices of the men, completely confused me. I had sent down a yard on a merchantman which had required much time and labor. Here, in a few moments, they had stripped this vessel to her topmast. I could not understand how they did it.

Presently, my old friend, Pavor, hove in sight. I headed him off, and had him explain

it all to me. He readily revealed the use of the strap and toggle. An iron grommet, on which the lifts and braces are hooked, fits over the yardarm. A strap and toggle holds the yard rope to the quarter of the yard, and a tripping line, having a snorter made of flat sennit attached to it, pulls the lower lift and brace off, and guides the yard on its way to the deck.

At the command, "Stand by," the tripping line is let go from the slings of the yard, and at the order, "Sway," the yard rope, being hooked out to the quarter of the yard, trips the yard as the men on deck haul on it. The light yard men quickly catch the grommets as they leave the yardarms, and hook them to small hooks in the crosstrees and royal jacks placed there for that purpose. Of course this necessitates having lifts reaching to the deck. While in port, the footropes on the light yards are forward of the mast, and no parrel lashings are passed; the short tyes are always unrove, and the yard rope is rove through a gin block hooked to the iron funnel on which the eyes of the rigging are placed.

All the rigging is fitted over these iron

funnels, and when the weight of the yards is off the yard ropes, a pull on the mast rope enables the topgallant yard men to haul out the mast fid, and down comes the naked mast. As the truck leaves the topmost cap, a turn of a running lizard on the standing part of the mast rope is passed around the masthead, which holds the mast upright in its descent. The funnels with the rigging around them rest on each other all on the topmost cap. Next morning a man goes aloft on each mast and straightens out everything in readiness for sending the mast and yards aloft.

I understood all of this man-of-war seamanship, and could see by the yards in the lower rigging and the mast on deck, the fullness of Pavor's instructions. Yet I hoped that when it came my turn to be drafted to a sea-going ship, I should not be stationed on a light yard before having an opportunity to examine the rig aloft.

I had been on the Vermont about a week when one day, at dinner, the boatswain's mate blew his whistle and bawled, "Now do you hear there." At this everybody was quiet, and he went on, "All you men whose names

I call go down to the paymaster's office and sign your accounts." My name was among the twenty-five. We knew we were drafted for some ship; whether in the Brooklyn Navy Yard or not, we could not tell. I gathered with the others at the paymaster's office, signed my accounts, and was told to be ready to leave for Norfolk, Va., to join the U. S. S. Alliance. In charge of an ensign and a ship's corporal, we started on the Old Dominion for Norfolk.

Next afternoon we reached the dock and were taken in a steam launch alongside the Alliance. With bags and hammocks we mustered on the quarter deck in the presence of Commander McGregor. I felt shaky when Lieutenant-Commander George E. Ide, the executive officer, told me my number was 264, and that I was main topgallant yard man. Stowing my bag below on the berth deck and my hammock in the netting, worrying about the method of sending the topgallant yard aloft in the morning, I reported to the captain of the maintop as one of his men.

CHAPTER XIV

A THREE YEARS' CRUISE

THE Alliance was a third-rate corvette, bark-rigged, with single topsail yards. She was armed with four nine-inch smooth-bore guns of the old-fashioned muzzle-loading order, one muzzle-loading eight-inch rifle, and a rifled sixty-pounder on the forecastle head. Aside from the regular complement of officers and "blue jackets," she rated a guard of marines, officered by Lieutenant Allan C. Kelton.

It was Sunday evening when we arrived on board. During the few moments remaining before sunset, I roamed around the decks making myself familiar with the ship, and forming acquaintances among the men.

At five o'clock we were piped to supper. At the first toot of the whistle every man made a dash for the berth deck. This was a small space extending from the forward end of the fire-room to the bulkhead of the

sick bay. Here the whole crew messed. The place was too small to admit the use of mess tables, so each mess had a painted piece of canvas called a mess cloth, which was spread on deck, and the pots and pans placed on the outer edges. The big pan of hash, or meat, or whatever it might be, was placed in the centre of the cloth, and as the men were piped to supper, each took a pan and pot and helped himself. Then the man moved to some part of the berth deck where he could find a seat, or perhaps he might take his pan on to the spar deck, and finding a seat on his ditty-box, eat his meal.

I owned a ditty-box. Indeed, a man-of-war's man would feel lonesome without one, for here he keeps his sewing gear and his pipe and tobacco. It is everything to him. As soon as I had prunes and bread enough, and a pot of tea, I made for the spar deck, found my ditty-box, and seated myself on the top of the topgallant fore-castle. No sooner was I seated than the captain of the fore-castle greeted me with, "What part of the ship do you b'long to?" "Maintop," I replied. "Well, look here, sonny, you must eat your grub in the starboard gangway where you

b'long. Don't come up here and spill your grease on this deck." "I'm not spilling any grease." "Well, don't eat up here anyway."

I now learned that the men when not on duty were supposed to loaf in their own parts of the ship, — the fore-castle men on the top and under the topgallant fore-castle, the fore-top men in the port gangway, and the maintop men in the starboard; the after-guards, idlers, and marines wherever they could find a congenial spot.

At sunset the drummer rolled off, the bugler sounded colors, while the boatswain's mates trilled their whistles and yelled, "Stand by your hammocks." All hands mustered to the side of the ship to receive them. My hammock hooks were on the starboard side of the berth deck, as I was a maintop man. When I got below, I found the berth deck crowded with hammocks packed as closely as sardines in a box. I hunted for hook 264, and found that to have room in which to sleep, I was forced to sling my hammock under those on each side of me. Though a cramped position in which to sleep, I soon became used to it.

The topgallant and royal yards were in the

lower rigging, so next morning I went aloft with my opposite number in the starboard watch and eagerly examined the gear and made everything ready for receiving the yards at eight o'clock. At half past seven the executive officer took the deck. A few minutes before eight all hands were called to cross topgallant and royal yards. At the command, "Light yard men aloft," I made my way up as nimbly as any one. Without a hitch, the main topgallant yard was rigged as quickly as any of the others. Puffing and blowing, I was in the crosstrees as soon as my opposite number, and was kept topgallant yard man the whole of the cruise.

I had been on the Alliance two days when Bill Reid, captain of the hold, came off liberty half drunk. Lieutenant L. K. Reynolds had the deck, and had given orders to the master at arms not to allow him any beer. A bum-boat woman supplied the ship with bottled beer. A half hour before meals the master at arms, or ship's corporal, stood near the boxes to see that we drank only our allowance, a bottle before each meal. I had begun to drink mine when Reid asked me for a swallow. Not knowing that his beer was re-

stricted, I handed him the bottle. The master at arms quickly took it from him and ordered me to the mast. Lieutenant Reynolds put my name on the report. When brought before Commander McGregor, he sentenced me to be put on the fifth-class conduct list, which meant no liberty for three months.

I felt severely wronged, and made up my mind to take liberty whenever I had opportunity, which I did both in Norfolk and New York. I secretly left the ship, and returned without having been missed. I took a dislike to the master at arms, and during the whole cruise he was my evil genius. He watched every chance to report against me, but my day came when, stripped of his brass buttons, I clinched with him on an equal footing and whipped him.

We remained in Norfolk most of the summer, and then sailed to Newport, R. I., to adjust our compasses before starting on our cruise. Previous to our departure we called at the Brooklyn Navy Yard to receive our stores, and to assemble at anchor in the bay with other warships, on the occasion of the lighting of the Statue of Liberty. All the ships at the Navy Yard of all grades and

classes, from the old Minnesota to the smallest tugboat, were assembled, beautifully dressed in bunting. The whole harbor presented a grand and brilliant display of flags.

In the afternoon the U. S. S. Dolphin, bearing the President of the United States and the Secretary of the Navy, was steaming in towards the anchorage. As she passed the first ship, a storm of artillery fire greeted her. Gun after gun in rapid succession sounded one prolonged roar. At this moment the yards of all the ships were manned, life lines reached from the lifts to the tyes, so that we could stand on the yards and touch each other's hands. In this exalted position I watched the course of our honored guest.

A few days after this, we cast off our lines from the cob dock; the steam hissed, the engines groaned, the propeller stirred a lather of foam under the stern, and the Alliance started on a three years' cruise, assigned to the South Atlantic Station. Gradually we glided toward Sandy Hook, and an hour after we crossed the bar we spread our canvas to the soft westerly breeze. Moving to the eastward, we took our last lingering look at the land disappearing beneath the horizon.

It would have been a matter of forty or fifty days for us to reach "Rio" and report to the flagship of the station, but we were detailed to do a special work on our way. The captain of a whaling schooner had sold his vessel to a Doctor Wilson, who lived on the Island of Johanna, one of the Comoros, in the northern end of the Mozambique Channel. We were ordered to proceed through the Suez Canal and search for this schooner; therefore it was fully nine months when we sailed round the Cape of Good Hope on our way to South America.

On the fourth day out, we were well into the Gulf Stream. The westerly breeze increased to a moderate gale with a choppy sea. Several of the crew, landsmen and marines who had never before been out of sight of land, afforded much amusement to the seasoned tars. We tossed and plunged, rolled and heaved, causing the seasick "joskins" to be unutterably miserable. Strange gymnastic performances took place on the berth deck. The seasick fellows stowed themselves in every secluded corner, and envied us as we tumbled and scrambled after the "dishes running away with the spoons." Until they

gained their "sea legs," stanchions and bulwarks were hugged most affectionately.

A cold and cheerless rain set in, which converted the clean, pleasant, though small berth deck into a very disagreeable abiding-place. Every man not on duty retreated into the regions below, glad to find shelter. At seven bells, the time to lay the mess cloths, it was an effort for "Jimmy Legs" and his corporal to chase the crowd on deck to make room for the mess cooks.

The first evening of the bad weather the topgallant sails were stowed and the topsails single-reefed. As we manned the halyards to sway up the main topsail yard, I led off on an old deep-water chanty, "A Long Time Ago." A few sailing-ship sailors joined in the refrain. We had sung one verse when the officer of the deck, Lieutenant Hanson Tyler, got hold of me by the shoulders.

"Here, what do you mean? Where do you think you are?"

"I thought, sir, it would make the yard fly aloft to sing 'A Long Time Ago.'"

"Well, we don't have chanties in the navy. The boatswain's mate's whistle will do all that. Let it be a long time ago before you sing another."

We sailed into favorable weather, and the days flew by. There is not much variety on a man-of-war at sea. Each day has its exercises, and every hour its duties. The calls are as regular and the movements as sure as though we were all parts of one great machine. Instead of one man on the fore-castle head to keep the lookout, there were fully half a dozen stations at night. With all sails set, at the stroke of the bell every half hour, the lookout on the starboard side of the fore-castle head shouted, "Starboard cathead, bright light." Then the next man, "Port cathead, bright light." The royals set, the men stationed at the halyards would continue the solemn sound, "Fore royal halyards." "Main royal halyards." At last the marine at the life buoy hanging over the taffrail aft ended with, "Life buoy, all's well." So long as we had neither a wheel, a station at the halyards, nor a lookout, we might snooze away our watch on deck on the soft side of a deck plank.

The caterer of the petty officers' mess was dissatisfied with the mess cook. He offered me two government rations (eighteen dollars a month) if I would take charge of the mess

and endeavor to give satisfaction. Instead of drawing the food for all the men, the paymaster of the ship gave in money the value of one ration for every fifth man. Thus, there were twenty-four men in the petty officers' mess. The caterer received the money for five, and drew provisions for the remaining nineteen. With the two dollars a month which each man "chipped in," and the five rations, forty-five dollars, the caterer could afford to pay me the value of two rations, and have enough money to purchase from the shore potatoes, milk, and dainties for his men.

I accepted the call to go on the berth deck. My good friend, "Yank Peterson," captain of the maintop, grumbled a little, and disapproved of my leaving the deck, but was pacified when I told him I would still run his topgallant yard when in port. On the berth deck I was under the eye of the master at arms. I kept the mess clean, so that at inspection he could find no cause for complaint.

We must have been out about two weeks when we sighted the Azores, and came to anchor in Fayal Harbor. Here we coaled,

proceeded on to sea, and within another week were in sight of the coast of Spain. One fine morning we entered the Straits of Gibraltar, through which the wind raged as through a pair of giant bellows, and anchored in the bay at the foot of the great towering fortress. During our few days' stay here, the men on the first-class conduct list were given sunset liberty. I had heard much about the "Rock," but now because of the meanness of the master at arms' report against me in Norfolk, I could not have liberty with the others.

The caterers were allowed on shore to purchase stores for their messes. My stores came, and I began to empty a sack of flour. The caterer seemed disturbed, and tried to hinder me. "Jimmy Legs'" suspicions were aroused, and he took hold of the flour bag and emptied it. No wonder the caterer was anxious, for packed in the flour were two bottles of liquor and a "square face" of gin. We were both ordered to the mast. We pleaded ignorance. We did not know the liquor was there—probably the merchant was making it a present to the men.

"Oh, yes," said Captain McGregor in a

sarcastic tone, "I know these Dagoes are very generous." But as nothing could be proved against us, we were dismissed, and the liquor emptied over the side.

In a few days we were on our way to Malta. Togerson, a sailor in the fore-castle, was a good man. Although ridiculed and buffeted by almost everybody, called "Holy Joe" and the "Psalm Singer," yet he was morally strong enough to withstand it all. By his sweet, patient spirit and Christian life he not only made two converts, but also gained the respect of the whole crew. The forenoon we made the island of Malta, these three professing Christians were by the fife rail around the foremast, reading the story of Paul's shipwreck. I became interested, especially when Togerson explained that this was the place where the wreck occurred. Boldly and fearlessly these three knelt in prayer, and gave thanks for being allowed to see this land.

As we drew near the famous old roadstead with its numerous impregnable and formidable fortresses and batteries, we could see the vessels at anchor in the bay. We passed the entrance to the harbor of Valeta, and shortly

afterward moored near the English ironclad squadron. Soon we were surrounded with boats loaded with birds, silks, bird-feathers, and curios of all kinds. At dinner time our deck was like an Oriental street, for the Arabs spread out their wares on both sides of the deck to tempt the eyes of the seamen. The war vessels are the life and business of the place, creating sufficient trade to atone for days of stagnation. The peddlers work like bees in summer to provide for times of inactivity. Merchants in all seaports pray earnestly for the arrival of a war vessel or squadron.

Each man had two hammocks. Once a month the clean ones were brought on deck at evening quarters, and each division officer had them served to his men. The following morning the dirty hammocks were scrubbed and hung on the clothes-line to dry. When the boatswain's mates pipe, "Stand by your scrubbed hammocks," the men get on deck to remove them from the line, taking care to keep them clean so that they will pass inspection at evening quarters.

We scrubbed our hammocks in Malta. That day I reached first-class conduct list, so

my name was on the liberty list to leave the ship at five o'clock. At about three we were called to stand by our scrubbed hammocks.

Now during the day several men had bought liquor from the Arabs. I purchased a plentiful supply. The berth deck cooks had been washing the white paint on their deck. My blue suit was besmeared with soapsuds. In this filthy state I hurriedly reached the port side of the quarter deck, where above me on the line my scrubbed hammock was hung to dry. Unfortunately the first lieutenant saw me. "King, what do you mean by coming here so dirty looking?" At any other time I would have held my peace and sneaked quickly forward. Indeed, had I been in my right mind, I would not have gone aft in that condition. But the Arabs' "fire-water" had control of me. I sullenly replied, "Do you suppose I can scrub paint on the berth deck and be as clean as you are?" Before I could take a half dozen steps, he shouted, "Master at arms, bring King to the mast." Here he saw that it was liquor which made me insolent. Turning to the ship's writer, he said, "Isn't King on the liberty list?" "Yes,

sir." "Take his name off and put his name on the report for being untidy around the decks."

I had tried hard to gain the first-class conduct list. Now I was on the report. This meant a reduction of class conduct which would prevent my visiting the shores of Malta. I walked forward and motioned to a Maltese boatman to haul under the fore chains. Throwing a rope's end over the side, I slid down to the boat and concealed myself under the bow. Halfway to the shore, the miserable Maltese wanted me to pay him a sovereign. After making him understand that I would stand up, hail the ship, and have him arrested for conveying me to shore in this clandestine manner, he continued sculling, and landed me for five shillings. Now I was surrounded on all sides by the beggars of the town. They seem to earn a living merely by following strangers all day and begging from them in their peculiar dialect. This is based on the Arabic, mixed with plenty of French, Italian, and English. I met several of my shipmates who were overstaying their liberty, and with them enjoyed the sights of the city.

During three days on shore, I was in constant fear of arrest, as the captain had offered ten dollars each for the capture of several men breaking their liberty. On the second day, to escape the eyes of a policeman who had been watching me, I kept with a few "blue jackets" and marines who had just come on liberty. This little company were the total abstainers of the ship. Having no desire to frequent the dives, they made their way to the better part of the town. At first I thought they did not care for my company, but one of them locked arms with me, and away we went to St. John's Cathedral. This is the principal temple of the Knights of Malta, and decidedly the most interesting spot on the island. We entered the many chapels of the Knights, with their numerous superb mausoleums of Grand Masters. These, of bronze, copper, and marble, all manifest the highest perfection of art. At every corner we were besieged by the Maltese guides, who caused us much annoyance, and it took all our efforts to rid ourselves of their companionship.

The next day, a policeman saw me as I was leaving the door of a house in the lower dis-

trict, stopped me, and began to examine my hands and face. The tattooed marks on my hands and arms satisfied him, and he placed the irons on my wrists and walked me to the station house. Sure enough, I answered the descriptive list they had of me. With three others who had been arrested for overstaying their liberty, I was rowed off to the Alliance. On reaching the deck, the two policemen were paid the rewards of ten dollars for each man, which sum was charged to our accounts. We were put below on the berth deck under the sentry's charge.

Next morning, when the delinquents were brought to the mast, Commander McGregor ordered my case tried by a summary court-martial. Again I was put under the sentry's charge, and four days after, Ensign Eaton handed me a copy of the specifications and charges. In due time I was tried by a court of our officers held in the cabin. On the tenth day, the boatswain's mates' whistles blew, and the call came, "All hands to muster."

Every officer and enlisted man mustered aft on the quarter deck while the master at arms walked me along to the mainmast.

Here the executive officer, in the presence of the commanding officer and the whole crew, read the following specifications and charges, and the sentence of the court. He began :

“ Specification of offenses preferred by Commander McGregor, commanding U. S. S. Alliance, against Stanton H. King, ordinary seaman, U. S. Navy.

“ Specification.

“ In that said Stanton H. King, an ordinary seaman in the United States Navy, attached to and serving on board the U. S. S. Alliance in the harbor of Valeta, Malta, did on the —— day of —— eighteen hundred and eighty-six, without permission, leave the same said ship.

“ Approved

—— MCGREGOR,
Commander U. S. Navy,
Commanding U. S. S. Alliance.”

After reading the specification the executive officer continued : —

“ The court finds the specification proved. The court does therefore sentence him, the said Stanton H. King, ordinary seaman, U. S. Navy, to the following punishment : —

“ Solitary confinement in double irons, on bread and water, for thirty days, with full

ration every fifth day. To perform extra police duties for one month, and to lose thirty days' pay, amounting to nineteen dollars.

“The proceedings and sentence in the case of Stanton H. King, ordinary seaman, U. S. Navy, are approved.

“That part of the sentence which involves loss of pay is respectfully referred to the Honorable Secretary of Navy.

— MCGREGOR,

Commander U. S. Navy,

Commanding U. S. S. Alliance.”

Here let me say that to all such loss of pay the Honorable Secretary of the Navy always gave his approval. The executive officer then gave the order to pipe down, and for the master at arms to carry out the sentence. Once more on the berth deck, the irons were fastened on my wrists and ankles, and I was locked in the “brig” to begin my punishment.

CHAPTER XV

IN THE "BRIG"

THE "brig" was a small space about six feet square. Its four sides were made of iron plate in which holes about the size of a man's little finger were perforated. Through these the cell was ventilated. As the berth deck had not an over-abundance of light, it was impossible for light enough to penetrate through the holes for a prisoner to read. In fact, a prisoner in the "brig" was not allowed a book. The only pastime was to walk around the foremast in the centre of the "brig" and to peep through the holes, interesting himself in what was taking place on the berth deck. Every four hours during the day, beginning at seven in the morning, the prisoners were taken on deck and the hand irons removed while we were allowed to wash ourselves. Then we were marched back, taking the step the short chain on the feet irons would allow, to our places on the

berth deck. The hardest part of the punishment was the restriction in the use of tobacco. As there was no way to obtain a smoke, we were forced to resort to chewing the weed.

To a prisoner who has no friends on board, bread and water for thirty days is a severe punishment, for hard biscuit and a tin pot of water are not very palatable. I had helped other unfortunates confined in the "brig," and now the kindness was returned. Occasionally I would hear a whisper on the side opposite the sentry, "King, take hold of this." Then through the hole in the iron partition strips of meat, bananas, figs, and other dainties were passed in to me by my shipmates.

An apprentice took a condensed milk can, bored a hole in the side near the bottom, and soldered the end of a tin flute to the hole. This unique funnel was kept hidden, and was used only by certain ones when they were "in durance vile." The third day a whispering voice called me to the holes in the forward partition. "King, I want you to swear that if we let you into our secret you will not reveal it when released." "Never, old fellow." "Good enough. I will be here while the wrestling match is taking place."

This lad arranged it so that during the evening hours before pipe down, all the men's attention was devoted to singing, boxing, wrestling, or some amusement on the spar deck near the fore hatch. While this fun was going on, the tube of the funnel was inserted into one of the holes in my cell, and I was given all the coffee or tea I wanted. Long, thin sausages were purchased from the bum-boat men, and the end of a boiled one would occasionally be pointed through a hole to me. "Hand over hand" I would haul it in. One evening, the sentry saw the tail end of a sausage disappearing. He thought it a snake, and made a cut for it with his bayonet. To his surprise, he had a few inches of sausage. The joke was so immense he was convulsed with laughter. He was a good-natured fellow and knew he was observed by only a few of us, so that he was in no danger of being detected in not reporting us. Sometimes the sentries were lenient, for they, like us, might be incarcerated for some slight misconduct.

A man is not a criminal because he is confined in chains or in the "brig" on a man-of-war. For a slight offense, that would go unnoticed in civil life, an enlisted man is

sentenced to such punishment. I have seen a chain gang of fourteen men on the berth deck. Some were the best men in the ship, but had overstayed liberty, or committed some petty misdemeanor.

The coffee funnel was always in demand. It did service for fully two years. Then one of our crowd was made master at arms and revealed our secret, or it would not have been brought to light. The commanding officer was surprised when it was taken aft for his inspection. I rather suspect he thought it mean of the master at arms to expose the instrument that had served him when, as a "blue shirt," he had been a prisoner in the "brig."

We had sailed from Malta and were in the harbor of Port Said before my sentence expired. Again reduced to the fifth-class conduct list, my liberty was restricted. Through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea we steered for Aden, where we expected to spend a week at least. Liberty was given all classes, and as stroke oarsman in the whaleboat, I had an opportunity of seeing as much of Aden as I desired.

From this place we proceeded to Zanzibar.

As we came to anchor near a fleet of German warships, we were called to get our scrapers and remove the flying-fish scales and brains from our black-painted sides. The fish must have made a target of the ship, for she was the color of a speckled hen. For three hours we worked in the hot sun scraping off scales and painting her. It is only a couple of hours' work to cover the outside of a man-of-war with black paint. Each part takes its allotted space, and rigging a stage over the side, we quickly daub the surface with woolen rags smothered in paint. Only in places where there is "gingerbread" work is a brush used.

We had sail and spar drill every morning and evening. The executive officer delighted to show the Germans how quickly we could cross our yards and make all sail. As main topgallant yard man, I did my best at my station and so pleased the first lieutenant. I was tired of being in the maintop and wanted a change to some other part of the ship. I made my desire known to the "first luff." To my delight, he told me he wanted me on the main topgallant yard, and if I behaved myself, he intended to give me the first vacant seaman's rate.

Nowhere have I seen the water as clear and transparent as in Zanzibar. Looking over the side, we could see the stones and sand at the bottom in six or seven fathoms of water. From Zanzibar we continued our search for the whaling schooner. We sighted the Comoro Islands, and came to anchor on the lee side of Johanna, close to a cluster of huts which was the seaport of the place. The natives were ignorant of the value of money. They brought off fruit, chickens, eggs, and turtles in their canoes, and were better satisfied with a polished copper cent, a brass button from a marine's coat, or an old piece of clothing than they were with money. The marines lost several buttons, and two apprentices served five days' bread and water for robbing the "sea soldiers" of their uniform ornaments.

One morning a list of names to man the first and second cutters was posted on the bulletin board. To my surprise, I was listed for the first cutter with nine others who were considered hard cases. After breakfast the cutters were called away, and word passed for the men whose names were on the bulletin board to man them. In the second cutter

were men who seemingly could be trusted to give strong drink a wide berth.

Away we started for the shore, in charge of the executive and two junior officers. When we made a landing, the "first luff" took the second cutter's men and an officer with him, in search of Doctor Wilson's plantation. He left the crew of the first cutter in charge of Ensign Sutphen, with orders not to allow us to leave his sight.

It was long after dinner time. We were hungry. One after another, we walked a little way from the boat as though gathering shells. At a given signal, when Mr. Sutphen's back was turned, we bolted for the bushes and kept on running till we were some distance away.

We met a native boy who understood when we said "Doctor Wilson," and motioned us to climb the hill. We compelled him to guide us for fully three miles over hills and through bushes, till we came in sight of the plantation. We could see some of the second cutter's crew, and beckning to them, we were soon together. Away from the sight of the officers, we secreted ourselves in a banana grove, and with an abundant supply of liquor, purchased from

the natives of the plantation, began our feast.

I do not know what happened next, but about midnight I found myself with five unfortunate shipmates on the berth deck under the sentry's charge. Next day we were sentenced to ten days' double irons on the berth deck, and to pay six rupees each, which money the first lieutenant had paid the natives for conveying us from the plantation to the boats. My comrades told me the "first luff" was greatly annoyed when he discovered that, besides the try-pots and whaling implements of the schooner which he had confiscated on the plantation, he had to care for a helpless crew.

After calling at Mayotte and other Comoro Islands, we headed for Mauritius, and here found our prize. Hauled up a creek, her seams wide open, dried by the hot sun, and beaten by every storm, she was a wreck unfit for sea; insomuch that the captain decided to let the useless hulk remain where it was.

I had made a close friend of Coleman, one of the marines; in fact, he was my chum. As no liberty was given in Mauritius, and there was but little intercourse with the

shore, I was surprised to find Coleman under the influence of liquor. Finding me on the forecastle head, he took my hand, saying, "King, old boy, I'm going to desert." Before I could dissuade him, he threw a rope's end over the side, and let himself slide into the sea. As he struck the water, I was by his side.

We were moored head and stern up an inlet which was perhaps a half mile wide. From our mooring-place it was quite two hundred yards to the nearest shore. It was raining, and the awnings were housed, which prevented the sentry seeing the phosphorescent wake we made as we struck out for the beach.

I knew that sharks had been caught in this anchorage, but all fears of such enemies were forgotten when Coleman cried, "Oh, King, I'm sinking!"

Now was the time for me to exercise the skill of my early boyhood training in the water.

"No, no, old fellow, put your hands on my shoulders, and rest yourself." He held on a few moments, a heavy drag on me.

"Take off your shoes, Coleman."



SHE WAS A WRECK, UNFIT FOR SEA

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

R

L

"I can't; they are too tightly laced."

Taking my knife from the lanyard around my neck, I dove for his feet, and released him from his heavy soldiers' shoes. Then hauling off his trousers and blouse, I rolled them with my blue uniform into a bundle, and tied them into my silk neckerchief.

With Coleman holding the bundle in one hand, while with the other he rested himself on my shoulder, we struggled for the shore. Now and again he would ease up on me and do some paddling for himself. Oh, the relief when he said, "I'm on the bottom"!

Shorter than he, I could not touch bottom with my feet. Exhausted, and bleeding at the nostrils and ears, I held on to my friend while he waded in to the beach. For fully an hour we remained quiet, till we had strength enough to wring the water from our clothes.

The place was barren, with not a sign of a house or any habitation. For two miles we trudged along the country road on our way to town. I tried to persuade my chum to return to the ship, but to no purpose. He disliked his duties on shipboard, and wanted a change.

As we drew near the landing where the boats were moored, I bade Coleman good-by, and bargained with a boatman to row me to the ship, offering him my blue uniform suit for his trouble. But he was afraid of being detected, and therefore hesitated. The only agreement we could reach was for him to pass by the ship at a safe distance while I swam the rest of the way.

As we came near the Alliance, the sentry hailed us — “Boat ahoy.”

The boatman made no reply, but rowed on as if he had some business in the bay. I lowered myself over the stern sheets, leaving my clothes with the boatman, and at about midnight was alone in the sea. Cautiously I swam for the bow, reached the mooring chains, climbed to the hawse pipe, and lifting myself up by the head stays, clambered into the head. The sentry saw me. “What are you doing there?”

“Having a salt water bath.”

“Well, go below; you can’t bathe this time of night.”

“Very good, Sam.”

I sneaked under the fore-castle head, awoke one of the men on anchor watch, and had him

bring me some clothing. Once dressed, I turned into my hammock. I almost wished I had remained with my chum. But of all things, desertion was abominable to me. I could not bring myself to think it anything but dishonorable to relinquish voluntarily my rights as an American citizen by deserting from my adopted country's flag.

We had not been missed. The next morning the master at arms reported Coleman missing, and he was booked as a deserter.

After a stay of a couple of weeks in Mauritius, we exhibited the stars and stripes to the natives of Madagascar and along the east coast of Africa, calling into many of their numerous seaports for a short stay. At most of these places we remained less than twenty-four hours. The day came when we moored our ship at the wharf in Cape Town at the foot of Table Mountain. It was delightful to mingle with people who could converse with us. Everybody spoke English.

Again I had reached the first-class conduct list, and should have obtained liberty with my shipmates, had I kept in different company. As it was, my friends were men

who drank whenever they could get liquor, and made every effort to obtain it.

It was now June, in the year 1887. Every preparation was made to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign. Some of her Majesty's soldiers visited the Alliance, and brought a supply of "Cape Smoke," a vile liquor. We indulged freely. That night, when I became conscious I found myself and four others chained to the stanchions on the berth deck. For this offense we were court-martialed, and sentenced to thirty days' bread and water, a month's extra police duty, and the loss of a month's pay. But we were thankful to be let off so easily, as we were told that under the influence of the "Cape Smoke" we had struck the master at arms, and used abusive language to the first lieutenant. Had all these charges been brought against us, we would have been kept prisoners till we reached the flagship, and then have had sentence of a general court-martial. At the expiration of our sentences we were near the coast of Brazil.

One clear morning we made the land, and steamed through the narrow entrance to the harbor of Rio Janeiro. We passed the coni-

cal peaked Sugar Loaf, its extreme apex two thousand feet above the earth, and came to anchor in the magnificent bay, studded with small islands, and as smooth as a lake. Here we found the old paddle-wheeled Tallapoosa in company with the Lancaster. The three ships comprised the whole fleet.

Because of sickness in Rio the crews were not allowed liberty. While with the flagship we were kept busy, not only with the admiral's inspection, but every day we were exercising at something. We would be tuckered out from hauling on the smooth-bored guns at big gun drill, when a signal from the Lancaster would call away, "All boats armed and equipped for distant service," or perhaps, "Make all sail."

In order that we might land and form the three ships' companies into line for battalion drill, the fleet got under way and steamed outside the harbor to St. Caterina, a quarantine station. At a given signal from the flagship, the crews manned their boats. Armed and equipped for heavy marching, we rowed for the beach, and landed in the surf near the old hospital.

We only landed twice, for on the third

morning a yellow flag was run up on our fore truck. The signal was made to the admiral that we had a case of smallpox on board. As soon as this was known, three blue jackets and one marine joined "Togerson's religious circle." I must do justice to the marine and say he proved to be a strong Christian fellow, even though he began his new life through fear of death by smallpox. We steamed back to Rio, where within a week five men were sent to the hospital with smallpox. Two of these died. To check the spread of the disease, we were ordered to proceed to Bahia, and there fumigate.

We had just passed out of the entrance to Rio harbor, when Mr. Tyler, the officer of the deck, shouted to me in the maintop, "Come down from aloft."

"I can't come down now, sir, I'm coiling the to'gallant yard rope in the top, and if I let go it will run back over the top to the deck."

"Come down, I say."

"Ay, ay, sir."

I let go the yard rope. The weight hanging from the top to the deck hauled the

portion of the yard rope I had coiled into the top over the top netting. Snakelike, it twisted itself around Mr. Tyler, who was on deck under the maintop, and tumbled him over and over. For this I was put on the report, and next morning brought before the commanding officer. I told my story, and claimed that I had obeyed orders. It was of no avail. Commander McGregor sentenced me to five days' bread and water in the "brig." I was pleased when the ship's writer told me that for laughing at Mr. Tyler when I saw him twisted about in the falling coils of the yard rope, I had not been lowered on the conduct list.

In a few days we steamed into the harbor of Bahia, and anchored in front of the city, which is beautifully situated, partly on a series of hills and partly at their base.

We were now ordered to spread all our clothes and bedding on lines on the berth deck. Large iron buckets used for hoisting ashes from the fire-room were placed here, and in them sulphur was burned, while the hatches and ports were kept closely fastened. We lived on deck under the awnings during these two days we were fumigating, and then

proceeded to Pernambuco to give liberty to the crew.

In Pernambuco we moored the Alliance inside the long reef, which affords excellent anchorage for small ships. The large steamers anchor outside and transfer their cargoes by means of lighters. This coral reef is connected with the city by an old bridge. The upper end is joined to the land by a sand-pit. All the crew, whether on the first or fifth conduct list, were allowed twenty-four hours on shore. There is plenty of amusement for seamen in this place. The streets and sidewalks are wide and clean, and the public edifices would be creditable anywhere. After every man had enjoyed a run on shore, we filled our coal bunkers and steamed back to the flagship at Rio.

Hagan, the captain of the foretop, had been ill, and was growing worse every day. He was liked by all of us. Anxiously we watched by his bedside, and hoped for his recovery; but he failed rapidly, and while in Rio passed away. The paymaster negotiated with a Rio undertaker to furnish a coffin. When it was brought on board, it received all attention. It was the greatest curiosity of

the cruise. When Hagan was placed in it, it was so shallow that the body lying in it was distinctly visible above the sides. The lid was shaped like the roof of a house, made of two sloping boards meeting and forming a ridge. This cover worked on hinges like the lid of a trunk.

Our departed shipmate had professed the Roman Catholic faith; therefore the services of a priest were engaged. Four boats filled with men, towed by the steam launch, went with the body to the shore near the cemetery. We formed into line and marched to the grave.

Of all detestable places, none could equal this cemetery in filth. The people were buried in quicklime, and at the end of two years the graves were opened for the use of other bodies. We passed rows of opened graves. The soil thrown up on the embankment was filled with bones and skulls and partly decayed human bodies. We were glad when the service was ended. As soon as the priest had read the prayers for the dead, and sprinkled the strange coffin with holy water, we beat a retreat to the gate, formed into line, and marched to the boats. Before we

left Rio, we raised money enough to purchase the grave for forty years, and erected a stone to the memory of our beloved shipmate.

I was glad that in the funeral party I was not in the whaleboat. The boat-keeper had in some way filled the boat's water-breaker with native liquor, and by the time we reached the ship several men were put below under the sentry's charge.

Again the fleet was together. The trip southward was uneventful. The ocean was calm, and we kept well out to sea till we sighted Maldonado, and headed up the river Rio de la Plata. In a few hours we were at anchor in Montevideo Bay.

For seven months we remained here. The harbor had a warlike appearance, as an imposing number of warships of almost every nation was anchored near us. For a little diversion we would steam outside the river and exercise at target practice. A trio of doomed barrels were lashed together and cast overboard. At a distance of a mile we would pour shot and shell with profusion and rapidity, to resemble an engagement. We indulged in these demonstrations once in three months till our quarterly allowance of ammunition

was exhausted. The men on the first-class list obtained liberty every other day. We became tired of the city, a clean, well-built place, of one-story, flat-roofed houses.

Montevideo has its sailors' district. The men from the merchant ships and war vessels were welcomed in the numerous dance-halls on Calle St. Theresa, and at the rumshops, which were kept by English and American broken-down seamen. Occasionally, a bull-fight on a Sunday afternoon would create a diversion, and at times, while at anchor, a lively pampero would stir up the shipping, creating a change in our humdrum existence, for a few days at least.

Once we weighed anchor and steamed about a hundred miles up the river to an island, where we were exercised in rifle and pistol target practice.

We must have been on the station about two years when the Alliance was ordered to Rio on special service. The Tallapoosa was detailed to survey the entrance of the river "Plate." To complete the complement of men so that the surveying work could be accomplished, twenty men from the Alliance were transferred to her.

I asked to be sent to the Tallapoosa, believing that if I could be away from my old associates and among strangers, I might then gain a reputation for good behavior. I was stationed on the running boat, making several trips to shore daily. For two weeks there was no report against me, and I was beginning to flatter myself that I should have a splendid report to take to my old ship on her return.

One afternoon we had to wait at the wharf for the mail orderly. The coxswain of the boat allowed one of his crew to purchase a bottle of gin from "Dirty Dick's" saloon, near the landing. "Dirty Dick" was an American who kept open account for any man-of-war's man, as he knew he would receive his money when we were paid. The bottle of gin was quickly emptied and more was purchased. I only remember receiving a stunning blow on the head while engaged in an all-around rumpus in the boat, and falling over the side into the bay. When I came to myself, I, with others of the boat's crew, was a prisoner on the berth deck.

The mail orderly told me that in the scuffle alongside the wharf I was knocked on the

head with the tiller, and, falling overboard, sunk to the bottom. The crew of a Brazilian warship's boat came to our assistance, or we should all have been drowned. I was court-martialed, and sentenced to thirty days' double irons, on bread and water, full ration every fifth day. This time I lost no pay, but felt hungry while in the "brig." When my sentence was served, the Tallapoosa was steaming from one end of the mouth of the river to the other, taking soundings. Here I had every chance to gain perfection in casting the hand lead. All day on deck we were in the canvas apron taking soundings, and as our reports were to be put on record, we were forced to be accurate.

At the end of three months the ships were together again, and we were transferred back to the Alliance. I felt mortified and ashamed as I mustered on the quarter deck with my bag and hammock. My life seemed to amount to very little. While waiting for the "first luff" to say what part of the ship we were to be stationed in, Lieutenant Allan C. Kelton, U. S. M. C., came on deck from the ward-room. Noticing me, he walked over and shook hands with me, saying, "King,

I'm glad to see you back with us. We have missed you."

This handshake and kind greeting from Mr. Kelton did me lots of good. I felt I still had the respect of one man, and would do my best to behave myself. I kept away from several old associates, and although I could not join "Togerson's religious band," I stayed much in his company and with others like him, and during the rest of the cruise I remained on the good-conduct list.

CHAPTER XVI

HOMEWARD BOUND

OUR carpenter's mate won the capital prize in the Montevideo lottery, and for once this old "shell-back" had all the money he wanted. In Montevideo the gambling-houses conducted their nefarious business openly. The roulette table and lottery were in full swing, using almost every store and every policeman and soldier to aid them in their villainous trade. At every corner the boys sold lottery tickets, and the bumboat man supplied the ships. The first liberty that was given the carpenter, he remained on shore eight days, and then was brought back by the shore authorities. The master at arms coveted the money which this man had, and clandestinely sold him liquor, charging him an exorbitant price for every skin of liquor he obtained. I heard of this fraudulent transaction, and watched for an opportunity to catch our chief of police. One evening I saw the master at arms

take a skin of liquor from one of the crew of the captain's gig. Two other men and myself saw him pass the liquor to the carpenter's mate and receive the money. Pouncing upon him, we took the liquor and carried it to the officer of the deck, making a report against the master at arms. He was tried by a summary court-martial, and sentenced to be disgraced to a landsman.

This was all spite on our part. The master at arms had been hateful to us. While he overlooked the petty faults of others, he was ever on the alert to find some charge against us. No longer chief of police or a petty officer, stripped of his brass buttons and in the same uniform as myself, we met one dark night on the forecastle head, and had it not been for the interposition of the new master at arms, we would have badly crippled each other. As it was, we were both unfit for duty for some days.

At this stage of the cruise we had changed our captaincy. Commander George W. Pigman had taken command of our ship. Next morning we were brought before him. After looking us over he said, "You seem to have punished each other enough. I am told it's

an old sore between you two men. Don't let me hear of any more trouble between you. Go forward." The ex-master at arms was disgraced. He felt humiliated, and having asked for his discharge, it was granted him.

On account of some disturbance regarding a lumber-laden schooner in the Straits of Magellan, we were ordered to proceed there in the dead of winter. Every mess laid in a stock of sea stores. Pea coats were issued to those who had none, and away we sailed to the southward. Every day it grew colder, and continued so till the coast of Patagónia was sighted near the entrance to the Straits. We entered against a heavy current, passed Elizabeth Island covered with numerous birds of many kinds, mostly penguins and gulls, and about a hundred miles from the Atlantic, came in sight of Punta Arenas, Sandy Point, as it is best known to English people. We dropped anchor about a mile from the shore.

I do not know how the trouble regarding the schooner was settled. We remained in Sandy Point several days; we were allowed to visit the shore. A town on a beach at the foot of a hill, consisting of a fort, a church, some old government barracks, and one or

two public buildings, — these, with several one-story houses built so as to form streets, comprised the whole of Punta Arenas. While here, one of the large Pacific mail steamers grounded farther up the Straits, and after discharging much of her cargo, it took the united efforts and steam power of another of the company's steamers and our ship to haul her from the beach.

We steamed back to Montevideo, and after taking a run up the Plata, calling at Rosario and Asuncion and a few minor places, we returned to our old anchorage to await the arrival of the Kearsarge, which was on her way to Montevideo with relief crews for the Alliance and Tallapoosa. One afternoon the quartermaster reported a warship steaming into harbor. Signals were exchanged, and the news went over the fleet that the incoming vessel was the Kearsarge.

My three years' enlistment had expired. Now I rejoiced to know that in a very few days I would be homeward bound once more. Although there was not a single person whom I felt would be glad of my return to the United States, no one to greet me there, still I felt it good to be returning to an American port, which would end my enlistment.

Our accounts were signed, and with bags and hammocks we were transferred to the *Kearsarge*. At the command, "All hands up anchor for home," the quartermaster hoisted to the breeze our homeward-bound pennant, three hundred feet long, with a gilded ball at the end, trailing far astern. Amid the cheers of all the men on the warships in the harbor, and the sweet sound of the flagships' bands playing "Home, Sweet Home," we bade farewell to the Spanish main. No sooner were we clear of land than the mooring chains were unbent and stowed below. The jackasses were taken from the manger, and with hawse pipes plugged, we headed for home.

A few days out we sighted the uninhabited Brazilian island, Trinidad. Here we had a splendid opportunity to try our hands at big gun target practice. We opened fire on the hills, and ploughed the soil with our shot and shell.

We crossed the equator, and in another week were in sight of land. As we drew near this island, we passed many flying-fish boats with masts unstepped. The negro fishermen were catching fish. We could see the

windmills on shore, and everything seemed to resemble Barbados. Meeting the first lieutenant, I dared to question him.

“Is that Barbados, Mr. Belknap?”

“Yes, King, it is.”

“Are we going to stop there?”

“Yes, only for a few days, to coal up.”

During my three years' cruise, my ship-mates had looked forward with keen pleasure to the arrival of the mail, to hear from their friends at home. I had not received a word from any one. In places where I had seen good women on the street, the thought of my mother had come to me, but I dashed it away and thought of other things. As we anchored in Carlisle Bay, I did not then allow myself to think she was gone forever. With a longing to see my father and sisters, and to be in the old home once more, I approached the officer of the deck and asked for liberty. Commander Allan D. Brown granted me forty-eight hours on shore, and told the paymaster to give me ten dollars.

On reaching the wharf I engaged a carriage, and told the driver to hasten to Payne's Bay. We passed the old school-house, and the chapel with its small burying-

ground. At last the old home hove in sight. Instead of the wide-open shutters and the evidence of human life, blinds and doors were shut, and no sign of human beings was there. We drove up the gap. I sprang from the carriage, my heart breaking in its loneliness, and wrenching the front door open, I passed through the vacant front rooms and entered my mother's bedroom. Of all places, this was the most desolate to me. Here in this room I had knelt with my brothers and sisters at the foot of her bed every morning, and repeating with her our daily prayer, we gave thanks to God.

Now, not a piece of furniture remained; not a soul to welcome me home. In my grief I cried, "Mother, mother, where are you?" I think I hear the echo mocking me as it sounded, "Where are you?"

The natives heard that I had returned, and as I reached the front door, intending to make inquiries as to the whereabouts of my father, one of our old negro servants threw her arms about my neck, and sobbing with me, cried, —

"Massa Harry, you' mammy is dead."

"I know it, Sarah; where is papa?"

“He’s at Carrington’s house on the hill.”

Afflicted with blindness in his old age, my father had been turned from his home, while it and all he owned were sold to the highest bidder. Renting a small house not far from the old home, his youngest daughter in Barbados was doing her best to make his pension provide food and shelter for him. I spent my forty-eight hours in his company, and when I left him, it was a sad farewell. We both believed it was the last time we would meet on earth. It was so, for he has since passed beyond all trouble and care.

I reported on board the Kearsarge, and in about ten days we were at Hampton Roads awaiting orders from Washington. Word came for us to proceed to New York and there discharge the crew. There were men who had never been in the “brig.” In fact, they had been considered good-conduct men the whole of the cruise. I was astonished when I saw them given small discharges. My question was, “What will my discharge be?”

When Mr. Belknap handed me my parchment, he said, “King, if it was in my power to change your discharge, I would do it. I

don't understand how you were recommended for a continuous service certificate by the executive officer of the Alliance, but here it is. Take it." Sure enough, my discharge was written on the face, "Entitled to an honorable discharge."

I looked it over carefully. Was it possible that after three court-martials and the sentences I had served in the "brig," I could be so honorably discharged? On reading the conduct record I was pleased to see:—

"Seamanship, excellent. Gunnery, very good. Industry, excellent. Obedience, good. Cleanliness, very good. Average standing for term of enlistment, very good."

Yes, I had always kept neat and clean, was implicitly obedient when in my sober mind, active and quick in movement. I gave satisfaction at my stations both aloft and on deck, and manifested an interest in every drill and exercise. Although the mark for obedience was only three, the other qualifications entitled me to twenty out of a possible twenty-five.

No longer an enlisted man, I purchased a suit of clothes. With some of my shipmates I squandered my money in New York, and

within three weeks appeared on the deck of the old Vermont ready to enlist again. I passed the doctor's examination, and was considered sound in body, but when the apothecary emptied a small cardboard box of wool on the table for me to put the different colors in heaps by themselves, my hopes were blasted. Although I knew it was impossible for me to do it, I made the attempt. My effort was a fearful mixture of colors. The doctor declared me color-blind, and rejected me.

There was one chance left. My discharge had not been tampered with, so before word of my rejection could be sent to Washington, I borrowed a few dollars of an old shipmate and started for Boston. I had hopes of "bluffing" the old apothecary on the Wabash again. Here I encountered the same difficulty. The box of wool was passed me to separate the skeins and place all of one color in heaps by themselves. The red, green, and brown were more than mixed, though I did my best, so for the second time I was rejected.

What was I to do? I had wasted my earnings, and had not a cent of my own.

The only thing was to find a sailing-ship, and continue my days on a "wind-jammer." Reaching the spar deck, I met Mr. Farnholt, the executive officer of the Wabash, who said, "King, I have a vacancy for a landsman in the ship's company. Will you take that?" "Yes, sir," I quickly replied, glad indeed to take any rate, even though it was at the bottom round of the ladder. "Very well, stay on board till I get permission from Washington to waive your color-blindness." In a few days a favorable answer was received, and as a landsman I was enrolled on the Wabash, a special service man on that ship for the period of one year. I thereby lost the three months' pay to which my honorable discharge entitled me, had I again enlisted for general service.

I held my rate as landsman for six weeks, at which time the captain of the forecastle was discharged, and I was given his rate. The year passed quickly, and I enlisted for another year, and was shortly after rated quarter gunner. My duties consisted of caring for the arms and ammunition, drilling the recruits, and training them in the different exercises for sea service.

Although I was not reported at any time, I deserved to be, for with others I yielded to the temptation of supplying the "moneyed big discharge men," the "old-timers," with liquor. We ran great risks to smuggle it on board that we might have money to squander in the dives outside the Navy Yard gate and in the North End of Boston.

In the summer of 1890, I had just passed my twenty-third birthday. Although so young, I had lived many years of recklessness and wrong-doing. My associates were of the worst kind. I did not care for anything different. Perfectly satisfied, I lived only for the day. Of the future and what it had in store for me, I cared nothing. I expected the only termination of a man-of-war's man's life: a pension in old age. I had no plans or ambitions, — a mere animal; worse off than some animals, for they at least had some one who bestowed affection on them. Still I was not unhappy. Only when my mother's face came to my mind and I allowed myself to think of her, did a trace of good thought or a longing for something better enter my life.

At this stage of my experience, a large

company of young women came on board the Wabash. It was Sunday afternoon. Old Bob Wilkes was on liberty, and I was acting boatswain's mate in his place. In a little while the officer of the deck shouted, "Bo's'n's mate, pass the word. Any men who wish to attend a temperance meeting lay aft on the gun deck. The rest of the men keep silence around the decks." These good women were members of the Charlestown Young Women's Christian Temperance Union, and had asked permission to hold a meeting, thinking they might be of help to some of the men. I kept away from their company. The very sight of these women brought thoughts of my mother and my sisters. Home and fond recollections filled my mind. To banish such thoughts, I became enraged, and as I blew my whistle and passed the word the officer of the deck had given me, I whistled again and shouted, "Get for'ard, everybody, and fill the scuttle butt." It did not require all the men to do this work. Some went aft to the meeting, but I kept many of them jerking on the fresh-water pump handle, and did my best to forget the gathering aft.

Standing forward on the gun deck by the scuttle butt watching that it did not overflow, I could see the gathering of people aft. Presently a sound, the sweetest of my life, reached my ears. Two young women were singing a hymn, "The Gospel Bells are Ringing." As I listened, my mind traveled back to my boyhood days, when Sankey's hymns had just been introduced into Barbados. I thought of the days when, with my young brother and sisters, we sang that very hymn at my father's side. I no longer desired to fight against the inrushing thoughts of home and loved ones, but allowed every remembrance of my mother's face and life to enter my being. At any other time I should have dreaded the ridicule of my shipmates, and given these Christian people a wide berth.

Shouting to the men below, "That'll do the pump," I walked aft and seated myself on a bench in front of the singers. "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," they sang, and then, "The Sweet By and By." I sobbed as though my heart would break. I was a boy again in the presence of my mother, and seemed to be telling her of my wasted life. It was as though her voice talked to me and

reasoned with me. I decided then and there to sever myself from every evil association, and to be what she would have me.

Now I have finished these experiences of my Bohemian life. I have confined myself to incidents on board ship, and to a few happenings on shore, as a sailor. The temptation to tell of other places and people has been strong, but I have refrained. My hardest task has been to discriminate between things worth relating and those that are not, but I feel, as far as my memory permits, I have set forth the truth. If no good is done, or no pleasure derived from reading the vicissitudes of a youthful sailor, cast the book away and say, —

At its best, it is only what most sailors would call a poor, hard-traveling purchase, “A rope yarn over a nail.”



